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# Oxford City Council

## Annual Monitoring Report 2005

(covering the period April 2004-March 2005)

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## FOREWORD

This is Oxford City Council's first Annual Monitoring Report for planning policies. It covers the period 1<sup>st</sup> April 2004 – 31<sup>st</sup> March 2005. The Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (Section 35) requires every local planning authority to submit an annual monitoring report to the Secretary of State containing information on the implementation of the Local Development Scheme (LDS) and the extent to which policies set out in local development documents (LDDs) are being achieved. (The Oxford Local Plan 2001 – 2016 is a LDD).

All local planning authorities are required to submit reports to the Secretary of State and publish the report on their websites by no later than the end of December following each monitoring period. This report covers the following aspects of planning policy monitoring:

**Local Development Scheme monitoring:** this reviews actual plan progress of the LDS compared with the targets and milestones for LDD preparation. Each year, this section of the report will assess whether the City Council:

- has met the LDS targets and milestones or is on target to meet them;
- is falling behind schedule or has failed to meet a target or milestone and the reasons for this;
- the need to update the LDS in light of this information.

**Monitoring policies:** these will be monitored in order to assess<sup>1</sup>:

- whether policies and related targets or milestones in LDDs have been met or progress is being made towards meeting them or where they are not being met or not on track to being achieved, the reasons why;
- what impact the policies are having in respect of national, regional and local policy targets and any other targets identified in LDDs;
- whether the policies in the LDD need adjusting or replacing because they are not working as intended;
- whether the policies need changing to reflect changes in national or regional policy; and
- if policies or proposals need changing, the actions needed to achieve this.

In accordance with Government guidance, the City Council has adopted an objectives-policies-targets-indicators approach to ensure relevant and effective monitoring. A range of indicators have been developed divided into:

- **Core output indicators** – these have been set nationally for all local authorities to provide data in a consistent format. The findings from these indicators will inform the preparation of regional spatial strategy annual monitoring reports.
- **Local output indicators** – these have been selected to supplement the information provided in the core indicators and have been selected to highlight the key circumstances and issues relevant to Oxford.
- **Contextual indicators** – these have been used to show the baseline position of the wider social, environmental and economic circumstances against which the policies operate.

Where appropriate, the report shows how policy monitoring links to national targets such as Public Service Agreement targets and its integration with other City Council initiatives such as the Community Strategy. The existing targets in the Local Plan vary in their precision but more detailed targets will be integrated into Development Plan Documents (DPDs). This report has been compiled in liaison with key stakeholders such as Oxfordshire County Council and the Environment Agency.

It is the intention to provide information in a consistent format year on year to enable comparisons to be made. However the detailed content may vary to reflect particular local issues that may arise or changes to national core output indicators.

<sup>1</sup> Planning Policy Statement 12: Local Development Frameworks

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## INTRODUCTION

It is expected that the Oxford Local Plan 2001-2016 will be adopted by the time this Annual Monitoring Report is submitted to the Secretary of State. This Local Plan sets out the policies and proposals for future development and land use in Oxford. The Local Plan provides the main framework for development control decisions (along with the Regional Spatial Strategy). Under the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, the policies in the Local Plan will be 'saved' until they are progressively replaced by policies in Development Plan Documents (DPDs). The timeframe for production of DPDs is set out in the Local Development Scheme. Hence this report assesses the key Local Plan policies.

Oxford covers an area of only 17.6 square miles. Oxford has a resident population of approximately 145,000. It has a huge housing need, even when compared with other cities in the South East region including London. Oxford has a large student population, with an estimated 30,300 at the two Universities alone. With the River Isis, historic colleges and university buildings, Oxford is one of the top tourist attractions in the South East. In addition, Oxford serves as a major shopping centre, centre for public services and a centre of manufacture.

Oxford is one of the largest employment centres in the South East with up to 100,000 jobs and low levels of unemployment. It is an affluent City, but contains pockets of severe deprivation.

Oxford is well located, with easy access to international airports (Heathrow, Gatwick, Birmingham and Luton), the railway network, and the M40 motorway. Oxford is within the M3/M40 wedge, and forms one end of the Oxford-Cambridge arc.

Oxford has a high level of in-commuting, with about half its workforce living outside its boundary. With more than 5 million visitors a year, a large sub-regional catchment area for shopping and other services, and a rapidly growing population, these have major implications for planning policy in Oxford.

### Why Monitor?

Monitoring is essential to establish what is happening now, what may happen in the future and then compare these trends against existing policies and targets to determine what needs to be done. It provides a crucial feedback loop and information on the performance of policy and its surrounding environment. Under the new planning system, with its focus on delivery of sustainable development and sustainable communities, monitoring takes on an added importance in providing a check on whether those aims are being achieved. Monitoring will also enable us to identify the need to review 'saved' Local Plan policies and future DPDs, and respond more quickly to changing priorities and circumstances.

Two of the key factors DPDs will be assessed against at independent examination are whether the policies are founded on a robust and credible evidence base, and whether there are clear mechanisms for implementation and monitoring. Therefore monitoring will be integrated in the development and review of all DPD preparation including the sustainability process in the following way:-

- At the initial evidence gathering stage – we will undertake surveys to establish the key characteristics to take into account such as population, land use issues, housing, economic issues and social factors. From this information we will establish an evidence base.
- During the production of documents – we will use this evidence base to develop potential indicators and policy targets.
- In refining the document following consultation to prepare for submission to the Secretary of State – we will continue to develop the evidence base to establish clear links between the objectives, the policy targets and the proposed output indicators.
- When adopted – we will refine the indicators in response to any objectives and policies proposed in the light of the Inspector's binding report following examination.

The data in this report has been obtained from information submitted with planning applications and analysed through the City Council Uniform computer system except where other sources are listed. The City Council monitors developments that have commenced and completed.

## 2.0 LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

List of Abbreviations	
<b>AADT</b>	Annual Average Daily Traffic
<b>AMR</b>	Annual Monitoring Report
<b>BAP</b>	Biodiversity Action Plan
<b>BBOWT</b>	Berkshire, Buckinghamshire & Oxfordshire Wildlife Trust
<b>BVPI</b>	Best Value Performance Indicator
<b>DETR</b>	Department of the Environment, Transport & the Regions
<b>DPD</b>	Development Plan Document (part of the Local Development Framework)
<b>DPH</b>	Dwellings per Hectare
<b>LDD</b>	Local Development Document (part of the Local Development Framework)
<b>LDF</b>	Local Development Framework
<b>LDS</b>	Local Development Scheme
<b>LTP</b>	Oxfordshire Local Transport Plan
<b>ODPM</b>	Office of the Deputy Prime Minister
<b>ONS</b>	Office of National Statistics
<b>PDL</b>	Previously Developed Land
<b>PPG</b>	Planning Policy Guidance
<b>PPS</b>	Planning Policy Statement
<b>RPG</b>	Regional Planning Guidance
<b>PSA</b>	Public Service Agreement
<b>RSS</b>	Regional Spatial Strategy
<b>SEP</b>	South East Plan
<b>SEERA</b>	South East England Regional Assembly
<b>SEEDA</b>	South East England Development Agency
<b>SOA</b>	Super Output Area
<b>SPD</b>	Supplementary Planning Document
<b>SPG</b>	Supplementary Planning Guidance
<b>SSSI</b>	Sites of Special Scientific Interest
<b>TVERC</b>	Thames Valley Environmental Record Centre

### 3.0 LOCAL DEVELOPMENT SCHEME

This section addresses progress towards the milestones set out in the Local Development Scheme (LDS) and assesses whether the LDS timetable is being met. The LDS 2005-08 is available to view on the City Council's website [www.oxford.gov.uk/ldf](http://www.oxford.gov.uk/ldf)

#### Period 2004/05

Only one document was programmed for production during this period, the Oxford Local Plan 2001–2016. The LDS shows the following stages and target dates for the production of the Local Plan. The shaded section shows the period 2004/05. The table illustrates that all the target dates set for the Local Plan stages were met.

Local Plan Stage		Date achieved	
Commence pre-production & community engagement	April 1999	April 1999	✓
Commencement of deposit - First Draft	June 2002	28 <sup>th</sup> June 2002	✓
Commencement of deposit - Second Draft	February 2003	21 <sup>st</sup> February 2003	✓
Commencement of consultation - PICs	September 2003	26 <sup>th</sup> September 2003	✓
Pre-inquiry meeting	November 2003	25 <sup>th</sup> November 2003	✓
Commencement of the inquiry	March 2004	2 <sup>nd</sup> March 2004	✓
Close of the inquiry	August 2004	12 <sup>th</sup> August 2004	✓
Receipt of Inspector's Report	February 2005	8 <sup>th</sup> February 2005	✓
Publication of Inspector's Report	February 2005	9 <sup>th</sup> February 2005	✓
Commencement of deposit - modifications	June 2005	17 <sup>th</sup> June 2005	✓
Adoption	November 2005	11 <sup>th</sup> November 2005	✓

#### BV200 – new plan-making

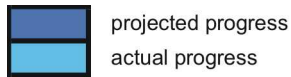
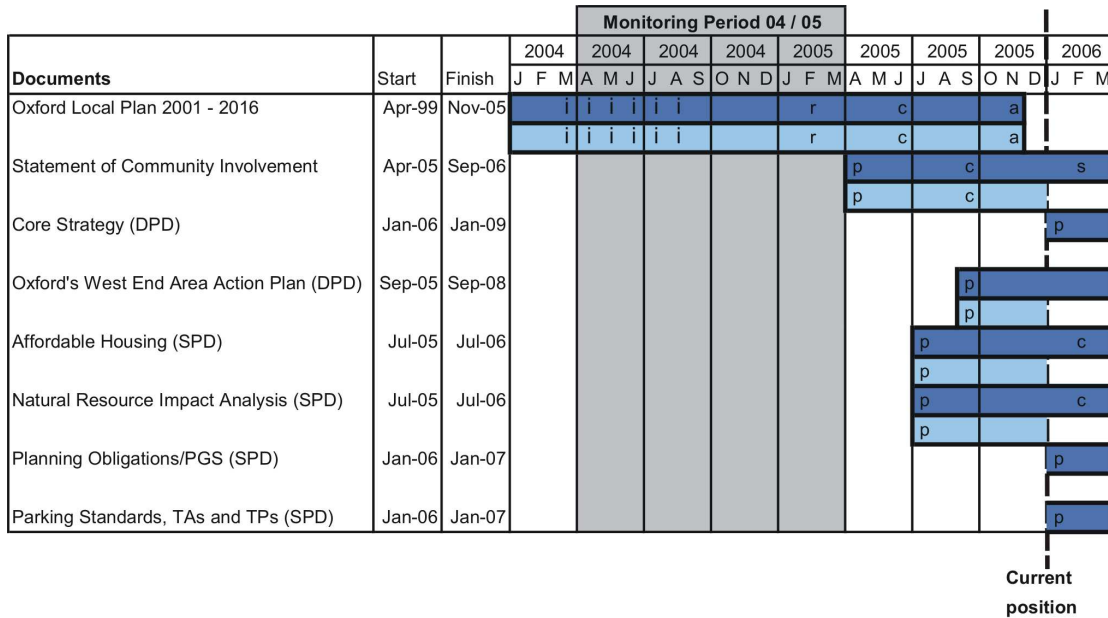
Best Value Performance Indicator 200 asks two linked questions:

- a. Do you have a development plan that has been adopted in the last 5 years and the end date of which has not expired?
- b. If 'no', are there proposals on deposit for an alteration or replacement, within a published timetable for adopting those alterations or replacement plan within three years?

As of November 2005, Oxford City Council does have an adopted plan that meets the requirements of question a., and therefore the requirements of question b. do not need to be met (albeit they are also met).

#### Beyond 2004/05

Whilst the milestones of the LDS for the period 2004/05 have been met as described above, it is also of note that to date (December 2005), those for the period 2005/06 have also been met. This is illustrated in the diagram below. It is anticipated that the remaining milestones for the period 2005/06 can also be met on target; this will be assessed in the City Council's Annual Monitoring Report 2006.



- i = inquiry
- r = receive Inspector's Report
- p = begin preparations
- c = consultation
- s = Submit to SoS
- a = adopt

**Figure 1: Local Development Scheme Milestones**



## 4.0 SUMMARY OF KEY FINDINGS

The most significant factor influencing planning policy during the period covered by this first monitoring report was the Oxford Local Plan Inquiry. The Inquiry was held between March and August 2004 and the Inspectors report was received in February 2005. Therefore by the end of the monitoring period, significant weight could be attached to its policies. With the adoption of the Local Plan by the time this report is published, we look forward to the successful implementation of the policies developed and the realisation of their influence on future development control decisions. The effectiveness of this implementation will be highlighted in future reports.

The City Council also produced its first Local Development Scheme (LDS) setting out its project plan for policy development over the next 3 years. The target dates for the production of the Local Plan was the only document included in the LDS during the monitoring period and the target dates were achieved. It is also on target for achieving the milestones set beyond the monitoring period for developing new Local Development Documents.

One of the major planning issues in Oxford is how to provide more housing to meet the huge demand, and in particular the need for affordable housing. Our analysis of permissions and predicted future provision means Oxford is likely to exceed the Local Plan and Structure Plan target to 2016. It is also pleasing to note that the net number of affordable housing completions (186) achieved in the monitoring period was above the draft Housing Strategy annual target of 150 dwellings. However with the Housing Requirements Study identifying an annual need of 1700-1800 affordable dwellings per year, the amount of affordable housing achieved through negotiated planning obligations alone will not satisfy the level of need. The increase in the number of residential permissions for small scale developments (less than 10 units) and its potential impact on the provision of affordable housing will be carefully analysed in future monitoring reports.

With student numbers at the two Universities increasing at a far greater rate than predicted in the Local Plan, any further increase in both student numbers and student accommodation will need to be carefully monitored so that appropriate remedial action can be taken should student numbers increase more rapidly than student accommodation. As the increase in student numbers is predominantly due to more efficient use of existing buildings and not as a result of increased academic floorspace, the growth in numbers has not been within the control of the City Council.

The monitoring period has also seen a growth of floorspace in the research and development sector and manufacturing/industrial uses. All this development has been on previously developed land which makes better and more efficient use of existing resources.

There has been little retail and office development completed during the monitoring period. There has been a significant increase in the indoor leisure sector with the completion of the Ozone Leisure Centre at Grenoble Road.

In terms of facilities for tourists, whilst the overall supply of short stay accommodation has increased in the monitoring period with additional hotel provision, two large guest houses have been lost. It is hoped that any future loss of guest house accommodation will be curbed now more weight can be given to the Local Plan policies.

On car parking standards, 76% of completed non-residential developments complied with car parking standards. It is expected that compliance with disabled and cycle parking standards will improve in future years with the implementation of revised standards.

As this is the first monitoring report, it should be viewed in the context of providing an important evidence base from which to assess future reports. Although the report draws attention to various key issues, care should be taken not to draw detailed conclusions from the indicators at this stage. It is hoped to develop a more detailed assessment of future trends as the evidence base develops.

## 5.0 INDICATORS

### HOUSING

<b>Indicator 1 (Core)</b>	<p><b>Housing trajectory</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i) net additional dwellings completed over the previous 5 year period or since the start of the relevant DPD period, whichever is the longer;</li> <li>ii) net additional dwellings completed for the current year;</li> <li>iii) projected net additional dwellings up to the end of the relevant DPD period or over a 10 year period from its adoption, whichever is the longer;</li> <li>iv) annual net additional dwelling requirement (annual rate of housing provision required);</li> <li>v) annual average number of net additional dwellings needed to meet overall housing requirements, having regard to previous year's performance.</li> </ul>
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#### Objective

To plan, monitor and manage the delivery of new housing in accordance with development plan requirement.

#### Target

Nationally, an objective of the ODPM is to “Achieve a better balance between housing availability and the demand for housing, including improving affordability, in all English regions while protecting valuable countryside around our towns, cities and in the green belt and the sustainability of towns and cities.”<sup>1</sup> The draft South East Plan<sup>2</sup> was published in January 2005 however, the strategic housing target for the Oxfordshire regions has not yet been established and will following in Spring 2006. Consultation is underway regarding the strategic target. The deposit draft Oxfordshire Structure Plan 2016<sup>3</sup> and Oxford’s Local Plan 2001-2016<sup>4</sup> sets a strategic target for Oxford as 6,500 dwellings to be provided between 2001-2016.

#### Data analysis

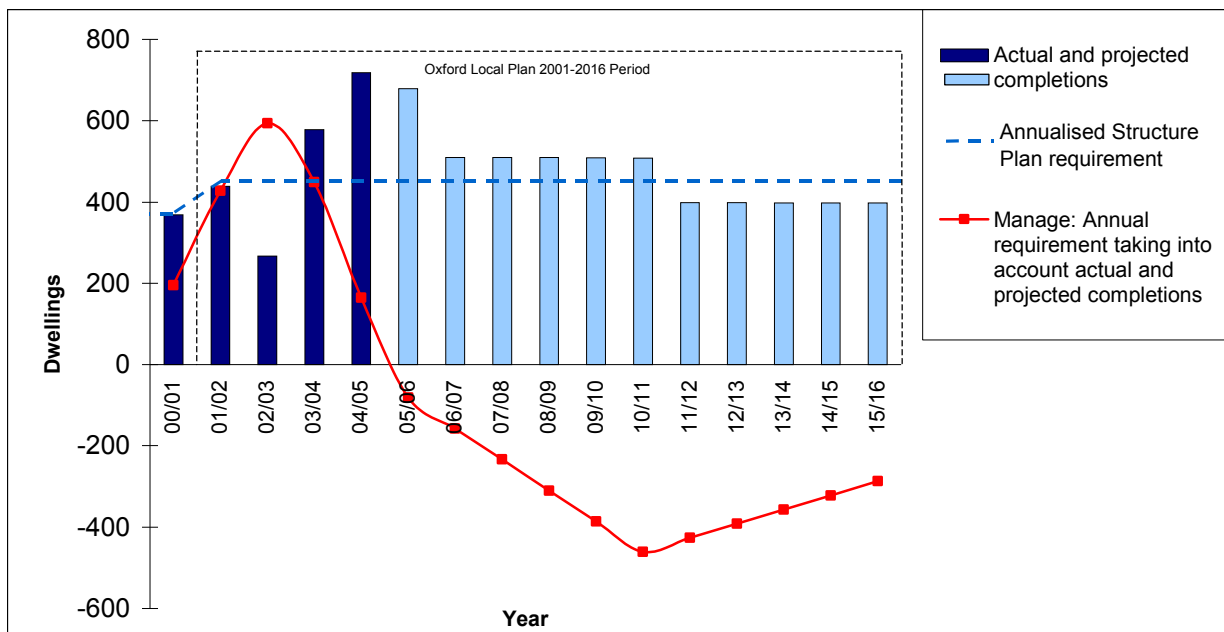


Figure 2: The past<sup>5</sup> and anticipated supply of housing during the Plan period 2001-2016 (Oxford City Council)

<sup>1</sup> PSA5, Public Service Agreement 2005-2008, Office of the Deputy Prime Minister

<sup>2</sup> *The South East Plan*, South East England Regional Assembly, January 2005

<sup>3</sup> Deposit Draft Oxfordshire Structure Plan 2016 (as amended by the Proposed Modifications), Sept 2003

<sup>4</sup> Policy HS.1, *Oxford Local Plan 2001-2016*, Oxford City Council, December 2005

<sup>5</sup> Includes data from 2000/2001 in order to show the past five year period as required by Table 4.4 *Local Development Framework Monitoring: A Good Practice Guide*, ODPM, March 2005

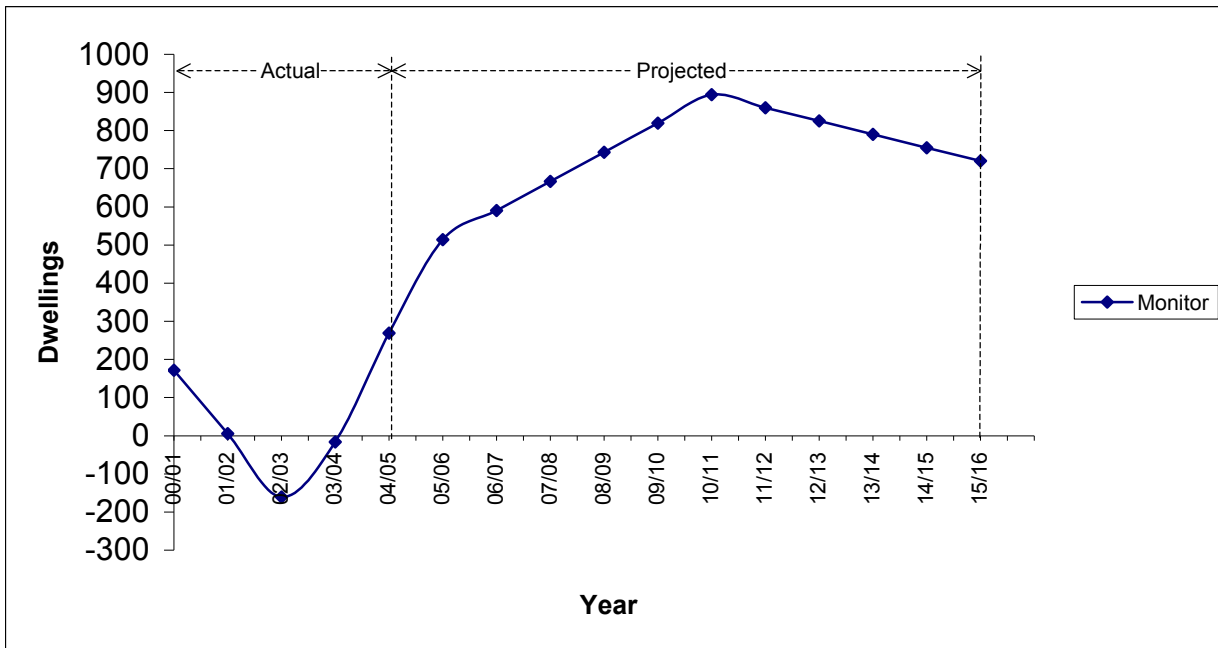


Figure 3: The position above or below zero represents how many dwellings Oxford City Council is ahead or behind their cumulative allocation at any point in time (Oxford City Council)

See Appendix 1 for comprehensive data table of housing trajectory figures.

### Commentary

During the past five years, the completions rate in Oxford has fluctuated above and below that shown in Figure 2, however, the projection suggests that sites will come forward for development which would result in the target being exceeded (Figure 3). This projection is a result of work undertaken for the Urban Potential Study 2005 and updated by Oxford City Council databases. Figure 4 shows the expected pattern of permissions and completions, whereby any rise in permissions one year, leads to a rise in completions the following years, due to the lag time from permission to construction.

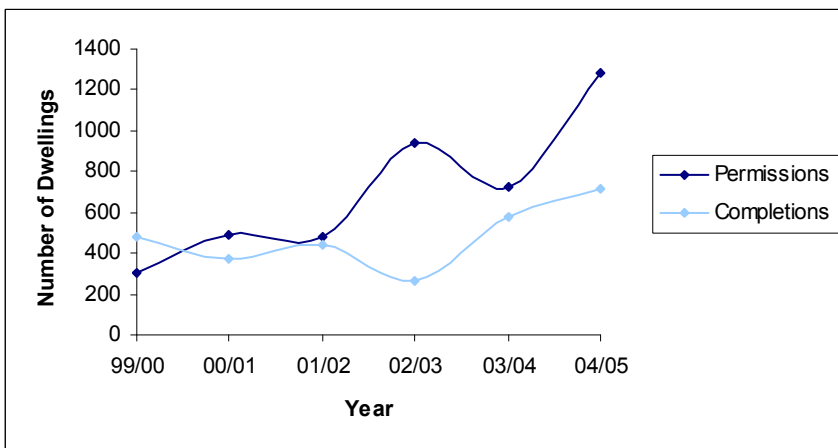


Figure 4: Pattern of total permissions and completions over the past five years (Oxford City Council)

Year	Permissions	Completions
99/00	307	477
00/01	489	369
01/02	482	439
02/03	938	267
03/04	726	578
<b>04/05</b>	<b>1279</b>	<b>718</b>

The increase in the permissions, and ultimately completions, is a result of a number of factors which include increased densities, allocated sites yielding more units than predicted, a considerable increase in the number of high density conversions as well as the possible impact of a profitable property market which is attractive to small scale house builders.

On target? ✓

<b>Indicator 2 (Core)</b>	<b>Percentage of new and converted dwellings built on previously developed land (gross)</b>
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### Objective

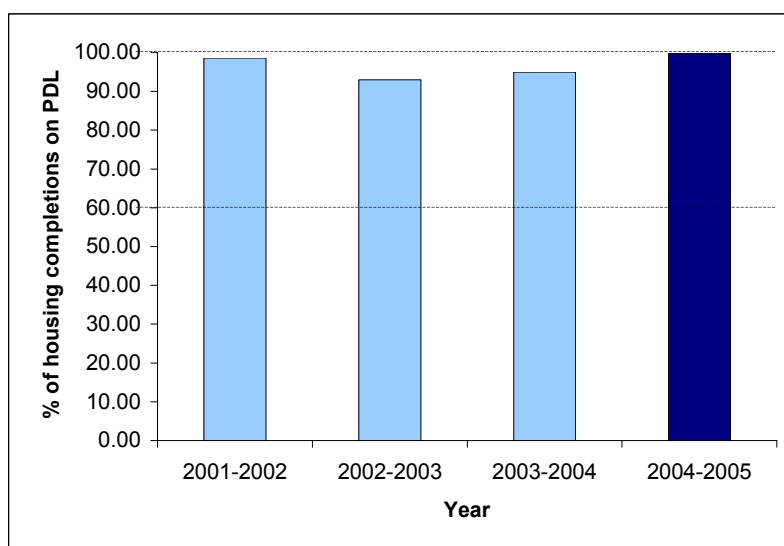
To maximise the re-use of previously developed land (PDL) in order to promote regeneration and minimise the amount of non-previously developed land being taken for development.

### Target

Nationally, at least 60% of additional housing should be provided on previously developed land<sup>1</sup>. The South East region as a whole, over the 2006-2026 period, the same target was set<sup>2</sup>. The Oxford Local Plan<sup>3</sup> sets a target to build 95-100% of new dwellings between 2001-2016 on previously-developed land.

### Data analysis

Year	Percentage of housing completions on PDL
2001/2002	98.60%
2002/2003	93.00%
2003/2004	95.00%
<b>2004/2005</b>	<b>99.87%</b>



**Figure 5: Percentage of new and converted dwellings built on Previously developed land 2004/2005 compared to previous years (Oxford City Council)**

### Commentary

Oxford is composed predominantly of an urban environment with some wedges, mainly Green Belt, running through the City. The urban nature of Oxford offers the opportunity to re-use a considerable proportion of previously developed land. The City Council has therefore been able to exceed the target of 60% set in national and regional guidance quite considerably since the beginning of the Plan period.

The general trend of the last few years is an upward one and, during 2004/2005, 99.87% of all new dwellings were built on previously developed land. It is considered that the percentage is unlikely to fall below the Local Plan target of 95% over the next five years.

**On target?** ✓

<sup>1</sup> *Planning Policy Guidance note 3*, Department of the Environment Transport and the Regions, 2000 and BVPI 106

<sup>2</sup> *The South East Plan*, South East England Regional Assembly, January 2005

<sup>3</sup> Paragraph 6.7.4, *Oxford Local Plan 2001-2016*, Oxford City Council, December 2005

<b>Indicator 3 (Core)</b>	<b>Housing densities</b> Percentage of new (gross) dwellings completed at: i) less than 30 dwellings per hectare (dph); ii) between 30 and 50 dph; iii) above 50 dph.
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**Objective**

To ensure an efficient and appropriate use of land.

**Target**

PPG3<sup>1</sup> encourages housing development which makes more efficient use of land (between 30 and 50 dwellings per hectare) and should seek higher densities in areas with good public transport accessibility. Most areas of Oxford are sustainably located and so the Oxford Local Plan<sup>2</sup> set a target that residential development should generally be above 40 dph with higher densities on appropriate sites.

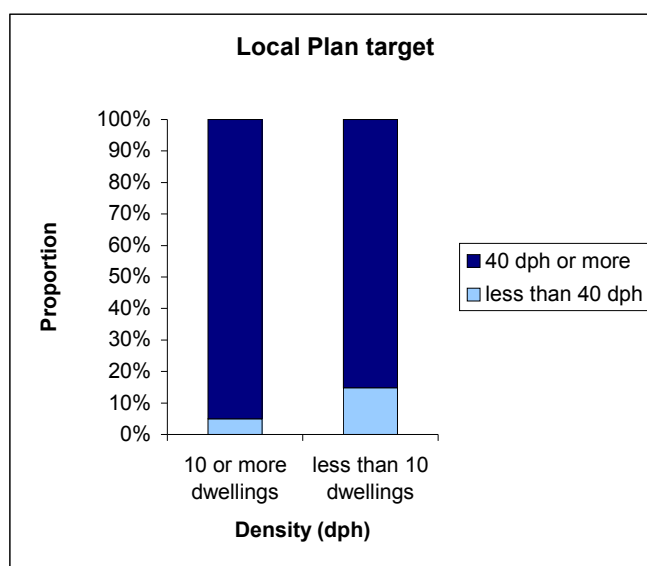
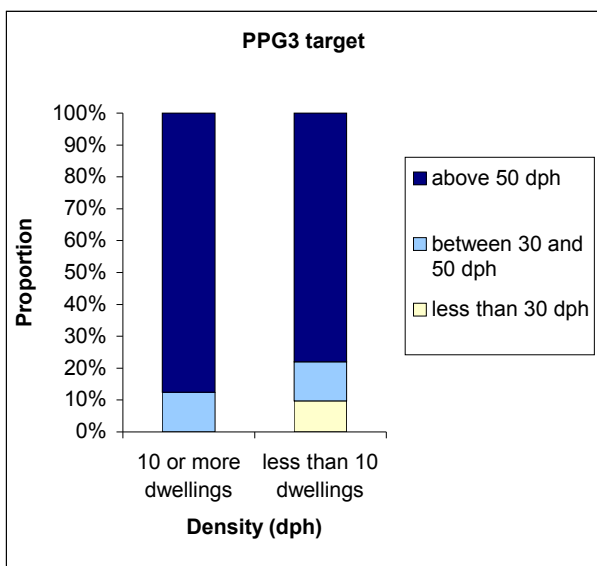
**Data analysis**

Density of completions 2004-2005 :

Density (PPG3 target)	Sites of ≥ 10 dwellings	Sites of < 10 dwellings
less than 30 dph	0%	9.74%
between 30 and 50 dph	12.41%	12.29%
above 50 dph	87.59%	77.97%

Density (Local Plan target)	Sites of ≥ 10 dwellings	Sites of < 10 dwellings
Less than 40 dph	4.96%	14.83%
40 dph or more	95.04%	85.17%

dph = dwellings per hectare



**Figure 6: Density of dwellings (PPG3 and Local Plan targets) completed (gross) during 2004/2005 split by site capacity (Oxford City Council)**

<sup>1</sup> Paragraph 58, *Planning Policy Guidance note 3*, DETR, 2000

<sup>2</sup> Policy CP.6, *Oxford Local Plan 2001-2016*, Oxford City Council, December 2005

## Commentary

In Oxford, there is a huge need for housing, but there is only a limited amount of land available for development. The City Council therefore expects land to be developed efficiently. Most areas of Oxford have excellent public transport links and are considered very sustainable so higher densities have generally been appropriate. PPG3 and the Local Plan recognises that density may not always be a useful measure on small sites of less than 10 dwellings so the data has been split to show densities of both large and small sites separately.

The results show that on large sites, the density of completions during 2004/2005 have been at the PPG3 target of 30-50 dph or higher, with a significant proportion above 50 dph. Small sites have been also been achieving a high proportion at higher densities, although this is likely to reflect the large number of developments of 1 or 2 dwellings where access roads and landscaping may not be required. Due to the compact nature of Oxford, a significant proportion of sites that come forward for development are small sites so it is considered worthwhile monitoring the density of small sites. The threshold for affordable housing provision is 10 dwellings and so the City Council will use this data to check that contributions to the provision affordable housing are not being lost as a result of underdevelopment.

Over 95% of dwellings completed on sites of 10 or more dwellings were built at a density of 40 dph or more. This is considered to be consistent with Policy CP.6 of the Oxford Local Plan 2001-2016. This level of density is expected to be consistently achieved in the future, however, the draft Supplementary Planning Document on Affordable Housing is likely to seek a greater number of larger dwellings and a fewer number of small dwellings than the current Supplementary Planning Document on Social Housing<sup>3</sup> due to the great need for affordable housing for families. This may result in reduced densities overall, however, the densities are not considered likely to reduce so much that it would result in underdevelopment and be contrary to Policy CP.6.

On target? ✓

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<sup>3</sup> Paragraph 22, Supplementary Planning Guidance on Social Housing, Oxford City Council, April 2001

<b>Indicator 4 (Core)</b>	<b>Number of affordable housing completions</b> i) Gross number of affordable housing completions; ii) Net number of affordable housing completions.
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### Objective

To secure a proportion of affordable housing to help meet housing needs.

### Target

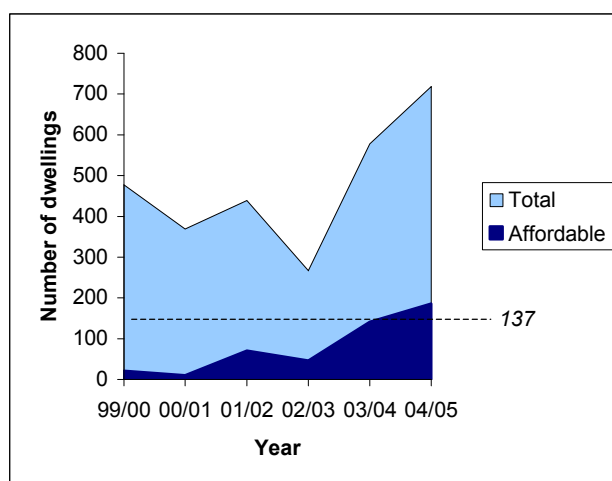
PPG3<sup>1</sup> says that local authorities should use surveys to demonstrate local need for affordable housing. These surveys would then form the basis for Local Plan policies on the delivery of affordable housing. The draft Regional Spatial Strategy for the South East sets an overall regional target that 35-40%<sup>2</sup> of all new housing should be affordable. In order for the region to achieve this, some authorities targets that are lower than this will be balanced with authorities with higher targets.

The Oxford Local Plan 2001-2016 requires 50% of dwellings to be affordable on residential sites with a capacity of 10 or more dwellings or on a residential site of 0.25ha<sup>3</sup>. The Local Plan seeks a contribution towards affordable housing from commercial development<sup>4</sup>. Oxford has a strategic target provision of 6,500 dwellings over the Plan period and by assessing the trend of size of sites coming forward for development, it is considered that the yield of affordable dwellings from residential development with the Local Plan 2001-2016 Policies should be approximately 2,060 dwellings (137 per year). Oxford's draft Housing Strategy<sup>5</sup> sets a target of 150 dwellings per annum.

### Data analysis

<b>Gross affordable housing completions 2004/2005</b>	186
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Year	Net total dwelling completions	Net affordable dwelling completions	Proportion of total dwellings that are affordable
99/00	477	21	4.4%
00/01	369	10	2.7%
01/02	439	71	16.2%
02/03	267	46	17.2%
03/04	578	141	25.7%
<b>04/05</b>	<b>718</b>	<b>186</b>	<b>25.9%</b>



**Figure 7: Net total dwelling completions compared with net affordable dwelling completions (Oxford City Council)**

<sup>1</sup> Paragraph 16, *Planning Policy Guidance note 3*, Department of the Environment Transport and the Regions, 2000

<sup>2</sup> Policy H4, *The South East Plan*, South East England Regional Assembly, January 2005

<sup>3</sup> Policies HS.4 and HS.5, *Oxford Local Plan 2001-2016*, Oxford City Council, December 2005

<sup>4</sup> Policy HS.7, *Oxford Local Plan 2001-2016*, Oxford City Council, December 2005

<sup>5</sup> Page 23, *Draft Housing Strategy for Oxford 2005-2008*, Oxford City Council, March 2005

## Commentary

The gross and net number of affordable housing completions for the 2004/2005 period was 186. It is considered useful to compare net affordable housing completions with net total housing completions to indicate the proportion of affordable housing being developed compared to all completions. This data is available for the previous 5 years and shows that there is generally an upward trend in the actual number of affordable dwellings and in their proportion of the total dwellings completed. The proportion of affordable housing permitted is analysed at Indicator 7.

The total number of dwellings completed in Oxford is increasing which has predictably lead to an increase in affordable housing completions. The affordable housing policies in the Local Plan do not appear to be having an adverse impact upon the delivery of affordable housing. However, due to the limited land available in Oxford, developers appear to be turning to small scale infill plots and conversions of family sized dwellings and these types of developments tend to be below the threshold for providing affordable housing so it will be important to monitor the trend in affordable housing delivery.

The need for affordable housing is so huge that it would be impossible to meet all the need therefore a more realistic approach must be taken. Whilst there is no set target in the Local Plan for the number of affordable units to be completed each year, Oxford's draft Housing Strategy<sup>5</sup> sets a target of 150 dwellings per annum. The 2004/2005 figure was considerably greater than 150, which is due to the fact that there have been a much higher number of permissions and completions over the last few years than had been predicted so therefore the number of affordable dwellings has also increased. It will be important to reassess the size of sites coming forward for development in the light of general development trends, following which it may be necessary to reduce the threshold.

The Housing Requirement Study<sup>6</sup> estimated that for the next 5 years, there is a shortfall of affordable housing in Oxford of around 1,700 – 1,800 affordable homes per year. Therefore whilst the 2004/2005 figure is greater than expected, it falls significantly short of that needed to meet the shortfall of affordable housing. It is clear that to deliver significantly more affordable housing negotiated through planning obligations alone will not satisfy this level of need.

On target? ✓

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<sup>5</sup> Page 23, Draft Housing Strategy for Oxford 2005-2008, Oxford City Council, March 2005

<sup>6</sup> Oxford Housing Requirements Study, Fordham Research, April 2004



<b>Indicator 5 (Local)</b>	<b>Number of affordable housing permissions against completions</b>
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**Objective**

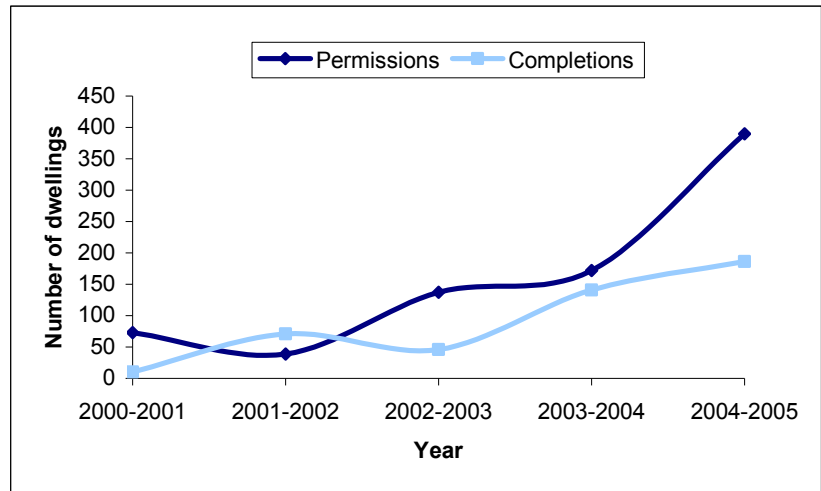
To enable the delivery of affordable housing to help meet housing needs.

**Target**

To ensure that every affordable dwelling that is permitted is completed and occupied, within a reasonable and acceptable time frame.

**Data analysis**

Year	Affordable housing permissions	Affordable housing completions
2000/2001	73	10
2001/2002	39	71
2002/2003	137	46
2003/2004	172	141
<b>2004/2005</b>	<b>390</b>	<b>186</b>



**Figure 8: Pattern of affordable housing permissions and completions over the past five years (Oxford City Council)**

**Commentary**

Indicator 5, compares the number of affordable housing permissions with the number of affordable housing completions. The expected time lag from permissions to completion is noticeable as is the relative closeness of the two lines on Figure 8 compared to the similar line in Figure 4 (Indicator 1). Developers are under obligation to build the affordable housing via a S106 legal agreement (planning obligation) and agreement with a Registered Social Landlord, and this is reflected in Figure 8. However, developers are under no obligation to implement planning applications with solely market housing which is why there is a difference between the delivery of market and affordable housing. On occasions, planning permissions for market housing are not implemented although this is more common on smaller sites and conversions as opposed to large schemes.

It may be useful in future AMRs to monitor the delivery of a signed Section 106 legal agreement (planning obligation) and whether or not this is having an impact on the delivery of affordable housing.

**On target?** ✓

<b>Indicator 6 (Local)</b>	<b>Cash contribution received during monitoring period towards affordable housing from:</b> i) Residential development; ii) Commercial development.
--------------------------------	---

## Objective

To secure financial contributions towards affordable housing from commercial development and from residential development (instead of on-site provision) in exceptional circumstances.

## Target

PPG3 states “Local planning authorities should encourage the development of mixed and balanced communities: they should ensure that new housing developments help to secure a better social mix by avoiding the creation of large areas of housing of similar characteristics”<sup>1</sup> and that “there is a presumption that such housing should be provided as part of the proposed development of the site”<sup>2</sup>.

The consultation document *Planning for Mixed Communities*<sup>3</sup> also emphasises that the presumption is that affordable housing should be in kind and on-site.

The draft Regional Spatial Strategy for the South East <sup>4</sup> also states that “There will be a presumption in favour of on-site affordable housing provision” and The deposit draft Oxfordshire Structure Plan 2016 says that provision of affordable housing will normally be on-site<sup>5</sup>.

Policy HS.6 of the Oxford Local Plan says that that affordable housing should be provided on-site as part of the proposed development. Policy HS.7 seeks a contribution from commercial development where a need for affordable housing is related to that commercial development. This will be provided on-site where the commercial development is part of a mixed use scheme.

## Data analysis

A financial contribution of £100,000 was received in 2004/2005 arising from a development for flats at The Dale, Bayswater Farm Road towards the provision of affordable housing in Oxford City. No financial contributions were received from commercial developments. The table below shows the contributions received over the past 5 years, as cash in lieu and as affordable housing in kind (on-site provision).

	1999/2000	2000/2001	2001/2002	2002/2003	2003/2004	2004/2005
<b>Cash in lieu (£) received for the provision of affordable housing</b>	446,815	0	477,969	573,650	0	<b>100,000</b>
<b>On-site provision (affordable dwellings permitted)</b>	-	73	39	137	172	<b>390</b>

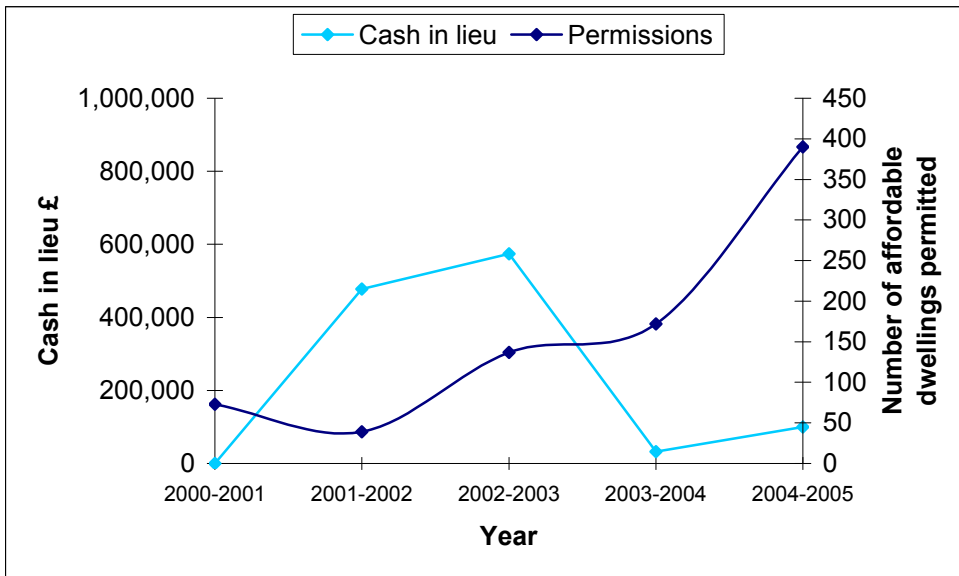
<sup>1</sup> Paragraph 10, *Planning Policy Guidance note 3*, Department of the Environment Transport and the Regions, 2000

<sup>2</sup> Paragraph 17, *Planning Policy Guidance note 3*, Department of the Environment Transport and the Regions, 2000

<sup>3</sup> Paragraph 12, *Planning for Mixed Communities*, Office of the Deputy Prime Minister, January 2005

<sup>4</sup> Policy H4, *The South East Plan*, South East England Regional Assembly, January 2005

<sup>5</sup> Policy H4, *Deposit Draft Oxfordshire Structure Plan 2016*, September 2003



**Figure 9: Contributions towards affordable housing received via cash in lieu and on-site (Oxford City Council)**

**Commentary**

The financial contribution received will be added to contributions from other developments received in previous financial years totalling over £1.8m. The majority of this funding is allocated to two affordable housing schemes hoped to be implemented in 07/08.

While the two sets of data in the table are not actually comparable, figure 9 shows the fluctuations in the amount of the cash in lieu contributions received. This is because there are generally few sites where the City Council have accepted cash in lieu in the past and these sites came forward sporadically, creating an uneven distribution in the contribution. During 2004/2005 the amount received was significantly less than the other years when cash was received which suggests the beginning of a downward trend. At the same time the trend of affordable dwelling completions is increasing. This is mainly due to the impact of the policies<sup>6</sup> in the Oxford Local Plan 2001-2016. However the application of Policy HS.6 is expected to contribute to an increase in the number of affordable dwellings contributed on-site while reducing the contributions received as cash in lieu. Policy HS.6 does allow for exceptions to on-site provision, although it is considered that these situations will be rare as due to the limited land available in Oxford, it will be a challenge finding available sites to develop affordable housing schemes on.

Contributions that are received due to the need for affordable housing arising from a commercial development are more likely to be as cash in lieu, however, in a mixed use development involving residential, the presumption will be for the on-site provision of affordable housing.

A formula for calculating affordable housing contributions from commercial development will be set out in the Affordable Housing Supplementary Planning Document (SPD), a draft of which is expected by the end of 2005. As yet, no contributions have been received from commercial development, however, this is expected to change once the draft SPD is published which will set out the draft formula.

**On target?** ✓

<sup>6</sup> Policies HS.5 and HS.6, Oxford Local Plan 2001-2016, Oxford City Council

<b>Indicator 7 (Local)</b>	<b>Average percentage of affordable housing permitted via S106 legal agreements (planning obligations) on residential sites</b>
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### Objective

To secure a proportion of affordable housing to help meet housing needs.

### Target

PPG3<sup>1</sup> says that local authorities should use surveys to demonstrate local need for affordable housing. These surveys would then form the basis for Local Plan policies on the delivery of affordable housing. The draft Regional Spatial Strategy for the South East sets an overall regional target that 35-40%<sup>2</sup> of all new housing should be affordable. In order for the region to achieve this, some authorities targets that are lower than this will be balanced with authorities with higher targets.

The Oxford Local Plan 2001-2016 requires 50% of dwellings to be affordable on residential sites with a capacity of 10 or more dwellings, or on a residential site of 0.25ha<sup>3</sup>. The Local Plan seeks a contribution towards affordable housing from commercial development<sup>4</sup>. Oxford has a strategic target provision of 6,500 dwellings over the Plan period and by assessing the trend of size of sites coming forward for development, it is considered that the yield of affordable dwellings from residential development with the Local Plan 2001-2016 Policies should be approximately 2,060 dwellings (137 per year).

### Data analysis

	2000/2001	2001/2002	2002/2003	2003/2004	2004/2005
<b>Average proportion of affordable housing from S106 legal agreements</b>	30.29%	27.86%	28.78%	43.35%	<b>44.60%</b>

### Commentary

Indicator 4 set out the number of affordable dwellings completed as a proportion of all dwellings. Indicator 7 however, specifically looks at the proportion of affordable housing permitted on where there is a policy requirement for affordable housing provision.

Policy HO6 in Oxford Local Plan 1991-2001 required a minimum of 20% affordable housing from qualifying sites. The SPG in 2001 clarified that the City Council would seek generally 30% of a proposed development to be affordable housing on suitable sites. The first and second drafts of the Oxford Local Plan 2001-2016 were published during the 2002/2003 year so their influence, as material considerations, and thus the application of Policy HS.5, became noticeable in the following year by the increase in the proportion. However, the Local Plan Inquiry Inspector's report, which recommended in favour of Policy HS.5 was not received until February 2005 so the average proportion achieved during 2004/2005 were slightly below the target of 50%. The Oxford Local Plan 2001-2016 is due to be adopted in November 2005 and it is expected that the average proportion of affordable housing permitted on S106 legal agreements (planning obligation) will increase to a minimum of 50% from the beginning of 2006.

**On target?** ✓

<sup>1</sup> Paragraph 16, *Planning Policy Guidance note 3*, Department of the Environment Transport and the Regions, 2000

<sup>2</sup> Policy H4, *The South East Plan*, South East England Regional Assembly, January 2005

<sup>3</sup> Policies HS.4 and HS.5, *Oxford Local Plan 2001-2016*, Oxford City Council, December 2005

<sup>4</sup> Policy HS.7, *Oxford Local Plan 2001-2016*, Oxford City Council, December 2005

<b>Indicator 8 (Local)</b>	<b>Mix of housing completed by house size in respect of:</b>  i) market dwellings; ii) affordable dwellings.
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### Objective

To ensure a mix of dwelling sizes is achieved in order to maintain, and create, sustainable communities.

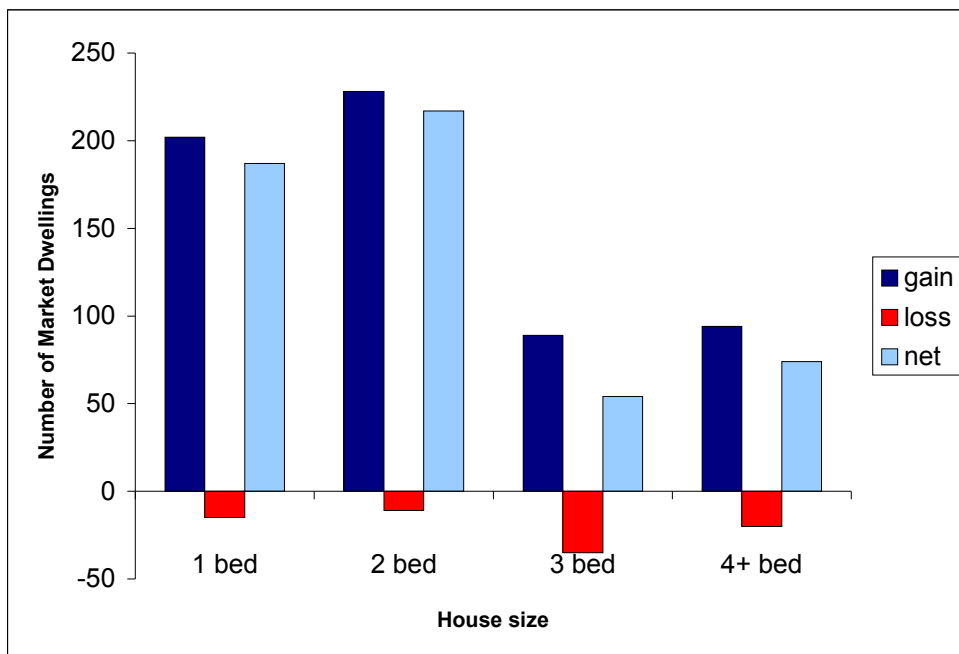
### Target

An objective of PPG3 is that Local Planning Authorities should “*plan to meet the housing requirements of the whole community*”<sup>1</sup>. The ODPM published a consultation document which states that “*Local Planning Authorities should ensure that their policies seek to achieve a mix of housing which will create sustainable communities by securing a wide range of housing which promotes social inclusion.*”<sup>2</sup>

The draft Regional Spatial Strategy for the South East states that “*Local Development Documents should seek to facilitate an appropriate range of housing opportunities in terms of a mix of housing types, sizes and tenure.*”<sup>3</sup>

The Oxford Local Plan 2001-2016 seeks to achieve a balance mix of dwelling sizes within a site and within a locality in order to maintain and create sustainable communities.<sup>4</sup> Oxford’s draft Housing Strategy<sup>5</sup> seeks to meet the needs of a range of households within Oxford which requires affordable dwellings to be of the right size to meet that need.

### Data analysis



**Figure 10: Mix of market dwelling size completed during 2004/2005 (Oxford City Council)**

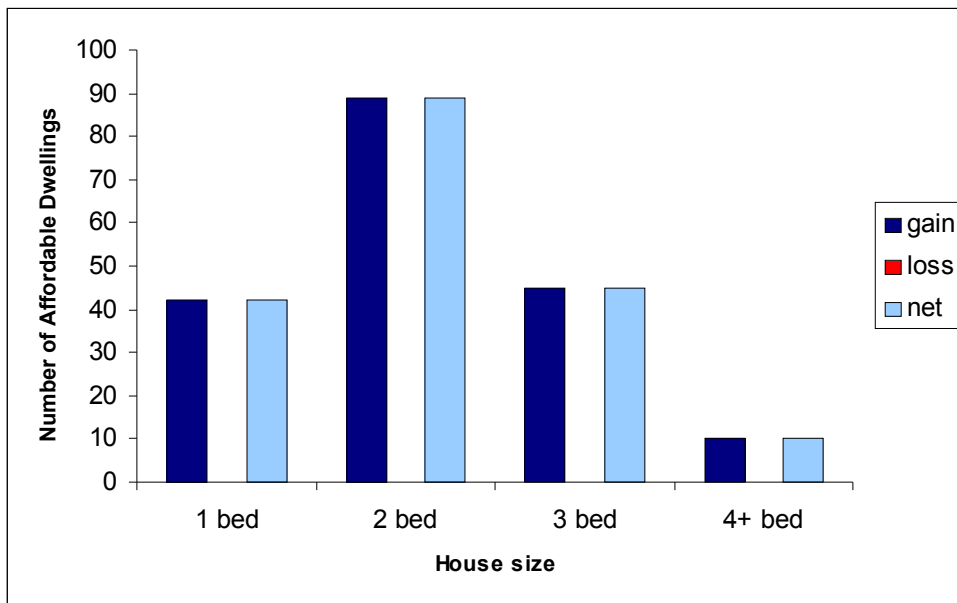
<sup>1</sup> Paragraph 2, *Planning Policy Guidance note 3*, Department of the Environment Transport and the Regions, 2000

<sup>2</sup> Paragraph 5, *Planning for Mixed Communities*, ODPM, January 2005

<sup>3</sup> Policy H6, *The South East Plan*, South East England Regional Assembly, January 2005

<sup>4</sup> Policy HS.8, *Oxford Local Plan 2001-2016*, Oxford City Council, December 2005

<sup>5</sup> Draft Housing Strategy for Oxford 2005-2008, Oxford City Council, March 2005



**Figure 11: Mix of affordable dwelling size completed during 2004/2005 (Oxford City Council)**

	Number of dwellings completed in 2004/2005 that were 1 or 2 bed in size	Total number of dwellings completed on 2004/2005	Proportion of dwellings completed that were 1 and 2 bed dwellings
<b>Market</b>	404	532	75.93%
<b>Affordable</b>	131	186	70.43%
<b>Total</b>	535	718	74.51%

## Commentary

Figure 10 and the table show that the size of market dwellings completed during 2004/2005 was significantly skewed towards one and two bed units. Figure 11 shows a notable skew towards two bed affordable dwellings compared to other sized dwellings that were completed during 2004/2005.

On a site by site basis, the majority of the large sites completed during 2004/2005 were on out of centre sites where a mix of units was generally achieved. On smaller sites and in the City centre, the pattern of development tends to be of a large number of small flats, which does not achieve a mix on-site.

Smaller units (both market and affordable) are generally more profitable to developers, and with the push towards higher densities since the publication of PPG3, smaller units on new build developments are commonly proposed. Oxford has the additional problem of having a limited land supply so developers are resourceful in finding sites to develop which often include the conversion of typical three bed semi detached houses into two flats. These conversions are primarily represented in Figure 10 by the loss of three bed market dwellings.

Due to the time lag between permissions and completions, it is expected that future years will show more of a skew away from three and four bed completions because of the more recent influx of permissions for conversions and for one bed purpose built flats. This is apparent from an initial review of permission data and is expected to be noticeable in the next AMR.

It is difficult at this stage to assess whether or not the City Council is 'on target' to meet the objective of Policy HS.8 because the information in this indicator is only a snapshot taken of completions during the monitoring period of 2004/2005. To consider whether or not the City Council is achieving an appropriate mix of dwelling sizes, further evidence must be taken into consideration. A robust assessment would consider the dwelling sizes of the current housing stock in Oxford and how the completions during 2004/2005 affect the mix of the existing stock. It would also consider the demographics of Oxford and

what impact this has on the need for particular sizes of market dwellings because although there were more one and two bed dwellings completed during 2004/2005 than three and four bed dwellings resulting in what appears to be an imbalance, the smaller dwellings are still meeting a recognised need in Oxford. Census<sup>1</sup> evidence shows that in Oxford there was a 3.4% increase in one person households between 1991 and 2001 and a decrease in households of two and four or more persons. The City Council must therefore be careful not to draw immediate conclusions from the evidence in this indicator without first considering all the factors which form the evidence base for the mix of dwellings in Oxford.

In conclusion, while the completions over 2004/2005 do not show an even mix of dwellings sizes, there is a recognised need for smaller dwellings and so, it is considered that at this stage, and in the absence of a detailed evidence base to support a robust assessment, the City Council should be regarded as being on target. It should be noted that the City Council is commissioning a study to compile the evidence base which will be available well in advance of the next Annual Monitoring Report.

**On target?** ✓

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<sup>1</sup> National Statistics website: [www.statistics.gov.uk](http://www.statistics.gov.uk) (2001) and Office for National Office of Population Censuses and Surveys (1991). Crown copyright material is reproduced with the permission of the Controller of HMSO.

<b>Indicator 9 (Local)</b>	<b>Affordable dwellings permitted and completed analysed by tenure</b>
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## Objective

To assess if a suitable balance of affordable housing is being achieved.

## Target

The ODPM published a consultation document which states that “*Local Planning Authorities should ensure that their policies seek to achieve a mix of housing which will create sustainable communities by securing a wide range of housing which promotes social inclusion.*”<sup>1</sup>

The draft Regional Spatial Strategy for the South East states that “*Local Development Documents should seek to facilitate an appropriate range of housing opportunities in terms of a mix of housing types, sizes and tenure.*”<sup>2</sup>

The Oxford Local Plan 2001-2016 seeks to achieve a balance mix of dwelling sizes, types and tenures within a site and within a locality in order to maintain and create sustainable communities.<sup>3</sup>

Oxford’s Social Housing SPG<sup>4</sup> indicated that the tenure split of affordable housing should be 70% social rented and 30% shared ownership. In April 2004, the City Council published its Housing Requirements Study<sup>5</sup> which indicated that the tenure split should now be sought at 80% social rented and 20% shared ownership.

## Data analysis

	<b>Proportions completed 2004/2005</b>	<b>Proportions permitted on S106 sites 2004/2005</b>	<b>Total proportions permitted on S106 and non S106 sites 2004/2005</b>
<b>Social Rented</b>	74.1%	65.6%	65.8%
<b>Shared Ownership</b>	25.9%	34.4%	34.2%

## Commentary

Due to the high cost of property in Oxford, the greatest need is for social rented affordable housing, however there is a need for shared ownership housing as well. Shared ownership is more attractive to developers both financially and in their perception of the type occupiers of shared ownership housing compared to occupiers of social rented housing and the impact this might have on the saleability of their market units. The tenure split is often an element that applicants try to negotiate and the success of their negotiations may be apparent in the data above as the tenure split of 70/30 indicated in the SPG has not consistently been permitted during 2004/2005, although completions during 2004/2005 exceed the 70/30 target. Also, in some areas where there is already a high proportion of social rented housing, shared ownership may be more appropriate and this might in turn affect the tenure split.

<sup>1</sup> Paragraph 5, *Planning for Mixed Communities*, ODPM, January 2005

<sup>2</sup> Policy H6, *The South East Plan*, South East England Regional Assembly, January 2005

<sup>3</sup> Policy HS.8, *Oxford Local Plan 2001-2016*, Oxford City Council, December 2005

<sup>4</sup> *Supplementary Planning Guidance on Social Housing*, Oxford City Council, April 2001

<sup>5</sup> *Oxford’s Housing Requirements Study*, Fordham Research, April 2004.



The proportion of social rented overall is slightly greater than the social rented proportion from sites secured by planning obligations. This is due to sites that are built by Registered Social Landlords or the City Council who seek to meet the greatest need which is for social rented accommodation.

The tenure split between social rented and shared ownership will be set out in the Affordable Housing Supplementary Planning Document (SPD), a draft of which is expected by the end of 2005. The tenure split achieved is expected to become closer to the target of 80/20 once the draft SPD is published, however, it may not be until the adoption of the SPD that the target is consistently achieved.

The data above indicates that while completions during 2004/2005 exceed our target of 70/30, permissions during the year do not, which is likely to result in completions over the next year or two that fall short of the 80/20 and even the 70/30 split.

**On target? X**

<b>Indicator 10 (Local)</b>	<b>Number of full and part time students and number of postgraduate and undergraduate students</b>
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**Objective**

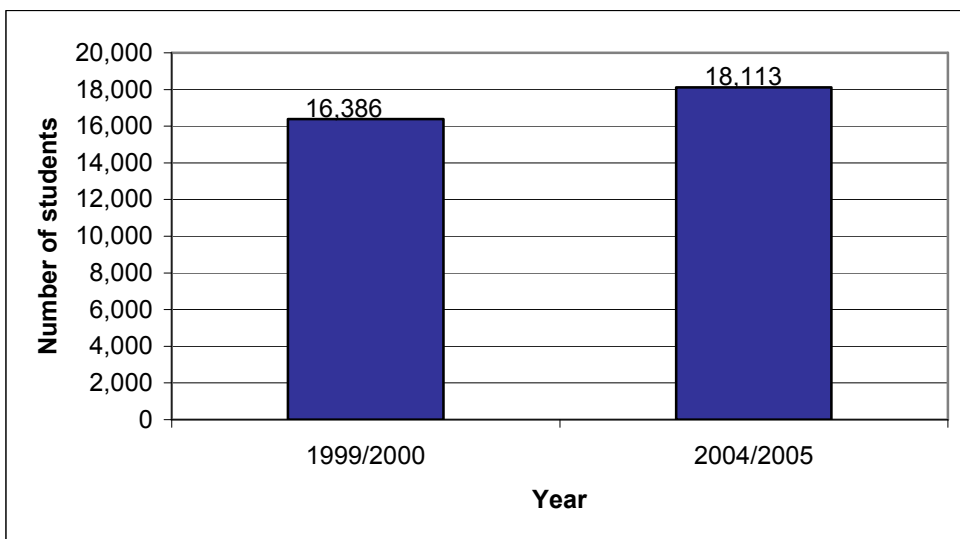
To ensure that any increase in student numbers at the University of Oxford and Oxford Brookes University does not have a detrimental effect upon the amount of private sector housing available by ensuring that any increase in student numbers is matched by an equivalent increase in purpose built student accommodation.

**Target**

Local Plan policies ED.6 and ED.8 state that in relation to both Oxford Brookes University and the University of Oxford the City Council will assess proposals for teaching/administration accommodation for their impact on student numbers. Planning permission will only be granted for additional teaching/administrative accommodation where the number of Oxford Brookes University/University of Oxford full-time students living in Oxford in accommodation not provided by Oxford Brookes University/University of Oxford does not exceed 3,500 in the academic years up to 2008, and 3,000 after that date.

**Data analysis**

**1. University of Oxford**

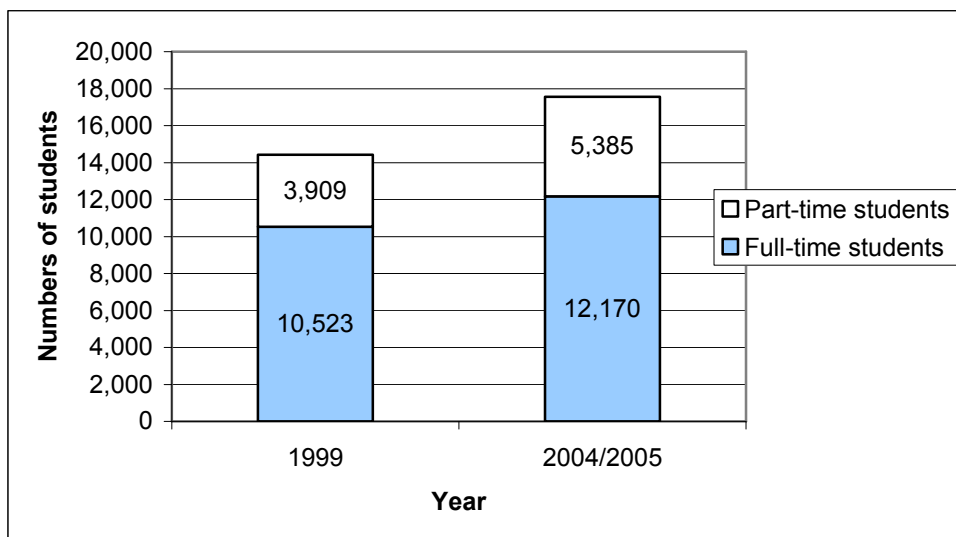


**Figure 12: Number of students at the University of Oxford**

Source: Information supplied by the University of Oxford

The Oxford Local Plan 2001 – 2016 states that the number of students at the University of Oxford ‘is expected to grow by an average of 1% a year. This will increase the total number of students [over the Local Plan period] to 19,300, giving an increase of 3,000 students.’ In 1999/2000, according to the Oxford Gazette, the total number of students was 16,386. For the academic year 2004/05 the total number of students is 18,113, according to the Oxford Gazette, an increase of 1,727 over the past 5 years, which is 57% of the total growth in student numbers expected over the Plan period. Analysis of the figures reveals that the increase has been predominantly in postgraduate students. Their numbers have increased from 4,901 in 1999/2000 to 6,491 in 2004/05, an increase of 1,590. Undergraduate numbers, by contrast have only increased from 10,993 to 11,225, an increase of only 232.

**2. Oxford Brookes University**



**Figure 13: The number of students at Oxford Brookes University**

Source: Letter from Oxford Brookes University dated 11.11.04 and Oxford Brookes University web site: [www.brookes.ac.uk](http://www.brookes.ac.uk)

The Oxford Local Plan 2001-2016 states that the overall number of students is likely to grow by 0.5% to 1% a year (across Oxford Brookes University's four academic centres) during the next 15 years. There could therefore be an extra 1,820 full time students at the University by 2016. In 1999 the total number of full and part-time students was 14,432 and this has increased to 17,555 in 2004/05. The number of full-time students has increased from 10,523 in 1999 to 12,170 in 2004/05, giving an increase of 1,647. This is almost the full projected increase of full-time students over the entire Local Plan period. The number of part-time students has also increased substantially from 3,909 in 1999 to 5,385 in 2004/05 giving an increase of 1,474.

## Commentary

### University of Oxford and Oxford Brookes University

The number of students at both the University of Oxford and Oxford Brookes University is increasing more rapidly than either of the Universities forecasted when the Oxford Local Plan 2001-2016 was being prepared. This is particularly the case at Oxford Brookes University where nearly all of the forecasted growth in full-time students over the Local Plan period has already occurred. This is a matter of concern, as the allocation of sites for the provision of student accommodation was made on the assumption that student numbers would increase at the rate of 1% per annum. Should the more rapid rate of increase continue there is the possibility that during the period covered by the Local Plan, student numbers could outstrip the supply of sites allocated for the provision of student accommodation. It could also result in the number of students living outside University provided accommodation exceeding the limits of 3,500 in the academic years up to 2008 and 3,000 after that date. Under the terms of Local Plan policies ED.6 and ED.8 planning permission will not be granted for additional teaching/administrative accommodation if the number living outside provided accommodation exceeds the limits given in these policies. As the increase in student numbers has, to date, been predominantly due to more efficient use of existing buildings and not as a result of increased academic floorspace, the growth in numbers has not been within the control of the City Council.

On target? **X**

<b>Indicator 11 (Local)</b>	<b>Number of units of purpose built student accommodation (by institution) completed</b>
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## Objective

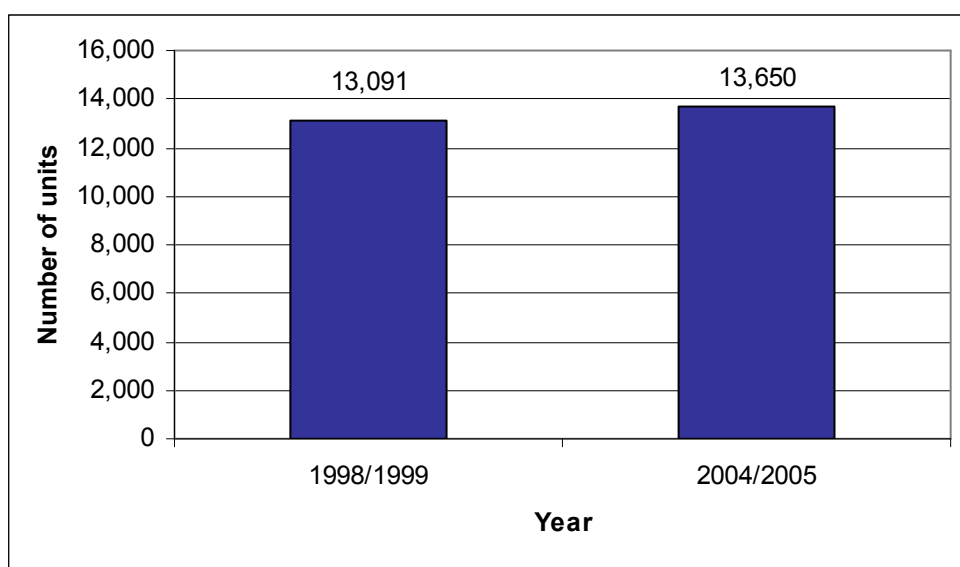
To ensure that enough purpose built student accommodation is built so as to match increases in student numbers and thereby avoid more students living in private sector housing. (Local Plan policies ED.5; to ED.8).

## Target

Local Plan policies ED.6 and ED.8 state that in relation to both Oxford Brookes University and the University of Oxford that planning permission will only be granted for additional teaching/administrative accommodation where the number of Oxford Brookes University/University of Oxford full-time students living in Oxford in accommodation not provided by Oxford Brookes University/University of Oxford does not exceed 3,500 in the academic years up to 2008, and 3,000 after that date.

## Data analysis

### 1. University of Oxford



**Figure 14: Provision of student accommodation by the University of Oxford**

The total number of student units in 1998/1999 was 13,090<sup>1</sup>. Figures provided by the University indicate that in 2004/05 there were approximately 13,650 units of accommodation. This gives an increase of only 560, with many of the units being provided on sites which have not been allocated for student accommodation in the Oxford Local Plan. More than 560 units have been constructed, but some units have been lost through disposal or conversion to other University uses. As the number of students has increased by 1,727 the indications are that the number of students are increasing more rapidly than new student accommodation is provided. As the number of students is 18,113 and the number of units of student accommodation is approximately 13,650, the number of students for whom University accommodation is not provided is 4,463. This, however, may be more than actually live in Oxford as the University states that some students are likely to be abroad or working with another research team at another University. Indeed according to returns from the Colleges the total number of graduates and undergraduates studying at all of the Colleges is 17,154. On the basis of these figures the total number living outside provided accommodation is 3,504.

<sup>1</sup> Report on the future land requirements of the University of Oxford in relation to the Radcliffe Infirmary site (September 2000) page 8.

## Oxford Brookes University

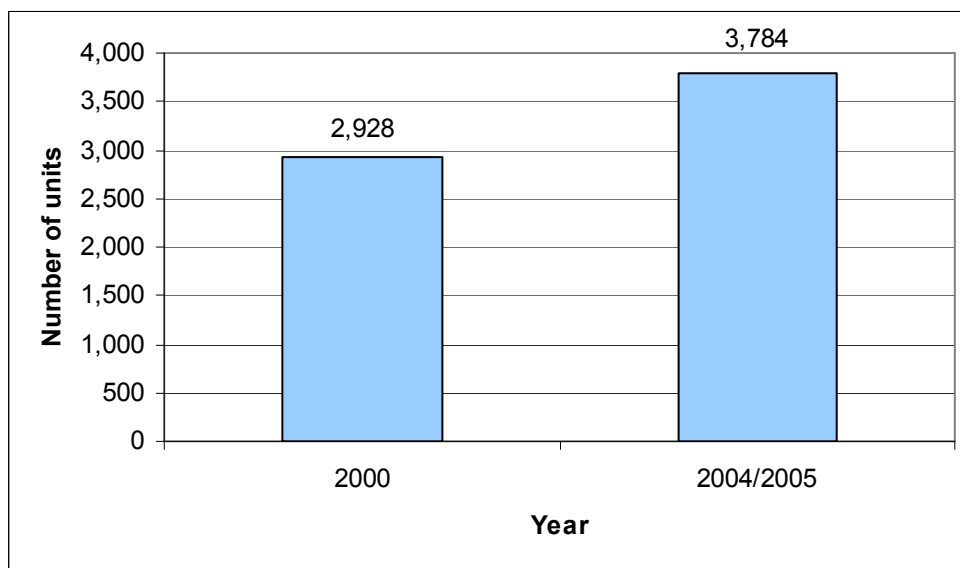


Figure 15: Provision of student accommodation by Oxford Brookes University

The total number of Oxford Brookes University students living in purpose built accommodation has increased from 2,928 in 2000 to 3,784 in 2004/05. Out of the 12,170 full-time students there are therefore 8,386, which are not living in purpose built accommodation. Oxford Brookes University has provided information on how the remaining full-time students are accommodated. 4,121 live at their normal home address, of which the majority live outside Oxford. In addition, of those students living away from home but not in University purpose-built accommodation, 415 have local addresses outside Oxford. A further 304 students are on sandwich courses, are away from Oxford on placement or studying off campus in partner colleges. The total number living in ordinary residential accommodation is therefore 3,546. Of these, 514 students live in houses administered by the University. The total number living in private rented accommodation within Oxford is therefore estimated to be 3,032.

### Commentary

#### University of Oxford

At present the number of students at the University of Oxford living outside provided accommodation is 4,463, which is above the 3,500 maximum given in Policy ED.8. Some of these students may, however, live away from Oxford so the actual number living in Oxford outside University provided accommodation may, in reality, be close to the 3,500 maximum given in the policy. Confirmation as to whether this is the case will be provided in the next Annual Monitoring Report. The number of students has increased rapidly and the indications are that this increase is not being matched by an equivalent amount of new student accommodation. If student numbers continue to increase rapidly it will be important that more student accommodation is provided. Should student numbers continue to rise more rapidly than the forecast in the Oxford Local Plan, a shortage could develop if the number of unallocated sites available for the provision of student accommodation was to diminish. It is important that growth in student numbers and the provision of student accommodation continues to be monitored so that the City Council can take appropriate remedial action should student numbers increase more rapidly than student accommodation.

#### Oxford Brookes University

At present the total number of students living in ordinary residential accommodation is 3,546. Of these, 514 students live in houses administered by the University. Therefore, the number of students living in private rented accommodation in Oxford is estimated to be 3,032. The University has constructed a large number of new units of student accommodation over the past five years. If the number of full-time

students at the University continues to increase rapidly it will be important that further purpose built student accommodation is provided. The number of students living in private rented accommodation in Oxford would also increase if less students chose to live at their normal home address. It is therefore vital that the situation is closely monitored to ensure that the number of students living in private rented accommodation does not significantly increase in future years, thereby putting further pressure on the Oxford housing market.

For both the University of Oxford and Oxford Brookes University, it will be critical for these institutions to monitor the growth in student numbers compared with the amount of purpose built accommodation. As the 2008 deadline approaches, the City Council should take a strong line against any major growth in academic floorspace unless it can be demonstrated that the increase in student accommodation will be provided before any further increase in student numbers.

**On target? X**

<b>Indicator 12 (Contextual)</b>	<b>House prices and affordability of housing</b>
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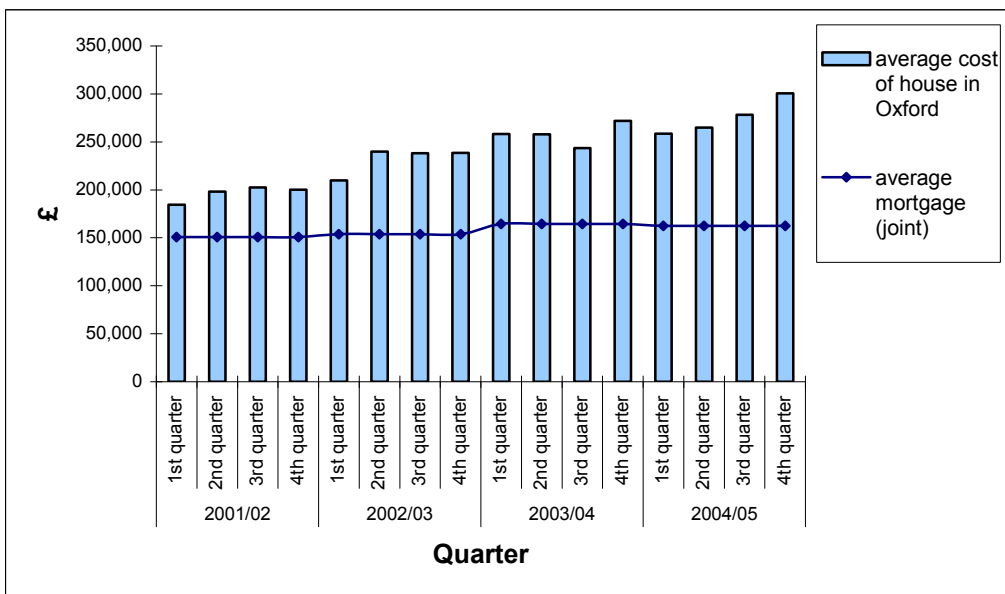
**Objective**

To monitor the affordability of housing.

**Target**

To improve the affordability of housing where possible.

**Data analysis**



**Figure 16: Comparison of the average house price with the average mortgage of a joint income over the past 4 years (Land Registry and ONS)**

**Commentary**

Figure 16 shows that the cost of the average house has been out of reach of the average first time joint income buyers constantly for the past four years. The average cost of a house in Oxford is increasing at a rate which far exceeds the rate that incomes are increasing. The Local Plan cannot itself affect income, nor can it have any significant impact on the cost of property in Oxford.

**On target? N/A**

No target appropriate, as this is contextual information.

**Objective**

To reduce the number of homeless households in Oxford.

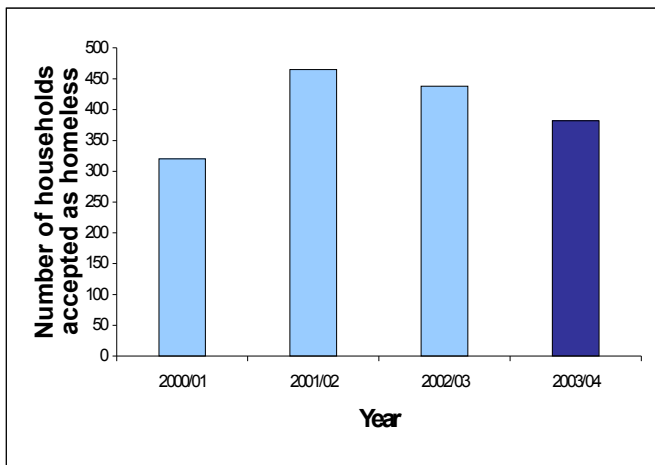
**Target**

Oxford’s Community Strategy<sup>1</sup> includes the objective to reduce the average time spent by homeless households in temporary accommodation by 50% by 2008.

The Homelessness Strategy for Oxford 2003-2008<sup>2</sup> sets out a number of objectives: to reduce the numbers presenting as homeless to the City Council; to reduce expenditure on homelessness in Oxford; to address the causes of homelessness wherever possible; to support and increase access to relevant services by the homeless; to enable different agencies to work together more co-operatively; to develop prevention of homelessness strategies; to establish systems for monitoring the implementation of the delivery plan; to increase the supply of affordable housing.

There is a need for a cross-boundary approach to monitoring traveller and gypsy accommodation needs within the sub-region. The Housing Act 2004 introduced a statutory requirement for local authorities to assess the accommodation needs of gypsies and travellers.

**Data analysis**



**Figure 17: Households accepted as homeless per year (Oxford City Council)**

<sup>1</sup> Oxford’s Community Strategy, Oxford Strategic Partnership, 2004

<sup>2</sup> Homelessness Strategy for Oxford 2003-2008, Oxford City Council.



## **Commentary**

### *Homelessness*

This is a contextual indicator which shows that over the past 3 years, the number of homeless households has been reducing. The increase in the amount of affordable housing completed goes part way to help reduce the number of homeless household in Oxford. However, the Local Plan has limited control on many of the reasons for the level of homeless households: the level of market rents, the cost of home ownership, income levels, inward migration, and the extent/level of public service provision.

Oxford has higher numbers of homeless households per 1,000 population than the other four Oxfordshire districts, the South East and England as a whole and although the level of homelessness is decreasing, there is still some way before targets are met.

### **Gypsy and Traveller Sites**

Monitoring of gypsy and traveller settlements across Oxfordshire is carried out by the Oxfordshire County Council Gypsy and Traveller Liaison team on a bi-annual basis. The monitoring includes both authorised and non-authorised sites, and has provided a basis upon which to informally assess gypsy and traveller accommodation needs in Oxfordshire.

There are currently no sites within the administrative boundaries of Oxford which have planning permission for gypsy or traveller encampment. However two sites, which are provided and managed by the County Council, are located just beyond the City boundary, to the south-east and south of Oxford respectively. A further site is located within five miles of Oxford at Wheatley.

At July 2005, no unauthorised encampments were identified in Oxford by a County-wide monitoring survey. Previous surveys dating back to January 2003 have found up to three unauthorised gypsy caravans located in Oxford, which is low compared with other, more rural districts within Oxfordshire.

The City Council has jointly commissioned, as a member of the Association of Councils in the Thames Valley Region, a comprehensive assessment of gypsy and traveller needs within the sub-region. It is hoped that this study may yield important contextual information and data which can be referred to in the next Annual Monitoring Report, and related to Local Development Framework policy development.

### **On target? N/A**

No target appropriate, as this is contextual information.

# ECONOMY

<b>Indicator 14 (Core)</b>	<b>Amount of floorspace developed for employment by type.</b>
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## Objective

To provide sufficient employment land for sustainable growth and encourage diversity to maximise job opportunities for the local workforce.

## Target

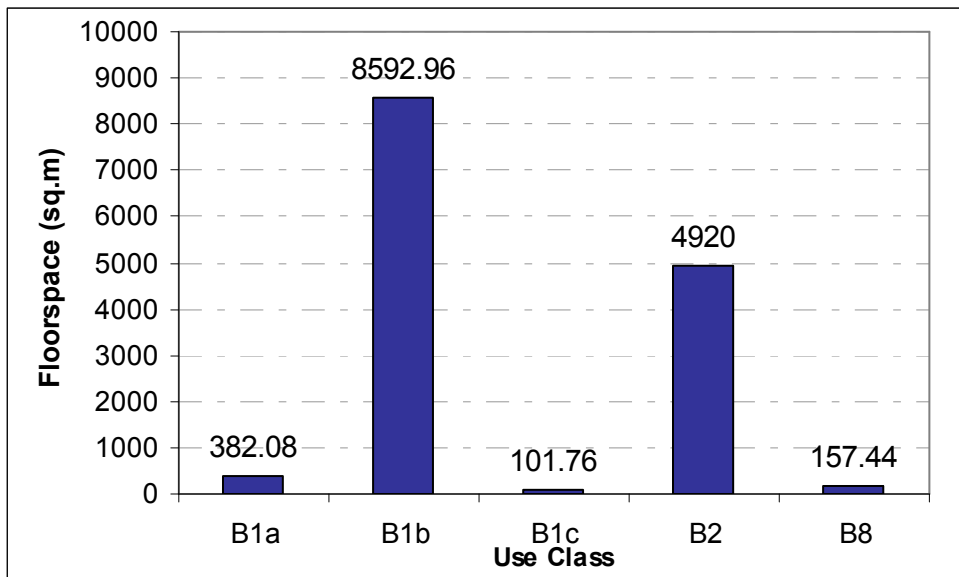
National policy<sup>1</sup> highlights the importance of promoting a strong, and productive economy that aims to bring jobs and prosperity for all. Sustainable development is encouraged to promote social inclusion and accessibility (both in locational and physical terms) to job opportunities. Sufficient land in suitable locations should be made available for industrial and commercial development.

The Draft South East Plan<sup>2</sup> emphasises the need to provide sufficient employment land to promote sustainable growth and diversity in the regional economy. A range of sites and premises should be provided to meet the needs of business and the local workforce.

The Oxford Local Plan<sup>3</sup> seeks to encourage sustainable development, strengthen existing employment sectors and modernise employment uses within Oxford. Diversity in the local economy is essential to maximise employment opportunities for the local workforce.

## Data analysis

The graph shows the amount of floorspace developed for employment uses<sup>4</sup> (B1a offices, B1b research and development & B1c light industrial, B2 general industrial and B8 warehousing) by type. These figures are taken from planning permissions completed. In total some 13,690 sqm. gross of internal floorspace has been developed for employment uses.



**Figure 18: Amount of floorspace developed for employment by type**

<sup>1</sup> Planning Policy Statement 1: 2005 & Employment Land Review Guidance Note: Dec 2004

<sup>2</sup> Policy RE1 & RE4, The Draft South East Plan, South East England Regional Assembly: Jan 2005

<sup>3</sup> Policy EC1, EC2, EC3, The Oxford Local Plan 2001-2016, Oxford City Council: Dec 2005

<sup>4</sup> Use Classes Order 2005 – See Glossary

## **Commentary**

Oxford has been building on its economic strengths, however recent additional growth has largely taken place within the research and development sector (Class B1b). There has only been a limited amount of new floorspace coming forward for office (Class B1a) and light industrial development (Class B1c).

In the context of the national trend towards the decline in manufacturing industrial (Class B2) uses and the amount of land and property lost in Oxford, it is important to recognise that additional floorspace has been completed to add to the stock of general industrial floorspace.

The very small amount of further warehouse (Class B8) floorspace is not considered to be significant given the nature of warehouse development, which often uses large amounts of scarce land and provides relatively few job opportunities.

Overall it does appear that additional floorspace has been provided to contribute towards the diversity of the local economy and offer a range of job opportunities for the local workforce.

**On target?** ✓

<b>Indicator 15 (Core)</b>	<b>Amount of floorspace developed for employment, by type, in employment or regeneration areas.</b>
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## Objective

To monitor the take-up of employment land on allocated sites, comprising development sites and protected employment sites

## Target

National policy<sup>1</sup> emphasises the importance of delivering sustainable development. It highlights the need to provide sufficient land in suitable locations to be made available for industrial and commercial development, so that the economy can prosper. Local Authorities should be aware of changes in the local economy and be sensitive to the implications for development and growth. Development Plan policies should seek to minimise the use of resources by making more efficient use or re-use of existing resources encouraging the use of previously developed land at appropriate densities.

The Draft South East Plan<sup>2</sup> supports the need to ensure sufficient employment land is made available to promote sustainable development, diversity in the regional economy and to contribute towards urban renaissance. Efficient use should be made of existing sites and premises to meet changing needs. The existing stock of industrial land and premises should be protected where justified by local circumstances to minimise the need for new sites to be allocated.

The Oxford Local Plan<sup>3</sup> promotes the 'cascade approach' to the use of employment generating land by protecting the key employment sites, and encouraging their modernisation for alternative employment uses. Other employment sites are assessed according to criteria based policies, which allows for their release subject to meeting the relevant criteria.

## Data analysis

This graph shows the amounts of each type of employment use (B1a/b/c<sup>4</sup> (office, research and development/light industrial), B2 (general industrial) and B8 (warehouse)) developed in development and regeneration areas. In Oxford this has been taken to include the allocated development sites and the protected employment sites identified in the Oxford Local Plan 2001-2016. 10,456.28 sqm was developed for employment uses in development regeneration areas, which is 76% of the new employment development. These figures are for completed developments during the AMR period and show additional gross internal floorspace created in sq.m.

**Figure 19: Development taken place in development and regeneration areas.**

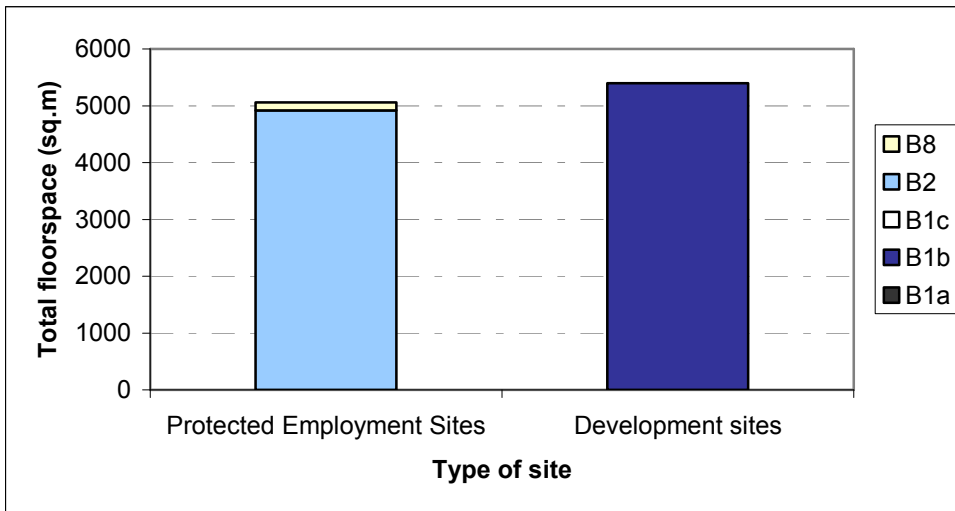
## Commentary

<sup>1</sup> Planning Policy Statement 1: 2005 & Employment Land Review Guidance Note: Dec 2004

<sup>2</sup> Policies RE1, RE4, The Draft South East Plan, South East Regional Assembly: Jan 2005

<sup>3</sup> Policies EC1-EC5, The Oxford Local Plan 2001-2016, Oxford City Council: Dec 2005

<sup>4</sup> Use Classes Order 2005 – See Glossary



In Oxford land is a scarce resource and in demand from a range of competing uses. Therefore the policy approach has encouraged the importance of protecting existing key employment sites and allocating additional development sites to accommodate further limited growth.

Development sites comprise allocated employment sites and mixed-use sites. These together account for the largest amount of additional gross employment floorspace, and comprise research and development (Class B1b).

The regeneration and modernisation of protected employment sites has also accounted for a significant amount of additional floorspace. It includes principally general industrial (Class B2) uses together with a small amount of warehousing floorspace (Class B8). This approach accords with national and regional guidance to promote sustainable development and to make the best and most efficient use of existing resources by re-using previously developed land. Oxford has therefore positively responded to the need to encourage the sustainable use of land and make a significant contribution to urban renaissance.

The additional floorspace completed on both the Development sites and Protected Employment Sites has been undertaken on previously developed land, which makes better and more efficient use of existing resources. The target objectives have therefore been met.

On target? ✓

<b>Indicator 16 (Core)</b>	<b>Amount of floorspace by employment type, which is on previously developed land.</b>
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## Objective

To focus development on previously developed land (PDL) in order to promote regeneration and minimise the amount of non-previously developed land taken for development.

## Target

National policy<sup>1</sup> emphasises the importance of delivering sustainable development. It highlights the need to provide sufficient land in suitable locations to be made available for industrial and commercial development, so that the economy can prosper. Development Plan policies are required to minimise the use of resources by making more efficient use or re-use of existing resources encouraging the use of previously developed land.

The Draft South East Plan<sup>2</sup> supports the need to ensure that sufficient employment land is made available to promote sustainable development, encourage diversity in the regional economy and promote urban renaissance. Efficient use should be made of existing sites and premises to meet changing needs. The existing stock of industrial land and premises should be protected to minimise the need for new sites to be allocated.

The Oxford Local Plan<sup>3</sup> promotes the ‘cascade approach’ to the use of employment land by protecting the key employment sites, and encouraging their modernisation for alternative employment uses. New allocations for employment uses are directed towards identified sites and mixed-use development sites.

## Data analysis

All of the new developments of B1a (office)<sup>4</sup> B1b (research and development) and B1c (light industrial), B2 (general industrial) and B8 (warehouse) uses completed in the monitoring period were on previously developed land.

## Commentary

In Oxford land is a scarce resource and in demand from a range of competing uses. Therefore the policy approach has encouraged the importance of protecting existing key employment sites and allocating additional development sites to accommodate further limited growth.

The policy approach in the Oxford Local Plan 2001-2016 promotes sustainable development and making the best and most efficient use of existing resources. Employment uses are therefore directed towards the key protected employment sites, allocated sites and mixed-use development sites. These all comprise previously developed land, the only exception being the Oxford Science Park and Littlemore Park.

<sup>1</sup> Planning Policy Statement 1: 2005 & Employment Land Review Guidance Note: Dec 2004

<sup>2</sup> Policies RE1, RE4, The Draft South East Plan, South East Regional Assembly: Jan 2005

<sup>3</sup> Policies EC1-EC5, The Oxford Local Plan 2001-2016, Oxford City Council: Dec 2005

<sup>4</sup> Use Classes Order 2005 – See Glossary

Oxford has successfully achieved the target objectives of directing development to previously developed land and therefore promoting regeneration and making the best use of resources.

**On target?** ✓

<b>Indicator 17 (Core)</b>	<b>Employment land available by type.</b>
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### **Objective**

To quantify employment land available on sites within Oxford and assess the amount/proportion of land on key protected employment sites, employment allocations, mixed-use development sites and planning permissions granted on other sites. It is therefore important to provide diversity in terms of the size of the sites available to accommodate a range of types of employment uses in sustainable locations.

### **Target**

National policy<sup>1</sup> emphasises the importance of delivering sustainable development. It highlights the need to provide sufficient land in suitable locations to be made available for industrial and commercial development, so that the economy can prosper. Sustainable development is encouraged to promote social inclusion (both in locational and physical terms) to job opportunities. Sufficient land in suitable locations should be made available for industrial and commercial development.

The Draft South East Plan<sup>2</sup> emphasises the need to provide sufficient employment land to promote sustainable growth and diversity in the regional economy. A range of sites and premises should be provided to meet the needs of business and the local workforce.

The Oxford Local Plan<sup>3</sup> seeks to encourage sustainable development, strengthen existing employment sectors and modernise employment uses within Oxford. Diversity in the local economy is essential to maximise employment opportunities for the local workforce.

### **Data analysis**

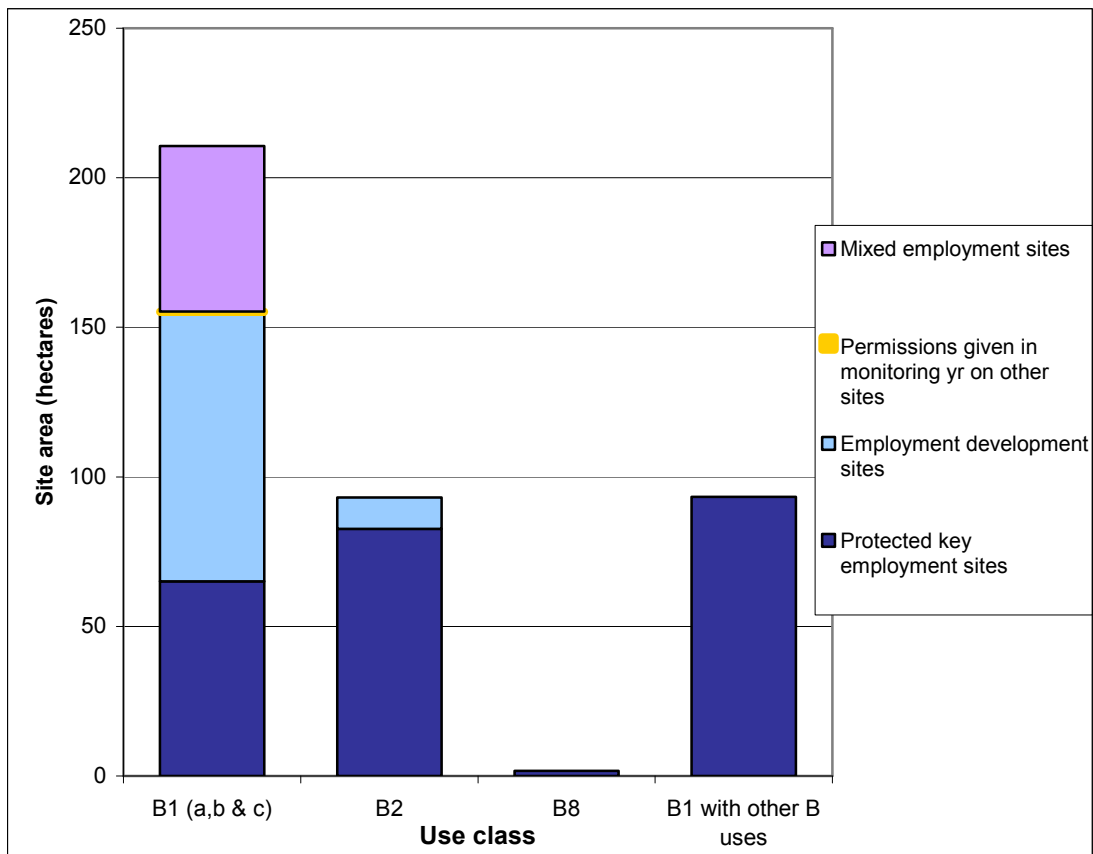
This bar chart shows the amount of employment land (hectares) available for development on protected employment sites, employment sites and mixed-use development sites.

<sup>1</sup> Planning Policy Statement 1: 2005 & Employment Land Review Guidance Note: Dec 2004

<sup>2</sup> The Draft South East Plan, South East Regional Assembly: Jan 2005

<sup>3</sup> Policies EC1, EC2, EC3 & EC7, The Oxford Local Plan 2001-2016, Oxford City Council: Dec 2005





**Figure 20: Employment Land supply by Type** Source: Oxford Local Plan 2001-2016

### Commentary

The total supply of employment land comprises principally protected employment sites and allocated sites, identified in the Oxford Local Plan 2001-2016. The allocated sites include employment and mixed-use development sites. The protected employment sites include industrial estates and major key employers. For example Plant Oxford occupied by BMW alone accounts for some 80 hectares of land. The principal employment sites are the Oxford Business Park and the Oxford Science Park, however both are well established and have only a very limited supply of land available for new development.

Land in Oxford is a scarce resource, subject to significant constraints and in demand from a range of competing uses. Therefore the policy approach has encouraged the importance of protecting existing key employment sites and allocating additional development sites to accommodate further limited growth.

The Oxford Local Plan seeks to encourage sustainable development, strengthen existing employment sectors and modernise employment uses within Oxford. The Plan has therefore sought to provide a range of sites throughout the City to achieve a sustainable distribution. Oxford has successfully provided a range of different sites that comprise protected key employment sites, employment sites and mixed-use development sites. These sites provide a diverse range of different types of employment uses that have been accommodated on the sites. Diversity in the local economy is essential to maximise employment opportunities for the local workforce.

To ensure that the supply of employment land is maintained for the future an ‘Employment Land Review’ is currently being undertaken. This study will assess the adequacy of the present land supply to meet projected future demand, in the context of Oxford’s acknowledged physical and environmental constraints and its key role within the sub-region.

The amount of employment land supply by type has been assessed in accordance with national guidance and together with background information to come from the Employment Land Review will

provide an up to date and robust assessment. It will also provide a good evidence base from which to continue to monitor the supply of employment land in the future.

**On target?** ✓

<b>Indicator 18 (Core)</b>	<b>Losses of employment land in (i) employment/regeneration areas and (ii) local authority areas. Amount of employment land lost to residential development.</b>
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### **Objective**

To maintain a sustainable supply of employment land and assess the losses of employment land that have taken place and whether it would affect the sustainable distribution of employment land available. Analyse the types of uses that have resulted from the loss of employment land.

### **Target**

National policy<sup>1</sup> emphasises the importance of delivering sustainable development. It highlights the need to provide sufficient land in suitable locations to be made available for industrial and commercial development, so that the economy can prosper. Development Plan policies are required to minimise the use of resources by making more efficient use or re-use of existing resources encouraging the use of previously developed land.

The Draft South East Plan<sup>2</sup> supports the need to ensure that sufficient employment land is made available to promote sustainable development, encourage diversity in the regional economy and promote urban renaissance. Efficient use should be made of existing sites and premises to meet changing needs. The existing stock of industrial land and premises should be protected and their loss resisted where economic and employment evidence supports it, such as Oxford, to minimise the need for new sites to be allocated.

The Oxford Local Plan<sup>3</sup> promotes the ‘cascade approach’ to the use of employment land by protecting the key employment sites, and encouraging their modernisation for alternative employment uses. New allocations for employment uses are directed towards identified sites and mixed-use development sites.

### **Data analysis**

There has been no net loss of employment land (hectares) in development and regeneration areas, which in Oxford has been taken to include protected employment sites and allocated sites, as identified in the Oxford Local Plan 2001-2016.

The following bar chart however shows the loss of employment land not protected or allocated which has been lost to other uses within the local authority area.

<sup>1</sup> Planning Policy Statement 1: 2005 & Employment Land Review Guidance Note: Dec 2004

<sup>2</sup> The Draft South East Plan, South East Regional Assembly: Jan 2005

<sup>3</sup> Policies EC1-EC5, The Oxford Local Plan 2001-2016, Oxford City Council: Dec 2005

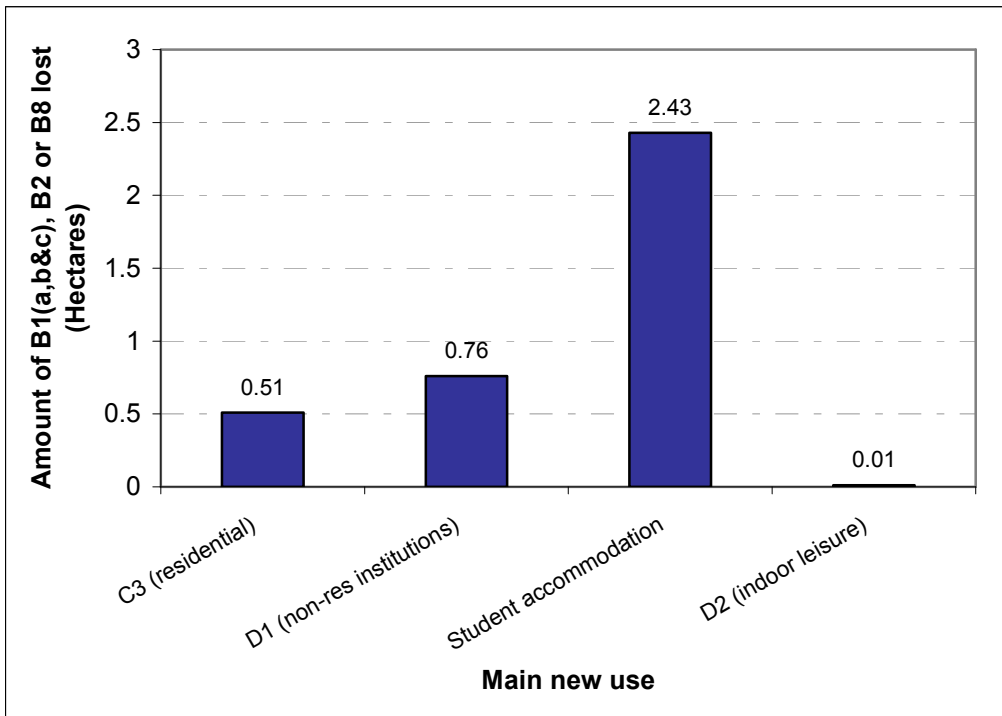


Figure 21: Loss of Employment Land in Oxford

### Commentary

Oxford has historically had a tightly drawn Green Belt, a relatively buoyant economy and a significant demand from a range of competing uses. Oxford has therefore been recycling land to other uses for several decades. Since 1985 the City has lost some 49 hectares of land from employment generating use to other uses. However during the AMR period there has been no net loss of employment land on allocated sites or regeneration areas.

Within the administrative area of Oxford however some 3.7 hectares of employment land has been lost to other uses. This represents a significant loss of employment land within a one year period. However the largest loss was on the Former Government Buildings Site, Marston Road (2.43ha) which was allocated for student accommodation use in the Local Plan. There were also losses to non-residential institutions and residential.

On target? ✓

<b>Indicator 19 (Contextual)</b>	<b>National, regional and county unemployment levels</b>
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### Objective

To provide contextual information to see how Oxford's unemployment levels compare to those of the South East region and nationally, and therefore to assess the relative performance of the local economy in providing job opportunities.

### Target

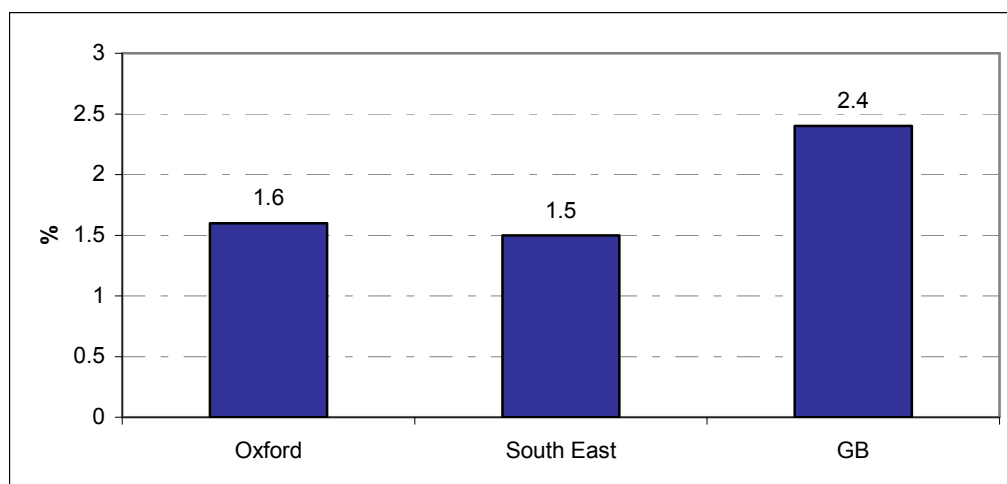
National policy<sup>1</sup> emphasises the importance of promoting a strong, and productive economy that aims to bring jobs and prosperity for all.

The Draft South East Plan<sup>2</sup> recognises that human resource development is a central component in promoting future economic success in the region. It is important for this human potential to be fully realised to maximise job opportunities and skill levels.

The Oxford Local Plan<sup>3</sup> recognises that there are pockets of high unemployment in the City. The overall policy approach seeks to create employment diversity to increase access to employment opportunities and improve skill levels in the local workforce.

### Data analysis

This bar chart shows the percentage of Job Seekers Allowance (JSA) claimants in the monitoring period for January 2005. The data shows that the unemployment level for Great Britain is 2.4%, as compared to 1.5% for the South East and 1.6% Oxford City.



**Figure 22: Unemployment levels in January 2005**

<sup>1</sup> Planning Policy Statement 1: 2005 & Employment Land Review Guidance Note: Dec 2004

<sup>2</sup> Policies RE1, RE2, RE3, The Draft South East Plan, South East Regional Assembly: Jan 2005

<sup>3</sup> Policies EC1, EC6, EC8, The Oxford Local Plan 2001-2016, Oxford City Council: Dec 2005

## **Commentary**

The unemployment figure for Oxford is comparable to that for the South East, but is relatively low in comparison to that for the UK. However it is important to bear in mind that these overall figures do not show the pockets of high unemployment which exist in certain parts of Oxford City, as identified by the Indices of Deprivation.

### **On target? N/A**

No target appropriate, as this is contextual information

<b>Indicator 20 (Contextual)</b>	<b>Areas of deprivation</b>
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**Objective**

To identify pockets of employment, income and education and training deprivation within Oxford.

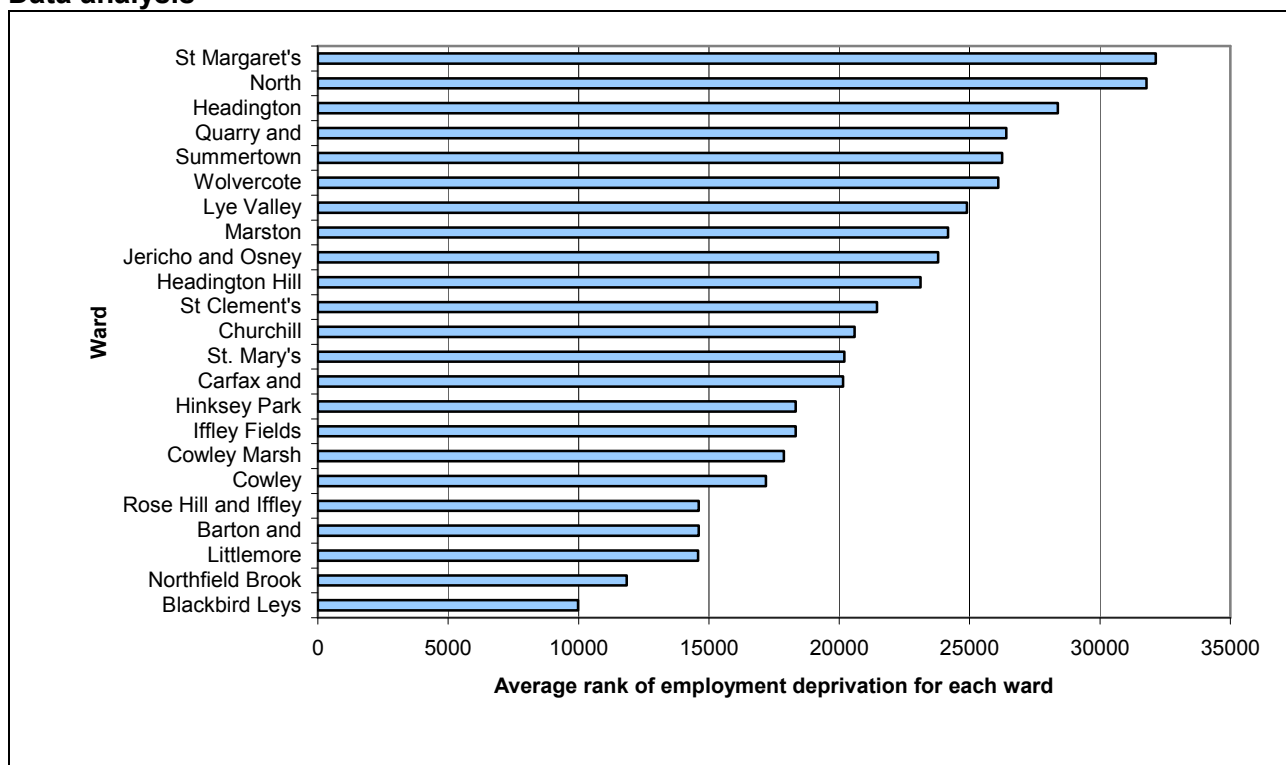
**Target**

National policy<sup>1</sup> emphasises the importance of promoting a strong, and productive economy that aims to bring jobs and prosperity for all.

The Draft South East Plan<sup>2</sup> recognises that human resource development is a central component in promoting future economic success in the region. It is important for this human potential to be fully realised to maximise job opportunities and skill levels.

The Oxford Local Plan<sup>3</sup> recognises that there are pockets of deprivation in the City. The overall policy approach therefore seeks to create employment diversity to increase access to employment opportunities and improve skill levels in the local workforce.

**Data analysis**

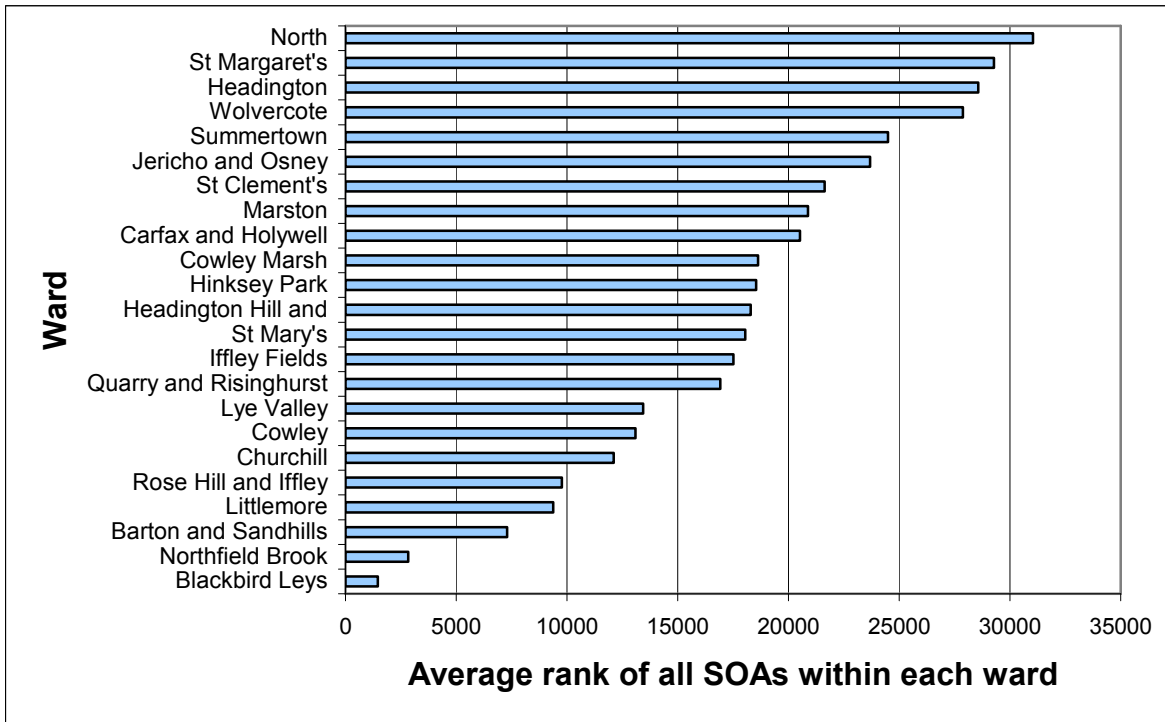


**Figure 23: Employment Deprivation in Oxford**  
Source: ONS

<sup>1</sup> Planning Policy Statement 1: 2005 & Employment Land Review Guidance Note: Dec 2004

<sup>2</sup> Policies RE1, RE2, RE3, The Draft South East Plan, South East Regional Assembly: Jan 2005

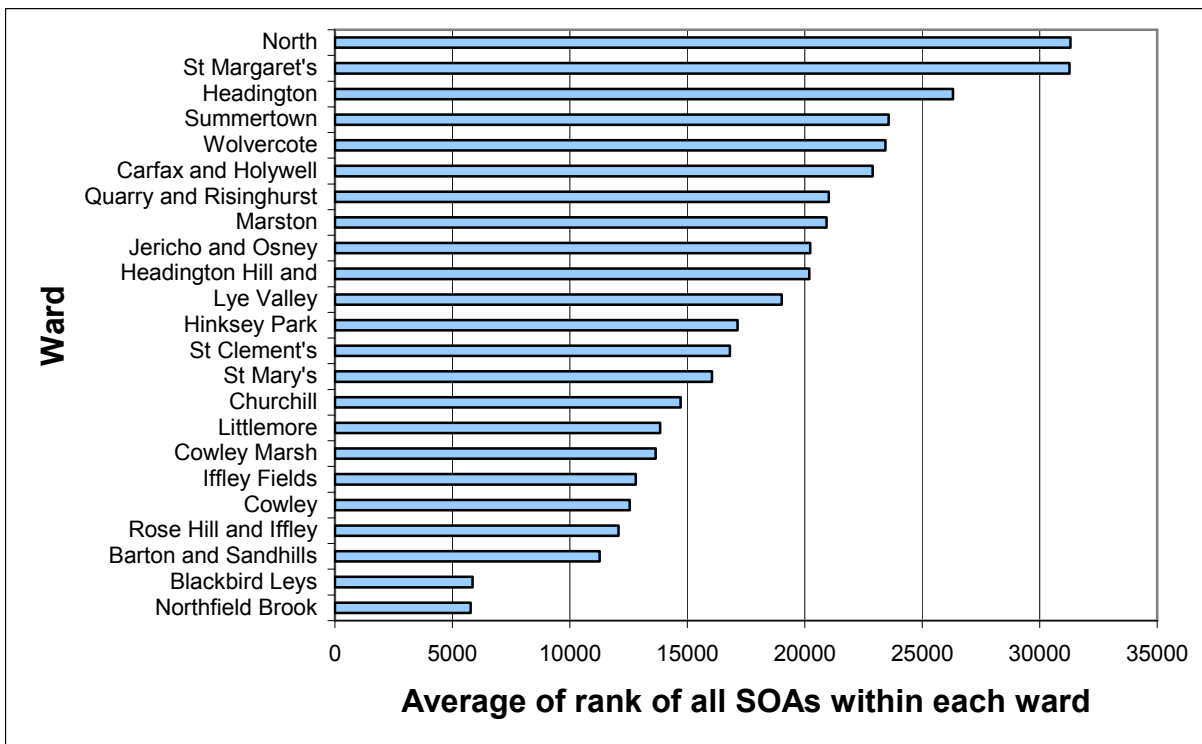
<sup>3</sup> Policies EC1, EC6, EC8, The Oxford Local Plan 2001-2016, Oxford City Council: Dec 2005



Figure

24: Training and education deprivation within Oxford

Source: ONS



Figure

25: Income deprivation within Oxford

Source: ONS

### Commentary

This data is based on the 2004 Indices of deprivation, which divides the country up into Super Output Areas (SOA's). These are small areas with an average of 1500 people. In order to relate this information to areas of Oxford it has been grouped together into wards (typically 3-4 in each ward), to allow an assessment to be made of the impact of the various indicators within different parts of the City. The three principal indicators chosen include employment deprivation, training and education, and income. It



is acknowledged, however, that this does obscure some of the particular peaks and troughs of individual SOA's within the City.

In terms of employment deprivation the wards with the lowest ranking are Blackbird Leys, Northfield Brook, Littlemore, Barton and Sandhills and Rose Hill and Iffley. Whilst by contrast St. Margaret's, North and Headington are the highest ranking. In the employment domain, the lowest ranked SOA in Oxford (Littlemore) is 4876<sup>th</sup> worst in England (in the worst 15%), while the highest ranked (in North) is 16<sup>th</sup> best and in the top 0.5%.

In relation to training and education deprivation the wards with the lowest ranking are Blackbird Leys, Northfield Brook, Barton and Sandhills, Littlemore, Rose Hill and Iffley. Whilst the North, St. Margaret's and Headington are the highest ranking. In the context of the City as a whole and nationally based on the smaller SOA data, the lowest ranked SOA in Oxford (in Barton and Sandhills) is 330<sup>th</sup> worst in England (in the worst 1%), while the highest ranked (in North) is 86<sup>th</sup> best and in the top 1%. The low averages for Northfield Brook and Blackbird Leys show that within these two wards there is a concentration of SOAs ranked amongst the lowest in England.

Finally in relation to income deprivation the wards with the lowest ranking are Northfield Brook, Blackbird Leys, Barton and Sandhills, Rose Hill and Iffley, and Cowley. Whilst the North, St. Margaret's and Headington are the highest ranked wards. In the income domain, the lowest ranked SOA in Oxford (Northfield Brook) is 2136<sup>th</sup> worst in England (in the worst 7%), while the highest ranked (in North) is 24<sup>th</sup> best and in the top 1%.

There are some areas of Oxford that are amongst the best in the country in terms of their ranking for training and education, income and employment. This is clearly a positive sign. However, there is also a large contrast between the best and worst ranked areas within Oxford, the deprivation in some areas is in stark contrast to the very low levels in others. This is particularly notable in training and education. Blackbird Leys and Northfield Brook have the lowest average SOA rankings of all the wards in all three of the deprivation domains analysed.

**On target? N/A**

No target appropriate, as this is contextual information.

<b>Indicator 21 (Local)</b>	<b>Gross floorspace and land (hectares), which are completed for other key employment generating uses, such as Class B1a and B1b Uses</b>
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### Objective

To promote science based research and development and education/university uses and hospital research uses.

### Target

National policy<sup>1</sup> emphasises the importance of delivering sustainable development. It highlights the need to provide sufficient land in suitable locations to be made available for industrial and commercial development, so that the economy can prosper. Development Plan policies are required to minimise the use of resources by making more efficient use or re-use of existing resources encouraging the use of previously developed land.

The Draft South East Plan<sup>2</sup> supports the need to ensure that sufficient employment land is made available to promote sustainable development, encourage diversity in the regional economy and promote urban renaissance. Efficient use should be made of existing sites and premises to meet changing needs.

The Draft strategy<sup>3</sup> for Central Oxfordshire seeks to build on the sub-region's economic strengths particularly in education, science and technology. It encourages making best use of previously developed land within urban areas.

The Oxford Local Plan<sup>4</sup> acknowledges the important role that Oxford plays in the economy of Oxfordshire. The Plan seeks to build on its economic strengths such as education, healthcare and research and development.

### Data analysis

This bar chart shows the amount of land approved, under-construction and completed for B1a<sup>5</sup> (office) and B1b (research and development) uses related to University and Hospital developments.

<sup>1</sup> Planning Policy Statement 1: 2005 & Employment Land Review Guidance Note: Dec 2004

<sup>2</sup> The Draft South East Plan, South East Regional Assembly: Jan 2005

<sup>3</sup> Policies CO5, CO7, The Draft South East Plan, South East Regional Assembly: Jan 2005

<sup>4</sup> Policy EC1, The Oxford Local Plan 2001-2016, Oxford City Council: Dec 2005

<sup>5</sup> Use Classes Order 2005- See Glossary

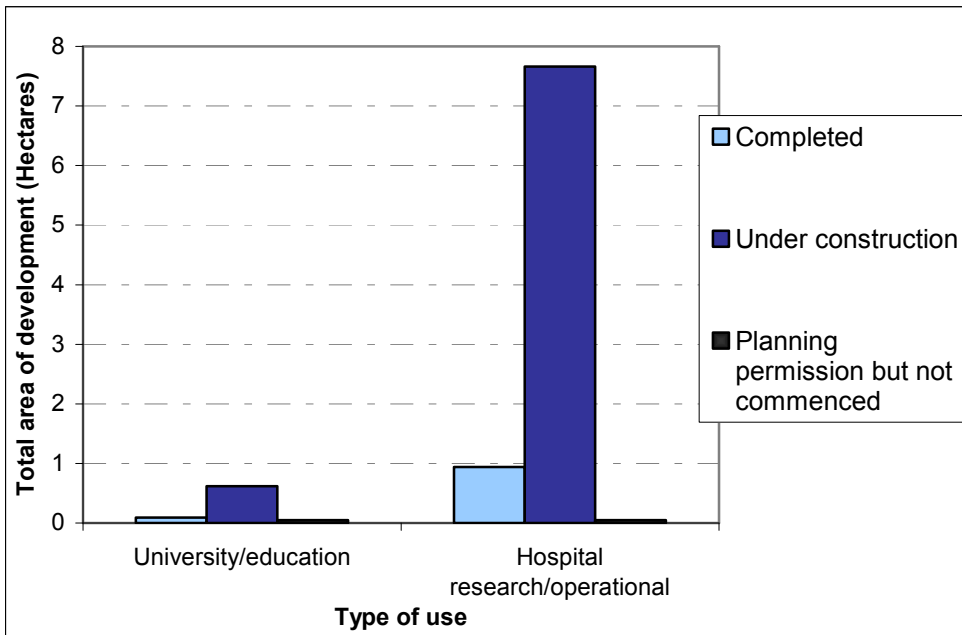


Figure 26: University and Hospital Development

### Commentary

Oxford has been successfully building on its economic strengths within the university and hospital sectors for associated research and development uses during the AMR period. There has been a significant amount of development, largely under construction, that has taken place during the monitoring period, which will lead to a growth in the research facilities associated with the hospital sector. This is part of an extensive programme of modernisation in the NHS Trust, which has been focused on the modernisation and expansion of existing principal hospital sites.

Although the level of development for research and development associated with the Universities has not been great during the AMR period, a considerable amount of development has already taken place. It is also likely that this sector will continue to play a significant role in the local and regional economy.

The target is being met but is part of an on-going process. It highlights the importance of research and development to the local and regional economy and in particular, the significant contribution made by both the University and hospital sectors.

On target? ✓

<b>Indicator 22 (Local)</b>	<b>Planning permissions for new Class B1 uses to include the number of units and gross floorspace</b>
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### Objective

To encourage new small and medium sized firms in Oxford.

### Target

National policy<sup>1</sup> emphasises the importance of delivering sustainable development. It highlights the need to provide sufficient land in suitable locations to be made available for industrial and commercial development, so that the economy can prosper. Sustainable development is encouraged to promote social inclusion (both in locational and physical terms) to job opportunities. Sufficient land in suitable locations should be made available for industrial and commercial development.

The Draft South East Plan<sup>2</sup> promotes sustainable economic development. It requires the allocation of employment land to provide a range of sites and premises to meet the needs of new and growing businesses. Policy encourages sustainable growth and diversity in the regional economy. A range of sites and premises should be provided to meet the needs of business and the local workforce.

The Oxford Local Plan<sup>3</sup> seeks to encourage sustainable development, strengthen existing employment sectors and modernise employment uses within Oxford. Diversity in the local economy is essential to maximise employment opportunities for the local workforce.

### Data analysis

This bar charts show the amount of floorspace and the numbers of developments approved for small (under 500 sq.m), medium (over 500 sq.m – 1500sq.m) and large (above 1500sq.m) developments for B1a<sup>4</sup> (office), B1b(research and development) and B1c (light industrial) uses.

<sup>1</sup> Planning Policy Statement 1: 2005 & Employment Land Review Guidance Note: Dec 2004

<sup>2</sup> The South East Plan, South East Regional Assembly: Jan 2005

<sup>3</sup> The Oxford Local Plan 2001-2016, Oxford City Council: Dec 2005

<sup>4</sup> Use Classes Order 2005 – See Glossary

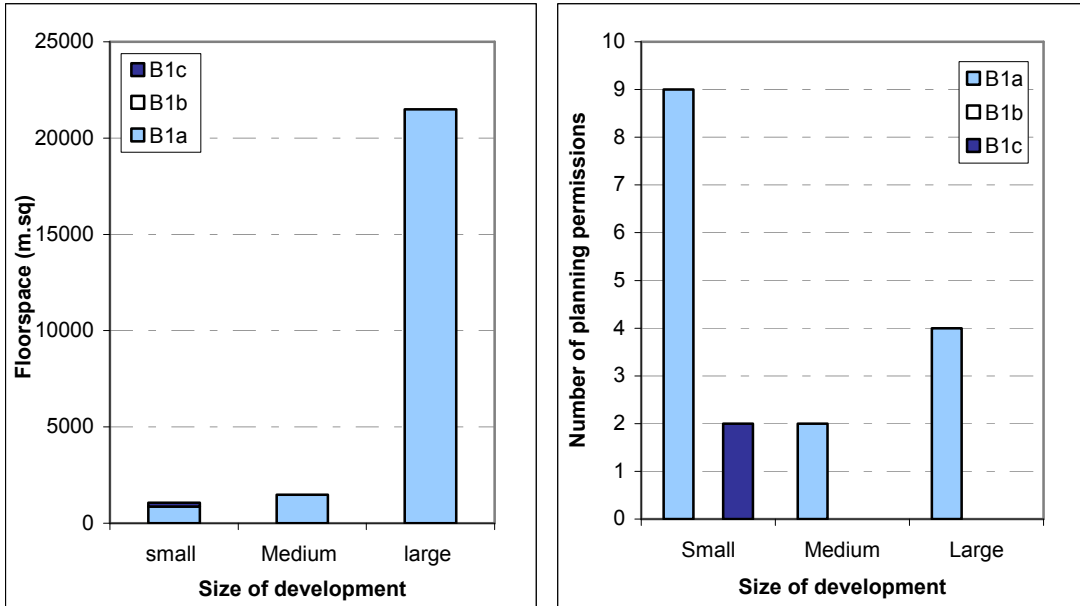


Figure 27: Planning permissions for Class B1 uses by type, by gross floorspace and by number

### Commentary

The office (Class B1a) sector has seen the majority of new permissions for employment generating uses in Oxford, taking place principally on one of the main allocated sites, the Oxford Business Park. These new permissions, assessed on the basis of the amount of floorspace, have been granted mainly for large developments. However when the permissions are assessed according to the total number granted then the smaller sites feature more prominently. It is important to recognise however that the total number of permissions within the monitoring period is comparatively low.

There has however been few new permissions for research and development (Class B1b) or light industrial uses (Class B1c), granted within the monitoring period.

There has been few recent permissions for small light industrial units in Oxford. This continues a trend in the lack of small start up and business units which is concerning since they do play an important role in Oxford's economy. The shortage of these units is in part a reflection of the high land values in Oxford and the difficulty in competing for the limited sites that become available. The competing uses comprise other commercial uses but principally the demand for additional residential sites.

Although additional floorspace has been approved for large sized premises this has principally been to accommodate Class B1a (office) related uses. There has been little growth in Class B1b (research and development) or B1c (light industrial) uses, within the monitoring period.

On target? **X**

<b>Indicator 23 (Contextual)</b>	<b>Employment data</b>
--------------------------------------	------------------------

**Objective**

To achieve sustainable levels of economic growth and diversity to maximise job opportunities for the local workforce.

### Target

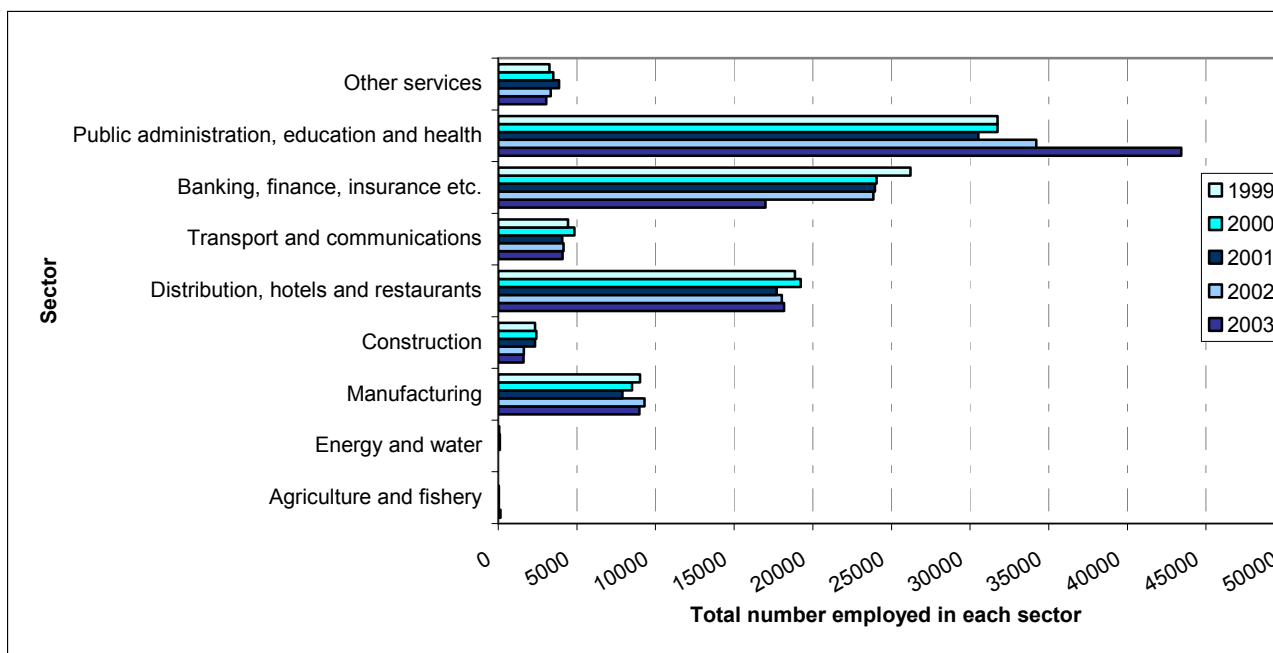
National policy<sup>1</sup> emphasises the importance of promoting a strong, and productive economy that aims to bring jobs and prosperity for all.

The Draft South East Plan<sup>2</sup> encourages sustainable economic development. Sustainable growth and diversity in the regional economy is promoted to maximise employment opportunities for the local workforce.

The Oxford Local Plan<sup>3</sup> aims to strengthen existing employment sectors and to ensure that there is diversity within the local economy.

### Data analysis

This bar chart shows a breakdown in the numbers of people employment in particular sectors in Oxford, and compares the changes between 1999-2003.



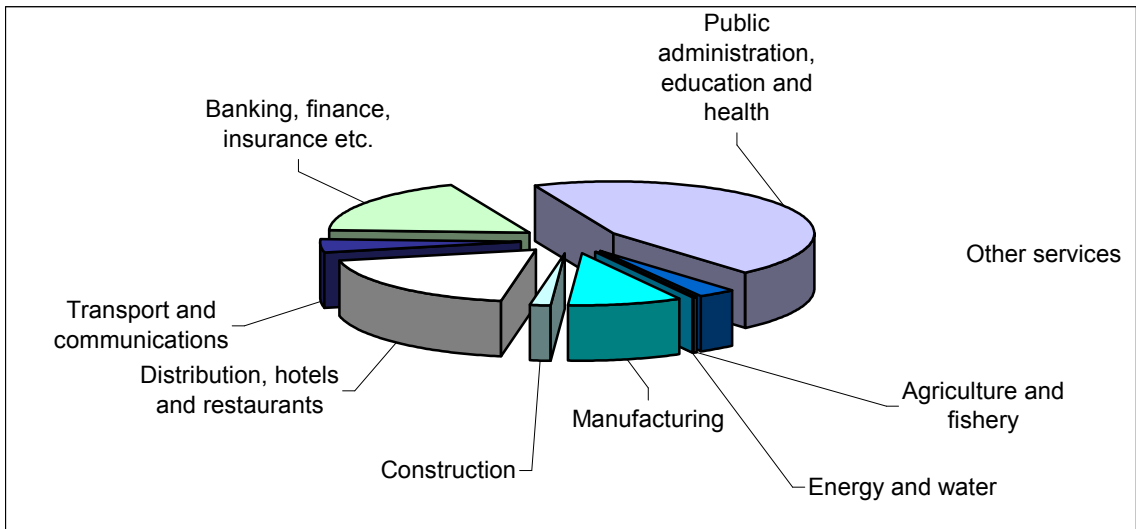
**Figure 28: Employment by Sector in Oxford between 1999-2003**

Source: Annual Business Inquiry 1999-2003

<sup>1</sup> Planning Policy Statement 1: 2005 & Employment Land Review Guidance Note: Dec 2004

<sup>2</sup> The South East Plan, South East Regional Assembly: Jan 2005

<sup>3</sup> The Oxford Local Plan 2001-2016, Oxford City Council: Dec 2005



**Figure 29: Principal Sectors of Employment in Oxford 2003**  
 Source: Annual Business Inquiry 2003

**Commentary**

The first contextual indicators show the distribution of employment in Oxford. This highlights the continuing trend in recent years towards the decline in the manufacturing sector and the significant growth in the service sector, which reflects the national position. Although manufacturing as a proportion of total employment in Oxford has declined, the presence of the BMW Plant being the sole manufacturer of the Mini has made a very significant contribution to the diversity of employment opportunities in Oxford.

The service sector has grown significantly and now clearly represents the dominant sector in the local economy. There has been significant growth in the public sector, which includes education and health uses. It reflects the importance of major employers in Oxford such as the universities and hospitals. These sectors make an important contribution to the South East Region and the national economy.

Whilst the banking and finance sector has declined slightly over the recent years the number of people employed in the hotel and restaurant sector has largely remained unchanged.

The second contextual indicator highlights the continuing dominance of the service sector. It also shows the importance of the education and health sectors. Banking and finance together with hotels and restaurants comprise other additional service related uses.

**On target? N/A**

No target appropriate, as this is contextual information

<b>Indicator 24 (Contextual)</b>	<b>Vacancy rates, recent transactions, amount of particular types of accommodation.</b>
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**Objective**

To assess and monitor the supply of employment land and premises available

**Target**

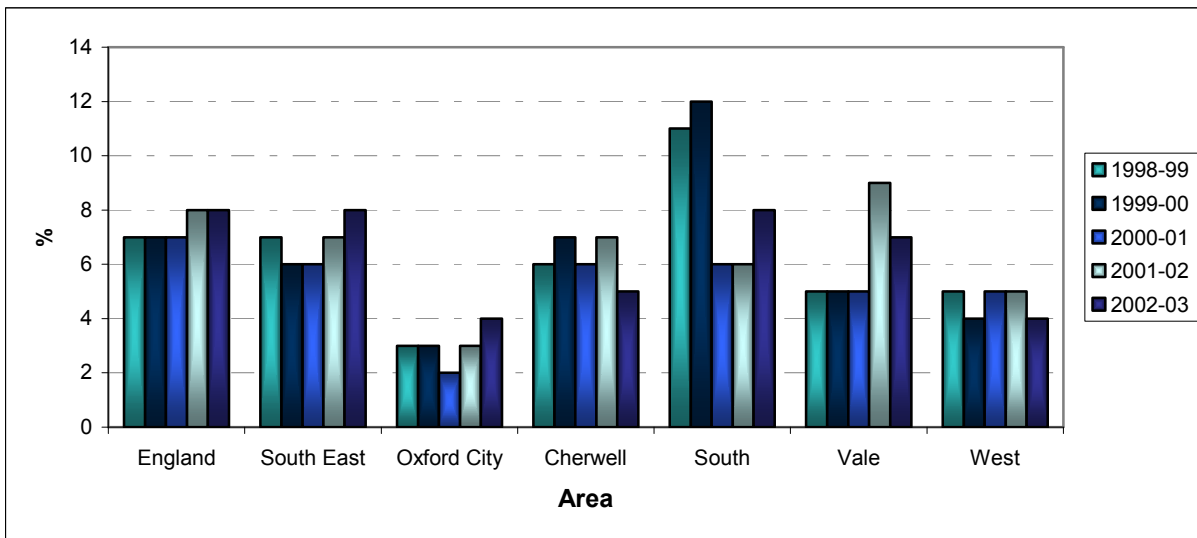
National policy<sup>1</sup> emphasises the importance of delivering sustainable development. It highlights the need to provide sufficient land in suitable locations to be made available for industrial and commercial development, so that the economy can prosper. Sustainable development is encouraged to promote social inclusion (both in locational and physical terms) to job opportunities. Sufficient land in suitable locations should be made available for industrial and commercial development.

The Draft South East Plan<sup>2</sup> emphasises the need to provide sufficient employment land to promote sustainable growth and diversity in the regional economy. A range of sites and premises should be provided to meet the needs of business and the local workforce.

The Oxford Local Plan<sup>3</sup> seeks to encourage sustainable development, strengthen existing employment sectors and modernise employment uses within Oxford. Diversity in the local economy is essential to maximise employment opportunities for the local workforce.

**Data analysis**

This graph shows the vacancy rates in business premises, which is based on an estimate of the value of empty property as a proportion of the total value of commercial and industrial property.



**Figure**

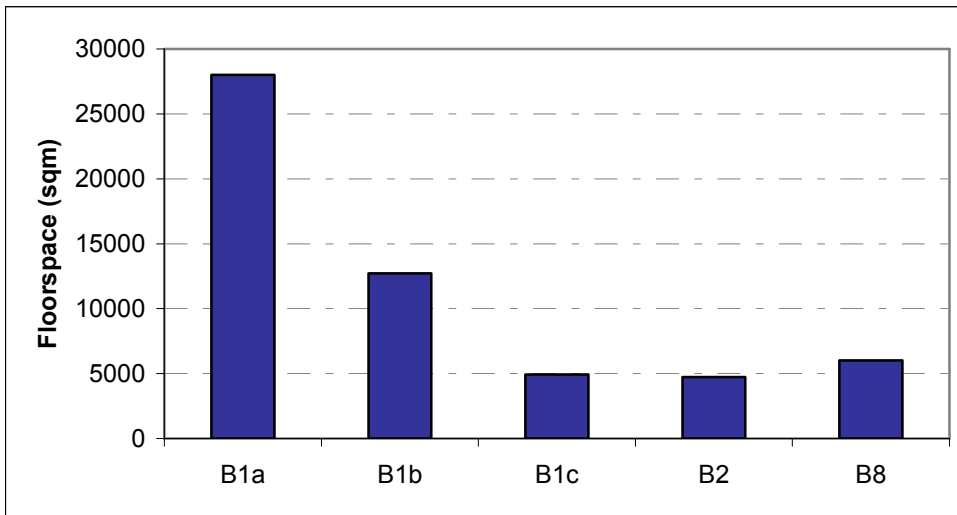
**30: Vacancy Rates for Business / Commercial premises**

<sup>1</sup> Planning Policy Statement 1: 2005 & Employment Land Review Guidance Note: Dec 2004

<sup>2</sup> Policies RE1, RE2, RE3, The South East Plan, South East Regional Assembly: Jan 2005

<sup>3</sup> Policies EC1, EC6, EC8, The Oxford Local Plan 2001-2016, Oxford City Council: Dec 2005





**Figure 31: Amount and type of floorspace (sq.m) available for let in Oxford**  
 Source: Oxford City Council survey

### Commentary

The data shown in the first table provides an indication of the vacancy rates for commercial and industrial properties. During a five year period between 1998-2003 Oxford had a significantly lower vacancy rate than for the South East and the National level. Oxford has also consistently had a lower vacancy rate than all the other Districts in Oxfordshire. This in part may be explained by the relative shortage of commercial and industrial property available in Oxford, as compared to the South East and other Districts within the County.

The second table shows the significant difference in Oxford between the type of commercial and industrial premises available. Office accommodation represents the most significant amount of floorspace available although this is mainly provided in larger premises within the Business Park. There is a limited amount of accommodation available for research and development. Clearly however the amount of floorspace available for light industrial and general industrial uses is of particular concern, and could restrict the opportunity for small and medium sized businesses to start up or relocate within Oxford.

Vacant warehousing units do appear to be in limited supply, however do not make a significant contribution to the level of employment generated compared to other uses.

**On target? N/A**

No target appropriate, as this is contextual information.

## LOCAL SERVICES

<b>Indicator 25 (Core)</b>	<b>Amount of eligible open spaces managed to Green Flag Award standard.</b>
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### Objective

To achieve Green Flag Award standards for publicly accessible open space in Oxford.

### Target

For all publicly accessible open spaces in Oxford to provide a high quality recreational experience.

National policy on this topic is set out in the ODPM's Public Service Agreement target 8 which is for local authorities to lead the delivery of cleaner, safer and greener public spaces and improvements of the quality of the built environment in deprived areas and across the country, with measurable improvement by 2008.

### Data analysis

The Green Flag Award is the national standard for parks and green spaces in England and Wales. The award is managed by the Civic Trust, on behalf of the ODPM and the Green Flag Advisory Board. Awards are given on an annual basis and those that are successful must apply each year to renew their Green Flag status. The core indicator does not actually require that sites should have been awarded Green Flag status but the percentage of publicly accessible open space that is 'managed to Green Flag Award standard.' The key criteria for the award of Green Flag status are outlined in Appendix 2.

Open spaces that are eligible for Green Flag Award status include town parks, country parks, formal gardens, nature reserves, local nature reserves, cemeteries and crematoria, water parks, open spaces, millennium greens, Sites of Special Scientific Interest and woodlands.

To be managed to Green Flag Award standard a site must have a management plan or strategy in place, which reflects the aspirations of Local Agenda 21 and clearly and adequately addresses all the criteria outlined in Appendix 2 and any other relevant aspects of the park or green space's management. The plan must be actively implemented and regularly reviewed.

Currently none of Oxford's sites meet the Green Flag Award criteria as there are currently no management plans or strategies in place for any of its open spaces, which reflect the aspirations of Local Agenda 21 and the key Green Flag Award criteria. Scott Wilson, however, have recently completed an assessment of Oxford's Green spaces on behalf of the City Council. As part of this exercise they carried out a quality audit of 184 open spaces in Oxford. They assessed each site's quality in relation to the following topics: physical quality; social quality; aesthetic quality and biodiversity. Although not carried out on quite the same basis as the Green Flag Award the survey did cover some of the same topics such as access, signage and security, though others such as sustainability were not covered. Scott Wilson's assessment of the quality of Oxford's open spaces is given in the table below:

Condition	Number of open spaces	% of Open Spaces by number	Hectares of Open Space	% of Open Space by hectares
Good	41	22	460	61

Average	97	53	263	35
Poor	46	25	34	4

The high quality sites include many of the Oxford's important parks/open spaces such as Bury Knowle Park; Cutteslowe Park; Court Place Farm; Headington Hill Park; Florence Park; Hinksey Park and the University Parks. However, some smaller sites such as Barns Road Pocket Park and Hundred Acres Close also obtained high scores. Those sites, which obtained low quality scores, mostly consisted of local parks and playgrounds in the east of the Oxford. Examples include Ridley Road and Normandy Crescent Recreation Grounds and Arnold Road; Pauling Road; Dynham Place; Titup Hall Drive and Quarry Hollow Play areas. On these sites features, which scored particularly poorly, included disabled access, quality of play provision, signage and footpaths.

### Commentary

Currently, no Oxford green spaces are managed to Green Flag Award standards. A significant number of Oxford open spaces are, however, of high quality and are probably not very far off achieving Green Flag Award standard. Indeed Scott Wilson in their Green Space study, commissioned by the City Council, recommend that in order to highlight the quality of Oxford's formal green spaces, the City Council should seek to achieve Green Flag Awards for all of Oxford's major parks. This requires the preparation of a full management plan for each site.

Some City sites are, however, of much lower quality and action needs to be taken to improve the quality of these sites. Recommendations on this topic will form part of the forthcoming Oxford Green Space Strategy.

On target? **X**

<b>Indicator 26 (Core)</b>	<b>Amount of completed retail, office and leisure development.</b>
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**Objective**

To monitor the amount of new retail, office and leisure development.

**Target**

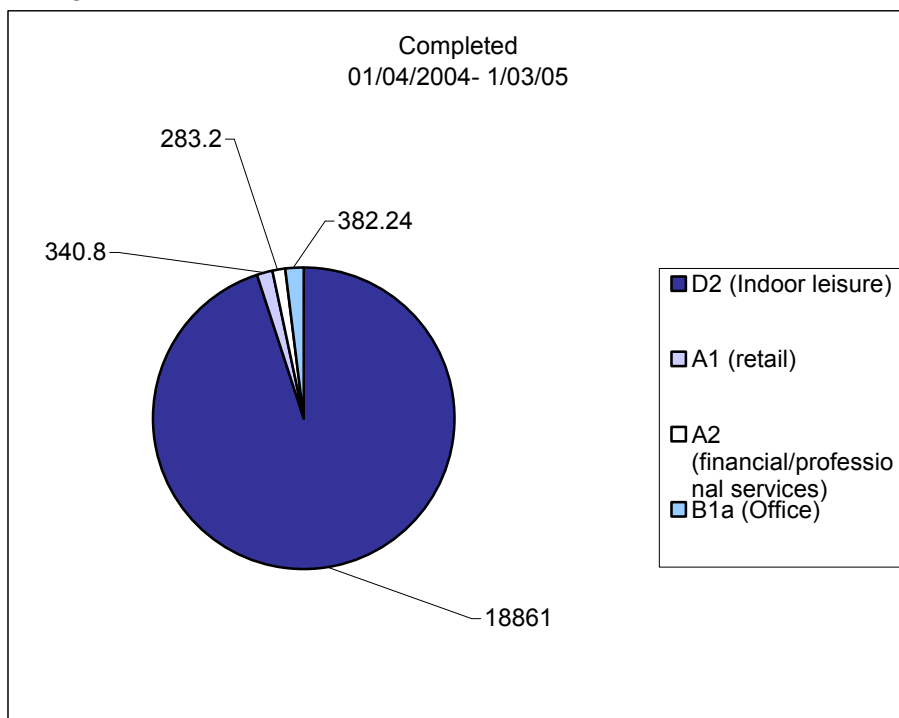
National policy<sup>1</sup> promotes sustainable development and aims to focus new development for retail, office and leisure uses in existing town centres. Growth and investment should therefore seek to promote vital and viable town centres.

South East policy<sup>2</sup> identifies Oxford as an important sub-regional centre. New development and redevelopment for retail, office and leisure uses should be focussed within the town centre. It should also make a positive contribution towards the regeneration of the City centre.

Local Plan<sup>3</sup> policy aims to maintain and strengthen the City centre hierarchy by directing major new developments to the centre.

**Data analysis**

These figures refer to gross internal floorspace.



**Figure 32: Office and leisure development completed (floorspace sqm)**

As the graph shows, there was a total of 340.8sq.m gross additional internal floorspace of new A1 development. The indicator also requires the amount of A1 in net internal floorspace; this figure includes

<sup>1</sup> Planning Policy Statement 6, ODPM, 2005

<sup>2</sup> The Draft South East Plan, South East Regional Assembly, Jan 2005

<sup>3</sup> Policy RC1, The Oxford Local Plan 2001-2016, Oxford City Council, Dec 2005

only sales space, so excludes areas such as store rooms. The net internal floorspace of A1 was 180sq.m.

### **Commentary**

There has been little A1 (retail) or A2 (financial and professional) development completed during the monitoring period, although of course this does not take account of other permissions in the pipeline both under-construction and as yet unimplemented. The main B1a (office) uses have also seen a relatively small amount of completed development.

The D2 leisure sector has seen the most significant amount of floorspace completed. This includes the recently completed Ozone Leisure Centre at Grenoble Road, an out-of-town development, which was permitted a number of years ago, and only just implemented.

This information provides an important evidence base from which to regularly monitor the amount of floorspace completed. It will then serve to highlight which local services have experienced growth and those that have not. Then in the context of need in the public interest being clearly established, sites suitable for accommodating additional facilities/services can be considered and allocated through the new Local Development Framework.

**On target? X**

<b>Indicator 27 (Core)</b>	<b>Amount of completed retail, office and leisure development in town centres.</b>
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### Objective

To monitor the amount of new retail, office and leisure development in town centres.

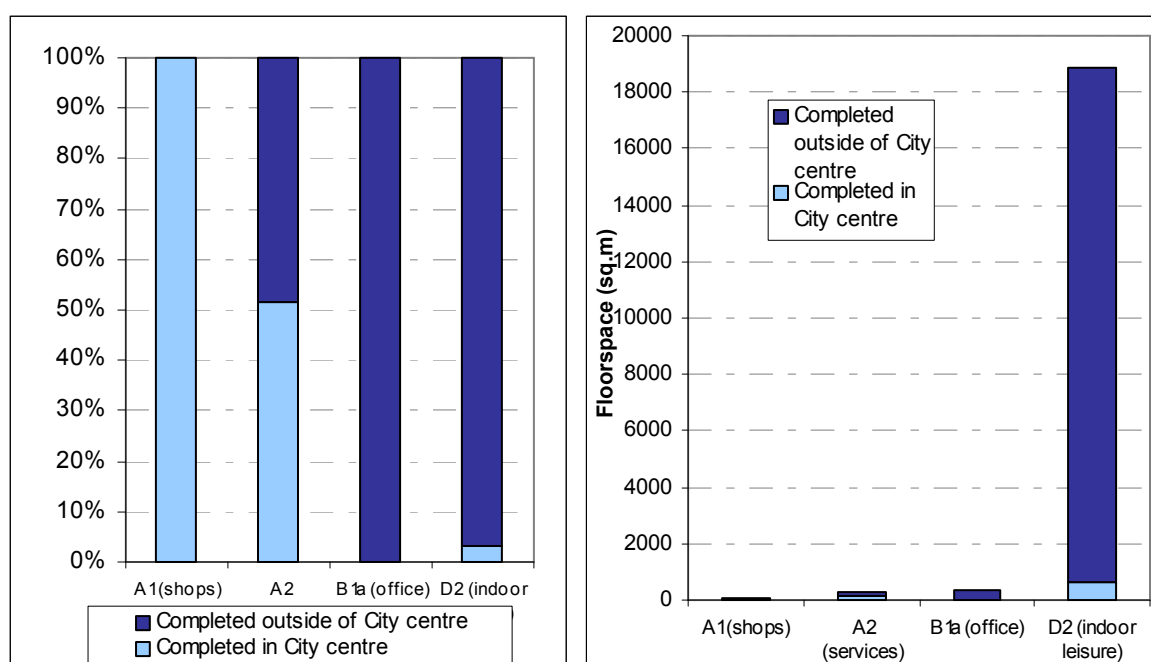
### Target

National policy<sup>1</sup> promotes sustainable development and aims to focus new development for retail, office and leisure uses in existing town centres. Growth and investment should therefore seek to promote vital and viable town centres.

South East policy<sup>2</sup> identifies Oxford as an important sub-regional centre. New development and redevelopment for retail, office and leisure uses should be focussed within the town centre. It should also make a positive contribution towards the regeneration of the City centre.

Local Plan policy<sup>3</sup> aims to maintain and strengthen the City centre by directing major new developments to the centre.

### Data analysis



**Figure 33: Percentage and amount (floorspace sq.m) of completed retail, office and leisure developments in City centre**

### Commentary

<sup>1</sup> Planning Policy Statement 1, & Planning Policy Statement 6, ODPM, 2005

<sup>2</sup> The Draft South East Plan, South East Regional Assembly, Jan 2005

<sup>3</sup> The Oxford Local Plan 2001-2016, Oxford City Council, Dec 2005

Although the amount of floorspace completed for A1<sup>4</sup> (shops) has been small it has nevertheless all been carried out within the City centre.

A2 (services) have also seen little growth but some 50% has taken place within the City centre.

The B1a (office) development completed during the monitoring period has also seen relatively little growth, which has taken place out of the City centre. These developments have included the regeneration of existing established employment generating sites, which in Oxford are historically located outside the City centre. In the City centre suitable land is in short supply, sites constrained and existing uses often well established. Those sites that have come forward are also subject to demand from competing uses, such as residential.

D2 (Indoor leisure) has experienced the most significant growth, which has taken place in an out-of-town location. The most significant recent development includes the Ozone Leisure Centre at Grenoble Road, which was allocated for commercial leisure use in the Oxford Local Plan 1991-2001 and for which planning permission had been granted in principle a number of years ago, and is only just being implemented.

Whilst development has taken place in out-of-centre locations during the monitoring period and therefore strictly speaking the target indicator has not been met, it is clear that these have resulted from both long standing commitments and the historical location of Oxford's principal employment sites.

**On target?** **X**

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<sup>4</sup> Use Classes Order – See Glossary

<b>Indicator 28 (Local)</b>	<b>Planning permissions resulting in loss of retail floorspace</b>
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### Objective

To monitor and manage the loss of A1<sup>1</sup> (retail) uses.

### Target

National policy<sup>2</sup> promotes sustainable development and aims to focus new development for retail, office and leisure uses in existing town centres. Growth and investment should therefore seek to promote vitality and viability in town centres.

South East policy<sup>3</sup> identifies Oxford as an important sub-regional centre. New development and redevelopment for retail uses should be focussed within the town centre. It should also make a positive contribution towards the regeneration of the City centre.

Local Plan policy<sup>4</sup> aims to maintain and strengthen the role of the City and District centres.

### Data analysis

The following three bar charts refer to the loss of A1 (retail) floorspace over the last four years and the types of new uses that have replaced it. The last chart relates solely to the loss of A1 (retail) floorspace in relation to the new uses within the monitoring year. The floorspace figures are calculated in square metres.

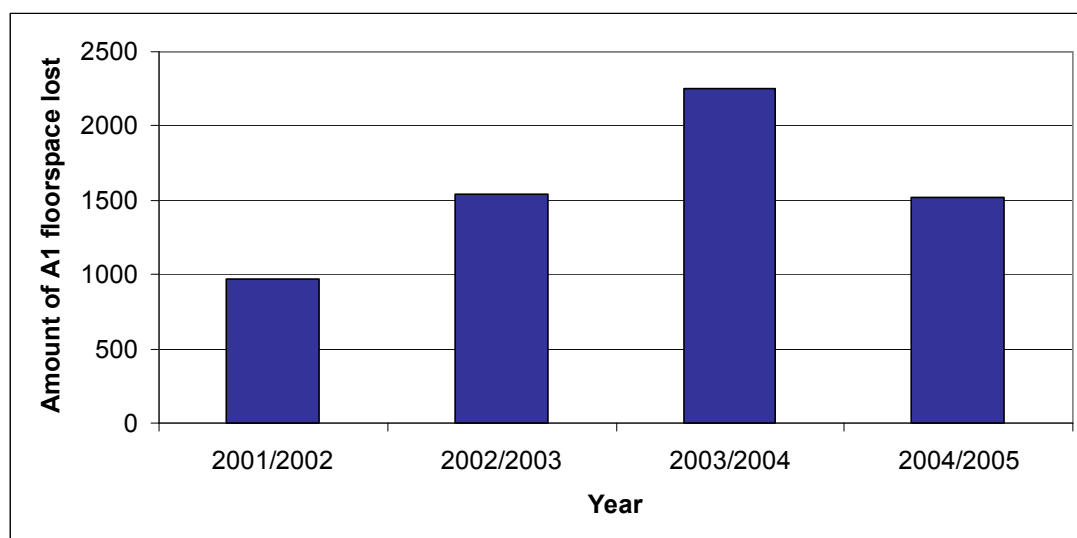


Figure 34: Amount of A1 (retail) floorspace lost over the last 4 years

<sup>1</sup> Use Classes Order – See Glossary

<sup>2</sup> Planning Policy Statement 1, & Planning Policy Statement 6, ODPM, 2005

<sup>3</sup> The Draft South East Plan, South East Regional Assembly, Jan 2005

<sup>4</sup> The Oxford Local Plan 2001-2016, Oxford City Council, Dec 2005



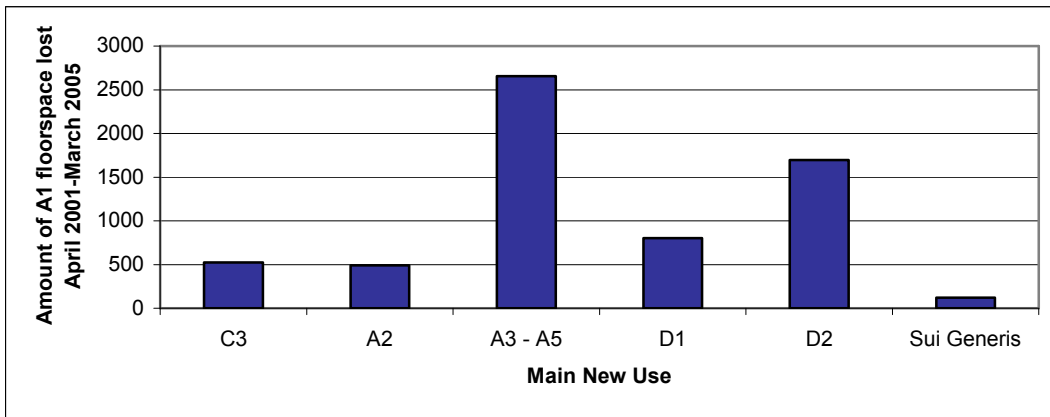


Figure 35: Loss of floorspace from A1 (retail) to other uses

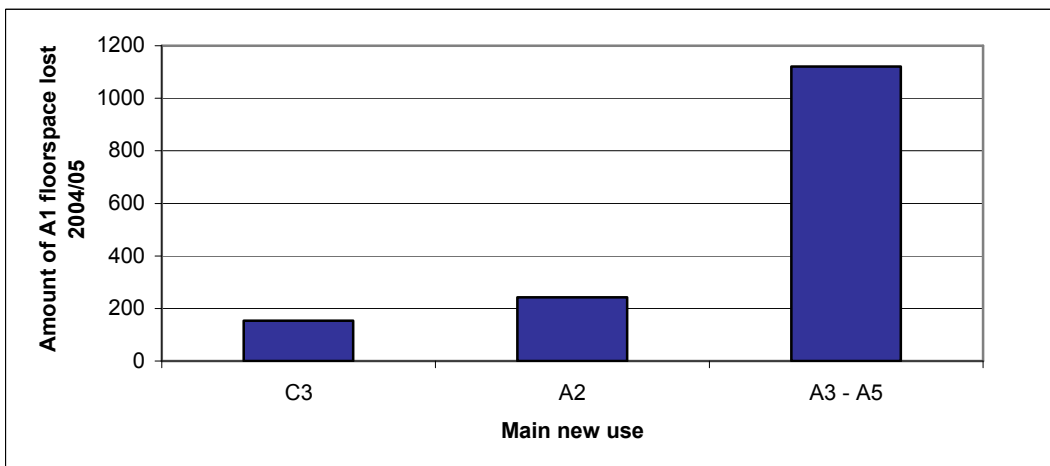


Figure 36: Amount of A1 (retail) floorspace lost in the monitoring year to new uses

### Commentary

Over the last four years Oxford has consistently lost floorspace from A1 (retail) use. Cumulatively this has an impact on the total, although on an annual basis the rate is relatively low and largely reflects the dynamic change in the market. A1 (retail) uses have been replaced by new uses such as A3-A5 (food and drink) and D2 (assembly and leisure) uses.

During the annual monitoring period however the principal changes that have taken place have largely been from A1 (retail) to principally A3-A5 (food and drink) uses. Other uses include A2 (office) and C3 (residential). Policies in the Oxford Local Plan 2001-2016 however ensure that the overall balance of uses is appropriate and the level of A1 (retail) uses does not fall below established thresholds for respective street frontages within City, District and Neighbourhood centres.

Overall the amount of floorspace lost from A1 (retail) to other uses within the monitoring period has not been significant. This data will however provide an important evidence base from which to monitor future changes to the amount of floorspace lost from A1 (retail). It also highlights where the new uses are taking place, which would be helpful in reviewing policies in the Local Development Framework.

On target? ✓

<b>Indicator 29 (Contextual)</b>	<b>Healthcheck assessments to include:</b> i) Market indicators (vacancy rates); ii) Vitality indicators (diversity of uses);
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### Objective

To assess the vitality and viability of existing centres.

### Target

National policy<sup>1</sup> encourages healthcheck assessments to be carried out for town centres to measure their vitality and viability.

The Draft South East Plan<sup>2</sup> recognises the importance of town centres and their role in promoting sustainable development. Their significance as transport hubs provide the most suitable location for focussing developments. Oxford City centre is identified as a sub-regional centre.

The Oxford Local Plan<sup>3</sup> seeks to maintain, enhance and strengthen the role of the established retail hierarchies, which include the City and District centres.

### Data analysis

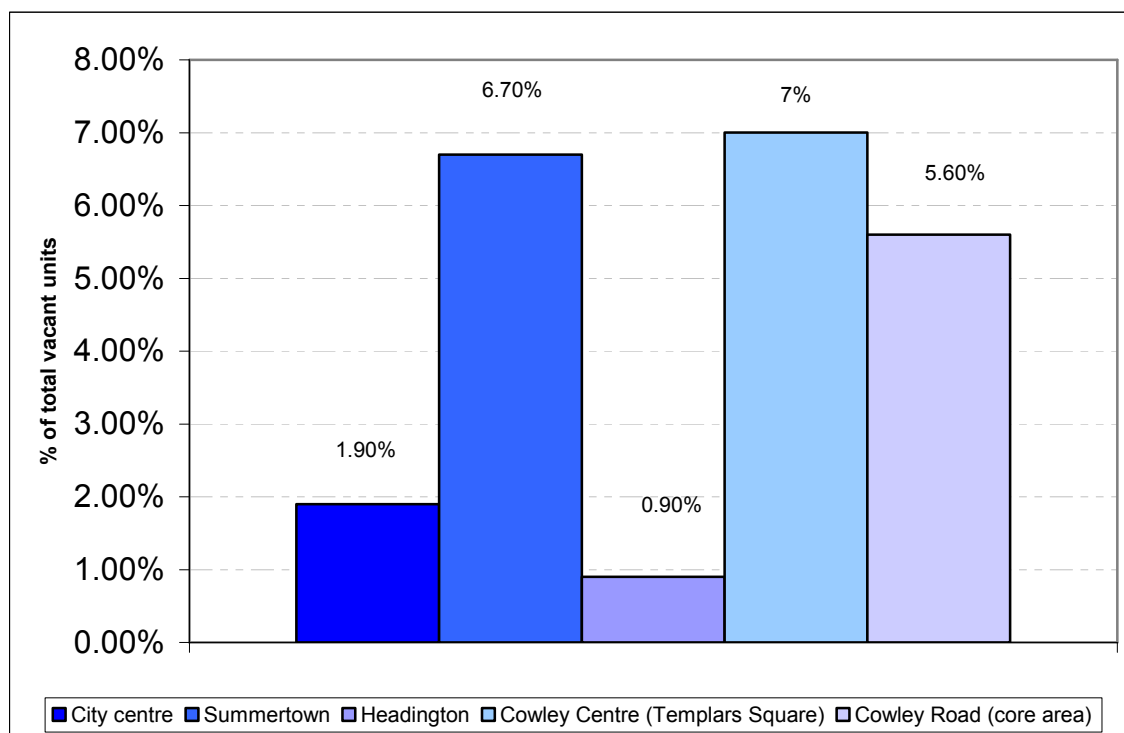


Figure 37: Vacancy levels in City and District centres.

<sup>1</sup> Planning Policy Statement 1, & Planning Policy Statement 6, ODPM, 2005

<sup>2</sup> The Draft South East Plan, South East Regional Assembly, Jan 2005

<sup>3</sup> The Oxford Local Plan 2001-2016, Oxford City Council, Dec 2005

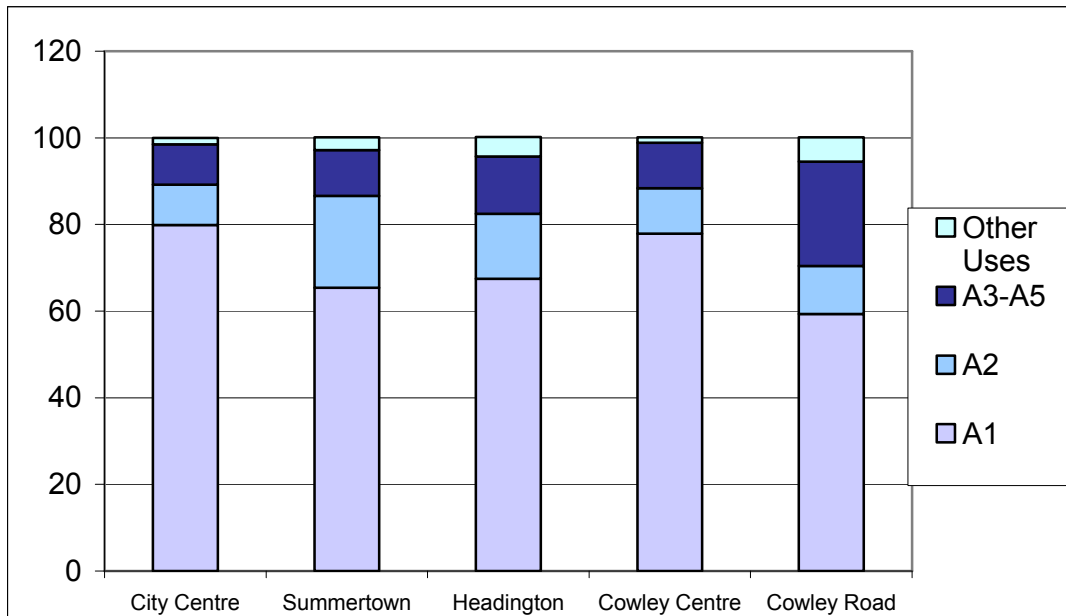


Figure 38: Percentage of A1 (retail) uses and other Class A uses in the City centre and District centres

### Commentary

#### Vacancy levels:

One of the key market indicators that measure the vitality and viability of existing centres is vacancy levels. The latest survey undertaken by the City Council within the monitoring period was carried out in February 2005. In the City centre the Primary Shopping Frontage (Policy RC.3) had only 1.9% of all the units vacant, which shows that that the City centre is healthy and performing well.

There are four District centres which each have a defined District Shopping Frontage (Policy RC.4). The Cowley centre (Templars Square) had the highest level of vacancy at 7.0%. This to a degree reflects the large number of A1<sup>4</sup> (retail) uses within the centre, and the relative lack of other Class A uses.) The Summertown District Shopping Centre had a vacancy level of some 6.7% which is relatively high for this active and popular centre. In some cases this includes A1 (retail) premises that have recently experienced competition from Marks and Spencer (Food Hall). In the longer term however the addition of this new magnet store should strengthen the vitality and viability of the centre.

The two District centres with the lowest level of vacancies include Cowley Road (Core Area) and Headington. In the case of the Cowley Road (Core Area) the level of vacancies is 5.6%. However it is important to bear in mind that this frontage relates to a relatively small number of units in the heart of the Cowley Road. The Headington District centre had a low vacancy level of some 0.9%; however it does have a comparatively high number of charity shops.

The City centre and the District centres are all performing well, appear healthy with a good level of vitality and viability. The level of vacancies within each District centre does vary but often is a reflection of the individual characteristics of the centre.

<sup>4</sup> Use Classes Order 2005 – See Glossary

**Vitality:**

The second indicator is diversity, which is an important measure of the vitality of a centre. It also provides an indication of the role of the centre and its attractiveness to shoppers. This indicator recognises the important role that retailing plays in the centre but assesses the range of other uses available, which contribute to its vitality and viability. The mix of uses is significantly influenced by the policies in the Oxford Local Plan 2001-2016 relating to the defined shopping frontages within each centre. In the case of the City centre, the present high proportion of A1 (retail) uses within the primary shopping frontage reflects its important role as a sub-regional shopping centre. Any additional Class A uses are directed towards the secondary shopping locations, to ensure that a diverse range of uses is satisfied.

In the case of the District centres, and in particular the defined District shopping frontages, there still appears to be a reasonable mix of uses, which are underpinned by their key role as retail centres. The highest proportion of A1 (retail) uses is within the Cowley centre (Templars square), although other uses have increased in recent years, it still plays an important role as a retail centre. Both Summertown and Headington have maintained a predominance of A1 (retail) uses, but with an appropriate mix of additional service related uses, which reflects the thresholds set out in the Oxford Local Plan 2001-2016. Whilst the level of A1 (retail) uses in the Cowley Road is lower, this reflects the relatively small number of units within the Core Area. The remainder of the commercial properties along the Cowley Road frontage are defined as secondary shopping frontage and as such include a higher proportion of other Class A uses.

It is clear however from these contextual indicators that the City centre and District centres appear to be in a healthy position, and whilst underpinned by their important retailing function do contain an appropriate mix of other Class A uses. The position does need to be carefully monitored to assess the performance of each centre in the context of both their role and respective individual characteristics.

**On target? N/A**

No target appropriate, as this is contextual information.

# TOURISM

Indicator 30 (Local)	Number and type and location of new short-stay accommodation, hotels, guest houses and dual use, to include number of bedspaces.
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## Objective

To improve both the range and standard of accommodation available to visitors to Oxford, and to encourage tourists to stay longer and spend more.

## Target

National guidance in PPS6<sup>1</sup> recognises the importance of arts, cultural and tourism uses to the vitality and viability of town centres. Hotels are specifically referred to as key tourist related uses.

Regional planning guidance for the South East (RPG9)<sup>2</sup> (Nov 2004) aims to positively promote diversity in the range of tourist accommodation. Protection should be afforded to the existing stock, where market demand exists and support given to proposals to upgrade the quality of the stock to meet consumer demand. Policies should require assessments of the need for additional hotel provision and promote sustainable locations for new development. Opportunities for longer stays should be encouraged.

The Oxford Local Plan<sup>3</sup> aims to retain the existing stock of tourist accommodation and support the provision of additional accommodation in a range of appropriate locations and to encourage longer stays in Oxford.

## Data analysis

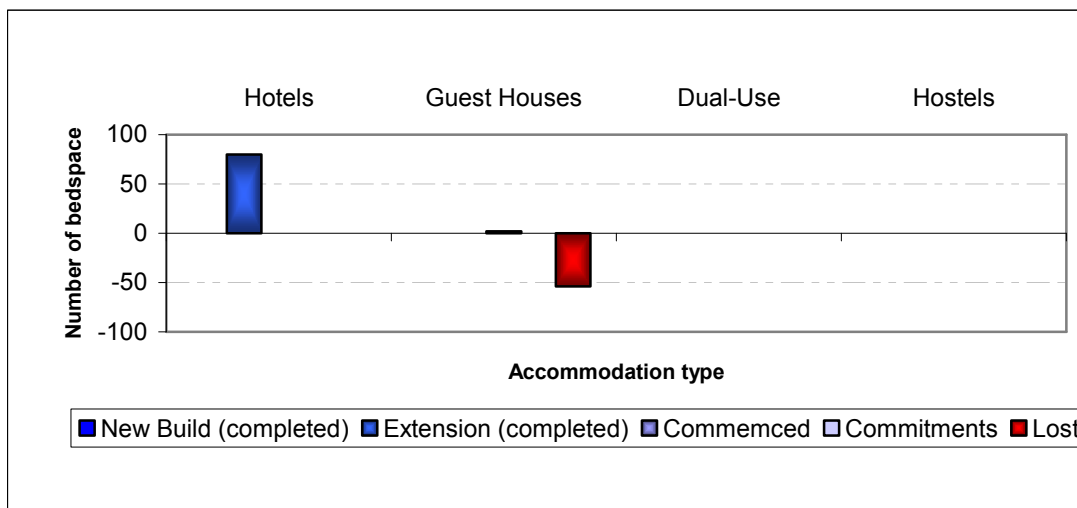


Figure 39: The location number of bed-spaces gained or lost, by type of short stay accommodation establishments.

<sup>1</sup> Planning Policy Statement 6: Planning for Town Centres, ODPM 2005

<sup>2</sup> Regional Planning Guidance for the South East (RPG9), GOSE

<sup>3</sup> Oxford Local Plan 2001-2016, Oxford City Council, December 2005

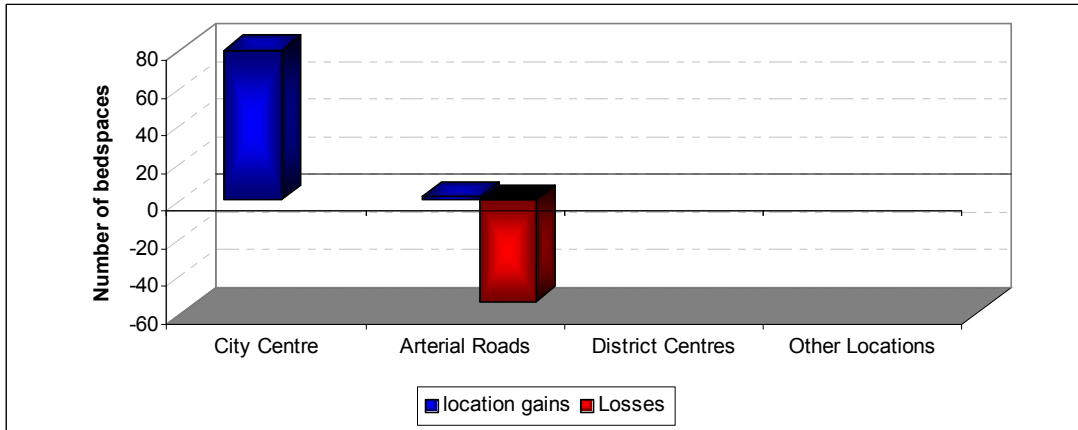


Figure 40: The location of where new bed-spaces are situated, and where losses have occurred, during 2004/2005.

### Commentary

Oxford is one of the South East’s major visitor destinations, particularly for overseas visitors, attracted by its national importance as a centre of culture and education.

There has been an overall increase in the supply of short stay accommodation in Oxford. The principal growth has taken place in the hotel sector, which has seen an increase in the provision of bedspaces completed. There has however been a loss of bedspaces in the guest house market.

The net increase in short stay accommodation has been provided in sequentially preferable locations principally within the City centre. It has therefore successfully achieved National, Regional and Local Plan policy objectives by adding to the range and diversity of short stay accommodation within sequentially preferable locations, improving the stock of accommodation and encouraging longer stays in Oxford.

However the loss of guest house accommodation is of concern, with the closure of two large guest houses on arterial routes into the City within the monitoring period, resulting in a substantial number of bedspaces lost. Stringent retention policies in the Local Plan 2001-2016 will in future aim to curb this level of loss.

This overall pattern of development has taken place within the principal aim of the Local Plan tourism strategy to promote long-term sustainable growth. Such development of all year facilities and longer stays aims to make the most efficient use of the tourism infrastructure to the benefit of both the transport systems and accommodation.

On target? ✓

<b>Indicator 31 (Local)</b>	<b>Number &amp; type of new facilities/attractions completed (new build, extensions &amp; changes of use).</b>
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**Objective**

To promote greater use of all existing attractions, and encourage additional cultural and tourist attractions, to add diversity and to offer a wider range of activities for visitors to Oxford to enjoy.

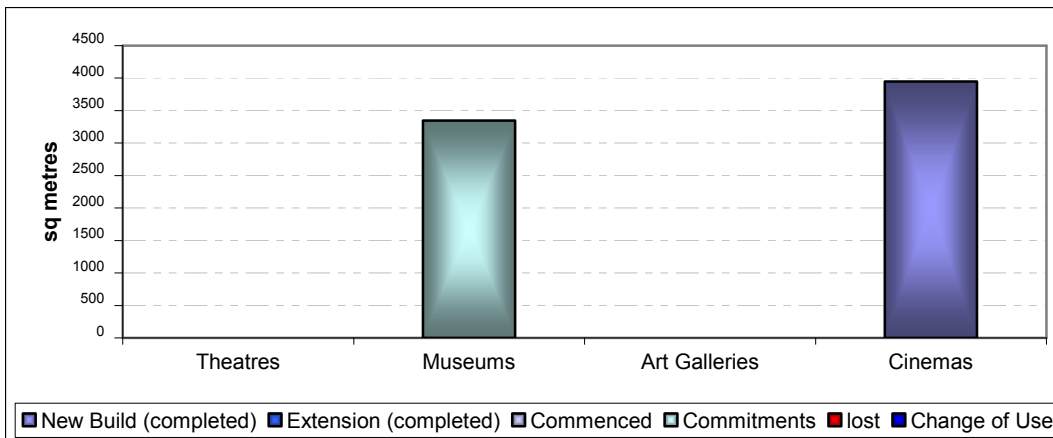
**Target**

National guidance in PPS6<sup>1</sup> recognises the importance of arts, cultural and tourism uses to the vitality and viability of town centres. Theatres, museums and galleries are specifically referred to as key arts, cultural and tourist related uses.

Regional policy for the South East<sup>2</sup> encourages Local Authorities to improve existing tourist attractions to enhance the visitor experience, and to promote high standards of design.

The City Council will promote Oxford’s cultural status, through the retention of art and entertainment venues. It aims to protect public venues, cultural and art attractions and promote enhancements or extensions to existing art-related premises.

**Data analysis**



**Figure 41: Floor-space lost or gained for Arts & Cultural Uses, in sq metres, during 2004/2005.**

<sup>1</sup> Planning Policy Statement 6: Planning for Town Centres, ODPM 2005  
<sup>2</sup> The South East Plan, South East England Assembly, January 2005

## **Commentary**

Oxford has successfully increased the amount of floorspace for arts and cultural related facilities, and in particular museum (the Ashmolean Museum, receiving planning permission to extend its premises to increase gallery space) and new cinema provision, thereby improving the range and amount of facilities available to visitors and residents of Oxford.

There has been no loss in the provision of existing arts and cultural related facilities.

**On target?** ✓



<b>Indicator 32 (Contextual)</b>	<b>Monitor the number of visitors to Oxford's principal tourist attractions</b>
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**Objective**

To promote greater use of Oxford's tourist attractions, and seek to enhance the overall visitor experience.

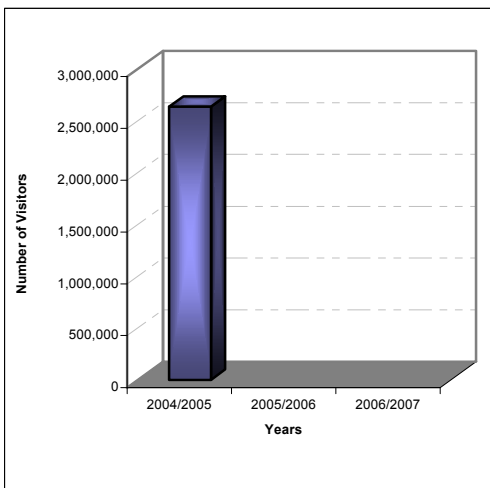
**Target**

Regional policy (TSR4) for the South East<sup>1</sup> encourages Local Authorities to improve existing tourist attractions to enhance the visitor experience, and to promote high standards of design.

The City Council will support extensions and enhancement and promote greater use of all existing attractions.

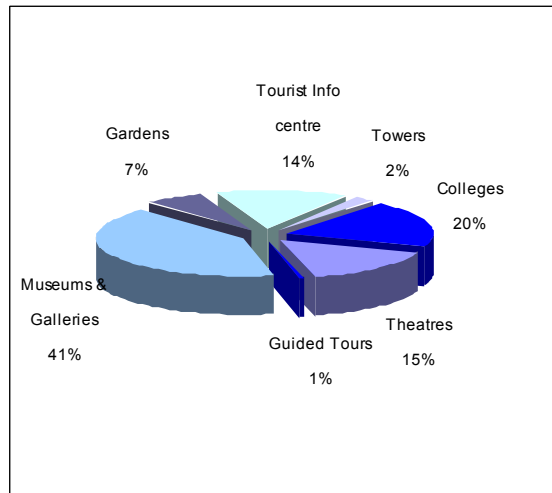
It will also encourage additional tourist attractions to add diversity and to offer a wide range of activities for visitors to Oxford to enjoy.

**Data analysis**



**Figure 42: Bar Chart Showing Number of Visitors to Principal Tourist Attractions**

Source: Oxford City Council, Survey



**Figure 43: Pie Chart Showing % of Visitors to Type of Attraction**

<sup>1</sup> The South East Plan, South East England Assembly, January 2005

## **Commentary**

Regional policy advises that 'regionally significant' attractions should only be encouraged in exceptional circumstances. Oxford is however fortunate in having many established tourist attractions, of local, regional and national importance.

The City Council's policy approach in line with regional advice therefore promotes improvements and enhancements to these recognised existing attractions. The range and diversity of tourist attractions is already well established, however by monitoring their use on an annual basis an evidence base can be established to monitor change, allow comparisons to be made and highlight areas of future provision.

### **On target? N/A**

No target appropriate, as this is contextual information.

## PROTECTING THE NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

<b>Indicator 33 (Core)</b>	<b>Change in areas and populations of biodiversity importance, including:</b> i. change in priority habitats and species (by type); and ii. change in areas designated for their intrinsic environmental value including sites of international, national, sub-regional or local significance.
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### Objective

To conserve and enhance Oxford's biodiversity, particularly in relation to priority habitats and species.<sup>1</sup>

### Target

Local policy on biodiversity is set out in the Oxford Local Plan 2001 – 2016 and the Oxford Community Strategy which states that the City Council will work to conserve, enhance, and increase access to the natural environment in Oxford by supporting the development of a partnership action list with local and community conservation groups by April 2005. This is to include the development of guidance for developers on protecting and promoting biodiversity. Work has commenced on this project and it is hoped that the action list and guidance for developers will be produced by April 2006.

To avoid development (or land management) which adversely affects priority species and habitats. To enhance, or restore, sites containing priority habitats or species and take measures to reduce their fragmentation and isolation by creating linkages between sites where the opportunity arises.

### Data analysis

#### i. UK BAP Priority Habitats & Species

In this first year of monitoring, the data establishes the baseline information. In future years changes in the area will be measured.

#### Priority Habitats

The figures provided by the Environmental Record Centre indicate that there are the following UK BAP priority habitats in Oxford:

Habitat Type	Oxford (ha)	County Context (ha)	% of County Total in Oxford
Lowland mixed deciduous woodland	10.7	2,467.5	0.43%
Wet woodland	5.8	98.4	5.89%
Wood pasture & parkland	12.1	101.3	11.94%
Lowland meadow	235.9	1,100.8	21.4%
Fen	16.2	92.6	17.6%
Reedbeds	1.0	6.5	15.38%

The data only relates to sites designated for their nature conservation interest. Generally recent data (5 years old) has been used for Sites of Local Importance for Nature Conservation (SLINC), but older data (approximately 15 years old) for Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI). Non-designated sites will be mapped for UK BAP priority habitats by 2006.

<sup>1</sup> Priority habitats and species have been identified by the UK Biodiversity Steering Group, set up by the Government to advise on the implementation of the UK Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP). Priority habitats fulfil at least one of the following criteria: they are at risk, experiencing a high rate of decline, or are important habitats for priority species. Priority species are globally threatened or are rapidly declining in the UK, ie by more than 50% in the last 25 years.

The above figures reveal that Oxford contains a significant area of several UK BAP Priority Habitats. This is particularly marked in the case of lowland meadow, where over a fifth of Oxfordshire's area of this habitat is found within Oxford. Indeed owing to the severe losses of this habitat since 1945, Oxford now has 1.57% of the total UK habitat area for this habitat.

Almost equally significant is the 16.2 ha of fen, which provides 17.6% of Oxfordshire's area of this habitat. Fen is a nationally rare and threatened habitat, which is virtually confined to parts of Oxfordshire, East Anglia and North Wales. There are no UK figures available for fen habitat, but it is likely that Oxford's contribution is as significant as for lowland meadows.

### UK BAP Priority Species

The Environmental Record Centre has indicated that 19 UK BAP Priority Species are found in Oxford.<sup>1</sup> There are 69 UK BAP Priority Species in Oxfordshire and 382 UK BAP Priority species in the UK as a whole.

#### ii. change in areas designated for their intrinsic environmental value including sites of international, national, sub-regional or local significance

The data supplied by the Environmental Record Centre indicates that there are the following areas of land which have been designated for their nature conservation importance in Oxford:

Type of Site	Oxford (ha)	County Context (ha)	% of County Total in Oxford
Special Area of Conservation (SAC)	177.7		
Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs)	278.2 <sup>2</sup>	4,401.1	6.32%
Sites of Local Importance for Nature Conservation (SLINCS) <sup>3</sup>	202.5		

Oxford has part of one site of international importance for nature conservation. This is the Oxford Meadows Special Area of Conservation, which consists of Port Meadow/Wolvercote Common and the meadows north of Wolvercote, as well as a large area north of the A34, which is outside the city boundary. English Nature has designated 12 SSSIs that are wholly or partly within Oxford, on account of their national ecological or geological importance. The table above indicates that Oxford has a significant proportion of the total area given SSSI status in Oxfordshire. A large area has also been given SLINC status, a local designation made by the City Council. As 6.1% of Oxford consists of SSSIs and a further 4.45% has been given SLINC status, the total area, which has been designated for its nature conservation value is 10.55%, a very significant part of Oxford, given its predominantly urban character. The percentage of land given SSSI status is also far above that in neighbouring districts, with only 1.7% of the whole area of Oxfordshire having received this designation.

<sup>1</sup> The 19 UK BAP priority Species found in Oxford are Brown Hare, Pipistrelle Bat, Water Vole, Bullfinch, Common Scoter (occasional visitor), Corn Bunting, Linnet, Reed Bunting, Skylark, Song Thrush, Spotted Flycatcher, Tree Sparrow, Turtle Dove, Creeping Marshwort, Great Crested Newt, Buttoned Snout Moth, *Pisidium tenuilineatum* (a pea mussel), *Lucanus cervus* (Stag Beetle), and *Ceutorhynchus insularis* (a weevil).

<sup>2</sup> This includes the area designated as a Special Area of Conservation as this area also has SSSI status.

<sup>3</sup> This includes sites designated in the Oxford Local Plan 2001 – 2016 which is due to be adopted in December 2005.

## Commentary

The data presented above indicates that Oxford contains a very significant resource for biodiversity. Government guidance on this topic has recently been strengthened by the publication of Planning Policy Statement 9 on 'Biodiversity and Geological Conservation'. This document states that a key principle of plan policies and planning decisions should be to maintain, and enhance, restore or add to biodiversity and geological conservation interests. It also encourages local planning authorities to use Local Development Frameworks to identify areas or sites for the restoration or creation of new priority habitats, which will contribute to regional targets. The statement also points out that development proposals provide many opportunities for building-in beneficial biodiversity or geological features as part of good design. In the years ahead the City Council will need to take advantage of these opportunities in order to ensure that Oxford's biodiversity resource is maintained and enhanced and that it continues to perform well against these indicators. While this year the City Council is establishing the baseline situation, the facts and figures present an encouraging picture for biodiversity in Oxford.

On target? ✓

<b>Indicator 34 (Contextual)</b>	<p><b>To assess the richness of local biodiversity and the impact of habitat enhancement measures by monitoring:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The distribution and status of water voles;</li> <li>• The condition of Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs);</li> <li>• The distribution and status of farmland birds;</li> <li>• Distribution and status of garden butterflies.</li> </ul>
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### Objective

To conserve and enhance the biodiversity of Oxford.

### Target

To halt further decline. In relation to SSSIs the Government's Public Service Agreement target is for 95% of SSSI land to be in a favourable or recovering condition by 2010.

### Data analysis

These indicators have been chosen as a representative sample to indicate the biodiversity health of Oxford. They have been selected to reflect the different types of wildlife found in Oxford and because these groups of organisms/sites are already monitored, so data is readily available. The Environmental Record Centre has collected data for these indicators across Oxfordshire so it is possible for the City Council to compare the situation with other parts of the County. Brief details about these indicators and the potential for the City Council to influence their status are provided in Appendix 3.

### The distribution of Water Voles

1,054.9 ha of Oxford has been measured as a Key Area positive for Water Voles. The total Key Area in Oxfordshire is 9,645.2 ha. 10.93% of the total Key Areas for Water Voles in Oxfordshire, therefore occur in Oxford. A Key Area is a watercourse where major or important populations have been found. The Key Areas in Oxford where Water Voles are found are Bayswater Brook, Oxford Canal, Littlemore and Northfield Brook and Osney Ditch/Bullstake Stream. These areas are regularly monitored and the data is derived from the Berkshire, Buckinghamshire and Oxfordshire Wildlife Trust (BBOWT). Despite the discovery of some new colonies, numbers of Water Voles in Berkshire, Buckinghamshire and Oxfordshire have severely declined in the last two years. Water Voles are a UK BAP priority species.

### Condition of SSSIs

The condition of SSSIs in Oxford is set out in the table below:

Condition	Sum of hectares	% of District Resource
Favourable	244.82	88
Unfavourable declining	5.05	2
Unfavourable no change	3.71	1
Unfavourable recovering	24.66	9
TOTAL	278.24	100

Source: English Nature Web site. Data collected by Environmental Record Centre. The data was collected predominantly in 2004 and 2005 but a small amount was collected from earlier years.

The figures indicate that 88% of Oxford's SSSIs are in a favourable condition and a further 9% is in an unfavourable but recovering condition. This is a major achievement and indicates that Oxford is already meeting the Government's target for 2010 for SSSI land. The SSSI situation in Oxford also compares very favourably with that in the other Oxfordshire districts, the County as a whole and the overall England figures as indicated by the table below.

Condition	Cherwell % of District Resource	South Oxfordshire % of District Resource	Vale of White Horse % of District Resource	West Oxfordshire % of District Resource	Oxfordshire % of County Resource	England % of Country's resource
Favourable	44	53	30	46	48	45
Unfavourable declining	11	1	1	1	3	12
Unfavourable no change	19	12	19	2	12	20
Unfavourable recovering	26	33	50	50	38	23
TOTAL	100	100	100	100	100	100

These good figures are a credit to those owning and managing Oxford's SSSIs. In particular this includes the City Council who through its Countryside Service manages Magdalen Quarry; Rock Edge; part of Lye Valley and, in conjunction with the Wolvercote Commoners Committee and the Freemen of Oxford, the large area of Port Meadow and Wolvercote Common. In addition the City Council owns and manages the very large Shotover and Brasenose Wood SSSI which occupies 113.24 ha, most of which is outside the City boundary. All of these areas are in 'favourable' condition, apart from Lye Valley, which is classified as 'unfavourable recovering', but is now well on the way to recovery as a result of the City Council's active management of this site. The City Council also owns most of Iffley Meadows SSSI, which is managed on its behalf by BBOWT and the City Council owned parts are in 'favourable' or 'unfavourable recovering' condition. The good state of Oxford's SSSIs is also a tribute to the other SSSI landowners who include the University Chest; Oxford University Press; various colleges and the Oxford Preservation Trust.

The southern part of the Hook Meadow and Trap Grounds SSSI was in a declining condition, but has been brought into a recovering condition, through City Council officers negotiating with the landowner, St Edwards School, English Nature (who provided a grant) and a local farmer whereby a stock proof fence has been erected and the site has now been brought back into suitable management.

### The distribution and status of farmland birds

The farmland bird index is based on a list of 19 farmland bird species.<sup>1</sup> The data is derived from the British Trust for Ornithology (BTO) and the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB). The data has been drawn from reliable breeding bird surveys. The number of surveys within districts are, however, relatively small and below the advised thresholds for BTO Breeding Bird Surveys and so the figures should be treated with some caution.

Based on the surveys an index has been derived for farmland birds. The indices for Oxford and Oxfordshire, against a baseline figure of 1, are as follows:

Oxford	1.36
Oxfordshire	0.63

<sup>1</sup> The 19 farmland bird species that are monitored are Kestrel, Grey Partridge, Lapwing, Turtle Dove, Skylark, Yellow Wagtail, Starling, Tree Sparrow, Linnet, Yellow Hammer, Reed Bunting, Corn Bunting, Woodpigeon, Jackdaw, Rook, Greenfinch, Goldfinch, Stock Dove, Whitethroat,

The figures show a rise in the Oxford index against the 1997 Index value, which is when surveys began. The Oxford figures are consistently higher than the Oxfordshire figures, which would seem to indicate that farmland birds are doing better in Oxford than Oxfordshire as a whole. This may be because much of the farmland in Oxford is managed by traditional agricultural techniques, rather than the intensive agriculture found in many other parts of Oxfordshire. However, it should be noted that the small sample size may be distorting trends and introducing statistical error.

### **Distribution and status of garden butterflies**

22 out of 22 'garden butterflies' are present.<sup>1</sup> 20 are widespread and 2 uncommon. The two uncommon are the Wall and the Essex Skipper.

Most of the common butterfly species would seem therefore to be doing fairly well in Oxford. It should be noted, however, that the results given for this indicator are general and based mainly on information that is over five years old. This indicator will be refined as more up to date information becomes available.

### **Commentary**

The data supplied indicates a generally encouraging situation for wildlife in Oxford. The one exception is the Water Vole which is declining rapidly both in Oxfordshire and the country as a whole. Oxford and the Thames Valley have traditionally been a stronghold of this species. In 1989/90 72% of survey sites in the Thames catchment were found to be occupied. By 1996-98 this figure had fallen to 24%. Sadly numbers are continuing to fall and if present trends continue, the Water Vole is likely to become extinct in the Oxford area before very long. If this decline is to be prevented it is important that habitat is conserved and appropriately managed; that opportunities are taken to create more Water Vole habitat and that the population of American Mink are controlled around sites where Water Voles are found. It is encouraging that a good population of Water Voles have become established at the Oxford Science Park. Under the terms of a planning agreement, these ponds are managed so as to provide suitable habitat for Water Voles. This indicates how new developments can create new areas of habitat as part of the planning process.

The report on the condition of Oxford's SSSIs is very encouraging, given that unlike most other areas, Oxford has already met a Government target for 2010. As the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended<sup>2</sup>) states that public bodies must 'take reasonable steps, consistent with the proper exercise of their functions, to further the conservation and enhancement of SSSIs', it is important that the City Council seeks to ensure that those small parts of Oxford's SSSIs which are in an unfavourable condition, and are not recovering, are put on the way to recovery. The particular, areas concerned, none of which are in City Council ownership, are:

- Hook Meadows and the Trap Grounds SSSI: Northern part.
- A small part of the Iffley Meadows SSSI on the east bank of the Thames.
- Lye Valley: a privately owned area south of the area managed by the City Council.
- Wolvercote Green where planning permission has been granted for the erection of a 1.5 metre high fence to enable grazing to be reintroduced.

Discussions will take place with English Nature on ways to ensure that these sites come into a recovering condition, so that hopefully in 2010 Oxford will have 100% of its SSSI sites in a 'favourable' or 'unfavourable recovering' condition.

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<sup>1</sup> The species surveyed are Small Skipper, Essex Skipper, Large Skipper, Brimstone, Large White, Small White, Green-veined White, Orange-tip, Small Copper, Common Blue, Holly Blue, Red Admiral, Painted Lady, Small Tortoiseshell, Peacock, Comma, Speckled Wood, Wall, Marbled White, Gatekeeper, Meadow Brown, and Ringlet.

<sup>2</sup> Amended by the Countryside & Rights of way Act 2000



From the data currently available, it would seem that farmland birds and garden butterflies are currently doing reasonably well in Oxford.

**On target? N/A**

No target appropriate, as this is contextual information.

<b>Indicator 35 (Core)</b>	<b>Number of permissions granted contrary to the advice of the Environment Agency on either flood defence grounds or water quality</b>
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### **Objective**

To take the Environment Agency's advice into account when determining planning applications which have a potential impact on the water environment.

To prevent further development in the undeveloped flood plain; prevent development which will lead to additional flooding problems, and to prevent development which would adversely affect water quality

### **Target**

To ensure that all planning applications granted planning permission will not have an adverse impact on flooding or water quality. To support schemes which would improve water quality and reduce the risk of flooding.

### **Data analysis**

There were no major applications to which the Environment Agency objected on flood defence grounds during the monitoring period. Major applications are defined in the Glossary.

The Environment Agency did object to two minor applications. In both cases the applications involved the erection of a new dwelling within the curtilage of an existing dwelling. In both cases the City Council took the view that given Government advice supporting the development of previously developed land and the proposed mitigation measures, including the creation of underfloor voids to accommodate flood water, that planning permission should be granted.

There were no applications during the monitoring period where the Environment Agency objected on water quality grounds.

### **Commentary**

The data currently available indicates that during the monitoring period the City Council has not approved any major schemes, which are likely to have significant implications for flood risk or water quality. Only two minor schemes were approved contrary to Environment Agency advice. The Oxford Local Plan 2001 – 2016, contains a set of policies on flooding which seeks to protect the undeveloped flood plain from built development, and to ensure that development within existing built up areas, where there is a risk of flooding, are only permitted where the appropriate standard of flood defence is provided, and the development will not lead to an increased risk of flooding elsewhere. These policies are based on the advice in Planning Policy Guidance note 25 on 'Development and Flood Risk'. The Local Plan also contains a policy on water quality. Provided these policies are applied new development should not have an adverse impact on water quality or accentuate flooding in Oxford.

**On target? X**

## ENCOURAGING SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

<b>Indicator 36 (Core)</b>	<b>Renewable energy capacity (in mega watts) installed by type</b>
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### Objective

To maximise the amount of energy produced from renewable energy schemes in order to reduce the amount of energy derived from fossil fuels and thereby seek to minimise greenhouse gas emissions and create a low carbon economy.

### Target

The Government's target is that by 2010, 10% of electricity should be generated from renewable sources, with the aspiration that this increases to 20% by 2020<sup>1</sup>. Current national estimates of production are around 3%, so there is a long way to go.

To ensure that all new developments are designed to optimise energy efficiency in accordance with Local Plan policy<sup>2</sup>.

### Analysis

The Government indicator requires the City Council to provide details of completed renewable energy schemes, including bio fuels, onshore wind, water, solar energy, and geothermal energy.

One of the problems with monitoring renewable energy schemes in Oxford, is that in most cases they consist of solar hot water and photovoltaic schemes (using sunlight to generate electricity) on domestic properties. Normally these can be installed under permitted development rights without the need for planning permission, so that it is difficult to monitor the implementation of schemes. However, the solar guide to Oxford reveals that there are at least 76 properties with these installations in Oxford. During this monitoring period a total of 12 applications were made for grants to install solar heating systems.

Two other renewable energy scheme installed during the monitoring period consist of a groundwater heating system at 30 Norham Gardens, North Oxford and the installation of photovoltaic slates and a solar thermal panel at Alastair Binnie Architects at 52 St Giles.

### Commentary

At present only a small amount of energy in Oxford is generated from renewable energy. It is very important that this is radically increased in the next few years in order to reduce reliance on fossil fuels and emissions of greenhouse gases, which contribute to global warming.

The adoption of the Local Plan and in particular the production of the Natural Resource Impact Analysis Supplementary Planning Document will provide significant tools in persuading developers to include renewable energy in new development schemes.

**On target?** **X**

<sup>1</sup> Energy White Paper: Our Energy Future – creating a low carbon economy, CM5761, February 2003.

<sup>2</sup> Local Plan policy CP16, the Oxford Local Plan 2001-2016, Oxford City Council, December 2005

## TRANSPORT

<b>Indicator 37 (Core)</b>	<b>Amount of new residential development within 30 minutes public transport time of a GP, hospital, primary and secondary school, areas of employment and a major retail centre</b>
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### Objective

To promote public transport as a chosen means of travel; to promote accessibility to jobs and services, and to reduce the need to travel by private car.

### Target

To provide new housing in proximity to local facilities.

### Data analysis

In July 2005, Oxfordshire County Council produced a Framework Accessibility Strategy as part of the Provisional Oxfordshire Local Transport Plan 2006-2011 (LTP2), which provides detailed information on bus accessibility to key services and service centres. The maps indicate that all established residential areas within Oxford are within 30 minutes' public transport travelling time to the services listed in the indicator, with the exception of part of the Greater Leys Estate, which is up to 40 minutes' bus/walk travel time from the nearest hospital. Monitoring data for residential completions indicate that no new residential development has taken place within this area during the monitoring period.

The following table shows the number and proportion of residential completions within 30 minutes' public transport travel time (i.e average bus and walk time) to the nearest key service shown, based on the LTP2 Accessibility Maps.

	Nearest GP	Nearest hospital	Nearest primary school	Nearest secondary school	Nearest employment	Nearest retail centre
Residential completions within 30 minutes' public transport travel time	718	718	718	718	718	718
Percentage of total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

### Commentary

The City of Oxford enjoys exceptionally good accessibility to local services by bus. Therefore, all new housing has complied with the indicator set out above (as shown in the table). It is expected that virtually all new development in Oxford will continue to comply with this indicator in the foreseeable future.

On target? 

<b>Indicator 38 (Core)</b>	<b>Amount of completed non-residential development within Use Class order A, B or D complying with car parking standards set out in the Local Development Framework.</b>
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**Objective**

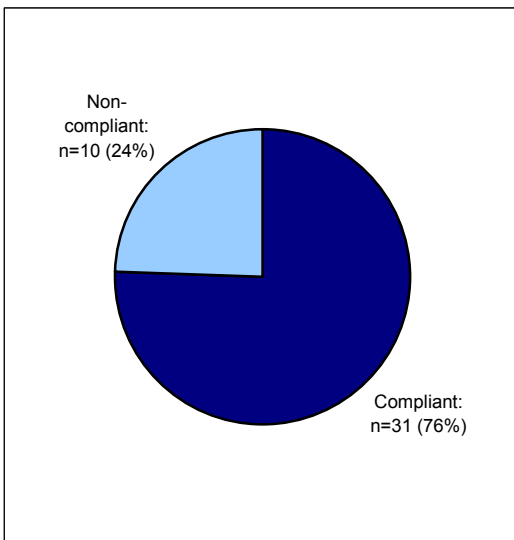
To promote sustainable transport choices, and minimise inefficient use of land, through promoting parking provision restraint as appropriate to local circumstances.

**Target**

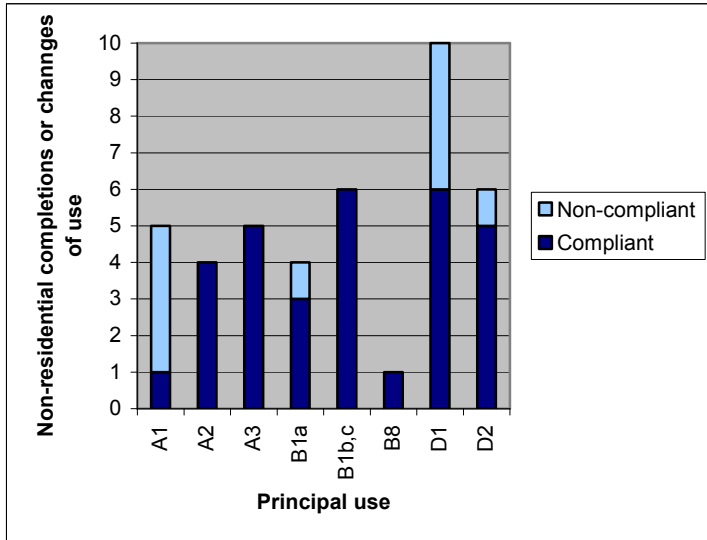
To ensure that new non-residential development complies with car parking standards.

**Data analysis**

The pie chart below shows the number and proportion of non-residential development completions (or changes of use) which comply with Local Plan parking standards most applicable at the time of determination. It should be noted that both minimum standards (i.e. provision to be equal to or greater than stated standard) and maximum standards (i.e. provision to be equal to or less than stated standard) have been used, depending on the time at which approval was granted (see below). The bar graph shows compliance with the indicator within each applicable use class<sup>1</sup>.



**Figure 44: number (n) and proportion of non-residential completions complying with parking standards**



**Figure 45: Number of non-residential completions complying with parking standards by use class**

It should be noted that five of the developments were considered to consist principally of residential development but with a significant element of non-residential; these developments have been classified according to their main non-residential use for the purpose of this report. (This also applies to **Indicators 39 and 40**)

<sup>1</sup> Use Classes Order 2005 – See Glossary

Regarding the standards used, the Second Draft Oxford Local Plan 2001-2016 was approved by the City Council for development control purposes in February 2003. Therefore all developments which were granted planning permission before February 2003 have been judged against the *minimum* parking standards set out in the previous Oxford Local Plan 1991-2001, whilst all developments approved from February 2003 onwards have been judged against the *maximum* parking standards set out in the current Oxford Local Plan 2001-2016.

## **Commentary**

There were 41 non-residential developments completed and identified through monitoring for the 2004/05 period. Of these, 76% were considered to be compliant with the general parking standards being used at the time of determination.

The two different sets of parking standards, either or both of which may have been used in determining planning applications during the local plan review period, renders it difficult to make a meaningful judgement on whether parking standards have been consistently adhered to. In addition, the merits of individual proposals, including local or special circumstances, form an important part of many decisions made, however such considerations are not taken account of in this analysis.

It is expected that the proportion of development completions complying with parking standards will be maintained at the present high level or improved upon, as the more up-to-date maximum standards set out in the Oxford Local Plan 2001-2016 will be used consistently, as opposed to when the standards set out in the previous Local Plan were also material prior to its formal replacement.

**On target?** ✓

<b>Indicator 39 (Local)</b>	<b>Percentage of completed non-residential development complying with car-parking standards for people with disabilities</b>
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**Objective**

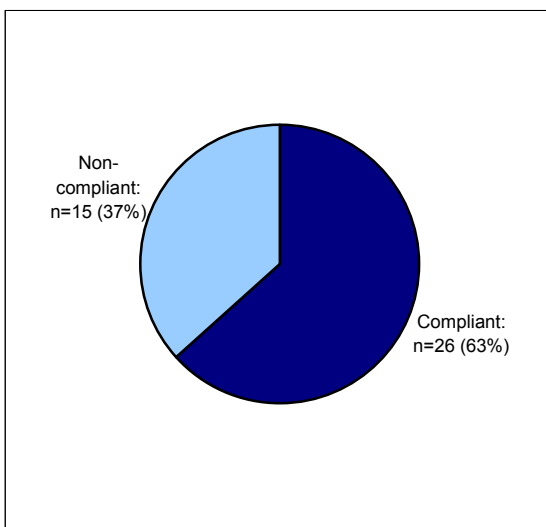
To ensure provision of an appropriate level of good quality disabled parking spaces as part of all new non-residential development, in order to maximise accessibility to local services for people with disabilities.

**Target**

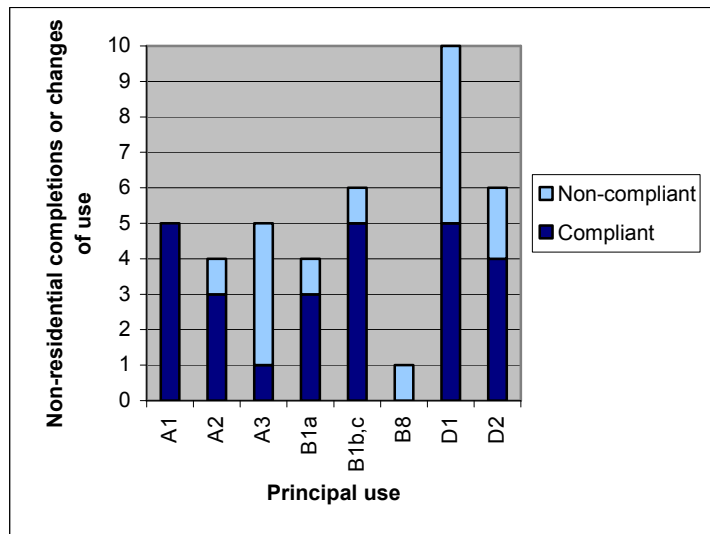
To ensure that new non-residential development complies with car parking standards for people with disabilities.

**Data analysis**

The pie chart below shows the proportion of non-residential development completions (or changes of use) which comply with Local Plan disabled parking standards most applicable at the time of determination. The bar graph shows compliance with the indicator within each applicable use class<sup>1</sup>.



**Figure 46: Number (n) and proportion of non-residential completions complying with disabled parking standards**



**Figure 47: Number of non-residential completions complying with disabled parking standards by use class**

Regarding the standards used, the Second Draft Oxford Local Plan 2001-2016 was approved by the City Council for development control purposes in February 2003. Therefore all developments which were granted planning permission before February 2003 have been judged against the parking standards set out in the previous Oxford Local Plan 1991-2001 (which did not specify any requirement for disabled parking). However all developments approved from February 2003 onwards have been judged against the parking standards set out in the Oxford Local Plan 2001-2016, which generally require 5% of parking provided to be allocated for disabled drivers, and that there should be disabled parking provision of some kind for all commercial development.

<sup>1</sup> Use Classes Order 2005 – See Glossary

## **Commentary**

Of the 41 non-residential completions (or changes of use), 63% were considered to be compliant with the disabled parking standards being used at the time of determination.

It would be difficult to make a meaningful analysis of the data in relation to the stated objective. In many cases, the special merits of the proposal may have been more material than the general stated requirement. For example some developments are already served by public or on-highway parking bays, both disabled and non-disabled (for example in the City centre), in which case the general standard may not have been applied. In addition, where changes of use were proposed for small premises within tightly built-up areas (for example terraced parades of shops), it would in many cases have been unfeasible to provide allocated disabled parking.

It should further be noted that all developments which gained approval before February 2003 automatically comply as no specific standard for disabled parking was set in the Adopted Oxford Local Plan 1991-2001.

It is expected that compliance with disabled parking standards will be improved upon in forthcoming years, subject to the merits of individual cases, particularly following the expected publication of a Parking Standards SPD in 2007 which will provide more detailed guidance.

**On target? X**

<b>Indicator 40 (Local)</b>	<b>Percentage of completed non-residential development complying with cycle-parking standards</b>
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**Objective**

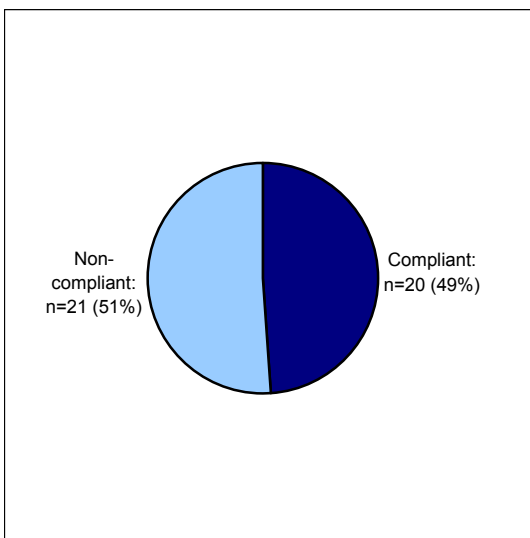
To increase the attractiveness of cycling as a means of travel for employees and visitors to businesses and services in Oxford.

**Target**

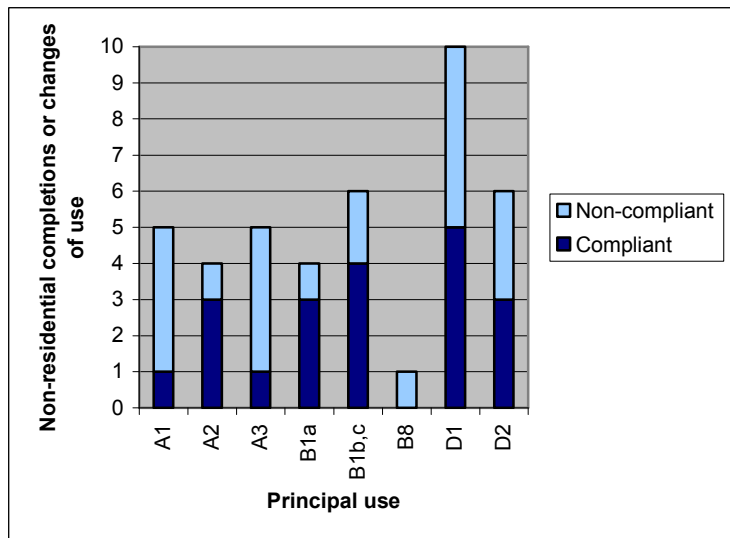
To ensure that new non-residential development complies with cycle parking standards.

**Data analysis**

The pie chart below shows the proportion of non-residential development completions (or changes of use) which comply with Local Plan cycle parking standards. The bar graph shows compliance with the indicator within each applicable use class<sup>1</sup>.



**Figure 48: Number (n) and proportion of non-residential completions complying with cycle parking standards**



**Figure 49: Number of non-residential completions complying with cycle parking standards by use class**

Regarding the standards used, the Second Draft Oxford Local Plan 2001-2016 was approved by the City Council for development control purposes in February 2003. Therefore all developments which were granted planning permission before February 2003 have been judged against the minimum cycle parking standards set out in the previous Oxford Local Plan 1991-2001, whilst all developments approved from February 2003 onwards have been judged against the minimum cycle parking standards set out in the current Oxford Local Plan 2001-2016.

<sup>1</sup> Use Classes Order 2005 – See Glossary



## Commentary

There were 41 non-residential developments completed and identified through monitoring for the 2004/05 period. Of these, 49% were considered to be compliant with the cycle parking standards being used at the time of determination.

It is expected that this figure will improve in future years, as the revised minimum cycle parking standards set out in the current Oxford Local Plan 2001-2016 will be used consistently, as opposed to when the standards set out in the previous Local Plan were also material prior to its formal replacement. Furthermore, the revised standards better reflect the level of cycle parking provision generally required for new non-residential development.

On target? **X**

<b>Indicator 41 (Contextual)</b>	<b>Overall change in traffic levels at the Oxford inner and outer cordons</b>
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**Objective**

Limit traffic growth in Oxford.

**Target adopted by Oxfordshire County Council**

No growth in annual average daily 12 hour traffic flow across the Oxford Inner Cordon<sup>1</sup>; limit growth in annual average daily 12 hour traffic flow across Oxford Outer Cordon<sup>2</sup> to an average yearly 1% growth level (this being 1% per year below the forecast growth for Oxford).

**Data analysis**

The chart below is based on Oxfordshire County Council monitoring of traffic flows across the Inner and Outer Cordons, and shows the trend in traffic growth in Oxford over the last four years.

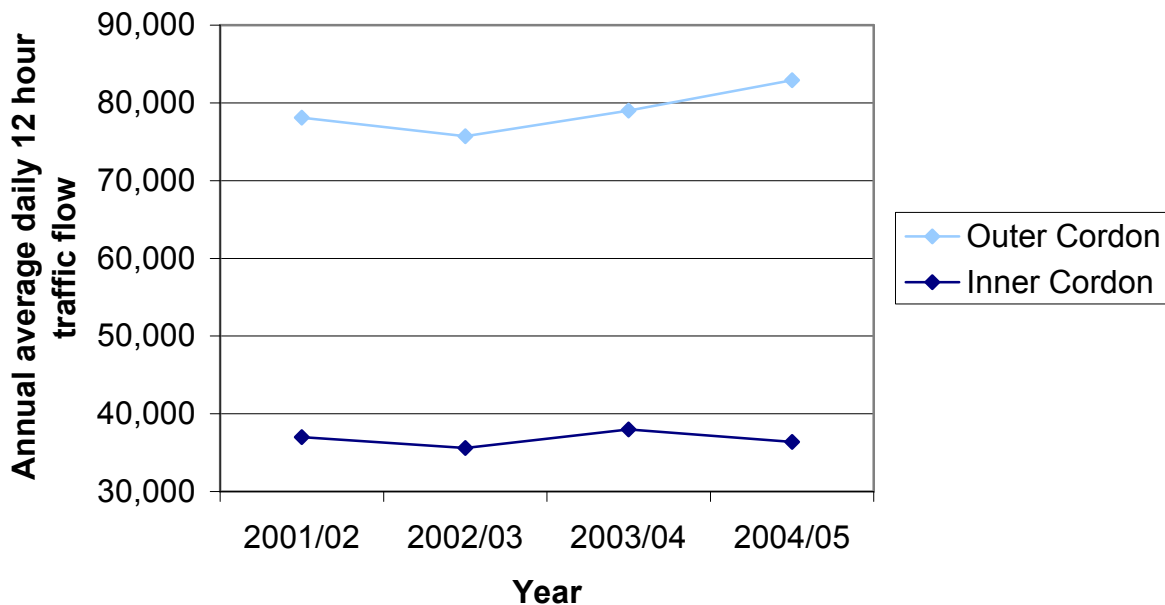


Figure 50: Traffic growth in Oxford, 2001/02 – 2004/05

**Commentary**

The targets referred to above relate to those set in the previous Oxfordshire Local Transport Plan 2001-2006 (LTP1). The current LTP, and the targets within it, are currently being reviewed, and new targets will be set out in the next full Local Transport Plan 2006-2011 (LTP2), due to be published March 2006.

<sup>1</sup> Automated traffic counters are located at six principal vehicular routes into the City centre, which are collectively referred to as the Oxford Inner Cordon.

<sup>2</sup> Automated traffic counters are located at twelve principle vehicular routes into Oxford close to the Oxford ring road, which are collectively referred to as the Oxford Outer Cordon.

Monitoring of indicators set out in the LTP1 has indicated that the County Council is currently not on track to meet these targets.

**On target? N/A**

No target appropriate, as this is contextual information.

## GLOSSARY

<b>Best Value Performance Indicator</b>	Data measuring local authority performance on a wide range of indicators used to allow comparisons between authorities
<b>Brownfield Land</b>	See Previously Developed Land
<b>Core Strategy</b>	A Development Plan Document that sets out the long-term spatial vision for the local planning authority's area, with objectives and policies to deliver that vision
<b>Development Plan</b>	An authority's development plan consists of the relevant Regional Spatial Strategy and the Development Plan Documents contained within its Local Development Framework
<b>Development Plan Document (DPD)</b>	Spatial planning documents that form part of the Local Development Framework. They are subject to independent examination and, together with the relevant Regional Spatial Strategy, forms the Development Plan for the local authority area
<b>Indicators</b>	A measure of variables over time which can be used to measure achievement of objectives
<b>Index of Multiple Deprivation 2004</b>	This is an index calculated nationally for all lower level Super Output Areas in the Country which combines data from the domains of income deprivation, employment deprivation, health deprivation and disability, education, skills and training deprivation, crime, barriers to housing and services and living environment
<b>Local Development Document (LDD)</b>	The documents which (taken as a whole) set out the City Council's policies relating to the development and use of land in Oxford.
<b>Local Development Framework (LDF)</b>	Introduced by the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 as the replacement for Local Plans. It is the term to describe the whole portfolio of planning policy documents (Local Development Documents) setting out the planning strategy and policies for the area. It consists of Development Plan Documents, Supplementary Planning Documents, a Statement of Community Involvement, the Local Development Scheme and Annual Monitoring Reports.
<b>Local Development Scheme (LDS)</b>	A project plan which outlines every Local Development Document that the City Council intends to produce over the next three years along with timetables for their preparation. The Local Development Scheme will be reviewed annually
<b>Local Plan</b>	A Local Plan sets out planning policies and allocations of land for development. It sets out where different types of development, from housing to shops and offices, that could be built during the plan period. Following the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act (2004) they have been superseded by Local Development Frameworks
<b>Local Transport Plan (LTP)</b>	A statutory plan produced by the local highways authority (Oxfordshire County Council) setting out the plans for transport for the next 5 years
<b>Major applications</b>	Major applications are defined in the General Development Procedure Order 1995 as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• a residential development of 10 or more dwellings;</li><li>• residential development on a site of 0.5ha or more;</li><li>• development involving a building(s) with a floorspace of 1,000 sq metres or more;</li></ul>

- any other development on a site of 1 hectare or more.

<b>Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act (2004)</b>	Introduced significant changes to the plan making process at all levels
<b>Previously Developed Land (PDL)</b>	Land which is or was occupied by a permanent structure (excluding agriculture or forestry buildings). The definition covers the curtilage of the development.
<b>Primary Shopping Frontage</b>	This relates solely to the City Centre. It aims to ensure the percentage of Class A1 (retail) units remains above 75%.
<b>Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS)</b>	These are to be prepared by Regional Planning Bodies, and set out the region's strategic policies in relation to the development and use of land and form part of the statutory development plan. For the South East region the RSS will be the South East Plan
<b>Secondary Shopping Frontage</b>	These relate to the City centre and parts of the Cowley Road and St. Clements. Secondary Shopping Frontages ensure a predominance of Class A1 (retail) uses, but allows for other Class A uses. A small proportion of other uses is possible on their merits. Residential use is not an acceptable use at ground-floor level in the Secondary Shopping Frontages.
<b>Sites of Local Importance for Nature Conservation (SLINC)</b>	A site containing important habitats, plants and animals in the context of Oxford.
<b>Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)</b>	Areas identified by English Nature as being of special interest for their ecological or geological features.
<b>South East England Development Agency (SEEDA)</b>	Is the Regional Development Agency for the South East, is responsible for the sustainable economic development and regeneration of the region. It is a business led organisation, with some government funding and is accountable to Government
<b>South East England Regional Assembly (SEERA)</b>	A representative body, comprising 111 members including elected councillors, nominated by the region's local authorities. There are also regional representatives chosen by town and parish councils, voluntary sector, environmental groups, business and economic partnerships, education and cultural networks and faith communities
<b>South East Plan (SEP)</b>	The SEP is the <i>Regional Spatial Strategy</i> for this region and, once adopted, will replace existing regional guidance set out in Regional Planning Guidance Note 9 (RPG9). It is produced by SEERA and sets out a spatial framework of strategic policies that will promote an integrated, co-ordinated and a more sustainable approach to development in the region up to 2026
<b>Special Areas of Conservation</b>	These consist of areas that are vitally important for nature conservation and have been identified as containing the best examples of habitats and species under the European Habitats Directive 1992.
<b>Super Output Area</b>	The Office for National Statistics (ONS) are devising a new layered geography for Neighbourhood Statistics. The smallest areas are Output Areas created for the 2001 Census. The largest areas are local authority districts. Between these layers will be three intermediate

layers, called Super Output Areas. 2001 Census information is available at these levels and 2004 indices of deprivation are based on the lowest level SOAs. These have a minimum population size of 1,000 persons (1,500 average). They are designed to replace electoral wards as the standard geography for the collection and dissemination of small area statistics, but they will be of a much more consistent size and will not be subject to as frequent a change of boundary.

**Supplementary  
Planning  
Documents (SPDs)**

A type of Local Development Document that supplements and elaborates on policies and proposals in Development Plan Documents. It does not form part of the Development Plan and is not subject to independent examination

<b>A1</b>	<b>Shops</b>	Shops, retail, warehouses, hairdressers, undertakers, travel and ticket agencies, post offices, dry cleaners, internet cafes, etc. Pet shops, cat-meat shops, tripe shops, sandwich bars Showrooms, domestic hire shops, funeral directors.
<b>A2</b>	<b>Financial &amp; Professional Services</b>	Banks, building societies, estate and employment agencies. Professional and financial services, betting offices.
<b>A3</b>	<b>Restaurants &amp; Cafes</b>	Restaurants, snack bars, cafes.
<b>A4</b>	<b>Drinking Establishments</b>	Pubs and bars.
<b>A5</b>	<b>Hot Food Take- Aways</b>	Take-Aways.
<b>B1</b>	<b>Business</b>	(a) Offices, not within A2 (b) Research and development, studios, laboratories, high tech (c) Light Industry
<b>B2</b>	<b>General Industry</b>	General industry
<b>B8</b>	<b>Storage &amp; Distribution</b>	Wholesale warehouse, distribution centre, repositories.
<b>C1</b>	<b>Hotels</b>	Hotels, boarding and guest houses
<b>C2</b>	<b>Residential Institutions</b>	Residential schools and colleges Hospitals and convalescent/nursing homes
<b>C3</b>	<b>Dwelling houses</b>	Dwellings, small businesses at home, communal housing of elderly and handicapped.
<b>D1</b>	<b>Non-residential Institutions</b>	Places of worship, church halls. Clinics, health centres, crèches, day nurseries, consulting rooms Museums, public halls, libraries, art galleries, exhibition halls. Non-residential education and training centres.
<b>D2</b>	<b>Assembly &amp; Leisure</b>	Cinemas, music and concert halls. Dance, sports halls, swimming baths, skating rinks, gymnasiums. Other indoor and outdoor sports and leisure uses, bingo halls, casinos.

**Sui Generis**

A land use which does not fall into one of the above specific land use categories. Examples of Sui Generis land uses may include shops selling and/or displaying motor vehicles, retail warehouse clubs, laundrettes, taxi or vehicle hire businesses, amusement centres, petrol filling stations, hostels, theatres or nightclubs.

## Appendix 1

Indicator 1 - Housing Trajectory Raw Data (for more information on the data, refer to Oxford's Urban Potential Study 2005)

	Oxford Local Plan 1991-2001	Oxford Local Plan 2001-2016														
		Short term					Medium term					Long term				
		2000/01	2001/02	2002/03	2003/04	2004/05	2005/06	2006/07	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15
Completions					Projections											
<b>Actual completions</b>	<b>369</b>	<b>439</b>	<b>267</b>	<b>578</b>	<b>718</b>											
Commitments (1,897)						173	173	173	173	173	172	172	172	172	172	172
Allocated sites						311	142	142	142	141	141	32	32	31	31	31
Large windfalls						20	20	20	20	20	20	20	20	20	20	20
Small windfall sites						175	175	175	175	175	175	175	175	175	175	175
<b>Projected annual completions</b>						<b>679</b>	<b>510</b>	<b>510</b>	<b>510</b>	<b>509</b>	<b>508</b>	<b>399</b>	<b>399</b>	<b>398</b>	<b>398</b>	<b>398</b>
March 2005: Projected cumulative completions	846	439	706	1284	2002	2681	3191	3700	4210	4719	5227	5626	6025	6424	6822	7220
<b>Structure Plan allocation annualised</b>	<b>367</b>	<b>433</b>	<b>433</b>	<b>433</b>	<b>433</b>	<b>433</b>	<b>433</b>	<b>433</b>	<b>433</b>	<b>433</b>	<b>433</b>	<b>433</b>	<b>433</b>	<b>433</b>	<b>433</b>	<b>433</b>
March 2005: 2016 SP cumulative requirement	674	433	867	1300	1733	2167	2600	3033	3467	3900	4333	4767	5200	5633	6067	6500
<b>Monitor: How many dwellings Oxford City Council is ahead or behind</b>	<b>172</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>-161</b>	<b>-16</b>	<b>269</b>	<b>514</b>	<b>591</b>	<b>667</b>	<b>744</b>	<b>819</b>	<b>894</b>	<b>860</b>	<b>825</b>	<b>790</b>	<b>755</b>	<b>720</b>
<b>Manage: Indicative annual completions needed to meet target</b>	<b>195</b>	<b>428</b>	<b>594</b>	<b>449</b>	<b>165</b>	<b>-81</b>	<b>-157</b>	<b>-234</b>	<b>-310</b>	<b>-386</b>	<b>-461</b>	<b>-426</b>	<b>-392</b>	<b>-357</b>	<b>-322</b>	<b>-287</b>

Note: Figure in bold are incorporated within figures 2 and 3



## **Appendix 2**

### **GREEN FLAG AWARD STATUS**

The key criteria for Green Flag Award status are given below:

#### **1. A Welcoming Place**

The overall impressions for any member of the community approaching and entering the park or green space should be positive and inviting, regardless of the purpose for which they are visiting. Features of particular importance are:

- Good and safe access;
- Good signage to and in the park or green space;
- Equal access for all members of the community.

#### **2. Healthy, Safe, and Secure**

The park or green space must be a healthy, safe and secure place for all members of the community to use. Relevant issues must be addressed in management plans and implemented on the ground. New issues that arise must be addressed promptly and appropriately. Particularly important issues are:

- Equipment and facilities must be safe to use;
- The park or green space must be a secure place for all members of the community to use or traverse;
- Dog fouling must be adequately addressed;
- Health & Safety policies should be in place, in practice and regularly reviewed;
- Toilets, drinking water, first aid, public telephones and emergency equipment where relevant (e.g. life belts by water) should be available in or near the park or green space, and clearly sign posted.

#### **3. Clean and Well Maintained**

For aesthetic as well as Health and Safety reasons, issues of cleanliness and maintenance must be adequately addressed, in particular:

- Litter and other waste management issues must be adequately addressed;
- Grounds, buildings, equipment and other features must be well maintained;
- A policy on litter, vandalism and maintenance should be in place, in practice and regularly reviewed.

#### **4. Sustainability**

Methods used in maintaining the park or green space and its facilities should be environmentally sound, relying on best practices available according to current knowledge. Management should be aware of the range of techniques available to them, and demonstrate that informed choices have been made and are regularly reviewed. Specifically:

- An environmental policy or charter and management strategy should be in place, in practice and regularly reviewed;
- Pesticide use should be minimised and justified;
- Horticultural peat use should be eliminated;
- Waste plant material in the park or green space should be recycled;

- High horticultural and arboricultural standards should be demonstrated;
- Energy conservation, pollution reduction, waste recycling, and resource conservation measures should be used.

## **5. Conservation and Heritage**

Particular attention should be paid to the conservation and appropriate management of:

- Natural features, wildlife and fauna;
- Landscape features;
- Buildings and structural features.

These features should serve their function well without placing undue pressure on the surrounding environment.

## **6. Community Involvement**

Management should actively pursue the involvement of members of the community who represent as many park or green space user groups as possible. Management should be able to demonstrate:

- Knowledge of user community and levels and patterns of use;
- Evidence of community involvement in management and/or developments and results achieved;
- Appropriate levels of provision of recreational facilities for all sectors of the community.

## **7. Marketing**

- Marketing strategy in place, in practice and regularly reviewed;
- Good provision of information to users, e.g. about management strategies, activities, features, ways to get involved;
- Promotion of the park or green space as a community resource.

## **8. Management**

A Green Flag Award application must have a management plan or strategy in place which reflects the aspirations of Local Agenda 21 and clearly and adequately addresses all the above criteria and any other relevant aspects of the park or green space's management. The plan must be actively implemented and regularly reviewed. Financially sound management of the park or green space must also be demonstrated.

## Appendix 3

<b>Indicator 34 (Contextual)</b>	<b>To assess the richness of local biodiversity and the impact of habitat enhancement measures by monitoring:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The distribution and status of water voles;</li><li>• The condition of Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs);</li><li>• The distribution and status of farmland birds;</li><li>• Distribution and status of garden butterflies.</li></ul>
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Brief details about the type of wildlife included in this contextual indicator; their present status; threats and opportunities and the relation of the indicator to local authority activity are given below.

### 1. DISTRIBUTION AND STATUS OF WATER VOLES

Water Voles, until fairly recently a common and widespread species in the UK, are the fastest declining mammal in the UK. The Thames area is an important historic stronghold for this species.

In 1989-1990 a national survey found water voles at 73.5% of all sites surveyed in the Thames Region (the second highest frequency of occurrence in the Country). In the 1996-1998 survey water voles were found at only 24% of sites surveyed and recent evidence suggests that they are still declining in the UK.

The decline of this river-bank species is related to habitat loss and change with intensification of agriculture, exacerbated by predation from the non-native American Mink. Change in bank-side management and control of the Mink population can help the Water Vole to recover.

Local Authorities can influence the fate of this species through:

- Development control decisions relating to watercourses and adjacent land;
- Local Authority management of bank-side vegetation through housing estates, playing fields, parks, nature areas etc.;
- Funding and other support for advisory and habitat management projects relating to Water Voles (e.g. Berkshire Buckinghamshire and Oxfordshire Wildlife Trust);
- Promotion and publicity for good bank-side management.

The local Wildlife Trust – BBOWT, organise voluntary recording of water voles in Berkshire, Buckinghamshire and Oxfordshire and there is a fairly comprehensive, regularly updated dataset. Copies of this data are held by TVERC who also collate records of Water Voles from a number of other sources. Water vole monitoring by BBOWT is dependent on availability of funding and there should be some contingency to allow for lack of funding or change in BBOWT project priorities.

## 2. CONDITION OF SSSIs

SSSIs are compartmentalised into habitat units and the condition of each unit is monitored regularly (every 3-6 years). The present status of SSSI units is as follows (figures from July 2005 English Nature data version):

Table One - % SSSI units in each condition state

South East	Oxfordshire	Berkshire	
45%	58%	51%	In favourable condition
18%	6%	5%	In unfavourable and declining condition
18%	12%	21%	In unfavourable condition with no change
19%	24%	23%	In unfavourable but recovering condition
0.22%	0%	0%	Destroyed
0.41%	0%	0%	Part destroyed

NB the figures in Table One show % of units in each condition state. This is given for context only and has been used because it is quick and easy to calculate. The actual statistic that will be supplied for the AMR will be hectares of SSSI in each condition state.

The major threat to SSSI condition is likely to be land management that is not sympathetic to biodiversity. Development on or adjacent to SSSIs could have an adverse effect.

English Nature are working with land owners to bring SSSI land into sympathetic management and some SSSIs in Oxford are managed by the City Council.

- Development control decisions relating to SSSIs, or adjacent land;
- Local Authority management of SSSI land;
- Funding and other support for other groups advising on land management or directly managing SSSI land;
- Promotion of good land management.

SSSIs are regularly and systematically monitored by English Nature staff and others and this data is freely available. The English Nature data need some manipulation to accurately reflect the hectares of SSSI in each County and District / Unitary because the sites fall across local authority boundaries. The monitoring cycle is 3-6 years.

### 3 DISTRIBUTION AND STATUS OF FARMLAND BIRDS

A recent European report<sup>1</sup> states that common farmland birds have declined sharply in number over the last 25 years. In contrast, common generalist birds have increased. Although Oxford is predominantly an urban area, significant populations of farmland birds are found in the City, owing to the presence of large areas of unimproved meadowland.

The decline in farmland birds is largely driven by changing agricultural methods, especially increased specialisation and intensification.

- Development control decisions relating to important bird sites or adjacent land;
- Funding and other support for other groups advising on land management or directly managing land;
- Promotion of good land management.

A great deal of bird data is systematically collected across the UK every year by ornithologists and some of this data is suitable for monitoring purposes. There are County and National breeding bird surveys planned over the next few years in Berkshire and Oxfordshire and these should provide useful data.

### 4 DISTRIBUTION AND STATUS OF GARDEN BUTTERFLIES

Around a third of the butterfly species found in the UK are regular visitors to gardens, and additional species can sometimes be found in gardens where conditions are favourable. The butterflies that visit our gardens are generally the more widespread and common species. In many cases their presence in gardens reflects the value and extent of wildlife habitats in the vicinity.

These butterflies do not all have the same status – for instance, some are spreading and others declining. There is evidence that some species are spreading northwards and that this is in reaction to climate change. Others may still be present in their traditional areas (the distribution remains the same) but are declining in numbers (populations are getting smaller).

Many people are starting to manage their own gardens for wildlife and this could be good news for butterflies. Changes in grassland management of parks, road verges, field margins, churchyards, recreation sites, newly developed sites and other green areas could also have a positive effect on 'garden butterflies'.

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<sup>1</sup> 8 June 2005 from the Pan-European Common Bird Monitoring (PECBM) scheme – a partnership involving the European Bird Census Council, the RSPB, Birdlife international and Statistics Netherlands that aims to deliver policy relevant biodiversity indicators for Europe.

For many people, garden butterflies (and birds) are their most regular contact with wildlife and this indicator is likely to be of interest to many. It is also useful as a measure of biodiversity in the more urban areas.

- Local authority management of land including grass cutting, hedge trimming, management of recreation areas, road verges, nature areas, parks etc.;
- Development control decisions relating to more houses with fewer / smaller gardens and opportunities to encourage sympathetic design and landscaping of business premises, new housing and new local parks and other recreational areas;
- Promotion of gardening for wildlife, composting schemes, safe use of garden chemicals, native species and wildlife planting on development sites;
- Funding and other support for advisory and direct work to manage gardens and other green spaces for wildlife.

A great number of people record butterflies in the UK and generate a wealth of data for use by conservationists and others.

One very significant potential source of data is the Butterflies for the New Millennium Project. This is a national recording project that generates data year by year. The project is based on a concern for butterflies and their habitats and the need for up-to-date information on all species as many continue to decline. It is managed in the UK by Butterfly Conservation and the Biological Records Centre through a sub-regional network of local recorders and data managers.