

## Appendix 1 – Overview and statistical profile of the borough

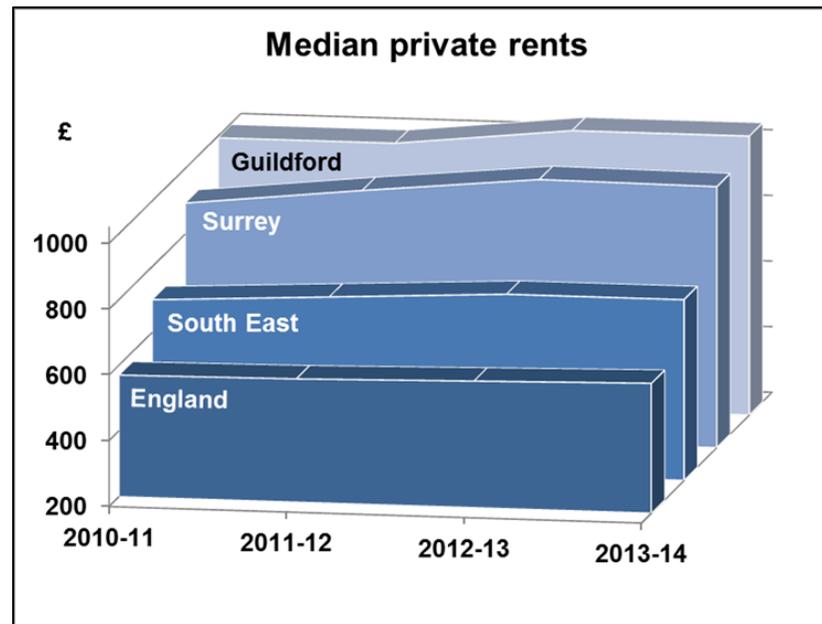
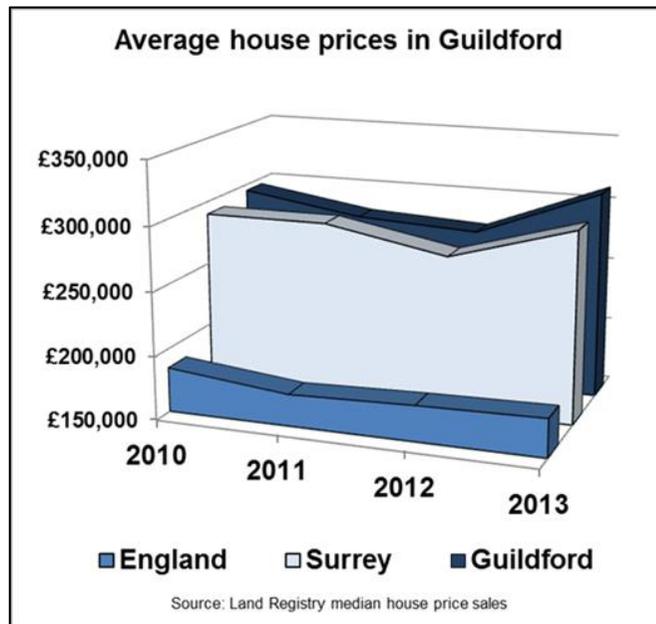
### Overview of the borough

Guildford is the second highest populated district in Surrey with 141,000 residents in 2013. Current estimates suggest this may rise past 150,000 during the lifetime of this strategy. The major urban areas are located in the town centre of Guildford and on the western fringes of the borough on the outskirts of Aldershot town. It is also the second largest borough in the county, covering approximately 270 square kilometres (104 square miles) of which 89 per cent is land designated as Green Belt.

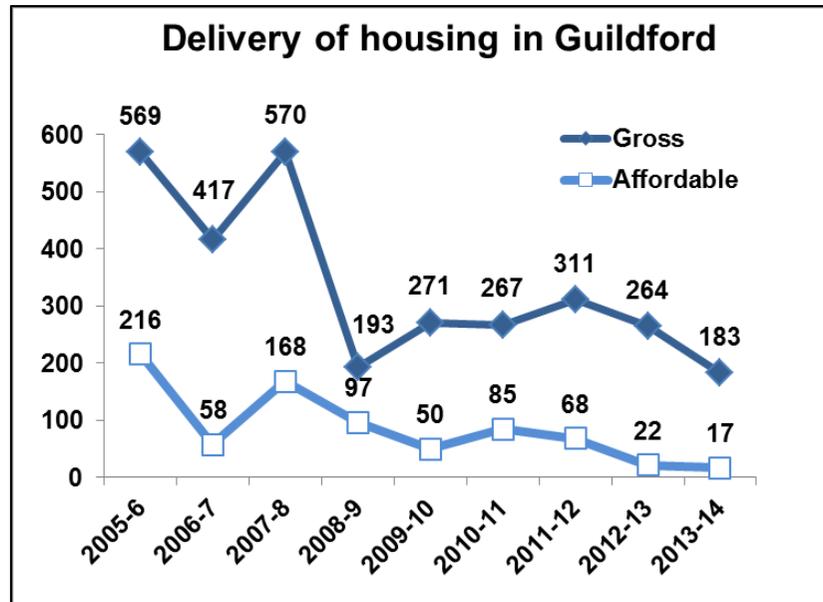
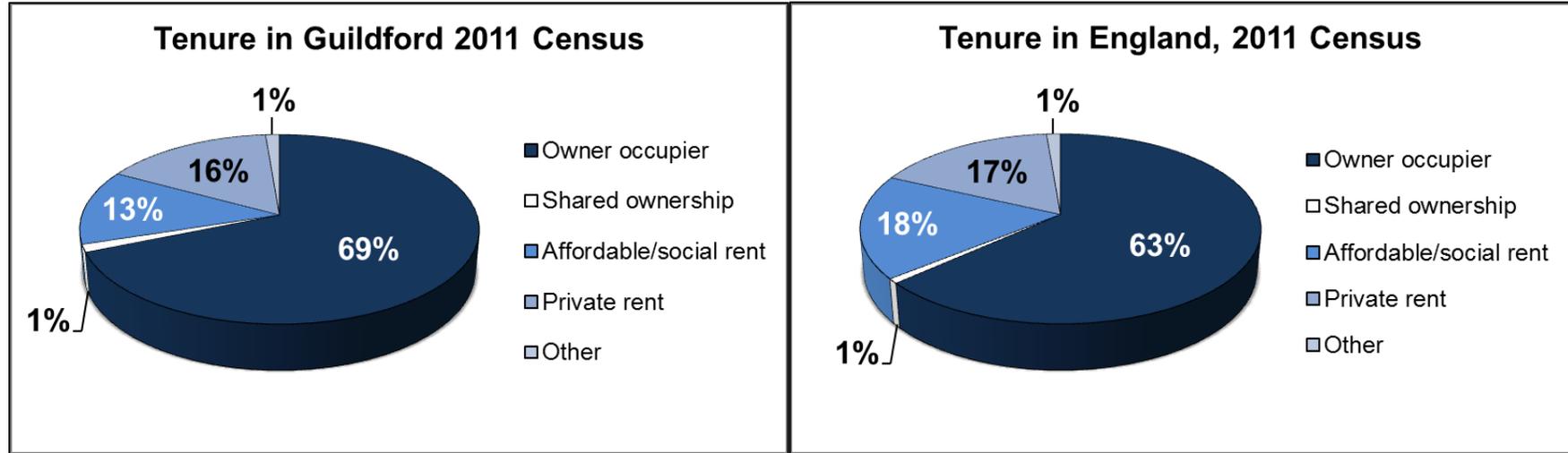
The need for new housing development and associated infrastructure is a particularly sensitive issue for local people, with preservation of the high quality natural landscape, including the green belt, being a high priority.

The high cost of housing in Guildford is apparent in both the owner-occupied and private rented sectors.

In 2013, house prices were almost 74 per cent above the average for England and well above the average for the South East.



There is an ongoing shortage of affordable housing, particularly for first time buyers and a shortage of suitable accommodation for people wishing to downsize.



Guildford is mostly an affluent area with relatively low unemployment and low levels of crime and most residents enjoy a well above average life expectancy. The workforce is generally well educated and highly skilled. The town centre is a focus for major commercial and administrative functions and is a principal regional shopping destination.

The number of jobs in the borough continues to grow. The number of jobs available in the borough reached 71,700 in 2012 across a wide range of industry sectors. The level of unemployment in the borough, at 4.7 per cent in 2012, is well below the national average of 7.9 per cent. Guildford does have a skills shortage in some sectors, coupled with many workers being unable to afford homes close to work. This creates additional pressure to make sure that adequate provision is made for housing.

Despite the general prosperity, there are pockets of deprivation. There are concentrations of people on low incomes, particularly in Westborough, part of which is in the most deprived national quartile and is the fourth most deprived area in Surrey. Other areas that are amongst the most deprived in the county are located in Stoke, Ash Wharf, Friary and St Nicolas and Worplesdon. The impact of such relative deprivation is exacerbated in an affluent area such as Guildford. For example, high housing costs mean that access to affordable housing is a major challenge for many.

The Guildford Borough community is not very ethnically diverse. 91 per cent of residents described themselves as white in the 2011 Census. This proportion has fallen around 3 per cent since 2006 but is still higher than for Surrey (90 per cent) and England (85 per cent). Guildford has the third highest level among Surrey authorities of citizens who have arrived in the U.K since 2001 and ranks second highest for those born in EU accession states. There is an identified demand for social housing from some of these workers as many are in low paid employment, but the ethnic profile of those allocated social housing correlates closely to the general population. In 2013, 94 per cent of those housed were in combined white groups.

## **Evidence of Need**

### **Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA)**

The SHMA is an assessment of peoples' housing needs within the borough based on statistical evidence and it provides the Council with an objectively assessed measure of housing need. The previous SHMA was completed in 2009 but the Local Plan required a new SHMA to ensure that the Plan is based on up-to-date and robust information. The SHMA informs the calculation of the number of new houses needed for the lifetime of the Local Plan.

The 2009 SHMA covered three boroughs considered to constitute a housing market area, Guildford, Waverley and Woking. In 2013, Guildford commissioned its own SHMA, which has been published in draft form. Then in March 2014 the three boroughs commissioned a further joint SHMA building on the existing Guildford and Waverley assessments with a new one for Woking. This is expected to be published soon, and will provide a valuable view across the whole housing market area.

The purpose of the SHMA is to develop a robust understanding of housing market dynamics, to provide an assessment of future needs for both market and affordable housing and the housing requirements of different groups within the population. The SHMA itself does not set housing targets. It makes no judgements regarding future policy decisions that the Councils may take. The housing figure in the Guildford Local Plan is informed by the SHMAs but will also take into account factors such as local infrastructure capacity, housing land availability, viability, sustainability and the local ecology.

The draft Guildford SHMA finds that the objectively assessed housing need is for 650 and 780 homes per year. This reflects the affordability issues in Guildford coupled with the high level of affordable need. As the Local Plan progresses the aim is to balance this need with the level of housing growth that can be sustainably accommodated.

The draft Guildford SHMA can be viewed at <http://www.guildford.gov.uk/shma>

### Employment levels and income

The SHMA data shows that employment levels in Guildford for the 16 to 64 age group are at 78 per cent, which is slightly above the pre-recession level.

The SHMA also highlights the fact that people working in the borough earn nearly £4,000 less per annum on average than people residing in the borough – this is as we would expect because those living in the borough and working elsewhere are often London commuters with higher salaries.

|            | Median    |          | Lower quartile |          |
|------------|-----------|----------|----------------|----------|
|            | Workplace | Resident | Workplace      | Resident |
| Guildford  | £31,883   | £35,365  | £23,367        | £23,939  |
| Waverley   | £26,252   | £36,770  | £20,000        | £22,544  |
| Woking     | £25,159   | £32,827  | £17,616        | £22,225  |
| Surrey     | £31,473   | £34,595  | £21,785        | £23,515  |
| South East | £28,181   | £29,491  | £20,010        | £20,654  |

Source: NOMIS/Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings 2012

### Housing Needs Survey

Guildford Borough Council conducted a major housing needs survey (HNS) in December 2012, working with a research company, asking residents from every ward in the borough about all aspects of their housing situation. Over 1000 households were interviewed capturing data

on affordability, household composition, newly forming households and support needs. The previous HNS in 2007 was as part of the Strategic Housing Market Assessment work in 2009. The 2012 HNS was considered as part of the evidence base for the new Guildford SHMA

[http://www.guildford.gov.uk/media/15205/Housing-Needs-Assessment-Report/pdf/Housing\\_Needs\\_Assessment\\_Report.pdf](http://www.guildford.gov.uk/media/15205/Housing-Needs-Assessment-Report/pdf/Housing_Needs_Assessment_Report.pdf)

Some of the findings from the survey are summarised below.

### Support Needs

14 per cent of respondents said that someone within the household had support needs. Seven per cent needed support with a physical disability and seven per cent with a medical condition, including two per cent who had mental health problems.

### Housing costs

94 per cent of those who owned their home reported that their housing costs were less than 40 per cent of income. By contrast, 56 per cent of those renting reported that their housing costs *exceeded* 40 per cent of income.

### Bedrooms required

With over-crowding and under-occupation both increasingly important issues, the survey looked at the number of bedrooms in respondents' properties and compared this with the number required, calculated from our allocations policy according to household size.

One fifth of respondents had the exact number of bedrooms to accommodate the residents in their household.

More than three-fifths who only needed one bedroom were living in a three or four bedroomed property.

Unsurprisingly, under-occupation was most common amongst home owners (79 per cent of those with a mortgage, and 91 per cent of those who own outright). In social housing, the survey showed a higher level of under-occupation in our own stock than in housing association stock (68 per cent of respondents as opposed to 20 per cent in HA stock). This is what we would expect because the age profile of our tenants is different to that of HA tenants – our tenants include a large number of elderly people who have been in Council homes for a long time.

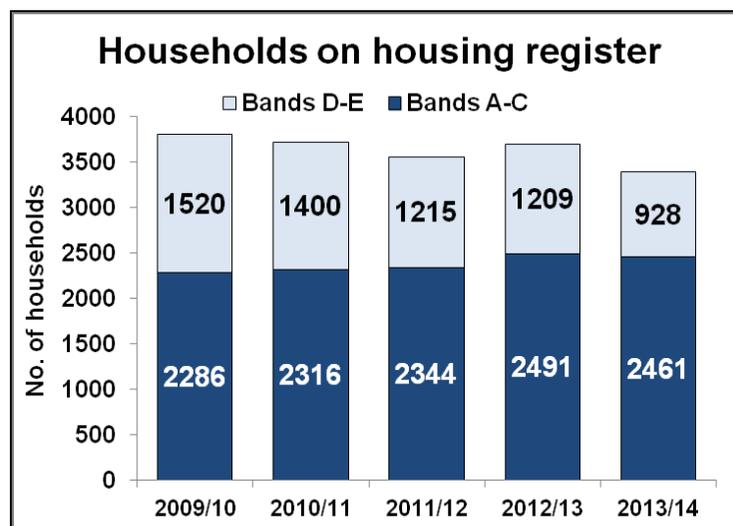
Only two per cent of households were categorised as overcrowded according to the allocations policy. However closer to 10 per cent considered themselves to be overcrowded.

### Condition of housing

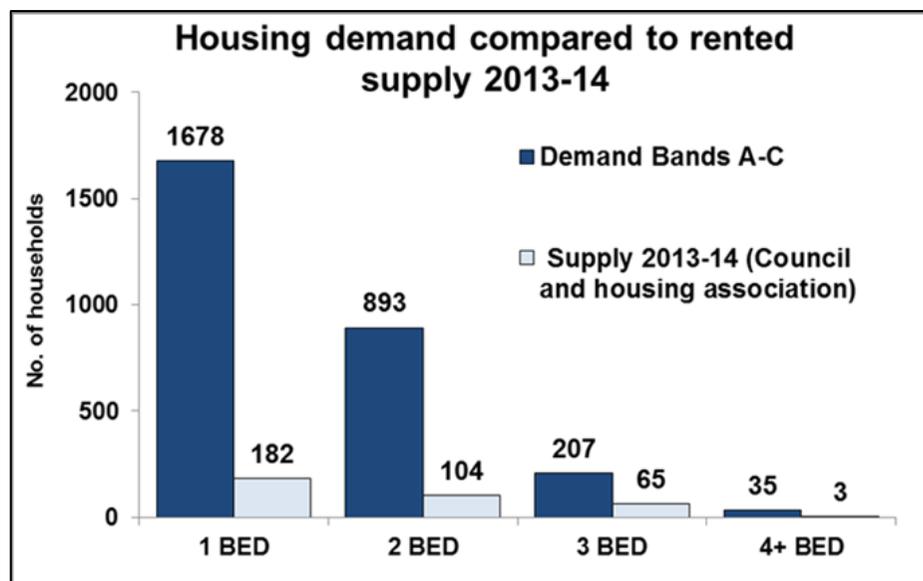
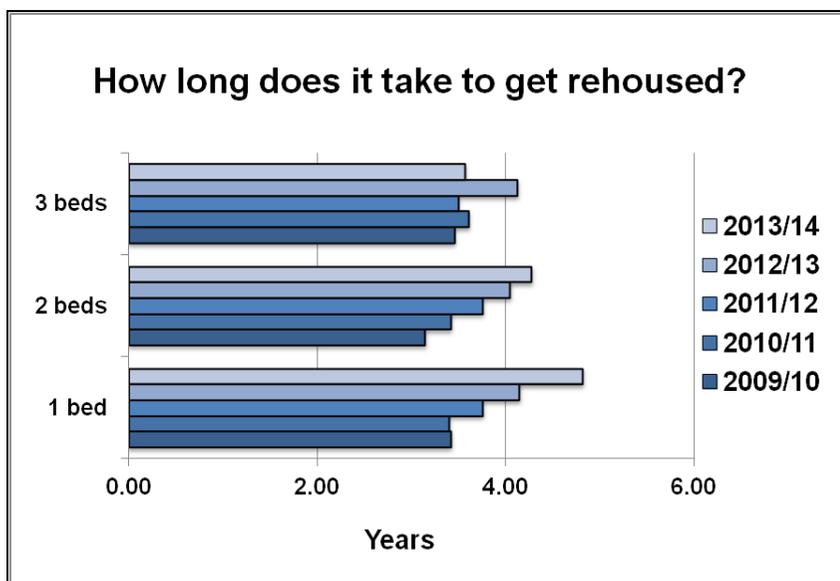
Although only 1 per cent of those surveyed considered their home to be in disrepair or lacking in basic facilities, a significant proportion of those with support needs considered that their home was in need of improvement to better meet those needs.

### The Housing Register

There were 3,389 households on the housing register in Guildford on 1 April 2014 of which 2,461 were in Bands A-C, which are classed as 'reasonable preference' bands where applicants are likely to be allocated social housing. In Bands A-C households have a substantive local connection with the Borough through residence, employment or family connections. The graph below shows the change in the number of households on the housing register since 2009.



The number of households on the housing register has remained consistently between 3600-3800 apart from a large drop in Band D-E applicants in 2013/14. This was largely due to a policy change whereby reminders to renew applications were no longer sent to these applicants. Further changes to the allocations scheme in August 2014 have tightened requirements to have a long and substantial local connection to Guildford. There are also changes to requirements on tenant behaviour, housing debt and limits to income/savings for those permitted on the register. These changes may affect the total number on the register, but the pressure on social housing from those in housing need and with a strong local connection remains very high.



With only around 400 vacancies in the social housing stock per year, applicants must look at all options when considering their housing situation.

#### Enterprise M3 Local Economic Partnership (LEP)

Guildford is part of the Enterprise M3 Local Economic Partnership (LEP) and in its Strategic Economic Plan, Enterprise M3 recognises the link between housing and the economy and seeks to accelerate the delivery of new homes by up to 25 per cent over the next 10 years.

#### Regeneris housing study

Enterprise M3 recently engaged Regeneris to undertake a housing study across the LEP geography. The study identified Guildford, Elmbridge and Runnymede, as being the least affordable locations in the LEP area. It also put a strong case for increased delivery of new housing, both private and affordable, and identified several benefits that this would deliver; the most significant being the economic benefit of supporting labour mobility and recruitment.

The LEP's Proposal to the Local Growth Fund resulted in significant investment to the area, and in July 2014, the Government agreed a growth deal, which includes the 5G Arrow Project, securing the area's world leading position as a centre of excellence in 5G technologies and research, with the 5G headquarters to be located at the Research Park in Guildford.

For further statistics on homelessness, please view the Homelessness Strategy and its statistical appendix at:

[http://www.guildford.gov.uk/media/18011/Item-6---Homelessness-Strategy-Annual-Review/pdf/Item\\_6\\_-\\_Homelessness\\_Strategy\\_Annual\\_Review.pdf](http://www.guildford.gov.uk/media/18011/Item-6---Homelessness-Strategy-Annual-Review/pdf/Item_6_-_Homelessness_Strategy_Annual_Review.pdf)

[http://www.guildford.gov.uk/media/18012/Item-61---Homelessness-Strategy-Annual-Review-Appendix-1---action-plan-progress/pdf/Item\\_6\(1\)\\_-Homelessness\\_Strategy\\_Annual\\_Review\\_Appendix\\_1\\_-\\_action\\_plan\\_progress.pdf](http://www.guildford.gov.uk/media/18012/Item-61---Homelessness-Strategy-Annual-Review-Appendix-1---action-plan-progress/pdf/Item_6(1)_-Homelessness_Strategy_Annual_Review_Appendix_1_-_action_plan_progress.pdf)