



**COTSWOLD**  
DISTRICT COUNCIL

Delivering great services locally

**PERFORMANCE REPORT**  
**January 2022 - March 2022**

## A note on performance benchmarking

Benchmarking can be a useful tool for driving improvement; by comparing our performance with other similar organisations, we can start a discussion about what good performance might look like, and why there might be variations, as well as learning from other organisations about how they operate (process benchmarking).

The second annual benchmarking exercise has been completed for the most recent data available (2020-21), and includes CIPFA benchmarking charts and revised Shire Districts' median /top quartile lines. The 2021-22 benchmarking data will be released over the course of the new financial year, and generally concludes around December time, ready for the 2022-23 Q4 performance report.

Two comparator groups that are commonly used to benchmark Councils' performance are: all shire district councils and CIPFA Nearest Neighbours (NN). The CIPFA NN Model is based on family groups; it adopts a scientific approach to measuring the similarity between councils taking into account a range of demographic and socio-economic characteristics. The standard model provides the 15 nearest neighbours to each council. In contrast, the all shire districts comparator group is a much larger dataset of 181 councils, and there will inevitably be a much greater variation between the councils in this group.

When we embark on performance benchmarking, it is important to understand that we are often looking at one aspect of performance i.e. the level of performance achieved. Although the CIPFA NN Model groups councils on the basis of similarity, these factors are external and based on 'place'. The model does not take into account how services are resourced or compare in terms of quality or level of service delivered, for example, how satisfied are residents and customers? Furthermore, each council is unique with its own vision, aim and priorities, and services operate within this context.

Therefore, benchmarking data should be viewed as a 'guide' and as a starting point for discussion. It is important to understand performance within context, and there will be a variety of internal factors that determine performance including costs, workloads and quality.

### Note

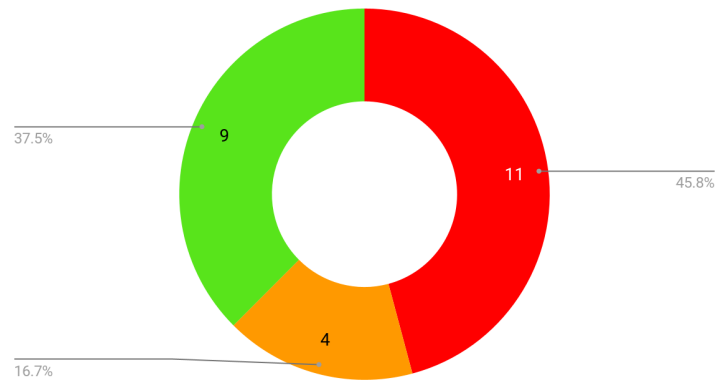
The data has been extracted from LG Inform, a benchmarking tool, which contains a range of routinely published data. It should be noted that:

- the extracted data may differ from the Council's own data;
- the median and top (best 25%) quartile lines are based on annual outturns but applied to the quarterly data;;
- 2021/22 benchmarks are not yet available, so the previous year's benchmarks have been used, and will be revised during each benchmarking exercise.

# KEY PERFORMANCE METRICS

## At a glance...

Summary of Performance



### OVERALL PERFORMANCE

During 2021-22, services have worked to recover from the pandemic, reducing backlogs and securing improvements in performance. An injection of additional resources, both temporary and permanent, alongside the continuing implementation of improvement plans, have had a positive effect on performance, especially in services such as the benefits service, and the planning service towards the end of the year. As expected, it was not possible to recover the shortfall in performance completely, due to higher than normal workloads, some of which related to the impact of Covid-19, as well as a shortage in staff. However, with the continued service improvements and additional resources, performance is expected to continue to improve.

The Planning service has introduced career graded posts in order to provide a competitive and desirable employment opportunity. However, due to the national shortage of qualified planning officers, the Planning service continues to experience difficulties in both recruiting and retaining officers.

Both Council tax and Business rates collection rates have been affected by the impact of Covid-19. The team has supported the administration of a range of mandatory and discretionary business grants throughout the pandemic, while some homeowners will receive a rebate on their Council Tax to help with the rising cost of living.

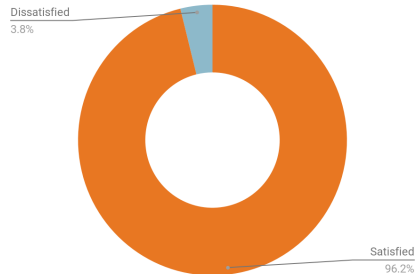
In spite of the challenges, customer satisfaction for services delivered by phone and face to face remain high. The implementation of improvement plans, in particular the increased use of technology and automation to better manage workflow and resources is expected to, and has had positive effects on performance, e.g. In-Cab technology in the waste service, and more recently the new Revs and Bens system

Indicators with targets	Status
Customer satisfaction - phones	
Customer satisfaction - F2F	
Satisfaction for Building Control service	No data
CT collection rate	
NNDR collection rate	
Average days to process CTS new claims	
Average days to process CTS change events	
Average days to process HB change events	
% HB overpayment due to LA error or admin delay	
% major planning applications determined within time	
% minor planning applications determined within time	
% other planning applications determined within time	
Total planning income	
Pre-application advice income	
% planning appeals allowed	
Affordable homes delivered	
% land charge searches dispatched within time	
% high risk notifications assessed within time	
% high risk food premises inspected within time	
Residual waste per household (kg)	
% combined recycling rate	
Missed bins per 100,000 collections	
Leisure visits	
Gym memberships	
Parking enforcement hours	

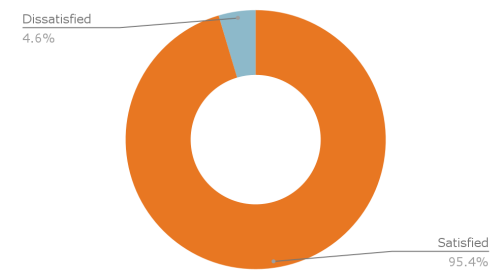
## CUSTOMER SERVICE

### Customer satisfaction

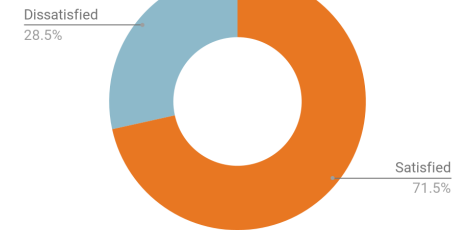
Face to face - 26 respondents



Phone - 65 respondents

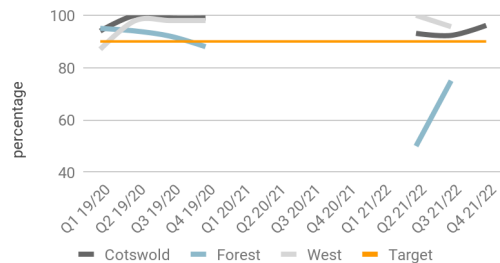


Email - 376 respondents

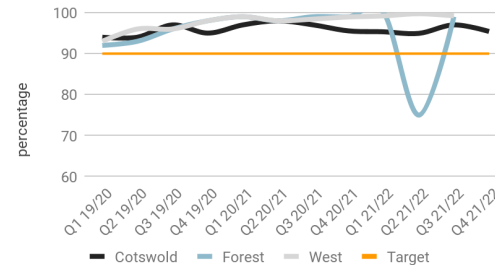


### What's the trend?

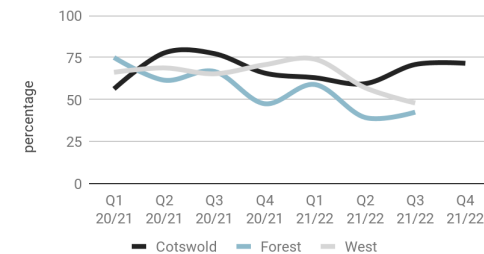
Customer satisfaction - face to face



Customer satisfaction - phone



Customer satisfaction - email



### OBSERVATION:

Trinity Road and Moreton Area Centre re-opened to customers from 12 April 2021, and although footfall continues to be relatively low, face to face surveys re-commenced at the end of July 2021. The number of surveys completed remains relatively low but is indicating that satisfaction for services delivered using this channel is high.

Overall, satisfaction ratings for services delivered via the phone continue to be high, although the number of surveys carried out in Q4 was lower than usual as the advisors were prioritising the active calls waiting. Cotswold frequently ranks within the top 10 councils on the GovMetric Telephone Channel Satisfaction Index.

Work continues on the Choice Channel project which is focussing on those services that have high call volumes and increasing the availability of online services where appropriate

## Customer satisfaction for the Building Control service



Cotswold Target



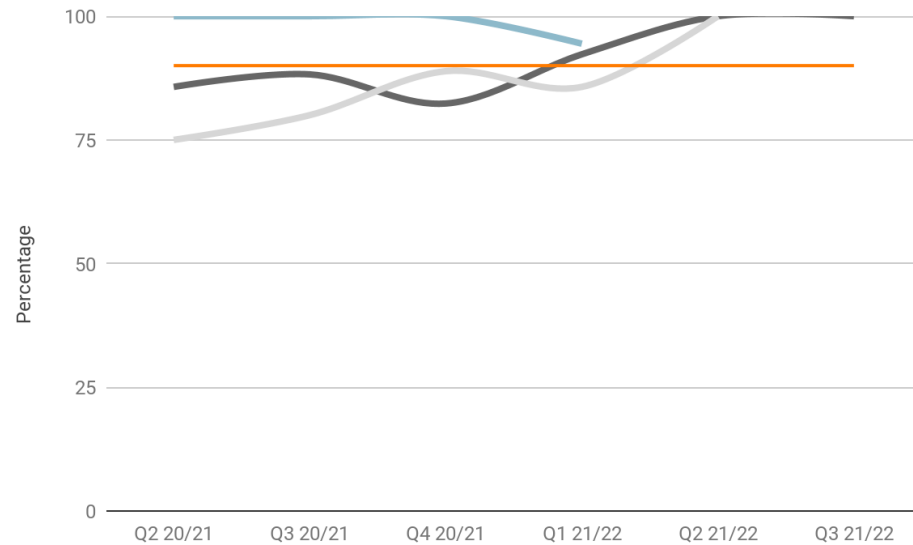
Cotswold



Forest of Dean



West Oxfordshire



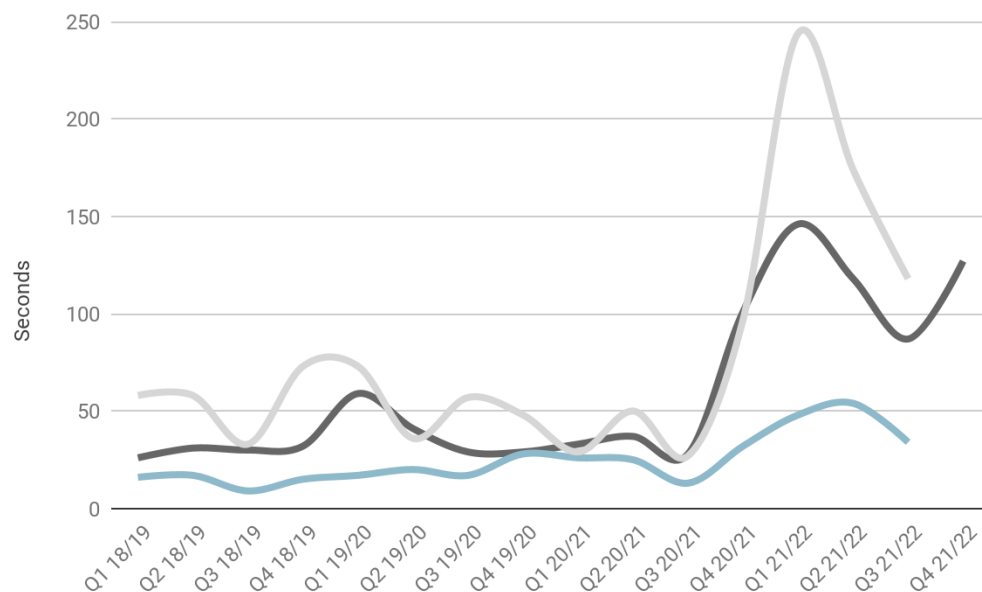
### OBSERVATION:

The surveys have been paused temporarily due to a shortage of staff in the service.

Staff are prioritising workloads, and Technical Support Officers are supporting the Surveyors, who are either in the process of becoming 'licenced' or who will embark on this mandatory training.

All building control surveyors need to be licenced by November 2023

## Telephone calls - average waiting time



### OBSERVATION

Overall, the average call waiting time remains within the three minute standard considered good for local authorities (GovMetric). There has been an increase in average call waiting time in Q4, which was due to a spike in the volume of phone calls in the last three weeks of March. Accounting for this spike, we are still well within the three minute standard.

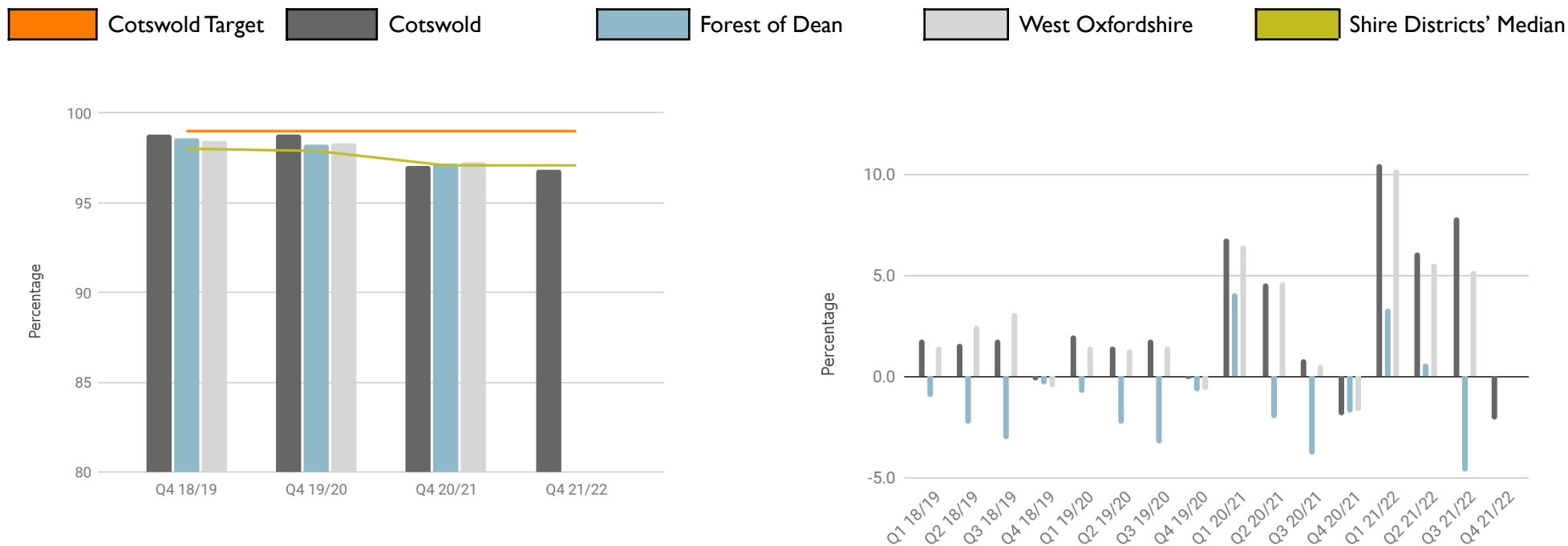
The higher volume of calls related primarily to queries about council tax annual billing and garden waste renewals. During this busy period, 12 staff including nine advisors across the partnership contracted the Covid-19 virus, some staff temporarily lost IT connectivity during one lunchtime; and Civica scheduled a software upgrade during annual billing (outside of the Council's control) which reduced capacity in the service while creating additional/repeat calls.

It has been acknowledged that garden waste renewals coinciding with the annual CT billing creates a spike in call volumes which can be difficult to manage; the service will be reviewing the scheduling of garden waste renewals later this year, as well as collaborating with key service areas on the comms going out to residents/businesses and building a timeline of events to better manage the demand for Customer Services.

As part of the Channel Choice project, processes in services with high call volumes are being reviewed in order to reduce call length time as well as the need for customer contact, and work is being planned to increase the availability of online services and further integration of forms to the back office systems

## Revenues and Benefits

**(Cumulative) Percentage of council tax collected at the end of the quarter & the difference between the % of council tax collected and the target**



### OBSERVATION:

At the end of Q4, the Council achieved a similar in-year collection rate to the previous year.

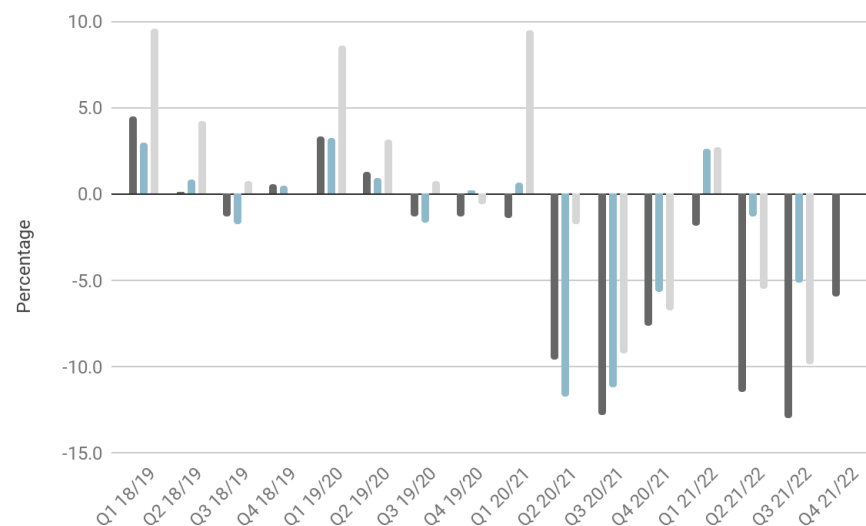
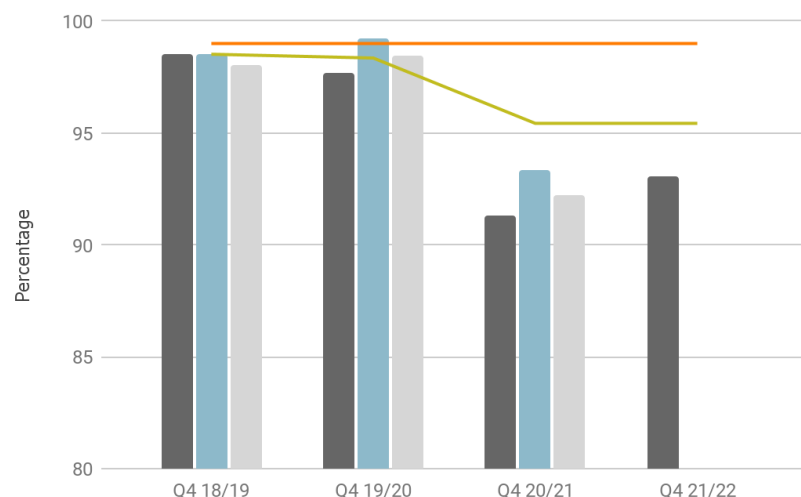
Over the last two years, the collection rate has been impacted by Covid-19, the pause in recovery action following government guidance and Member decision, and the closure of the Magistrates courts over a number of months. This Council re-started recovery action in 2021-22 Q1. In addition, the end of furlough, the removal of the Universal Credit uplift, and the rising cost of living could potentially have affected the collection rate.

The service continues to support residents, contacting customers by phone and email, and setting up payment plans, as well as referring them to the Client Support team and signposting them to other organisations such as the CAB. The debt, however, can only be secured through recovery action and issuing of a liability order.

The government announced a £150 council tax rebate for homeowners in bands A-D, and those more vulnerable residents in Council Tax bands E to H. The process commenced in April 2022. This initiative will help homeowners with the rising cost of living, although, the rebate will come via their bank accounts or other means rather than as a credit on their Council Tax accounts.

## (Cumulative) Percentage of business rates collected & the difference between the percentage of business rates collected and the target

Cotswold Target
  Cotswold
  Forest of Dean
  West Oxfordshire
  Shire Districts' Median



### OBSERVATION:

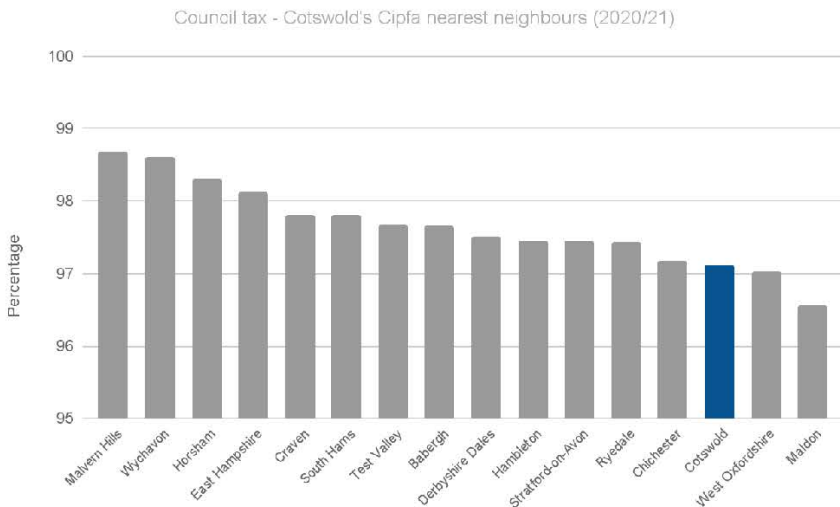
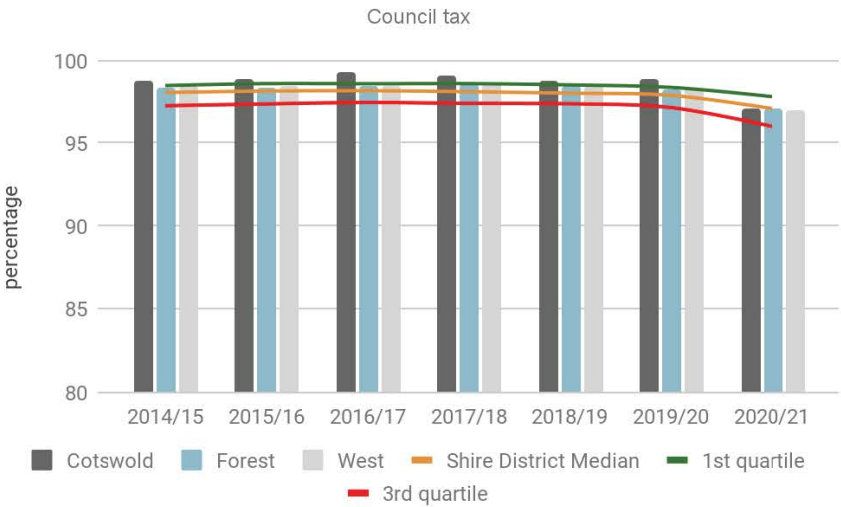
At the end of Q4, the collection rate has improved on the previous year, but is still being impacted as we move through the latter stages of the pandemic. The collection rate was expected to remain depressed as businesses are struggling financially due to the cumulative impact of Covid-19, and more lately the Omicron variant. In addition, some resources in the team have been diverted to administer business grants.

Many businesses have been supported by extended retail relief and a range of mandatory and discretionary grants including the Omicron mandatory grant in Q4. Extended retail relief will continue through 2022-23 at a relief of 50%, and for those businesses that are not eligible for extended retail relief and have been impacted by Covid-19, there is £1.95m in Covid-19 additional relief fund (CARF) to support them. A large proportion of these businesses have already been identified although the window for applying will remain open until September 2022. These businesses will have their business rates accounts credited which will help to reduce the debt owed in 2021-22.

The service is continuing to support businesses; sending out reminders, phoning and emailing businesses to encourage them to contact the Council so that we can support them via manageable repayment plans. The dedicated team responsible for the recovery of rates will continue to recover debts owed to the Council.

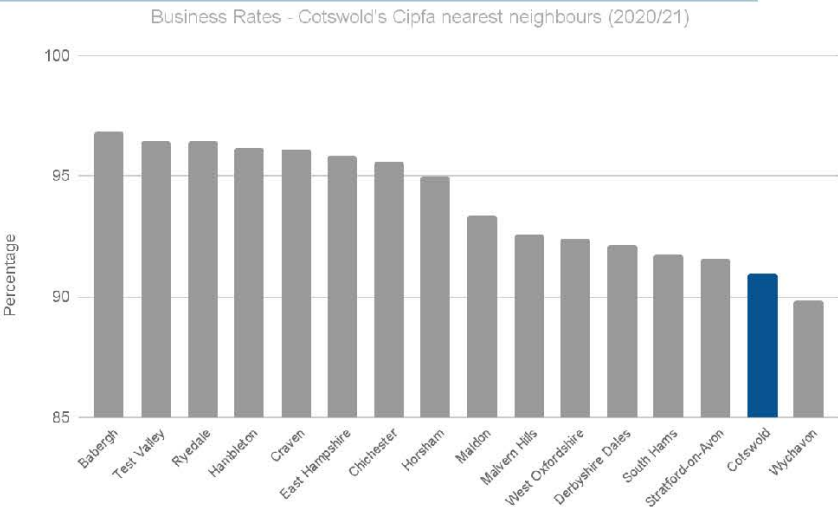
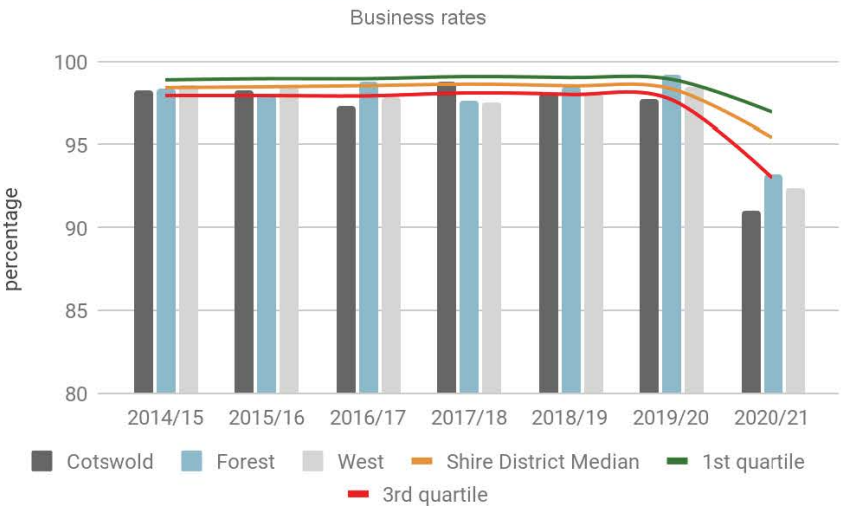


**Benchmarks against all Shire Districts and Cipfa nearest neighbours for council tax collection rates and business rates collection rates**

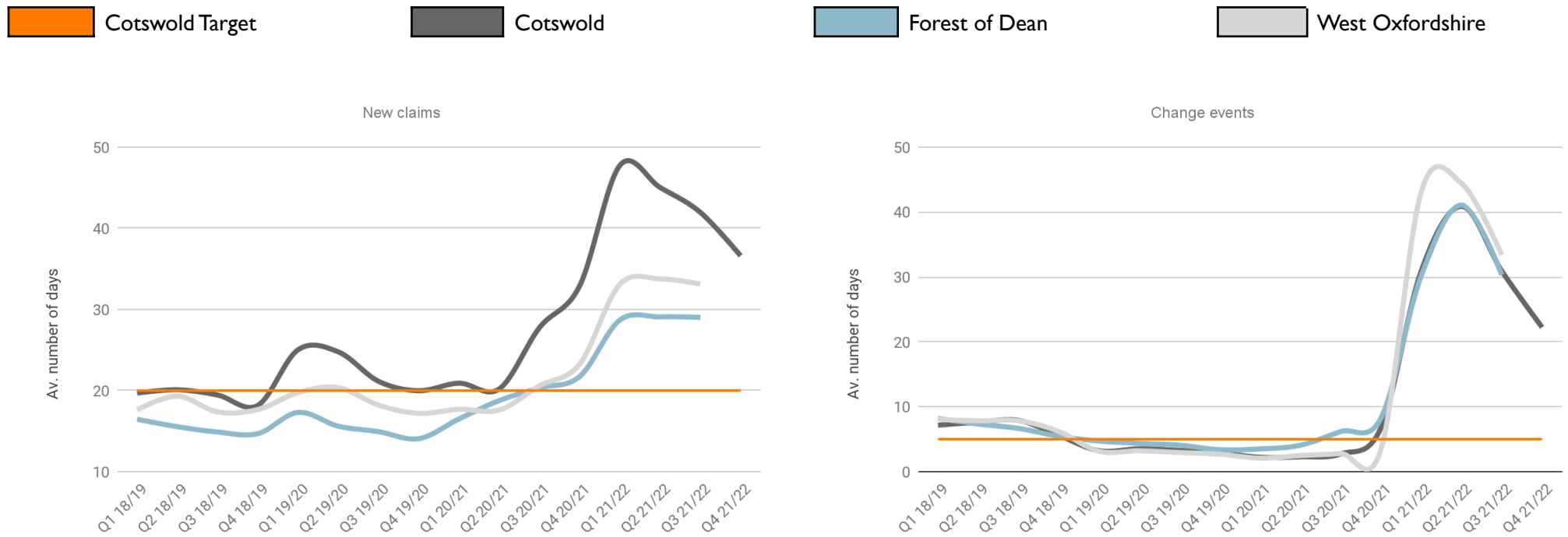


**OBSERVATION:**

Each Council has its own approach, policies and procedures to recovering debt, for example, this Council sends out three reminders prior to commencing recovery action while others may send out two reminders, or commence recovery action more quickly. These variations as well as when Magistrates were able to re-open may account for some of the differences in Councils' collection rates



## (Cumulative) Average number of days taken to process Council Tax Support new claims and change events



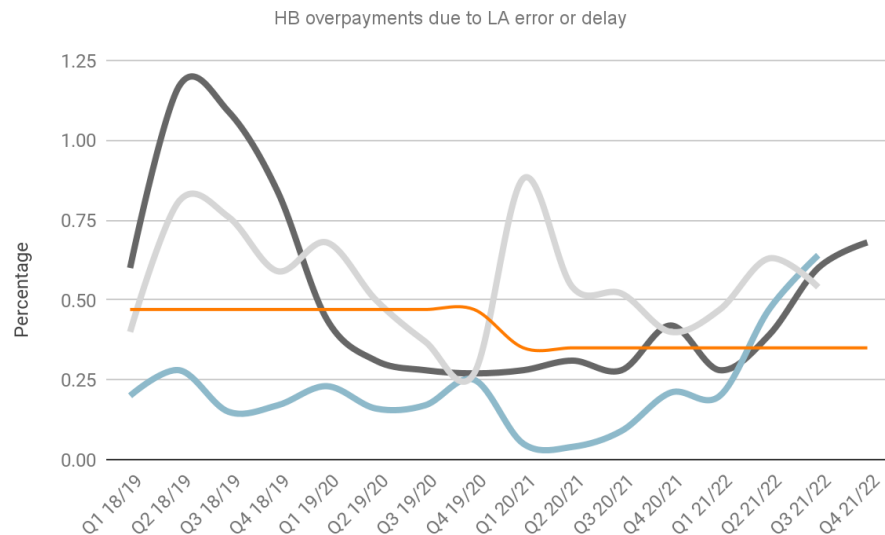
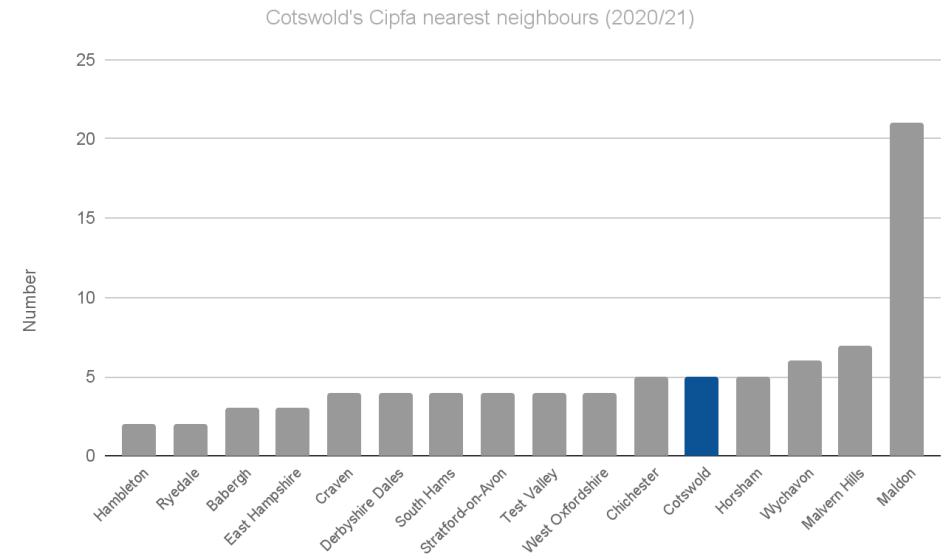
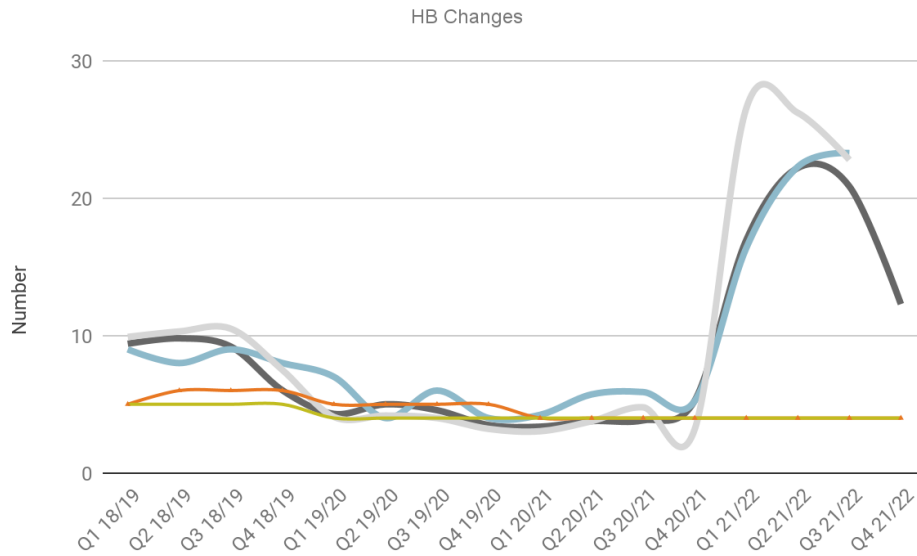
### OBSERVATION:

The average processing times have continued to improve over the last six months, however, as anticipated, there has been insufficient time to recover the shortfall in performance completely. Processing times increased following the implementation of the new benefits system which created a backlog. This coincided with high workloads related to the increase in Universal Credit claims due to the impact of Covid-19 (with much of the New Claims time delays beyond our control) and the administration of Track and Trace, as well as software issues which the supplier finally resolved in January 2022.

Additional resources were brought in during Q3 to support the team in reducing the backlog; and a recovery plan is being developed to improve performance. The OpenPortal was officially launched in January 2022 and clients are now able to start self-serving. A project is underway to improve performance management tools, information, and target setting, to enable to service to see improvements in case turnaround times, and have more management information to monitor demands, backlog, and resourcing. Although it will take time for the system to be fully exploited, the initial signs are promising with performance starting to return to previous levels.

## (Cumulative) Average number of days taken to process Housing Benefit changes of circumstances & % HB overpayments due to LA error /delay

■ Cotswold Target 
 ■ Cotswold 
 ■ Forest of Dean 
 ■ West Oxfordshire 
 ■ Shire Districts' Median



### OBSERVATION:

Significant work has been undertaken to reduce the backlog of HB changes in Q3 which has had a positive impact on performance at the end of the year. Please see commentary for Council Tax Support new claims and changes for further information.

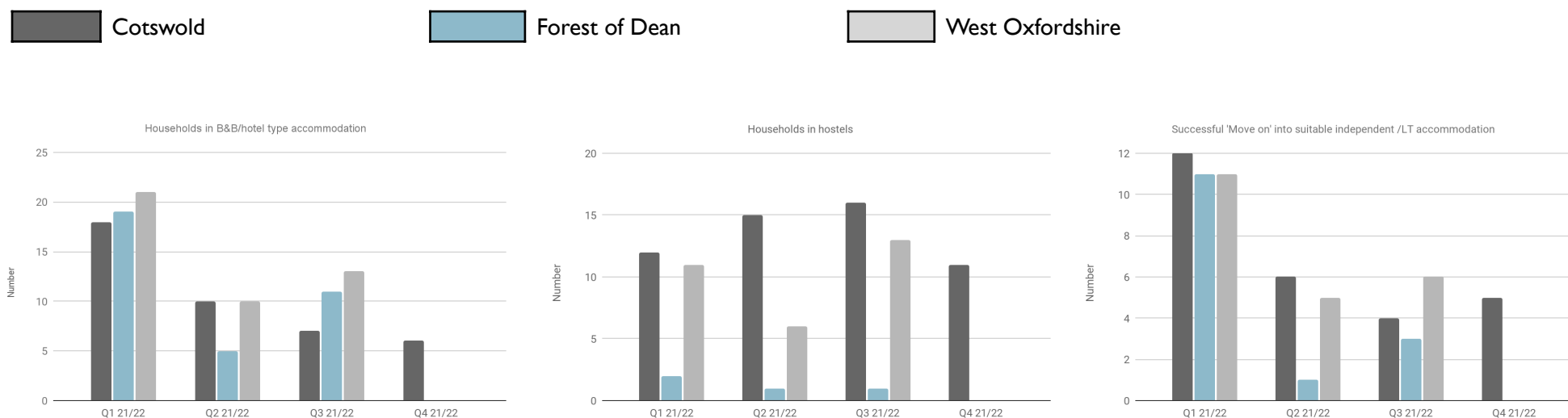
The HB over payments due to LA error or delay is outside the national target of 0.47%. The delays in processing were created by the implementation of the new benefits system, as well as software failure which prevented the automatic upload of changes. The supplier provided the final fix in January 2022.

It was anticipated there would be an improvement in the outturn once the automatic upload was reinstated; however the impact was reduced, as over time the number of HB claims have decreased as claimants transfer to Universal Credit, and therefore the percentage is more susceptible to change.

Note: the national target is 0.47%. In 2020-21, the service set a more stringent target of 0.35%

## Housing Support

**(Snapshot) Number of households in B&B/hotel-type accommodation & Hostels (LA owned or managed); and Number of successful 'Move On' into suitable independent/long-term accommodation from B&Bs/hotels/hostels**



### OBSERVATION:

The number of people contacting the Council as homeless or threatened with homelessness increased in Q3 and into Q4 due to the ending of Covid related financial incentives and the new Government request to accommodate all rough sleepers under Protect and Vaccinate directive in December 2021. This was in response to the concerns surrounding the Omicron variant and its impact on those who were at risk of rough sleeping.

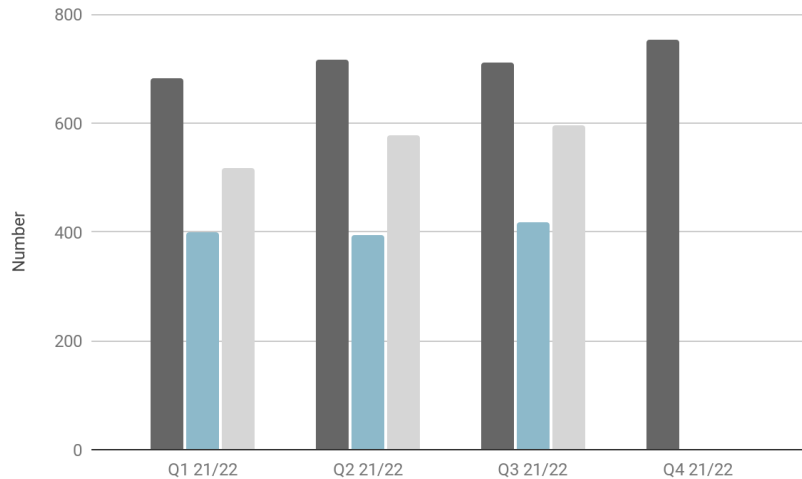
Going forward, the Housing Team is refocusing more resources on the Prevention approach with the recruitment of specialist Complex Needs officers and also moving people on from emergency accommodation as quickly as possible. The use of specialist Temporary Accommodation officers is proving invaluable in this task as they are able to offer dedicated support and bespoke solutions for helping clients move on successfully from emergency accommodation.

The availability of social housing stock however remains low, partially due to prevention measures being put in place to assist those affected by the financial implications of Covid and the increasing cost of energy. These measures are aimed at working with households to enable them to remain in their own home, with reducing rent arrears or covering the costs of increased bills. Accessing the Private Rented Sector also remains difficult due to affordability.

The Eviction ban was lifted on 1 October 2021 so numbers of people with families approaching for assistance with their housing continue to rise as well as domestic abuse cases coming through for re-housing. The Housing Team has also provided targeted provision for rough sleepers as part of its Severe Weather Emergency Protocol response throughout Q4. The Housing Team will continue to work with anyone who is new to rough sleeping, regardless of season or weather, to ensure that this is either preventable in the first instance, or where it does occur, that it is brief and non-recurring.

### (Snapshot) Number of Long Term Empty properties (six months and over)

Cotswold Forest of Dean West Oxfordshire



#### OBSERVATION:

During Q4, 205 properties were removed from the long term empty homes list and 246 added.

A range of proactive work is being undertaken to both reduce the number of LTE properties in the District as well as ensuring that the Council's data is up to date; for example, the LTE coordinator is cleansing the Bromford Housing database to ensure that demolished properties have been removed from the LTE list.

Work is also being undertaken to understand the reasons why properties are coming onto the list so that they can be proactively managed. A three month rolling action plan is in place, and includes tackling some of the complex cases (property on LTE levy, accounts in arrears, and unresponsive owner), contacting those householders whose properties are about to slip into LTE status or an increased levy, and raising awareness amongst estate agents dealing with the sales of these types of properties

**(Cumulative) Percentage of major planning applications determined**

 Cotswold Target
  Cotswold
  Forest of Dean
  West Oxfordshire
  Shire Districts' Median

----- Cotswold

----- Forest of Dean

----- West Oxfordshire



Extensions of times are often a result of consultees requesting changes to the scheme or because the consultee response is essential but has not been received within the timetable. They are also used where officers are working proactively with applicants to improve schemes and make developments acceptable.

Performance for 'major' applications continues to meet its target. Sixteen major applications were determined in Q4 compared to nine in Q4 in the previous year; and 41 for the year compared to 31 in 2020-21.

Over the last year, the service has experienced a shortage of DM staff. Despite multiple rounds of recruitment and the introduction of career graded posts, it has been difficult to both recruit the right staff and then to retain them. Although the service recently recruited to three posts (start May 2022), there are still 3.5 vacant posts to be filled, and the use of agency staff has been agreed in the interim. The Business Manager is exploring what further can be done to make the recruitment and retention of staff more attractive against a national shortage of qualified planning officers.

As part of an improvement programme, a new planning checklist is being created to help improve the quality of the applications submitted, along with clear guidance to help applicants. Other projects include improving case management using workflow tools, and improving the way we communicate with customers

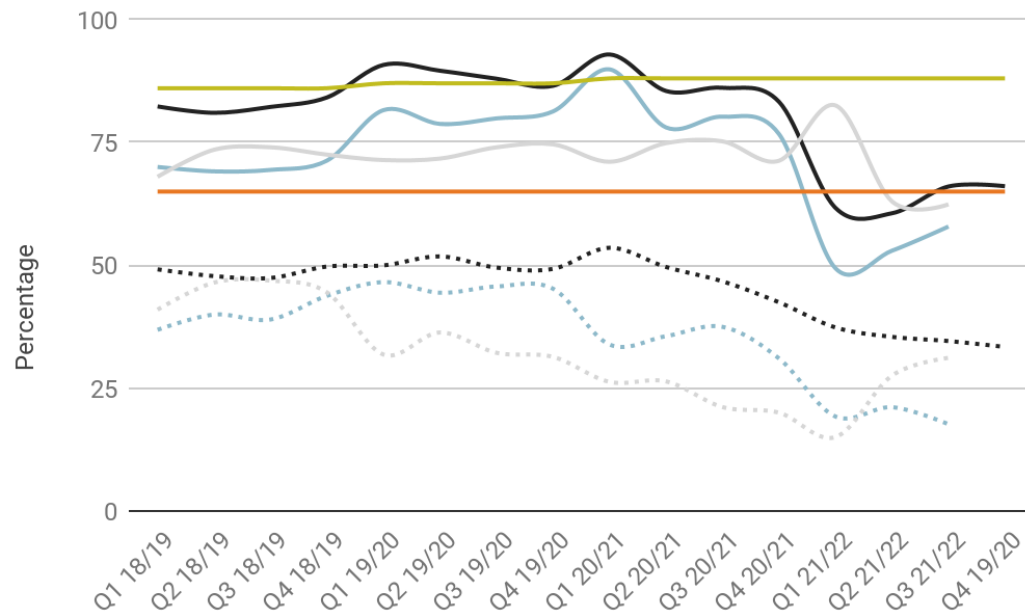
## (Cumulative) Percentage of minor planning applications determined

% of all applications completed within 8 weeks or an agreed timescale

Cotswold Target
  Cotswold
  Forest of Dean
  West Oxfordshire
  Shire Districts' Median

% of all applications completed within 8 weeks

----- Cotswold
 ----- Forest of Dean
----- West Oxfordshire



### OBSERVATION:

Performance for 'minor' applications has improved over the last six months

83 minor applications were determined in Q4 compared to 97 in Q4 of the previous year; and 395 for the year compared to 361 for 2020-21.

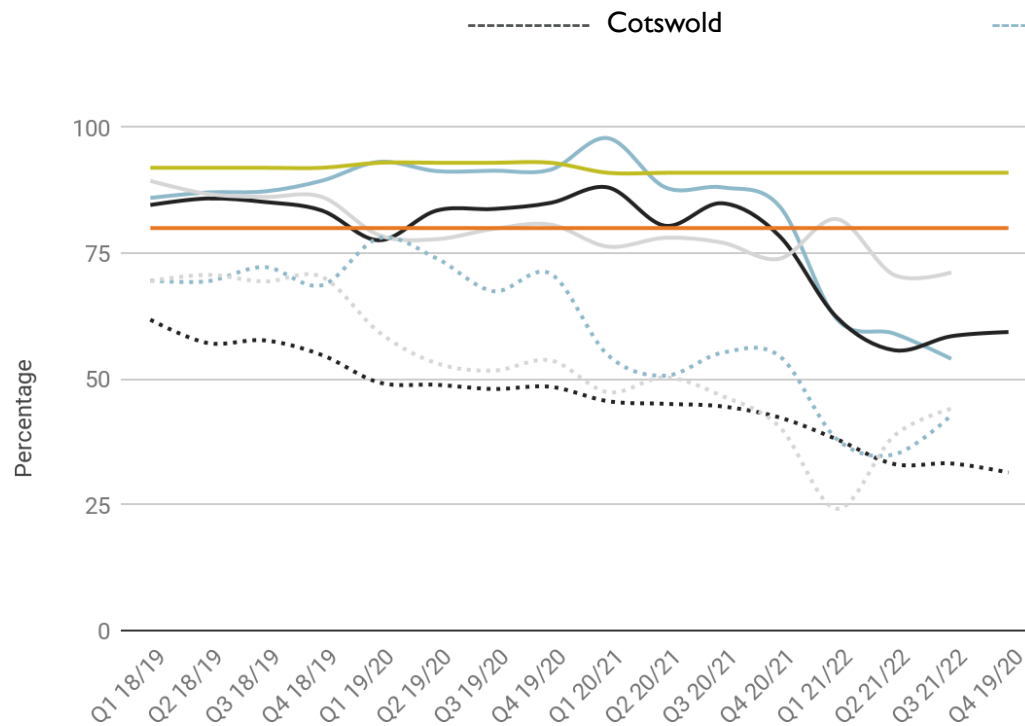
See Observation for Major applications for further explanation

## (Cumulative) Percentage of other planning applications determined

% of all applications completed within 8 weeks or an agreed timescale

Cotswold Target Cotswold Forest of Dean West Oxfordshire Shire Districts' Median

% of all applications completed within 8 weeks



### OBSERVATION:

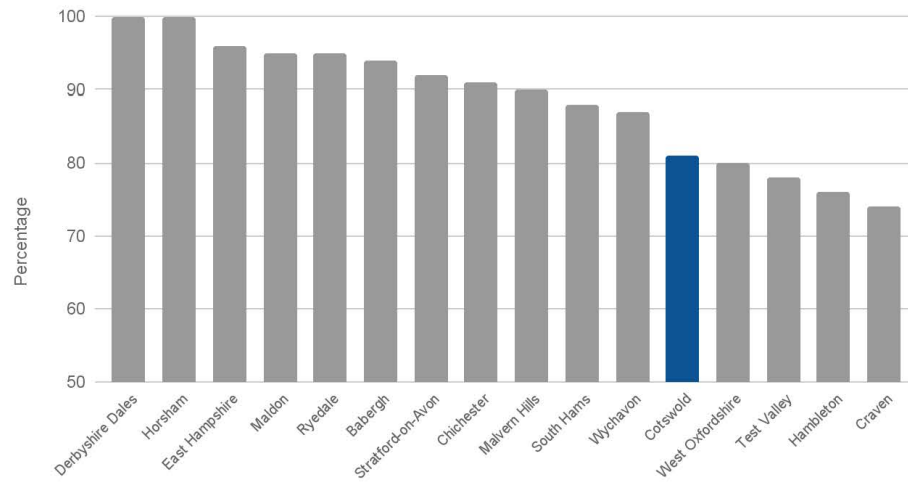
318 other applications were determined in Q4 compared to 268 in Q4 of the previous year; and 1430 for the year, nearly 43% higher than 2020-21.

See Observation for Major applications for further explanation

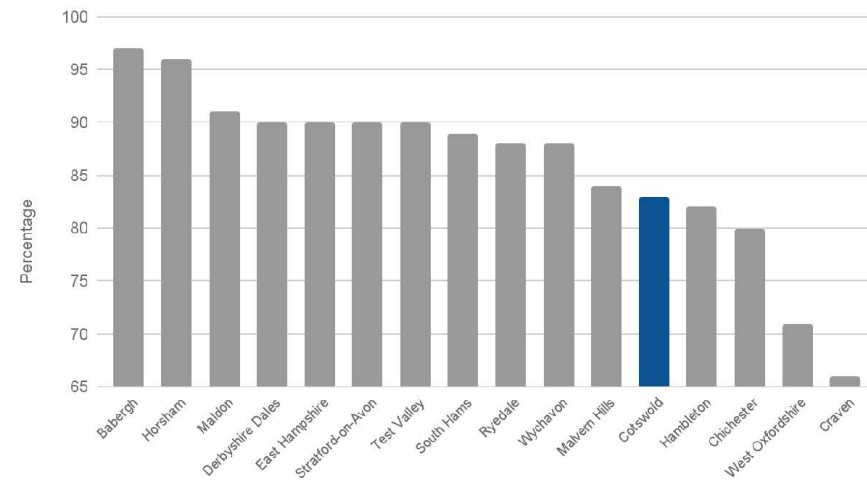


## Benchmarks against Cipfa nearest neighbours for % of planning application determined within agreed timescales

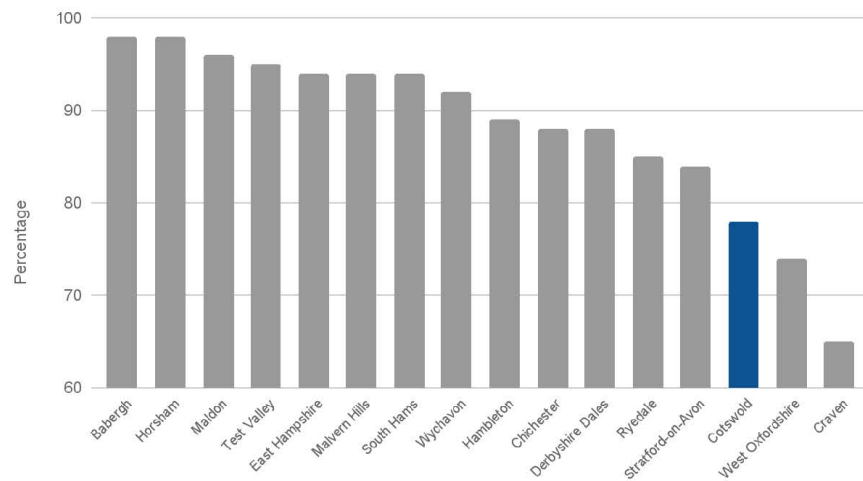
Major applications - Cotswold's Cipfa nearest neighbours (2020/21)



Minor applications - Cotswold's Cipfa nearest neighbours (2020/21)

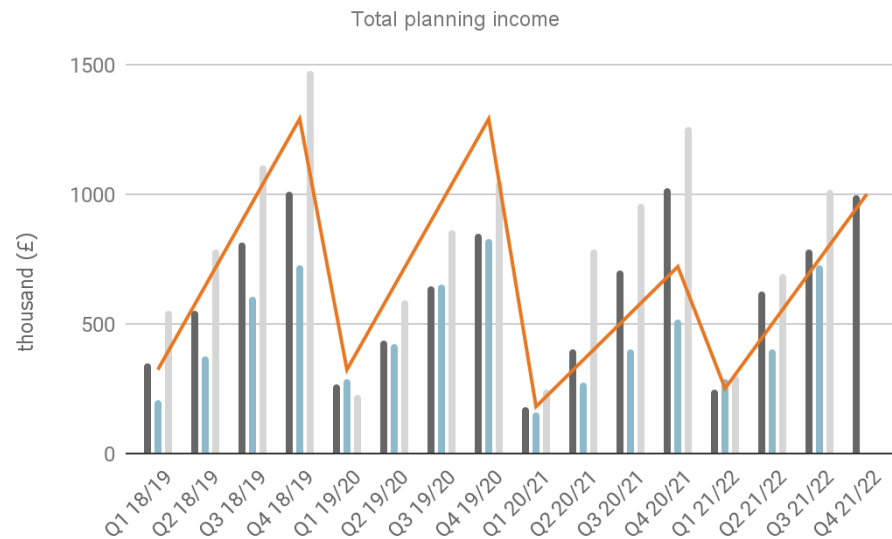


Other applications - Cotswold's Cipfa nearest neighbours (2020/21)

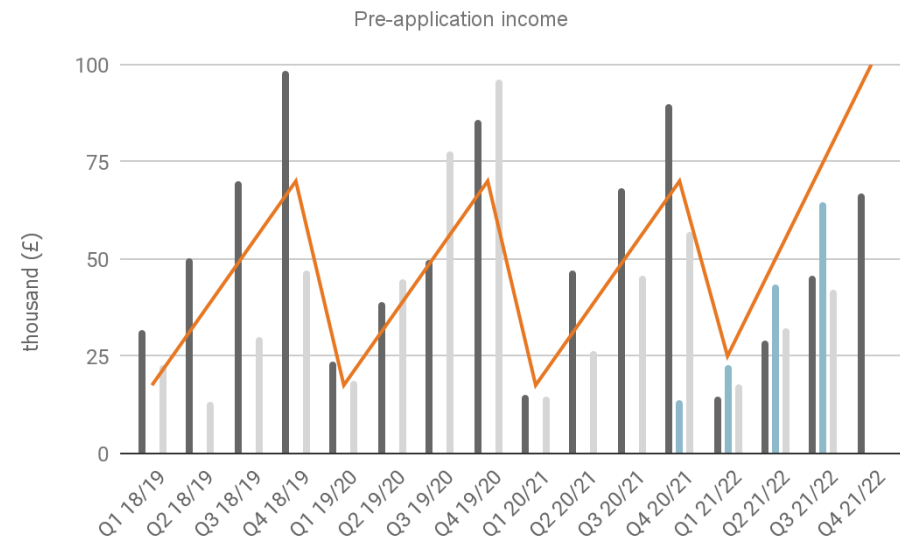


## (Cumulative) Planning income

■ Cotswold Target ■ Cotswold



■ Forest of Dean ■ West Oxfordshire

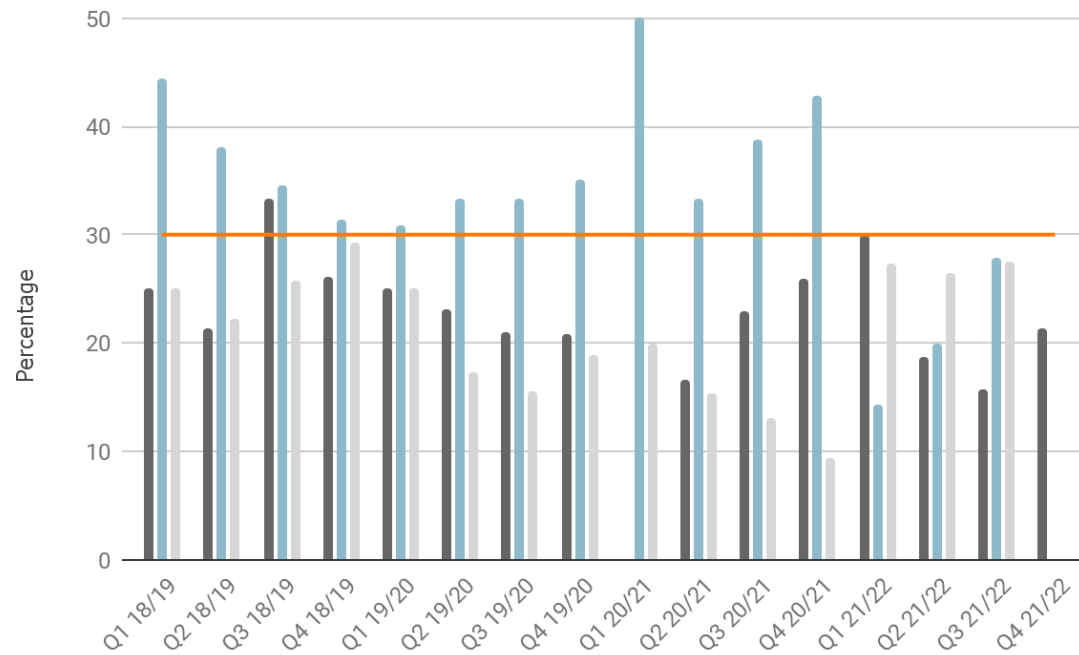


### OBSERVATION:

At the end of Q4, total planning income was close to achieving the annual target. Pre-application income was lower than expected, partly due to smaller scale pre-applications which attract a lower fee. In addition, with less capacity in the service, the focus has been on delivering other aspects of the service

## (Cumulative) Percentage of planning appeals allowed

Cotswold Target
  Cotswold
  Forest of Dean
  West Oxfordshire



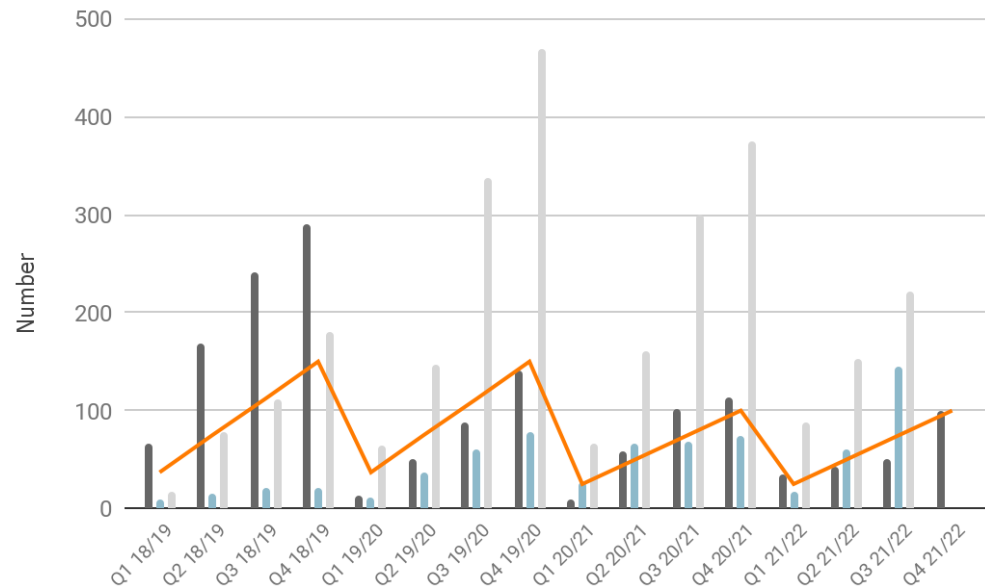
### OBSERVATION:

This indicator seeks to ensure that no more than 30% of planning appeals are allowed.

In Q4, six of the nine appealed decisions were supported.

During 2021-22, 22 out of 28 planning appeals were supported, and just six appeals were allowed

## (Cumulative) Number of affordable homes delivered



### OBSERVATION:

After a difficult year with construction delays due to Covid and the rising cost and lack of availability of building materials, 48 affordable homes for individuals and families were completed in Q4 bringing the total for 2021/22 to 99 units, one short of the target of 100.

This quarter's completed units comprised six x 1-bedroom flats and ten x 2-bedroom houses for shared ownership in Moreton in Marsh, two x 1-bedroom bungalows for social rent in Stow on the Wold and 30 affordable homes for social rent in Tetbury. The Tetbury homes, a mixture of 1 bed flats and 2 & 3 bed family homes, were completed just in time for families to move in for Easter.

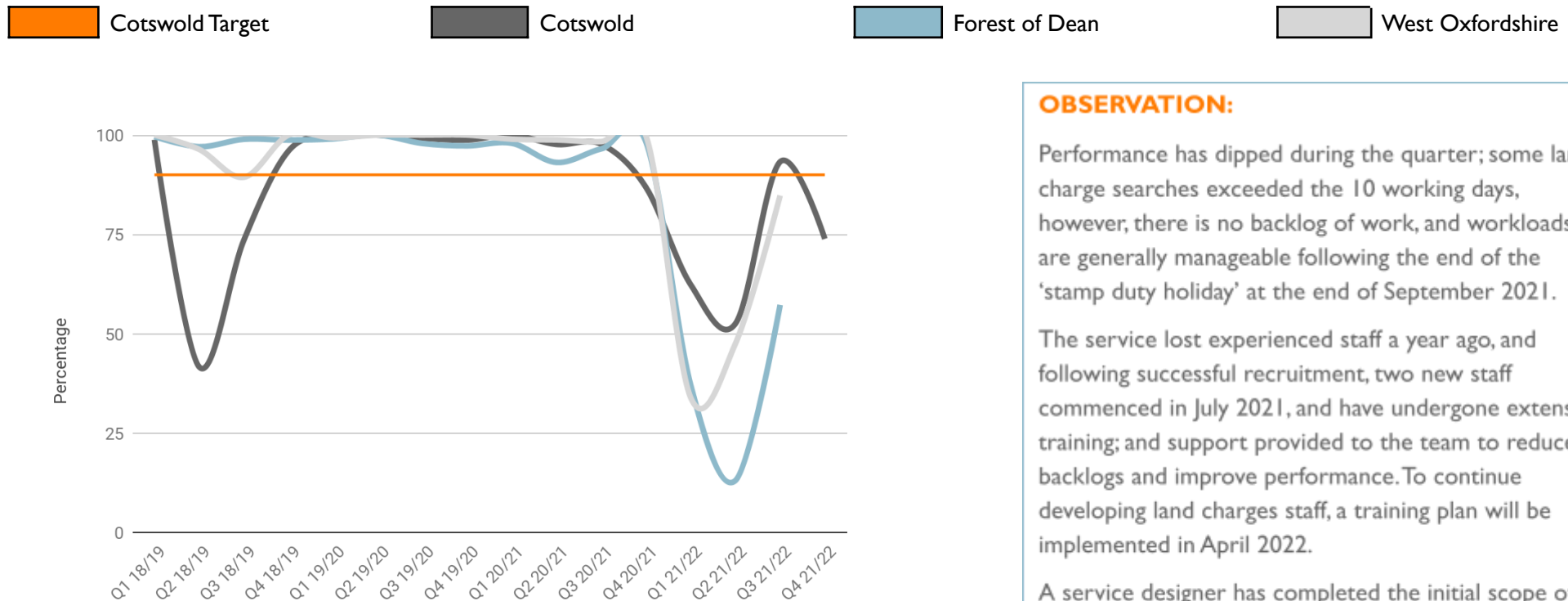
Nine affordable homes in Chipping Campden, originally forecast to complete this financial year will now complete later in 2022/23.

Work continues on sites in South Cerney and Cirencester, and work has commenced on 10 new affordable homes in Upper Rissington.

The forecast for 2022/23 is currently 125 affordable units, with potentially 65 units completing in Q1.

Note: this data is collected cumulatively from the beginning of the financial year to account for peaks and troughs

## Percentage of land charge searches dispatched within 10 working days



### OBSERVATION:

Performance has dipped during the quarter; some land charge searches exceeded the 10 working days, however, there is no backlog of work, and workloads are generally manageable following the end of the 'stamp duty holiday' at the end of September 2021.

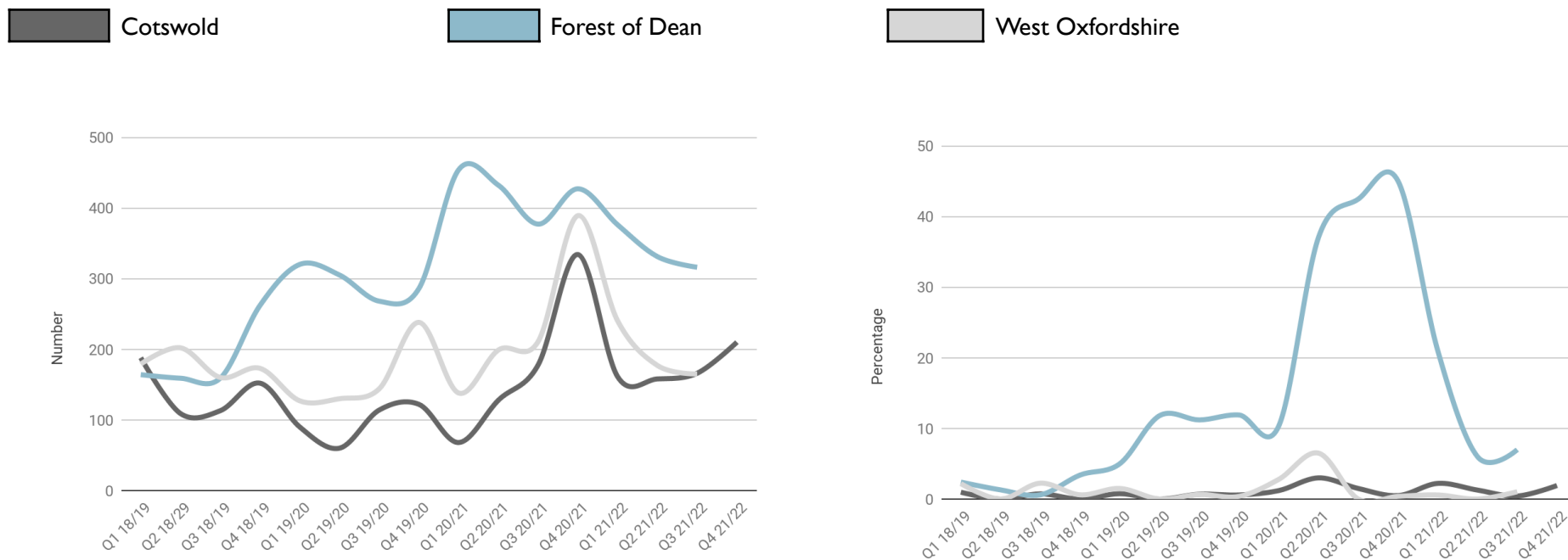
The service lost experienced staff a year ago, and following successful recruitment, two new staff commenced in July 2021, and have undergone extensive training; and support provided to the team to reduce backlogs and improve performance. To continue developing land charges staff, a training plan will be implemented in April 2022.

A service designer has completed the initial scope of improvements for the service and will be working with the service to improve processes, including customer contact, customer enquiries and inbox management, and improvements in efficiency and systems.

Going forward, the Her Majesty's Land Registry (HMLR) project has commenced. This involves the migration of LLCI searches to HMLR for all Local Authorities. The project will utilise specialist experience within the team, and will be closely and carefully managed internally, and by HMLR to help mitigate any potential impacts to service delivery.

## Environmental and Regulatory

**Number of fly tips collected & % of fly tips that result in an enforcement action taking place (defined as a warning letter, fixed penalty notice, simple caution or prosecution)**



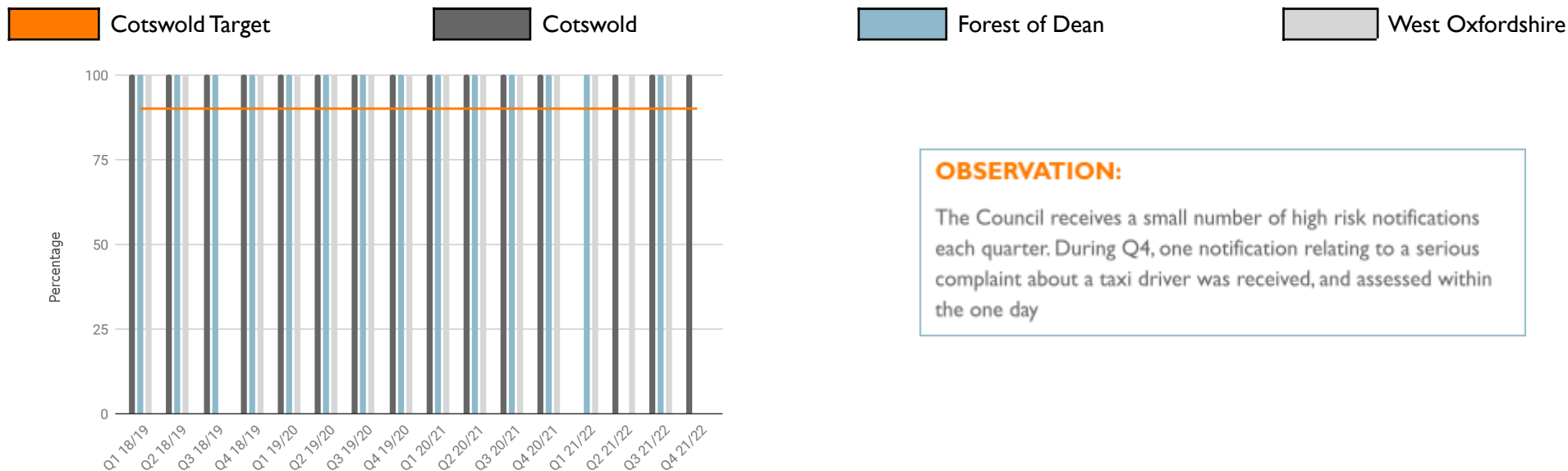
### OBSERVATION:

An increase in fly tips reported nationally coincided with the start of Covid-19. This trend appears to be reflected more locally and continued throughout 2020/21. As restrictions were eased, the number of fly tips collected by Ubico appears to decline before levelling off. There are some signs that fly tips may have increased during the rise of the Omicron variant reflecting the 'stay at home if you can' message during this period.

The Council has increased its enforcement activity supported by its Clean and Green initiative. During Q4, 101 flytips were referred for investigation resulting in six FPNs, making a total of 15 enforcement actions since the beginning of 2021-22. The Council takes a proactive and preventative approach to fly tipping, and duty of care work has been carried out with businesses and households to support them to manage their waste responsibly. More recently, the Council has commenced some targeted work in locations which are attracting high levels of fly tipping using a combination of proactive measures to deter fly tipping such as signage as well as enforcement activity. Further targeted work is expected in the coming months.

Note: This data source does not contain all types of fly tips e.g. asbestos, at all locations e.g. bring sites. Forest of Dean appears to collect a higher number of fly tips than Cotswold and West as it counts fly tips at bring sites

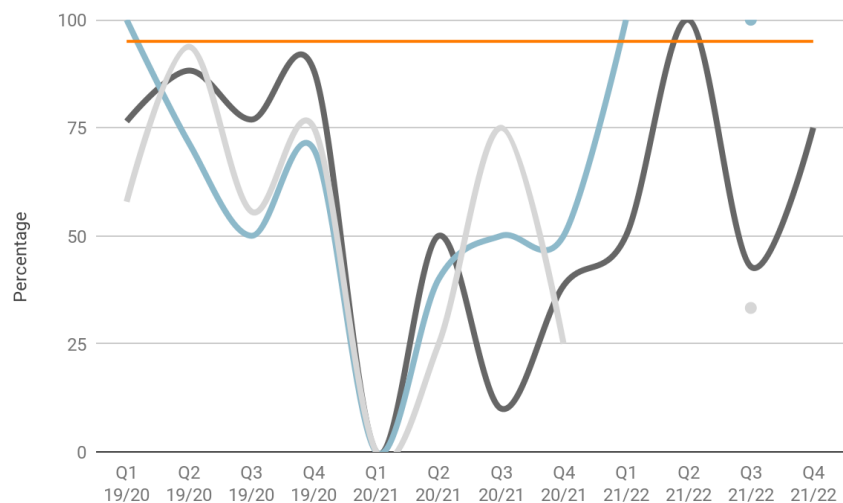
**Percentage of high risk notifications (including food poisoning outbreaks, anti-social behaviour, contaminated private water supplies, workplace fatalities or multiple serious injuries) risk assessed within 1 working day**



**OBSERVATION:**

The Council receives a small number of high risk notifications each quarter. During Q4, one notification relating to a serious complaint about a taxi driver was received, and assessed within the one day

**Percentage of high risk food premises inspected within target timescales**

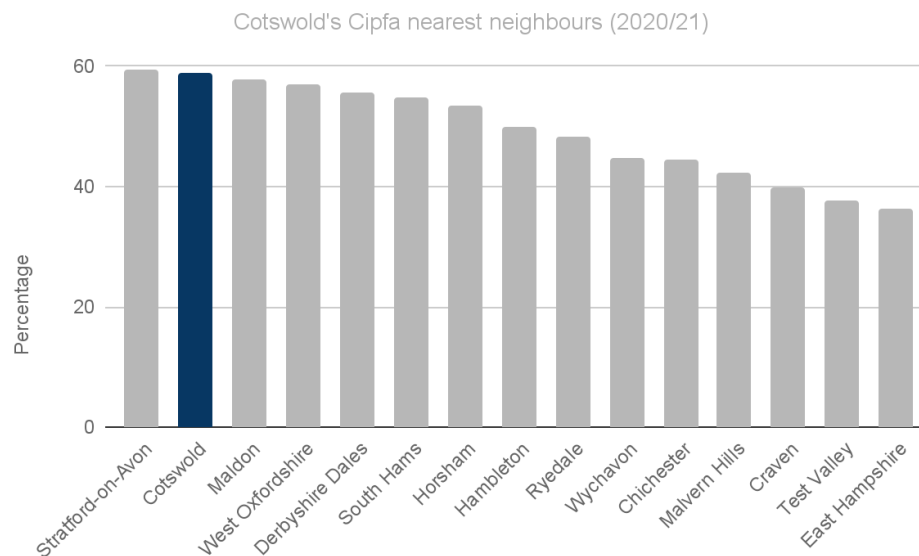
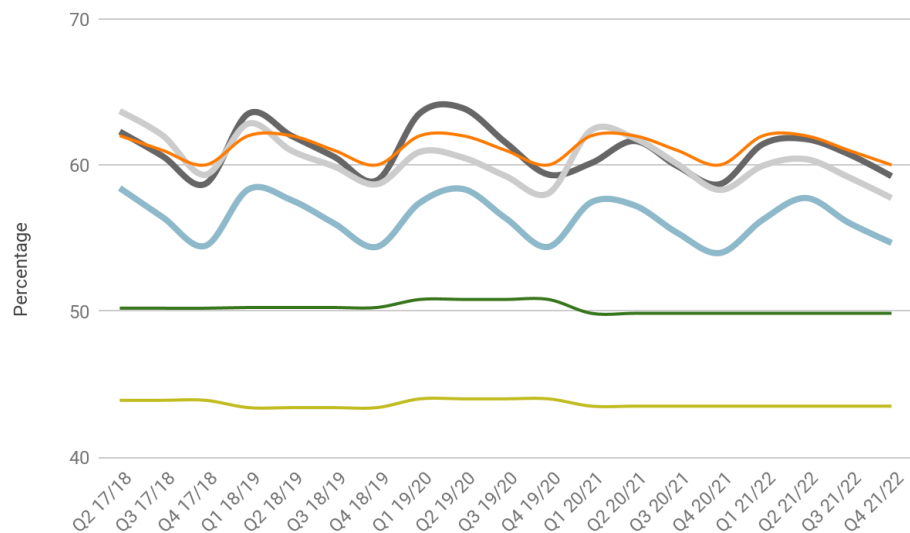


**OBSERVATION:**

During Q4, three out of four high risk food inspections were completed within the target timescale, and the outstanding inspection has since been completed. Although two career graded posts were recruited to during the quarter to support the business, the appointed officers will require training over the next 6-12 months. The shortage of senior environmental health officers to deal with high risk food inspections may result in some inspections being delayed. In July 2021, the FSA updated the recovery plan for local authorities in response to Covid-19 and dealing with the backlogs of food inspections. This Council cleared its backlog of high risk inspections ahead of the target dates set by the FSA and is currently on schedule with the other elements of the recovery plan.

## Waste Management

### (Cumulative) Percentage of household waste recycled



#### OBSERVATION:

The combined recycling rate for 2021-22 was 59.23% compared to 58.69% in the previous year when the garden waste service was suspended between 26 March 2020 and 12 May 2020. All waste streams (tonnages) have reduced during 2021-22 except garden waste as Covid restrictions lifted.

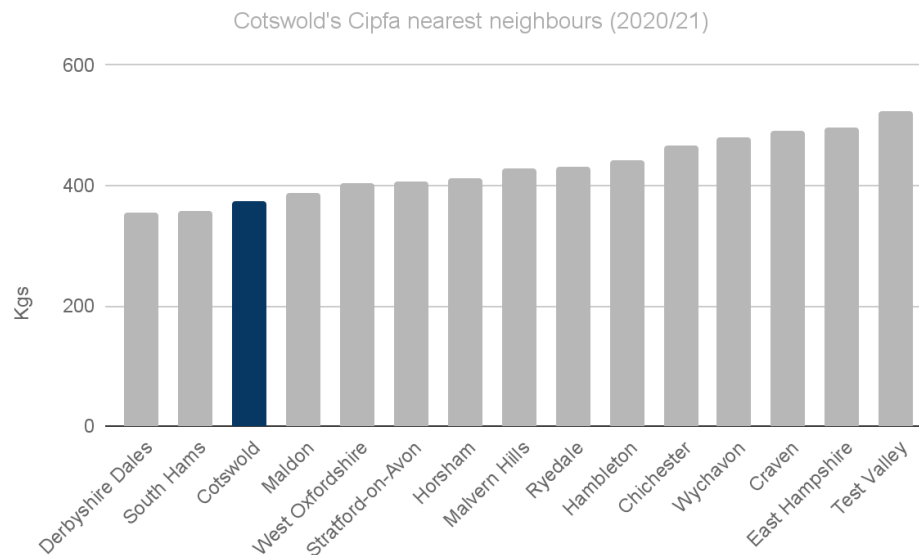
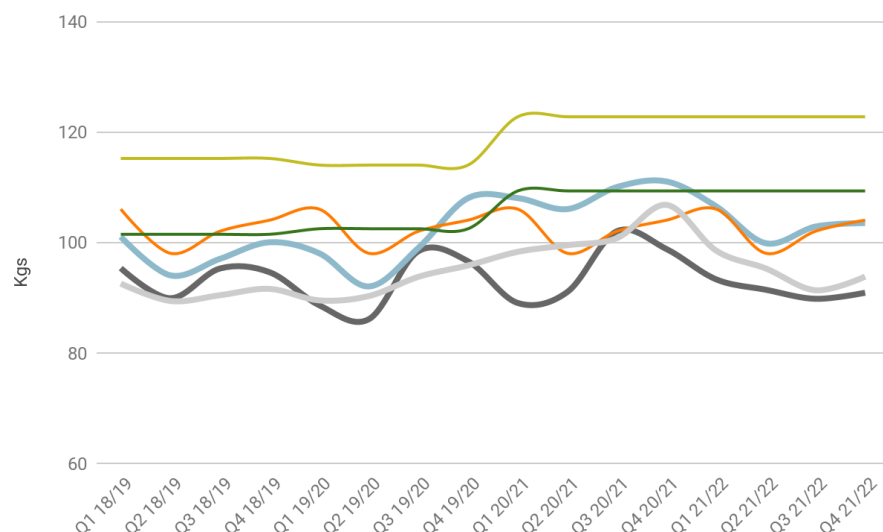
In comparison to 2019-20, the combined recycling rate was similar. Most notable is that dry recycling tonnages are still relatively high (up by 8.5%) contributing to an increase in the dry recycling rate of two percentage points.

In 2020-21, households waste arisings collected at the kerbside increased nationally due to Covid-19 and households working from home or self-isolating. However, due to the increase in residual waste and the closure of Household Waste recycling Centres, the combined recycling rate for England decreased from 43.8% to 42.3%. In Cotswold District, the combined recycling rate was 58.69%; residual waste tonnages increased by 3.5% and dry recycling tonnages by 16.3% which would have been facilitated by the expansion of the dry recycling service in March 2020.

Notes: Composting and food waste was a single waste stream prior to 2020-21. The quarterly recycling targets are profiled to account for seasonal differences. The data is also presented cumulatively which will flatten out some of these differences



## Residual household waste per household (kg)

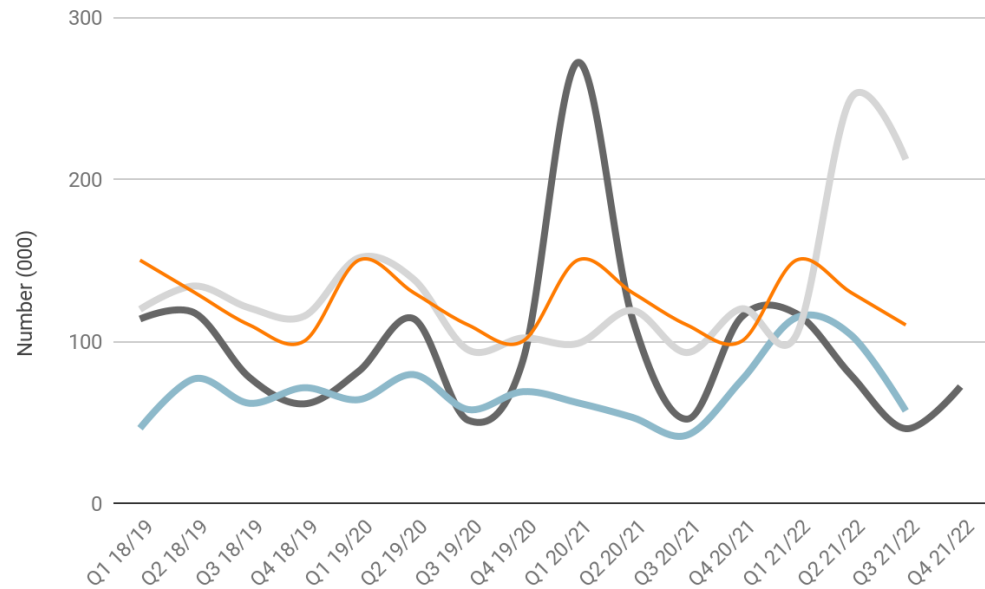


### OBSERVATION:

During 2021-22, the District produced 365 kg of residual waste per household compared to 382 kg in the previous year, and 370 kg in the pre-Covid year

The District continues to produce relatively low amounts of residual waste per household. During 2020-21, residual waste tonnages increased by 3.5% due to the impact of Covid but has now return to the levels similar to the pre-Covid years.

## Number of missed bin per 100,000 scheduled collections



### OBSERVATION:

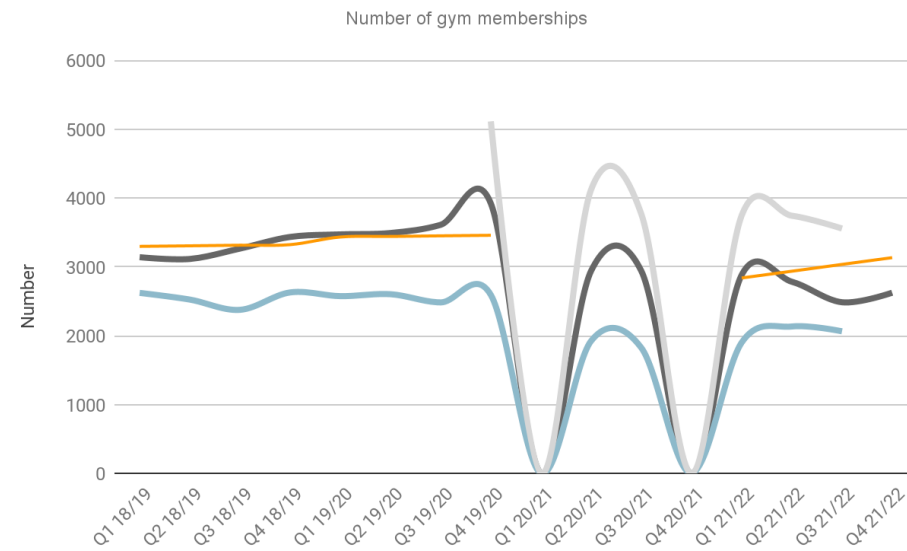
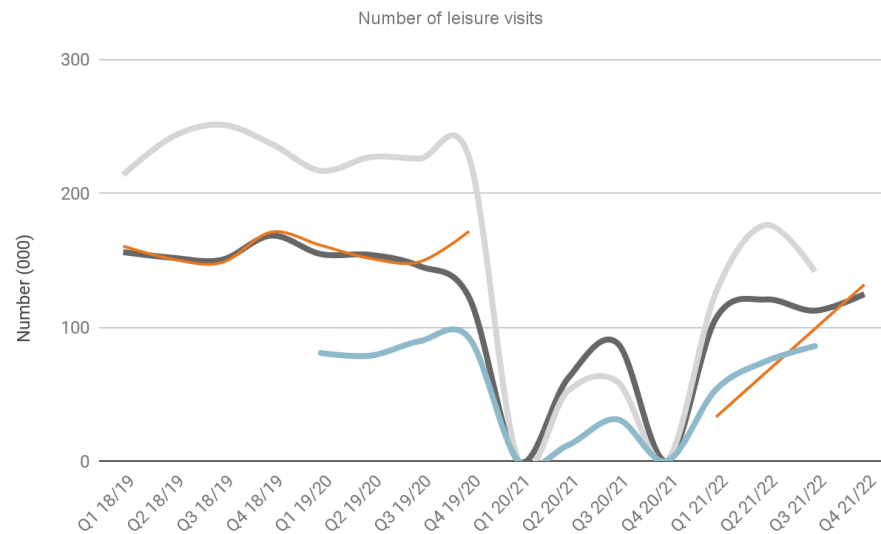
In spite of staffing issues due to high rates of Covid-19, Storm Eunice (requiring the rescheduling of collections) and relatively high levels of waste due to home working, the number of missed bins per 100,000 scheduled collections continues to perform well within the target. The implementation of In-Cab technology a year ago is having positive benefits.

There was some difficulties in obtaining agency staff in the quarter particular for loaders; and the national shortage of HGV drivers and the buoyant jobs market/seasonal work may present an issue going into the summer.

Note: since the implementation of In-Cab technology, the data source for missed collections is Alloy, In-Cab's back office system. This data source is more accurate than the previous data source

## Leisure

### Number of visits to the three leisure centres & (Snapshot) Number of gym memberships



#### OBSERVATION:

Although the number of leisure visits was slightly short of the quarterly target, the annual target of 329,170 has been exceeded; there were over 464,000 visits to the Council's three leisure centres. Membership sales were steady in the final quarter, which traditionally is the busiest quarter of the year, but are lower than previous years due to competition from Pure Gym in Cirencester as well as Evesham, which has impacted on Chipping Campden, as well as a couple of independent boutique type gyms opening in and around Bourton. Swimming lessons however continue to flourish at all three centres which are back to pre-covid levels and in the case of Chipping Campden the highest number they have ever recorded.

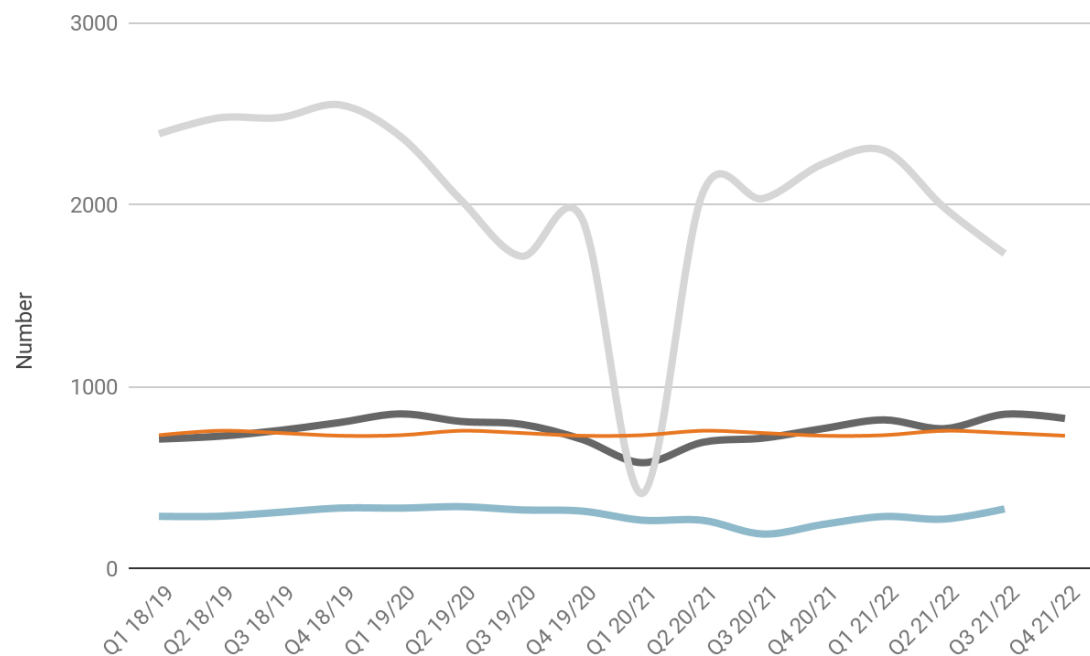
Whilst pandemic restrictions have generally been lifted the impact on customers and staff contracting Covid, along with any financial support having ended, making the final quarter of the financial year challenging. The retention of current staff and recruitment of vacant posts has been difficult due to a competitive employment market. However, SLM reports that there are signs of recovery which will be helped by the gym refurbishments and with re-opening of the Café in Cirencester by the end of April/beginning of May.

SLM has continued to promote, market and advertise across a range of media but primarily on-line which is fast becoming the more prominent method of advertising and raising the profile and awareness of the facilities and the associated activities. The company has recently drafted a Community Health & Wellbeing Strategy which will enable and assist in re-engaging with our communities following the pandemic.

Note: Gym memberships were frozen during the first and third lockdowns. No targets were set for 2020-21

## Parking

### Total hours spent undertaking on and off-street parking enforcement visits

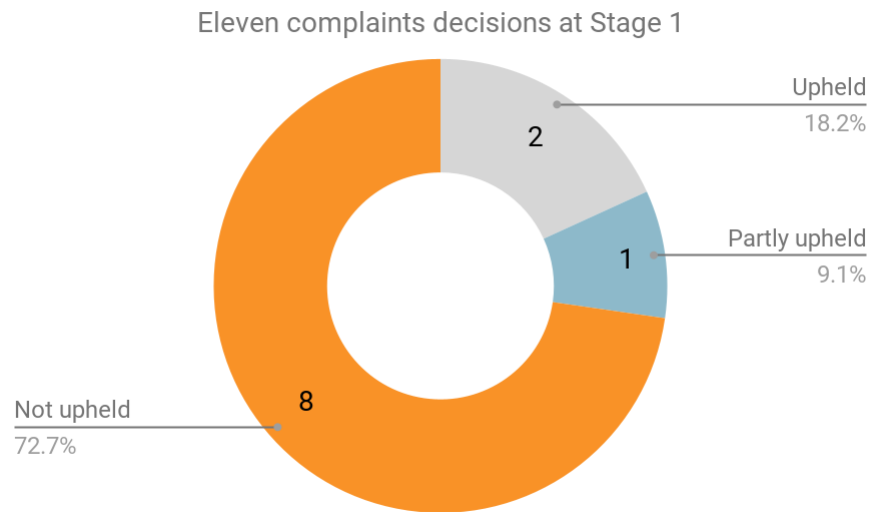


#### OBSERVATION:

There has been a slight increase in enforcement hours during the year, first to support the introduction of cashless parking, and more recently to support the statutory consultation on the increase in car park charges commencing 4 April 2022.

In December 2021, Cabinet agreed that the parking enforcement function should be brought back in-house when the contract with APCOA ends at the end of March 2022 to allow for a closer alignment to the Council's priorities such as supporting the 'Clean and Green' initiative, as well as facilitating improvements in the car park service through closer alignment of the in-house enforcement service and the car park management team

## COMPLAINTS - ARE WE DOING THE 'DAY JOB' REALLY WELL FOR OUR COUNCILS?



### OBSERVATION:

A new Customer Feedback Procedure went live on the 1st October 2021.

The new process has the following stages:

**Stage 1:** Relevant service area responds to complaint within 10 working days

**Stage 2:** Complaint is reviewed by Corporate Responsibility Team, response is signed off by relevant Business Manager, and sent to complainant within 10 working days

**Stage 3:** Complaint is reviewed by relevant Business Manager, signed off by relevant Group Manager, and sent to complainant within 15 working days

The complaints shown below only include complaints which were upheld or partly upheld at Stage 1.

Service area	Description	Outcome/learning	Decision	Response time (days)
Development Management	Complaint regarding the decision not to revoke and reissue a Decision Notice	An issue with the administrative process resulted in the Decision Notice being issued without the additional context that formed the Committee's resolution. An apology was offered for the error; the incident was reported to Members, and the team is now actively reviewing procedures to ensure this error does not recur	Upheld	10

Revenues & Benefits	Complainant unhappy with delay in confirming a council tax band reduction and refund, and other issues with their account	The delay was caused by a system issue, which has now been resolved, along with other issues on the account. The credit has now been refunded.	Upheld	9
Revenues & Benefits	Complainant had not received a response to email requesting a Direct Debit was set up on their account	It was acknowledged that there had been a delay, however the issue has now been resolved and an apology offered.	Partly upheld	10