



MONITORING STATEMENT

Colchester City Council's
Monitoring Statement
2023-2024
December 2024



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1. Introduction

- 1.1 The Council usually publish an Authority Monitoring Report (AMR) annually in December. However, as the Council is currently undertaking a review of the Local Plan, this report will be a shorter monitoring statement published for 2024, which will capture key information and data regarding the planning service and preparation of the Development Plan.
- 1.2 The Development Plan system is a continuous process with monitoring and review being fundamental aspects to the delivery of a successful plan. While production of an Authority Monitoring Report (AMR) is no longer a statutory requirement, local authorities need to continue to demonstrate how plan objectives are being delivered.
- 1.3 The Monitoring Statement will analyse the period of the previous financial year (1 April to 31 March). Further information from outside of this period is included, particularly in relation to the preparation of the Development Plan, to reflect the latest information.

2. Progress on Development Plan Preparation

2.1 The current Local Development Scheme (LDS) sets out the programme for plan preparation from 2024 to 2027. This is available on the [Council's website](#) and a summary chart is included at Appendix C.

2.2 The LDS was updated in November 2024. The table below summarises the progress of the Development Plan Documents and identifies key milestones in this monitoring period. Further specific updates regarding the Local Plan Review and Neighbourhood Plans are also provided.

Local Development Scheme Progress Overview

Development Plan Document	Progress / Current stage Comments	Target Date/ Key Milestones
Local Plan Review	<p>This document will develop the overall strategic objectives and areas for growth in the city. The Local Plan will replace both the Section 1 and Section 2 Local Plan.</p> <p>Initial document preparation and evidence base collation has been completed. Early engagement covered the themes of green networks and waterways, Call for Sites, the Vision and Placemaking. The evidence base and draft plan are being prepared for consultation in Feb/March 2025.</p>	<p>Member Approval of Preferred Options February 2025</p> <p>Full Adoption Spring/Summer 2026</p>
Tendring Colchester Borders Garden Community Development Plan Document (TCB GC DPD)	<p>Planning Framework Document related to strategic allocation for new development at the Tendring Colchester Borders Garden Community.</p> <p>Issues and Options Consultation November 2017 to February 2018</p> <p>Public Consultation on Draft DPD (Regulation 18) 14 March – 25 April 2022</p> <p>Submission Version Consultation (Regulation 19) 15 May 2023 to 25 June 2023</p> <p>The DPD along with other publication and submission documents was submitted to</p>	Adoption 2025

Development Plan Document	Progress / Current stage Comments	Target Date/ Key Milestones
	<p>the Secretary of State for independent 'Examination in Public' by a Planning Inspector on the 21 September 2023. Hearing sessions were held in May 2024 6-week consultation on the modifications held 10 September to 21 October 2024.</p> <p>The Modifications Consultation was undertaken in September/October 2024. The Inspectors Report is expected in due course.</p>	
Affordable Housing SPD	Adopted February 2023	Adopted February 2023
Biodiversity SPD	SPD adopted June 2023	Adopted June 2023
Active Travel SPD	Adopted December 2023	Adopted December 2023
Climate Change SPD	Adopted December 2023	Adopted December 2023
City Centre Masterplan SPD	Adopted January 2024	Adopted January 2024
Shop Front Design Guide SPD	<p>Work ongoing including further engagement with specific bodies.</p> <p>Draft anticipated Winter 2026/27.</p>	Adoption Summer 2027
Statement of Community Involvement (SCI)	Statement of Community Involvement Updated in February 2023	Will consider need for review annually and/or in line with national policy and guidance.

Adopted Colchester Local Plan

- 2.3 The Colchester Local Plan is in two sections covering the period to 2033. The Section 1 Colchester Local Plan covers strategic and cross boundary issues for North Essex, including housing and employment targets and allocates the Tendring Colchester Borders Garden Community (TCBGC). This was adopted on 2 February 2021.
- 2.4 The Section 2 Colchester Local Plan sets the policy framework, site allocations and development management policies across Colchester. This was adopted on 4 July 2022.
- 2.5 Further information can be found on the Council's [website](#).

Local Plan Review

- 2.6 There is a statutory requirement for a Local Plan to be reviewed every 5 years, which in the case of Colchester means a new Local Plan will be required by February 2026.
- 2.7 The importance of having an up-to-date Local Plan cannot be overstated. Without a Local Plan to identify where and how the City and areas beyond should develop, planning applications are determined in accordance with national policy which does not provide the local context for Colchester. Without a Local Plan, Colchester would be at significant risk from speculative development. A Local Plan provides certainty of where development can be delivered sustainably across the City area.
- 2.8 Regulation 18 of plan preparation and review includes evidence gathering and early consultation. Often this involves consultation on a single draft document which is known as 'Issues and Options' stage. Issues and Options itself is not a statutory requirement. The statutory requirement is for a local planning authority to notify consultees, including members of the public, of the subject of a local plan and invite them to make representations about what a local plan ought to contain, what local needs are, and which sites should be developed, and which should be protected.
- 2.9 The Local Plan Committee has agreed that for the Local Plan Review a more iterative and themed based approach to engagement is adopted, which ran between Autumn 2023 and Summer 2024, rather than the production of a single Issues and Options document. A high level summary is included in the table below; however some consultation ran outside of this monitoring period but for completeness has been included.
- 2.10 A more detailed report regarding the outcomes of the consultations was presented to Local Plan Committee in November 2024. This is available to view [online](#).

Local Plan Review – Engagement Summary

Progress	Overview
June 2023	The Local Plan Committee considered a report which explained the current position of the development plan and the further work needed to review the Local Plan.
August 2023	<p>A report was presented which set out a high-level programme for the Local Plan Review, including proposing an iterative Issues and Options engagement comprising multiple themed engagements rather than one composite Issues and Options consultation. Themes include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Green Networks and Waterways (14 November 2023 - 5 January 2024) • Call for Sites (20 October 2023 – 5 January 2024) • Draft Methodology Strategic Land Availability Assessment (SLAA) (20 October 2023 – 17 November 2023) • Developing a vision for Colchester (8 February 2024 – 21 March 2024) • Placemaking (13 June to 25 July 2024) • BNG call for sites (14 June to 26 July 2024) • Planning Policy Position for Net Zero Carbon Homes and Buildings in Greater Essex (16 April 2024 – 30 May 2024)
October 2023	<p>The Local Plan Committee agreed the approach to the Local Plan Review. The decision was taken to use the green network and waterways and creating a better environment agenda as the starting point for the Local Plan Review.</p> <p>Call for sites consultation ran from 20 October 2023 – 5 January 2024.</p> <p>Draft Methodology Strategic Land Availability Assessment (SLAA) consultation ran from 20 October 2023 to 17 November 2023.</p>
November 2023	Green Networks and Waterways consultation ran from 14 November 2023 - 5 January 2024.
December 2023	A committee report provided an update of work to date and asked the committee to agree engagement on the Vision for the Local Plan Review early in 2024.
February 2024	The Local Plan Committee agreed to consult on the themes of placemaking, climate change and net zero buildings and to continue work under the health and wellbeing theme.

Progress	Overview
	Developing a vision for Colchester consultation ran from 8 February 2024 – 21 March 2024.
Outside of this monitoring period	
April 2024	Planning Policy Position for Net Zero Carbon Homes and Buildings in Greater Essex consultation ran from 16 April 2024 – 30 May 2024.
June 2024	Placemaking consultation ran from 13 June to 25 July 2024. BNG call for sites consultation ran from 14 June to 26 July 2024.
July 2024	Residents Panel workshop held at the Town Hall on 23 July 2024.

Tendring Colchester Borders Garden Community Development Plan Document (DPD)

- 2.11 The Tendring Colchester Borders Garden Community addresses the long-term need for new housing. The Garden Community was included in the shared Section 1 Local Plans for Tendring District Council and Colchester City Council adopted by the Councils in 2021. The shared Section 1 required a further Plan (Development Plan Document) to be prepared by the Councils to set out additional planning policies for the site, include identifying where certain land uses are being proposed.
- 2.12 The Councils have been preparing the Tendring Colchester Borders Garden Community Development Plan Document (DPD).
- 2.13 In February 2023 the joint committee recommend to the Full Councils of both Tendring and Colchester that they agree for the Submission Version of the Plan be published for a six-week public consultation. Subsequently the Full Council meetings of Tendring (2 March 2023) and Colchester (23 March 2023) agreed that the DPD, SA and supporting evidence base be published for a six-week public consultation period. The Submission Plan Consultation ran from 15 May to the 25 June 2023 (Regulation 19 Consultation).
- 2.14 The DPD along with other publication and submission documents was submitted to the Secretary of State for independent 'Examination in Public' by a Planning Inspector on the 21 September 2023.
- 2.15 On 13 October 2023, the Councils received notification that G Wyatt BA (Hons) MRTPI has been appointed as the independent Planning Inspector.
- 2.16 Although outside of this monitoring period but for completeness, the hearing sessions were held in May 2024, with the Inspector recommending modifications to the Tendring Colchester Borders Garden Community Development Plan Document (DPD). These are modifications the Inspector considers necessary to make the plan sound.

2.17 A six-week consultation on the modifications occurred from 10 September 2024 to 21 October 2024. All relevant comments received during the consultation period will be considered by the Inspector before any modifications are finalised.

2.18 The Councils are currently awaiting a report from the Planning Inspector regarding the Examination. All information and updates will be provided on the [Examination Website](#).

Neighbourhood Plans

2.19 Neighbourhood planning has remained high on the national government's agenda since regulations were introduced in 2012. Revisions to national policy, guidance and regulations continue to demonstrate the importance of Neighbourhood Plans (NPs) for housing provision and local planning matters.

2.20 A number of Neighbourhood Plans have progressed during the monitoring period. Table 3 summarises the current position of NPs across the administrative area.

2.21 During the 2023-24 monitoring period the following has occurred:

- Tiptree Neighbourhood Plan Referendum was held on 4 May 2023 and was adopted by Full Council on 24 May 2023;
- Copford with Easthorpe Neighbourhood Plan examiner concluded, subject to modifications it can proceed to referendum which took place on the 21 September 2023. The plan was formerly made by Full Council on 17 October 2023;
- Myland and Braiswick Neighbourhood Plan review commenced its examination in July 2023. The Examiner issued his final report on 13 September 2023 and concluded that the Review Plan meets the Basic Conditions, and a referendum is not required. The plan was formerly made by Full Council on 17 October 2023.

2.22 The following key milestone occurred in the next monitoring period (2024/25) but for completeness have also been recorded in this report:

- Great Tey neighbourhood plan Regulation 16 Consultation held from 12 February to 25 March 2024. Examination commenced in April 2024 concluding subject to modifications can proceed to Referendum. A successful Referendum was held on 21 September 2024. Full Council adopted the plan on 16 October 2024.
- In November 2024, the Council approved the West Bergholt Neighbourhood Plan Review 2024 as a minor (non-material) modifications review of the original plan. The plan review succeeds the original Neighbourhood Plan, to form part of the Colchester City Development Plan.

Neighbourhood Plans Progress

Neighbourhood Plan	Area Designated	Current Stage
Boxted	October 2012	Adopted December 2016, part of the Development Plan used for decision making.
Myland and Braiswick Review	January 2013	The Myland and Braiswick Review was formally made by Full Council on 17 October 2023, part of the Development Plan used for decision making.
Wivenhoe	July 2013	Adopted May 2019, part of the Development Plan used for decision making. Considering scope of plan review.
West Bergholt	July 2013	Adopted October 2019, part of the Development Plan used for decision making. Minor (non-material) review made in November 2024, part of the Development Plan used for decision making.
Eight Ash Green	June 2015	Adopted December 2019, part of the Development Plan used for decision making. Considering scope of plan review.
Marks Tey	September 2015	Adopted March 2022, part of the Development Plan used for decision making.
West Mersea	November 2016	Adopted March 2022, part of the Development Plan used for decision making.
Tiptree	February 2015	Adopted May 2023, part of the Development Plan used for decision making.
Copford with Easthorpe	May 2015	Adopted October 2023, part of Development Plan used for decision making.
Great Horkesley	June 2022	Evidence gathering and plan preparation
Great Tey	June 2017	Adopted October 2024, part of Development Plan used for decision making.
Messing	July 2013	Work abandoned. No active NHP group currently.
Stanway	June 2014	Work abandoned. No active NHP group currently.

3. Planning Applications

3.1 The level of planning applications provides a useful backdrop against which the effects of policies can be considered. The table below summarises planning applications determined in this monitoring period.

Planning Applications Summary 1 April 2023 to 31 March 2024

Planning Applications from 1 April 2023 to 31 March 2024	
The number of applications received (major, minor and other)	1,455
The number of applications approved	1,165
The number of applications refused	237
The number of appeals made	66
The number of appeals allowed	8(0 Partial,0 Withdrawn & 54 Dismissed)
The number of departures	1
Minor applications decided within 8 weeks	96%
Major applications decided within 13 weeks	100%

3.2 The total number of applications (major, minor and others i.e. change of use and listed building consent) received between 1 April 2023 and 31 March 2024 of 1,455 shows a continuation in the fall in applications with 2022/23 year's total of 1722, and 2021/22 year's total of 1,982. These figures however do not include all applications i.e. discharge of condition and preliminary inquiries.

3.3 Decision rates remain high with 96% of minor applications decided within 8 weeks; the same percentage as recorded in the previous year.

3.4 Performance in the major applications category has remained at 100%; the same as the previous two monitoring periods 2021/22 and 2022/23. This demonstrates that year on year the majority of applications are being determined, with all applications being dealt with in this monitoring period within the specified decision time limits.

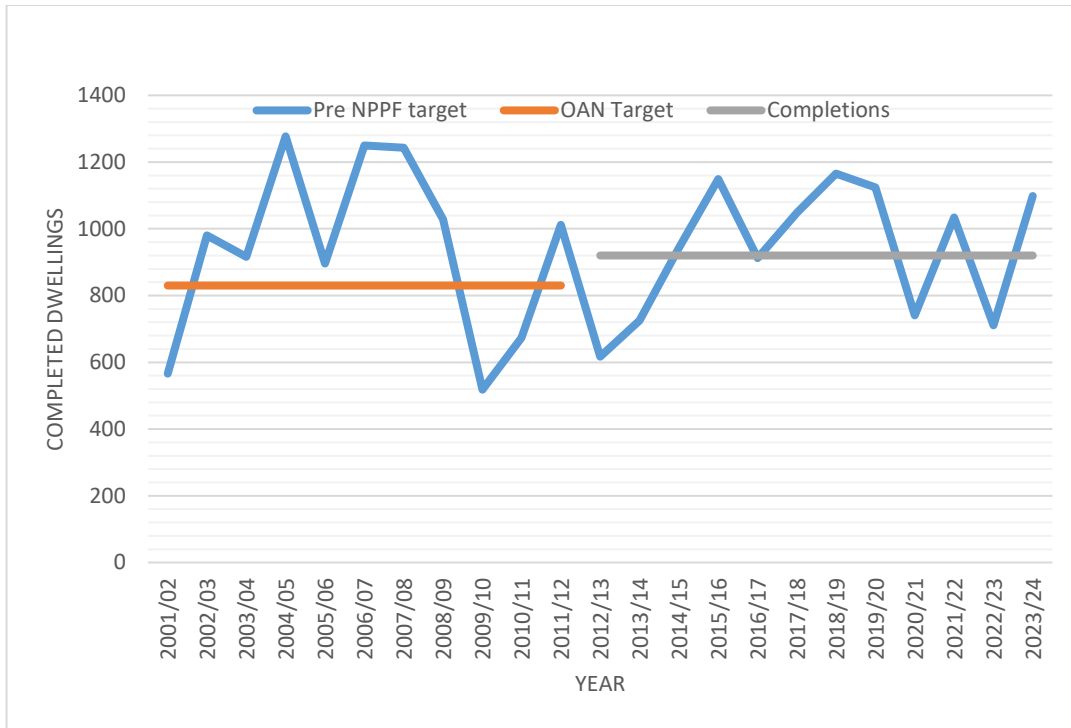
3.5 Overall, it can be seen that the Council's implementation of project management measures for applications, including pre-application advice and Planning Performance Agreements have and continue to enhance consistency and quality in processing applications.

4. Housing Completions

4.1 Colchester has delivered 21,626 new homes between 2001/02 and 2023/24 at an average rate of 940 dwellings per year. During the last monitoring period, a total of 1098 units were delivered across the City.

New Dwelling Completions in Colchester 2001/2 to 2023/24

Year	Total Units
2001/2002	566
2002/2003	980
2003/2004	916
2004/2005	1,277
2005/2006	896
2006/2007	1,250
2007/2008	1,243
2008/2009	1,028
2009/2010	518
2010/2011	673
2011/2012	1,012
2012/2013	617
2013/2014	725
2014/2015	943
2015/2016	1,149
2016/2017	912
2017/2018	1,048
2018/2019	1,165
2019/2018	1,124
2020/2021	741
2021/2022	1034
2022/2023	711
2023/2024	1,098
Total from 2001 to 2024	21,626



The table below illustrates the context of delivery rates across other Essex authorities where figures are available; Colchester continues to demonstrate a good track record against housing requirement.

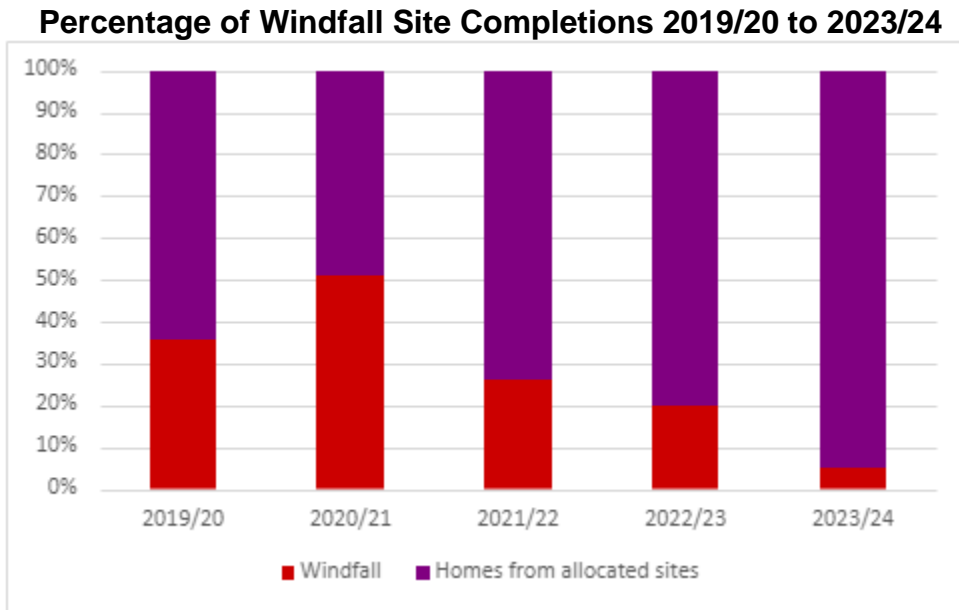
Essex Local Authority Housing Delivery

Authority	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	Total Units
Basildon	340	464	317	438	222	281	2,108
Braintree	534	883	861	1,064	1,097	1147	5,611
Brentwood	246	200	168	407	385	TBC	1,406
Castle Point	200	71	166	205	271	113	930
Chelmsford	1,256	832	829	866	822	1015	5,700
Colchester	1,165	1,124	741	1,034	711	1,098	5,873
Epping Forest	426	223	198	328	184	346	1,705
Harlow	676	725	535	416	560	436	3,477
Maldon	306	462	426	330	449	403	2,376
Rochford	262	347	349	456	495	TBC	1,909
Tendring	915	784	646	777	810	838	4,698
Uttlesford	981	519	362	208	747	828	3,668
Essex Total	7,330	6,607	5,666	6,549	6,804	2951	39,461

Source: Essex County Council, District/Borough and Unitary Councils

4.2 Colchester’s build rate has been on target in recent years. When taking an average over the past five years, Colchester has provided a net additional 942 new homes per year, which provides reassurance on future target delivery. The Council accordingly expects to be able to continue a sufficient rate of delivery.

4.3 Of the 1,098 dwellings completed in this monitoring period, 54 units were from windfall sites. This is lower than previous years where we see an average delivery rate of 248 windfall units over a five-year period. See figure and table below.



Colchester Historic Windfall Completions

Year	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	5 Year Average
Number of Dwellings from Windfall	399	377	271	143	79	248

4.4 The housing completions included in this report show that a net of 1,098 homes were built between 1 April 2023 and 31st March 2024.

Housing Completions (site by site basis) 1 April 2023 to 31st March 2024

Planning Reference	Site location	Windfall	23/24
Berechurch			
191093	BERECHURCH HALL ROAD (HARDING)	No	9
180987	L/A 166 BERECHURCH HALL ROAD, COLCHESTER	Yes	1
220994	200 MERSEA ROAD, COLCHESTER	Yes	1
202025	BERECHURCH HALL ROAD (PERSIMMON)	No	41
Castle			
180045	COWDRAY CENTRE, MASON ROAD, COLCHESTER	No	39
212472/212473	63&64 HIGH ST, COLCHESTER	Yes	1
220235	EWER HOUSE (STUDENT), CROUCH STREET	Yes	12
230533	4 ST BOTOLPHS STREET, COLCHESTER	Yes	5
Lexden & Braiswick			
202596	LAND OFF HALSTEAD ROAD, EIGHT ASH GREEN	No	54
182336	7 PARK ROAD,	Yes	1
191997	STABLE COTTAGE, COLCHESTER ROAD, WEST BERGHOLT	No	2
231041	BRIARBERRY FARM, TURKEY COCK LANE	Yes	1
Mile End			
100502	FORMER SEVERALLS HOSPITAL PHASE 2	No	37
150473	CHESTERWELL, (Both Outlets)	No	71
212506	CORDELIA DRIVE, COLCHESTER (NC2)	No	4
Prettygate			
200854	133 STRAIGHT ROAD, COLCHESTER	Yes	1
212888	15 MARLOWE WAY, COLCHESTER	Yes	1
222417/231463	L/A 69 HEATH ROAD, COLCHESTER	Yes	1
Shrub End			
190522	GOSBECKS PHASE 2, COLCHESTER	No	25

Planning Reference	Site location	Windfall	23/24
212972	37 BOADICEA WAY, COLCHESTER	Yes	1
St Johns and St Annes			
191780/202889	18 ST ANNES ROAD, COLCHESTR	Yes	1
Stanway			
VARIOUS	LAKELANDS	No	53
172049	CHITTS HILL, STANWAY	Yes	19
202829	CATCHBELLES, LAND NORTH OF LONDON ROAD	No	3
Marks Tey & Layer			
202076	ROCKINGHAM FARM ROAD, LAYER MARNEY	Yes	4
192249	BROOK ROAD, GREAT TEY	No	30
230593	THE PADDOCKS, LAYER ROAD, KINGSFORD	Yes	1
Mersea & Pyefleet			
201847	15 RAINBOW ROAD, WEST MERSEA	Yes	1
190140	HIGH STREET NORTH, WEST MERSEA	Yes	3
191440	BELLEVUE, 11 KINGSLAND, WEST MERSEA	Yes	1
200960/240313	BRIERLEY PADDOCKS, WEST MERSEA	No	38
210717	BOCKING HALL, 35 EAST MERSEA ROAD, WEST MERSEA	Yes	1
211874	14 BEACH ROAD, WEST MERSEA	Yes	1
Rural North			
160906	HORKESLEY HAMLET, GREAT HORKESLEY	Yes	5
182640	QUEENS HEAD, FORD STREET, ALDHAM	Yes	1
191830	SCHOOL ROAD (EAST), LANGHAM	No	15
Tiptree			
122134	FLORENCE PARK, GRANGE ROAD, TIPTREE	No	2
210398	BARBROOK LANE, TIPTREE	No	48
170993	INWORTH GRANGE BARN, TIPTREE	Yes	1
230716	86 CHURCH ROAD, TIPTREE	Yes	4

Planning Reference	Site location	Windfall	23/24
222393/232747	SPRINGFIELD, KELVEDON ROAD, TIPTREE	Yes	6
	STABLEVIEW, NEWBRIDGE ROAD, TIPTREE	Yes	2
Wivenhoe			
192090	UNIVERSITY OF ESSEX, COLCHESTER	No	548
191700	17 QUEENS ROAD, WIVENHOE	Yes	1
212474	12 ST JOHNS ROAD, WIVENHOE	Yes	1
CITY TOTAL NEW DWELLINGS 2023/2024			1,098

5. Affordable Housing

5.1 During this monitoring period, a total of 275 affordable housing units were delivered as set out below.

5.2 231 new build affordable housing units were delivered, of these 178 were Affordable Rent, 5 First Homes and 48 were Shared Ownership. The comparable figures for the previous two years were 171 in 22/23, 45 in 21/22.

5.3 Outside of Section 106 and the Council's Development Company, a further 44 units have been delivered through the Council's acquisitions programme.

5.4 For the year 2023/24, no commuted sums were received for affordable housing.