



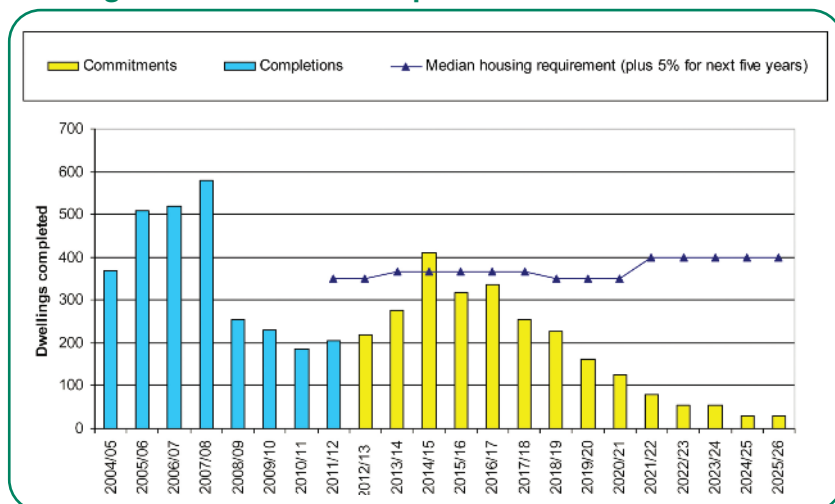
WHAT THE LOCAL PLAN SETS OUT TO DO

- Support new house building in Darlington to better meet the identified needs of local people and to help retain and attract more young and working age people.
- Identify sufficient land for about 350 net additional new homes every year until 2021, and about 400 per year from 2021-2026.
- Provide at least 35 additional affordable homes every year until 2016 and 50 per year from 2021-2026.
- Make provision for travelling groups at existing sites at Honeypot Lane, Neasham Road and other small sites within the Borough. Where required, make provision for additional sites according to the locational criteria in the Core Strategy to ensure access to sufficient good quality accommodation.

WHAT HAS BEEN ACHIEVED?

House Build Rates: Following a year on year reduction in house build rates from 2008/09 to 2010/11, a small increase in net output was achieved in 2011-12 as shown in the table below. Publicly funded affordable housing schemes have made an important contribution to output over the last couple of years, highlighting the significance of funding provided by the Homes and Communities Agency (HCA). New build completions are expected to continue at a relatively low level over the next few years and much of the output is expected to be maintained by delivery of affordable housing schemes. Projections indicate that 45 affordable completions are anticipated in 2012/13 and a further 196 in 2013/14.

Housing Build Rates: Net Completions and Commitments



Source: Darlington Borough Council.

Housing supply over the five year period 2011-16 could be met entirely through delivery of existing planning permissions. The Council maintains ongoing dialogue with affordable housing providers, private house builders and landowners to closely monitor the realism of projected build out rates for existing planning permissions.

Any allocation of new sites for the period to 2016 will only be made where this is necessary to ensure a range and choice of sites.

Projected output in the above table does not yet factor in additional output capacity that is due to be programmed into the trajectory in the form of housing site allocations for 2016/17 and future years. Work is currently underway to complete the trajectory for the full plan period.

Darlington Local Plan Annual Monitoring Report 2012

HOUSING SUPPLY FACT SHEET



During the last year, the Council has assembled and prepared evidence to support decisions on future allocations. This includes the 2012 update of the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA), a document which assesses the suitability, availability and achievability of potential new housing sites. The evidence base will inform site allocations in the Preferred Options for the Making and Growing Places DPD which will be published for public consultation in Spring 2013.

The Council must allocate a sufficient and deliverable supply of land for housing to meet housing need over the Local Plan period. In line with changes introduced to the planning system by the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) in March 2012, in the first five years of the Local Plan period, the Council is factoring in an additional buffer of 5% to ensure choice and competition in the market for land.

In terms of tenure of housing completions, the impact of the economic downturn on the viability and momentum of private sector house building is apparent. Affordable housing completions have made an important contribution to build rate output during the last two to three years, indicating the importance of public sector intervention in terms of kick-starting and maintaining development. This is particularly apparent in the last two years as shown in the table below, where affordable housing completions accounted for almost one third of all completions in 2010/11 and just under 50% of completions in 2011/12.

Affordable Housing Completions

	2004/05	2005/06	2006/07	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12
Gross additional dwellings completed	372	516	520	581	256	232	205	232
Affordable housing completions	28	10	38	50	25	49	60	107
Affordable completions as % of total completions	7.53%	1.94%	7.31%	8.61%	9.77%	21.12%	29.27%	46.12%
RSS / Core Strategy target	525	525	525	525	525	525	525	350

Source: Darlington Borough Council.

The sites that have delivered the majority of the affordable units in the last two years are the former school sites at Beaumont Hill, known as Woodland View which has been developed by Tees Valley Housing, and the former Springfield school site, known as Beadnell Close. The latter provided most of the additional Council rented dwellings during this period.



Woodland View



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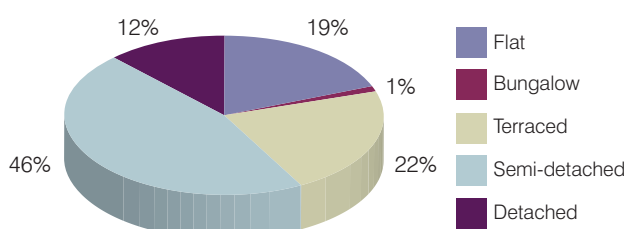
HOUSING SUPPLY FACT SHEET



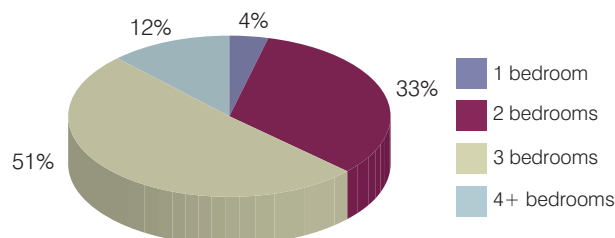
Size, Type and Quality of Housing: The Council continues to monitor dwelling type, size and quality to ensure the housing stock meets needs and aspirations. In terms of affordable housing provision, re-modelling of Council stock is helping to address this issue. In terms of private sector housing, the Council continues to work with house builders to ensure the housing mix on new sites is appropriate, though dwelling type has tended to be dictated by viability recently. Out of 231 dwellings completed in 2011-12, the majority of dwellings were 2 and 3 bedroom (33% and 51% respectively), and only 11% of dwellings had 4 or more bedrooms.

In terms of house type, the majority of completed dwellings were semi-detached (46%) and over 20% terraced. There was an increase in flats (19%) but relatively few new detached houses (12%) and a negligible increase in bungalows.

Dwellings Completed 2011-12 by Type



Dwellings Completed 2011-12 by No. of Bedrooms



Source: Darlington Borough Council.

In the current economic climate, it is also proving difficult to negotiate design standards with house builders due to issues of viability. However, in 2011, the Council supported the delivery of PV panels on seven of its own properties at Sadberge and has built 65 new homes to Code for Sustainable Homes Level 3 and 4 across 4 different sites, as part of the HCA's new build programme. Tees Valley Housing has also delivered energy efficient new homes at the recently completed development at Woodland View which has also been supported as part of the HCA's affordable housing programme. Homes have been built to at least Code for Sustainable Homes Level 3 and six homes to Level 5.

Accommodating Travelling Groups: The Council is committed to providing for travelling groups at existing sites and where required, on additional sites, selected according to the locational criteria in the Local Plan. Seven additional permanent pitches were granted planning permission in 2011/12 on four separate sites. On three of these sites, pitches included spaces for touring caravans. No pitches have been lost in the Borough due to development or closure. At the time of writing, there are a number of planning applications either pending consideration, or going through the appeal process.

Site allocations for new pitches will be identified in the Making and Growing Places DPD. To inform this, in March/April 2012, the Council consulted on potential sites for Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople, and subsequently, has selected its preferred sites. Feasibility work to inform delivery of this is likely to be done in Spring 2013, to inform a Preferred Option for the Making and Growing Places DPD.

In July 2012, the Council published an updated Housing Strategy and Action Plan for the period 2012-2017. These documents guide action to improving the availability, accessibility and quality of housing across all types and tenures in the Borough and underpin housing related planning policy in the Local Plan.



WHAT DOES THIS MEAN?

While efforts are underway to stimulate housing supply, housing demand continues to be suppressed following the onset of the credit crunch in 2007. Ongoing issues around limited access to mortgages, particularly for first time buyers combined with an increase in average house prices are part of the problem. While median prices are marginally lower in 2011 than 2010 (£115,000 versus £125,000), median house prices across Darlington have increased dramatically over the last decade from a baseline of around £48,500 in 2000. Terraced houses, traditionally the first step on to the housing ladder, have become less affordable at an average £62,715 in October 2011. While this is a drop from the peak of £75,673 seen the same month in 2007, it represents a significant increase from a baseline of £31,787 in October 2000 (Land Registry). Furthermore, in terms of relative affordability, Darlington is one of two Tees Valley authorities which have house price to income ratios above the Regional average of 4.6. The ratio of lower quartile price to income is 4.81 meaning the cheapest housing costs are 4.81 times the lowest incomes (Darlington Strategic Housing Market Assessment 2012). These factors continue to impact on the volume of sales of properties and in turn this influences patterns of build rates.

However, while the housing market remains challenging, there are signs of recovery following an increase in net output in 2011-12. In terms of private sector housing, the development at West Park, which is currently the largest private sector housing site in the Borough, will continue to deliver a steady flow of completions.

New build starts are expected on other strategic development sites such as Central Park, where an outline planning permission has been granted for a refreshed Master Plan. Phase 1 of the residential development encompassing 325 dwellings is anticipated to come forward in 2014. At Lingfield Point, 1,220 dwellings are proposed. Reserved Matters for Phase 1 have recently been approved for the erection of 271 dwellings and build out is expected to commence in Spring 2013. Significant housing development is not anticipated to start coming forward as part of the Town Centre Fringe development until 2016.

It is anticipated that delivery of new affordable homes will help to maintain momentum up to 2015 as affordable housing schemes are built out. The Council continues to work with RSL providers to try to stimulate development that is necessary to address affordable housing needs in Darlington. The provision of Council owned land at a nominal cost and deferral of land receipts are examples of financial incentives which can help facilitate delivery of schemes. Deferral of land receipt at Beaumont Hill has facilitated delivery of new housing. The disposal of the Houghton Road/Dundee Street site has enabled the delivery of 12 new affordable homes and the disposal of surplus land at Buxton Moor at Firthmoor will facilitate the development of 20 new affordable homes.

MOVING THINGS FORWARD: KEY ACTIONS

- Complete the annual update of the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (December 2012).
- Discuss with relevant interests how constraints on potential housing sites can be overcome.
- Continue dialogue with house builders to identify opportunities for increasing build rates.

Contact Us: You can access more information on planning policy in Darlington at:

www.darlington.gov.uk/planningpolicy

If you are particularly interested in statistics and data for Darlington borough, you can view these at:

<http://lis.darlington.gov.uk/>

Alternatively, contact the Planning Policy Team on 01325 388644 or email planning.policy@darlington.gov.uk

This document is available in different formats on request.