

## Note for Discussion- Essex Developers Group June 2019

### Housing Delivery Test: implications across Essex

In February 2019, the first annual HDT results for councils were published by the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG).

$$\text{Housing Delivery Test (\%)} = \frac{\text{Total net homes delivered over three year period.}}{\text{Total number of homes required over three year period.}}$$

Local Planning Authorities (LPAs) are required to take specific action depending upon their HDT result, these actions persist until subsequent HDT results are published or new housing requirements are adopted.

- **Pass (95%):** No action required.
- **Action Plan (>85%):** LPAs are required to prepare an action plan setting out the causes of under delivery and the intended actions to increase this.
- **20% Land Buffer (>25%):** LPAs are required for an additional 20% to be applied to the supply of deliverable sites.
- **Presumption in favour of sustainable development (<25%):** proposed developments should be granted planning permission unless the adverse impacts outweigh the benefits.

However, from November 2019, any councils with an HDT score below 45% will fall into 'presumption in favour of sustainable development'. By November 2020 this will rise to 75%.

#### Essex's HDT Performance.

Area Name	Total number of homes required	Total number of homes delivered	Housing Delivery Test: 2018 measurement	Housing Delivery Test: 2018 consequence	Housing Delivery Test: 2020/2021 projections (based upon current delivery levels)
Basildon	2,089	1,569	75%	Buffer	Presumption
Braintree	1,416	1,311	93%	Action plan	Presumption
Brentwood	933	474	51%	Buffer	Presumption
Castle Point	821	395	48%	Buffer	Presumption
Chelmsford	2,025	2,802	138%	None	Action Plan
Colchester	2,583	3,109	120%	None	Buffer
Epping Forest	1,982	980	49%	Buffer	Presumption
Harlow	1,008	846	84%	Buffer	Presumption
Maldon	678	682	101%	None	Presumption
Rochford	764	574	75%	Buffer	Presumption
Southend-on-Sea	2,495	1,223	49%	Buffer	Presumption
Tendring	1,877	1,468	78%	Buffer	Presumption
Thurrock	2,480	2,171	88%	Action plan	Presumption

Area Name	Total number of homes required	Total number of homes delivered	Housing Delivery Test: 2018 measurement	Housing Delivery Test: 2018 consequence	Housing Delivery Test: 2020/2021 projections (based upon current delivery levels)
Uttlesford	1,533	2,246	147%	None	Buffer

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/housing-delivery-test-2018-measurement>

## Analysis

Chelmsford, Colchester, Maldon and Uttlesford all met or exceeded their targets.

Braintree and Thurrock were more than 85% but less than 95% of meeting their targets and are required to produce an action plan within 6 months.

The remaining 8 LAs are now required to provide an additional 20% buffer as set out in the NPPF.

Future predictions suggest that the number of councils meeting the 95% pass rate will decline. By 2020 there will be a number of authorities that will be in the “presumption in favour of sustainable development” category.

## Actions of Essex Authorities/ EPOA.

The HDT presents LPAs in Essex with both opportunities and challenges, particularly when districts are yet to adopt new local plans and face green belt constraints. Since the HDTs publication an EPOA working group have developed an initial HDT action plan:

	Action
<b>National / Strategic Actions</b>	EPOA/Joint Essex planning portfolio holders lobby MHCLG: regarding the methodology of the HDT and its alignment with wider planning policy objectives/priorities.
<b>Local / Implementation Actions</b>	Compile Essex-wide developer/ build-out data
	Raise awareness of the implications of HDT with elected members.
	Liaise with Essex Developers’ Group to gain feedback from developers.
	Explore the potential for Essex Design Guide to include information on HDT. Promote good practice/ guidance on higher density development (possibly using EDG)
	Promote use of ‘live’ IDPs
<b>Additional Actions</b>	Attend PAS workshops May/June/July to gain insight and feedback best practices to EPOA working group
	Report HDT actions to EPOA Chief Officers Group
	Follow-up HDT working group meeting- July 2019

## Engagement with developers’ group

ECC are keen for the developers' group to consider and discuss how the HDT might impact their business and activities. Early and frank discussions between LPAs and developers are likely to be key to unblocking stalled sites and improving delivery rates.

LPAs in Essex are working on action plans where required, as a means to analyse blockages and identify solutions. The EPOA working group are supporting this and looking to the future when HDT pass rates will change and a larger number of LPAs will be affected. The working group is keen to understand:

- Are there any LPA actions which could improve delivery rates?
- Are there any developer actions which could improve delivery rates?