



WOKINGHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL

A Meeting of the **EXECUTIVE** will be held in David Hicks 1 - Civic Offices, Shute End, Wokingham RG40 1BN on **THURSDAY 29 SEPTEMBER 2022 AT 7.00 PM**

Susan Parsonage
Chief Executive
Published on 21 September 2022

Note: Non-Committee Members and members of the public are welcome to attend the meeting or participate in the meeting virtually, in accordance with the Council's Constitution. If you wish to participate, either in person or virtually via Microsoft Teams, please contact Democratic Services. The meeting can also be watched live using the following link: <https://youtu.be/sr2i34G7zto>

Please note that other people may film, record, tweet or blog from this meeting. The use of these images or recordings is not under the Council's control.

Our Vision
<i>A great place to live, learn, work and grow and a great place to do business</i>
Enriching Lives
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Champion excellent education and enable our children and young people to achieve their full potential, regardless of their background. • Support our residents to lead happy, healthy lives and provide access to good leisure facilities to enable healthy choices for everyone. • Engage and empower our communities through arts and culture and create a sense of identity for the Borough which people feel part of. • Support growth in our local economy and help to build business.
Providing Safe and Strong Communities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Protect and safeguard our children, young and vulnerable people. • Offer quality care and support, at the right time, to reduce the need for long term care. • Nurture our communities: enabling them to thrive and families to flourish. • Ensure our Borough and communities remain safe for all.
Enjoying a Clean and Green Borough
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Play as full a role as possible to achieve a carbon neutral Borough, sustainable for the future. • Protect our Borough, keep it clean and enhance our green areas for people to enjoy. • Reduce our waste, promote re-use, increase recycling and improve biodiversity. • Connect our parks and open spaces with green cycleways.
Delivering the Right Homes in the Right Places
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Offer quality, affordable, sustainable homes fit for the future. • Ensure the right infrastructure is in place, early, to support and enable our Borough to grow. • Protect our unique places and preserve our natural environment. • Help with your housing needs and support people, where it is needed most, to live independently in their own homes.
Keeping the Borough Moving
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain and improve our roads, footpaths and cycleways. • Tackle traffic congestion and minimise delays and disruptions. • Enable safe and sustainable travel around the Borough with good transport infrastructure. • Promote healthy alternative travel options and support our partners in offering affordable, accessible public transport with good transport links.
Changing the Way We Work for You
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be relentlessly customer focussed. • Work with our partners to provide efficient, effective, joined up services which are focussed around our customers. • Communicate better with customers, owning issues, updating on progress and responding appropriately as well as promoting what is happening in our Borough. • Drive innovative, digital ways of working that will connect our communities, businesses and customers to our services in a way that suits their needs.
Be the Best We Can Be
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be an organisation that values and invests in all our colleagues and is seen as an employer of choice. • Embed a culture that supports ambition, promotes empowerment and develops new ways of working. • Use our governance and scrutiny structures to support a learning and continuous improvement approach to the way we do business. • Be a commercial council that is innovative, whilst being inclusive, in its approach with a clear focus on being financially resilient. • Maximise opportunities to secure funding and investment for the Borough. • Establish a renewed vision for the Borough with clear aspirations.

MEMBERSHIP OF THE EXECUTIVE

Clive Jones	Leader of Council and Business and Economic Development
Stephen Conway	Deputy Leader of the Council and Executive Member for Housing
Rachel Bishop-Firth	Equalities, Inclusion and Fighting Poverty
Prue Bray	Children's Services
Lindsay Ferris	Planning and Local Plan
Paul Fishwick	Active Travel, Transport and Highways
David Hare	Health and Wellbeing and Adult Services
Sarah Kerr	Climate Emergency and Resident Services
Ian Shenton	Environment, Sport and Leisure
Imogen Shepherd-DuBey	Finance

ITEM NO.	WARD	SUBJECT	PAGE NO.
26.		<p>APOLOGIES To receive any apologies for absence.</p>	
27.		<p>MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING To confirm the Minutes of the Meeting held on 28 July 2022 and of the 22 March 2022 Extraordinary Meeting.</p>	9 - 34
28.		<p>DECLARATION OF INTEREST To receive any declarations of disclosable pecuniary interests, other registrable interests and any non-registrable interests relevant to any matters to be considered at the meeting.</p>	
29.		<p>PUBLIC QUESTION TIME To answer any public questions</p> <p>A period of 30 minutes will be allowed for members of the public to ask questions submitted under notice.</p> <p>The Council welcomes questions from members of the public about the work of the Executive.</p> <p>Subject to meeting certain timescales, questions can relate to general issues concerned with the work of the Council or an item which is on the Agenda for this meeting. For full details of the procedure for submitting questions please contact the Democratic Services Section on the numbers given below or go to www.wokingham.gov.uk/publicquestions</p>	
29.1	Arborfield	<p>Jan Heard has asked the Executive Member for Planning and Local Plan the following question:</p>	

Question

A recent discussion with officials from the University of Reading made clear that the university is still very much focusing on the plan to build 4,500 houses at Hall Farm. At what point will Wokingham Borough Council make clear to the university that this plan is unacceptable to the Council?

29.2 None Specific

Paul Stevens has asked the Leader of the Council the following question:

Question

Can the Executive Leader confirm the determination of where the houses in the Local Plan Update (LPU) are to go is a political decision - not an officer decision and that the officers are doing what the politicians want them to do?

29.3 None Specific

Robin Cops has asked the Leader of the Council the following question:

Question

The Arc is being funded by donations collected by the charity Arts4Wokingham as a gift to Wokingham Borough. The charity exists to advance arts and culture for the public benefit. Do you anticipate that the Council will positively support the installation of more public art in the future across the borough and particularly amongst the new housing developments, which will enable more people to have access to free art on their doorstep?

29.4 None Specific

Charlotte Haitham Taylor has asked the Leader of the Council the following question:

Question

The landmark sculpture entitled, The Arc will capture and depict stories from the current community of Wokingham borough and share them with the future people of Wokingham borough and beyond. It is a custom work that will embed the essence of Wokingham through words and audible stories. Do you think that there is anything that Wokingham Borough Council can do, in partnership with Arts4Wokingham, who are commissioning this work, to continue to engage the public locally, and specifically to understand the impact of The Arc on communities within the borough?

30.

MEMBER QUESTION TIME

To answer any member questions.

A period of 20 minutes will be allowed for Members to ask questions submitted under Notice.

Any questions not dealt with within the allotted time will be dealt with in a written reply.

30.1 None Specific

Gary Cowan has asked the Executive Member for Planning and Local Plan the following question:

Question

A question about the Councils Planning Enforcement Service was asked some years ago and as a direct result of the question Cllr John Kaiser authorised an INDEPENDENT investigation into Planning enforcement.

This was carried out by John Silvester Associates and their 43 page report, dated 4th September 2013 and can be found [here](#).

As part of the consultation the Council carried out a public consultation and the comments from Officers, Public, Ward Members, and Parish Councillors are included in a separate sheet which is available upon request from Democratic Services. It included a lengthy comment from the Leader of the Council.

The outcome was that Enforcement became a much improved service thanks to Cllr. John Kaiser's initiative.

My question is would the Planning Department, if subjected to a similar independent public inquiry, offer a better service to our residents?

30.2

Laura Blumenthal has asked the Executive Member for Climate Emergency and Resident Services the following question:

Question

How will you measure the success of White Ribbon accreditation?

Matters for Consideration

31.	None Specific	PUBLIC SPACES PROTECTION ORDER	35 - 48
32.	None Specific	VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN AND GIRLS, WOKINGHAM RESPONSE TO NATIONAL STRATEGY AND STATEMENT OF EXPECTATIONS (NSE)	49 - 54
33.	None Specific	HEALTH AND SAFETY ANNUAL REPORT 21-22	55 - 60

34.	None Specific	LOCAL BUS SERVICES	61 - 68
35.	None Specific	PROPOSAL TO CHANGE THE NUMBER OF SUPPLIED BLUE REFUSE BAGS TO PROPERTIES IN THE BOROUGH FROM FEBRUARY 2023	69 - 76
36.	None Specific	CEASING THE SUPPLY OF SINGLE USE PLASTIC FOOD CADDY LINERS	77 - 80
37.	Wescott	TWYFORD NEIGHBOURHOOD DEVELOPMENT PLAN - REGULATION 16 CONSULTATION AND FUTURE EXAMINATION	81 - 270
38.	Finchampstead North; Finchampstead South; Wokingham Without	FINCHAMPSTEAD NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN - REGULATION 16 CONSULTATION AND FUTURE EXAMINATION	271 - 284
39.	None Specific	OFF STREET CAR PARK CHARGES	285 - 290
40.	Wescott	CARNIVAL HUB PUBLIC REALM ART INSTALLATION	291 - 296
41.	None Specific	RISK MANAGEMENT POLICY AND GUIDANCE	297 - 330
42.	None Specific	ENERGY CONTRACT PROCUREMENT Report to follow.	
43.	None Specific	SPECIAL EDUCATION NEEDS AND DISABILITY SUFFICIENCY AND SAFETY VALVE PROGRAMMES	331 - 356
44.	None Specific	COMMISSIONED SERVICES FOR THE HEALTH AND WELLBEING OF CARERS	357 - 382
45.	None Specific	REPROCUREMENT OF BERKSHIRE COMMUNITY EQUIPMENT SERVICE	383 - 414

46. **EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC**
The Executive may exclude the press and public in order to discuss the Part 2 sheets of Agenda Item 34, 42, 44 and 45 above and to do so it must pass a resolution in the following terms:-

That under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act (as amended).

A decision sheet will be available for inspection at the Council's offices (in Democratic Services and the General Office) and on the web site no later than two working days after the meeting.

CONTACT OFFICER

Priya Patel	Head of Democratic and Electoral Services
Tel	0118 974 6051
Email	priya.patel@wokingham.gov.uk
Postal Address	Civic Offices, Shute End, Wokingham, RG40 1BN

This page is intentionally left blank

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF
THE EXECUTIVE
HELD ON 28 JULY 2022 FROM 7.00 PM TO 8.10 PM**

Committee Members Present

Councillors: Clive Jones (Chairman), Stephen Conway (Vice-Chairman), Rachel Bishop-Firth, Lindsay Ferris, Paul Fishwick, David Hare, Ian Shenton and Imogen Shepherd-DuBey

Committee Members Present Online

Prue Bray

Other Councillors Present

Norman Jorgensen

Pauline Jorgensen

Caroline Smith

12. APOLOGIES

An apology for absence was received from Councillor Sarah Kerr.

Councillor Prue Bray was unable to be present in person at the meeting but attended remotely. In accordance with the legislation Councillor Bray took part in discussions but did not take part in voting during the meeting.

13. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The Minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 30 June 2022 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

14. DECLARATION OF INTEREST

Councillors Prue Bray, Stephen Conway, David Hare and Clive Jones declared a personal interest in Agenda Item 19 Council Owned Companies Update by virtue of the fact that they were non-Executive Directors of Council owned companies. These Councillors remained in the room and voted on the item.

Councillor Stephen Conway declared a personal and prejudicial interest in Agenda item 22 Relocation of Twyford Library To The Old Polehampton Boys School Site by virtue of the fact that he was the Council's representative on the Polehampton Charity. Councillor Conway left the room and did not take part in any discussion or vote on this item.

Councillor David Hare declared a personal and prejudicial interest in Agenda Item 23 New Dementia Care Home In The Toutley East Development Construction Consultation And Contract by virtue of the fact that he was a non-Executive Director of Optalis Limited. Councillor Hare left the room and did not take part in any discussions or vote on this item.

15. STATEMENT FROM THE LEADER

Good evening everyone and welcome to the Executive meeting of 28 July 2022. I am very pleased that the new administration has decided that we will be supporting families in receipt of free school meals during the school holidays up to and including May of 2023. There are a few teething problems, we are moving with a provider called Charris and I contacted them last week and they have reacted very quickly to sort out the issues.

The theme as most people will know by now of this administration is to promote partnership working wherever possible across the Council and with outside bodies. I've asked the Deputy Leader of the Council to look into developing partnerships across the Borough and he will give us a short update of his plans at either the next Executive meeting or the next full Council.

16. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

In accordance with the agreed procedure the Chairman invited members of the public to submit questions to the appropriate Members.

16.1 Colin Watts asked the Leader of the Council the following question:

Question

At the end of April visit to the University of Reading campus to present the SOLVE group alternatives to housing at Hall Farm, you were clear in your objections to the building of 4,500 houses at Hall Farm. Can you confirm that this remains your position and that the next version of the Local Plan Update will not include any significant development at Hall Farm?

Answer

My colleague Cllr Lindsay Ferris responded to a similar question at the 30 June meeting of Executive.

The last administration approved the strategy put forward in the Local Plan Update Revised Growth Strategy Consultation 2021 which proposed 4,500 houses at Hall Farm.

My administration will be working with Officers to look carefully at options for how we can best plan for our housing and development needs going forward in ways that ensure that our Local Plan will pass as 'sound' at public examination.

Clearly, I cannot pre-determine this process, however I can assure you that we are going into this process open minded, as we must, and that we will carefully consider all the views that have been expressed by residents alongside those of stakeholders and importantly, the technical evidence that must guide us to the best and most sustainable locations for new development to be located.

Since the election we have written to the Secretary of State highlighting our concerns about how the high housing numbers currently expected of Wokingham Borough are calculated and enforced. We have engaged our local MPs and have received their strong support to our efforts.

Experience both here and elsewhere across the country shows that we must put a new local plan in place which delivers on our development needs. No doubt what it eventually includes will not suit everybody, but not having an effective plan would mean less control over where development happens. Hall Farm cannot be dismissed as a possibility without good reason and at this stage our officers are still gathering evidence upon the best options and solutions available.

Supplementary question

I think it is clear to the residents around the whole farm site that huge, and I mean huge amounts of work are going on by the university and the planning department, and our great concern is this becomes a fait accompli. Even this week we got a drone flying over

for a week and a half over the site, constantly having people come from the university and the conversation that we had with the university just the other week, it is totally clear that whatever the university says about engaging with the local community, they are lying about the 4,500, it is there and it will stay there from the university's mind. So my question is that the concern about it being a fait accompli because of all the work that both the Council's planning department and the university are engaged in.

Supplementary answer

All I can say is that I cannot pre-determine the process. So, thank you very much.

16.2 Paul Stevens asked the Executive Member for Planning and Local Plan the following question:

Question

The Local Plan Update has to set out housing plans for Wokingham up to 2038. The Hall Farm proposed plan goes way beyond that date, with only half of the 4,500 homes being completed by 2038. Can you confirm that the next version of the LPU will only cover the period up to 2038 and will not try to create a plan beyond that date?

Answer

My colleague Cllr Jones has already outlined in his answer to an earlier question that the new administration will be working closely with officers to look at all options for how we best plan for and manage the development we need going forward in ways that ensure our Local Plan is found to be 'sound' at public examination.

As Cllr Jones explained, we cannot pre-determine this process.

The National Planning Policy Framework (the NPPF) requires local planning authorities to put plans in place which provide for new housing supply for at least 15 years from its date of intended adoption, so this we must do.

In addition, where a strategic allocation of scale is proposed, Government expects the Council to look at that allocation on a comprehensive basis and make clear within the Local Plan what is proposed in the longer term, to ensure the most sustainable development solution is planned for that site over time, rather than in a piecemeal fashion.

The approach would be the same for Hall Farm or any other major allocation of similar scale proposed by the Plan.

Cllr Jones has also outlined our lobbying of government and our concerns regarding how housing needs are calculated. We will be continuing to lobby Government to change the methodology in parallel to our work on the Local Plan, whilst being clear in our aim to work towards having a new Local Plan which can be found to be 'sound' at examination.

Supplementary question

The number of houses proposed are at least in part predicated upon the developers need to build 4,500 houses to pay for the level of infrastructure required to make the site viable. Can you clarify precisely how many new houses are required for Wokingham to have a viable plan that would meet the requirements set by the current national government housing targets?

Supplementary answer

We have at the moment a figure of 781 houses per annum, and as a Local Plan we have to have 15 years of housing supply from the start of the Local Plan.

16.3 Tony Johnson asked the Executive Member for Health & Wellbeing and Adult Services the following question:

Question

Please could the Executive Member for Health and Wellbeing and Adult Services comment on the Equalities Impact Assessment for WBC's proposed 70 bed dementia care home which was approved by WBC's Planning Committee under Application [211777](#) on 13th July?

Answer

Adult Services has worked in partnership with Optalis Ltd technical advisors and the council's property team in the development of our outline planning application. The application ensures that the building design meets the appropriate standards and utilise best practice from across the sector.

As is required, a Stage 1 Equalities Impact Assessment was completed by Wokingham Borough Council in the early stage of the project and the assessment did not identify an adverse impact on the protected characteristic under the Equalities Act.

However, the Council's Adult Services has always been committed to making certain that this site is appropriate and has planned due diligence ahead of a reserved matters planning application. This will include commissioning an independent external care provider to complete an assessment of the site to ensure its ability to deliver high quality care to vulnerable people.

It is worth noting that the proposed dementia care home at Toutley East will provide us with the capacity it needs to meet the demand and complexity of an ageing population. We estimate that the number of older people expected to require residential and nursing care provision, funded by the council, will rise by at least 17% by 2025.

Forthcoming reforms to Adult Social Care will place increasing pressure on the care sector from October 2023. Central government's ambition to reform the sector has not, unfortunately, been matched by the funding required to meet this enormous challenge. These reforms only increase the need to deliver the right care, at the right time and at the right price.

Supplementary question

Thank you for providing an answer on behalf of the Council, especially for talking about the due diligence at the reserved matters stage where you plan to have somebody else to come in and do a report. Although, there are many other impact assessments made as part of the planning application, the equalities impact assessment doesn't appear to have been included within the document pack, which given Justice Lewis' 2018 ruling to Bath and North East Somerset Council that the Public Sector Equality Duty applies at the Outline Planning stage and not just at the Reserved Matters is somewhat odd. If it had been published then Members of the Planning Committee might have been able to take a properly informed judgement. However, as Lord Chief Justice Hewart pointed out in 1924, justice must not only be done, it must be seen to be done. So please can you explain why Wokingham Borough Council has not shown itself to be compliant with the case law and thus may have opened itself up for judicial review?

Supplementary answer

I am not sure and will send you a written report. I am quite honest, I am not a planner.

17. MEMBER QUESTION TIME

In accordance with the agreed procedure the Chairman invited Members to submit questions to the appropriate Members

17.1 Charles Margetts asked the Executive Member for Children's Services the following question:

Question

A key issue for residents in my ward is provision of a sixth form in the south of the Borough. In early 2022, WBC announced the provision of a 6th form, additional Year 7 places, and additional SEND places at Bohunt School. Can the Executive Member update me on progress including when this provision will open?

Answer

Charles is not here and this is essentially the same question that he asked me at the Council meeting last week. But I know that maybe people watching would like to know what the answer is. So I can confirm that the plan is still that the sixth form at Bohunt will open in September 2023, and Charles and his fellow ward Councillors have already been sent that information in the update that I promised them at last week's Council meeting.

17.2 Gary Cowan asked the Executive Member for Health & Wellbeing and Adult Services the following question which was answered by the Executive Member for Planning and the Local Plan:

Question

At the Planning Committee I voted against Toutley East as putting people who have no say in their placement next to noisy polluting motorways is quite wrong. Dementia patients or their relatives have no say where they live if they are occupants of a Council run care home.

The business case makes no reference to other Council owned land away from motorways such as Farley Hill's closed Primary School.

The business case recommends the delivery model should be a Joint Venture with a development partner but fails to consider the Councils own Housing Companies.

Would a better business case be the location of the care home at the closed Farley Hill School site and use the Councils own Housing Companies to build even more desperately needed affordable houses at Toutley East.

Answer

We were pleased that the Planning Committee accepted that this is a suitable location for a care home. Mitigation against road noise will of course need to be taken into account in the design of the building and I am confident that the Council can deliver a high-quality care home on this site to the standards that our residents both expect and deserve.

With regards to the decision-making process for dementia patients, the Mental Capacity Act 2005 protects vulnerable people over the age of 16 around decision-making. Adult Social Care will support residents to make their own decisions if they can; we want to uphold their rights while living in care homes.

If a person is assessed to lack capacity to consent to living in a care home, the Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards mandate a set of assessments that are undertaken by two assessors independent of those commissioning the placement, to consider what is in the persons Best Interest and the less restrictive option.

In making this Best Interests decision the assessor is required to consult with a variety of people including the adult concerned (who will still have views, wishes and feelings even if lacking capacity) and 'relevant others' (including friends/family/advocates).

With respect to your subsequent points, it is true that the Council owns other land and that other such sites might also be suitable for new care home provision. However, having established that the Toutley East site is acceptable under planning, this site is the quickest route to deliver the facility and thus start addressing the increasing revenue spend pressures that the Council is facing from having to fund placements in private care homes. Failure to proceed on this site will lead to a delay in the delivery programme of approximately 18-24 months; whilst an alternative site is identified, survey work undertaken, designs worked up and planning secured. A two-year delay in delivery will only act to exacerbate financial pressures on Adult Social Care, especially in light of the impending Social Care reforms.

In terms of the residential delivery, please note that the business case for the residential delivery is not being presented in the Executive report. Rather the Executive is being asked to note the delivery options. As is set out in the report, the full business case will be prepared and reported back to Executive and potentially full Council in due course.

Supplementary question

Thank you for that answer. In yesterday's Daily Mail headline is new evidence that in a landmark report by a committee of government advisors stating that air pollution, not just noise, contributes to the decline in mental ability and vascular dementia, and I believe the Council should not disregard the committee of government advisors who will be much more informed than our Borough Council Council Officers. With the availability now of a government landmark report on air pollution as a cause of dementia, it is now for the Executive to decide if Toutley is still a good option or should they look elsewhere for a more suitable site.

I raised the suitability of Toutley and other sites with planning Officers but they simply stated that they were not material considerations. That view was supported by the Council's Legal department. I would point out that planning regulations clause nine of schedule 12a of the Town Country Planning Act of 1992 on exempt information states, and I quote: "Information is not exempt information if it relates to proposed development for which the local planning authority may grant itself planning permission. To withhold information from a Member is in breach of the Act and it is as reprehensible as withholding information from the public about the expenditure of the public monies on projects." Where the Borough Council is effectively the judge and jury as is the case with Toutley East. An independent enquiry into the role of the planning department would not go amiss here either, as I am sure our residents would appreciate it and it would give greater public confidence in that department.

So, really if you see the Daily Mail headline yesterday which is that it would suggest that air pollution is a very serious issue and to take a decision based on the limited information you've got now, I think it would be inappropriate.

Supplementary answer

Thank you Gary, yes I did see reference to that issue and report of the committee that was in the papers yesterday, and I think we will need to take due reference to that from that. On the other point that you raised, can I suggest that obviously you were, felt uncomfortable as to what happened on this issue, that you feel so much, there is a complaints process through Andrew Moulton, to do that. And I would also recommend that you write to me with some of your concerns so that I can look at them as well.

17.3 Jim Frewin asked the Executive Member for Health & Wellbeing and Adult Services the following question:

Question

This question relates to item 21 Toutley master plan.

In answer to the full Council 21 July question (34.2) it was clear that vulnerable residents will be moved from Suffolk Lodge to Toutley as part of this project. Please provide risk assessment and mitigation details on how this move would impact vulnerable residents especially how the changes in noise levels and air quality (A329M proximity) impacts.

Answer

Suffolk Lodge currently provides less than 30% of the residential care the Council commissions. Although, it has a Care Quality Commission rating of "Good", it cannot meet the needs of all the older individuals the Council has to provide residential and nursing care for.

The proposed Dementia Care Home at Toutley would provide local residents with the care and support needed to meet an aging population. It will promote a better quality of life and improved welfare for residents through more personalised care and support.

We are committed to ensuring the scheme reflects best practice in dementia design and the design of the new home is inspired by recent research and learning from the pandemic to create a safe, welcoming place, that promotes the wellbeing and good health of people with dementia.

We intend to work closely with Optalis Ltd to ensure a safe and smooth transition for residents to the new care home and indeed we have made provision of £500K in the Medium Term Financial Plan for this. Individuals have different needs and this funding will ensure any transition works for all.

The Mental Capacity Act 2005 protects vulnerable people over the age of 16 around decision-making. Adult Social Care will support residents at Suffolk Lodge to make their own decisions if they can, in order to uphold their rights while living in care homes.

If a person is assessed to lack capacity to consent to living in a care home, the Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards mandate a set of assessments that are undertaken by two assessors independent of those commissioning the placement, to consider what is in the persons Best Interest and the less restrictive option.

In making this Best Interests decision the assessor is required to consult with a variety of people including the adult concerned (who will still have views, wishes and feelings even if lacking capacity) and 'relevant others' (including friends/family/advocates). The

assessment will consider the benefits and burdens of a particular placement against other available options to determine what is in the individuals' best interests.

Supplementary question

Thank you David, you didn't actually answer the question about air quality and noise but I joined the partnership because I believed we would build on the good things started by the previous administration and that we would challenge the things we believed to be not so good. In my opinion this Toutley plan is not such a good idea, it appears to be done for speed to provide a number of places and it is not taking into account the health and wellbeing of the residents being placed there. Given the fact that the public question tonight and now two of the Members questions highlighted a number of concerns with this Toutley plan, my supplementary question is this: Will this Executive defer the decision on Toutley until clarification is made on the points raised tonight and points raised outside?

Supplementary answer

I don't think we can defer a decision, but certainly as the process goes along we will make sure that the air pollution and noise are kept to an absolutely minimum and within all legal standards of this country and we would do that anyway, and that is the most important thing. I do not want the people who I am serving as Executive Member to be any worse off at this new chapter development at Suffock Lodge and I am sure that is why you said this as well. And we will endeavour to make sure that this is as fair as possible and yes, the noise is kept down low below standards and also air pollution.

18. CAPITAL PROGRAMME REVIEW

The Executive considered a report relating to the Capital Programme review. The review had identified savings which would help the budget gap identified in the MTFP. Further work would be ongoing as part of the capital monitoring throughout the year and the budget setting process for 2023/24 to look at options to close the budget gap.

The Executive Member for Finance Councillor Imogen Shepherd-DuBey stated that it had become apparent that the Council had been increasing its level of borrowing under the previous administration. This level of borrowing was putting pressure on the revenue budgets and interest repayments on these loans.

Councillor Imogen Shepherd-DuBey informed that the report highlighted areas of improvement and efficiencies to help to bridge the gap identified in the MTFP. Some items had been moved to later years and some had been removed altogether.

Councillor Imogen Shepherd-DuBey stated that the report also sought approval to fund the 'Active Travel and Bus Priority' from savings identified from the 'Managing Congestion and Pollution' project.

The Executive Member for Active Travel, Transport and Highways Councillor Paul Fishwick emphasized that the £4m saving identified would be re-invested in Active Travel and Bus Priority, this was aligned with the Local Cycling and Walking Strategy and would support the revision of the Bus Service Improvement Plan for 2022, following discussions and feedback from the Department for Transport.

RESOLVED That:

- 1) The capital programme review carried out by directors and lead members be noted and approved, which includes;

- Confirmation for £136m of capital projects to continue as planned.
 - Savings of £12.5m achieved through the removal of projects or reductions in budget. Taking into account lost capital receipts, the net saving is £9.3m. Details set out in Appendix A.
 - Re-profiling capital budgets of £15.7m from 2022/23 into future years. Details set out in Appendix B.
- 2) The £4m saving identified from 'Managing Congestion & Pollution', to be reinvested in 'Active Travel and Bus Priority' over two years (£2m in 2023/24 and £2m in 2024/25) and considered as part of the medium term financial plan for 2023/24 be approved;
- 3) The figures in recommendation one are in addition to the financial information presented in the Capital Monitoring 2022/23 - Quarter 1 Executive report be noted.

19. REVENUE MONITORING 2022-23 Q1

The Executive considered a report relating to the revenue monitoring 2022-23 Q1 which outlined the current forecast outturn positions for 2022/23 for the Council's net revenue expenditure, its General Fund Balance (GFB), the Housing Revenue Account (HRA), and the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG).

Councillor Imogen Shepherd-DuBey informed that the report showed a predicted shortfall of £2.2m in the Revenue Budget for this year. She recognised that when this Budget was set, no one could have predicted the war on Ukraine, the fuel crisis and the inflation raises. However, there had been an over ambitious target, which had been set in order to deliver a balanced Budget.

Councillor Imogen Shepherd-DuBey stated that some of the challenges identified included a £558k overspend in the Home to School Transport Budget. This was due to a large number of SEND children needing transport, and a large number of children arriving from Hong Kong and Ukraine for whom transport was necessary as they were being sent to various locations in the Borough where the available school places were.

Councillor Imogen Shepherd-DuBey informed that a £780k shortfall in car parking income was expected. This was because an over ambitious target had been set. Also, since the covid pandemic, people's driving habits had changed and people were using their cars less.

It was explained by the Executive Member for Finance that another challenge was the increase in inflation which meant that goods were costing more to buy. For example, there was a shortfall of £250k in the Budget to buy the blue bags for waste collection due to an increase in the price of plastic.

Councillor Shepherd Du-Bey stated that it was necessary to either increase the income or find savings in order to bridge the shortfall identified in the Budget. Officers were undertaking a lot of work to find more efficiencies.

The Deputy Leader of the Council and Executive Member for Housing Councillor Stephen Conway wished to emphasise that a lot of work was being undertaken to address the projected challenges identified.

RESOLVED that the overall forecast of the current position of the General Fund revenue budget, Housing Revenue Account (HRA) and Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) illustrated in the Executive Summary and appendices attached to the report be noted.

20. CAPITAL MONITORING 2022/23 - QUARTER 1

The Executive considered the capital monitoring 2022/23 – Quarter 1 report which outlined the progress of the Council in delivering its capital programme for the financial year 2022/23.

Councillor Shepherd-DuBey informed that the report highlighted a challenge at the Winnersh Triangle Parkway, where an unexpected water mains was found during the building process. This project now had a £1.3m of unallocated cost attached to it.

Councillor Shepherd-DuBey pointed out that the report sought approval of a capital budget supplementary estimate of £5.5, for the building of a SEND school in the Borough. Funding for the SEND school was coming from central government, and the building of this school would help the Council to significantly reduce the amount of money spent on sending children to specialist places outside of the Borough.

Councillor Paul Fishwick informed that the issue with the Thames Water Main had been identified in 2021. However, no supplementary estimate had been established at the time to remedy the shortfall.

RESOLVED That:

- 1) The position of the capital programme at the end of Quarter 1 (to 30 June 2022) as summarised in the report and set out in detail in Appendix A to the report be noted;
- 2) The proposed carry forwards in the capital programme as set out in Appendix B be approved and noted; and
- 3) A capital budget supplementary estimate of £5,576,900 for SEND sufficiency plan to help meet the actions identified under the High Needs Block management plan. This budget will be funded through a budget virement from reallocating existing SEND project budgets (£425,000) and allocation of the Higher Needs Provision Capital Allocations (HNPCA) Grant (£5,151,900) be approved. Further information is set out in the report.

21. COUNCIL OWNED COMPANIES UPDATE

(Councillors Prue Bray, Stephen Conway, David Hare and Clive Jones declared a personal interest in this item.)

The Executive considered the Council owned companies update. The report outlined changes to the boards of the Council owned companies.

The Leader of the Council Councillor Clive Jones, Leader of the Council thanked the Councillors who were retiring from their positions in Council owned companies for their contributions during their tenure.

Councillor Clive Jones stated that the new non-Executive Directors were looking forward to working with the Council Owned Companies to deliver the necessary infrastructure in the Borough.

The Executive Member for Health and Wellbeing and Adult Services Councillor Dave Hare reported that he had had the first meeting with Optalis, this had been positive and new HR person had been introduced to the Board. He was hopeful that things would move forward in a positive way.

The Executive Member for Children's Services Councillor Prue Bray informed that she had attended the first meeting with Berry Brook Homes and she too felt that this had been a positive meeting.

RESOLVED That the following changes to the non-executive directors of the Council owned companies as follows be noted:

- 1) WBC (Holdings) Limited – Retirement of Cllrs John Kaiser, Stuart Munro and Wayne Smith and appointment of Cllrs Clive Jones (Chairman), Stephen Conway, Prue Bray. Re-appointment of Graham Ebers;
- 2) Wokingham Housing Limited and Berry Brook Homes Limited – Retirement of Cllr John Kaiser and appointment of Cllr Prue Bray;
- 3) Loddon Homes Limited – Retirement of Cllrs Shahid Younis and Norman Jorgensen and appointment of Cllrs Clive Jones (Chairman) and Stephen Conway; and
- 4) Optalis Limited – Retirement of Cllr Charles Margetts and appointment of Cllr David Hare

22. IMPLEMENTING THE LEISURE STRATEGY

The Executive considered a report which gave details of a proposal to enhance sports and football facilities, addressing the shortfall in 3G pitches within the community.

The Executive Member for Environment, Sport and Leisure Councillor Ian Shenton stated that the report sought approval to progress a 3G pitch proposal in Lower Earley and to approve the release of S106 funds to finance improvements to physical activity facilities at the Forest School.

Councillor Ian Shenton explained that problems had been identified with proposals for a 3G pitch at Laurel Park, however there remained a need for additional football facilities in the Borough, both for training and for weekend fixtures. An analysis had been carried out which had identified the Maiden Erlegh site as the most suitable site.

Councillor Ian Shenton informed that extensive public consultation would be carried out prior to the planning application submission. Following the planning application, a bid for funding from the Football Foundation would be submitted. Installation was expected to happen during the 2023 summer holiday, with the facility opening in September 2023, whereafter income would exceed ongoing costs.

Councillor Ian Shenton explained that approval was also being sought for improvements to the swimming pool and sports facilities at the Forest School, including refurbishment of the gym and swimming pool floor. Once the improvements were completed, the facilities would be available for the community to use. The swimming pool would provide for 'modest swimming requirements', which would be a unique feature within the Borough's swimming pool facilities.

Councillor Dave Hare wished to emphasise that the consultation should be thorough and that football clubs should be consulted too, he believed that the facility should be built to meet the needs of the community.

Councillor Ian Shenton confirmed that the consultation would be thorough, the final details were being finalised with comms.

Councillor Clive Jones agreed with the previous comments about the consultation and added that a workshop with Earley Town Council would also take place.

In response to a question Councillor Ian Shenton confirmed that the 3G project was dependent on the funding from the Football Foundation being obtained, which put some pressure on the timescales.

RESOLVED That:

- 1) Subject to planning, Football Foundation funding and endorsement by formal public consultation prior to planning application, the outcome of the option appraisal analysis, Maiden Erlegh School, is progressed as the proposed 3G pitch site; and
- 2) Funds for use of S106 finance for physical activity enhancements at Forest School be approved and released.

23. TOUTLEY EAST DEVELOPMENT: STRATEGIC MASTERPLAN AND RETURN ON INVESTMENT

The Executive considered a report which contained an update on the Toutley East Development.

The Executive Member for Equalities, Inclusion and Fighting Poverty Councillor Rachel Bishop-Firth spoke on behalf of the Emmbrook Ward Members and stated that there was consensus that more affordable housing and care home beds were needed in the Borough. However, there were concerns about this particular site, and objections had already been raised on this issue, and work would be undertaken to address these concerns at the reserved matters stage.

Councillor Stephen Conway acknowledged the concerns raised by local ward Members. He added that this plan had been approved by the Planning Committee, however this was an outline planning permission and as such there was scope to address some of the concerns previously raised.

Councillor Stephen Conway emphasized the fact that the realisation of the plan was dependent upon the building of housing to pay for the project. It was pleasing to note that the plan included 35% of affordable housing.

Councillor David Hare stated that a new care home was desperately needed in the Borough. He drew attention to the fact that the facility would be of high quality and be one of the best in the southeast, if not in the country. He added that although Suffolk Lodge was a much loved facility, but it did not serve the purposes of the residents.

The Executive Member for Planning and Local Plan Councillor Lindsay Ferris supported the plan. He proposed to add a recommendation to take on board the points raised by

Councillors Gary Cowan and Jim Frewin with regard to noise and pollution. This additional recommendation was agreed by the Executive.

RESOLVED That:

- 1) This update on the delivery of the Toutley East development be noted;
- 2) The proposed strategic masterplan and land uses for the site, including a new 68-bed dementia care home and up to 130 residential units (on 13th July 2022 Planning Committee resolved to grant outline planning consent for the strategic masterplan) be noted;
- 3) The financial business case (Return on Investment) for the Toutley East development, including how the proposed land uses financially support each other and the net revenue benefit of £337,000 per annum rising to £700,000 per annum over an approximate 4 year time period be noted;
- 4) The delivery options for the residential development identified at this stage, which will be subject to a future business case being approved by Executive and Council be noted;
- 5) Authority to the Director of Assets and Resources, in consultation with the Executive Member for Finance, the Executive Member for Business and Economic Development and the Executive Member for Health, Wellbeing and Adult Services, be delegated to deliver the strategic masterplan in line with the approved financial business case; and
- 6) Officers provide a report on the impact of poor air quality and noise on dementia as reported in the national press.

24. RELOCATION OF TWYFORD LIBRARY TO THE OLD POLEHAMPTON BOYS SCHOOL SITE

(Councillor Stephen Conway declared a personal and prejudicial interest on this item, he left the room and did not take part in the discussions or vote.)

The Executive considered a report containing an update on the proposal to relocate Twyford library.

Councillor Clive Jones explained that there had been a campaign for a permanent library in Twyford for around 20 years, with a huge amount of public support. He thanked the Polehampton Charity for engaging with Council for so long. He also wished to pay tribute to the late Dave Turner, who was a trustee of the Polehampton Charity and worked very hard to transfer the library to the old Polehampton Boys School historical site.

Councillor Clive Jones explained that historical buildings played a vital role in the community and helped to connect people with their heritage. The old Polehampton Boys School site would provide a permanent home for the library and was a good example to partnership working between the Council and Polehampton Charity.

Councillor Lindsay Ferris pointed out that this was a facility within the northern area of the Borough, which another positive aspect of the project. This facility would be used by residents of not only Twyford, but also Hurst, Charvil and other villages around. He

extended his gratitude to the Polehampton Charity and the late Dave Turner in helping to achieve this project.

Councillor Prue Bray confirmed that the campaign to move the Twyford library had been ongoing for over 20 years. She too wished to thank the Polehampton Charity for their patience for the time it had taken to agree to the relocation of the library. She informed that there was also a vision for a Twyford Hub in the site, this was the stage 1 of the project.

Councillor Prue Bray extended her gratitude to Councillors Stephen Conway and Lindsay Ferris, and Dee Tomlin who had been a councillor for many years for Twyford and had also campaigned for the relocation of the library.

Councillor Lindsay Ferris explained that there would be an opportunity to raise revenue from the current library site, which could then be used to fund the new library.

RESOLVED That:

- 1) The relocation of Twyford library be proceeded;
- 2) The allocation of £330,000 of S106 funds to the project be agreed; and
- 3) The lease agreements for the new library site (as summarised in the report), and delegates authority to the Director of Place and Growth, in consultation with the Executive Member for Climate Change & Resident Services and the Executive Member for Business & Economic Development, to complete the lease be approved.

25. NEW DEMENTIA CARE HOME IN THE TOUTLEY EAST DEVELOPMENT CONSTRUCTION CONSULTANT AND CONTRACT

(Councillor David Hare declared a personal and prejudicial interest in this item, he left the room and did not take part in the discussions or vote.)

The Executive considered a report which outlined details of proposal for a new dementia care home and residential development of up to 130 residential units and supporting infrastructure.

Councillor Clive Jones explained that the report sought the approval of the procurement process for the new dementia care home in Toutley. Optalis would continue to be the provider, however a new contract with Optalis was required as the new home would be larger than Suffolk Lodge. The current financial modelling predicted that the new care home would deliver around £377k per annum worth of financial efficiencies by 2025. The reforms within Adult Social Care however, were likely to increase the potential saving from this scheme. It was therefore envisaged that that care home would support the delivery of additional cost avoidance in the region of £700k per year.

Councillor Clive Jones informed that the Council was starting to look at potential sites for a second care home.

Councillor Imogen Shepherd-DuBey stated that most of the people living care homes in Wokingham were in private care homes. She informed that under the new Adult Social Care reforms, the Council would be required to start assessing those people for their care needs and subsequently be expected to start covering the care costs when they reached the threshold of £86k. So, in order to manage these costs, care places would have to be

offered in Council run care homes. Having Council run care homes would be the only way to manage the cost of care going forward, therefore she supported this proposal.

RESOLVED That:

- 1) The proposal to transfer service provision from existing care services at Suffolk Lodge to the new dementia care home at Toutley East, and delegates authority to the Director of Adult Social Care and the Director of Resources and Assets, jointly, in consultation with the Executive Members for Health, Wellbeing and Adult Services and the Executive Member for Finance, to make any changes necessary to the contract between Wokingham Borough Council and Optalis Ltd to give effect to this change in service, up to a value of £2m per annum be noted;
- 2) Authority jointly to the Director of Adult Services and the Director of Resources and Assets to increase the value of the care contract in place with Wokingham Borough Council's Local Authority Traded Company (Optalis Limited), by way of contract variation, up to the value of circa £4m, subject to inflationary increases, to deliver the staffing requirements for the care home, be delegated, that in each case:
 - a) the budget for the costs of the services has already been approved as part of the agreed Council Budget;
 - b) the business case has been approved by both Directors;
 - c) the Executive Member with responsibility for Adult Services and the Executive Member with responsibility for Finance have been consulted.
- 3) The procurement strategy set out in the Procurement Business case for the construction consultants and contractor required for the development of the new dementia care home and associated works; and delegates authority to the Director of Resources and Assets, in consultation with the Executive Member for Finance, to implement and/or adapt this strategy within the approved budget be approved.

26. EDUCATION MANAGEMENT SYSTEM PROCUREMENT

The Executive considered Education Management System Procurement report. The report sought approval to extend the contract for the Capita One Education Management System until March 2026 and complete a procurement process to enable any new system to be implemented by April 2026.

Councillor Prue Bray explained that Children's Services the management system which was used by Children's Services was coming to the end of its contract. The report sought approval to extend this contract in order to enable the service to have more time to explore the best options going forward.

RESOLVED That:

- 1) The extension of the contract for Capita One for another two years from 1st April 2024 to 31st March 2026 be approved; and
- 2) The procurement business case for the Education Management System be approved.

This page is intentionally left blank

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF
THE EXECUTIVE
HELD ON 31 MARCH 2022 FROM 7.00 PM TO 7.40 PM**

Committee Members Present

Councillors: John Halsall (Chairman), John Kaiser, Parry Batth, Graham Howe, Stuart Munro, Gregor Murray, Wayne Smith and Bill Soane

Other Councillors In Attendance

Pauline Jorgensen, Highways and Transport
Imogen Shepherd-DuBey

128. APOLOGIES

An apology for absence was submitted from Councillor Charles Margetts.

Councillor Pauline Jorgensen was unable to attend the meeting in person but attended virtually.

129. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS

The Minutes of the meeting of the Executive held on 17 February 2022 and the Extraordinary Executive held on 7 March 2022 were confirmed as correct records and signed by the Leader of Council.

130. DECLARATION OF INTEREST

Councillor John Halsall declared a personal interest in Agenda Item 129, Temporary Closure Remenham Footpath No 4 Henley Festival by virtue of the fact that he was a resident of Remenham and Chairman of the local Parish Council. Councillor Halsall did not act as Chairman of the meeting for this item but remained in the meeting for the debate and vote.

131. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

In accordance with the agreed procedure the Chairman invited members of the public to submit questions to the appropriate Members.

131.1 Peter Must asked the Executive Member for Highways and Transport the following question:

Question

Following work on a draft Borough-wide Parking Management Action Plan by the Community and Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee in 2019 it was reported by the Director of Locality and Customer Services to that Committee at its meeting on 2 September 2019 that: "In 2019/20, the Council is to review its parking management strategy for the Borough. If agreed, this document will go out for full public consultation before adoption by the Council. Following this and in line with the strategy documents, an action plan will be developed and further policies and procedures put in place".

Could the Executive Member say what has happened since that statement?

Answer

Proposals to commence a Borough-wide review of the Council's Parking Management Strategy and to prepare an Action Plan in the final quarter of the 2019/20 financial year were suspended due to the impacts of the Covid pandemic on parking demand.

Apart from impacting resident and visitor parking behaviours, both on-street and in the Council's car parks, the pandemic also affected the ways in which essential site assessment surveys could be undertaken by the Council's Officers and its consultants. I know for instance in Twyford, where we started some of the work, there were an awful lot more people working from home and parked on the streets than is normal. So it is very difficult to get a representative sample.

However, a pilot parking management project to assess the parking behaviour and develop solutions in Twyford, for which the majority of resident surveys had already been completed prior to Covid, was resumed in November 2021 when we considered that things had got more back to normal and a number of supplementary surveys to measure kerbside occupancy, parking characteristics and street capacity were concluded in February.

The results of these surveys are currently being assessed and will enable a number of the broader parking management measures proposed in the draft Borough-wide Parking Management Action Plan to be reviewed in a post-Covid context, enabling aspects such as commuter parking, resident parking zones and permit policy and greater, daytime on-street parking demands by those now working from home more frequently can be considered.

In addition, a review of the Council's Off-Street Car Parks Order was carried out and has resulted in a number of changes which are currently progressing through statutory procedures. Both of these activities will inform the Parking Management Action Plan and enable a revised draft to be presented for public consultation in Autumn 2022.

Supplementary Question

If I have got the gist of that it is intended to bring the Plan forward for public consultation later in this year? How will you be conducting that?

Supplementary Answer

A normal consultation. I think we normally do wide ranging communications. We generally put things on the website. We will put stuff in libraries and that sort of thing and we will generally make sure as many people as possible know about it so that we can get as much input as possible.

131.2 Peter Humphreys asked the Executive Member for Resident Services, Communications and Emissions the following question:

Question

The Council have announced a target of carbon zero by 2030 and plan to plant 250,000 trees in the five years to 2025. Yet actions speak louder than words. Rather than reducing electricity usage in property it owns or has influence over it is increasing usage, take the unopened section of the NWDR which has been illuminated every night for since last autumn. Amazingly some of the Xmas illuminations in Broad Street are still switched on each night whilst the existing Wokingham Library and new Carnival Pool are illuminated 24/7. It can't be for security reasons as its unlikely the pool will be stolen.

Of new trees planted a high percentage have died due to lack of watering, on Dead Trees Roundabout even the replacements have been allowed to die. And there has been the deliberate mass destruction of trees at various sites.

You'll agree that Wokingham is thus in a negative position with regard to trees; how many trees will now need to be planted by the target date to achieve a net 250,000 increase of trees that will reach their tenth birthday?

Answer

The climate emergency remains a key priority for the Council and for our residents, and we all must do our bit to reduce carbon emissions. As a Council, we want to take an active role as possible in tackling our properties and our carbon footprint, and we are continuing to look at ways to improve our properties and make them more energy efficient.

The Council has also a responsibility towards the safety and security of our residents and employees, and for this reason, some night illumination might be required. The library, for example, will be illuminated outside of opening hours whilst staff from other departments based in the building are working, whilst cleaning is being undertaken, and the emergency lighting is left on as per a legal requirement. Carnival pool is a construction site, and the power is managed by the contractor, the lights are left on for workers and for the security staff that remain there. The Council is committed to working with businesses to increase awareness of good energy efficiency practices, we can remind contractors and staff to switch off lights and be more climate conscious.

Regarding your comments about mature trees being removed, it is true that development will result in some of the mature trees being lost but we can compensate for this over the long-term through the provision of replacements. There are mature trees in urban areas now that were planted alongside new developments many generations ago. The Council is developing a tree policy that is viable and works within legislative and guidance boundaries, this is currently being consulted on alongside the Core Strategy.

The trees that are planted by developers are part of their planning obligations, and these are not being counted in the 250,000 tree planting project. The 250,000 tree-planting target is looking at delivering schemes outside of these requirements, for example, across the Council-owned sites including country parks and public open spaces, sites owned by our towns and parish councils and community groups, schools and private landowners who have the space appropriate for hedgerow and woodland creation. The Council is also developing a Tree Strategy for the Borough which will include guidance around developer responsibility in relation to felling and replanting trees. The policies within the developing Tree Strategy will be linked to the Core Strategy currently under consultation.

From October 2021 to the end of March 2022, over 15,000 trees have been planted by various community and volunteer groups, schools, town and parish councils, WBC Countryside Service and by private landowners. The Council will continue to actively engage with the community to support the delivery of this target.

Supplementary Question

I do not know if you want to answer the first question about why the lights are left on at the new road that is still not open for several months?

Apart from that you obviously do not seem to be monitoring how many trees have been cut down so how are you actually going to know if you are going to reach carbon zero if you have got no records of what is going on? Also, as you are only planting 15,000 trees you are well short of the annual target, which should be about 50,000 on average.

Supplementary Answer

I would need to speak to Pauline in a bit more detail about the north west distributor road.

My understanding, and I am sure Pauline will hopefully confirm this, is that that piece of the north west distributor road is actually still owned by the contractor that was building it and as per the same as your own house and your own back garden we do not have the right to ask you to turn your light off. If they want to leave it on overnight all we can do is ask them but they are under no obligation to do it. If they choose as a private contractor to have lights on a road that they own there is nothing that we can do as a Council other than ask them to turn them off.

In terms of the tree planting yes, some trees have been cut down and some trees have, unfortunately, been left to die by developers. I live on a development myself where that has happened. We as a Council are asking the developers to live up to their obligations. Many of them will overplant the number of trees they are required to put into the ground on the assumption that some will die before they complete on the site. I am sure that Wayne would be able to give you some more details around what his department are doing in order to make sure that more trees get planted by developers.

One thing I can also add is that I have seen the supplementary planning guidance that is being proposed as part of the Local Plan Update. I know that the Tree Strategy is being developed and will be included. Part of that includes some very, very high targets for tree planting but also ensuring that trees get to maturity will be part of our Local Plan Update.

Councillor Jorgensen gave the following answer:

Gregor gave a very comprehensive answer. The only thing to add is that the lights, not only are they currently in the control of the developer but they have not been certified yet so they could not be handed over to us yet in any case as the development is not yet finished.

132. MEMBER QUESTION TIME

In accordance with the agreed procedure the Chairman invited Members to submit questions to the appropriate Members

132.1 Imogen Shepherd-DuBey asked the Executive Member for Neighbourhood and Communities the following question:

Question

In Wokingham we have suffered increasing anti-social behaviour due to late night drinking in the town. This is resulting in broken windows, smashed glasses and bottles around the town, destroyed flower planters and loud behaviour in the early hours, waking up local residents. This is blighting the lives of those who live, work and use the Town centre area, especially as the mess is still there in the morning. We are in desperate need of a solution that ensures that a few people do not make things so unpleasant for the many.

It then came; much to my surprise to find that the ASB team only intend to operate till 2am. Most of the alcohol related anti-social behaviour we see occurs after 3am, as the bars close and people are heading home. I have suggested ways in which WBC can find funding for itself and the police – via a late-night levy on late licences – which is well within its power, if needed. However, we desperately need extra support in Wokingham Town – now – especially in the early hours at the weekend.

Please can you explain what commitments Wokingham Borough Council are going to take in tackling this significant problem?

Answer

Anti-Social Behaviour problems across the Borough are discussed at the Wokingham multi-agency Problem Solving Task Group, which is chaired by Thames Valley Police. Issues that have been occurring in Wokingham Town were discussed at the last meeting, several actions have been agreed including;

- The Police and Council are planning an operation to check licence standards and customer compliance in Wokingham Town.
- The Council's Licensing Team and police have required a problematic license holder to update the licence conditions to be more robust in relation to CCTV and other security measures.
- The notice of variation is posted on the window of the premises for residents and other interested parties to view, comment and make representations.

In addition to this, joint visits with police licensing have been undertaken to several Wokingham late night licensed venues. It was agreed that they will work with the door staff to ensure customers are not leaving their venues with bottles and glasses. Licensing Liaison Officers have also been looking for broken glass and engaging with venues during their weekly patrol in Wokingham. It is also anticipated that the Wokingham Pubwatch group will be able to restart meetings again shortly.

The viability of implementing a late-night levy has recently been reviewed, in order to put this scheme in place, it requires a minimum number of late night licenses. Unfortunately, as it currently stands, there is a lack of late-night licensed premises in Wokingham to make it possible to implement one.

The Council wants to encourage people into our local towns, to enjoy the facilities and businesses and to help support the local economy. However, we also want to ensure that a few individuals do not detract from the majority of well-behaved people enjoying the town and its amenities. We anticipate that these actions will send a clear message to both the licensee and anybody thinking of behaving badly.

Supplementary Question

Well, it is good to know that they are going to try and stop them leaving pubs without glass bottles and that the Pubwatch team is going to reestablish themselves.

The problem we have is not so much in the bars themselves it is when people leave. They are going to look for taxis and wandering around and they are walking home. That is generally where we have the problem. We want people to enjoy the town but we need more support on the street as people leave and there is evidence that we need some controls in that area.

So, I am kind of asking what solutions would you suggest for this piece of work?

Supplementary Answer

Let me say that the incidences that you are saying occur after 3am. The fact is that our ASB Teams will be working up until 2am as it is at the moment and after that time, obviously, the police will be in attendance as well and the sort of issues you are raising, I

would think that hopefully the police will deal with. Let me say that the times of the Anti-Social Behaviour Team is very flexible. We do not even know if we need ten Officers throughout the night or two Officers throughout the night at the moment. It is very early stages. It is flexible and should there be a high demand for more Officers or longer hours then that can be reviewed, but obviously at this stage it is early stages.

What I will say is, just to give you some idea of what we are doing, tomorrow night we have some of our new Anti-Social Behaviour Teams out with the police and going to the Gig House to have a look and see what exactly is happening, and how we can best improve the service.

132.2 Gary Cowan had asked the Executive Member for Finance and Housing the following question but as he was unable to attend the meeting the following written answer was provided:

Question

Page 86 of the report mentions an Inspector's Report of which a copy of the inspector's report is in Appendix 2. Comments a, b, and c below are quite challenging and do not appear to be satisfactorily answered in the report. I cannot comment on the Inspectors report as I cannot find Appendix 2.

On 17 November 2021, the Inspector made his decision not to confirm the CPO on the grounds that:

- a) The sustainability benefits claimed by the Council were not substantiated.
- b) The Council had not shown that the demolition of the existing properties is the only or best way to achieve those benefits; or
- c) That inclusion of the objector's properties is necessary.

The Inspector concludes that the task of demonstrating a compelling case therefore falls not on the objectors, but firmly on the Acquiring Authority. A copy of the Inspector's report is in Appendix 2.

My question is how legal or more to the point moral is this Compulsory Purchase Order?

Answer

The Gorse Ride regeneration project is a flagship scheme in the Council's response to the escalating need for more and better social housing. The provision of well-planned and delivered social housing has never been more important. Data on a national and a local-level shows that homelessness is on the increase, with an escalating demand for temporary accommodation. Not only impacting the Council's future temporary accommodation budgets but having a major effect on those residents whose lives are disrupted by not having a stable and secure home.

The use of compulsory purchase powers will enable all necessary land interests to be acquired to secure the delivery of the regeneration of Gorse Ride and the consequential benefits to the local community.

The scheme will deliver improvements to housing stock within the Borough through the demolition of 178 poor quality housing units and the creation of 249 new well-designed homes. It will bring vitality to the area and enrich the community for the future. The scheme will provide significant social, economic, and environmental benefits to the local

area by creating a new community of which residents can feel proud, new jobs for local people and a significant public realm and landscaping improvements.

A recent analysis of social value generated from those rehoused from the first phase of the Gorse Ride regeneration showed that since moving home, people experienced improvements in, their sense of belonging, their perception of antisocial behaviour in their neighbourhood and their levels of health, as well as now living in homes with improved energy efficiency.

The Council remains committed to acquiring third party property interests voluntarily without the need to exercise the CPO. However, an approval for the Council to proceed with making a new compulsory purchase order is sought as a last resort. The ability to include CPO after all other stages of the negotiation process have been exhausted will enable the regeneration scheme to proceed in accordance with the timeframes shared with residents. Until now the Council has been able to purchase properties successfully through negotiation but to ensure the delivery of the project for the whole community the Council needs to have the right to exercise CPO powers if needed.

In deciding to use this power to make a CPO, the Council has had regard to all other available compulsory purchase powers, including section 17 of the Housing Act 1985, which authorises the acquisition of land for housing purposes. The Council has chosen to utilise its power in section 226 of the 1990 Town and Country Planning Act because it considers that the regeneration of the site will deliver wider regeneration benefits to the community and the locality, than just the provision of housing.

133. TEMPORARY CLOSURE REMENHAM FOOTPATH NO 4 HENLEY FESTIVAL

(Councillor Halsall declared a personal interest in this item)

[Note: For this item Councillor Kaiser took over as Chairman]

The Executive considered a report relating to an application received for the Temporary Closure of Remenham Footpath No 4 to enable the Henley Festival to be organised and run in a safe manner.

The Executive Member for Environment and Leisure went into detail on what was being requested as part of the application, as set out in the report.

Councillor Munro queried whether the timings of the closure of the footpath was in line with the timings requested by the Festival organisers? Councillor Batth confirmed that this was the case and that widespread consultation had taken place and the times had been agreed as per the organisers' requirements.

RESOLVED that:

- 1) the making of an order for the closure of Footpath Remenham No 4, for a closure of an 80m section of the footpath for the set up and de rig of the Festival stage from Monday 4th to Wednesday 6th July 2022 inclusive and from Monday 11th July to Tuesday 12th July 2022 inclusive be approved; and
- 2) include within the closure a 620m section for evening performances from Wednesday 6th July to Sunday 10th July 2022 inclusive and day time performances on Saturday 9th July and Sunday 10th July 2022, under Section 16A of the Road

Traffic Regulation Act 1984, subject to the receipt of the requisite consent of the Secretary of State for Transport.

134. VOID PROPERTY WORKS CONTRACT

The Executive considered a report relating to approval of a procurement business case for a new contract to provide a range of repair and refurbishment works required to ensure domestic void properties meet the Council's re-let standard prior to occupation by new tenants or licensees.

During his introduction the Executive Member for Finance and Housing explained that the contract related to homes that sat within the Council's Housing Revenue Account and a void was a property that had become vacant eg because somebody has gone into care or moved to a different property. Work or refurbishment would then be carried out on the property before being occupied by new tenants. Because of the size of the contract Executive approval was required.

Councillor Kaiser confirmed that the total number of homes that sat within the HRA was around 2,700 and around 10% of these became voids per annum. Given the number of people waiting for such homes it was important that any voids were turned round as quickly as possible. Councillor Kaiser also advised that when a property was void the opportunity was also taken to undertake substantial changes eg improving insulation, updating boilers and upgrading kitchens.

RESOLVED: That the business case to enable the Housing Service to procure a suitably qualified, experienced, and competent contractor for the delivery of void property works as required for the Council's housing stock be approved.

135. WINNERSH FARM ACCESS

RESOLVED: That the item be deferred for more information and further review.

136. ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE NEW ENFORCEMENT AND SAFETY SERVICE

The Executive considered a report relating to arrangements for the new Enforcement and Safety Service which was due to start operation on 1 April 2022.

During his introduction the Executive Member for Neighbourhood and Communities reminded Members that the Council had left the Public Protection Partnership, a joint service hosted by West Berkshire Council, today. From tomorrow certain regulatory functions would be run in-house. Councillor Soane advised that after 12 months of considerable negotiations agreement had been reached with both partners for an exit strategy which was fair to all concerned. Councillor Soane thanked Officers from both Councils for their hard work in bringing this to a conclusion.

The meeting was informed that service managers would be in place to oversee issues relating to environmental health, licensing, residential and environmental protection and anti-social behaviour. Councillor Soane stated his gratitude to the Partnership for their work over the years and thanked the Officers and staff who had assisted Wokingham in the past.

Councillor Soane highlighted that in bringing these services back in house the Council would have the ability to offer residents a service that met their needs and their expectations. The service offered by the Anti-Social Behaviour Team would be able to

rapidly and efficiently respond to incidents by being available during times of increased demand. It was noted that currently some of the Team were engaged in the important role of ensuring the safety of Ukraine refugees arriving in the Borough by checking that the homes and the hosts were best suited to the needs and safety of the refugees.

It was further noted that some trading standards and ancillary services, as set out in the report, would continue to be provided by West Berkshire Council.

Councillor Halsall stated that the work of the new service complemented the work being undertaken with the Community Safety Partnership and Domestic Violence and Anti-Social Behaviour Managers.

RESOLVED that:

- 1) the progress made in relation to the repatriation of Environmental Health and Licensing from the Public Protection Partnership ('PPP') to the Council, and setting up an Anti-Social Behaviour Team within the newly created Enforcement and Safety Service be noted;
- 2) it be noted that the Council will continue to contract services for Trading Standards (and ancillary services) from the PPP until 08 January 2027 and agrees that the initial term of the contract shall be at least 2 years;
- 3) a supplementary estimate to facilitate the payment of £416,681 to West Berkshire Council in full settlement of all liabilities incurred as a result of the Council's decision to withdraw services from the PPP be approved. The payment shall be made over 3 financial years; and
- 4) the Director of Place and Growth and Deputy Chief Executive (and Section 151 Officer), in consultation with the Lead Member for Finance and Housing, be delegated the agreement of the final terms of the settlement with West Berkshire and completion of the settlement agreement and the contract for Trading Standards and ancillary services.

137. DELIVERING THE GORSE RIDE REGENERATION PROJECT - COMPULSORY PURCHASE ORDER

The Executive considered a report relating to the use of a compulsory purchase order to enable all necessary land interests to be acquired to secure the delivery of the Gorse Ride regeneration project.

The Executive Member for Finance and Housing reminded the meeting that the Gorse Ride regeneration project was the flagship scheme in the Council's response to escalating need for more and better social housing. The provision of well planned and delivered social housing had never been more important and data on a national and local level showed that homelessness was on the increase. There was also an escalating demand for temporary accommodation.

Councillor Kaiser confirmed that the use of Compulsory Purchase powers would enable all the necessary land interests to be acquired to secure the delivery of the regeneration of Gorse Ride and the consequential benefits to the local community. The scheme would deliver improvements to the housing stock within the Borough through the demolition of 178 very poor quality housing units and create 249 new well designed homes.

Councillor Kaiser reiterated that the Council remained committed to acquiring third party property interests voluntarily without the need to exercise CPO powers. CPO would only be used as a last resort after all stages of negotiation had been exhausted and only to ensure that the regeneration scheme could proceed in accordance with the timeframe, not only to save money but to ensure that people could move into the homes as soon as possible. The Council had been able to purchase properties successfully through negotiations but to ensure that the project could be delivered for the whole community the Council needed the ability to exercise CPO powers if required.

Councillor Smith advised that he was impressed with the quality of the houses completed as part of the first phase.

RESOLVED that:

- 1) the Council should make a new compulsory purchase order ("CPO") to acquire the land as shown indicatively edged red on the plan at Appendix 1 of this report ("the Land") required to deliver the proposed regeneration of land known as land at Gorse Ride South, Finchampstead, Wokingham ("the Site") pursuant to section 226(1)(a) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) ("the 1990 Act") because it considers that:
 - a. the acquisition of the Land will facilitate the carrying out of the development, redevelopment or improvement of the site.
 - b. the development, redevelopment or improvement of the site is likely to contribute to the achievement of any one or more of the promotion or improvement of the economic, social and environmental well-being of the borough of Wokingham; and
 - c. there is a compelling case in the public interest for the CPO.
- 2) the Deputy Chief Executive, in consultation with the Executive Member for Housing and Finance, be authorised to:
 - a. take all necessary steps in relation to the Land to secure the making, the confirmation and the implementation of the CPO including publication and service of all relevant notices and the presentation of the Council's case at any Public Inquiry; and
 - b. approve terms for the acquisition of legal interests (including rights if required) by agreement including for the purposes of resolving any objections to the CPO.

TITLE	Public Spaces Protection Order
FOR CONSIDERATION BY	The Executive on Thursday, 29 September 2022
WARD	None Specific;
LEAD OFFICER	Director, Place and Growth - Steve Moore
LEAD MEMBER	Executive Member for Environment, Sport and Leisure - Ian Shenton

PURPOSE OF REPORT (INC STRATEGIC OUTCOMES)

A key decision is required to implement a PSPO to reduce the harm caused by anti-social vehicle use in car parks and other public open spaces in the borough

RECOMMENDATION

That the Executive:

- 1) authorises the Corporate Director for Place and Growth to proceed with the implementation of the PSPO as detailed in Appendix 1 and delegate authorised officers to enforce the conditions of the PSPO including issuing Fixed Penalty Notices for breaches of these in appropriate cases; and
- 2) authorises the head of legal services to commence prosecution proceedings in relation to breaches of conditions in the PSPO in appropriate cases.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

A large number of complaints have been made to the council about anti-social vehicle use in council owned car parks, and also on privately owned land, such as supermarket car parks. The activity features engine revving, wheel spinning, aggressive driving, noise from horns and music equipment.

The number and regularity of incidents is sufficient to meet the statutory test that anti-social vehicle use in the borough has had a detrimental effect on the quality of life of those in the locality, is persistent, is unreasonable and justifies the restrictions being imposed. Many incidents have occurred in the evenings or at night resulting in loss of sleep, and incidents regardless of time of day have resulted in alarm and distress to residents and visitors to the area.

The PSPO would be an additional power available to authorised Council officers to use in appropriate circumstances, and a deterrent to the activity occurring.

BACKGROUND

On 22nd March 2022, Executive resolved that the Director for Place and Growth be authorised to commence a public consultation about a proposed Public Spaces Protection Order, and consider the results of the consultation, and bring forward to the Executive a further report if it is considered appropriate, in the light of consultation, to proceed with the implementation of the Public Spaces Protection Order.

The proposed activities to be prohibited in the PSPO are in Appendix 1.

Public consultation took place from 7 June 2022 to 19 July 2022 and responses are summarised in Appendix 2. 75% of respondents were in favour of the proposed PSPO and 84% in favour with modifications. The level of support for the proposed PSPO in the consultation is considered to significantly outweigh the responses which were not in favour. It is therefore proposed to implement a PSPO to reduce the harm caused by anti-social vehicle use in car parks and other public open spaces in the borough

The Anti-social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014 (“the Act”) provides the legal framework within which PSPOs can be implemented. Orders can be introduced in a specific public area where the local authority is satisfied on reasonable grounds that the following conditions have been met:

- The activity to be restricted has had a detrimental effect on the quality of life of those in the locality, or it is likely that the activity will take place and will have a detrimental effect
- The effect or likely effect of the activity is, or is likely to be, persistent or continuing in nature and is unreasonable and justifies the restrictions being imposed.

The Home Office statutory guidance issued in January 2021 states that proposed restrictions should focus on specific behaviours and be proportionate to the detrimental effect that the behaviour is causing or can cause, and are necessary to prevent it from continuing, occurring or recurring.

As a minimum, a PSPO must set out

- what the detrimental activities are
- what is being prohibited and/or required, including any exemptions
- the area covered
- the consequences for breach
- the period for which it has effect.

The activity restricted by an Order must be carried out in a public place, which is defined in the legislation as ‘any place to which the public or any section of the public has access, on payment or otherwise, as of right or by virtue of express or implied permission’.

Local authorities are obliged to consult with the local chief officer of police; the police and crime commissioner; owners or occupiers of land within the affected area where reasonably practicable, and appropriate community representatives. Parish and town councils that are in the proposed area covered by the PSPO must be notified.

“Community representatives” are defined broadly in the Act as “any individual or body appearing to the authority to represent the views of people who live in, work in or visit the restricted area”. Those who will be directly affected by the Order, or groups representing their interests, should be directly approached.

A PSPO can last for up to three years, after which it must be reviewed and may be extended if an extension is necessary to prevent activity recurring, or there has been an increase in frequency or seriousness of the activity. Extensions can be repeated, with each lasting for a maximum of three years. Effective evaluation of a PSPO will be important when determining whether any extensions or variations would be appropriate.

PSPOs can be challenged on the grounds that the local authority did not have the power either to make it or include particular prohibitions or requirements, or that proper processes had not been followed as prescribed by the legislation. Challenges must be made to the High Court within six weeks of the Order being made, and by an individual who lives in, regularly works in or visits the restricted area.

It is an offence under section 67 of the Act to fail to comply with a PSPO without a reasonable excuse.

Should it be alleged that such an offence has been committed, then prosecution can follow, and upon conviction, the maximum penalty is a fine, not exceeding level 3 (currently £1,000).

Authorised officers have the power, pursuant to section 68 of the Act to issue fixed penalty notices (FPNs) of up to £100 to anyone they reasonably believe is in breach. This is a direct alternative to prosecution.

The Statutory maximum of £100 has been recommended as it will provide the best deterrent effect and send the necessary message that this is taken extremely seriously. Were a lower amount to be chosen it may weaken that message.

The reasonable excuse defence would cater for any situation in which the behaviour prohibited or required in a PSPO would be regarded by an average person as legitimate.

Regulations set out requirements regarding the publication of PSPOs, stipulating that information must be:

- published on the local authority’s website
- erected on or adjacent to the place the Order relates to, and is sufficient to draw attention, setting out the effect of the Order.

BUSINESS CASE

The Borough has suffered significant nuisance from vehicles and people engaged in car cruising activities within the last two years, for example in relation to the Carnival Pool Car Park, Wellington Street, Mere oak Park and Ride and Thames Valley Business Park and the surrounding area. The activities included drag racing on the highway, drifting around the roundabouts and car parks. This is accompanied by the playing of loud music from the vehicles as they gathered to watch the activities. The attendance and activities described have resulted in several numbers of complaints from residents affected by the noise of car exhausts, tyres screeching and loud music.

There were also safety issues as people were very close to speeding vehicles being driven in a dangerous manner.

The number and regularity of incidents is sufficient to meet the statutory test that anti-social vehicle use in the borough has had a detrimental effect on the quality of life of those in the locality, is persistent, is unreasonable and justifies the restrictions being imposed. Many incidents have occurred in the evenings or at night resulting in loss of sleep, and all incidents regardless of time of day have resulted in alarm and distress to residents and visitors to the area.

Consideration has been given to limiting the PSPO to locations where incidents have occurred. However, the locations identified were not limited to a few specific locations, and it is assessed that such limitation would be likely to have the effect of displacing the same activity to different locations. To avoid this displacement effect, it is proposed to make the order applicable to all publicly accessible open spaces in the borough. This will include some privately owned land such as supermarket car parks. The PSPO provision would not absolve private land owners of their duty to take preventative measures of their own accord.

The PSPO would not prevent enforcement action being taken against individual vehicle users or owners, such as road traffic laws and regulations enforced by the police, or noise abatement notices served by the council. The PSPO would be an additional power available to authorised local authority officers to use in appropriate circumstances, and a deterrent to the activity occurring.

ANALYSIS OF ISSUES

The 16% not in favour cite reasons for not supporting the PSPO which fall under the following general headings. The Council has considered these reasons carefully, and decides that the majority view in support of the PSPO should prevail. The Council's response to the reasons given against the PSPO are as follows.

The activity is not causing a problem and the powers are not necessary

Council response: The Council has a duty to do all it reasonably can to prevent or reduce anti-social behaviour in its area. Whilst it is likely that substantial numbers of residents may not have experienced this type of nuisance, a significant number who live near to where these events take place are disturbed by it and have complained to the council and the police about it. The Council believes that the effect of the behaviour on those residents is sufficiently detrimental to justify the implementation of the PSPO.

The powers are not fair

Council response: The Council is aware that the PSPO should be enforced proportionately and reasonably. The proposed conditions specifically prohibit aggressive driving and behaviour which goes beyond the behaviour expected at a peaceful meeting of car enthusiasts. Event organisation or spectating only becomes a breach of the PSPO if the prohibited activities occur there. In all cases, the defence of "reasonable excuse" applies – any person who can show a reasonable excuse for behaviour which appears to be breach of the conditions, would not commit an offence.

There are enough powers already

Council response: Whilst there are Road Traffic Act and other statutory powers available to the police, the PSPO would be an additional power available to authorised Council officers and PCSOs to use in appropriate circumstances, and a deterrent to the activity occurring, in addition to police officers. It also provides an additional power for police officers to use in appropriate circumstances, such as issuing a fixed penalty notice as an alternative to prosecution in court. The Council therefore believes the PCSO powers are useful to deter the prohibited activities and deal with breaches in a proportionate and effective manner.

Alternatives should be considered and organised events should be encouraged

Council response: Whilst several of the alternatives suggested by respondents have merit, for the police and Council to allocate resources to policing and organising these unauthorised events which are privately arranged would not be a justifiable use of public resources. The Council is not in a position to organise car cruising events at public expense on behalf of private individuals or clubs.

Responsible event organisers who wish to arrange a private event would obtain permission from landowners and approach the council's licensing service to agree an event management plan. These car cruising events are not organised with the knowledge of the council and the police, and as such are unregulated and unauthorised.

The powers might displace the activity

Council response: To avoid this displacement effect, it is proposed to make the order applicable to all publicly accessible open spaces in the borough. This will include some privately owned land such as supermarket car parks.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS OF THE RECOMMENDATION

The Council faces severe funding pressures, particularly in the face of the COVID-19 crisis. It is therefore imperative that Council resources are focused on the vulnerable and on its highest priorities.

	How much will it Cost/ (Save)	Is there sufficient funding – if not quantify the Shortfall	Revenue or Capital?
Current Financial Year (Year 1)	£2,000	Yes	
Next Financial Year (Year 2)	Nil	Yes	
Following Financial Year (Year 3)	Nil	Yes	

Other Financial Information

The costs of consultation, signage and publicity, and enforcement by authorised officers can be met by using part of central government grant to the Community Safety Partnership, with any excess cost met from existing budgets within the Place and Growth Service.

Stakeholder Considerations and Consultation

Public consultation took place from 7 June 2022 to 19 July 2022 and responses are summarised in Appendix 2. 75% of respondents were in favour of the proposed PSPO and 84% in favour with modifications. The modifications suggested do not really affect the PSPO itself – they made suggestions of such things as more speed cameras and more enforcement against dangerous driving. The 16% not in favour cite a variety of reasons, but generally fall into such categories as - sufficient powers already exist; car enthusiasts are not causing any harm and need somewhere to meet; innocent people shouldn't be fined; events should be better organised and existing laws enforced.

The Thames Valley Police Borough Commander for Wokingham and the Police and Crime Commissioner have expressed support for the PSPO provided an enforcement capability is delegated to council officers so that the burden of enforcement does not fall entirely on police.

A sample of owners of relevant land within the affected area (ie supermarkets) have been contacted as far as is reasonably practicable (see appendix 3). Their response was it would be a positive measure if it deters people coming to the area for the purposes of car cruising, so they would support the implementation of the PSPO if we believe it will help.

Parish and town councils have been consulted.

Public Sector Equality Duty

Due regard to the Public Sector Equality Duty will be taken and an equalities impact assessment has been completed because it is important for councils to consider carefully the potential impact of a PSPO on different sections of communities. Proposals for a PSPO have been reviewed to determine how they might target or impact on certain groups.

Climate Emergency – This Council has declared a climate emergency and is committed to playing as full a role as possible – leading by example as well as by exhortation – in achieving a carbon neutral Wokingham Borough by 2030

There would be no identifiable impact on the Council's carbon neutral objective.

List of Background Papers

[Report to Executive on 22nd March 2022](#)

[Anti-social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014 Statutory guidance for frontline professionals June 2022](#)

Full list of consultation responses (available on the Council's website – link to be added)

Contact Ed Shaylor	Service Place
Telephone 07871 735927	Email ed.shaylor@wokingham.gov.uk

Appendix 1 The proposed activities to be prohibited in the PSPO

Conditions in the Order which are prohibitions:

In the restricted areas (see schedule below) a person commits an offence if without reasonable excuse he or she continues to carry out activities from which they are prohibited namely:

1. being the driver of or being carried in (or on) a motor vehicle in circumstances where the following activities (“the prohibited activities”) take place
 - a. causing danger or risk of injury to road users (including pedestrians)
 - b. causing damage or risk of damage to property
 - c. aggressive acceleration or braking or racing
 - d. carrying out manoeuvres such as (but not limited to) skidding, handbrake turns, drifting
 - e. creating noise through excessive engine revving, sounding horns or playing music
 - f. using foul or abusive language
 - g. using threatening or intimidating behaviour
 - h. causing obstruction (whether moving or stationary).
2. promoting, organising or publicising (including but not limited to via email, the internet, social media, or via any publication or broadcast medium) any event where the prohibited activities take place
3. attending an event as defined in clause 2 above either as a vehicle owner or spectator where the prohibited activities take place

A person who fails without reasonable excuse to comply with conditions above, commits an offence under section 67 of the Act and is liable on summary conviction to a fine not exceeding £1,000 or a fixed penalty notice of a maximum £100.

Schedule of the restricted areas

All land owned, maintained or managed by the Council and any other place to which the public has access as of right or by virtue of express or implied permission.

General

An authorised officer means a local authority employee, a person designated by the local authority, a police officer or police community support officer.

Appendix 2 Summary of results of public consultation

Total responses: 791

Partially completed: 309

Fully completed: 482

Do you think the council should introduce a car cruising PSPO?	Percentage	Number
Yes	75.3%	363
Yes but with modifications	8.3%	40
No	16.4%	79
Total	100%	482

Are you responding as:		
Wokingham Borough resident	96.7%	466
Borough councillor	0.8%	4
Parish or Town councillor	0.6%	3
Representative of an organisation or individual	1%	5
Other	0.8%	4
Total		482

Have you been affected by noise or nuisance from vehicle related anti-social behaviour? This may include dangerous driving, racing, aggressive acceleration and braking, sounding horns, playing loud music, foul language and threatening behaviour.

 Add chart

Answer Choices	Responses		
Yes		66.60%	321
No		33.40%	161

How often does this happen?

 Add chart

Answer Choices	Responses		
Only once or twice		8.07%	26
Less than once a month		13.04%	42
About once a month		18.94%	61
A couple of times a month		24.84%	80
Once a week		11.80%	38
More than once a week		23.29%	75

Where have these taken place?

 Add chart

Answer Choices	Responses		
Carnival Pool Car Park		41.72%	131
Thames Valley Business Park		5.41%	17
Mereoak Park & Ride		21.66%	68
Other (please specify): Show		59.24%	186

The other locations were too many and various to list them all, but there were several references to the A33 (18 mentions); Tesco car park (6); Elms Road car park and Elms Field (22); Woodley (6) and Wokingham town centres (19); Reading Road (6); Finchampstead Road (8); Arborfield (10); Norreys Avenue (2); Woosehill (4).

The locations identified were, therefore, not limited to a few specific locations.

Examples of reasons given in answer to:

Why should we adopt the PSPO?

The activity is causing danger

- Stupid, endangering life, unnecessary polluting
- Their use of public parking areas to race is dangerous

The activity is causing nuisance

- Residential areas are no place for car meets!
- To reduce noise pollution at ridiculous hours. I think it's fine to have this during the day but after 9pm or so it should be limited.
- Because the noisy racing affects quality of life of residents and is totally pointless.
- The actions of a few should not restrict, impact or inhibit the ability of the majority to live in peace. Car Cruising is a hobby that can be undertaken in a considerate and appropriate manner, but the behaviour that is currently occurring is obnoxious, disruptive and should not be permitted.

The activity is inconsiderate

- A few individuals should not be allowed to impact the many in a negative and harmful way.
- Why should residents lives be blighted by these unpleasant, rowdy, abusive events - whether it is just once or, for those unfortunate enough to live near one of the venues on a very regular basis
- Meeting and discussing / showing cars to like-minded people is great, it's a social group who have a passion. It just needs to be done without the lack of consideration for others

More powers are needed

- To stop antisocial behaviour, dangerous driving, noise nuisance late at night
- More needs to be done to clamp down on anti-social behaviour
- Will help enforce the need for these events to stop
- If people cannot behave in a decent a respectful way, and are a constant nuisance to many residents, then further action needs to be taken by the authorities to deter and/or prosecute them.
- It ensures this borough is kept free of antisocial behaviours and young people (mostly) are more respectful of wider community. Ok to have fun with friends but shouldn't become a nuisance to neighbours
- Because there seems to be more happening and more often
- To make the borough safer and to give the police powers to deal with the problem
- People should be able to be in their own homes without being the subject of anti-social behaviour. The number of people affected is huge from such a small number of people. It's a growing problem that needs a strong response. They clearly don't care about any current repercussions. It's anti-social to the extreme and as I've already said it has frightened my child on more than one occasion. Completely unacceptable and needs to stop.

The powers would be a deterrent

- I think it would be a legitimate deterrent

- Anything that will discourage these people must help. I thought the Police could confiscate their vehicles but if this is happening it doesn't seem to be discouraging them.
- For some repeat offenders it's the only way they learn. However it should be the last resort and restorative methods should be used first
- I don't think anyone should feel intimidated, anxious or frustrated by other people when in their own homes or communities. It is affecting a lot of people which is unfair. If there were things in place then I'd like to think it would make people at least think twice about it and consider their actions.
- Stronger deterrents are required to address this behaviour, which is regular - the culprits currently appear to act with impunity.

Examples of reasons given in answer to:

Why no to the PSPO?

The activity is not causing a problem

- Don't see the issue and think council time and money should be spent on other more critical services
- I have seen no evidence of the behaviour about which you complain.

The powers are not necessary

- I imagine in reality it affects a very small minority of people and seems like a sledgehammer to crack a nut.

The powers are not fair

- I don't think those not causing a nuisance should be punished as it could push them to cause nuisance
- This proposal so far too broad. It needs to be worded a lot better to target only these problem groups and make it much more restrictive in terms of where and when it would apply.
- A Car Cruising Public Spaces Protection Order is using a sledge hammer to crack a nut and could affect innocent drivers just meeting up in an open space socially and are no problem to anybody.
- I would not wish to inhibit the activities of car clubs who meet for conversation and joint trips to various places but do not behave in the manner you describe. I think that the Council has to be careful that they do not take on the role of a police state.
- Rather than ban the activity as a whole, ban the specific anti-social behaviours highlighted. Some of the offences appear vague and could be applied recklessly by police to target any driver. E.g. "causing risk of damage to property" could arguably be applied to anyone driving a vehicle on the road. Personally, I believe the police already have adequate powers to address the behaviours causing residents concern
- The scope is too wide and is open to interpretation by people with their own prejudices and most likely already with a dislike of car meets. It would potentially limit the opportunities for like minded people to gather and discuss cars, further isolating a mainly male group. There are plenty of car meets that occur in the area that generate income for local businesses and cause no trouble but all it takes is

someone to complain. Under the proposed rules two people in a pub car park showing their cars to each other could be found in breach of the rules.

Aggressive behaviour and bad language are very wrong but there is nothing wrong with people enjoying tuning and showing off their cars.

There are enough powers already

- Any extreme behaviour is already going to be illegal, being young (which I am not) and owning a car shouldn't be
- The police should be more active in enforcing existing laws and regulations, noise, dangerous driving, driving with undue care are already on the statute book. The real issue is enforcement or lack thereof rather than looking at new controls
- Speeding is my major concern, we have laws for that, just needs speed limits reduced and enforced
- Dangerous driving, racing, aggressive acceleration and braking, sounding horns, playing loud music is covered by the highway code and the police can already enforce this
- I am concerned that the government is gradually introducing regulations which restrict our personal freedoms
- The offences listed all appear to be existing actionable offences. The only new offences appear to be attending a car meet or organising & promoting a car meet. These simply punish the genuine car enthusiasts. The wording used also seems ripe for scope creep

Alternatives should be considered

- No need to stop it just needs a police present to make sure it doesn't get out of hand
- We need to find ways to improve the ratio of responsible attendees and dangerous idiots. Simply cracking down won't do that. Punish people who break the law and encourage those who don't. To paraphrase a very old skateboarding phrase: Car meets are not a crime
- I believe they should be allowed but policed and organised better. Not all car meets are the same
- There is no need for additional regulation; existing regulation suffices.
- Better to engage people with advice from PCSO and Police, that go down penalties route. Education first
- I suggest that the people who complain should be encouraged to record the behaviour on their mobile phones including number plates and then pass this information to the police to take action

Organised events should be encouraged

- They should be allowed to enjoy their cars. Where else can they meet up? How do you classify people driving particular types of cars. If anything you provide a place where they can meet and show their cars
- I think the council should allow car meets, authorised events where care enthusiasts can show their cars to friends and other members of the public. Rather than ban, you should facilitate events

- You have to provide outlets for the people who want to do this activity, trying to just completely restrict it would only cause it to go further underground and probably cause more problems and criminalise the people involved
- Work with them. It seems to me we as a society are too quick to resort to the law when common sense and reasonable conversation would produce a simpler cost effective solution. What it requires is for the council to put time and effort in rather than seeking an easy quick fix. Turn the problem on its head. Consider the youngsters as an asset to the area. Then look at the potential spin offs for the borough and local businesses. An enlightened approach could turn a problem in a country leading public asset - be imaginative
- In these extremely difficult times I feel the young people are only trying to have a little fun . What is needed is a fully controlled car meetings run by the local authorities . This in my opinion would then be when and where the meeting would be and rules could then be put in place. We all sometimes forget we use to be young and wanted to do things different

The powers might displace the activity

- There are existing laws that cover antisocial behaviour in public and the Council would be wise to encourage the police to enforce the existing laws and not waste time on orders that will only push the problem to another area and not solve the cause of the issues

Appendix 3

Supermarket's consulted
Aldi Wellington Rd, RG40 2EX
Tesco Finchampstead Rd, RG40 2NS
Sainsbury King Street Lane, Winnersh RG41 5AR
Morrisons Emmview Close,
Lidl Molly Millars Lane, RG41 2RU

TITLE	Violence Against Women & Girls (VAWG) Wokingham Response to National Strategy and Statement of Expectations (NSE)
FOR CONSIDERATION BY	The Executive on Wednesday, 29 September 2022
WARD	None Specific;
LEAD OFFICER	Director, Place and Growth - Steve Moore
LEAD MEMBER	Executive Member for Climate Emergency and Resident Services - Sarah Kerr

PURPOSE OF REPORT (INC STRATEGIC OUTCOMES)

To seek approval for the development of a borough wide Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) Strategy.

To seek approval to progress with council wide adoption of White Ribbon Accreditation.

RECOMMENDATION

That the Executive approve:

1. The development of a borough wide Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) Strategy outlining the Council's commitment to tackle all forms of violence against women and girls.
2. Development of an action plan and all the necessary requirements to become an accredited White Ribbon organisation.
3. The in year supplementary estimate of £600 required to fund White Ribbon Accreditation this financial year.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In July 2021, the Government published a 'Tackling Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG)' strategy as well as a National Statement of Expectations in March 2022, to highlight crimes which disproportionately affect women and girls.

This report proposes that the national guidance and National Statement of Expectations is used as a framework for developing a Wokingham specific response to VAWG. By analysing local data by VAWG crime type and exploring best practice, a strategy will be developed which recognises the profound effect these crimes have on victims, survivors and their loved ones, as well as on wider society.

A Wokingham specific VAWG strategy will place the borough in a strong position to develop better processes to work in partnership with its communities to strengthen the understanding of where there are differences in report, responses, risks and outcomes

to individuals experiencing VAWG. The strategy will also focus on targeting prevention of VAWG through changing attitudes and behaviours.

As part of this public commitment to address Violence Against Women and Girls the Council also intends to develop an action plan to achieve White Ribbon accreditation.

BACKGROUND:

Wokingham Violence Against Women and Girls Strategy (VAWG)

The public profile and awareness of Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) has been raised in recent years by a number of well publicised murders, especially that of Sarah Everard, who was kidnapped and killed by a serving Metropolitan Police Officer. In addition, there have also been the murders of sisters Bibaa Henry and Nicole Stillman, who were killed in a park in northwest London, Julia James, a police community support officer, killed while walking her dog in Kent, and Sabina Nessa, a primary school teacher who was attacked and killed in southeast London. The combination of these killings, at a time when statistics have shown that rates of domestic abuse and the number of women requesting support following the COVID-19 pandemic has surged, has led to widespread calls for change.

Crimes such as rape, female genital mutilation, stalking, harassment and digital crimes such as cyber-flashing, 'revenge porn' and 'up-skirting' are taking place every day and have a long-lasting impact on victims, including mental and physical health problems, not doing well at school or work, becoming homeless, children being harmed and not feeling safe.

VAWG is caused by a combination of drivers operating at different levels of society. These risk factors include a person's genetic predisposition, developmental history, attitudes and beliefs, their relationships and household dynamics, community factors such as social norms and levels of poverty, and wider factors such as religious ideologies and gender regimes.

A national consultation, which formed part of the development of the government's VAWG Strategy 2021, highlighted the large number of women and girls who were having bad experiences at school, work, on buses and trains, on the street and at home, with many respondents feeling that crimes such as sexual harassment were almost an inevitable part of being a woman.

The Government's VAWG Strategy 2021 sets out the actions the Government will take moving forward to increase support for survivors, bring perpetrators to justice, and, ultimately, reduce the prevalence of violence against women and girls. It focuses on crimes which disproportionately affect women and girls and sets out a framework to drive changes – the overall ambition being to “reduce the prevalence of violence against women and girls and improve the support and response for victims and survivors”.

The framework focuses on:

- Increasing support for victims and survivors, through ensuring they have access to quality support appropriate to their needs (as measured through increased funded support services);

- Increasing the number of perpetrators brought to justice. In addition, given the under-reporting of these crimes, increased reporting to the police and increased victim engagement with the police and wider public service response.
- Reducing the prevalence of VAWG in the long term

The VAWG National Statement of Expectations sets out expectations of local strategies and services, for stakeholders including local authorities, and provides a comprehensive list of considerations linked to exploring whether the victim/ survivor is at the centre of service design and delivery; there is a clear focus on perpetrator interventions; a strategic, system-wide approach to commissioning which starts from understanding the issue and problem which it seeks to solve; utilisation and coordination of local initiatives and services already in place and; awareness raising activities which seek to engage and empower communities to seek, design and deliver solutions.

Whilst Wokingham Borough Council has taken important steps towards improving its response to VAWG, for example through the Anti-abuse charter and WBC Domestic Abuse Strategy, it is clear that more needs to be done. A local Wokingham VAWG strategy is essential in drawing together data, best practice, and experiences of victims who are affected by crimes which disproportionately affect women and girls, creating a robust response and drive to reduce prevalence of these crimes. This strategy would sit alongside existing workstreams, including the domestic abuse response, which addresses one of the strands within VAWG.

As well as targeting the external response to VAWG, the strategy will also outline the Council's internal organisational response to VAWG. There will be a focus on preventing violence and harassment by identifying potential risks within the workplace, a commitment to gender equality and diversity throughout the organisation, protection of employees with supportive policies and procedures, and accountability and monitoring of actions at all levels within the organisation.

Wokingham Borough Council intends to imminently progress with the development of a local VAWG strategy which will enable:

- All partners involved in the reduction and response to VAWG to be clear about the agreed priorities over the next 10 years and embed these within their organisations and strategic plans.
- All residents to understand and feel able to contribute towards making Wokingham a safer and healthier place for all.
- Victims/survivors to feel supported to seek help and empowered to lead safe lives, free from abuse.
- Perpetrators to know that their behaviour will not be tolerated and where they can seek support for abusive behaviour.

White Ribbon Accreditation

In parallel to the development of a Wokingham specific VAWG strategy, and in order to further strengthen our local approach, the Council intends to attain White Ribbon accreditation. The Council has already adopted an 'Anti-Abuse Charter' which makes the intentions of the council in relation to violence against women and girls clear and helps borough residents, including victims and survivors, understand the council's commitment towards fostering a deep-rooted culture and step change on violence and abuse.

White Ribbon accreditation programme is the most comprehensive and well established available and is recognised in line with the wider violence against women and girl's agenda. In April 2022 it was adopted by Thames Valley Police as part of their VAWG strategy. Therefore, in alignment with Thames Valley Police's approach, it is recommended that the Council proceed with gaining White Ribbon accreditation.

BUSINESS CASE

N/A

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS OF THE RECOMMENDATION

The Council faces severe funding pressures, particularly in the face of the COVID-19 crisis. It is therefore imperative that Council resources are focused on the vulnerable and on its highest priorities.

(Relates to charges made by White Ribbon UK organization)

	How much will it Cost/ (Save)	Is there sufficient funding – if not quantify the Shortfall	Revenue or Capital?
Current Financial Year (Year 1)	£600	Shortfall of £600	Revenue
Next Financial Year (Year 2)	£600	Shortfall of £600	Revenue
Following Financial Year (Year 3)	£600	Shortfall of £600	Revenue

Other Financial Information
White Ribbon Accreditation will require an annual subscription fee of £600. There is no revenue budget available to cover this cost and therefore an in-year supplementary estimate will be required to fund this year's subscription. A growth item will also be required to fund future year's subscription.

Stakeholder Considerations and Consultation
N/A

Public Sector Equality Duty
EIA has been undertaken.

Climate Emergency – This Council has declared a climate emergency and is committed to playing as full a role as possible – leading by example as well as by exhortation – in achieving a carbon neutral Wokingham Borough by 2030
The strategy and associated actions could lead to a culture change whereby women in the borough feel safer and therefore are more likely to walk, rather than drive or take a cab. In turn, this may lead to a reduction in carbon emissions.

Reasons for considering the report in Part 2
N/A

List of Background Papers
None

Contact Narinder Brar	Service Environment & Safety
Telephone 0118 974 6000	Email Narinder.Brar@wokingham.gov.uk

This page is intentionally left blank

TITLE	Health and Safety Annual Report 21-22
FOR CONSIDERATION BY	The Executive on Thursday, 29 September 2022
WARD	Non-Specific;
LEAD OFFICER	Chief Executive - Susan Parsonage, Director, Place and Growth - Steve Moore
LEAD MEMBER	Leader of the Council and Executive Member for Business and Economic Development- Clive Jones

PURPOSE OF REPORT (INC STRATEGIC OUTCOMES)

The Council has a legal duty to protect the health and safety of employees and other people who come into contact with its undertakings e.g. customers, pupils etc.; the standard set by law requires employers to do what is considered to be 'reasonably practicable'.

The effective management of health and safety is an essential part of good corporate governance. Furthermore, the active management and mitigation of accidents at work is essential, not only to protect people from harm but to also minimise financial loss through employee absences and other direct and indirect related costs.

The legal responsibility and accountability for health and safety lies with the employer, Wokingham Borough Council. In addition to staff working in the services, the Authority is the employer in the case of community and community special schools, voluntary controlled schools, maintained nurseries and pupil referral units. In respect of foundation schools, voluntary aided schools, academies and free schools the Governing Body is the employer.

Note: this report does not include the health and safety performance of Wokingham Borough Council wholly owned subsidiaries operating as separate companies as their respective boards monitor and review their own internal health and safety performance.

RECOMMENDATION

That the Executive notes the internal health and safety performance for 2021-22; and note and agree the priorities in the report described under Corporate Health and Safety Priorities for 2021-22 which will inform the current municipal year 2022-23

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Whilst not a statutory report, the preparation and issue of an annual health and safety report by a local authority (a health and safety regulator in its own right) in respect of its own internal health and safety reflects good practice and provides assurance to senior levels of the organisation

In overall terms the health and safety performance during 2021-22 across both the schools and the services workforces could be viewed in a positive light in that the number of serious employee incidents i.e. those that require notification to the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) under The Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous

Occurrences Regulations 2013 (RIDDOR) remained at a low level with no employee related RIDDOR reportable incidents for either services or schools were noted during the 2021-2022 year.

An additional RIDDOR four notifications were raised to the HSE regarding members of the public attending countryside parks and activities and a pupil who had to be taken to hospital due to an object lodged in their throat after swallowing it. All incidents were investigated, and risk controls established with lessons learnt to prevent recurrences.

Of a total of 98 incident reports were raised by service staff during 2021-22 (an increase of 40% over the previous year but is consistent with reporting levels pre-pandemic) Whilst an increase in reporting is a positive step toward a more safety aware culture within services, we are continuing to raise awareness amongst employees of the importance of incident reporting as requirement of the councils Health and Safety requirements.

27% of accidents and incidents overall related to staff working with children and young people with special needs, and 74% of incidents reported had an outcome of either a minor injury or no injury; however an increase in the number of incidents relating to verbal abuse against service employees rose again by 25% on the previous year and was the first reported instances of physical incidents against Council staff in two years.

Incidents reported by school employees went up from 197 to 204 in 2021-22. 98% of school incidents were recorded as minor injury and the slight increase in reporting was directly attributable to a special school, accounting for 80% of all incidents recorded, who continue to meet their objective of total reporting in order to ensure their risk prevention strategies, designed to protect the health and safety of staff and pupils alike, are well informed and kept up to date.

During 2021-22 no Improvement Notices or Prohibition Notices were served on the Council by the HSE for breaches of statutory health and safety duties nor were there any health and safety prosecutions against the Council

BACKGROUND

The Health and Safety Annual Report 2021-22 is a high-level report that looks back at internal health and safety performance during that financial years twelve month period, highlighting the main achievements over the year and outlining key priorities for the current year.

The annual report is transparent; it provides stakeholders with information on health and safety performance to enable an understanding of the key issues facing Council staff together with assurance to the Executive that the main risks have been identified, appropriately prioritised and are being adequately addressed.

The annual report is reviewed internally by various management and staff consultation groups. The Corporate Leadership Team, along with the central employee consultation forums for services and schools, receive supplementary information in the form of statistical charts with data breakdowns, for example, by work area and hazard type to aid analysis and the identification of trends and patterns in support of the ongoing development of suitable risk prevention strategies.

ANALYSIS OF ISSUES – SERVICES

- No statutory notifications under RIDDOR were made to the HSE in 2021-22 in respect of the Council's services workforce.
- 98 incident reports in total were raised by service staff during 2021-22, an increase of 40% over the previous year. The average total services employee headcount increased remained fairly static across both those performance years. An increase in incident reporting numbers could be viewed as a positive indicator when factors such as greater awareness of the organisation's incident reporting policy, consistent engagement and recognising the benefits of reporting minor/near miss events towards accident prevention are considered.
- In 74% of all cases the outcome was either an injury of a minor nature, for example, a minor cut, scratches, bruising or hair being pulled or had no resulting injury.
- 2021-22 saw service employees report 20 incidents relating to verbal abuse and aggressive and threatening language being directed at service employees which is a 25% increase on the previous year records, which themselves had also seen a rise from the two previous performance years. These related to verbal abuse by members of the public where service employees in the course of their work were spoken to in a threatening, aggressive or offensive way.
- Verbal Abuse is a trend that continues to increase and is likely the result of employees now reporting more but it is likely that this figure is higher than currently reported given anecdotal evidence from service level forums and employee engagement that not all incidents are reported.
- 2021-22 was the first year of physical assaults being recorded against council staff since 2018; of the two recorded incidents one was of an SEN-related matter that resulted in injury and another which was referred directly to Thames Valley Police for further action due to the nature of the incident.
- Efforts to raise awareness amongst employees of the importance of incident reporting are ongoing.

- 2021-22 also saw service employees report 6 incidents relating to slips, trips or falls on same level, which is a modest increase but a figure very similar to the two previous performance years. Slips and trips whilst out in the community or where using internal staircases featured as a discernible trend.
- RIDDOR requires for work related injuries involving members of the public to be reported where the injured person was taken straight to hospital for treatment. In relation to the delivery of the Council's services during 2021-22 there were 3 RIDDOR notifications in respect of members of the public relating to countryside parks and sailing activities.
- The review of lone working highlighted in the 2021-22 annual report considered changes in the current needs, issues, and ways of working that the Covid-19 pandemic has produced and has led to the development of project group to identify relevant and pragmatic solutions aligned to supporting services in the proactive management of these work-related hazards.
- It worthy of noting that 2021-22 saw more near miss reporting by services than in previous years which allowed for preventative actions to be taken to reduce the risk associated with potential hazards and ensure the safety of both staff and members of the public.

ANALYSIS OF ISSUES – SCHOOLS

- No statutory notifications under RIDDOR were made to the HSE in 2021-22 in respect of school employees.
- 204 incident reports were raised by school employees during 2021-22, a minor increase of 4% over the previous year. For the second performance year in a row the significant decrease in overall reporting from pre-pandemic levels from 501 incidents recorded in 2019-2020.
- Consistently a large number of incidents, 80%, were directly attributable to a special school catering for pupils with moderate, severe, or profound learning needs, many of whom have associated sensory motor and/or behavioral difficulties including autism spectrum disorder. Where the outcome of an incident involved injury, most were of a minor nature e.g. a scratch, bruise or temporary discomfort. A positive reporting culture is critical to this school's ongoing development of tailored pupil behaviour and support plans designed to protect staff and pupils alike. The staff at the school are trained in Team Teach methods, a training programme aimed at managing challenging behaviours through positive interventions.
- Against a positive three-year downward trend, there was a slight increase in 2021-22 in relation to the number of school employee reports of slip, trip and fall incidents, 14 compared to the previous year's 12. The primary hazard trend in this category related to poor housekeeping, for example, wet or slippery floors and trips whilst assisting activities and pupils in outdoor play areas. Slips and trips are the most common cause of injuries at work within school environments. This type of incident is preventable, not inevitable, and the Schools Workforce and Health and Safety Committee continues to look at ways of raising awareness of the hazards amongst employees and the role that everyone must play in preventing slip and trip injuries in the workplace.
- One school related RIDDOR notification was made during 2021-22 in respect of a person who was not an employee. The pupil swallowed a small metal clip leading to

choking when the object becoming lodged in their throat requiring them to attend hospital to remove the object. This was a unique incident, but an investigation was undertaken to ensure that all hazards were clearly identified and controls are in place so that risks are effectively controlled.

- The 2021-22 annual report highlights the completion of the Schools Seeking Assurance Programme which highlighted areas of improvement around monitoring and recording of and safety improvement plans were issued to the Headteacher of each community school. An assurance report has been presented to the Schools Workforce and Health and Safety Committee to develop where trends were identified across all community schools which has resulted in the development of a strategic improvement plan
- In response to an HSE inspection the Council's asbestos management framework was strengthened and made more practical; training was provided to Headteachers to support its implementation.

Corporate Health and Safety Priorities for 2021-22

- Based on the findings of the 2021-22 health and safety assurance programme in schools, to work in conjunction with the Schools Workforce and Health and Safety Committee to develop and follow through on the strategic improvement plan.
- Development of a Corporate Health and Safety Board to oversee the delivery of health and safety measures in the protection of our employees and customers by working with the Corporate Works Council and Schools Workforce Committee as bodies for consultation.
- Focus on the development of directors, managers and staff through further training in health and safety.
- Delivery in 2022-23 the health and safety assurance programme for service and corporate property following the same two-stage self-evaluation at local service level and assurance visit from the health and safety team to confirm compliance and that suitable and sufficient arrangements are in place and that risks are being effectively controlled.
- To strengthen the policies and arrangements relating to lone working and violence at work towards Council employees, including threats and abuse directed at our staff through social media and other remote channels

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS OF THE RECOMMENDATION

The Council faces severe funding pressures, particularly in the face of the COVID-19 crisis. The Financial implication of the health and safety strategy have been met through current revenue and so no further financial recommendations are required at this point.

	How much will it Cost/ (Save)	Is there sufficient funding – if not quantify the Shortfall	Revenue or Capital?
Current Financial Year (Year 1)	0	Yes	
Next Financial Year (Year 2)	0	Yes	
Following Financial Year (Year 3)	0	Yes	

Other Financial Information

A failure to comply with statutory duties has the potential to lead to both criminal and civil fines, prosecution costs and enforcement recovery costs.

Stakeholder Considerations and Consultation

Not Applicable

Public Sector Equality Duty

Due regard has been given to WBC's Public Sector Equality Duties.

Climate Emergency – This Council has declared a climate emergency and is committed to playing as full a role as possible – leading by example as well as by exhortation – in achieving a carbon neutral Wokingham Borough by 2030

Not Applicable

Reasons for considering the report in Part 2

Not Applicable

List of Background Papers

The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 and 'Managing for Health and Safety' (HSG65), a guide for employers published by the HSE.

Contact Laurence McCammick	Service Place and Growth/HR
Telephone 07801664618	Email Laurence.McCammick@wokingham.gov.uk

TITLE	Local Bus Services
FOR CONSIDERATION BY	The Executive on Thursday, 29 September 2022
WARD	None Specific;
LEAD OFFICER	Director, Place and Growth - Steve Moore
LEAD MEMBER	Executive Member for Active Travel, Transport and Highways - Paul Fishwick

PURPOSE OF REPORT (INC STRATEGIC OUTCOMES)

Existing local bus contracts have come to their natural end. The contracts must be retendered if local bus services, which are not commercially sustainable, continue to be provided and financially supported by the Council.

Providing local bus services benefits residents as follows:

- provides access to key services and amenities,
- enables access to employment and education
- reduces social exclusion,
- provides residents with a choice in the way that they travel,
- contributes to tackling the climate change emergency and
- helps improve air quality and
- helps reduce congestion on local roads

RECOMMENDATION

That the Executive:

- 1) gives approval for officers to go out to tender for local bus services, serving Wokingham Town and the surrounding villages, to the villages which lie to the South of the M4, for additional evening and Sunday journeys to Arborfield and for services to the Woodley and Earley areas.
- 2) gives approval to delegate the award of the winning tender to the Director of Place and Growth assuming the winning tender meets the allocated budget and service specification.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Local Bus Service contracts, currently operated by Thames Valley Buses and Reading Buses, have come to their natural end, and need to be retendered. The Council is also aware that the 19b bus service which operates in Lower Earley, is no longer financially viable and a replacement service will need to be procured if it is to continue. Permission is sort to go out to tender to allow for the continued provision of local bus services within the existing budget.

Any services procured for April 2023 will need to be procured within the Council's existing budget for these local bus services, which is £753,000 per annum, or just under £2.5m over a 3-year contract term once taking account of inflation. The Council will request bids from operators which are within the existing budget. The level of service requested will be the same as that operating on 5th September 2022.

The next steps are:

- October 2022 – Draft tender documents
- November 2022 – Tenders out for bidding by operators
- December 2022 – Evaluation of tender bids
- January 2023 – Award of tenders & start of mobilisation period
- February 2023 & March 2023 – Mobilisation period
- April 2023 – Start of new services

BACKGROUND

The Council's budget for contracted local bus services in and around Wokingham Town, to the villages which lie to the South of the M4, to the Woodley and Earley areas, along with Twyford, Sonning, Hurst, Charvil, Winnersh, Emmbrook, Woosehill and the Norreys Estate is £753,000. The budget will be increased as appropriately to reflect inflation over a proposed three-year contract term.

In addition to the above areas, the 19b service from Lower Earley to the Royal Berkshire Hospital and into Reading has been identified as no longer commercially viable. The 19b service is currently being operated under an emergency contract until 1st April 2023 by Reading Buses. The 19b service will need to be included within the package of routes put out for tender.

Local bus services serving the above areas facilitate over 1 million passenger trips per year between them (annualised based on February 2022 data). A package of revised services must be retendered for April 2023.

Bus operators who are registered on Lot 10 of the Council's Dynamic Purchasing System for Transport Services will be invited to bid on the tender package. Officers will evaluate all valid bids which meet the available budget and tender specification. The Executive are being asked to delegate the tender award for the winning bid to the Director of Place and Growth.

BUSINESS CASE

There are four distinct areas where bus services need to be considered. The routes which serve each of the four areas are detailed below. Operator will be asked to either submit individual bids for all the routes within each area or combine one or more areas to allow for a more efficient operation. In all cases bids will need meet the tender specification and available budget to be considered valid. Operators will be permitted to submit as many bids as they wish.

Wokingham Town and Surrounding Areas –

- 121 Norreys Estate to Wokingham Town
- 122/3 Woosehill & Emmbrook to Wokingham Town
- 124 Easthampstead Road to Wokingham Town
- 125 Wokingham Without & Crowthorne to Wokingham Town)
- 125 Wokingham Town & Crowthorne to Meadows (Saturday only)
- 127 Reading and Twyford to Maidenhead (Saturday only)
- 128 Reading, Woodley, Sonning, Charvil, Twyford, Hurst and Winnersh to Wokingham Town

Villages South of the M4 – (Shinfield, Spencerswood, Swallowfield and Riseley)

- 600 Riseley & Swallowfield to Reading / Shinfield & Spencer Wood to Reading (formally served by Leopard 8, Leopard 9 and Tiger 7)

Woodley and Earley – (Maiden Erleigh, North Earley, Lower Earley and Woodley)

- 19a/c Woodley and Maiden Erleigh to Reading
- 19b Lower Earley to Reading

Arborfield

- 3 Reading to Arborfield (evenings and Sundays only)

Details of passenger numbers, operational costs, and revenues, as of February 2022, are included in Part 2 for each of the above routes.

It should be noted that in all cases it cannot be guaranteed which operator will win any future tender or the tender prices which are likely to be achieved. There is always a risk of achieving no appropriate bids. This risk is minimised by requesting that operators consider the available budget and by providing a clear tender specification.

Next Steps

- October 2022 – Draft tender documents
- November 2022 – Tenders out for bidding by operators
- December 2022 – Evaluation of tender bids
- January 2023 – tender awards and start of mobilisation period
- February 2023 & March 2023 –mobilisation period
- April 2023 – Start of new services

Expected Outcomes

An appropriate competitive tender is undertaken in accordance with procurement regulations. Full consideration is given to the available budget and the level of service required.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS OF THE RECOMMENDATION

The Council faces severe funding pressures, particularly in the face of the COVID-19 crisis. It is therefore imperative that Council resources are focused on the vulnerable and on its highest priorities.

	How much will it Cost/ (Save)	Is there sufficient funding – if not quantify the Shortfall	Revenue or Capital?
Current Financial Year (Year 1)	£0	n/a	n/a
Next Financial Year (Year 2)	Cost £0	n/a	n/a
Following Financial Year (Year 3)	Cost £0	n/a	n/a

Other Financial Information

If decisions are not approved then there will either be a gap in service and therefore a period when no spend occurs on contracted bus services, or contracts will need to be renegotiated with current suppliers. which risks higher prices than maybe secured through a competitive tender. By reducing local bus services, there maybe negative financial impacts on other Council budgets such as Home to School Transport budgets and Adult Social Care budgets.

Stakeholder Considerations and Consultation

Further engagement will be undertaken with the relevant Town and Parish Councils.

Public Sector Equality Duty
An Equalities Assessments will need to be carried on any options which return to Executive.

Climate Emergency – <i>This Council has declared a climate emergency and is committed to playing as full a role as possible – leading by example as well as by exhortation – in achieving a carbon neutral Wokingham Borough by 2030</i>
By approving the procurement of local bus services this reduces the risk of bus services being withdrawn and therefore the risk of more residents travelling by private car. An increase in private car trips would have a detrimental effect on the Council’s ability to achieve the objective of a carbon neutral Borough by 2030.

Reasons for considering the report in Part 2
Part 2 contains commercially sensitive commercial data which has been provided by local bus operators following the signing of a Non-Disclosure Agreement.

List of Background Papers
Part 2 – Commercially Sensitive Data

Contact Rebecca Brooks	Service Place
Telephone Tel: 0118 908 8302	Email rebecca.brooks@wokingham.gov.uk

This page is intentionally left blank

By virtue of paragraph(s) 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A
of the Local Government Act 1972.

Document is Restricted

This page is intentionally left blank

TITLE	Proposal to change the number of supplied blue refuse bags to properties in the Borough from February 2023
FOR CONSIDERATION BY	The Executive on Thursday, 29 September 2022
WARD	None Specific;
LEAD OFFICER	Director, Place and Growth - Steve Moore
LEAD MEMBER	Executive Member for Environment and Leisure - Cllr Ian Shenton

PURPOSE OF REPORT (INC STRATEGIC OUTCOMES)

To set out how the Council will tackle financial pressures and drive forward its waste minimisation, recycling and carbon reduction commitments. This will be achieved either by reducing the number of blue bags provided to properties for refuse from 80 to 54 bags per year or ceasing the supply of blue bags to properties.

RECOMMENDATION

That The Executive either:

- i) Option 1: Approve the proposed change of policy from supplying 80 blue bags for refuse to 54 blue bags for refuse per annum to all properties (including larger households) OR
- ii) Option 2: Approve stopping the annual supply of all blue bags to all properties

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In light of the Council's financial situation and commitment to improving environmental performance (including the Climate Emergency), two household waste management proposals have been submitted in order to address these key pressures.

In June 2010, the Council's Executive agreed a policy to supply the Borough's properties a maximum of 80 blue bags for the containment of non-recyclable household refuse. However, there are immediate financial and environmental pressures which need to be addressed in order to meet targets and drive best practice.

A recent blue bag composition review showed that nearly 57% of the refuse thrown away is recyclable either through the kerbside green bag scheme, food waste caddies or via the Household Waste Recycling Centres (HWRC's). The approximate cost of disposing of this valuable material is c.£1m which, on average, is 65% more expensive than recycling. Additionally, once this material is disposed of, it will contribute to carbon emissions and ultimately it cannot be used again.

The first proposal is to encourage residents to maximise the use of the existing comprehensive recycling services by reducing the number of supplied blue bags for refuse from 80 to 54 per annum. This adjustment will not only help with the financial pressure but contribute to meeting the climate emergency objectives.

The second option to consider is for no blue bags to be distributed to residents. This would mean residents would purchase their own bags for the containment of their rubbish.

Any delays to the decision will result in the bags not being ordered at the beginning of October 2022. This will mean the opportunity to improve the Councils environmental and financial performance will be missed until February 2024 when this can be reviewed.

BACKGROUND

Wokingham Borough Council has a good track record of waste management with over 54% of rubbish being recycled in 2021/22. New initiatives have helped drive this forward including the food waste service implementation in 2019 which is used, but not to the full extent it could be. Additionally, communications and engagement campaigns have been pivotal to further capture more recyclable material and generally inform residents of climate change impacts.

However, there are now financial and environmental pressures which must be addressed. The cost of plastic has escalated dramatically, so that maintaining an unchanged number of blue bags is not affordable within the budget. Additionally, each year thousands of tonnes of recyclable material are disposed of in the blue bags, costing over £1m a year in excess disposal fees, contributing to carbon emissions and it means that this valuable material can never be used again.

A recent compositional analysis of the blue bags collected in Wokingham Borough showed that nearly 57% of the contained material could be recycled at the kerbside (green bags or food waste) or via the Household Waste Recycling Centre's (HWRC's). Therefore, there is a significant opportunity to capture more recycling and disposing less non-recyclable material through the existing comprehensive recycling services. A reduction in the blue bags for non-recyclable refuse is a natural progression to encourage a more positive recycling behaviour change.

The proposal is to reduce the number of supplied blue bags to properties from 80 to 54. This will stay within budget and encourage residents to maximise the use of the existing comprehensive kerbside recycling scheme and to a lesser extent at the HWRC's.

To further increase savings, which may have an adverse impact on recycling performance, a secondary option is to cease the supply of blue bags to all properties in the borough.

BUSINESS CASE

It is clear that the annually increasing cost of disposal, along with the increased price of plastic to produce the bags as well as the loss of recyclables, is both environmentally and financially unviable.

Option 1: Reducing the number of bags from 80 to 54

In terms of the savings, Table 1 below outlines the reduction of blue bags and associated estimated savings, in the form of cost avoidance.

Number of bags	Total cost per year
80 bags	£463,000
54 bags	£314,000
Saving	£149,000

Table 1: Estimated financial savings as a result of reducing number of bags

Further to the saving as a result of bag reduction, there will be a saving as a result of more recyclable material being diverted from the blue bags as detailed in Table 2 below:

Potential diversion of recyclables from blue bags	Potential saving (recycled rather than disposed of) per annum
10%	£101,471
25%	£253,670
50%	£507,356
100%	£1,014,712

Table 2: Potential saving from diverting recyclables from blue bags to green bags etc

Additional recycling will be captured; however, it is difficult to quantify the amount which could be realised. Capturing all 100% of the recyclable material (57% of current blue bags contents) in the blue bags may not be practical in the shorter term and an estimated amount for the first year is likely to be 10%. It is expected that the amount of recycling captured will rise as residents recycling behaviours change.

In addition to this, there is the opportunity for realising an income for the sale of recyclables. This is to be determined as it is dependent on factors that cannot be predicted including market prices.

To assist with communicating the change, it is proposed a £50k fund is set aside which will be raised through the savings above. This will enable greater targeted reach to low recycling areas and support for residents which will also include home visits if required.

Option 2:

Ceasing the supply of all blue bags in the borough

The saving from not supplying the blue bags for all properties in the borough is around £463,000 per year as outlined in Table 3 below.

Number of bags	Total cost per year
80 bags	£463,000

Table 3: The saving from not supplying the blue bags to all properties in the borough

It is also proposed that a £50k fund is set aside for this option, which will be raised through the savings above. This will enable greater targeted reach to low recycling areas and support for residents which will also include home visits if required.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS OF THE RECOMMENDATION

The Council faces severe funding pressures, particularly in the face of the COVID-19 crisis. It is therefore imperative that Council resources are focused on the vulnerable and on its highest priorities.

	How much will it Cost/ (Save)	Is there sufficient funding – if not quantify the Shortfall	Revenue or Capital?
Current Financial 2022/23 (Year 1)	£0		
Next Financial Year 2023/24 (Year 2)	<p>Option 1: Reducing the amount of blue bags from 80 to 54:</p> <p>(£149,000 plus £101,471 plus unknown additional income)</p> <p>£50,000 cost for communications campaign</p> <p>Option 2: Stopping the supply of blue bags for all properties in the borough</p> <p>(£463,000)</p> <p>£50,000 cost for communications campaign</p>	Yes	Revenue
Following Financial Year 2024/25 (Year 3)	£0		

Other Financial Information

Do nothing

- To do nothing and keep 80 blue bags with the same projected recycling behaviours would cost in the region of £463,000 for 2023. Reducing the number of bags to 54 would save £149,000. If 80 bags were to continue, this would result in an additional budget pressure of around £149,000 each year and many thousands of tonnes of valuable recyclable material being disposed of.

Stakeholder Considerations and Consultation

Stakeholder consultation and consideration has been assessed as part of this report. In 2017, WBC undertook a waste and recycling consultation which set out to gain insight into resident's waste and recycling opinions. 95% of residents stated that it was important to increase recycling and reduce landfill. A further 97% stated that it was important to reduce the impact on our environment.

In 2021 a borough wide waste and recycling consultation was undertaken, and most residents stated that the environmental benefits were their primary concern. Over 95% of residents stated that it was 'very important' or 'important' to reduce the amount of waste produced.

It is clear from these surveys that there is a desire to improve our recycling and minimise waste as much as possible in the borough.

Public Sector Equality Duty

A Full Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) has been undertaken and this has highlighted further consideration for those residents that have additional rubbish from medical waste which can be disposed of in blue bags rather than specialist clinical collection.

It is proposed that residents which generate additional waste due to medical needs and maybe affected by this proposal to contact the Council for further support.

Currently larger households can receive additional blue bags. However, as nearly 57% of the content of a blue bag is recyclable and if this material is diverted to the green bags, it is likely that there will be sufficient existing space for the containment of general rubbish in one blue bag per week. Extra green recycling bags are available and can be ordered online or via Customer Services. It is therefore proposed as part of the approval that the current policy of additional bags for larger households is stopped and residents can utilise further green bags if required. Additional support will be provided to households which require further waste management information/assistance.

Climate Emergency – This Council has declared a climate emergency and is committed to playing as full a role as possible – leading by example as well as by exhortation – in achieving a carbon neutral Wokingham Borough by 2030

This Council has declared a climate emergency and is committed to playing as full a role as possible through leading by example as well as by encouragement. This proposal will help reduce carbon and single use plastic and support the goal of the Borough reaching carbon neutral by 2030.

List of Background Papers
None

Contact Richard Bisset	Service Place
Telephone 0118 974 6000	Email richard.bisset@wokingham.gov.uk

This page is intentionally left blank

Agenda Item 36.

TITLE	Ceasing the supply of single use plastic food caddy liners
FOR CONSIDERATION BY	Executive on Thursday, 29 September 2022
WARD	None Specific;
LEAD OFFICER	Director, Place and Growth - Steve Moore
LEAD MEMBER	Executive Member for Environment and Leisure - Cllr Ian Shenton

PURPOSE OF REPORT (INC STRATEGIC OUTCOMES)

To confirm the decision for stopping the supply of caddy liners.

RECOMMENDATION

That the Executive agree ceasing the supply of caddy liners as alternatives are available.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report has been brought to Council following a 'call-in' motion by seven Members under 5.4.14 of the Council's Constitution as they consider this is a Key Decision. This was originally made as an officer decision in consultation with the Lead Member as it was not considered to qualify as a Key Decision as defined in paragraph 1.4.4 of the Constitution. As it is not clear, this report has been brought to Executive for decision.

In 2019, the food waste service was implemented with a starter pack of 100 caddy liners for one year. Although no budget was set aside, this supply continued in 2020, 2021 and 2022 as income generated by the wider service was able to accommodate this spend, however due financial pressures this is no longer financially viable.

This report sets out the decision to cease the supply of food waste caddy liners and the associated rationale.

BACKGROUND

In January 2018, The Executive approved the report for the delivery of the food waste service which was funded through both revenue and capital expenditure. The supply of caddy liners was funded through a one-off capital receipt in the first year to start the service and was not intended to continue thereafter. The day-to-day operation of the service was funded through revenue.

In 2019, seven million caddy liners were distributed to residents as part of the implementation of the new food waste collection service. Each property received a starter pack of 100 liners to support residents with the transition.

Income to the waste service has subsequently enabled the supply of caddy liners to properties since 2019. However now due to financial and environmental pressures this income from the waste service can no longer be realised.

Financial reasons for the Change:

There is no specific budget for caddy liners as set out in Paper 2 of the January 2018 report. The estimated cost of the caddy liners for 2022/23 has escalated dramatically to around £120k, reflecting crude oil price increases.

The funding as set out in Paper 2 of the 2018 report states that there is only £500,000 one off cost for containers and liners as Table 1 below:

	How much will it Cost/ (Save)	Is there sufficient funding – if not quantify the Shortfall	Revenue or Capital?
Current Financial Year (Year 1)	£0	Yes	Not Applicable
Next Financial Year (Year 2)	£0	Yes	Not Applicable
Following Financial Year (Year 3 2019/20)	£500,000 one-off cost for containers & kitchen caddies, etc.	Yes	Capital

Table 1: Extract taken from January 2018 report

There has not been any specific budget for the supply of kitchen caddy liners beyond 2019 and there is no specific policy in place to supply going forwards. Although there is no specific budget, stopping the supply of caddy liners will save the current cost.

Environmental reasons for the change:

The Council has included reducing single use plastics as an initiative under the Climate Emergency and has tasked the Executive Member for Environment to deliver this (para 5.2.10.26). It is considered that this decision aligns with that initiative as currently the Council uses seven million single-use liners per year. Those that are used to line food waste caddies are removed during the composting process and incinerated with attendant greenhouse gas emissions.

The impact of the change is minor as the kitchen caddy can be lined with other items i.e. bread bags, cereal packets, newspaper etc and ultimately there is no requirement for it to be lined at all (residents can wash the caddy if required).

There is a perception that there could be a drop of collected food waste if the caddy liners are not supplied. However, a strong communications campaign will be undertaken to highlight the issue of food waste in the blue bags (c.20%) and move this to the food caddies. The Council’s waste team will also support residents with advice where required.

The weekly collection of food waste will continue, and it was not envisaged that the caddy liners would be supplied beyond the first year. There are simply financial and environmental issues that have to be addressed

Key Decisions:

The original decision was made by officers on Friday 15 July 2022 after consultation with the Lead Member. The decision was not considered to qualify as a key decision as stipulated in parts 1.4.4 the Council’s Constitution.

However, seven councillors did not consider this was correct and elected to use the constitutional review mechanism within part 5.4.14. This would require Council to consider the point on the 22 September 2022 and if full Council determined it was a Key Decision then it would have required the decision maker to redetermine the decision after following the Key Decision process.

Officers do not consider that this is Key Decision under the Constitution but recognise that it is not clear and so have made the pragmatic decision (in response to the constitution review) to withdraw the original decision and bring this to Executive following the Key Decision process.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS OF THE RECOMMENDATION

The Council faces severe funding pressures, particularly in the face of the COVID-19 crisis. It is therefore imperative that Council resources are focused on the vulnerable and on its highest priorities.

Although there is no specific budget allocated for the supply of caddy liners, there would be a cost saving which would amount to around £120k per annum.

	How much will it Cost/ (Save)	Is there sufficient funding – if not quantify the Shortfall	Revenue or Capital?
Current Financial 2022/23 (Year 1)	£0		
Next Financial Year 2023/24 (Year 2)	c.£120k cost saving		
Following Financial Year 2024/25 (Year 3)	c.£120k cost saving		

Other Financial Information
Although there is no specific budget allocated for the supply of caddy liners, there would be a cost avoidance <u>saving</u> which would amount to around £120k per annum.

Stakeholder Considerations and Consultation
Stakeholder consideration has been assessed as part of this report. The impact of the change is minor as the kitchen caddy can be lined with other bags i.e. bread bags, newspaper etc and ultimately there is no requirement for it to be lined. A robust targeted communications campaign to highlight that over 20% of the blue bags is food waste and encourage moving this to the food waste caddies.

Public Sector Equality Duty
This has been completed with no impact determined.

Climate Emergency – <i>This Council has declared a climate emergency and is committed to playing as full a role as possible – leading by example as well as by exhortation – in achieving a carbon neutral Wokingham Borough by 2030</i>
This Council has declared a climate emergency and is committed to playing as full a role as possible through leading by example as well as by encouragement. This proposal will help reduce carbon and single use plastic and support the goal of the Borough reaching carbon neutral by 2030

Reasons for considering the report in Part 2
N/A

List of Background Papers
None

Contact Richard Bisset	Service Place
Telephone	Email richard.bisset@wokingham.gov.uk

TITLE	Twyford Neighbourhood Development Plan – Regulation 16 Consultation And Future Examination
FOR CONSIDERATION BY	The Executive on Thursday, 29 September 2022
WARD	Twyford;
LEAD OFFICER	Director, Place and Growth - Steve Moore
LEAD MEMBER	Executive Member for Planning and Local Plan - Lindsay Ferris

PURPOSE OF REPORT (INC STRATEGIC OUTCOMES)

Twyford Parish Council has produced a draft Neighbourhood Plan which proposes a series of planning policies that will work alongside the council's local plan to manage development.

This report seeks approval to consult on the draft Plan and procure an independent examiner, who will subsequently examine the draft Plan, which includes considering all the representations submitted during the consultation. Consultation and examination are requirements of the governing regulations.

RECOMMENDATION

That the Executive:

- 1) approve a 6-week consultation on the draft Twyford Neighbourhood Plan (Appendix A); and
- 2) agrees to appoint an examiner to independently examine the draft Twyford Neighbourhood Plan, delegating the appointment and submission of the examination documentation to the Director of Place and Growth in consultation with the Lead Member for Planning and Local Plan.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Twyford Parish Council has produced a draft Neighbourhood Development Plan (Appendix A) ***(due to the size of this document it is not included in the agenda. A copy can be found on the website or made available on request through Democratic Services)*** which if progressed to being made (adopted) will sit alongside the council's planning policies to help shape how development is managed in their area. The submission draft Plan contains a number of policies on issues including housing (including First Homes); climate change mitigation; the natural, built and historic environment; community facilities; retail centres and active travel and highways. The submission draft Plan does not include any site allocations for development.

In addition, the submission draft Plan is supported by two key pieces of technical evidence: a Housing Needs Assessment (Appendix B) and a Design Guidelines and Code report (Appendix C).

In accordance with the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 (as amended), the council must carry out a minimum six-week consultation on the

submission draft Plan to invite comments from the public, statutory consultees, and interested parties and must arrange for an independent examination to take place. This report seeks approval to carry out the required publication and consultation and to appoint an examiner to undertake the necessary examination. If approved, the consultation could take place from Monday 10 October to Monday 21 November 2022.

At the current stage, the council is not required to reach a formal view on whether the submission draft Plan meets the basic conditions¹, but must be satisfied that the proper legal process has been carried out. Officers have been engaged with the parish council throughout its preparation. Several of the matters raised by officers have been addressed, with any remaining issues capable of being for the examiner to determine through the examination process. To raise these matters the council will need to submit formal representations to the proposed draft Plan consultation. The council's comments do not fall within the scope of this recommended Executive decision but will be agreed via the Individual Executive Member Decision process. The types of comments that the council will wish to make are as follows:

- Identifying areas where draft policy diverges from the council's adopted Core Strategy and Managing Development Delivery local plans and supplementary guidance.
- Identifying where supporting evidence to some draft policy areas is considered by the council to be insufficient. Examples previously highlighted as areas of concern to the parish council include the deliverability and implementation of requirements in the submission draft Plan, including Policy TW10 (Zero Carbon Buildings)
- Identifying areas where greater clarity would aid decision takers.
- General phraseology amendments of policy and supporting text to improve clarity and application of policy.

The costs of undertaking the consultation and examination can be met from the existing revenue budget, subject to recovery from government grant.

For clarity, any post examination processes and programmes will be subject to a further decision of the council's Executive and Full Council.

Upon adoption, the Twyford Neighbourhood Plan will form part of the statutory development plan alongside the council's local plans and be part of the starting point for the determination of planning applications and appeals in or affecting Twyford Parish. Once adopted, the parish council will also benefit from receipt of 25% of the revenues from the Community Infrastructure Levy arising from the development that takes place in their area thereafter. This reflects a 10% increase on the 15% available to parish councils where there is no neighbourhood plan in place.

¹ As can be seen at: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/neighbourhood-planning--2#basic-conditions-for-neighbourhood-plan-to-referendum>

BACKGROUND

Neighbourhood Planning

Neighbourhood planning was introduced through the Localism Act 2011 and is a means for local communities to take the lead on shaping how their area is developed. Communities can prepare Neighbourhood Development Plans (often referred to as Neighbourhood Plans) which set out specific planning policies to help shape and guide development in their area.

The broad stages in producing a neighbourhood plan are as follows:

- 1) Designating a neighbourhood area
- 2) Preparing a draft neighbourhood development plan
- 3) Pre-submission publicity & consultation
- 4) Submission of a neighbourhood development plan to the local planning authority
- 5) Submission draft plan consultation
- 6) Independent examination
- 7) Referendum
- 8) Bringing the neighbourhood development plan into force

This report seeks approval to undertake stages 5 and 6 for the draft neighbourhood development plan produced by Twyford Parish Council.

Twyford Neighbourhood Plan progress to date

Twyford Parish Council began work on producing a neighbourhood development plan (hereafter referred to as the draft Plan) shortly after being designated a neighbourhood area by the council in August 2018. The parish council undertook a consultation on their pre-submission draft Plan (Regulation 14) in April to May 2022.

Working with the council officers, the parish council has considered the consultation responses on the pre-submission draft Plan and has made a number of amendments. The parish council subsequently submitted the submission draft Plan to the council.

Under the regulations governing neighbourhood development plans, the council is now required to publicise the submission draft Plan for consultation and arrange an independent examination.

The submission draft Plan contains policies on issues including housing (including First Homes); climate change mitigation, the natural, built and historic environment; community facilities; retail centres and active travel and highways. The submission draft Plan does not allocate land for development.

The submission draft Plan is supported by two key pieces of technical evidence: a Housing Needs Assessment (Appendix B) and a Design Guidelines and Codes report (Appendix C).

The Housing Needs Assessment, produced by AECOM, provides local evidence to support the policies regarding the future development of housing in Twyford Parish.

The Design Guidelines and Codes report, also produced by AECOM, identifies the key and distinctive features of Twyford Parish and sets out some guiding principles to

ensure that any future development proposals respond to and contribute to the local character and distinctiveness of the area.

Analysis of Issues

Whilst the early stages in the preparation of a neighbourhood development plan are led by the parish council, the governing regulations requires the later stages to be managed by the council as the local planning authority.

Now that the submission draft Plan has been received, the council must publicise it for a minimum regulatory six-week consultation and invite representations (known as the Regulation 16 consultation).²

Concurrent with the consultation, the council will need to appoint an examiner to undertake the subsequent stage of independent examination. The examiner's role will be to independently test whether the submission draft Plan meets the basic conditions³, and other matters set out in regulations⁴.

The examination will take place following the consultation, and typically take place via written representations without the need for a public hearing. Where additional points of clarity are required by the examiner, these can be sent to the examiner in writing and made publicly available by the council. Where necessary however, examiners may hold hearing sessions to assist their consideration of specific issues.

The approval of Executive is requested to publish the submission draft Plan for consultation and begin the process of appointing an examiner. An examiner will be appointed using the Neighbourhood Planning Independent Examiner Referral Service (NPIERS). This service allows for a shortlist of highly experienced examiners to be provided to the council and parish council, who will then jointly decide who to appoint based on an assessment of their application and CV. All NPIERS examiners carry a standard daily fee.

The council is not required at this time to come to a formal view on whether or not the submission draft Plan meets the basic conditions but must be satisfied that the proper legal process has been carried out. Officers have been actively engaged with the parish council throughout the various stages in the preparation of the draft Plan. Several of the matters raised by officers have been addressed, with any remaining matters capable of being considered by the examiner through the examination process. To raise these matters the council will need to submit formal representations to the proposed consultation. The council's comments do not fall within the scope of this Executive decision but will be agreed via the Individual Executive Member Decision process in due course. The types of comments that the council will wish to make are as follows:

- Identifying areas where neighbourhood plan policy diverges from the council's adopted Core Strategy and Managing Development Delivery local plans and supplementary guidance.

² Of the [Neighbourhood Planning \(General\) Regulations 2012 \(as amended\)](#)

³ As can be seen at: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/neighbourhood-planning--2#basic-conditions-for-neighbourhood-plan-to-referendum>

⁴ paragraph 8 of Schedule 4B to the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended)

- Identifying where supporting evidence to some policy areas is considered by the council to be insufficient. Examples previously highlighted as areas of concern to the parish council include the deliverability and implementation of certain policy requirements in the submission draft Plan, including Policy TW10 (Zero Carbon Buildings).
- Identifying areas where greater clarity would aid decision takers.
- General phraseology amendments of policy and supporting text to improve clarity and application of policy.

This report recommends that Executive approve the publication and consultation on the submission draft Plan and the approval to appoint an examiner.

Consultation

Subject to the approval of Executive, consultation could be undertaken from Monday 10 October to Monday 21 November 2022. The submission draft Plan will be publicised and documents made available in accordance with the council's Statement of Community Involvement⁵.

Future steps

Following the publication of the submission draft Plan, there is no prescribed timeframe in which an independent examination should take place. It will be at the examiner's discretion whether or not any hearings are required to consider aspects of the draft Plan. If hearings are required, this is likely to increase the time and cost of the examination process.

Following the examination process, the examiner will make recommendations on any changes that are required in order for the submission draft Plan to satisfy the basic conditions and advise whether it should proceed to the next stage of a referendum. Following receipt of the examiner's report, the council will need to consider the recommendations and decide what action to take. This includes coming to a formal view on whether the submission draft Plan meets the basic conditions and whether to accept or not the examiner's recommended modifications. If the council agrees the plan meets the basic conditions, it will be responsible for arranging and holding the referendum on whether the draft Plan should be made and use alongside the wider development plan as the starting point for determining planning applications and appeals. A referendum could take place later in autumn 2022.

Should more than half of those voting in a referendum do so in favour of making the draft Plan, a neighbourhood development plan is required to be adopted.

For clarity, any post examination processes and programmes will be subject to a further decision of the Executive and Council. As set out in this report, the current recommendations relate solely to carrying out consultation on the submission draft Plan under Regulation 16 and the process to appoint an examiner to undertake the examination.

⁵ Which can be viewed on the Council's website: <http://www.wokingham.gov.uk/planning-policy/planning-policy-information/local-plan-and-planning-policies/>

BUSINESS CASE

Need for the decision

In accordance with the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 (as amended), the council must carry out a minimum six-week consultation on the submission draft Plan to invite comments from the public, statutory consultees, and interested parties. It must also arrange for an independent examination to take place. The current recommendation facilitates the council carrying out its legal duties.

Alternative options

There is no alternative option that could be considered for taking the submission draft Plan forward to being made (adoption).

Risks

No risks are apparent to progressing the submission draft Plan to consultation and examination.

With regard to future stages beyond the scope of this report, the main risk is whether the submission draft Plan will be found through the examination process to meet the basic conditions. This risk is considered to be low with officers having been actively engaged with the parish council throughout its preparation. Issues raised by officers have, for the most part, largely been addressed through the drafting process. Outstanding issues can reasonably be addressed by the examiner through the examination process. To do this, the council will need to submit formal representations on the submission draft Plan in the same way as other stakeholders. The council's comments will be agreed in consultation with the Executive Member for Planning and Enforcement via the Individual Executive Member Decision process.

Expected outcome

The outcome of recommendation to Executive is that a successful consultation is carried out in accordance with legal requirements and that the draft Plan proceeds to examination.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS OF THE RECOMMENDATION

	How much will it Cost/ (Save)	Is there sufficient funding – if not quantify the Shortfall	Revenue or Capital?
Current Financial Year (Year 1)	Nil.	Yes, due to cost recovery through grant funding from government.	Revenue
Next Financial Year (Year 2)	No additional cost with the project expected to be completed.	Not applicable.	Not applicable
Following Financial Year (Year 3)	No additional cost expected with the	Not applicable.	Not applicable

	project expected to be completed		
--	----------------------------------	--	--

Other Financial Information
<p>The council is required to fund the examination and referendum up front, however once the referendum is successfully arranged an application for grant funding of £20,000 can be submitted. In the short term the recommendation of this report can be met from existing revenue budget.</p> <p>Once a neighbourhood development plan is made (adopted), the parish council will benefit from receipt of 25% of the revenues from the Community Infrastructure Levy arising from the development that takes place in their area. This reflects a 10% increase on the 15% available to parish councils where there is no neighbourhood plan in place.</p>

Stakeholder Considerations and Consultation
Consultation to be carried out for minimum 6 weeks as set out in main body of text.

Public Sector Equality Duty
An Equalities Impact Screening Report Form is set out in Appendix D to the report.

Climate Emergency – <i>This Council has declared a climate emergency and is committed to playing as full a role as possible – leading by example as well as by exhortation – in achieving a carbon neutral Wokingham Borough by 2030</i>
The submission Plan includes a range of policies which provide additional detail to complement policies in the Core Strategy (2010) and Managing Development Delivery (MDD) local plans. Specific policies include maximising opportunities for walking and cycling, protecting and enhancing existing green infrastructure assets and sustainable design and construction.

List of Background Papers
<p>Appendix A: Twyford Draft Neighbourhood Plan <i>(Due to the size of this document it is not included in the agenda but can be made available on request through Democratic Services or through the website as a background paper)</i></p> <p>Appendix B: Twyford Draft Neighbourhood Plan - Housing Needs Assessment</p> <p>Appendix C: Twyford Draft Neighbourhood Plan - Design Guidelines and Codes</p> <p>Appendix D: Equalities Impact Screening Report Form</p> <p>Other relevant non-background papers are also available on request, for example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Basic Conditions Statement • Consultation Statement

Contact Ben Davis	Service Delivery and Infrastructure
Telephone Tel: 07824545226	Email Ben.Davis@wokingham.gov.uk

This page is intentionally left blank

Twyford Neighbourhood Plan

Housing Needs Assessment (HNA)

April 2022

Twyford Neighbourhood Plan Housing Needs Assessment

Quality information

Prepared by	Checked by	Approved by
Laurie Marriott Graduate Urban Planner	Paul Avery Principal Housing Consultant	Paul Avery Principal Housing Consultant

Revision History

Revision	Revision date	Details	Authorized	Name	Position
1	December 2021	First Draft	LM	Laurie Marriott	Graduate Urban Planner
2	December 2021	Internal Review	PA	Paul Avery	Principal Housing Consultant
3	December 2021	Second Draft	LM	Laurie Marriott	Graduate Urban Planner
4	March 2022	Group Review	LP	Lynn Povey	Assistance Clerk, Twyford Parish Council
5	April 2022	Locality Review	AO	Annabel Osborne	Neighbourhood Planning Officer, Locality
6	April 2022	Final Report	OC	Olivia Carr	Graduate Housing Consultant

Prepared for: The Neighbourhood Plan Steering Committee of Twyford Parish Council

Prepared by:

AECOM Infrastructure & Environment UK Limited
Aldgate Tower
2 Lemn Street
London E1 8FA
United Kingdom
aecom.com

© 2022 AECOM Infrastructure & Environment UK Limited. All Rights Reserved.

This document has been prepared by AECOM Infrastructure & Environment UK Limited (“AECOM”) for sole use of our client (the “Client”) in accordance with generally accepted consultancy principles, the budget for fees and the terms of reference agreed between AECOM and the Client. Any information provided by third parties and referred to herein has not been checked or verified by AECOM, unless otherwise expressly stated in the document. No third party may rely upon this document without the prior and express written agreement of AECOM.

Table of Contents

1. Executive Summary	5
Context and Approach.....	5
Tenure, Affordability and the Need for Affordable Housing	5
Type and Size	8
2. Context	11
Local context.....	11
Planning policy context.....	14
3. Approach	16
Research Questions.....	16
Relevant Data	17
4. RQ 1: Tenure, Affordability and the Need for Affordable Housing	18
Introduction	18
Current tenure profile	19
Affordability.....	20
Affordable housing- quantity needed.....	28
Conclusions- Tenure and Affordability	37
5. RQ 2: Type and Size	41
Introduction	41
Existing types and sizes	41
Age and household composition	44
Dwelling mix determined by life-stage modelling.....	48
The SHMA findings.....	52
Conclusions- Type and Size.....	53
6. Conclusions	56
Overview	56
Recommendations for next steps.....	58
Appendix A : Calculation of Affordability Thresholds	59
A.1 Assessment geography	59
A.2 Market housing.....	60
A.2.1 Market sales	60
A.2.2 Private Rented Sector (PRS).....	61
A.3 Affordable Housing	61
A.3.1 Social rent.....	62
A.3.2 Affordable rent	62
A.3.3 Affordable home ownership	63
Appendix B : Housing Needs Assessment Glossary	66
Appendix C MSOA covering Twyford Parish	78

List of acronyms used in the text:

DLUHC MHCLG)	Department for Levelling Up, Communities and Housing (formerly MHCLG)
HMA	Housing Market Area
HNA	Housing Needs Assessment
HRF	Housing Requirement Figure (the total number of homes the NA is expected to plan for, usually supplied by LPAs)
HLIN	Housing Learning and Improvement Network
HRP	Household Reference Person
LHN	Local Housing Need
LHNA	Local Housing Needs Assessment
LPA	Local Planning Authority
NA	Neighbourhood (Plan) Area
NP	Neighbourhood Plan
NPPF	National Planning Policy Framework
OA	Output Area
ONS	Office for National Statistics
PPG	Planning Practice Guidance
PRS	Private Rented Sector
RQ	Research Question
SHMA	Strategic Housing Market Assessment
TNA	Twyford Neighbourhood Area
TNP	Twyford Neighbourhood Plan
VOA	Valuation Office Agency
WBC	Wokingham Borough Council

1. Executive Summary

Context and Approach

1. This Housing Needs Assessment provides evidence to support the future development of housing in the Parish of Twyford, Wokingham.
2. The proposed Neighbourhood Plan period starts in 2022 and extends to 2036, therefore comprising a planning period of 14 years. The evidence supplied in this report will look forward to the Plan end date of 2036, but where possible will also provide annualised figures which can be extrapolated to a different term if the Plan period changes.
3. The Twyford Neighbourhood Plan is being produced in the context of the Wokingham Core Strategy and Development Plan and the emerging Local Plan.
4. This Housing Needs Assessment seeks to use the most up-to-date data possible at the time of writing the report, any discrepancies of notable points in relation to the data used have been explained in detail within the main document.
5. Two research questions were formulated to direct the assessment:
 - RQ 1: What quantity and tenures of Affordable Housing should be planned for over the Neighbourhood Plan period?
 - RQ 2: What type (terrace, semi, bungalows, flats and detached) and size (number of bedrooms) of housing is appropriate for the Plan area over the Neighbourhood Plan period?

Tenure, Affordability and the Need for Affordable Housing

6. The Parish of Twyford has a rate of home ownership which is broadly consistent with Wokingham, though considerably higher than that seen across England; when focusing on shared ownership tenures, Twyford's figure is slightly lower than England and more significantly lower than that seen in Wokingham. Of those who rent, the majority are in private rented accommodation, with a significantly lower than nationally average proportion of people living in social rented accommodation.
7. House prices in the area have steadily increased since 2011, with the most pronounced increases seen in terraced and semi-detached properties. Setting this in the context of incomes in the Parish, households are on average likely to earn approximately £72,600 (2018), though lower quartile earners may earn significantly less at approximately £36,148 per household (assuming two lower quartile earners living in one household).

8. Focusing on affordability thresholds, no affordable or market tenure options are likely to be considered to be affordable for those single-earning (£18,074) lower quartile households, when accounting for potential lower quartile earners from households with two earners, affordable or social rented tenures may be affordable, but ownership options are considered unaffordable. Those on average household incomes are likely to be able to afford market and affordable level rents as well as some more generous affordable ownership options (such as: 50% discount First Homes and Shared Ownership options with 10% and 25% ownership rates).
9. In terms of affordability, the following tenures would be considered to be affordable for those earning less than the mean income:
 - Social rent
 - Affordable rent
 - Shared ownership (10%)
 - Entry-level market rent
 - Average market rent
 - Shared ownership (25%)
 - First homes (-50%)
10. Wokingham is identified as an area which has a particularly high need for affordable housing, with a majority of people in need occupying unsuitable housing and unlikely to be able to access market rents. As such, affordable rented tenures should be prioritised before affordable ownership options. That said, some lower ownership proportions under shared ownership tenures may be affordable for some of these groups. A pro-rated figure related to the number of households on the affordable housing waiting list reveals that there could be around 90 households in Twyford who are currently on the affordable housing waiting list.
11. Considering current need, future need and the supply of affordable housing, there is likely to be an overall shortfall of affordable units for rent of 52.5 (53) across the plan period (3.7 per annum). Taking the focus to affordable routes to home ownership and considering the same factors, there is likely to be a shortfall of 348.3 (348) units over the plan period (25.1 per annum). These estimates are in broad alignment with the figures that result if the latest LHNA figures are pro-rated to Twyford according to population statistics.
12. In terms of historic delivery of affordable units for rent or ownership in Twyford, there has been some significant under delivery, meaning that a similar pattern in the future could be expected. This under delivery could be due to a number of factors, including sites not meeting the minimum size threshold to require affordable units to be delivered.
13. Wokingham have a target of up to 50% of all new housing being required to be affordable and this is something which requires a high burden of justification for neighbourhood to alter.

14. Whilst the relationship between the affordable housing for rent and for ownership need in Twyford would suggest a split in favour of affordable homes for ownership, the acute shortage of affordable housing means that a focus on affordable units for rent should be reinforced to ensure provision is provided for those most in need. The emerging and existing Local Plan suggest a split of 70% rented and 30% ownership, which might offer a suitable split for the Twyford NP. Considering that, national policy and local circumstances, the following tenure split would be considered reasonable and well evidenced (Table 4-8).

Table 4-8: Recommended affordable tenure splits.

Tenure	Indicative mix
Routes to home ownership, of which	45%
First Homes	25%
Shared ownership	12%
Rent to buy	8%
Affordable Housing for rent, of which	55%
Social rent	To be set by Registered Providers
Affordable rent	To be set by Registered Providers

15. The scale of Twyford’s indicative housing requirement relative to the need identified here, in addition to historic delivery rates of affordable housing in the parish, suggest that the evidenced affordable housing needs might not be met over the Plan period. As such, the recommendation is that the policy requirement be met wherever possible, and further avenues for delivering greater quantities of Affordable Housing (such as exception sites) could be explored. If the group considers exceeding the Local Plan policy requirement in the neighbourhood plan then it must be noted that an extremely high standard of justification is required which goes beyond the scope of this HNA, in particular around the issue of what level of Affordable Housing delivery can be financially viable in the NA. Raising the percentage of Affordable Housing required could have the effect of discouraging new building from coming forward altogether. Should the group wish to consider such an option, it is advisable to discuss this with the LPA in the first instance.
16. Affordable housing is typically provided and made financially viable by its inclusion as a proportion of larger market developments, as guided by Local Plan policy. However, if the community wishes to boost the supply of affordable housing, there are other, more proactive routes available for its provision. For example, using community development orders, identifying exception sites or developing community land trusts are all ways of boosting the supply of affordable housing.

Type and Size

17. This study provides an indication of the likely need for different types and sizes of homes based on demographic change. It is important to remember that other factors should be considered in determining the dwelling mix that is desirable in the parish or on any particular site. These include the specific characteristics of the nearby stock of housing (such as its condition and design), the role of the NA or site within the wider housing market area (linked to any Local Authority strategies or plans) and site-specific factors which may justify a particular dwelling mix.

Dwelling type

18. Where Wokingham Borough Council's housing delivery recording methods mean that it is difficult to precisely detail the quantities and types of new housing in the Parish, other datasets have been used to detail the approximate mix of dwelling types in the Parish. Twyford's accommodation stock shows signs that the highest category of types is detached houses, followed by semi-detached and terraced dwellings which both share a relatively equal proportion of the stock. The Parish has a lower than nationally average proportion of terraced housing, though this figure is higher than local authority-wide rates. The Parish has significantly higher rates of detached housing than seen in England, though this figure is lower than seen across Wokingham (which in itself is has an unusual mix of dwelling types compared to patterns across England). The share of semi-detached properties is largely in line with local and national averages.

19. Whilst VOA data shows that there have been some changes in dwelling types in Twyford since 2011, the fact that the 2011 Census dataset does not record bungalows as a separate category and the VOA data does, means that more conclusive points regarding the change over time are less reliable.

Dwelling size

20. Twyford's existing stock is largely made up of properties made up of over three bedrooms (61%), with less than 10% being made up of 1 bedroom dwellings. Wokingham also shows signs of its housing stock being largely comprised of larger properties, with 71% of properties made up of 3+ bedrooms. England has a significantly smaller proportion of 4+ bedroom dwellings, though higher rates of 3 bedroom dwellings; England and Twyford have broadly similar levels of 2-bed dwellings. Overall, it can be said that Twyford, much like Wokingham, has a housing stock which, in terms of dwelling sizes, is significantly larger than that seen across England, on average.

Age and household composition

21. Between 2011 and 2019, Twyford's age structure has seen some areas of stability, alongside some changes across specific age bands. There has been a marked decline in those aged 25-44, compensated with some increases across other age bands, with small scale changes across each. Compared to Wokingham as a whole, the Parish has a smaller than average population aged 16-24 alongside a larger than average population aged 25-44 and 65+.

22. Focusing on household composition, compared to Wokingham, Twyford has a higher than average proportion of one-person households (though this is marginally lower than England's average). The majority of households are occupied by one family only (most of these are with no children or dependent children) and overall, Twyford has a lower than average proportion of households counted as 'other'.
23. Twyford and Charvil show signs of some significant under occupation, with older age groups considerably more likely to have two or more spare bedrooms.

Dwelling mix by life stage modelling

24. Younger populations occupy the smallest dwellings in general across Twyford, with increases in occupancies of four+ bedroom dwellings through middle age groups. Older age populations generally occupy a range of dwelling sizes, with the majority being 2 and 3 bedrooms.
25. Whilst the above statement relating to occupancies by age might be representative of Wokingham as a whole, as previously mentioned, the Borough has an unusually large housing stock with high rates of under-occupation. As such, using the profile of the Borough's age-related occupancies to suggest future dwelling mixes could risk embedding a pattern which is potentially unsuitable to the needs of those in Twyford. As such, considering national averages as a basis for a more equally distributed profile of occupancies might show a more desirable trend, with older populations generally occupying smaller dwellings.
26. Looking across the Twyford Neighbourhood Plan period (to 2036), it is evident that projections expect an increase in households with younger populations (24 and under as the HRP) and significant increases in older groups (25% increase for 55-64 and a 77% increase for 65+). There is expected to be a moderate decline in those aged 25-34 acting as a HRP.
27. An overall suggested mix of new dwellings through to 2036, taking account of current household occupancies and population projections, would indicate a need for dwellings of 3 or more bedrooms. That said, this does not take account of more localised issues such as desires for housing for older people to enable some downsizing whilst staying within the Twyford area.
28. Should the NP wish to depart from the suggested mix which attempts to rebalance the area's housing stock in favour of smaller homes and to focus on important factors which as affordability, the following should be considered. Whilst there is an abundance of existing 1 and 2-bed properties in the Parish, a future mix may wish to include some of this size dwelling in future recommended mixes, which may help to address factors such as affordability and ensuring a rounded market offering. It would also be more closely aligned with the demand expressed in the household survey and the need indicated for the wider borough in the LHNA. Whilst there is no exact model which could help to evidence a dwelling mix which would steer the dwelling stock in this direction, primary surveys, consultation evidence or LHNA guidance on the under-occupation of existing homes may prove helpful. One approach which may be helpful could be to combine the category of smaller homes, such as recommending a provision of at least 50% of new

homes to be 3 or fewer bedrooms. Another approach might reduce the share of larger dwellings.

2. Context

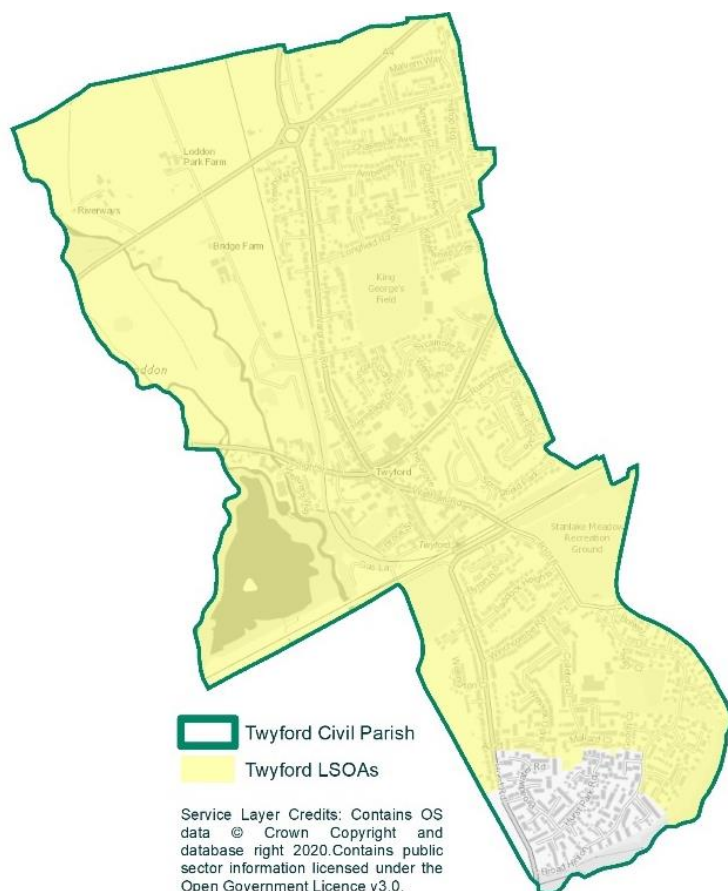
Local context

29. Twyford is a Neighbourhood Plan area located in Wokingham, Berkshire. The Neighbourhood Area (NA) boundary aligns with the civil parish of Twyford and was designated in August 2018.
30. The proposed Neighbourhood Plan period starts in 2022 and extends to 2036, therefore comprising a planning period of 14 years. The evidence supplied in this report will look forward to the Plan end date of 2036, but where possible will also provide annualised figures which can be extrapolated to a different term if the Plan period changes.
31. The parish includes the village of Twyford and borders the village of Ruscombe, which abuts Twyford, to the east. A railway line (Great Western Main Line) travels through the village, providing connectivity to Reading (and beyond) to the south west and Maidenhead (and beyond, including London) to the north east. Road based connectivity provides access to Reading and Maidenhead along the A4, and Wokingham and Henley-on-Thames on the A321. On a more local scale, the village of Charvil lies approximately 1km to the west and Wargrove approximately 1km to the north. Hare Hatch lies approximately 1.5km to the north east and the villages of Wristley Green and Hurst lie between 0.5-1.5km to the south. In terms of the Parish's composition, the west of the area is less developed, with much of it comprised of agricultural land and a number of waterbodies and courses. The east of the Parish is largely developed with a mixture of residential uses, a small high street, retail and leisure services, educational facilities, a healthcare surgery, some open and recreational space amongst other uses.
32. Data for the Twyford Parish was captured in the 2011 Census. Up-to-date population estimates can also be obtained for parishes. However, for other datasets including the 2001 Census, the parish needs to be recreated using statistical units called Output Areas (OAs).
33. The Twyford Neighbourhood Area (TNA) can be recreated using a number of OAs of varying geographical scales (Lower Super Output Area (LSOA) and OAs), including the following which have been used throughout as a statistical proxy for the NA boundary and which can be interrogated for data from both the 2001 and the 2011 Censuses:
 - LSOA: E01016692
 - LSOA: E01016693
 - LSOA: E01016694
 - LSOA: E01016695
 - OA: 00MFNN0007
 - OA: 00MFNN0008
 - OA: 00MFNN0009

34. The statistics show that in the 2011 Census the NA had a total of 6,618 residents, formed into 2,851 households and occupying 2,929 dwellings. The Office for National Statistics (ONS) produces mid-year population estimates for parishes and wards throughout the country. The mid-2019 population estimate for Twyford is 6,980 – indicating population growth of around 5.5%, or 362 individuals since 2011. It is worth noting that this figure is an estimate only, based on data which is mostly available at local authority level such as administrative registers of births and deaths, data on moves between local authorities, small-area population estimates and official population projections, and not based on a survey count.

35. Due to the make-up of the statistical areas which are encompassed by Twyford, there is not an exact match with LSOAs to include the entirety of the Parish. Valuation Office Agency (VOA) data on the composition of the housing stock uses LSOAs as the lowest level of statistical output area and hence in order to use VOA data for the area, there has to be an understanding that this does not fully reflect the full extent of the Parish. For the purpose of this report, when referring to VOA data, the aforementioned LSOAs will be used.

Figure 2.1: LSOA coverage for the Twyford Parish.



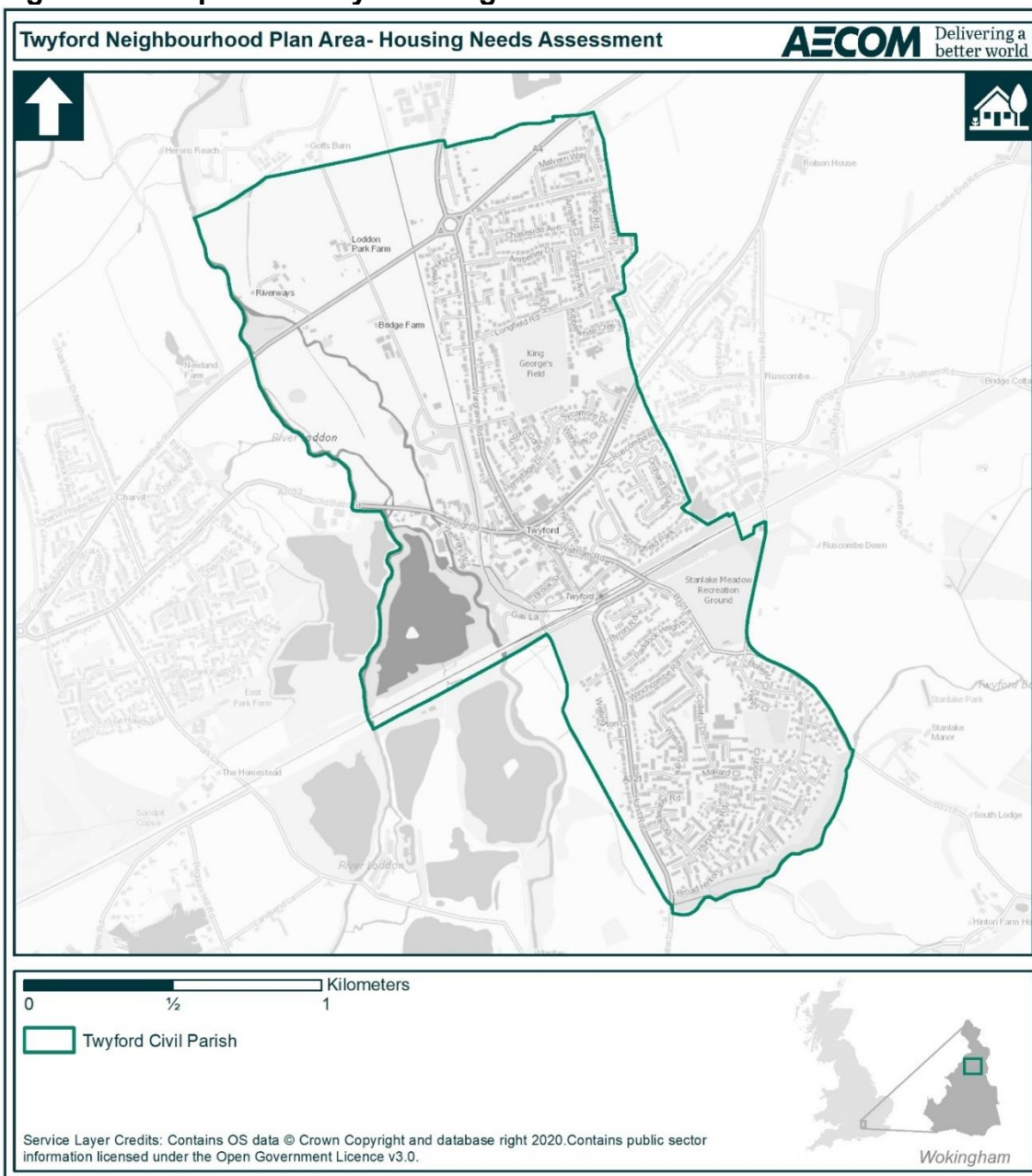
36. Figure 2-1 indicates the extent of the statistical area's coverage across the Parish.

37. Taking 2011 as a baseline to assess housing growth in Twyford through until 2021, a number of considerations must be made.

Firstly, the data relates to the four previously discussed LSOAs (Figure 2.1), as such the overall housing totals would be likely to be not representative of the entire Twyford area, however the growth rate would be expected to be broadly representative. The VOA data also rounds figures to the nearest 10, and hence a small degree of accuracy is lost. That said, the growth figures should be broadly indicative of the rate of growth between 2011 and 2019. The relevant area of the Parish had a total of 2,534 dwellings in 2011 and approximately 2,670 dwellings in 2021. This is the equivalent of a 5.4% growth rate. Over the same period of time, there has been an estimated population growth of 5.5%, highlighting a potential situation whereby housing growth has kept up with population growth.

38. In 2011, the Census indicated that there were 2,929 dwellings in the Parish. At the same point in time, the four LSOAs which are entirely within Twyford had a total of 2,611 dwellings. Current VOA data shows that these four LSOAs currently encompass 2,650 dwellings; indicating an increase of 1.5%. As a crude assumption for the purposes of this report, it is likely that the missing parcel of land in the south of Twyford saw a similar increase in housing.
39. Studying the housing in the area in the south of Twyford which is excluded from the VOA data due to it being part of a larger LSOA which would not reflect Twyford's characteristics, it is evident that the housing mix in this area is broadly aligned with the southern part of the Parish as a whole.
40. A map of the Plan area appears below in Figure 2.2.

Figure 2.2: Map of the Twyford Neighbourhood Plan area



Planning policy context

41. Neighbourhood Plans are required to be in general conformity with adopted strategic local policies.¹ In the case of Twyford, the relevant adopted Local Plan for Wokingham consists of the following planning documents:

- Core Strategy Development Plan Document (2010-2026)
- Wokingham Borough Development Plan: Adopted Managing Development Delivery Local Plan (2014)
- Wokingham Borough Council are in the process of a Local Plan update which will replace the aforementioned policy documents and guide where and how development should occur across the Borough until the year 2036; its anticipated adoption is for Winter 2021/22. The document reviewed was the Consultation draft Local Plan Update (2020).

Policies in the adopted local plan

- Table 2-1 below summarises adopted Local Plan policies (Core Strategy Development Plan Document (2010) and Wokingham Borough Development Plan: Adopted Managing Development Delivery Local Plan (2014)) that are relevant to housing need and delivery in Twyford.

Table 2-1: Summary of relevant adopted policies in the Wokingham Core Strategy and Development Plan

Policy	Provisions
Core Strategy Development Plan Document (2010)	
CP2 Inclusive communities	New development must, alongside other requirements, address the requirements of an ageing population, particularly in terms of housing.
CP5 Housing mix, density and affordability	Support is provided for residential development where an appropriate mix of densities, types, tenures and sizes are evidenced. Affordable housing must reflect the sizes and types that meet evidenced needs. Affordable housing must be provided at up to 50% of net additional dwellings on sites of 5 or more dwellings, or, over 0.16ha (subject to viability and requirements differ for developments on differing land types).
CP9 Scale and location of development proposals	The scale of development proposals must correlate to the existing or proposed levels of facilities and services nearby to a site, including considerations of their accessibility. Development within development limits will be acceptable in Twyford, which is considered a 'major development location'.
CP17 Housing delivery	This policy sets out the trajectory of required housing delivery over the plan period, with an expected 550 dwellings to be delivered across Major Development Locations (including Twyford).
Development Plan: Adopted Managing Development Delivery Local Plan (2014)	
TB05 Housing mix	Residential developments should provide a mix of housing to meet existing and future needs. Approximately 10-20% of dwellings should be built to 'Lifetime Homes Standards'.
TB07 Internal space standards	This policy outlines the specific minimum space requirements for residential dwellings according to dwelling occupancy and room use.
TB09 Residential accommodation for vulnerable groups	The policy provides support for housing which meets the specialist needs of more vulnerable groups in society.

¹ A description of the Basic Conditions of Neighbourhood Planning is available at <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/neighbourhood-planning--2#basic-conditions-for-neighbourhood-plan-to-referendum>

Source: Both documents can be found [here](#).

Policies in the emerging local plan

42. Table 2-2 below summarises emerging Local Plan policies that are relevant to housing need and delivery in Twyford.

Table 2-2: Summary of relevant adopted policies in the Draft Wokingham local Plan (February-March 2020 Consultation)

Policy	Provisions
H1 Housing provision	A minimum of 13,901 dwellings will be delivered across Wokingham between 2018-2036.
H2 Sites allocation for residential/mixed use	Alongside allocations across the borough, Land at Bridge Farm, Twyford has been allocated for 150 dwellings.
H3 Housing mix, density and standards	The policy sets out requirements for housing to be delivered with a locally evidenced appropriate mix of types and tenures and at an appropriate density for the area. Higher densities should be sought in locations which are considered accessible. Housing also has to ensure that it is accessible and adaptable in line with specialist needs and any developments of over 20 dwellings must ensure 6% of new housing is wheelchair accessible and adaptable.
H5 Affordable housing	Support is provided for residential development where an appropriate mix of densities, types, tenures and sizes are evidenced. Affordable housing must reflect the sizes and types that meet evidenced needs. Affordable housing must be provided at up to 50% of net additional dwellings on sites of 5 or more dwellings, or, over 0.16ha (subject to viability and requirements differ for developments on differing land types).
H8 Self-build and custom housebuilding	This policy ensures that 5% of plots on proposals for developments of 100 dwellings or more are services plots for custom and self-builds.
H9 Accommodation for older people and vulnerable communities	This policy provides support for the specialist needs of more vulnerable groups to be met through the provision of the appropriate types of dwelling.
H10 Conversion and subdivision of buildings	Development proposals for the conversion or sub-division of buildings into self-contained flats or houses of multiple occupation within development limits, will be supported provided they adhere to a number of criteria listed in the policy.

Source: The document can be found [here](#).

Quantity of housing to provide

43. The NPPF 2021 (paragraphs 66 and 67) requires Local Authorities to provide neighbourhood groups upon request with a definitive or an indicative number of houses to plan for over the Neighbourhood Plan period.

44. Wokingham Borough Council has fulfilled this requirement by providing Twyford with an indicative housing needs figure of 271 additional dwellings to be delivered over the Local Plan period 2018-2038. This has been determined using the proposed allocation in the parish in the Local Plan, plus an assumed rate of windfall development, and allowance of 10% for flexibility, with completions since 2018 deducted.

45. This figure applies to a different plan period than the Neighbourhood Plan – starting four years earlier and ending two years later. However, it serves as the most accurate available benchmark for the volume of delivery that may be expected in the parish in the coming years.

3. Approach

Research Questions

46. The following research questions were formulated at the outset of the research through discussion with the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Committee of Twyford Parish Council. They serve to direct the research and provide the structure for the HNA.

Tenure and Affordability

47. The neighbourhood planning group would like to understand the needs of the community for housing of varying tenures, as well as the relative affordability of those tenures that should be provided to meet local need now and into the future.

48. This evidence will allow the Twyford Neighbourhood Plan to establish the right conditions for new development to come forward that is affordable, both in the broader sense of market housing attainable for first-time buyers, and as Affordable Housing for those who may be currently priced out of the market.

49. The neighbourhood planners are interested in exploring the need for Affordable Housing for sale (also known as affordable home ownership) and are therefore eligible for support under the Affordable Housing for sale element of the Neighbourhood Planning Technical Support programme. Analysis and commentary on this issue has been provided where relevant and possible in the HNA.

RQ 1: What quantity and tenures of Affordable Housing should be planned for over the Neighbourhood Plan period?

Type and Size

50. The neighbourhood planning group is seeking to determine what size and type of housing would be best suited to the local community.

51. The aim of this research question is to provide neighbourhood planners with evidence on the types and sizes needed by the local community. This will help to shape future development so that it better reflects what residents need.

52. While this study is not able to advise on space standards or home configurations, it may reveal imbalances between the available stock and demographic trends.

53. Note, however, that the evidence gathered here takes the current population as its starting point and projects forward trends that exist today. It therefore risks embedding features of the housing stock and occupation patterns that the community may actually wish to change. In that sense, the findings in this report might be viewed as the baseline scenario on top of which the community's objectives and primary evidence should be layered to create a more complete picture and vision for the future.

RQ 2: What type (terrace, semi, bungalows, flats and detached) and size (number of bedrooms) of housing is appropriate for the Plan area over the Neighbourhood Plan period?

Relevant Data

54. This HNA assesses a range of evidence to ensure its findings are robust for the purposes of developing policy at the Neighbourhood Plan level and is locally specific. This includes data from the 2011 Census and a range of other data sources, including:

- Other Office of National Statistics (ONS) datasets providing more up-to-date demographic information;
- ONS population and household projections for future years;
- Valuation Office Agency (VOA) data on the current stock of housing;
- Land Registry data on prices paid for housing within the local market;
- Rental prices from Home.co.uk;
- Local Authority housing waiting list data;
- The Wokingham Borough Local Housing Needs Assessment (LHNA) 2020; and
- The group conducted a questionnaire which surveyed Twyford residents' opinions on a range of topics, including housing, transport and a vision for the future. Initial analysis of the questionnaire results showed 13% of respondents were considering leaving Twyford due to a lack of suitable housing, with some reasons behind this relating to affordability, dwelling types and sizes. Topping the list of respondent concerns about which types of accommodation were poorly provided for was accommodation for young people, followed by affordable rented accommodation, social housing to rent or buy and accommodation suitable for people who want to downsize. One and two-bed properties were highlighted as the sizes which were least well provided for in Twyford. In terms of dwelling types, apartment blocks and bungalows were highlighted as the least well provided in Twyford, with maisonettes/duplexes, terraced houses and semi-detached houses all also highlighted. The questionnaire went on to identify what sort of developments should accommodate additional homes in Twyford, with the most popular options being a range of small scale developments (4-9 dwellings) or one or two-bed dwellings spread across the settlement in the form of infill development; the survey also overwhelmingly favoured brownfield development.

55. More recent data sources for the population and existing housing stock will be used wherever possible in this report. However, Census datasets providing, for example, the breakdown of households (as opposed to individuals) by age and the tenure of dwellings, cannot be accurately brought up to date in this way. Such patterns are instead generally assumed to persist to the present day.

4. RQ 1: Tenure, Affordability and the Need for Affordable Housing

RQ 1: What Affordable Housing (eg social housing, affordable rented, shared ownership, discounted market sale, intermediate rented) and other market tenures should be planned for in the housing mix over the Neighbourhood Plan period?

Introduction

56. This section approaches the question of affordability from two perspectives. First, it examines what tenure options are currently available in the parish and which of them might be most appropriate going forward, based on the relationship between how much they cost and local incomes. Second, it estimates the quantity of Affordable Housing that might be required during the Neighbourhood Plan period. The scale of need for these homes can justify planning policies to guide new development.

57. Tenure refers to the way a household occupies their home. Broadly speaking, there are two categories of tenure: market housing (such as homes available to purchase outright or rent from a private landlord) and Affordable Housing (including subsidised products like social rent and shared ownership). We refer to Affordable Housing, with capital letters, to denote the specific tenures that are classified as affordable in the current NPPF. A relatively less expensive home for market sale may be affordable but it is not a form of Affordable Housing.

58. The definition of Affordable Housing set out in the NPPF 2021 makes clear the Government's commitment to home ownership by broadening the definition to include a range of low-cost housing opportunities for those aspiring to own a home. As part of this effort, the Government has recently introduced a new product called First Homes.²

59. Because the First Homes product is new and expected to be an important part of the strategy for improving access to home ownership, it is worth summarising its key features and implications:

- First Homes should be available to buy with a minimum discount of 30% below their full market value (i.e. the value of an equivalent new home);
- The discount level can be set higher than 30% – at 40% or 50% – where this can be suitably evidenced. The setting and justifying of discount levels can happen at neighbourhood as well as local authority scale;
- After the discount is applied the initial sale price must not exceed £250,000 (or £420,000 in Greater London), and lower caps can be set locally;

² The shape that the new First Homes product will take is set out in a Ministerial Statement issued in May 2021, available here: <https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-statements/detail/2021-05-24/hlws48>. The relevant update to PPG is available here: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/first-homes#contents>.

- Purchasers must be first-time buyers with an income less than £80,000 (or £90,000 in Greater London), and First Homes can be prioritised for local people and/or key workers;
- They will be subject to legal restrictions ensuring the discount is retained for future occupants, and renting out or sub-letting will not normally be permitted;
- In addition to setting the discount level, local authorities and neighbourhood planning groups can apply additional criteria, such as a lower income cap, local connection test or prioritisation for key workers through adopted plans, emerging policy or Supplementary Planning Documents.
- 25% of all homes delivered through section 106 developer contributions on sites enabled through the planning process should be sold as First Homes. In simpler terms, 25% of all subsidised Affordable Housing on mainstream housing developments should be First Homes. This is likely to mean that First Homes will take the place of shared ownership housing in many circumstances, and in some cases may also displace social or affordable rented homes.

Current tenure profile

60. The current tenure profile is a key feature of the Neighbourhood Plan Area (NA). Patterns of home ownership, private renting and affordable/social renting reflect demographic characteristics including age (with older households more likely to own their own homes), and patterns of income and wealth which influence whether households can afford to rent or buy and whether they need subsidy to access housing.
61. Table 4-1 Table below presents data on tenure in Twyford compared with Wokingham and England from the 2011 Census, which is the most recent available source of this information.
62. Table 4-1 shows that both Twyford and Wokingham have higher rates of home ownership than seen nationally. The Parish also has lower rates of Affordable Housing related tenures compared to local and average figures, with the most pronounced discrepancy being seen for social rented tenures, where Twyford's share is 12.4 percentage points lower than England's comparative rate.

63. There is no current data on the proportion of housing that is rented because the choice to let out a property does not require planning permission or other changes that would be recorded centrally. The 2021 Census will provide the most robust and up-to-date picture of this when the results are released in the coming months. However, it is interesting to observe the change recorded between the 2001 and 2011 Census: in Twyford the private rented sector expanded by 79% in that period, a rate of growth that is broadly aligned with the local and national averages (80% and 82% respectively). During this same period, Twyford has seen two significant changes to tenures relating to affordable housing; in terms of shared ownership, there has been a 29% decline, whereas Wokingham has seen an 86% increase and England has seen a 30% increase. It is important to note here, that despite an apparent substantial decline according to percentage change figures, the raw data indicated a drop from 24 to 17 shared ownership households in Twyford; sometimes which could be accounted for by households buying out full ownership of a property which was previously under shared ownership. Focusing on social rented tenures, Twyford saw an 8% decline, compared to Wokingham’s 25% increase and England’s 1% decrease. The relatively small decline in Twyford (in terms of the raw data, a decline of 13 households was observed), this is usually attributed to occupants purchasing their home through the Right to Buy scheme, making it a market home for future occupants.

Table 4-1: Tenure (households) in Twyford, 2011

Tenure	Twyford	Wokingham	England
Owned; total	78.7%	79.7%	63.3%
Shared ownership	0.6%	1.1%	0.8%
Social rented; total	5.3%	7.0%	17.7%
Private rented; total	14.9%	11.2%	16.8%

Sources: Census 2011, AECOM Calculations

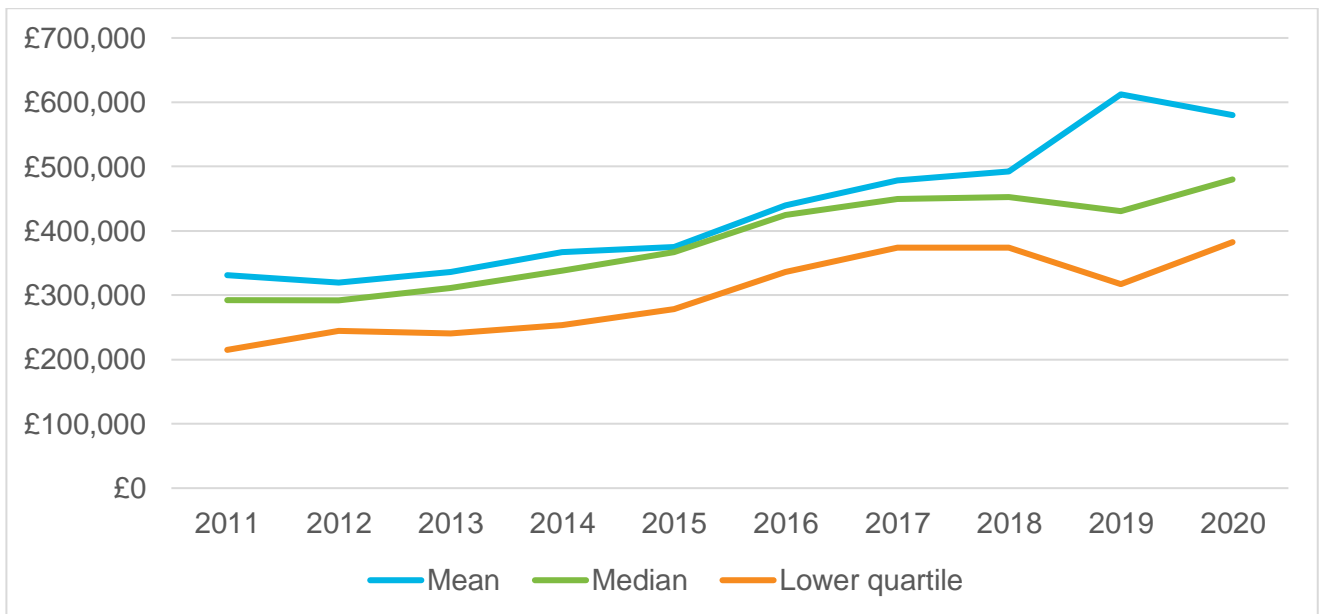
Affordability

House prices

64. House prices provide an indication of the level of demand for homes within an area. The relationship between house prices and incomes determines whether housing is affordable to local households and, to a large extent, what tenure, type and size of home they occupy. Changes in affordability over time can indicate pressures in the housing market. As such, it is useful for the evidence base for plans to examine trends in prices and consider what this reveals about the local housing market.

65. Figure 4.1 below looks at selected measures of house prices in Twyford. It shows that house prices over the past decade in Twyford have been steadily increasing in general. 2019 saw a slight shift in the trend, where mean house prices saw an increase (because the mean captures the average of all the house prices, both high and low, the few outlying data points on the high end cause the mean to increase, making it higher than the median). This increase is likely to be attributable to the sale of a property which had a value which could be considered an outlier. Further scrutiny of the data reveals that 2019 saw a property sale valued at £17.8 million, alongside six other sales worth over £1 million, confirming the previous assertion. The same year saw some slight declines for median (the middle number when you sort the data from smallest to largest) prices and lower quartile prices, indicating a slight reduction in house prices for the area as a whole; though these declines bounced back for 2020. Current median house prices in Twyford are £480,000 with a lower quartile price of £382,500.

Figure 4.1: House prices by quartile in Twyford, 2011-2020



Source: Land Registry PPD

66. Table 4-2 below breaks down house prices by type. It shows that, as expected, detached properties are significantly more expensive than other types of housing, with flats costing on average the least. In terms of house price change between 2011 and 2020, the largest growth has been seen in terraced properties (70% increase), followed by semi-detached (55%) and detached (40%). It is notable that during this time, where average prices have increased by 75%, flats have only increased in price by 10%.

Table 4-2: House prices by type in Twyford, 2011-2020 (£000's)

Type	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	Growth
Detached	484.5	429.3	451.5	504.0	511.2	592.7	616.6	626.6	659.5	679.4	40.2%
Semi-detached	316.3	327.1	334.5	350.7	399.0	441.4	461.0	435.5	440.2	490.5	55.1%
Terraced	228.0	257.8	259.8	267.2	323.0	378.0	384.7	376.3	356.6	389.2	70.7%
Flats	196.3	183.1	188.1	220.0	233.7	253.8	302.6	330.1	237.1	215.3	9.7%
All Types	331.5	319.6	335.9	366.6	375.3	439.3	478.4	492.7	612.3	580.5	75.1%

Source: Land Registry PPD

Income

67. Household incomes determine the ability of households to exercise choice in the housing market, and consequently the level of need for affordable housing products. Two sources of data are used to examine household incomes in the NA.
68. The first source is ONS's estimates of incomes in small areas. This is locally specific but limited to the overall average income (i.e. it does not provide the average income of lower earners). The average total household income before housing costs locally was £72,600 in 2018. A map of the area to which this data applies is provided in Appendix A.
69. The second source is ONS's annual estimates of UK employee earnings. This provides lower quartile average earnings (i.e. the income of the lowest 25% of earners). However, it is only available at the Local Authority level. It also relates to individual earnings. While this is an accurate representation of household incomes where there is only one earner, it does not represent household income where there are two or more people earning. Wokingham's gross individual lower quartile annual earnings were £18,074 in 2018. To estimate the income of households with two lower quartile earners, this figure is doubled to £36,148.
70. It is immediately clear from this data that there is a large gap between the spending power of average earning households and those earning the lowest 25% of incomes, particularly where the household in question has one earner only.

Affordability Thresholds

71. To gain a clearer understanding of local affordability, it is useful to understand what levels of income are required to afford different tenures. This is done using 'affordability thresholds': the estimated amount of annual income required to cover the cost of rent or a mortgage given local housing prices.
72. AECOM has determined thresholds for the income required in Twyford to buy a home in the open market (average and entry-level prices), and the income required to afford private rent and the range of Affordable Housing tenures as set out in the NPPF. These calculations are detailed and discussed in more detail in Appendix A.
73. The key assumptions made in assessing the affordability of different tenures are explained alongside the calculations, but it is worth noting here that we have assumed that the maximum percentage of household income that should be spent on rent is 30% and that mortgage financing will be offered at a maximum of 3.5 times household income.

74. Table 4-3 summarises the estimated cost of each tenure, the annual income required to support these costs within the NA, and whether local incomes are sufficient. The income required column assumes the household already has access to a deposit (which we have assumed to be 10% of the value to be purchased) but does not reflect the possibility that households may already hold equity from an existing property. Although these factors may be crucial to whether housing will be affordable, they are highly dependent on individual circumstances that cannot be anticipated here.

75. The same information is presented as a graph in Figure 4.2 on a subsequent page, with selected measures from the table presented for clarity.

Table 4-3: Affordability thresholds in Twyford (income required, £)

Tenure	Mortgage value (90% of price)	Annual rent	Income required	Affordable on average incomes? £72,600	Affordable on LQ earnings (single earner)? £18,074	Affordable on LQ earnings (2 earners)? £36,148
Market Housing						
Median House Price	£432,000	-	£123,429	No	No	No
LA New Build Mean House Price	£400,368		£114,391	No	No	No
LQ/Entry-level House Price	£344,250	-	£98,357	No	No	No
Average Market Rent	-	£17,532	£58,440	Yes	No	No
Entry-level Market Rent	-	£16,788	£55,960	Yes	No	No
Affordable Home Ownership						
First Homes (-30%)	£336,000	-	£86,400	No	No	No
First Homes (-40%)	£288,000	-	£74,057	Marginal	No	No
First Homes (-50%)	£240,000	-	£61,714	Yes	No	No
Shared Ownership (50%)	£216,000	£6,000	£81,714	No	No	No
Shared Ownership (25%)	£108,000	£9,000	£60,857	Yes	No	No
Shared Ownership (10%)	£43,200	£10,800	£48,343	Yes	No	No
Affordable Rented Housing						
Affordable Rent	-	£8,236	£32,943	Yes	No	Yes
Social Rent	-	£7,122	£28,488	Yes	No	Yes

Source: AECOM Calculations

76. Before considering each tenure category in turn, it is important to stress that these affordability thresholds have been calculated to give a sufficiently robust indication of the costs of various tenures to inform Neighbourhood Plan policy choices. These figures rely on existing data and assumptions, and it is not possible to estimate every possible permutation. The income figures also disguise a large degree of variation. For simplicity the analysis below speaks in terms of tenure products being 'affordable' or 'not affordable' for different groups, but individual circumstances and the location, condition and other factors of specific properties in each category have a large impact. These conclusions should therefore be interpreted flexibly.

Market housing for purchase and rent

77. Thinking about housing for purchase on the open market, it appears that local households on average incomes are unable to access even entry-level homes unless they have the advantage of a very large deposit. Market housing, even with the benefit of a higher than average income, is likely to remain out of reach to most. The median house price would require an annual income 70% higher than the current average.
78. Private renting is generally only affordable to average to higher earners. Households made up of two lower quartile earners would still struggle to afford the given rental thresholds. Affordability is improved if households are able or willing to dedicate a larger proportion of their incomes to rental costs, although this has repercussions for other quality of life aspects and cannot be assumed to suit all individuals' circumstances.

Affordable home ownership

79. There is a relatively large group of households in Twyford who may be able to afford to rent privately but cannot afford home ownership. They are typically earning between around £55,960 per year (at which point entry-level rents become affordable) and £98,357 (at which point entry-level market sale homes become affordable). This 'can rent, can't buy' cohort may benefit from the range of affordable home ownership products such as First Homes and shared ownership.
80. First Homes are to be offered at a discount of at least 30% on equivalent market prices (i.e. new build, entry-level properties). Local authorities and neighbourhood plan qualifying bodies will have discretion to increase the discount on First Homes to 40% or 50% where there is evidence to suggest this is appropriate.
81. This report has estimated the income required to afford First Homes and tested the implications of 30%, 40% and 50% discount levels. In the case of Twyford it could be argued that local circumstances would permit the threshold to be set at 50% discount; this is due to the discounts of 30% and 40% being largely considered unaffordable for those earning the average (mean) household income of £72,600 and the additional likelihood that First Homes at lower discounts in Twyford would not fall beneath the price and income caps (see Appendix A).

82. Table 4-4 below shows the discount required for First Homes to be affordable to the three income groups. Because it is not possible to estimate the cost of a typical First Home due to a lack of data on new build entry-level house prices in the NA, it is worth considering the discounts required for some additional price benchmarks. The table above uses median house prices in the NA as the best proxy for the cost of a newly built entry-level home in the area, because this reflects the local market and accounts for the price premium usually associated with newly built housing (which would bring the price closer to the price of median existing homes than existing entry-level homes). However, it is worth thinking about First Homes in relation to the cost of new build prices in the wider area, and of entry-level existing prices locally to get a more complete picture. The discount levels required for these alternative benchmarks are given below. It remains clear that 50% discount is the most appropriate from an affordability perspective. It is worth noting that higher discounts may have implications on development viability and the overall amount of Affordable Housing that developers are able to deliver. This risk should be discussed with the Local Authority if the Neighbourhood Plan is to include policy provisions on this topic.

Table 4-4: Discount on sale price required for households to afford First Homes

Tenure/product	Mean Income	LQ Income x1	LQ Income x2
NA Median house price	41%	85%	71%
LA New build mean house price	37%	84%	68%
NA Entry-level house price	26%	82%	63%

Source: Land Registry PPD; ONS MSOA total household income

83. Shared ownership appears to be more affordable than First Homes, but is broadly accessible to the same groups. Government has recently announced that the minimum equity share for shared ownership will fall to 10% of the property value.³ If this is delivered in the NA, it will make shared ownership easier to access for more people. However, while the income threshold for a 10% equity shared ownership home is lower, this product may not necessarily be more attractive than the alternatives (such as shared ownership at higher equity shares and First Homes) for those who can afford them.

84. The transition from 10% to 100% ownership would be long, and during this period the rent on the 90% unsold value would not be subsidised, meaning that monthly costs for occupants will remain relatively high and the build-up of equity will be relatively slow. This product would therefore only be a realistic route to full ownership for households prepared to take a long-term view.

85. The income required to access rent to buy is assumed to be the same as that required to afford market rents. On that basis, First Homes and shared ownership (of 25% and 50% ownership) are less affordable options, though in terms of initial access, shared ownership of 10% would be more affordable.

³ The previous minimum equity share was 25%. This change took effect from 28 June 2021 and transitional arrangements are in place for planning policy documents that are prepared during the implementation timeframe. Changes are also introduced to make the process of staircasing to full ownership more gradual with lower minimum increments of 1%. The ministerial statement confirming and detailing the changes is available here: <https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-statements/detail/2021-05-24/hws48>.

86. These three products need to be considered in relation to what they offer occupants in the long term beyond simply being affordable to access or not.

- First Homes allow for a greater ownership stake in the property, enabling occupiers to benefit from price appreciation over time. Monthly outgoings are also limited to mortgage costs alone, which tend to be cheaper than renting.
- Shared ownership at high equity shares performs a similar function to First Homes, but there are additional costs associated with the rented portion.
- Shared ownership at low equity shares can usually be accessed by lower earning households (than First Homes) and requires a smaller deposit. However, this is a potentially less attractive route to eventual ownership because monthly outgoings remain high. The occupant has to pay a significant monthly rent as well as service charges and other costs, so it can be harder for them to save funds to buy out a greater share in the property over time.
- Rent to buy requires no deposit, thereby benefitting those with sufficient incomes but low savings. It is more attractive than renting but results in a much slower accumulation of the funds that can provide an eventual route to ownership than the other tenures discussed above.

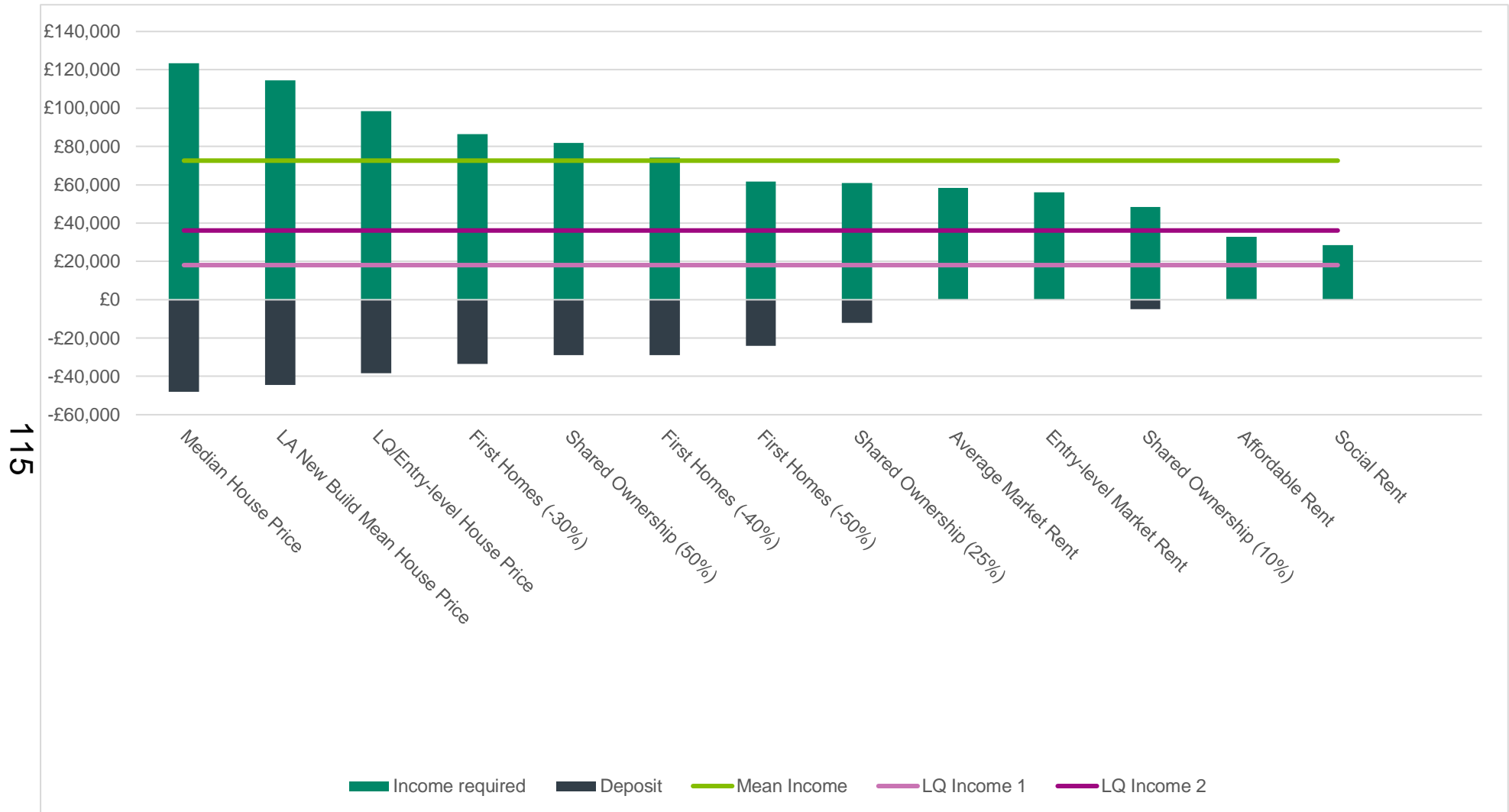
87. In conclusion, all of these products would provide valuable to different segments of the local population, with shared ownership at a lower than 25% equity share potentially allowing lower earning households to get a foot on the housing ladder, while rent to buy is helpful to those with little or no savings for a deposit, and First Homes (especially at 50% discount) may provide a better long-term investment to those who can afford to access it.

Affordable rented housing

88. Affordable rented housing is generally affordable to households with two lower earners depending on their household size (average earning households are unlikely to be eligible). However, households with a single lower earner appear unable to afford any of the tenures considered including the smallest socially rented units. Many such individuals will, if unable to secure a social rented dwelling require additional subsidy through Housing Benefit to access housing.

89. The evidence in this chapter suggests that the affordable rented sector performs a vital function in Twyford as the only option for a large segment of those in the greatest need. Social rents are cheaper and would therefore leave households on lower earnings better off and better able to afford their other living costs, such as food and fuel etc. Where households are supported by housing benefit the difference in the cost of affordable and social rents may be irrelevant as the level of housing benefit flexes according to the rent. This means that households supported by housing benefit may be no better off in social rented accommodation because they receive a lower rate of housing benefit to cover their rent.

Figure 4.2: Affordability thresholds in Twyford, income required (additional cost of deposit in black)



Source: AECOM Calculations

Affordable housing- quantity needed

90. The starting point for understanding the need for affordable housing in Twyford is the relevant Local Housing Needs Assessment (LHNA). An LHNA was undertaken for Wokingham in 2020. It finds that the borough as a whole has an affordable housing need of 407 additional dwellings per year over the period 2018-2038. This comprises 100 dwellings per year for affordable rent and 307 for affordable home ownership.
91. When the LHNA figures are pro-rated to Twyford based on its fair share of the population (4.3% of the LPA's population), this equates to 17.5 homes per annum (4.3 for affordable rent and 13.2 for affordable home ownership) or 245 in total over the Neighbourhood Plan period (2022-2036).
92. However, pro-rating District level estimates of affordable housing need to rural areas presents problems in practice. The District level figures are likely to represent higher needs in the urban areas of the District where there is a large social housing stock and larger numbers of households living in the PRS on housing benefit. Both of these factors tend to generate higher needs. By contrast, in rural villages like Twyford the lack of social housing means there is no need generated from households already living in the sector. Similarly, households who may need social housing often move away to areas where their needs are more likely to be met (either because there is social housing available or more private rented housing). This means it is difficult to identify need for social/affordable rented housing within Twyford.
93. That said, reporting processes at the local planning authority means that specific data relating to the number of Twyford households currently applying for Affordable Housing is not possible to attain. Considering this, the previously discussed LHNA figures could be used, or a separate approach (which would provide more up to date figures) would be to request the Borough-wide figure for the affordable housing waiting list, and pro-rata it to estimate Twyford's need (Table 4-4). Whilst this would still be a figure subject to the previously discussed limitations, it would provide more locally-specific figures than those calculated in the LHNA. Taking this approach, the current number of households in Twyford who are in need of affordable housing is 90.
94. It should be noted that this approach does not permit a more detailed understanding of the size of affordable housing units which are required.

Table 4-4: Affordable housing waiting list for the Wokingham Borough Council as well as prorated figure for Twyford.

Area	Number of households on Affordable Housing Waiting List (prorated at 4.3%)
Wokingham	2,086
Twyford (pro rated)	90

95. In Table 4-5 below we have calculated, using PPG as a starting point,⁴ an estimate of the total need for affordable rented housing in Twyford over the Plan period. It should, however, be noted that the accuracy of the findings generated by the model is only as strong as the evidence we have available to us. For example, Census 2011 data is increasingly out-of-date. However, given the test of proportionality for evidence supporting neighbourhood plans, and the need to be in conformity with Local Authority strategic policies, the calculations set out here are considered a reasonable basis for understanding and planning for neighbourhood-level affordable housing need.
96. It should also be noted that figures in Table 4-5 are largely dependent on information provided by Wokingham Borough Council in its capacity as manager of the local housing waiting list.
97. The table shows that there are currently about 90 households in Twyford unable to access affordable rented homes suitable to their needs. The table also suggests that, over the Plan period, 42 additional households in the Neighbourhood Plan area will fall into need, producing total need for affordable rented homes of 132. When considering the likely supply of affordable housing over the Plan period, the overall shortfall is likely to be 53 units, which equates to approximately 3.7 units per annum. This is very close to the LHNA-informed estimate of 4.3 units per year.

⁴ Paragraphs 024-026 Reference ID: 2a-026-20140306, at <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/housing-and-economic-land-availability-assessment>

Table 4-5: Estimate of need for Affordable Housing for rent in [NA Name]

Stage and Step in Calculation	Total	Description
STAGE 1: CURRENT NEED		
1.1 Current households in need	90.0	Latest waiting list data available from DLUCH Local authority housing statistics data return (households in priority need). Pro rata for the NA. Replace with neighbourhood level data if provided by LA.
1.2 Per annum	6.4	1.1 divided by the plan period 2022-2036
STAGE 2: NEWLY ARISING NEED		
2.1 New household formation	379.2	DLUCH 2018-based household projections for the LA between start and end of plan period. % increase applied to NA
2.2 Proportion of new households unable to rent in the market	11.1%	(Steps 1.1 + 2.2.1 + 2.2.2) divided by number of households in NA
2.2.1 Current number of social renters in NA	189.7	2011 Census + LA-level % increase
2.2.2 Number of private renters on housing benefits	78.6	Housing benefit caseload May 2018. Pro rata for NA.
2.3 New households unable to rent	42.2	Step 2.1 * Step 2.2
2.4 Per annum	3.0	Step 2.3 divided by plan period 2022-2036
STAGE 3: SUPPLY OF AFFORDABLE HOUSING		
3.1 Supply of social/affordable re-lets (including transfers) %	3.0%	Assumed proportion of stock re-let each year
3.2 Supply of social/affordable re-lets (including transfers)	5.7	Step 3.1 x NA social rented stock (2.2.1)
NET SHORTFALL (OR SURPLUS) OF RENTED UNITS PER ANNUM		
Overall shortfall (or surplus) per annum	3.7	Step 1.2 + Step 2.4 - Step 3.2
Overall shortfall (or surplus) over the plan period	52.5	(Step 1.1 + Step 2.3) - Step 3.2 * plan period

Source: AECOM model, using Census 2011, English Housing Survey 2018, DLUCH 2018 based household projections and net additions to affordable housing stock. 2018 is the latest reliable data for some datasets so is used throughout for consistency. Figures may not sum due to rounding.

98. Turning now to Affordable Housing providing a route to home ownership, Table 4-6 below estimates the potential demand in Twyford. This model aims to estimate the number of households which might wish to own their own home but cannot afford to – the ‘can rent, can’t buy’ group described in the previous section. The model is consistent with methods used at Local Authority scale in taking as its starting point households currently living in or expected to enter the private rented sector who are not on housing benefit.

99. There may be other barriers to these households accessing home ownership on the open market, including being unable to save for a deposit, or being unable to afford a home of the right type/size or in the right location. The model also discounts 25% of households potentially in need, assuming a proportion will be renting out of choice. This assumption is based on consistent results for surveys and polls at the national level which demonstrate that most households (typically 80% or more) aspire to home ownership.⁵ No robust indicator exists for this area or a wider scale to suggest aspirations may be higher or lower in the NA.
100. The result of the calculation is 25.1 households per annum who may be interested in affordable home ownership (or 348 for the entirety of the Plan period). Again this is not far removed from the LHNA-informed figure of 13.2 units per year, but the higher HNA estimate expresses potential demand in a more open-ended way than the LHNA figure.
101. Again, this assumes a rate of turnover in the existing stock will satisfy some need, though this is extremely minimal because of the lack of shared ownership in the NA currently.
102. It is important to keep in mind that the households identified in this estimate are, by and large, adequately housed in the private rented sector, Affordable Housing, or living in other circumstances. They do not necessarily lack their own housing but would prefer to buy rather than rent. They have been included in the national planning definition of those in need of Affordable Housing, but their needs are less acute than those on the waiting list for affordable rented housing.

⁵ <http://www.ipsos-mori-generations.com/housing.html>

Figure 4-6: Estimate of the potential demand for affordable housing for sale in Twyford

Stage and Step in Calculation	Total	Description
STAGE 1: CURRENT NEED		
1.1 Current number of renters in NA	518.1	Census 2011 number of renters * national % increase to 2018
1.2 Percentage renters on housing benefit in LA	15.2%	% of renters in 2018 on housing benefit
1.3 Number of renters on housing benefits in NA	78.6	Step 1.1 * Step 1.2
1.4 Current need (households)	329.6	Current renters minus those on HB and minus 25% assumed to rent by choice
1.5 Per annum	23.5	Step 1.4 divided by plan period
STAGE 2: NEWLY ARISING NEED		
2.1 New household formation	379.2	LA household projections for plan period (2018 based) pro rated to NA
2.2 % of households unable to buy but able to rent	11.3%	(Step 1.4 + Step 3.1) divided by number of households in NA estimated in 2020
2.3 Total newly arising need	42.8	Step 2.1 * Step 2.2
2.4 Total newly arising need per annum	3.3	Step 2.3 divided by plan period
STAGE 3: SUPPLY OF AFFORDABLE HOUSING		
3.1 Supply of affordable housing	34.4	Number of shared ownership homes in NA (Census 2011 + LA new build to 2018/19 pro rated to NA)
3.2 Supply - intermediate resales	1.7	Step 3.1 * 5% (assume rate of re-sale)
NET SHORTFALL (OR SURPLUS) PER ANNUM		
Overall shortfall (or surplus) per annum	25.1	(Step 1.5 + Step 2.4) - Step 3.2
Overall shortfall (or surplus) over the plan period	348.3	(Step 1.4 + Step 2.3) - Step 3.2 * number of years to end of plan period

Source: AECOM model, using Census 2011, English Housing Survey 2018, DLUCH 2018 based household projections and net additions to affordable housing stock. 2018 is the latest reliable data for some datasets so is used throughout for consistency.

103. There is no policy or legal obligation on the part either of the Local Authority or Neighbourhood Plan to meet affordable housing needs in full, though there are tools available to the Steering Group that can help ensure that it is met to a greater extent if resources permit (e.g. the ability to allocate sites for affordable housing).
104. It is also important to remember that even after the Neighbourhood Plan is adopted, the assessment of need for Affordable Housing, the allocation of affordable rented housing to those in need, and the management of the housing waiting list all remain the responsibility of the Local Authority rather than the neighbourhood planning group.

Affordable Housing policy guidance

105. Wokingham's adopted policy on this subject (Core Strategy Policy CP5) requires up to 50% of all new housing to be affordable (depending on circumstance and land type). Taking a look at the housing growth between 2011 and 2020 for the area of the Parish which is encompassed by the LSOAs which are entirely within Twyford, there were an additional 136 homes delivered overall. Wokingham Borough Council figures reveal that over this same period, four affordable units were delivered. Given that Affordable Housing made up just 3% of new housing in Twyford over the last decade, it is understood that this target is not usually met on sites in the NA. Note that the growth of approximately 136 dwellings over the aforementioned period relates to the LSOAs which are entirely within the Parish and excludes any growth over the period in the previously discussed, small omitted area in the south west of the Parish; however, the delivery of affordable housing relates to the entire Parish. As such, the percentage of affordable housing delivery may be smaller than the stated 3%.
106. The overall proportion of housing that must be affordable is not an area of policy that a Neighbourhood Plan can usually influence, but it is worth emphasizing that the HNA finds there to be robust evidence of need for Affordable Housing in the NA, and every effort should be made to maximise delivery where viable.
107. How the Affordable Housing that comes forward through mainstream development sites is broken down into specific tenures – such as the balance between rented tenures and routes to home ownership – is left as a matter to be informed by the latest evidence, and negotiated on a site-by-site basis, as set out by the existing and emerging development plans for Wokingham. The HNA can supply more localised evidence, and this section summarises the factors that might be taken into account before proposing a suggested Affordable Housing tenure mix that might be suitable for Twyford specifically.
108. The following evidence and considerations may be used as a starting point in the development of policy concerning the Affordable Housing mix:
- A. **Evidence of need for Affordable Housing:** This study estimates that Twyford requires roughly 53 units of affordable rented housing and 348 units of affordable home ownership over the Plan period (estimates that are broadly in line with the result of pro-rating the LHNA figures). Both forms of Affordable Housing appear to be valuable in meeting the needs of people on various incomes.
- The relationship between these figures suggests that 13% of Affordable Housing should be rented and 87% should offer a route to ownership. However, as noted above, these figures are not directly equivalent: the former expresses the identified need of a group with acute needs and no alternative options; the latter expresses potential demand from a group who are generally adequately housed in rented accommodation and may not be able to afford the deposit to transition to ownership.

If the quantity of new housing overall were unlimited, 13% to 87% may be an appropriate affordable tenure mix. However, this is not likely and also not strictly necessary.

- B. Can Affordable Housing needs be met in full?** How far the more urgently needed affordable rented housing should be prioritised in the tenure mix depends on the quantity of overall housing delivery expected.

If all of the indicative housing requirement of 271 comes forward and the 50% affordable requirement is met, around 136 units of Affordable Housing could be delivered. However, judging by the historic delivery of Affordable Housing in the Twyford Parish, future housing delivery could be unlikely to deliver the Local Plan target of up to 50% of homes being affordable. One reason for such trends could be a higher than average delivery of housing on sites which are not large enough to meet the threshold of 5 dwellings/0.16 hectares, above which the Affordable Housing policy applies. If that is the case in the future, the potential delivery of Affordable Housing is likely to be lower still. This would be unlikely to be sufficient to satisfy the total potential demand for Affordable Housing identified here.

As a result, affordable rented housing should have a higher weighting in the tenure mix to ensure that the most acute needs are met as a priority. But given the historic delivery rates it is reasonable to assume that supply will be limited and affordable rented accommodation should be prioritised. The 70% rented 30% ownership guideline mix in the Local Plan may offer an appropriate benchmark, though considering the difference between this split and the evidenced need, a balance at 55% rented and 45% ownership may be more appropriate.

- C. Government policy (eg NPPF) requirements:** current NPPF policy requires 10% of all homes to be delivered for affordable home ownership. For 10% of all housing to be affordable ownership in Wokingham, where 50% of all housing should be affordable, 20% of Affordable Housing should be for affordable ownership. This complies with the guideline tenure split sought in the Local Plan.

There can be exceptions to this requirement if it would prevent the delivery of other forms of Affordable Housing. Based on the findings of this HNA there is no evidence that meeting the 10% threshold in Twyford would prejudice the provision of much needed affordable rented homes.

- D. Local Plan policy:** As noted above, the emerging Local Plan and existing Core Strategy seek a tenure split of 70% rented 30% ownership.
- E. First Homes policy:** the Government recently concluded a consultation on the introduction of First Homes (to provide at least 30% discount on new build home prices). The proposals have now been enacted through a ministerial statement. A minimum of 25% of all Affordable Housing secured through developer contributions are now required to be First Homes.

This new minimum requirement may have the effect of displacing other products in any established tenure mix, and will reduce the amount of social or affordable rent if this was proposed to be more than 75% of Affordable Housing. Though, in this case a 70% delivery of social or affordable rented units would still be expected to be possible.

After the 25% First Homes requirement has been met, the remaining 75% of Affordable Housing units should as a first priority protect the provision for social rent set out in the Local Plan. The remaining units should then be allocated to other tenure products in the relative proportions set out in the Local Plan.

This guidance generally applies to district-level policy, and there may still be potential for a neighbourhood plan tenure mix to deviate from how the other tenures are rebalanced if appropriate.

- F. **Viability:** HNAs cannot take into consideration the factors which affect viability in the neighbourhood area or at the site-specific level. Viability issues are recognised in the Local Plan and it is acknowledged that this may affect the provision of affordable housing, the mix of tenures provided and the discounts that can be sought on First Homes properties.
- G. **Funding:** the availability of funding to support the delivery of different forms of Affordable Housing may also influence what it is appropriate to provide at a particular point in time or on any one site. The neighbourhood planning group may wish to keep this in mind so that it can take up any opportunities to secure funding if they become available.
- H. **Existing tenure mix in Twyford:** The Parish currently has a relatively low proportion of shared ownership tenures (0.6%) across all tenures, with the figure slightly below national averages (0.8%) and a larger amount below local averages (1.1%). In terms of social rented accommodation, Twyford has a proportion (5.3%) which is significantly below average for both local (7%) and national figures (17.7%). This suggests that at present, there is a significant shortfall of affordable rented housing, with a less pronounced shortfall of affordable ownership options, though it is still considered to be undersupplied. This suggests that some provision of Affordable Housing would offer a wider choice of homes for local residents and, importantly, may allow those on lower incomes including newly forming households and younger families to remain in or move to the area.
- I. **Views of registered providers:** it is not within the scope of this HNA to investigate whether it would be viable for housing associations (registered providers) to deliver and manage affordable rented homes in the parish. The funding arrangements available to housing associations will determine rent levels.

- J. **Wider policy objectives:** the neighbourhood planning group may wish to take account of broader policy objectives for Twyford and/or the wider district. These could include, but are not restricted to, policies to attract younger households, families or working age people to the NA. These wider considerations may influence the mix of Affordable Housing provided.
109. On the basis of the considerations above, Table 4-7 below proposes an indicative Affordable Housing tenure mix that might be sought through Neighbourhood Plan policy.
110. This indicative mix is chiefly a response to the expectation that the delivery of Affordable Housing will be lower than the needs identified here. In this context, affordable rented tenures should be prioritised. The Local Plan guideline mix of 70% rented to 30% ownership may offer a suitable benchmark, which also complies with the various minimum requirements mandated nationally. However, considering the difference between this split and the evidenced need, a balance at 55% rented and 45% ownership may be more appropriate.
111. A 25% split of Affordable Housing First Homes tenures matches national policy and hence has been recommended; this should be targeted with a discount level of 50% to suit local needs. This chapter has demonstrated that shared ownership (10%) offers the most affordable route to home ownership for the Twyford Parish with 25% ownership still being considered affordable for those on mean incomes; as such 12% of Affordable Housing could be comprised of this tenure. Rent to buy schemes are also considered to be affordable for those on mean incomes (more affordable than a 25% shared ownership tenure, but less so than a 10% shared ownership tenure). However, this tenure type is emerging and the effectiveness is still relatively unknown, as such, a split of 8% could be allocated to this tenure; this should also help to ensure diversity and a maximisation of choice alongside locally relevant tenures to deliver Affordable Housing.
112. This mix should be viewed as a starting point, based primarily on secondary evidence, which should be reconsidered in light of considerations F to J above, and in particular the views and objectives of the community.
113. Where the neighbourhood planning group wish to develop policy that deviates from that outlined in the Local Plan – either by differing from the headline split between renting and ownership or by specifying a greater level of detail around sub-tenures, it is important that they liaise with Wokingham Borough Council to gather more detailed income and viability information, and to ensure that departures from the local policy context have their support.
114. Another option when developing Neighbourhood Plan policies on tenure splits is to add caveats to the policy in question, to the effect that the precise mix of affordable housing will be considered on the basis of site-by-site circumstances in addition to this evidence.

Table 4-7: Indicative tenure split (Affordable Housing)

Tenure	Indicative mix	Considerations and uncertainties
Routes to home ownership, of which	45%	
First Homes	25%	Product untested so uncertainties around viability, developer, lenders and buyer appetite etc.
Shared ownership	12%	Recently confirmed changes to the model to allow purchases of 10% share - impact on viability unknown. RPs business plans currently reliant on shared ownership model. Impact of displacement by First Homes unknown.
Rent to buy	8%	Emerging product with popularity and effectiveness as yet unknown. Impact of displacement by First Homes unknown.
Affordable Housing for rent, of which	55%	
Social rent	To be set by Registered Providers	Uncertain how much funding available to support this tenure in local area. Uncertain whether RPs willing to own/manage stock in this area.
Affordable rent	To be set by Registered Providers	Uncertain whether RPs willing to own/manage stock in this area.

Source: AECOM calculations

Conclusions- Tenure and Affordability

115. The Parish of Twyford has a rate of home ownership which is broadly consistent with Wokingham, though considerably higher than that seen across England; when focusing on shared ownership tenures, Twyford's figure is slightly lower than England and more significantly lower than that seen in Wokingham. Of those who rent, the majority are in private rented accommodation, with a significantly lower than nationally average proportion of people living in social rented accommodation.
116. House prices in the area have steadily increased since 2011, with the most pronounced increases seen in terraced and semi-detached properties. Setting this in the context of incomes in the Parish, households are on average likely to earn approximately £72,600 (2018), though lower quartile earners may earn significantly less at approximately £36,148 per household (assuming two lower quartile earners living in one household).

117. Focusing on affordability thresholds, no affordable or market tenure options are likely to be considered to be affordable for those single-earning (£18,074) lower quartile households, when accounting for potential lower quartile earners from households with two earners, affordable or social rented tenures may be affordable, but ownership options are considered unaffordable. Those on average household incomes are likely to be able to afford market and affordable level rents as well as some more generous affordable ownership options (such as: 50% discount First Homes and Shared Ownership options with 10% and 25% ownership rates).
118. In terms of affordability, the following tenures would be considered to be affordable for those earning less than the mean income:
- Social rent
 - Affordable rent
 - Shared ownership (10%)
 - Entry-level market rent
 - Average market rent
 - Shared ownership (25%)
 - First homes (-50%)
119. Wokingham is identified as an area which has a particularly high need for affordable housing, with a majority of people in need occupying unsuitable housing and unlikely to be able to access market rents. As such, affordable rented tenures should be prioritised before affordable ownership options. That said, some lower ownership proportions under shared ownership tenures may be affordable for some of these groups. A pro-rated figure related to the number of households on the affordable housing waiting list reveals that there could be around 90 households in Twyford who are currently on the affordable housing waiting list.
120. Considering current need, future need and the supply of affordable housing, there is likely to be an overall shortfall of affordable units for rent of 52.5 (53) across the plan period (3.7 per annum). Taking the focus to affordable routes to home ownership and considering the same factors, there is likely to be a shortfall of 348.3 (348) units over the plan period (25.1 per annum). These estimates are in broad alignment with the figures that result if the latest LHNA figures are pro-rated to Twyford according to population statistics.
121. In terms of historic delivery of affordable units for rent or ownership in Twyford, there has been some significant under delivery, meaning that a similar pattern in the future could be expected. This under delivery could be due to a number of factors, including sites not meeting the minimum size threshold to require affordable units to be delivered.
122. Wokingham have a target of up to 50% of all new housing being required to be affordable and this is something which requires a high burden of justification for neighbourhood to alter.

123. Whilst the relationship between the affordable housing for rent and for ownership need in Twyford would suggest a split in favour of affordable homes for ownership, the acute shortage of affordable housing means that a focus on affordable units for rent should be reinforced to ensure provision is provided for those most in need. The emerging and existing Local Plan suggest a split of 70% rented and 30% ownership, which might offer a suitable split for the Twyford NP. Considering that, national policy and local circumstances, the following tenure split would be considered reasonable and well evidenced (Table 4-8).

Table 4-8: Recommended affordable tenure splits.

Tenure	Indicative mix
Routes to home ownership, of which	45%
First Homes	25%
Shared ownership	12%
Rent to buy	8%
Affordable Housing for rent, of which	55%
Social rent	To be set by Registered Providers
Affordable rent	To be set by Registered Providers

124. The scale of Twyford’s indicative housing requirement relative to the need identified here, in addition to historic delivery rates of affordable housing in the parish, suggest that the evidenced affordable housing needs might not be met over the Plan period. As such, the recommendation is that the policy requirement be met wherever possible, and further avenues for delivering greater quantities of Affordable Housing (such as exception sites) could be explored. If the group considers exceeding the Local Plan policy requirement in the neighbourhood plan then it must be noted that an extremely high standard of justification is required which goes beyond the scope of this HNA, in particular around the issue of what level of Affordable Housing delivery can be financially viable in the NA. Raising the percentage of Affordable Housing required could have the effect of discouraging new building from coming forward altogether. Should the group wish to consider such an option, it is advisable to discuss this with the LPA in the first instance.

125. Affordable housing is typically provided and made financially viable by its inclusion as a proportion of larger market developments, as guided by Local Plan policy. However, if the community wishes to boost the supply of affordable housing, there are other, more proactive routes available for its provision. For example, using community development orders, identifying exception sites or developing community land trusts are all ways of boosting the supply of affordable housing.

126. Table 4-9 below summarises Twyford’s position with regards to the expected delivery of Affordable Housing, and how this might ideally be apportioned among sub-categories of tenure to meet local needs over the Plan period. This exercise simply applies the indicative housing requirement figure for the area (noting it applies to a slightly different period) to the Local Plan policy expectation, and shows the quantities of affordable housing for rent and sale that would be delivered if the tenure mix proposed in this HNA were to be rigidly enforced. In this sense it is hypothetical, and the outcomes in practice may differ, either as a result of measures taken in the neighbourhood plan (e.g. if the group plan for more housing (and therefore more affordable housing) than the local plan, or if the group decide to influence the tenure mix in other ways), or as a result of site-specific constraints.

Table 4-9: Estimated delivery of Affordable Housing in Twyford

	Step in Estimation	Expected delivery
A	Indicative housing requirement	271
B	Affordable housing quota (%) in LPA's Local Plan	50%
C	Potential total Affordable Housing in NA (A x B)	136
D	Rented % (e.g. social/ affordable rented)	55%
E	Rented number (C x D)	75
F	Affordable home ownership % (e.g. First Homes, Rent to Buy)	45%
G	Affordable home ownership number (C x F)	61

Source: AECOM estimate based on LPA's affordable housing policies, AECOM's indicative tenure mix

5. RQ 2: Type and Size

RQ 2: What type (terrace, semi, bungalows, flats and detached) and size (number of bedrooms) of housing is appropriate for the Plan area over the Neighbourhood Plan period?

Introduction

127. The evidence in this chapter is intended to give a snapshot of the existing dwelling stock in Twyford in terms of type and size, as well as some of the population characteristics that tend to influence housing needs. From this, it is possible to develop an understanding of what sort of housing would be appropriate going forward.
128. It is worth emphasising that this evidence assumes that existing demographic and occupation patterns will persist into the future. It can therefore be thought of as the baseline or default scenario, into which the community may wish to intervene – for example to attract a different or more balanced demographic. The recommendations in this chapter, particularly the final suggested size mix, are a starting point that may be adjusted in light of other community objectives and primary evidence.

Existing types and sizes

Background and definitions

129. Before beginning to explore issues of dwelling type and size, it is important to note that the demand for housing by size and type tends to be determined primarily by wealth – with those having more buying power choosing to occupy larger homes, and often preferring detached properties to denser types, such as flats.
130. This study is concerned primarily with need rather than demand. Need for homes of different sizes is chiefly determined by the number of people occupying the home. In the strict sense, there is no ‘need’ for dwellings of any particular type, other than the specific needs of those with certain disabilities for level access properties, for example.
131. The best proxy for the number of people in a household is age or ‘life stage’, with younger and then older households tending to have one or two people, and those in between these poles more likely to have larger families including children. Life stage is therefore a main indicator considered here for the size of housing needed. But it is worth pointing out that wealth is also correlated with age, so it is not possible to attain a pure view of what is needed from the secondary data alone.

132. It is also useful to clarify the terminology around dwellings and households. Dwellings are counted in the Census by combining address information with Census returns on whether people's accommodation is self-contained. As such, all dwellings are classified as either shared or unshared dwellings. Households are groups of people who live together as a coherent unit (such as a family), and a dwelling is shared where there is more than one household occupying it (e.g. two families or a group of individual students). Hence, there is usually a different number of households and dwellings in any given area. The number of dwellings can also exceed that of households in areas with large numbers of holiday or second homes.
133. As noted in the Context section of this report, there is no perfect data source for the current mix of dwellings in the NA. For some aspects, such as the size mix of homes, adding together Census figures and completions data for the intervening period is highly accurate. For others, such as the type mix of homes, this method is not available and Valuation Office Agency (VOA) must be used, and it must be accepted that the data areas do not entirely match with the Twyford area. The most appropriate combination of approaches is used in this section.

Dwelling type

134. Wokingham Borough Council's housing delivery recording methods mean that it is difficult to precisely detail the quantities and types of new housing in the Parish since the 2011 Census. As such, this report will rely on VOA data to understand the split of housing types in Twyford.
135. Census 2011 data is presented below, but this unfortunately cannot be used to fully understand the changes between 2011 and 2020 because Census data counts bungalows within each of the other categories rather than independently (hence the apparent decline in the number of semi-detached properties). Whilst the VOA data refers to a slightly smaller proxy area than the Parish of Twyford, this has been accounted for by ensuring that the Census data used for comparative purposes here only includes the four LSOAs which are included in the VOA data. Note also that VOA data is rounded to the nearest 10 in each dwelling category.
136. Table 5-1 can be used to assess 2020 accommodation types with some level of comparison to housing types at the 2011 Census in Twyford. Whilst the VOA data does not cover the entire geographical extent of Twyford (as previously explained), the area is fairly representative of Twyford as a whole in terms of its accommodation types. At both points in time, the Parish's stock was mainly comprised of detached, semi-detached and terraced housing. The latest VOA data shows that bungalows make up the smallest proportion of categorised accommodation types.

Table 5-1: Accommodation type, Twyford (using the four LSOAs which are entirely within the Parish), 2011 and 2020

Dwelling type	2011 (Census)	2020 (VOA)
Bungalow	-	280
Flat	349	420
Terrace	482	540
Semi-detached	767	600
Detached	936	810
Unknown/other	-	20
Total	2,534	2,670

137. Source: ONS 2011, VOA 2020, AECOM Calculations

138. As shown in Table 5-2, despite the low number, Twyford has a higher than average proportion of bungalows within its mix of dwelling types. Compared to national averages, there is a small proportion of flats, however the proportion of the Parish's mix comprised of flats is higher than seen across Wokingham. A similar picture is seen when looking at Terraced housing. In terms of semi-detached accommodation, neighbourhood, local and national figures are broadly aligned without significant anomalies. When focusing on detached housing, Twyford and Wokingham both have significantly greater proportions (of which Wokingham's percentage is greater than Twyford's) than national equivalents.

Table 5-2: Accommodation type, various geographies, 2020.

Dwelling type	Twyford	Wokingham	England
Bungalow	10.5%	7.7%	9.4%
Flat	15.7%	13.1%	23.0%
Terrace	20.2%	16.1%	26.4%
Semi-detached	22.5%	24.2%	23.8%
Detached	30.3%	36.6%	15.9%
Unknown/other	0.7%	2.4%	1.4%

Source: VOA 2020, AECOM Calculations

Dwelling size

139. For the purposes of this assessment and as for early sections of the report, the data used to understand the historic and current mix of housing sizes within Twyford rely on Census data and VOA data. For Table 5-3 (below), the 2011 Census data relates only to the four LSOAs in the Parish which are relevant to the VOA data; this allows a more direct comparison in order to assess change over time. Whilst the absolute numbers will not be entirely representative of Twyford as a whole, the percentage splits are likely to be broadly representative. The fact that dwelling sizes can change (including through extensions, subdivisions of rooms or changes to the composition of properties) and the fact that VOA data rounds figures to the nearest 10 and records properties with an unknown number of rooms means that some discrepancies and reductions can be seen. The newest data available is for 2020 – which also misses any homes completed in the last year.

140. Whilst understanding the above limitations, Table 5-3 indicates that the proportions of different dwelling sizes within the Parish are broadly similar now, compared to 2011 rates, there have been some slight increases in proportions of 1 (or no/unknown) bedroom(s), 2 bedroom and 3 bedroom properties made up for with a reduction in 4+ bedroom dwellings. Looking at the actual change over time, there have been decreases in 1 (or no) and 4+ bedroom dwellings, and more significant increases in 2 and 3 bed dwellings since 2011.

Table 5-3: Dwelling size (bedrooms), Twyford Parish, 2011 and 2020

Number of bedrooms	2011 (Census)	Percentage (2011 Census)	VOA data 2021	Percentage Split (VOA data 2020)	2011-2020 Percentage Change
1 (or no bedrooms)	268	10.6%	260	9.7%	-3.1%
2	662	26.1%	770	28.6%	14%
3	858	33.8%	960	35.7%	10.6%
4+	749	29.5%	690	25.7%	-8.6%
Unknown	-	-	10	0.4%	-
Total	2,537	-	2,690	-	5.7%

Source: ONS 2011, VOA 2020, AECOM Calculations

141. Table 5-4 (below), using VOA data for the LSOAs which cover the majority of the Twyford Parish, shows that at the neighbourhood and local scales there are proportionately fewer 1-bedroom dwellings than seen across England as a whole. In terms of 2-bedroom properties, Twyford is aligned with England's average, though both are higher than the proportion for Wokingham. Twyford has a lower than average proportion of 3-bedroom dwellings and in terms of 4+ bedrooms, it has significantly higher rates than England, but lower than Wokingham as a whole.

Table 5-4: Dwelling size (bedrooms), various geographies, 2020

Number of bedrooms	Four LSOAs within Twyford	Wokingham	England
1	9.7%	7.0%	12.2%
2	28.6%	21.3%	28.1%
3	35.7%	40.5%	43.6%
4+	25.7%	30.7%	15.4%

Source: VOA 2020, AECOM Calculations

Age and household composition

142. Having established the current stock profile of Twyford and identified recent changes to it, the evidence gathered below examines the composition and age structure of households living in the NA. Many of these indicators have a bearing on what housing might be needed in future years.

Age structure

143. Table 5-5 below shows the most recent estimated age structure of the NA population, alongside 2011 Census figures. The data shows that the proportion of those living within Twyford who were aged 0-24 has seen very little change over the timeframe stated. There has been a fairly substantial decline in the proportion of people aged between 25-44, compensated for with some increases in the proportion of those aged 45-84. Overall, this trend suggests that the population in Twyford is getting generally older, with the youth and very elderly (85+) populations remaining broadly stable.
144. Note that ONS advises exercising caution with population estimates by single year of age (from which this 2019 data has been derived), as patterns of variance and bias make it relatively less accurate compared to Census data.
145. It is also worth noting that only the age structure of the population (individuals) can be brought up to date in this way. The life stage of households, which forms the basis of the subsequent analysis of future dwelling size needs, is not estimated each year. The 2011 Census therefore remains the most accurate basis to use in those areas, and the brief comparison here demonstrates that the change from 2011-2019 has not been so significant as to invalidate the 2011 household data used in modelling later in this chapter.

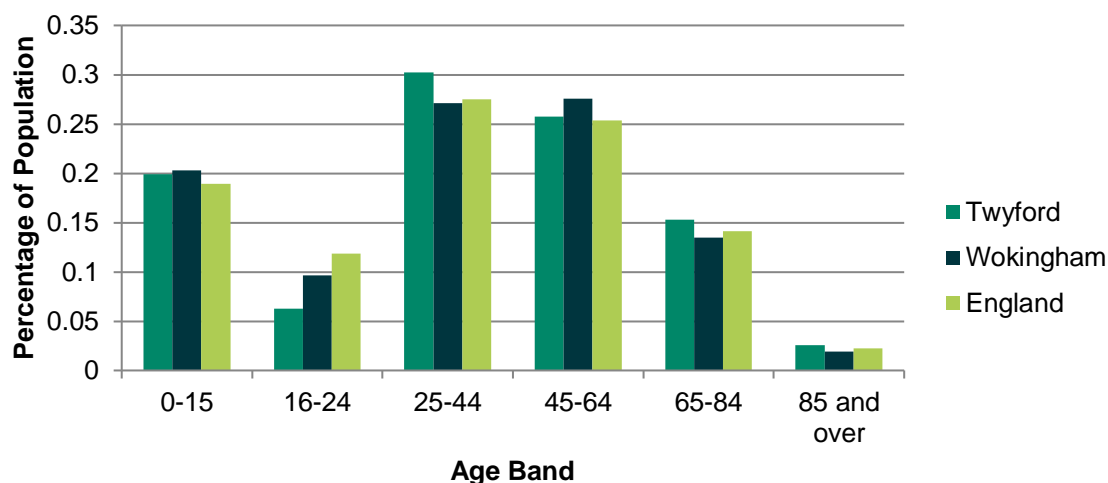
Table 5-5: Age structure of Twyford population, 2011 and 2019

Age group	2011 (Census)		2019 (ONS, estimated)	
0-15	1,316	20%	1,488	21.3%
16-24	413	6%	445	6.4%
25-44	2,001	30%	1,766	25.3%
45-64	1,706	26%	1,905	27.3%
65-84	1,013	15%	1,174	16.8%
85 and over	169	3%	202	2.9%
Total	6,618	100%	6,980	100%

Source: ONS 2011, ONS mid-2019 population estimates, AECOM Calculations

146. For context, it is useful to look at the parish population structure alongside that of the district and country. Figure 5.1 below (using 2011 Census data) shows that whilst Twyford's proportion of the population aged 0-15 is broadly aligned with local and national averages, there is a significantly smaller proportion of people in the Parish aged between 16 and 24. This trend reverses for those within the age bracket of 25-44, where Twyford has a greater than locally and nationally average proportion of people within this bracket. For those aged 45-64, Twyford is broadly aligned with national averages, whereas Wokingham has higher than average proportions.

Figure 5.1: Age structure in Twyford, Wokingham and England, 2011



Source: ONS 2011, AECOM Calculations

Household composition

147. Household composition (i.e. the combination and relationships of adults and children in a dwelling) is an important factor in the size (and to an extent, the type) of housing needed over the Neighbourhood Plan period.
148. Table 5-6 shows that the majority of Twyford's households consist of one family units (67.7%), with the majority of these consisting of families with dependent children (27.8%), closely followed by single family units with no children (23.3%).
149. In comparative terms, the household composition of Twyford does not differ significantly from that seen across Wokingham, however when looking at England as a whole, there are some marked differences. England tends to have a greater proportion of one person households, which are generally comprised more commonly of populations aged under 65. This is compensated for with a reduction in the number of single family household units seen across England (61.8%), with the most noticeable difference seen for those units with no dependent children (17.6%).
150. Note that non-dependent children refer to households in which adult children are living at home, or which students still call their primary residence despite living for most of the year near to university. A marked increase in this category can be taken to indicate the relative unaffordability of entry-level homes, where young people are financially unable to move out and form their own households. The higher rates under this bracket seen in both Twyford and Wokingham indicate that this could be the case in these areas. While the data is quite old at this point, it is interesting to observe that this category shrank by 3.2% between 2001 and 2011 in the parish – in line with a slower rate of decline than the District average (-0.6%), suggesting that affordability for first time buyers has been improving in Twyford at a more positive rate than Wokingham as a whole.

Table 5-6: Household composition, Twyford, 2011

Household composition		Wokingham	Twyford	England
One person household	Total	23.3%	28.7%	30.2%
	Aged 65 and over	10.2%	13.9%	12.4%
	Other	13.1%	14.8%	17.9%
One family only	Total	71.0%	67.7%	61.8%
	All aged 65 and over	9.4%	9.8%	8.1%
	With no children	20.6%	23.3%	17.6%
	With dependent children	31.1%	27.8%	26.5%
	All children Non-Dependent ⁶	9.8%	6.9%	9.6%
Other household types	Total	5.7%	3.6%	8.0%

Source: ONS 2011, AECOM Calculations

i) Occupancy ratings

151. The tendency of households to over- or under-occupy their homes is another relevant consideration to the future size needs of the NA. A person is considered to under-occupy their home when there are more bedrooms in their home than a family of their size and composition would normally be expected to need. This is expressed as an occupancy rating of +1 or +2, indicating that there is one surplus bedroom or at least two surplus bedrooms (respectively). Over-occupancy works in the same way, with a rating of -1 indicating at least one bedroom too few.

152. Census data on occupancy rating is only provided down to MSOA level. So for the purpose of this analysis, the NA is represented by MSOA 'Wokingham 002'; it should be noted that this administrative area encompasses the Parish of Twyford as well as an equally sized area to the west, which includes the village of Charvil. For this wider area, Table 5-7 shows that very few dwellings are over occupied and a significant proportion are underoccupied. Those who are older in age are broadly much more likely to be living in an underoccupied dwelling, with those younger in age more likely to be occupying a dwelling with a provision of bedrooms proportionate to the household's size.

Table 5-7: Occupancy rating by age in the Twyford area (including Charvil), 2011

Age group	+2 rating	+1 rating	0 rating	-1 rating
0-15	37%	39%	21%	3%
16-49	38%	38%	21%	3%
50-64	63%	26%	10%	1%
65 and over	64%	25%	10%	0%
All ages	47%	34%	17%	2%

Source: ONS 2011, ONS mid-2019 population estimates, AECOM Calculations

⁶ Refers to households containing children who are older than 16, e.g. students or young working people living at home.

Dwelling mix determined by life-stage modelling

Suggested future dwelling size mix

153. As noted above, there is a strong link between the life stage of a household and the size of dwelling that household can be expected to need. The final part of this chapter presents the results of a model that aims to estimate the dwelling size needs of the parish at the end of the Neighbourhood Plan period. The steps involved in this model are not presented in full, but can be summarised – along with the underpinning assumptions and some limitations – as follows:

- The starting point is the age distribution of Twyford households in 2011.
 - The life stage of a household is determined by the age of the household reference person (HRP), a more modern term for the head of household.
 - As noted above, household life stages are not estimated annually, so the older Census data must be used.
- This life stage data is then projected forward to the end of the Plan period by applying the growth rates for each household age group as suggested by the latest household projections. This allows for an estimate of how the parish population might evolve in future.
 - ONS household projections are produced every two years but are only available at Local Authority level. The growth rates are therefore applied to the 2011 starting household age profile of the NA.
- Next, we turn to a Census dataset that shows the occupation patterns or preferences of each household life stage (e.g. what proportion of households aged under 24 tend to live in 1 bedroom homes as opposed to 2, 3 or 4 bedroom homes). This data is mapped to the distribution of the projected NA population for each life stage and each dwelling size category to form a picture of what mix of homes might be appropriate in future.
 - This occupation data is again only available at Local Authority scale, so it does risk embedding any unusual characteristics present in the area.
 - The model also assumes that today's occupation patterns persist into the future, which is not a given, particularly with the change in preferences for home working space and other features arising from the Covid-19 pandemic. However, there is no better indication of what those patterns might look like. It is considered more appropriate to adjust the end mix that results from this model to reflect such trends than to build further speculative assumptions into the model.
- Finally, this 'ideal' future mix of dwelling sizes can be compared to the current stock of housing in the NA. From this we can identify how future development might best fill the gaps.

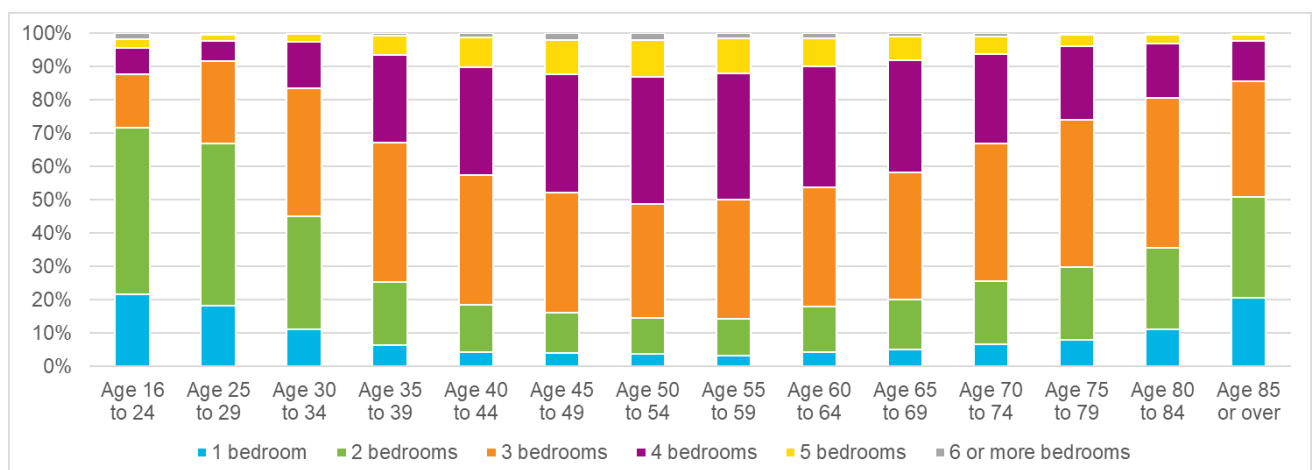
- The 2011 dwelling size mix is used for consistency, so any imbalances in new development since then may justify adjustments to the final results.

154. It is important to keep in mind that housing need is not an exact science and this exercise provides an estimate based on demographic trends and occupancy patterns alone. It does not take into account income and wealth, other than in an indirect way through the tendency of households to occupy more or less space than they ‘need’. It also does not anticipate changes in how people may wish to occupy their homes in response to social and technological change.

155. The approach therefore embeds existing patterns of occupancy which may or may not be desirable. As such, it is appropriate for the result of this model to be taken as a baseline scenario – what would occur if current trends persisted. It may well be the intention of the community to intervene to produce a different outcome more in line with their interpretation of emerging trends and their place- and community-shaping objectives. Layering these factors on top of the indicative picture provided by this model is considered entirely appropriate for the purpose of drafting neighbourhood plan policy.

156. The first, given as Figure 5.2 below, sets out the relationship between household life stage and dwelling size for Wokingham in 2011. This shows how the youngest households occupy the smallest dwellings, before rapidly taking up larger homes as their families expand, and then at a considerably more gradual rate, downsizing to smaller homes again as they age. It is notable that 3-bedroom dwellings are occupied by a fairly consistent proportion of the population across all age groups past the age of 30, with a small reduction seen for those aged over 85.

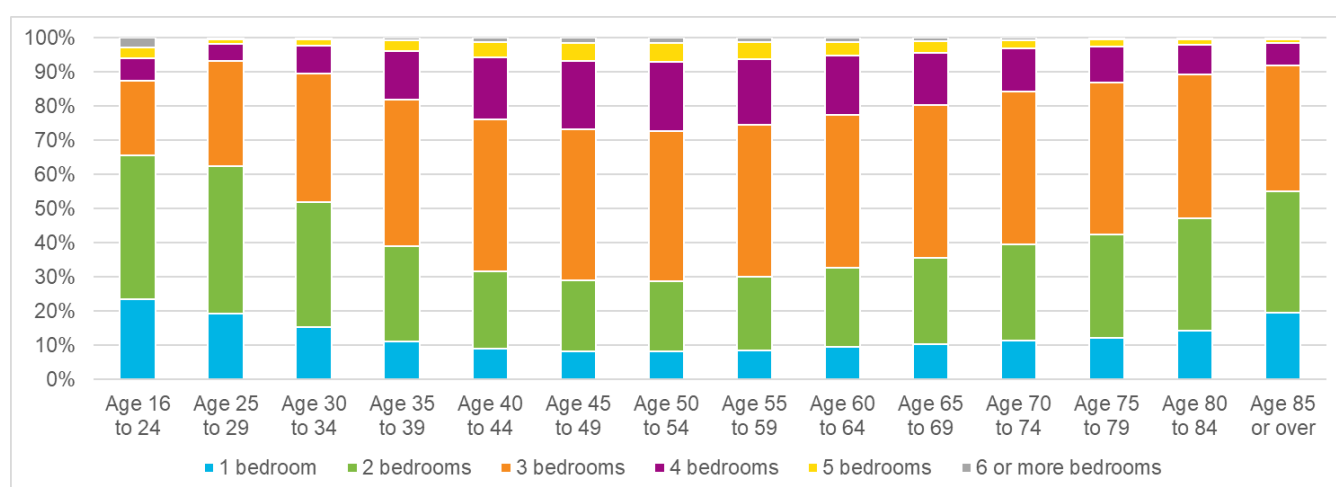
Figure 5-2: Age of household reference person by dwelling size in Wokingham, 2011



Source: ONS 2011, AECOM Calculations

157. As the data shown in Figure 5.2 is representative of Wokingham as a whole, it is important to note that as a Borough, it has an unusually large proportion of large dwellings, potentially skewing the results. As such, the same data is presented below, but representative of averages for England and Wales (Figure 5.3); this might help to provide insight into how dwelling sizes look as a national average, rather than potentially embedding unusual patterns of occupation seen in local circumstances. The most notable difference is the proportion of households occupying four-bedroom properties, which is considerably reduced across middle and later ages across England and Wales, compared to Wokingham. This reduction is made up for largely through an increased rate of people occupying one and two-bedroom properties across middle and later ages.

Figure 5.3: Age of household reference person by dwelling size in England and Wales, 2011



Source: ONS 2011, AECOM Calculations

158. The second dataset of note is the result of applying Local Authority level household projections to the age profile of Twyford households in 2011 and the updated estimates of household numbers described in the bullets above. Table 5-8 below makes clear that population growth can be expected to be driven by the oldest households, with younger households remaining fairly static or even seeing some reductions for those aged 25-34.

Table 5-8: Projected distribution of households by age of HRP, Twyford

Year	Age of HRP and under 24	Age of HRP 25 to 34	Age of HRP 35 to 54	Age of HRP 55 to 64	Age of HRP 65 and over
2011	22	365	1,222	440	802
2018	25	316	1,261	480	997
2036	25	336	1,261	552	1,419
% change 2011-2036	13%	-8%	3%	25%	77%

Source: AECOM Calculations

159. The final result of this exercise is presented in Table 5-9 below. The model suggests that new developments should be broadly focused towards delivering dwellings of 3 bedrooms or more, with a majority consisting of 3 bedrooms.

Table 5-9: Suggested dwelling size mix to 2036, Twyford

Number of bedrooms	Current mix (2011)	Target mix (2036)	Balance of new housing to reach target mix
1 bedroom	9.4%	7.2%	0.0%
2 bedrooms	25.4%	19.0%	0.0%
3 bedrooms	33.4%	38.0%	51.5%
4 bedrooms	25.7%	28.0%	34.2%
5 or more bedrooms	5.9%	7.8%	14.3%

Source: AECOM Calculations

160. The result of this model is a relatively blunt measure of what could be beneficial given population change and existing imbalances in housing options. It is based on the dwelling size preferences of different age groups at Local Authority level (due to limitations in the data) and so is influenced to some degree by the high proportion of larger homes across Wokingham (noted above). It should therefore be seen as a starting point for thinking about how best to address the more nuanced needs of the future population.
161. For example, the young starter families and downsizing older households mentioned above may both need ‘mid-sized’ homes, but are likely to have extremely different requirements and degrees of purchasing power. Limiting the smaller end of the spectrum to 3 bedroom homes would present a challenge in terms of affordability, so it is not recommended that 1-2 bedroom homes be prohibited entirely. They should not be the focus given their (relative) abundance in the existing stock, but they serve an important function in the market and should be retained as part of the mix. It is also relevant that the household survey indicated some demand for smaller dwellings, which is a valid reason to depart from the mix proposed here.
162. Indeed, the preceding chapter found that affordability is a serious and worsening challenge in the NA. While the provision of Affordable Housing (subsidised tenure products) is one way to combat this, another is to ensure that homes come forward which are of an appropriate size, type and density for local residents’ budgets. Continuing to provide smaller homes with fewer bedrooms would help to address this situation, whilst also allowing older households to downsize, freeing up larger housing.
163. To best meet the needs of the large cohort of older households expected to be present by the end of the Plan period, it should be considered whether the existing options are well tailored to older people’s requirements in terms of space, flexibility, quality, location and accessibility. Variety should be sought within the mid-sized homes that come forward in future to attract both newly forming households on lower budgets and older households with substantial equity from their existing larger homes. Facilitating downsizing among older households may release those larger homes for use by families who need more bedrooms.

164. More generally, it would be unwise for any new housing that does come forward to be delivered in an unbalanced way. Those wishing to move within or relocate to the area will have a range of circumstances and preferences, and they should be offered a range of choices. As such, it is recommended that priority is given to mid-sized and larger homes but that this is done to a degree that aligns with the wider objectives of the community and does not limit choice or threaten viability. The evidence in this section represents a starting point for further thought and consultation.
165. There is no precise statistical method for rebalancing the size mix proposed here to allow for more smaller homes, but primary survey or consultation evidence may provide a steer, evidence on the under-occupation of existing homes is relevant, and the guidance from the LHNA (see below) would be appropriate to take into account. One simple approach could be to combine the smaller categories, for instance by requiring that at least 50% of new homes have 3 or fewer bedrooms, which would permit greater flexibility. Reducing the share of 4+ bedroom homes would also be a valid approach.

The LHNA findings

166. It should be emphasised that this document provides needs for Wokingham, rather than Twyford itself. It does, however, provide a broader picture of the wider borough's needs that should be taken into account when thinking about the mix in Twyford. The Wokingham mix overall is not dissimilar to the recommendation for Twyford above aside from its inclusion of 10% 1 bedroom and 10% 2 bedroom homes. This justifies the adjustments proposed above to ensure that a wider range of choices is provided. The LHNA also helpfully disaggregates size by tenure, with a greater focus on larger market homes and smaller affordable homes.

Table 5-10: Wokingham LHNA (2020) recommended housing mix

	1-Bed	2-Bed	3-Bed	4+-Bed
Market	5-10%	5-10%	40-50%	35-40%
Affordable	20-25%	45-50%	20-25%	5-10%
All Dwellings	10%	10%	45%	35%

Source: LHNA Figure 42

Conclusions- Type and Size

167. This study provides an indication of the likely need for different types and sizes of homes based on demographic change. It is important to remember that other factors should be considered in determining the dwelling mix that is desirable in the parish or on any particular site. These include the specific characteristics of the nearby stock of housing (such as its condition and design), the role of the NA or site within the wider housing market area (linked to any Local Authority strategies or plans) and site-specific factors which may justify a particular dwelling mix.

Dwelling type

168. Where Wokingham Borough Council's housing delivery recording methods mean that it is difficult to precisely detail the quantities and types of new housing in the Parish, other datasets have been used to detail the approximate mix of dwelling types in the Parish. Twyford's accommodation stock shows signs that the highest category of types is detached houses, followed by semi-detached and terraced dwellings which both share a relatively equal proportion of the stock. The Parish has a lower than nationally average proportion of terraced housing, though this figure is higher than local authority-wide rates. The Parish has significantly higher rates of detached housing than seen in England, though this figure is lower than seen across Wokingham (which in itself is has an unusual mix of dwelling types compared to patterns across England). The share of semi-detached properties is largely in line with local and national averages.

169. Whilst VOA data shows that there have been some changes in dwelling types in Twyford since 2011, the fact that the 2011 Census dataset does not record bungalows as a separate category and the VOA data does, means that more conclusive points regarding the change over time are less reliable.

Dwelling size

170. Twyford's existing stock is largely made up of properties made up of over three bedrooms (61%), with less than 10% being made up of 1 bedroom dwellings. Wokingham also shows signs of its housing stock being largely comprised of larger properties, with 71% of properties made up of 3+ bedrooms. England has a significantly smaller proportion of 4+ bedroom dwellings, though higher rates of 3 bedroom dwellings; England and Twyford have broadly similar levels of 2-bed dwellings. Overall, it can be said that Twyford, much like Wokingham, has a housing stock which, in terms of dwelling sizes, is significantly larger than that seen across England, on average.

Age and household composition

171. Between 2011 and 2019, Twyford's age structure has seen some areas of stability, alongside some changes across specific age bands. There has been a marked decline in those aged 25-44, compensated with some increases across other age bands, with small scale changes across each. Compared to Wokingham as a whole, the Parish has a smaller than average population aged 16-24 alongside a larger than average population aged 25-44 and 65+.

172. Focusing on household composition, compared to Wokingham, Twyford has a higher than average proportion of one-person households (though this is marginally lower than England's average). The majority of households are occupied by one family only (most of these are with no children or dependent children) and overall, Twyford has a lower than average proportion of households counted as 'other'.
173. Twyford and Charvil show signs of some significant under occupation, with older age groups considerably more likely to have two or more spare bedrooms.

Dwelling mix by life stage modelling

174. Younger populations occupy the smallest dwellings in general across Twyford, with increases in occupancies of four+ bedroom dwellings through middle age groups. Older age populations generally occupy a range of dwelling sizes, with the majority being 2 and 3 bedrooms.
175. Whilst the above statement relating to occupancies by age might be representative of Wokingham as a whole, as previously mentioned, the Borough has an unusually large housing stock with high rates of under-occupation. As such, using the profile of the Borough's age-related occupancies to suggest future dwelling mixes could risk embedding a pattern which is potentially unsuitable to the needs of those in Twyford. As such, considering national averages as a basis for a more equally distributed profile of occupancies might show a more desirable trend, with older populations generally occupying smaller dwellings.
176. Looking across the Twyford Neighbourhood Plan period (to 2036), it is evident that projections expect an increase in households with younger populations (24 and under as the HRP) and significant increases in older groups (25% increase for 55-64 and a 77% increase for 65+). These is expected to be a moderate decline in those aged 25-34 acting as a HRP.
177. An overall suggested mix of new dwellings through to 2036, taking account of current household occupancies and population projections, would indicate a need for dwellings of 3 or more bedrooms. That said, this does not take account of more localised issues such as desires for housing for older people to enable some downsizing whilst staying within the Twyford area.

178. Should the NP wish to depart from the suggested mix which attempts to rebalance the area's housing stock in favour of smaller homes and to focus on important factors such as affordability, the following should be considered. Whilst there is an abundance of existing 1 and 2-bed properties in the Parish, a future mix may wish to include some of this size dwelling in future recommended mixes, which may help to address factors such as affordability and ensuring a rounded market offering. It would also be more closely aligned with the demand expressed in the household survey and the need indicated for the wider borough in the LHNA. Whilst there is no exact model which could help to evidence a dwelling mix which would steer the dwelling stock in this direction, primary surveys, consultation evidence or LHNA guidance on the under-occupation of existing homes may prove helpful. One approach which may be helpful could be to combine the category of smaller homes, such as recommending a provision of at least 50% of new homes to be 3 or fewer bedrooms. Another approach might reduce the share of larger dwellings.

6. Conclusions

Overview

179. Table 6-1 below sets out in full the conclusions and recommendations of this Neighbourhood Plan housing needs assessment, based on the evidence reviewed and analysed.

Table 6-1: Summary of study findings specific to Twyford with a potential impact on Neighbourhood Plan housing policies

Issue	Summary of evidence and data assessed	Conclusions and recommendations
Housing tenure and affordability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ In terms of ownership, Twyford (and Wokingham) have higher than average rates of home ownership alongside lower than average rates of shared ownership. Other forms of ownership are largely consistent with average figures. ▪ In terms of rent, the majority of Twyford’s renters occupy private rented accommodation, with a smaller than average proportion living in social rented accommodation. ▪ In the context of rising and higher than average house prices, affordability is an issue in Twyford, where average households earning £74,600; though lower quartile household earning may be around £36,148. ▪ Considering the relationship between house prices and incomes, in order of affordability, the following tenures would be affordable for those on the mean income <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Social rent, affordable rent, shared ownership (10%), entry-level market rent, average market rent, shared ownership (25%) and First Homes. ▪ Considering supply and demographics, a need of 53 units for affordable rent and 348 units for affordable home ownership options over the plan period has been evidenced. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Considering housing delivery, potential future need and local characteristics of housing tenures and affordability, the Twyford Neighbourhood Plan could suggest the following affordable tenure split. ▪ Routes to home ownership: 45% <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – First Homes: 25% – Shared ownership: 12% – Rent to buy: 8% ▪ Affordable Housing for rent: 55% <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Social rent to be set by Registered Providers – Affordable rent to be set by Registered Providers ▪ Historic delivery rates of affordable housing suggest that the evidenced affordable housing needs might not be met over the Plan period. As such, the recommendation is that the policy requirement be met wherever possible (to an extent which does not lead to viability issues preventing house building), and further avenues for delivering greater quantities of Affordable Housing (such as exception sites) could be explored. ▪ Community development orders, identifying exception sites or developing community land trusts are other pathways the group could explore to increase the delivery of affordable housing.

Issue	Summary of evidence and data assessed	Conclusions and recommendations
<p>Housing type and size</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Twyford’s housing stock is comprised of a majority of detached houses (with higher than nationally average rates of this type of housing), followed by semi-detached and terraced properties. ▪ In terms of size, the Parish has a significantly higher than nationally average proportion of larger houses, a pattern which is exaggerated when looking at Wokingham as a whole. ▪ Twyford’s age profile shows a pattern whereby there is a relatively old population, with fewer than average proportions of those aged 16-24. ▪ In terms of household composition, the majority of Twyford’s households are occupied by one family alongside some significant rates of under-occupation of larger dwellings. ▪ Whilst there are some difficulties in comparing the dwelling stock change over time due to data limitations, ▪ Future demographic projections indicate a potential increase in households with younger populations (aged under 24) and a significant increase in households with older populations (aged 55+). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ In order to avoid embedding existing occupancy patterns relating to an oversupply of larger housing, a degree of caution is advised over using the existing occupancies related to age alongside potential future demographic change to evidence future mix of housing sizes. Focusing on national averages may offer a more suitable baseline to help to help to meet local needs. ▪ An overall mix of dwellings through to the end of the Plan period could focus on delivering the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – 1 bedroom: 0% – 2 bedroom: 0% – 3 bedroom: 52% – 4 bedroom: 34% – 5 bedroom: 14% ▪ However, this does not account for potential future needs related to downsizing for older populations as well as the aforementioned affordability issues related to larger households. As such, it would be advisable to deliver some smaller units within the recommended mix, potentially in place of larger dwellings, of which there is an existing oversupply. ▪ The NP could seek to encourage dwellings of up-to 3 bedrooms, ensuring that a varied mix of dwelling sizes is delivered.

Recommendations for next steps

180. This Neighbourhood Plan housing needs assessment aims to provide Twyford with evidence on a range of housing trends and issues from a range of relevant sources. We recommend that the neighbourhood planners should, as a next step, discuss the contents and conclusions with Wokingham Borough Council with a view to agreeing and formulating draft housing policies, bearing the following in mind:
- All Neighbourhood Planning Basic Conditions, but in particular Condition E, which is the need for the Neighbourhood Plan to be in general conformity with the strategic policies of the adopted development plan;
 - The views of Wokingham Borough Council;
 - The views of local residents;
 - The views of other relevant local stakeholders, including housing developers and estate agents; and
 - The numerous supply-side considerations, including local environmental constraints, the location and characteristics of suitable land, and any capacity work carried out by Wokingham Borough Council.
181. This assessment has been provided in good faith by AECOM consultants on the basis of housing data, national guidance and other relevant and available information current at the time of writing.
182. Bearing this in mind, it is recommended that the Neighbourhood Plan steering group should monitor carefully strategies and documents with an impact on housing policy produced by the Government, Wokingham Borough Council or any other relevant party and review the Neighbourhood Plan accordingly to ensure that general conformity is maintained.
183. At the same time, monitoring on-going demographic or other trends over the Neighbourhood Plan period will help ensure the continued relevance and credibility of its policies.

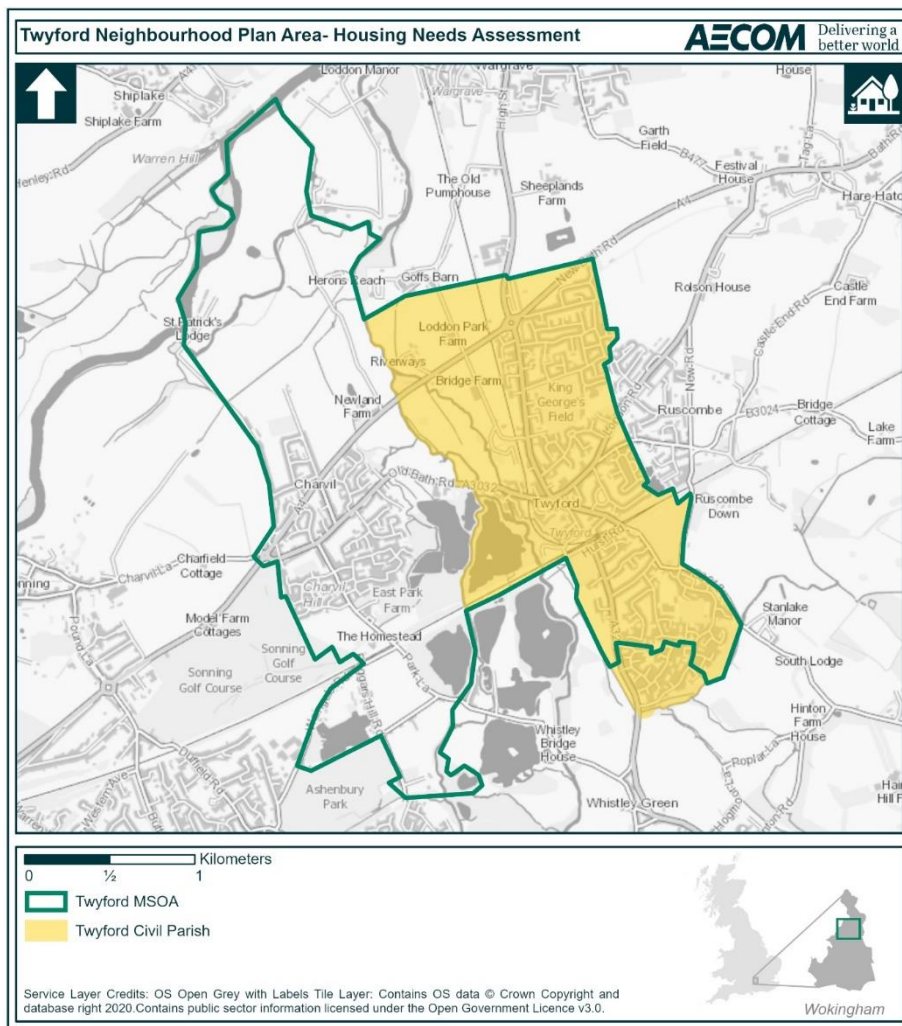
Appendix A : Calculation of Affordability Thresholds

A.1 Assessment geography

184. As noted in the Tenure and Affordability chapter above, affordability thresholds can only be calculated on the basis of data on incomes across the Neighbourhood Plan area. Such data is available at MSOA level but not at the level of neighbourhood plan areas.

185. As such, when calculating affordability thresholds, an MSOA needs to be selected that is a best-fit proxy for the Neighbourhood Plan area. In the case of Twyford, it is considered that MSOA Wokingham 002 (E02003440) is the closest realistic proxy for the Neighbourhood Plan area boundary, and as such, this is the assessment geography that has been selected. A map of Wokingham 002 appears below in Figure A-1.

Figure A-1: MSOA Wokingham 002 (E02003440) used as a best-fit geographical proxy for the Twyford Neighbourhood Plan area



A.2 Market housing

186. Market housing is not subsidised, and tends to be primarily accessible to people on higher incomes.
187. To determine affordability in market housing, this assessment considers two primary indicators: income thresholds, which denote the maximum share of a family's income that should be spent on accommodation costs, and purchase thresholds, which denote the standard household income required to access mortgage products.

A.2.1 Market sales

188. The starting point for calculating the affordability of a dwelling for sale (i.e. the purchase threshold) from the perspective of a specific household is the loan to income ratio which most mortgage companies are prepared to agree. This ratio is conservatively estimated to be 3.5.
189. To produce a more accurate assessment of affordability, the savings required for a deposit should be taken into account in addition to the costs of servicing a mortgage. However, unlike for incomes, data is not available for the savings available to households in Twyford, and the precise deposit a mortgage provider will require of any buyer will be determined by their individual circumstances and the state of the mortgage market. An assumption is therefore made that a 10% purchase deposit is required and is available to the prospective buyer. In reality it is possible that the cost of the deposit is a greater barrier to home ownership than the mortgage costs.
190. The calculation for the purchase threshold for market housing is as follows:
- Value of a median NA house price (2020) = £480,000;
 - Purchase deposit at 10% of value = £48,000;
 - Value of dwelling for mortgage purposes = £432,000;
 - Divided by loan to income ratio of 3.5 = purchase threshold of £123,429.
191. The purchase threshold for an entry-level dwelling is a better representation of affordability to those with lower incomes or savings, such as first-time buyers. To determine this threshold, the same calculation is repeated but with reference to the lower quartile rather than the median house price. The lower quartile average in 2020 was £382,000, and the purchase threshold is therefore £98,357.
192. Finally, it is worth assessing the purchase threshold for new build homes, since this most closely represents the cost of the new housing that will come forward in future. Land Registry did not record any sales of new build properties in the NA in 2019. The average new build price in Wokingham in 2019 was £444,854, with the more affordable types of dwellings averaging sale prices of £265,437 for flats and £404,948 for terraced properties.

A.2.2 Private Rented Sector (PRS)

193. Income thresholds are used to calculate the affordability of rented and affordable housing tenures. It is assumed here that rented housing is affordable if the annual rent does not exceed 30% of the household's gross annual income.
194. This is an important assumption because it is possible that a household will be able to afford tenures that are deemed not affordable in this report if they are willing or able to dedicate a higher proportion of their income to housing costs. It is becoming increasingly necessary for households to do so. However, for the purpose of planning it is considered more appropriate to use this conservative lower benchmark for affordability on the understanding that additional households may be willing or able to access housing this way than to use a higher benchmark which assumes that all households can afford to do so when their individual circumstances may well prevent it.
195. The property website [Home.co.uk](https://www.home.co.uk) shows rental values for property in the Neighbourhood Plan area. The best available data is derived from properties available for rent within one mile from the centre of Twyford (as detailed on Home.co.uk), which covers a larger area than the Plan area itself but can be used as a reasonable proxy for it. Moreover, because it forms a larger geography with a greater number of rental properties offered, the larger sample size is likely to generate more robust findings.
196. According to [home.co.uk](https://www.home.co.uk), there were 10 properties for rent at the time of search in August, 2021, with an average monthly rent of £1,461. There were 5 two-bed properties listed, with an average price of £1,399 per calendar month.
197. The calculation for the private rent income threshold for entry-level (2 bedroom) dwellings is as follows:
- Annual rent = £1,399 12 = £16,788;
 - Multiplied by 3.33 (so that no more than 30% of income is spent on rent) = income threshold of £55,960.
198. The calculation is repeated for the overall average to give an income threshold of £58,440.

A.3 Affordable Housing

199. There are a range of tenures that constitute the definition of Affordable Housing within the NPPF 2021: social rent and affordable rent, discounted market sales housing, and other affordable routes to home ownership. More recently, a new product called First Homes has been introduced in 2021. Each of the affordable housing tenures are considered below.

A.3.1 Social rent

200. Rents in socially rented properties reflect a formula based on property values and average earnings in each area, resulting in substantial discounts to market rents. As such, this tenure is suitable for the needs of those on the lowest incomes and is subject to strict eligibility criteria.
201. To determine social rent levels, data and statistical return from Homes England is used. This data is only available at the LPA level so must act as a proxy for Twyford. This data provides information about rents and the size and type of stock owned and managed by private registered providers and is presented for Wokingham in the table below.
202. To determine the income needed, it is assumed that no more than 30% of income should be spent on rent. This is an assumption only for what might generally make housing affordable or unaffordable – it is unrelated to the eligibility criteria of Affordable Housing policy at Local Authority level. The overall average across all property sizes is taken forward as the income threshold for social rent.

Table A-1: Social rent levels (£)

Size	1 bed	2 beds	3 beds	4 beds	All
Average social rent per week	£119.84	£133.71	£144.49	£160.09	£136.96
Annual average	£6,232	£6,953	£7,513	£8,325	£7,122
Income needed	£24,927	£27,812	£30,054	£33,299	£28,488

Source: Homes England, AECOM Calculations

A.3.2 Affordable rent

203. Affordable rent is controlled at no more than 80% of the local market rent. However, registered providers who own and manage affordable rented housing may also apply a cap to the rent to ensure that it is affordable to those on housing benefit (where under Universal Credit the total received in all benefits to working age households is £20,000).
204. Even an 80% discount on the market rent may not be sufficient to ensure that households can afford this tenure, particularly when they are dependent on benefits. Registered Providers in some areas have applied caps to larger properties where the higher rents would make them unaffordable to families under Universal Credit. This may mean that the rents are actually 50-60% of market levels rather than 80%.
205. Data on the most realistic local affordable rent costs is obtained from the same source as social rent levels for Wokingham. Again it is assumed that no more than 30% of income should be spent on rent, and the overall average is taken forward.
206. Comparing this result with the average 2 bedroom annual private rent above indicates that affordable rents in the NA are actually closer to 51% of market rates than the maximum of 80%, a feature that is necessary to make them achievable to those in need.

Table A-2: Affordable rent levels (£)

Size	1 bed	2 beds	3 beds	4 beds	All
Average affordable rent per week	£134.82	£166.74	£204.24	£236.45	£158.38
Annual average	£7,011	£8,670	£10,620	£12,295	£8,236
Income needed	£28,043	£34,682	£42,482	£49,182	£32,943

Source: Homes England, AECOM Calculations

A.3.3 Affordable home ownership

207. Affordable home ownership tenures include products for sale and rent provided at a cost above social rent, but below market levels. The three most widely available are discounted market housing (a subset of which is the new First Homes product), shared ownership, and rent to buy. These are considered in turn below.

208. In paragraph 65 of the NPPF 2021, the Government introduces a recommendation that “where major housing development is proposed, planning policies and decisions should expect at least 10% of the homes to be available for affordable home ownership.” The recently issued Ministerial Statement and updates to PPG state that 25% of all Affordable Housing should be First Homes – the Government’s new flagship discounted market sale product. When the NPPF is next updated, it is expected that the 10% affordable home ownership requirement referenced above may be replaced by the First Homes requirement.

First Homes

209. Whether to treat discounted market housing as affordable or not depends on whether discounting the asking price of new build homes of a size and type suitable to first time buyers would bring them within reach of people currently unable to buy market housing.

210. The starting point for these calculations is therefore the estimated cost of new build housing in Twyford. Because there were insufficient new build transactions in Twyford in recent years, the cost of a new entry-level home is assumed to be similar to the cost of an existing median home (with the new build premium accounting for the uplift against existing entry-level prices. As noted above, the starting point is £480,000.

211. For the minimum discount of 30% the purchase threshold can be calculated as follows:

- Value of a new home (assumed) = £480,000;
- Discounted by 30% = £336,000;
- Purchase deposit at 10% of value = £33,600;
- Value of dwelling for mortgage purposes = £302,400;
- Divided by loan to income ratio of 3.5 = purchase threshold of £86,400.

212. The income thresholds analysis in the Tenure and Affordability chapter also compares local incomes with the costs of a 40% and 50% discounted First Home. This would require an income threshold of £74,057 and £61,714 respectively.
213. Two of the three income thresholds (40 and 50% discount rates) calculated here for First Homes are below the cap of £80,000 above which households are not eligible. That said, where the 40% discount rate would price the discount value of properties at £288,000, this would be above the threshold of £250,000 needed to qualify for the scheme. As such, a greater discount is justified, developers would need to bring the price down, or smaller or lower value properties would need to be delivered than our assumed benchmark.
214. Note that discounted market sale homes may be unviable to develop if the discounted price is close to (or below) build costs. Build costs vary across the country but as an illustration, the build cost for a 2 bedroom home (assuming 70 sq m and a build cost of £1,500 per sq m) would be around £105,000. This cost excludes any land value or developer profit. This would not appear to be an issue in Twyford.

Shared ownership

215. Shared ownership involves the purchaser buying an initial share in a property, typically of between 25% and 75% (but now set at a minimum of 10%), and paying rent on the share retained by the provider. Shared ownership is flexible in two respects, in the share which can be purchased and in the rental payable on the share retained by the provider. Both of these are variable. The share owned by the occupant can be increased over time through a process known as 'staircasing'.
216. In exceptional circumstances (for example, as a result of financial difficulties, and where the alternative is repossession), and at the discretion of the provider, shared owners may staircase down, thereby reducing the share they own. Shared equity is available to first-time buyers, people who have owned a home previously and council and housing association tenants with a good credit rating whose annual household income does not exceed £80,000.
217. To determine the affordability of shared ownership, calculations are again based on the estimated costs of new build entry-level housing as discussed above. The deposit available to the prospective purchaser is assumed to be 10% of the value of the dwelling, and the standard loan to income ratio of 3.5 is used to calculate the income required to obtain a mortgage. The rental component is estimated at 2.5% of the value of the remaining (unsold) portion of the price. The income required to cover the rental component of the dwelling is based on the assumption that a household spends no more than 30% of the income on rent (as for the income threshold for the private rental sector).
218. The affordability threshold for a 25% equity share is calculated as follows:
- A 25% equity share of £480,000 is £120,000;
 - A 10% deposit of £12,000 is deducted, leaving a mortgage value of £108,000;

- This is divided by the loan to value ratio of 3.5 to give a purchase threshold of £30,857;
- Rent is charged on the remaining 75% shared ownership equity, i.e. the unsold value of £360,000;
- The estimated annual rent at 2.5% of the unsold value is £9000;
- This requires an income of £30,000 (annual rent multiplied by 3.33 so that no more than 30% of income is spent on rent).
- The total income required is £60,857 (£30,857 plus £30,000).

219. The same calculation is repeated for equity shares of 10% and 50% producing affordability thresholds of £48,343 and £81,714 respectively. The later (50% equity share) would not be below the eligibility cap of the £80,000 income threshold.

Rent to buy

220. Rent to buy is a relatively new and less common tenure, which through subsidy allows the occupant to save a portion of their rent to build up a deposit to eventually purchase the home. It is therefore estimated to cost the same as private rents – the difference being that the occupant builds up equity in the property with a portion of the rent, but this portion is still a monthly outgoing for the occupant.

Help to Buy (Equity Loan)

221. The Help to Buy Equity Loan is not an affordable housing tenure but allows households to afford market housing through a loan provided by the government. With a Help to Buy Equity Loan the government lends up to 20% (40% in London) of the cost of a newly built home. The household must pay a deposit of 5% or more and arrange a mortgage of 25% or more to make up the rest. Buyers are not charged interest on the 20% loan for the first five years of owning the home.
222. It is important to note that this product widens access to market housing but does not provide an affordable home in perpetuity.

Appendix B : Housing Needs Assessment Glossary

Adoption

This refers to the final confirmation of a local plan by a local planning authority.

Affordability

The terms 'affordability' and 'affordable housing' have different meanings. 'Affordability' is a measure of whether housing may be afforded by certain groups of households. 'Affordable housing' refers to particular products outside the main housing market.

Affordability Ratio

Assessing affordability involves comparing housing costs against the ability to pay. The ratio between lower quartile house prices and the lower quartile income or earnings can be used to assess the relative affordability of housing. The Department for Levelling Up, Communities and Housing (DLUCH) (formerly, MHCLG) publishes quarterly the ratio of lower quartile house price to lower quartile earnings by local authority (LQAR) as well as median house price to median earnings by local authority (MAR) e.g. income = £25,000, house price = £200,000. House price: income ratio = $\frac{£200,000}{£25,000} = 8$, (the house price is 8 times income).

Affordable Housing (NPPF Definition)

Housing for sale or rent, for those whose needs are not met by the market (including housing that provides a subsidised route to home ownership and/or is for essential local workers); and which complies with one or more of the following definitions:

a) Affordable housing for rent: meets all of the following conditions: (a) the rent is set in accordance with the Government's rent policy for Social Rent or Affordable Rent, or is at least 20% below local market rents (including service charges where applicable); (b) the landlord is a registered provider, except where it is included as part of a Build to Rent scheme (in which case the landlord need not be a registered provider); and (c) it includes provisions to remain at an affordable price for future eligible households, or for the subsidy to be recycled for alternative affordable housing provision. For Build to Rent schemes affordable housing for rent is expected to be the normal form of affordable housing provision (and, in this context, is known as Affordable Private Rent).

b) Discounted market sales housing: is that sold at a discount of at least 20% below local market value. Eligibility is determined with regard to local incomes and local house prices. Provisions should be in place to ensure housing remains at a discount for future eligible households.

c) Other affordable routes to home ownership: is housing provided for sale that provides a route to ownership for those who could not achieve home ownership through the market. It includes shared ownership, relevant equity loans, other low-cost homes for sale (at a price equivalent to at least 20% below local market value) and rent to buy (which includes a period of intermediate rent). Where public grant funding is provided, there should be provisions for the homes to remain at an affordable price for future eligible households, or for any receipts to be recycled for alternative affordable housing provision, or refunded to Government or the relevant authority specified in the funding agreement.

Affordable rented housing

Rented housing let by registered providers of social housing to households who are eligible for social rented housing. Affordable Rent is not subject to the national rent regime but is subject to other rent controls that require a rent of no more than 80% of the local market rent (including service charges, where applicable). The national rent regime is the regime under which the social rents of tenants of social housing are set, with particular reference to the Guide to Social Rent Reforms (March 2001) and the Rent Influencing Regime Guidance (October 2001). Local market rents are calculated using the Royal Institution for Chartered Surveyors (RICS) approved valuation methods⁷.

Age-Restricted General Market Housing

A type of housing which is generally for people aged 55 and over and the active elderly. It may include some shared amenities such as communal gardens but does not include support or care services.

Annual Monitoring Report

A report submitted to the Government by local planning authorities assessing progress with and the effectiveness of a Local Development Framework.

Basic Conditions

The Basic Conditions are the legal tests that are considered at the examination stage of neighbourhood development plans. They need to be met before a plan can progress to referendum.

Backlog need

The backlog need constitutes those households who are eligible for Affordable Housing, on account of homelessness, over-crowding, concealment or affordability, but who are yet to be offered a home suited to their needs.

Bedroom Standard⁸

⁷ The Tenant Services Authority has issued an explanatory note on these methods at <http://www.communities.gov.uk/documents/planningandbuilding/pdf/1918430.pdf>

⁸ See <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/english-household-survey-2011-to-2012-household-report>

The bedroom standard is a measure of occupancy (whether a property is overcrowded or under-occupied, based on the number of bedrooms in a property and the type of household in residence). The Census overcrowding data is based on occupancy rating (overcrowding by number of rooms not including bathrooms and hallways). This tends to produce higher levels of overcrowding/ under occupation. A detailed definition of the standard is given in the Glossary of the EHS Household Report.

Co-living

Co-living denotes people who do not have family ties sharing either a self-contained dwelling (i.e., a 'house share') or new development akin to student housing in which people have a bedroom and bathroom to themselves, but share living and kitchen space with others. In co-living schemes each individual represents a separate 'household'.

Community Led Housing/Community Land Trusts

Housing development, provision and management that is led by the community is very often driven by a need to secure affordable housing for local people in the belief that housing that comes through the planning system may be neither the right tenure or price-point to be attractive or affordable to local people. The principle forms of community-led models include cooperatives, co-housing communities, self-help housing, community self-build housing, collective custom-build housing, and community land trusts. By bringing forward development which is owned by the community, the community is able to set rents and/or mortgage payments at a rate that it feels is appropriate. The Government has a range of support programmes for people interested in bringing forward community led housing.

Community Right to Build Order⁹

A community right to build order is a special kind of neighbourhood development order, granting planning permission for small community development schemes, such as housing or new community facilities. Local community organisations that meet certain requirements or parish/town councils are able to prepare community right to build orders.

Concealed Families (Census definition)¹⁰

The 2011 Census defined a concealed family as one with young adults living with a partner and/or child/children in the same household as their parents, older couples living with an adult child and their family or unrelated families sharing a household. A single person cannot be a concealed family; therefore one elderly parent living with their adult child and family or an adult child returning to the parental home is not a concealed family; the latter are reported in an ONS analysis on increasing numbers of young adults living with parents.

Equity Loans/Shared Equity

⁹ See <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/national-planning-policy-framework/annex-2-glossary>

¹⁰ See http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20160107160841/http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/dcp171776_350282.pdf

An equity loan which acts as a second charge on a property. For example, a household buys a £200,000 property with a 10% equity loan (£20,000). They pay a small amount for the loan and when the property is sold e.g. for £250,000 the lender receives 10% of the sale cost (£25,000). Some equity loans were available for the purchase of existing stock. The current scheme is to assist people to buy new build.

Extra Care Housing or Housing-With-Care

Housing which usually consists of purpose-built or adapted flats or bungalows with a medium to high level of care available if required, through an onsite care agency registered through the Care Quality Commission (CQC). Residents are able to live independently with 24 hour access to support services and staff, and meals are also available. There are often extensive communal areas, such as space to socialise or a wellbeing centre. In some cases, these developments are included in retirement communities or villages - the intention is for residents to benefit from varying levels of care as time progresses.

Fair Share

'Fair share' is an approach to determining housing need within a given geographical area based on a proportional split according to the size of the area, the number of homes in it, or its population.

First Homes

The Government has recently confirmed the introduction of First Homes as a new form of discounted market housing which will provide a discount of at least 30% on the price of new homes. These homes are available to first time buyers as a priority but other households will be eligible depending on agreed criteria. New developments will be required to provide 25% of Affordable Housing as First Homes. A more detailed explanation of First Homes and its implications is provided in the main body of the HNA.

Habitable Rooms

The number of habitable rooms in a home is the total number of rooms, excluding bathrooms, toilets and halls.

Household Reference Person (HRP)

The concept of a Household Reference Person (HRP) was introduced in the 2001 Census (in common with other government surveys in 2001/2) to replace the traditional concept of the head of the household. HRPs provide an individual person within a household to act as a reference point for producing further derived statistics and for characterising a whole household according to characteristics of the chosen reference person.

Housing Market Area

A housing market area is a geographical area defined by household demand and preferences for all types of housing, reflecting the key functional linkages between places where people live and work. It might be the case that housing market areas overlap.

The extent of the housing market areas identified will vary, and many will in practice cut across various local planning authority administrative boundaries. Local planning authorities should work with all the other constituent authorities under the duty to cooperate.

Housing Needs

There is no official definition of housing need in either the National Planning Policy Framework or the National Planning Practice Guidance. Clearly, individuals have their own housing needs. The process of understanding housing needs at a population scale is undertaken via the preparation of a Strategic Housing Market Assessment (see below).

Housing Needs Assessment

A Housing Needs Assessment (HNA) is an assessment of housing needs at the Neighbourhood Area level.

Housing Products

Housing products simply refers to different types of housing as they are produced by developers of various kinds (including councils and housing associations). Housing products usually refers to specific tenures and types of new build housing.

Housing Size (Census Definition)

Housing size can be referred to either in terms of the number of bedrooms in a home (a bedroom is defined as any room that was intended to be used as a bedroom when the property was built, any rooms permanently converted for use as bedrooms); or in terms of the number of rooms, excluding bathrooms, toilets halls or landings, or rooms that can only be used for storage. All other rooms, for example, kitchens, living rooms, bedrooms, utility rooms, studies and conservatories are counted. If two rooms have been converted into one they are counted as one room. Rooms shared between more than one household, for example a shared kitchen, are not counted.

Housing Type (Census Definition)

This refers to the type of accommodation used or available for use by an individual household (i.e. detached, semi-detached, terraced including end of terraced, and flats). Flats are broken down into those in a purpose-built block of flats, in parts of a converted or shared house, or in a commercial building.

Housing Tenure (Census Definition)

Tenure provides information about whether a household rents or owns the accommodation that it occupies and, if rented, combines this with information about the type of landlord who owns or manages the accommodation.

Income Threshold

Income thresholds are derived as a result of the annualisation of the monthly rental cost and then asserting this cost should not exceed 35% of annual household income.

Intercensal Period

This means the period between the last two Censuses, i.e. between years 2001 and 2011.

Intermediate Housing

Intermediate housing is homes for sale and rent provided at a cost above social rent, but below market levels subject to the criteria in the Affordable Housing definition above. These can include shared equity (shared ownership and equity loans), other low-cost homes for sale and intermediate rent, but not affordable rented housing. Homes that do not meet the above definition of affordable housing, such as 'low-cost market' housing, may not be considered as affordable housing for planning purposes.

Life Stage modelling

Life Stage modelling is forecasting need for dwellings of different sizes by the end of the Plan period on the basis of changes in the distribution of household types and key age brackets (life stages) within the NA. Given the shared behavioural patterns associated with these metrics, they provide a helpful way of understanding and predicting future community need. This data is not available at neighbourhood level so LPA level data is employed on the basis of the NA falling within its defined Housing Market Area.

Life-time Homes

Dwellings constructed to make them more flexible, convenient adaptable and accessible than most 'normal' houses, usually according to the Lifetime Homes Standard, 16 design criteria that can be applied to new homes at minimal cost: <http://www.lifetimehomes.org.uk/>.

Life-time Neighbourhoods

Lifetime neighbourhoods extend the principles of Lifetime Homes into the wider neighbourhood to ensure the public realm is designed in such a way to be as inclusive as possible and designed to address the needs of older people, for example providing more greenery and more walkable, better connected places.

Local Development Order

An Order made by a local planning authority (under the Town and Country Planning Act 1990) that grants planning permission for a specific development proposal or classes of development.

Local Enterprise Partnership

A body, designated by the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, established for the purpose of creating or improving the conditions for economic growth in an area.

Local housing need (NPPF definition)

The number of homes identified as being needed through the application of the standard method set out in national planning guidance (or, in the context of preparing strategic policies only, this may be calculated using a justified alternative approach as provided for in paragraph 60 of this Framework).

Local Planning Authority

The public authority whose duty it is to carry out specific planning functions for a particular area. All references to local planning authority apply to the District Council, London Borough Council, County Council, Broads Authority, National Park Authority or the Greater London Authority, to the extent appropriate to their responsibilities.

Local Plan

This is the plan for the future development of the local area, drawn up by the local planning authority in consultation with the community. In law this is described as the development plan documents adopted under the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004. Current core strategies or other planning policies form part of the Local Plan and are known as 'Development Plan Documents' (DPDs).

Lower Quartile

The bottom 25% value, i.e. of all the properties sold, 25% were cheaper than this value and 75% were more expensive. The lower quartile price is used as an entry level price and is the recommended level used to evaluate affordability; for example for first time buyers.

Lower Quartile Affordability Ratio

The Lower Quartile Affordability Ratio reflects the relationship between Lower Quartile Household Incomes and Lower Quartile House Prices, and is a key indicator of affordability of market housing for people on relatively low incomes.

Market Housing

Market housing is housing which is built by developers (which may be private companies or housing associations, or Private Registered Providers), for the purposes of sale (or rent) on the open market.

Mean (Average)

The mean or the average is, mathematically, the sum of all values divided by the total number of values. This is the more commonly used "average" measure as it includes all values, unlike the median.

Median

The middle value, i.e. of all the properties sold, half were cheaper and half were more expensive. This is sometimes used instead of the mean average as it is not subject to skew by very large or very small statistical outliers.

Median Affordability Ratio

The Lower Quartile Affordability Ratio reflects the relationship between Median Household Incomes and Median House Prices, and is a key indicator of affordability of market housing for people on middle-range incomes.

Mortgage Ratio

The mortgage ratio is the ratio of mortgage value to income which is typically deemed acceptable by banks. Approximately 75% of all mortgage lending ratios fell below 4 in recent years¹¹, i.e. the total value of the mortgage was less than 4 times the annual income of the person who was granted the mortgage.

Neighbourhood Development Order (NDO)

An NDO will grant planning permission for a particular type of development in a particular area. This could be either a particular development, or a particular class of development (for example retail or housing). A number of types of development will be excluded from NDOs, however. These are minerals and waste development, types of development that, regardless of scale, always need Environmental Impact Assessment, and Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects.

Neighbourhood plan

A plan prepared by a Parish or Town Council or Neighbourhood Forum for a particular neighbourhood area (made under the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004).

Older People

People over retirement age, including the active, newly-retired through to the very frail elderly, whose housing needs can encompass accessible, adaptable general needs housing for those looking to downsize from family housing and the full range of retirement and specialised housing for those with support or care needs.

¹¹ See <https://www.which.co.uk/news/2017/08/how-your-income-affects-your-mortgage-chances/>

Output Area/Lower Super Output Area/Middle Super Output Area

An output area is the lowest level of geography for publishing statistics, and is the core geography from which statistics for other geographies are built. Output areas were created for England and Wales from the 2001 Census data, by grouping a number of households and populations together so that each output area's population is roughly the same. 175,434 output areas were created from the 2001 Census data, each containing a minimum of 100 persons with an average of 300 persons. Lower Super Output Areas consist of higher geographies of between 1,000-1,500 persons (made up of a number of individual Output Areas) and Middle Super Output Areas are higher than this, containing between 5,000 and 7,200 people, and made up of individual Lower Layer Super Output Areas. Some statistics are only available down to Middle Layer Super Output Area level, meaning that they are not available for individual Output Areas or parishes.

Overcrowding

There is no single agreed definition of overcrowding, however, utilising the Government's bedroom standard, overcrowding is deemed to be in households where there is more than one person in the household per room (excluding kitchens, bathrooms, halls and storage areas). As such, a home with one bedroom and one living room and one kitchen would be deemed overcrowded if three adults were living there.

Planning Condition

A condition imposed on a grant of planning permission (in accordance with the Town and Country Planning Act 1990) or a condition included in a Local Development Order or Neighbourhood Development Order.

Planning Obligation

A legally enforceable obligation entered into under section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 to mitigate the impacts of a development proposal.

Purchase Threshold

Purchase thresholds are calculated by netting 10% off the entry house price to reflect purchase deposit. The resulting cost is divided by 4 to reflect the standard household income requirement to access mortgage products.

Proportionate and Robust Evidence

Proportionate and robust evidence is evidence which is deemed appropriate in scale, scope and depth for the purposes of neighbourhood planning, sufficient so as to meet the Basic Conditions, as well as robust enough to withstand legal challenge. It is referred to a number of times in the PPG and its definition and interpretation relies on the judgement of professionals such as Neighbourhood Plan Examiners.

Private Rented

The Census tenure private rented includes a range of different living situations in practice, such as private rented/ other including households living “rent free”. Around 20% of the private rented sector are in this category, which will have included some benefit claimants whose housing benefit at the time was paid directly to their landlord. This could mean people whose rent is paid by their employer, including some people in the armed forces. Some housing association tenants may also have been counted as living in the private rented sector because of confusion about what a housing association is.

Retirement Living or Sheltered Housing

Housing for older people which usually consists of purpose-built flats or bungalows with limited communal facilities such as a lounge, laundry room and guest room. It does not generally provide care services, but provides some support to enable residents to live independently. This can include 24 hour on-site assistance (alarm) and a warden or house manager.

Residential Care Homes and Nursing Homes

Housing for older people comprising of individual rooms within a residential building and provide a high level of care meeting all activities of daily living. They do not usually include support services for independent living. This type of housing can also include dementia care homes.

Rightsizing

Households who wish to move into a property that is a more appropriate size for their needs can be said to be rightsizing. This is often used to refer to older households who may be living in large family homes but whose children have left, and who intend to rightsize to a smaller dwelling. The popularity of this trend is debatable as ties to existing communities and the home itself may outweigh issues of space. Other factors, including wealth, health, status and family circumstance also need to be taken into consideration, and it should not be assumed that all older households in large dwellings wish to rightsize.

Rural Exception Sites

Small sites used for affordable housing in perpetuity where sites would not normally be used for housing. Rural exception sites seek to address the needs of the local community by accommodating households who are either current residents or have an existing family or employment connection. Small numbers of market homes may be allowed at the local authority’s discretion, for example where essential to enable the delivery of affordable dwellings without grant funding.

Shared Ownership

Housing where a purchaser part buys and part rents from a housing association or local authority. Typical purchase share is between 25% and 75%, and buyers are encouraged to buy the largest share they can afford. Generally applies to new build properties, but re-sales occasionally become available. There may be an opportunity to rent at intermediate rent level before purchasing a share in order to save/increase the deposit level

Sheltered Housing¹²

Sheltered housing (also known as retirement housing) means having your own flat or bungalow in a block, or on a small estate, where all the other residents are older people (usually over 55). With a few exceptions, all developments (or 'schemes') provide independent, self-contained homes with their own front doors. There are many different types of scheme, both to rent and to buy. They usually contain between 15 and 40 properties, and range in size from studio flats (or 'bedsits') through to 2 and 3 bedrooomed. Properties in most schemes are designed to make life a little easier for older people - with features like raised electric sockets, lowered worktops, walk-in showers, and so on. Some will usually be designed to accommodate wheelchair users. And they are usually linked to an emergency alarm service (sometimes called 'community alarm service') to call help if needed. Many schemes also have their own 'manager' or 'warden', either living on-site or nearby, whose job is to manage the scheme and help arrange any services residents need. Managed schemes will also usually have some shared or communal facilities such as a lounge for residents to meet, a laundry, a guest flat and a garden.

Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment

A Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) is a document prepared by one or more local planning authorities to establish realistic assumptions about the availability, suitability and the likely economic viability of land to meet the identified need for housing over the Plan period. SHLAAs are sometimes also called LAAs (Land Availability Assessments) or HELAAs (Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessments) so as to integrate the need to balance assessed housing and economic needs as described below.

Strategic Housing Market Assessment (NPPF Definition)

A Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) is a document prepared by one or more local planning authorities to assess their housing needs under the 2012 version of the NPPF, usually across administrative boundaries to encompass the whole housing market area. The NPPF makes clear that SHMAs should identify the scale and mix of housing and the range of tenures the local population is likely to need over the Plan period. Sometimes SHMAs are combined with Economic Development Needs Assessments to create documents known as HEDNAs (Housing and Economic Development Needs Assessments).

¹² See <http://www.housingcare.org/jargon-sheltered-housing.aspx>

Specialist Housing for the Elderly

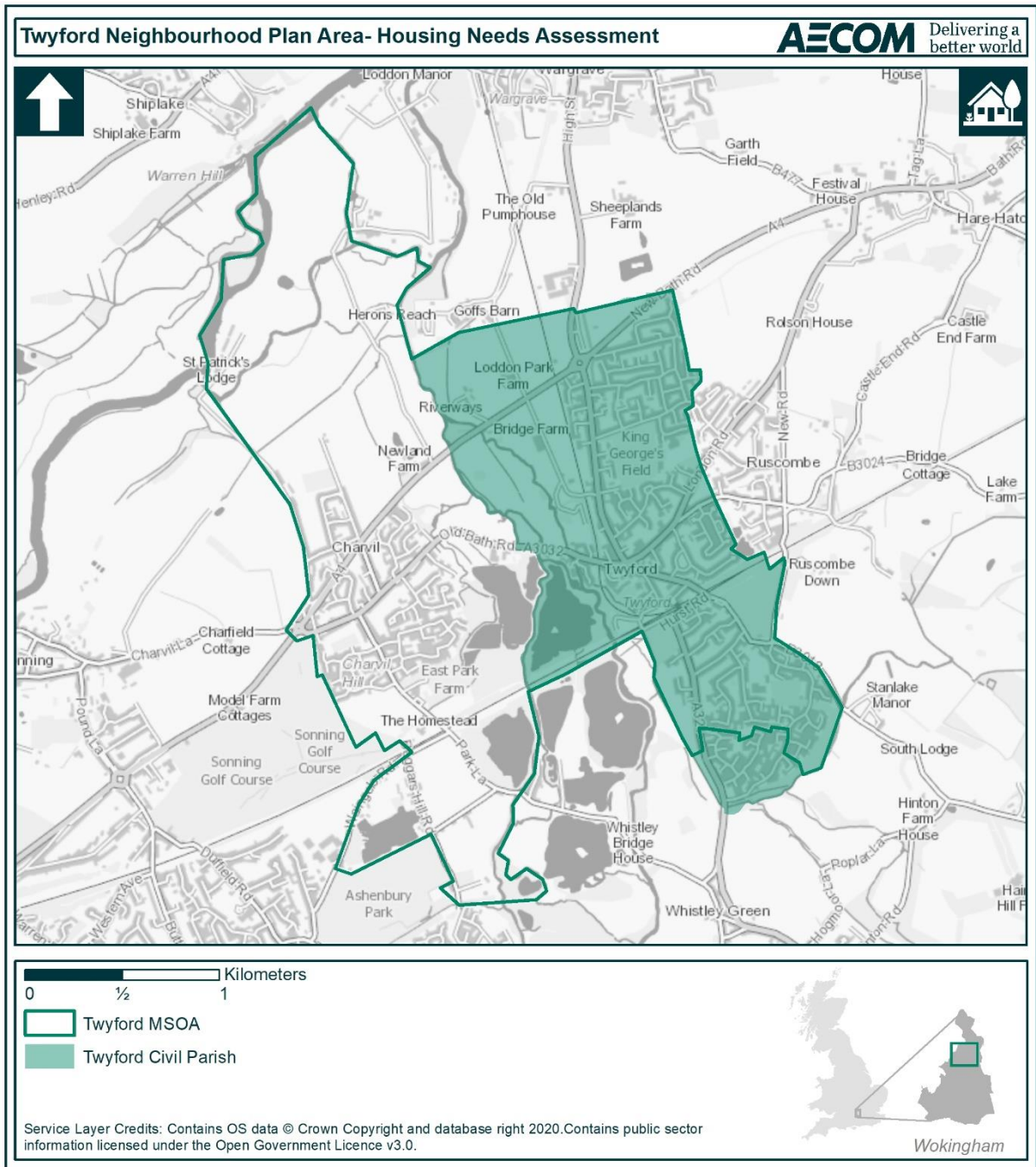
Specialist housing for the elderly, sometimes known as specialist accommodation for the elderly, encompasses a wide range of housing types specifically aimed at older people, which may often be restricted to those in certain older age groups (usually 55+ or 65+). This could include residential institutions, sometimes known as care homes, sheltered housing, extra care housing, retirement housing and a range of other potential types of housing which has been designed and built to serve the needs of older people, including often providing care or other additional services. This housing can be provided in a range of tenures (often on a rented or leasehold basis).

Social Rented Housing

Social rented housing is owned by local authorities and private registered providers (as defined in Section 80 of the Housing and Regeneration Act 2008.). Guideline target rents for this tenure are determined through the national rent regime. It may also be owned by other persons and provided under equivalent rental arrangements to the above, as agreed with the local authority or with Homes England.¹³

¹³ See <http://www.communities.gov.uk/documents/planningandbuilding/doc/1980960.doc#Housing>

Appendix C MSOA covering Twyford Parish



aecom.com

This page is intentionally left blank

169

Twyford

Design Guidelines and Codes

Final Report

July 2022

Quality information

Prepared by	Checked by	Approved by
Stela Kontogianni	Ben Castell	Ben Castell
Urban Designer	Director	Director
Chatnam Lee	Jasper den Boeft	
Graduate Urban Designer	Associate Director	

Revision History

Issue no.	Issue date	Details	Issued by	Position
6	200422	Review	Francis Shaw	Locality
5	290322	Review	Liz Ashley	Twyford Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group
4	150322	Review	Ben Castell	Director
3	080322	Review, site visit	Jasper den Boeft	Associate Director
2	240222	Heritage research	Katy Murray	Graduate Built Heritage Consultant
1	180222	Research, drawings	Stela Kontogianni	Urban Designer
0	180222	Research, drawings	Chatnam Lee Daniel Mather	Graduate Urban Designer

170

This document has been prepared by AECOM Limited ("AECOM") in accordance with its contract with Locality (the "Client") and in accordance with generally accepted consultancy principles, the budget for fees and the terms of reference agreed between AECOM and the Client. Any information provided by third parties and referred to herein has not been checked or verified by AECOM, unless otherwise expressly stated in the document. AECOM shall have no liability to any third party that makes use of or relies upon this document.

Contents

171

1	1. Introduction	5	4	4. Design guidelines and codes	41
	1.1 The importance of good design	5		4.1 Place making	41
	1.2 What is a design code	5		4.2 Walkable places	41
	1.3 The purpose of this document	6		4.3 General principles and guidelines	42
	1.4 Preparing the design code	7		4.4 Twyford design guidelines and codes	43
	1.5 Area of study	8		4.5 Checklist	87
2	2. Policy context	11	5	5. Delivery	95
3	3. Local character analysis	14			
	3.1 Historic evolution and settlement pattern	14			
	3.2 Local heritage assets	16			
	3.3 Access and movement	19			
	3.4 Green and blue infrastructure	21			
	3.5 Character areas	24			

Introduction

01

1. Introduction

Through the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) Programme led by Locality, AECOM was commissioned to provide design support to Twyford Parish Council.

173

1.1 The importance of good design

As the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (paragraph 126) notes, 'good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, creates better places in which to live and work and helps make development acceptable to communities'.

Research, such as for the Government's Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment (now part of the Design Council; see, for example, The Value of Good Design¹) has shown that good design of buildings and places can improve health and well-being, increase civic pride and cultural activity, reduce crime and anti-social behaviour and reduce pollution.

This document seeks to harness an understanding of how good design can make future development as endearingly popular as the best of what has been done before.

1. <https://www.designcouncil.org.uk/sites/default/files/asset/document/the-value-of-good-design.pdf>

Following a detailed analysis of Twyford, a set of architectural and design qualities will be created. This set of qualities combined with good design practice will form the design principles that any development within Twyford Parish should follow in order to comply with this Design Guidelines and Codes document.

1.2 What is a design code

The Governments Planning Policy Guidance defines design codes as:

'... a set of illustrated design requirements that provide specific, detailed parameters for the physical development of a site or area. The graphic and written components of the code should be proportionate and build upon a design vision, such as a masterplan or other design and development framework for a site or area. Their content should also be informed by the 10 characteristics of good places set out in the National Design Guide. They can be ...appended to a Neighbourhood Plan...'²

2. Paragraph: 008 Reference ID: 26-008-20191001 - Revision date: 01 10 2019.

1.3 The purpose of this document

The NPPF 2021, paragraphs 127-128 states that:

'Plans should... set out a clear design vision and expectations, so that applicants have as much certainty as possible about what is likely to be acceptable. Design policies should be developed with local communities so they reflect local aspirations, and are grounded in an understanding and evaluation of each area's defining characteristics. Neighbourhood plans can play an important role in identifying the special qualities of each area and explaining how this should be reflected in development...'

'To provide maximum clarity about design expectations at an early stage, plans ... should use visual tools such as design guides and codes. These provide a framework for creating distinctive places, with a consistent and high quality standard of design. However their level of detail and

degree of prescription should be tailored to the circumstances in each place, and should allow a suitable degree of variety where this would be justified.'

The Government is placing significant importance on the development of design codes in order to set standards for design upfront and provide firm guidance on how sites should be developed.

Wokingham Core Strategy Development Plan was adopted in 2010 and the new Local Plan is expected to be adopted by winter 2022. There are no allocated sites at the moment of writing this report, however, it is a consensus that a set of design guidelines and codes is needed to ensure that any future development in the village respects the existing local character and implements good design practices that better the environment and enhance the civic pride.

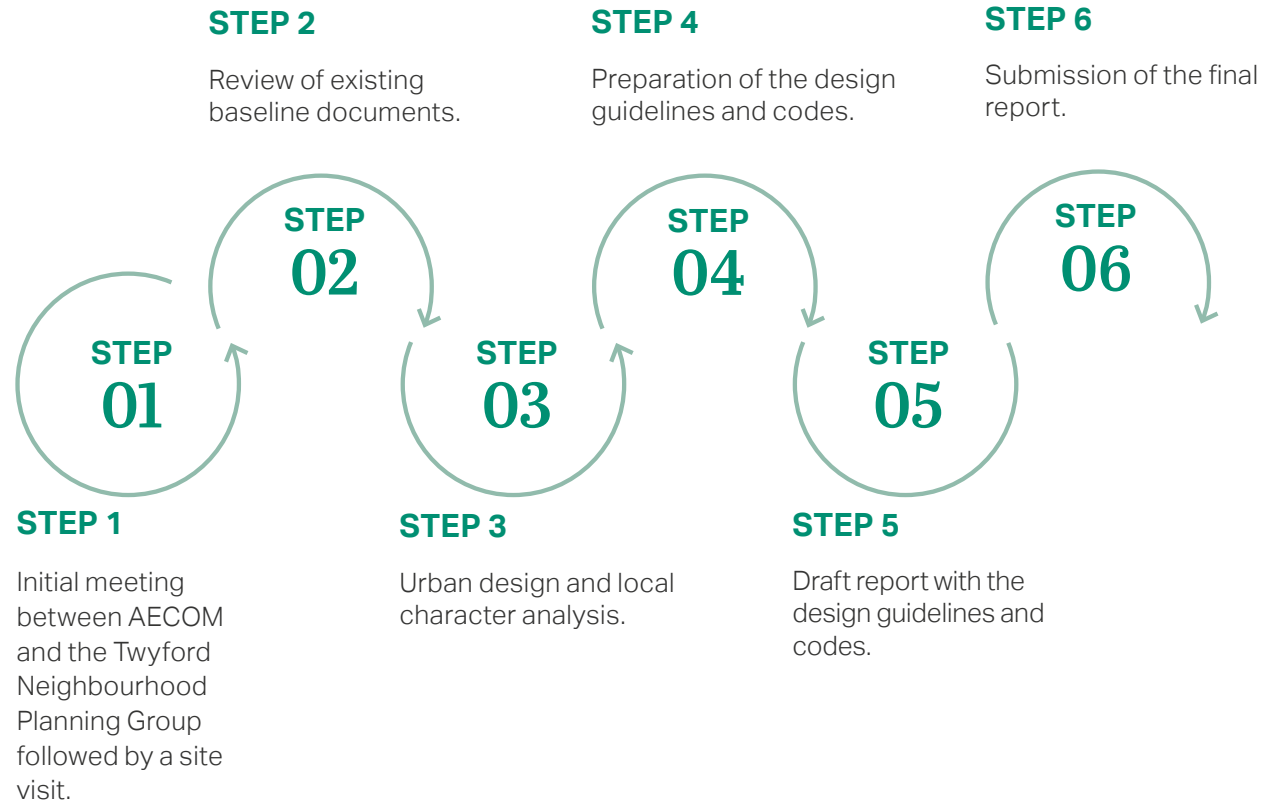
It is intended that the Design Guidelines and Codes report becomes an integral part of the Neighbourhood Plan and be given weight in the planning process. The

Government intends to make it clear that decisions on design should be made in line with design codes.

1.4 Preparing the design code

Following an inception meeting and an online site visit with 2 members of the Steering group and a real time site visit by the AECOM team, the following steps were agreed with the Group to produce this report:

175



1.5 Area of study

Twyford Parish covers an area of around 281 hectares located to the north-east of Reading and north of Wokingham in the county of Berkshire.

It is located in close proximity to the River Loddon, which runs along the western edge of the parish, and landscape areas like the Loddon Nature Reserve on the west of the parish and Thames Valley Park Nature Reserve further to the west.

Twyford Parish has an industrial and trade heritage which can be dated back to 1186 when the Twyford Mills was established. The village was an important transit location for tradesmen traveling to London to cross the River Loddon with locally produced wool and agricultural produces. Up until 1829, water driven mills at Twyford Mills also manufactured silk supplied to other major cities across the country. The site of the Old Silk Mill can be found today on Silk Lane to the west of the Parish, along the River Loddon.

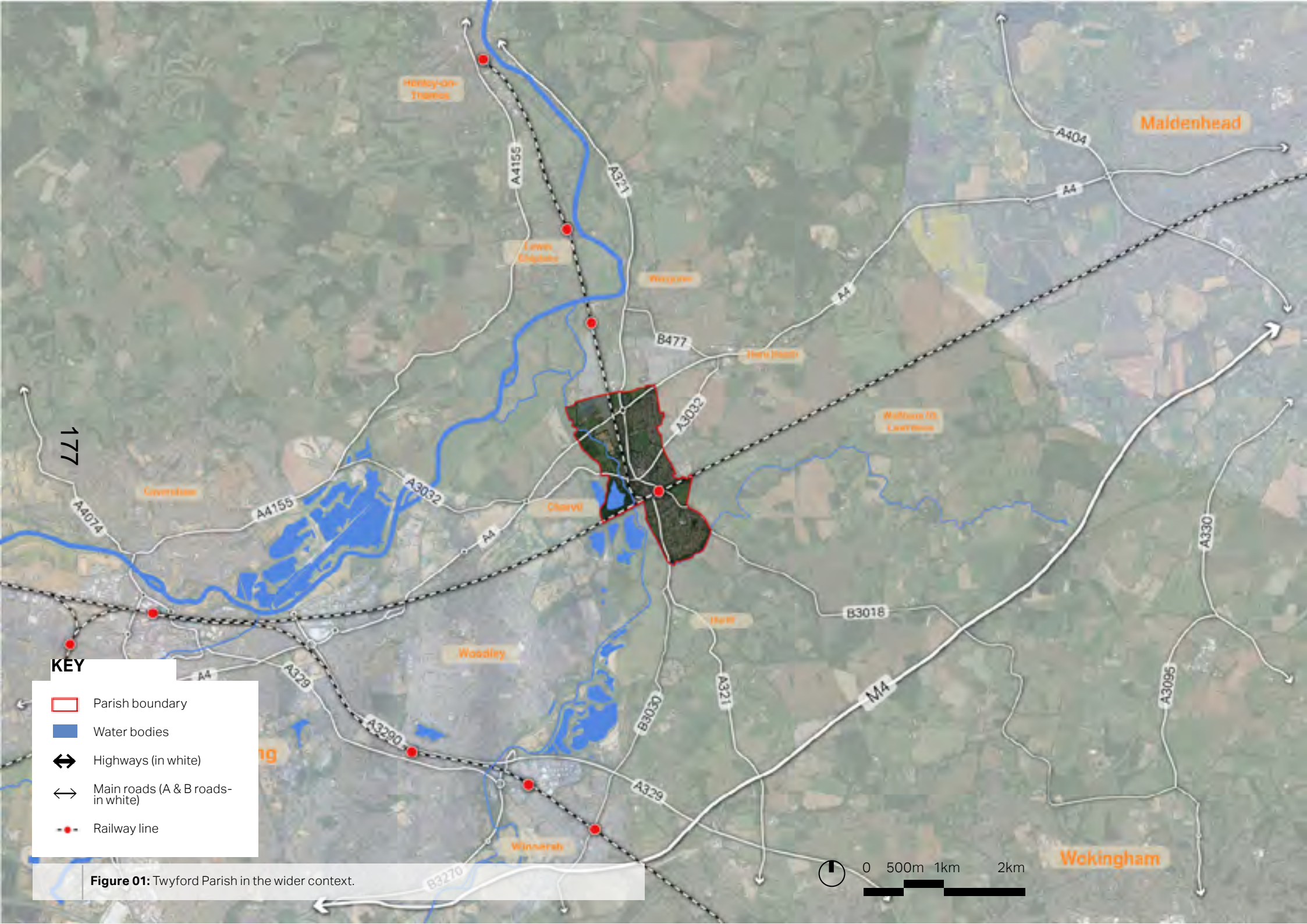
The A321 is the principal north-south route connecting the village with the M4 to the south and nearby villages like Wargrave and Lower Shiplake to the north. The A032 provides east-west access across the village towards Reading and Charvil to the west, as well as Maidenhead and Hare Hatch to the east. Local roads and B roads provide further connections to surrounding villages and towns close to Twyford.

The closest railway station is Twyford station on Station Road within the Parish, providing train services to Reading, Henley-on-Thames and London Paddington.

With regard to public transport in the Parish, buses run on an hourly basis to Reading, Wokingham and High Wycombe. There are no buses on Sunday or on Bank Holidays and there are no late evening services. There are bus stops on Amberley Drive, Church Street, at Twyford Station

and others across the village. In terms of cycling, Route 4 of the National Cycleway runs along the western border of Twyford Parish on Wargrave Road and Twyford Road, connecting the Parish with Reading, Wargrave and Maidenhead.

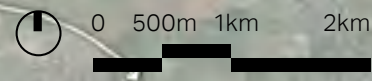
There are a number of local facilities and services in the parish including Twyford Parish Church, a local focal point located in the Twyford Station Conservation Area, a GP surgery, post office, a range of shops, pubs, restaurants as well as Loddon Hall which serves as the Parish Hall. Some light industrial warehouses can also be found on the east and north-west of the Parish. The Piggot Church of England Primary School is located to the north-west of the Parish.



KEY

- Parish boundary
- Water bodies
- Highways (in white)
- Main roads (A & B roads- in white)
- Railway line

Figure 01: Twyford Parish in the wider context.



Policy context

02

2. Policy context

This section outlines some key policy and design guidance that should be considered in future development in Twyford Parish. The following guidelines have been produced at national, district or parish level.

179

NATIONAL LEVEL

2021 - National Planning Policy Framework

Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities

The National Planning Policy Framework sets out the Government’s planning policies for England and how these should be applied. It provides a framework within which locally-prepared plans for housing and other development can be produced.

In terms of heritage conservation, Part 16 (Conserving and enhancing the historic environment) of the NPPF specifies that plans set out a positive strategy for the conservation and enhancement of the historic environment, identifying sustainable uses which sustain and enhances the significance of heritage assets. The historic environment is recognised as

having potential to contribute positively to local character and distinctiveness.

2021 National Model Design Code

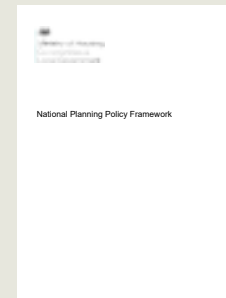
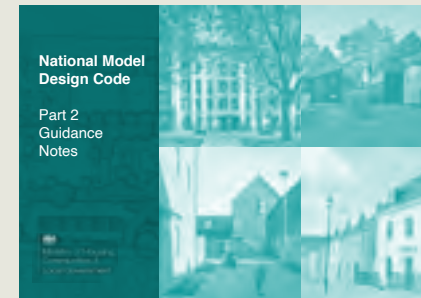
Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities

This report provides detailed guidance on the production of design codes, guides and policies to promote successful design. It expands on 10 characteristics of good design set out in the National Design Guide.

2019 - National Design Guide

Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities

The National Design Guide illustrates how well-designed places that are beautiful, enduring and successful can be achieved in practice.



2007 - Manual for Streets

Department for Transport

Development is expected to respond positively to the Manual for Streets, the Government’s guidance on how to design, construct, adopt and maintain new and existing residential streets. It promotes streets and wider development that avoid car dominated layouts but that do place the needs of pedestrians and cyclists first.

2020 - Building for a Healthy Life Homes England

Building for a Healthy Life (BHL) is the new (2020) name for Building for Life, the government-endorsed industry standard for well-designed homes and neighbourhoods. The BHL toolkit sets out principles to help guide discussions on planning applications and to help local planning authorities to assess the quality of proposed (and completed) developments, but can also provide useful prompts and questions for planning applicants to consider during the different stages of the design process.



2010 - Wokingham Borough Local Development Framework

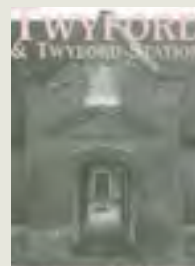
Wokingham Borough Council

This document provides a broad policy framework to guide where development will take place between 2006 and 2026. It includes policies for all forms of development including homes, shops, offices, factories, libraries, schools and health and leisure facilities. It also provides a broad spatial vision for the borough to 2026 and the policies designed to achieve this.

1996 - Twyford & Twyford Station conservation area studies

Wokingham Borough Council

This document provides an appraisal for both conservation areas within Twyford analysing the historical and morphological development, the existing fabric and the character for each of the main streets. Lastly, it provides some opportunities for the enhancement of the conservation areas.



2020 - Twyford Parish Land Management Plan

Twyford Parish Council

This document outlines some strategies to manage and protect open spaces owned by Twyford Parish Council across a 10-year period. It provides an overview on the type of recreational activities that take place on these open spaces, as well as their potential for biodiversity enhancement through adequate management.

2020 - Twyford Parish Climate Change Plan

Twyford Parish Council

This document provides a series of aspirations related to climate change under various key themes - such as transport, air quality, renewable energy sources and carbon off-setting. It also outlines corresponding actions to take across a short, mid and long term period that involve different actors across the parish as a coordinated, parish-wide effort to mitigate against climate change.



Local character analysis

03

3. Local character analysis

This chapter describes the local context and key characteristics of Twyford related to heritage, built environment, streetscape, views, landscape and topography.

3.1 Historic evolution and settlement pattern

182

The placename Twyford is Anglo-Saxon in origin, meaning 'double ford' in reference to the two fords over the River Loddon. One of these fords is located on the Old Bath Road to the west of the village centre, the other next to the Lands End Public House. According to the writings of an early medieval chronicler, King Æthelred I of Wessex and his brother the future King Alfred the Great fled from the Vikings after defeat at Reading over a ford at Twyford in 871.

Until the arrival of the Great Western Railway in 1838, Twyford's economy was primarily agriculturally based. The prominence of agriculture is evidenced by the survival

of historic farmhouses such as Old Farm House (NHLE 1118148) Grade II, Chiswick House (NHLE 1319092) Grade II and Loddon Park Farm. A mill is first recorded at Twyford during the 12th century. The milling industry was an important agricultural offshoot, and in addition to flour, paper and silk were also milled at Twyford. The last mill was damaged by fire in the 1970s and subsequently demolished. An apartment block designed to reflect the earlier mill now occupies this site.

Historically, Twyford was bisected by the Old Bath Road, the main coaching route between London and Bath. Travellers would be served by Twyford's coaching houses and inns, one example being the Waggon and Horses Public House (NHLE 1118154) Grade II, which dates to the 17th century. The flow of traffic through the centre was redirected by the creation of a bypass in 1929.

The arrival of the railway in Twyford catalysed development south of the historic High Street. A number of Victorian brick terraces with high quality decorative features were built on Station Road, Brook Street and Waltham Road.












Figure 02: Twyford village c.1883. (Source: National Library of Scotland)



Figure 03: Twyford village c.1933. (Source: National Library of Scotland)

KEY

-  Twyford Parish
-  Twyford village conservation area & Station conservation area
-  Open spaces & open fields
-  Water bodies
-  Road network
-  Railway
-  Water courses
-  Listed building Grade II
-  Listed building Grade II*

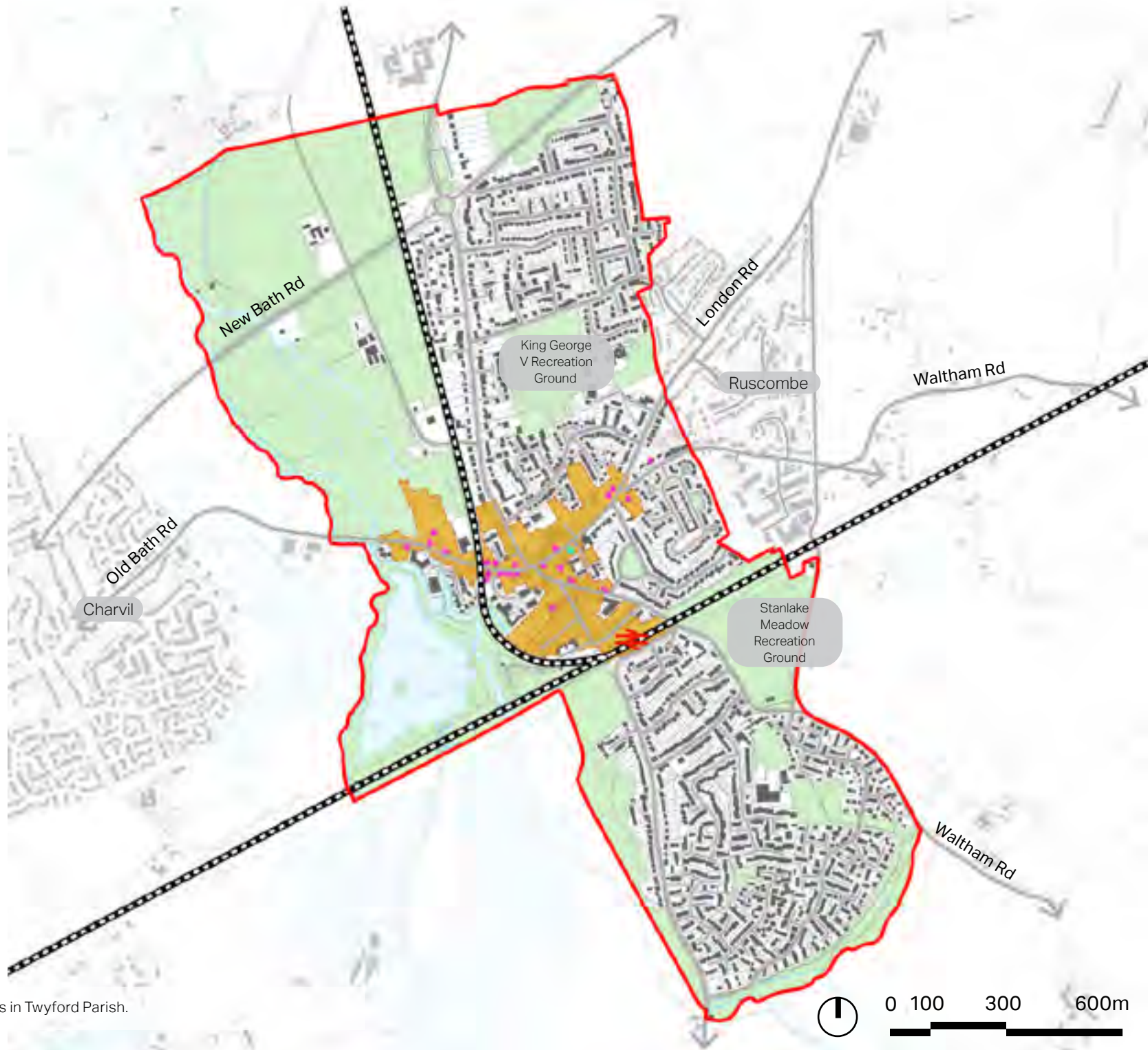


Figure 04: Map showing the heritage assets in Twyford Parish.



3.2 Local heritage assets

Twyford is home to a wealth of heritage assets that can be found across 2 conservation areas - Twyford Conservation area and Station Conservation Area, covering an area along the High Street, London Road, Church Street, Station Road and Waltham Road.

- **Twyford Conservation Area.** This is centred upon the most historic areas of settlement which comprised the Old Bath Road. The conservation area includes the historic western gateway into the settlement, effectively establishing character. There is a high concentration of historic structures along the High Street including the Duke of Wellington Public House (NHLE 1135819) Grade II, the Harrison Almshouses (NHLE 118152) Grade II*, and the Church of St Mary (NHLE 1319130) Grade II*. With the exception of the Church of St Mary, structures are typically modest in scale, and limited to

two or three storeys in height, in either brick or render.

- **Station Conservation Area.** This area provides the setting for a high number of Victorian structures associated with the arrival of the railway. Among these structures is the Old Station House dated 1901, occupied by successive station masters until 1969. Brick terraces were built to house railway workers, which remain largely unaltered retaining features such as sash windows, zig-zag window arches and coloured brick banding. These terraces are of notable architectural merit and effectively establish the character of the conservation area
- **Listed buildings.** There are over 20 listed buildings across Twyford and most of these are concentrated within the parish's conservation areas.
- **Non-designated heritage assets.** There are a number of non-designated historic buildings and structures of

special interest within the study area. A List of Buildings of Traditional Local Character has been established by Wokingham Borough Council which outlines more details regarding these structures.¹

¹ The list can be found following this link: <https://www.wokingham.gov.uk/planning/how-to-apply-for-planning-permission/listed-buildings-heritage-and-conservation-areas/>



Figure 05: The Duke of Wellington Public House and 23, 23A & 25 High Street (Twyford Conservation Area).



Figure 06: Victorian-style terraced houses along Brook Street, Station Conservation Area.



Figure 07: Old Farm House, 24 High Street (Twyford Conservation Area).



Figure 08: The Church of St Mary, a key landmark for Twyford on Station Road (Station Conservation Area).



Figure 09: The Waggon and Horses Public House, Old Bath Road (Twyford Conservation Area).

3.3 Historic Built Form

Much of the built environment of Twyford is influenced by the architectural styles of the parish's historic built form and character. Some of the key characteristics are highlighted as follows:

- Buildings are typically brick with some examples of rendered and partially rendered frontages. There are few masonry buildings, the Church of St Mary (NHLE 1319130) Grade II* being the most prominent example;
- Roofs are pitched slate or tile with gabled dormers. Brick chimneys are common features, one particularly significant example being those of the Harrison Almshouses (NHLE 118152) Grade II*. Within the Twyford Station Conservation Area roofscape is highly uniform, there is greater variation in building height within the Twyford Conservation Area;
- Windows are largely timber sash. There has been some replacement with casement, not entirely in keeping with

historic character;

- Within both conservation areas, buildings typically front onto the pavement or are set back behind small paved front gardens with a range of boundary treatments. Front gardens become more generous in size as London Road progresses eastwards; and
- Gable ends receive a range of decorative treatments including coping, banded brickwork, timber studding, render and hung tile.



Figure 10: A row of Victorian style red brick terrace houses fronting onto Twyford Station, Station Road (Station Conservation Area)



Figure 11: The Old School building with red brick and stone facade along with large casement windows, Polehampton Close (Twyford Conservation Area).



Figure 12: Site of the Old Silk Mill on Silk Lane by River Loddon, reflecting Twyford's silk manufacturing legacy (Twyford Conservation Area).

3.4 Access and movement

There is a hierarchy of roads running through the Parish. Each one, due to its different typology and therefore character, contributes to the overall character of the streetscene.

- **Main roads.** The area is serviced by the A4 road which provides connectivity to both Reading in the west and London which is approximately 20 miles due east of Twyford. Other primary routes in the parish include London Road, Waltham Road, Hurst Road and the A321. All main roads, for the most part, accommodate two-lane traffic with pavements on both sides;
- **Secondary, tertiary roads and cul-de-sac streets.** Secondary and tertiary roads are connected to the main road network stretching within the residential neighbourhoods. The neighbourhoods,

from which those roads are passing through, are laid out in a permeable pattern. However, the rest of the properties, mainly those to the south of the village, are arranged in a cul-de-sac layout;

- **Public Rights of Way.** There is a network of footpaths around and within the Parish offering connections to Charvil to the west, as well as Ruscombe to the east; and
- **Twyford Railway Station.** The station provides links towards Didcot, Reading and London Paddington through TFL Rail and the Great Western Railway.



Figure 13: High Street which becomes London Road to the east and Old Bath Road to the west is one of the main roads running through the village.



Figure 14: Waltham Road changes in character from a green street with houses on both sides to a less vegetated street with shop fronts as it reaches the village centre.

KEY

- Twyford Parish
- Open spaces & open fields
- Water bodies
- Main roads
- Secondary roads
- Tertiary roads
- Cul-de-sacs
- Public Rights of Way
- Road network outside Twyford Parish
- Railway
- Water courses

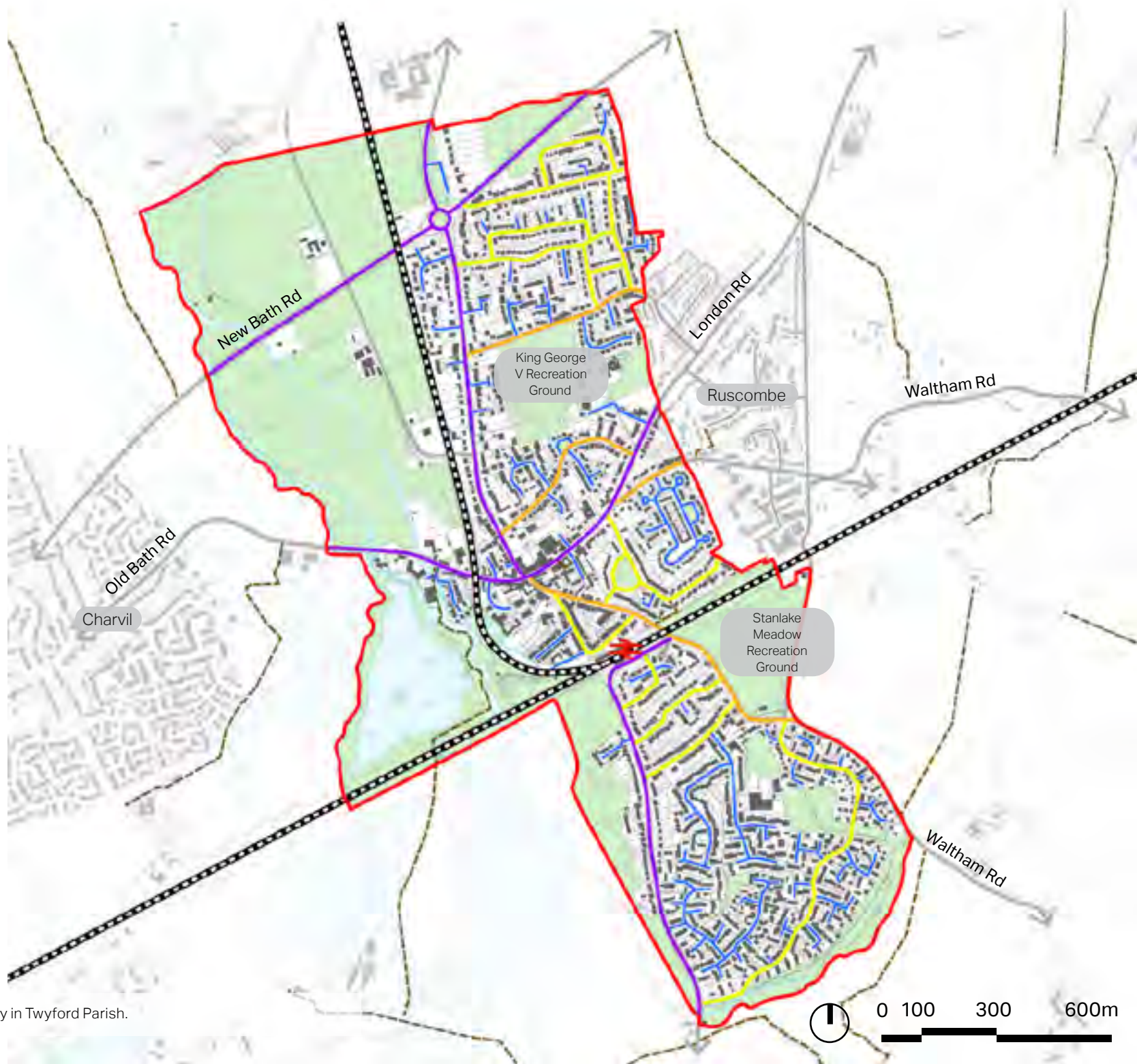


Figure 15: Map showing the street hierarchy in Twyford Parish.

3.5 Green and blue infrastructure

Twyford Parish is surrounded by a good amount of green and blue assets, mainly to the west, which boost biodiversity and the feeling of being close to nature.

- **Woodlands and other habitats.** Twyford is located in an area of natural significance. This is supported by the various designated areas of deciduous woodland and traditional orchards;
- **Designated local green spaces.** Within the village there are designated green spaces which provide spaces for leisure activities, as well as opportunities for the community to get outside;
- **Loddon Nature Reserve.** In the west of the Parish there is the Loddon Nature Reserve and Local Wildlife site which are surrounded by deciduous woodland;

- **Flood risk zones.** The River Loddon and the Old River are both tributaries of the Thames and flow from the north to the south of the Parish. As can be seen in Figure 18, this creates a large area which is highly susceptible to flooding, especially the parts that fall under flood zone 3;
- **Green route.** Waltham Road, from the railway station, along the A321 and New Bath Road to the north is designated as a proposed green route, which will enhance the movement of species and provide a pleasant walking route. Additionally, there are proposed areas, by the NP Group, of green route enhancement along New Bath Road and A321 to the north and Hurst Road to the south; and
- **Open countryside.** In general, the open fields and countryside to the west, south and east enhance the feeling of openness and closeness to nature.

189



Figure 16: St Mary's churchyard offers a pleasant green break within the enclosed built environment, Church Street.



Figure 17: The residential neighbourhoods to the north and south of the village are well-vegetated with large green verges, street trees and open spaces enhancing the natural environment.

KEY















-  Twyford Parish
-  Open fields
-  Nominated local green spaces
-  Flood risk zone 2
-  Flood risk zone 3
-  Loddon Nature Reserve & Local Wildlife site
-  Deciduous woodland
-  Traditional orchard
-  Proposed green route (by the NP Group)
-  Proposed green route enhancement areas (by the NP Group)
-  Road network
-  Railway
-  Public Rights of Way
-  Water courses



Figure 18: Map showing the green and blue infrastructure in Twyford Parish.

191



Figure 19: Weir Pool Court and Old Silk Mill.



Figure 20: Footbridge providing crossing over River Loddon at Silk Lane.



Figure 21: Loddon Nature Reserve, accessible via the back of the Waggon and Horse pub on Old Bath Road.

3.6 Character areas

Following on from the analysis set out above, this section focuses on the different character areas within Twyford.

Twyford's character and identity is not defined by only one style. There is a mixture of architectural styles, details, settlement patterns and building layouts that all together contribute to the unique character of Twyford.

192 The design guidelines and codes, presented in the next chapter, will reference this variety of characteristics to build a strong case for Twyford, and therefore become a useful guide for any future development around the Parish.

The character areas identified within Twyford Parish, and shown on the next page, are:











- Twyford Conservation Area;
- Twyford Station Conservation Area;
- North of the village;
- South of the village; and
- Springfield Park & Orchard Estate;

These areas are characterised by variations in land use, patterns of growth, layout of buildings, street patterns, car arrangements, building heights, density, public realm and landscape setting.

The next pages will present an analysis for each character area accompanied by photos.

An important note is that, while some of the character areas are clearly defined and have very fixed boundaries, there is often an overlap and an element of mixing.

KEY

-  Twyford Parish
-  Open fields
-  Twyford Conservation Area
-  Twyford Station Conservation Area
-  North of the village
-  South of the village
-  Springfield Park & Orchard Estate
-  Road network
-  Railway
-  Water courses

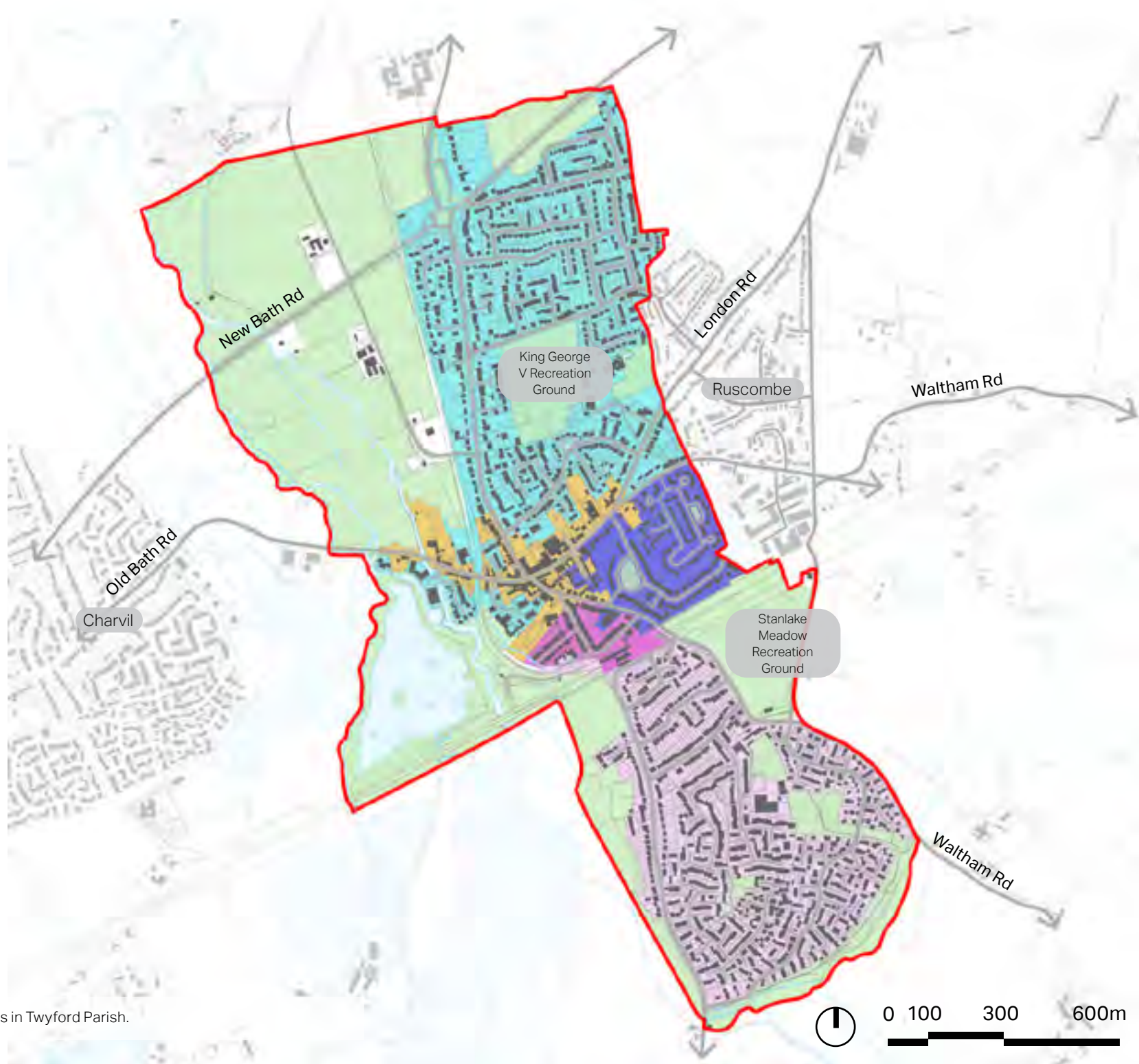


Figure 22: Map showing the character areas in Twyford Parish.

Twyford Conservation Area

Twyford Conservation Area was first designated in 1977 by Wokingham District Council. This designation was altered in the revisions adopted in 1996.

194



<p>Land use</p>	<p>This character area includes a mixture of retail and residential uses. The retail core of Twyford village is considered to be around the crossroads. Those four corners possess remarkably different attributes to one another. Wargrave Road is mainly residential, however some retail uses are found towards the south where the road meets the High Street. High Street and London Road concentrate the majority of retail uses which expand further to the west and east of the crossroads. Church Street tends to house commercial outlets on the ground floor and either storage or residencies on the upper floors. This character area also includes two large green areas; to the north along River Loddon; and to the south around St Mary’s Church.</p>
<p>Access and movement</p>	<p>High Street forms the western approach to the village, whilst London Road its continuation to the east, is considered to be the eastern entrance. Church Street, although a small narrow road, provides the southern entrance to the village, whilst due to its width it also acts as a gateway to the village core.</p> <p>The levels of traffic congestion along the village core are quite high creating air quality issues and a sense of unsafety for pedestrians.</p> <p>In addition, bus services are available along London Road, Wargrave Road and Waltham Road.</p>
<p>Patterns of growth & layout of buildings</p>	<p>The development pattern within this character area is relatively linear with buildings set along the carriageway. Exception is the modern developments, Bell Court, west of Wargrave Road, and Bridge Park which is formed in a cul-de-sac layout. High Street, London Road and Church Street have slightly meandering characters offering evolving views along the streetscape. There are no gaps between buildings which creates a continuous front.</p> <p>Building lines are fairly consistent with subtle variations enhancing the rural feel in the area. Building setbacks show some variations adding different attributes along each street. In particular, the majority of the buildings along the High Street and London Road front directly onto the pavements, since they house retail uses on the ground floor, however, there are also examples towards the west of High Street and east of London Road where buildings have front gardens. Along London Road in particular, the scale of the houses increases as well as the sizes of the front gardens. Wargrave Road shares similar characteristics towards its northern end with more vegetation and mature trees bordering the properties compared to the High Street and London Road.</p>

Twyford Conservation Area

195

<p>Patterns of growth & layout of buildings</p>	<p>Lastly, the buildings along Church Street also front directly onto the pavements, however, the narrow width of the street and the narrow pavements create a different feel compared to the rest of the streets, since the level of enclosure is higher.</p> <p>Plot sizes vary within this character area contributing to the rural context, whilst only fully residential buildings offer rear gardens. In general the sizes of both front and rear gardens is smaller compared to other residential neighbourhoods within the village, which is justified by the high density that the village core has.</p>
<p>Boundary treatments and public realm</p>	<p>This character area, due to the layout of the buildings and the lack of front gardens and green spaces is mainly hardscaped with some soft elements along the public realm like street trees and flower and plant pots. This is also justified by the nature of this area, being the retail core of the village. However, due to the low-height buildings set along the High Street, London Road and Church Street, there are unobstructed views of the rich vegetation in the background. This gives a sense of softness along the public realm. In addition, the northern end of Wargrave Road is well landscaped with mature trees bordering some properties.</p> <p>In terms of public realm, the widths of the pavements vary with wide footways at places and a spill-out area in the corner of High Street and Wargrave Road, whilst there are also narrow pedestrian areas or poor paving conditions at places.</p>
<p>Heights & roofline</p>	<p>In general, the high density within the village core, the generally consistent building lines and the continuous building frontage contribute to a relatively continuous roofline. However, variations are found along all four roads within this character area. The roofline along London Road, looking eastwards, is fairly consistent, since the building heights are 2-2.5 storeys creating little variations. However, towards its eastern end, density gets lower, whilst vegetation and gaps between buildings start appearing. Thus, the roofline starts to get interrupted by those features. The roofline along the High Street is inconsistent, due to the variations in building heights ranging between 1-3 storeys. The roofline is interrupted by gabled dormers, pitches and chimneys that decorate the roofs. However, similar to the eastern end of London Road, the western end of the High Street is characterised by a less continuous roofline, since the gaps between buildings and the rich vegetation start to appear affecting the previous continuity. The roofline along Wargrave Road is significantly affected by the Bell Court development to the west which has varying storey heights and incorporates gables. The rest of the street shares the same attributes as London Road and High Street, with a continuous roofline to the south-eastern end of the road and a more interrupted roofline moving towards the north where density gets higher and vegetation and gaps between buildings start to appear. The roof types range between flat roofs, gabled and hipped. There are also examples of hipped and gabled dormers that add visual interest along the roofline.</p>
<p>Car parking</p>	<p>There are designated areas for on-street parking along London Road, whilst there is public parking east of Wargrave Road. In addition, examples of on-plot parking are also found towards the eastern end of London Road and the northern end of Wargrave Road where properties are bigger. Lastly, examples of parking courtyards are found towards the western end of the High Street.</p>

Twyford Conservation Area

196



Figure 23: The pavements along the High Street are narrow at places impeding pedestrian flow and creating a sense of unsafety for people.



Figure 24: Open space along the High Street offers a break along the highly enclosed street and facilitates pedestrian flow.



Figure 25: Bell Court, a recent development, is located at the corner of the High Street and Waltham Road standing out due to its variations in heights incorporating gables.



Figure 26: Buildings front directly onto the pavements to service the shops on the ground floor, whilst the upper floors are used for storage or residencies.

Twyford Conservation Area

197



Figure 27: Church Street is a relatively narrow road which combined with the narrow pavements and continuity of the façades creates high levels of enclosure.



Figure 28: Recent development along the western end of the conservation area respects the materiality and massing of the opposite buildings along the High Street.



Figure 29: There is a good number of listed buildings within the conservation area, the architectural qualities of which need to be references in future development.



Figure 30: Positive example of modern residences reflecting the historic site of the old mill.

Twyford Station Conservation Area

Twyford Station Conservation Area was designated in 1996. It includes Waltham Road, Station Road and Brook Street.



<p>Land use</p>	<p>This character area is mainly residential with some other uses spread around. In particular, St Mary’s Church dominates the area to the east, whilst there are some shops and services along Waltham Road. The railway station and the car parking area are also found to the south.</p>
<p>Access and movement</p>	<p>Waltham Road provides a sense of entry to the village from the south connecting it with the railway station. It becomes Church Street towards the north where it meets the High Street. Other tertiary streets, like Station Road, Brook Street and Gas Lane are connected with Waltham Road to the south offering access to the residential neighbourhood. The levels of traffic congestion within Waltham Road are high, whilst the traffic island is small and inadequate. In addition, bus services are available along Waltham Road.</p>
<p>Patterns of growth & layout of buildings</p>	<p>The development pattern within this character area is characterised by a permeable block created by Waltham Road and Station Road, as well as cul-de-sac streets, such as Brook Street. The buildings set along Waltham Road provide evidence of the Victorian era within the village. To its northern side the housing is of detached style with well-sized front gardens, whilst on the southern side, the housing follows a traditional Victorian terrace pattern with small-sized front gardens.</p> <p>Station Road houses the main area of Victorian development within the village. The area is made up of two roads at right angles to one another, one facing the Station and the other one providing a link with the old core. Building lines are generally consistent, whilst most of the buildings are setback from the road allowing for small-sized front gardens. A large number of houses are of terraced layout which creates a sense of continuity on the facades. However, the highly enclosed environment sometimes opens up to less enclosed spaces, for instance at St Mary’s churchyard, or close to the car park area and railway station.</p>

Twyford Station Conservation Area

199

<p>Patterns of growth & layout of buildings</p>	<p>Brook Street has a linear character and it shares similar characteristics as to Station Road in terms of building lines, setbacks, continuity of frontages and front gardens. The levels of enclosure are high as well, especially towards the eastern end of the road where housing is of terraced layout.</p> <p>Plot sizes and widths vary within this character area contributing to the rural context of the village.</p>
<p>Boundary treatments and public realm</p>	<p>This character area is more vegetated compared to Twyford Conservation area, since physical boundary treatments border the majority of the houses. Waltham Road is well vegetated with hedges, bushes and trees decorating the front gardens on both sides of the street. Station Road on both angles shares similar qualities creating a feeling of softness along the streetscene. On the contrary, Brook Street presents less soft surfaces, whilst the parking courtyard to the western end of the street increases the hard surfaces. However, due to its close proximity to the natural environment, the views of the rich vegetation towards the end of the street compensates for the lack of green elements along the streetscape.</p> <p>In terms of public realm, the width of the pavements is narrow impeding pedestrian flow and creating a car dominated environment. In addition, the quality of some areas in front of the shops is poor.</p>
<p>Heights & roofline</p>	<p>The layout of the buildings, the continuity of the facades and the consistent building heights to around 2-2.5 storeys, result in a continuous roofline along the eastern side of Waltham Road, Station Road adjacent to the railway and Brook Street, whilst it gets interrupted by the chimneys that decorate the roofs. However, the roofline to the western side of Waltham Road, eastern side of Brook Street and Station Road along St Mary’s church is characterised by a less continuous form, since the vegetation, open spaces or gaps between buildings start to appear and affect its continuity.</p> <p>The roof types vary between hipped and gabled roofs, whilst chimneys, rooflights and dormers decorate the roofs.</p>
<p>Car parking</p>	<p>There are designated areas for on-street parking along Station Road. However, on-street parking is also found along Brook Street, a narrow road, which clutters the public realm, impedes pedestrian flow and creates a car dominated environment. In addition, on-plot parking and parking courtyards can also be found in this area.</p>

Twyford Station Conservation Area



200

Figure 31: Terraced housing is the prevailing typology and one of the characteristics that define this area.



Figure 32: There is a mixture of soft and hard landscaping with either buildings fronting directly onto the pavements with no front gardens, or front gardens bordered with vegetation and low height brick walls.



Figure 33: Due to the terraced typology, parking is an issue in the area and the solution of on-street parking over the pavements clutters the public realm, impedes pedestrian flow and creates a car dominated environment.



Figure 34: St Mary's Church occupies a good amount of land within this character area and it is responsible for creating a feeling of openness in the area.

Twyford Station Conservation Area

201



Figure 35: There is a good number of buildings within the conservation area, the architectural qualities of which need to be referenced in future development.



Figure 36: The railway station is included within the conservation area and it is located adjacent to Station Road creating a feeling of openness in the neighbouring streets.



Figure 37: Buildings front directly onto the pavements to service the shops on the ground floor, whilst the upper floors are used for storage or residencies.



Figure 38: Local examples of front gardens bordered with hedges and low-height brick walls.

North of the village

The North of the village character area comprises 50's/70's housing developed between New Bath Road and London Road.



<p>Land use</p>	<p>This character area is mainly residential, however, some other uses can also be found scattered around, for instance the recreation ground along Longfield Road, Polehampton C of E Junior School, a surgery, a convenience store, a Day Nursery, as well as a nursery and some farms to the north of New Bath Road.</p>
<p>Access and movement</p>	<p>This character area is bordered with New Bath Road to the north and London Road to the south. Wargrave Road is considered the northern entrance to the area, whilst London Road creates access to the area from the east. Bus services run along Waltham Road, Amberley Drive, Hilltop Road, Pennfields and London Road creating a loop within this character area.</p>
<p>Patterns of growth & layout of buildings</p>	<p>The buildings are laid out in either perimeter blocks or cul-de-sac streets. In general, building lines are less regular compared to the previous character areas showing variations on setbacks and rotations, however some streets are characterised by consistent building lines, like Troutbeck Close. Most of the street network is defined by slightly meandering streets, evolving views and irregular buildings lines, rotations and setbacks. This irregularity creates a variety of depths for front gardens, whilst creating a visual interest along the streetscene. Plot sizes are generally regular with subtle variations.</p> <p>The level of enclosure is lower compared to the previous two character areas, due to lower density, larger building setbacks and occasional green verges along the streets.</p>
<p>Boundary treatments and public realm</p>	<p>The North of village is characterised by a mixture of soft and hard surfaces. In particular, front and rear gardens are well vegetated with hedges and bushes bordering the building lines, whilst others combine physical boundary treatments with low-height brick walls. There are examples of properties where boundary treatments help clearly separate public from private space, like along Hilltop Road or Wargrave Road, whilst in others front gardens are defined by grass areas with limited vegetation bordering the site, and thus creating a feel of a more shared surface. Pavements, of generally good widths, can be found on both sides of the road network, whilst some cul-de-sac developments offer a shared surface for their users with no pavements.</p>
<p>Heights & roofline</p>	<p>Building heights vary between 1-2.5 storeys. There is a variety of roof shapes and orientations, due to the layout of the buildings, whilst the roof types vary between gabled and hipped roofs. This creates a dynamic and evolving roofline, non continuous, rather than a uniform one.</p>
<p>Car parking</p>	<p>The car parking typologies found in this character area are on-street and on-plot parking.</p>

North of the village

203



Figure 39: Buildings setback from the road with generous front gardens and physical boundary treatments bordering the boundary lines.



Figure 40: Roads are equipped with large green verges, street trees and wide pavements creating a 'countryside' feel improving the surroundings.



Figure 41: Public footpaths located in close proximity to residential developments which are bordered with rich vegetation enhancing biodiversity.



Figure 42: Wide cycle lane to accommodate for cyclists, with clear signage and rich vegetation to enhance biodiversity.

South of the village

The South of the village character area comprises 60's/70's and 80's housing developed between the railway line, Waltham Road to the east, Hurst Road to the west and open countryside to the south.



<p>Land use</p>	<p>This character area is mainly residential, however, some other uses can also be found scattered around, for instance the Stanlake Meadow recreation ground, the Colleton Primary School and play areas.</p>
<p>Access and movement</p>	<p>This character area is bordered with the railway to the north, Waltham Road to the east, Twyford Brook to the south and Hurst Road to the west. The area is connected with the north part of the village through Waltham Road. Bus services run along Hurst Road, Winchcombe Road, Broad Hilton creating a loop within this character area.</p>
<p>Patterns of growth & layout of buildings</p>	<p>Buildings laid out in perimeter blocks are mainly found to the north, whilst the south area includes cul-de-sac developments. Perimeter blocks are characterised by generally regular building lines and rotations, whilst plots sizes show slight variations. Building setbacks vary at places creating interesting visuals and variety on the widths of front gardens. Cul-de-sac developments are laid out along meandering streets which results in irregular buildings lines and rotations. Plot sizes are smaller compared to the ones organised in perimeter blocks. Building setbacks vary due to the street layout creating evolving views and interesting visuals. There is a recent infill development found along Wellington Close which shares the same qualities as the rest of cul-de-sac developments in the area in terms of buildings lines, rotations and setbacks and it is generally sensitively located within its surroundings. The level of enclosure is generally low, similar to the North of village character area, since the building density is lower than that of the conservation areas, buildings have generous gaps between them and road width is wide.</p>
<p>Boundary treatments and public realm</p>	<p>The South of village is characterised by a mixture of soft and hard surfaces. In particular, front and rear gardens are well vegetated with hedges and bushes bordering the building lines, whilst others combine physical boundary treatments with low-height brick walls. There are examples of properties where boundary treatments help clearly separate public from private space, like along Hurst Road and Waltham Road, whilst in others front gardens are defined by grass areas with limited vegetation bordering the site, and thus creating a feel of a more shared surface. Pavements, of generally good widths, can be found on both sides of the road network, whilst some cul-de-sac developments offer a shared surface for their users with no pavements.</p>
<p>Heights & roofline</p>	<p>Building heights vary between 1-2.5 storeys. There is a variety of roof shapes and orientations, due to the layout of the buildings, whilst the roof types vary between gabled and hipped roofs. This creates a dynamic and evolving roofline, non continuous, rather than a uniform one. In addition, gable dormers and chimneys serve as decorative features.</p>
<p>Car parking</p>	<p>The car parking typologies found in this character area are on-street and on-plot parking.</p>

South of the village

205



Figure 43: Buildings bordered with hedges, bushes and flower beds improve the environment whilst helping separate public from private space.



Figure 44: Buildings with limited or no boundary treatments create a feel of shared surface where private and public spaces are not clearly defined.



Figure 45: Open spaces within the built environment provide a nice break along the streetscape, improve the environment and enhance biodiversity.



Figure 46: Recent development along Wellington Close respects the layout, massing and scale of the surrounding cul-de-sac developments.

Springfield Park & Orchard Estate

Springfield Park and Orchard Estate character area comprises a modern development located south of London Road and Ruscombe Road, and north-east of Waltham Road.



Land use	This character area is purely residential, whilst it is located in close proximity to the village core.
Access and movement	Springfield Park is accessible via London Road and Waltham Road, whilst Orchard Estate can be accessed via Ruscombe Road (B3024). The entrances from Waltham Road and Ruscombe Road are well vegetated providing a good buffer with the existing properties located at the corner.
Patterns of growth & layout of buildings	<p>Properties are organised around Springfield Park overlooking an open space with two cul-de-sac streets to the south. Similarly, properties in Orchard Estate are also arranged in cul-de-sacs, with some fronting onto a central playground. Building lines are generally consistent with subtle variations to add visual interest along the streetscape. Building setbacks show variations resulting in a variety of sizes in the front gardens. The buildings along the cul-de-sac street are flats laid out on different rotations compared to the rest of the development. Plot sizes are generally consistent showing little variations.</p> <p>The levels of enclosure are lower compared to the North and South of village character areas, since the proximity to the open space increases the sense of openness in the area.</p>
Boundary treatments and public realm	<p>This character area is characterised by soft surfaces. The presence of green assets like extensive grass areas, large trees, hedges and bushes enhance the natural environment. However, although the green coverage is extensive, those assets do not border the building lines and therefore, the boundary treatments are limited, creating a sense of shared surface between public and open space and a sense of neighbourhood feel.</p> <p>Pavements, of generally good widths, can be found along the roads, whilst some cul-de-sac developments offer a shared surface for their users with no pavements.</p>
Heights & roofline	Building heights vary between 2-2.5 storeys. The roofline is not continuous as it gets interrupted by the gaps between buildings and the surrounding vegetation. Roof types range between gabled and hipped roofs whilst chimneys decorate the roofs. There is a variety of roof orientations which, combined with the rest of the roof characteristics, creates a dynamic and evolving roofline rather than a uniform one.
Car parking	The prevailing car parking typology for both is on-plot parking, however on-street parking can also be found and a parking courtyard is located in the centre of Orchard Estate.

Springfield Park & Orchard Estate

207



Figure 47: Open spaces overlooked by properties improve natural surveillance whilst enhancing the natural environment.



Figure 48: Buildings laid out in generally regular building lines, whilst setbacks allow for well-sized front gardens, Orchard Estate.



Figure 49: Entrance to Springfield Park from Waltham Road is bordered with rich vegetation, local stones, whilst its width filters traffic preserving the character of the surrounding buildings.



Figure 50: Buildings of historic character in close proximity to Springfield Park are bordered with rich vegetation providing a good buffer with the modern development.

Design guidelines and codes

04

4. Design guidelines and codes

This chapter provides guidance on the design of development, setting out the expectations that applicants for planning permission in Twyford Parish will be expected to follow.

209 4.1 Place making

What urban designers and planners call 'placemaking' is about creating the physical conditions that residents and users find attractive and safe, with good levels of social interaction and layouts that are easily understood.

The placemaking principles set out in the following pages should be used to assess the design quality of future development or regeneration proposals.

These key principles should be considered in all cases of future development as they reflect positive place-making and draw on the principles set out in many national urban design best practice documents.

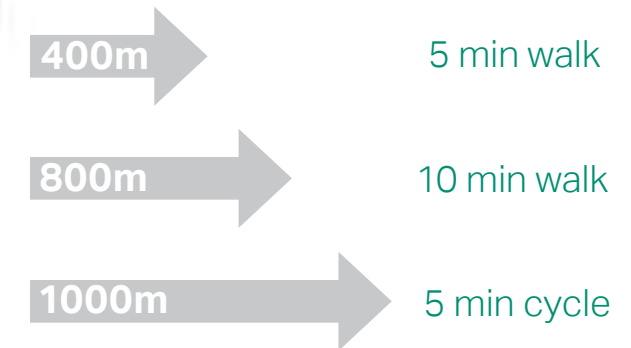


Figure 51: The 10 characteristics of well-designed places. (Source: National Design Guide, page 8).

4.2 Walkable places

Creating new walking routes which are well connected to the existing network should be a prerequisite for any new development in Twyford Parish.

The success of a place is influenced by how walkable it is. It is good practice to plan new homes within a 400 metres walking distance (= 5 minutes) of bus stops and within 800 metres (= 10 minutes) of convenience stores or community buildings.



4.3 General principles and guidelines

The design guidelines and codes, with reference to the Twyford Neighbourhood Plan Area, will follow a brief introduction of the general design principles.

The guidelines and codes developed in the document focus on residential environments including new housing development in the Parish.

In any case, considerations of design and layout must be informed by the wider context, considering not only the immediate neighbouring buildings, but also the landscape and rural character of the wider locality. The local pattern of streets and spaces, building traditions, materials and natural environment should all help to determine the character and identity of a development.

It is important that full account is taken of the local context and that the new design embodies the ‘sense of place’ and also meets the aspirations of people already living in that area. Therefore, some design principles that should be present in any design proposal are:

- Respect the existing pattern of the village to preserve the local character;
- Respect the heritage, valued landscapes¹ identified in the Parish;
- Aim for high quality design that reflects and respects the local vernacular;
- Integrate with existing paths, streets, circulation networks and improve the established character of streets, greens and other spaces;

- Harmonise and enhance the existing village in terms of physical form, architecture and land use;
- Ensure all components e.g. buildings, landscapes, access routes, parking and open space are well related to each other;
- Incorporate necessary services and drainage infrastructure without causing unacceptable harm to retained features; and
- Aim for innovative design and eco-friendly buildings while respecting the architectural heritage and tradition of the area.

¹ For more information, reference Wokingham Borough Council's Valued Landscapes Topic Paper via <https://www.wokingham.gov.uk/planning-policy/planning-policy-information/draft-local-plan-consultation/?categoryesct191f252ff-550d-4cfa-a838-92ef2cb5f83c=10723>

4.4 Twyford design guidelines and codes

This section introduces a set of design principles that are specific to Twyford Parish. These are based on:

- Baseline analysis of the area in Chapter 2;
- Understanding national design documents such as National Design Guide, National Model Design Code and Building for a Healthy Life documents which informed the principles and design codes; and
- Discussion with members of the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group.

The codes are divided into **5 sections**, shown on the next pages, each one with a different number of subsections. Each theme is numbered (e.g DC.01) to facilitate its reading and consultation.

211

Theme	Code	Title
DC.01 In keeping with local character	DC01.1	Consider the context
	DC01.2	Heritage, views and landmarks
	DC01.3	Patterns of growth and layout of buildings and gardens
	DC01.4	Development on the settlement edges
DC.02 Access and movement	DC02.1	Accessible and attractive footpath network / access to the countryside
	DC02.2	Prioritise walking and cycling
	DC02.3	People friendly streets
	DC02.4	Street lighting
	DC02.5	Parking and servicing
	DC02.6	Cycle parking
DC.03 Green and blue infrastructure	DC03.1	Create a green network
	DC03.2	Biodiversity
	DC03.3	Water management
	DC03.4	Trees
	DC03.5	Open spaces
DC.04 Built form	DC04.1	Boundary lines, boundary treatment & corner treatment
	DC04.2	Continuity and enclosure
	DC04.3	Legibility and wayfinding
	DC04.4	Building heights, density and housing mix
	DC04.5	Infill development
	DC04.6	Building conversions into residential
	DC04.7	Building modifications and extensions
	DC04.8	Public realm, materials and street furniture
	DC04.9	Materials and architectural details
DC.05 Sustainability	DC05.1	Minimising energy use
	DC05.2	Lifetime and adaptability
	DC05.3	Minimising construction waste
	DC05.4	Recycling materials and buildings

DC.01 In keeping with the local character

DC01.1 Consider the context

Twyford Parish boasts high quality natural areas in close proximity to the village settlement. More specifically, Loddon Nature Reserve, traditional orchard and floodplain grazing marsh, tree preservation areas and local wildlife sites. In addition, the parish has rich heritage including two conservation areas and a good number of listed buildings.

These are some of the characteristics that need to be taken into consideration during the design process. Some design guidelines for future development are:

- New development should respect the existing rich heritage and make sure actions are taken to mitigate any impact. For example, where new development is taking place in close proximity to a heritage asset, careful consideration needs to be taken in terms of views, landmarks, massing, density, enclosure and architectural details;

- New development should have a good understanding of the existing character areas identified in the village and therefore, carefully consider road layout, scale, layout, density, boundary treatments, massing and materials for the new buildings. Sensitively sitting next to existing properties should be a priority for new development;
- New development should be well-integrated into the existing settlement pattern and avoid any kind of fragmentation. For that reason, the future development surrounding the existing settlement should prioritise connectivity, especially through pedestrian and cycle links. This will create accessible places and a more cohesive social tissue;
- New development should improve the connection with the surrounding countryside by enhancing existing links or creating new ones. In edge locations, it is important to connect all streets to the network of public pathways and rights of way;
- New development should prioritise creating a well-connected green system and promote alternative ways of transportation. The existing public rights of ways and the new footpaths will contribute significantly to this system;
- New development should respect and retain the existing green assets of any form; designated natural areas, tree preservation orders, hedges and hedgerows. Those elements will need to be integrated into the design process and shape the design outcome;
- New development should make use of the natural landscape in the surroundings and promote freedom of movement within the open countryside. Safe accessible paths and corridors within the open fields can become structuring elements that connect Twyford with surrounding villages and towns. An appropriate signage system can help navigate people around and make them aware of walking and cycling routes; and

DC.01 In keeping with the local character

- Flooding is an important issue in the Parish, mainly to the west and south, and therefore, a regional and cohesive approach is needed to create a more effective overall village drainage plan. In addition, new development should suggest large green areas along any flood risk zone to create a buffer with the new built environment.



- 01 New development should respect the existing rich heritage and make sure actions are taken to mitigate any impact.
- 02 New development should have an understanding of the different character areas, layouts, typologies, densities and boundary treatments to ensure new design sits sensitively next to it.
- 03 Existing green and blue assets like woodlands, trees, hedges, hedgerows, ponds and rivers need to be retained and integrated into the design.
- 04 A well-connected green system needs to be promoted and integrated into the new and existing development.

DC.01 In keeping with the local character

DC01.2 Heritage, views and landmarks

214 Twyford Parish has a rich heritage which is mainly concentrated around the village core, comprising two conservation areas. There is a great number of listed buildings, as well as other unlisted buildings that are important to the village because of their contribution to its history. Therefore, any new development adjacent to heritage assets or in close proximity to them needs to be aware of their existence and stimulate ways in which those assets could be further promoted and protected. Some design guidelines are:

- New development in close proximity to heritage assets must propose green screenings to mitigate any unpleasant visual impact;
- New development proposals in close proximity to heritage assets should not be visually intrusive. This should be achieved through the appropriate scale, massing and design including screening where appropriate;
- New development should retain the existing open spaces, vegetation and trees to preserve the historic form and pattern of development in the Parish;
- Important views and vistas towards historic landmarks, open spaces or historic streets should be identified and integrated into the new design to demonstrate the significance of those assets;
- Scenic and tranquil views to the countryside should be retained and enhanced in future development. For example, footpaths bordered with rich vegetation can help protect particular views while improving walkability in the village; and
- Creating short-distance views broken by buildings, trees or landmarks helps to create memorable routes. Creating views and vistas allows easily usable links between places.



Figure 52: Positive example of recent development within the conservation area that respects the historic buildings to the east by introducing an open space with vegetation to create a buffer between the existing and new development. This open space also stimulates the role of those historic assets as landmarks and focal points.



Figure 53: The recent development to the western border of the conservation area respects the opposite buildings across the street by retaining a similar scale, massing and materiality.

DC.01 In keeping with the local character

DC01.3 Patterns of growth and layout of buildings and gardens

The Parish owes much of its character to the historic pattern and layout of the roads and buildings as well as its close relationship with the surrounding countryside. Some design guidelines for new development within Twyford village are:

215

- New development must demonstrate a good understanding of the street network, density and building scale, massing, orientation and enclosure of the surrounding built environment to propose sympathetic design;
- New development outside the conservation areas, towards the north or south of the Parish should recommend perimeter blocks. Their sizes and shapes should respond to the uses, existing landscape features, topography and residential density. Courtyards should be used within large blocks to create interesting and efficient arrangements. Developments should avoid car-dependent layouts based on monotonous repetition of a uniform building typology arranged along cul-de-sacs;
- The layout of new development should optimise the benefits of daylighting, through the use of solar panels, and passive solar gains, through building orientation, as this can significantly reduce energy consumption;
- New properties should provide a variety of house types. The use of a repeating type of dwelling along the entirety of the street should be avoided to create variety of interest in the streetscape;
- Boundary treatments, both soft and hard, should border the property lines to match the style of the surrounding properties in the Parish. Examples like hedges, trees and low height brick walls are recommended;
- The size of plots and their pattern should be varied to contribute to the rural character of the village;
- Building setbacks should be slightly irregular to create an informality, but, in general, the building lines along the main roads should maintain a linear character; and
- Existing hedges, hedgerows and trees should be integrated into design, whilst more planting and vegetation is encouraged to form part of the green network strategy.



Figure 54: Example of a perimeter block (red dotted line) within the village, organised along meandering streets (blue dash line showing building line following street) affecting the building setbacks while creating evolving views and visual interest along the streetscape, Amberley Drive.

DC.01 In keeping with the local character

DC01.4 Development on the settlement edges

Twyford is surrounded by countryside and open fields to the west, east and south. Therefore, any development should be sensitive to the natural environment and some guidelines are:

- Any future interfaces between the existing settlement edges and the future extensions to the west, east or south of the village must be carefully designed to integrate new and existing communities. This is particularly important where new residential buildings will face existing residential properties;
- Edges must be designed to link rather than segregate existing and new neighbourhoods. Where physical boundaries are found, those must be retained and integrated into new green corridors between existing and new neighbourhoods; and

- Green corridors are highly recommended to also provide additional pedestrian and cycle links that will contribute to the successful integration of the new development with the rest of the village.

The illustration below presents design principles to connect the new and existing settlements with a green space and edge lane which provide space for walking and cycling.

1. Existing properties buffered with rich vegetation to mitigate any visual impact from the new development.
2. Retained green hedges at the back of existing properties.
3. New green verge with trees on both sides of the green link serving as an additional buffer (width varies).
4. New private drive or edge lane used by vehicles and cyclists.
5. New residential frontage with boundary hedges and front gardens.

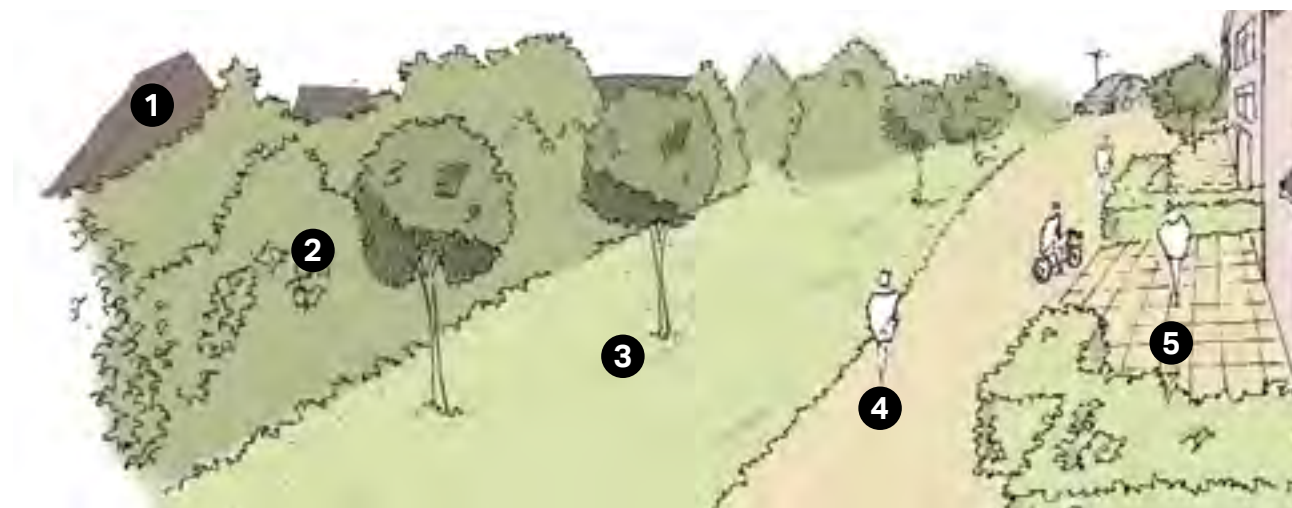


Figure 55: Plan sketches of potential edges with the new settlement.

DC.02 Access and movement

DC02.1 Accessible and attractive footpath network/ access to the countryside

It is a general consensus that active travel is a priority in Twyford Village. Therefore, the existing network of footpaths and cycle routes needs to be improved, whilst new development should support this lifestyle and stimulate ways to encourage walking and cycling through design. Some design guidelines are:

217

- Any new design should consider existing proposals or opportunities for walking and cycling networks around the village made by the Neighbourhood Plan Group and do its best to integrate them;
- New development should take into account designated Public Rights of Way and ensure to successfully integrate them into design. For example, there is a good number of public footpaths, green routes and riverside paths to the west, east and south of the village, within the open fields and countryside, that could be used as drivers to set the baseline for an upGraded pedestrian and cycling network;

- Where possible, newly developed areas must retain or provide direct and attractive footpaths between neighbouring streets and local facilities and amenities. Establishing a robust pedestrian network across new developments and among new and existing development is key in achieving good levels of connectivity and promoting walking and cycling;
- Where possible, new proposed footpaths should link up green and blue spaces and woodlands to create a network of green walking routes and promote biodiversity. For example, footpath connections and other green links could connect potential new development to the west with Loddon Nature Reserve or the south of the village;
- Strategically placed signposts can assist pedestrians and cyclists with orientation and increase awareness of publicly accessible paths around the village. However, new signposts must respect the character of the Parish and avoid creating visual clutter; and

- Design features such as gates or barriers to footpaths must be kept at a minimum and barriers should be avoided;



Figure 56: Cul-de-sac street which, however, allows for pedestrian and cycle connections to the surrounding neighbourhoods and countryside, elsewhere in UK.



Figure 57: Footpath connecting the surrounding countryside within the village settlements, bordered with vegetation and large trees, somewhere in UK.

DC.02 Access and movement

DC02.2 Prioritise walking and cycling

Walking and cycling is challenging around the Parish, especially in the village centre due to the lack of cycle paths and narrow pavements. The majority of the residents value all alternative ways of transport and therefore, any new development should aim to improve and enhance the existing condition and provide safe and easy access to local amenities. Some design guidelines are:

- Design features such as barriers to vehicle movement, gates to new developments, or footpaths between high fences must be kept to a minimum; and
- All newly developed areas must provide direct and attractive footpaths between neighbouring streets and local facilities. Streets must be designed to prioritise the needs of pedestrians and cyclists.

218

- Varied links should be enabled and created to favour pedestrian and cycle movement. These routes should be always overlooked by properties to create natural surveillance and offer good sightlines and unrestricted views to make people feel safer;
- Cul-de-sac development pattern should be avoided in new developments. However, if it is proposed then it should be connected to footpaths to avoid blocking pedestrian and cycle flow;



Figure 58: Green links within the natural environment should be equipped with cycle stands to encourage people to cycle, whilst getting in close contact with nature, somewhere in UK.



Figure 59: Footpath integrated within residential development offering alternative walking and cycling routes to people, Great Kneighton, Cambridge.



Figure 60: Example of a green link (source: <https://www.sustrans.org.uk/our-blog/opinion/2020/august/how-does-the-uk-government-s-gear-change-relate-to-the-national-cycle-network>).

DC.02 Access and movement

DC02.3 People-friendly streets and green links

It is essential that the design of new development includes streets that incorporates the needs of pedestrians, cyclists, and, if applicable, public transport users. Some guidelines for future development are:

- 219
- Streets must meet the technical highways requirements, as well as being considered a 'place' to be used by all. It is essential that the design of new development includes streets and junctions that incorporate the needs of pedestrians, cyclists, and if applicable, public transport users;
 - It is important that on-street parking, where introduced, does not impede the access of pedestrians and other vehicles and it is well vegetated;
 - Within the development boundaries, streets should not be built to maximise vehicle speed or capacity. A range of traffic calming measures could be introduced by design;
 - New streets should be linear with gentle meandering, while also providing evolving views to the surrounding countryside;
 - Routes should be laid out in a permeable pattern, allowing for multiple choices of routes, particularly on foot and cycle. Any cul-de-sacs should be relatively short and provide onward pedestrian links;
 - Streets must respect the existing vegetation, while also incorporating new opportunities for landscaping, green infrastructure, and sustainable drainage; and

- Any new development should provide well-connected streets of varied character to filter traffic and speed. A legible street hierarchy should include primary, secondary, tertiary roads and edge lanes. The next pages present illustrations examples of those street typologies.

Primary streets

- Primary streets are the widest neighbourhood roads and also the main routes used for utility and emergency vehicles, as well as buses;
- Primary streets must be defined by strong building lines. Primary frontages alongside the road should include taller and more dense developments; and
- Street trees and/or green verges along the road should be provided to contribute to the village identity, local biodiversity, and provide cooling and shading.

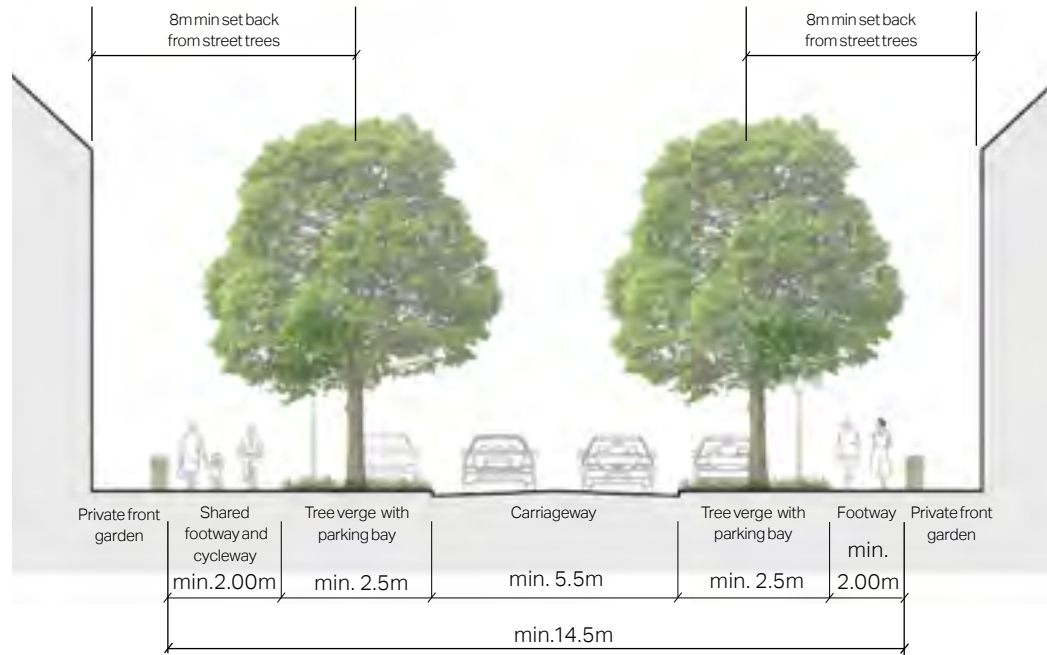


Figure 61: Cross-section to illustrate some dimensions for primary streets.

Secondary streets

- Secondary streets should accommodate carriageways wide enough for two-way traffic. On-street parking may be on or accommodated on the street or inset into green verges;
- Carriageways should be designed to be shared between motor vehicles and cyclists. Vertical traffic calming features such as raised tables may be introduced; and
- Where possible, secondary streets should be tree-lined on both sides.

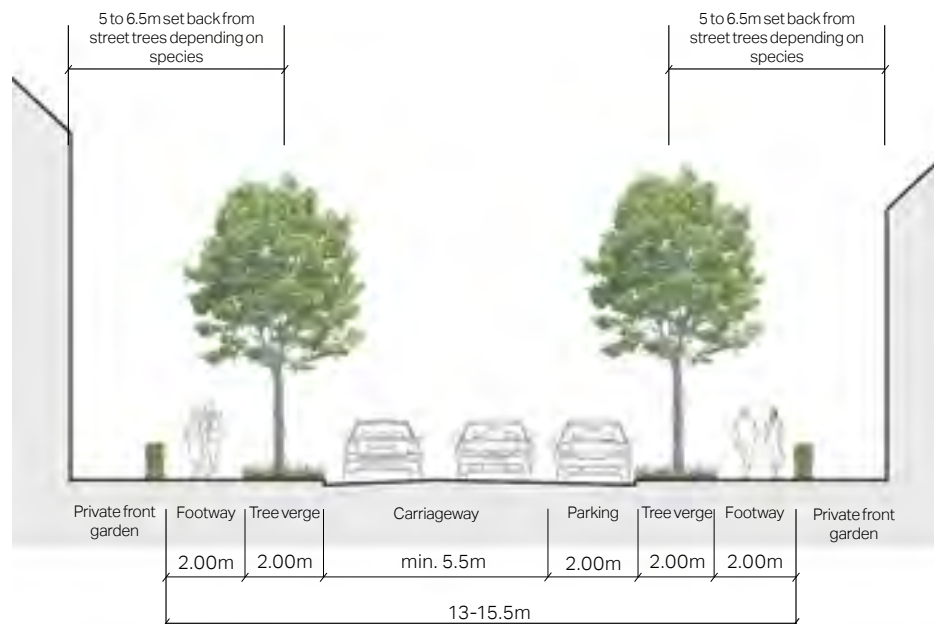


Figure 62: Cross-section to illustrate some dimensions for secondary streets.

DC.02 Access and movement

Tertiary streets

- Tertiary streets have a strong residential character and they should be designed for low traffic volumes and low speeds, ideally 20 mph;
- These streets must be designed for cyclists to mix with motor vehicles. Traffic calming features such as raised tables can be used to prevent speeding;
- Tertiary streets should be formed with a high degree of built form enclosure, with consistent building lines and setbacks; and
- Street trees should be provided with suitable gaps wherever possible.

221

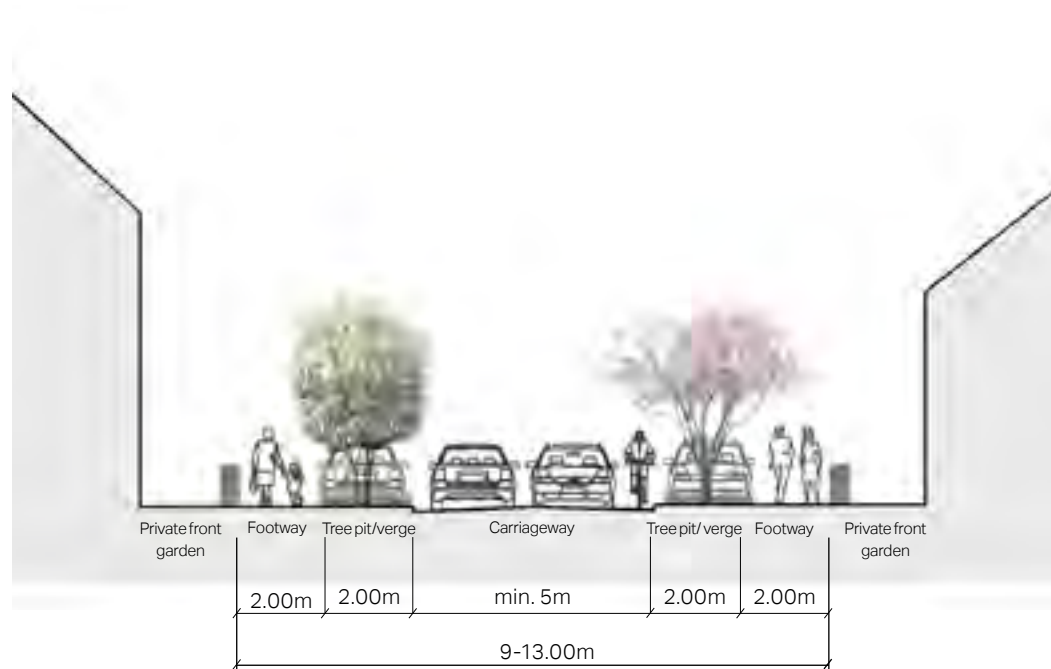


Figure 63: Cross-section to illustrate some dimensions for tertiary roads.

DC.02 Access and movement

Edge lanes

- All the edges of new development areas should be served by continuous Edge Lanes to provide high levels of connectivity;
- Edge lanes are low-speed streets that front houses with gardens on one side and a green space on the other. Carriageways typically consist of a single lane of traffic in either direction, and are shared with cyclists; and
- Variations in paving materials and textures can be used instead of kerbs or road markings.



Figure 64: Cross-section to illustrate some dimensions for edge lanes.

Green links

2222

- Green links should be located within minimum 7.5m wide corridor adjacent to retained green assets;
- Shared or segregated footpath and cycleway to be provided within corridor;
- Footpath and cycleway to be hard surfaced and constructed of bound material which may also combine with vehicle access;
- Combined width of unsegregated footpath and cycleway to be a minimum of 3.0m; and
- Where required, SUDs features to be incorporated into corridor beside the surface of shared footpath and cycleway.

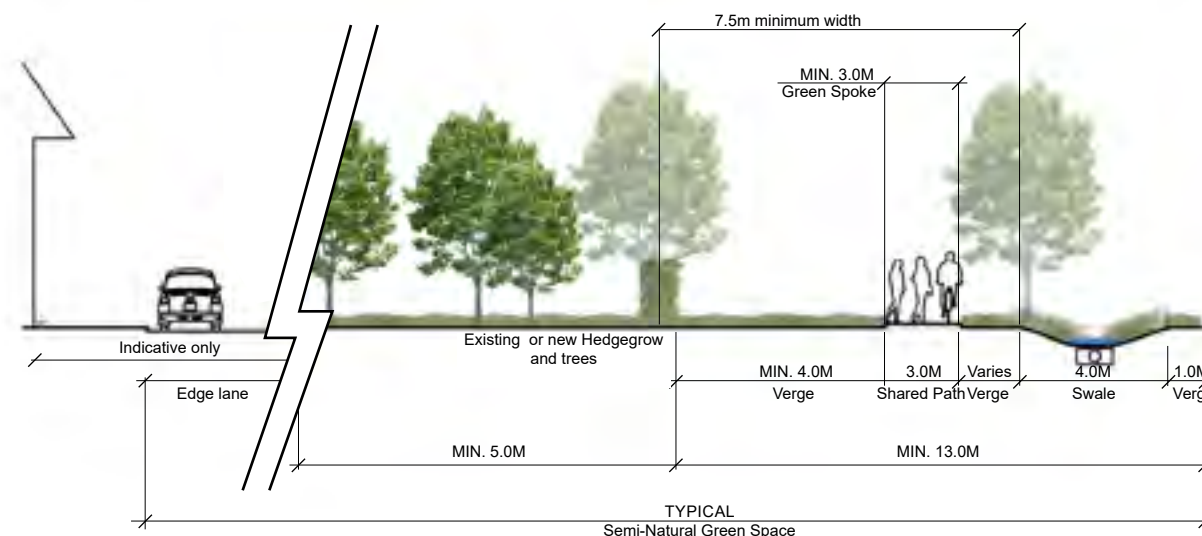


Figure 65: Section to illustrate some dimensions for green links.

DC.02 Access and movement

223



Figure 66: Example of a primary street with large street trees and green verges along the carriageway, elsewhere in UK.



Figure 67: Secondary street with inset parking bays alternating with street trees on both sides of the street in Derwenthorpe, York.



Figure 68: Tertiary street with inset parking bays alternating with trees on both sides in Dewenthorpe, York.



Figure 69: Positive example of a meandering edge lane where properties with well vegetated front gardens overlook the adjacent open space, Newquay.



Figure 70: Edge lane with spaces for informal parking (left) and pinch points (right) in Poundbury, Dorchester.

DC.02 Access and movement

DC02.4 Street lighting

Artificial light provides valuable benefits and it makes areas feel more welcoming during night-time. However, any new development needs to minimise light pollution that disrupts the natural habitat and human health. The 'dark skies' character of the countryside should be protected since it benefits both people and wildlife. It is also beneficial to have warm white street lighting as standard and baffles fitted to reduce light spill.

224

The following guidelines aim to ensure there is enough consideration given at the design stage of new developments:

- Ensure that lighting schemes will not cause unacceptable levels of light pollution particularly in intrinsically dark areas. Dark at night is defined as more than 50m from an existing street light;
- Consider lighting schemes that could be turned off when not needed ('part-night lighting') to reduce any potential adverse effects;
- Foot/cycle path light should be in harmony with surrounding rural

landscape. Lightings, such as solar cat's-eye lighting, reflective paint and ground-based lighting could be introduced;

- Choice of lighting should be energy-efficient and sustainable. The installation of motion sensors on the lights should be encouraged;
- Any new developments and house extensions designs should be encouraged to use natural light sources; and
- Proposals should have regard to current guidelines established for rural areas by the Institute of Lighting Professionals.



Figure 71: Example of a foot/cycle path which is lit by solar cat's-eye providing some light for pedestrian and cyclists without creating any disturbance to the nearby properties or unacceptable levels of light pollution.

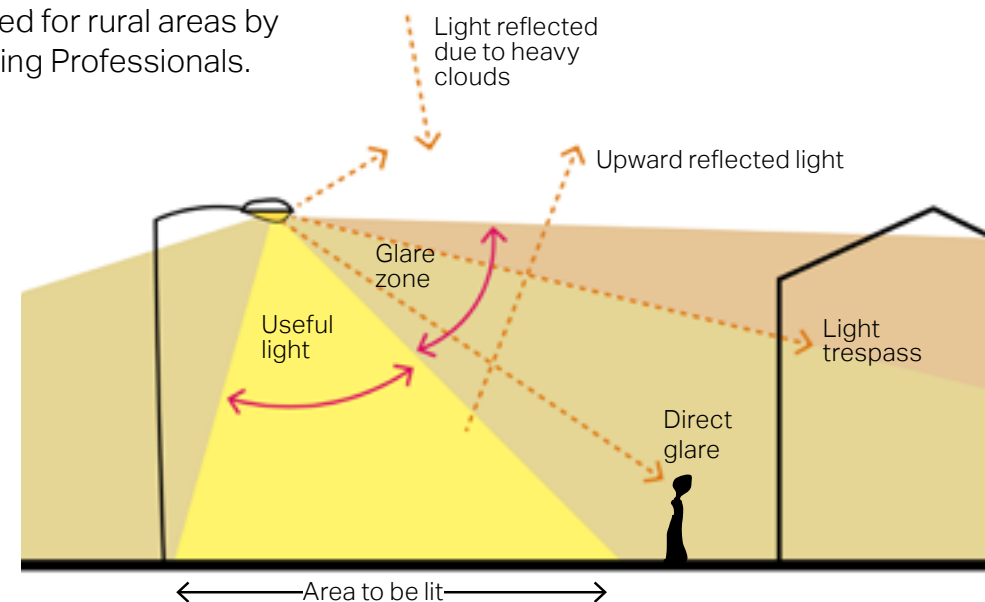


Figure 72: Diagram to illustrate the different components of light pollution and what 'good' lighting means.

DC.02 Access and movement

DC02.5 Parking and servicing

Although, the aim to create a good network of walking and cycling routes within Twyford Parish is a priority, the demand for private cars still remains high, at the time of writing, and therefore car parking has to be carefully integrated into the design. In addition, the energy efficiency aspect is also important and the need for more electric cars is rising. Please see page 59 for more details and guidelines on electric charging points.

225

The car parking typology mainly found in the Parish is on-plot parking; however, there are also cases of on-street parking and parking courts. Therefore, the design guidelines on the next pages will focus on the above mentioned typologies.

Guidelines for on-plot or on front car parking

- Parking should be well integrated into design so as not to dominate the public realm;
- High-quality and well-designed soft landscaping, hedges, hedgerows, and trees, should be used to increase the visual attractiveness of the parking and

enhance the rural character of the Parish; and

- Hard standing and driveways must be constructed from porous materials, to minimise surface water run-off and therefore, help mitigate potential flooding.



Figure 73: Illustrative diagram showing an indicative layout of on-plot front parking.



Figure 74: Illustrative diagram showing an indicative layout of on-plot side parking.

Guidelines for parking courts

- Parking courts should be acceptable for small building clusters and permeable paving should be used where possible;
- Parking courts must be overlooked by properties to increase natural surveillance; and
- Planting and vegetation should be integrated into design to soften the presence of cars and preserve the rural character of the area.



Figure 75: A courtyard with informal perpendicular and garage parking in Poundbury, Dorchester.

DC.02 Access and movement

Guidelines for on-street car parking

- The streetscape should not be dominated by continuous on-street parking spaces. Where possible, tree planting and grass areas can be incorporated between parking bays to improve aesthetics;
- On-street parking must be designed to avoid impeding the flow of pedestrians, cyclists and other vehicles; and
- On-street parking should be widened to allow each bay to be able to charge electric vehicles.

226



Figure 76: Illustrative diagram showing an indicative layout of on-street inset parking.



Figure 77: Example of on-street parking with parking bays and street trees to mitigate the impact of the cars on the streetscape, Poundbury.



Figure 78: Example of on-plot garage parking, Cambridge.

Guidelines for garages

- The use of garages should be avoided, if possible;
- Garages must not dominate the appearance of dwellings and must not reduce the amount of active frontage to the street; and
- They should provide minimum 3m x 7m internal space to park a car and provide space for storage to avoid the garage to be used for storage purposes only.



Figure 79: Indicative layout of a garage with a cycle storage area.

DC.02 Access and movement

Electric vehicle charging points

Twyford Parish strongly supports proposals for using electrically and other non fossil fuel powered vehicles. Those can be integrated both on and off street. Some design guidelines on how new development should design for electric vehicle charging points are:

On-street car parking or parking courts

- Car charging points should always be provided adjacent to public open spaces. Street trees and vegetation is also supported to minimise any visual contact with the charging points;
- Where charging points are located on the footpath, a clear footway width of 1.5m is required next to the charging point to avoid obstructing pedestrian flow; and
- Car charging points within parking courts are highly supported, since they can serve more than one vehicle.

Off-street car parking

- Mounted charging points and associated services should be integrated into the design of new developments, if possible with each house that provides off-street parking; and
- Cluttering elevations, especially main façades and front elevations, should be avoided.



Figure 80: Example of on-street electric vehicle charging points.



Figure 81: Example of electric vehicle charging points in a parking court.



Figure 82: Example of off-street electric vehicle charging points.

227

DC.02 Access and movement

Servicing

With modern requirements for waste separation and recycling, the number and size of household bins has increased posing a problem with the aesthetics of the property and the management of the bins. Therefore, some guidelines for new development are:

- When dealing with waste storage, servicing arrangements and site conditions should be taken into account; in some cases waste management should be from the front of the building and in others, from the rear. It is recommended that bins are located away from areas used as amenity space;
- A specific enclosure of sufficient size should be created for all the necessary bins;
- Bins should be placed as close to the dwelling's boundary and the public highway, such as against a wall, fence, hedge but not in a way as to obstruct the shared surface for pedestrian and vehicle movements;

- Bins should be placed within easy access from the street and, where possible, with the ability to open on the pavement side to ease retrieval;
- Wheelie bin storages are recommended to improve the aesthetics of the environment; and
- Bin storage could be combined with cycle storage.



Figure 83: Example of wheelie bin storage for front gardens that include a green element to improve the aesthetics.



Figure 84: Green roofs could be added to the wheelie bin storage to add an element of sustainability as well as improving the aesthetics.

DC.02 Access and movement

DC02.6 Cycle parking

Cycling, either for commuting or recreation, is a common activity in the Parish. Therefore, provision for cycle parking should be an integrated part in the design for new developments.

Houses without garages

- For residential units, where there is no on-plot garage, covered and secured cycle parking should be provided within the domestic curtilage;
- Cycle storage must be provided at a convenient location with an easy access;
- When provided within the footprint of the dwelling or as a free standing shed, cycle parking should be accessed by means of a door at least 900mm and the structure should be at least 2m deep;
- The use of planting and smaller trees alongside cycle parking can be used.

Houses with garages

- The minimum garage size should be 7m x 3m to allow space for cycle storage;
- Where possible, cycle parking should be accessed from the front of the building either in a specially constructed enclosure or easily accessible garage;
- The design of any enclosure should integrate well with the surroundings; and
- The bicycle must be removed easily without having to move the vehicle.



Figure 85: Example of cycle parking for houses without garages, Cambridge.

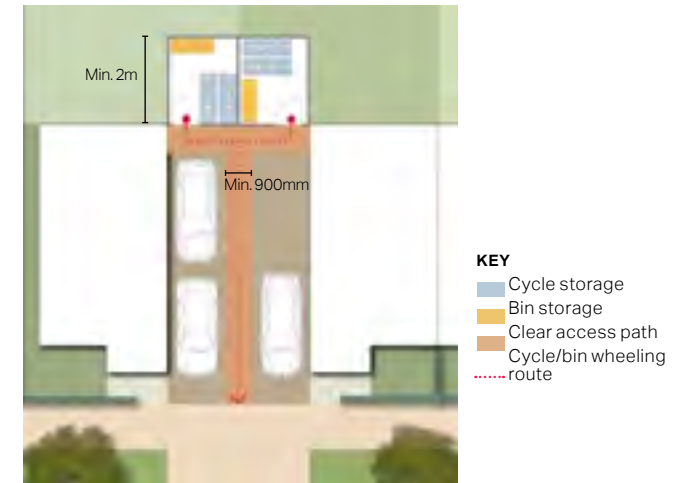


Figure 86: Indicative layout of a bicycle and bin storage area at the back of semi-detached properties.

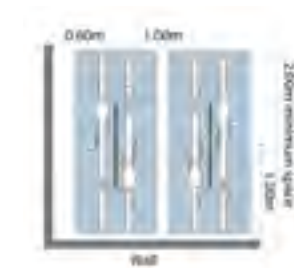


Figure 87: Sheffield cycle stands for visitors and cycle parking illustration.

DC.03 Green and blue infrastructure

DC03.1 Create a green network

230 Twyford Parish contains a variety of green and blue infrastructure that provides an environmental support system for the community and wildlife. New development should aim to enhance the existing natural assets and promote a well-connected green network throughout the new neighbourhoods to provide links to the countryside for people as well as habitats. Opportunities should be sought to introduce green assets into design and contribute to biodiversity. Some design guidelines on green networks are:

- New development should avoid harming existing ecological assets, e.g. Loddon Nature Reserve, flood zones, wildlife sites and habitats. Those green assets should be identified and integrated into the design process early on;
- New development should propose green links to enhance the pedestrian and cycle movement within the village connecting new and existing residential neighbourhoods between them as well as with the village centre and other open space and green routes within the village;

- Green networks should link existing and newly proposed street trees, green verges, front and rear gardens, open spaces, habitat sites and the countryside together;
- New development should front onto green assets and access should be granted for all groups of people;
- Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SuDs) should be introduced, where possible, and incorporated into the

design of the green network to mitigate any flooding issues; and

- Green areas will encourage walking and cycling over driving. However, since car users still represent a major group in the area, car parking should be well incorporated, e.g. parking bays with green verges and street trees, into the public realm to minimise the presence of cars. For further information about car parking please see the principles that are listed in Building for a Healthy Life and Manual for Streets documents in pages 8 and 9.

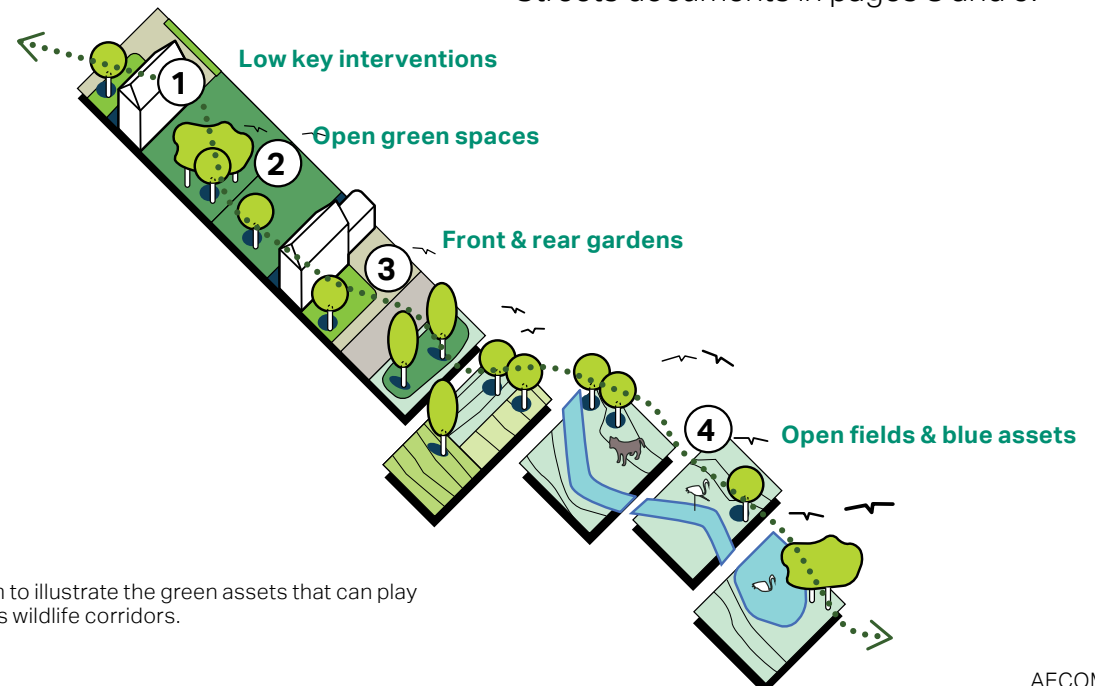


Figure 88: Diagram to illustrate the green assets that can play an important role as wildlife corridors.



Figure 89: An example of a SuDS corridor - Upton Urban Extension, Northampton.



Figure 90: Edge lane overlooking basin in open space (source: Susdrain)



Figure 91: Opportunities for green links (green arrows) around the Parish based on the existing assets and proposals suggested by the Twyford Neighbourhood Plan Group.

DC.03 Green and blue infrastructure

DC03.2 Biodiversity

The opportunity to avoid dangerous levels of global heating is closing and action is required swiftly at all levels from the international to the individual. Biodiversity could be highly affected and therefore new development should prioritise its enhancement through design. Some design guidelines are:

- New development should protect and enhance the existing habitats like Loddon Nature Reserve, local wildlife sites, protected trees, grazing marsh and other habitats. In particular, new development should help increase movement between isolated populations and provide escape cover from predators and shelter during bad weather;
- Biodiversity, woodlands, hedgerows, ditches should be protected and enhanced where possible and be an integrated part of the design process rather than an afterthought;

- New development proposals should aim for the creation of new habitats and wildlife corridors, e.g. by aligning back and front gardens or installing bird boxes or bricks in walls;
- Gardens and boundary treatments should be designed to allow the movement of wildlife and provide habitat for local species. For that reason, rich vegetation and plantation is suggested;
- Blue assets can also contribute to biodiversity connectivity. Therefore, the existing ditches and lakes should be considered in design proposals when planning for wildlife corridors; and
- All areas of biodiversity that require further planting/ enhancement should be planted before start of construction.

232



Figure 92: Example of a birdbox located on a grass area opposite to a public footpath, somewhere in UK.



Figure 93: Example of a structure used as a frog habitat corridor located in an outdoor green space.

DC.03 Green and blue infrastructure

DC03.3 Water management

Sustainable drainage solutions (SuDS)

It is a general consensus that the risk of flooding is a concern in the Parish and the majority of the residents would want to see some improvements to the surface water drainage. Therefore, the introduction of some sustainable drainage systems, known as SuDS, would be beneficial for the village.

233

The most effective type or design of SuDS would depend on site-specific conditions such as underlying ground conditions, infiltration rate, slope, or presence of ground contamination. However, a number of overarching principles that could be applied in new development are:

- Manage surface water as close to where it originates as possible;
- Reduce runoff rates by facilitating infiltration into the ground or by providing attenuation that stores water to help slow its flow down, so that it does not overwhelm water courses or the sewer network;

- Improve water quality by filtering pollutants to help avoid environmental contamination;
- Integrate into development and improve amenity through early consideration in the development process and good design practices;
- SuDS are often also important in areas that are not directly in an area of flood risk themselves, as they can help reduce downstream flood risk by storing water upstream;
- Some of the most effective SuDS are vegetated, using natural processes to slow and clean the water, whilst increasing the biodiversity value of the area;
- Best practice SuDS schemes link the water cycle to make the most efficient use of water resources by reusing surface water; and
- SuDS should be designed sensitively to augment the landscape and provide biodiversity and amenity benefits.



Figure 94: Example of swales integrated within the new development creating green links with the surrounding countryside, somewhere in UK.



Figure 95: Example of SuDS designed as a public amenity and fully integrated into the design of the public realm, Stockholm.

DC.03 Green and blue infrastructure

Storage and slow release

Rainwater harvesting refers to the systems allowing the capture and storage of rainwater as well as those enabling the reuse in-site of grey water. Simple storage solutions, such as water butts, can help provide significant attenuation.

However, another solution that could be integrated into new design is underground tanks which work with a pump and pipe system to transport water in the storage tank to application areas, like toilets or washing.

In addition, the solution of a gravity fed rainwater system allows ground floor toilet cisterns to fill and flush using rainwater. This system can also be used to irrigate garden spaces, assuming the garden level is below the base of the tank. This system provides a simple and inexpensive alternative to conventional underground rainwater harvesting systems with lower capital and installation costs, reduced maintenance and operational costs.

234



Figure 96: Examples of water butts used for rainwater harvesting in Reach, Cambridgeshire.



Figure 97: Example of an underground water tank in relationship with the building (Source: <https://handymantips.org/about-underground-water-tanks/>)



Figure 98: Example of a gravity fed rainwater system for flushing a downstairs toilet or for irrigation.

DC.03 Green and blue infrastructure

Some design guidelines to well integrate water storage systems are:

- Consider any solution prior to design to appropriately integrate them into the vision.
- Conceal tanks by cladding them in complementary materials.
- Use attractive materials or finishing for pipes.
- Combine landscape/planters with water capture systems.

235



Figure 99: Diagram illustrating rainwater harvesting systems integrated into open spaces and residential properties.

DC.03 Green and blue infrastructure

Permeable paving

Most built-up areas, including roads and driveways, increase impervious surfaces and reduce the capacity of the ground to absorb runoff water. This in turn increases the risks of surface water flooding.

Permeable paving offers a solution to maintain soil permeability while performing the function of conventional paving.

Therefore, some design guidelines for new development are:

- The choice of permeable paving units must be made depending on the local context; the units may take the form of unbound gravel, clay pavers, or stone setts; and
- Permeable paving can be used where appropriate on footpaths, private access roads, driveways, car parking spaces (including on-street parking) and private areas within the individual development boundaries.

Regulations, standards, and guidelines relevant to permeable paving and sustainable drainage are listed below:

- Sustainable Drainage Systems - non-statutory technical standards for sustainable drainage systems¹.
- The SuDS Manual (C753)².
- Guidance on the Permeable Surfacing of Front Gardens³.

1. Great Britain. Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (2015). Sustainable drainage systems – non-statutory technical standards for sustainable drainage systems. Available at: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/415773/sustainable-drainage-technical-standards.pdf

2. CIRIA (2015). The SuDS Manual (C753).

3. Great Britain. Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government (2008). Guidance on the Permeable Surfacing of Front Gardens. Available at: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/7728/pavingfrontgardens.pdf

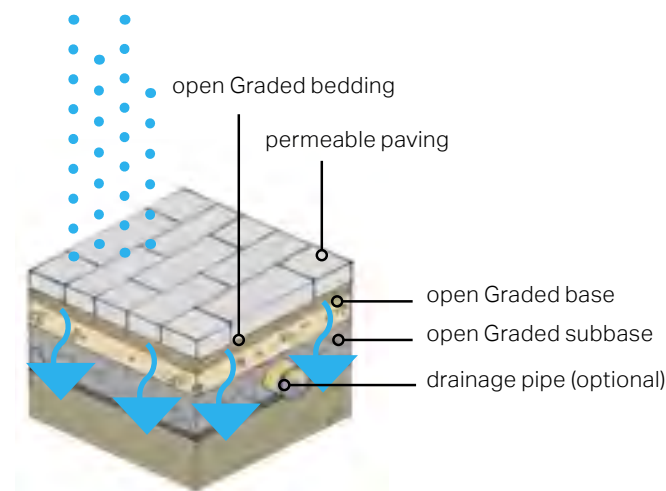


Figure 100: Diagram illustrating the function of a soak away.



Figure 101: Example of a permeable paving that could be used from driveways.

DC.03 Green and blue infrastructure

DC03.4 Trees

New street planting helps maintain visual consistency along the public realm. It is associated with better mental health and well-being by reducing stress, lessening heat islands, and providing protection from natural elements such as wind and rain. Some guidelines for new development are:

237

- New development should aim to preserve existing mature trees and hedges by incorporating them in the new landscape design;
- New development should ensure to introduce a variety of native tree species over a single one to improve resilience and increase visual interest along the streetscape;
- Flower beds, bushes and shrubs should be welcomed in new development, since they contribute to the liveliness of the streetscape and create visual interest and colour to their surroundings;
- Hedgerows can be planted in front of bare boundary walls to ease their visual presence or they can be used to conceal on-plot car parking and driveways within curtilages;
- Native trees can normally be used to mark reference points and legibility;
- Native trees should also be present in any public open space, green or play area to generate environmental and wildlife benefits; and
- The success of tree planting is more likely to be achieved when it has been carefully planned to work in conjunction with all parts of the new development, parking, buildings, street lights etc.



Figure 103: Positive example of open space with trees overlooked by properties, elsewhere in UK



Figure 102: Example of street planting along main road with green verges and large street trees encouraging walking, elsewhere in UK.

DC.03 Green and blue infrastructure

DC03.5 Open spaces

Open spaces play a vital role in creating a positive environment in Twyford. These places foster community and gathering and therefore, they create lively places in neighbourhoods. Currently there are some large designated open spaces to the north and south of the village that are appreciated by the residents. New development should prioritise the design of more open spaces and some design guidelines are:

238

- The location of new open spaces within new development should be decided based on the location of the existing ones considering the needs of the existing population too. Open space should be within walking distance (400m) from residential neighbourhoods;
- Landscape should not be used as a divisive measure between new and existing development however, green buffer zones between older and new development are acceptable. This can be achieved by procuring a landscape consultant early on in the design process;

- Substantial recreational space should be provided to include woodland walks, sport pitches and play areas;
- All recreational spaces should be designed to link up with each other and also link up with existing adjoining sites taking particular note of enhancing green fingers;
- Surrounding buildings should overlook play areas and public spaces to encourage movement and natural surveillance;
- Open spaces should be equipped with good quality street furniture to create pleasant seating areas, shaded spaces avoiding hidden spots; and
- The materials and style of any street furniture in the open spaces should be consistent throughout the Parish and aim to proudly represent the local character.



Figure 104: Example of a children's play area with many activities for the whole family, Tunbridge Wells.



Figure 105: Properties overlooking a public open space which is equipped with grass areas, large green trees and street furniture, Poundbury.

DC.04 Built form

DC04.1 Boundary lines, boundary treatments and corner treatment

Together with the creation of potential local landmarks, three more crucial aspects of a successful streetscape and urban form is the issue of corners, boundary lines and boundary treatments. Therefore, the following guidelines should be applied in new development.

239

- Buildings should front onto streets. The building lines should have subtle variations in the form of recesses and protrusions, to follow the existing context of Twyford. Gaps between buildings are generally encouraged to respect surrounding density;
- Buildings should be designed to ensure that streets and/or public spaces have good levels of natural surveillance. This can be ensured by placing ground floor habitable rooms and upper floor windows facing the street;
- Natural boundary treatments should reinforce the character of the village and help define the street. They should be mainly continuous hedges and occasionally low-height brick walls;
- In the case of edge lanes, natural boundary treatments can act as buffer zones between the site and the countryside and offer a level of protection to the natural environment and open unobstructed views;
- If placed at important intersections the building could be treated as a landmark and thus be slightly taller or display another built element, signalling its importance as a wayfinding cue;
- The form of corner buildings should respect the local architectural character. Doing so improves the street scene and generates local pride;
- All the façades overlooking the street or public space should be treated as primary façades; and
- Road layouts should be designed to slow traffic and advantage pedestrians over vehicles.



Figure 106: Local positive example of physical boundary treatments that help separate properties whilst enhancing the natural environment, Twyford.



Figure 107: Positive example of corner treatment where the building façades overlook the street on both sides, whilst hedges create a curved boundary around the plot offering good visibility for pedestrians, elsewhere in Twyford.

DC.04 Built form

DC04.2 Continuity and enclosure

Focal points and public spaces in new development should be designed in good proportions and be delineated with clarity. Clearly defined spaces help create an appropriate sense of enclosure - the relationship between a given space (lane, street, square) and the vertical boundary elements at its edges (buildings, walls, trees). Some design guidelines that should be considered for achieving satisfactory sense of enclosure are:

- When designing building setbacks, there must be an appropriate ratio between the width of the street and the building height. Ratios between 1:2 and 1:3 (building height/street width) will generally create spaces with a strong sense of enclosure;
- Careful positioning of walls, railings, landscaping and paving can achieve visual continuity and well-defined open spaces to link buildings together and define public and private spaces;

- Buildings should be designed to turn corners and create attractive start and end points of a new street or frontage;
- Trees, hedges, and other landscaping features can help create a more enclosed streetscape in addition to providing shading and protection from heat, wind, and rain; and
- In the case of terraced and adjoining buildings, it is recommended that a variety of plot widths, land use, building heights, and façade depth should be considered during the design process to create an attractive streetscape and break the monotony.

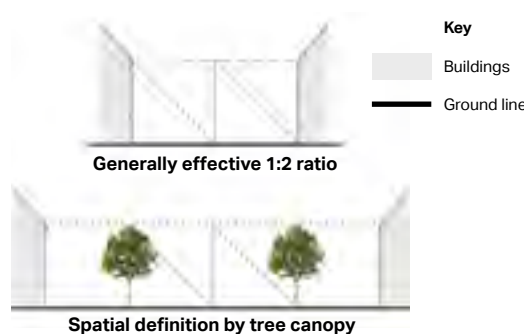


Figure 108: A ratio of 1:2 (top) or 1:3 is generally appropriate for residential streets. In addition, enclosure can be defined by trees instead of buildings (bottom).



Figure 109: The sense of enclosure along this footpath is created by the close distance of buildings in relationship to the width of the footpath, Poundbury.



Figure 110: Local example of tertiary street that creates high levels of enclosure due to the width of the road in combination with the rich vegetation and the height of the buildings and the trees, Twyford.

DC.04 Built form

DC04.3 Legibility and wayfinding

When places are legible and well signposted, they are easier for the public to understand, therefore likely to both function well and be pleasant to live in or visit. It is easier for people to orient themselves when the routes are direct and visual landmarks clearly emphasise the hierarchy of the place. Some design guidelines are:

241

- Signage could be strategically located along walking and cycling routes to signalise location of local and heritage assets. For instance, habitats to the west of the village, open spaces around the area or the local facilities in the village centre could be highlighted to aid navigation and encourage people to visit them;
- Obvious and unambiguous features should be designed in new development. Those will help create memorable routes;
- Buildings, as well as public arts, historic signage totems or even an old and sizeable tree could act as landmarks;
- Buildings which are located at corners, crossroads or along a main road could play a significant role in navigation. For that reason, the architectural style of those buildings could be slightly differentiated from the rest to help them stand out;
- New signage design should be easy to read. Elements like languages, fonts, text sizes, colours and symbols should be clear and concise, and avoid confusion;



Figure 111: Example of signage that could be integrated along footpaths to navigate people towards important destinations.

- Signage should relate well to the setting of the host building, whilst illuminated signage will not be recommended; and
- Applicants are encouraged to use wooden, hand painted and non illuminated signage, avoiding the use of garish or day-glow colours.



Figure 112: Positive example of signage to indicate the location of public footpaths. The material of the sign post could fit perfectly into the context of Twyford village.

DC.04 Built form

DC04.4 Building heights, density and housing mix

Building heights, density and housing mix are three important parameters that should be designed and decided with careful consideration of Twyford's context.

Buildings heights

There is a relatively low housing density in the Parish which goes higher within the village centre due to the prevailing terraced typology. More specifically, properties tend to be 1- or 2-2.5-storey high with decent-sized rear gardens. The rooflines are irregular and they often get interrupted with nature. Chimneys decorating the roof also interrupt the roofline offering a visual interest. Some design guidelines are:

- New development should propose maximum height of 2.5 storeys to preserve the existing context;

- Monotonous building elevations should be avoided, therefore subtle changes in roofline should be ensured during the design process;
- Locally traditional roof detailing elements such as roofing materials, chimney stacks and edge treatments should be considered and implemented where possible in cases of new development. Thus, the two conservation areas, which include local architectural details and materials, should be the reference points for new development; and
- Roofline should be set lower than the vegetation backdrop, avoiding hard lines of the silhouette against the sky.



Figure 113: Local example, within the Twyford village conservation area, of clay tiles on a mansard roof with gable dormers.



Figure 114: Local example, within the Station conservation area, of grey slate tiles on a gable roof with chimney.

DC.04 Built form

Building density

The concept of density is important to planning and design as it affects the vitality and viability of the place. The density within the Parish is quite low, apart from the village centre. Therefore, some guidelines for new development are needed to ensure that the existing housing density numbers are respected.

243

- Density should be appropriate to the location of any new development and its surroundings and enhance the character of the existing village;
- Housing densities should be reduced towards development edges in order to create a gradual transition towards the countryside; and
- Small scale developments are encouraged, for instance the one in Bridge Park, because they follow the scale and pattern of existing grain and streets and therefore, retain the character of the area.

Housing mix

The aspiration for the Parish is to ensure that there is a mix of housing types and supply of social and affordable housing to cater for the needs of a wider group of people. Therefore, a mix of new housing could attract a wide group of people and boost the local economy. Some design guidelines for new development are:

- New development should propose a mix of housing to include a range of house types and sizes, both developer and self built, to allow for a variety of options and bring balance to the population profile. The existing mix of housing in the village, including terraced, detached, semi-detached, bungalows and flats, should be enhanced; and
- In the case of affordable housing, its quality and architectural design should be of high standards to complement the local vernacular.



Figure 115: Local example of terraced housing within the Twyford Station Conservation Area.



Figure 116: Local example of a detached house to the south of the village, Twyford.

DC.04 Built form

DC04.5 Infill development

There is a fair amount of infill development within the Parish, for instance Bell Court along the High Street or the recent development along Wellington Close.

Proposed designs should be appropriate and sensitive to Twyford's setting and therefore, some design guidelines are needed and presented below:

- Infill development should complement the street scene into which it will be inserted. Therefore, the surrounding building context needs to be studied so the same principles can be reflected into the new design;
- Infill development needs to reflect the materials, scale, massing and layout of the surrounding properties;

- Infill development needs to be considered in relation to topography, views, vistas and landmarks to ensure that none of those elements are blocked; and
- New building lines should be reasonably consistent along a street with existing buildings.



Figure 117: Local example of infill development to the south of the village that respects the surrounding scale and massing as well as the street layout of other cul-de-sac streets in the area, Wellington Close.



Figure 118: Local example of a recent small development within the conservation area that respects the massing and architectural styles of the neighbouring streets, High Street.

DC.04 Built form

DC04.6 Building conversions into residential

Twyford's village core is composed by a large number of shops set along the crossroads with residential units or storage of the upper floors. However, through the passing of time many shops are converted into housing and therefore, design guidance is needed to ensure that the outcome

245 does not undermine the original use of the building. Some design guidelines are:

- Any domestic add-ons such as chimneys, porches, satellite dishes, domestic external lighting and hanging baskets should be avoided;
- Any features that are characteristic of the building, such as large openings and bay windows on the facade, should be retained and not filled in

- New openings should generally be avoided, and kept to a minimum when necessary;
- Features such as dormer windows should be avoided, unless if they were part of the original building. If rooflights are used, they should be sited discreetly so as to not become a feature in the landscape; and
- Existing brickwork should be reused or reclaimed. Consideration should be given to the material source and matching the colour, texture, size and bond of the existing brickwork.



Figure 119: Positive example of a shop conversion into residential where the existing openings have been retained and now form part of the design of the property, Twyford.



Figure 120: Positive example of a shop conversion into residential where the existing openings have been retained and now form part of the design of the property, Twyford.

DC.04 Built form

DC04.7 Building extensions

There are a number of principles that residential extensions and conversions should follow to maintain character. It is worth noting that some extensions do not require planning consent as they already fall within permitted development rights. However, principles presented in this section applies to extensions where permitted development rights do not apply, such as those within the conservation areas. These principles include:

- The original building should remain the dominant element of the property regardless of the scale or number of extensions. The newly built extension should not overwhelm the building from any given viewpoint;
- Extensions should not result in a significant loss to the private amenity area of the dwelling;

- Designs that wrap around the existing building and involve overly complicated roof forms should be avoided;
- The pitch and form of the roof used on the building adds to its character and extensions should respond to this where appropriate;
- Extensions should consider the materials, architectural features, window sizes and proportions of the existing building and respect these elements to design an extension that matches and complements the existing building;
- In the case of side extensions, the new part should be set back from the front of the main building and retain the proportions of the original building. This

is in order to reduce any visual impact of the transition between existing and new;

- In the case of rear extensions, the new part should not have a harmful effect on neighbouring properties in terms of overshadowing, overlooking or privacy issues; and
- Where possible, reuse as much of the original materials as possible, or alternatively, use like-for-like materials. Any new materials should be sustainable and be used on less prominent building parts.

DC.04 Built form

247

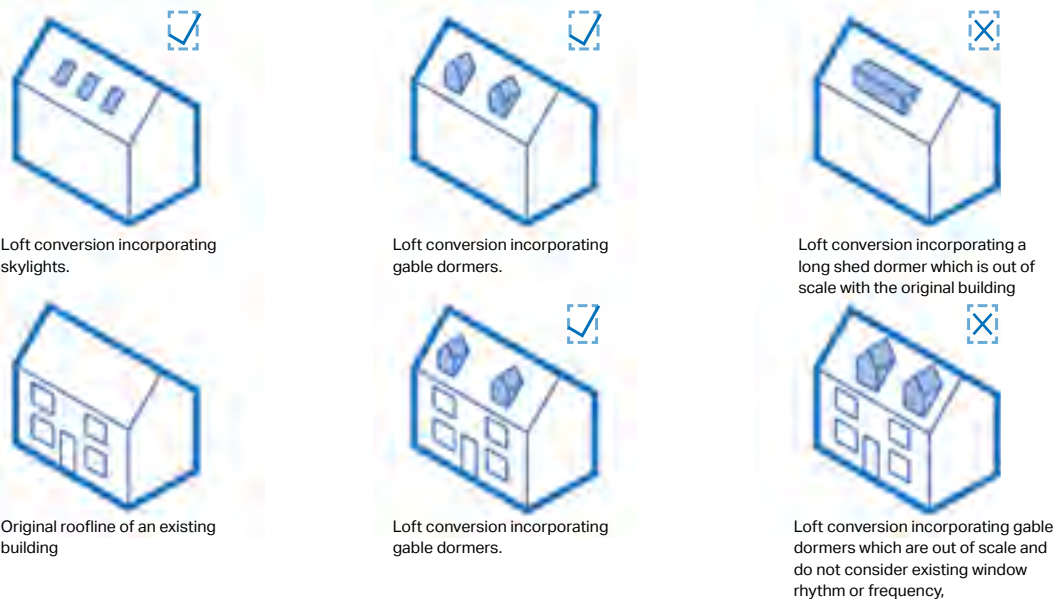


Figure 121: Some examples for different type of building extensions.

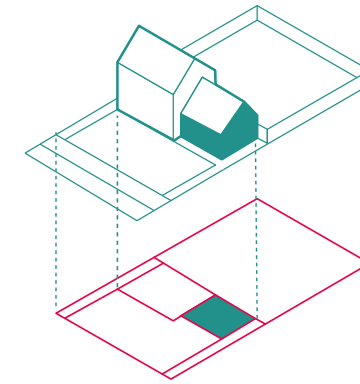


Figure 123: An example diagram of a side extension.

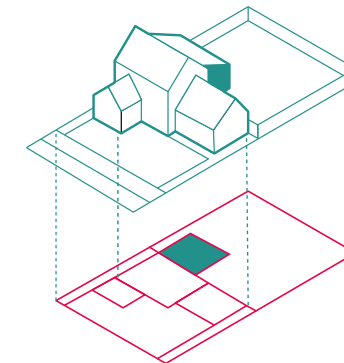


Figure 124: An example diagram of a rear extension.



Figure 122: Good examples for side extensions, respecting existing building scale, massing and building line.

DC.04 Built form

DC04.8 Public realm, materials and street furniture

Streets are the most important components of public space and these are referenced in the hierarchy of movement section.

Paved areas are a major element within most developments and their design has a significant impact on the overall appearance, quality and success of a scheme. Care must be taken when choosing appropriate materials and when detailing paved areas as part of the overall design.

High quality materials such as stone, gravel and brick can provide a durable and attractive hard surface, although there is an extensive range of modern materials that can contribute positively to the quality of outdoor spaces if chosen with care. The laying pattern and materials used should make a significant contribution to the overall appearance, quality and success of a scheme. If laying patterns, random bond, broken bond, gauged width, and the European fan should be preferred designs.

Some guidelines for new development are:

- The public realm should provide high quality paving that is of a cohesive design using a palette of sustainable and durable materials. Permeable paving should be preferred to contribute to rain water infiltration.
- Materials should be robust, aesthetically attractive and with excellent weathering characteristics defining a sustainable and attractive place for residents and visitors.
- The laying pattern and materials used should make a significant contribution to the overall appearance, quality and success of a scheme.
- Large unbroken areas of a particular surface material should be avoided, especially tarmac. Areas can be made distinctive by using materials of a similar colour but with different textures.
- Larger development projects with more than one developer should employ the same consistent palette of materials and designs.

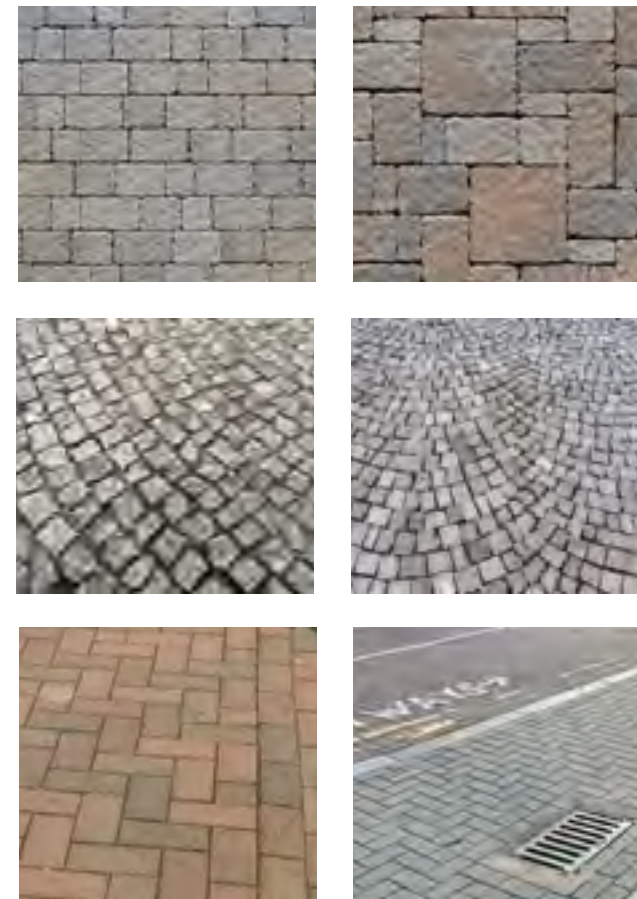


Figure 125: Examples of quality materials and visually pleasing layout patterns that could be considered for public realm surfacing.

DC.04 Built form

DC04.9 Materials and architectural details

Twyford Parish has a wide variety of architectural styles and details, mainly concentrated within the two character areas, that can act as references for new development. Some design guidelines for new development are:

- Architectural design shall reflect high quality local design references in both the natural and built environment and make a valuable contribution to the character of the village;
- Appropriate materials may include timber, naturally finished timber boarding, tiles, slate, shingles, brick, flint and appropriately coloured render;
- The choice of colour and finish of materials is an important design factor in reducing the impact of the buildings on the surrounding landscape. Generally very light colours, like white, cream or light grey, and large areas of intense strong colours do not blend well with the natural landscape. Thus, muted,

pastel and darker tones could be a better option; and

- The use of traditional, natural and preferably locally sourced materials is generally more appropriate than man-made synthetic, pre-coloured materials, as they lack the variation on colour and texture found in natural materials.

Roofing



Dark grey slate roof tiles



Clay tiles



Mansard roof with clay tiles and gable dormers



Gabled roof decorated with chimney stacks



Gable roof with chimney stacks and rooflights



Hipped roof with hipped dormers

DC.04 Built form

Walls



Red brick



Rendered facades with different colours



Off-white render



Half timbering technique infilled with off-white render

250



Half timbering technique infilled with red brick



Grey brick combined with yellow brick around the openings



Red brick on the upper floor and coloured brick on the ground floor



Local stone

Windows



Sash windows



Casement windows



Large shopfront windows retained after its conversion to residential



Bay windows

DC.05 Sustainability

Wokingham Borough Council has committed to be carbon neutral by 2030. Data shows that the borough's carbon footprint is 580.9 ktCO₂e (kilotons of carbon dioxide) made of three sectors: domestic, transport, and industrial and commercial. It also shows that the borough's carbon footprint has been dropping since 2012, due to behaviour change, increased proportion of renewable energy in electricity supplies and more efficient technologies, however despite the decreasing emissions more actions need to be made to achieve carbon neutrality.

251

Each village or town within the borough should do their part, and therefore the design guidelines below, codes 05.1 - 05.4, show how buildings can contribute towards this goal.

DC05.1 Minimising energy use

Buildings contribute almost half (46%) of carbon dioxide (CO₂) emissions in the UK. The government has set rigorous targets for the reduction of CO₂ emissions and minimising fossil fuel energy use.

There is a good number of energy efficient technologies that could be incorporated

in buildings. The use of such principles and design tools is strongly encouraged to futureproof buildings and avoid the necessity of retrofitting.

Energy efficient or eco design combines all around energy efficient appliances and lighting with commercially available renewable energy systems, such as solar electricity and/or solar/ water heating.

F.128 features an array of sustainable design features. Those on the top show the features that should be strongly encouraged in existing homes, while those on the bottom show additional features that new build homes should be encouraged to incorporate from the onset.

DC05.2 Lifetime and adaptability

The fastest route to building a functional, supportive, neighbourly community is to build homes that people can and want to live in for most of their lives instead of having to move every time domestic circumstances change.

'Lifetime' homes means designing in the flexibility and adaptability needed to allow for easy incorporation of wheelchair accessibility, addition/removal of internal

walls, and ease of extension - both vertically and horizontally. This is particularly important for the aged, infirm or expanding/contracting families who may be dependent on nearby friends and family for emotional and physical support.











Figure 126: Use of shingle-like solar panels on a slate roof, with the design and colour of the solar panels matching those of the adjacent slate tiles.

DC.05 Sustainability












Figure 127: Positive example of implementing solar panels since the design stage.

Existing homes

- 1  **Insulation**
in lofts and walls (cavity and solid)
- 2  **Double or triple glazing with shading**
(e.g. tinted window film, blinds, curtains and trees outside)
- 3  **Low-carbon heating**
with heat pumps or connections to district heat network
- 4  **Draught proofing**
of floors, windows and doors
- 5  **Highly energy-efficient appliances**
(e.g. A++ and A+++ rating)
- 6  **Highly waste-efficient devices**
with low-flow showers and taps, insulated tanks and hot water thermostats
- 7  **Green space (e.g. gardens and trees)**
to help reduce the risks and impacts of flooding and overheating
- 8  **Flood resilience and resistance**
with removable air back covers, relocated appliances (e.g. installing washing machines upstairs), treated wooden floors

Additional features for new build homes

- A  **High levels of airtightness**
- B  **Triple glazed windows and external shading**
especially on south and west faces
- C  **Low-carbon heating**
and no new homes on the gas grid by 2025 at the latest
- D  **More fresh air**
with mechanical ventilation and heat recovery, and passive cooling
- E  **Water management and cooling**
more ambitious water efficiency standards, green roofs, rainwater harvesting and reflective walls
- F  **Flood resilience and resistance**
e.g. raised electrical, concrete floors and greening your garden
- G  **Construction and site planning**
timber frames, sustainable transport options (such as cycling)
- H  **Solar panel**
- I  **Electric car charging point**

252

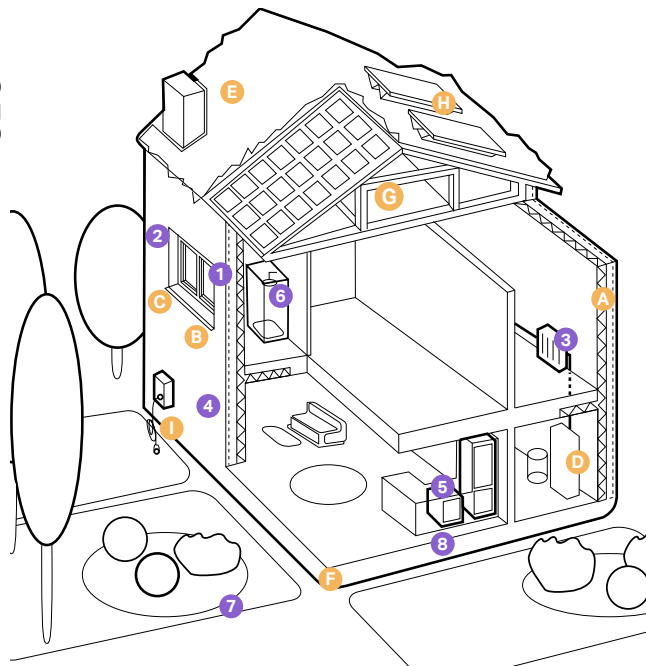


Figure 128: Diagram showing low-carbon homes in both existing and new build conditions.

DC.05 Sustainability

DC05.3 Minimising construction waste

As part of the environmental management system it is important that the waste generated during construction is minimised, reused within the site or recycled.

Developers should plan to re-use materials by detailing their intentions for waste minimisation and re-use in Site Waste Management Plans. The actions that this plan will include are:

- Before work commences, the waste volumes to be generated and the recycling and disposal of the materials will be described;
- On completion of the construction works, volumes of recycled content purchased, recycled and landfilled materials must be collated;

- Identify materials used in high volumes; and
- The workforce should be properly trained and competent to make sure storage and installation practices of the materials is done under high standards.



Figure 129: Diagram to illustrate the 4 main stages where waste management practices can be implemented.

DC05.4 Recycling materials and buildings

To meet the government’s target of being carbon neutral by 2050, it is important to recycle and reuse materials and buildings. Some actions for new development are:

- Reusing buildings, parts of buildings or elements of buildings such as bricks, tiles, slates or large timbers all help achieve a more sustainable approach to design and construction;
- Recycling and reuse of materials can help to minimise the extraction of raw materials and the use of energy in the production and transportation of materials; and
- Development should also maximise the re-use of existing buildings (which often supports social, environmental and economic objectives as well).

254



Figure 130: Diagram to illustrate the life cycle thinking for recycling materials and buildings. (Source: https://www.researchgate.net/publication/319464500_Combining_seismic_retrofit_with_energy_refurbishment_for_the_sustainable_renovation_of_RC_buildings_a_proof_of_concept)

4.5 Checklist

Because the design guidance and codes in this document cannot cover all design eventualities, this chapter provides a number of questions based on established good practice against which the design proposal should be evaluated. The aim is to assess all proposals by objectively answering the questions below. Not all the

255

questions will apply to every development. The relevant ones, however, should provide an assessment as to whether the design proposal has considered the context and provided an adequate design solution.

As a first step there are a number of ideas or principles that should be present in all proposals. These are listed under 'General design guidance for new development'. Following these ideas and principles, several questions are listed for more specific topics on the following pages.

1

General design guidelines for new development:

- Integrate with existing paths, streets, circulation networks and patterns of activity;
- Reinforce or enhance the character of streets, greens, and other spaces;
- Relate well to local topography and landscape features, including prominent ridge lines and long-distance views;
- Reflect, respect, and reinforce local architecture and historic distinctiveness;
- Retain and incorporate important existing features into the development;
- Respect surrounding buildings in terms of scale, height, form and massing;
- Adopt contextually appropriate materials and details;
- Provide adequate open space for the development in terms of both quantity and quality;
- Incorporate necessary services and drainage infrastructure without causing unacceptable harm to retained features;
- Ensure all components e.g. buildings, landscapes, access routes, parking and open space are well related to each other;
- Positively integrate energy efficient technologies;
- Make sufficient provision for sustainable waste management (including facilities for kerbside collection, waste separation, and minimisation where appropriate) without adverse impact on the street scene, the local landscape or the amenities of neighbours;
- Ensure that places are designed with management, maintenance and the upkeep of utilities in mind; and
- Seek to implement passive environmental design principles by, firstly, considering how the site layout can optimise beneficial solar gain and reduce energy demands (e.g. insulation), before specification of energy efficient building services and finally incorporate renewable energy sources.

2

Street grid and layout:

- Does it favour accessibility and connectivity? If not, why?
- Do the new points of access and street layout have regard for all users of the development; in particular pedestrians, cyclists and those with disabilities?
- What are the essential characteristics of the existing street pattern; are these reflected in the proposal?
- How will the new design or extension integrate with the existing street arrangement?
- Are the new points of access appropriate in terms of patterns of movement?
- Do the points of access conform to the statutory technical requirements?

257

3 (continues)

Local green spaces, views & character:

- What are the particular characteristics of this area which have been taken into account in the design; i.e. what are the landscape qualities of the area?
- Does the proposal maintain or enhance the key characteristics of the landscape character as per WBC's LCA 2019¹ ?
- How does the proposal affect the trees on or adjacent to the site?
- Can trees be used to provide natural shading from unwanted solar gain? i.e. deciduous trees can limit solar gains in summer, while maximising them in winter.
- Has the proposal been considered within its wider physical context?
- Has the impact on the landscape quality of the area been taken into account?
- In rural locations, has the impact of the development on the tranquility of the area, and on reducing or as a minimum kept to current levels of light pollution, been fully considered?
- Can any new views be created?
- Is there adequate amenity space for the development?
- Does the new development respect and enhance existing amenity space?

¹ Wokingham Borough Council's Landscape Character Assessment 2019: <https://www.wokingham.gov.uk/planning-policy/planning-policy-information/draft-local-plan-consultation/?categoryesct191f252ff-550d-4cfa-a838-92ef2cb5f83c=10725>

3

Local green spaces, views & character:

- Have opportunities for enhancing existing amenity spaces been explored?
- Will any communal amenity space be created? If so, how this will be used by the new owners and how will it be managed?
- Is there opportunity to increase the local area biodiversity?
- Can green space be used for natural flood prevention e.g. permeable landscaping, swales etc.?
- Can water bodies be used to provide evaporative cooling?
- Is there space to consider a ground source heat pump array, either horizontal ground loop or borehole (if excavation is required)?

258

4

Gateway and access features:

- What is the arrival point, how is it designed?
- Does the proposal maintain or enhance the existing gaps between hamlets?
- Does the proposal affect or change the setting of a listed building or listed landscape?
- Is the landscaping to be hard or soft?

5 (continues)

Buildings layout and grouping:

- What are the typical groupings of buildings?
- How have the existing groupings been reflected in the proposal?
- Are proposed groups of buildings offering variety and texture to the village?
- What effect would the proposal have on the streetscape?
- Does the proposal maintain the character of dwelling clusters stemming from the main road?
- Does the proposal overlook any adjacent properties or gardens? How is this mitigated?

5

Buildings layout and grouping:

- Subject to topography and the clustering of existing buildings, are new buildings oriented to incorporate passive solar design principles, with, for example, one of the main glazed elevations within 30° due south, whilst also minimising overheating risk?
- Can buildings with complementary energy profiles be clustered together such that a communal low carbon energy source could be used to supply multiple buildings that might require energy at different times of day or night? This is to reduce peak loads. And/or can waste heat from one building be extracted to provide cooling to that building as well as heat to another building?

259

6

Building line and boundary treatment:

- What are the characteristics of the building line?
- How has the building line been respected in the proposals?
- Has the appropriateness of the boundary treatments been considered in the context of the site?

7

Building heights and roofline:

- What are the characteristics of the roofline?
- Have the proposals paid careful attention to height, form, massing and scale?
- If a higher than average building(s) is proposed, what would be the reason for making the development higher?
- Will the roof structure be capable of supporting a photovoltaic or solar thermal array either now, or in the future?
- Will the inclusion of roof mounted renewable technologies be an issue from a visual or planning perspective? If so, can they be screened from view, being careful not to cause over shading?

8

Household extensions:

- Does the proposed design respect the character of the area and the immediate neighbourhood, and will it pose any adverse impact on neighbouring properties in relation to privacy, overbearing or overshadowing impact?
- Is the roof form of the extension appropriate to the original dwelling (considering angle of pitch)?
- Do the proposed materials match those of the existing dwelling?
- In case of side extensions, does it retain important gaps within the street scene and avoid a 'terracing effect'?
- Are there any proposed dormer roof extensions set within the roof slope?
- Does the proposed extension respond to the existing pattern of window and door openings?
- Is the side extension set back from the front of the house?
- Does the extension offer the opportunity to retrofit energy efficiency measures to the existing building?
- Can any materials be re-used in situ to reduce waste and embodied carbon?

9

Building materials & surface treatment:

- What is the distinctive material in the area?
- Does the proposed material harmonise with the local materials?
- Does the proposal use high-quality materials?
- Have the details of the windows, doors, eaves and roof details been addressed in the context of the overall design?
- Does the new proposed materials respect or enhance the existing area or adversely change its character?
- Are recycled materials, or those with high recycled content proposed?
- Does the new proposed materials match existing materials or respond to the historical and landscape context?

10

Building materials & surface treatment:

- Has the embodied carbon of the materials been considered and are there options which can reduce the embodied carbon of the design? For example, wood structures and concrete alternatives.
- Can the proposed materials be locally and/or responsibly sourced? E.g. FSC timber, or certified under BES 6001, ISO 14001 Environmental Management Systems?

261

11

Car parking:

- What parking solutions have been considered?
- Are the car spaces located and arranged in a way that is not dominant or detrimental to the sense of place?
- Has planting been considered to soften the presence of cars?
- Does the proposed car parking compromise the amenity of adjoining properties?
- Have the needs of wheelchair users been considered?
- Can electric vehicle charging points be provided?
- Can secure cycle storage be provided at an individual building level or through a central/ communal facility where appropriate?
- If covered car ports or cycle storage is included, can it incorporate roof mounted photovoltaic panels or a biodiverse roof in its design?

Delivery

05

5. Delivery

The Design Guidelines & Codes will be a valuable tool in securing context-driven, high quality development in Twyford, especially on potential sites that might come forward in the future. They will give more certainty to both developers and the community in securing developments that are designed to the aspirations of the community and potentially speed up the planning process.

263 The opposite table summarises the various ways that this document can be used by each actor in the planning and development process.

Actors	How they will use the design guidelines
Applicants, developers, & landowners	As a guide to community and Local Planning Authority expectations on design, allowing a degree of certainty – they will be expected to follow the Guidelines as planning consent is sought.
Local Planning Authority	As a reference point, embedded in policy, against which to assess planning applications. The Design Guidelines should be discussed with applicants during any pre-application discussions.
Parish Council	As a guide when commenting on planning applications, ensuring that the Design Guidelines are complied with.
Community organisations	As a tool to promote community-backed development and to inform comments on planning applications.
Statutory consultees	As a reference point when commenting on planning applications.

Table 01: delivery

About AECOM


AECOM is the world's trusted infrastructure consulting firm, delivering professional services throughout the project lifecycle — from planning, design and engineering to program and construction management. On projects spanning transportation, buildings, water, new energy and the environment, our public- and private-sector clients trust us to solve their most complex challenges. Our teams are driven by a common purpose to deliver a better world through our unrivaled technical expertise and innovation, a culture of equity, diversity and inclusion, and a commitment to environmental, social and governance priorities. AECOM is a *Fortune 500* firm and its Professional Services business had revenue of \$13.2 billion in fiscal year 2020. See how we are delivering sustainable legacies for generations to come at aecom.com and [@AECOM](https://twitter.com/AECOM).



Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) form: Initial impact assessment

If an officer is undertaking a project, policy change or service change, then an initial impact assessment must be completed and attached alongside the Project initiation document.

EqIA Titular information:

Date:	28 July 2022
Service:	Place and Growth (Delivery & Infrastructure)
Project, policy or service EQIA relates to:	Twyford Neighbourhood Plan – Consultation and Examination
Completed by:	Ben Davis (Growth and Delivery Team, Planning Policy Officer)
Has the EQIA been discussed at services team meeting:	Yes
Signed off by:	 Trevor Saunders Assistant Director Planning Service
Sign off date:	16 th August 2022

1. Policy, Project or service information:

This section should be used to identify the main purpose of the project, policy or service change, the method of delivery, including who key stakeholders are, main beneficiaries and any associated aims.

<p>What is the purpose of the project, policy change or service change, its expected outcomes and how does it relate to your services corporate plan:</p>
<p>Neighbourhood planning gives communities the power to develop a shared vision for their area. Neighbourhood plans can shape, direct and help to deliver sustainable development, by influencing local planning decisions as part of the statutory development plan.</p> <p>Twyford Parish Council has prepared a draft neighbourhood development plan for their area.</p>

The report to Executive seeks agreement to publish the draft Twyford Neighbourhood Plan for consultation and to delegate the appointment of an examiner and the submission of the examination documentation to the Director of Place and Growth in consultation with the Lead Member for Planning and Enforcement. Consultation and examination are required under the regulations governing neighbourhood development plans.

The purpose of the consultation is to seek views on the draft Twyford Neighbourhood Development Plan, which was formally submitted by Twyford Parish Council to Wokingham Borough Council on 15th August 2022.

Public consultation on the Twyford Neighbourhood Plan is planned to take place for a minimum period of six weeks, starting from Monday 10th October 2022 and ending on Monday 21st November 2022.

Other supporting documentation, including the SEA/HRA Screening Determination Statement, also form part of the consultation.

Twyford Parish Council consulted on an earlier draft Neighbourhood Plan in April to May 2022 (Regulation 14).

Public consultation on the recommended version of the Twyford Neighbourhood Plan is a legal requirement under Regulation 16 of the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 (as amended). The consultation will be undertaken in line with the principles set out in the council's Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) and all relevant legislation and regulations governing that process, including to reflect latest planning guidance in response to the Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic.

If made (adopted), the Twyford Neighbourhood Plan would help shape new development and improve the social, economic and environmental well-being of the neighbourhood area.

Outline how you are delivering your project, policy change or service change. What governance arrangements are in place, which internal stakeholders (Service managers, Assistant Directors, Members etc.) have/will be consulted and informed about the project or changes:

The publication of the Twyford Neighbourhood Plan will be undertaken in accordance with the council's adopted Statement of Community Involvement for planning policy consultations but are adapted to reflect latest government advice and guidance regarding Covid-19, including the temporary amendments to Regulation 35 of the Regulations. This will involve sending emails/letters to those registered on the consultation database (Engage), including organisations (general and specific consultation bodies specified in the Regulations), councillors and internal officers. Advertising and further information will be placed on Twyford Parish Council's and Wokingham Borough Council's website and publicised through social and other forms of traditional media to promote the consultation.

Stakeholders including the Assistant Director of Place and Growth and Director of Place and Growth are engaged through the Corporate Leadership Team. Lead Specialists from Growth and Delivery have also engaged with members of the Twyford Neighbourhood Planning Steering Group and Twyford Parish Council and provided policy advice and support on earlier iterations of the neighbourhood plan and supporting documentation.

Outline who are the main beneficiaries of the Project, policy change or service change?

The Twyford Neighbourhood Development Plan has been produced by Twyford Parish Council (the qualifying body) with the input of officers in the council's Growth and Delivery team, communities and stakeholders through a previous consultation on a draft plan (under Regulation 14). If made (adopted), the Twyford Neighbourhood Plan would become part of the Development Plan for the parish and therefore be considered alongside the council's planning policies when making decisions on planning applications and help shape how development is managed in their area.

Outline any associated aims attached to the project, policy change or service change:

Public consultation on the Twyford Neighbourhood Plan will facilitate engagement in the plan-making process, by providing a further opportunity for individuals and organisations (including statutory and prescribed bodies) to comment on proposals, prior to an examination by an independent person (to be appointed jointly by the council and Ruscombe Parish Council).

The Twyford Neighbourhood Plan, once adopted, will become part of the Development Plan and would help set out a vision and general planning policies for the development and use of land in the area, and in so doing guide decision making on planning applications in the area alongside the council's planning policies.

2. Protected characteristics:

There are 9 protected characteristics as defined by the legislation:

- Race
- Gender
- Disability
- Gender re-assignment
- Age
- Religious belief

- Sexual orientation
- Pregnancy/Maternity
- Marriage and civil partnership:

To find out more about the protected groups, please consult the EQIA guidance.

3. Initial Impact review:

In the table below, please indicate whether your project, Policy change or service change will have a positive or negative impact on one of the protected characteristics. To assess the level of impact, please assign each group a Positive, No, Low or High impact score:

For information on how to define No, low or high impact, please consult the EQIA guidance document.

If your project is to have a positive impact on one of the protected groups, please outline this in the table below.

For details on what constitutes a positive impact, please consult the EQIA guidance.

Protected characteristics	Impact score	Please detail what impact will be felt by the protected group:
Race:	None	Neutral impact – it is not envisaged that the Twyford Neighbourhood Plan would have any impact upon this group as policies contained in the draft plan provide additional detail to existing policies in the council’s local plans (e.g., Core Strategy and Managing Development Delivery local plans). The group would not be prohibited from reviewing and commenting on the consultation for the Twyford Neighbourhood Plan.
Gender:	None	Neutral impact – it is not envisaged that the Twyford Neighbourhood Plan would have any impact upon this group as policies contained in the draft plan provide additional detail to existing policies in the council’s local plans (e.g., Core Strategy and Managing Development Delivery local plans). The group would not be prohibited from reviewing and commenting on the consultation for the Twyford Neighbourhood Plan.
Disabilities:	Positive	There is likely to be a positive impact. Policies are included in the Twyford Neighbourhood Plan to maximise opportunities for walking and cycling, green and blue infrastructure and Public Rights of Way (e.g., Policy TW1: Encouraging Sustainable Travel; Policy TW2: Sustainable Accessibility and Mobility). Considerations of factors such as safety, accessibility and infrastructure in future development proposals are likely to benefit those with reduced mobility and physical and visual impairments.

Protected characteristics	Impact score	Please detail what impact will be felt by the protected group:
Age:	Positive	<p>There is likely to be a positive impact.</p> <p>Policy TW12: New Homes – Tenure and Mix of the Twyford Neighbourhood Development Plan sets out a proposed mix of dwelling types, tenures and sizes to address local needs and create balanced, inclusive and mixed communities. An appropriate mix of smaller dwellings in the parish is likely to support older people (wishing to downsize), younger people and first-time buyers. An appropriate mix of larger dwellings in the parish is likely to support current or growing families with children.</p> <p>Policy TW13 of the Twyford Neighbourhood Plan establishes a requirement for a proportion of First Homes to be delivered, which is likely to support first-time buyers and younger people looking to enter the property ladder.</p> <p>Policy TW19 of the Twyford Neighbourhood Plan supports the retention and improvement of early years provision, including nursery and preschool provision.</p> <p>A policy is also included in the Twyford Neighbourhood Plan (Policy TW18: Community Facilities) to protect a number of existing community services and facilities in the parish (listed in the neighbourhood plan), notably Twyford Community Hub, Twyford District Youth & Community Centre, Twyford and District Age Concern Day Centre, as well as valued recreational spaces.</p>
Sexual orientation:	None	<p>Neutral impact – it is not envisaged that the Twyford Neighbourhood Plan would have any impact upon this group as policies contained in the draft plan provide additional detail to existing policies in the council’s local plans (e.g., Core Strategy and Managing Development Delivery local plans). The group would not be prohibited from reviewing and commenting on the consultation for the Twyford Neighbourhood Plan.</p>
Religion/belief:	Positive	<p>There is likely to be a positive impact.</p> <p>A policy is also included in the Twyford Neighbourhood Plan (Policy TW18: Community Facilities) to protect a number of existing community services and facilities in the parish (listed in the neighbourhood plan), notably Twyford Community</p>

Protected characteristics	Impact score	Please detail what impact will be felt by the protected group:
		Hub, Twyford District Youth & Community Centre, St Mary's Church and Hall, Saint Thomas More's Catholic Church and Twyford United Reformed Church.
Gender re-assignment:	None	Neutral impact – it is not envisaged that the Twyford Neighbourhood Plan would have any impact upon this group as policies contained in the draft plan provide additional detail to existing policies in the council's local plans (e.g., Core Strategy and Managing Development Delivery local plans). The group would not be prohibited from reviewing and commenting on the consultation for the Twyford Neighbourhood Plan.
Pregnancy and Maternity:	None	Neutral impact – it is not envisaged that the Twyford Neighbourhood Plan would have any impact upon this group as policies contained in the draft plan provide additional detail to existing policies in the council's local plans (e.g., Core Strategy and Managing Development Delivery local plans). The group would not be prohibited from reviewing and commenting on the consultation for the Twyford Neighbourhood Plan.
Marriage and civil partnership:	None	Neutral impact – it is not envisaged that the Twyford Neighbourhood Plan would have any impact upon this group as policies contained in the draft plan provide additional detail to existing policies in the council's local plans (e.g., Core Strategy and Managing Development Delivery local plans). The group would not be prohibited from reviewing and commenting on the consultation for the Twyford Neighbourhood Plan.

Based on your findings from your initial impact assessment, you must complete a full impact assessment for any groups you have identified as having a low or high negative impact. If No impact, or a positive impact has been identified, you do not need to complete a full assessment. However, you must report on this initial assessment and it must receive formal approval from the Assistant Director responsible for the project, policy or service change.

Initial impact assessment approved by....

Trevor Saunders



Assistant Director Planning Service

Date:.... 16/08/2022

TITLE	Finchampstead Neighbourhood Plan - Regulation 16 Consultation and Future Examination
FOR CONSIDERATION BY	The Executive on Thursday, 29 September 2022
WARD	Finchampstead North; Finchampstead South; Wokingham Without;
LEAD OFFICER	Director, Place and Growth - Steve Moore
LEAD MEMBER	Executive Member for Planning and Local Plan - Lindsay Ferris

PURPOSE OF REPORT (INC STRATEGIC OUTCOMES)

Finchampstead Parish Council has produced a draft Neighbourhood Plan which proposes a series of planning policies that will work alongside the council's local plans to manage development.

This report seeks approval to consult on the draft Plan and the authority to procure an independent examiner who will subsequently examine the draft Plan, which includes considering all the representations submitted during the consultation. Consultation and examination are requirements of the governing regulations.

RECOMMENDATION

That the Executive:

- 1) approve a 6 week consultation on the draft Finchampstead Neighbourhood Development Plan; and
- 2) agrees to appoint an examiner to independently examine the draft Finchampstead Neighbourhood Development Plan, delegating the appointment and submission of the examination documentation to the Director of Place and Growth in consultation with the Lead Member for Planning and Local Plan.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Finchampstead Parish Council has produced a draft Neighbourhood Development Plan (Appendix A) ***(due to the size of this document it is not included in the agenda but can be made available on request through Democratic Services)*** which, if progressed to being made (adopted), will sit alongside the Council's other adopted planning policies to help shape how development is managed in their area. The submission draft Plan contains a number of policies on issues including housing; settlement separation; the natural and historic environment; retail facilities; business and commercial development; transport; and design. The submission draft Plan proposes to allocate two sites for development comprising a total of 4 dwellings. It also proposes to allocate areas of land as Local Green Space.

In accordance with the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 (as amended), the council must carry out a minimum six-week consultation on the

submission draft Plan to invite comments from the public, statutory consultees, and interested parties and must arrange for an independent examination to take place. This report seeks approval to carry out the required publication and consultation and to appoint an examiner to undertake the necessary examination. If approved, the consultation could take place from Monday 10 October to Monday 21 November 2022.

At the current stage, the council is not required to reach a formal view on whether the submission draft Plan meets the basic conditions¹, but must be satisfied that the proper legal process has been carried out. Officers have been actively engaged with the parish council throughout its preparation. Several of the matters raised by officers have been addressed, with any remaining issues capable of being for the examiner to determine through the examination process. To raise these matters the council will need to submit formal representations to the proposed consultation. The council's comments do not fall within the scope of this recommended Executive decision but will be agreed via the Individual Executive Member Decision process. The types of comments that the council will wish to make are as follows:

- Identifying areas where draft policy diverges from the council's adopted Core Strategy and Managing Development Delivery local plans and supplementary guidance;
- Identifying where supporting evidence is considered by the council to be insufficient. Examples previously highlighted as areas of concern to the parish council include aspects of the Strategic Gaps and Green Wedges Topic Paper;
- Identifying areas where greater clarity would aid decision makers;
- General phraseology amendments of policy and supporting text to improve clarity and application of policy.

The costs of undertaking the consultation and examination can be met from the existing revenue budget, subject to recovery from government grant.

For clarity, any post examination processes and programmes will be subject to a further decision of the Council's Executive and Full Council.

Upon adoption, the Finchampstead Neighbourhood Development Plan will form part of the statutory development plan alongside the council's local plans and be part of the starting point for the determination of planning applications and appeals in or affecting Finchampstead Parish. Once adopted, the parish council will also benefit from receipt of 25% of the revenues from the Community Infrastructure Levy arising from the development that takes place in their area thereafter. This reflects a 10% increase on the 15% available to parish councils where there is no neighbourhood development plan in place.

¹ As can be seen at: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/neighbourhood-planning--2#basic-conditions-for-neighbourhood-plan-to-referendum>

BACKGROUND

Neighbourhood Planning

Neighbourhood planning was introduced through the Localism Act 2011 and is a means for local communities to take the lead on shaping how their area is developed.

Communities can prepare Neighbourhood Development Plans (often referred to as Neighbourhood Plans) which set out specific planning policies to help shape and guide development in their area.

The broad stages in producing a neighbourhood plan are as follows:

- 1) Designating a neighbourhood area
- 2) Preparing a draft neighbourhood development plan
- 3) Pre-submission publicity & consultation
- 4) Submission of a neighbourhood development plan to the local planning authority
- 5) Submission draft plan consultation
- 6) Independent examination
- 7) Referendum
- 8) Bringing the neighbourhood development plan into force

This report seeks approval to undertake stages 5 and 6 for the draft neighbourhood development plan produced by Finchampstead Parish Council.

Finchampstead Neighbourhood Development Plan progress to date

Finchampstead Parishes began work on producing a neighbourhood development plan (hereafter referred to as the draft Plan) shortly after being designated a neighbourhood area by the Council in March 2019. The parish council undertook a consultation on their pre-submission draft Plan in February to March 2021.

Following a change of circumstances around the council's Local Plan Update, the parish council undertook a further focussed consultation between October and November 2021 to seek views on a number of sites supported for housing development within the parish.

With the draft Plan proposing to allocate sites for residential development, Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) and Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) have been undertaken to meet legislative requirements.

Working with council officers, the parish council has considered the consultation responses to its pre-submission consultations on the draft Plan, as well as the SEA and HRA processes, and has made a number of amendments. The parish council subsequently submitted the submission draft Plan to the council (Appendix A) ***(due to the size of this document it is not included in the agenda but can be made available on request through Democratic Services)***. Under the regulations governing neighbourhood plans, the council is now required to publish the submission draft Plan for consultation and arrange an independent examination.

The submission draft Plan contains a number of policies on issues including housing; settlement separation; the natural and historic environment; retail facilities; business and commercial development; transport; and design. The draft Plan proposes to allocate two

sites for development comprising a total of 4 dwellings. It also proposes to allocate a number of areas of land as Local Green Space.

Analysis of Issues

Whilst the early stages in the preparation of a neighbourhood plan are led by the parish council, the regulations governing neighbourhood plans requires the later stages to be managed by the council as the local planning authority.

Now that the submission draft Plan has been received, the council must publicise it for a minimum regulatory six-week consultation and invite representations (known as the Regulation 16² consultation).

Concurrent with the consultation, the council will need to appoint an examiner to undertake independent examination. The examiner's role will be to independently test whether or not the submission draft Plan meets the basic conditions³, and other matters set out in regulations⁴.

The examination will take place following the consultation and typically take place via written representations without the need for a public hearing. Where additional points of clarity are required by the examiner, these can be sent to the examiner in writing and made publicly available by the council. Where necessary however, examiners may hold hearing sessions to assist their consideration of specific issues.

The approval of Executive is requested to publish the submission draft Plan for consultation and begin the process of appointing an examiner. An examiner will be appointed using the Neighbourhood Planning Independent Examiner Referral Service (NPIERS). This service allows for a shortlist of highly experienced examiners to be provided to the council and parish council who will then jointly decide who to appoint based on an assessment of their application and CV. All NPIERS examiners carry a standard daily fee.

The council is not required at this time to come to a formal view on whether or not the submission draft Plan meets the basic conditions, but must be satisfied that the proper legal process has been carried out. Officers have been actively engaged with the parish council throughout the various stages in the preparation of the draft Plan. Several of the matters raised by officers have been addressed, with any remaining capable of being considered by the examiner through the examination process. To raise these matters the council will need to submit formal representations to the proposed consultation. The council's comments do not fall within the scope of this Executive decision but will be agreed via the Individual Executive Member Decision process in due course. The types of comments that the council will wish to make are as follows:

- Identifying areas where neighbourhood plan policy diverges from the council's adopted Core Strategy and Managing Development Delivery local plans and supplementary guidance;
- Identifying where supporting evidence is considered by the council to be insufficient. Examples previously highlighted as areas of concern to the parish council include aspects of the Strategic Gaps and Green Wedges Topic Paper;

² Of the [Neighbourhood Planning \(General\) Regulations 2012 \(as amended\)](#)

³ As can be seen at: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/neighbourhood-planning--2#basic-conditions-for-neighbourhood-plan-to-referendum>

⁴ [paragraph 8 of Schedule 4B to the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 \(as amended\)](#)

- Identifying areas where greater clarity would aid decision makers;
- General phraseology amendments of policy and supporting text to improve clarity and application of policy

This report recommends that Executive approves the submission draft Plan for publication and consultation and the approval to appoint an examiner.

Consultation

Subject to the approval of Executive consultation could be undertaken from Monday 10 October to Monday 21 November 2022. The submission draft Plan will be publicised and documents made available in accordance with the council's Statement of Community Involvement⁵.

Future steps

Following the publication of the submission draft plan, there is no prescribed timeframe in which an independent examination should take place. It will be at the examiner's discretion whether or not any hearings are required to consider aspects of the draft Plan. If hearings are required, this is likely to increase the time and cost of the examination process.

Following the examination process, the examiner will make recommendations on any changes that are required in order for the submission draft Plan to satisfy the basic conditions and advise whether it should proceed to a referendum. Following receipt of the report, the council will need to consider the recommendations and decide what action to take. This includes coming to a formal view on whether the submission draft Plan meets the basic conditions and whether to accept or not the examiner's recommended modifications. If the council agrees the plan meets the basic conditions, it will be responsible for arranging and holding the referendum on whether the draft Plan should be made and used alongside the wider development plan as the starting point for determining planning applications and appeals.

Should more than half of those voting in a referendum do so in favour of making the draft Plan, a neighbourhood plan is required to be adopted. The plan would hold the same legal status as the council's local plans and so form part of the starting point for deciding planning applications and appeals within Finchampstead.

For clarity, any post examination processes and programmes will be subject to a further decision of the Executive and Council. As set out in this report, the current recommendations relate solely to carrying out consultation under Regulation 16 and process to appoint an examiner to then carry out the examination.

BUSINESS CASE

Need for the decision

In accordance with the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 (as amended), the council must carry out a minimum six-week consultation on the

⁵ Which can be viewed on the Council's website: <http://www.wokingham.gov.uk/planning-policy/planning-policy-information/local-plan-and-planning-policies/>

submission draft Plan to invite comments from the public, statutory consultees, and interested parties. It must also arrange for an independent examination to take place. The current recommendation facilitates the council carrying out its legal duties.

Alternative options

There is no alternative option that could be considered for taking the submission draft Plan forward to being made (adoption).

Risks

No risks are apparent to progressing the submission draft Plan to consultation and examination.

With regard to future stages beyond the scope of this report, the main risk is whether the submission draft Plan will be found through the examination process to meet the basic conditions. This risk is considered to be low with officers having been actively engaged with the parish council throughout its preparation. Issues raised by officers have largely been addressed through the drafting process. Outstanding issues can reasonably be addressed by the examiner through the examination process. To do this, the council will need to submit formal representations on the submission draft Plan in the same way as other stakeholders. The council’s comments will be agreed via the Individual Executive Member Decision process.

Expected outcome

The outcome of recommendation to Executive is that a successful consultation is carried out in accordance with legal requirements and that the draft Plan proceeds to examination.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS OF THE RECOMMENDATION

The Council faces severe funding pressures, particularly in the face of the COVID-19 crisis. It is therefore imperative that Council resources are focused on the vulnerable and on its highest priorities.

	How much will it Cost/ (Save)	Is there sufficient funding – if not quantify the Shortfall	Revenue or Capital?
Current Financial Year (Year 1)	Cost of examination is dependent on the amount of hours the Examiner requires and whether formal hearing sessions are required. Estimate of between £5,000 and £6,000, based on previous	Yes, due to cost recovery through grant funding from government.	Revenue

	Shinfield Neighbourhood Plan and Arborfield and Barkham Neighbourhood Plan examinations.		
Next Financial Year (Year 2)	No additional cost with the project expected to be completed.	Not applicable	Not applicable
Following Financial Year (Year 3)	No additional cost with the project expected to be completed.	Not applicable	Not applicable

Other Financial Information

The council is required to fund the examination and referendum up front, however once the referendum is successfully arranged an application for grant funding of £20,000 can be submitted. In the short term, the recommendation of this report can be met from existing revenue budget.

Once a neighbourhood plan is made (adopted), the parish council will benefit from receipt of 25% of the revenues from the Community Infrastructure Levy arising from the development that takes place in their area. This reflects a 10% increase on the 15% available to parish councils where there is no neighbourhood plan in place.

Stakeholder Considerations and Consultation

Consultation to be carried out for minimum 6 weeks as set out in main body of text.

Public Sector Equality Duty

An Equalities Impact Screening Report Form is set out in Appendix B to the report.

Climate Emergency – This Council has declared a climate emergency and is committed to playing as full a role as possible – leading by example as well as by exhortation – in achieving a carbon neutral Wokingham Borough by 2030

The submission Plan includes a range of policies which provide additional detail to complement policies in the Core Strategy (2010) and Managing Development Delivery (MDD) local plans. Specific policies include environmental standards for residential development, protecting and enhancing existing green infrastructure assets, and encouraging the use of sustainable transport modes.

Reasons for considering the report in Part 2

Not applicable.

List of Background Papers

Appendix A: Finchampstead Draft Neighbourhood Plan
Appendix B: Equalities Impact Screening Report Form

Other relevant non-background papers are also available on request, for example:

- Basic Conditions Statement

- Consultation Statement
- Environmental Report
- Habitats Regulation Assessment

Contact James McCabe	Service Delivery and Infrastructure
Telephone Tel: 0118 908 8333	Email james.mccabe@wokingham.gov.uk

Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) form: Initial impact assessment

If an officer is undertaking a project, policy change or service change, then an initial impact assessment must be completed and attached alongside the Project initiation document.

EqIA Titular information:

Date:	16 th August 2022
Service:	Place and Growth (Delivery & Infrastructure)
Project, policy or service EQIA relates to:	Finchampstead Neighbourhood Plan – Consultation and Examination
Completed by:	James McCabe (Growth and Delivery Team, Principal Planning Policy Officer)
Has the EQIA been discussed at services team meeting:	Yes
Signed off by:	 Trevor Saunders Assistant Director Planning Service
Sign off date:	16 th August 2022

1. Policy, Project or service information:

This section should be used to identify the main purpose of the project, policy or service change, the method of delivery, including who key stakeholders are, main beneficiaries and any associated aims.

<p>What is the purpose of the project, policy change or service change, its expected outcomes and how does it relate to your services corporate plan:</p> <p>Neighbourhood planning gives communities the power to develop a shared vision for their area. Neighbourhood plans can shape, direct and help to deliver sustainable development, by influencing local planning decisions as part of the statutory development plan.</p> <p>Finchampstead Parish Council have prepared a draft neighbourhood development plan for their area.</p>
--

The report to Executive seeks agreement to publish the draft Finchampstead Neighbourhood Plan for consultation and to delegate the appointment of an examiner and the submission of the examination documentation to the Director of Place and Growth in consultation with the Lead Member for Planning and Local Plan. Consultation and examination are required under the regulations governing neighbourhood development plans.

The purpose of the consultation is to seek views on the draft Finchampstead Neighbourhood Development Plan, which is anticipated to be formally submitted by Finchampstead Parish Council to Wokingham Borough Council by September 2022.

Public consultation on the Finchampstead Neighbourhood Plan is planned to take place for a minimum period of six weeks, starting from Monday 10th October 2022 and ending on Monday 21st November 2022.

Other supporting documentation including the Environmental Report and Habitats Regulation Assessment also form part of the consultation.

Finchampstead Parish Council consulted on an earlier full draft Neighbourhood Plan in February to March 2021 (Regulation 14) and a further targeted consultation between October and November 2021 (also Regulation 14).

Public consultation on the recommended version of the Finchampstead Neighbourhood Plan is a legal requirement under Regulation 16 of the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 (as amended). The consultation will be undertaken in line with the principles set out in the council's Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) and all relevant legislation and regulations governing that process.

If 'made' (adopted), the Finchampstead Neighbourhood Plan would help shape new development and improve the social, economic and environmental well-being of the neighbourhood area.

Outline how you are delivering your project, policy change or service change. What governance arrangements are in place, which internal stakeholders (Service managers, Assistant Directors, Members etc.) have/will be consulted and informed about the project or changes:

The publication of the Finchampstead Neighbourhood Plan will be undertaken in accordance with the council's adopted Statement of Community Involvement for planning policy consultations. This will involve sending emails/letters to those registered on the consultation database, including organisations (general and specific consultation bodies specified in the Regulations), councillors and internal officers. Advertising and further information will be placed on Finchampstead Parish Council's and Wokingham Borough Council's website and publicised through social and other forms of traditional media to promote the consultation.

Stakeholders including the Assistant Director of Planning and Director of Place and Growth are engaged through the Place and Growth Leadership Team and Corporate Leadership Team. Lead Specialists from Growth and Delivery have also engaged with members of the Finchampstead Neighbourhood

Planning Steering Group and Finchampstead Parish Council and provided policy advice and support on earlier iterations of the neighbourhood plan and supporting documentation.

Outline who are the main beneficiaries of the Project, policy change or service change?

The Finchampstead Neighbourhood Development Plan has been produced by Finchampstead Parish Council (the qualifying body) and volunteers with the input of officers in the council's Growth and Delivery team, communities and stakeholders through previous consultations on a draft plan (under Regulation 14). If 'made' (adopted), the Finchampstead Neighbourhood Plan would become part of the Development Plan for the parish and therefore be considered alongside the council's planning policies when making decisions on planning applications and help shape how development is managed in their area.

Outline any associated aims attached to the project, policy change or service change:

Public consultation on the Finchampstead Neighbourhood Plan will facilitate engagement in the plan-making process, by providing a further opportunity for individuals and organisations (including statutory and prescribed bodies) to comment on proposals, prior to an examination by an independent person (to be appointed jointly by the council and Finchampstead Parish Council).

The Finchampstead Neighbourhood Plan, once adopted, will become part of the Development Plan and would help set out a vision and general planning policies for the development and use of land in the area, and in so doing guide decision making on planning applications in the area alongside the council's planning policies.

2. Protected characteristics:

There are 9 protected characteristics as defined by the legislation:

- Race
- Gender
- Disability
- Gender re-assignment
- Age

- Religious belief
- Sexual orientation
- Pregnancy/Maternity
- Marriage and civil partnership:

To find out more about the protected groups, please consult the EQIA guidance.

3. Initial Impact review:

In the table below, please indicate whether your project, Policy change or service change will have a positive or negative impact on one of the protected characteristics. To assess the level of impact, please assign each group a Positive, No, Low or High impact score:

For information on how to define No, low or high impact, please consult the EQIA guidance document.

If your project is to have a positive impact on one of the protected groups, please outline this in the table below.

For details on what constitutes a positive impact, please consult the EQIA guidance.

Protected characteristics	Impact score	Please detail what impact will be felt by the protected group:
Race:	None	Neutral impact – it is not envisaged that the Finchampstead Neighbourhood Plan would have any impact upon this group as policies contained in the draft plan provide additional detail to existing policies in the council’s local plans (e.g., Core Strategy and Managing Development Delivery local plans). The group would not be prohibited from reviewing and commenting on the consultation for the Finchampstead Neighbourhood Plan.
Gender:	None	Neutral impact – it is not envisaged that the Finchampstead Neighbourhood Plan would have any impact upon this group as policies contained in the draft plan provide additional detail to existing policies in the council’s local plans (e.g., Core Strategy and Managing Development Delivery local plans). The group would not be prohibited from reviewing and commenting on the consultation for the Finchampstead Neighbourhood Plan.
Disabilities:	Positive	Neutral impact – it is not envisaged that the Finchampstead Neighbourhood Plan would have any impact upon this group as policies contained in the draft plan provide additional detail to existing policies in the council’s local plans (e.g., Core Strategy and Managing Development Delivery local plans). The group would not be prohibited from reviewing and commenting on the consultation for the Finchampstead Neighbourhood Plan.

Protected characteristics	Impact score	Please detail what impact will be felt by the protected group:
Age:	Positive	Neutral impact – it is not envisaged that the Finchampstead Neighbourhood Plan would have any impact upon this group as policies contained in the draft plan provide additional detail to existing policies in the council’s local plans (e.g., Core Strategy and Managing Development Delivery local plans). The group would not be prohibited from reviewing and commenting on the consultation for the Finchampstead Neighbourhood Plan.
Sexual orientation:	None	Neutral impact – it is not envisaged that the Finchampstead Neighbourhood Plan would have any impact upon this group as policies contained in the draft plan provide additional detail to existing policies in the council’s local plans (e.g., Core Strategy and Managing Development Delivery local plans). The group would not be prohibited from reviewing and commenting on the consultation for the Finchampstead Neighbourhood Plan.
Religion/belief:	Positive	Neutral impact – it is not envisaged that the Finchampstead Neighbourhood Plan would have any impact upon this group as policies contained in the draft plan provide additional detail to existing policies in the council’s local plans (e.g., Core Strategy and Managing Development Delivery local plans). The group would not be prohibited from reviewing and commenting on the consultation for the Finchampstead Neighbourhood Plan.
Gender re-assignment:	None	Neutral impact – it is not envisaged that the Finchampstead Neighbourhood Plan would have any impact upon this group as policies contained in the draft plan provide additional detail to existing policies in the council’s local plans (e.g., Core Strategy and Managing Development Delivery local plans). The group would not be prohibited from reviewing and commenting on the consultation for the Finchampstead Neighbourhood Plan.
Pregnancy and Maternity:	None	Neutral impact – it is not envisaged that the Finchampstead Neighbourhood Plan would have any impact upon this group as policies contained in the draft plan provide additional detail to existing policies in the council’s local plans (e.g., Core Strategy and Managing Development Delivery local plans). The group would not be prohibited from reviewing and commenting on the consultation for the Finchampstead Neighbourhood Plan.
Marriage and civil partnership:	None	Neutral impact – it is not envisaged that the Finchampstead Neighbourhood Plan would have any impact upon this group as policies contained in the draft plan provide additional detail to existing policies in the council’s local plans (e.g., Core Strategy and Managing Development Delivery local plans). The group would not be prohibited from reviewing and commenting on the consultation for the Finchampstead Neighbourhood Plan.

Based on your findings from your initial impact assessment, you must complete a full impact assessment for any groups you have identified as having a low of high negative impact. If No impact, or a positive impact has been identified, you do not need to complete a full assessment. However, you must report on this initial assessment and it must receive formal approval from the Assistant Director responsible for the project, policy or service change.

Initial impact assessment approved by....

Trevor Saunders

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Trevor Saunders', with a horizontal line underneath.

Assistant Director Planning Service

Date:....16/08/2022

TITLE	Off Street Car Park Charges
FOR CONSIDERATION BY	The Executive on Thursday, 29 September 2022
WARD	None Specific;
LEAD OFFICER	Director, Place and Growth - Steve Moore
LEAD MEMBER	Executive Member for Active Travel, Transport and Highways - Paul Fishwick

PURPOSE OF REPORT (INC STRATEGIC OUTCOMES)

To recommend to the executive proposed increases to the off-street, car parking charges.

RECOMMENDATION

That the Executive:

Agrees to the increases to the parking charges as detailed in Appendix 1

BACKGROUND

The Council has not increased off street car parking charges since 2018, unlike many other Local Authorities and although this has primarily been welcomed, the current tariffs have not been subject to inflationary increases in line with the councils' other fees and charges.

The income collected for parking is essential for helping to maintain the Councils roads and footways to ensure they are of high quality and safe for all users. If the fees and charges are not increased, then the Councils ability to continue to maintain the highway to the current standards will be significantly compromised.

Current predictions for 22/23 estimate a loss of income of between £0.6m and £0.8m and although it is hoped that parking usage will increase over time, there is no guarantee as the 'new hybrid ways of working' for many people does not appear to be showing any signs of reverting back to a pre-pandemic position.

This is a significant drop in income and the proposal detailed within this report is primarily to address the shortfall to ensure we can sustain highway services that the residents of the Borough have benefited from over the last few years.

The current fees and charges for parking in the Borough are some of the lowest regionally if not nationally. Benchmarking information within appendix 1 lists comparable Local Authority data in greater detail.

It should be noted that even with the proposed increases, the Boroughs parking charges will remain at the lower end compared with other Local Authorities

Proposal

To increase the charges for off street parking for the first time in 4 years as detailed in appendix 1 of the report, to address the current shortfall in income that has resulted from the pandemic.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS OF THE RECOMMENDATION

The Council faces severe funding pressures, particularly in the face of the COVID-19 crisis. It is therefore imperative that Council resources are focused on the vulnerable and on its highest priorities.

	How much will it Cost/ (Save)	Is there sufficient funding – if not quantify the Shortfall	Revenue or Capital?
Current Financial Year (Year 1)	(£50k) Costs of around £50k and estimated additional income of £100k	The cost is expected to be covered from the additional income generated	Revenue
Next Financial Year (Year 2)	(£600k)	N/A	Revenue
Following Financial Year (Year 3)	Year 2 income levels are forecast to be ongoing year on year		

Other Financial Information

The numbers included in the table above are best estimates based on current parking trends. However, parking behaviour changed as a result of the pandemic causing the level of income generated from car parking tickets to reduced significantly. If demand for car parking increases, then the level of income in future years will also increase.

It is however important to note that forecast income for 2022/23 is £600k to £800k below budget, therefore the forecast income figures shown in the table above will bring income level back close to pre-covid levels and more in line with budgets but will not generate additional income over and above current car parking income budgets.

Stakeholder Considerations and Consultation

Due consideration has been given to the need for those living, working and visiting the borough, those operating businesses and the need to support economic recovery in the borough's commercial centres as well as increased population, resident development and car ownership/use.

Public Sector Equality Duty

Due regard to the Public Sector Equality Duty has been taken and an equalities assessment is not required as no change to existing policy or procedures is involved. The report will assist in providing equality of charges across all car parks and exempt valid blue badge holders as disabled spaces will remain free.

Climate Emergency – This Council has declared a climate emergency and is committed to playing as full a role as possible – leading by example as well as by exhortation – in achieving a carbon neutral Wokingham Borough by 2030

There has been no increase to borough parking charges since 2018. Increasing charges will encourage better use of the car parks.

Reasons for considering the report in Part 2

N/A

List of Background Papers

See Appendix 1 attached.

Contact Chris Easton, Andy Glencross

Telephone Tel: 0118 908 8305, Tel: 0118 974 6199

Service Place

Email chris.easton@wokingham.gov.uk,
andy.glencross@wokingham.gov.uk

Appendix 1

Proposals to increase parking charges.

Proposed Period of operation 24 hours Monday to Sunday (inclusive)	Current charges (8am-6pm Monday to Saturday inclusive)	Proposed Charges 6am to 10pm Monday to Sunday (inclusive) Evenings 10pm to 6am Monday to Sunday (inclusive) free vend
Up to 1 hour	80p	£1.30
Up to 2 hours	£1.20	£2.50
Up to 4 hours	£2.00	£4.50
Up to 6 hours	£3.00	£6.50
Over 6hrs	£4.00	£9.00
Extended day Market traders Cockpit Path car park only.	£4.00	£6.50
Evenings 10pm-6am	£0.00	Free vend ticket required to register vehicle in car park.
<p>This proposal is estimated to bring in an additional £591K based on post Covid levels of parking usage. Current parking usage levels are still below pre covid levels but expected to recover further in 2023/24.</p>		

Season tickets

Under the proposed charges above, season ticket fees will increase as shown in the below table.

Season ticket charges					
	1 Month	3 Months	6 Months	12 Months	Overnight 12 Months
Current	£82.23	£240.35	£450.34	£900.68	£292
Proposed	£168.50	£506.50	£1,013.00	£2,026.00	£Nil Free vend

Time scales for Implementation and costs

A minimum of 12 – 16 weeks to draft and advertise the proposed new parking order.

Design and order new signs for all car parks 12-16 weeks lead time £25- £30,000.

Configure Tariff files 6–8-week lead time £15,500.

Update RingGo configuration 6 weeks lead time Nil costs under new contract.

Advertise new Traffic Order 28 days subject to objections which could lead to IEMD or full council report £6,000 (legal, Traffic Management services and advertising costs).

It is estimated that the earliest implementation date would be Jan 2023

Benchmarking

The proposed increases and new tariffs have been benchmarked against other local authorities as detailed below. The data demonstrates that even with the increase in charges the Council would still retain some of the lowest charges for parking

Bench Marking					
Location	30 mins	1 hour	2 hours	All day	Overnight
Wokingham (existing charges)	£0.50	£0.80	£1.20	£4.00	Free
Bracknell Forest The Avenue MSCP	£1.60	£1.60	£2.70	£9.00	Open all day
Windsor & Maidenhead Alma Road Windsor	£1.70	£1.70	£3.40	£14.00	
Windsor & Maidenhead The Broadway Maidenhead	£0.70	£1.40	£2.40	£15.00	
Basingstoke Long Stay car parks	£2.20	£2.20	£2.20	£10.60	£2.20
Surrey Heath Main Square MSCP	£1.80	£1.80	£1.80	£7.00	£2.20
Reading Broad Street	£1.60	£1.60	£4.10	£14.20	£4.10
Waverley BC (Farnham Town)	£1.00	£1.00	£2.10	£14.00	
Andover (Test Valley)	N/A	N/A	£1.00	£5.90	
Reigate (Upper west Street)	N/A	£1.30	£2.20	* £6.20	* Up to 10 hours
Redhill (Gloucester Road)	N/A	£1.30	£2.50	* £5.50	* Up to 10 hours
Egham (Runnymede)	N/A	£1.30	£2.50	*£5.50	* Max stay 6 hours
Newbury (Kennet Centre)	N/A	£1.50	£2.70	£12.00	
Petersfield (East Hants)	N/A	£1.00	£1.40	£7.00	8am - 6pm

Godalming(Waverley)	N/A	£1.10	£2.20	*£20.00	* Up to 10 hours 8am to 6pm
Walton (Elmbridge)	N/A	£1.40	£2.80	*£9.50	*9 + hours 8am to 7pm
Fleet (Hampshire) Church Road	£0.20	N/A	£1.00	£7.00	20p 30 mins or £1.00 overnight
Wokingham (Proposed charges)	N/A	£1.30	£2.50	£9.00	10pm to 6am Free Vend (with ticket)

Additional benchmarking covering Overnight, Sundays and Bank Holidays is shown below:

Bench Marking Overnight, Sundays and Bank Holidays				
Location	Overnight	Sundays	B/Holidays	Comments
Wokingham	Free	Free	Free	Current
Andover	Free	Free	Free	
Reigate	N/A	£1.00	As Sundays	£1.00 up to 2 hours £2.00 up to 4 hours £4.00 over 4 hours
Redhill	N/A	£1.00	As Sundays	£1.00 up to 2 hours £2.00 up to 4 hours £4.00 over 4 hours
Egham	N/A	As Mon – Sat	As Mon – Sat	
Newbury	£2.00	As Mon – Sat	As Mon – Sat	
Petersfield	Free	As Mon – Sat	As Mon – Sat	10am to 4pm
Godalming	N/A	Free	As Mon – Sat	
Walton	Free	As Mon – Sat	Free	
fleet	£1.00	£1.00	£1.00	
Wokingham 10pm to 6am	Free vend	As Mon- Sun	As Mon – Sun	Proposed

This page is intentionally left blank

TITLE	Carnival Hub Public Realm Art Installation
FOR CONSIDERATION BY	The Executive on Thursday, 29 September 2022
WARD	Wescott;
LEAD OFFICER	Deputy Chief Executive - Graham Ebers
LEAD MEMBER	Leader of the Council and Executive Member for Business and Economic Development- Clive Jones

PURPOSE OF REPORT (INC STRATEGIC OUTCOMES)

The Executive is asked to approve the Council entering into a loan of sculptural artwork 'the Arc', from Arts4Wokingham, to be located in the external public realm at the Carnival Hub, Wokingham.

Executive approval to the loan is required under Part 12.1.13.7 of the Council's Constitution.

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the Executive:

- 1) Approves the Council taking a loan of the public artwork, known as 'the Arc', on the terms detailed within this report.
- 2) Notes the termination and reinstatement provisions within the terms detailed in this report.
- 3) Notes the financial implications for the Council of the agreement, and that the costs for insurance and maintenance will be included in the Carnival Hub estates management budget;
- 4) Delegates authority to the Director of Assets and Resources, in consultation with the Executive Member for Business and Economic Development, to implement the agreement.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Council has been partnering with Arts4Wokingham, a local charity, in their vision to deliver a piece of public artwork at the Carnival Hub in Wokingham. The delivery of this piece of public artwork also supports some of the Council's strategic aims in its arts & culture strategy. Arts4Wokingham have commissioned an artwork installation called The Arc and have responsibility for the funding, commissioning and installation of this artwork.

The Carnival Hub and the external public realm areas around it are in the freehold ownership of the Council. To include this artwork within the Carnival Hub public realm a

formal agreement between the Council (as landlord) and the Arts4Wokingham (as commissioner and owner of the artwork) is required.

Terms have been provisionally agreed for a loan of 'The Arc' to Wokingham Borough Council and through this report the Executive is asked to approve the loan of the public artwork from Arts4Wokingham to the Council on these terms.

The Loan and the installation of the 'Arc' at Carnival Hub will be at no cost to the Council. The Council will be responsible for the annual costs of insurance and cleaning and maintenance.

Agreement to the principles and proposed Heads of Terms of the loan will demonstrate the Council's commitment to the provision of this public artwork.

BACKGROUND

In 2020 Wokingham Borough Council consulted with the local community on an Arts & Culture Strategy to create an ambitious vision for the area -

By 2030 Wokingham Borough will be recognised regionally and nationally as a dynamic cultural hub, a Borough of surprises that delight across all our towns and villages, a Borough where everyone can access or get involved in creating high quality cultural experiences and where creativity is nurtured across all age-groups.

There are strong evidenced links between Arts & Culture and increased economic, social, and intrinsic outcomes. The Arts & Culture agenda is very important to the council going forward and public art is a component of this. Arts and Culture outcomes are rooted in our corporate priorities as a council. Arts & Culture helps to promote community engagement, cohesion & resilience, health & wellbeing, educational outcomes, equality, diversity, & inclusion and placemaking, economic development & growth.

As part of our Arts & Culture strategy by 2030 we have a vision for the borough to: enhance quality of life, strengthen communities, and grow the boroughs reputation as a great place to live, to visit and to work in. Public art contributes to this vision and is a great example of enhancing our cultural identity and sense of 'place'. It helps to create interest and excitement across the borough and put Wokingham 'on the map'. This enhances the boroughs cultural offer and increases cultural engagement which in turn can drive future growth, investment, and economic success.

As part of this ambitious vision the Borough Council has brought together an Arts & Culture Alliance made up of key representatives from the Council, artistic and cultural groups and the community.

Arts4Wokingham

Arts4Wokingham (A4W) is a member of Wokingham's Arts and Culture Alliance. As a newly formed charity, its aim is to champion and promote artistic and cultural endeavours to ensure the Borough meets the changing needs of the 21st Century and becomes known as the place to live and enjoy life. In partnership with Wokingham Borough Council. A4W encourages public art, including commission and funding where appropriate, as part of its responsibilities.

The Carnival Hub

The Carnival Hub forms part of the Council's Wokingham Town Centre Regeneration project and provides opportunities for fitness and leisure, a new library and cultural and community uses, utilising a multi-use performance hall and studio spaces.

The Carnival Hub is located in the centre of Wokingham town and is a highly prominent development with significant external public realm areas.

Public Art Vision for the Carnival Hub

Arts4Wokingham's vision is to commission and create a major, permanent, free-standing artwork for Wokingham, located outside at the main entrance of The Carnival

Hub, that will foster a sense of wellbeing whilst enhancing economic prosperity and drawing in visitors from further afield.

Commissioning

Arts4Wokingham have undertaken a competitive process to commission the design of the artwork for the Carnival Hub. In February 2022 Nicola Anthony was announced as the winning designer, with her design proposal of The Arc.

BUSINESS CASE

Proposed agreement

The Carnival Hub and the external public realm areas around it are in the freehold ownership of the Council. To include this artwork within the Carnival Hub public realm a formal agreement between the Council (as landlord) and the Arts4Wokingham (as commissioner and owner of the artwork) is required.

Proposed Heads of Terms

Draft Heads of Terms have agreed for the loan of the Arc from Arts4Wokingham to Wokingham Borough Council in order that it can be included as part of the Carnival Hub public realm. A copy of the full Heads of Terms is included in appendix 1 of this report, the main terms of the loan are summarised below.

- a) **Lender:** Arts4Wokingham
- b) **Borrower:** Wokingham Borough Council
- c) **Property:** 'The Arc' Sculptural Artwork.
- d) **Setting:** Carnival Hub Public Realm, Wellington Road, Wokingham
- e) **Term:** 150 years
- f) **Loan Fee:** £nil
- g) **Planning Consent:** Arts4Wokingham will secure all necessary planning consents to permit installation of the Arc.
- h) **Installation:** The Lender/Artist will be responsible for the installation of the Arc at the Setting.
- i) **Early Determination:** both parties may determine the loan on service of 18 months' notice.
In the event the loan is determined by the Lender, the Lender will be responsible for the removal of The Arc and the full reinstatement of the Setting/Location in line with the Carnival Hub Masterplan.
- j) **Insurance:** The Borrower will insure the property at a value equivalent to its cost of construction.
- k) **Maintenance:** The Borrower will be responsible for the maintenance and cleaning of the Arc.

Budget

Arts4Wokingham will fund the design, construction and installation of Arc by public subscription, sponsorship and grants.

The Council will be responsible for the cost of insurance and cleaning & maintenance, which is estimated at circa £1000 per annum. A growth bid has been submitted for the financial year 2023/24 and onwards for the estates management of the public realm of the Carnival Hub, and the costs for insurance and maintenance would be included within this budget.

Recommendation

The Executive is asked to approve the loan of the public artwork from Arts4Wokingham to the Council on the terms set out in this report.

Agreement to the principles and proposed Heads of Terms of the loan will demonstrate the Council's commitment to the provision of this public artwork

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS OF THE RECOMMENDATION

The Council faces severe funding pressures, particularly in the face of the COVID-19 crisis. It is therefore imperative that Council resources are focused on the vulnerable and on its highest priorities.

	How much will it Cost/ (Save)	Is there sufficient funding – if not quantify the Shortfall	Revenue or Capital?
Current Financial Year (Year 1)	Nil	N/A	N/A
Next Financial Year (Year 2)	£1000	Yes	Revenue
Following Financial Year (Year 3)	£1000	Yes	Revenue

Other Financial Information

Arts4Wokingham will fund the design, construction and installation of Arc by public subscription, sponsorship and grants.

A growth bid has been submitted for the financial year 2023/24 and onwards for the estates management of the public realm of the Carnival Hub, and the costs for insurance and maintenance would be included within this budget.

Stakeholder Considerations and Consultation

Consultation was undertaken by Arts 4 Wokingham as part of the commissioning process for the Arc and will be ongoing through the design process.

Public Sector Equality Duty

A Stage 1 EqIA has been completed on this decision and there will be no impact or no disproportionate impact on protected groups.

Climate Emergency – This Council has declared a climate emergency and is committed to playing as full a role as possible – leading by example as well as by exhortation – in achieving a carbon neutral Wokingham Borough by 2030

The decision will have a limited impact on the Council's carbon neutral objective.

List of Background Papers
None

Contact Craig Hoggeth	Service Commercial Property
Telephone Tel: 0118 908 8313	Email craig.hoggeth@wokingham.gov.uk

TITLE	Risk Management Policy and Guidance
FOR CONSIDERATION BY	The Executive on Thursday, 29 September 2022
WARD	None Specific
LEAD OFFICER	Deputy Chief Executive - Graham Ebers
LEAD MEMBER	Leader of the Council and Executive Member for Business and Economic Development- Clive Jones

PURPOSE OF REPORT (INC STRATEGIC OUTCOMES)

Enterprise Risk Management (ERM) provides for robust and transparent decision-making. Effective ERM is therefore an integral part of the Council's governance arrangements and helps demonstrate the effective use of resources and sound internal controls. The Council's Risk Management Policy and Guidance sets out the policy framework and formal guidance to enable pro-active identification and management of risk.

RECOMMENDATION

That the Executive approve the Council's Risk Management Policy and Guidance with the changes described in the Executive Summary as recommended by the Audit Committee.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Risk Management is a key element of the Council's governance framework (as described in the Council's Local Code of Corporate Governance). Risk Management increases the likelihood that the Council achieves its objectives by identifying and mitigating risk. Risk management enables the effective use of resources and sound internal control.

The Policy and Guidance was reviewed by the Audit Committee on 27 June 2022 and their comments have been incorporated into the attached documents. There have been several small enhancements and clarifications, and these have been tracked within the documents.

Within the Policy, the main amendment is in the roles and responsibilities section to formally recognise the role of the officer Risk Management Group.

The main change to the Guidance is to provide more clarity on how risks are described. The new format looks to simplify the description of the risk and enhance the focus on the cause. The updated format for the corporate risk register which was introduced in 2021/22 is also reflected in the Guidance.

BACKGROUND

The Council is a highly complex organisation delivering a diverse range of services to residents, businesses, and the community. This creates a challenging operating environment where risks are dynamic and require effective processes and systems to identify and mitigate them. The Covid pandemic represented a significant challenge to the Council's risk management process. The Council has captured the learning from the pandemic by changing the format of the Corporate Risk Register. This has made the current level of risk compared to the risk appetite clearer and strengthened the accountability for mitigating actions.

The Risk Management Policy sets out scope, principles and roles and responsibilities for risk management in the Council. The Risk Management Guidance sets out the framework for managing risk.

BUSINESS CASE

Together the Risk Management Policy and Guidance describe the Risk Management framework for the Council. The effective management of risk enhances the Council's ability to achieve its objectives by identifying and mitigating risks. The assessment of risk and mitigating actions, reduce the likelihood of risks occurring and/or developing contingency arrangements when they do. This provides a value for money process to support the delivery of the Council's ambitions.

The changes to the Risk Management Policy and Guidance simplify the recording of risks and reduce the opportunity for misunderstanding or confusion. Thus, enabling the Council to focus on high-risk areas. Improved visibility of the risk appetite will enable stakeholders to identify where further mitigating actions are no longer required thus preventing costs that are unnecessary.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS OF THE RECOMMENDATION

The Council faces severe funding pressures, particularly in the face of the COVID-19 crisis. It is therefore imperative that Council resources are focused on the vulnerable and on its highest priorities.

	How much will it Cost/ (Save)	Is there sufficient funding – if not quantify the Shortfall	Revenue or Capital?
Current Financial Year (Year 1)	Nil	Yes	Revenue
Next Financial Year (Year 2)	Nil	Yes	Revenue
Following Financial Year (Year 3)	Nil	Yes	Revenue

Other Financial Information

The discipline of risk management mitigates financial risks and can also promote innovation in support of strategic objectives and service delivery; opening the door to the possibility of taking risks to achieve positive outcomes. Risk management operates within the Council budget envelope supporting the Council to manage its finances within set budgets.

Stakeholder Considerations and Consultation
The Risk Management Policy and Guidance has been reviewed by the Audit Committee in June 2022

Public Sector Equality Duty
Due regard to the Public Sector Equality Duty has been taken in the completion of the review of the Risk Management Policy and Guidance.

Climate Emergency – <i>This Council has declared a climate emergency and is committed to playing as full a role as possible – leading by example as well as by exhortation – in achieving a carbon neutral Wokingham Borough by 2030</i>
Risk management is an important tool to support the Council in achieving this priority.

Reasons for considering the report in Part 2
Provide justification of why the report should be in Part 2 setting out how the public interest in withholding the information outweighs the public interest in disclosing it

List of Background Papers
CIPFA/SOLACE Delivering Good Governance in Local Government Framework

Contact Andrew Moulton	Service Governance
Telephone Tel: 07747 777298	Email andrew.moulton@wokingham.gov.uk

This page is intentionally left blank



WOKINGHAM
BOROUGH COUNCIL

Enterprise Risk Management Policy

A Framework for Managing Opportunity and Risk

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 Wokingham Borough Council's environment is complex and dynamic. The Council provides services directly, through partnership working and via contractors to approximately 174,000 residents of the Borough. The Council's gross annual budget is in excess of £300 million. Risks (threats and opportunities) are inherent in all services and activities provided.
- 1.2 The importance of this Policy to the Council will increase given that the Council is becoming less risk adverse (i.e. accepting greater levels of risk) through its ambitious aspirations for the Borough, service delivery models (companies, trusts and partners), and greater use of technology. Managers will be less controlled through rules based management but empowered to take risks and opportunities as they arise.
- 1.3 The Council and its partners collaborated to produce the Council's Corporate Delivery Plan and long term (2020-2024 Community Vision for the borough: "A great place to live, learn, work and grow and an even better place to do business". The Council has identified six key priorities to enable it to deliver on its Community Vision for the borough.
- 1.4 This Enterprise Risk Management Policy (ERM) commits the Council to an effective Risk Management Guidance in which it will adopt best practices in the identification, evaluation and control of risks in order to:
 - strengthen the ability of the Council in achieving the Community vision, priorities, and corporate delivery objectives and to enhance the value of the services it provides;
 - adopt best practices in decision making through identification, evaluation and mitigation of risk;
 - integrate and embed proactive risk management into the culture of the Council;
 - heighten the understanding of all the positive risks (opportunities) as well as negative risks (threats) that the Council faces;
 - manage risks cost-effectively and to an acceptable level;
 - reduce the risk of injury and damage;
 - help secure value for money;
 - help enable the Council to be less risk adverse;
 - enhance partnership and project working; and
 - raise awareness of the need for risk management.
- 1.5 This policy will allow management to make better informed decisions and become less risk adverse through a focus on risk and return which in turn will enhance the value of money provided to our taxpayers (domestic and non-domestic). This policy has a key role in supporting the Council's Commercialisation Strategy. This policy will be implemented through the development and application of ERM Guidance. The ERM Guidance shall be approved by Corporate Leadership Team and the Audit Committee and Executive on behalf of the Council.

- 1.6 The importance of this policy has been emphasised in 2020 and 2021 with the impact of Covid-19 providing a framework for effectively managing and responding to the new and emerging impacts on all areas of the Council's operations and strategic objectives.

2.0 Scope

- 2.1 The importance of ERM within the Council transcends every policy, Guidance and individual transaction, since losses arising from the failure to manage risk or take opportunities can have systemic repercussions for the Council. As such, effective ERM is of interest to all our stakeholders including Members, managers, inspectors, residents, taxpayers and suppliers.



- 2.2 This policy is also applicable to the council's interests in its wholly-owned subsidiaries. The officer responsible for the council's interest in the subsidiary should be familiar with this policy and remains accountable for the management of all such risks.
- 2.3 Nothing in this policy overrides the Health and Safety risk assessment process which aligns with Health and Safety Executive guidance and are recorded in Business World On (BWO). Significant project and H&S risks should be identified on risk registers where appropriate.
- 2.4 The Chief Executive, the Corporate Leadership Team, Extended Corporate Leadership Team, 2nd and 3rd Tier Managers, Members of the Audit Committee, Members of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and the Executive should be fully familiar with this policy.
- 2.5 All other staff and elected Members should be aware of it.

3.0 ERM Principles

3.1 This policy and the ERM Guidance shall be premised upon a common understanding and application of the following principles:

PRINCIPLE 1	The informed acceptance of risk is an essential element of good governance and management.
PRINCIPLE 2	Risk management is an effective means to enhance and protect the Council over time.
PRINCIPLE 3	Common definition and understanding of risks is necessary, in order to better manage those risks and make more consistent and informed decisions.
PRINCIPLE 4	The management of risk is an anticipatory, proactive process, to be embedded in the corporate culture and a key part of strategic planning, business planning and operational management.
PRINCIPLE 5	All risks are to be identified, assessed, measured, managed, monitored and reported on in accordance with the Enterprise Risk Management Guidance based on best available information.
PRINCIPLE 6	All business activities are to adhere to risk management practices which reflect effective and appropriate levels of internal controls.
PRINCIPLE 7	Directors should bring to the attention of their respective executive portfolio holders all significant risks on a timely basis.

4.0 Approach to ERM

4.1 This policy is aligned with the Council's Local Code of Corporate Governance. This policy recognises the actions that Council makes with respect to the achievement of the Community Vision, Corporate Delivery Plan priorities, and objectives are ultimately tied to decisions about the nature and level of risk it is prepared to take and the most effective means to manage and mitigate those risks. ERM covers all the council's risks in a unified and consistent manner.

4.2 Risk management at the Council shall be based on an understanding of the quality and nature of the Council's assets and its sources of revenue, and the impact of any associated potential liabilities. This policy, the ERM Guidance, the related management policies and procedures and management committees, shall enable management and the Corporate Leadership Team to meet their ERM responsibilities.

4.3 The Council's approach to risk management is detailed in its ERM Guidance which is available on the Council's internet and intranet.

5.0 Assignments and responsibilities

5.1 ERM shall be integrated into existing corporate processes, thus becoming part of regular day-to-day operations and activities. ERM shall be a collective and collaborative effort by the Council in order to achieve an effective system for the management of risk.

5.2 The following describes the roles and responsibilities that Members and Officers will play in introducing, embedding and owning the risk management process and therefore contributing towards the best practice standards for risk management.

5.3 **Chief Executive**

- The Chief Executive has overall responsibility for the management of all significant risk within the Council including the creation, membership and functions of management committees with risk management roles. This includes the Corporate Leadership Team and the assignment and performance review of Directors with responsibility for the management of identified risks;
- The Chief Executive also has a critical role in reporting to the Executive on identified strategic risks and communicating the strategic value of effective risk management to the Executive. The Chief Executive also has a role to play in ensuring adequate funding and resources are available for risk management activities.

5.4 **Corporate Leadership Team**

- To collectively ensure that effective systems of risk management and internal control are in place to support the Corporate Governance of the Council;
-
- To take a leading role in identifying and managing the risks and opportunities to the Council and to set the example and standards for all staff;
- To identify, analyse and profile high-level strategic cross-cutting and emergent risks on a regular basis;
- To approve the risk appetite for each risk detailed in the Council's Corporate Risk Register and monitor the total risk faced by the Council;
- To ensure that appropriate risk management skills training and awareness is provided to appropriate elected Members and staff.

5.5 **Council Risk Facilitator – Assistant Director Governance**

- To facilitate the communication and implementation of this Policy and ERM Guidance to all elected Members, managers and staff to fully embed them in the Council's service planning and monitoring processes (as per their respective roles and responsibilities);
- To report to Corporate Leadership Team and Audit Committee on the management of corporate and other significant risks and the overall effectiveness of risk management;
- To provide training and support to relevant members and managers with regard to risk management;
- To co-ordinate all of the Council's risk management registers.

5.6 **Directors**

- Directors are individually responsible for proper monitoring of the risks identified in their relevant service plans, local action plans and for embedding risk management into the service planning of their relevant services;
- Ensuring that the risk management process is part of all major projects, partnerships and change management initiatives;

- Ensuring that all reports of a strategic nature written for Members include a risk assessment of the options presented for a decision;
- Report regularly to the Corporate Leadership Team on the progress being undertaken to manage their risks and provide updates on the nature of the significant risks in their relevant Directorate areas;
- To determine the risk appetite for each risk detailed in their Directorate Risk Register;
- Provide assurance on the adequacy of their relevant Directorate's risk and control procedures;
- Bring to the attention of their respective Executive portfolio holders all significant risks on a timely basis.

5.7 **Assistant Directors**

In respect of risk management, each Assistant Director is individually responsible for:

- the proper identification, assessment and monitoring of the risks associated in their area of activity;
- bringing to the attention of their Director all significant risks on a timely basis;
- ensuring that all reports of a strategic nature written for Executive Members include a risk assessment of the options being presented for a decision;
- recommending (to the Assistant Director Governance) risk management training for their staff (where relevant);
- implementing approved risk management action plans;
- maintaining an awareness of risks and feed them into the risk identification process;
- embedding a culture of pro-active risk assessment in their area of activity.

5.8 **Audit Committee**

To provide independent assurance of the adequacy of the ERM Policy and Guidance and the associated control environment. In particular:

- to receive the annual review of internal controls and be satisfied that the Annual Governance Statement properly reflects the risk environment and any actions required to improve it;
- to receive regular reports covering implementation of the Council's ERM Policy and Guidance to determine whether strategic risks are being actively managed;
- to review, revise as necessary and recommend adoption of the ERM Policy and Guidance to Executive on a regular basis;
- to have the knowledge and skills requisite to their role with regard to risk management and to undertake awareness training in respect of ERM as and when specific training needs are identified.

5.9 **Executive Members**

- Executive members are responsible for governing the delivery of services to the local community. Executive Members therefore have a responsibility to be aware and fully understand the strategic risks that the Council faces;
- Executive members have the responsibility to consider the risks associated with the decisions they make and will be informed of these risks in the reports that are submitted to them. They are required to consider the cumulative level of risk faced by the authority. They cannot avoid or delegate this overall responsibility, as it is vital to their stewardship responsibilities;
- To have the knowledge and skills requisite to their role about risk management and to undertake awareness training in respect of ERM as and when specific training needs are identified;
- To receive regular reports, as presented to the Audit Committee covering the implementation of the Council's Risk Management Policy and Guidance, including updates over the management of all strategic risks.

5.10 **Overview and Scrutiny Committee**

To have due regard for this policy, and specifically, when undertaking scrutiny reviews to consider the Executive's risk identification and evaluation process.

5.11 **Members**

To have the knowledge and skills requisite to their role with regard to risk management and to undertake awareness training in respect of ERM as and when specific training needs are identified.

5.12 **Directorate Leadership Teams**

- To collate on a quarterly basis the key and consistent themes from service, project and partnership risk registers and feed these via their Risk Management Group representative to Corporate Leadership Team and give feedback to the services;
- To collate the highest level and most common operational risks (including those risks of a more health and safety or liability perspective) from a service level for communication and if required, consideration by Corporate Leadership Team;
- To monitor the implementation and embedding of risk management within key Council processes;
- To identify risk management training needs, approve training programmes and presentations;
- To facilitate services on an ongoing basis with maintaining their risk registers and matrix;
- To implement the detail of the Enterprise Risk Management Guidance;
- To ensure that risks and action plans are updated in the Corporate Risk Register;

5.13 **Risk Management Group**

The risk management group is composed of each Directorate Risk Management Lead and will meet at least quarterly to:

- To share/exchange relevant information with colleagues in other service areas.
- To review the corporate risk register on a quarterly basis.
- To identify risks that should be escalated from Directorate risk registers to the corporate risk register and risks that should be de-escalated from the corporate risk register to the relevant Directorate risk register.
- To review the key and consistent themes from Directorate, project and partnership risk registers and feed these to CLT and give feedback to the services.
- To identify interdependencies between risks from a service level that in totality represent strategic risks for consideration by CLT.
- To identify risk management training needs, approve training programmes and presentations.
- Provide support to relevant members and managers with regard to risk management in their Directorates.
- To act as a forum for the sharing of best practice.
- To implement the detail of the Enterprise Risk Management Policy.
- Publicise and promote risk management across the council.

5.14 **Internal Audit**

Internal audit will

- provide assurance to the Council through an independent and objective opinion on the control environment comprising risk management, control procedures and governance;
- report to Members on the control environment; and
- provide an Internal Audit Plan (on at least an annual basis) that is based on a reasonable evaluation of risk and to provide an annual assurance statement to the Council based on work undertaken in the previous year.

5.15 **Staff**

Staff have a responsibility to identify risks surrounding their every day work processes and working environment. They are also responsible for:

- participating in ongoing risk management within service areas;
- actively managing risks and risk actions (where appropriate); and
- demonstrating an awareness of risk and risk management relevant to their role and to take action accordingly.

6.0 Review and Continual Improvement

6.1 The Audit Committee shall review and recommend adoption of the ERM Policy to the Council on a regular basis or when significant changes require a revision of it.

6.2 The Council should continue to improve the effectiveness of its risk management arrangements through:

- learning from risk events and the application of controls;
- review risk occurrences to identify emerging trends; and

- learn from other organisations about their risk occurrences in order to consider whether there is a likelihood of the Council experiencing a similar occurrence.

Susan Parsonage
Chief Executive

Councillor Rachel Burgess
Chairman Audit Committee

Version Control

Date: 27 July 2022
Version: 16.0
Authors: Paul Ohsan Ellis

VERSION	DATE	DESCRIPTION
1.0	15 February 2009	Working Draft
2.0	3 March 2009	Working Draft
3.0	9 March 2009	Initial Release
4.0	11 March 2009	Draft for Consultation
5.0	25 March 2009	Draft for SLB Approval
6.0	30 April 2009	Draft for Audit Committee Adoption
7.0	13 May 2009	Draft for Approved Audit Committee
8.0	14 May 2009	Final Adopted Audit Committee 13/5/09
9.1	18 June 2010	Risk Management Group Refresh 2010-11
9.2	9 July 2010	Revised Draft for SLB Adoption
9.3	9 September 2010	Revised Draft for Audit Committee Adoption
9.4	7 October 2010	Final Adopted Audit Committee 22/09/10
10.0	31 October 2012	Revised Draft for CLT Adoption
11.0	28 November 2012	Final Adopted by Audit Committee
12.0	4 February 2014	Final Adopted by Audit Committee
12.1	21 November 2014	Final Adopted by Audit Committee
13.0	27 November 2015	Final Adopted by Audit Committee
14	6 September 2018	Final Adopted by Audit Committee (18/9/2018)
15	11 June 2020	Draft for adoption by Audit Committee (29/7/2020)
16	2 June 2022	Draft for adoption by Audit Committee
17	27 July 2022	As updated by Audit Committee for Executive on 29 Sept 2022



**WOKINGHAM
BOROUGH COUNCIL**

Enterprise Risk Management Guidance

A Framework for Managing Opportunity and Risk

Date: 2 June 2022
Version: 18.0
Authors: Andrew Moulton

VERSION	DATE	DESCRIPTION
1.0	15 February 2009	Working Draft
2.0	3 March 2009	Working Draft
3.0	9 March 2009	Initial Release
4.0	11 March 2009	Draft for Consultation
5.0	25 March 2009	Draft for SLB Approval
6.0	30 April 2009	Draft for Audit Committee Adoption
7.0	13 May 2009	Draft for approval by Audit Committee
8.0	14 May 2009	Final approved by Audit Committee
9.0	18 June 2010	Refresh by Corporate Governance Group
10.0	3 September 2010	Refresh for approval by Audit Committee
11.0	22 September 2010	Final approved by Audit Committee
12.0	14 November 2012	Final approved by Audit Committee
13.0	22 January 2014	Final approved by Audit Committee
14.0	21 November 2014	Final approved by Audit Committee
15.0	26 November 2015	Final approved by Audit Committee
16.0	6 September 2018	Final approved by Audit Committee
17.0	1 July 2020	Draft for approval by Committee on 29/7/2020
18.0	2 June 2022	Draft for approval by Committee on 2/06/2022

19	27 July 2022	As updated by Audit Committee for consideration by Executive on 29-09-22
-----------	---------------------	---

Contents

Chapters		Page Numbers
1	Introduction	1
2	Purpose of the Guidance	1
3	Approval, Communication, Implementation and Review	1 – 2
4	What is Enterprise Risk Management?	2 – 3
5	Benefits of Risk Management	3
6	Critical Success Factors	4
7	Relationship between Risk Management and Internal Controls	4
8	Risk Management, Business Continuity and Emergency Planning	4 – 5
9	Risk Management in Projects and Partnerships	5
10	Strategic Approach to Risk Management	6
11	Implementation Guidance Risk Management	6 – 12
Appendix 1	Overview of Risk Management Framework	13
Appendix 2	Examples of Risk Categories	14
Appendix 3	Impact Scores	15
Appendix 4	Likelihood Scores	16

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 Risk Management is about managing opportunities and threats to objectives and in doing so helps create an environment of “no surprises”. It is a crucial element of good management and a key part of corporate governance. It should be viewed as a mainstream activity and something that is an integral part of the management of the Council; an everyday activity.
- 1.2 Risk Management is already inherent in much of what the Council does. Good practices like good safety systems, procurement and contract regulations, financial regulations and internal control are not labelled Risk Management but these and many other processes and procedures are used to manage risk.

2.0 Purpose of the Guidance

- 2.1 The purpose of this Enterprise Risk Management Guidance is to establish a framework for the systematic management of risk, which will ensure that the objectives of the Council’s Risk Management policy are realised.

The Purpose of this Guidance
Define what Risk Management is about and what drives Risk Management within the Council
Set out the benefits of Risk Management and the strategic approach to Risk Management
Outline how the Risk Management will be implemented
Formalise the Risk Management process across the Council

- 2.2 An overview of this framework is detailed in Appendix 1.

3.0 Approval, Communication, Implementation and Review

- 3.1 The Enterprise Risk Management Guidance has been adopted by the Corporate Leadership Team and has been approved by the Council via the Audit Committee. It has been issued to:
- All Members of the Council
 - Corporate Leadership Team
 - All Assistant Directors
 - Key Stakeholders
 - Other interested parties such as External Audit
- 3.2 It has been placed on the Council’s intranet site so that all members of staff can have access and easily refer to it. It is included on all new staff’s corporate induction. Therefore all individual members of staff are aware of both their roles and responsibilities for Risk Management within the Council and their service (depending on their own role within the Council). Risk Management is included within the Council’s performance management framework so that staff and managers are aware of how Risk Management contributes to the achievement of the Council’s and Service objectives.
- 3.3 All elected Members have been issued with a copy of the Guidance. It is part of all newly elected Members’ induction to the Council it has been included as a

training area within the Members Training and Development Programme. The Guidance will be reviewed annually by the Audit Committee.

4.0 What is Enterprise Risk Management?

4.1 Risk is an unexpected future event or action that can affect the Council's ability to achieve its objectives and successfully execute its strategies. It can be a positive (an opportunity) or negative (a threat). Risk Management is the process by which risks are identified, evaluated and controlled.

4.2 It has critical links to the following areas:

- Corporate governance;
- Community focus;
- Structure and processes;
- Standards of conduct;
- Service delivery arrangements; and
- Effective use of resources.

4.3 Enterprise Risk Management can be defined as:

“The management of integrated or holistic risk and opportunity in a manner consistent with the virtues of economy, efficiency and effectiveness. In essence it is about making the most of opportunities (making the right decisions) and about achieving objectives once those decisions are made. The latter is achieved through controlling, transferring and living with risks”.

4.4 Risk Management therefore is essentially about identifying the opportunities, risks and weaknesses that exist within the Council. A holistic approach is vital to ensuring that all elements of the Council are challenged including decision making processes, working with partners, consultation processes, existing policies and procedures and also the effective use of assets – both staff and physical assets. This identification process is integral to all our strategic, service and work planning.

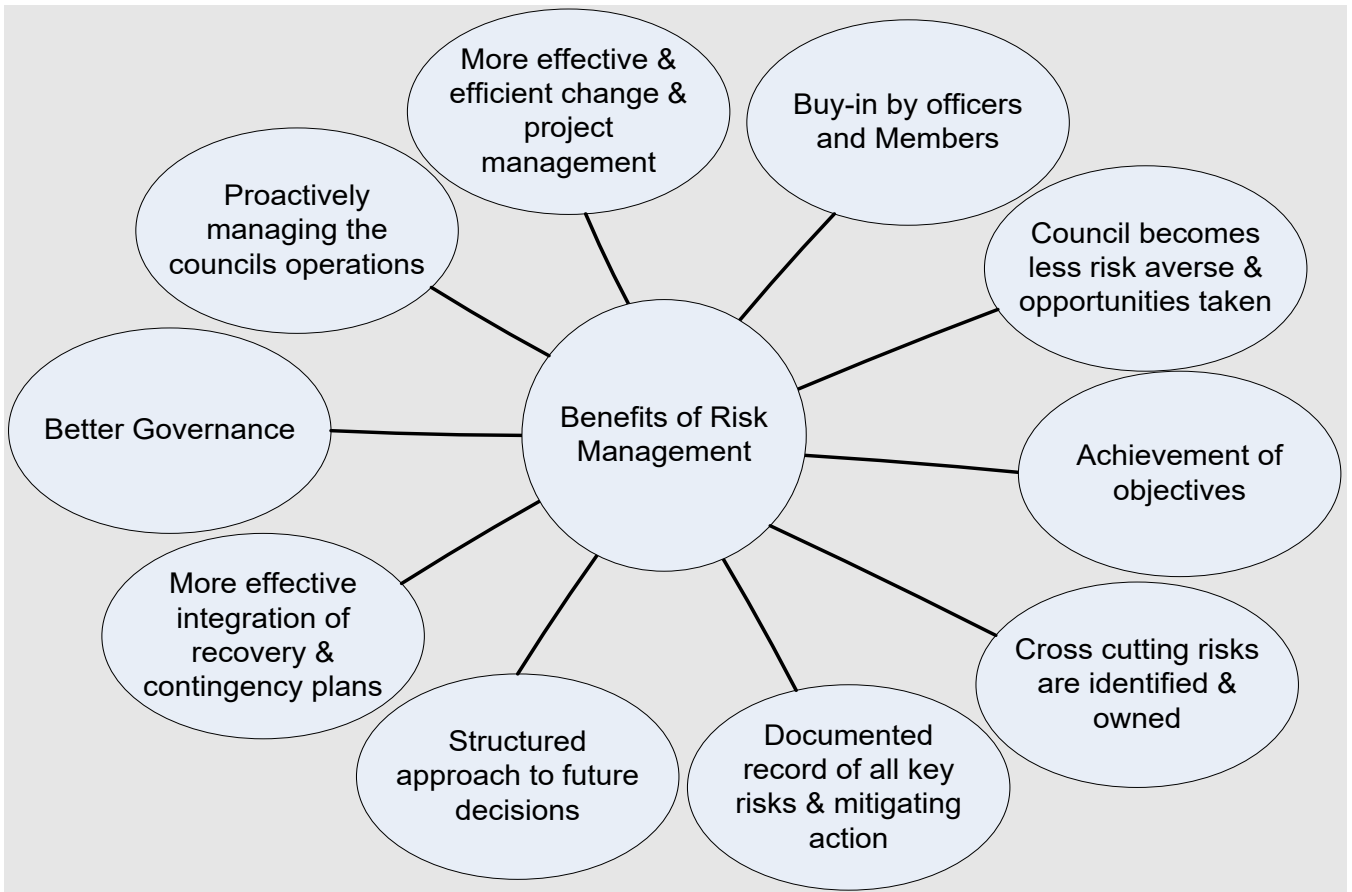
4.5 Once the risks have been identified the next stage is to prioritise them to identify the key risks to the Council moving forward. Once prioritised it is essential that steps are taken to then effectively manage these key risks. The result is that significant risks that exist within the Council can be mitigated to provide the Council with a greater chance of being able to achieve its objectives. Included within this should also be a consideration of the positive or 'opportunity' risk aspect.

4.6 Risk Management will improve the business planning and performance management processes, strengthen the ability of the Council to achieve its objectives and enhance the value of the services provided.

4.7 In order to strive to meet the Community Vision, and Corporate Delivery Plan objectives, the Council has recognised the need to further embed Risk Management arrangements. The desired outcome is that risks associated with these objectives can be managed and the potential impact limited, providing greater assurance that the Vision will be achieved.

5.0 Benefits of Risk Management

5.1 Successful implementation of Risk Management will produce many benefits for the Council if it becomes a living tool. These include:



6.0 Critical Success Factors

6.1 To develop a framework which:

Reference	Critical Success Factors
1	Enables the Council's performance and take advantage of opportunities.
2	Focus on the major risks to our strategies and objectives.
3	Provide a clear picture of the major risks the Council faces, their nature, potential impact and their likelihood.
4	Establish a shared and unambiguous understanding of what risks will be tolerated.
5	Develop an awareness of our ability to control the risks we have identified.
6	Is embedded in our planning and decision-making processes.
7	Actively involve all those responsible for planning and delivering services.
8	Clarify and establish roles, responsibilities and processes.
9	Enable and empower managers to manage those risks in their area of responsibility.
10	Capture information about key risks from across the Council.
11	Include regular risk monitoring and review of the effectiveness of internal control.
12	Is non-bureaucratic, cost efficient and sustainable.

7.0 Relationship between Risk Management and Internal Controls

7.1 The Council recognises that Risk Management is an integral part of its internal control environment. The constitution states that internal controls are required to manage and monitor progress towards strategic objectives.

7.2 The system of internal control also provides measurable achievement of:

- Efficient and effective operations;
- Reliable financial information and reporting;
- Compliance with laws and regulations; and
- Risk Management.

7.3 Internal Audit, when evaluating risks during the course of its Internal Audit work, will categorise risks as per this Guidance and will analyse their likelihood and impact in accordance with the qualitative measures / tables contained in this Guidance, thus further integrating and embedding our Risk Management Guidance into the Council's internal control environment.

8.0 Risk Management, Business Continuity and Emergency Planning

- 8.1 There is a link between these areas. However it is vital for the success of Risk Management that the roles of each, and the links, are clearly understood. The Council recognises that there is a link between Risk Management, Business Continuity Management and Emergency Planning. This is demonstrated by the lead in all three issues being taken by the Corporate Leadership Team.

Business continuity management

- 8.2 Business continuity management is about trying to identify and put in place measures to protect the Council's priority functions against catastrophic risks that can stop it in its tracks. There are some areas of overlap e.g. where the I.T. infrastructure is not robust then this will feature as part of the relevant Risk Register and also be factored into the business continuity plans.

Emergency planning

- 8.3 Emergency planning is about managing the response to those incidents that can impact on the community (in some cases they could also be a business continuity issue) e.g. a plane crash is an emergency, it becomes a continuity event if it crashes on the office!

9.0 Risk Management in Projects, Partnerships and Health and Safety

- 9.1 It is recognised that Risk Management needs to be a key part of the ongoing management of projects, Health and Safety and partnerships.

Project / Programme management

- 9.2 There is a consistent and robust approach to Risk Management used in projects both at initiation and throughout the project

Partnerships

- 9.3 The Council has a Partnership Protocol, of which Risk Management is a key aspect. The Partnership Protocol requires that this approach to risk management is adhered to. The Partnership Protocol is available on the intranet.

Health and Safety

- 9.4 The Council has a Health and Safety Policy, of which management of risk is a critical aspect. Health and safety risks are managed in accordance with Health and Safety Executive guidance and are recorded in Business World On (BWO). The Health and Safety Policy is available on the intranet.

10.0 Strategic Approach to Risk Management

10.1 In order to formalise and structure Risk Management the Council has recognised that there are obvious and clear links between Risk Management and: strategic and financial planning; policy making and review; and performance management.

10.2 The links are as follows:

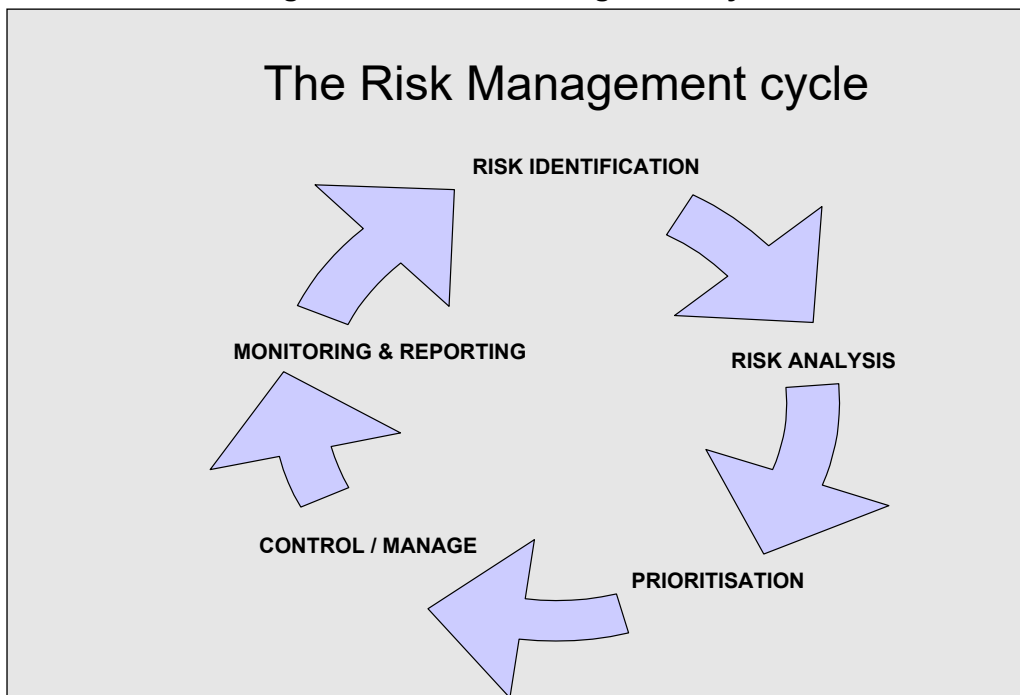
- Measurement of performance against the key objectives, performance indicators and key tasks.
- Management of Key Strategic Risks which could affect the delivery of the above Council objectives/targets is undertaken by the Corporate Leadership Team.

11.0 Implementation Guidance Risk Management

The risk management process

Implementing this Guidance involves a 5-stage process to identify, analyse, prioritise, manage and monitor risks as shown in figure 1. This section will outline the approach.

Figure 1: The Risk Management Cycle



Stage 1 – Risk Identification

The first step is to identify the 'key' risks that could have an adverse effect on or prevent key objectives from being met. It is important that those involved with the process clearly understand the service or Council's key objectives i.e. '*what it intends to achieve*' in order to be able to identify '*the risks to achievement*'. It is important to consider the relevant Service Plans in a broader context, i.e. not focusing solely on specific detailed targets but considering the wider direction and aims of the service and the outcomes it is trying to achieve.

When identifying risks it is important to remember that as well as the 'direct threats', risk management is about 'making the most of opportunities' e.g. making bids for funding, successfully delivering major projects and initiatives, pursuing beacon status or other awards, taking a national or regional lead on policy development etc.

Using Appendix 2 as a prompt, various techniques can then be used to begin to identify 'key' or 'significant' risks including: -

- A 'idea shower' session;
- Own (risk) experience;
- 'Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats' analysis or similar;
- Experiences of others - can we learn from others' mistakes?
- Exchange of information/best practice with other Councils, organisations or partners.

It is also recommended that a review of published information such as other Service Plans, strategies, financial accounts, press releases, and inspectorate and audit reports be used to inform this stage, as they are a useful source of information.

The process for the identification of risk should be undertaken for projects (at the beginning of each project stage), partnerships and for all major revenue and capital contracts. Details of who contributes to these stages are explained further in the 'Roles, Assignments and Responsibilities' section of the Enterprise Risk Management Policy.

Risks, both opportunity and threats, identified should be recorded in a Risk Register as per figure 2.

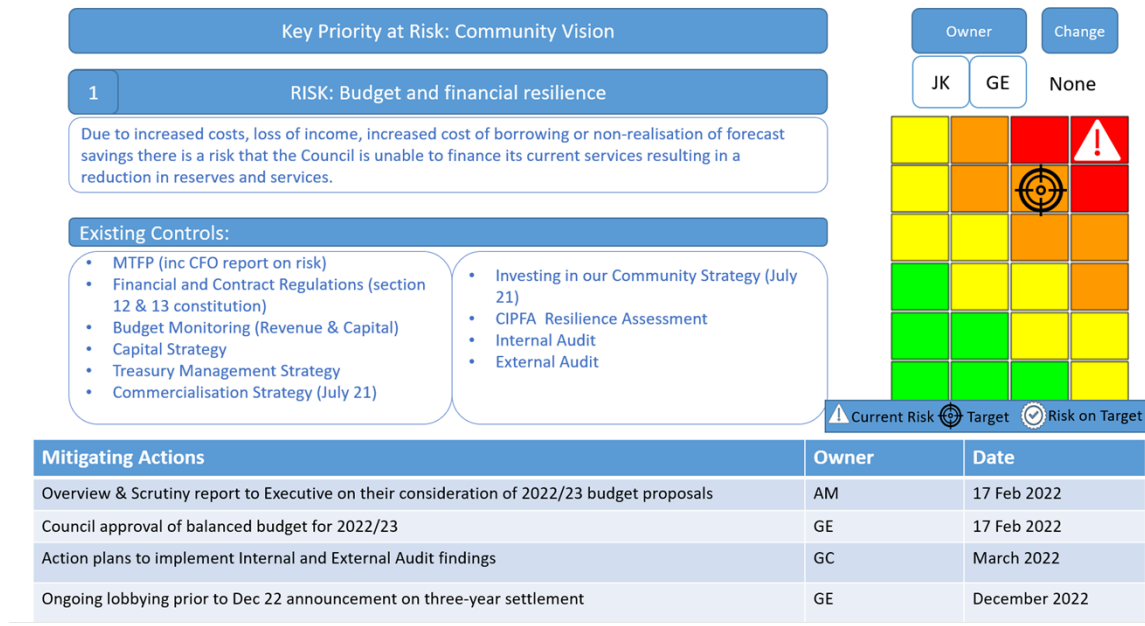
Risk should be expressed in the format

"Due to

there is a risk that....

leading to....

Figure 2: Risk Register Summary (example)



Stage 2 – Risk Analysis

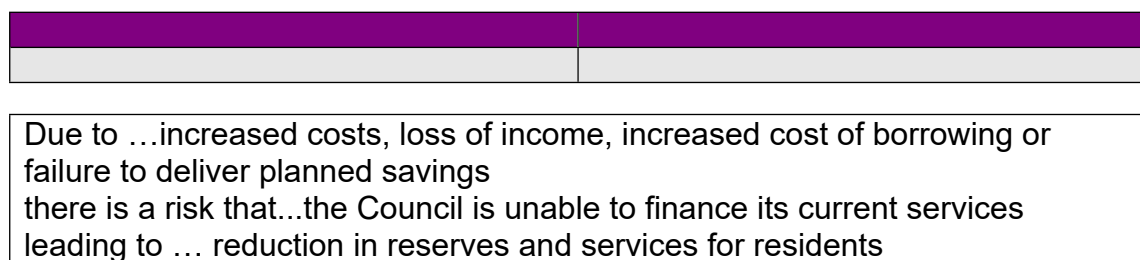
The information that is gathered needs to be analysed into risk scenarios to provide clear, shared understanding and to ensure the potential root cause of the risk is clarified. Risk scenarios also illustrate the possible consequences of the risk if it occurs so that its full impact can be assessed.

There are 2 parts to a risk scenario:-

- The cause describes the situation and/or event (that may be perceived) that exposes the Council to a risk; and
- The consequences are the events that follow in the wake of the risk.

Risk Scenario

Figure 3: Example of the structure of a risk scenario



Each risk scenario is logged on the respective Risk Register. These registers could be potentially strategic, against a specific Service Plan, or relating to a project or partnership.

For further information on the project Risk Register template and guidelines, please refer to the project management methodology.

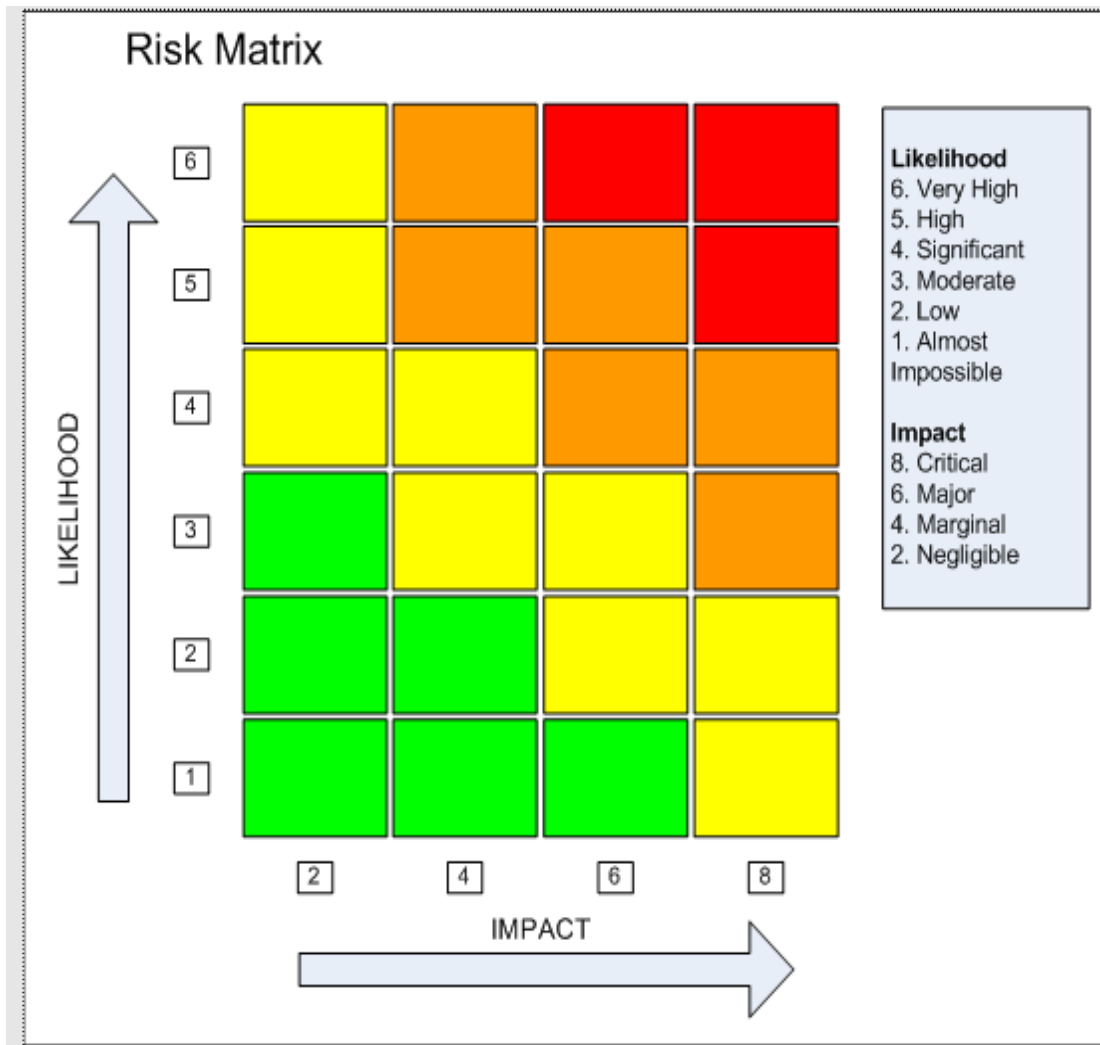
Stage 3 – Prioritisation

Following identification and analysis the risks will need to be evaluated, different scenarios should be explored. Their ranking is decided according to the potential likelihood of the risk occurring and its impact if it did occur. A matrix is used to plot the risks (Figure 4) and once completed this risk profile clearly illustrates the priority of each risk.

When assessing the potential likelihood and impact the risks must be compared with the appropriate objectives e.g. corporate objectives for the strategic risk profile, and service objectives for the Service Plan risk profile. The challenge for each risk is how much impact it could have on the ability to achieve the objective and outcomes. This allows the risks to be set in perspective against each other.

At the beginning of this stage a timeframe needs to be agreed, and the likelihood and impact should be considered within the relevant timeframe. Often a 3-year time horizon is used at strategic level, with perhaps a 1-year timeframe used at service level, to link with service delivery planning. The likelihood and impact should also be considered with existing controls in place, not taking future ones into account at that time.

Figure 4: Example of the Council risk matrix and filters



The matrix is also constructed around 4 filters - these being red (very high), orange (high), amber (medium) and green (low). The red and orange filtered risks are of greatest priority. Amber risks represent moderate priority risks. Green risks are low priority but should be monitored.

If there are numerous red, orange and amber risks to be managed it is prudent to cluster similar risks together. This is to aid the action planning process as a number of risks can be managed by the same or similar activity. Each cluster should be given a title e.g. recruitment and retention, staff empowerment etc. This technique of clustering should only be used when there are many risks to be managed e.g. in excess of 15 red and amber risks and where risks share common causes and consequences and therefore could be managed in a similar way.

Stage 4 – Control / Manage

It is important at this stage to determine the Council’s risk appetite for this risk. This should be through discussion with the relevant Director and Executive Lead Member. Where the risk is within its appetite the identity of the decision maker must be formally recorded under the mitigating action section of the risk register i.e. “no further action at this time”

and owner recording who made the decision and the date. If the risk is currently within its appetite, then there is no need to mitigate the risk and stage 4 can be skipped.

This is the process of turning 'knowing' into 'doing'. It is assessing whether to control, accept, transfer or terminate the risk on an agreed 'risk appetite'. Risks may be able to be: -

Controlled - It may be possible to mitigate the risk by 'managing down' the likelihood, the impact or both. The control measures should, however, be commensurate with the potential frequency, impact and financial consequences of the risk event.

Accepted - Certain risks may have to be accepted as they form part of, or are inherent in, the activity. The important point is that these risks have been identified and are clearly understood.

Transferred or Shared – the Council may choose to share risk or transfer risk with another body or organisation i.e. insurance, contractual arrangements, outsourcing, partnerships etc. Only some risks can be transferred i.e. Financial risks can be transferred but the Council will remain accountable for delivery and reputational elements of risk.

Terminated - By ending all or part of a particular service or project.

It is important to recognise that, in many cases, existing controls will already be in place. It is therefore necessary to look at these controls before considering further action. It may be that these controls are not effective or are 'out of date'.

Most risks are capable of being managed – either by managing down the likelihood or impact or both. Relatively few risks have to be transferred or terminated. These service plans will also identify the resources required to deliver the improvements, timescale and monitoring arrangements.

Existing controls, their adequacy, new mitigation measures and associated action planning information is all recorded on the Risk Register, including ownership of the risk and allocation of responsibility for each mitigating action.

Consideration should also be given here as to the 'Cost-Benefit' of each control weighed against the potential cost / impact of the risk occurring. N.B. 'cost / impact'

High cost/low impact of mitigating risk	High cost/big impact of mitigating risk
Low cost/low impact of mitigating risk	Low cost/big impact of mitigating risk

Stage 5 – Monitoring & Reporting

The Corporate Leadership Team is responsible for ensuring that the key risks on the Corporate Risk Register are managed and the progress with the risk mitigation measures should be monitored at appropriate intervals. Directors and Assistant Directors are responsible for ensuring that the key risks in the Risk Registers linked to respective

services are managed. It is recommended that the 'red risks' feature as a standing item on Directorate Leadership Team meeting agendas.

On a quarterly basis, the Corporate and service Risk Registers should be reviewed and where necessary risks re-prioritised. Risks should be amended so they reflect the current situation, obsolete risks should be deleted and new risks identified. This ensures that the Risk Registers and resulting risk mitigation measures are appropriate for the current service and corporate objectives. The quarterly review of the Corporate Risk Register must be undertaken by Corporate Leadership Team and the Directorate Registers should be reviewed / updated by the respective Director and Assistant Director with their management teams.

During the year new risks are likely to arise that have not previously been considered on the existing Risk Registers. Also the environment in which the risks exist will change making some risks more critical or others less important. Every quarter the respective Risk Registers and matrices at each level should be updated to reflect these changes. If such risks require Corporate Leadership Team ownership and management then they should be incorporated into the Corporate Risk Register. If the management of such risks is more appropriate at a service level then it should be included in the respective service Risk Register. This will need to be undertaken on a quarterly basis by Corporate Leadership Team, Directors and Assistant Directors.

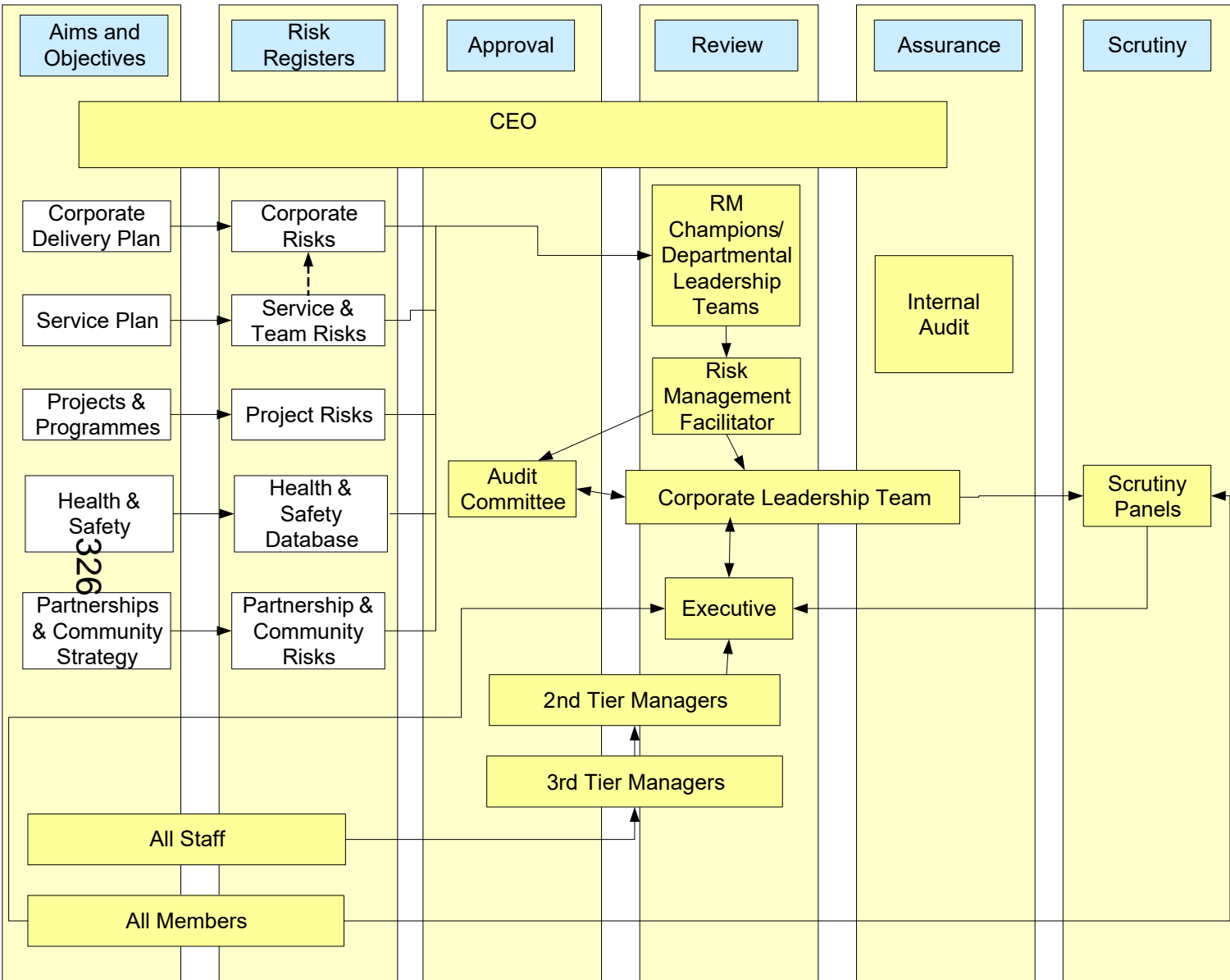
It is recognised that some Directorate risks have the potential to impact on the corporate objectives and these will often be the red risks on the matrix. Every quarter, the Directorate Risk Registers will be fed into the Corporate Leadership Team where a decision will be taken on whether to prioritise any of these risks on the strategic risk matrix and include them on the Corporate Risk Register (owned by Corporate Leadership Team). At the relevant Corporate Leadership Team session to review risk management, each Director will also feedback the headline risks from their individual areas.

12.0 Risk Appetite

Risk appetite is the phrase used to describe how much risk the council is prepared to take in pursuit of its objectives. Due to its diverse range of services the council does not have a single risk tolerance and appetite for risk will vary between different services and activities, or even at different times. For certain types of risk the Council does not have the power to determine its risk appetite as this is set by legislation i.e. the compliance framework for the safeguarding of children is determined by law.

Considering and setting risk appetites will enable the council to optimise its risk taking and accepting calculated risks by enabling risk-reward decision making. Equally, it reduces the likelihood of unpleasant surprises. Risk appetite is determined on each of the risks and is essentially the target we need to manage the risk against i.e. seeking to align the controls with the risk appetite..

Overview of Risk Management Framework



Appendix 1

Appendix 2 – Example of Risk Categories

Risk	Definition	Examples
Political	Associated with the failure to deliver either local or central government policy or meet the local administration's manifest commitment	New political arrangements, Political personalities, Political make-up
Economic	Affecting the ability of the Council to meet its financial commitments. These include internal budgetary pressures, the failure to purchase adequate insurance cover, external macro level economic changes or consequences proposed investment decisions	Cost of living, changes in interest rates, inflation, poverty indicators
Social	Relating to the effects of changes in demographic, residential or socio-economic trends on the Council's ability to meet its objectives	Staff levels from available workforce, ageing population, health statistics
Technological	Associated with the capacity of the Council to deal with the pace/scale of technological change, or its ability to use technology to address changing demands. They may also include the consequences of internal technological failures on the Council's ability to deliver its objectives	IT infrastructure, Staff/client needs, security standards, Business Continuity.
Legislative	Associated with current or potential changes in national or European law	Human rights, appliance or non-appliance of TUPE regulations
Environmental	Relating to the environmental consequences of progressing the Council's strategic objectives	Land use, recycling, pollution
Competitive	Affecting the competitiveness of the service (in terms of cost or quality) and/or its ability to deliver best value	Fail to win quality accreditation, position in league tables
Customer/ Citizen	Associated with failure to meet the current and changing needs and expectations of customers and citizens	Managing expectations, extent of consultation
Managerial/ Professional	Associated with the particular nature of each profession, internal protocols and managerial abilities	Staff restructure, key personalities, internal capacity
Financial	Associated with financial planning and control	Budget overspends, level of Council tax & reserves
Legal	Related to possible breaches of legislation	Client brings legal challenge
Partnership/ Contractual	Associated with failure of contractors and partnership arrangements to deliver services or products to the agreed cost and specification	Contractor fails to deliver, partnership agencies do not have common goals
Physical	Related to fire, security, accident prevention and health and safety	Offices in poor state of repair, use of equipment

Impact

Score	Level	Description	
8	Critical	Critical impact on the achievement of objectives and overall performance. High impact on costs and / or reputation. Very difficult and possibly long term to recover.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unable to function without aid of Government or other external Agency • Inability to fulfil obligations • Medium - long term damage to service capability • Severe financial loss – supplementary estimate needed which will have a critical impact on the council’s financial plan and resources are unlikely to be available. • Death • Adverse national publicity – highly damaging, severe loss of public confidence. • Litigation certain and difficult to defend • Breaches of law punishable by imprisonment
6	Major	Major impact on costs and objectives. Serious impact on output and / or quality and reputation. Medium to long term effect and expensive to recover.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Significant impact on service objectives • Short – medium term impairment to service capability • Major financial loss - supplementary estimate needed which will have a major impact on the council’s financial plan • Extensive injuries, major permanent harm, long term sick • Major adverse local publicity, major loss of confidence • Litigation likely and may be difficult to defend • Breaches of law punishable by fines or possible imprisonment
4	Marginal	Significant waste of time and resources. Impact on operational efficient, output and quality. Medium term effect which may be expensive to recover.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Service objectives partially achievable • Short term disruption to service capability • Significant financial loss - supplementary estimate needed which will have an impact on the council’s financial • Medical treatment require, semi- permanent harm up to 1 year • Some adverse publicity, need careful public relations • High potential for complaint, litigation possible. • Breaches of law punishable by fines only
2	Negligible	Minimal loss, delay, inconvenience or interruption. Short to medium term affect.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minor impact on service objectives • No significant disruption to service capability • Moderate financial loss – can be accommodated • First aid treatment, non-permanent harm up to 1 month • Some public embarrassment, no damage to reputation • May result in complaints / litigation • Breaches of regulations / standards

328

Likelihood

Score	Level	Description				
6	Very High	Certain.	>95%	Annually or more frequently	>1 in 10 times	An event that is has a 50% chance of occurring in the next 6 months or has happened in the last year. This event has occurred at other local authorities
5	High	Almost Certain. The risk will materialise in most circumstances.	80 – 94%	3 years +	>1 in 10 - 50 times	An event that has a 50% chance of occurring in the next year or has happened in the past two years.
4	Significant	The risk will probably materialise at least once.	50 – 79%	7 years +	>1 in 10 – 100 times	An event that has a 50% chance of occurring in the next 2 years or has happened in the past 5 years.
3	Moderate	Possible the risk might materialise at some time.	49 – 20%	20 years +	>1 in 100 – 1,000 times	An event that has a 50% chance of occurring in the next 5 or has happened in the past 7 years.
2	Low	The risk will materialise only in exceptional circumstances.	5 – 19%	30 years +	>1 in 1,000 – 10,000 times	An event that has a 50% chance of occurring in the next 10 year or has happened in the past 15 years.
1	Almost Impossible	The risk may never happen.	< 5%	50 years +	>1 in 10,000 +	An event that has a less than 5% chance of occurring in the next 10 years and has not happened in the last 25 years.

This page is intentionally left blank

TITLE	Special Education Needs and Disability Sufficiency and Safety Valve Programmes
FOR CONSIDERATION BY	The Executive on Thursday, 29 September 2022
WARD	None Specific
LEAD OFFICER	Deputy Chief Executive - Graham Ebers, Director, Children's Services - Helen Watson
LEAD MEMBER	Executive Member for Children's Services - Prue Bray

PURPOSE OF REPORT (INC STRATEGIC OUTCOMES)

The decision is required because

- (a) there are too few special school places in or on the margin of the Borough, leading to children having to travel outside the local area for special school places.
- (b) action is required to reduce spend on the High Needs Block budget, to eliminate a budget deficit, by delivery of high quality, local, more cost effective specialist provision.
- (c) Action is required to reduce spend on home to school transport, by reducing the length of journeys to school.

The benefits are:

- (a) Children will be able to attend appropriate specialist provision close to their homes, reducing the time they spend in transit.
- (b) Delivering cost savings for both the High Needs Block and Home to School Transport will ensure available funding is better aligned to the needs of vulnerable children and young people.

RECOMMENDATION

That Executive:

- 1) Approves the submission of a proposal by the Director of Children's Services in consultation with the lead member for Children's Services to the DfE for two new Special Free Schools in the borough in October 2022;
- 2) Supports the recommendation to utilise two sites (part of Rooks Nest Farm, Barkham and part of Grays Farm, south of Wokingham) owned by the Council for the provision of two new Special Free Schools and note that the disposal of these sites would be subject to a further Executive decision;

- 3) Notes the ongoing preparatory work for participation in the national “Safety Valve” intervention programme from September 2022.
- 4) Notes the development work in progress for further projects to increase special needs provision in the borough.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

As with many other local authorities, Wokingham continues to face significant challenges in balancing available High Needs Block (HNB) resources with meeting the needs of local children and young people with SEN. One of the contributory factors to this challenge is insufficient local high quality, but value for money, specialist provision.

An in-year deficit of £4.3m on the High Needs Block is forecast for the 2022/23 financial year, with a cumulative DSG deficit of £14.5m forecast by the end of March 2023. The number of children requiring support is projected to continue to increase.

Under the governance of the SEND Innovation & Improvement Programme the local authority seeks to work in partnership with schools, families and a range of stakeholders to identify and deliver a sustainable approach to SEND within the borough. A number of key actions have been identified, and plans are in development to improve service provision. Two strands of work can be identified:

- Improving SEND services (including assessment) in mainstream schools.
- Investment in new local specialist provision, to meet increasing demand and to increase the proportion of children and young people with Education Health and Care Plans in local provision.

This report provides an overview of the significant programme of work ongoing, the focus of the SEND Improvement Board over the coming months, and Wokingham’s participation in the Department for Education’s Safety Valve Programme from September 2022. This programme was established in 2020/21 to provide additional support to Local Authorities with the highest percentage Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) HNB deficits.

Five key areas of work to improve services (learning from previous safety valve interventions) are planned:

- Early Intervention Focus
- Increased SEN Support Offer
- Review EHCP assessment process and thresholds
- Culture change and work with school leaders
- Appropriate and thorough provision mapping, with potential development of more local provision

Investment in new facilities will be central to plans to improve services, while reducing the current deficit. While this investment is separate to the Safety Valve Programme, the proposals are linked through the underlying need to reduce spend. Three levels of provision are planned:

- Specially resourced provision (SRP), where children spend most of their time in school in mainstream classes.
- Designated units (DU), where children spend most of their time in the unit, with mainstream education for a smaller proportion of their school time. 2 new units and a separate Early Years provision have been identified as required to meet need.

- Special Schools, where a need for two additional special schools has been identified.

Plans for SRP and DU provision are in development.

The DfE announced this summer that local authorities have a further opportunity to put forward proposals for new special free schools, under the national “Wave 15” Free School Programme. In essence, if accepted, local authorities provide free sites, guarantee to fund places at the schools, and provide statements of requirements and evaluate proposals from Trusts who wish to run new schools, and the DfE provides capital funding and appoints Trusts to run schools. It is proposed that two proposals are put forward, for schools on part of the Rooks Nest Farm site at Barkham and part of the Grays Farm site, south of Wokingham.

BACKGROUND

In Wokingham 2.5% of the school age child population have an Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP) (a statutory statement of the additional support and special provision they require) because of the severity or complexity of their needs. Many of these children are placed in mainstream schools (just under 40% of all EHCPs are for mainstream schools), but an almost identical proportion are placed in Special Schools and Resource Bases (the balance is largely made up of young people attending Further Education colleges).

Wokingham Borough is experiencing a very rapid growth in the number of children with high levels of Special Education Needs (measured by EHCPs). Recent projections point to the number of EHCPs increasing from just under 1,500 EHCPs in January this year to nearly 2,400 EHCPs by 2025, nearly 60% growth, if no corrective action is taken. This is consistent with the rate of growth in the number of EHCPs over the period 2019 to 2022 of over 15% per annum (from 934 in 2019 to 1,488 in 2022). This rate of growth greatly exceeds the growth rate for the child population (less than 5%).

Associated with this growth in EHCPs, the number of children with EHCPs naming special schools outside the borough, including high cost independent and non-maintained special schools, has increased.

As a consequence of this growth an in-year deficit of £4.5m is forecast for the 2022/23 financial year, with a cumulative deficit of £14.5m forecast by the end of March 2023. Without corrective action this deficit will continue to grow.

It has been recognised by officers, members and other stakeholders that this is untenable, and officers have been working with schools and other stakeholders to better understand the challenges to help formulate plans to improve the local management of SEND. This work continues under the leadership of a local SEND Improvement Board, tasked with the delivery of a SEND Innovation and Improvement Programme.

This issue is not unique to Wokingham, and the DfE set up a national Safety Valve programme to support councils facing rapidly rising deficits to reduce spend in 2020/21. Learning from ongoing Safety Valve interventions in other areas informs the programme of works that has been developed by officers and key stakeholders working to the SEND Improvement Board.

Business Case

Evidence of need

Key data is set out below, with further data in Appendix one, the current SEND position.

Needs and support requirements relating to SEND have increased significantly in Wokingham between 2017 and 2020; analysis of trend data suggests that future increases are likely over the next three years.

Within this group, the increasing numbers of younger children (in Reception, KS1 and KS2) with EHCPs is notable. Although absolute numbers are small, between 2019 and 2020 there was a 75% increase in the numbers of children at Reception age with EHCPs. Increases in the numbers of children at early curriculum years have potentially significant implications for increased demand for services and support in coming years.

In terms of primary SEN needs featured in EHCPs, the greatest areas of need show consistently across various data sets as being for Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD), Social Emotional and Mental Health difficulties (SEMH), Speech Language and Communication difficulties (SLC) and Moderate Learning Difficulties (MLD) In recent

years, there have been significant proportionate increases in ASD and SEMH in KS2 and KS3 particularly. This also has potentially significant implications for demand for services and support as these children age through the education system.

The projected increases for these categories of need are sufficient to justify new provision in Wokingham. Between 2022 and 2025, the following increases are expected:

SEMH	277
ASD	370
SLD	14
SLCN	104
Other needs	106

The new Oak Tree School in Winnersh will provide 75 places for children with ASD in the borough, still below the scale of the projected need.

The projections for SEMH (Social Emotional and Mental Health difficulties) and SLD (Severe Learning Difficulties) and SLCN (Speech Language and Communication difficulties) potentially require a programme at least twice as great as the proposed 200 additional Special School places, but the gap will be made up through improved support in schools and better provision in mainstream schools through new resource base and unit places.

The projected cumulative deficit (without corrective action) will increase to circa £49m by the end of 2025/26.

Options considered

Three options have been identified:

- 1) Do Nothing
- 2) Seek to solve the various identified challenges solely through use of Wokingham held resources.
- 3) Seek to work in partnership with the DfE with the intention of securing investment and support using external resources.

Option one has been rejected as the financial consequences of the scale of the expected deficit are unsustainable and the lack of local provision means that children are subject to lengthy daily journeys to out of borough provision.

Option two is to do what is possible without external financial support. However, the scale of the capital investment required is such that it would be very challenging to support the development of additional provision, given Wokingham's pre-existing commitments and limited resources. Changes to support, assessment and service delivery would all take place, but the impact would be lessened if aspects of the growth programme were not deliverable. Further details of proposed improvements to the support programme for schools are set out in Appendix two: SEND support programme improvements.

Option three has the potential to unlock funds that will enable a full programme of interventions to be delivered, including timely investment in new facilities. The two key partnerships with the DfE are participation in the Safety Valve Programme and securing support for two new special schools in the borough through bids to the national Wave Free School funding programme (which is separate to the Safety Valve Programme).

Further details of the proposed investment programme, including the two proposed Special Free Schools, are set out in Appendix three: SEND Investment Programme

Option 3 has been identified as the most advantageous to the Council, with Option 2 as the fall back.

Proposed sites

New school site area

Each new school would need between 1.22 and 1.63 Hectares for the site, based on DfE non-statutory accommodation and site guidance for special schools.

Proposed sites

Following a review of the Council's land ownership two sites have been identified as suitable and available for new Special Schools. These are:

- Part of Rooks Nest Farm, Barkham Ride, Finchampstead, Wokingham RG40 4EU
- Part of Grays Farm Heathlands Road, Wokingham RG40 3AN

Utilising our existing understanding and knowledge of the sites, the initial view of officers is that these sites would be suitable for SEND School use from a planning and development point of view. They could also be available within the timeframes of the programme.

Subject to approval from the DfE of our bids, the formal long leasehold disposal of the sites to the DfE for SEND school use would be subject to a decision by the Executive.

Risks

The key risks are:

That the Council is unsuccessful in securing new schools through the Wave 15 proposals.

This has to be considered a high risk, as only 60 schools are expected to be approved.

That too few schools volunteer to host specialist resource bases and resource units.

This has to be considered to be a high risk, as there has been limited interest to date from schools.

That the planned review of the EHCP assessment process and thresholds leads to a faster throughput to Special School provision than currently projected.

While this is considered to be a medium risk, it has to be counterbalanced by proposals to increase both SEND support for schools and early intervention.

Timescales

Safety Valve Interventions

From Winter 2022

New WBC supported Specialist Resources Bases and Units

From September 2023

Expected outcomes

Reduction in the High Needs Block Deficit, working towards a balanced budget

Reduction in Home to School Transport Spend

Increased proportion of children educated in appropriate specialist provision in the borough

Trend towards an increased proportion of children educated in special schools reversed.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS OF THE RECOMMENDATION

The Council faces severe funding pressures, particularly in the face of the COVID-19 crisis. It is therefore imperative that Council resources are focused on the vulnerable and on its highest priorities.

	How much will it Cost/ (Save)	Is there sufficient funding – if not quantify the Shortfall	Revenue or Capital?
Current Financial Year (Year 1)	£100k	Yes – funded from existing resources	Revenue
Next Financial Year (Year 2)	£100k	Yes – funded from existing resources	Revenue
Following Financial Year (Year 3)	£30m	No – subject to capital funding bids through Wave programme	Capital

Other Financial Information

The capital cost of building 2 new special schools is estimated at £26m. Bids to the DfE’s Wave programme would seek to secure funding as set out in option 3 above. In addition, some capital funding is also held by the DfE for the Safety Valve Programme and this will be explored as part of negotiations.

Release of the 2 sites identified for locating the new schools would equate to loss of capital receipts of between £5m and £5.5m as the land would not be available for other purposes.

The capital receipt could otherwise be used to reduce the Council’s revenue spend by a sum equating to 5% of the capital value received, in this case therefore £262,500 per annum.

The revenue costs of additional capacity needed to deliver the programme of work supporting the funding bids is estimated at £200k.

Delivery of increased local provision to meet need unlocks savings as more SEN pupils are educated locally. The average cost of a special school place is significantly lower than commissioning a place through the independent and non-maintained sector, driving down costs for the High Needs Block. In addition, as individuals are educated closer to home, costs incurred on statutory Home to School Transport are reduced.

Based on current average costs, for every pupil educated in an in-borough special school rather than an independent non-maintained school, the following savings would be delivered annually:

- Placement cost £35,000
- Transport cost £5,000

Providing an additional 200 in borough placements would save around £70m against the High Needs Block, and £10m on transport over a 10 year period. Savings would start to be delivered from the point the schools open, increasing over a 4 year period reflecting expected intake profile. Given timeline for delivery of new schools, it is anticipated that the earliest savings would be delivered would be 2026/27.

Revenue Savings	per pupil £	per annum [based on 200 pupils] £	over 10 years of Education £
Average INMSS placement	65,000	13,000,000	130,000,000
Average Special School placement	30,000	6,000,000	60,000,000
Revenue Saving to High Needs Block	35,000	7,000,000	70,000,000
Average Transport cost Out of Borough	13,000	2,600,000	26,000,000
Average Transport cost In Borough	8,000	1,600,000	16,000,000
Revenue Saving to General Fund	5,000	1,000,000	10,000,000

Note here that the expected saving to General Fund alone is, at £1m p.a., £0.74m greater than the financial benefit that would accrue from selling the sites and using the interest from the receipts to offset revenue spend.

Stakeholder Considerations and Consultation

Include information relating to any consultation that is due to be carried out including date and how the consultation will be carried out

Public Sector Equality Duty

Equalities assessment attached.

Climate Emergency – *This Council has declared a climate emergency and is committed to playing as full a role as possible – leading by example as well as by exhortation – in achieving a carbon neutral Wokingham Borough by 2030*

New accommodation would be built to higher standards, with all electric heating, and solar panels in accordance with carbon neutral policy commitments. Educating an increased number of children within the borough will reduce school run transport

List of Background Papers

n/a

Contact Piers Brunning	Service Learning Achievement and Partnerships
Telephone Tel: 0118 974 6084	Email piers.brunning@wokingham.gov.uk

This page is intentionally left blank

Appendix One: SEND Need

1. **Needs and support requirements relating to SEND have increased significantly** in Wokingham between 2017 and 2020; analysis of trend data suggests that future increases are likely over the next three years.
2. Trend data from 2017-2020 show **increasing numbers and proportion of Wokingham children and young people with EHCPs**. The increases are in excess of local population growth (approximately 4% over the past 3 years, compared with an increase of 8% in the number of children and young people with EHCPs between 2019 and 2020).
3. Within this group, the **increasing numbers of younger children (in Reception, KS1 and KS2) with EHCPs requires attention**, and explanations for this require further research and discussion. Although absolute numbers are small, between 2019 and 2020 there was a **75% increase in the numbers of children at Reception age with EHCPs**. Data collected at the local level also demonstrates **increased demand for support for children aged between 3 months and 5 years**. Increases in the numbers of children at early Curriculum years have potentially significant implications for increased demand for services and support in coming years.
4. In terms of primary SEN needs featured in EHCPs, the greatest areas of need show consistently across various data sets as being for ASD, SEMH, SLC and MLD. In recent years, there have been **significant proportionate increases in ASD and SEMH in KS2 and KS3 particularly**. This also has potentially significant implications for demand for services and support as these children age through the education system.
5. Through consultation on the SEND Strategy in general, **the sufficiency of local support for SEMH-related needs** is an area which professionals, parents and carers have consistently flagged as a priority area of focus for the SEND Strategy.
6. Reviews of EHCPs show **there are increases in several types and levels of SEN needs at KS2 level**. Explanations for this, implications of services and how the system needs to be shaped over the lifetime of this Strategy require further research and discussion. As of 2020, **more children at KS2 receive SEN support than any other Curriculum Year (41% of the total number of children and young people receiving SEN support are in KS2)**. In terms of SEN Support, there are also increasing levels of needs relating to ASD in KS2 and an upward trend between 2017 and 2020.
7. **There is also a general upward trend in demand for SEN Support**. Currently 9% of children and young people in Wokingham receive SEN Support, and numbers of children with SEN support in state-funded Wokingham schools have increased significantly since 2017. **Increases in SEN support needs related to SEMH across most Key Stages** over the last three years is particularly striking.

8. As with many other local areas across the country, it is a consistent struggle to ensure that needs are met through local provision in Wokingham. A significant proportion (**approximately 33%**) of children and young people with EHCPs are **educated Out of Borough**. Over 62% of children and young people educated out of borough are 16+.

9. Collectively, the scale and nature of trend increases has significant implications for the strategic approach to **strengthening local arrangements for children and young people with SEND and their families**: particularly in relation to **the sufficiency of in-borough provision** particularly for areas of growing need; support for children and young people in **mainstream settings**, and **strengthening transition arrangements** between school years and into adulthood.

Appendix Two: SEND support programme

The Safety Valve Programme

In 2020/21, the Department for Education introduced the 'safety valve' intervention programme for those local authorities with the very highest percentage Dedicated School Grant (DSG) deficits, recognising that help would be needed for these authorities to turn things around in a short space of time.

The programme required those local authorities to develop substantial plans for reform to their high needs systems and associated spending, with support and challenge from the department, to rapidly place them on a sustainable footing.

Wokingham is due to take part in the 'safety valve' intervention programme from September 2022.

Delivery of the programme to date has focussed on two principal goals, viewed as critical for local authorities to reach financial sustainability:

- Appropriately managing demand for EHCPs, including assessment processes that are fit for purpose.
- Use of appropriate and cost-effective provision. This includes ensuring mainstream schools are equipped and encouraged to meet needs where possible, whilst maintaining high standards for all pupils.

Initial thinking for meeting the above goals in the Council's improvement journey, based on actions by councils already in the Safety Valve Programme is organised under five key headings:

- Early Intervention Focus
- Increased SEN Support Offer
- Review EHCP assessment process and thresholds
- Culture change and work with school leaders
- Appropriate and thorough provision mapping, with potential development of more local provision

Established Key Programme Actions

This section provides a brief account of agreed actions under current plans, as these set the context for the enhanced programme of activities that will be agreed once the Council enters the Safety Valve Programme.

Transitions

The Council is continuing to deliver against an Accelerated Progress Plan (APP) in respect of the ongoing weakness identified in the SEND Revisit (an Ofsted inspection in 2021, following up on progress since the Local Area SEND Inspection in 2019), in terms of the lack of a developed pathway to enable young people with SEND to make a successful transition to adulthood.

An action plan of six key areas of improvement has been developed with the following key actions:

1. Strengthen governance and performance management of transitions for all children and young people with SEND in Wokingham.
2. Informed by the outcomes from Action 1 above, establish a clear protocol / policy within WBC that defines transitions and the respective roles of professionals including (but not limited to) Children's Services and Adult Social Care.
3. Complete coproduced Preparation for Adulthood (PfA) Pathway documentation and guidance for parents, carers, and professionals, which articulates the engagement, roles, and responsibilities of all key stakeholders/partners at each stage of transition to adulthood.
4. To improve transition arrangements through Royal Berkshire Foundation Trust (healthcare) provision.
5. To continue to increase the number of people aged 14+ who are on GP Learning Disability registers and access an LD Health Check.
6. Fully utilise Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET/EET) & September Guarantee (a statutory requirement for local authorities to find education and training places for young people aged 16 and 17) data.

Work is progressing under each of these areas, with some areas now completed. Officers are currently bringing together a range of evidence to support the sharing of impact of the APP.

Officers continue to work closely with the Council's DfE SEND Advisor, and have held an APP review meeting with the DfE and CQC colleagues in July 2022

Children and Young People's Integrated Therapy (CYPIT)

The Council commissions Occupational Therapy, Speech and Language Therapy and Physiotherapy for Children and Young People with an Education Care and Health Plan (EHCP) where therapy has been identified in the Education section of the plan (Section F).

Berkshire Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust (BHFT) currently provide the commissioned service (CYPIT), under a contract which runs to 31 August 2022.

Formal approval was secured to source a provider for these services across Berkshire West, in collaboration with Brighter Futures for Children, Reading and West Berkshire District Council. The subsequent procurement has been led by Wokingham, and tender responses submitted are being evaluated.

The Council will be seeking formal approval to extend the current Wokingham CYPIT contract for a further seven months from 1 September 2022 to 31 March 2023 on current terms and conditions; to accommodate additional time required to complete evaluation and contract mobilisation.

Extension of the Wokingham CYPIT contract until the 31 March 2023, will ensure continuity and sustainability of current service provision and the continued delivery of

statutory services for the duration of procurement, with a new single CYPIT contract across Berkshire West commencing on the 1 April 2023.

Foundry Review

The Foundry College is the Wokingham Pupil Referral Unit (PRU), established to educate children who cannot be educated in a school, normally because of a medical condition or permanent exclusion.

The review, in partnership with Foundry College, has been progressing well with stage 1 now completed. Through the Innovation and Improvement Partnership (IIP), with support from commissioning and Foundry a one-year Service Level Agreement (SLA) will be in place by early summer. This will then further develop into a new SLA with ongoing work to develop a five-year strategic plan and budget setting around need based on the four key deliverables. Permanently Excluded, Medically Vulnerable, Alternative Provision, and Outreach.

During 2021/22, potential funding of £400k has been identified within the High Needs Block to support potential financial activity that may come out of the review and support Foundry on projects of a significant in-year deficit. No funding was drawn down as the actual financial position improved on the school's initial projections. Foundry has set a balanced budget for the 2022/23 financial year, with discussions ongoing around longer-term financial planning.

This page is intentionally left blank

Appendix Three: SEND new premises programme

There are three components to the SEND new premises programme:

On existing sites / smaller provision

The first two are (normally) on the sites of mainstream schools, run by those schools.

- Special Resource Bases (SRB)
- Special Units

Resource bases are for children that are expected to spend the majority of their time in mainstream classes (as a guide 70% mainstream and 30% in the unit). Units are for children who will spend the majority of their time in the Unit (as a guide, 30% mainstream and 70% in the unit). Consequently Units will be larger premises, even if the number of children are the same. Admission is through the facility being named in an Education Health and Care Plan, following consultation.

Both SRBs and Units will have more space per child than mainstream provision, not least because of their high staff to pupil ratio and small teaching groups. Both may have specialist therapy areas, small group teaching spaces and staff facilities and meeting rooms.

Currently Wokingham has a number of primary schools and one secondary school with designated Resource Bases, covering autism, speech, language and communications difficulties, hearing impairment and physical disabilities but these are subject to review because the number of places commissioned and the operational model of the existing provision does not match current needs. This has resulted in a high number of empty places being funded, whilst needing to commission appropriate specialist provision in independent and non-maintained schools to be able to meet the complex needs of children and young people.

The size of Resource Bases can vary, but in Wokingham current provision has a range of 8 to 25 funded places.

The programme is in development and it is anticipated that this will be the subject of further reports to Executive, towards the end of 2022 for implementation in September 2023..

New Schools

Projections point to a need for additional local provision, because of rising need for certain categories of SEND. Moreover, approximately 1/3rd of the Wokingham children on the roll of special schools are placed outside the borough. Creating local special schools will help meet the needs of new children needing special school places, and, in time, has the potential to reduce the usage of high cost out of borough independent and non-maintained special school places.

Recognising the need for additional special school capacity, the DfE has determined that circa 60 new Special Free School Places will be created through the “Wave 15” national Free School programme. Local Authorities have been invited to submit proposals in October 2022. Successful Local Authorities will be required to commission places at the new school or schools (and so guarantee the revenue funding for the school) and will write the specification and be part of the appointment process for the Trust that will run the school. They will also be expected to identify a site for the new school that is available for free or at a peppercorn rate (this ordinarily means the local authority will need to provide the site). In exchange the DfE will provide the premises and will appoint a Trust to run the school (which would normally be the Trust the Council favours).

Wokingham is proposing two new secondary schools, each offering 100 places.

- A Social Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH) focused school.
- A Severe Learning Disability and Speech, Language and Communication difficulty school (essentially very similar to Addington School in Woodley).

These schools would complement the existing provision in Wokingham:

- Addington School, 255 places, 3 to 19, for children with a range of needs (10), including Learning Disabilities.
- Chiltern Way, 69 places, 8 to 16, a school for children with SLCN - Speech, language and Communication and ASD - Autistic Spectrum Disorder.
- The Oak Tree School, 75 places, 5 to 19, for children with ASD, expected to open 2023

New school site area

Each new school would need between 1.22 and 1.63 Hectares for the site, based on DfE non-statutory accommodation and site guidance for special schools.

Proposed sites

Two sites in the Council’s ownership have been identified:

- Part of Rooks Nest Farm, Barkham Ride, Finchampstead, Wokingham RG40 4EU
- Part of Grays Farm Heathlands Road, Wokingham RG40 3AN

Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) form: the initial impact assessment

1. Process and guidance

The purpose of an EqIA is to make sure that the council is meeting the needs of all our residents by ensuring we consider how different groups of people may be affected by or experience a proposal in different ways.

The council has a two stage EqIA process:

- Stage 1 - the initial impact assessment
- Stage 2 - the full impact assessment.

This form is for use at Stage 1 of the process. This must be completed when undertaking a project, policy change, or service change. It can form part of a business case for change and must be completed and attached to a Project Initiation Document. The findings of the initial impact assessment will determine whether a full impact assessment is needed.

Guidance and tools for council officers can be accessed on the council's Tackling Inequality Together intranet pages.

Date started:	25 th August 2022
Completed by:	Piers Brunning
Service:	Childrens Services
Project or policy EqIA relates to:	Proposals for two Wave 15 Special Free Schools
Date EqIA discussed at service team meeting:	30/08/22
Conclusion (is a full assessment needed?):	No
Signed off by (AD):	Sal Thirlway
Sign off date:	30/08/22

2. Summary of the policy, project, or service

This section should be used to summarise the project, policy, or service change (the proposal).

What is the purpose of the proposal, what are the aims and expected outcomes, and how does it relate to service plans and the corporate plan?

The proposal is that proposals for two special free schools are submitted to the DfE for consideration under the DfE's Wave 15 national Free Schools Programme. These would be schools for 100 students, with SEMH and Severe Learning Difficulties (complex needs)

The aims are:

To become the local school of choice for children with these needs.

That they should lead to a reduction in the number of children placed at schools outside the borough, including independent special schools.

To reduce the volume (total passenger distance) of movement out of the borough to special schools.

Outcomes:

To maintain standards of education provision for children with high levels of Special Education Need and Disabilities.

To improve the welfare of children by reducing the length of their home to school transport journey.

To reduce spend (including projected future spend) from the Dedicated Schools Grant High Needs Block.

To reduce spend (included projected future spend) from the Home to School Transport Budget.

Corporate Objectives:

Enriching lives: Champion excellent education and enable our children and young people to achieve their full potential, regardless of their background.

Support and challenge all schools to provide the right environment for effective learning for all pupils.

How will the proposal be delivered, what governance arrangements are in place and who are the key internal stakeholders?

The project would be delivered through a partnership between the Council and the DfE.

Governance occurs at a number of levels.

The decision as to whether or not to proceed with the project lies with the Council’s Executive, who are scheduled to consider the matter during their September 2022 meeting. Executive will (if the proposals are taken up by the DfE) also have responsibility for determining whether or not the sites can be transferred to the DfE. These arrangements are in accordance with the Council’s Constitution.

A partnership board would be established, with senior officer representation from a number of services would be established to work in collaboration with DfE representatives to oversee the development and delivery of the project.

Who will be affected by the proposal? Think about who it is aimed at and who will deliver it.

The proposal is intended to directly benefit children and young people with Special Education Needs and Disabilities. It will also provide opportunities for borough residents to be employed locally, both in the initial build phase, and, more importantly, in the open schools, supporting both teaching and providing necessary support services.

351

3. Data & Protected Characteristics

This section should be used to set out what data you have gathered to support the initial impact assessment.

The table below sets out the equality groups that need to be considered in the impact assessment. These comprise the nine protected characteristics set out in the Equality Act 2010 and other priority areas defined by the council.

Age	Disability	Gender reassignment	Marriage and Civil Partnership	Pregnancy/Maternity
-----	------------	---------------------	--------------------------------	---------------------

Religious belief	Race	Sex	Sexual Orientation	Socio-economic disadvantage
------------------	------	-----	--------------------	-----------------------------

What data and information will be used to help assess the impact of the proposal on different groups of people? A list of useful resources is available for officers on the Council’s Tackling Inequality Together intranet pages.

Age

The purpose of the schools would be to deliver improved services to children and young people aged 4 to 19.
The school will employ people of working age (18 to 67)

The age distribution of children and young people with high levels of SEND (with Education Health and Care Plans) can be ascertained from school census data and National Statistics.

Disability

The schools are intended solely to support children and young people with special education needs and disabilities.
The premises would be accessible and therefore the schools could employ individuals with disabilities.

Details of the needs and disabilities of children placed in special schools are held on internal confidential records.

Gender re-assignment

Relevant data would include the employment and HR policies of the Trusts that would operate the premises. These are unknown at this point.

Marriage and Civil Partnership

Relevant data would include the employment and HR policies of the Trusts that would operate the premises. These are unknown at this point.

Pregnancy / maternity

352

Relevant data would include the employment and HR policies of the Trusts that would operate the premises. These are unknown at this point.

Religious belief

The schools would serve pupils solely based on education need or disability, information on religious beliefs is not collected.

Relevant data would include the employment and HR policies and records of the Trusts that would operate the premises. These are unknown at this point.

Race

The declared ethnicity children and young people with high levels of SEND (with Education Health and Care Plans) can be ascertained from school census data and National Statistics.

Sex

The gender of children and young people with high levels of SEND (with Education Health and Care Plans) can be ascertained from school census data and National Statistics.

Sexual orientation

Relevant data would include the employment and HR policies and records of the Trusts that would operate the premises. These are unknown at this point.

Socio economic disadvantage

The school would serve children based on need, not economic circumstances. No records are collected on parental or carer circumstances.

4. Assessing & Scoring Impact

This section should be used to assess the likely impact on each equality group, consider how significant any impacts could be and explain how the data gathered supports the conclusions made.

Scoring impact for equality groups	
Positive impact	The proposal promotes equality of opportunity by meeting needs or addressing existing barriers to participation and/or promotes good community relations
Neutral or no impact	The proposal has no impact or no disproportionate impact.
Low negative	The proposal is likely to negatively impact a small number of people, be of short duration and can easily be resolved.
High negative	The proposal is likely to have a significant negative impact on many people or a severe impact on a smaller number of people.

354

Referring to the Scoring table above, please give an impact score for each group, explain what the likely impact will be, and briefly set out how the data supports this conclusion.

Equality group	Impact score	Impact and supporting data
Age	Positive Impact	The core purpose of the proposal is to benefit children and young people.
Disability	Positive Impact	The core purpose of the proposal is to benefit children and young people with disabilities.
Gender reassignment	Neutral impact	While no information on the Trust who will be responsible for running the schools is available, the DfE have a vetting process to ensure responsible bodies adhere to statutory employment requirements, including adherence to the Equality Act requirements.

Marriage and Civil Partnership	Neutral impact	While no information on the Trust who will be responsible for running the schools is available, the DfE have a vetting process to ensure responsible bodies adhere to statutory employment requirements, including adherence to the Equality Act requirements.
Pregnancy/Maternity	Neutral impact	While no information on the Trust who will be responsible for running the schools is available, the DfE have a vetting process to ensure responsible bodies adhere to statutory employment requirements, including adherence to the Equality Act requirements.
Religious belief	Neutral impact	While no information on the Trust who will be responsible for running the schools is available, the DfE have a vetting process to ensure responsible bodies adhere to statutory employment requirements, including adherence to the Equality Act requirements.
Race	Neutral impact	While no information on the Trust who will be responsible for running the schools is available, the DfE have a vetting process to ensure responsible bodies adhere to statutory employment requirements, including adherence to the Equality Act requirements.
Sex	Neutral impact	While no information on the Trust who will be responsible for running the schools is available, the DfE have a vetting process to ensure responsible bodies adhere to statutory employment requirements, including adherence to the Equality Act requirements.
Sexual Orientation	Neutral impact	While no information on the Trust who will be responsible for running the schools is available, the DfE have a vetting process to ensure responsible bodies adhere to statutory employment requirements, including adherence to the Equality Act requirements.
Socio-economic disadvantage	Neutral impact	While no information on the Trust who will be responsible for running the schools is available, the DfE have a vetting process to ensure responsible bodies adhere to statutory employment requirements, including adherence to the Equality Act requirements.

5. Conclusion and next steps.

Based on your findings from your initial impact assessment, you must complete a full impact assessment if you have identified any groups as having a low or high negative impact.

If no impact, or a positive impact has been identified, you do not need to complete a full assessment. However, you must include reference to the initial assessment in any associated reports, and it must receive formal approval from the Assistant Director responsible for the project, policy, or service change.

As the only identified impacts are positive, there is no requirement to complete a full assessment.

TITLE	Commissioned Services For The Health And Wellbeing Of Carers
FOR CONSIDERATION BY	The Executive on Thursday, 29 September 2022
WARD	None Specific
LEAD OFFICER	Director, Adult Social Care and Health - Matt Pope
LEAD MEMBER	Executive Member for Health, Wellbeing and Adult Services - David Hare

PURPOSE OF REPORT (INC STRATEGIC OUTCOMES)

Executive Committee are asked to approve the proposal to reprocur the voluntary sector (VCS) services that support unpaid carers with an additional budget of £80,000, taking the total spend on carers VCS services to £234,000 per annum. This will help manage demand for statutory residential, nursing and home care services.

This tender is part of a total £100,000 additional investment in services for unpaid carers in the borough (total spend will be £300,000 p.a.). There will also be £66,000 p.a. awarded to Optalis for registered care to support carers who need a break or cover in emergencies.

This report outlines the level of need within Wokingham and demonstrates the essential role carers play in preventing, reducing and delaying the need for formal care and support.

This project contributes to the strategic outcomes in the Community Vision of delivering Safe, Strong Communities and Changing the Way We Work for You. It will also deliver on the four Adult Social Care Strategy priorities, and on the priorities in the Carers Strategy of Identifying and Recognising Carers, Supporting Young Carers, Empowering Working Age Carers, and Enabling Carers to have a life outside of caring.

RECOMMENDATION

That the Executive:

- 1) Notes and approves the planned procurement of the carers service at a total value of £234,000 per annum for a period of up to 4 years, and
- 2) Delegates award post-procurement to the Director of Adult Services in consultation with the Lead Member for Health, Wellbeing and Adult Services.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

A carer is someone who, without payment, helps another person who needs support due to illness, age, disability, substance misuse or mental health problems (NHSE, 2020). This support is unpaid and is delivered to a family member, friend or other loved one.

Adults, children and young people can be carers. Carers may support someone with personal care, household tasks, finances or emotional support. There were approximately 14,000 unpaid or family carers in Wokingham at the time of the last census in 2011 and it is anticipated that this number will have grown significantly.

Unpaid and family carers support many people with health and social care needs to stay in good health and remain at home. It is an important part of the Adult Services Demand Management programme, and the desire of most residents, that carers are supported to keep their loved one at home for as long as possible to prevent, reduce and delay the need for statutory support including a care home placement.

Since 2016, carers services in Wokingham have been commissioned by the Council and delivered by TuVida (previously called Carers Trust East Midlands) and Crossroads Wokingham (recently dissolved). These comprise an information, outreach and support service for adults; a young carers service, and a flexible respite support service, offering stand-in care by professional care staff when carers have to attend medical appointments, or have a personal emergency which means they cannot carry out their caring role.

These three services were reprocured in late 2021, at a combined value of £200,000 per annum, for an initial three year term, with the option of two years' extension. They were procured using the existing budget, however it has become clear that Carers needs have increased throughout the Covid lockdowns, Council Officers made regular welfare calls to carers and feedback from social work teams and the voluntary sector evidenced that, many carers experienced high levels of mental health and social isolation difficulty as a result of the covid epidemic.

It is proposed that the commissioning budget for carers services is increased by £100,000 p.a. to a total budget of £300,000 p.a. This funding will be split:

1. New VCS contract for Outreach, Information and Advice for Adult and Young Carers for £234,000p.a. will be offered through open tender to commence 1st April 2023 until 31st March 2025 with the option of two one-year extensions (2+1+1). This is in line with the full range of Adult Services VCS contracts. Due to the amount of money being added, it is necessary under the Public Contracts Regulations to reprocure this contract in a competitive tender. The total cumulative spend will be £800,000 over the term of the contract; therefore, Executive Committee must approve this spend and is the subject of this report.
2. Service for flexible support for carers when they have hospital and other appointments or emergencies. will be awarded to Optalis, the Council owned registered care provider for £66,000 p.a

The additional benefits to carers will include:

- Support when a loved one is discharged from hospital, often a time when someone first becomes a carer or has to deal with change of circumstances.
- Training for carers to help them support a loved one safely at home, for example how to help move around.
- Help reduce social isolation with virtual and face-to-face opportunities to meet other carers and access social activities

Key issues, financial considerations and risks

- Positive PR implications are expected from this decision as it will invest an extra £100,000 into commissioned services supporting carers (£80,000 for consideration in this report)
- Financial: Extra £100,000 in total (£80,000 in this procurement) to be funded by growth funding as set out in the Medium Term Financial Plan.
- Risk - Challenge to procurement from existing provider: This is unlikely due to increase of money & current provider entitled to bid
- Risk of no bids received leaving the borough with no carers support service – this is highly unlikely as three appointable organisations, as well as current provider, have expressed interest in a potential tender

Timescales: The procurement would take place in Winter 2022 and the new contracts will commence 1st April 2023 for an initial two year term.

BACKGROUND

A carer is someone who helps another person who needs support due to illness, age, disability, substance misuse or mental health problems (NHSE, 2020). This support is unpaid and is delivered to a family member, friend or other loved one. Adults, Children and Young People can be carers. Carers may support someone with personal care, household tasks, finances or emotional support and deliver care worth approximately £132bn per annum in the UK (Carers UK, 2019).

There were approximately 14,000 unpaid or family carers ('carers') in Wokingham at the time of the last census in 2011 (Wokingham Carers Strategy 2020-2025, 2020) and it is anticipated that this number will have grown significantly. Under the Care Act 2014, local authorities have a duty to assess and support carers in their caring role; this is not contingent on the cared-for person having an assessment of their social care needs.

Legislation and guidance

Under the Care Act 2014, local authorities have a duty to assess carers and provide information and advice that supports them in their caring role. Under the government's recent People at the Heart of Care report social care reform includes expanding the capacity of the commissioned service to identify and support carers.

This project meets the aim in the Council Adult Social Care Strategy and the Voluntary and Community Sector Strategy to prevent, reduce and delay the need for formal care and support. This project will focus on supporting the Carers Strategy aims by increasing capacity to identify and recognise carers, support young carers, empower working age carers and enabling carers to have a life outside of caring.

BUSINESS CASE

During covid, carers were greatly impacted by closures of day services, community centres and other groups and communal face to face activities, for both them and their cared for person. The disproportionate increase in the caring burden during covid led many carers to experience deteriorations in their mental and physical health, including burnout and increased rates of illness (Carers UK, 2022). As well as the caring burden increasing for existing carers, lockdown meant that carer numbers increased, as people who had previously relied on other services for support turned to family and friends for care and support. Young carers were particularly hard hit, as the respite offered by school and the physical separation from their caring role of the school day was removed as the pandemic advanced into school closures.

The government's White Paper, People at the Heart of Care [People at the Heart of Care: adult social care reform white paper - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/white-papers/people-at-the-heart-of-care) has a focus on empowering unpaid carers, specifically:

1. Working with the sector to kick start a change in the services provided to support unpaid carers
2. Identifying, recognising and involving unpaid carers
3. Supporting the economic and social participation of unpaid carers. (Department of Health and Social Care, 2021)

Building on the national Carers Action Plan 2018 – 2020, the reforms require more access to respite and breaks, more peer group and wellbeing support, and more pro-active outreach by local authorities to seldom heard groups (for example carers of

people with dementia, carers from BAME groups), who often do not recognise they are entitled to support with their caring role. Commissioners from Wokingham Borough Council have been involved in discussions with Department of Health and Social Care about how to spend the planned £25m that will be made available nationally; however, no bidding process has yet emerged, and the planned focus appears to be currently on innovation projects, rather than expanding current services.

There is a strong business case for investing in carers as an essential element of the Council's prevention approach. Caring for carers helps to ensure that they and the people they care for remain out of costly statutory care. Carers are central to the Adult Social Care strategy priority to prevent, reduce and delay the need for formal care and support; by expanding the services through this reprocurement, the Council will directly contribute to carers and their cared-for people living more years in independent better health, reducing the cost to the Authority but, more importantly, securing the health, wellbeing and happiness of residents for years to come.

Options

Three options have been considered for meeting the need to increase support to carers:

1. Do nothing
2. Recommission with additional money to expand and improve the service
3. Bring the service inhouse and deliver as part of a Council team.

Option 1 – Do nothing:

This would mean that we keep the commissioned services as they are under the current contract, set to run under March 2025. Welfare calls to Carers and reports from operational teams show that this would not adequately support the additional carers who have been identified as a result of covid, nor cater for the increased needs for support, respite, information and advice that have emerged for the same reason. Ultimately, this means some carers and their cared for people would escalate to statutory levels of care faster, as their health and wellbeing deteriorated.

Option 2 – Recommission with additional money to expand and improve the service:

Under this option, additional funding of £100,000 would allow the Council to deliver better support for carers through the commissioned services' increased capacity for leadership, better awareness raising and publicity for carers' needs in the borough, especially those from seldom heard communities, thus empowering more carers to come forward for support (directly contributing to reform aims). It would also allow us to expand the offer of respite for carers and carers breaks, to expand the information, advice and activities offer to both adult and young carers.

Under this option, we would terminate existing commissioned services and offer the Information Advice and support for Adult and Young People Carers to the market (including to the current provider) as a tender for new, expanded services, with more funding and new elements of specification. The procurement would be aimed at providers in the voluntary and community sector as it is known that these organisations are well equipped to engage with seldom heard communities as they are not associated with statutory services; some people in seldom heard communities feel 'safer' engaging with these organisations. This option would directly benefit carers in the borough, leading to a happier, healthier carer population, who felt empowered to prioritise their

own wellbeing and continue in their caring role without the need for formal care and support. **This is the recommended option.**

Option 3 – Bring the service inhouse and deliver as a Council team:

Commissioners have researched the feasibility of this option, as it has been known to work in other authorities. Since 2007, Portsmouth City Council has a team of 13 that deliver carers support services to the city's 240,000 people. The team consists of social workers, support workers and assessors who offer combined assessments for carer and cared for, block purchased respite beds, and marketing and digital to keep the profile of carers high. The annual cost is in excess of £500,000 and the service does not benefit from the increased potentiality for engagement that independence from the Council does for VCS providers. While this is a sound option for some places and clearly has worked very well for Portsmouth, this service has had many years and a lot of funding to grow, develop and change into a service that meets current need. Given the imminent need to implement the social care reforms as they affect carers, Wokingham would be better to source carer support through specialist voluntary sector organisations that specialise in carers.

Risks associated with the decision

Potential challenge to decision to reprocure, or challenge to award:

This procurement will take place following termination of an existing contract mid-term. This is necessary because the amount of funding being added is greater than 10% of the current contract value and so under the procurement rules, a new procurement must be carried out. It is possible that the current provider would mount a legal challenge to either the decision to reprocure, or the outcome of the tender award. This is highly unlikely because due process has been followed in accordance with the law in the decision to reprocure, and all procurements are carried out in a legally compliant, fair and transparent process, giving all eligible candidates equal chances of success. In addition, it is anticipated that all providers, including the current provider, will welcome a decision to add substantial sums to the value of the contract. It is not foreseen that this is a significant risk.

Potential lack of bidders bidding for contract:

If this were to happen then the Council would have to consider either direct award to a provider, or bringing the service inhouse. However, it is not anticipated that this will occur. Commissioners have undertaken significant market engagement activity over the past few months and it is anticipated that there are three competent providers, as well as the current provider, who are interested in bidding for these contracts. This is a higher number than have previously shown interest in the carers contracts. It is not foreseen that this is a significant risk.

Timescales: Provisional timescales for this procurement are shown in Table 1 below:

Timeline for Tender			
Co produce revised Specifications	July 2022		TH
Market Engagement	July 2022		
Draft ITT documents	August 2022		TH
Exec	29 th Sept		
Give 6 months notice to Tu Vida	1 st October		End of contract would be 31 st March 2023
Issue ITT	w/c 3 rd October	Monday 28 th November	As earliest contract start is 1 st April there is a 2 month window to start the tender.
ITT deadline	Friday 4 th November	3rd January	
Evaluate Tenders	By Friday 18 th November	By 14 th Jan	
Director Approval	Friday 2 nd December	31 st Jan	
Intention to Award letter	5 th December	1 st Feb	
TUPE and mobilisation complete and contract start date	4 th Feb is possible but doesn't match notice after Exec	1 st April 2023	

Expected outputs and outcomes:

The expected outputs of the proposal are:

1. More carers identified, assessed and receiving support by an expanded carers support service, from a current 1305 to at least 2000 by the end of year 2
2. Increase in staff numbers delivering support in the commissioned service from 3FTE to at least 5FTE plus strategic management oversight
3. Increase in numbers of hours delivered under flexible support service from 1700 to 2500 per annum
4. Carers from diversity groups are represented in numbers proportionate to the general population (e.g. 24% with a disability, 13% from an ethnic minority (Wokingham Equality Profile, 2021))
5. More support will be delivered to young carers including faster assessments, more one to one support, more choice in group sessions, activities and events

The expected outcome is that carers in Wokingham will be well supported, awareness of carers and their needs will be well established and high profile in the borough, and accessing support is quicker and more comprehensive, leading to carers experiencing greater health, wellbeing and happiness in their caring role and the rest of their lives.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS OF THE RECOMMENDATION

The Council faces severe funding pressures, particularly in the face of the COVID-19 crisis. It is therefore imperative that Council resources are focused on the vulnerable and on its highest priorities.

	How much will it Cost/ (Save)	Is there sufficient funding – if not quantify the Shortfall	Revenue or Capital?
Current Financial Year (Year 1)			
Next Financial Year (Year 2)	£300,000	Yes	Revenue
Following Financial Year (Year 3)	£300,000	Yes	Revenue

Other Financial Information

There is a £200k base budget plus £100k of growth included in the MTFP for 2023/24 as part of the demand management programme to manage the Adult Service Revenue Budget,

The tender will be for £234,000 p.a for two years plus the option to extend for a further 2 years in line with the other Adult Voluntary Sector Contracts.

£66,000 p.a. will be directly awarded to Optalis, the Council owned care provider, for an enhanced the back Me Up and Flexible Carers Sitting service

Stakeholder Considerations and Consultation

- Carers Strategic Group and key voluntary sector & health partners were involved in the original procurement and carers service users were involved in the evaluation.
- Over 450 carers were spoken to in January 2022 as part of the Covid welfare checks.
- Healthwatch completed a Carers survey report October 2021
- The ASCOF Carers Survey 2021 reported on satisfaction of carers in the Borough.

Public Sector Equality Duty

PSED complied with and EqIA attached

Climate Emergency – This Council has declared a climate emergency and is committed to playing as full a role as possible – leading by example as well as by exhortation – in achieving a carbon neutral Wokingham Borough by 2030

Providers will be required to encourage and support children and young people to take an active role in reducing carbon emissions, encourage use of public transport to sessions and activities and raise awareness among carers of climate emergency agenda

List of Background Papers

Procurement Strategy Report

EQIA

Contact Jenny Lamprell

Telephone 07824 372114

Service Adult Social Care

Email jenny.lamprell@wokingham.gov.uk

Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) form: the initial impact assessment

1. Process and guidance

The purpose of an EqIA is to make sure that the council is meeting the needs of all our residents by ensuring we consider how different groups of people may be affected by or experience a proposal in different ways.

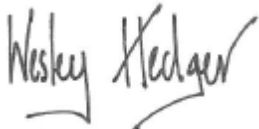
The council has a two stage EqIA process:

- Stage 1 - the initial impact assessment
- Stage 2 - the full impact assessment.

This form is for use at Stage 1 of the process. This must be completed when undertaking a project, policy change, or service change. It can form part of a business case for change and must be completed and attached to a Project Initiation Document. The findings of the initial impact assessment will determine whether a full impact assessment is needed.

Guidance and tools for council officers can be accessed on the council's Tackling Inequality Together intranet pages.

Date started:	18/7/22
Completed by:	Pamela Iyer
Service:	Strategy and Commissioning
Project or policy EqIA relates to:	Carers commissioned service reprocurement 2022
Date EqIA discussed at service team meeting:	3 rd August 2022
Conclusion (is a full assessment needed?):	No full assessment needed

Signed off by (AD):	
Sign off date:	3 rd August 2022

2. Summary of the policy, project, or service

This section should be used to summarise the project, policy, or service change (the proposal).

What is the purpose of the proposal, what are the aims and expected outcomes, and how does it relate to service plans and the corporate plan?

Purpose: Unpaid and family carers support many people with health and social care needs to stay in good health and remain at home, and this additional funding will be used to better identify, acknowledge and support more carers in the borough. Many carers experienced high levels of mental health and social isolation difficulty as a result of the covid epidemic. It is proposed that the budget for carers commissioned services be boosted by an additional £100k in order to facilitate improvements. As this is a variation in cost of more than 10% of the current contract, the service must go out to competitive tender again under the Council's procurement rules.

Aims and outcomes: The aim is for carers in Wokingham to be ably support to maintain their caring role, live a life outside of caring and fulfil their own health and wellbeing, as per the Carers Strategy 2020 – 2025. Expected outcomes include:

- Fewer statutory care referrals as carers are better supported to prevent, reduce and delay the need for formal care and support
- People who are looked after by an unpaid or family carer live more years in better health
- Wokingham's businesses, organisations and schools have greater awareness of carers needs, and carers know where to go for help
- More carers in Wokingham are identified and supported

Service plans and corporate plans: This project relates to the Carers Strategy and the ASC Strategy. It delivers on the Community Vision priorities of Enriching Lives and Changing the way we work for you in that carers' lives will be improved by better support and that this procurement will be linked to the strategic action plan for carers (implementing the Carers Strategy).

How will the proposal be delivered, what governance arrangements are in place and who are the key internal stakeholders?

This is additional funding, increasing budget for carer's services by 50% enabling more carers to be identified and receive support.

The proposal will be delivered via:

1. Full open tender for Information, Advice and Support for Carers
2. Direct Award to Optalis of the flexible sitting service to support carers who need to leave their loved one while the carer attends hospital or other appointments.

Governance – Executive Report and Procurement Strategy Report to September 2022 Executive. via Carers Steering group/Strategic Procurement Board and ASCLT

Key internal stakeholders – DASS, AD S&C, AD PHIP, AD ASC, Optalis(see Stakeholder Analysis)

Who will be affected by the proposal? Think about who it is aimed at and who will deliver it.

Unpaid Carers who support family or friends

Cared-for people and other family members

ASC staff

Existing provider and their staff

Communities in Wokingham: VCS services must all work harder to ensure seldom heard communities have the same opportunity to access services as the majority demographic. This means that services, including carers services, must consider pro-active outreach to these communities and how best to effect engagement, including whether this means partnering with other organisations in that community.

Services should also consider whether there are historic variations in levels of trust and engagement from some communities, and what the reasons for that may be.

3. Data & Protected Characteristics

This section should be used to set out what data you have gathered to support the initial impact assessment.

The table below sets out the equality groups that need to be considered in the impact assessment. These comprise the nine protected characteristics set out in the Equality Act 2010 and other priority areas defined by the council.

Age	Disability	Gender reassignment	Marriage and Civil Partnership	Pregnancy/Maternity
Religious belief	Race	Sex	Sexual Orientation	Socio-economic disadvantage

368

What data and information will be used to help assess the impact of the proposal on different groups of people? A list of useful resources is available for officers on the Council’s Tackling Inequality Together intranet pages.

Information directly from Service users via co-production work undertaken by Jodie Reichelt and Tim Holland
 Demographic data from JSNA, MHNA
 Equality plan information
 Ethnically Diverse Staff Network – internal staff network
 Residents’ Equality Forum – cross-borough network for residents
 Other staff networks and consultation with Equalities lead BG
 Consult with refugee groups including Reading Refugee Support Group

4. Assessing & Scoring Impact

This section should be used to assess the likely impact on each equality group, consider how significant any impacts could be and explain how the data gathered supports the conclusions made.

Scoring impact for equality groups	
Positive impact	The proposal promotes equality of opportunity by meeting needs or addressing existing barriers to participation and/or promotes good community relations
Neutral or no impact	The proposal has no impact or no disproportionate impact.
Low negative	The proposal is likely to negatively impact a small number of people, be of short duration and can easily be resolved.
High negative	The proposal is likely to have a significant negative impact on many people or a severe impact on a smaller number of people.

Referring to the Scoring table above, please give an impact score for each group, explain what the likely impact will be, and briefly set out how the data supports this conclusion.

Equality group	Impact score	Impact and supporting data
Age	Positive	The majority of carers are older adults, caring for older adults. Expanding this service will have a positive effect on that demographic.
Disability	Positive	People who are cared for by an unpaid or family carer are more likely to also be disabled. Expanding this service will have a positive effect on that demographic.
Gender reassignment	Neutral	At present, data does not indicate that there are members of this group included in these services. However, as the service is expected to increase pro-active outreach, it is likely that more people in this group will be engaged. At that point this assessment will be revised to include information as we receive it.
Marriage and Civil Partnership	Neutral	This project will not specifically impact people in this group in any notable way.
Pregnancy/Maternity	Neutral	This project will not specifically impact people in this group in any notable way.
Religious belief	Neutral	This project will not specifically impact people in this group in any notable way.
Race	Positive	As part of the tender, bidders will be specifically asked about pro-active outreach to BAME communities, who are historically underrepresented in these services, according to population data.
Sex	Positive	A larger number of unpaid and family carers in Wokingham are women; expanding this service will have a positive effect on this group.
Sexual Orientation	Neutral	This project will not specifically impact people in this group in any notable way.

Socio-economic disadvantage	Positive	A number of carers experience poverty as they are unable to work and therefore are more likely to be on a low income. This expanded service will be able to offer more and better quality advice on benefits maximisation and direct to sources of financial support.

5. Conclusion and next steps.

Based on your findings from your initial impact assessment, you must complete a full impact assessment if you have identified any groups as having a low or high negative impact.

If no impact, or a positive impact has been identified, you do not need to complete a full assessment. However, you must include reference to the initial assessment in any associated reports, and it must receive formal approval from the Assistant Director responsible for the project, policy, or service change.

This page is intentionally left blank

By virtue of paragraph(s) 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A
of the Local Government Act 1972.

Document is Restricted

This page is intentionally left blank

TITLE	Reprocurement of Berkshire Community Equipment Service
FOR CONSIDERATION BY	The Executive on Thursday, 29 September 2022
WARD	None Specific
LEAD OFFICER	Director, Adult Social Care and Health - Matt Pope, Director, Children's Services - Helen Watson
LEAD MEMBER	Executive Member for Health, Wellbeing and Adult Services - David Hare

PURPOSE OF REPORT (INC STRATEGIC OUTCOMES)

The Berkshire Community Equipment Service supports people to remain independent in their own homes by providing items such as grab rails, walking frames, toilet frames, orthopaedic beds and mattresses, specialist chairs, hoists and bath aids. The service delivers equipment to people's homes across the county and recycles after use. Last year over 10,000 items were delivered to homes in Wokingham, helping over 2,500 adults and children. The key benefit of the service is that vulnerable adults and disabled children in the Borough are able to remain living independently in a familiar and safe environment.

The service provision aligns to the strategic priorities set out within Wokingham's Adult Social Care Strategy, which include to:

1. Keep people safe
2. Prevent, reduce and delay the need for formal care and support
3. Work in partnership and commission services that deliver quality and value for money

The service is mainly used by Adult Services but equipment is also purchased by the Children with Disabilities Team (Children's Services).

The BCES was created in 2011 as a partnership between

- Wokingham Borough Council
- West Berkshire Council
- Reading Borough Council
- Bracknell Forest Council
- Slough Council
- The Royal Borough Windsor and Maidenhead Council
- Berkshire West and Berkshire East CCGs

The partnership operates through a Section 75 agreement which is an agreement under s.75 NHS Act 2006 to pool resources and delegate health related functions between partners.

This partnership has enabled efficiencies and economies of scale in the procurement and managing of the service. Purchasing in volume has allowed competitive prices to be

achieved. As the partners share hospitals and health services, there are efficiencies in the transporting of equipment and cost sharing with health partners.

This report seeks approval to proceed with the joint procurement of the Berkshire Community Equipment Service under the Section 75 agreement in accordance with the Procurement and Contracts Rules and Procedures. Executive Approval of the Procurement Business case is required as the total ascertainable value of Wokingham's contribution to the contract is over £663,540.

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that Executive:

- 1) Approves the attached Business Case to undertake a joint procurement exercise of Berkshire Community Equipment Service for Wokingham in partnership with West Berkshire, Reading, Bracknell Forest, Slough, the Royal Borough Windsor and Maidenhead Local Authorities and the NHS CCGs in Berkshire East and Berkshire West. West Berkshire Council will be the lead authority.

Details of the current spend and available budget can be found in Part 2 of the Executive Report (Financial Information).

- 2) Delegates authority to the Directors of Adult Services and Children Services in consultation with the Lead Members for Adults and Children's Services to utilise the budget for this service and to award the contract in conjunction with the other authorities to the preferred supplier.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Care Act 2014 places a statutory duty on Local Authorities to provide services which reduce or delay the impact of people's needs and help people to regain skills, for instance after a stay in hospital. The Children Act 1989: Section 17 provides a general duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of children in need (which includes a child with a disability).

Since 2012, Wokingham Borough Council has been part of a Section 75 agreement (an agreement under s.75 NHS Act 2006 to pool resources and delegate health related functions between partners) with Reading Borough Council, Bracknell Forest Borough Council, West Berkshire Council, Slough Borough Council, the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead and the NHS CCGs in East and West Berkshire to jointly procure an integrated equipment service for the community known as the Berkshire Community Equipment Service (BCES).

The Berkshire Community Equipment Service supports the Council's statutory duties by providing equipment at no cost to the customer when someone needs it to keep safe and remain in their own home rather than make use of other more costly statutory care such as nursing homes. The service provides daily living and nursing equipment to people who live in the community. It includes simple equipment such as perching stools, toilet frames and walking sticks, as well as more complex items such as hoists and specialist beds and seating. The purpose of this equipment is to support people in their own homes, promoting independence and safety.

The service is used by prescribers of community equipment, such as Occupational Therapists, Physiotherapists, GPs or Community Nurses, who have assessed their clients and who can then order the appropriate equipment. This is a loan service, which means that when the client no longer needs the equipment, it is collected and recycled.

The service itself is currently provided for the BCES partners by NRS Healthcare, who deliver, install and maintain all items of equipment. The contract is based upon usage and each local authority only pays for the equipment it uses commissioned. This ensures that Wokingham is only paying for services received and funding is not utilised to subsidise other commissioning authorities.

This well-established partnership is very successful and often held up as an example of good practice in joint commissioning. The partnership has great purchasing power due to the volumes of equipment purchased which gives access to a wide range of equipment including bespoke items and drives down costs. The service is performing very well and has improved year on year. In the last financial year, 87.19% of clients across the county said they felt 'very satisfied' with the service they had received. The number of complaints about the service is very small at just 0.04% as a percentage of all activity. The service is meeting its annual activity target of 98% for deliveries and collections with the highest number of activity and most cost effective being 3 day deliveries and 5 day collections. Operational staff are very happy with the service. Under the S75 agreement, West Berkshire Council is named as the lead authority and commissions the service in Wokingham on our behalf. Each partner pays an annual management fee to West Berkshire to cover contract management costs and staffing. West Berkshire Council contracts with NRS Healthcare directly on behalf of the partnership organisations to deliver the service. The current contract is due to expire on 31st March 2024. Under the Public Procurement Regulations, local authorities are required to offer new contract opportunities to the market through a competitive tender process in order to ensure value for money is achieved.

The Section 75 agreement between the partners itself remains current and does not need to be formally renewed as it is a rolling contract. However, approval is required for Wokingham to proceed with the joint procurement of the service with its partners. The new contract opportunity will be for an initial period of 5 years with up to 2 years contract extension. The opportunity will be advertised in May 2023 with a contract commencement date of 1st April 2024. West Berkshire will continue as Lead Authority.

BACKGROUND

The Council has a statutory duty under the Care Act 2014 to help to improve people's independence and wellbeing and provide services that prevent, reduce and delay the need for formal care and support. The Council also has a statutory duties under section 17 of the Children Act 1989 to safeguard and promote the welfare of children in need (which includes a child with a disability) and under section 2 of the Chronically Sick and Disabled Persons Act (1970) to make arrangements which are assessed to be necessary in order to meet the needs of the individual child.

Provision of equipment to adults and disabled children in their own home and continue to access education across the borough is a key part of the local offer to maintaining independent and safe living and enhances quality of life and wellbeing. It also enables carers both paid and unpaid to provide safe care and support.

Since 2012 the Council has worked jointly with its neighbouring local authorities and NHS CCGs to create an integrated Berkshire Community Equipment Service for adults and disabled children with an assessed need.

The service is currently delivered by NRS Healthcare which is one of the three main suppliers in the market nationally, all offering a similar service. Therefore, whichever provider is successful in the tender, it is expected that there will be a seamless transfer to the new contract. The service is well established and very well utilised. It offers a wide range of equipment from low level items such as bath boards and walking frames, to complex items such as hoists, turning aids and specialist seating.

Spend is based directly on demand arising from assessed need so varies year on year. Details of how WBC's spend compared with our partners during the last year can be found in Part 2 of the Executive Report.

Purchasing equipment under an integrated partnership arrangement represents value for money because the supplier is able to offer competitive rates due to bulk buying compared with purchasing items directly from a provider on-line. It is difficult to quantify the cost to WBC if we opted to commission our own service because there are no other single commissioned services as a comparator in the South East region: all authorities commission jointly with their health partners. Also, there are many variables to be factored into the service design which would impact on the cost model. However, to some degree we can quantify what WBC stands to lose by not continuing the partnership arrangement, in terms of the financial benefits of the recycling model and 50/50 cost splits with Health, details of which can be found in Part 2 of the Executive Report.

As a further simple comparison, below is a list of the five top items of equipment delivered to Wokingham residents and the cost of buying through the integrated service versus directly online from the supplier.

Description	Price each for BCES from NRS	Price each buying online	Saving per item by using BCES	Percentage difference buying online compared with BCES prices
Configura comfort tilt armchair	£1,075	£2,022.49	£947.49	88.14%
Bathlift (reclining back)	£159	£209.99	£50.99	32.11%
Mobile Hoist	£510	£833.32	£323.32	63.40%
Profiling bed	£436	£566.00	£129.86	29.77%
Half step	£45	£89.99	£44.76	98.96%

Further spend analysis is available within the Procurement Business Case attached and Part 2 of the Executive Report.

There is revenue and capital funding available for this contract as detailed in Part 2. Inflation and demand changes will be assessed on an annual basis over the life of the contract. The current contract has no clause for inflationary uplift so there is no obligation placed on the partnership. NRS approaches the Steering Group each year with their proposal for an uplift for activity charges which the Steering Group agrees or declines. Under the new contract, consideration will be given by the Steering Group about whether to include an inflationary clause to better manage cost over time. Equipment is bought at the market rate at the time.

The current contract includes an effective recycling credit model which is one of the standout features of this contract. This means that equipment no longer needed by those it was prescribed for is recycled and used again for other adults and children. Recycling is the key to controlling the budget because items recycled in this way generate financial credits. It also contributes to a reduction on the environmental impact of the service.

The current contract is efficiently managed by West Berkshire and was awarded via a tender process in 2017. It has been extended by two years until 31st March 2024. Similar examples of integrated community equipment services are found all over the country including Wales, Cornwall and North Yorkshire. Benchmarking within the South East region has shown that all Local Authorities jointly commission equipment services with their health partners therefore the model in Berkshire is in line with national and regional trends. The benefits of jointly procuring the service include:

- Efficient storage and distribution of equipment across the region
- Single point of contact for all prescribers and service users across the county for equipment supplies.
- Sharing of costs with our health partners.
- Aligning partner resources secures greater purchasing power which drives down costs through economies of scale. Opportunity to achieve Value for Money.
- Providers can make efficiencies such as securing more competitive prices from suppliers, lower contract administration cost, more efficient use of resources, recycling equipment
- The ability to order special one-off items at a good price

- Avoids duplication of effort across multiple authorities in procuring and contract managing.
- Dedicated resource in West Berkshire available to oversee and develop the service to ensure quality is achieved through monitoring of KPIs and outcomes.
- Improved information sharing between partners on the volumes, spend and performance of the equipment service commissioned for adults and disabled children.

BUSINESS CASE

The provision of a Berkshire wide service to supply equipment to vulnerable adults and disabled children living in their own homes for both short and long term care. This service is critical to ensure that children can continue to be safely cared for by their families in their own homes, coupled with supporting access to education settings and also to prevent hospital admissions and aid timely discharges from hospital.

It is proposed that the service will be jointly commissioned under a Section 75 Partnership agreement between the six Berkshire Unitary Authorities and the NHS CCGs in East and West Berkshire. The Section 75 agreement itself remains current and will not require to be renewed because it is a rolling contract however approval is required for Wokingham to commit to reprocurring the service along with its partners.

The competitive and open procurement process will be led by West Berkshire Council acting on behalf of the partnership with input from each partner to ensure the most economically advantageous tender following a proportionate quality:price evaluation. The Operational and Commissioning teams from WBC will have full involvement in the tender process including creating tender documentation which clearly sets out the requirements of the service and the expected outcomes to ensure we maintain control over the competitive tendering process and obtain a service comparable to what we have now. We will take part in evaluating the tender to ensure that a robust and fair process is followed and to ensure that consensus among the partners is reached on the winning bid. A key evaluation question will be about experience and knowledge of the boroughs.

West Berkshire have been the lead since 2015 and have dedicated staff in place to closely monitor and manage the service once awarded. The partners will meet regularly to discuss the development of the service and any issues. The contract will include robust clauses around default and termination in case of any serious issues with service delivery or under performance by the provider. The notice period is likely to be 6 months or immediate effect in the case of a serious breach. In this instance, a new provider would be commissioned.

If at any point Wokingham no longer wishes to be a member of the partnership, we would be required to give 12 months' notice and commission our own service. Under the terms of the agreement we would be required to indemnify the other parties for all costs arising as a result of the termination. West Berkshire has confirmed that the extent of our liability would be the cost of the contract management fee during the 12 month notice period. The service is large enough to continue as it is almost unnoticed if a single partner leaves, such is the scale of it.

In the event of extreme budget crisis, partners can suspend the agreement with one month's notice without incurring further expenditure.

To date the arrangement has been hugely successful and beneficial. Owing to its size and buying power, the partnership has influence over the provider which makes NRS Healthcare very responsive to the needs of all partners, particularly for one-off special requests. The number of complaints about the service is very small at just 0.04% as a percentage of all activity. The NRS Client Survey showed that the Berkshire depot achieved the highest percentage (87.19%) of clients who said they felt 'very satisfied' with the service they had received. The service is meeting its annual activity target of 98% for deliveries and collections and operational staff are very happy with the service.

The on-costs of the service such as logistics, warehouse provision and equipment maintenance are spread evenly among the partners which makes the service costs effective compared with commissioning a service alone.

Jointly tendering the service across Berkshire is the most cost effective way of delivering this service and using one provider means there is single point of contact for everyone using the service.

While Wokingham Borough Council could seek to end existing arrangements, there are considerable disadvantages of doing so including:

- providers may not be willing to establish a small operating model in the region for Wokingham alone due to the set up costs associated with creating a new infrastructure encompassing a warehouse, stock management, route planning and delivery, installation, servicing and maintenance, cleaning, training in using equipment, out of hours service.
- assumed loss of economies of scale due to smaller volumes of work which increases the unit price of each piece of equipment
- range of equipment likely to be limited
- Providers are less likely to generate efficiencies when delivering a Wokingham only service so the Council is unlikely to achieve value for money
- Additional cost to support contract management and the coordination of the service.

Procuring and mobilising a small scale service for Wokingham alone is not viable and therefore a joint approach is recommended.

Further information is included within the attached Procurement Business Case

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS OF THE RECOMMENDATION

The Council faces severe funding pressures, particularly in the face of the COVID-19 crisis. It is therefore imperative that Council resources are focused on the vulnerable and on its highest priorities.

	How much will it Cost/ (Save)	Is there sufficient funding – if not quantify the Shortfall	Revenue or Capital?
Current Financial Year (Year 1)	Contained in Part 2 of the report	Yes	
Next Financial Year (Year 2)	Contained in Part 2 of the report	Yes	
Following Financial Year (Year 3)	Contained in Part 2 of the report	Yes	

Following Financial Year (Year 4)	Contained in Part 2 of the report	Yes	Revenue and Capital
Following Financial Year (Year 5)	Contained in Part 2 of the report	Yes	Revenue and Capital
Following Financial Year (Year 6)	Contained in Part 2 of the report	Yes	Revenue and Capital
Following Financial Year (Year 7)	Contained in Part 2 of the report	Yes	Revenue and Capital

Other Financial Information

The Capital expenditure will help manage demand in the Revenue Budget. By providing capital equipment to assist people to live independently there will be less need for revenue expenditure on care staffing.

See Part 2 of the report.

Stakeholder Considerations and Consultation

Consultations with Stakeholders and service users will be conducted as part of this procurement.

The method will be determined by the Steering Group when work commences on the detailed tender project plan.

Public Sector Equality Duty

An Equalities Impact Assessment has been completed and no impact has been identified as there will be no change the existing service.

Climate Emergency – *This Council has declared a climate emergency and is committed to playing as full a role as possible – leading by example as well as by exhortation – in achieving a carbon neutral Wokingham Borough by 2030*

The recycling of equipment to be used again by other people has a positive impact on the Council's carbon neutral objective.

Reasons for considering the report in Part 2

Contains commercially sensitive financial information

List of Background Papers

- Executive Report Part 2 – Financial Information
- Procurement Business Case
- EQIA

Contact Sarah Salter	Service Strategy and Commissioning
Telephone 07809103093	Email sarah.salter@wokingham.gov.uk

By virtue of paragraph(s) 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A
of the Local Government Act 1972.

Document is Restricted

This page is intentionally left blank

Document is Restricted

This page is intentionally left blank

Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) form: the initial impact assessment

1. Process and guidance

The purpose of an EqIA is to make sure that the council is meeting the needs of all our residents by ensuring we consider how different groups of people may be affected by or experience a proposal in different ways.

The council has a two stage EqIA process:

- Stage 1 - the initial impact assessment
- Stage 2 - the full impact assessment.

This form is for use at Stage 1 of the process. This must be completed when undertaking a project, policy change, or service change. It can form part of a business case for change and must be completed and attached to a Project Initiation Document. The findings of the initial impact assessment will determine whether a full impact assessment is needed.

Guidance and tools for council officers can be accessed on the council's Tackling Inequality Together intranet pages.

Date started:	9 th June 2022
Completed by:	Sarah Salter
Service:	Commissioning
Project or policy EqIA relates to:	Berkshire Community Equipment Service
Date EqIA discussed at service team meeting:	
Conclusion (is a full assessment needed?):	No
Signed off by (AD):	
Sign off date:	5 th August 2022

2. Summary of the policy, project, or service

This section should be used to summarise the project, policy, or service change (the proposal).

What is the purpose of the proposal, what are the aims and expected outcomes, and how does it relate to service plans and the corporate plan?

Since 2012, Wokingham Borough Council has been part of a S75 agreement with Reading Borough Council, Bracknell Forest Borough Council, West Berkshire Council, Slough Borough Council, the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead and the NHS CCGs in East and West Berkshire to jointly procure an integrated equipment service for the community known as the Berkshire Community Equipment Service (BCES). The service is used by both adults and children with disabilities and provides daily living and nursing equipment to people who live in the community. It includes simple equipment such as perching stools and walking sticks, as well as more complex items such as hoists and specialist seating. The purpose of this equipment is to support people in their own homes, promoting independence and safety.

The service fulfils the Council's statutory duties under the Care Act 2014 to help to improve people's independence and wellbeing and provide services that prevent, reduce and delay the need for formal care and support and under section 17 of the Children Act 1989 to safeguard and promote the welfare of children in need (which includes a child with a disability).

The service provision aligns to the strategic priorities set out within Wokingham's Adult Social Care Strategy, which include to:

1. Keep people safe
2. Prevent, reduce and delay the need for formal care and support
3. Work in partnership and commission services that deliver quality and value for money

It also supports the delivery of strategic objectives as set out in the Children’s Services Strategy 2021 – 2024:

1. Ensure we are designed to deliver excellent outcomes for all children, young people & families in Wokingham
2. Develop effective strategies which improve outcomes and deliver them in the most efficient way
3. Strengthen our partnerships, drive system leadership & put children at the heart of everything Wokingham does

The current contract is due to expire at the end of March 2024. The arrangement has been highly successful in meeting the needs of vulnerable adults and children cost effectively because the partnership can buy in bulk which drives down price. The proposal is for Wokingham to continue being part of the partnership and to joint reprocure the service for a further 5 years (plus 2 years extension).

How will the proposal be delivered, what governance arrangements are in place and who are the key internal stakeholders?

Service Managers in Adult and Children’ services have been consulted as well as colleagues in Procurement, Finance and Legal who all support the proposal to jointly reprocure the service. A Procurement Business case has been written which will be presented to the leadership teams of Adults and Children’s Services before being presented to the Executive Committee for approval to proceed.

Once approved, the reprocurement exercise will be managed by West Berkshire Council as the lead authority with involvement from each partner in design and evaluation of the tender.

Who will be affected by the proposal? Think about who it is aimed at and who will deliver it.

The service is aimed at vulnerable adults and children with disabilities across the whole of Berkshire. A suitable provider will be awarded the contract via an open and competitive tender process.

3. Data & Protected Characteristics

This section should be used to set out what data you have gathered to support the initial impact assessment.

The table below sets out the equality groups that need to be considered in the impact assessment. These comprise the nine protected characteristics set out in the Equality Act 2010 and other priority areas defined by the council.

Age	Disability	Gender reassignment	Marriage and Civil Partnership	Pregnancy/Maternity
Religious belief	Race	Sex	Sexual Orientation	Socio-economic disadvantage

What data and information will be used to help assess the impact of the proposal on different groups of people? A list of useful resources is available for officers on the Council’s Tackling Inequality Together intranet pages.

From annual reporting we know that for the financial year 21-22 2,492 adults and 103 children with disabilities received pieces of equipment. Data is not specifically reported in relation to the nine protected characteristics, however, as this is a statutory service, it is available to anybody in the borough with an assessed need regardless of equality groups.

4. Assessing & Scoring Impact

This section should be used to assess the likely impact on each equality group, consider how significant any impacts could be and explain how the data gathered supports the conclusions made.

Scoring impact for equality groups	
Positive impact	The proposal promotes equality of opportunity by meeting needs or addressing existing barriers to participation and/or promotes good community relations
Neutral or no impact	The proposal has no impact or no disproportionate impact.
Low negative	The proposal is likely to negatively impact a small number of people, be of short duration and can easily be resolved.
High negative	The proposal is likely to have a significant negative impact on many people or a severe impact on a smaller number of people.

Referring to the Scoring table above, please give an impact score for each group, explain what the likely impact will be, and briefly set out how the data supports this conclusion.

Equality group	Impact score	Impact and supporting data
Age	No impact	The proposal to continue with the existing arrangement means that anybody with an assessed need will have access to the service free of charge regardless of equality groups
Disability	No impact	As above
Gender reassignment	No impact	As above
Marriage and Civil Partnership	No impact	As above
Pregnancy/Maternity	No impact	As above
Religious belief	No impact	As above
Race	No impact	As above
Sex	No impact	As above
Sexual Orientation	No impact	As above
Socio-economic disadvantage	No impact	As above

412

5. Conclusion and next steps.

Based on your findings from your initial impact assessment, you must complete a full impact assessment if you have identified any groups as having a low or high negative impact.

If no impact, or a positive impact has been identified, you do not need to complete a full assessment. However, you must include reference to the initial assessment in any associated reports, and it must receive formal approval from the Assistant Director responsible for the project, policy, or service change.

This page is intentionally left blank