

Annual Monitoring Report – 2011/12



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Section 1 – Background

Introduction

Planning authorities are required to prepare Annual Monitoring Reports (AMRs) to monitor how the District Council is performing in implementing the Local Development Scheme (LDS), and progress on the replacement local plan aims and objectives.

This AMR will be split into two distinct sections for this monitoring year. The purpose of the two sections is to give monitoring consideration to both current policies in the North West Leicestershire Local Plan and emerging policies in the North West Leicestershire Pre-submission Core Strategy.

Section 13 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Development) (England) Regulations 2004 specifies those matters which local planning authorities should keep under review as being:

- The principal physical, economic, social and environmental characteristics of the authority;
- The principal purposes for which land is used in the area;
- The size, composition and distribution of the population of the area;
- The communications, transport system and traffic of the area;
- Any other considerations which may be expected to affect those matters, and
- Such other matters as may be prescribed or as the Secretary of State (in a particular case) may direct.

The publication of the Localism Act on the 15th November of 2011 has led to the requirements of Annual Monitoring Reports being amended from that stated in the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004. The amendments stated by the Localism Act 2011 are set out in Appendix 2 to this AMR, but the summary changes are:

- The AMR may be prepared as and when desired by the Council;
- The AMR need no longer be submitted to the Secretary of State, and
- More than one AMR may be prepared in a monitoring period (and Councils can determine when that monitoring period can run from and until)

What Is Monitoring?

In simple terms, monitoring involves collecting and analysing a range of information and assessing whether policies are being implemented in the way intended. The AMR is the main mechanism for assessing performance of the Development Plan and plays an important role in the provision of evidence for emerging planning policies at the local level.

A number of tools can be used to monitor progress against policies, including targets and indicators.

It is important that planning policies are monitored to ensure they are achieving their objectives and delivering sustainable development. Monitoring also enables an assessment of whether policies are having unintended consequences and whether the thinking behind the policies is still relevant and effective.

How will we undertake monitoring?

When undertaking monitoring we will:

- Use existing data sources, both internal and external, wherever possible;
- Identify all data sources;
- Ensure that there are clear links with any national monitoring, using the same or similar indicators wherever possible;
- Only develop new indicators/targets where there is a demonstrable need for them and ensure that they are meaningful and capable of being updated on a regular basis:
- Ensure that all Development Plan Documents and associated policies include clearly defined and measureable objectives, targets and indicators;
- Share information with other users of the planning system;
- Analyse the data collected to identify existing or emerging issues, and
- Work in co-operation with other organisations and individuals to develop and monitor targets and indicators as necessary.

District Context

North West Leicestershire is a predominately rural district, covering 27,900 hectares. The principal town is Coalville and the other main settlements are Ashby de la Zouch, Castle Donington, Ibstock, Kegworth and Measham.

The District shares borders with Hinckley and Bosworth Borough, Charnwood Borough, Rushcliffe Borough, Erewash Borough, South Derbyshire District, Lichfield Borough and North Warwickshire Borough Councils.

North West Leicestershire District has good road links and major roads include the M1, the A42/M42, the A50 and the A511, all of which link the District with larger centres such as Nottingham, Derby, Leicester and Birmingham.

The District is ranked 200 out of 326 in the 2010 Index of Multiple Deprivation, where 1 is ranked as the most deprived nationally. North West Leicestershire remains the most deprived district in Leicestershire. The rate of unemployment was 3% in January 2012, the highest of the Leicestershire districts, but lower than the regional rate of 3.9% and the national rate of 4.1%. This figure has worsened as a result of the economic downturn.

In 2010, 14.9% of the districts housing stock of 39,850 dwellings were social housing, 11.3% being Council-owned.

Demographic Context

At the time of the 2001 Census, there were 85,503 people living within the district. Since then, the population has increased to 90,400 (Office for National Statistics (ONS) mid-2007 population estimate).

At the time of the 2001 Census, the majority of Residents within the District lived within the main settlements of Coalville (33,671) and Ashby de la Zouch (11, 578 Residents). The Residents within these two settlements accounted for more than half of the district's population (ONS 2011).

In the 2001 Census, the percentage of working age population within the district (59.2%) was broadly in line with national figures (59.0%). North West Leicestershire does, however, have a larger

than average number of people who are working age with 30-39 age bracket and fewer than average below the age of 29 (ONS Census, 2001).

Data from the 2011 Census is expected to become available during 2013.

Localism Act

The Localism Act received royal assent on the 15th November 2011, it will take some time for the provisions and requirements of this Act to have impact and filter into the planning system, although some will have an immediate effect. The general idea of “localism” has been known for a while and the council has been preparing to acknowledge it, in its policies. In addition, many of the Act’s provisions merely give legal weight to practises already taking place in local government.

Regional Strategies

The Localism Act will enable the Government to abolish Regional Strategies in accordance with their stated intention in 2010. To this end, the Government has recently published draft assessments of the likely environmental implications that would result from this abolition.

Until such time as the Regional Strategies – in the East Midlands, this is the East Midlands Regional Plan – are abolished, they remain part of the development plan and the Council must prepare its planning policies without having regard to the government’s intended abolition. This is not the case with planning applications, where the intended abolition is capable of being a material consideration. The Council is, therefore, obliged to continue monitoring progress against the policies of the Regional Plan.

Annual Monitoring Report

Government previously advised Councils that the format of their AMRs would now be of their own design, and would not require Councils to respond to the “Core Output Indicators” of previous years. As noted earlier, this abridged AMR is the result of that earlier direction. The Localism Act no longer requires that Councils submit their AMRs to the Secretary of State.

Community Infrastructure Levy

The Localism Act requires Councils to move away from Section 106 Agreements to secure “planning gain” – that is, finances or infrastructure required as a result of the implementation of a planning permission – and towards the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL). CIL is a one-off payment which is levied to a developer at the level of each new dwelling or 1 hectare (or other threshold as may be specified by a Council). The monies raised via CIL must be used to respond to pre-determined infrastructure needs in the district.

Although the Council has begun contributing to an evidence base at the county-level in order to inform the development of its CIL, no decision has yet been taken as to whether or not a CIL will be adopted in North West Leicestershire. Officers are intending to prepare a Cabinet Report setting out the available options, including the potential implications of adopting (or not adopting) a CIL, during 2013.

Community Right to Build and Neighbourhood Planning

The Act gives groups of local people the power to deliver the development that their local community wants. A community organisation, formed by members of the local community, will be able to bring forward development proposals which, providing they meet minimum criteria and can demonstrate local support through a referendum, will be able to go ahead without requiring a separate traditional planning application.

Neighbourhood planning will allow communities to come together through a local parish council or neighbourhood forum and say where they think new houses, businesses and shops should go – and what they should look like.

Local communities will be able to use neighbourhood planning to grant full or outline planning permission in areas where they most want to see new homes and businesses. The mechanism for this will be the Neighbourhood Plan or the Neighbourhood Development Order.

Provided a Neighbourhood Plan is in line with national planning policy, with the strategic vision for the wider area set by the local authority, and with other legal requirements, local people will be able to vote on it in a referendum. If the Plan is approved by a majority of those who vote, then we will adopt it within our Development Plan.

It is not immediately clear if we will be able to monitor development approved under the “Community Right to Build” and “Neighbourhood Development Order” arrangements as new development will not need to go through the planning system. Our internal records are maintained with reference to new planning permissions issued, so if the Council does not formally grant planning permission for certain developments it will require an adapted monitoring system.

No Neighbourhood Plan areas have been formally designated in the District as yet, although both Ashby Woulds Town Council and Ashby de la Zouch Town Council have expressed a formal intention to develop a Neighbourhood Plan in their areas and have established steering groups to enable the process to be started.

Section 2 – Monitoring Outputs for 2011/12

Housing

Completions

Completions from 2006/07 onwards are set out below:

Monitoring Period	New Dwellings
2006 / 2007	336
2007 / 2008	354
2008 / 2009	235
2009 / 2010	231
2010 / 2011	187
2011 / 2012	230

Table 1: Housing Completions

There was a sharp decrease in housing completions from 2007/08 to 2008/09, although since that time completions have been relatively consistent. This is as a result of the continuing financial problems faced in the UK and beyond. As noted below, it is considered that the depressed housing market will continue to have an impact for some time, although the situation is not considered likely to worsen. A full housing trajectory, prepared for the Core Strategy submission document, can be found at Appendix One and demonstrates that completions are projected to increase in the coming years.

Permissions

Significant numbers of dwellings have been granted planning permission during the year but, as Tables 1 and 2 demonstrate, this is not having a significant impact on the number of builds:

Date	Dwellings with Planning Permission
31 st March 2007	673
31 st March 2008	786
31 st March 2009	652
31 st March 2010	1,055
31 st March 2011	1,097
31 st March 2012	1,346

Table 2: Planning Permissions

Design

The Council remains committed to improving the quality of design for new development in the district, particularly so with housing. Since the production of the previous AMR, the Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment (CABE) has been largely disbanded and then subsumed within the Design Council. CABE was the primary supporter of the Building for Life housing design standard (BfL), and the future for Building for Life remains uncertain despite its being reinvented as “Building for Life 12” during 2012.

In addition to BfL, the Council has developed a design initiative known as Ourplace™, which takes the BfL criteria and applies a scoring schedule:

16.0 – 20.0	Very Good
14.0 – 15.5	Good
10.0 – 13.5	Average
0.0 – 10.0	Poor

More information on the Ourplace™ initiative can be found on its dedicated [website](#).

No assessments of housing design were undertaken during the monitoring year and, with the format for Building for Life having changed the future for assessing build quality of new housing development is uncertain.

Affordable Housing

In recent years, the completion of affordable housing has increased significantly over that of previous years. Given the reduction in public funding over the next few years, it is expected that these high delivery rates will not be maintained.

For 2011/12, 57 affordable homes were completed across four schemes, of which two were exclusively affordable housing. Build figures for affordable housing delivered through the planning system are set out below:

YEAR	FLATS			HOUSES				Total
	1 Bed	2 Bed	3 Bed	1 Bed	2 Bed	3 Bed	4 Bed	
2004/05			16		4	5		25
2005/06		6			6	20		32
2006/07					14	2		16
2007/08		31			15			46
2008/09	1	16			6	12		35
2009/10	13	1			29	36		79
2010/11				8	29	5		42
2011/12					25	25	7	57
Total	14	54	16	8	128	105	7	332
Total	84			248				
Percentage	25.30%			74.70%				

Table 5: Affordable Houses Delivered Through the Planning System

Previously Developed land / Greenfield Split

The district has had extremely high levels of building on previously developed land (PDL) – during 2009/10, nearly 95% of all dwellings were built on PDL. On coming to power in May 2010, the coalition government changed the definition of PDL to exclude garden land. This has not altered the number of planning permissions granted on garden land to a great extent, but it has had the result of reducing significantly the number of dwellings being built on PDL from 2010 onwards. This is also true for 2011/12:

	Previously Developed Land	Greenfield Land	Percentage on PDL
Completions (2011 / 2012)	106	167	38.83%
Under Construction (as at 31st March 2012)	90	117	43.48%
Planning Permission (as at 31st March 2012)	794	552	59.99%

Table 6: Previously Developed Land / Greenfield Split

Completion Density

‘Density’ refers to the number of dwellings built within a particular area. For example, if 35 dwellings were built on a site of one hectare, its density would be 35dw/ha. At the same time as the Government altered the definition of PDL, it also removed the need for minimum density requirements on new housing developments, stating that Councils could determine these. It will take some time before this change – and that relates to PDL – filters its way through the planning system.

Local Plan Policy H6 requires that all housing development in and adjoining Ashby and Coalville, plus those settlements with good access to facilities, should be a minimum of 40dw/ha, while all other development should be at 30dw/Ha. In previous years the AMR has split housing densities into the two main settlements of Coalville and Ashby and from all other locations within the district, as they were specifically mentioned at the time the Policy H6 was formulated.

However, this AMR takes into account the Pre-Submission Core Strategy by using the same hierarchical structure of settlements set out in Policy CS7, giving four distinct categories. The emerging Core Strategy policy on density (CS16) does not set a density figure, and instead states that higher density “will be encouraged in locations that offer, or have the potential to offer, a choice of transport options and are accessible to other services and facilities”. The table below outlines the current density levels across dwelling completions, dwellings under construction and those with planning permission in the four types of settlement in the district:

	Total (dwellings per hectare)	Coalville Urban Area (dwellings per hectare)	Rural Centres (dwellings per hectare)	Sustainable Villages (dwellings per hectare)	Rural Villages and elsewhere in the district (dwellings per hectare)
Completions (2011/2012)	39.15	67.77	27.17	29.89	14.45
Under Construction (as at 31st March 2012)	33.41	26.48	61.89	22.52	13.15
Planning Permission (as at 31st March 2012)	39.83	44.70	52.07	19.21	17.89

Table 7: Completion Densities Split by Location

Employment and Business

Employment land

Employment land commitments have increased significantly since the previous monitoring year owing to the approval of the Lounge Disposal Point at Ashby. The planning permission allows for rail freight interchange use, although the application itself was for B128.

Use Class	Planning Permission (Hectares)
B1	20.13
B12	4.42
B128	76.05
B18	3.35
B2	-
B8	2.15
Total	106.1

Table 8: Employment Land Commitments by Type

Starts and completions figures for 2011/12 reflect the continuing downward trend in employment land development since the recession first became apparent. It is clear from the fact that no completions were recorded, and only 0.16 hectares of starts (office development at Ivanhoe Business Park), that speculative employment land development is now extremely rare. A higher completion figure will be recorded in the 2012/13 monitoring period owing to the completion of the Marks and Spencer Distribution warehouse (15.90 hectares) at the East Midlands Distribution Centre.

Unemployment

The high unemployment rates of 2009/10, 2010/11 were replicated during 2011/12. Unemployment fell slightly during early to mid 2011, however has continued to rise since and is at its highest point since the economic downturn started in 2009.

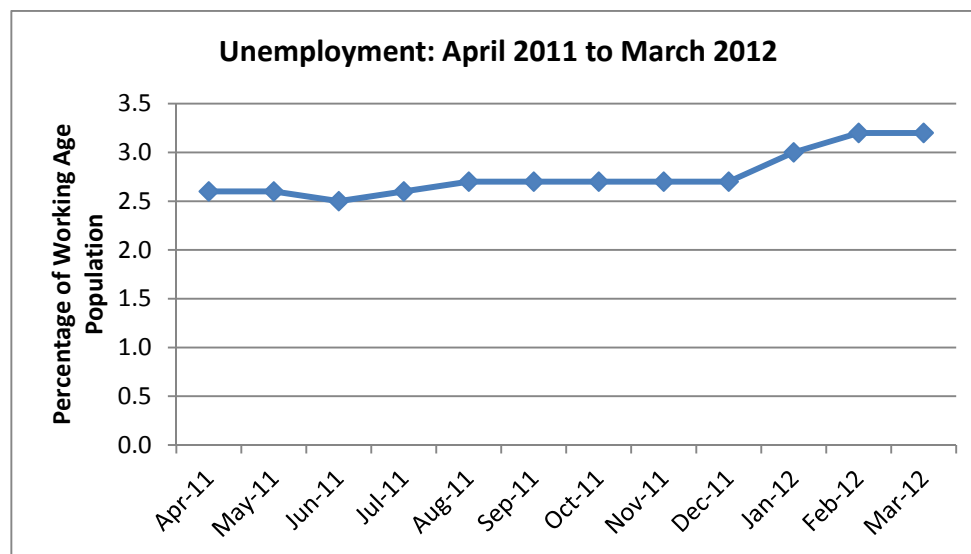


Chart 1: District-wide Unemployment Rates

During the monitoring period, unemployment in the district failed to improve in all wards, most of which increased by around 0.3%. Coalville remains the area with the highest unemployment with 3.4% and Ashby the lowest at 2.0%. Continuing financial and economic uncertainty is likely to be responsible for the high unemployment rate in the District.

Retail supplementary Planning Document

Last year's AMR noted that it had been possible to conduct a comprehensive assessment of the uses in the District's Town and Local Centres following the preparation and adoption of a Retail Supplementary Planning Document.

Such a review has not been done this year, although it is hoped one can be done during 2013/14.

River Mease

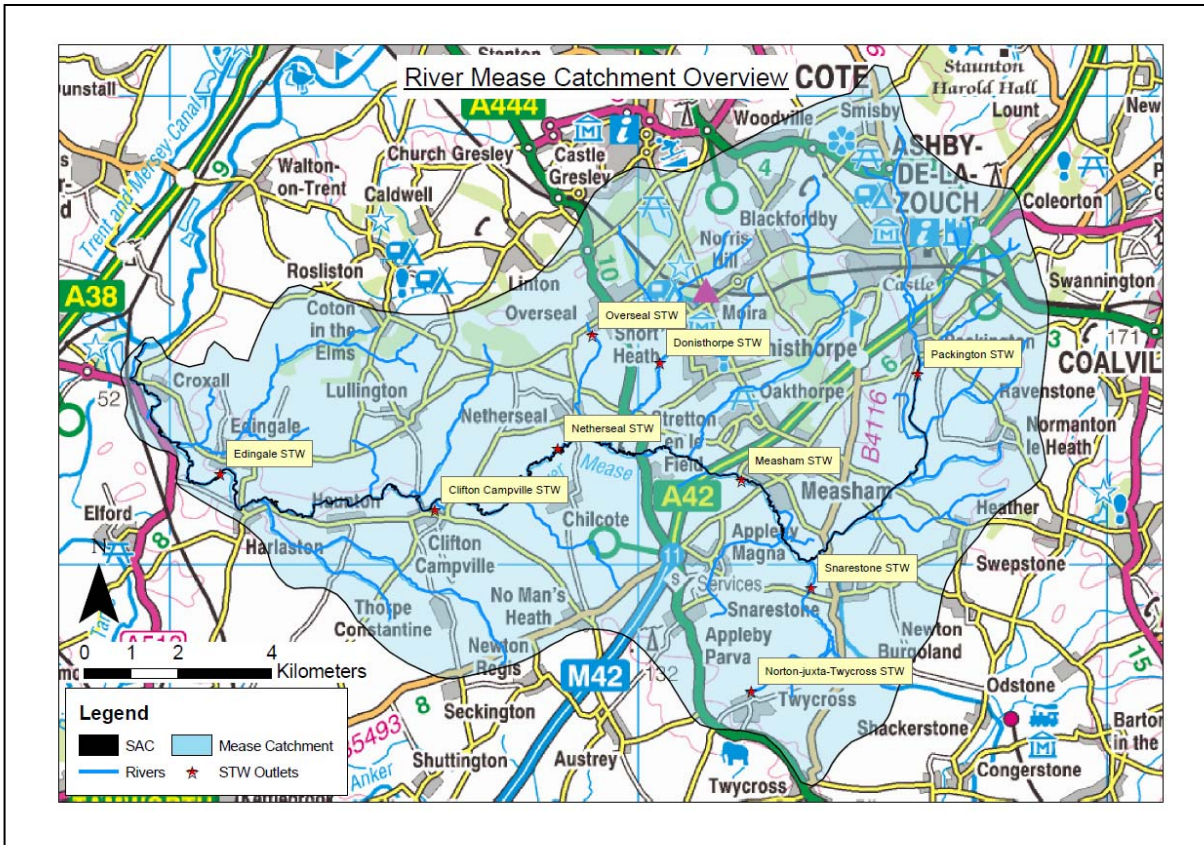


Figure 3: River Mease Special Area of Conservation Catchment

Over two years ago, the Environment Agency and Natural England advised the District Council that there were water quality issues which were affecting the River Mease. This meant that the Council was unable to approve many new developments in the River Mease catchment area as they may have led to high levels of chemicals in the river. At the time of reporting a Water Quality Management Plan has been published (27th June 2011) and the Council, the Environment Agency and Natural England are working together to agree a Developer Contribution Scheme (DCS).

Section 3 – Future Monitoring Changes

North West Leicestershire District Council is currently in the process of working towards the adoption of its Core Strategy, which is anticipated during early 2014. The adopted Core Strategy will supersede some of the policies within the adopted North West Leicestershire Local Plan.

All policies of the Core Strategy will need to be monitored to determine their effectiveness and identify any changes that may be required to the policy or the manner in which it is applied. This process enables an audit (of sorts) to the Core Strategy, which in turn enables alterations to be made where necessary. This will be addressed in future AMRs once the Core Strategy is adopted.

Appendix One

Housing Trajectory (originally prepared for Pre-Submission Core Strategy)

SITE	2006 /07 to 2011 /12	2012 /13	2013 /14	2014 /15	2015 /16	2016 /17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29	2029/30	2030/31	TOTAL
		1	2	3	4	5															
WINDFALL ALLOWANCE		60	60	60	60	60	60	60	60	60	60	60	60	60	60	60	60	60	60	60	1,140
EXISTING COMMITMENTS		156	172	253	207	212	141	90	97	32	25	25	8								1,418
DIRECTION OF GROWTH - ASHBY (NORTH)						50	50	50	50	50	50	50	50	50	50	50	60				610
DIRECTION OF GROWTH - CASTLE DONINGTON (SOUTH WEST)				50	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	20							970
DIRECTION OF GROWTH - COALVILLE (BARDON GRANGE)				60	120	120	180	180	180	180	180	180	180	180	180	180	180	180	180	180	2,820
DIRECTION OF GROWTH - COALVILLE (SOUTH WEST)					50	50	50	50	50	50	50	50	50	50	50	50	50	50	50	50	800
DIRECTION OF GROWTH - COALVILLE (ELSEWHERE)		12	12	12	12	12	36	36	36	36	36	32	32	32	32	32					400
DIRECTION OF GROWTH - IBSTOCK (WEST)						35	35	35	35	40	40										220
DIRECTION OF GROWTH - MEASHAM (WEST)						40	40	40	40	40	40	40	40	40	40	40					440
GROWTH IN KEGWORTH							19	19	19	19	19	19	19	19	19	19					190
GROWTH IN SUSTAINABLE VILLAGES		7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	6	7	6	7	6	130
Past Completions	1,573																				
Projected Completions		235	251	442	556	686	718	667	674	614	607	563	546	458	438	437	357	296	297	296	
Cumulative Completions	1,573	1,808	2,059	2,501	3,057	3,743	4,461	5,128	5,802	6,416	7,023	7,586	8,132	8,590	9,028	9,465	9,822	10,118	10,415	10,711	

Appendix Two

Legal wording altering the function, format and particulars of the Annual Monitoring Report as set out in the Localism Act 2011.

- 1) Section 35 of the Planning and Compulsory Act 2004 (Local Authorities must make an annual report to the Secretary of State) is amended as follows:
- 2) Omit Subsection (1) (duty to make an annual report).
- 3) In subsection (2) (contents of annual report) for “The annual report must contain” suitable “Every local planning authority must prepare reports containing.
- 4) In subsection (3) (rules about annual reports) for the words from the beginning to the end of paragraph (B) substitute –
 “A report under subsection (2) must –
 (A) Be in a respect of a period –
 i. Which the authority considers appropriate in the interests of transparency
 ii. Which begins with the end of the period covered by the authority’s most recent report under subsections (2) and
 iii. Which is not longer than 12 months or shorter period as is prescribed
- 5) After subsection (3) insert –
 “(4) The authority must make the authority’s reports under this section available to the public”

In the heading for “Annual” substitute “Authorities” and for “Report” substitute “Reports”.