Chorley Council

Housing Delivery Test Action Plan

November 2025

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1. Introduction

1.1 The Housing Delivery Test (HDT) is an annual measurement of housing delivery in the area of relevant plan making authorities against the number of homes that are required for the preceding three year period. It is measured by dividing the total net homes delivered over the three year period by the total number of homes required over the 3-year period.

1.2 Where the latest adopted housing requirement is more than five years old, as is currently the case in Chorley, the figure used for the number of homes required is the annual local housing need figure calculated using the standard method for assessing local housing need formula, as published by MHCLG (known as the standard method).

1.3 The requirements of the HDT are set out in the NPPF and are as follows:

- Where the HDT falls below **95%**, the requirement is to publish an action plan.
- Where the HDT falls below **85%**, a 20% buffer must be applied to the authority's five year land supply.
- Where the HDT falls below **75%**, the presumption in favour of sustainable development must be applied.

1.4 The latest HDT is the 2023 measurement which was published in December 2024 and covers the financial years 2020/21, 2021/22 and 2022/23. The HDT 2023 measurement for Chorley is set out below.

Table 1: HDT 2023 Measurement

Monitoring Period	Total net homes delivered	Total number of homes required	Housing Delivery Test Measurement
2020/2021	286	379	-
2021/2022	228	537	-
2022/2023	312	542	-
TOTAL	**826**	**1,458**	**57%**

1.5 As the result is 57%, this Action Plan has been prepared as required by the HDT requirements set out in the NPPF. It sets out the reasons for the under delivery, and actions to improve the level of housing delivery in the future. In addition, a 20% buffer has been applied to the latest five year housing land supply calculation and the presumption in favour of sustainable development is being applied when determining planning applications.

1.6 Some of the delivery data used in the above calculation by the government is incorrect and differs from the data collected by the Council and provided to the government through the Housing Flows Reconciliation data return. The total completions recorded by the Council in the three year period is 843 dwellings rather than 826 dwellings. The HDT measurement should therefore be 58% but this does not impact on the HDT requirements. Should there be an error that results in the measurement for Chorley incorrectly falling below one of the requirements set out in the NPPF, the Council would notify MHCLG of this and request that the HDT is recalculated using the correct completion figures.

1.7 It should be noted that the government are currently operating to a delayed publication timetable for HDT. The original HDT Measurement Rule Book published in July 2018 stated that HDT results will be published annually in November each year covering the three preceding financial years, however this has not been the case in recent years. The latest published HDT measurement should therefore be the 2025 measurement covering the financial years 2022/23, 2023/24 and 2024/25. The government has acknowledged this and states that this is because of planning reforms and associated consultations. They are considering options for expediting future HDT collections, including the possibility of combining the data collections for the 2024 and 2025 HDTs.

1.8 The Council have calculated what the measurement would be for Chorley for the HDT 2024 and 2025 measurements, and until adoption of the Central Lancashire Local Plan the measurement will still be below 75% therefore the same requirements would apply.

2. Analysis of Housing Delivery

Adopted Housing Requirement

2.1 The Central Lancashire Core Strategy, adopted in July 2012, sets a minimum housing requirement for Chorley of 417 dwellings per year for the period 2010 to 2026. This gives a total of 6,672 dwellings over the plan period. At April 2010 Chorley had prior under provision of 162 dwellings, which also needs to be made up over the plan period. The total requirement is therefore 6,834 dwellings.

Introduction of the Standard Method

2.2 The standard method was introduced to the planning system in 2017 to calculate local housing need. As set out in the NPPF, local authorities are required to use standard method to calculate local housing need where the adopted housing requirement is more than five years old. The standard method calculation is updated each year using the latest data including affordability ratios.

2.3 The Core Strategy was adopted on 17th July 2012 in Chorley therefore standard method was required to be used to calculate local housing need from 17th July 2017 onwards. Table 4 sets out the housing requirement using standard method from April 2017 onwards.

2.4 The original methodology was based on 2014 household projections adjusted for affordability. The standard method does not take account of past over delivery, and the household projections used are based on a time when housing delivery was significantly high in Chorley. Therefore, the annual housing requirement for Chorley significantly increased under the standard method. For these reasons, since the introduction of the standard method, the Council has not been able to demonstrate a five year housing land supply.

2.5 The methodology was updated in December 2024, with the key change being the use of existing housing stock as a baseline rather than household projections and a different adjustment for affordability. The new formula still results in a significantly higher requirement than the Core Strategy requirement with the latest annual requirement being 558 dwellings.

Delivery against the Housing Requirement

2.6 The table below identifies housing completions each year of the plan period so far against the Core Strategy housing requirement and the standard method requirement from 2017 onwards.

Table 2: Annual Dwelling Completions (Net) Against Core Strategy and Standard Method Requirements, 2010 - 2024

Year	Net dwellings completed	Requirement	Surplus/deficit during the year
April 2010 – March 2011	527	579	-52
April 2011 – March 2012	552	417	135
April 2012 – March 2013	638	417	221
April 2013 – March 2014	582	417	165
April 2014 – March 2015	723	417	306
April 2015 – March 2016	597	417	180
April 2016 – March 2017	517	417	100
April 2017 – March 2018	661	494	167
April 2018 – March 2019	573	603	-30
April 2019 – March 2020	640	530	110
April 2020 – March 2021	306	379	-73
April 2021 – March 2022	228	537	-309
April 2022 – March 2023	309	542	-233
April 2023 – March 2024	291	505	-214
April 2024 – March 2025	383	506	-123
TOTAL	**7,527**	**7,177**	**350**

* 417 + 162 previous undersupply

2.7 The table shows that at the start of the plan period completions far exceeded the annual housing requirement. From 2020/21 onwards completions have fallen below the annual housing requirement. This is in line with the housing trajectory included in the Local Plan which projected that completions would exceed the requirement significantly in the early years of the plan period but decrease in the later years of the plan period. This was mainly due to the development of Buckshaw Village which is a strategic site in the Core Strategy, and other housing allocations coming forward earlier in the plan period.

2.8 The Council sought to control when the housing allocations in the Chorley Local Plan came forward under Policy HS2: Phasing of Housing Development to prevent the majority of the allocated sites coming forward in the earlier years of the plan period. However, the Local Plan Inspector did not accept the policy as worded and requested it

was modified to be indicative only. The Council therefore had no control over when the allocated sites came forward.

2.9 Overall, completions between 2010 and 2025 exceeded the housing requirement by 350 dwellings. If the standard method had not been introduced, completions would have exceeded the original Core Strategy requirement by 1,110 dwellings. Therefore, there has been over delivery over the plan period even with the introduction of the standard method which significantly increased the housing requirement in Chorley. However, this over delivery has not occurred in the three year period covered by the HDT 2023 measurement.

3. Reasons for the Under Delivery

3.1 As set out in the previous section, there has been over delivery over the plan period when comparing completions to both the Core Strategy housing requirement and standard method requirement.

3.2 However, when looking solely at the three year period covered by the HDT 2023, there has been under delivery against the standard method requirement.

3.3 There are not considered to be any specific market factors that have led to housing delivery in the borough slowing down in recent years. As stated in the previous section, delivery has been in line with the adopted Chorley Local Plan housing trajectory which predicted significantly higher completions in the earlier years of the plan period, with delivery decreasing in the later years of the plan period.

3.4 The majority of housing allocations came forward earlier in the plan period and the strategic site at Buckshaw Village also largely came forward in the earlier years of the plan period.

3.5 The reason for under delivery in the three year period covered by the HDT 2023 is therefore purely due to the majority of housing allocations being completed earlier in the plan period and there being a lack of additional available and suitable sites towards the end of the plan period.

4. Actions to Prevent Further Under Delivery

Adoption of the Central Lancashire Local Plan

4.1 The Central Lancashire Local Plan (CLLP) has been under preparation since 2018. It covers the local authority areas of Chorley, Preston and South Ribble and will replace the Central Lancashire Core Strategy and each authority's Local Plan when adopted. The CLLP was submitted for examination in June 2025 and is expected to be adopted by the end of 2026.

4.2 Policy HS1 sets out the housing requirement for Central Lancashire, based on the recommended scenario in the Central Lancashire Housing Study. The overall requirement has been distributed across Central Lancashire in accordance with the spatial strategy.

4.3 The proposed annual housing requirement for Chorley is 334 dwellings, but this is stepped over the plan period to take account of lower expected housing delivery in the earlier years of the plan. For the first three years of the plan period (1st April 2023 to 31st March 2026) the annual requirement is 280 dwellings, increasing to 345 dwellings per annum for the remainder of the plan period.

4.4 Policies HS2 and EC5 allocate housing and mixed use sites in Chorley to meet this requirement. All sites have been subject to detailed assessment though the Strategic Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment (SHELAA) and only sites that are considered suitable, available and achievable are proposed for allocation. In addition to the allocations, there are existing commitments and a windfall allowance that contribute to the housing supply over the plan period.

4.5 As identified in the housing trajectory for Chorley in Appendix 3 of the CLLP, sufficient land is available to meet the housing requirement for Chorley over the plan period.

4.6 Upon adoption of the CLLP, Chorley will therefore have a sufficient supply of housing to meet the requirement.

HDT Result Following Adoption of the CLLP

4.7 As identified in the Local Development Scheme (LDS), the CLLP is expected to be adopted by December 2026. The latest published HDT at this time should be the HDT 2026 measurement that will cover the financial years 2023/24, 2024/25 and 2025/26.

4.8 However, if the CLLP is adopted earlier than anticipated or if the government is still operating to a delayed timetable for HDT, the latest published HDT may be the HDT 2025 measurement covering the financial years 2022/23, 2023/24 and 2024/25.

4.9 The HDT Measurement Rule Book states that any new housing requirement will be used for the calculation of HDT from the date it becomes part of the development plan. It also states for the purposes of calculating the HDT, the new adopted housing requirement will apply from the start of the relevant plan period. The Rule Book confirms that following adoption of the new strategic policies, the new housing requirement figure can be used to recalculate the HDT results during the year in collaboration with MHCLG.

4.10 This means that upon adoption of the CLLP, the housing requirement in the CLLP can be used in the latest HDT calculation and the Council can recalculate the HDT result using the adopted housing requirement from 1st April 2023 as that is the start date of the plan period.

4.11 The table below identifies what the HDT 2025 measurement will be upon adoption of the CLLP. Completions for all years are already known. The result will be 89% therefore an action plan will be required, but the other requirements will no longer apply.

Table 3: HDT 2025 Measurement

Monitoring Period	Total net homes delivered	Total number of homes required	Housing Delivery Test Measurement
2022/2023	309	542	-
2023/2024	291	280	-
2024/2025	383	280	-
TOTAL	**983**	**1,102**	**89%**

4.12 The table below identifies what the HDT 2026 measurement will likely be upon adoption of the CLLP. Completions for 2023/24 and 2024/25 are already known however for 2025/26 the estimated completion figure is taken from the CLLP housing trajectory. The result is predicted to be 134% therefore the HDT has been exceeded, and no action will be needed.

Table 4: Estimated HDT 2026 Measurement

Monitoring Period	Total net homes delivered	Total number of homes required	Housing Delivery Test Measurement
2023/2024	291	280	-
2024/2025	383	280	-
2025/2026	448	280	
TOTAL	**1,122**	**840**	**134%**

Monitoring and Engagement with Developers

4.13 The Council have re-introduced a pre-application advice service which enables applicants/developers to enter into early discussions regarding the acceptability of proposals. The service also helps to ensure a better understanding of planning issues and the requirements of any subsequent planning applications. This increases the efficiency and effectiveness of the planning application system and can lead to more successful applications, therefore helping to increase development.

4.14 As part of annual housing monitoring and five year housing land supply work, the Council engages with developers to obtain up to date information on development timescales and identify if there are any barriers to the development. This will continue upon adoption of the CLLP. If barriers are identified, the Council can hold discussions with the developer to seek to address any issues and enable development to progress.

5. Summary

5.1 The HDT 2023 measurement identifies under delivery in Chorley for the years 2020/21, 2021/22 and 2022/23 therefore this Action Plan has been prepared in accordance with the requirements in the NPPF.

5.2 Over the Local Plan period as a whole there has been over delivery of housing against the requirement, but the majority of allocations came forward earlier in the plan period which has resulted in lower completions in the later years of the plan period.

5.3 The Central Lancashire Local Plan (CLLP) has been submitted to the Planning Inspectorate for examination and is expected to be adopted by the end of 2026. It identifies a sufficient supply of housing to meet the housing requirement.

5.4 Upon adoption of the CLLP the Council can use the adopted housing requirement in the HDT calculation from the start of the plan period which is 1st April 2023. It is estimated that the HDT 2026 measurement, which should be the latest published HDT at the point of adoption of the CLLP, will be 134% therefore there will no longer be under delivery of housing.