Housing needs and supply

This topic addresses:

SA Objective:
(3) To meet local housing needs by ensuring that everyone has the opportunity to live in a decent affordable home

SEA Theme: Population; Material assets

Introduction

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) requires that Local Plans are prepared using a proportionate, adequate, up-to-date and relevant evidence base “about the economic, social and environmental characteristics of the area”. This background paper draws together and summarises the evidence with regard to meeting housing needs and delivery.

The urgent need for more housing and the constrained supply in Oxford is well documented and frequently features in the press and research studies. This is not a new problem; it was an issue also back in previous plans including the Core Strategy and former South East Plan. Independent inspectors at those times recognised the challenges of the urgent and significant level of housing need in Oxford versus the physical constraints of a city already built up to its boundaries. More recently the Oxfordshire Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) provided updated figures and an ‘objectively-assessed’ need figure, but in essence the broad scale and challenges of the problem of meeting housing needs remain similar to those of 10-15 years ago because whilst housing has been delivered the population has also increased.

The constrained housing supply and increasing unaffordability of housing in Oxford have significant sustainability impacts for those living and working in the City. It also puts pressure on welfare spending, because increasing rents push up spending on housing benefit. Housing provision is a well-known key determinant in attracting and retaining people to support continued economic growth of the City, and therefore also impacts the wider region, as does the congestion on roads around Oxford resulting from people living further away from their jobs in the City.

The supply of student accommodation and older persons accommodation are covered in subsequent papers.

Plans, Policies and Programmes

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

The NPPF identifies housing as one of the key elements to delivering sustainable development:

*<u>"a social role</u> – supporting strong, vibrant and healthy communities, by **providing the supply of housing required to meet the needs of present and future generations**; and by creating a high quality built environment, with accessible local services that reflect the community's needs and support its health, social and cultural well-being"* (NPPF para 7, emphasis added).

The NPPF makes clear that local planning authorities should have a robust understanding of housing requirements in their area, and that Local plans must support delivery of market and affordable housing to meet the needs of their area, unless this would compromise key sustainable development principles. The NPPF asks local councils to plan for a mix of housing based on current and future demographic trends and the needs of different groups in the community. The key sections of the NPPF in relation to housing are in **Section 6, Delivering a wide choice of high quality homes (paragraphs 47 to 53) and Para 159 within the Plan-making evidence base section**.

Other housing requirements and guidance within the NPPF are: the ability to make a windfall allowance if compelling evidence is available; the requirement to demonstrate a five-year supply of deliverable housing sites (Para 48); that relevant policies shall not be considered up-to-date if a five year supply of housing sites cannot be demonstrated (Para 49); encouraging local authorities to bring back empty houses and buildings into use and should normally approve changes to residential use from commercial (Para 51); and resisting inappropriate development within residential gardens (Para 53). It is also noteworthy that the introduction of the NPPF removed targets for development on previously developed (brownfield) land and the requirement to have regard to national minimum density for housing.

Paragraph 159 sets out the evidence base requirements regarding housing need and supply, stipulating that local planning authorities should prepare a Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) and a Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA)[1]. The SHMA should assess the full housing needs, identifying the scale and mix of housing and the range of tenures that the local population is likely to need over the plan period. This should meet household and population projections, taking account of migration and demographic change; address the need for all types of housing, including affordable housing and the needs of different groups in the community; and cater for housing demand and the scale of housing supply necessary to meet this demand. The SHLAA should 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.

Planning Practice Guidance (first published 2014[2])

The PPG supplements the NPPF to provide more information about the methodology for assessing housing needs and supply.

It sets out that these should not be constrained by land availability, or other infrastructure or environmental factors. 'Housing Market Areas' are identified within the guidance as the basis for the

[1] Note that guidance produced since the NPPF now encourages integration with employment land assessments, so is often referred to as a HELAA rather than SHLAA which only considers housing.
[2] Note the PPG is subject to ad-hoc updates by Government, so where quoted we have included the date of the extract for clarification.

needs Assessments. It also specifies that to determine housing requirements local planning authorities should turn first to household projections, and Census and Labour Force Survey data.

Housing and Planning Act 2016

The Housing and Planning Act is likely to have significant implications for the delivery of housing in Oxford, especially affordable housing. As the Act continues through the statutory stages it will be clarified through Regulations as the full impacts are not known at this stage. Potential changes yet to be confirmed in the implementation detail of the Act which could impact on supply of homes include:

- Introduction of Starter Homes as part of S106 agreements
- Introduction of 'Pay to Stay' for social housing tenants whose income increases.
- Annual payments by local authorities for the highest value council homes (High Value Property Void levy)
- Caps on Local Housing Allowance/annual rent increases for social rent providers
- Extension of voluntary right to buy for social rent tenants.

It is also anticipated that there will be further changes to the operation of the planning system in response to the Government Technical consultation on **Implementation of Planning Changes**, which considered measures such as 'Permission in Principle', and a new 'Brownfield Register'. The Government has not yet confirmed such changes, although the brownfield register is already being trialled in some authorities including Oxford.

Additional local powers through **devolution** processes are also being explored by the Oxfordshire authorities. This could also affect housing delivery in Oxford if relevant new powers are granted and funding, but at present this is unknown.

Other Relevant National Plans and Policy

In an attempt to boost the supply of new housing nationally and devolve significant new powers to a local level, the Government has implemented or is continuing to progress, various changes to the way the planning system operates and changes to national policy for planning and housing.

In recent years there have been various incentives introduced to see more homes built including:

- New Homes Bonus to local authorities for new homes delivered
- Neighbourhood Planning for communities who wish to deliver additional homes
- Changes to Permitted Development Rights for conversion of office to residential
- Exemptions of certain developments from developer contributions for affordable housing
- Community Right to Build

As well as incentives to promote home ownership such as the increased discount on Right to Buy[3] properties, and financial incentives for first time buyers like the Help to Buy ISA.

[3] as of April 2012, the discount cap has been increased to 75% nationwide, in order to incentivise tenants to buy their properties

Oxfordshire Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) 2014

The main evidence about housing need for Oxford is the Oxfordshire Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA, 2014).

The SHMA identifies the overall scale of housing need, as well as the mix of housing and range of tenures which the local population is likely to need in the period to 2031. It considers household and population projections, taking account of migration and demographic change. It also addresses the need for all types of housing, including affordable housing needs, and the needs of different groups in the community. It then brings this information together to identify the 'objectively assessed need' (OAN).

Consistent with guidance, we worked jointly with neighbouring authorities and considered needs across administrative boundaries to assess the whole Housing Market Area (Oxfordshire). A joint study was commissioned by the Oxfordshire authorities, undertaken by GL Hearn and published in April 2014. Since then some authorities[4] have undertaken minor updates for their district areas to take into account demographic projections (eg 2012-based Population and Household Projections) published by Government subsequent to the SHMA publication. Those updates to inform Local Plan examinations, are consistent with the methodology in the SHMA, do not seek to provide an alternative assessment of housing need, and were found not to fundamentally or significantly alter the 2014 findings.

The Local Plan period will run until 2036 so some further technical work will be needed to roll forward the Oxford OAN calculations from 2031 to 2036, and to ensure the latest population and household projections are taken into account. This is in accordance with PPG which requires the most up-to-date estimates of household growth should inform work but that assessments are not outdated every time new projections are issued[5].

In the meantime the SHMA is sufficiently up to date to inform the initial stages of the Local Plan: The demographic-led projections in the SHMA were based on the ONS 2011-based Interim Sub-National Population and Household Projections as a starting point, and then extended beyond 2021, and re-based to take account of the 2011 Census data to address the apparent suppression in household formation rates especially in Oxford. The adjustments and sensitivity applied to the data pre-empted the adjustments which were then borne out in the subsequent data releases such as the CLG 2012-based Household Projections, ONS 2012-based Sub-National Population Projections, and ONS Mid-year Population Estimates for 2013 and 2014.

Oxford Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment 2014, and the Housing and Employment Land Availability Assessment 2016

The Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) assesses the total quantity of housing that could be provided in Oxford by considering sites against suitability, availability, and achievability criteria. It does not allocate or indicate preferences of sites. In 2014 the capacity identified totalled 10,212 dwellings for the period 2011-2031. This figure incorporates planning permissions and a

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[4] Vale of White Horse, and West Oxfordshire District Councils
[5] PPG paragraph *2a-016-20150227*

windfall allowance, as well as other identified sites which are anticipated might be submitted as planning applications in future.

In 2016 the SHLAA is being updated and incorporated into a Housing and Employment Land Availability Assessment (HELAA) in accordance with national guidance. At the time of writing this work is on-going, however emerging findings have identified sites with a total capacity for around 6,000 dwellings in the period 2016-2036 (excluding windfalls). (The HELAA will be published on the City Council's website when the work has been completed). The HELAA also considers the demand and supply of land for employment, and the interrelationship with land for housing.

Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople Accommodation Needs Assessment, 2014 update

Oxford City, South Oxfordshire, and Vale of White Horse district councils have jointly considered the needs for Gypsy, Traveller, and Travelling Showpeople in an accommodation needs assessment, most recently updated in 2014[6]. The study considers the accommodation needs for those specific groups, for the period up to 2026. This is supplemented by bi-annual caravan counts.

Oxford City Council Corporate Plan 2016-2020

Meeting housing needs is identified as a key priority in the City Council Corporate Plan, and the lack of affordable housing is recognised as a constraint to the City's growth potential. The impact of the current housing crisis is also recognised, particularly the impact on major employers, and the most vulnerable and least well paid people. The plan sets a success measure of 400 new homes per year being granted planning permission.

The City Council also has several other adopted strategies which seek to address different elements of housing need alongside the role as local planning authority, for example the Homelessness Strategy, Housing Strategy, and Empty Property Strategy.

Current situation

Housing needs

Housing need and housing targets mean different things in national policy. The NPPG makes it clear that the assessment of housing <u>needs</u> should be objective and based on facts, without limitations such as land supply or viability being imposed. This is the 'objectively assessed housing need' (OAN).

Other factors, such as land supply, sustainability appraisal, and aligning the housing and economic strategy, are then addressed subsequently in development plan policies when setting the housing <u>target</u>.

Objectively-assessed need for housing in Oxford

[6] Oxford City, South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse district councils Gypsy, Traveller, and Travelling Showpeople Accommodation Needs Assessment Update (ORS, 2014)

The SHMA identifies an OAN for Oxford ranging between 24,000 to 32,000 additional new homes needed between 2011 and 2031.

This calculation takes into account demographic trends, committed economic growth (such as the City Deal), as well as addressing the huge affordable housing needs. Assuming a mid-point of the range results in a figure of 1400 homes per year needed through the period 2011-2031.

Figure 6.2.1 Summary of Oxford Objectively-assessed need

Housing Needed per Year (2011-31)	A. Demographic Base + Shortfall	B. To Support Committed Economic Growth	C. To Meet Affordable Housing Need in Full	D. Range: Housing Need per Year	E. Midpoint of Range
Cherwell	682	1142	1233	1090-1190	1140
Oxford	780	700	2058	1200 - 1600	1400
South Oxfordshire	552	749	965	725-825	775
Vale of White Horse	508	1028	683	1028	1028
West Oxfordshire	541	661	685	635-685	660
Oxfordshire	3063	4280	5624	4678 - 5328	5003

Extract from SHMA (2014), Figure 15 Conclusions on Future Housing Need

Affordable housing need

The SHMA also considers the need specifically for affordable housing. The SHMA considers the backlog of affordable housing need plus newly-arising (projected) need from newly-forming households, and existing households falling into need, against the supply of affordable housing from social rent re-lets, and re-lets/sales from intermediate sector or registered providers, as well as role of the private rented sector in meeting needs.

Current planning policies in Oxford seek to deliver at least 50% affordable housing from qualifying housing developments, of which 80% should be social rent and up to 20% intermediate affordable housing tenures. Notwithstanding those high targets, there is a backlog of pent up demand and overall the demand for affordable housing is still likely to increase during the Plan period, exacerbating the already existing difference between affordable housing demand and supply. The SHMA identified that for Oxford 988 net additional affordable homes are needed per year to meet future demand and the backlog that has accrued, such as people currently in unsuitable housing such as overcrowded households[7]. This is in addition to the current supply in the development pipeline and the supply through existing re-lets (SHMA table 55).

In terms of the social rent element of affordable housing need, there are currently 3,300 households on the Council's Housing Register for social housing. This is likely to increase during the plan period on the basis that on average only about 500 properties become available to let each year[8]. The City Council is striving to build more new homes including setting up a Local Housing Company[9], but overall there is anticipated to be a net reduction in social rent homes because homes will be sold off as a result of the Government proposals to increase Right to Buy, and the proposed new levy that

[7] Table 55 in SHMA, annual net affordable housing need 2011-2031 including development pipeline
[8] Figures from Oxford Allocations Policy document
[9] Report to CEB 17 March 2016
http://mycouncil.oxford.gov.uk/documents/s28744/Housing%20Company%20Report%20FINAL.pdf

the Council will have to pay to Government on High Value Council Void Properties[10]. These trends are likely to result in loss of dwellings from the stock available for social rent, and particularly of larger family-sized dwellings.

Current planning policies in Oxford prioritise delivering social rent affordable housing[11] on the basis that even intermediate forms of affordable housing are still beyond the reaches of many households. This is illustrated in the marked difference in tenure profile in Oxford compared to other parts of Oxfordshire and nationally.

Figure 6.2.3 Tenure profile of Oxford

% Households	Total Households	Owned	Shared Ownership	Social Rented	Private Rented	Other
Cherwell	56,728	69.3	0.8	12.1	16.2	1.6
Oxford	55,375	46.7	1.7	21.4	28.2	2.0
South Oxfordshire	54,104	72.9	0.8	11.4	13.3	1.5
Vale of White Horse	49,407	70.3	1.0	13.3	13.6	1.7
West Oxfordshire	43,241	69.7	1.3	12.5	14.9	1.7
Oxfordshire	258,855	65.5	1.1	14.2	17.5	1.7
South East	3,555,463	67.6	1.1	13.7	16.3	1.3
England	22,063,368	63.3	0.8	17.7	16.8	1.3

Source: Census (2011)

Extract from SHMA Table 4, Detailed Tenure Profile from 2011 Census

Oxford City Council manages its own housing stock of around 7,500 homes. Of the current stock of social rent housing, some is owned and managed by the City Council, and others are run by registered providers. Similarly the delivery of new social rent stock is through a combination of City Council direct new builds under the Government-funded Affordable Homes Programme, and provision through on-site developer contributions from market housing schemes, the units are then taken on and managed by either the City Council or registered providers.

Gypsy, Traveller, and Travelling Showpeople accommodation needs

Oxford currently has no Gypsy & Traveller sites and has seen only one caravan recorded during the caravan counts of the past 5 years. The 2011 Census indicates that the Gypsy and Traveller population in Oxford is 92, which indicates that there are a number of households living in bricks and mortar. The Travelling Showpeople caravan count indicates there are no Showperson caravans within Oxford. There are several sites close to Oxford's boundary at Redbridge Hollow (24 pitches), Middle Ground Wheatley (16 pitches), Ten Acre Park Sandford (16), as well as Manor View Marston (4) and Kiln Lane Garsington (1) (both unauthorised, tolerated sites.

In conclusion, the Accommodation Assessment identifies that no additional pitches (for Gypsy & Travellers) or plots (for Travelling Showpeople) are needed in Oxford in the period 2012-2029.

Housing target

[10] Government proposals that councils would be forced to sell off their most expensive properties when they become empty in order to help fund the extension of the Right to Buy to housing associations

[11] Core Strategy Policy CS24, Sites and Housing Plan Policy HP3, and Affordable Housing and Planning Obligations SPD

The target or requirement is different from the OAN. The current housing target is set in the adopted Core Strategy at 8,000 homes in the 20 year period 2006-2026, averaging 400 homes per year. The Core Strategy target is clearly a constrained and capacity-based target, and the Inspector clearly acknowledged that the target does not represent the full need nor perpetuate to meet that need in full. The need figure for the city has always been far higher than the capacity to meet the need and the most recent SHMA did not demonstrate a need that was not known previously, hence the Core Strategy target remains appropriate despite it being lower than the full OAN. The OAN identified in the Oxfordshire SHMA identifies a need for between 24,000 and 32,000 dwellings for Oxford in the period 2011-2031, which would average out at 1,200-1,600 per year. However the OAN does not automatically supersede the Core Strategy target. This was confirmed by the Government that an OAN identified in a SHMA "*is untested and should not automatically be seen as a proxy for a final housing requirement in local plans. It does not immediately or in itself invalidate housing numbers in existing local plans*"[12].

The full OAN would clearly not be a deliverable target or a realistic requirement for Oxford due to the extensive land constraints in the city. A significant proportion of the OAN will therefore need to be met outside of the city, elsewhere within the Oxfordshire Housing Market Area. The City Council is actively pursuing this with the neighbouring authorities through the Oxfordshire Growth Board. The Local Plan will need to consider what an appropriate total, and annualised, target for housing should be. Currently there is a working assumption with the Oxfordshire authorities that approximately 15,000 of Oxford's housing need will be met in adjoining areas within the HMA.

Housing supply

Housing permissions and housing land supply

This table shows dwellings permitted (net) since the start of the Core Strategy period. This takes into account dwellings gained and lost through new build completions, demolitions, changes of use and conversions. It excludes outline permissions where reserved matters have subsequently been permitted to avoid double counting. This shows that there are substantial permissions already granted and that are due to commence which will boost housing supply in future monitoring years, particularly with major schemes such as Barton Park.

Figure 6.2.4 Net additional dwellings permitted in Oxford

Year	Net additional C3 dwellings permitted
2006/07	501
2007/08	653
2008/09	348
2009/10	283
2010/11	148
2011/12	235
2012/13	102
2013/14	1,350
2014/15	184

[12] Letter from Brandon Lewis MP, open letter to the Planning Inspectorate in December 2014

Total:	3,804

The HELAA (and formerly the SHLAA) assesses the housing land supply from these and other sources of identified sites. The 2014 SHLAA identified sites with a capacity of around 6,400 dwellings, and the 2016 update in the HELAA is due to be published shortly.

Windfall supply

Windfall sites are those which have not been specifically identified as available due to the City Council not being aware of them until a planning application. They would normally comprise previously-developed sites that have unexpectedly become available. All sites identified in the SHLAA or the HELAA are considered to be identified sites and so are not windfall sites.

Windfall sites may be justified by the Local Authority as part of the housing land supply if "*they have compelling evidence that such sites have consistently become available in the local area and will continue to provide a reliable source of supply*" (NPPF, paragraph 48). Oxford has a strong housing market with high demand for new homes and a high proportion of previously-developed sites and conversions, and as such windfall sites have consistently come forward at varying rates.

Traditionally the housing land supply has only considered sites of 10 or more dwellings, so sites of less than 10 dwellings were counted within the windfall allowance. In the 2016 HELAA the site size threshold has been adjusted identify sites of 5 or more dwellings, so the windfall rate will also be adjusted down accordingly to avoid double counting.

Likely trends without a new Local Plan

Housing Supply

There are a range of factors which significantly constrain the supply of land available for new housing or any other type of new development within Oxford. Amongst others are the tightly bound nature of the city administrative area, with significant areas at risk of flooding. These factors increase the competition for land between housing, student accommodation and employment and other uses. This pressure on infrastructure is exacerbated by the fact that the majority of housing developments are on small scale, infill sites, either through re-development of sites or back garden developments, with limited opportunity to deliver new on-site or strategic infrastructure.

This competition for land in Oxford is putting increasing pressure on other land uses which are important elements of sustainable communities such as public open spaces, school playing fields, and sites of ecological interest, and community facilities. These all face pressure from speculative residential development. Changes to national policy in recent years, such as permitted development right changes for office to residential conversions, has exacerbated these pressures, as homes built under permitted development do not have the same planning considerations about supporting infrastructure or impact on the local area. It is important to have sufficient infrastructure such as school places, public open space, and public transport capacity, alongside new housing.

As identified above, there is not capacity within Oxford to fully meet the OAN. We are therefore working with neighbouring districts, landowners, and developers to identify locations for housing in and around Oxford. The joint work through the Oxford Growth Strategy is on-going. The next stage is for an apportionment to be agreed later in 2016 of how much un-met need will be accommodated by each district. The exact locations within the districts are not yet known as it will be tested and confirmed through their local plans. However there are clear sustainability benefits to those locations most proximate to Oxford in the form of urban extensions which can maximise use of existing transport and other infrastructure in the City more than locating growth at more remote locations[13].

Housing completions

During the Core Strategy period (since 2006), the majority of new homes have been delivered on small scale, dispersed, brownfield sites, either redeveloping existing sites or converting existing buildings. The majority of developments are either 1-3 units, or 10-20 units. The two notable exceptions to this are Barton Park and Northern Gateway. At Barton Park construction is in progress to deliver 885 dwellings, with the first residential completions anticipated in Spring 2017. Northern Gateway is an employment-led development but is also expected to deliver 500 homes.

The cumulative number of dwellings completed in the nine years since the start of the Core Strategy period (2006/07 to 2014/15) is 3,460[14] dwellings (net). The cumulative number of completions that might have been expected during this period is 3,600 dwellings. Therefore at the end of 2014/15 there were just 140 fewer completed dwellings than might have been expected. It is anticipated that this will be addressed within the next few years when completions are forecast to increase. Fluctuations in delivery rates reflect not only changes to national economy (impacting on viability) but also the normal fluctuations that can be expected when supply is made up from primarily small sites.

Figure 6.2.5 Net additional dwellings completed since start of the Core Strategy in 2006

Year	Dwellings Completed (net)
2006/07	821
2007/08	529
2008/09	665
2009/10	257
2010/11	200
2011/12	228
2012/13	213
2013/14	215*
2014/15	332*
Total:	**3,460**

**Note: Totals for 2013/14 and 2014/15 include residential dwellings plus a dwelling equivalent figure for student accommodation and care homes, to reflect changes introduced in the PPG in 2014.*

[13] Oxford Growth Strategy and Route Map work
https://www.oxford.gov.uk/info/20201/oxford_growth_strategy/763/oxford_growth_strategy

[14] Includes a dwelling equivalent figure for student accommodation and C2 care homes, for the years 2013/14 and 2014/15 only, to reflect the changes introduced in the Planning Practice Guidance in 2014.

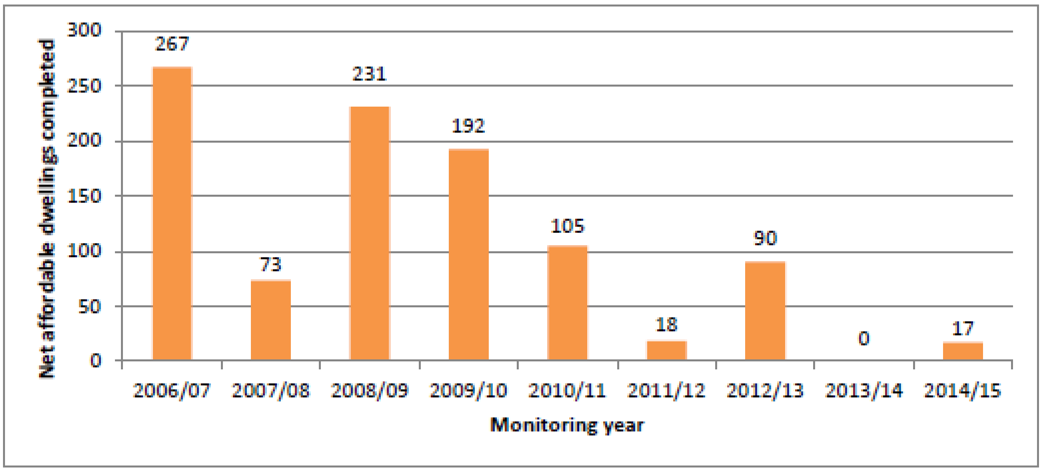
In the 2014/15 monitoring year, 332 (net) dwellings[15] were completed in Oxford. This represents a positive increase in comparison to recent years. This takes into account dwellings gained and lost through new build completions, demolitions, changes of use, and conversions and includes purpose built student accommodation.

Recent government changes are also now promoting an increase in self-build homes, although in Oxford this is expected to have a more limited affect because by the nature of small sites the majority are already not developed by major housebuilders and are often small scale local builders or self-build. At May 2016 there was only one person on the self-build register.

Affordable housing delivery

In recent years the annual delivery of new affordable housing has fallen. This reflects a number of factors including the (declining) availability of grant funding, timing of delivery of specific schemes, and changes to national policy regarding permitted development rights and exemption thresholds.

Figure 6.2.6 Affordable housing completions in Oxford



Extract from Annual Monitoring Report 2014/15, Figure 5 Net Affordable Dwelling Completions 2006/7 to 2014/15

Just 17 affordable dwellings were completed in the 2014/15 monitoring year. The situation is expected to improve in future monitoring years as existing planning permissions are built out, particularly on some of the larger sites. Planning permission was granted for 493 (net) affordable dwellings in 2013/14. This includes 354 (net) affordable dwellings at Barton Park, where work has now commenced on site and the first completions are anticipated in spring/summer 2017. The permissions also include 107 (gross) affordable dwellings being provided through the City Council's own building programme which had not been completed by April 2015 (the reporting period for the AMR) and so will be reported in the 2015/16 monitoring year. It is anticipated that the pipeline of permissions will significantly boost the supply of affordable housing in Oxford in the next few years as the permissions are built out.

[15] For the monitoring year 2014/15 this includes 270 C3 residential dwellings, plus student accommodation units equivalent to 62 dwellings in accordance with Planning Practice Guidance, totalling 332 net dwellings

Changes to national policy over the last few years have also reduced the opportunities to deliver new affordable housing (or secure financial contributions towards it,) through planning permissions. For example changes to permitted development rights resulted in a loss of 32 new affordable homes that would normally have been secured through developer contributions in 2014/15[16]. The changes to the PPG which introduced[17] a minimum threshold for affordable housing contributions of 10 units or 1000sqm, will also impact on the delivery of affordable housing from smaller scale developments: in Oxford small scale developments account for about 50% of developments.

The Housing and Planning Act is potentially bringing in significant changes to the definition, delivery, and supplies of affordable housing in the coming years. Similarly the changes to the welfare system could have implications for the level of need and demand for affordable housing[18]. These changes include the reduction in social rents and extending the Right to Buy, which will change the context for delivering affordable housing in future. The City Council has also set up a Local Housing Company so this will also influence future delivery rates of affordable housing. Changes to the definition of affordable housing nationally could affect the calculations for the need and supply of affordable housing in the SHMA but this is not yet confirmed, for example whether Starter Homes are included within the definition.

Gypsies, Travellers, and Travelling Showpeople accommodation provision
It is not anticipated that there will be much change in the provision for Gypsy and Traveller accommodation in Oxford during the Plan period because no need has been identified from recent assessments. There are currently no pitches in the city, and whilst there are people living in bricks and mortar it has not been identified that they wish to move to caravans. There are no indications that this situation is likely to change but will continue to be monitored.

Sustainability Issues

- Lack of access to housing and affordable housing is already directly impacting on key local employers' ability to attract or retain workers for key services and economic sectors. This is likely to worsen.
- Oxford needs around 32,000 new homes between 2011-2031, with capacity to only accommodate around 10,000. This means that some housing needs will need to be met in areas adjoining the city. The locations (to be determined through Local Plans) will impact on commuting flows into Oxford.
- Without further large sites being identified, the number of small scale infill sites is likely to increase and could result in further pressure on existing infrastructure.

[16] AMR Table 13, Proportion of affordable housing where there is a policy requirement
[17] First introduced in November 2014, then quashed in July 2015 by a High Court decision, which was then overturned by Court of Appeal in May 2016.
[18] Oxford City Council Corporate Plan 2016-2020