

Spelthorne Borough Council

Housing Delivery Test Action Plan

Summary

October 2021

- 1 The Housing Delivery Test (HDT) has been introduced by the Government as a monitoring tool to demonstrate whether local areas are building enough homes to meet their housing need. The HDT, which was published in February 2021 updates the previous results published in 2019 and 2020. The test compares the number of new homes delivered over the previous three years with the authority's housing requirement. In the case of Spelthorne, the housing requirement is the minimum annual local housing need figure (611 dwellings per annum as of February 2021). The calculation for Spelthorne is given as:

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

$$HDT(\%) = 785/1574 \times 100 = 50\%$$

As a consequence, Spelthorne is required to produce an action plan within a period of six months.. It should be noted that a total of seven out of the eleven Surrey authorities are required to produce a housing delivery action plan.

2. The action plan is attached to this document and is to be made available to the general public by placing it in the Council's website. When the HDT was first introduced, it was to be in a phased approach over three years. This entailed:
 - an action plan (where delivery was less than 95%) – year 1,
 - an action plan and 20% housing buffer (where delivery was less than 85%) – year 2, and
 - an action plan, 20% housing buffer and a presumption in favour of development within the borough (where delivery was less than 75%) – year 3.

The three year transitional period has now ended. As Spelthorne's HDT is 50%, it now falls within the last category above.

3. The housing delivery action plan identifies actions to address under-delivery against the housing requirement in the area. The plan looks at the reasons for under - delivery and the steps to be taken to drive up housing delivery in the area.
4. The first section examines the action plan context. These include Spelthorne's corporate documents which play a role in housing delivery. **It should be noted that this action plan does not play any role in deciding the future of the current green belt or proposed housing allocations. These will be dealt with completely separately as part of the preparation of the new local plan.**

5. The next section is an assessment of the 'under delivery' of new homes in the Borough. This includes the local and national issues which influence housing delivery, i.e., affordability issues, proximity to London, Covid 19 impacts, difficulties once development has commenced). A range of data and sources have been used to inform this analysis. As part of this process, the Council has engaged with stakeholders to improve its understanding of the issues effecting housing delivery. The analysis of the issues has been used to inform what actions the Council need to take to improve its housing delivery.
6. Finally the action plan includes a number of measures to improve decision making and also to support wider opportunities. These include, amongst many: working with site promoters and other stakeholders to deliver local plan allocations, continue to improve planning performance on speed and quality of decision making, to refine the Planning DM computer software and procedures to enhance agile / paperless working in DM and to review the discharge of planning conditions (after planning permission has been granted) to speed up the process.

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