

# Annual Monitoring Report 2014

Employment, Town Centres and the Environment

## West Berkshire Local Plan



# Annual Monitoring Report 2014: Employment and the Environment

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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.

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 the preparation of the Local Plan. The AMR reports on progress towards meeting the timetable in the LDS. The current LDS was adopted by the Council in September 2013.

Progress on the Local Plan has been as follows:-

- **The Statement of Community Involvement (SCI)** was adopted in July 2006.
- **The West Berkshire Core Strategy DPD** (the Core Strategy) was adopted by the Council on 16 July 2012.
- **Housing Site Allocations DPD.** Work on the Housing Site Allocations (HSA) DPD is underway.
- **Minerals and Waste DPD.** Work on the Minerals and Waste DPD has now commenced.

The following Supplementary Planning Documents have been prepared since 1 April 2013:

- Delivering Investment from Sustainable Development SPD was adopted in June 2013 and took effect from 1 July 2013.
- Sandford Park, Newbury SPD was adopted in September 2013.
- Pirbright Institute site, Compton SPD was adopted in September 2013.
- Planning Obligations SPD was adopted on December 2014. It will apply, alongside the implementation of the Community Infrastructure Levy, to any planning applications or appeals determined on or after 1 April 2015 and will replace the current Delivering Investment from Sustainable Development SPD.

A Neighbourhood Development Area for the parish of Stratfield Mortimer was formally approved by the Council in February 2014. Work to produce a Neighbourhood Development Plan is underway.

### Monitoring the Key Elements of the Local Plan 2013/14

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

#### Main highlights of the monitoring exercise :-

**Business Development** – A total of 9,783 sq m of gross employment floorspace was developed in 2013/14, less than in 2012/13 (22,609 sq m). Most of the employment development was for B2 (general industrial) and B8 uses (storage and warehousing). A total of 152,793 sq m gross floorspace for B class uses remain outstanding across the District (it should be noted that this included a permission for a B1/A1/A3 use of 248 sq m whereby it is not possible to sub-divide the floorspace by use class).

**Town Centres** – Completed retail development across West Berkshire was lower than the previous year with a total of 1,318 sq m of gross internal floorspace completed.



## Background

**1.1** Under the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (as amended by Part 6 Section 113 of the Localism Act 2011) the Council is required to publish a regular monitoring report which monitors and reviews the progress made with the Local Plan and the extent to which its planning policies are being successfully implemented. Part 8 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 sets out the exact details of the requirement for the content of these 'authorities' monitoring reports.

**1.2** The Council produces its monitoring report on an annual basis. The Annual Monitoring Report (AMR) monitors the remaining policies of the West Berkshire District Local Plan 1991 - 2006 (saved policies 2007) as well as the policies in the West Berkshire Core Strategy, which was adopted in July 2012.

**1.3** This report covers the period of 12 months from the end of the last Annual Monitoring Report (AMR), i.e. 1 April 2013 to 31 March 2014. It builds on the format of previous years but is being published in separate sections. This section of the report covers monitoring of the employment and environment policies within the Local Plan. A second report covers the housing elements of plan monitoring.

## Planning Context

**1.4** The Development Plan for West Berkshire comprises 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 in 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 and the recently published Planning Practice Guidance replaced 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, has highlighted a number of key issues affecting West Berkshire which 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.

- **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 significantly with the proportion of over 65's projected to grow substantially.<sup>(1)</sup> Demographic changes will have implications for the type and size of housing required.
- **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** The Council has a Duty to Cooperate when preparing all DPDs. This Duty was introduced in the Localism Act of 2011 and requires us to work with neighbouring authorities and other prescribed bodies (Set out in Part 2 (4(1)) of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012) in preparing DPDs in order to address strategic issues relevant to our area. It requires that we engage constructively, actively and on an ongoing basis to develop strategic policies; and requires us to consider joint approaches to plan making. At the heart of the Duty is effective partnership working to achieve outcomes.

**1.16** The other local planning authorities and public bodies that we will need to cooperate with will depend on the strategic matters we are planning for and the most appropriate functional area to gather evidence and develop planning policies. It is likely that we will need to work in different groupings for different strategic matters.

**1.17** In May 2014 the Council produced a paper which set out how we will deal with strategic planning issues as part of the preparation of the West Berkshire Local Plan. In order to take forward the Duty to Cooperate in a holistic way we identified what we saw as the key strategic issues for West Berkshire both for the Local Plan as a whole and more specifically, the Housing Site Allocations Development Plan Document. We sought agreement on a finalised list of strategic issues for the Housing Site Allocations Development Plan Document and asked how interested public bodies would prefer to be involved in dealing with them so that we could then establish appropriate governance and support arrangements for taking them forward. Details of which bodies we consulted, a summary of the representations received, the Council's response and subsequent outcomes, are outlined in our Consultation Statement which we produced as part of our Preferred Options consultation in July 2014. We continue to progress this work in accordance with those outcomes.

**1.18** Across Berkshire we use the Memorandum of Understanding on Strategic Planning (MoU) signed by all the Berkshire unitary authorities to guide our approach to cooperation. In accordance with the MoU we continue to use existing partnerships and working groups to take issues forward as appropriate. At an officer level these include the Berkshire Development Plans Group (DPG) which reports to the Berkshire Heads of Planning (BHoP). At a member level this includes Berkshire Leaders (and occasional meeting of portfolio holders for specific issues).

# 1 Introduction

**1.19** As part of the work on our wider Local Plan this year we have continued to work strategically on transport and economic related issues at both an officer and member level. We have done this primarily through the Berkshire Strategic Transport Forum (BSTF) and the Thames Valley Berkshire Local Enterprise Partnership.

**1.20** During the year we have continued to work at both an officer and member level as a constituent member of the North Wessex Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) Council of Partners (CoP), a partnership body which was set up in 2001 to oversee the future of the AONB. The CoP prepares and reviews the statutory Management Plan for the AONB on behalf of its constituent local authorities. This sets out a strategic policy framework that reflects national and local issues to ensure the AONB's natural heritage, landscape and built character are conserved, the local economy is supported and use of the AONB for recreation is encouraged and helps ensure that the Council meets its duty under Section 85 of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000. We adopted the new Management Plan for 2014-2019 on 22 July 2014.

**1.21** At a strategic level we continue to ensure that we are achieving a net gain for biodiversity at a landscape scale by working at both an officer and member level through the Berkshire Local Nature Partnership (LNP).

**1.22** A small area in the south east of the District lies within 7km of the boundary of the Thames Basin Heaths

**1.23** Special Protection Area (SPA). Within this part of the District we use the Thames Basin Heaths SPA Delivery Framework (produced by the Thames Basin Heaths Joint Strategic Partnership) to guide assessment and any avoidance or mitigation measures that may be needed from potential new development. The provision of Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace (SANG) to attract new residents away from the SPA is a key part of these avoidance measures, together with strategic access management on the SPA and monitoring. No potential new developments have come forward this year, but the Council will explore opportunities for cross boundary working in this regard when appropriate.

## Monitoring Development Plan Policies

**1.24** 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. The Core Strategy sets out the indicators that will be used to monitor its policies.

**1.25** Monitoring follows an objectives- policies - targets - indicators approach. Where appropriate, strategic aims from the Sustainable Community Strategy update, published in 2011 <sup>(2)</sup>, as well as the Core Strategy objectives and policies and saved Local Plan policies are presented. Targets, whether local 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.



## 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 within West Berkshire are lower than average.

**Table 3.1 Economic Activity 2013-14**

	West Berkshire	South East	GB
<b>Economic Activity Rate</b> (percentage of working age population in employment or unemployed)	85.4%	79.9%	77.4%
<b>Unemployed</b> (unemployed of working age as percentage of economically active)	3.4%	4.8%	6.5%
<b>Job Seeker's Allowance Claimants</b> (percentage of working age population as at March 2014)	1%	1.8%	2.9%

Source: Nomis Official Labour Market Statistics: ONS annual population survey (April 2013 – March 2014)

**3.3** According to the Office for National Statistics (ONS), at December 2013, West Berkshire has a skilled labour force with 40.4% of working age population educated to HND, Degree and Higher Degree level, compared to 35.2% nationally<sup>(3)</sup>.

**Table 3.2 Business and Town Centres: Objectives**

<p><b>Sustainable Community Strategy Strategic Aims:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increase knowledge and skills in local businesses</li> <li>Increase the number of residents employed locally</li> <li>Increase the skills of local people</li> <li>Increase the economic prosperity of our Market Towns</li> </ul>
<p><b>Core Strategy Objective:</b></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>

## 3 Business Development and Town Centres

**Table 3.3 Business Development and Town Centres: Indicators and Policies**

Indicators	West Berkshire District Local Plan (Saved Policies)	West Berkshire Core Strategy Development Plan Document Policies
<p>Total amount of additional employment floorspace - by type</p> <p>Total amount of outstanding commitments - by type</p>	ECON.5: Town Centre Commercial Areas	ADPP2: Newbury ADPP3: Thatcham ADPP4: Eastern Area ADPP5: North Wessex Downs AONB ADPP6: The East Kennet Valley CS9: Location and type of business development CS10: The rural economy CS11: Hierarchy of centres CS12: Equestrian/racehorse industry
Total amount of floorspace for 'town centre uses'	ECON.5: Town Centre Commercial Areas SHOP.1: Non-retail Uses in Primary Shopping Frontages SHOP.3: Retail Areas and Retail Warehousing SHOP.5: The Encouragement of Local and Village Shops	ADPP2: Newbury ADPP3: Thatcham ADPP4: Eastern Area ADPP5: North Wessex Downs AONB ADPP6: The East Kennet Valley CS9: Location and type of business development CS10: The rural economy CS11: Hierarchy of centres
Amount of floorspace developed for employment by type, in employment or regeneration areas	ECON.5: Town Centre Commercial Areas ECON.6: Future of the former Greenham Common Airbase	ADPP2: Newbury ADPP3: Thatcham ADPP4: Eastern Area ADPP5: North Wessex Downs AONB ADPP6: The East Kennet Valley CS9: Location and type of business development CS10: The rural economy CS11: Hierarchy of centres CS12: Equestrian/racehorse industry
<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>	ECON.5: Town Centre Commercial Areas	ADPP2: Newbury ADPP3: Thatcham ADPP4: Eastern Area ADPP5: North Wessex Downs AONB ADPP6: The East Kennet Valley CS9: Location and type of business development CS10: The rural economy CS12: Equestrian/racehorse industry

## Business Development and Town Centres 3

Indicators	West Berkshire District Local Plan (Saved Policies)	West Berkshire Core Strategy Development Plan Document Policies
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

## Indicator

## Employment Completions and Commitments

- Total amount of additional employment floorspace - by type
- Total amount of outstanding commitments - by type

Table 3.4 Summary Table for Employment Completions and Commitments (square metres)

	B1a (Sqm)	B1b (Sqm)	B1c (Sqm)	B1* (Sqm)	B2/ SG* (Sqm)	B1,A2,A3* (Sqm)	B2 (Sqm)	B8 (Sqm)	Total (Sqm)
Gross completions	186	0	118	215	485	0	5,358	3,421	<b>9,783</b>
Net completions	-1997	0	-482	-4,049	0	0	511	3,319	<b>-2,698</b>
Outstanding (softs) in sqm	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	<b>0</b>
Gross outstanding (hards) in sqm	22,606	27,037	5,503	42,778	0	248	37,212	17,409	<b>152,793</b>

\* Unable to split use class.

Source: *Employment Commitments 2013/14, West Berkshire Council (WBC)*

## Commentary

**3.4** 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). It has not been possible to separate some use classes such as B2/SG and B1/A2/A3.

**3.5** Table 3.4 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 2013/14 is less than that of last year with 9,783 sq.m (gross) internal employment floorspace developed this year, compared to 22,609 sq.m last year. This variation is predominantly due to an 11,100 sq.m B1b development at New Greenham Park, which completed during the 2012/13 monitoring year. Appendix A sets out the total amount and type of completed employment floorspace since 2006/07 (the start of the Core Strategy plan period).

**3.6** Table 3.4 also indicates approximately 152,793 sq.m (gross) floorspace with planning permission for business uses (B class uses). There has also been a reduction in B1 and B1a net floorspace compared to last year.

## 3 Business Development and Town Centres

**Table 3.5 Floorspace completed for business use (square metres – gross internal floorspace) 2013/14**

GROSS FLOORSPACE (SQ.M.) - Completed	B1a Offices	B1b R & D	B1c Light Ind	B1 Business*	B2/ SG*	B2 General Ind	B8 Storage & Dist.	Total
Newbury Town Centre	0	0	0	215	0	0	0	215
Newbury/Thatcham Area	0	0	0	0	0	414	1740	2154
Rest of West Berkshire	186	0	118	0	485	4,944	1,681	7,414
<b>West Berkshire Total</b>	<b>186</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>118</b>	<b>215</b>	<b>485</b>	<b>5,358</b>	<b>3,421</b>	<b>9,783</b>

\* Unable to split use class.

Source: *Employment Commitments 2013/14 (WBC)*

### Commentary

3.7 Table 3.5 shows there were a limited number of gross completions within Newbury Town Centre and the wider Newbury/Thatcham area. The majority of B class uses employment floorspace completed in 2013/14 was within the Rest of West Berkshire area. The total amount of B-use class completions across the district is lower this year compared to 2012/13 (22,609 sq.m) and 2011/12 (30,422 sq.m). More detailed tables on employment completions are contained in Appendix A.

### Employment Land Available

**Total amount of outstanding commitments by type for which planning permission has been granted but not yet completed**

**Table 3.6 Outstanding commitments for business use at March 2014**

GROSS FLOORSPACE - (sqm) Outstanding	B1a Offices	B1/ A2/ A3*	B1b R&D	B1c Light Ind	Business B1*	B2 General Ind	B8 Storage & Dist.	Total
Newbury Town Centre	353	248	0	0	0	0	0	601
Newbury/ Thatcham Area	12,977	0	0	195	29,940	2,250	15,523	60,885
Rest of West Berkshire	9,276	0	27,037	5,308	12,838	34,962	1,886	91,307
<b>West Berkshire Total</b>	<b>22,606</b>	<b>248</b>	<b>27,037</b>	<b>5,503</b>	<b>42,778</b>	<b>37,212</b>	<b>17,409</b>	<b>152,793</b>

\* Unable to split use class.

Source: *Employment Commitments, 2013/14 (WBC)*.

3.8 Outstanding commitments are those for which planning permission has been granted but implementation is not yet complete. Table 3.6 shows outstanding commitments for business uses as at March 2014. Further details of outstanding commitments are shown in Table A.3 in Appendix A.



## Business Development and Town Centres 3

**3.9** 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.

**Policy Effectiveness:** 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, due to reasons outlined in paragraph 3.5, compared to 2011/12 and 2012/13, whilst outstanding commitments continue to be high.

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

**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.

### Indicator

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

**Table 3.7 Floorspace developed for employment use in Protected Employment Areas 2013/14 (Gross sqm)**

	Internal floorspace - square metres	Percentage of total completed employment floorspace (by use class)
<b>Business B1*</b>	0	0%
<b>Offices B1(a)</b>	0	0%
<b>Research and Development B1(b)</b>	0	0%
<b>Light Industry B1(c)</b>	0	0%
<b>General Industrial B2</b>	0	0%
<b>Storage/ Distribution B8</b>	0	0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0%</b>

\* Unable to split use class.

Source: *Employment Commitments, 2013/14 (WBC)*

### Commentary

**3.10** Table 3.7 shows the amount of employment floorspace developed within Protected Employment Areas (PEAs) as designated in the West Berkshire District Local Plan. Details of these are included in Appendix A. Table 3.6 shows that no B class use floorspace was completed within Protected Employment Areas during this monitoring period, although 330 sq.m of D2 floorspace was completed. There are 99,438 sq.m of outstanding commitments within PEAs.

### 3 Business Development and Town Centres

**Policy Effectiveness:** Policy allows for some economic development, particularly B1a (office), outside of designated Protected Employment Areas.

**Actions Required:** The production of Development Plan Documents are required to continue the emphasis on focusing business development in Protected Employment Areas and on Previously Developed Land, and encouraging a diverse economic base. A review of the role and function of Protected Employment Areas as part of the new Local Plan will assist in strengthening the role and status of these areas.

**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

## Indicator

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

Table 3.8 Losses of Employment Land to Alternative Uses 2012/13

Area	Site	Existing Use Class	Lost Floorspace (net sq m)
<b>Losses to completed residential use</b>			
Newbury Town Centre	Guildgate House, Pelican Lane	B1a	-380
	Oxford Court, 21 - 23 The Broadway	B1a	-313
	11 - 13 Market Place	B1a	-290
	3 Toomers Wharf, Canal Walk	B1a	-225
Thatcham	77-79 Bath Road	B1a	-240
	77-79 Bath Road	B1c	-600
	23-25 High Street	B1a	-190
Bradfield	The Old Dairy House, Maidenhatch, Pangbourne	B1	-284
Lambourn	Land At The Old Station Yard	B2	-667
<b>Total losses to completed residential use</b>			<b>-3,189</b>
<b>Losses to completed alternative uses</b>			
Newbury Town Centre	21 - 23 The Broadway	B1a	-215
Tadley	Falcon Garage, Burghfield Road	B2	-50
<b>Total losses to completed alternative uses in Protected Employment Areas</b>			
London Road Industrial Estate, Newbury	Unit Q3, Faraday Road	B1a	-330
<b>Total losses to completed alternative uses outside of Protected Employment Areas</b>			<b>-265</b>
<b>Total losses to completed alternative uses</b>			<b>-595</b>
<b>Total losses of employment floorspace across the District</b>			<b>-3,784</b>

Source: Employment Commitments, 2013/14 (WBC)

## 3 Business Development and Town Centres

### Commentary

**3.11** The Core Strategy allows for alternative uses for employment sites, other than for the protected areas subject to policy CS9. There have been losses of employment land across the District, to both residential uses (-3,189 sqm) and alternative uses (-595sqm). Changes to permitted development introduced in May 2013, including that to allow change of use of offices to residential use without the need for planning permission, will need to be monitored through the prior approval process. In the 2013/14 monitoring year, 380 sqm of office floorspace was lost as a result of the changes to permitted development.

**3.12** Within Newbury town centre a total of 1,208 sqm of B1a office space has been lost to residential use, creating 14 residential units. This is an increase on the previous year.

**3.13** Overall, Table 3.8 depicts that over the last year a total of 3,784 sqm of employment floorspace (B uses) has been lost to alternative uses across the District, including residential. Of this total 330 sqm of B uses has been lost within Protected Employment Areas, a reduction on the previous year. 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 one Protected Employment Area. Despite this, the policies have been effective in retaining Protected Employment Areas for employment use, with only one completed loss to an alternative use 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. The changes to permitted development will impact on the effectiveness of these local policies and their effect will need to be monitored.

**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

**3.14** The Core Strategy identifies six town and district centres: the major town centre of Newbury, which is the principal shopping and leisure destination in the District, the smaller town centres of Thatcham and Hungerford, and the three district centres of Lambourn, Pangbourne and Theale. The Core Strategy seeks to encourage mixed uses in existing town and district 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.

**3.15** At present Lambourn, although defined as a district centre given its role and function, does not have a town centre commercial boundary, and is therefore not recorded in Table 3.9. The designation of a town centre commercial boundary will be assessed through the production of the new Local Plan.

**3.16** The completion of the Parkway scheme in 2011/12 has significantly boosted the retail offer within Newbury town centre. The Newbury Vision document 'Newbury 2025', published in October 2003, sets out the long term vision for Newbury and its role in supporting the surrounding villages and rural area. The implementation of Parkway was one of the key outcomes from this vision. The 'Newbury 2025' document is currently being revised.

## 3 Business Development and Town Centres

### Indicator

Total amount of floorspace for 'town centre uses'

Table 3.1 Completed floorspace (sqm gross & net) for town centre uses within town centres and the District

	Square metres	A1	A2	B1a	D2	Total	A1/A3*	B1*
<b>Newbury town centre</b>	Gross	78	0	0	2,048	<b>2,126</b>	266	215
	Net	-1,184	-398	-1,423	1,880	<b>-1,125</b>	266	215
<b>Hungerford town centre</b>	Gross	0	0	0	0	<b>0</b>	0	0
	Net	0	0	0	0	<b>0</b>	0	0
<b>Pangbourne district centre</b>	Gross	0	0	0	0	<b>0</b>	0	0
	Net	0	0	0	0	<b>0</b>	0	0
<b>Thatcham town centre</b>	Gross	-13	0	0	0	<b>-13</b>	0	0
	Net	-13	0	-190	0	<b>-203</b>	0	0
<b>Theale district centre</b>	Gross	0	0	0	0	<b>0</b>	0	0
	Net	0	0	0	0	<b>0</b>	0	0
<b>Town/District Centres Total</b>	<b>Gross</b>	<b>65</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>2,048</b>	<b>2,113</b>	<b>266</b>	<b>215</b>
<b>Town/District Centres Total</b>	<b>Net</b>	<b>-1,197</b>	<b>-398</b>	<b>-1,613</b>	<b>1,880</b>	<b>-1,328</b>	<b>266</b>	<b>215</b>
<b>Newbury/Thatcham Area (exc. Town/District Centres)</b>	Gross	0	0	0	330	<b>330</b>	0	0
	Net	-107	-505	-570	210	<b>-972</b>	0	0
<b>Rest West Berkshire (exc. Town/District Centres)</b>	Gross	1,253	0	186	244	<b>1,683</b>	0	0
	Net	662	0	186	174	<b>1,022</b>	0	-4,264
<b>West Berkshire Total</b>	<b>Gross</b>	<b>1,318</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>186</b>	<b>2,622</b>	<b>4,126</b>	<b>266</b>	<b>215</b>
	<b>Net</b>	<b>-642</b>	<b>-903</b>	<b>-1,997</b>	<b>2,264</b>	<b>-1,278</b>	<b>266</b>	<b>-4,049</b>
<b>Percentage completed in town centres</b>	<b>Gross</b>	<b>4.9%</b>	<b>0%</b>	<b>0%</b>	<b>78%</b>	-	<b>100%</b>	
<b>Percentage completed in town centres</b>	<b>Net</b>	<b>0%</b>	<b>0%</b>	<b>0%</b>	<b>83%</b>	-	<b>100%</b>	

Source: Employment Commitments, 2013/2014 (WBC)

### Commentary

**3.4** Retail completions across West Berkshire in 2013/14 have continued to decline, and there has been a net loss of A1 floorspace. This can partly be attributed to the loss of A1 floorspace to a D2 use (gym) at Parkway in Newbury Town Centre.

**3.5** Of the 1,318 sq metres (gross) completed for retail use, only 4.9% was completed in town centres (in Newbury), a reduction on the previous year.

**3.6** There has been a net loss of A2 and B1a uses not only within the town and district centres, but across the rest of the district too. There has, however, been an increase in the amount of floorspace completed for D2 uses.

**3.7** The table below sets out the level of development activity for town centre uses within Newbury town centre since the start of the Core Strategy plan period (2006/07 - 2013/14).

## Business Development and Town Centres 3

**Table 3.10 Completed floorspace (gross & net) for town centre uses within Newbury town centre (2006/07 - 2013/14)**

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	-967
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
2012/13	gross	3,622	128	0	0	3,750
	net	3,074	24	-235	0	2,863
2013/14	gross	78	0	0	2,048	2,156
	net	-1,184	-398	-1,423	1,880	-1,125
Total 2006/07 - 2013/14	gross	32,836	1,803	471	4,384	37,624
	net	25,342	80	-8,785	4,216	20,853

**3.21** It is evident from Table 3.9 that over the past 8 years Newbury town centre has seen an overall net gain in town centre uses of 20,853sqm. There has been a net loss of 8,785sqm of B1a office floorspace 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. The effect of recent changes to permitted development allowing conversion of offices to residential use without the need for planning permission will need to be monitored over the next few years.

### 3 Business Development and Town Centres

**Policy Effectiveness:** Current economic conditions have seen office development decrease over the plan period. With the development of Parkway, Newbury town centre remains vibrant.

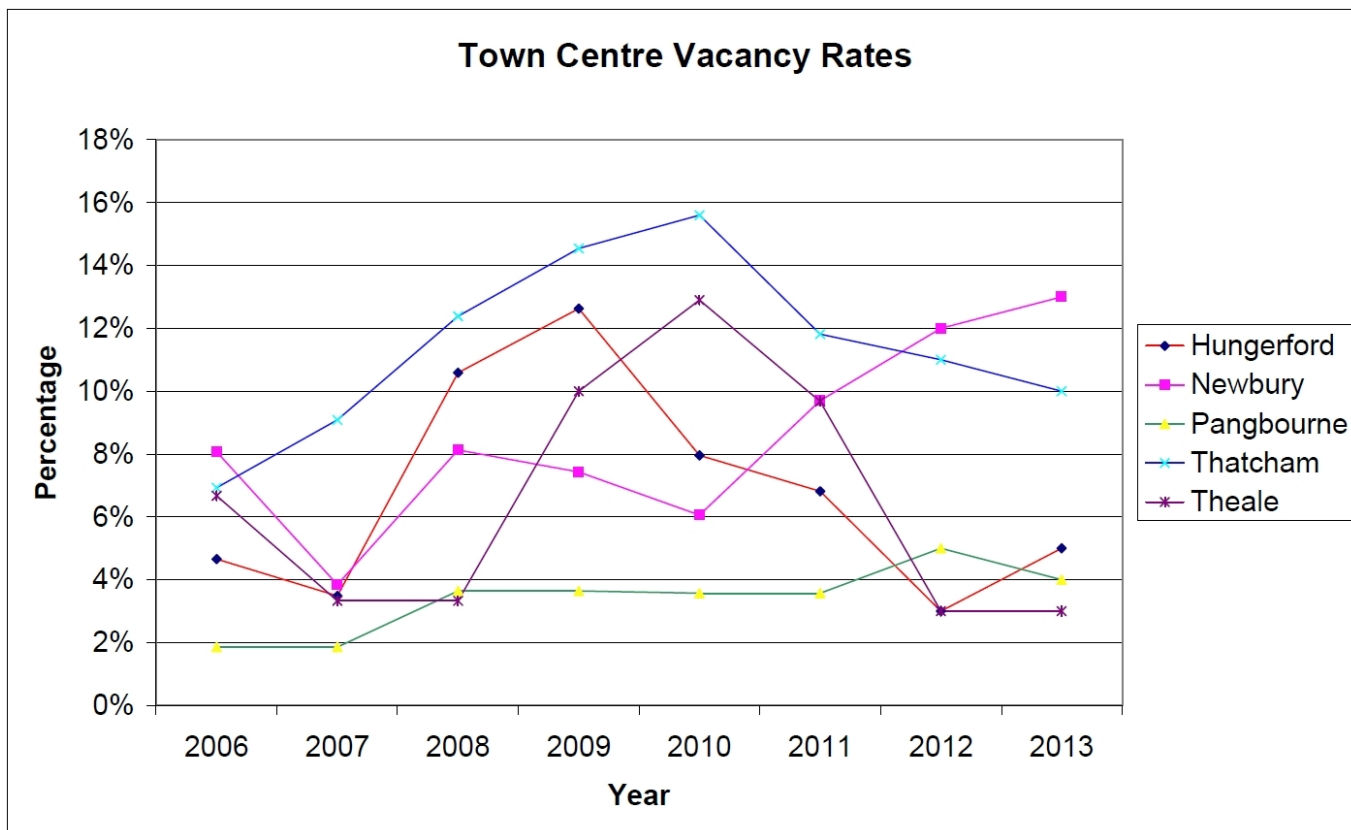
**Actions Required:** Encourage the retention of office floorspace in town centres through Development Plan Documents.

**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.

**Indicator**

**Amount of vacant retail units in town centres**

Figure 3.1



**Commentary**

**3.22** The graph above shows vacancy rates in the retail centres of the District with town centre boundaries. Vacancy rates within these centres have continued to be low over the past year. The slight increase in the percentage of vacant units in Newbury is partly due to the development of approximately 40 units in the 'Parkway' development.

**3.23** 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.

**3.24** Vacancy rates for Lambourn, Mortimer and Kintbury over the period 2006 – 2013 are set out in Appendix B of this document. Vacancy rates in these centres are low but are based on only a small number of units.



## Business Development and Town Centres 3

**3.25** Vacancies recorded are for retail units (use classes A1 to A5) plus other appropriate town centre uses (such as use classes D1, D2 and sui generis).

**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.

## 4 The Environment

### The Environment

**Table 4.1 The Environment: Objectives**

<p><b>Sustainable Community Strategy Strategic Aims:</b></p> <p>Reduce the carbon footprint of the District</p> <p>Increase the use of local food and resources</p> <p>Improve the health and wellbeing of local people</p>
<p><b>Core Strategy Strategic Objectives:</b></p> <p>To exceed 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.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>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.</p>
<p><b>WBDLP Objectives:</b></p> <p>To conserve resources and minimise the impacts of development.</p>

**Table 4.2 The Environment: Indicators and Policies**

Indicators	West Berkshire District Local Plan Policies	West Berkshire adopted Core Strategy (July 2012) Policies
Number of planning applications granted contrary to Environment Agency advice on flooding and water quality grounds		<b>CS16:</b> Flooding
Change in areas of biodiversity importance Condition of SSSIs Distribution and status of selected species		<b>CS17:</b> 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.		<b>CS19:</b> Historic environment and landscape character
Amount of eligible open spaces managed to Green Flag Award Standards	<b>RL.1:</b> Public Open Space Provision in Residential Development Schemes <b>RL.3:</b> The Selection of Public Open Space and Recreation Sites	<b>CS19:</b> Green infrastructure

## The Environment 4

Indicators	West Berkshire District Local Plan Policies	West Berkshire adopted Core Strategy (July 2012) Policies
Renewable Energy Generation		<b>CS16:</b> Renewable, low and zero carbon energy

## FLOOD PROTECTION AND WATER QUALITY

**4.1** The provision of services, particularly water and sewage, can have significant implications for local environments. The Local Plan aims to maintain water quality, ensure that development is generally not located in areas liable to flooding, to conserve and enhance the environmental qualities of water courses and to promote the efficient use of 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. <sup>(4)</sup> A Strategic Flood Risk Assessment for the District has been completed and is available on the Council's website.

### Indicator

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

**Table 4.3 Applications granted contrary to EA advice**

Flooding	Water Quality	Total
0	0	0

**4.3** There were no planning applications approved contrary to Environment Agency advice during this monitoring period.

**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

**4.4** 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.

**4.5** 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.

## 4 The Environment

### Indicator

#### Change in areas of biodiversity and geodiversity importance

#### Changes in areas designated for their intrinsic environmental value

Table 4.4 Areas Designated for their Intrinsic Environmental Value

	No. of Sites	Area in hectares (2010)	Area in hectares (2011)	Area in hectares (2012)	As % of West Berkshire	Details of change
<b>Special Areas of Conservation (SACs)</b>	3	154.04	154.04	154.04	0.22	None - stable
<b>Special Protection Areas (SPAs)</b>	0	0	0	0	0	None - stable
<b>Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs)</b>	51	1,348.86	1,348.86	1,348.86	1.92	None - stable
<b>Local Wildlife Sites (LWS)</b>	460	6320.80	6320.80	6,112.00	9.00	None - no recording undertaken
<b>Local Geological Sites (LGS)</b>	7	150.70	156.00	156.00	0.21	None - stable
<b>Local Nature Reserves (LNR)</b>	3	67.31	67.31	67.31	0.10	None - stable

4.6 There has been no change in the area of sites of international and national significance i.e. SACs, SPAs and SSSIs since 2008. No recording has been undertaken for Local Wildlife Sites and Local Geological Sites since 2009.

#### Commentary

4.7 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.

4.8 The change in area of Local Wildlife Sites in 2012 is due to more accurate mapping of boundaries and not an actual decrease in Local Wildlife Site area.

## Change in area of UK BAP Priority Habitat

Table 4.5 UK BAP Priority Habitats in West Berkshire

UK BAP priority habitat type	Area (ha) 2009	Area (ha) 2010	Area (ha) 2011	Area (ha) 2012	% of Berkshire context 2012
Arable field margins	Not known	Not known	Not known	Not known	Not known
Coastal & floodplain grazing marsh	1,602.0	1,424.1	1,424.13	1216.0	60
Eutrophic standing waters	526.9	528.65	526.97	531.0	36
Fens	Not given	36.04	36.02	33.0	31
Hedgerows	Not known	Not known	Not known	Not known	Not known
Lowland beech and yew woodland	228.8	228.14	228.15	229.0	53
Lowland calcareous grassland	184.4	184.36	184.36	184.0	88
Lowland dry acid grassland	10.6	18.75	18.76	29.0	20
Lowland heathland	273.2	252.43	175.13	163.0	42
Lowland meadows	107.0	107.01	106.99	132.0	52
Lowland mixed deciduous woodland	4,264	4,997.26	4,897.47	4,983.0	59
Mesotrophic lakes (new)	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0
Oligotrophic and dystrophic lakes	Not known	Not known	Not known	Not known	Not known
Open mosaic habitats on previously developed land	Not known	Not known	8.52	9.0	100
Ponds	2.2	2.2	2.19	2.0	15
Purple moor grass and rush pastures	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0
Reedbeds	36.0	35.76	35.76	38.0	89
Rivers	132.1	131.96	131.95	137.0	85
Traditional orchards	Not known	56.05	56.21	60.0	41
Wet woodland	288.9	291.14	291.19	286.0	61
Wood pasture and parkland	385.7	385.74	385.74	330.0	36
<b>Total area of BAP priority habitat</b>	<b>8,052.3</b>	<b>8,679.6</b>	<b>8,599.52</b>	<b>8,360.0</b>	

Source: Thames Valley Environmental Records Centre (TVERC), October 2013

**4.9** The total area of UK Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) priority habitat in the District has been calculated at 8,360 ha. The extent of individual BAP priority habitats in West Berkshire is given in Table 4.5. The changes in the habitats are attributable to new information provided by a review of previous Local Wildlife Site survey habitat mapping and recent updates in habitat inventories.

## 4 The Environment

### Commentary

**4.10** As in previous years, changes to last year's figures generally represent improvements in our knowledge of the existing habitat resource rather than an actual, on the ground change in the extent of the habitat. Tabulated data represent a refinement of the baseline position as new mapping of site survey data is undertaken and the re-interpretation of existing mapping (based on expert knowledge and technical mapping methodology issues) has taken place. This has resulted in relatively minor changes in some of the habitat resource both at a local and a county level.

**4.11** The reduced area of coastal and floodplain grazing marsh and lowland heathland was down to more accurate mapping rather than a reduction in habitat. The reduction in lowland fens and increase in reedbeds was due to reclassification following survey.

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

**Table 4.6 Proportion of Local Sites where positive conservation management has been or is being implemented**

West Berkshire	Total of sites	Sites qualifying under Criteria				Total	SDL 160
		1	2	3	4		
2012/13	473	178	30	21	8	199	42%
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%
<b>Berkshire total 2012/13</b>	<b>765</b>	<b>235</b>	<b>101</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>321</b>	<b>42%</b>

Source: TVERC from DEFRA, October 2013

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

### Commentary

**4.12** This indicator calculates the number of Local Wildlife Sites and Local Geological Sites that can be said to be in or have been in positive conservation management in the five year period to 31st March 2013. 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.



**4.13** There was an increase of 6% in the proportion of sites in positive conservation management in West Berkshire from 36% to 42%. The number of Local Wildlife Sites stayed the same, but the number of qualifying sites increased by 30, due to 11 more sites having a site management plan and meeting criteria 1 and a net total of 20 more sites being in woodland grant schemes than last year. The overall figure for Berkshire for 2012/13 was 42%, an increase of 3% from the previous year.

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

## Indicator

### Condition of SSSIs

**Table 4.7 Condition of SSSIs**

Condition	No. of units or part units 2012	Ha. in 2012	% of total SSSI in District							
			2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
Favourable	73	739	63	63	63	66.7	66.9	53.17	53.74	54.00
Unfavourable recovering	24	445	18	20	20	20.0	19.8	35.78	37.51	33.00
Unfavourable no change	10	167	16	16	16	11.7	10.8	8.59	8.11	12.00
Unfavourable declining	4	9	3	2	2	1.6	2.5	2.46	0.63	Less than 1
TOTAL	111	1,360	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.00	100.00

Source: TVERC from Natural England, 2013

**4.15** There are 51 SSSIs wholly or partly within West Berkshire, representing approximately 2% of the land area. Data on condition of SSSIs, derived from work by Natural England is presented in Table 4.7. The data has been collected over a period from 2000 – 2013. Twelve sites were assessed between 2012-13. Changes for 2012 include Boxford Water Meadows (units 1 and 2) changing from favourable in 2008 to unfavourable recovering in 2012; Inkpen and Walbury Hills (unit 5) changing from unfavourable recovering in 2007 to favourable in 2012; Greenham and Crookham Commons (unit 2) changing from unfavourable recovering in 2009 to unfavourable no change in 2012 and Chilton Foliat Meadows (unit 5) changing from unfavourable recovering in 2010 to unfavourable no change in 2012.

**4.16** The data shows that 87% of the area of SSSIs is considered to be in either a favourable or unfavourable recovering condition.

## Distribution and status of selected species

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

## 4 The Environment

**Table 4.8 Water vole records in West Berkshire**

Year	Number of sites surveyed in Berkshire (per 500m stretch)	Number of sites surveyed in West Berkshire
2012	115 (47 positive)	105 (48 positive)
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

Source: TVERC from BBOWT 2013

**4.18** In 2012/13, of the 105 known potential sites for water vole that were surveyed, 48 sites still had water vole present. 57 had no further evidence of their presence.

### Commentary

**4.19** 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 2012 revealed that water vole populations in areas surveyed this year in West Berkshire remained stable. There have, however, been short term declines along the River Lambourn.

**4.20** 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.

### Distribution and status of farmland birds

**4.21** 17 of the 19 farmland bird species were recorded with the tree sparrow and turtle dove failing to be observed. Specialist farmland bird species such as the yellowhammer were recorded in fewer numbers in 2012. Other species maintained or slightly increased their numbers.

### Commentary

**4.22** 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

## The Environment 4

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.

**4.23** The data for West Berkshire shows that the specialists are generally in decline during the survey period. The apparent loss of tree sparrow is indicative of the scale of the decline of the farmland specialists. 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

### Indicator

#### Number of listed buildings at risk

**Table 4.9 Listed Buildings on the Heritage at Risk Register**

Site Names	Designation	Condition
Chapel of St Leonard, east of Manor Farmhouse, Brimpton Road, Brimpton	Listed Building Grade II*	Good
Pair of gate piers 204 metres east of entrance to Home Farm, Park Lane, Hamstead Marshall	Listed Building Grade I	Poor
Three pairs of gate piers and walls around gardens and terrace at Home Farm, Park Lane, Hamstead Marshall	Listed Building Grade I	Very Bad

**4.24** The 2013 Heritage at Risk Register published by English Heritage includes three Grade I and II\* buildings in West Berkshire, which are listed above in Table 4.9 This figure has reduced from eight buildings at risk in the previous reporting year.

**4.25** Also included on the Risk Register are three registered Parks and Gardens, which are located at Aldermaston Court, Sandford Priory and Shaw House in Newbury. In addition, there are eight Scheduled Monuments, throughout the District and one Battlefield site in Newbury that are also on the Risk Register.

## 4 The Environment

### Indicator

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 4.10 Conservation Areas**

	No of Conservation Areas 2011	% of total	No of Conservation Areas 2012	% of total	No of Conservation Areas 2013	% 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

**4.26** There are 53 Conservation Areas in West Berkshire. Conservation Area Appraisals (CAAs) have been completed for Streatley and Peasemore 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:** The continued production of Conservation Area Appraisals and management proposals.

**Significant Sustainability Effects:** The conservation and enhancement of heritage assets has helped to protect and enhance the local distinctive character and identity of the various towns and villages across the District.

### OPEN SPACE

Amount of eligible open spaces managed to Green Flag Award Standards

**4.27** 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

**4.28** In line with the NPPF, the Council will be undertaking an up to date assessment of the needs for open space, sports and recreation facilities and opportunities for new provision in West Berkshire. Once completed the assessment will enable detailed standards for open space provision to be defined through the new Local Plan.

**4.29** 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.

## The Environment 4

**4.30** The Council has set out its strategic approach towards Green Infrastructure through the Core Strategy. More detailed standards for open space provision will be defined through the a new Local Plan.

**Policy Effectiveness:** No indication that policies are proving ineffective.

**Actions Required:** Completion of an up to date assessment of the needs for open space, sports and recreation facilities and opportunities for new provision in West Berkshire in accordance with the NPPF. Detailed standards will be defined through the new Local Plan.

**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

## Indicator

## Renewable energy generation

**4.31** The data reported in table 6.7 below has been collated by T V Energy, <sup>(5)</sup> and was collected from installer surveys sent out by TV Energy and this was supplemented with data obtained from Feed in Tariff (FIT)<sup>(6)</sup> and Renewable Obligation (RO) installation reports and certificate statistics, published by Ofgem.

**4.32** The Government's requirement to report on core output indicators has been removed. However, 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.'<sup>(7)</sup>

**Table 4.11 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 1/4/12 and 31/3/13(MW)	0.005	0.929	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.934
Cumulative total of installed electric capacity up to 31/3/13 (MW)	0.038	3.538	0	0.346	0	0	0	0	0	3.922

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](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>

## 4 The Environment

**4.33** For a second consecutive year, there has been a significant increase in the level of renewable energy generated through solar photovoltaic (PV) installations. This could be linked to the introduction of the Feed in Tariff (FiT) by the Department of Energy and Climate Change on the 1<sup>st</sup> April 2010. FiTs are intended to encourage the installation of additional small-scale (less than 5MW) low-carbon electricity generation.

**4.34** This tariff scheme allows people to invest in small-scale low-carbon electricity. In return for a guaranteed payment from an electricity supplier for the electricity they generate and use, as well as a guaranteed payment for unused surplus electricity they export back to the grid.

**4.35** The data supplied by TV Energy demonstrates the increase in level of PV energy installed during this reporting period in comparison to previous years. Whilst TV Energy haven't supplied any specific installation data due to the confidential nature of some of the projects, it is apparent from reviewing the number and size of applications submitted, that this source of renewable energy is being generated from a number of relatively small scale installations across the District, as opposed to a few large scale installations, as the FiT scheme intended. 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:

**4.36** 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.

**4.37** In addition, policy CS15 of the submitted Core Strategy requires major development to generate a certain proportion of its energy from renewable sources. <sup>(8)</sup>

**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.



## 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.

**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.

## A Business Development

**Table A.1 Employment Structure – Employee Jobs**

	West Berkshire percentage (%)	South East percentage (%)	GB percentage (%)
Primary Services (agriculture and mining)	0.2	0.2	0.3
Energy and Water	1.3	1.0	1.1
Manufacturing	11.7	6.4	8.5
Construction	5.0	4.7	4.4
Services	81.9	87.7	85.7
Wholesale and retail, including motor trades	17.8	17.3	15.9
Transport storage	2.6	4.1	4.5
Accommodation and food services	6.0	7.3	7.0
Information and communication	11.9	6.3	4.0
Financial and other business services	18.5	20.8	21.8
Public admin, education and health	18.2	26.6	28.0
Other Services	6.9	5.2	4.6
<b>Total employee jobs</b>	87,400	-	-

Source: Nomis Official Labour Market Statistics: ONS annual business inquiry employee analysis (2013)

## Business Development A

Table A.2 Employment Completions 2013/14

Gross floorspace (sq.m. internal) - Completed	B1a	B1b	B1c	B1*	B2	B8	B2/SG*
Newbury Town Centre	0	0	0	215	0	0	0
Castle Estate, Newbury	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Hambridge Rd/Hambridge La, Newbury	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
London Rd Industrial Estate, Newbury	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Newbury Business Park	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Turnpike Estate, Newbury	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
New Greenham Park ( <i>not a Protected Employment Area</i> )	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Colthrop Estate, Thatcham	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Green Lane, Thatcham	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Rest of Newbury and Thatcham Area</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>414</b>	<b>1,740</b>	<b>0</b>
Calleva Park, Aldermaston	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Paices Hill, Aldermaston	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Beenham Industrial Area	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Red Shute Hill Hermitage	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Station Yard, Hungerford	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Smitham Bridge (Hungerford Trading Estate)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Charnham Park, Hungerford	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Membury Estate, Lambourn	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Lowesdon Works, Lambourn	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Horseshoe Park, Pangbourne	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Arlington Business Park, Theale	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Station Road & adj estates, Theale	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Theale Lakes at Sheffield Bottom, Theale	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Rest of West Berkshire</b>	<b>186</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>118</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>4,944</b>	<b>1,681</b>	<b>485</b>
<b>Total for all Employment Sites</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>West Berkshire Total</b>	<b>186</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>118</b>	<b>215</b>	<b>5,358</b>	<b>3,421</b>	<b>485</b>

\* Unable to split use class.

Source: *Employment Commitments 2013/14 (WBC)*

# A Business Development

**Table A.3 Planning Permissions (Hard Commitments) Outstanding at March 2014- Net\* 2013/14**

Net Change in Floorspace (sq.m. internal)	A1	A2	B1a	B1b	B1c	B1**	B2	B8	B1/A1/A3*	OTHER
Newbury Town Centre	-787	-933	-11,252	0	-56	0	0	0	248	1,621
Castle Estate, Newbury	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Hambridge Rd/Hambridge La, Newbury	0	0	1,500.4	0	0	0	0	-2,305	0	2,305
London Rd Industrial Estate, Newbury	1,200		7,700	0	0	0	-1,037	0	0	7,051
Newbury Business Park	0	0	2,970	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Turnpike Estate, Newbury	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
New Greenham Park ( <i>not a Protected Employment Area</i> )	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3,081	0	1,202
Colthrop Estate, Thatcham	0	0	0	0	195	29,940	1,750	10,459	0	0
Green Lane, Thatcham	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Rest of Newbury and Thatcham Area	160.25	0	-129.5	0	-2,964.2	0	-232	-769	0	37,427
<b>Total for Newbury/ Thatcham Area</b>	<b>573.25</b>	<b>-933</b>	<b>788.9</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>-2,825.2</b>	<b>29,940</b>	<b>481</b>	<b>10,466</b>	<b>248</b>	<b>49,606</b>
Calleva Park, Aldermaston	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Paices Hill, Aldermaston	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Beenham Industrial Area, Beenham	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Red Shute Hill, Hermitage	0	0	0	0	0	560	0	0	0	0
Station Yard, Hungerford	0	0	570	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Smitham Bridge (Hungerford Trading Estate)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Charnham Park, Hungerford	0	0	0	0	0	5992	0	0	0	0
Membury Estate, Lambourn	0	0	150	0	549	0	0	190	0	2,395
Lowesdon Works, Lambourn	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Horseshoe Park, Pangbourne	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Arlington Business Park, Theale	0	0	9,785	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Station Road & adj. Estates, Theale	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Theale Lakes at Sheffield Bottom, Theale	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Rest of West Berkshire</b>	<b>24,355</b>	<b>-146.3</b>	<b>-11,677.2</b>	<b>27,037</b>	<b>2,965</b>	<b>4,276</b>	<b>24,546</b>	<b>-275.8</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>81,209</b>
<b>Total for Rest of West Berkshire</b>	<b>24,355</b>	<b>-146.3</b>	<b>-11,722</b>	<b>27,037</b>	<b>3,514</b>	<b>10,828</b>	<b>24,546</b>	<b>-85.8</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>83,604</b>
<b>WEST BERKSHIRE TOTAL</b>	<b>24,928.25</b>	<b>-1,145</b>	<b>-10,933.1</b>	<b>27,037</b>	<b>688.8</b>	<b>40,768</b>	<b>25,027</b>	<b>10,380.2</b>	<b>248</b>	<b>133,210</b>

\*Includes developments not started &amp; under construction.

\*\* Unable to split use classes

Source: *Employment Commitments 2013/14 (WBC)*

## Business Development A

Table A.4 B Class Uses Completions 2006/07 - 2013/14 Internal Floorspace (sqm)

		B1a	B1b	B1c	B1*	Total B1 (B1/a/b/c)	B2	B8	B1-B8*	Total	B2/SG*
<b>2006/07</b>											
	<b>gross</b>	4,723	0	5,417	0	10,140	7,875	853	0	<b>18,868</b>	<b>0</b>
	<b>net</b>	1,890	0	-2,266	0	-376	2,095	634	-3,302	<b>-949</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>2007/08</b>											
	<b>gross</b>	22,519	0	2,338	515	25,372	439	9,704	29,552	<b>65,067</b>	<b>0</b>
	<b>net</b>	19,795	0	1,298	-2,979	18,114	-4,427	8,799	29,552	<b>52,038</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>2008/09</b>											
	<b>gross</b>	25,549	0	2,528	0	28,077	7,068	2,975	0	<b>38,120</b>	<b>0</b>
	<b>net</b>	22,395	0	2,424	0	24,819	5,967	-7,525	0	<b>23,261</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>2009/10</b>											
	<b>gross</b>	870	2,406	214	0	3,490	3,034	2,686	0	<b>9,210</b>	<b>0</b>
	<b>net</b>	-2,651	2,406	-3,006	-621	-3,872	2,512	1,245	-1,213	<b>-1,328</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>2010/11</b>											
	<b>gross</b>	1,553	0	778	2,807	5,138	23,796	4,109	0	<b>33,043</b>	<b>0</b>
	<b>net</b>	-2,203	0	89	2,807	693	23,103	3,408	0	<b>27,204</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>2011/12</b>											
	<b>gross</b>	3,831	0	2,130	17,845	23,806	1,936	4,680	0	<b>30,422</b>	<b>0</b>
	<b>net</b>	1,132	0	1,696	11,254	14,082	1,936	3,182	0	<b>19,200</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>2012/13</b>											
	<b>gross</b>	6,180	11,100	593	1,300	19,173	2,448	988	3,436	<b>22,609</b>	<b>0</b>
	<b>net</b>	3,057	10,878	-844	1,300	14,391	2,341	-695	1,646	<b>16,037</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>2013/14</b>											
	<b>gross</b>	186	0	118	215	519	5,358	3,421	0	<b>9,298</b>	<b>485</b>
	<b>net</b>	-1,997	0	-482	-4,049	-6,528	511	3,319	0	<b>-2,698</b>	<b>485</b>
<b>Total 2006-14</b>											
	<b>gross</b>	<b>65,411</b>	<b>13,506</b>	<b>14,116</b>	<b>22,322</b>	<b>115,715</b>	<b>51,954</b>	<b>29,416</b>	<b>32,988</b>	<b>226,637</b>	<b>485</b>
	<b>net</b>	<b>41,418</b>	<b>13,284</b>	<b>-1,091</b>	<b>7,712</b>	<b>61,323</b>	<b>34,038</b>	<b>12,367</b>	<b>26,683</b>	<b>132,765</b>	<b>485</b>

\* Unable to split use classes

Source: Employment Commitments JSPU 2006-2010, WBC 2013/14

## A Business Development

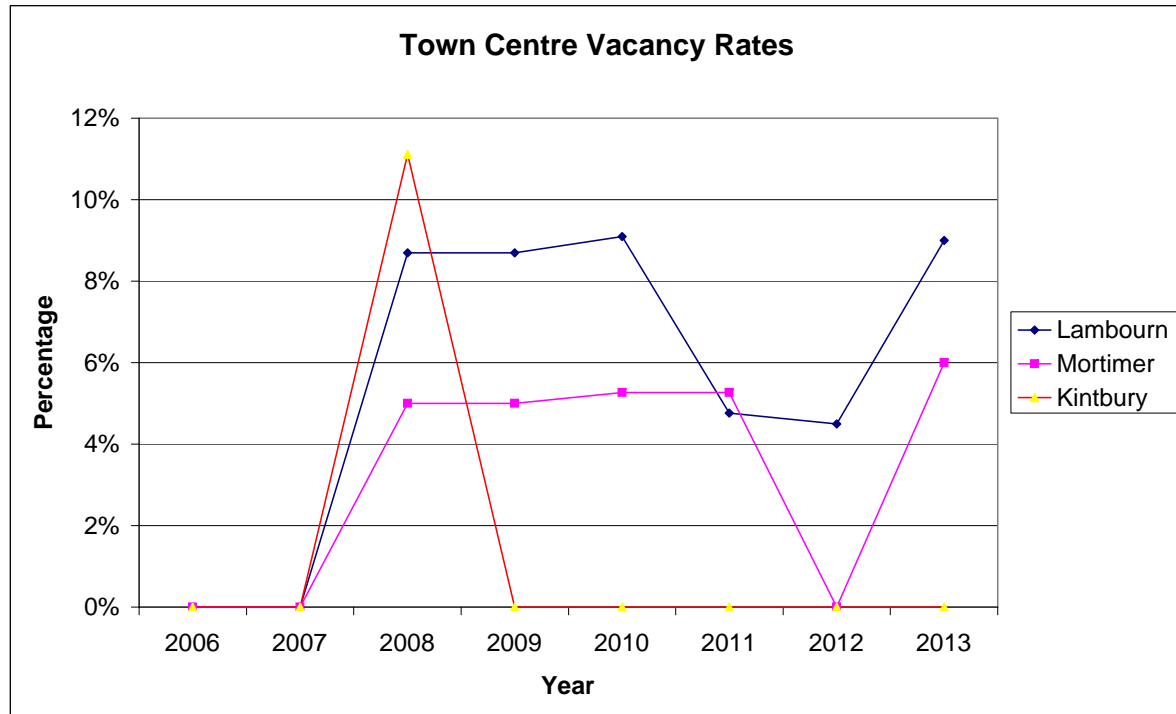
**Table A.5 Protected Employment Areas (Areas where policy CS9 of West Berkshire Core Strategy applies)**

	Area (hectares)		Area (hectares)
<b>Newbury</b>		<b>Aldermaston</b>	
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	<b>Beenham Industrial Area</b>	21.4
Castle Estate Newbury	1.8		
		<b>Lambourn</b>	
<b>Thatcham</b>		Membury	21.9
Green Lane Thatcham	0.7	Lowesdon Works	2.7
Colthrop Estate Thatcham	88.7		
		<b>Theale</b>	
<b>Hungerford</b>		Arlington / Station Road Theale	50.4
Smitham Bridge Road	1.3	Sheffield Bottom Theale	1.7
Charnham Park	9.8		
Station Road	5.3	<b>Hermitage - Red Shute Hill</b>	4.0
		<b>Pangbourne - Horseshoe Park</b>	1.2



## Town Centre Vacancy Rates B

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 2002-2013**

Year	Newbury	Thatcham	Hungerford	Theale	Pangbourne	Lambourn	Motimer	Kintbury
2002	7		4	7	2			
2003	7	8	5	7	2			
2004	5	3	4	3	0			
2005	9	7	5	3	2			
2006	8	7	5	7	2	0	0	0
2007	4	9	3	3	2	0	0	0
2008	8	12	11	3	4	9	5	11
2009	7	14	13	10	4	9	5	0
2010	6	16	8	13	4	9	5	0
2011	10	12	7	10	4	5	5	0
2012	12	11	3	3	5	5	0	0
2013	13	10	5	3	4	9	6	0

## C Biodiversity

### Changes in area of biodiversity importance

#### Information sources

Special Areas of Conservation (SAC) / Special Protection Area (SPA) - Data on SACs and SPAs are derived from the digitised site boundaries layers obtained from Natural England

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 area are derived from an analysis of digitised site boundary files following the site selection panel meeting of the AMR year of analysis. In this case the figures presented are those resulting from the March 2013 site selection panel meeting.

Local Geological Sites (LGS) - Site information was digitised by TVERC using site documentation provided by the Berkshire Geoconservation Group. The data are the result of site selection panel meetings.

### 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.

## Distribution and Status of Water Voles

### Information Sources

Information for this indicator is entirely from survey work carried out by trained volunteer surveyors and co-ordinated 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 vole within a 500m stretch of water course and not population size.

### Quality of the information

More detailed survey that makes estimates of population size would give a more accurate picture of the trends in status of water voles in the County. The resources to do this sort of work are not currently available.

## 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	

Survey data was 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 RSPB.

### Quality of the information

There are several limitations with this indicator. The methodology is based on surveying a number of 1 km grid squares chosen on a stratified random basis and the quality of information associated is dependent on as many field survey records as can be obtained. This varies from year to year. As a consequence, the reliability of the resulting farmland bird figures could be open to debate.

As records are obtained from BTO volunteer surveyors, BTO's ability to improve on county survey coverage will determine whether more records can be generated.

# Glossary

Table .1

Acronym	Term	Explanation
<b>AONB</b>	<b>Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty</b>	Area with statutory national landscape designation, the primary purpose of which is to conserve and enhance the natural beauty
<b>AMR</b>	<b>Annual Monitoring Report</b>	A report that presents an analysis of existing policies and progress on the Local Development Scheme (see below)
<b>BAP</b>	<b>Biodiversity Action Plan</b>	A strategy aimed at conserving and enhancing biological diversity
<b>CAA</b>	<b>Conservation Area Appraisal</b>	
<b>DCLG</b>	<b>Department for Communities and Local Government</b>	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.
<b>DPD</b>	<b>Development Plan Documents</b>	A statutory element of the Local Plan. DPDs are subject to independent examination and include the Core Strategy.
<b>LDD</b>	<b>Local Development Documents</b>	Local Development Documents comprise both Development Plan Documents and Supplementary Planning Documents. LDDs are likely to include core policies, area action plans, proposal maps, site specific policies..
<b>LDF</b>	<b>Local Development Framework</b>	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 NPPF makes no reference to the LDF and development plan documents now form part of the Local Plan
<b>LDS</b>	<b>Local Development Scheme</b>	A timetable and project plan for the production of all the LDDs relating to the Local Plan.
<b>NPPF</b>	<b>National Planning Policy Framework</b>	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.
	<b>Natural England</b>	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.
<b>PDL</b>	<b>Previously Developed Land</b>	Land that is or was occupied by a permanent structure (excluding agricultural or forestry buildings), and associated fixed surface infrastructure. The NPPF contains a detailed definition
<b>PPS</b>	<b>Planning Policy Statements</b>	Guidance issued by the DCLG (see above), setting out the Government's policy on planning issues. These have now been replaced by the NPPF.
<b>RIGS</b>	<b>Regionally Important Geological &amp; Geomorphological Site</b>	A non-statutory regionally important geological or geomorphological site designated to protect important earth science and landscape features.
	<b>Saved Policies/Saved Plans</b>	Policies within development plans that are saved for a time period during replacement production of Local Development Documents

Acronym	Term	Explanation
<b>S106</b>	<b>Section 106 Agreement</b>	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.
<b>SAC</b>	<b>Special Areas of Conservation</b>	Designated to protect the habitats of threatened species of wildlife under EU Directive 92/43.
<b>SCI</b>	<b>Statement of Community Involvement</b>	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.
<b>SCS</b>	<b>Sustainable Community Strategy</b>	Sets out the long term vision for the local authority area.
<b>SPA</b>	<b>Special Protection Areas</b>	Designated to protect rare and vulnerable birds under EC Directive 79/409.
<b>SPD</b>	<b>Supplementary Planning Documents</b>	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.
<b>SPG</b>	<b>Supplementary Planning Guidance</b>	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
<b>SSSI</b>	<b>Sites of Special Scientific Interest</b>	Defined protected areas of nature conservation and scientific value identified by English Nature as being of national (and sometimes international) importance.
<b>TV ERC</b>	<b>Thames Valley Environmental Records Centre</b>	TV ERC is a 'not for profit' operation run by a partnership of organisations that collect information about the natural environment.
<b>WBDLP</b>	<b>West Berkshire District Local Plan</b>	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
<b>WHS</b>	<b>Wildlife Heritage Sites</b>	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,  
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