

Council

Monday 18 December 2017

Agenda Item 9 (a), Written Questions

Question From: Councillor Barry Richards

Question To: Leader of the Council, Councillor Barry Wood

Topic: Housing Waiting List

Question

Please could you supply the following information:

1. The number of people on the Council's waiting list as at 1 November 2012.
2. The average waiting time as at 1 November 2012.

We do not hold this data for 2012 and our IT software does not allow us to extract data in this format. However, we do have more recent data on the average waiting time that households who were rehoused had to wait before being re-housed:

- *In 2014/15 the average waiting time for households to be re-housed was 73 weeks*
 - *In 2015/16 the average waiting time for households to be re-housed was 58 weeks*
3. How many houses have been built in Cherwell District since 1 November 2012.
 4. How many of those have been let at social housing rents.

Housing Delivery in Cherwell

Figures are taken from the 2017 Annual Monitoring Report (AMR)

Housing completions 2012 – 2016/17 (the last available figure) totals – 4,223. This includes the whole of year 2012/13, as we do not record house building by month, but an annual basis.

Table 1 – Housing Completions (net) 2011 – 2017

	Banbury			Bicester			Elsewhere			District			
	GF	PDL	Total	GF	PDL	Total	GF	PDL	Total	GF	PDL	Total	PDL %
2011 / 12	34	102	136	40	26	66	118	36	154	192	164	356	46%
2012 / 13	4	38	42	116	14	130	50	118	168	170	170	340	50%
2013 / 14	12	22	34	137	33	170	119	87	206	268	142	410	35%
2014 / 15	222	106	328	193	30	223	119	276	395	534	412	946	44%
2015 / 16	257	96	353	307	60	367	316	389	705	880	545	1425	38%
2016 / 17	349	59	408	309	62	371	141	182	323	799	303	1102	27%
Totals	878	423	1301	1102	225	1327	863	1088	1951	2044	1433	4579	31%

An extensive number of houses have been consented on development sites, totalling 7708. Some of this total will have been built after 31 March 2017 and will be reported in the 2018 AMR.

Table 2: Housing Commitments at 31/03/2017

		No. of dwellings
Banbury	GF	2746
	PDL	389
	Total	3135
Bicester	GF	1230
	PDL	1943
	Total	3173
Elsewhere	GF	739
	PDL	661
	Total	1400
District	GF	4715
	PDL	2993
	Total	7708

Note GF- Green Field; Pdl – previously developed land.

In terms of affordable housing completions – the period 2012/13 – 2016/17 saw 1,044 affordable houses completed.

Affordable Housing in Cherwell

No new housing has been built at social housing rents in recent years with the last delivery in the year 2012/13 as there have been no notable affordability issues and also these are generally difficult to negotiate with developers. Cherwell's Housing Policy allows for either affordable or social rent and that general needs housing is at an affordable rent (80% of market values) but is capped at Local Housing Allowance (now usually less than the affordable rent particularly in the higher value areas). It is worth noting that social rented stock is still available in the District as Sanctuary's stock from stock transfer has not been converted from social rent to affordable rent.

The Council's historic delivery figures are as follows:

2012/13 - 91 affordable homes overall = **25 SR / 40 AR / 26 SO**

2013/14 - 145 affordable homes overall = **111 AR / 34 SO**

2014/15 - 195 affordable homes overall = **127 AR / 68 SO**

2015/16 - 322 affordable homes overall = **232 AR / 90 SO**

2016/17 - 312 affordable homes overall = **184 AR / 128 SO**

(SR = social rent; AR = affordable rent; SO = shared ownership)

The adopted Cherwell Local Plan in Policy BSC3 leaves it flexible as whether the non-intermediate forms of affordable housing are delivered as either affordable rent or social rent (70% of the total). It is the tenancy strategy (and national policy) which drives the delivery of affordable rent as the main form of housing for new build. Relevant extracts from this are as follows:

The Localism Act gave Registered Providers the ability to offer flexible tenancies with the aim of making better use of existing homes in a diminishing market and encouraging tenants to use Affordable Housing opportunities as a springboard to other more aspirational tenures. The existing agreements between Registered Providers and their tenants are not affected and it is possible for Registered Providers to offer fixed term tenancies at social rent levels as well as at affordable rent levels. The affordable rent model is usually reserved for new build properties and a limited number of conversions.

Cherwell District Council continues to support the use of Affordable Rents because we want to see development in the district to meet the housing need of our residents whilst also understanding that Registered Providers have a need to generate income through higher rents to replace public subsidy, which has been lost in current grant programmes.

5. The number of people on the Council's waiting list as at 1 November 2017.

As at the end of November 2017 there were 1,141 households on Cherwell District Council's housing register.

6. The average waiting time as at 1 November 2017.

In 2016/17 the average waiting time for households re-housed was 47 weeks