

Winslow Town Council (WTC) is convinced that Wycombe District Council's Local Plan has not been positively prepared for the simple reason that it fails to deliver sufficient land for new homes to meet the needs of the District. Undoubtedly, a major factor in this failure was due to the obvious reluctance of Wycombe District Council to robustly review existing Green Belt land and positively establish that which can justifiably be designated as 'poorly performing' and therefore suitable for re-designation for housing.

The Wycombe District Local Plan (WDLP) only allocates 57 hectares of previously designated Green Belt land for housing, to deliver 1,100 new homes at 19.3 dph. This represents a mere 0.4% of the District's Green Belt, in a District with 48% Green Belt.

Many Local Planning Authorities in a similar position to Wycombe District Council have recognised that, in order to meet the housing need identified by their Full Objectively Assessed Housing Need (FOAN), it is necessary to recognise the 'exceptional circumstances' and to reallocate poorly performing areas of Green Belt for housing development in order to fully meet their own FOAN. A local example of such an approach is South Oxfordshire's Local Plan, where re-designated Green Belt land will deliver 5,500 new homes on 3 sites.

Other LPAs such as Cherwell, Central Bedfordshire and Dacorum Councils are taking a similar positive and responsible approach to the challenge, following guidance from the Government such as that of the then Housing Minister, Gavin Barwell, when speaking in relation to the Housing White paper, who said - *"The green belt is 13% of the land. We can solve this crisis without having to take huge tracts out of the green belt. We are not going to weaken the protections; we have a clear manifesto promise and there is no need to take huge tracts of land out of the green belt to solve our housing crisis. They can take land out of the green belt in exceptional circumstances but they should have looked at every other alternative first."* (WTC emphasis)

The Wycombe District Local Plan is essentially claiming, by its establishing a level of unmet need to be provided by a neighbouring LPA, that the District 'is full' and has no future capacity, of any significance, for providing land for housing beyond 2033. This is demonstrably not true.