

# Monitoring

## Is the strategy delivering?

West Midlands Spatial Strategy



A guide for Local Planning Authorities on the aims and procedures of monitoring in the region.

### Where can I get more information?

Should you have any questions or require more information about the monitoring of LDFs and the RSS in the West Midlands please do not hesitate to contact

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**West Midlands**  
**Regional Assembly**  
Speaking out for the region

## Is this Guide for you?

This Guide is intended to assist all those involved or interested in the monitoring of Local Development Frameworks (LDFs) or the West Midlands Spatial Strategy (WMSS).

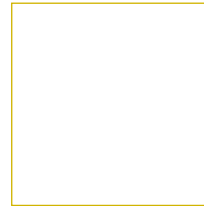
## Why do we need to monitor?

Monitoring is a key part of the Government's new planning system. Through addressing questions like

- are policies achieving their objectives?
- have policies had unintended consequences?
- are the assumptions and objectives behind policies still relevant?
- are the targets being achieved?

monitoring will help to underpin the assessment of current and development of future planning policies at Local, Sub-regional and Regional levels.

In short, without monitoring, we will not know whether the policies in WMSS or the LDFs are working or where the outputs and outcomes might suggest a review of policy is required.



## What is the legislative background to monitoring?

The Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 set out the roles of the different parts of the planning system. It strengthened the role of regional planning, replacing Regional Planning Guidance with **statutory** Regional Spatial Strategies (RSSs) and replaced local plans with Local Development Frameworks (LDFs).

Recent Planning Policy Statements (PPS11: Regional Spatial Strategies; and PPS12: Local Development Frameworks) set out the Government's policy on these topics. Both stress the need for monitoring demanding a regular and systematic approach proposing that appropriate output targets and indicators must be set out within both the RSS and LDFs. The role and profile of monitoring is further strengthened by two Statutory Instruments associated with the new Planning Act (Local Development 2004/2204; Regional Planning 2004/2203). These require the preparation of an Annual Monitoring Report (AMR) and indicate required coverage.

## When are Annual Monitoring Reports required?

There are strict timing requirements for the preparation of AMRs with the period prescribed being the period of twelve months commencing 1st April in each year and ending on 31st March the following year. The time permitted for preparation and submission of the AMR is 9 months

(LDF) and 11 months (RSS). In practice this means that in respect of each year's data:

- An AMR for each LDF has to be submitted to GOWM by the end of December. Whilst an AMR will be required in December 2005 ODPM accept that individual authorities may experience difficulties in preparing a full report this year.
- The AMR for the WMSS has already entered the cycle of being submitted to GOWM by 28th February each year.

## What indicators are used?

A monitoring framework was agreed for WMSS when it was approved in June 2004. In parallel and subsequent to the development of the WMSS monitoring framework ODPM has put together complementary lists of core output indicators for the monitoring of RSS and LDFs. These are detailed in the LDF Monitoring Good Practice Guide (published by ODPM on 28/02/05) and the forthcoming RSS equivalent. It is intended that over the next year or so the minor differences between these and the WMSS monitoring framework will be ironed out.

The following table summarises the range of indicators that appear in the Statutory Instruments and the Good Practice Guides. It is intended to highlight the very high crossover of requirement between Local and Regional level monitoring although for a full understanding of the detail reference should be made to the source documents.

Description of Requirement or Indicator	LDF	RSS
<b>Statutory Requirement</b>		
Summary of progress towards LDF preparation	✓	✗
Where a policy is not being implemented an account of why, intended action and arising review implications	✓	✓
Dwellings built	✓	✓
<b>Contextual Indicators</b>		
✓	✓	
Suggested issues for coverage:		
• Demographic structure		
• Socio-cultural issues		
• Economy		
• Environment		
• Housing and built environment		
• Transport and spatial connectivity		
<b>Core Output Indicators</b>		
<b>BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT</b>		
1a Amount of land developed for employment by type.	✓	✓
1b Amount of land developed for employment, by type, which is in development and/or regeneration areas defined in the LDF/RSS.	✓	✓
1c Percentage of 1a, by type, which is on previously developed land (& by LA area for RSS)	✓	✓
1d Employment land supply by type. (& by LA area for RSS)	✓	✓
1e Losses of employment land in (i) development/regeneration areas and (ii) local authority area.	✓	✓
1f Amount of employment land lost to residential development.	✓	✗
<b>HOUSING</b>		
2a Housing trajectory showing:		
(i) net additional dwellings over the previous five year period or since the start of the relevant development plan document period, whichever is the longer;	✓	✓
(ii) net additional dwellings for the current year;	✓	✓
(iii) projected net additional dwellings up to the end of the relevant development plan document period or over a ten year period from its adoption (LDF) / publication (RSS), whichever is the longer;	✓	✓
(iv) the annual net additional dwelling requirement; and	✓	✓
(v) annual average number of net additional dwellings needed to meet overall housing requirements, having regard to previous years' performances.	✓	✓
2b Percentage of new and converted dwellings on previously developed land.	✓	✓
2c Percentage of new dwellings completed at: (& by LA area for RSS)		
(i) less than 30 dwellings per hectare;	✓	✓
(ii) between 30 and 50 dwellings per hectare; and	✓	✓
(iii) Above 50 dwellings per hectare.	✓	✓
2d Affordable housing completions. (& by LA area for RSS)	✓	✓
<b>TRANSPORT</b>		
3a Percentage of completed non-residential development complying with car-parking standards set out in the LDF / RTS local development framework. : (& by LA area for RSS)	✓	✓
3b Percentage of new residential development within 30 minutes public transport time of a GP hospital, primary and secondary school, employment and a major health centre.	✓	✗
<b>LOCAL SERVICES / REGIONAL SERVICES</b>		
4a Amount of completed retail, office and leisure development. : (& by LA area for RSS)	✓	✓
4b Percentage of completed retail, office and leisure development in town centres.	✓	✓
4c Percentage of eligible open spaces managed to green flag award standard	✓	✗
<b>MINERALS (for minerals planning authority only)</b>		
5a Production of primary land won aggregates. (& by MPA for RSS)	✓	✓
5b Production of secondary/recycled aggregates. (& by MPA for RSS)	✓	✓

Description of Requirement or Indicator	LDF	RSS
<b>WASTE (for waste planning authority only)</b>		
6a Capacity of new waste management facilities by type. (& by MPA for RSS)	✓	✓
6b Amount of municipal waste arising, and managed by management type, and the percentage each management type represents of the waste managed. (& by MPA for RSS)	✓	✓
<b>FLOOD PROTECTION AND WATER QUALITY</b>		
7. Number of planning permissions granted contrary to the advice of the Environment Agency on either flood defence grounds or water quality.	✓	✓
<b>BIODIVERSITY</b>		
8. Change in areas and populations of biodiversity importance, including: (i) change in priority habitats and species (by type); and (ii) change in areas designated for their intrinsic environmental value including sites of international, national, regional or sub-regional significance.	✓	✓
<b>RENEWABLE ENERGY</b>		
9. Renewable energy capacity installed by type. (& by LA area for RSS)	✓	✓

### Will there be changes to the West Midlands Monitoring tradition?

Our Region has a tradition of successful working through informal mechanisms. Annual monitoring reports on housing and employment have been produced for the West Midlands since the mid 1970s. The Region, as required by the Secretary of State, is now actively moving

towards reports which relate the indicators to policies and identify where policies are not working and where change is required.

However, these requirements which are being placed on both Local Authorities and West Midlands Regional Assembly will place

considerable demands on existing resources. The chart below illustrates the sort of timetable a typical Local Authority might have to employ to achieve the necessary data collection/reporting/political clearance round necessary for a end-of-December submission to GOWM

### Possible LDF AMR Timetable - for illustrative purposes.

	Feb	March	April	May	June	July	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
WMRA Data Formats Consultation	##	##									
Finalise Regional Data Formats		#									
Local Data Collection		##	####	##							
Local Processing			#	###	#						
Submit to wRADAR/WMRA						##					
Local Analysis (inc wRADAR)				##	#####	###					
Internal Consultation					#####						
Drafting/Internal circulation						###					
Draft Local AMR							####				
WMRA Sub-regional consultation								####			
Final Draft Local AMR								#	#		
Senior Management Team									#		
Corporate Directors										#	
CAPS (Corp Directors prep for CABINET)											#
CABINET											#
Publish Local AMR											#

Source : Borough of Telford and Wrekin

The land use monitoring system will need to become slicker if the tight deadlines the monitoring community are increasingly working to are to be met. This additionally has implications for the deployment of existing resources within individual Local Authorities as well as the utilisation of PDG for monitoring purposes by District Authorities. To supplement these activities and potential changes in working patterns other sources of monitoring information will need to be investigated and developed to supplement the land use information, particularly in the fields of environment and transport monitoring.

### How does the land use monitoring system work?

Annual surveys are undertaken by District and Unitary Authorities and are coordinated by Worcestershire County Council (Residential Land) and Mott MacDonald (Employment Land, Offices, Retail, Leisure, Derelict Land and Green Belt) on behalf of the Region.

These surveys use planning and building control records together with local knowledge to build the information. Details of the location and characteristics of completions and commitments are monitored. Then according to local arrangements, which in the Shires typically involve the County Council, the data is

forwarded to the coordinating organisation which then puts the data into a standard format for use by the regional body.

### Who are the main players?

In common with other areas of West Midlands Regional Assembly activity, a decentralised approach has been adopted in order to maximise the bank of knowledge and expertise around the Region. Accordingly, a number of organisations contribute to the monitoring approach. These organisations and their roles are summarised in the table below:

### Roles of organisations involved in monitoring in the West Midlands.

<b>District Councils and Unitary Authorities</b>	Collect the monitoring data primarily from planning applications, building regulation approvals and Council Tax records. Will be required to produce LDF AMR.
<b>County Authorities</b>	Play a co-ordinating role in checking data meets the requirements. According to local arrangements may contribute to LDF AMR production.
<b>West Midlands Regional Assembly (Regional Planning Body)</b>	Plays a lead role in deciding what information is required for monitoring RSS and uses the data to produce the Annual Monitoring Report as required by Government. Provides overall coordination.
<b>Staffordshire County Council</b>	Acts as Policy Lead for the Regional Assembly on Monitoring issues
<b>Worcestershire County and Birmingham City Councils</b>	Play lead roles in monitoring of Residential Land (Worcestershire) and Employment Land (Birmingham) and produce the PMM and RELs reports used for monitoring these topics.
<b>Mott Macdonald, Birmingham</b>	A consultant with a Service Level Agreement to collect and co-ordinate much of the data provision. Responsible for the development and maintenance of wRADAR.



## What Happens to the information?

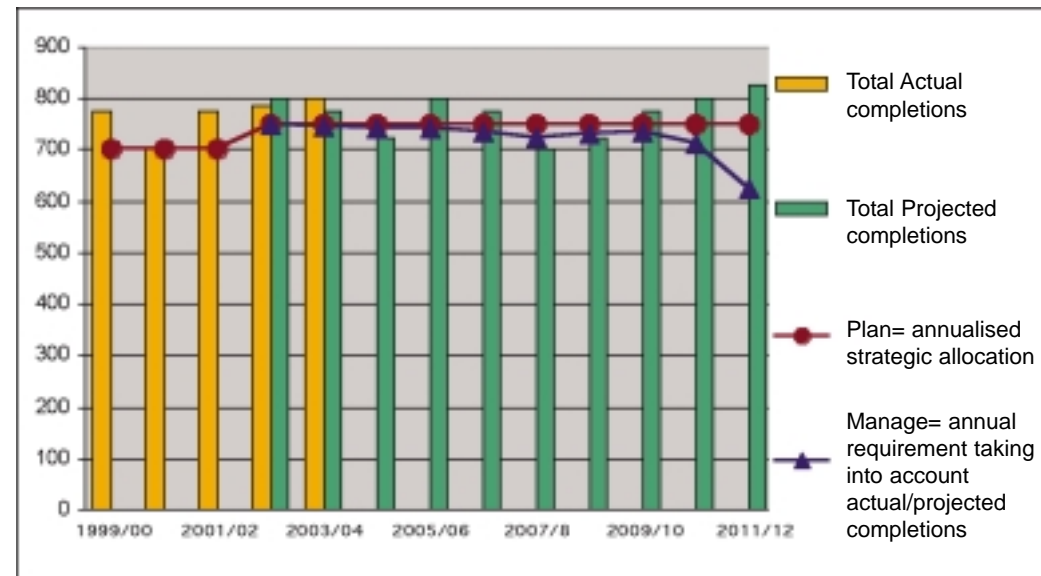
The information from the land use surveys is used by the Regional Planning Body to monitor the Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS). In addition to monitoring of the strategy as a whole, the housing information provides the major input into monitoring the Communities of the Future policies and employment

information into Prosperity For All policies. The monitoring information provides the basis for the annual Plan, Monitor and Manage and Regional Employment Land Survey reports, together with the overall AMR required by Government. It is the intention that the housing information will also become a part of the monitoring of

the Regional Housing Strategy as part of the shared evidence base.

Other data sources are used in the Monitoring Reports. In particular information from partner organisations is widely used for environmental and transport monitoring.

### Housing Trajectory figure

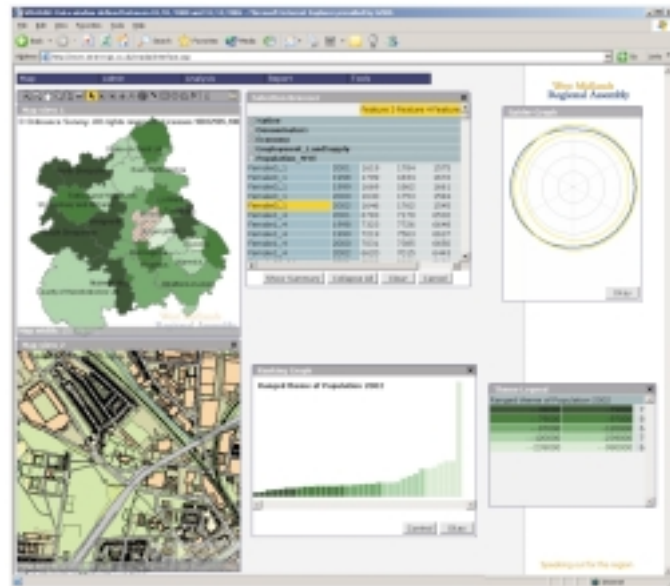


## What is the role of wRADAR ?

West Midland Regional Assembly Data Analysis Resource (wRADAR) is the Regional Assembly's GIS system designed to support planning and monitoring in the West Midlands. It is a password protected web-enabled GIS designed to run from a conventional PC connected to the internet. It has no additional user-end software requirements.

As well as having the capability of showing spatially all the completions and commitments within the land use monitoring system it is also able to produce standard tables showing the indicators required. The system is also being additionally populated with a range of other contextual datasets.

Districts will be able to use it to monitor their own LDFs as well as examining data from other authorities. The RPB will be able to use it to monitor the RSS.



## What do we need to make monitoring work well?

- Commitment at all levels to making the system work effectively
- Commitment to data accuracy and appropriate timing
- Good systems to manage data. A common approach to avoid duplication and improve compatibility - one system for both the LDFs and the RSS
- Good planning to ensure we get out of the system all that we need.

## What are the challenges?

Some of the challenges we all need to be considering:

- How can data collection be made more efficient?
- How can we make sure that one set of information is used to monitor all the levels of planning (LDFs, sub-regional strategies and RSS)
- How can computer systems be improved to make data quickly transferable?
- What changes are needed to make sure deadlines are met?
- What is the best way of presenting the output and feeding it back for the partial review of RSS?
- How can sufficient resources be made available to address the monitoring demands of the new planning system.

## Way Forward

We have a good record of monitoring in this region with a long tradition of successful partnership working. However, to respond to the demands of the new planning system we need to build on this and become the epitome of best practice.

Through Regional Monitoring Officers Group the West Midlands Regional Assembly and the Region's Local Authority community is striving towards a vision where District and Unitary Authorities use the same (or a compatible) system to collect the same data. This data is then fed speedily by 28th July 2005 to the region (via Counties where appropriate). This will allow time to produce the AMRs for both LDFs (by December) and WMSS (by February).

At the same time the data is fed through to the Region it will be hosted onto wRADAR.

