

Annual Monitoring Report 2012

Employment, Town Centres and the Environment

West Berkshire Local Plan



West Berkshire
COUNCIL

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Executive Summary

Preparation of the Local Plan

The Annual Monitoring Report (AMR) monitors and reviews the progress made with the preparation of the Local Plan and the extent to which planning policies are being successfully implemented. This report monitors the business development and environment policies within the development plan, and follows an earlier report which covered housing policies.

The Development Plan for West Berkshire comprises the West Berkshire Core Strategy, adopted in July 2012, the Saved Policies of the West Berkshire District Local Plan (WBDLP) adopted in June 2002, the Replacement Minerals Local Plan for Berkshire (RMLP) incorporating alterations adopted December 1997 and May 2001 and the Waste Local Plan for Berkshire (WLP) adopted December 1998. The Core Strategy replaced a number of policies in the WBDLP.

The Local Development Scheme (LDS) sets out the timetable for Local Plan preparation. The AMR reports on progress towards meeting the timetable in the LDS. The current LDS was adopted by the Council in May 2012.

Progress on the Local Plan has been as follows:-

- **The Statement of Community Involvement (SCI)** was submitted to the Secretary of State in August 2005 as scheduled. Objections were addressed at examination by written representations and the Inspector's Report was received in May 2006. The SCI was adopted in July 2006.
- **The West Berkshire Core Strategy DPD** (the Core Strategy) was submitted to the Secretary of State on 9 July 2010 in accordance with the revised 2010 LDS. The Core Strategy hearings began on 2 November 2010 and initially ran for 8 days. The Examination was suspended on 11 November 2010 to enable the Council to undertake further work. The examination process reopened on 2 May 2011 and the hearing sessions resumed on 27 June 2011. At the end of the resumed hearings the Council asked for another suspension to the examination to enable it to consider matters that had arisen from the discussions and undertake further work. The examination was suspended until February 2012 and further hearings were held in May 2012. The Inspector's Report was received on 3 July 2012 and the Core Strategy adopted by the Council on 16 July 2012.
- **Site Allocations and Delivery DPD.** Work on the Site Allocations and Delivery DPD is commencing in 2013.

Two Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs) have been prepared:

- The Market Street Urban Village Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) was adopted in June 2005.
- Quality Design- West Berkshire SPD was published for consultation in October 2005 and adopted by the Council in June 2006.

Three SPDs are in production:

- Sandford Park Newbury, an SPD to guide a planning application for this strategic site allocated in the Core Strategy.
- Institute for Animal Health Site, Compton, an SPD to guide potential redevelopment.
- Delivering Investment from Sustainable Development, an update of the current Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG).

Monitoring the Business Development, Town Centre and Environment Elements of the Local Plan 2011/12

This section of the AMR examines the success of policies in meeting business development, town centre and environment objectives and targets, under a number of topic headings. Contextual indicators describing the wider social, environmental and economic background are presented, together with indicators which measure quantifiable activities directly related to the implementation of planning policies.

Executive Summary

Main highlights of the monitoring exercise :-

Business Development – A total of 30,422 sq m of gross employment floorspace was developed in 2011/12, less than in 2010/11 (33,043 sq m). Most of the employment development was for B1 uses (business). A total of 260,428 sq m gross floorspace for B class uses remain outstanding across the District.

Town Centres – Completed retail development across West Berkshire was significantly higher than previous years with a total of 32,869 sqm of gross internal floorspace completed. This is a result of the completion of the Parkway development in Newbury. This has significantly enhanced the vitality of Newbury Town Centre.

Environment - There has been no change in the area of sites of international and national biodiversity importance over the last eight years.

Background

1.1 The planning system has changed significantly in the last year. A fundamental change has been the publication of the [National Planning Policy Framework](#) (NPPF), which came into force on 27 March 2012 and replaced previous Planning Policy Statements and Planning Policy Guidance. The [Localism Act](#) came into force in 2011, and Part 6 (section 113) amended the [Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004](#) in respect of the requirements for producing Annual Monitoring Reports. Part 8 of the [Town and Country Planning \(Local Planning\) \(England\) Regulations 2012](#) sets out details of the requirements for the content of 'authorities' monitoring reports. This report has been produced in light of these changes.

1.2 The Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act (as amended) requires *"every local planning authority to prepare reports containing (a) the implementation of the local development scheme; (b) the extent to which policies set out in the local development documents are being achieved."*

1.3 This monitoring report covers the period of 12 months from the end of the last Annual Monitoring Report (AMR), i.e. 1 April 2011 to 31 March 2012, and is the eighth to have been produced by West Berkshire Council. The AMR monitors the saved policies of the West Berkshire District Local Plan as well as the policies in the Core Strategy, which was adopted in July 2012.

Planning Context

1.4 The Development Plan for West Berkshire comprises the South East Plan adopted in May 2009, the West Berkshire Core Strategy, adopted in July 2012, the West Berkshire District Local Plan (WBDLP) adopted June 2002 (Saved Policies), together with the Replacement Minerals Local Plan for Berkshire, incorporating alterations adopted December 1997 and May 2001 and the Waste Local Plan for Berkshire adopted December 1998.

1.5 The WBDLP is being replaced in stages by Development Plan Documents within the new Local Plan. The programme for production of this is set out in the Local Development Scheme (LDS). The West Berkshire Core Strategy, sets out the strategic approach to spatial planning in the District. Under the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, policies in existing Development Plans stayed into effect until 27 September 2007. The Council requested an extension to a number of Local Plan policies and these were saved by the Secretary of State. Some of these saved policies were superseded in July 2012 on adoption of the Core Strategy.

1.6 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) was published in March 2012. This sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied. It provides a framework within which local people and their councils can produce their own distinctive local and neighbourhood plans, which reflect the needs and priorities of their communities. The NPPF replaced the Planning Policy Statements (PPS) and Planning Policy Guidance (PPG) documents.

Key Characteristics of West Berkshire

1.7 West Berkshire is an administrative area of 704 square kilometres containing extensive rural areas. There are two main urban areas, the towns of Newbury and Thatcham and the urban areas of Tilehurst, Purley-on-Thames and Calcot to the west of Reading. Rural West Berkshire is a large and diverse area which contains a number of larger towns and villages, including Hungerford, Lambourn and Kintbury in the west and Pangbourne, Theale, Burghfield Common and Mortimer to the east. There are a large number of smaller village communities throughout the area.

1.8 The District occupies a strategic position where the east-west M4 corridor intersects the north-south route of the A34. There are mainline railway services to London and good road connections to nearby larger centres such as Reading, Oxford, Swindon and Basingstoke. These factors, combined with the high quality urban and rural environment within the District, have contributed to a thriving economy, making the area a popular place to live and work.

1.9 The general high standard of living in the District is reflected in many social and economic indicators. Levels of economic activity are higher than the national average. People in West Berkshire enjoy better health and lower crime rates than the national average. Levels of educational attainment are high. The high level of affluence in the area is however tempered by pockets of deprivation and exclusion in both urban and rural areas.

1 Introduction

Map 1.1 West Berkshire



1.10 Employment provision is diverse. West Berkshire has a strong industrial base, characterised by new technology industries with a strong service sector and several manufacturing and distribution firms. The areas that have the highest concentrations of employment are Newbury Town Centre and the industrial areas and business parks in the east of Newbury, the business parks at Theale, Colthrop industrial area east of Thatcham and the Atomic Weapons Establishments at Aldermaston and Burghfield.

1.11 House prices in West Berkshire are high and the provision of affordable housing to meet local needs, particularly for young people and key workers, is one of the Council's priorities.

1.12 74% of the District is part of the North Wessex Downs AONB which is characterised by the quality of its chalk landscape which ranges from remote open downland, dramatic skyline escarpments, contrasting wooded downland, and the small scale intimate settled river valleys of the Lambourn and Pang. Outside the AONB, the River Kennet, from Newbury to Reading, lies within a distinctive broad corridor of an open lowland landscape characterised by a variety of wetland habitats including wet meadow, reed bed, and flooded gravel workings. Further south there are small areas of remnant heath.

1.13 There are many important areas of biodiversity and geodiversity, including 3 internationally designated Special Areas of Conservation (SACs), 51 nationally important Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), 3 Local Nature Reserves and about 500 Local Wildlife Sites and Local Geological Sites. There is also a large number of significant heritage assets, including nearly 1900 listed buildings, 53 Conservation Areas, 13 Historic Parks and Gardens, approximately 90 Scheduled Ancient Monuments and 1 Registered Battlefield.

Key Issues Facing West Berkshire

1.14 Research and evidence base work, including public consultation and the Sustainability Appraisal, has highlighted a number of key issues affecting West Berkshire which have informed the preparation of the Core Strategy.

- **The Economic Downturn.** Conditions are currently difficult for businesses, with issues including falls in profit margins and reduced access to credit. This is leading to redundancies or recruitment freezes. Given that the Core Strategy is a long term plan, providing the flexibility of conditions to assist the economy in recovery will be essential.

Introduction 1

- **Access to Housing.** Despite the current economic downturn, house prices in the District remain high, and have fallen less than many surrounding areas. It therefore remains difficult for some to access housing. The need for affordable housing remains high in the District.
- **Changing Demographics.** Government statistics indicate that the population of the District is projected to rise to 168,200 by 2026 and the population of over 65's is projected to grow significantly during the same period. Demographic changes will have implications for the type and size of housing required. ⁽¹⁾
- **Conserving and enhancing environmental character.** Conserving and enhancing the distinctive local character of both the natural and built environment of the District will be a key issue. The high quality, diverse landscape character with its rich cultural and natural heritage contributes to the overall quality of life of everyone in the District and using this as a positive tool in accommodating necessary change is an important consideration for the Core Strategy.
- **Climate Change.** There is a need to continue to be proactive in responding to the threat of climate change by including a robust set of policies to achieve carbon emission targets. We must also plan for incorporating more sustainable designs to mitigate against the physical, social and economic impacts of flooding.
- **Provision of Infrastructure and Facilities.** Consultation has highlighted a concern that community infrastructure including open space, education provision, transport links and other services should be provided with new development.
- **Resource use.** Lifestyle and consumption trends have generally resulted in increased demands on energy and material resources. There is a need to actively plan for waste minimisation and recycling, water use efficiency and energy efficiency through the use of renewables. These are areas where spatial planning can have a direct role.
- **Sustainable transport.** There is a challenge to provide access to sustainable modes of transport in a District where development and the population are dispersed and there is a high level of car ownership.

Duty to Cooperate

1.15 Section 110 of the Localism Act sets out a general duty to cooperate and came into force on 15 November 2011. This requires the local planning authority to cooperate with neighbouring authorities in the preparation of development plan documents. Prior to this duty coming into force it was already part of national policy that the local planning authority would consider the wider area and that there would be cross-boundary consultation. The Core Strategy was prepared before the duty to cooperate came into effect but its preparation required cooperation with neighbouring authorities and other organisations and the plan needed to demonstrate that it was coherent with the core strategies prepared by neighbouring authorities, where cross boundary issues were relevant.

1.16 West Berkshire Council has engaged constructively, actively and on an ongoing basis with other local planning authorities in the plan making process. It has engaged with a wide range of statutory and other consultees which include the Highways Agency, Natural England, English Heritage and parish and town councils within and adjoining West Berkshire. The duty to cooperate is effectively replacing the strategic planning previously carried out in the preparation of the RSS (the South East Plan). The Council and all the neighbouring authorities were fully involved during the preparation of the South East Plan and have mechanisms in place for joint working in the future.

1.17 The Core Strategy sets out that the Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) will be reviewed in cooperation with neighbouring authorities. The Council is already in discussions with neighbouring authorities with regard to cooperation on reviews of the evidence base in the light of the NPPF and the duty to cooperate.

1.18 Berkshire has had, and continues to have, a strong tradition of cooperation on strategic planning, initially through the joint Structure Plan process, and later through a joint approach in contributing to the preparation of the

1.19 South East Plan. Good working relationships at officer level have been established through Planning Officer Groups, including the Berkshire Heads of Planning (BHoP) and the Berkshire Development Plan Group (DPG). Work is underway by DPG to establish an agreed, practical and effective structure and processes for joint working on common planning issues, taking account of the NPPF guidance on how the duty will be complied with.

1 Introduction

Monitoring Development Plan Policies

1.20 Monitoring is an essential part of the continuous planning process. Monitoring enables the examination of trends and comparison against existing targets and policies, indicating where a review of these policies may be needed.

1.21 The previous core output indicators were designed to achieve a consistent approach to data collection across the regional and local levels, covering a number of national planning policy and sustainable development objectives appropriate to local and regional policy. The core output indicators are no longer required to be reported to Government. The Council has, however, continued to monitor most of these indicators as they are relevant to monitoring the policies in the West Berkshire Local Plan . They are no longer identified as core output indicators.

1.22 Monitoring follows an objectives- policies - targets - indicators approach. Where appropriate, strategic aims from the Sustainable Community Strategy update, published in 2011 ⁽²⁾, as well as the emerging Core Strategy objectives and policies and saved Local Plan policies are presented. Targets, whether local, regional or national, are given where possible and the indicator used to evaluate the policy effectiveness. Actions required, whether in terms of additional monitoring requirements or review of policies, are outlined, together with the significant sustainability effects of the policies.

Local Development Scheme Implementation 2

The Local Development Scheme (LDS)

2.1 The first LDS was submitted in March 2005 and came into effect on 11 April 2005. It has been revised since, in 2010 and 2012. The current LDS was published in May 2012.

Statement of Community Involvement (SCI)

2.2 Production of the Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) progressed as scheduled in the original 2005 LDS, with submission to the Secretary of State in August 2005. Objections were addressed at examination by written representations and the Inspector's Report was received on 9 May 2006, two months later than scheduled in the 2005 LDS. The SCI was adopted by the Council on 27 July 2006.

West Berkshire Core Strategy DPD

2.3 The West Berkshire Core Strategy DPD (the Core Strategy) was submitted to the Secretary of State on 9 July 2010 in accordance with the revised 2010 LDS. The Core Strategy hearings began on 2nd November 2010 and initially ran for 8 days. The Examination was suspended on 11th November 2010 to enable the Council to undertake further work. The examination process reopened on 2 May 2011 and the hearing sessions resumed on 27 June 2011. At the end of the resumed hearings the Council asked for another suspension to the examination to enable it to consider matters that had arisen from the discussions and undertake further work. The examination was suspended until February 2012 and further hearings were held in May 2012. The Inspector's Report was received on 3 July 2012 and the Core Strategy adopted by the Council on 16 July 2012, meeting the timetable in the 2012 LDS, which anticipated adoption in September 2012.

Site Allocations and Delivery DPD

2.4 Work on the Site Allocations and Delivery DPD was delayed by the extended Core Strategy Examination. Public participation in the preparation of this DPD will commence early in 2013.

Supplementary Planning Documents

2.5 Two Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs) have been prepared to date.

- **Market Street Urban Village SPD** was adopted in June 2005.
- **Quality Design – West Berkshire SPD** was published for consultation on 28 October 2005 and was adopted by the Council on 19 June 2006.

2.6 A further three SPDs are in preparation:

- **Sandleford Park Newbury**, an SPD to guide a planning application for this strategic site allocated in the Core Strategy.
- **Institute for Animal Health Site, Compton**, an SPD to guide potential redevelopment.
- **Delivering Investment from Sustainable Development**, an update of the current Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG).

Village and Town Design Statements

2.7 Since commencement of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act five Village and Town Design Statements, prepared in consultation with the local community, were adopted as non-statutory local authority approved guidance which is a 'material consideration' in the determination of planning applications. These were:

- Newbury Town Design Statement, adopted 19 April 2005
- Compton Village Design Statement, adopted 11 October 2005
- Pangbourne Village Design Statement, adopted 16 November 2005
- Brimpton Village Design Statement, adopted January 2007
- Stratfield Mortimer Village Design Statement, adopted November 2007

2.8 Since July 2008 the Council has adopted Design Statements through the community planning process rather than the formal planning process. Design Statements adopted through this process include:

- Streatley - Adopted 12 March 2009

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- Hamstead Marshall - Adopted 14 August 2009
- Stanford Dingley - Adopted 21 January 2010
- Burghfield - Adopted 24 August 2011

Business Development and Town Centres 3

Business Development

Context

3.1 West Berkshire shares in the overall affluence of the South East region. The District has a strong industrial base with new technology industries, a strong service sector and several manufacturing and distribution firms.

3.2 Table 3.1 presents indicators of economic activity in the District. Activity rates are higher than regional and national rates, while unemployment rates are lower than average. West Berkshire has a skilled labour force with 34.8% of working age population educated to HND, Degree and Higher Degree level, compared to 32.9% nationally⁽³⁾.

Table 3.1 Economic Activity

	West Berkshire	South East	GB
Economic Activity Rate (percentage of working age population in employment or unemployed)	81.9%	79.4%	76.5%
Unemployed (unemployed of working age as percentage of economically active)	4.7%	5.9%	8.1%
Job Seeker's Allowance Claimants (percentage of working age population as at October 2012)	1.7%	2.4%	3.7%

Source: Nomis Official Labour Market Statistics: annual population survey (April 2011 – March 2012)

Table 3.2 Business Development and Town Centres: Objectives, Indicators and Policies

<p>Sustainable Community Strategy Strategic Aims:</p> <p>Increase knowledge and skills in local businesses</p> <p>Increase the number of residents employed locally</p> <p>Increase the skills of local people</p> <p>Increase the economic prosperity of our Market Towns</p>		
<p>Local Plan Objectives:</p> <p>To provide for a range of sizes and types of employment land and premises in the right locations to respond to the forecast changes in economic activity, the location of new residential development and the specific needs of the rural economy, including the equestrian and horseracing industries.</p>		
Indicators	West Berkshire District Local Plan (Saved Policies)	West Berkshire Core Strategy Policies
<p>- Total amount of additional employment floorspace - by type</p> <p>- Total amount of outstanding commitments - by type</p>	<p>ECON.5: Town Centre Commercial Areas</p>	<p>ADPP2: Newbury</p> <p>ADPP3: Thatcham</p> <p>ADPP4: Eastern Area</p> <p>ADPP5: North Wessex Downs AONB</p> <p>ADPP6: The East Kennet Valley</p> <p>CS9: Location and type of business development</p>

3 Business Development and Town Centres

		<p>CS10: The rural economy</p> <p>CS11: Hierarchy of centres</p> <p>CS12: Equestrian/racehorse industry</p>
- Total amount of floorspace for 'town centre uses'	<p>ECON.5: Town Centre Commercial Areas</p> <p>SHOP.1: Non-retail Uses in Primary Shopping Frontages</p> <p>SHOP.3: Retail Areas and Retail Warehousing</p> <p>SHOP.5: The Encouragement of Local and Village Shops</p>	<p>ADPP2: Newbury</p> <p>ADPP3: Thatcham</p> <p>ADPP4: Eastern Area</p> <p>ADPP5: North Wessex Downs AONB</p> <p>ADPP6: The East Kennet Valley</p> <p>CS9: Location and type of business development</p> <p>CS10: The rural economy</p> <p>CS11: Hierarchy of centres</p>
- Amount of floorspace developed for employment by type, in employment or regeneration areas	<p>ECON.5: Town Centre Commercial Areas</p> <p>ECON.6: Future of the former Greenham Common Airbase</p>	<p>ADPP2: Newbury</p> <p>ADPP3: Thatcham</p> <p>ADPP4: Eastern Area</p> <p>ADPP5: North Wessex Downs AONB</p> <p>ADPP6: The East Kennet Valley</p> <p>CS9: Location and type of business development</p> <p>CS10: The rural economy</p> <p>CS11: Hierarchy of centres</p> <p>CS12: Equestrian/racehorse industry</p>
<p>- Losses of employment land in (i) employment / regeneration areas and (ii) local authority area.</p> <p>- Amount of employment land lost to residential development</p>		<p>ADPP2: Newbury</p> <p>ADPP3: Thatcham</p> <p>ADPP4: Eastern Area</p> <p>ADPP5: North Wessex Downs AONB</p> <p>ADPP6: The East Kennet Valley</p> <p>CS9: Location and type of business development</p> <p>CS10: The rural economy</p>

Business Development and Town Centres 3

		CS12: Equestrian/racehorse industry
- Amount of vacant retail units in town centres	ECON.5: Town Centre Commercial Areas SHOP.1: Non-retail Uses in Primary Shopping Frontages	ADPP2: Newbury ADPP3: Thatcham ADPP4: Eastern Area ADPP5: North Wessex Downs AONB ADPP6: The East Kennet Valley CS11: Hierarchy of centres

3 Business Development and Town Centres

Employment Completions and Commitments

Total amount of additional employment floorspace - by type

Total amount of outstanding commitments - by type

Table 3.3 Summary Table for Employment Completions and Commitments (square metres)

	B1a (Sqm)	B1b (Sqm)	B1c (Sqm)	B1 (Sqm)	B2 (Sqm)	B8 (Sqm)	Total (Sqm)
Gross completions	3,831	0	2,130	17,845	1,936	4,680	30,422
Net completions	1,132	0	1,696	11,254	1,936	3,182	19,200
Outstanding (softs) in sqm	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Gross outstanding (hards) in sqm	39,242	22,787	29,359	68,341	34,000	66,709	260,438

Source: *Planning Commitments for Employment Uses, WBC 2012*

Commentary

3.3 The table above and those throughout this section outline the breakdown for offices (B1a), research and development (B1b) and light industrial (B1c), along with general industry (B2) and storage and distribution (B8). In addition the breakdown of the B1 floorspace shows those sites which are defined on the planning application only as business use (B1).

3.4 Table 3.3 illustrates the total amount and type of completed employment floorspace and the total amount and type of outstanding commitments. The amount of employment floorspace completed in 2011/12 is less than that last year with 30,422 sqm (gross) internal employment floorspace developed this year compared to 33,043 sqm last year. Gross outstanding hard commitments for B1c use is significantly higher this year than last year. This is due to 26,574 sqm of development at AWE Burghfield. Appendix A sets out the total amount and type of completed employment floorspace since 2006/07 (the start of the Core Strategy plan period).

3.5 Table 3.3 also indicates approximately 260,438 sqm gross floorspace has already been committed to economic development (B class uses), all of which have been through hard commitments (those with planning permission).

Business Development and Town Centres 3

Total amount of additional employment floorspace - by type**Table 3.4 Floorspace developed for employment use (square metres – gross internal floorspace) 2011/12**

GROSS FLOORSPACE (SQ.M.) - Completed	B1a Offices	B1b R & D	B1c Light Ind	B1 Business	B2 General Ind	B8 Storage & Dist.	Total
Newbury Town Centre	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Newbury/Thatcham Area	3,237	0	1,224	10,023	814	3,011	18,309
Rest of West Berkshire	594	0	906	7,822	1,122	1,669	12,113
West Berkshire Total	3,831	0	2,130	17,845	1,936	4,680	30,422

Source: *Planning Commitments for Employment Uses, WBC 2012*

Commentary

3.6 Table 3.4 shows there were no completions within Newbury Town Centre in any of the sectors in the B-use class. Most of the employment floorspace completed in 2011/12 was within the Newbury/Thatcham area due to large completions for B1 uses at Hambridge Road. The market for B1a office space has started to pick up, with an increase in completions this year across the District compared to the last year. More detailed tables on employment completions are contained in Appendix A.

Employment Land Available**Sites defined and allocated in the Local Plan**

3.7 Table A.5 (Appendix A) lists the employment areas designated in the Local Plan. The total area of land within protected employment areas is 317.9 hectares. A further 54.4 hectares of land at the former Greenham Common Airbase is designated for industrial, distribution and storage uses, with some sporting and recreational use. Further details of outstanding commitments are shown in Table A.3 (Appendix A).

Sites for which planning permission has been granted but not yet completed**Table 3.5 Outstanding Commitments for Employment Use at March 2012**

GROSS FLOORSPACE - (sqm) Outstanding	B1a Offices	B1b R&D	B1c Light Ind	Business B1	B2 General Ind	B8 Storage & Dist.	Total
Newbury Town Centre	128	0	0	215	0	0	343
Newbury/Thatcham Area	16,688	0	309	37,581	500	57,740	123,676
Rest of West Berkshire	22,426	22,787	29,050	30,545	33,500	8,969	147,277
West Berkshire Total	39,242	22,787	29,359	68,341	34,000	66,709	260,438

Source: *Planning Commitments for Employment Uses, WBC 2012*.

Policy Effectiveness: There is no evidence to suggest that policies have been ineffective in encouraging a diverse employment base. There has been a decrease in B-use completions this year compared to last year, whilst outstanding commitments are high.

The Employment Land Assessment (2007) helps assess the future demand and supply of employment land across the District.

3 Business Development and Town Centres

Actions Required: The production of Development Plan Documents are required to continue the emphasis on priority for development on previously developed land and encourage a diverse economic base to meet existing and future requirements.

Significant Sustainability Effects: A strong diverse economy with a focus in the existing employment and urban areas is important for maintaining high and stable levels of economic growth and development. The emphasis on re-use of previously developed land will reduce the pressure for developing on greenfield sites and assist the revitalisation of built-up areas.

Amount of floorspace developed for employment by type, in employment or regeneration areas

Table 3.6 Floorspace developed for employment use in Protected Employment Areas 2011/12 (Gross sq.m)

	Internal floorspace - square metres	Percentage of the District total completed employment floorspace (by use class)
Business B1	10,023	56%
Offices B1(a)	3,518	92%
Research and Development B1(b)	0	0%
Light Industry B1(c)	1,224	57%
General Industrial B2	1,336	71%
Storage/ Distribution B8	3,363	72%
Total	19,494	64%

Source: *Planning Commitments for Employments Uses, WBC 2012*

Commentary

3.8 Table 3.6 shows the amount of employment floorspace developed within Protected Employment Areas as designated in the West Berkshire Local Plan. Details of these are included in Appendix A. The total percentage of economic development completed within Protected Employment Areas is significantly lower than last year, at 32%. Table 3.6 shows 57% of B1a completed floorspace and 71% of B2 floorspace was delivered within Protected Employment Areas.

Policy Effectiveness: The policy has allowed for some economic development, particularly B1b, outside of designated protected Employment Areas. Current policy remains largely effective in protecting such employment areas for employment uses.

Actions Required: The production of Development Plan Documents are required to continue the emphasis on priority for development on previously developed land and encourage a diverse economic base.

Significant Sustainability Effects: A focus on existing employment areas enables diversification in the local economic base within established areas.

Business Development and Town Centres 3

Losses of Employment Land

Losses of employment land in (i) employment / regeneration areas and (ii) local authority area.
Amount of employment land lost to residential development.

Table 3.7 Losses of Employment Land to Alternative Uses 2011/12

Area	Site	Existing Use Class	Lost Floorspace (sq m) (Net)
Losses to completed residential use			
Newbury Town Centre	18 Kings Road West	B1a	98
Newbury	6 Digby Croft, 6 Buckingham Road	B1a	257
Basildon	The Studio, The Grotto, Reading Road	B1a	147
Pangbourne	Fernbrook, The Square	B1a	363
Pangbourne	41 Reading Road	B1a	104
Total losses to completed residential use			969
Losses to completed alternative uses			
Hambridge Road / Hambridge Lane, Newbury	Unit 14, Bone Lane	B8	888
Hambridge Road / Hambridge Lane, Newbury	Unit 11, Newbury Trade Park	B1c	2,526
Total losses to completed alternative uses in Protected Employment Areas			3,414
Newbury	Ground Floor, The Barn, Enborne Court, Enborne Gate	B1a	151
Newbury	Rear of Clarendon House, 44 London Road	B1c	105
New Greenham Park	110 New Greenham Park	B1a	135
Mortimer	Unit 3, James Farm, Grazeley, Mortimer	B1a	142
Pangbourne	17 Reading Road	B1a	165
Thatcham	18-21 Church Gate	B1a	470
Total losses to completed alternative uses outside of Protected Employment Areas			1,168
Total losses to completed alternative uses			4,582
Total losses to residential use			969
Total completed losses to other uses			4,582
Total losses of employment floorspace across the District			5,551

Source: Planning Commitments for Employment Uses, WBC 2012

Commentary

3.9 The Core Strategy allows for alternative uses for employment sites, other than for the protected areas, subject to policy CS9. There have been some losses of employment land across the District, some to residential uses (969 sqm) but the majority have been to alternative uses (4,582 sqm).

3 Business Development and Town Centres

3.10 Within Newbury town centre a total of 98 sqm of B1a office space has been lost to residential. Outside of Newbury town centre a further 3,927 sqm of B uses have been lost to either residential or alternative uses within Newbury. This gives a total loss of B uses in Newbury of 4,025 sqm.

3.11 Overall, Table 3.7 depicts that over the last year a total of 5,551sqm of employment floorspace (B uses) has been lost to alternative uses across the District, including residential. Of this total 3,414sqm of B uses has been lost within Protected Employment Areas. It is important to note that these figures relate to completed losses of employment land.

Policy Effectiveness: Current policies have allowed the loss of some employment floorspace across the District and within Protected Employment Areas. Despite this the policies have been effective in retaining Protected Employment Areas for employment use, with only 3 completed losses to alternative uses within such areas. The Employment Land Assessment highlights the need to protect the District's quantity of employment land, particularly office space and provides a picture of future employment land supply and demand.

Actions Required: Production of Development Plan Documents to protect employment provision, particularly within town centres and facilitate the upgrading of lower quality office space.

Significant Sustainability Effects: Some development of employment land for other uses, including housing, may assist in revitalising urban areas and reducing the requirement for development on greenfield land.

Conversion of office accommodation in town centres has potential to harm the employment base of the town centre and undermine the requirement to ensure there is sufficient office accommodation to meet identified need.

Loss of employment in smaller settlements may have an impact on their sustainability, reducing local employment opportunities and diversity.

Business Development and Town Centres 3

Town Centres

Context

3.12 The Core Strategy identifies five town centres: the major town centre of Newbury, which is the principal shopping and leisure destination in the District, and the smaller town centres of Thatcham, Hungerford, Lambourn, Pangbourne and Theale. The Local Plan seeks to encourage mixed uses in town centres (within the defined town centre commercial boundary) and protect the vitality of the primary shopping areas. Core Strategy policy CS11 sets out a hierarchy of centres which defines each centre according to their scale, character and role within the District.

3.13 The West Berkshire Retail Study Update (February 2010) indicates that Newbury town centre is a relatively healthy and vibrant town centre. However, its role and status as a shopping location had seen a decline over recent years as competing nearby centres continue to attract significant investment and development. The completion of the Parkway scheme during this monitoring year has significantly boosted the retail offer within the town centre. In October 2003 the document 'Newbury 2025', setting out the long term vision for Newbury and its role in supporting the surrounding villages and rural area, was published. Elements of the Vision have been implemented and others are scheduled to take place.

Total amount of floorspace for 'town centre uses'

Table 3.8 Completed floorspace (gross & net) for town centre uses within i) town centre areas and ii) the local authority area.

		A1 (sqm)	A2 (sqm)	B1a (sqm)	D2 (sqm)	Total (sqm)
Newbury town centre	Gross	27,809	0	0	105	27,914
	Net	27,809	-381	-98	105	27,435
Hungerford town centre	Gross	0	0	0	0	0
	Net	0	0	0	0	0
Pangbourne district centre	Gross	0	0	0	0	0
	Net	0	0	-528	0	-528
Thatcham town centre	Gross	0	0	0	0	0
	Net	-111	-76	0	0	-187
Theale district centre	Gross	0	0	0	0	0
	Net	0	-145	0	0	-145
West Berkshire Town Centre Total	Gross	27,809	0	0	105	27,914
	Net	27,698	-602	-626	105	26,575
Newbury/Thatcham Area	Gross	4,902	0	3,237	994	9,133
	Net	4,902	0	2,224	-3,344	3,782
Rest West Berkshire	Gross	158	82	594	303	1,137
	Net	-228	82	-466	303	-309
West Berkshire Total Completions	Gross	32,869	82	3,831	1,402	38,184
	Net	32,372	-520	1,132	-2,936	30,048
Percentage completed in town centres	Gross	85%	0%	0%	7%	-

3 Business Development and Town Centres

Source: Planning Commitments for Employment Uses, WBC 2012

Commentary

3.14 Retail developments across West Berkshire in 2011/12 have seen a significant increase on that of last year, with a total of 32,869 sq metres of gross internal floorspace completed, compared to 2,908 sq metres last year. Of the 30,869 sq metres completed for retail use, 85% was completed in town centres. The majority of this was due to the completion of the Parkway development, which included 27,428 sq metres of retail and office floorspace.

3.15 In 2011/12, there has been a total of 1,402 sq metres of gross internal floorspace completed for leisure uses within the District.

3.16 The table below sets out the level of development activity within Newbury town centre since the start of the Core Strategy plan period (2006/07 - 2011/12) for town centre uses.

Table 3.9 Completed floorspace (gross & net) for town centre uses within Newbury town centre (2006/07 - 2011/12)

Newbury town centre		A1	A2	B1a	D2	Total
2006/07	gross	362	840	471	0	1,673
	net	-	-	-	-	-
2007/08	gross	367	704	0	0	1,071
	net	-1,828	704	-1,023	0	-2,147
2008/09	gross	250	0	0	231	481
	net	-2,457	0	-2,305	231	-4,531
2009/10	gross	234	0	0	2,000	2,234
	net	197	0	-3,157	2,000	-960
2010/11	gross	114	131	0	0	245
	net	-269	131	-544	0	-682
2011/12	gross	27,809	0	0	105	27,914
	net	27,809	-381	-98	105	27,435
Total 2006/07 - 2011/12	gross	29,136	1,675	471	2,336	33,618
	net	23,452	454	-7,127	2,336	19,115

3.17 Newbury town centre has seen a significant increase in A1 (retail) floorspace in the last year as a result of the completion of the Parkway development. B1a (offices) have seen net losses of -7,127sqm within the town centre since the start of the plan period. To ensure the vitality and viability of Newbury town centre is maintained in the longer term and in accordance with national policy guidance, new office development should be promoted in town centre locations.

Business Development and Town Centres 3

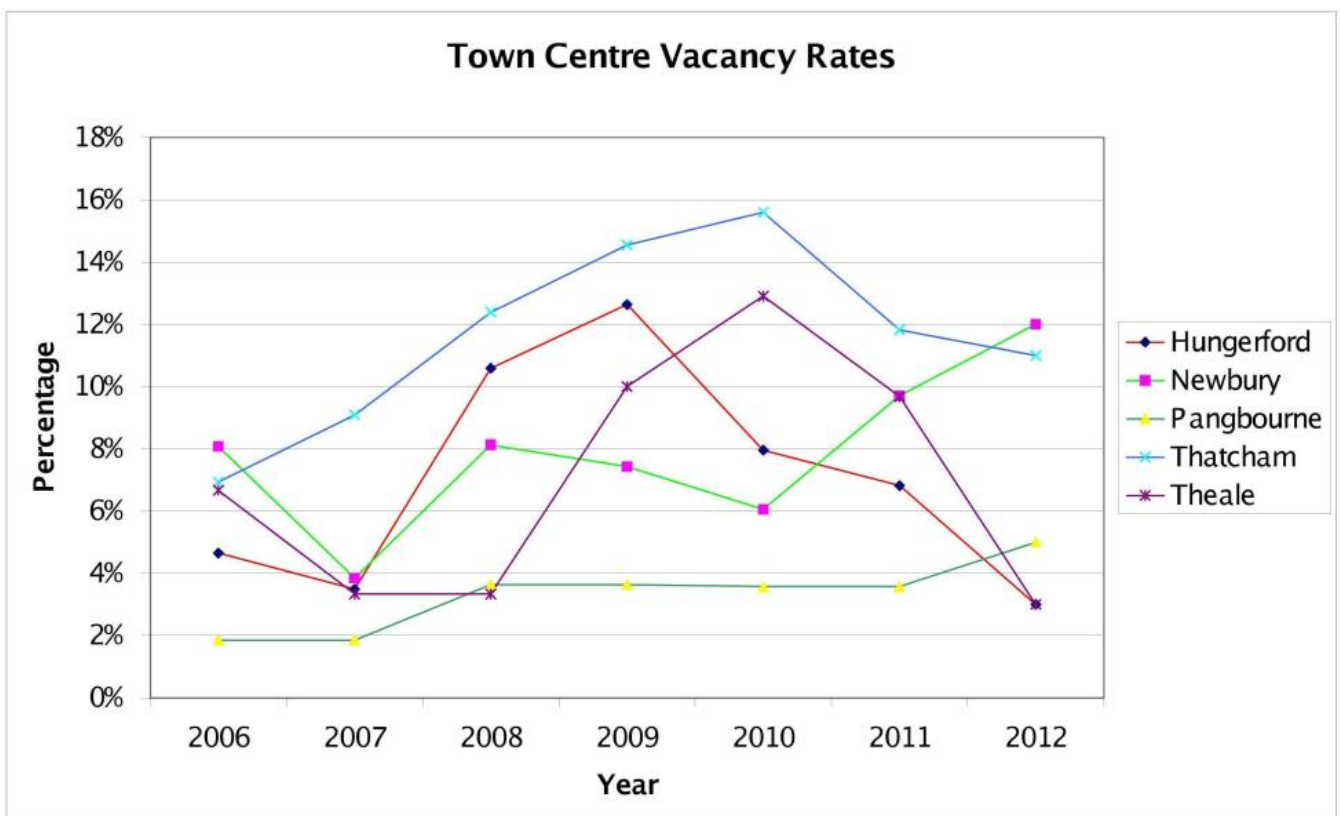
Policy Effectiveness: Current economic conditions have seen office development decrease over the plan period, however in the last year this has been far less pronounced. With the development of Parkway (and large area of floorspace completed), Newbury town centre remains vibrant.

Actions Required: Encourage the retention of office floorspace in town centres through Development Plan Documents.

Significant Sustainability Effects: Additional retail and leisure floorspace enhances consumer choice and promotes competition within the retail and leisure sector. The promotion of retail, leisure and office development within town centres helps ensure business and community needs are accessible and helps promote and strengthen the vitality and viability of centres.

Amount of vacant retail units in town centres

Figure 3.1



Commentary

3.18 The graph above shows vacancy rates in the retail centres of the District with town centre boundaries. With the exception of Newbury, vacancy rates within these centres have fallen over the past year. It is anticipated the new 'Parkway' development, which opened in October 2011, will increase the footfall within Newbury town centre in years to come. This is expected to benefit the wider area as a whole and subsequently reduce the number of vacant units.

3.19 Vacancy levels are widely recognised as providing a good indication of the relative health of a centre, although they should be used alongside other indicators such as the mix of uses, pedestrian counts and customer satisfaction and retailer demand in order to give a more accurate indication of a centre's health.

3 Business Development and Town Centres

3.20 Vacancy rates for Lambourn, Mortimer and Kintbury over the period 2006 – 2012 are set out in Appendix B of this document. Vacancy rates are low but are based on only a small number of units.

3.21 The above information includes retail units (Use classes A1 to A5) plus other town centre uses (such as Use classes D1 and D2) and appropriate sui generis uses.

Policy Effectiveness: The policies reflect one strand of a strategy to maintain and enhance the vitality and viability of West Berkshire's town centres. The relatively low vacancy levels suggest the policies are effective.

Actions Required: Continued monitoring of vacancy rates within the town centre should be supplemented by regular monitoring of other indicators of town centre health.

Policies to be reviewed through the Local Plan process should reflect the NPPF and the role of town centres as a focus for 'town centre uses' which are wider than just retail.

Significant Sustainability Effects: Promoting and strengthening the vitality and viability of town centres helps support successful and inclusive communities.

Table 4.1 The Environment: Objectives, Indicators and Policies

Sustainable Community Strategy Strategic Aims:		
Reduce the carbon footprint of the District		
Increase the use of local food and resources		
Improve the health and wellbeing of local people		
Local Plan Strategic Objectives:		
To contribute towards national targets for carbon dioxide emissions reduction and deliver the District's growth in a way that helps to adapt to and mitigate the impacts of climate change.		
To ensure that West Berkshire contains a strong network of well-connected and multi-functional green infrastructure which provides an attractive environment to live, work and spend leisure time, providing benefits for health and opportunities for formal and informal recreation.		
To ensure that development to 2026 is planned, designed and managed in a way that ensures the protection and enhancement of the local distinctive character and identity of the built, historic and natural environment in West Berkshire's towns, villages and countryside.		
Indicators	West Berkshire District Local Plan (Saved Policies)	West Berkshire Submission Core Strategy Policies
Number of planning applications granted contrary to Environment Agency advice on flooding and water quality grounds		CS16: Flooding
Change in areas of biodiversity importance Condition of SSSIs Distribution and status of selected species		CS17: Biodiversity and geodiversity
Number of listed buildings at risk The total number of conservation areas, the percentage of these with an up-to-date character appraisal and the percentage with published management proposals.	ENV.33: Development in an Historic Setting	CS19: Historic environment and landscape character
Amount of eligible open spaces managed to Green Flag Award Standards	RL.1: Public Open Space Provision in Residential Development Schemes RL.3: The Selection of Public Open Space and Recreation Sites	CS18: Green infrastructure
Renewable Energy Generation		CS15: Renewable, low and zero carbon energy

4 The Environment

FLOOD PROTECTION AND WATER QUALITY

4.1 The provision of services, particularly water and sewage, can have significant implications for local environments. The Core Strategy aims to achieve a planning solution to flood risk management wherever possible, steering development away from areas affected by flooding. It also seeks to ensure that development provides appropriate measures for the management of rainfall (surface water).

4.2 In West Berkshire the main areas within floodplains are in the valleys of the Kennet and Lambourn Rivers, including a substantial land area to the south of Reading. The extent of areas liable to flood can be seen on Environment Agency maps. ⁽⁴⁾ A Strategic Flood Risk Assessment for the District has been completed and is available on the Council's website.

Number of planning applications granted contrary to Environment Agency advice on flooding and water quality grounds.

Table 4.2 Applications granted contrary to EA advice

	Flooding	Water Quality	Total
E2	1	1	2

4.3 Two planning applications were approved contrary to the advice of the Environment Agency. The first application was for the change of use from B8 (Storage and Distribution) to trade and retail sale of reclaimed and recycled building materials (sui generis). The Environment Agency objected to the proposals unless it could be demonstrated that a preferable means of foul water disposal was not viable. Following confirmation that this facility is only used for the customer toilets, that operatives are more likely to use the main facilities in the adjacent site, and given the scale of the waste production, this was not considered to be a significant issue within the context of the application. Given that the cesspit is fully contained and regularly emptied by the operating company, there was not considered to be any demonstrable risk of land or groundwater contamination as a result of the use of the cesspit. On this basis there was not considered to be a substantive case for refusing planning permission for this reason.

4.4 The second application involved the demolition of an existing dwelling and the erection of 2 detached houses with attached garages. The Environment Agency considered that the measures proposed to compensate for the loss of floodplain storage were not adequate and that the proposed access and egress route would have a 'danger for some' hazard rating, which would place additional burden on emergency services during a flood.

4.5 West Berkshire Council's Emergency Planning Team were consulted and considered that, whilst it is an area that is likely to flood in the future, the proposed measures are adequate to satisfy the Environment Agency. The two properties would be built with under-floor voids and the floor level of the living areas set above the 1:100 flood levels. Though some concern was raised should the level be greater than 1:100, it was acknowledged that residents could move upstairs. Further to this, the River Kennet is normally a slow responding river and there is normally a lead-in time from the warning time to the actual flooding taking place. This would allow occupants time to prepare and evacuate the properties rather than being trapped in the buildings.

4.6 The other matter considered was that the current property does not benefit from any flooding defence and is a bungalow, with all living accommodation set on the ground floor and below the 1:100 flood level. Therefore, should any flooding occur, the whole of the property would be seriously affected. Therefore, the addition of new dwellings with floodable voids below should be an improvement on the current situation.

4.7 Given the above, it was considered that a low hazard route from the site could be achieved in the event of flooding, as the lead-in time from the warning to the flood taking place would allow occupants to evacuate the properties. Further to this, the raised floor levels would lie above the 1:100 flood level, therefore protecting the properties from a certain level of flooding.

4.8 It was therefore considered that the application documents and mitigation measures overcame the objections raised by the Environment Agency

Policy Effectiveness: No indication that policies are not proving effective.

Actions Required: None

Significant Sustainability Effects: Protection and improvement of water quality and prevention of inappropriate development in floodplains are important principles of sustainable development.

BIODIVERSITY AND GEODIVERSITY

Context

4.9 West Berkshire supports both a rich and diverse range of biodiversity and geodiversity which make a positive contribution to the overall quality of life and sense of place for residents and visitors in both urban and rural areas.

4.10 The most important sites for biodiversity and geodiversity receive statutory protection under international and national legislation. The District also has a large number of sites designated for their local conservation importance.

Change in areas of biodiversity and geodiversity importance

Changes in areas designated for their intrinsic environmental value

Table 4.3 Areas Designated for their Intrinsic Environmental Value

	No. of Sites	Area in hectares (2008)	Area in hectares (2009)	Area in hectares (2010)	Area in hectares (2011)	As % of West Berkshire	Details of change
Special Areas of Conservation (SACs)	3	154.04	154.04	154.04	154.04	0.22	None - stable
Special Protection Areas (SPAs)	0	0	0	0	0	0	None - stable
Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs)	51	1,348.86	1,348.86	1,348.86	1,348.86	1.92	None - stable
Local Wildlife Sites (LWS)	460	6320.8	6320.8	6320.8	6,320.8	9.00	None - no recording undertaken
Local Geological Sites (LGS)	7	150.7	150.7	150.7	155.5	0.12	Increase
Local Nature Reserves (LNR)	3	67.31	67.31	67.31	67.31	0.10	None - stable

4 The Environment

4.11 There has been no change in the area of sites of international and national significance i.e. SACs, SPAs and SSSIs since 2008. No surveys were conducted in 2011 in West Berkshire. There has been an overall increase in the county resource. No recording has been undertaken for Local Wildlife Sites since 2009.

Commentary

4.12 The purpose of this indicator is to show losses or additions to biodiversity habitat. Areas of biodiversity importance should be recognised in the Development Plan for their intrinsic environmental value in the form of an analysis of sites of international, national, regional and local significance.

Change in area of UK BAP Priority Habitat

Table 4.4 UK BAP Priority Habitats in West Berkshire

UK BAP priority habitat type	Area (ha) 2009	Berkshire context 2009	Area (ha) 2010	Berkshire context 2010	Area (ha) 2011	Berkshire context 2011
Arable field margins	Not known	Not known	Not known	Not known	Not known	Not known
Coastal & floodplain grazing marsh	1,602.0	2663.0	1,424.1	2362.41	1424.13	2362.87
Eutrophic standing waters	526.9	1437.5	528.65	1437.4	526.97	1445.14
Fens (lowland)	Not given	109.9	36.04	87.32	36.02	92.19
Hedgerows	Not known	Not known	Not known	Not known	Not known	Not known
Lowland beech and yew woodland	228.8	496.4	228.14	502.19	228.15	497.47
Lowland calcareous grassland	184.4	209.1	184.36	208.99	184.36	208.97
Lowland dry acid grassland	10.6	111.9	18.75	117.82	18.76	128.74
Lowland heathland	273.2	460.1	252.43	469.82	175.13	391.3
Lowland meadows	107.0	225.4	107.01	225.17	106.99	228.41
Lowland mixed deciduous woodland	4,264	7,535.7	4,997.26	8,589.59	4897.47	8529.99
Mesotrophic lakes (new)	0.0	21.5	0.0	21.45	0.0	21.63
Oligotrophic and dystrophic lakes	Not known	Not known	Not known	3.07	Not known	3.07
Open mosaic habitats on previously developed land	Not known	Not known	Not known	Not known	8.52	8.52
Ponds	2.2	13.7	2.2	14.12	2.19	13.83
Purple moor grass and rush pastures	0.0	9.2	0.0	9.41	0.0	9.22
Reedbeds	36.0	39.8	35.76	40.59	35.76	40.34
Rivers	132.1	155.2	131.96	155.19	131.95	155.37
Traditional orchards	Not known	Not known	56.05	145.92	56.21	145.92
Wet woodland	288.9	448.2	291.14	469.83	291.19	476.85
Wood pasture and parkland	385.7	1137.0	385.74	1131.5	385.74	1173.43
Total area of BAP priority habitat	8,052.3	15,073.6	8,679.6	15,988.69	8,599.52	15933.26

Source: Thames Valley Environmental Records Centre (TVERC), October 2012

4 The Environment

4.13 The total area of UK Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) priority habitat in the District has been calculated at 8,599.52 ha, a slight decrease from the 8,679 ha recorded in 2010/11. The extent of individual BAP priority habitats in West Berkshire is given in Table 4.4.

Commentary

4.14 There are three notable changes in habitat resource in 2011/12. The changes represent an improved understanding of the habitat resource in West Berkshire, rather than the creation or loss of habitat. The lowland heathland resource has been reduced as a consequence of a re-assessment of the previous digital mapping. Sites previously mapped as heathland were re-examined using more recent aerial photography and survey information, leading to a large amount of the previous heathland resource being re-categorised.

4.15 As another component of the heathland inventory review, part of the Greenham Common site - an area of disused runway - was identified as supporting open mosaic habitat on previously developed land.

4.16 The heathland inventory work and a correction of some historic mapping of sites also lead to a reduction in the lowland mixed deciduous woodland resource.

4.17 Appendix C contains further detail on the information sources and quality of this information.

Proportion of local sites where positive conservation management has been or is being implemented

Table 4.5 Positive conservation management figures for Berkshire Unitary Authorities

West Berkshire Council	Sites total	Sites qualifying under Criteria					% positive
		1	2	3	4	Total	
2011/12	473	157	10	0	10	169	36%
2010/11	472	189	12	0	10	203	43%
2009/10	468	173	10	0	8	191	41%
Baseline 2008/09	469	183	6	0	7	196	42%
Berkshire Total 2011/12	773	229	57	1	47	301	38.9%

4.18 The qualifying criteria is listed below which is derived from DEFRA 2008 guidance:

- 1: site management plan
- 2: management schemes - agri-environment or conservation management agreement or scheme
- 3: relevant Biodiversity Action Plan (including habitat action plan, species action plan or local biodiversity action plan). Where a site is designated primarily for its geological features, the recommended management activity may be defined within a site specific management plan or, more broadly, within a Local Geodiversity Action Plan
- 4: management guidance and advice
- 5: for Local Geological Sites the monitoring process and guidance provides a basis for judging whether appropriate management is being undertaken.

Commentary

4.19 The implementation of positive conservation management, defined as management that contributes to maintaining or enhancing the features of interest for which a site has been selected, has been assessed by Thames Valley Environmental Records Centre (TVERC) across all six Berkshire Unitary Authorities using a standardised methodology, approved and verified by the Local Sites Partnership, the Berkshire Nature Conservation Forum.

4.20 In Berkshire, a site was considered to be in positive management if at least 50% of the site was being managed in a way that protected or enhanced the biological or geological interest of that site. The baseline for Berkshire, carried out in 2008 was 39% of Local Wildlife Sites considered to be in positive management.

4.21 There was a notable decrease in the percentage of sites in West Berkshire in positive conservation management, from 43% in 2010/11 to 36% in 2011/12. The decrease can be attributed to a large number of woodland grant schemes coming to an end in 2006 (and so no longer reportable within the 5 year analysis period for this report). This means that, in percentage terms, the proportion of sites in positive management drops below that of the county.

4.22 Appendix C contains further detail on the criteria for qualification and information sources for this information.

4 The Environment

Condition of SSSIs

Target: Natural England target of 95% in favourable or unfavourable recovering condition by 2010

Table 4.6 Condition of SSSIs

Condition	No. of units or part units	Hectares	% of total SSSI in District	% of total SSSI in District	% of total SSSI in District	% of total SSSI in District	% of total SSSI in District	% of total SSSI in District	% of total SSSI in District
			2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
Favourable	74	720.95	63	63	63	66.7	66.9	53.17	53.74
Unfavourable recovering	4	485.22	18	20	20	20.0	19.8	35.78	0.63
Unfavourable no change	8	116.51	16	16	16	11.7	10.8	8.59	8.11
Unfavourable declining	27	33.36	3	2	2	1.6	2.5	2.46	37.51
TOTAL	113	1,356.23	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Source: TVERC from Natural England, 2011

4.23 There are 51 SSSIs wholly or partly within West Berkshire, representing approximately 2% of the land area. Summary date for information collated up to March 2012, based on assessments carried out by Natural England between 2000 and 2012.

4.24 There have been relatively minor changes in the proportions of sites in varying management conditions between the 2011 and 2012 reports as a consequence of 32 condition monitoring visits taking place to West Berkshire SSSIs in 2011-12. Further information is contained in Appendix C.

4.25 In 2010, there was a 13% reduction in the proportion of sites in favourable condition and this can be attributed to approximately 180 hectares of Greenham and Crookham Common SSSI being determined to have moved from favourable to unfavourable recovering condition.

Distribution and status of selected species

4.26 The distribution and status of water voles and farmland birds have been selected as indicators because of their value as monitoring tools and relevance to local biodiversity and planning issues.

Table 4.7 Water vole records in West Berkshire

Year	Number of sites surveyed in Berkshire (per 500m stretch)	Number of sites surveyed in Unitary
2011	97 (84 positive for water vole)	73 (40 positive for water vole)
2010	Not known	Not known
2009	130	120
2008	202	Not known
2007	Not known	Not known
2006	Not known	Not known
2005	330	22
2004	170	30
2003	149	65
2002	87	38
1998-2001 inclusive	136	21

4.27 In 2011/12, of the 73 known potential sites for water vole that were surveyed, 40 sites still had water vole present. 33 had no further evidence of their presence. The majority of these survey sites were along the upper reaches of the River Kennet.

Commentary

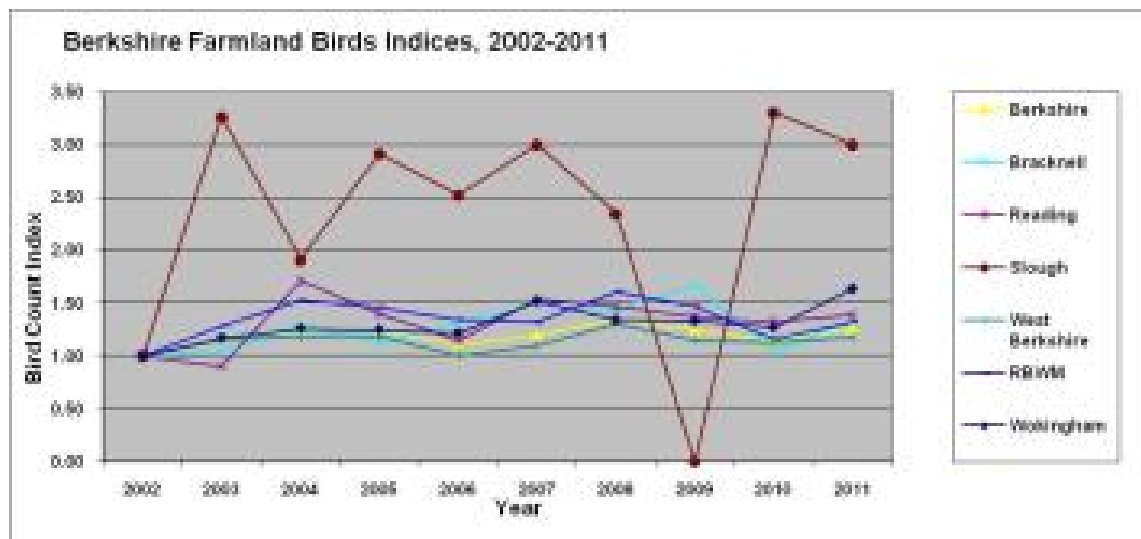
4.28 There are 666 survey stretches of watercourse in West Berkshire, identified by the Berkshire, Buckinghamshire and Oxfordshire Wildlife Trust (BBOWT) water vole project officer. Of these, 412 are to be found in West Berkshire. Survey effort from year to year has not been consistent as the water vole project has developed and more surveyors recruited. However, data provided by the BBOWT project officer for survey effort in 2011 revealed that of the 412 stretches of watercourses in West Berkshire, 9.7% were positive for water vole. This compares with the figure of 12.6% for the county as a whole.

4.29 The water vole is Britain's fastest declining mammal. The Thames region is one of the country's strongholds for the animal and even here the decline has been dramatic. A national survey in 1996 - 1998 showed that there had been a 67.5% loss of occupied sites in the UK since the national 1989 - 1990 survey and a 32.6% overall loss in the Thames region. The decline was estimated to be 94% by 2001. 7.71% of the British water voles were calculated to be in the Thames region in 1996 -1998.

4 The Environment

Distribution and status of farmland birds

Picture 4.1



Commentary

4.30 Farmland still supports large numbers of birds, but great changes have occurred to the management of farmland over the past 30 years. 19 bird species have been identified as being particularly associated with farmland and are utilised at a national level to assess changes in farmland ecology. This Farmland Bird Index can be broken down into two groups: specialists and generalists. Over the years in the national data set there have been increases or steady populations in the generalists and decreases in the specialists. Specialists such as corn bunting, grey partridge, turtle dove, tree sparrow and lapwing rely solely on farmland for their breeding and feeding requirements and are therefore more susceptible to habitat change. Generalists such as wood pigeon, rook, greenfinch and goldfinch can use many different habitats to breed and feed in and are therefore less affected by changes in agricultural land.

4.31 Picture 4.1 above provides an indication of plotted changes over time in the Berkshire unitaries.

4.32 The results for 2011 surveys revealed a general decrease in the numbers of farmland specialists - for example, linnet, grey partridge and lapwing - but showed some species having minor increases in numbers or no change in their other counts. More significant increases were seen with corvid species.

4.33 The 2011 West Berkshire index figure improved on that calculated for 2010, but still fell slightly lower than that for the county as a whole. However it should be noted that 7 survey squares fewer than 2010 were surveyed, with the survey effort being the lowest in West Berkshire since 2002.

4.34 Appendix C contains further information on these indicators.

Policy Effectiveness: Policy has been effective in ensuring there has been no change in the area of sites of international and national importance. There is a recorded change in habitat resource, but this is a result of improved understandings and data collection rather than any ecological factors or threats.

Inconsistent survey effort for the distribution and status of selected species makes it difficult to establish trends.

Actions Required: Continual update of sites of environmental value by TVERC.

Distribution and status of species requires resource investment to ensure continued monitoring and improved accuracy (water voles) and as many field survey records as possible (farmland birds).

Significant Sustainability Effects: Protection of our key environmental assets and conservation of the natural environment are critical to sustainability.

HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT

Number of listed buildings at risk

Table 4.8 Listed Buildings on the Heritage at Risk Register

	2009	2010	2011	2012
Total in West Berkshire	6	6	8	8

4.35 The 2012 Heritage at Risk Register published by English Heritage includes 8 Grade I and II* buildings at risk in West Berkshire. Two churches, the Church of St Peter and Paul in Yattendon and the Church of St Mary in Hampstead Norreys, were both been added in 2011.

The total number of conservation areas, the percentage of these with an up-to-date character appraisal and the percentage with published management proposals.

Table 4.9 Conservation Areas

	No of Conservation Areas 2010	% of total	No of Conservation Areas 2011	% of total	No of Conservation Areas 2012	% of total
Conservation Areas with an adopted Conservation Area Appraisal (CAA)	2	3.77	2	3.77	2	3.77
CAA in preparation	3	5.66	3	5.66	3	5.66
No CAA	48	90.57	48	90.57	48	90.57
Total	53	100.0	53	100.0	53	100.0

4.36 There are now 53 Conservation Areas in West Berkshire. Conservation Area Appraisals (CAAs) have been completed for Streatley and Peasmore and further Appraisals are in preparation for Hungerford, Lambourn and Eastbury.

Policy Effectiveness: Conservation Area status has undoubtedly contributed to the conservation of the historic character of West Berkshire but is difficult to quantify.

Actions Required: Production of Conservation Area Appraisals and management proposals.

Significant Sustainability Effects: The conservation of historic buildings and areas has helped to sustain the distinctive communities in the District. Conservation needs are not necessarily incompatible with building new housing for local needs if care is taken over design.

4 The Environment

OPEN SPACE

Amount of eligible open spaces managed to Green Flag Award Standards

4.37 The Green Flag Award is a national standard for parks and green spaces in England and Wales, and a way of recognising the best green spaces in the country. 2 parks within the district have won the Green Flag Award: Northcroft and Goldwell Park in Newbury and Linear Park in Calcot.

Commentary

4.38 The Council is undertaking an audit and assessment of open space within the District which includes an assessment of the quality of open space. Once completed the audit and assessment will help to identify quality standards for open space in the District. The quality standard to be adopted is expected to be benchmarked against nationally recognised standards such as the Green Flag Award scheme for parks and open spaces. The Council is committed to completing the audit of open space which will complement the assessment of local need and provide a framework from which to develop a comprehensive open space strategy.

4.39 In 2005 the Council carried out an assessment of local needs for open spaces, sport and recreation facilities across the District. The research concentrated on quantitative demand for sports facilities and qualitative assessment of open spaces. The research found that the maintenance and management of open spaces is generally well regarded with 76% of respondents satisfied or very satisfied with the quality of open spaces. The research also found that 60% of respondents considered there to be adequate provision of open space and that resources should be directed to improvements to the quality of existing open space rather than to the provision of new spaces or facilities.

4.40 The Council has set out its strategic approach for Green Infrastructure through the Core Strategy. More detailed standards for open space provision will be defined through the Site Allocations and Delivery DPD.

Policy Effectiveness: No indication that policies are proving ineffective.

Actions Required: Completion of West Berkshire Open Space audit and assessment. Local standards for open space provision to be set through Site Allocations and Delivery DPD.

Significant Sustainability Effects: Protection of existing open space and provision of new open space to meet development demands helps maintain and promote health, well being, social inclusion and community cohesion and supports other sustainability objectives such as creating attractive urban environments and fostering nature conservation and biodiversity.

RENEWABLE ENERGY

Renewable energy generation

4.41 The data reported in table 4.11 below has been collated by TV Energy, ⁽⁵⁾ and was collected from installer surveys sent out by TV Energy and this was supplemented with data obtained from Feed in Tariff (FIT) ⁽⁶⁾ and Renewable Obligation (RO) installation reports and certificate statistics, published by Ofgem.

4.42 The level of renewable energy generation is a priority for the Council in conjunction with reducing the District's carbon footprint and tackling climate change, outlined in the Council's Sustainable Community Strategy 'A Breath of Fresh Air.'⁽⁷⁾

5 Details can be viewed online at: <http://www.tvenergy.org>

6 Details can be viewed online at http://www.decc.gov.uk/en/content/cms/meeting_energy/renewable_ener/feedin_tariff/feedin_tariff.aspx

7 Details can be viewed online at: <http://www.westberkshirepartnership.org/index.aspx?articleid=15225>

Table 4.10 Renewable Energy Generation

E3	Wind onshore	Solar photovoltaics	Hydro	Biomass						Total
				Landfill gas	Sewage sludge digestion	Municipal (and industrial solid waste combustion)	Co-firing of biomass with fossil fuels	Animal biomass	Plant biomass	
New Installed electric capacity between 1/4/10 and 31/3/11 (MW)	0	1.857	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1.857
Cumulative total of installed electric capacity up to 31/3/11 (MW)	0.33	2.609	0	0.346	0	0	0	0	0	2.988

4.43 There has been a significant increase in the level of renewable energy generated through solar photovoltaic (PV) installations. This can be linked to the introduction of the Feed in Tariff (FiT) by the Department of Energy and Climate Change on the 1 April 2010. FiTs are intended to encourage the installation of additional small-scale (less than 5MW) low-carbon electricity generation.

4.44 The data supplied by TV Energy demonstrates the increase in level of PV energy installed during this reporting period in comparison to previous years. It is assumed that PV installations have increased significantly more than any other form of renewable electricity due to the level of financial incentive available compared to other forms of renewable electricity installation subsidy. This trend is expected to continue whilst these financial incentives remain.

Commentary:

4.45 The Council is committed to encouraging the incorporation of high standards of energy efficiency in future development. The Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) series 'Quality Design – West Berkshire' was adopted in June 2006. This document encourages developers to incorporate sustainable design techniques into their developments.

4.46 In addition, policy CS15 of the Core Strategy requires major development to generate a certain proportion of its energy from renewable sources. ⁽⁸⁾

Policy Effectiveness: Difficult to ascertain at this stage whether policies are proving effective in encouraging energy efficient technology

Actions Required: Improved monitoring through planning applications and building control data.

Significant Sustainability Effects: Increased energy efficiency and installation of renewable energy capacity will reduce emissions contributing to climate change.

5 Minerals and Waste

MINERALS AND WASTE

5.1 In respect of Minerals and Waste planning matters the six Unitary Authorities in Berkshire have historically worked together to produce a Joint Minerals and Waste Development Framework, which was always intended to be complementary to their individual Local Plans. This cross Berkshire Planning work was coordinated by the Joint Strategic Planning Unit (JSPU) on behalf of the six Authorities.

5.2 The Joint Minerals and Waste Annual Monitoring report for Berkshire published in 2010 by the JSPU provided an update on the progression of the Joint Minerals and Waste Local Development Framework (JMWLDF) at the time that report was published (November 2010) which confirmed that in September 2010 all work on the JMWLDF was suspended.

5.3 In September 2011 the JSPU closed, the cross Berkshire joint plan making functions ceased and the minerals and waste plan making functions returned to the Berkshire Unitary Authorities individually. Each individual authority is therefore now responsible for the formulation of their own minerals and waste planning policy documents, including annual monitoring reports.

5.4 West Berkshire Council is to move forward with the formulation of a single Development Plan Document that relates to Minerals and Waste Development in West Berkshire. It is anticipated that this project will commence in 2013.

5.5 Unfortunately, due to the closure of the JSPU late in 2011, it has not yet been possible for West Berkshire Council to produce any meaningful information in the time that has been available that could feed into an AMR for Minerals and Waste in West Berkshire.

5.6 We are continuing to discuss this matter with the industry in an attempt to progress with providing information on minerals and waste matters over the reporting period without breaching data protection legislation or generating issues of commercial confidentiality.

Monitoring Framework 8

- 8.1** West Berkshire Council recognises the importance of monitoring to spatial planning. Monitoring enables the examination of trends and comparison against existing targets and policies, indicating where a review of these policies may be needed.
- 8.2** Current arrangements for monitoring include the annual monitoring of housing and employment commitments carried out by the Council since the closure of the Berkshire Joint Strategic Planning Unit (JSPU) during this monitoring year.
- 8.3** Some indicators rely on surveys and, where practicable, these will be carried out on an annual basis. For some, notably the biodiversity indicators, updating the baseline data will be less frequent and may take place on a rolling programme.
- 8.4** Policy drafting of documents in the Local Plan will include consideration of monitoring requirements. Some policy areas do not lend themselves to effective monitoring in quantitative terms but, where appropriate, policies will set measurable targets.
- 8.5** It is intended that the number and scope of local output indicators is increased in future AMRs to reflect the policies in the local development documents, being prepared as part of the Local Plan, and provide a more detailed picture of issues which are of particular importance to West Berkshire. Future AMRs will also develop significant effects indicators linked to the sustainability appraisal objectives and indicators.

A Business Development

Table A.1 Employment Completions 2011/12

Gross floorspace (sq.m. external) - Completed	B1a	B1b	B1c	B1 (Cannot Split)	B2	B8
Newbury Town Centre (<i>not a Protected Employment Area</i>)	0	0	0	0	0	0
Turnpike & Castle Estates	0	0	0	0	0	0
Hambridge Rd/Hambridge La	3,327	0	1,224	9,110	660	2,026
London Rd Industrial Estate	0	0	0	0	154	0
Newbury Business Park	0	0	0	0	0	0
New Greenham Park (<i>not a Protected Employment Area</i>)	0	0	0	0	0	0
Colthrop / Industrial Estate	0	0	0	913	0	985
Green Lane	0	0	0	0	0	0
Rest of Newbury and Thatcham Area	0	0	0	0	0	0
Aldermaston: Calleva Park & Paices Hill	0	0	0	0	0	0
Beenham Industrial Area	0	0	0	0	0	0
Red Shute Hill Hermitage	0	0	0	0	0	0
Hungerford: Charnham Pk/Station Rd/Smitham Bridge	106	0	0	0	0	0
Lambourn: Lowesdon Works/Membury Estate	175	0	0	0	552	352
Theale: Arlington Business Park/Station Rd/Sheffield Bottom	0	0	0	0	0	0
Horseshoe Park Pangbourne	0	0	0	0	0	0
Rest of West Berkshire	313	0	906	7,822	570	1,317
West Berkshire Total	3,831	0	2,130	17,845	1,936	4,680

Source: Planning Commitments for Employment Uses, WBC 2012

Business Development A

Table A.2 Planning Permissions (Hard Commitments) Outstanding* - Net 2011/12

NET CHANGE IN FLOORSPACE (SQ.M. External)	A1	A2	B1 (B1a/b/c&B1)	B2	B8	OTHER
Newbury Town Centre (<i>not a Protected Employment Area</i>)	3,900	-541	-6,474	0	-185	-2,286
Turnpike & Castle Estates	0	0	0	0	0	0
Hambridge Rd/Hambridge La	107	0	0	-107	0	0
London Rd Industrial Estate	1,200	0	7,700	-1,037	0	7,051
Newbury Business Park	0	0	14,936	0	-631	0
New Greenham Park (<i>not a Protected Employment Area</i>)	0	0	3,413	0	46,433	-12,440
Colthrop Industrial Estate	0	0	34,120	0	10,919	0
Green Lane	0	0	0	0	0	0
Rest of Newbury and Thatcham Area	11,103	111	603	-2,322	388	30,179
Total for Newbury/Thatcham Area	16,310	-430	54,298	-3,466	56,924	22,504
Aldermaston: Calleva Park & Paices Hill	0	0	1,030	0	0	0
Beenham Industrial Area, Beenham	0	0	0	0	0	0
Red Shute Hill, Hermitage	0	0	560	0	0	0
Hungerford: Charnham Park/Station Rd/ Smitham Bridge	0	0	5,362	1,200	0	0
Lambourn: Lowesdon Works/Membury Estate	0	0	0	136	0	0
Theale: Arlington Business Park / Station Rd / Sheffield Bottom	0	0	19,509	0	-9,724	0
Horseshoe Park, Pangbourne	0	0	0	0	0	0
Rest of West Berkshire	-352	-45	69,452	19,773	7,890	39,680
Total for Rest of West Berkshire	-352	-45	95,913	21,109	-1,834	39,680
WEST BERKSHIRE TOTAL	15,958	-475	150,211	17,643	55,090	62,184

*Includes developments not started & under construction.

A Business Development

Table A.3 B Class Uses Completions 2006/07 - 2011/12 Internal Floorspace (sqm)

		B1a	B1b	B1c	B1	Total B1 (B1/a/b/c)	B2	B8	B1-B8 (Cannot Split)	Total
2006/07										
	gross	4,723	0	5,417	0	10,140	7,875	853	0	18,868
	net	1,890	0	-2,266	0	-376	2,095	634	-3,302	-949
2007/08										
	gross	22,519	0	2,338	515	25,372	439	9,704	29,552	65,067
	net	19,795	0	1,298	-2,979	18,114	-4,427	8,799	29,552	52,038
2008/09										
	gross	25,549	0	2,528	0	28,077	7,068	2,975	0	38,120
	net	22,395	0	2,424	0	24,819	5,967	-7,525	0	23,261
2009/10										
	gross	870	2,406	214	0	3,490	3,034	2,686	0	9,210
	net	-2,651	2,406	-3,006	-621	-3,872	2,512	1,245	-1,213	-1,328
2010/11										
	gross	1,553	0	778	2,807	5,138	23,796	4,109	0	33,043
	net	-2,203	0	89	2,807	693	23,103	3,408	0	27,204
2011/12										
	gross	3,831	0	2,130	17,845	23,806	1,936	4,680	0	30,422
	net	1,132	0	1,696	11,254	14,082	1,936	3,182	0	19,200
Total 2006-12										
	gross	59,045	2,406	13,405	21,167	96,023	44,148	25,007	29,552	194,730
	net	40,038	2,406	235	10,461	53,460	31,186	9,743	25,037	119,426

Business Development A

Table A.4 Protected Employment Areas (Areas where policy CS9 of West Berkshire Core Strategy applies)

	Area (hectares)		Area (hectares)
Newbury		Aldermaston	
Hambridge Road and Lane Newbury	64.6	Calleva Park Aldermaston	7.1
London Road Estate Newbury	13.4	Paices Hill Aldermaston	6.4
Newbury Business Park	10.9		
Turnpike Estate Newbury	4.6	Beenham Industrial Area	21.4
Castle Estate Newbury	1.8		
		Lambourn	
Thatcham		Membury	21.9
Green Lane Thatcham	0.7	Lowesdon Works	2.7
Colthrop Estate Thatcham	88.7		
		Theale	
Hungerford		Arlington / Station Road Theale	50.4
Smitham Bridge Road	1.3	Sheffield Bottom Theale	1.7
Charnham Park	9.8		
Station Road	5.3	Hermitage - Red Shute Hill	4.0
		Pangbourne - Horseshoe Park	1.2

B Town Centre Vacancy Rates

Figure B.1



Commentary

Unlike the town centres which appear in Fig 3.1, the settlements measured in the graph above do not have designated town centre boundaries. Whilst percentage changes appear to be extreme in some instances, this may be caused by the change of a small number of retail outlets, even down to an individual unit.

Table B.1 Percentage of vacant retail units in West Berkshire Town Centres 2006-2012

Year	Lambourn	Mortimer	Kintbury
2006	0	0	0
2007	0	0	0
2008	9	5	11
2009	9	5	0
2010	9	5	0
2011	5	5	0
2012	5	0	0

Change in areas of biodiversity importance

Information sources

Special Areas of Conservation (SAC) - Digital SAC data were obtained as downloaded site maps from the Natural England website.

Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) - Data on SSSIs are derived from the digitised site boundaries layers obtained from Natural England.

Local Nature Reserves (LNR) - Figures on areas of Local Nature Reserves are derived from the Natural England web site.

Local Wildlife Sites (LWS) - TVERC maintains the Local Wildlife Site boundary information on GIS - alterations are made to these boundaries as decisions are made by the site selection panel during the course of the year, or as any remaining boundary errors are corrected. Figures for changes in an area are derived from an analysis of digitised site boundary files following the site selection panel meeting of the AMR analysis. In this case, the figures presented are those resulting from the April 2011 site selection panel meeting.

Local Geological Sites (LGS) (formerly known as Regionally Important Geological and Geomorphological Sites (RIGS)) - Site information was digitised by TVERC using site documentation provided by the Berkshire RIGS Group. The data are a result of site selection panel meetings, the latest of which occurred in April 2011.

Proportion of Local Sites where positive conservation management has been or is being implemented

Local Sites Qualifying Criteria

DEFRA guidance issued in 2008 stated:

To show that positive conservation management is being undertaken on a Local Site, there must be documented evidence of management that contributes to maintaining or enhancing the features of interest for which a site has been selected and designated. The nature of the management activity appropriate to interest features of a site will commonly be defined within one, or more of the following:

1. site management plan
2. management schemes - agri-environment or conservation management agreement or scheme
3. relevant Biodiversity Action Plan (including habitat action plan, species action plan or local biodiversity action plan). Where a site is designated primarily for its geological features, the recommended management activity may be defined within a site specific management plan or, more broadly, within a Local Geodiversity Action Plan
4. management guidance and advice
5. for Local Geological Sites the monitoring process and guidance provides a basis for judging whether appropriate management is being undertaken.

Information sources:

- Countryside Stewardship (CSS). Data provided by DEFRA, 2003 - 2010
- Environmentally Sensitive Areas Scheme (GIS dataset provided by Natural England in 2009)
- Environmental Stewardship (GIS dataset provided by DEFRA). To qualify as in positive management only LWS under EL3, EL4, EK3, EK4 and HLS schemes were included
- Woodland Grant Scheme (GIS dataset provided by Forestry Commission 2003 - 2010)
- England Woodland Grant Scheme (GIS dataset provided by Forestry Commission 2003 - 2010)
- Site management plans from by Forestry Commission, Woodland Trust, National Trust, BBOWT or Local Authorities for the conservation of the features of that site
- Local Authority ecology contacts supplied ad hoc information on sites where known positive management has been undertaken in the last 5 years.

C Biodiversity

Condition of Sites of Special Scientific Interest

Information Sources

Natural England (NE) publishes "condition assessments" for all SSSIs. These are an assessment, to a standard methodology, which of the quality of these sites, describing the condition of the features for which the sites were originally scheduled. SSSIs are monitored over a 5-6 year period.

Distribution and status of water vole

Information sources

Information for this indicator is entirely from survey work carried out by trained volunteer surveyors and coordinated by the Buckinghamshire, Berkshire and Oxfordshire Wildlife Trust (BBOWT) as part of a wider water vole project. The survey methodology records presence or absence of water voles within a 500m stretch of water course and not population size.

Future data needs

The BBOWT Water Vole Project is dependent on funds being available and this is by no means certain in the long term. More resource investment in more survey would improve the accuracy of of this indicator, but there are no definite plans for this.

Distribution and status of farmland birds

This indicator uses an established list of 19 species, identifiable as farmland birds, compiled by the RSPB. Records associated with these species generated through British Trust for Ornithology (BTO) breeding bird surveys in specific 1km x 1km squares are then used to determine a farmland bird index. TVERC has obtained these records and followed the RSPB methodology to plot the trend in changes in the index over time. This indicator remains an important one for assessing the general ecological health of the largely rural areas of the District.

Table C.1 Farmland Bird Species

Farmland Bird Species			
Kestrel	Yellow Wagtail	Reed Bunting	Jackdaw
Grey Partridge	Starling	Corn Bunting	Rook
Lapwing	Tree Sparrow	Stock Dove	Greenfinch
Turtle Dove	Linnet	Woodpigeon	Goldfinch
Skylark	Yellowhammer	Whitethroat	

Information sources

Survey data were generated in the field by BTO survey volunteers and compiled by BTO officers in Thetford. These records were then made available to TVERC for processing at a district-specific level, using the methodology established by the the RSPB Central England Office staff.

Quality of the data

The data have been collected by known BTO surveyors who have been directed to specific areas within Berkshire to conduct breeding bird surveys of an established methodology. As the RSPB have commented, the reliability of species records is dependent upon the number of 1km squares which have been surveyed in a season. This varies from year to year. As a consequence, the reliability of of the resulting farmland bird figures is open to debate.

Future data needs

The quality of information associated with this indicator is dependent on as many field survey records as can be obtained. As records are obtained from BTO volunteer surveyors, BTOs ability to improve on county survey coverage will determine whether more records can be generated.

Glossary

Table .1

Acronym	Term	Explanation
AONB	Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty	Area with statutory national landscape designation, the primary purpose of which is to conserve and enhance the natural beauty
AMR	Annual Monitoring Report	A report that presents an analysis of policies and progress on the Local Development Scheme (see below)
BAP	Biodiversity Action Plan	A strategy aimed at conserving and enhancing biological diversity
BSP	Berkshire Structure Plan	Provided a strategic framework for Local Plans and development control across Berkshire. Superseded by the Regional Spatial Strategy, the South East Plan
CAA	Conservation Area Appraisal	
DCLG	Department for Communities and Local Government	The job of the Department for Communities and Local Government is to help create sustainable communities, working with other Government departments, local councils, businesses, the voluntary sector, and communities themselves.
DPD	Development Plan Documents	A statutory element of the Local Plan. DPDs are subject to independent examination and include the Core Strategy.
LDD	Local Development Documents	Local Development Documents comprise both Development Plan Documents and Supplementary Planning Documents. LDDs are likely to include core policies, proposal maps, site specific policies.
LDF	Local Development Framework	A folder containing a number of documents including LDDs setting out a local authority's policies for meeting the economic, environmental and social aims of its area. The concept of the LDF has not been carried forward in the National Planning Policy Framework published in March 2012 and development plan documents now form part of the Local Plan.
LDS	Local Development Scheme	A timetable and project plan for the production of all the LDDs relating to a Local Plan
NPPF	National Planning Policy Framework	Planning guidance issued by the DCLG in March 2012, replacing PPSs. It sets out the government's planning policies and how these are expected to be applied.
	Natural England	Brings together English Nature, parts of the Countryside Agency and the Rural Development Service. Natural England is working to conserve, enhance and manage the natural environment. It is responsible for agreeing National and Local Nature Reserves, identifying SSSIs (below) and proposed special areas of conservation and advising the Government.
PDL	Previously Developed Land	Land that is or was occupied by a permanent structure (excluding agricultural or forestry buildings), and associated fixed surface infrastructure. The NPPF has a definition
PPG and PPS	Planning Policy Guidance and Planning Policy Statements	Guidance issued by the DCLG that set out the Government's policy on planning issues. These have been superseded by the NPPF
RIGS	Regionally Important Geological & Geomorphological Site	A non-statutory regionally important geological or geomorphological site designated to protect important earth science and landscape features.

Glossary

Acronym	Term	Explanation
RPG	Regional Planning Guidance	Regional planning policy and advice issued for each region in England by the Secretary of State. As part of the reform process the existing RPG becomes the spatial strategy for the region until revised by a replacement Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS).
RSL	Registered Social Landlord	Social landlords registered with the Housing Corporation:- providers of low cost social housing for rent and shared ownership.
	Saved Policies/Saved Plans	Policies within development plans that are saved for a time period during replacement production of Local Development Documents
S106	Section 106 Agreement	A legal agreement under section 106 of the 1990 Town & Country Planning Act. Section 106 agreements are legal agreements between a planning authority and a developer, or undertakings offered unilaterally by a developer, that ensure that certain extra works related to a development are undertaken.
SAC	Special Areas of Conservation	Designated to protect the habitats of threatened species of wildlife under EU Directive 92/43.
SCI	Statement of Community Involvement	Sets out the Council's policy by which the community will be engaged in the preparation and revision of LDDs and in the consideration of planning applications.
SCS	Sustainable Community Strategy	Sets out the long term vision for the local authority area.
SPA	Special Protection Areas	Designated to protect rare and vulnerable birds under EC Directive 79/409.
SPD	Supplementary Planning Documents	A Supplementary Planning Document is a Local Development Document that may cover a range of issues, thematic or site specific, and provides further detail of policies and proposals in a 'parent' Development Plan Document.
SPG	Supplementary Planning Guidance	Supplementary Planning Guidance may cover a range of issues, both thematic and site specific and provide further detail of policies and proposals in a development plan
SSSI	Sites of Special Scientific Interest	Defined protected areas of nature conservation and scientific value identified by English Nature as being of national (and sometimes international) importance.
TV ERC	Thames Valley Environmental Records Centre	TV ERC is a 'not for profit' operation run by a partnership of organisations that collect information about the natural environment.
WBDLP	West Berkshire District Local Plan	Sets out the Council's policies and proposals for the development and use of land within the district. It includes detailed policies and specific proposals to guide planning decisions
WHS	Wildlife Heritage Sites	Designated sites of nature conservation value. These are non-statutory, and defined by the Berkshire Nature Conservation Forum.

If you require this information in an alternative format or translation,
please contact Planning & Countryside on Telephone 01635 42400 .

**West Berkshire Council
Planning and Countryside.**

Council Offices
Market Street
Newbury
RG14 5LD

Tel: 01635 519111
Fax: 01635 519408
Email: planningpolicy@westberks.gov.uk
Website: www.westberks.gov.uk