

# Authority Monitoring Report



## 2023/24 Monitoring Report

## Contents

|                                                             |    |
|-------------------------------------------------------------|----|
| 1. INTRODUCTION.....                                        | 1  |
| 2. EXETER PLANNING FRAMEWORK .....                          | 2  |
| 3. PROGRESS AGAINST THE LOCAL DEVELOPMENT SCHEME .....      | 4  |
| 4. POLICY IMPLEMENTATION .....                              | 8  |
| 5. POLICY MONITORING.....                                   | 11 |
| 6. COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE LEVY (CIL) AND SECTION 106..... | 24 |
| 7. DUTY TO COOPERATE .....                                  | 27 |

## 1. Introduction

### 1.1 *The Authority Monitoring Report*

- 1.1.1 The Localism Act (2011) requires Local Planning Authorities to prepare and publish an Authority Monitoring Report. The role of this report is to set out progress on the timetable specified in the Local Development Scheme and to show how the implementation of the policies contained within Exeter's Development Plan is progressing. It also reports on nationally prescribed matters including housing provision, whether any Neighbourhood Plans have been adopted, actions relating to the Duty to Cooperate, and Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) receipts.
- 1.1.2 This Authority Monitoring Report covers the period 1 April 2023 to 31 March 2024. It should be noted, therefore, that some events or data which have emerged since March 2024 are not covered in this report. These will be included in the next version of the report for 2024/25.

## 2. Exeter Planning Framework

### 2.1 *The Development Plan*

2.1.1 In Exeter, the Development Plan currently includes the following documents:

- **Exeter Core Strategy**<sup>1</sup> - this sets out policies and allocations to guide future development in Exeter. It provides the broad strategy for the development of the city up to 2026.
- **Exeter Local Plan First Review (saved policies)**<sup>2</sup> – provides more detailed land use policies vital to making decisions on planning applications. The Secretary of State has confirmed that the majority of the Local Plan First Review policies will be saved until they are replaced by new policies in the emerging Local Development Framework (to be provided by the Exeter Plan).
- **Devon Minerals Plan and Devon Waste Plan**<sup>3</sup> - these are produced by Devon County Council. The Minerals Plan sets out how and where minerals should be worked in Devon. The Waste Plan is the planning policy framework for the facilities that are needed to manage Devon's waste.
- **St James Neighbourhood Plan**<sup>4</sup> - this sets out policies to be used in making planning decisions within the St James neighbourhood area.

2.1.2 As at the end of March 2024, the Council had also produced the following adopted **Supplementary Planning Documents**<sup>5</sup> (SPDs) which add to or expand upon policies in the Core Strategy or the Local Plan First Review:

- Affordable Housing
- Householder's Guide to Extension Design
- Houses in Multiple Occupation (**updated SPD adopted December 2023**)
- Planning Obligations
- Public Open Space
- Residential Design Guide
- South West Exeter Development Brief
- Sustainable Transport
- Trees in Relation to Development
- University of Exeter Streatham Campus Masterplan Framework
- Canal Basin Masterplan

2.1.3 Two SPDs were also being produced as of March 2024:

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<sup>1</sup> [Core Strategy Development Plan Document](#)

<sup>2</sup> [Local Plan First Review 1995-2011](#)

<sup>3</sup> [Minerals and waste policy \(devon.gov.uk\)](#)

<sup>4</sup> [St James Neighbourhood Plan](#)

<sup>5</sup> [Exeter City Council's Supplementary Planning Documents](#)

- An updated Householders Guide: Design of Extensions and Alterations; and
- A new Liveable Water Lane SPD.

2.1.4 These masterplans have also been produced:

- Monkerton and Hill Barton Masterplan
- Newcourt Masterplan
- Riverside and Ludwell Valley Parks Masterplan

## 2.2 *Local Development Order (LDO)*

2.2.1 LDOs provide permitted development rights for specified types of development in defined locations.

2.2.2 Exeter has one Local Development Order which is for Local Energy Networks<sup>6</sup>. This grants permitted development rights, which are in addition to permitted development rights granted nationally, to district heating and other local energy transmission and distribution networks, including pipes, wires, heat exchange equipment, enclosures, information signage and ancillary engineering works.

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<sup>6</sup> [Local Development Order](#)

### 3. Progress against the Local Development Scheme

#### 3.1 *Local Development Scheme*

- 3.1.1 The Local Development Scheme (LDS) sets out the planning policy that is to be prepared by Exeter City Council and the timetable for its preparation. An updated and revised Local Development Scheme (LDS) was produced in June 2023. Progress against that version of the LDS that occurred in the 2023-2024 reporting period is set out in this section.

#### 3.2 *The Exeter Plan*

- 3.2.1 The Exeter Plan will cover the city's development needs until 2041 and was launched in autumn 2021. The 2023 LDS included the following timetable for preparing the Exeter Plan (it has subsequently been updated).

- Issues consultation: September 2021. **Complete.**
- Outline draft plan consultation: September 2022. **Complete.**
- Draft Plan consultation: October 2023. **Complete**
- Publication: October 2024
- Submission to Planning Inspectorate: March 2025
- Examination hearings: June 2025
- Adoption: December 2025

- 3.2.2 The Issues consultation document marked the first stage in the plan making process for the new Exeter Plan and met Regulation 18 of the plan making regulations.

- 3.2.3 The comments received during the Issues consultation were used in the preparation of the Outline Draft Exeter Plan, the first version of the Exeter Plan which was consulted on for 12 weeks in autumn. The Outline Draft consultation was the second round of consultation undertaken in the plan making process for the Exeter Plan and met Regulation 18<sup>7</sup> of the plan making regulations. The Outline Draft included the vision for the city, potential development sites for a mixture of uses including housing and a draft set of policies. This version was not a full draft as it did not include a full set of development management policies nor allocation policies.

- 3.2.4 The Full Draft Exeter Plan consultation was the third round of consultation undertaken in the Exeter Plan. A 12-week consultation period (twice the statutory requirement) ran from 23 October 2023 to 15 January 2024. Feedback from the previous two rounds of consultation was used to inform the Full Draft Exeter Plan. The consultation met Regulation 18 of national

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<sup>7</sup> [The Town and Country Planning \(England\) Regulations 2012](#)

planning legislation. It built on the framework included in the previous Outline Draft and included:

- The vision for the city;
- A large number of policies covering different topics which will be used to steer planning applications;
- Potential development sites for a mixture of uses including housing and employment; and
- A proposals/policies map, which showed the extent of spatial designations and proposals contained within the Plan.

3.2.5 The following documents accompanied the Exeter Plan and the full draft public consultation:

- **Sustainability Appraisal** of the Exeter Plan. This is an assessment of the likely effects of the Full Draft Exeter Plan on social, economic, and environmental issues.
- **Habitats Regulation Assessment** of the Exeter Plan. This is an assessment of the Full Draft Exeter Plan on the internationally important sites for biodiversity in and around Exeter.

3.2.6 The consultation on the Full Draft Exeter Plan successfully met the milestone outlined in the 2023 Local Development Scheme (LDS), which set the timeline for this stage of plan-preparation. This consultation phase was a key step in engaging the community and stakeholders in the planning process, ensuring that a wide range of views and feedback could be incorporated into the development of the Plan.

3.2.7 During the Full Draft consultation, the planning team spoke with more than 600 people at 20 face-to-face events held across the city, in addition to taking the plan to community groups and city stakeholders. Responses to draft policies and sites were invited through the Commonplace online engagement platform, with the option to email or provide paper comments. 1,118 people, organisations and companies responded to the consultation, providing 2,856 responses. A report summarising comments received was published in March 2024<sup>8</sup>.

3.2.8 Throughout the 2023-2024 reporting period, evidence, draft policies and site assessments were prepared to move towards the Publication Draft Exeter Plan.

### 3.3 *Exeter Vision 2040*

3.3.1 Exeter has an ambitious vision. The City Council adopted this vision in 2019 following engagement with our key partners and stakeholders. The vision can be summarised as:

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<sup>8</sup> [Exeter Plan Full Draft Consultation Report](#)

*'By the time they are an adult, a child born in Exeter today will live in a city that is inclusive, healthy and sustainable - a city where the opportunities and benefits of prosperity are shared, and all citizens are able to participate fully in the city's economic, social, cultural and civic life.'*

- 3.3.2 The emerging Exeter Plan includes this vision to ensure it is enshrined in new city planning policy.

### 3.4 *Liveable Exeter*

- 3.4.1 In 2019 the City Council launched Liveable Exeter. Liveable Exeter will help deliver the Exeter Vision 2040<sup>9</sup> and the Exeter Plan. It is a bold initiative to build at least 12,000 new homes in the city by 2040. It aims to transform previously developed land, strengthen existing communities and create new neighbourhoods. A series of Liveable Exeter Principles will guide the largest developments to ensure they are of the highest quality. The Liveable Exeter Principles were included in the Full Draft Exeter Plan.

### 3.5 *Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs)*

- 3.5.1 The Council already has a series of SPDs (listed earlier in this document) covering topics such as affordable housing, planning obligations, public open space and various areas in the city. The list of SPDs will gradually need to be reviewed in the context of the new policies which emerge in the new Exeter Plan and to reflect changes in national planning policy.
- 3.5.2 The 2023 LDS outlined that the Council is preparing the following SPD documents and reviews:
- **Houses in Multiple Occupation Supplementary Planning Document Review.** This sits alongside a review of the associated Article 4 Direction which manages the change of use of regular residential properties to houses in multiple occupation within the area covered by the Article 4 Direction. Consultation on this SPD and the Article 4 Direction area was carried out during the reporting period. Comments were then reviewed and the revised SPD was adopted by Exeter City Council on 12 December 2023. The revised Article 4 Direction area was approved on the same date, coming into force in December 2024.<sup>10</sup>
  - **Liveable Water Lane Supplementary Planning Document.** This was consulted on during the 2023 – 2024 reporting period. The comments received were reviewed and the document continued to be progressed during the reporting period.
  - **Householder's Guide: Design of Extensions and Alterations Supplementary Planning Document Review.** An updated draft SPD was consulted on during the 2023 – 2024 reporting period. The comments received were reviewed and further edits made to finalise this SPD update

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<sup>9</sup> [Vision 2040 \(liveableexeter.co.uk\)](https://liveableexeter.co.uk)

<sup>10</sup> [ECC Supplementary Planning Documents and Planning Statements - HMO SPD and Article 4 Direction](#)

which was adopted by Exeter City Council on 23 April 2024, just outside of this reporting period<sup>11</sup>.

### **3.6    *Community Infrastructure Levy***

- 3.6.1 The Council's Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Charging Schedule which sets out CIL rates in the city was reviewed and the revised schedule went through consultation and independent examination during 2023. The revised CIL Charging Schedule<sup>12</sup> was approved and came into effect in January 2024. It applies to new development proposals that are CIL liable and given planning consent from 1 January 2024. The new charges cover flats, build to rent, co-living and purpose-built student accommodation.

<sup>11</sup> [ECC Supplementary Planning Documents and Planning Statements - Householders Guide: Design of Extensions and Alterations SPD](#)

<sup>12</sup> [Community Infrastructure Levy \(CIL\) Charging Schedule Review](#)

## 4. Policy implementation

### 4.1 *Policies implemented*

- 4.1.1 All policies contained within the Core Strategy and saved policies of the Local Plan First Review are implemented, except for the requirements of Core Strategy Policy CP14 on renewable and low carbon energy and, as of June 2022, the carbon emission reduction element of Core Strategy policy CP15 on sustainable construction.
- 4.1.2 Towards the end of the 2012/13 the requirements of the sustainable construction policy (Policy CP15) became more onerous than those of the renewable and low carbon energy policy (Policy CP14). Hence there was no need to seek specific compliance with Policy CP14. This has remained the case in subsequent years.
- 4.1.3 In 2015, a ministerial statement was issued limiting energy performance requirements through local planning policy to the equivalent of Code for Sustainable Homes Level 4 (CSH4<sup>13</sup>). The Planning Practice Guidance was amended to reflect this position and continues to do so. Therefore, the carbon emission reduction element of the sustainable construction policy (CP15) was effective but only up to CSH4 equivalence.
- 4.1.4 In December 2021 the Government published 'The Future Buildings Standard' and this made clear that going forward, operational energy would be addressed through changes to Building Regulations (in 2022 and 2025). As of 15 June 2022, new-build homes need to produce at least 31 per cent less carbon emissions compared to the previous Building Regulations. This requirement is more onerous than CSH4 and hence it is no longer possible to seek specific compliance with the carbon emission reduction element of the sustainable construction policy (Policy CP15) or to apply conditions to that effect. However, the BREEAM 'Excellent' element of the sustainable construction policy (Policy CP15) is still implemented.

### 4.2 *Policy revisions*

- 4.2.1 Core Strategy policy CP7 on affordable housing provision has been re-interpreted in order to comply with the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) requirements. These documents set out that affordable housing should only be sought on major developments of 10 or more residential units (the policy wording as originally drafted sought affordable housing on proposals of 3 units or more). This revision was relevant to decision making during the 2023-2024 reporting period.
- 4.2.2 In 2021, a national planning policy update on affordable housing was made introducing First Homes, a new type of affordable housing. The City Council's

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<sup>13</sup> Later replaced by the 2023 ministerial statement 'Planning – Local Energy Efficiency



First Homes Planning Policy Statement<sup>14</sup>, further reinterprets Core Strategy Policy CP7 on affordable housing to take account of First Homes.

4.2.3 One First Home was delivered during the 2023-2024 reporting period.

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<sup>14</sup> [First Homes Planning Policy Statement](#)

## 5. Policy monitoring

### 5.1 Housing delivery

5.1.1 **Annual housing figure:** The Core Strategy housing target of at least 12,000 dwellings between 2006 and 2026 has been superseded by the Government's standard method housing figure. The standard method uses a formula to assess housing need and identify the minimum number of homes expected to be planned for. It sets out a minimum annual housing need figure.

5.1.2 Exeter's standard method housing figure for 2023/24 was 642 homes per annum.

5.1.3 **Housing completions:** The following numbers of homes were completed in Exeter in the reporting year April 2023 to March 2024:

- 694 net additional homes (not including purpose built student accommodation); and
- 55 net additional purpose built student accommodation bed spaces.

5.1.4 Previous annual housing completions (excluding purpose built student accommodation) are outlined in Table 1. This data includes co-living accommodation at a ratio of 1.8 co-living units to 1 regular residential unit.

| Reporting year | Number of dwellings completed |
|----------------|-------------------------------|
| 2006 / 2007    | 891                           |
| 2007 / 2008    | 491                           |
| 2008 / 2009    | 236                           |
| 2009 / 2010    | 270                           |
| 2010 / 2011    | 432                           |
| 2011 / 2012    | 555                           |
| 2012 / 2013    | 87                            |
| 2013 / 2014    | 382                           |
| 2014 / 2015    | 483                           |
| 2015 / 2016    | 618                           |
| 2016 / 2017    | 508                           |
| 2017 / 2018    | 473                           |
| 2018 / 2019    | 621                           |
| 2019 / 2020    | 553                           |
| 2020 / 2021    | 348                           |
| 2021 / 2022    | 585                           |
| 2022 / 2023    | 462                           |
| 2023 / 2024    | 694                           |

**Table 1: Annual number of homes delivered**

5.1.5 **Housing Delivery Test:** This is an annual measurement of housing delivery covering a three-year period and has a nationally set method for calculation (including Purpose Built Student Accommodation). For the three years 2020/21 to 2022/23, Exeter had a total housing requirement of 1,693, calculated by the Government via standard housing method plus adjustment. A total of 1,867 homes were delivered over this same period. On this basis, Exeter City Council passed the 2023 Housing Delivery Test with a result of 110%.

5.1.6 In addition to data on the delivery of homes, data covering the additional number of homes with planning consent is a useful indicator. Figures for the last three years are included in Table 2.

| Reporting year | Number of additional dwellings granted planning consent (excluding purpose built student accommodation) |
|----------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 2021 / 2022    | 1,913                                                                                                   |
| 2022 / 2023    | 777                                                                                                     |
| 2023 / 2024    | 885                                                                                                     |
| Reporting year | Number of additional dwellings granted planning consent (including purpose built student accommodation) |
| 2021 / 2022    | 2,622                                                                                                   |
| 2022 / 2023    | 823                                                                                                     |
| 2023 / 2024    | 1,117                                                                                                   |

**Table 2: Annual number of homes granted planning consent**

5.1.7 **Five-year housing supply calculation:** The latest Five Year Land Supply Statement<sup>15</sup> prepared during the reporting period was published by the City Council in May 2024. This Statement demonstrates that the Council was able to demonstrate a housing supply of just under five years and one month for the period commencing 1 April 2024. During the reporting year, and given the progress made on the new Exeter Plan, the Council was required to demonstrate a four-year supply of housing for decision-making purposes. The supply of deliverable homes exceeded the four-year housing requirement which applied at the time.

## 5.2 Affordable housing

5.2.1 111 additional affordable dwellings were completed in Exeter in 2023 – 2024. The figures for this year are those reported by Government. Previous annual affordable housing completions are outlined in Table 3.

<sup>15</sup> [Five Year Housing Land Supply Statement May 2024](#)

| Reporting year | Number of affordable dwellings completed | % affordable housing of total delivery |
|----------------|------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------|
| 2006 / 2007    | 247                                      | 27.72                                  |
| 2007 / 2008    | 97                                       | 19.76                                  |
| 2008 / 2009    | 126                                      | 53.39                                  |
| 2009 / 2010    | 206                                      | 76.30                                  |
| 2010 / 2011    | 142                                      | 32.87                                  |
| 2011 / 2012    | 170                                      | 30.63                                  |
| 2012 / 2013    | 26                                       | 29.89                                  |
| 2013 / 2014    | 100                                      | 26.18                                  |
| 2014 / 2015    | 75                                       | 15.53                                  |
| 2015 / 2016    | 130                                      | 21.04                                  |
| 2016 / 2017    | 83                                       | 16.34                                  |
| 2017 / 2018    | 97                                       | 20.51                                  |
| 2018 / 2019    | 160                                      | 25.76                                  |
| 2019 / 2020    | 81                                       | 14.65                                  |
| 2020 / 2021    | 40                                       | 11.49                                  |
| 2021 / 2022    | 111                                      | 18.97                                  |
| 2022 / 2023    | 78                                       | 16.88                                  |
| 2023 / 2024    | 111                                      | 15.99                                  |

**Table 3: Annual number of affordable homes delivered (gross: does not take account of right to buy deductions)**

### 5.3 *Specialist housing with care*

5.3.1 During 2023-2024, 86 net additional bed spaces providing housing with care were delivered at:

- Watermeadow Grange, Topsham: 86 bed care home

### 5.4 *Student accommodation*

5.4.1 The adopted Core Strategy identifies the importance of delivering Purpose Built Student Accommodation (PBSA) as part of the wider housing mix.

- 75 net additional PBSA bed spaces were provided in 2023-2024.

### 5.5 *Co-living accommodation*

5.5.1 Co-living accommodation is described as a sui generis use and a specialist form of housing aimed primarily at younger adults who wish to live in a well-managed, communal environment and who might otherwise live in Houses of Multiple Occupation (HMOs).

5.5.2 During 2023-2024, net additional bedspaces were provided at:

- The Gorge, Gladstone Road: 133 net additional bedspaces

## 5.6 *Community facilities*

5.6.1 The availability and provision of community facilities are integral to supporting the well-being of local people and communities. The City Council aims to support the provision of such services. The following schemes that seek to provide community facilities have progressed during the 2023-2024 reporting period. This list is not exhaustive.

- **Northbrook Park:** Plans progressed to create a new wild arboretum, with an extensive collection of trees and plants, on the site of the former Northbrook pitch and putt golf course. This is being pursued in partnership with Devon Wildlife Trust. During 2023-2024, fruit trees were planted which will become a community orchard, and the creation of a wildflower meadow progressed as well as bulbs and hedgerow trees planted.
- **Exwick Parish Hall:** Plans were progressed for the replacement of Exwick Parish Hall with a new purpose-built facility.
- **Play parks:** The maintenance and improvement of various play areas was undertaken including at: Mulberry Close, Whipton; Merrivale Park, St Thomas; Lakeside Avenue, and Countess Wear.
- **St Thomas splash pad:** Initial plans for the St Thomas splash pad were developed.
- **Wonford Community Wellbeing Hub:** Plans and designs for the new community hub were available for people to review and discuss with the project team in March 2023. This followed a long period of community engagement. The proposals for the new hub have since been developed further. The initial vision and design are part of the Sport England funded Local Delivery Pilot programme Live and Move, hosted by Exeter City Council. The aspiration is to support more people to be healthy, happy and active every day, with Wonford being a particular area of priority to help improve the wellbeing and health of the local community. It should be noted that outside of the reporting year, a planning application was submitted for this project.
- **CIL receipts:** Are used each year to support small-scale neighbourhood projects. These are managed through a City Council grants programme.
- **Exeter Community Lottery**<sup>16</sup>: This was created in 2023 by Exeter City Council. It supports community projects within Exeter operating on the principle of raising money within the community for the community.

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<sup>16</sup> [Exeter Community Lottery](#)

## 5.7 *Employment*

- 5.7.1 The total area of employment land within Exeter is around 350 hectares and the majority, in the region of 315 hectares, falls within the classification of established employment areas. Of the remainder, around 15 hectares are located within other existing employment areas, around 7 hectares consists of undeveloped allocation land, and approximately 5 hectares of land contains sites with planning permission for planning use classes B1, B2 and B8. The amount of employment land detailed here demonstrates the continued importance of Exeter as a regional employment destination, and support for Exeter's economy.
- 5.7.2 Footfall data provided by the Business Improvement District (InExeter) shows an increase in Exeter City Centre footfall for 2023 compared to 2022 (calendar years). Total monitored footfall for 2023 in the city centre was around 45,800,000 compared to 43,800,000 in 2022. This growth highlights a strong performance and increased activity in the city centre.

## 5.8 *Energy – Renewable, decentralised and zero carbon*

- 5.8.1 Exeter has declared a climate emergency and has the ambition to be a net zero carbon city by 2030. The decarbonisation of energy production is integral to meeting these aims and planning plays a role within this agenda.
- 5.8.2 **Passivhaus standard developments:** Passivhaus is an internationally recognised design standard delivering ultra-energy efficient buildings and high standards of comfort and health. Exeter City Council has a number of Passivhaus standard projects:
- **St Sidwell's Point:** St Sidwell's Point the UK's first Passivhaus standard leisure centre opened in April 2022.
  - **Housing:** Exeter City Council's Housing Team have delivered 96 homes. The 96 homes have been delivered at Edwards Court, Bovemoors Lane and Hockings Green, Thornpark Rise. In 2023-2024 work was underway at new schemes at Hamlin Gardens, 21 Passivhaus flats, and Vaughan Road, 35 Passivhaus homes.
- 5.8.3 **Retrofitting Council houses:** By the end of the 2023-2024 reporting period, around 700 of the 4,000 Council owned homes had been retrofitted to reduce carbon emissions and lower tenants' fuel bills. This is part of the city's ambition to become net zero carbon. Retrofitting involves insulation, new windows and doors, draft proofing measures, solar panels, smart meters, heat pumps and upgraded central heating systems. It is being jointly funded by the City Council and the Government.

- 5.8.4 **Local Development Order (LDO) for Local Energy Networks<sup>17</sup>:** Exeter City Council has an LDO to contribute to the Council's net zero ambition. The principal aim of this LDO is to support the roll-out of decentralised energy networks in Exeter in the interests of decarbonising energy supply in the city. Decentralised energy is generated close to where it will be used rather than at a plant and distributed through the grid.
- 5.8.5 The Local Energy Networks LDO was approved in 2019 and grants Permitted Development rights to District Heating and other local energy transmission and distribution networks within the area identified on the Local Development Order map.
- 5.8.6 **District heating in Exeter and the East Devon Enterprise Zone:** The District Heating network operated by E-on serving Monkerton, Tithebarn and Science Park continues to be rolled out to new connections, the Energy Centre has been commissioned and the link under the M5 completed. Progress regarding a connector project to reduce carbon content of heat through a connection to a commercial waste operation in East Devon continues. A retrofit District Heating Network proposal for the city centre University and Hospital sites by 1Energy has been awarded central government funding and is working to deliver a network with a connection to the Energy from Waste facility at Marsh Barton.
- 5.8.7 **Renewable energy:** Small scale renewable energy installations, such as domestic rooftop photovoltaic arrays, have come forward in the city. These often fall within permitted development and as planning permission is not required, these schemes are unable to be monitored through the planning process. More significant solar arrays are also coming forward. These include an array at Duryard on the university campus which was permitted during the reporting year.
- 5.8.8 Exeter City Council is continuing to generate large amounts of electricity at sites across the city as it strives to become Net Zero by 2030. The solar generation for January to March 2024 was:
- Total solar array: 3.4 MWp (megawatt peak)
  - Total energy generated: 244,408 kWh (kilowatt-hour)
  - Carbon savings: 51.81 tCO<sub>2</sub>e (tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent)
- 5.8.9 In total the Council has a 3.4MWp solar photo voltaic (PV) capacity across 13 sites:
- Ground mounted 1.2MWp solar PV array at Water Lane co-located with a 1MW/2MWh battery storage facility and a connection providing a renewable energy supply to the City Council's Operations Depot at Exton

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<sup>17</sup> [Local Development Order for Local Energy Networks](#)

Road to support the electrification of the Council's fleet, completed in January 2023.

- 124kW PV array at Riverside Leisure Centre alongside a small battery store.
- Battery storage technology also installed at Matford Livestock Centre and John Lewis car park.
- Solar PV panels installed on City Council homes, around 17% of the Council's housing stock, as part of a retrofit programme.

## 5.9 *Flood risk*

- 5.9.1 As part of the climate change mitigation agenda, the City Council takes the issue of flood risk seriously. The National Planning Policy Framework is clear in its aims to protect people and property from flooding, and the Environment Agency is consulted when planning proposals fall within the relevant flood risk areas.
- 5.9.2 In compliance with the above policy, no planning permissions granted by Exeter City Council in 2023-2024 were contrary to the advice of the Environment Agency.

## 5.10 *Green spaces*

- 5.10.1 **Exeter Valley Parks:** The Core Strategy identifies seven Exeter Valley Parks within the city. Large areas of these Valley Parks are owned by the City Council, while others are private owned. In May 2019, Devon Wildlife Trust took on the maintenance of approximately 140ha of land within the Valley Parks under an arrangement with Exeter City Council who remain as landowners. A further area of Valley Park was secured to the north of the city by development off Celia Crescent and Spruce Close (the plans for the development were approved by the city council in February 2024).
- 5.10.2 Exeter City Council and Devon Wildlife Trust put together a joint vision for the former Northbrook pitch and putt golf course which connects Ludwell and Riverside Valley Parks. The vision to become a wild arboretum and community space recognises the important role of this space as a corridor for both wildlife and people between the Valley Parks and demonstrates the commitment to improving the greenspace of the city in future. During the 2023-2024 reporting period plans progressed to create this new arboretum, with an extensive collection of trees, plants, hedgerows, wildflower meadow and a community orchard.
- 5.10.3 **Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG):** The Environment Act 2021 gained Royal Assent in November 2021. The 10% biodiversity net gain legal requirement became mandatory for all non-exempt planning applications from 2nd April 2024. The City Council is working closely with Devon County Council and other authorities to ensure a joint and consistent approach to BNG, and the

Devon Planning Guidance for Biodiversity Compensation and Net Gain has been produced.

- 5.10.4 During the 2023/2024 reporting period a 'habitat bank' was secured in Exeter, the first in the country. Devon County Council and Exeter City Council worked with Devon-based Bio Gains Limited to register the privately owned 3.2 hectare site in Duryard Valley Park. The habitat bank in Exeter will be enhanced predominantly into lowland meadow, which is a national priority habitat. There will also be around 260 metres of new and enhanced species-rich hedgerow and some small areas of scrub.
- 5.10.5 Local planning authorities also now have an enhanced biodiversity duty as part of the Environment Act and are required to produce regular biodiversity reports. The monitoring of BNG through the planning system must form part of these reports. New software, an extension of our existing EXACOM monitoring software, has been procured which will aid with this reporting and the management of BNG for planning applications generally.
- 5.10.6 **Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI):** A SSSI is a formal conservation designation for an area that is of particular interest to science due to the presence of rare species of flora or fauna, or important geological or physiological features.
- 5.10.7 There are three SSSIs located within Exeter, although the Exe Estuary extends beyond Exeter City Council's administrative boundary:
- Bonhay Road Cutting: 0.26ha (designated for geological features);
  - Exe Estuary: 2190.10ha (designated for ecology); and
  - Stoke Woods: 91.63ha (designated for ecology).
- 5.10.8 Natural England assesses the condition of SSSIs in England on 6 year cycles with the objective to achieve 'favourable condition' status for all SSSIs. Favourable condition means that the SSSI's habitats and features are in a healthy state and are being conserved by appropriate management.
- 5.10.9 Natural England's assessment of Exeter's SSSI's in 2023 details they are predominantly meeting 'favourable' or 'unfavourable recovering' condition criteria with the exception of the Bonhay Road Cutting SSSI. More detail is contained within Table 4. The Bonhay Road cutting is designated for its geological features and the planning system has limited potential to impact on its condition.

| Location                  | Condition:<br>Favourable<br>or<br>unfavourable<br>recovering | Condition:<br>favourable | Condition:<br>unfavourable<br>recovering | Condition:<br>unfavourable<br>declining |
|---------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------|------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------|
| Bonhay<br>Cutting<br>SSSI | 0%                                                           | 0%                       | 0%                                       | 100%                                    |

| Location               | Condition:<br>Favourable<br>or<br>unfavourable<br>recovering | Condition:<br>favourable | Condition:<br>unfavourable<br>recovering | Condition:<br>unfavourable<br>declining |
|------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------|------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------|
| Exe<br>Estuary<br>SSSI | 74.34%                                                       | 70.98%                   | 3.36%                                    | 25.66%                                  |
| Stoke<br>Woods<br>SSSI | 100%                                                         | 14.83%                   | 85.17%                                   | 0%                                      |
| Devon*                 | 70.34%                                                       | 28.25%                   | 42.10%                                   | 8.71%                                   |
| England*               | 61.74%                                                       | 40.09%                   | 21.65%                                   | 9.66%                                   |

**Table 4: Natural England's SSSI condition assessment 2023 - 2024**

\* Remaining percentages classified as: Unfavourable – No change / partially destroyed / destroyed / not recorded

#### 5.11 *Habitats mitigation contributions*

- 5.11.1 The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 require the City Council to ensure that the impacts of development on the protected habitats of the Exe Estuary, Dawlish Warren, and the East Devon Pebblebed Heaths are mitigated. Consent cannot legally be granted for a development that would either alone or in combination with other developments, have a likely significant effect on a European wildlife site, unless full mitigation is provided.
- 5.11.2 Residential development in Exeter is considered to impact on these protected habitats because it accommodates a growing population which places increased recreational pressure on them. The visitor pressure comes either from developments in themselves or from developments in combination with others. Protecting these sites is important for a number of reasons including providing safe areas for all users to enjoy while caring for the wildlife these sites support.
- 5.11.3 Developer contributions collected through Habitats Mitigation payments including the Community Infrastructure Levy and Section 106 Agreements are ways in which developers are required to contribute towards mitigation of the impact of their development. In 2023-2024 Exeter City Council provided £167,672 of developer contributions (on a per-dwelling basis) to the South East Devon Habitats Regulation Partnership which goes towards the management of these important habitats. This is a partnership between Exeter City, East Devon District and Teignbridge District Councils.
- 5.11.4 The partnership Councils are in the progress of updating the Habitat Mitigation Strategy.

## 5.12 Pollution

- 5.12.1 Local Authorities are required to carry out air quality monitoring as part of their statutory duties. This entails monitoring of concentrations of the pollutants nitrogen dioxide (NO<sub>2</sub>), and particulate matter (PM<sub>10</sub> and PM<sub>2.5</sub>). Nitrogen dioxide is a gas mainly produced during the combustion of fossil fuels. Particulate matter is everything in the air that is not a gas and therefore consists of a huge variety of chemical compounds and materials. The particles are less than 10 micrometres in diameter (PM<sub>10</sub>) and less than 2.5 micrometres in diameter (PM<sub>2.5</sub>). It is also noted that air quality is affected by other emissions, pollutants and factors that extend beyond this monitoring framework.
- 5.12.2 In line with the national framework, the City Council's Environmental Health team monitor air quality by measuring the concentration of pollutants nitrogen dioxide (NO<sub>2</sub>) and particulate matter (PM<sub>10</sub> and PM<sub>2.5</sub>) at points across the city.
- 5.12.3 **Air Quality Action Plan (AQAP):** An AQAP is required when an Air Quality Management Area (AQMA) is declared, when an exceedance of an air quality objective is recorded. Exeter's AQMA covers some of the busiest roads into and around the city due to an exceedance of air quality objectives. Exeter's AQAP outlines the action that will be taken to improve air quality within the AQMA between 2019 and 2024. Exeter City Council will work with Devon County Council highways team, neighbouring authorities and Sport England to deliver the measures in this plan.
- 5.12.4 The AQAP focusses on the air quality issues that are within the City Council's control while recognising there are many more issues that go beyond the City Council's influence. The AQAP contains and refers to numerous projects and measures that aim to reduce concentrations of air pollutants and exposure to air pollution within the AQMA. Ultimately this aims to positively contribute to the health and quality of life of residents and visitors.
- 5.12.5 All relevant planning applications were assessed in accordance with the Air Quality Action Plan.
- 5.12.6 **2023 Air Quality Annual Status Report<sup>18</sup>:** This is published by Exeter City Council's Environmental Health team. The 2023 report summarises that air quality in Exeter mainly meets government objectives.
- 5.12.7 **Nitrogen dioxide (NO<sub>2</sub>):** In 2023 levels of nitrogen dioxide were below the objective (40µg /m<sup>3</sup>) at every site except East Wonford Hill.
- 5.12.8 As the distance from busy roads increases levels of nitrogen dioxide fall below 25µg/m<sup>3</sup>. The majority of the population of Exeter therefore live in locations with concentrations of nitrogen dioxide well below the objective, but

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<sup>18</sup> [Air quality monitoring - Exeter City Council](#)

a very small number are still exposed at home to levels above the objective. No schools in Exeter experience levels above the objective.

- 5.12.9 **Particulate matter (PM<sub>10</sub> and PM<sub>2.5</sub>):** The results of the 2023 particulate pollution measurements (PM<sub>10</sub><sup>19</sup> and PM<sub>2.5</sub><sup>20</sup>) indicate that no areas in the city exceed the objectives for this type of air pollution. Annual average PM<sub>10</sub> concentrations rose in 2022 compared to the previous four years. The longer-term trend in annual concentrations is a decline since 2006. The data will continue to be monitored to identify whether this recent increase is part of an emerging trend or caused by inter-annual variability. PM<sub>2.5</sub> is recorded to be well below the relevant objective level.

### 5.13 Transport

- 5.13.1 Developer contributions collected through Section 106 and the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) from developments in the city have contributed significantly to the funding of various projects, including transport infrastructure. The most recent major transport projects delivered in Exeter are outlined in Table 5.

| Project                                                                                     | Opened |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------|
| A379 Sandy Park junction upgrade                                                            | 2017   |
| Tithebarn Link Road – phase 2 and pedestrian/cycle bridge                                   | 2018   |
| Bridge Road outbound widening                                                               | 2018   |
| Exeter E4 cycle route – phase 1                                                             | 2018   |
| Exeter E4 cycle route – phase 2 and phase 3                                                 | 2020   |
| Moor Lane roundabout improvement                                                            | 2020   |
| Exeter Bus Station                                                                          | 2021   |
| Exeter Park and Change (Exeter Science Park)                                                | 2021   |
| Pinhoe Station Interchange improvements                                                     | 2022   |
| Exeter E9 cycle route – making permanent Ludwell Lane and Dryden Road modal filters         | 2022   |
| Exeter E3 cycle route – road safety improvement at Whipton Lane /Sweetbrier Lane roundabout | 2022   |
| Marsh Barton rail station                                                                   | 2023   |
| Magdalen Road enhancement scheme                                                            | 2023   |
| A379 foot and cycle bridge opened                                                           | 2024   |
| A379 Devon Hotel roundabout improvements ongoing                                            | 2024   |

**Table 5: Overview of key transport projects delivered in Exeter**

- 5.13.2 **Exeter Transport Strategy:** In November 2020, Devon County Council adopted the Exeter Transport Strategy 2020- 2030. One of the aims of the

<sup>19</sup> PM<sub>10</sub> annual average not to exceed 40µg/m<sup>3</sup>

PM<sub>10</sub> daily mean concentrations for the past five years not to exceed the air quality objective of 50µg/m<sup>3</sup> more than 35 times per year.

<sup>20</sup> Annual average EU limit value for PM<sub>2.5</sub> is 25µg/m<sup>3</sup>.

Transport Strategy is for 50% of all journeys starting and finishing in the city to be made by foot or bicycle by 2030. Similar aims are shared in Exeter City Council's Carbon Neutral 2030 plan and the Sport England Local Delivery Pilot programme which aims to make Exeter the most active city in the UK. This position is also included in the emerging Exeter Plan. Work will continue to engage with Devon County Council through the preparation of the Local Transport Plan (4).

#### 5.13.3 Bus and rail infrastructure:

- **Marsh Barton rail station:** During the 2023-2024 reporting period this new rail station opened and improvements to associated walking, cycling and nearby signage were completed. The station opened in July 2023. Council Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) receipts were part of the funding package for the station.
- **Train Stations:** Exeter Central and Exeter St David's, the main stations in Exeter, have shown steady growth, reflecting their importance in the local network. Exeter Central saw a 6.7% rise in usage from 2023 to 2024 and a 9.7% increase since 2019 while Exeter St David's reported a 4.0% growth from 2023 to 2024 and a 1.7% rise since 2019.
- **Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP):** Funding has been secured for a programme of bus service improvements on several corridors into Exeter. These are aimed at reducing journey times and improving reliability of services. The corridors included are:
  - Central Corridor: Heavitree Road to city centre
  - Western Corridor: Cowick Street to city centre
  - Eastern Corridor: Pinhoe Road to the city centre
  - Northern Corridor: New North Road to city centre

#### 5.13.4 Cycle and pedestrian enhancements: In 2023/24 active travel measures were introduced along Exeter's strategic cycle routes. These included:

- **Magdalen Road:** Local enhancement scheme. Works completed.
- **Rifford Road:** Construction of a new two-way cycle path on Rifford Road begun in March 2023. The Scheme is funded by grants from the Active Travel Plan, Local Transport Plan and developer contributions.

#### 5.13.5 Electric charge points and vehicles: In 2023-2024, progress continued regarding the installation of electric vehicle charging points across Exeter.

- Gridserve and Moto have installed six new ultra rapid charging points to Moto Exeter's charging hub. A total of 56 charging points are now located at Exeter Services, junction 30 of the M5.

**5.13.6 South West Exeter transport infrastructure:**

- South West Exeter is a new development on the edge of the city which has been coming forward over recent years in both Exeter and Teignbridge. In January 2024, during the reporting period, the new walking and cycling bridge over the A379 opened, connecting the two sides of the development. In addition, the upgrade of the Devon Hotel roundabout in Exeter was progressed during the 2023/24 reporting period.

## 6. Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) and Section 106

### 6.1 CIL collected since implementation

- 6.1.1 The Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) is a planning charge which can be levied by local authorities on new development in their area. It is an important tool to help local authorities deliver infrastructure in their area.
- 6.1.2 CIL was implemented by Exeter City Council in 2013. Since that date, and as of the end of March 2024, a total of approximately £31.68m has been received from the levy.

### 6.2 CIL 2023/24

- 6.2.1 The Community Infrastructure Levy Regulations, as amended, require Councils to publish an Annual Infrastructure Funding Statement<sup>21</sup> (AIFS), including information about CIL and Section 106 receipts.
- 6.2.2 A summary of the CIL information monitored through the AIFS is included in Tables 6 and 7. These detail CIL funding collected, spent, and retained during 2023/24. CIL money is not required to be spent in the year it is received and can be retained and carried over.

| Description                          | Value (£)     |
|--------------------------------------|---------------|
| CIL demand notices issued in 2023/24 | £6,298,451.58 |
| CIL receipts total 2023/24           | £4,751,953.96 |
| Total CIL expenditure 2023/24        | £1,283,322.45 |
| CIL retained                         | £7,499,800    |

**Table 6: Summary of 2023/24 CIL collected, spent and retained**

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<sup>21</sup> [Annual Infrastructure Funding Statement - Exeter City Council](#)

| Expenditure                             | Value (£)            |
|-----------------------------------------|----------------------|
| <b>Total expenditure 2023/24</b>        | <b>£1,283,322.45</b> |
| Neighbourhood CIL contributions         | £553,223             |
| Play area capital expenditure           | £175,086             |
| Habitat Mitigation                      | £167,672             |
| Infrastructure maintenance              | £160,000             |
| Administration (maximum 5% of receipts) | £156,270.07          |
| St Thomas splash pad                    | £41,475              |
| Northbrook Wild Arboretum               | £16,096              |
| Materials reclamation facility          | £13,500              |

**Table 7: Summary of 2023/24 CIL expenditure**

### 6.3 Section 106

6.3.1 Alongside CIL, Exeter City Council also enters into Section 106 agreements with applicants and landowners to ensure that site-specific requirements related to development can be secured. These agreements are negotiated on a case-by-case basis and are used to secure affordable housing, infrastructure and community facilities and services.

6.3.2 Tables 8 and 9 summarise the key figures relating to Section 106 funding, as reported in the AIFS, in Exeter for the reporting year 2023-2024.

| Description                                                                                                  | Value (£)     |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------|
| The total funding from any planning obligations entered into during 2023/24                                  | £861,870.06   |
| The total funding from any planning obligations received during 2023/24                                      | £1,058,668.60 |
| The total funding from any planning obligations spent in 2023/24                                             | £2.48m        |
| The total number of affordable housing units which were secured by Section 106s Agreements signed in 2023/24 | 24            |

**Table 8: Summary of key 2023/24 figures for S106 agreements**

## Authority Monitoring Report 2023-2024

| Expenditure                | Value (£)     |
|----------------------------|---------------|
| Total expenditure 2023/24  | £2,477,596.29 |
| Affordable housing         | £2,419,094.99 |
| Infrastructure maintenance | £57,251.30    |
| Sports provision           | £50,023.43    |
| Playing pitches/open space | £49,780.00    |
| Community facilities       | £1,250.00     |

**Table 9: Summary of 2023/24 S106 expenditure**

## 7. Duty to cooperate

### 7.1 *Duty to cooperate overview*

- 7.1.1 The Duty to Cooperate places a legal duty on Local Planning Authorities to engage constructively, actively and on an ongoing basis with key stakeholders to maximise the effectiveness of Local Plan preparation in the context of strategic cross boundary matters.

### 7.2 *Duty to cooperate activities*

- 7.2.1 Below is a summary of the activities undertaken relating to the Duty to Cooperate. This list is not exhaustive and does not cover all joint discussions or meetings which take place.
- **Non-Statutory Joint Strategy ‘Shared coordinates’** covering a wide variety of themes was developed between East Devon, Exeter, Mid Devon and Teignbridge Councils. This was approved by Exeter City Council’s Executive Committee in November 2023. The strategy intends to ensure a collaborative and coordinated approach to addressing cross-boundary issues effectively in the sub-region. It will not be a formal planning policy document.
  - **Exeter Highways and Traffic Orders Committee (HaTOC)** is a long established joint committee of Devon County Council and Exeter City Council Members which deals with highway and other transport schemes.
  - **South East Devon Joint Habitat Regulations Committee** is a joint committee between Exeter, East Devon and Teignbridge which oversees the implementation of the joint mitigation strategy which manages development impact on European habitats.
  - **Liveable Exeter Place Board (now the Exeter Partnership)** has been established to bring together the major organisations in the city (public, private and voluntary sectors) to collaboratively and proactively plan for the city’s future and deliver the city’s 2040 vision.
  - **Devon and Cornwall Planning Officers Group** (formally Devon Planning Officers Group) is a long established group of planning officers that addresses strategic issues that require a common understanding, initiates work that can be most effectively undertaken jointly, and enables Authorities to exchange best practice across Devon. This group is currently chaired by an Officer from Exeter City Council.
- 7.2.2 There are also many discussions between the Council’s planning department and community groups. These are not detailed here because they are not covered specifically by the Duty to Cooperate.

**7.3**     *Joint Evidence and plan preparation*

**7.3.1**   Significant evidence base work to support the Exeter Plan has been carried out in partnership with neighbouring authorities and other organisations. Key studies progressed jointly in the reporting period include:

- East Devon, Exeter, Mid Devon and Teignbridge Local Housing Needs Assessment;
- Greater Exeter Area Economic Development Needs Assessment Update;
- Joint commission of Gypsy and Traveller accommodation assessment;
- Joint strategic transport modelling and evidence;
- South East Devon Wildlife – Joint Habitats Sites Mitigation Strategy (update);
- Exeter Plan: Strategic Flood Risk Assessment; and
- Exeter views, density and heights study.

**7.3.2**   Emerging Exeter Plan policy has also been directly informed by discussions co-drafting in some cases. This includes some of the housing policies, transport policies, infrastructure policies and a policy covering development proposals in Topsham and the neighbouring area of East Devon.

# Authority Monitoring Report



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