

# Housing Delivery Test 2023

## Position Statement

January 2025

## Introduction

The Housing Delivery Test (HDT) was introduced by the UK Government in 2018 to determine which local authorities have been able to meet their housing requirement and which have not, based on an assessment of net homes delivered against the homes required over the three previous financial years.

Where housing requirements have not been met, the Local Authority is required to take steps to increase housing delivery:

- Where less than 95% of housing requirements have been met, an action plan is required.
- Where less than 85% has been met a 20% buffer is applied when calculating the 5 year housing supply.
- When less than 75% has been met the presumption in favour of sustainable development applies.

This statement confirms Watford Borough Council's 2023 Housing Delivery Test position as being **97%** and the Council is subject to **no sanctions**.

## Publication of the results

The most recent Housing Delivery Test results were published by Ministry for Housing Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) on 12<sup>th</sup> December accounting for the financial years 2020/21 to 2022/23. These results provided an incorrect measurement for Watford, reporting the Council's Housing Delivery Test result as 121%.

The Council identified this error and contacted MHCLG to query the result and the Council received formal notification that an error had been made on 15<sup>th</sup> January 2025. To calculate Watford's HDT percentage, the Government had used the Council's 2013 Local Plan housing requirement rather than the most recent housing requirement figure published in the 2022 Local Plan.

This formal letter set out a revised calculation which showed that the borough **achieved a score of 97%** during the most recent HDT period 2021-2023 and not 121%. This means that although the revised score reduces the percentage score relative to the incorrect figure that was published in December, it does not change the fact that **no sanctions apply**, and the Council has moved out of the presumption.

This is a significant improvement compared to previous years. In 2020, Watford’s result was 48%, and 73% in 2022.

MHCLG requested that the Council publish this revised position, and their formal letter is appended to this statement.

### Watford Borough Council final 2023 Housing Delivery Test position

The NPPF (2024) sets out that the annual publication of the HDT results supersede previously published results from the day following their publication. This position remains up to date until a revised result is published.

The results in Table 1 confirm Watford’s final position as informed by the Government’s corrected figure in the letter received by the Council on the 15<sup>th</sup> January 2025.

Table 1: Final Watford Housing Delivery Test results 2023

Number of homes required			Total number of homes required	Number of homes delivered			Total number of homes delivered	Housing Delivery Test: 2023 measurement	Housing Delivery Test: 2023 consequence
2020-21	2021-22	2022-23		2020-21	2021-22	2022-23			
524	784	781	2089	496	763	772	2031	97%	None

**For the avoidance of any doubt, the above result formally supersedes the figure that was published by MHCLG on 12<sup>th</sup> December 2024.**



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15/01/2025

**Letter from MHCLG following change of homes required figure for purposes of HDT**

You brought to our attention that the Local Housing Need figure that we used to calculate your 2023 Housing Delivery Test score was incorrect. We have produced a revised score with the corrected LHN figure. We are therefore able to confirm that Watford Borough Council's revised 2023 measurement is as follows:

Number of homes required			Total number of homes required	Number of homes delivered			Total number of homes delivered	Housing Delivery Test: 2023 measurement	Housing Delivery Test: 2023 consequence
2020 -21	2021 -22	2022 -23	2089	2020 -21	2021 -22	2022 -23	2031	97%	None
524	784	781		496	763	772			

For the avoidance of doubt, this letter supersedes the measurement for your local authority area which was published on 12 December 2024. To provide clarity, you should publish this on your website.

The revised Housing Delivery Test measurement for Watford Borough Council takes effect upon receipt of this letter, as will any consequences that apply as a result of the measurement.

The consequence shown above will remain in place until the next full publication of the Housing Delivery Test measurement.

Kind regards,

Planning Policy Team  
Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government