

Joint Interim Statement of Common Ground (SoCG) between
Cherwell District Council, Oxford City Council, South Oxfordshire District Council,
Vale of White Horse District Council and West Oxfordshire District Council.

Regulation 19 stage of the Oxford Local Plan 2045
30 January 2026

Introduction

1. This is an Interim Statement of Common Ground prepared specifically in relation to Oxford City Council's Regulation 19 consultation draft of the Oxford Local Plan 2045 and published alongside it.
2. National planning policy emphasises the importance of local planning authorities working collaboratively on strategic matters¹ with potential cross-boundary implications, such as the provision of new homes, jobs and infrastructure, where effective co-operation would assist sound plan-making.
3. Such joint working should be captured in a statement of common ground which is essentially a written record of the strategic matters that are being addressed and explaining where effective co-operation is and is not happening throughout the plan-making process.
4. A Statement of Common Ground forms part of the evidence base which is needed to demonstrate that local planning authorities have complied with the Duty to Co-operate, whilst that Duty remains in effect, when local plans are considered at examination. On 27 November 2025 the Government announced an intention not to save the Duty when new plan-making regulations take effect, which the Government expects to be early in 2026.

Purpose of this Statement of Common Ground

5. This Interim Statement of Common Ground focuses solely on the key strategic matters of housing need, housing capacity and unmet housing need. It is intended to be a helpful position statement to assist those seeking to engage with the Local Plan consultation.
6. The intention is that this Interim Statement of Common Ground will be subject to review and that a new SOCG/Memorandum of Understanding will be published with the submission of the Oxford Local Plan 2045, specifically addressing Oxford's housing and unmet housing need.
7. All the Oxfordshire Local Planning Authorities (LPAs) have engaged with Oxford in production of this interim statement and are signatories to it (listed in alphabetical order):
 - Cherwell District Council

¹ South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse District Councils consider that this SOCG's use of the term "strategic matters" embraces but is also broader than matters satisfying the statutory definition of that term.

- Oxford City Council
 - South Oxfordshire District Council
 - Vale of White Horse District Council
 - West Oxfordshire District Council
8. The interim statement has been prepared through the Oxfordshire Duty to Co-operate Forum comprised of the planning policy manager (or equivalent) from each Council. The interim statement has been agreed by the respective senior officer of each Council as reflected in the signatories below.

Strategic Matters

9. This Statement of Common Ground focuses on the following key strategic matter as identified in Oxford's Duty to Co-operate Scoping Statement:
- 1) Housing need and supply
 - 1a – Overall Housing Need, Supply and Unmet Housing Need

Overall Housing Need - matters of principle:

10. The parties agree the following:
- Housing is an important strategic priority for all our authorities.
 - An assessment of housing need is a strategically important matter which can have important cross-boundary implications for local plan-making;
 - Housing need is an unconstrained assessment of the number of homes needed in an area and is the first step in deciding how many homes to plan for; and
 - In order to determine the minimum number of homes needed, strategic policies should be informed by a local housing needs assessment, conducted using the standard method in national planning guidance.

Housing Need - current position of the LPAs:

11. All parties agree that Oxford's use of the government Standard Method to calculate its local housing need is clear and appropriate.
12. The Oxford Regulation 19 consultation draft Local Plan (January 2026) identifies a local housing need figure, based on the Standard Method, for Oxford of 1,087 dwellings per annum.

Overall Housing Supply - matters of principle:

13. The parties agree the following:

- To support the Government’s objective of significantly boosting the supply of homes, it is important that a sufficient amount and variety of land can come forward where it is needed;
- Maximising housing delivery within Oxford’s administrative boundaries is vital in underpinning discussions around unmet need; and
- The overall aim should be to meet as much of an area’s identified housing need as possible within the area’s boundaries.

Overall Housing Supply - current position of the LPAs:

14. To inform their Local Plan 2045, Oxford City Council have produced a Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) (2026) in which the Council identifies a total housing capacity for Oxford City of 9,267 homes in the period 2025 – 2045 (463 dwellings per annum). This is reflected in Policy H1 of the Oxford Regulation 19 consultation draft local plan which identifies a capacity-based housing requirement of 9,267 homes over the plan period 2025 – 2045.
15. Oxford’s SHLAA has been shared with each of the districts in order that they can review it in detail and consider its conclusions. Full responses are expected through the Regulation 19 consultation process and scrutiny is likely to need to be ongoing up to Submission and through the Examination. It is legitimate for neighbouring district councils to scrutinise Oxford’s assessment of its capacity.

Unmet Housing Need - matters of principle:

16. The parties agree the following:
 - Any needs that cannot be met within neighbouring areas should also be taken into account in establishing the amount of housing to be planned for, and that this should inform Local Plan strategies where it is practical to do so and is consistent with achieving sustainable development;
17. Cherwell, Oxford and West Oxfordshire agree the following:
 - Oxford cannot meet all its housing need within its boundaries over the period 2025-2045 when the standard method figure is applied;
18. South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse agree the following:
 - Oxford is currently expected to be unable to meet all its housing need within its boundaries over the period 2025-2045 when the standard method figure is applied, with the precise capacity to be confirmed following review of the SHLAA;
19. The parties agree the following:
 - To continue to honour the commitments made regarding Oxford’s unmet housing need made in the last round of Local Plans.

Unmet Housing Need - current position of the LPAs:

20. Oxford City Council have identified a total housing need of 21,640 (1,082 dwellings per annum) for the period 2025 – 2045 set against a total capacity of 9,267 dwellings (463 dwellings per annum).
21. On this basis, the City Council consider there to be an unmet housing need of 12,373 homes in the period 2025 – 2045.
22. In October 2025, the City Council wrote to each of the Oxfordshire local planning authorities to formally ask whether those authorities would be able to meet any of this residual unmet need. The Oxford City letter (Appendix 1) and the responses of each Council are appended to this statement (Appendices 2-5).
23. Adopted local plans in the Oxfordshire districts (covering periods from 2011-2031 or 2034) make provision for 14,300 homes as set out in paragraphs 24-30 below. A round of emerging local plans are currently in production with a Joint South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse Local Plan at examination, and Cherwell's Local Plan Review at examination, and West having recently published a Regulation 18 consultation document. Each district's position on its provision for Oxford's unmet housing needs in their respective emerging local plans is set out in paragraphs 24-30 below.

Cherwell District Council

24. Cherwell state that their commitment towards Oxford's unmet housing need is as follows:
 - Cherwell's adopted Partial Review of the Cherwell Local Plan makes provision for 4,400 homes to be delivered for Oxford's needs between 2021-2031. At 31 March 2025 none of these homes had been delivered.
 - The Submission Cherwell Local Plan review 2042 proposes to roll forward the provision of the previously committed 4,400 homes by saving the site allocation policies of the "Adopted Cherwell Local Plan 2011-2031 Partial Review - Oxford's Unmet Housing Need", these sites are as follows (full details provided in Appendix 6):
 - PR6a – Land east of Oxford Road – 690 homes
 - PR6b – Land west of Oxford Road – 670 homes
 - PR7a – Land SE of Kidlington – 430 homes
 - PR7b – Land at Stratfield Farm – 120 homes
 - PR8 – Land east of A44, Begbroke – 1,950 homes
 - PR9 – Land west of Yarnton – 540 homes
 - The Submission Cherwell Local Plan Review therefore makes provision for 4,400 homes between 2020-2042 for Oxford's needs.

South Oxfordshire District Council

25. South Oxfordshire District Council state that their commitment towards Oxford's unmet need is as follows:
 - Provision for Oxford's unmet need in adopted Plan (2021-2035) = 4,950 homes

- Provision for Oxford's unmet need in emerging Plan (2021-2036) = 4,950 homes
26. Neither the adopted South Local Plan nor the emerging Joint Local Plan ring fence Oxford's need from the rest of the district's requirement. However, there are three sites allocated in the adopted Plan identified as contributing towards Oxford's unmet need as follows; these sites are also included in the emerging Plan as referenced in square brackets (full details are provided in Appendix 7):
- STRAT11: Land South of Grenoble Road – 3,000 homes (2,480 within plan period) [AS3 – 3,000 homes]
 - STRAT12: Land at Northfield – 1,800 homes [AS4 – 1,800 homes]
 - STRAT13: Land at Bayswater Brook – permission for 1,513 homes (allocated for 1,100 homes) [AS5 – 1,100 homes]
- In combination these sites are allocated for 5,380 homes, more than the 4,950 commitment to Oxford's unmet need. As at 31 March 2025, no homes have been delivered on these sites.

Vale of White Horse District Council

27. Vale of White Horse District Council state that their commitment towards Oxford's unmet housing need is as follows:
- Provision for Oxford's unmet need in adopted Plan (2019-2031) = 2,220 homes
 - Provision for Oxford's unmet need in emerging Plan (2021-2031) = 1,830 homes
28. Neither the adopted Vale of White Horse Local Plan nor the emerging Joint Local Plan ring fence Oxford's need from the rest of the district's requirement. However, the adopted Plan identifies that provision will be made through either strategic or additional sites within the Abingdon-on-Thames and Oxford Fringe Area as below. These sites are included in the emerging Plan as referenced in square brackets (full details are provided in Appendix 8):
- Pt1 - CP8: North Abingdon-on-Thames – permission for 992 homes (allocated for 800 homes) [proposed to be saved]
 - Pt1 - CP8: North-west of Abingdon-on-Thames - 200 homes [proposed to be saved]
 - Pt1 - CP8: North-West Radley – 240 homes [proposed to be saved]
 - Pt1 - CP8: South Kennington – permission for 283 homes (allocated for 270 homes) [proposed to be saved]
 - Pt2 - CP8a and b: Dalton Barracks - 1,200 homes [proposed for 2,750 homes in part beyond the plan period]
 - Pt1 – CP8: East of Kingston Bagpuize with Southmoor – 280 homes
 - Pt2 – CP8a: East of Kingston Bagpuize with Southmoor – permission for 697 homes (allocated for 600 homes) [proposed to be saved]
 - Pt2 – CP8a: North of East Hanney - 80 homes [proposed to be saved]
 - Pt2 – CP8a: North east of East Hanney – delivered 48 homes (allocated for 50 homes) [proposed to be saved]
 - Pt2 – CP8a: South East of Marcham – permission for 87 homes (allocated for 90 homes) [proposed to be saved]
- In combination these sites will deliver 3,646 homes. Between 2025 and 2045 (the Oxford Plan period) they will deliver 2,887 homes, more than the 2,220 commitment to Oxford's

unmet need. All of these allocations are proposed to be saved as part of the emerging Joint Local Plan 2041. The Dalton Barracks site is proposed for continuation and extension to 2,750 homes to be delivered in part beyond the Plan period. As at 31 March 2025, 1,420 homes have been delivered on seven of these ten sites.

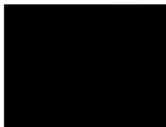
West Oxfordshire District Council

29. West Oxfordshire District Council state that their commitment towards Oxford's unmet housing need is as follows:
- Provision for Oxford's unmet need in adopted Plan (2021 – 2031) = 2,750 homes
 - Provision for Oxford's unmet need in emerging Plan = to be established in the Reg19 draft plan; Reg18 proposes a 10% uplift in supply against WODC need to account for potential unmet need of Oxford.
30. West Oxfordshire's adopted Local Plan 2031 allocates the following sites as WODC's contribution towards Oxford's unmet needs; these sites are included in the Reg18 consultation for the 2042 Plan as referenced in square brackets (full details are provided in Appendix 9):
- Salt Cross Garden Village – 2,200 homes [2042 Plan: 2,125 homes by 2043]
 - West Eynsham SDA – 550 homes out of total of 950 [2042 Plan: 1,187 homes by 2043]
- 237 homes have been completed on the West Eynsham site to date but none of the affordable homes have been allocated to those on Oxford's housing waiting list.

Next Steps

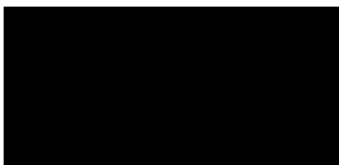
31. The parties agree that the above forms a basis for discussion about a future Memorandum of Understanding concerning the planning for Oxford's unmet housing needs, and agree to work together constructively, actively and on an ongoing basis.
32. The signatories to this Statement of Common Ground from each of the Councils are set out below.

Signed on behalf of Cherwell District Council:



David Peckford, Assistant Director – Planning, 30 January 2026

Signed on behalf of Oxford City Council:



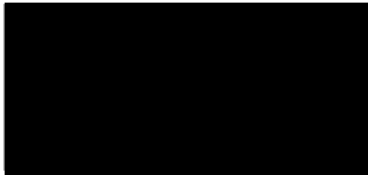
David Butler, Director of Planning and Regulatory Services

Signed on behalf of South Oxfordshire District Council and Vale of White Horse District Council:



Tim Oruye – Head of Policy and Programmes

Signed on behalf of West Oxfordshire District Council:



Andrew Thomson, Planning Policy Manager

Appendices:

1. Letter from the Chief Executive of Oxford City Council to the Chief Executives of the Oxfordshire Districts
2. Response from Cherwell District Council
3. Response from South Oxfordshire District Council
4. Response from Vale of White Horse District Council
5. Response from West Oxfordshire District Council
6. Proforma from Cherwell District Council
7. Proforma from South Oxfordshire District Council
8. Proforma from Vale of White Horse District Council
9. Proforma from West Oxfordshire District Council

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Mr Gordon Stewart
Chief Executive
Cherwell District Council

31 October 2025

SENT VIA EMAIL

Dear Gordon

Oxford Local Plan 2045: Formal request to assist with Oxford unmet housing need

I write to you regarding the Oxford Local Plan 2045 and in particular the challenge Oxford faces in meeting its housing needs. I want to ensure that our approach to addressing unmet housing need is clearly understood and that you have the fullest opportunity to engage with us throughout the plan making process.

You will be aware that Oxford City Council, this Summer, published its Regulation 18 stage of the Local Plan 2045⁰, which considers how to manage the competing challenges facing the city in terms of housing, the economy, the environment and infrastructure. A fundamental challenge in this is that the housing need for Oxford far exceeds the capacity of the city: this is a long-standing issue and has been discussed for many years with the Oxfordshire local planning authorities through various collective forums and collaborative working initiatives both at officer and member levels. The inspector's report on our withdrawn Local Plan 2040 also found that given the constrained nature of the City, there would still be a significant shortfall in capacity.

We all worked collectively to address the unmet need identified in our current Local Plan 2036, through the (then) Oxfordshire Growth Board forums, and ultimately this culminated in an apportionment of the unmet need for each district. Subsequently, each district incorporated their apportionment into the current round of Local Plans and included site allocations accordingly. It is a very positive step that many of the identified sites related to Oxford unmet need are already now under construction, and several more are in the planning process.

Oxford's Local Plan period

Following advice and emerging practice from the Planning Inspectorate, we have made the decision to amend the plan period of our Local Plan to cover 2025-2045 in order to ensure we comfortably have fifteen years post-adoption. This minor change now will help mitigate any risk of timetable slippage after we submit the plan for examination which would be beyond our control.

As the Oxford Local Plan 2045 looks further ahead than our adopted Local Plan, to 2045, the evidence needs to revisit the housing need for Oxford and the subsequent level of need that cannot be accommodated within the city boundaries.

⁰ Please note: when published, the Regulation 18 document was entitled the Local Plan 2042



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Oxford's approach to maximising housing capacity and delivery

Before looking to ask others to accommodate our unmet need, a thorough review of the policy approaches of the Oxford Local Plan 2045 has been undertaken, including a green belt and grey belt review. This has ensured that a large number of policies designed to maximise housing capacity and delivery within the city boundary are proposed in order to minimise the level of unmet need, these include:

- Site allocations for residential development, including minimum housing numbers where appropriate;
- Minimum housing numbers and capacity assumptions being based on highest appropriate density assumptions;
- Including assumptions for windfall housing developments within the capacity assessment;
- Allowing housing on all employment sites;
- Assessing all greenfield sites for their intrinsic value and allowing development on some (where surplus or can be replaced, in compliance with NPPF approach);
- Not allowing loss of dwellings, including a policy preventing the loss of existing homes; and
- Allowing uses other than new homes, only in city and district centres and where already established as a lawful use and not allocating new sites outside those areas for other uses, thus prioritising housing.

Oxford's housing need

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF 2024) states the Government's objective of significantly boosting the supply of homes and stresses the importance of bringing forward a sufficient amount and variety of land where needed. At paragraph 62 the NPPF sets out that to determine the minimum number of homes needed, strategic policies should be informed by a local housing needs assessment, conducted using the standard method in national planning guidance. The Oxford Local Plan 2045 uses the Standard Method for calculating Oxford's housing need.

The Government Standard Method calculates a housing need in Oxford of 1,087 dwellings per annum to 2045; totalling 21,740 homes over the plan period.

Oxford's housing capacity

To support the Regulation 18 consultation for the 2045 Plan, emerging work on our Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) was published to provide transparency on which sites had been assessed and to enable respondents to help identify any additional sites which should be included. The evidence was not complete enough at that stage to publish a draft capacity calculation, so the previous published capacity figure of 9,851 from the HELAA Addendum (published in March 2024 on submission of the 2040 Local Plan) was included as an indicative figure instead. Since that HELAA was published, work has commenced on Local Plan 2045, and work has been carried out to update the capacity figure. As had been shared with your officers in conversations during this work, the new capacity figure now is a little lower than the previous HELAA had been.

The updated evidence on capacity is provided by our SHLAA. We have been working to refine this with the best available up to date information. This has included ongoing monitoring of site completions and planning permissions, an updated windfall assumption (to incorporate 2024/25 completions), and work on 2045 Plan site allocations and updated landowner intentions. We discussed these outputs at our most recent SHLAA workshop on 11th September with your officers. Our current estimates in the SHLAA conclude that Oxford's total housing capacity over the plan period is 8,202 homes.



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Oxford's housing requirement and unmet housing need

Based on the above calculations, the housing requirement proposed for the Local Plan 2045 is therefore 410 dwellings per annum, which equals the total capacity of 8,202. This results in an unmet need of 13,538 homes over the plan period. These calculations are summarised in the table below:

Oxford's total housing need (SM) 2025-2045	21,740 (1,087 dwellings per year)
Oxford's total housing capacity (SHLAA) 2025-2045	8,202
Unmet need 2025-2045	13,538

Additional measures Oxford has taken to maximising housing delivery

Delivery of housing, particularly affordable housing, is a key priority of the City Council, and there are further measures from across the council more widely to increase the supply of housing in Oxford, including the establishment of our housing company OX Place to deliver over 2,000 homes over 10 years, including on sites that would not be considered commercially viable. OX Place has already delivered 8 built out schemes in the city, delivering 173 homes so far, and has also secured permission for a further 234 homes.

We are pleased that the government has recognised the challenges Oxford faces and are delighted to be working closely with the Oxford Growth Commission in seeking help to tackle barriers to development needed to support economic and housing growth additional ways to unlock and accelerate delivery.

However, despite the City Council taking a very positive approach to delivering housing in Oxford, the highly constrained nature of the city and the lack of land for expansion of the city means there is a limited supply of new sites and not enough to meet identified needs. The tightly drawn boundary around the city and lack of available land means that there is simply no way that a greater number of homes can be delivered within the city boundary in a sustainable manner.

Oxford's formal request for help

A substantial amount of work has been undertaken between respective authorities to address the Duty to Co-operate in recent years. As part of this process, officers from our Planning Policy Team have been liaising with officers from your authority throughout the preparation of the Oxford Local Plan 2045 through various channels including through the Heads of Planning, the Oxfordshire Planning Policy Officers group and the more recently established Oxfordshire Duty to Co-operate Forum.

We appreciate that districts in Oxfordshire are at different plan-making stages. We also understand the very real pressure you have in meeting your own needs. However, under the 2011 Localism Act and the provisions of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), I am writing to you now to formally ask whether your authority would be able to meet any of Oxford's unmet housing need?

We acknowledge that your authority has previously made provisions for Oxford's unmet needs identified in our current local plan, however, these agreements and commitments stem from a different round of plan making with a different evidence base and deal with a different time period. We now need to discuss the unmet need arising from the Oxford Local Plan 2025-2045. There will need to be further conversations around how and where that need might be provided, and it may be the case that existing provisions are ultimately found to be enough to meet need. However, in the first instance, we want to establish as a principle that unmet need is



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generated from the Oxford Local Plan 2025-2045, and that you will work with us to provide for this unmet need.

I look forward to hearing from you on this important issue and would be grateful for a response by 20th November 2025.

Yours sincerely



Caroline Green
Chief Executive



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Chief Executive

Gordon Stewart



Cherwell
DISTRICT COUNCIL
NORTH OXFORDSHIRE

Caroline Green
Chief Executive
Oxford City Council

By email: [REDACTED]

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www.cherwell.gov.uk

Please ask Chief Executive

Direct Dial:

Email: [REDACTED]

Our Ref:

20 November 2025

Dear Caroline

Oxford Local Plan 2045: Formal request to assist with Oxford unmet housing need

Thank you for your letter dated 31 October 2025 regarding the above.

I am aware our respective officers have engaged constructively as we completed our Local Plan and have continued to do so in now taking it through Examination. In particular, may I thank your officers for the positive approach in recently agreeing a Statement of Common Ground which has been provided to our Planning Inspectors. My officers will continue to engage positively as your new Plan moves forward.

Housing is one of the most important strategic priorities for both our authorities. Providing good quality homes, including affordable housing, in sustainable locations is fundamental to the well-being of all people. It is a strategic priority for all Oxfordshire authorities where demand and price are high and where the supply of housing is intrinsically linked to economic health.

Our 2020 Local Plan Partial Review made an unambiguous commitment to delivering the agreed 4,400 homes for Oxford's needs with a spatial strategy focused on proximity and sustainable transport connections into Oxford. In approving the new Local Plan for submission, this Council has agreed that those policies should be saved.

Our new Local Plan (proposed changes) demonstrates a total potential land supply of 26,078 (2020-2042) homes and with another 4,075 homes post 2042. We also await the Government's consideration of the recommendations of its New Towns Task Force, and those of the Oxfordshire Growth Commission. At 31 March 2025, we had over 10,000 homes with outline or detailed planning permission waiting to be built. We are working system wide to support housing delivery. The next most impactful step we can take in providing homes for people, is to get our new Local Plan adopted with both saved policies and new housing supply.

We agree that the City Council's approach to assessing housing needs should be clearly understood. It is helpful to see the figures you have provided (reproduced below) and the clarity in your stated reliance on the Standard Method. You are of course working under the 2024 National Planning Policy Framework



whilst our Local Plan was prepared under the 2023 iteration and submitted under the 2024 transitional arrangements.

Oxford's total housing need (SM) 2025-2045	21,740 (1,087 dwellings per year)
Oxford's total housing capacity (SHLAA) 2025-2045	8,202
Unmet need 2025-2045	13,538

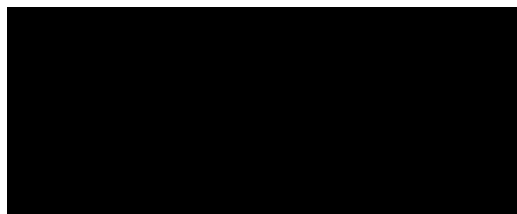
We recognise that Oxford cannot meet all its housing need within its boundaries. We note that your Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment is being finalised and we would ask for the opportunity to consider its conclusions.

The forward housing supply of all the Oxfordshire rural districts will be needed in delivering the 13,538 homes (subject to final confirmation of capacity). Paragraph 3.26 of our Statement of Common Ground makes clear, *'The parties agree that the Partial Review sites will deliver 4,400 homes as Cherwell's contribution to meeting Oxford's anticipated needs to 2042'*.

We will of course continue to engage with you and the other districts in considering your final capacity figures and in determining any agreed residual requirements.

We would also welcome your support in helping us get our Local Plan adopted and to provide the certainty that additional new homes will be provided across what is in reality an Oxfordshire wide housing market area.

Yours sincerely



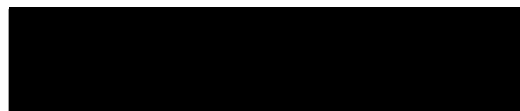
Gordon Stewart, Chief Executive



Caroline Green
Chief Executive
Oxford City Council

Suzanne Malcolm
Deputy Chief Executive – Place
Adrianna Partridge
Deputy Chief Executive -
Corporate and Communities

Via email



Abbey House,
Abbey Close,
Abingdon,
OXON,
OX14 3JE

20 November 2025

Dear Caroline,

We write in reply to your letter of 31 October 2025, containing a formal request to assist with Oxford unmet housing need.

As you will know, we have long been assisting Oxford by planning to accommodate housing in South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse that Oxford is not able to accommodate. This has been the case for decades and has seen areas like Old Marston, Littlemore, Risinghurst & Sandhills and Greater Leys eventually incorporated into Oxford. Through the years of the Oxfordshire Structure Plans, housing was directed to 'country towns' like Didcot because of growth constraints at Oxford. In more recent years since the Localism Act 2011, in the absence of a Structure Plan and under the formal process of Duty to Cooperate, the district councils have worked together to address Oxford's unmet needs. This process will be changing again (for local plans after this current round) under the Levelling-up and Regeneration Act 2023, which, once secondary legislation is passed, will remove the Duty and introduce an Alignment Policy. In the near future, under the government's devolution proposals, a new Mayoral Strategic Authority will total up and redistribute housing numbers between the unitary authorities to meet housing needs, through the preparation of Spatial Development Strategies.

We note that in your letter you comment that "it may be the case that existing provisions are ultimately found to be enough to meet need". On the basis of interim calculations, we agree that this is very likely to be the case. Looking at the housing need and housing supply in each Oxfordshire district between 2025-2045, there appears to be more than enough supply to accommodate the 13,538 homes you identify in your letter that you may not have capacity for in Oxford.

Based on figures you have provided in your letter, we are confident that the unmet need over the emerging Oxford Local Plan period (2025-2045) is addressed in full in our adopted local plans and maintained in the emerging Joint Local Plan. As you will know we have committed 4,950 homes in South Oxfordshire and 2,200 in Vale of White Horse through our adopted local plans. We are honouring that commitment, with delivery already underway in Vale and in South Oxfordshire the first edge of Oxford strategic site has been granted planning permission (for a number in excess of the number allocated in the local plan).

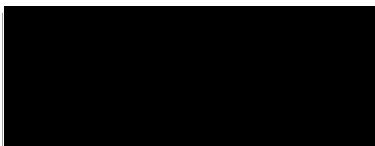
You ask us to accept as a principle that unmet need is generated from the Oxford Local Plan 2025-2045, and that we will work with you to provide for this unmet need. Our answer is provisionally yes, as it has been before, there is likely to be some unmet need subject to the following principles, which we seek your agreement on in return:

Suggested principles:

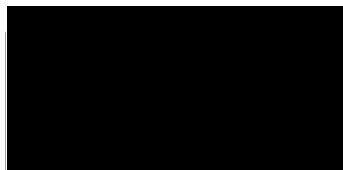
1. Agreement to use the government's Standard Method to calculate housing need.
2. Agreement that Oxford City Council does all it can in finalising the Oxford Local Plan 2045 to accommodate housing within Oxford in order to minimise the unmet need numbers.
3. Agreement by Oxford to share with all the neighbouring district councils the data still outstanding which will influence Oxford's final capacity (for example the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment), in order to assess the position and finalise the calculations.
4. Agreement that it is legitimate for neighbouring district councils to scrutinise Oxford's assessment of its capacity.
5. Agreement that unmet need is generated from the Oxford Local Plan 2025-2045, and that we will work with you and the other neighbouring district councils to (a) seek to agree the amount and (b), subject to point (4) above, provide for the unmet need through emerging local plans (including our Joint Local Plan).
6. Agreement for each district council to identify which years overlap between their own emerging plan periods and Oxford's proposed plan period (2025-2045) and calculate unmet need for those years that overlap.
7. Agreement to honour the existing commitments to unmet need made in the last round of local plans.

We would like to suggest that these principles and the latest figures form part of a new Memorandum of Cooperation. Our officers would be happy to work with you and the other district councils on developing such a document to update the previously agreed version.

Yours sincerely



Suzanne Malcolm
Deputy Chief Executive - Place



Adrianna Partridge
**Deputy Chief Executive – Corporate and
Communities**



Caroline Green
Chief Executive
Oxford City Council

Suzanne Malcolm
Deputy Chief Executive – Place
Adrianna Partridge
Deputy Chief Executive -
Corporate and Communities

Via email

Abbey House,
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20 November 2025

Dear Caroline,

We write in reply to your letter of 31 October 2025, containing a formal request to assist with Oxford unmet housing need.

As you will know, we have long been assisting Oxford by planning to accommodate housing in South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse that Oxford is not able to accommodate. This has been the case for decades and has seen areas like Old Marston, Littlemore, Risinghurst & Sandhills and Greater Leys eventually incorporated into Oxford. Through the years of the Oxfordshire Structure Plans, housing was directed to 'country towns' like Didcot because of growth constraints at Oxford. In more recent years since the Localism Act 2011, in the absence of a Structure Plan and under the formal process of Duty to Cooperate, the district councils have worked together to address Oxford's unmet needs. This process will be changing again (for local plans after this current round) under the Levelling-up and Regeneration Act 2023, which, once secondary legislation is passed, will remove the Duty and introduce an Alignment Policy. In the near future, under the government's devolution proposals, a new Mayoral Strategic Authority will total up and redistribute housing numbers between the unitary authorities to meet housing needs, through the preparation of Spatial Development Strategies.

We note that in your letter you comment that "it may be the case that existing provisions are ultimately found to be enough to meet need". On the basis of interim calculations, we agree that this is very likely to be the case. Looking at the housing need and housing supply in each Oxfordshire district between 2025-2045, there appears to be more than

enough supply to accommodate the 13,538 homes you identify in your letter that you may not have capacity for in Oxford.

Based on figures you have provided in your letter, we are confident that the unmet need over the emerging Oxford Local Plan period (2025-2045) is addressed in full in our adopted local plans and maintained in the emerging Joint Local Plan. As you will know we have committed 4,950 homes in South Oxfordshire and 2,200 in Vale of White Horse through our adopted local plans. We are honouring that commitment, with delivery already underway in Vale and in South Oxfordshire the first edge of Oxford strategic site has been granted planning permission (for a number in excess of the number allocated in the local plan).

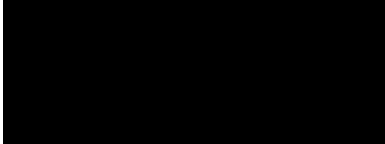
You ask us to accept as a principle that unmet need is generated from the Oxford Local Plan 2025-2045, and that we will work with you to provide for this unmet need. Our answer is provisionally yes, as it has been before, there is likely to be some unmet need subject to the following principles, which we seek your agreement on in return:

Suggested principles:

1. Agreement to use the government's Standard Method to calculate housing need.
2. Agreement that Oxford City Council does all it can in finalising the Oxford Local Plan 2045 to accommodate housing within Oxford in order to minimise the unmet need numbers.
3. Agreement by Oxford to share with all the neighbouring district councils the data still outstanding which will influence Oxford's final capacity (for example the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment), in order to assess the position and finalise the calculations.
4. Agreement that it is legitimate for neighbouring district councils to scrutinise Oxford's assessment of its capacity.
5. Agreement that unmet need is generated from the Oxford Local Plan 2025-2045, and that we will work with you and the other neighbouring district councils to (a) seek to agree the amount and (b), subject to point (4) above, provide for the unmet need through emerging local plans (including our Joint Local Plan).
6. Agreement for each district council to identify which years overlap between their own emerging plan periods and Oxford's proposed plan period (2025-2045) and calculate unmet need for those years that overlap.
7. Agreement to honour the existing commitments to unmet need made in the last round of local plans.

We would like to suggest that these principles and the latest figures form part of a new Memorandum of Cooperation. Our officers would be happy to work with you and the other district councils on developing such a document to update the previously agreed version.

Yours sincerely



Suzanne Malcolm
Deputy Chief Executive - Place



Adrianna Partridge
**Deputy Chief Executive – Corporate and
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**WEST OXFORDSHIRE
DISTRICT COUNCIL**

20 November 2025

Caroline Green
Chief Executive
Oxford City Council
Oxford Town Hall
St Aldate's
Oxford
OX1 1BX

Dear Caroline

Oxford Local Plan 2045 – Formal request to assist with Oxford unmet housing need

Thank you for your letter and for reaching out on this important issue. I very much appreciate the constructive and transparent approach that Oxford City Council has taken in engaging with neighbouring authorities in the context of the emerging Oxford Local Plan 2045.

We agree that this is a matter of particular importance and that full engagement, openness, and shared understanding will be key as work on our respective local plans progresses.

West Oxfordshire District Council supports in principle the decision to amend the Oxford Local Plan period to cover 2025 - 2045, noting that this aligns with the base date for our own emerging Local Plan.

This alignment will help to ensure consistency across Oxfordshire's plan-making activities and provide a more coherent evidence base for strategic discussions.

We also welcome the approach you have taken to presenting emerging work on Oxford's assumed housing capacity. We look forward to receiving a copy of the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment so that we can provide feedback. Maximising housing delivery within Oxford's administrative boundaries and taking a comprehensive approach to identifying opportunities for sustainable housing growth is vital in underpinning discussions around any unmet housing need.

West Oxfordshire supports the proposed use of the Government's Standard Method for assessing Oxford's housing need. This approach provides clarity and consistency and directly addresses the concerns previously expressed by West Oxfordshire regarding the use of alternative methodologies.

Continued...../

That said, we would note some concern and caution regarding the updated housing capacity figure set out in your letter, which has reduced significantly from the level previously published as part of the Regulation 18 consultation in June.

At this stage, the reasons for that change are not entirely clear and as outlined above, we would welcome further engagement with you regarding the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment to explore the assumptions made given its direct implication for the level of any unmet housing need arising.

Turning to your formal request for assistance in meeting Oxford's unmet housing need, I can confirm that the District Council accepts in principle that a proportion of unmet housing need exists for Oxford in the period 2025 – 2045 when the standard method figure of 1,087 dwellings per annum is applied.

We have been clear in our emerging Local Plan consultations to date that West Oxfordshire remains committed to assisting Oxford City, subject to further clarification over the quantum of unmet housing need and the period over which this arises.

In this respect, we very much welcome the ongoing dialogue between our authorities through established planning officer forums and will continue to work collaboratively with you and the other Oxfordshire authorities to consider how any unmet need might be accommodated.

Any future discussions relating to unmet housing need arising from Oxford City will, of course, need to take place in the context of our respective ongoing Duty to Co-operate. This includes continuing to work together constructively, actively and on an ongoing basis in relation to strategic cross-boundary planning matters, including the assessment and potential distribution of housing need. Ensuring that this collaborative approach remains embedded in all future dialogue will be essential to demonstrating legal compliance and soundness at examination and to achieving genuinely sustainable outcomes for Oxfordshire as a whole.

These discussions will be particularly important in understanding the basis of the capacity and supply assumptions within Oxford, and the potential apportionment of any unmet need arising from the 2025 - 2045 period.

Finally, I would note that all of these discussions will need to take place in the wider context of the current consideration of options for local government reorganisation in Oxfordshire. It will be important for all partners to remain cognisant of this changing landscape to ensure that any long-term spatial planning decisions are made in a way that remains resilient and adaptable to future governance arrangements.

Thank you once again for the proactive engagement and for keeping us fully informed.

Continued...../

20 November 2025
Caroline Green
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We look forward to continuing constructive and transparent discussions as the Oxford Local Plan 2045 progresses.

Yours sincerely



GILES HUGHES
Chief Executive

PRO FORMA To establish commitments to meeting Oxford's unmet housing needs – please complete by 5th January

1) Current provision for Oxford's unmet housing need made in extant local plan housing requirement- p.a. and years applicable?		Total Plan Requirement (2021 – 2031) = 4,400 homes Plan Requirement (2021 – 2026) = 1700 homes					
2) Provision for Oxford's unmet housing need made in emerging local plan housing requirement- p.a. and years applicable?		In the overall plan requirement between 2020 – 2042, 4,400 homes have been included to meet Oxford's unmet housing need.					
3) List of any sites nominally or explicitly identified, or partly identified, for Oxford's unmet need:							
Site name/reference	Total assumed capacity	Capacity for Oxford's unmet need if lower	Amount delivered to meet Oxford's unmet need prior to April 2025	Remaining provision for Oxford's unmet need from April 2025	Years site likely to begin delivery (or delivery began) and complete	Site likely to have potential for additionality to help meet any residual unmet need y/n	Any difference in emerging plans?
PR6a – Land east of Oxford Road	690		0	690	27/28 – 39/40		no
PR6b – Land west of Oxford Road	670		0	670	29/30 – 37/38		no
PR7a – Land SE of Kidlington	430		0	430	26/27 – 30/31		no
PR7b – Land at Stratfield Farm	120		0	120	27/28 – 30/31		no

PR8 – Land east of A44, Begbroke	1950		0	1950	28/29 – 40/41		no
PR9 – Land west of Yarnton	540		0	540	28/29 – 33/34		no
4) Total of any general delivery from April 2025 onwards considered to be delivering against Oxford's unmet need (e.g. sites with nomination rights).				4,400			

SOUTH OXFORDSHIRE**PRO FORMA To establish commitments to meeting Oxford's unmet housing needs – please complete by 5th January**

1) Current provision for Oxford's unmet housing need made in extant local plan housing requirement- p.a. and years applicable?		4,950 homes between 1 April 2021 and 31 March 2035					
2) Provision for Oxford's unmet housing need made in emerging local plan housing requirement- p.a. and years applicable?		4,950 homes between 1 April 2021 and 31 March 2036					
3) List of any sites nominally or explicitly identified, or partly identified, for Oxford's unmet need:							
Site name/reference	Total assumed capacity	Capacity for Oxford's unmet need if lower	Amount delivered to <u>date</u> meet Oxford's unmet need prior to April 2025	Remaining capacity provision for Oxford's unmet need from April 2025	Years site likely to begin delivery (or delivery began) and complete	Site likely to have potential for additionality to help meet any residual unmet need y/n	Any difference in emerging plans?
Land South of Grenoble Road	3,000	See note 1	0	3,000	2032 Start Beyond 2050 Finish		No
Land at Northfield	1,800	See note 1	0	1,800	2030 Start 2043 Finish		No

Land at Bayswater Brook	1,513 ¹	See note 1	0	1,513	2028 Start 2037 Finish	No
4) Total of any general delivery from April 2025 onwards considered to be delivering against Oxford's unmet need (e.g. sites with nomination rights).						
				4,950		

Note 1: This proforma's approach doesn't align with how our local plans accommodate unmet housing need. In the emerging Joint Local Plan there is no ringfence or compartmentalisation of the unmet need from the rest of the district's housing requirements. Unmet need forms part of the overall housing requirement within the districts – same with the supply. This is the approach taken in the adopted South Oxfordshire Local Plan too. This is proposed in the emerging plans for South and Vale because the NPPF (paragraph 69) expects a housing requirement figure for the whole area (with only neighbourhood plan housing targets being specifically mentioned in paragraph 69 as a distinct component of the housing requirement). The PPG expands on this saying we should explore how unmet needs are addressed / distributed through the statement of common ground (PPG on plan making paragraphs 11 and 12).

Note 2: The emerging Joint South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse Local Plan is currently at examination. At the time of submission, the end date of the plan is stated as 2041. In South Oxfordshire, the JLP currently proposes to address unmet need from Oxford in the period between 2021 and 2036. However, some of the plan allocations will deliver over a longer period and it is possible that during the examination process, the end date may be extended through modifications.

¹ Site has planning permission for 1,450 homes and a 120 bed care home (equivalent to 83 homes with the relevant ratio applied). The site is allocated for 1,100 homes.

VALE OF WHITE HORSE

PRO FORMA To establish commitments to meeting Oxford's unmet housing needs – please complete by 5th January

1) Current provision for Oxford's unmet housing need made in extant local plan housing requirement- p.a. and years applicable?		2,220 homes between 1 April 2019 and 31 March 2031					
2) Provision for Oxford's unmet housing need made in emerging local plan housing requirement- p.a. and years applicable?		1,830 homes between 1 April 2021 and 31 March 2031					
3) List of any sites nominally or explicitly identified, or partly identified, for Oxford's unmet need:							
Site name/reference	Total assumed capacity	Capacity for Oxford's unmet need if lower	Amount delivered to <u>date</u> meet <u>Oxford's unmet need prior to April 2025</u>	Remaining capacity provision for <u>Oxford's unmet need from April 2025</u>	Years site likely to begin delivery (or delivery began) and complete	Site likely to have potential for additionality to help meet any residual unmet need y/n	Any difference in emerging plans?
North Abingdon-on-Thames	992 ¹	See note 1	455	537	2021 Start 2031 Finish		No
North-west of Abingdon-on-Thames	200	See note 1	194	6	2021 Start 2026 Finish		No

¹ Site has planning permission for 950 homes and an 80 bed care home, equivalent to 42 dwellings. This takes the total equivalent dwellings on site to 992. The site is allocated for 800 homes.

North-West Radley	240	See note 1	153	87	2021 Start 2027 Finish	No
South of Kennington	283 ²	See note 1	283	0	2019 Start 2025 Finish	No
Dalton Barracks	2,750 ³	See note 1	0	2,750	2031 Start Beyond 2050 finish	Yes
East of Kingston Bagpuise with Southmoor (LPP1 allocation)	280	See note 1	280	0	2017 Start 2022 Finish	No
East of Kingston Bagpuise with Southmoor (LPP2 allocation)	697 ⁴	See note 1	0	697	2028 Start 2037 Finish	No
North of East Hanney	80	See note 1	0	80	2031 Start 2032 Finish	Yes
North east of East Hanney	48 ⁵	See note 1	48	0	2021 Start 2023 Finish	No
South East of Marcham	87 ⁶	See note 1	7	80	2024 Start 2028 Finish	No

² Site has planning permission for 283 homes, but is allocated for 270

³ Vale LPP2 allocates the site for 1,200 homes, but the emerging JLP identifies a capacity of 2,750 homes

⁴ Site has planning permission for 660 homes and a 70 bed care home, equivalent to 697 homes in total. The site is allocated for 600 homes.

⁵ Site has completed on a permission for 48 homes, but the site is allocated for 50 homes.

⁶ Site is allocated for 90 homes, but has only secured consent for 87 homes. This permission is now building out.

4) Total of any general delivery from April 2025 onwards considered to be delivering against Oxford's unmet need (e.g. sites with nomination rights).	Requires discussion
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Note 1: This proforma's approach doesn't align with how our local plans accommodate unmet housing need. In the emerging Joint Local Plan there is no ringfence or compartmentalisation of the unmet need from the rest of the district's housing requirements. Unmet need forms part of the overall housing requirement within the districts – same with the supply. This is the approach taken in the adopted South Oxfordshire Local Plan too. This is proposed in the emerging plans for South and Vale because the NPPF (paragraph 69) expects a housing requirement figure for the whole area (with only neighbourhood plan housing targets being specifically mentioned in paragraph 69 as a distinct component of the housing requirement). The PPG expands on this saying we should explore how unmet needs are addressed / distributed through the statement of common ground (PPG on plan making paragraphs 11 and 12).

Note 2: 7 of the 10 Vale sites above have started delivering homes – between them delivering 1,420 homes between 2017 and 2025. Between 2021 and 2041 (the emerging JLP plan period), these sites will deliver 3,646 homes. Between 2025 and 2045 (emerging Oxford Local Plan period), they will deliver 2,887 homes. This exceeds both the unmet need figure apportioned to the Vale of White Horse from the previous Oxford Local Plan 2036 (2,200 homes) and the unmet need figure of 1,830 homes accommodated in the emerging JLP. However as set out in note 1, the spatial strategy for both our adopted and emerging plans recognise that housing needs will be met across the plan area – not just on those specific sites.

Note 3: The emerging Joint South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse Local Plan is currently at examination. At the time of submission, the end date of the plan is stated as 2041. In the Vale of White Horse, the JLP currently proposes to address unmet need from Oxford in the period between 2021 and 2031. However, some of the plan allocations will deliver over a longer period and it is possible that during the examination process, the end date may be extended through modifications.

PRO FORMA To establish commitments to meeting Oxford's unmet housing needs – please complete by 5th January

1) Current provision for Oxford's unmet housing need made in extant local plan housing requirement- p.a. and years applicable?	West Oxfordshire Local Plan 2031 (adopted September 2018) is based on an overall housing requirement of 15,950 homes, including 13,200 homes for West Oxfordshire's housing need in the 20-year period 2011 – 2031 (660 per year) and 2,750 for Oxford's unmet housing need in the 10-year period 2021 – 2031 (275 per year).
2) Provision for Oxford's unmet housing need made in emerging local plan housing requirement- p.a. and years applicable?	The emerging WODC Local Plan is intended to cover the 18-year period 2025 – 2043, with the overall housing requirement based on WODC's standard method figure of 905 dwellings per annum (i.e. 16,290). To account for potential slippages in expected delivery and also to account for the potential unmet housing need of Oxford City, the proposed approach to date has been to identify an overall housing supply of 18,000 (c. 10% uplift). The intention is to publish the Regulation 19 draft plan in mid-2026. Depending on the progress made with re-calculating and apportioning Oxford's unmet housing need for the period 2025 onwards, the intention is that the Regulation 19 plan will more definitively outline how WODC is able to assist Oxford in meeting its housing need.
3) List of any sites nominally or explicitly identified, or partly identified, for Oxford's unmet need:	

Site name/reference	Total assumed capacity	Capacity for Oxford's unmet need if lower	Amount delivered to meet Oxford's unmet need prior to April 2025	Remaining provision for Oxford's unmet need from April 2025	Years site likely to begin delivery (or delivery began) and complete	Site likely to have potential for additionality to help meet any residual unmet need y/n	Any difference in emerging plans?
Salt Cross Garden Village	2,200	2,200	Nil	To be confirmed depending on further discussions around quantum and apportionment of unmet need from 2025 onwards.	First homes now expected in 2030 with completion of around 2,125 homes by 2043 based on previously agreed likely delivery trajectory.	Yes – but not in the period to 2043 due to anticipated build-out rates.	The emerging Local Plan 2043 (Regulation 18 Spatial Options Paper – October 2025) highlights the potential to increase the quantum of development at Salt Cross to between 2,520 – 3,780 dwellings depending on the assumptions made. This would be achieved via a

West Eynsham SDA	950	550			237 homes completed but none specifically allocated to those on Oxford's housing waiting list	To be confirmed depending on further discussions around quantum and apportionment of unmet need from 2025 onwards.	237 homes already completed since around 2016. Masterplan in place to guide delivery of the remainder. No developer agreed trajectory in place but reasonable to expect next set of completions by 2030 and delivery of the whole site by 2038.	Yes – see comment in adjacent column to the right.	The emerging Local Plan 2043 (Regulation 18 Spatial Options Paper – October 2025) highlights the potential to increase the quantum of development at West Eynsham from 1,000 to around 1,187, all of which are expected to be completed by 2043.	'refresh/update' of the allocation.
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4) Total of any general delivery from April 2025 onwards considered to be delivering against Oxford's unmet need (e.g. sites with nomination rights).	To be confirmed depending on further discussions around quantum and apportionment of unmet need from 2025 onwards.
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