

# **Forest Heath**

**Local Development Framework**

## **Annual Monitoring Report 2007-2008**



**Forest Heath**  
District Council

**December 2008**



# Forest Heath Local Development Framework

## Annual Monitoring Report 2007-2008

### Introduction

- 1.1 The Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act (September 2004) introduced a system of Local Development Frameworks (LDF) including a requirement to produce an Annual Monitoring Report (AMR).
- 1.2 Annual Monitoring Reports should be prepared by the local authority and are required, by Regulation 48(7)7 of The Town and Country Planning (Local Development) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2008, Local Development Framework Monitoring: A Good Practice Guide (March 2005) and Regional Spatial Strategy and Local Development Framework Core Output Indicators Update 2/2008 (which replaces Table 4.4 and Annex B of the Good Practice Guide) undertake certain key monitoring tasks, all of which are interrelated.

The key tasks are as follows:

- review actual progress in terms of local development document preparation against the timetable and milestones in the local development scheme;
- assess the extent to which policies in local development documents are being implemented;
- where policies are not being implemented, explain why and to set out what steps are to be taken to ensure that the policy is implemented; or whether the policy is to be amended or replaced;
- whether the policies in the local development document need adjusting or replacing because they are not working as intended;
- whether the policies need changing to reflect changes in national or regional policy; and
- set out whether policies are to be amended or replaced.

PPS 12 and Local Development Framework Monitoring: A Good Practice Guide

This AMR monitors the period 1 April 2007 to 31 March 2008. The assessment of Local Development Scheme progress monitors the period 1<sup>st</sup> January 2007 to 31<sup>st</sup> December 2008.

In the context of the new planning system, with its focus on the delivery of sustainable development and sustainable communities, monitoring takes on an added importance in providing a check on whether those aims are being achieved.

- 1.3 The policy documents that will comprise Forest Heaths LDF have yet to be adopted. The Council has consulted on the Core Strategy completing its Issues and Options stage and consulted on the Preferred Options, October 2006. Following a year of no progress with the LDF in 2007 due to excessive staff

shortages. It was considered necessary to undertake a further Issues and Options consultation (in accordance with the Town and Country Planning (Local Development) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2008, in August 2008 entitled 'Final Policy Option' prior preparing the proposed submission consultation.

- 1.4 The Council have also continued with the Issues and Options stage for the Site Specific Allocations by undertaking an additional 'call for sites' in October 2008, followed by a stakeholder meeting in December 2008 (as part of the SHLAA process).
- 1.5 The AMR will focus on the 'saved' policies that are set out in the Forest Heath District Local Plan 1995. Future AMRs will eventually be able to focus on monitoring the adopted policies within the Forest Heath LDF.
- 1.6 **Core and local output indicators** are used to measure whether the **processes** that have been put in place to deliver the Plan's policies are achieving the desired **outcomes**. The indicators show what significant effects the implementation of planning policies has had. There are also **contextual indicators** that show how the District is performing relative to the County and the Region and how the District is changing over time.
- 1.7 Forest Heath will fulfil its commitment to monitor and review the Local Development Plan. This will ensure that the Plan remains the most appropriate and locally acceptable response to current issues of environmental, social and economic importance.
- 1.8 The monitoring scheme will be kept under review and will be amended to reflect changes in emphasis and changes in priorities. In particular, it will incorporate the ODPM guidance in 'Local Development Framework Monitoring: A Good Practice Guide' March 2005 and Regional Spatial Strategy and Local Development Framework Core Output Indicators Update 2/2008 (which replaces Table 4.4 and Annex B of the Good Practice Guide)
- 1.9 **The pervious years AMR identified that the monitoring system is insufficient to complete a full monitoring return. The main gaps include employment and transport data. As a result Development Control, Building Control, IT and Forward Plans having been working together to update, improve and in many instances put in place a robust monitoring system incorporating the revised Core Output Indicators – Update 2/2008. The revised monitoring system will be put in place April 2008 to ensure a full 2008-2009 financial year monitoring return. However, progress has been successful and the majority of indicators have been reported within this monitoring year.**

## **Key Conclusions from the Forest Heath Core Indicators 2007-08**

- **During 2007-08 the total housing completions (549 dwellings) were above the RSS annual requirement for the District of 380 dwellings.**
- **Of the total housing completions 17% (97) were affordable dwellings.**
- **Due to the predominantly rural nature of the District only 24.4% of completions were on brownfield sites. The majority of this growth is due to the Forest Heath Local Plan Allocation opposite College Heath Road, Mildenhall, (Policy 4.7) and Red Lodge (Policy 13.1).**

## **Local Development Scheme Implementation**

2.1 This section will consider whether the timetable and milestones for the preparation of documents set out in the adopted Local Development Scheme have been met or progress is being made towards meeting them.

2.2 The original Local Development Scheme (LDS) gained approval from GO-East in April 2005. The 2006/07 Annual Monitoring Report (AMR) stated the need for timetable amendments. In response a revised LDS was drafted April 2008 and adopted as interim guidance, following advice from Go-East. The LDS has been revised to reflect the new regulations that came into force on the 27<sup>th</sup> June 2008.

A full version of the Local Development Scheme is available on the District Council web site [www.forest-heath.gov.uk](http://www.forest-heath.gov.uk) under Local Development Framework heading.

2.3 During 2008 the Council has progress with the LDF in accordance with the revised Local Development Scheme April 2008, all milestones have been met.

The revised LDS April 2008 contains four milestones that we expect to achieve within the next monitoring year they are:

1. Site Specific Issues and Options (2) consultation
2. Proposed Submission Consultation for the Core Strategy
3. Submission of the Core Strategy to the SoS

<b>ANNUAL MONITORING REPORT 2007</b>	
Performance	<p>This document was produced on time and submitted to Government Office for the East of England prior to the 31<sup>st</sup> December deadline. The document was made available on the website and the Council offices at the same date.</p> <p>A monitoring system is currently being introduced. It is therefore expected that 2008-2009 Annual Monitoring Report will provide a complete baseline for the District in terms of housing, employment and retail change.</p>

<b>STATEMENT OF COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT</b>	
Progress	<p>The initial SCI (October 2004) was subject to consultation for a 7 week period (December 04 to January 05).</p> <p>In light of the representations received the SCI was amended and a Draft SCI was prepared (June 2005) a statutory 6 week consultation followed (June – August 2005); and</p> <p>A further consultation ran from (September to November 2005).</p>
Implications and Action	<p>The SCI was not submitted to SoS and has remained in draft. Advice from Go-east was to prioritise the DPD preparation.</p> <p>Amend SCI in light of the representations received and prepare revised timetable following the implantation of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act (Part Two) anticipate Spring 2009.</p>

<b>CORE STRATEGY</b>		
Schedule	<p>Evidence Gathering &amp; appraisal of options (Reg 25)</p> <p>Proposed Submission Document consultation (Reg 27)</p> <p>Submission to Secretary of State (Reg 30)</p> <p>Examination in Public</p> <p>Inspectors Report</p> <p>Adoption</p>	<p>Jan 2008 – Dec 2008</p> <p>March – May 2009</p> <p>Aug 2009.</p> <p>Jan - Feb 2010.</p> <p>April 2010.</p> <p>June 2010</p>
Progress	<p>The Council prepared and consulted on the Core Strategy Final Policy Option Document (August 2008) completing Regulation 25 in accordance with the draft LDS timetable.</p>	
Implications and Action	<p>N/A</p>	

<b>SITE SPECIFIC ALLOCATIONS</b>		
Schedule	<p>Evidence Gathering and Issues and Options (Reg 25)</p> <p>Proposed Submission Document consultation (Reg 27)</p> <p>Submission (Reg 30)</p> <p>Examination in Public</p> <p>Inspectors Report</p> <p>Adoption</p>	<p>July 2009</p> <p>Oct – Nov 2009</p> <p>March 2010</p> <p>November 2010</p> <p>Aug – Sept 2010</p> <p>January 2011</p>
Progress	<p>The Council has undertaken an additional 'call for sites' which was last undertaken in 2006; following this a stakeholder</p>	

	meeting was undertaken in accordance with the SHLAA process.  The Council following discussions with Go-East, Planning Officers Society and other Suffolk Local Authorities as decided that with the pending Local Government Reorganisation Review.
Implications and Action	Keep abreast of Local Government Review and implications to the Site Specific Allocations timetable.

<b>OPEN SPACE, SPORT AND RECREATION SPD</b>	
Progress and Action	The preparation and consultation of the SPD has been delayed, following an additional piece of evidence base which supports the PPG17 audit was identified. These include: A Built Facilities Study and Green Space Strategy.  The Draft SPD and accompanying Sustainability Appraisal is due for consultation (Regulation 17) February/March 2009.

### **Existing Local Plan Policies**

- 3.1 The Forest Heath Local Plan was adopted in 1995 and was originally intended to provide land-use policy and proposals up to 2001, and up to 2006 in relation to the expanded settlement of Red Lodge. In the absence of an adopted Core Strategy, Development Control Policies DPD or Site Specific Allocations DPD, the Local Plan (1995) is still used to determine planning applications, although this is often in conjunction with policies in the more up to date national Planning Policy Guidance/Statement's and the Regional Spatial Strategy.
- 3.2 Despite the date of the plan, the policies of the Local Plan continue to be generally effective in assessing planning applications. In the monitoring period 935 planning applications were determined, of which 24 were advertised as departures from the plan, and of these departures, 9 were approved. Also during the period 33 appeals were decided, of which only 6 (18.18%) were allowed.
- 3.3 The Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 provides for the saving of policies in adopted local plans for a period of three years from the commencement date of the Act, which was 28<sup>th</sup> September 2004. Policies in adopted local plans after that date **expired** unless extended by the Secretary of State.
- 3.4 The Secretary of States Direction came into effect on the 28<sup>th</sup> September 2007 and accordingly all Local Plan Policies not saved on the 27<sup>th</sup> September and can no longer be used.
- 3.5 The saved policies listed within Appendix A is considered up to date and should be used where appropriate as material considerations when determining planning applications. All policies no longer saved cannot be used and no longer apply.

## Production of Evidence base

4.1 The new planning system requires local authorities to produce an up-to-date and credible evidence base to support and underpin the Development Plan Documents being prepared.

The progress of the main studies contributing towards the Forest Heath evidence base is set out below.

DOCUMENT TITLE	STATUS	COMMENTS
Urban Capacity Study	Complete Oct 2003	Superseded by Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment currently being prepared.
Housing Needs Study	Complete Feb 2006	No update projected.
Strategic Housing Market Assessment	Complete June 2008	Part of the Cambridge Sub Region partnership study.
Retail and Town Centre Study	Complete June 2006	No update projected.
Employment Land Review	Complete Oct 2006	Suffolk West Employment Land Review Group has employed consultants to prepare a joint ELR. Stage A was completed in house in partnership with the four District Authorities and Suffolk County Council.
Conservation Area Appraisals	On going	<b>Barton Mills:</b> Adopted 28 <sup>th</sup> May 2008 <b>Brandon:</b> revised and adopted 28.3.2007. <b>Dalham:</b> revised and adopted 28.3.2007 <b>Eleveden:</b> designated 19.10.73. Revised First Draft January 2008 <b>Eriswell:</b> revised and adopted 28.3.2007 <b>Exning:</b> designated 29.1.74. <b>Freckenham:</b> designated 20.10.93. <b>Higham:</b> Adopted 28 <sup>th</sup> May 2008 <b>Lakenheath:</b> revised and adopted 28.3.07 <b>Mildenhall:</b> designated 16 May 1990. <b>Moulton:</b> Adopted 28 <sup>th</sup> May 2008 <b>Newmarket:</b> designated 20.7.88, extended 24.7.91, 16.10.91, & 13.3.96, revised 1 <sup>st</sup> draft January 2008. <b>Santon Downham:</b> designated 21.12.73.
Strategic Flood Risk Assessment and Water Cycle Study	Scoping Report complete – Nov 2008 On going.	Document is being prepared in partnership with St Edmundsbury Borough Council, Anglian Water, and Environment Agency. The document is due for completion March 2009.
Parish Profile – Settlement Hierarchy	Complete May 2008	Completed in house May 2008 the draft document is on the website
Infrastructure and Environmental Capacity Appraisal	On going	Main evidence base to support Integrated Delivery Plan. Involving all stakeholders and infrastructure providers.
Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Needs Assessment	Complete May 2006	Cambridge Sub-Region Traveller Needs Assessment.
Open Space, Sport and Recreation Assessment / Audit	Ongoing	PPG17 Audit – Complete Oct 2007 Green Space Strategy – Due Feb 08 Built Facilities Study – Due Feb 2008
Habitat Regulations Assessment	On-going	Work currently underway in house and in Partnership with Breckland District Council.



## Contextual Indicators

4.1 Contextual indicators are used to describe the wider social, environmental, and economic background against which to consider the effects of policies and inform the interpretation of output indicators. In effect, they provide a baseline summary of how sustainable Forest Heath is relative to key national and regional sustainability targets. The following is the background evidence and key facts included within the Forest Heath Core Strategy Final Policy Option consultation undertaken in August 2008.

### Core Spatial Strategy

#### Brownfield Development

For the period of 1<sup>st</sup> April 2001 to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2007, the average proportion of new dwellings built on 'previously developed land' (PDL) was 55% (Suffolk's Environment Monitoring Report). This compares with the national target of 60%.

There is limited long-term potential for further brownfield development only 81 sites over 0.3 hectares have been identified within the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment as 100% 'brownfield'. Further details are set out below:

<b>Settlement</b>	<b>Brownfield (ha)</b>	<b>Number of sites</b>
NEWMARKET	12.85	11
MILDENHALL	13.29	11
BRANDON	10.35	11
LAKENHEATH	11.43	11
RED LODGE	13.74	4
BECK ROW	15.49	10
EXNING	0	0
KENTFORD	17.36	5
<b>Totals</b>	<b>94.51 hectares</b>	<b>63</b>
<b>Assume a density of 30 dwellings per ha</b>	<b>2,835 dwellings</b>	

#### Sustainability assessment of the towns and sustainable villages in Forest Heath.

The eight sustainability indicators listed provide an assessment of each settlement indicating its sustainability and indicative position within the settlement hierarchy.

In May 2008 the Council completed a Parish Profile for every parish within Forest Heath (document can be found on the website). Each profile included the following data:

<b>Sustainability indicators used to assess Forest Heath settlements</b>	
<b>INDICATOR</b>	<b>PURPOSE OF THE INDICATOR</b>
Population size 2001 census	Potential for self-containment – the larger a settlement, the greater the potential for it to support the full range of employment and community facilities.
Unemployment rate 2001 census Claimant unemployed as a % of economically active population of working age	A measure of the health of the local economy – towns showing a low unemployment rate are considered to offer greater opportunities for housing to be located where the jobs are likely to be available.
Residents working in Settlement 2001 daytime population of an area as a % of the economically active population in an area.	Settlements showing a high ratio of employment in the settlement compared to the resident workforce offer greater opportunities for locating people closer to their place of employment. Settlements with a low proportion of people working in the town in which they live exhibit commuter settlement characteristics.
Proportion using sustainable transport to work 2001, as a % of all working residents of the area except those working at home.	Towns with a high proportion of people using sustainable modes of transport (i.e. walking, cycling, public transport) to get to work are already providing attractive alternatives to the car.
Percentage of people living within 400m of a local shop and a primary school.	The opportunity of people to access community facilities by walking or cycling, rather than using a car.
Presence of a state upper school.	This indicates whether pupils have to travel to another town in order to go to school, which can have an effect on the number of car journeys made.
Presence of a doctor's surgery.	Proximity of a settlement's population to essential community facilities.
Presence of a hospital.	Proximity of a settlement's population to essential community facilities.

### **Urban Capacity**

The Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (draft) identifies 63 sites within the existing development boundaries of the three towns and the 'sustainable villages' with the potential to provide a total of around 2, 835 new dwellings.

### **Economic Development, Retail and Tourism**

#### **Number of Jobs**

The journey to work census data records approximately 32,000 full and part-time jobs in the District in 2001. That is around 4,000 more jobs than resident workers. 69% of Forest Heath residents worked within the District in 2001,

#### **Unemployment**

Between April 2006 - March 2007, unemployment in the District was 3.7%. This is below the averages for Suffolk, the east of England and the whole of England (ONS and Suffolk Observatory).

#### **Economic Activity**

The Forest Heath Economic Monitoring Report (April 2008) shows the proportion of people within the 16-74 age group who are in some form of work (economically active) is significantly higher than the average for both the east of England and the whole of England.

#### **Number of Businesses in the District**

The number of businesses registered for VAT in the District increased from 2,045 in 2000 to 2,315 at the end of 2007.

#### **Occupation Groups**

The proportion of people working as managers, in professional occupations and administrative/secretarial occupations is below the average for Suffolk, the east of England and the whole of England. Conversely, the proportion working as 'plant and machine operatives' and in 'elementary occupations' (unskilled labourers) is higher than the averages for the east of England and the whole of England.

#### **Average Weekly Earnings**

The mean weekly earnings in Forest Heath, both by workplace and residence are below the average for Suffolk, the east of England, and the whole of England. (ONS 2006).

#### **Distance travelled to work**

The proportion of those in work who travel less than 2kms to work (28%) is significantly higher than the averages for Suffolk, the east of England or the whole of England. The proportion of people working from home in 2001 was 9%, which is the same as the averages for the east of England and the whole of England, but slightly below the average for Suffolk. The average distance travelled to work is 13.1 km which is the lowest average distance travelled in any Suffolk district.

#### **Horseracing Industry**

Newmarket is recognised both nationally and internationally as the headquarters of the horseracing industry. It is estimated that around 20% of jobs in the Newmarket area (approx. 2,300 jobs) are related to horseracing.

#### **Vacant Retail Units in Town Centres**

In 2006, the proportion of vacant retail units in Brandon and Mildenhall was above the Suffolk average and the proportion in Newmarket was below (Suffolk's Environment).

#### **Tourism – Visitor Numbers**

In 2004 Forest Heath District attracted an estimated 58% of all the visits to visitor attractions in Suffolk. A very high proportion of these visitors (approx. 87%) visited Thetford Forest Park (Visit Britain).

#### **Tourism – Accommodation and Attractions**

In 2001, Forest Heath had the 2<sup>nd</sup> highest number of visitor bed-spaces of all the Suffolk Districts. This is largely due to the presence of 'Centre Parcs'. However, the District had the 2<sup>nd</sup> lowest number of tourism attractions in Suffolk.

## **Housing**

### **Existing Housing Stock**

As at 31st March 2008, the total number of dwellings in the District was 26,250. The RSS requires a 20% (approx) increase on the number of dwellings in the district in March 2007 by 2021.

### **House Building**

For the period 1<sup>st</sup> April 2001 to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2008, the average building rate was 232 per annum in the District, which is 25% of the Regional Plan requirement of 6,400 dwellings between 2001 – 2021 of which 1625 have been built as at March 2008.

If the RSS total of 6,400 new dwellings is to be achieved, then a further 4775 dwellings, an average of 367 dwellings a year, will need to be built in the 13 years between 2008 and 2021.

### **Existing Housing Stock by Type**

On the basis of the 2001 census the mix of housing types in Forest Heath compared to the whole of England was as follows:

	Forest Heath	England
Detached	35%	22%
Semi Detached	29%	32%
Terraced	22%	26%
Flats, maisonettes & bedsits	11%	20%
Caravans & other temporary Dwellings	1%	0%

There are some significant variations with the England-wide proportions. However, the Suffolk-wide proportions are similar to those in Forest Heath.

### **Household Size**

In 2001, the mix of household sizes in the District was as follows:

1 person – 29%

2 person – 35%

3 person – 16%

4 person – 14%

5 person – 5%

6 or more person – 1%

This is a similar mix to those for the whole of England, the East of England and Suffolk. Therefore, Forest Heath has a typical, average mix.

### **Quality of the Existing Housing Stock**

In 2001, 2.4% of the housing stock was classified as 'unfit', which was below the average for Suffolk of 3.4%.

The 2001 census included an assessment of 'overcrowding'. 5% of households in Forest Heath were classified as 'overcrowded', compared to 4% for Suffolk, 5% for the east of England and 7% for the whole of England.

In 2001, 4.4% of households in Forest Heath were without central heating, compared to 7.6% for Suffolk, 5.1% for the east of England and 8.4% for the whole of England.

#### **House Prices**

In September 2006, the average house price in the District was just below the averages for Suffolk, the east of England and the whole of England. However, there were variations within the District with the average house price in Newmarket being above the national average.

#### **Affordable Housing – Price to Income Ratio**

At September 2006, it cost 7.2 times the average Forest Heath income to buy a dwelling in the District. This is in line with the average for Suffolk of 7.26.

#### **Stock of Social Housing**

In the period 1<sup>st</sup> April 2001 to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2007, 285 affordable dwellings were built, which was 26.5% of the total number of new dwellings, compared to the 35% required by the Regional Plan. A total of 1955 affordable dwellings will need to be built in Forest Heath between 2007 and 2021 if the Regional Plan requirement of 2,240 (35% of 6,400) is to be achieved.

#### **Special Needs Housing**

The 2001 census recorded that 19% of the District's population was aged over 60 and 14.5% had a 'limiting long-term illness'.

#### **Vacant Housing and Second Homes**

2005 records indicate that approximately 1% of the housing stock is long-term vacant dwellings (unoccupied for longer than 6 months) and 0.7% are second homes.

### **Transport**

#### **Car Ownership**

Car ownership in Forest Heath is above the national average. In 2001, 17% of households had no car, compared to 27% nationally. 45% had one car (43% nationally), 31% had two cars (24% nationally), 5% had three cars (5% nationally) and 2% had four or more cars (1% nationally).

#### **Traffic Levels**

The increases in traffic levels between 1996 and 2003 on roads within Forest Heath was 3%, significantly less than the Suffolk-wide 13% increase. This was the smallest increase of all the Suffolk local authorities.

Changes on particular roads were as follows:

- A11 at Elveden +1.6%
- A14 at Risby +26.3%
- A1065 south of Eriswell +10.6%
- A1065 south west of Brandon +5.6%
- A1101 Beck Row -33%
- A1105 Mildenhall, north of College Heath Road -6.7%
- B1112 Eriswell, south of C602 +69.5%
- C624 Tuddenham, east of U6204 -8.1%

#### **Length of Journey to Work**

In 2001, the proportion of Forest Heath residents in work who travel less than 2kms to work (28%) is significantly higher than the averages for Suffolk, the east of England or the whole of England. The proportion of people working from home in 2001 was 9%, which is the same as the averages for the east of England and the whole of England but slightly below the average for Suffolk.

#### **Journey to Work, Mode of Transport**

In 2001, the % of Forest Heath residents in work who normally travel to work by car was 65%; the national average being 55%. Those travelling by train was less than 1% (4% national average); those travelling by bus was 2% (national average 8%). However, those travelling by bicycle (5%) and walking (11%) were above the national averages of 3% and 10%.

#### **Quality of Bus Services**

Suffolk County Council has set out minimum bus services levels. In 2003, it estimated that 95.7% of Parishes in Forest Heath achieved that standard compared to 92.7% Suffolk-wide.

### **Environmental Resources**

#### **Diverse Natural and Built Heritage**

The District is one of the smallest rural Districts in the UK, just under 38,000 hectares. However, it is made up of four distinct 'landscape character areas', which make for a diverse character in terms of both landscape and vernacular buildings.

**Designated Landscape** Approximately 50% of the area of the District is designated as 'special landscape area' in the Local Plan (1995) and the Suffolk Structure Plan (2001). This amounts to 17% of the designated landscape in Suffolk, which is the second highest proportion of the rural Districts after Suffolk Coastal (42%).

**Area of Woodland** 17% of the District is covered by woodland, the majority of which is commercial coniferous forest, and only 1% is designated as 'ancient woodland'. The woodland in Forest Heath contributes 20% of the total woodland in Suffolk, which is above the average for the other rural Districts.

**Area designated as 'Sites of Special Scientific Interest'** 33% of the District's area is designated as SSSIs because of their nationally important wildlife interests. This is a significantly higher proportion than any other District in Suffolk, and the area of SSSI in Forest Heath amounts to 39% of the total in Suffolk.

#### **Biodiversity**

60% of the species identified in the Suffolk Biodiversity Action Plan are found in the District. One of the regional biodiversity targets is to create an additional 2000 ha of reed beds and fen by 2010. The recently created RSPB reserve at Lakenheath covers nearly 300 ha, 15% of the regional target.

#### **High Quality Agricultural Land**

30% of all agricultural land in the District is classified as grade 1 or 2, and 4% is farmed organically.

#### Conservation Areas

The District has 13 Conservation Areas which have been designated for their special architectural or historical interest. These cover 2% of the District's total area which is just below the Suffolk-wide District average of 2.6%.

#### Buildings at Risk

In 2006, 9 properties listed as being of special architectural or historic interest were classified as 'at risk' in the District. Whilst numerically this is one of the lowest numbers of properties in a Suffolk District, it is the highest proportion at over twice the Suffolk average of 0.8%.

#### Unique Heritage of Newmarket

Newmarket is the only place in the world, which still has horseracing stables operating in and around the town centre.

#### Air Quality Management Areas

In 2007, there were no significant areas of air pollution, which required the designation of an 'air quality management area'. Elsewhere in Suffolk there were a total of eight 'air quality management areas' affecting a total of 51 properties.

#### Capacity of Renewable Energy Schemes within the District.

As at 2006, only up to 0.66 (MW) of renewable energy is produced on one site within the District, although it is understood that woodland waste from Thetford Forest is used to produce renewable energy at the power station just over the boundary in Breckland District. Both the national and regional targets are for 10% of electricity consumption to be from renewable sources by 2010.

#### Energy Efficiency

Between 1996-2006, there was only an 12.4% increase in energy efficiency in residential properties in the District. This is below the rate required to achieve the national target of a 30% increase by 2011.

#### Proportion of Household Waste Recycled

Approximately 50% of household waste is recycled in the District. This is one of the highest proportions in England and ahead of the national target.

#### Proportion of the District designated at Flood risk

21% of the District is designated by the Environment Agency as being at potential flood risk.

#### Proportion of the District suffering from Significant Aircraft Noise.

17% of the District suffers from aircraft noise of 70 dB (A) or above. This is a significant problem caused by the two large military airbases in the District.

## **Culture**

### **Proportion of the population living within 5kms of an informal Countryside Recreation Site.**

97% of the population live within 5kms of an informal countryside recreation site, which is above the Suffolk-wide average of 93%.

### **Visitor Numbers to Main Leisure Attractions per Annum**

Centre Parcs – 347,000

FHDC Leisure Centres and swimming pools in Brandon, Mildenhall and Newmarket – 450,000

Newmarket Racecourse – 353,000

High Lodge Visitor Centre - 300,000

Thetford Forest Park – 2,000,000 (estimated).

Brandon Country Park – 92,000

Brandon Country Park, Visitor Centre – 63,400

The National Horseracing Museum – 19,350

The National Stud – 16,000

West Row Stadium – not known

Lakenheath Fen RSPB Reserve – 7,000

Mildenhall Museum – 5,000

### **Satisfaction with Leisure Facilities**

In 2004, a MORI poll of 500 Forest Heath residents indicated the following: -

- 60% of Forest Heath residents would like to see more leisure facilities (cinema, bowling alley, skating rink etc) provided in the next 10 years (compared to the Suffolk-wide average of 41%).
- 13% thought that leisure facilities were 'particularly good' (compared to the Suffolk-wide average of 25%).
- 44% thought leisure facilities were in need of improvements (compared to the Suffolk-wide average of 28%).

### **Sports Clubs**

160 local sports clubs are registered in the Council's Sports Club Guide.

### **Interest in the Arts**

Over 600 people are registered as interested in supporting local arts events within the District, plus there are 120 known local clubs/societies.



## **Core Output Indicators**

## Business Development and Town Centres

The following information for business development is for the previous (2006/7) monitoring year. The District Council was unable to monitor business and employment. The lack of a computerised monitoring system meant the data available was not considered robust and therefore a nil return for 2007/8.

A monitoring system to collect all business and town centre indicators has been put in place and commenced April 2007. However the mechanism for pulling the information from the computer system onto a report has been complex; the Council therefore commissioned experts to undertake this work to ensure a robust monitoring system is in place. The final reports are due for completion February 2009.

<b>BD1</b>			<b>Total amount of additional employment floorspace - by type</b>
<b>Employment by type</b>	<b>Completed employment Floorspace (gross)</b>	<b>Completed employment Floorspace (net)</b>	
B1a	N/A	N/A	
B1b	N/A	N/A	
B1c	N/A	N/A	
B2	N/A	N/A	
B8	N/A	N/A	
<b>Total</b>	<b>N/A</b>	<b>4,807sq m</b>	

Full return including breakdown by type will be reported 2008/09

<b>BD2</b>				<b>Total Amount of employment floorspace on previously developed land – by type</b>
3,807 sq m of completed business development was on previously developed land.				
<b>Employment by type</b>	<b>Total floorspace completed</b>	<b>Floorspace completed on PDL</b>	<b>Percentage</b>	
B1a	N/A	N/A	N/A	
B1b	N/A	N/A	N/A	
B1c	N/A	N/A	N/A	
B2	N/A	N/A	N/A	
B8	N/A	N/A	N/A	
<b>Total</b>	<b>4,807 sq m</b>	<b>3,807 sq m</b>	<b>79%</b>	

Full return including breakdown by type and gross floorspace will be reported 2008/09.

<b>BD3      Employment land available - by type</b>			
<b>Employment land supply by type</b>	<b>Outstanding Permissions</b>	<b>Outstanding Allocations for Business Uses</b>	<b>Total</b>
B1a	N/A	N/A	N/A
B1b	N/A	N/A	N/A
B1c	N/A	N/A	N/A
B2	N/A	N/A	N/A
B8	N/A	N/A	N/A
<b>Total</b>	<b>21,618sq m</b>	<b>31ha</b>	<b>33.2ha</b>

Breakdown by type will be reported 2008/09.

<b>BD4      Total amount of floorspace for 'town centre uses'</b>		
<b>i. within town centre area</b>	<b>Completed Floorspace (gross)</b>	<b>Completed Floorspace (net)</b>
A1	N/A	N/A
B2	N/A	N/A
B1a	N/A	N/A
D2	N/A	N/A
<b>Total</b>	<b>N/A</b>	<b>N/A</b>

  

<b>ii. within local authority area</b>	<b>Completed Floorspace (gross)</b>	<b>Completed Floorspace (net)</b>
A1	N/A	N/A
B2	N/A	N/A
B1a	N/A	N/A
D2	N/A	N/A
<b>Total</b>	<b>N/A</b>	<b>N/A</b>

Breakdown by type will be reported 2008/09.

## Housing

H1		Plan period and housing targets	
Start of Plan Period	End of Plan period	Total Housing Required	Source of plan Target
01/04/2001	31/03/2021	6,400	Regional Spatial Strategy (May 2008)
01/04/2007	31/04/2031	8,132 *	Emerging RSS review Emerging Core Strategy

\* Housing Capacity submitted by SCC to EERA

The housing trajectory is attached as Appendix B. The projected completions in the trajectory are based primarily on the estimated implementation of outstanding planning permissions for major development.

As identified within the 2006/07 Annual Monitoring Report and Housing Trajectory Forest Heath exceeded the RSS annual housing requirement in 2007/08 completing 549 dwellings.

H2(a)		Net additional dwellings – in previous years																														
H2(b)		Net additional dwellings – for the reporting year																														
H2(c)		Net additional dwellings – for the reporting year																														
		30/31	29/30	28/29	27/28	26/27	25/26	24/25	23/24	22/23	21/22	20/21	19/20	18/19	17/18	16/17	15/16	14/15	13/14	12/13	11/12	10/11	09/10	08/9	07/8	06/7	05/6	04/5	03/4	02/3	01/2	
H2a Past completions (net)																											265	334	201	67	62	147
H2b Completions (monitoring yr)																									549							
H2c Housing delivery	Net additions																															
	Hectares																															
	Target																															
H2d																																

NOTE: The RSS14 annual housing requirement has risen to 367 per year; this is due to the shortfall of housing completions within the first 6 years of the plan period.

NOTE: The projected completions include the estimated completion of 'large' residential permissions within the District

NOTE: H2d will be completed in 2008/09 following the completion of the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment

Full return including will be reported 2008/09 following completion of the SHLAA.



<b>H3 New and converted dwellings – on previously developed land</b>		
<b>Total number of completed dwellings</b>	<b>Number of dwellings completed on PDL</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
549	134	24%
<p>During 2007-08 a total of 549 dwellings were completed of which only 134 (24%) were on previously developed land. This is significantly below the national average of 60%. This is mainly due to the ongoing development of 'greenfield' allocated Local Plan (1995) sites in Red Lodge.</p> <p>Full return including gross numbers will be reported 2008/09.</p>		

<b>H4 Net Additional pitches (Gypsy and Traveller)</b>	
Total number of permanent pitches (2006)	35
New pitches since 2006	12
<b>Total:</b>	<b>47</b>
<p><b>AUTHORISED</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sandy park, Skeltons Drove, Beck Row - 35 units</li> <li>Willow Park, Rookery Drove, Beck Row - 12 units</li> </ul> <p><b>UNAUTHORISED</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Heath Farm Road, Red Lodge – 2 units</li> </ul> <p>Forest Heath contains <b>no transit pitches</b> – authorised or unauthorised.</p>	

<b>H5 Gross affordable housing completions</b>	
Social rent homes provided	N/A
Intermediate homes provided	N/A
<b>Total Affordable homes</b>	<b>97</b>
<p>During 2007-08, 97 affordable dwellings were completed, which is 17.6% of the total number of 549 dwellings completed.</p> <p>Full return including sum of social rented and intermediate affordable housing will be reported 2008/09.</p>	

H6	Housing Quality – Building for Life Assessments
<p>No return for 2007/08. A monitoring system has been put in place and a full return will be reported 2008/09.</p> <p>The Council is putting in measure to adopt the Buildings for Life Standard to all large developments to ensure the buildings for life criteria is considered.</p>	

## FINDINGS

### Residential Allocations – Local Plan Adopted 1995

Local Plan 1995 Allocation	Location	Site Area	Status
Policy 4.3	Between All Saints Road and The Avenue, Newmarket	2ha	Subject to completion of S.106 (76 dwellings)
Policy 4.4 saved	South West of Sefton Way and Leaders Way, Newmarket	2ha	No progress
Policy 4.5	North West of West Row Road, Mildenhall	5.3ha	Complete
Policy 4.6 saved	South of Gonville Close, Mildenhall	2.6ha	No progress
Policy 4.7	East of College Heath Road, Mildenhall	6.1ha	Under construction (158 dwellings)
Policy 4.8	North of Green Road, Brandon	2.2ha	No progress
Policy 4.9	West of Bury Road, Brandon	4ha	On part of site – Not started (31 dwellings)
Policy 4.10	Matthews Nursery and Land to North Lakenheath	1.8ha	No progress
Policy 4.11	North of Station Road, Lakenheath	4.5ha	Under construction
Policy 4.12	Lamble Close, Beck Row	1.6ha	No progress
Policy 4.13	Tweed Close, Moulton	0.5ha	Complete
Policy saved 13.1	Red Lodge	-	Under Construction (1,500 dwellings)

NOTE: This assessment demonstrates that there has been limited progress in the take up of the housing allocations due to the site constraints which are unlikely to be overcome.



## DRAFT Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (December 2008) – Summary table

Settlement	Total Sites	Total ha	BF	Ha	Dwe	Green	ha	Dwe	Both	Ha	Dwe
Brandon	19	192	11	10.35	310	7	156.67	4700	1	25.4	762
Mildenhall	29	409	11	13.29	399	16	253.57	7607	2	142.57	4277
Newmarket	21	143	11	12.85	385	8	100.93	3028	2	29.23	877
Lakenheath	27	91	11	11.43	343	16	79.12	2374	0	0	0
Red Lodge	10	47	4	13.74	412	4	26.18	785	2	6.72	201
Beck Row	21	125	10	15.49	465	10	108.21	3246	1	1.29	39
Exning	4	39	0	0	0	4	39.26	1178	0	0	0
Kentford	11	46	5	17.36	521	6	28.72	862	0	0	0
West Row	22	22	7	6.58	197	14	14.53	436	1	0.92	28
Barton Mills	4	2	2	1.08	32	2	1.25	37	0	0	0
Eriswell	2	68	0	0	0	1	68.17	2045	1	0.27	8
Freckenham	5	4	2	1.24	37	2	0.89	27	1	1.78	53
Holywell Row	5	53	1	0.54	16	2	28.58	857	2	26.34	790
Icklingham	1	10	0	0	0	1	9.88	296	0	0	0
Moulton	1	2	1	2.13	64	0	0	0	0	0	0
Tuddenham	3	5	1	0.33	10	2	4.49	135	0	0	0
Worlington	8	18	4	1.46	44	4	16.27	488	0	0	0
Dalham	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0.96	29
Herringswell	1	0.21	0	0	0	1	0.21	6	0	0	0
<b>Totals</b>	<b>195</b>	<b>1277.21</b>	<b>81</b>	<b>107.87</b>	<b>3235</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>936.93</b>	<b>28107</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>235.48</b>	<b>7064</b>



## Statement of Five Year Land Supply – January 2008

### Five Year Deliverable Housing Supply extract

The schedule of housing sites in **Appendix B** provides details of sites that make up the 5 year supply of deliverable sites. The schedule is summarised in Table 1 and demonstrates that there is sufficient supply of housing land for approximately 5 years. The schedule includes sites which already have planning permission, sites where dwellings are under construction but are not yet recorded as complete and other sites where there is a clear expectation that development will occur in the next five years in accordance with development plan policies.

In this statement no allowance has been made for the development of sites which have been suggested as possible allocations in the LDF or for unidentified windfalls (although the authority considers it highly likely dwellings on such sites will contribute to the five year supply).

Sites which are not considered to be available, suitable or achievable are not included in the schedules. Annual Monitoring of planning permission show a low rate of expired planning permissions within Forest Heath and given the high demand for residential development, it has been assumed that all unimplemented permission large permissions will come forward within the plan period. The Local Plan (1995) allocations with no planning permission have been excluded as it is unknown if these site are 'deliverable' and will come forward. In addition the Urban Capacity figure has also not been included as further work needs to be undertaken.

Identified Sites	As at 1 April 2007
Outstanding Unimplemented planning permissions as at 1 <sup>st</sup> April 2007 (large and small)	<b>3,421</b>
Allocations in Local Plan	<b>76*</b>
Sites where principle of development is accepted	<b>0</b>
Contingent sites (Brownfield sites with potential)	<b>0**</b>

\* Historically the take up of allocations has been limited. Policy 4.3

\*\* Further work is required to determine the identified urban capacity sites which are likely to come forward in the short term

Five year deliverable housing supply	1 April 2007 – 31 March 2012
5 Year requirement	<b>1,900</b>
<i>Annual Average requirement</i>	<b>380</b>
5 Year Identified Supply (See Schedule, Appendix A: committed large site only)	<b>2,267</b>
<i>Equates to</i>	<b>5.9 years supply</b>
Shortfall over 5 year period	<b>0</b>
<b>TOTAL FIVE YEAR SUPPLY</b>	
<i>Equates to at least a</i>	<b>5.9 years supply</b>

Table 1: Land Supply Schedule

In total this means that of the **3, 421** dwellings committed for housing development we have assessed that **2,267 dwellings on large sites** are

deliverable within the five year period between 1st April 2007 and 31st March 2012. This assessment gives us **367** dwellings above our five year housing provision requirement of **380** dwellings.

This gives at least a **5.9 year supply** of deliverable sites. Please note that this figure does not include Local Plan allocations, Brownfield Capacity with no planning permission or committed small windfall sites.

The Forest Heath Core Strategy (incorporating development control policies) is programmed for adoption in early 2010 and will identify strategic locations for housing growth in the District. When adopted it will provide greater certainty, particularly with regard to designations on the proposals map, and will allow consideration of planning applications consistent with Core Strategy policies.

The Council has consulted on its "Issues and Options" for the Site Specific Proposals (September 2006) and will be undertaking further consultation prior to the Preferred Options stage early 2009. Although no allowance has been made, the level of windfall development in the district has historically been over 340 dwellings per annum (average since 2001), and there is little evidence to suggest that such windfall dwellings will not come forward in the future.

## Environmental Quality

<b>E1</b>	<b>Number of planning permissions granted contrary to the advice of the on flooding or water quality grounds</b>
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No such permissions were granted in 2007/8.

<b>E2</b>	<b>Change in areas of biodiversity importance</b>
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**No change during 2007/08**

66 hectares of heathland was created in the District at Brandon Country Park and Warren Hills between 2001-2005, as part of the English Nature Heathland Heritage Initiative.

Over 100 hectares of reedbed was created at the RSPB Reserve at Lakenheath Fen between 1998-2005. Further creation on the 300 hectare site is planned.

<b>E3</b>	<b>Renewable energy generation</b>
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		<b>Permitted installed capacity in MW</b>	<b>Completed installed capacity in MW</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Wind onshore</b>		0	0	0
<b>Solar photovoltaic's</b>		0	0	0
<b>Hydro</b>		0	0	0
<b>Biomass</b>	<b>Landfill gas</b>	0	0	0
	<b>Sewage sludge digestion</b>	0	0	0
	<b>Municipal (and industrial) solid waste combustion</b>	0	0	0
	<b>Co-firing of biomass with fossil fuels</b>	0	0	0
	<b>Animal biomass</b>	0	0	0
	<b>Plant biomass</b>	0	0	0

According to information supplied by 'Renewable's East' in April 2007 one site south of Red Lodge is producing up to 0.66MW of renewable energy, which is around 3% of the Suffolk total.



**APPENDIX A: Forest Heath Local Plan Saved Policy list.**

<b>FOREST HEATH LOCAL PLAN - LIST OF SAVED POLICIES - SEPT 2007</b>	
<b>SETTLEMENT POLICIES</b>	
3.1	The Towns & Red Lodge
3.2	The Villages
3.3	The Minor Settlements
3.6	Housing for the Military Air Bases
<b>HOUSING POLICIES</b>	
4.4	New Residential Allocation - Sefton Way/Leaders Way, Newmarket
4.6	New Residential Allocation - Gonville Close, Mildenhall
4.7	New Residential Allocation - College Heath Road, Mildenhall
4.8	New Residential Allocation - Green Road, Brandon
4.9	New Residential Allocation - Bury Road, Brandon
4.10	New Residential Allocation - Matthews Nursery, Lakenheath
4.12	New Residential Allocation - Lamble Close, Beck Row
4.14	Windfall sites - Towns
4.15	Windfall sites - Villages
4.16	Windfall Sites - Minor Settlements
4.24	Replacement or extended Dwellings in the Countryside
4.28	Conversion of Existing Properties to Flats/Housing in multiple occupation
4.31	Self-contained residential annexes
4.32	Extensions to Dwellings
<b>EMPLOYMENT POLICIES</b>	

5.4	New allocations for industrial & commercial development - Newmarket (former George Lambton Playing Field)
5.6	New allocation for industrial & commercial development-Lakenheath
5.14	Visitor Attractions
<b>TRANSPORT POLICIES</b>	
6.2	Roads-Primary Route Network-Mildenhall
6.5	Roads - Primary Route Network-Newmarket
6.10	Horse walks
6.12	Lorry Parking
<b>TOWN CENTRE POLICIES</b>	
7.2	Newmarket Town Centre
7.3	Mildenhall Town Centre
7.4	Brandon Town Centre
7.5	Non-retail uses in Town Centre
<b>GENERAL ENVIRONMENTAL POLICIES</b>	
8.37	Vacant sites
<b>BUILT ENVIRONMENT POLICIES</b>	
8.19	Advertisements & Shop fronts in Conservation areas
<b>RURAL AREA POLICIES</b>	
9.1	The Rural area & New Development
9.2	The Rural area & New Development
<b>RECREATION POLICIES</b>	
10.2	Outdoor playing space
10.3	Outdoor playing space
10.4	Recreation development at Newmarket
10.5	Loss of public or private open space or recreational facilities
<b>COMMUNITY FACILITIES POLICIES</b>	



11.2	Red Lodge school
11.5	Newmarket Hospital
<b>HORSERACING INDUSTRY POLICIES</b>	
12.1	Racecourse & training grounds
12.2	The studs
12.3	The studs
12.4	Training establishments
12.5	Training establishments
12.6	Training establishments
12.7	Training establishments
12.8	Training establishments
12.10	other facilities
<b>RED LODGE POLICIES</b>	
13.1	General expansion of Red Lodge
13.2	Master Plan
13.3	Master Plan
13.4	Red Lodge Legal agreements
13.5	Completion of legal agreements
13.6	Development diagram
<b>IMPLEMENTATION POLICIES FOR RED LODGE</b>	
14.1	Implementation

**APPENDIX B: Housing Trajectory**

**Housing Trajectory 2008 based on Regional Spatial Strategy Policy H1 (May 2008)**

