



Refloating
THE
ARC



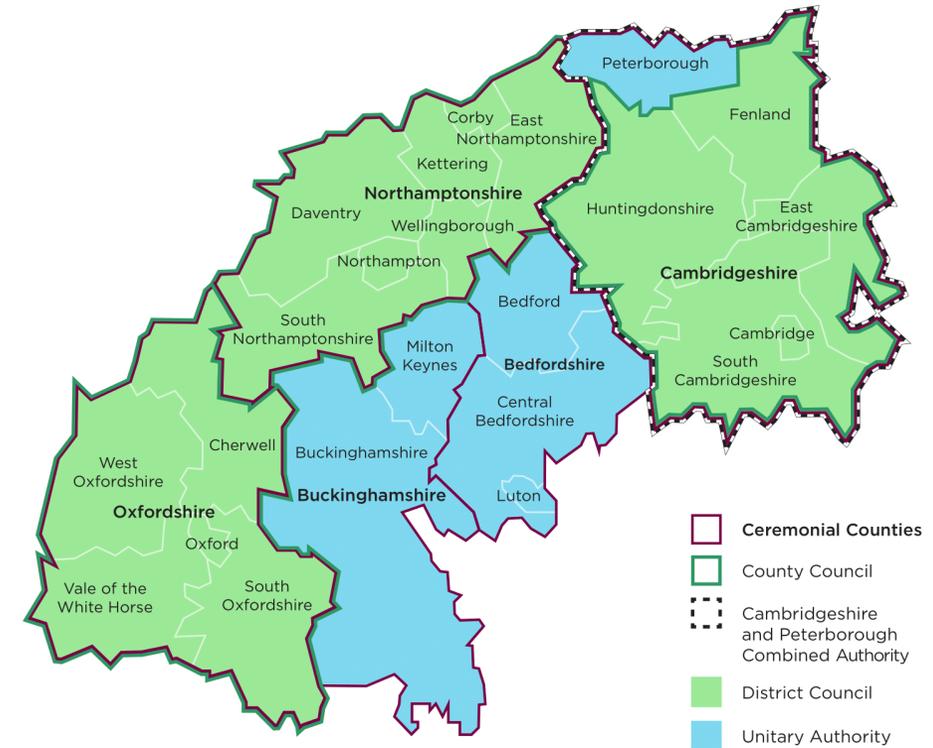
**COLIN
BROWN**

**HEAD OF PLANNING
& DEVELOPMENT**

THE ARC – WHAT IS IT?

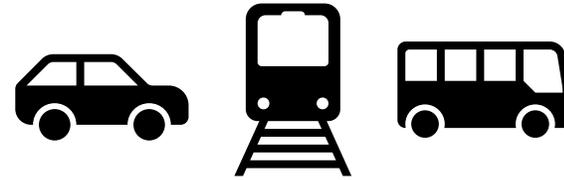


- Area stretching from Oxfordshire to Cambridgeshire taking in three other counties
- 26 separate Local Authority bodies
- Home to 2 million jobs and 3.7 million residents
- Home to world-leading economic, cultural and scientific assets and two world-class universities
- Generates over £110 billion to the UK economy every year
- Projections suggest the Arc could deliver £200 billion output by 2050 with the right investment



THE ARC – INFRASTRUCTURE DEFICIT

- Connectivity east to west is poor – not a joined-up transport corridor
- Main road arteries run north to south (e.g. M40, M1, A1, A14/M11)
- Rail corridors are also focused north to south – frequent services to London but not across the Arc
- Plans to enhance East West rail are very important



THE ARC – ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS

- Car dependence in the Arc results in higher than the national average of CO2 emissions
- Air quality is consequentially poor with many Air Quality Management Areas (AQMAs)
- Flood risk high and growing
- Large areas with limited ecological value
- Many parts of the natural environment are inaccessible to the public



HOUSING NEED

- National Infrastructure Commission report in 2017 – Partnering for Prosperity
- Concluded that “*lack of sufficient and suitable housing presents a fundamental risk to future economic growth*”
- Called for a joined-up approach to planning for housing, jobs and infrastructure without which “*the Arc risks being left behind by its international competitors*”
- East West transport links seen as a generational opportunity
- Central finding was that rates of housebuilding need to **double** if economic potential is to be achieved
- Indicates an annual housing requirement of up to 30,000 dw/pa by 2050



CURRENT HOUSING DELIVERY

- Significant under-provision relative to Local Plan requirements in recent years
- Local Plan allocations just under 16,000 homes a year
- Estimates of objectively assessed needs - 20,135 homes a year (taken from Strategic Housing Market Assessments)
- Delivery lower yet (e.g. around 13,000 pa between 2012-17)

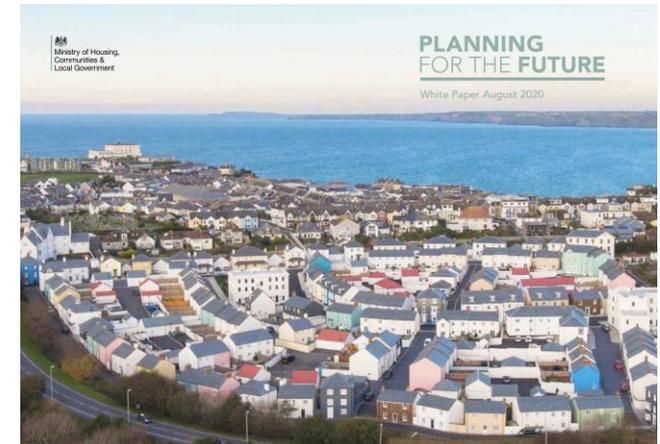


CHANGES TO THE PLANNING SYSTEM

- Fundamental changes coming – ‘Changes to the Planning System’ and Planning White Paper
- New Standard Method – December 2020
- End of duty to cooperate
- More top-down approach
- Spatial Framework for the Arc



Ministry of Housing,
Communities &
Local Government



SPATIAL FRAMEWORK FOR THE ARC

- Announced 18 February 2021
- Focus on strategic opportunities for growth and environmental improvement alongside infrastructure investment
- Looking to tackle housing affordability
- Need for Government-led approach to strategic planning and the co-ordination of planning functions
- Time horizon to 2050 'and beyond'
- An integrated approach
- Sustainable, transport-led development

Policy paper

Planning for sustainable growth in the Oxford-Cambridge Arc: an introduction to the spatial framework

Published 18 February 2021



**Ministry of Housing,
Communities &
Local Government**

SPATIAL FRAMEWORK FOR THE ARC

- Development to be delivered via new settlements (at scale and speed), brownfield development and densification
- Expansion of existing settlements which are or can be made to be more sustainable
- Development to support habitat recovery
- Housing needs to be met in full
- Spatial Framework will “*indicate locations but will not include site allocations*” – but continuing role for Local Plans

SPATIAL FRAMEWORK FOR THE ARC

- Anticipating draft Framework by autumn 2022 with final Framework ‘shortly after’
- Public engagement and options will guide process
- *“The Spatial Framework will have the status of national planning and transport policy, providing a strategic Framework for local planning”*
- Means significant weight in decision-making and will sit alongside NPPF
- Inform preparation of Local Plans
- Sustainability appraisal to remain

CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

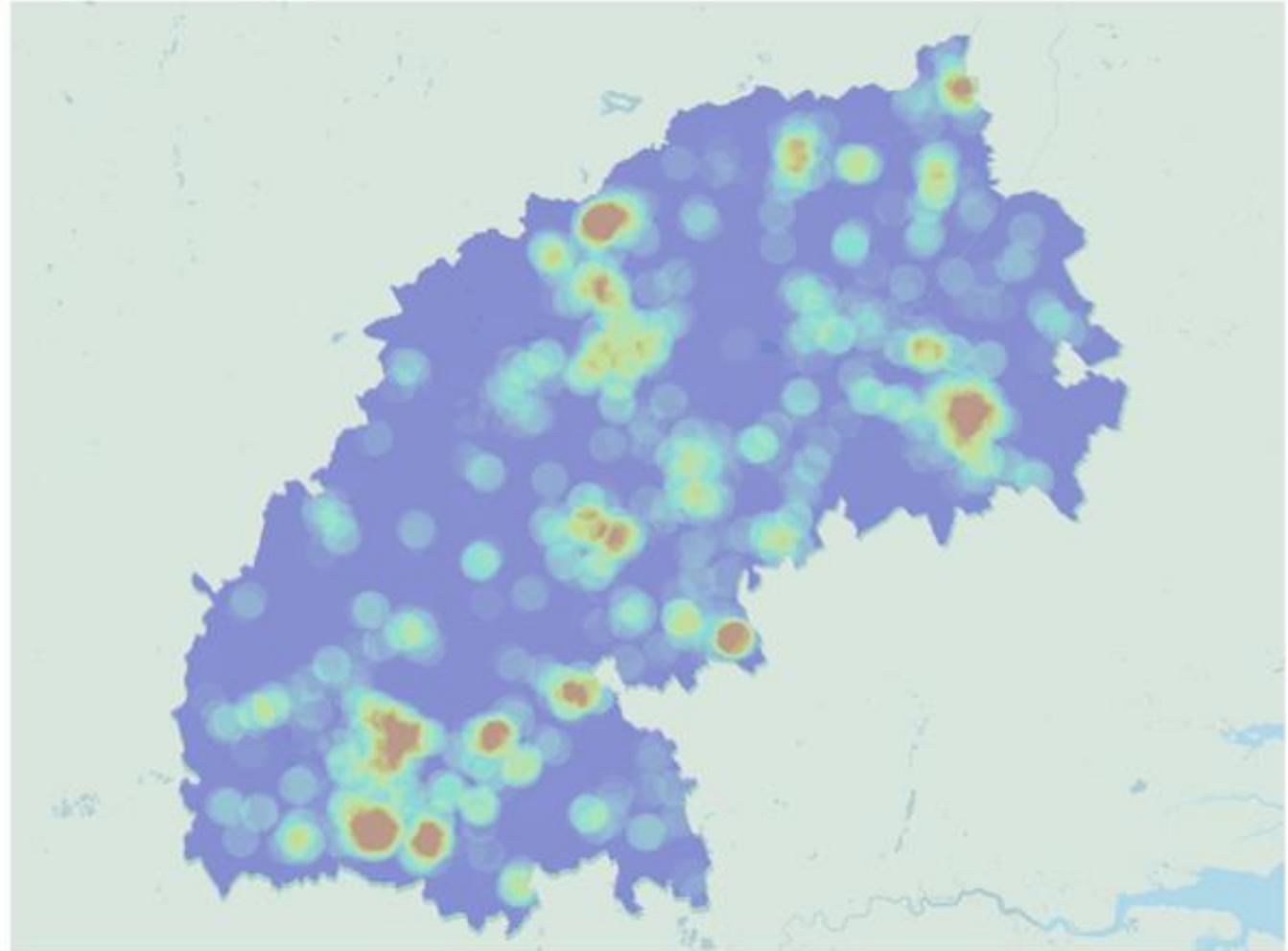
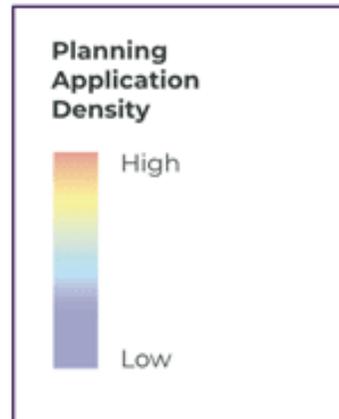
- Timing and speed of delivery
- Public engagement and support
- Arriving at a shared vision / political buy-in
- Environmental aspects
- Funding and viability
- Coordination of activities and integrating infrastructure

The background of the image consists of numerous concentric circles of varying radii, creating a tunnel-like or ripple effect. The colors are a mix of deep blue and vibrant purple, with some lines appearing as bright streaks. The overall effect is dynamic and futuristic.

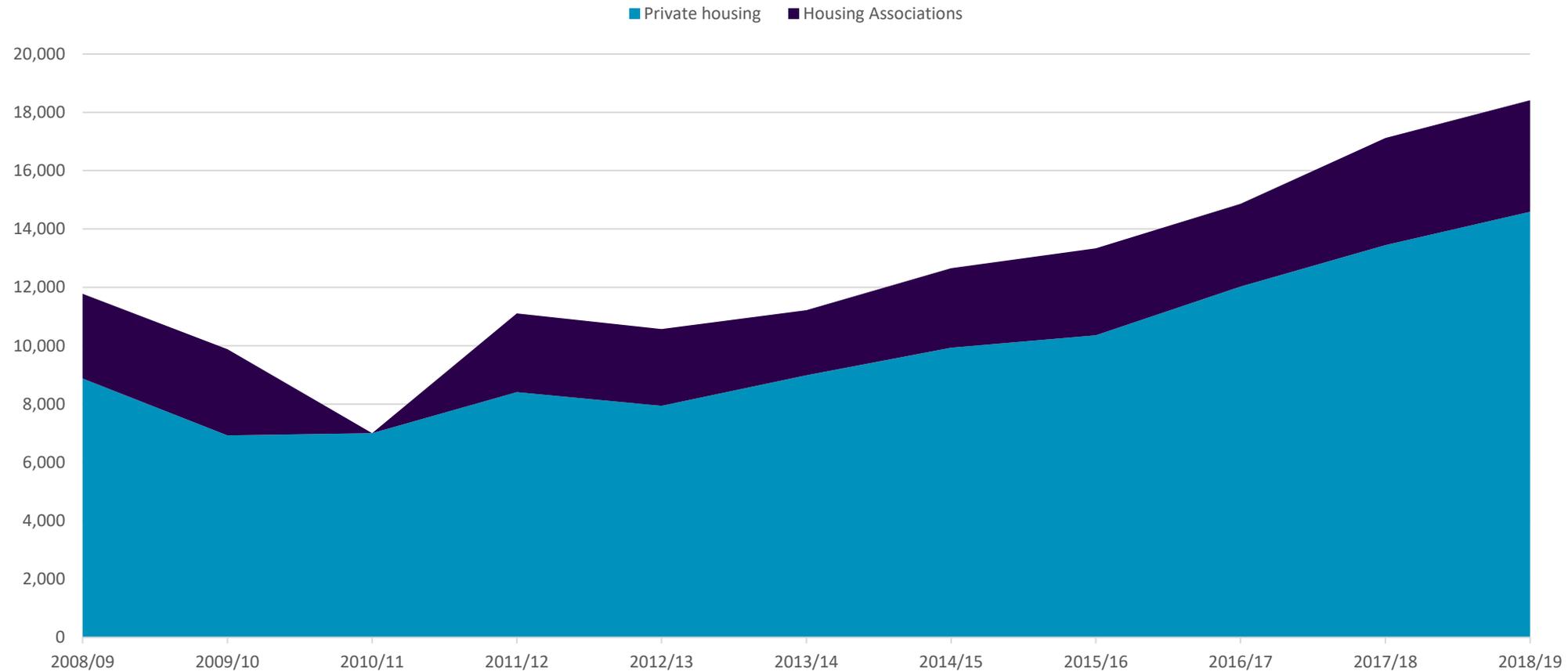
**FRANCIS
TRUSS
PARTNER**

HOUSING DELIVERY

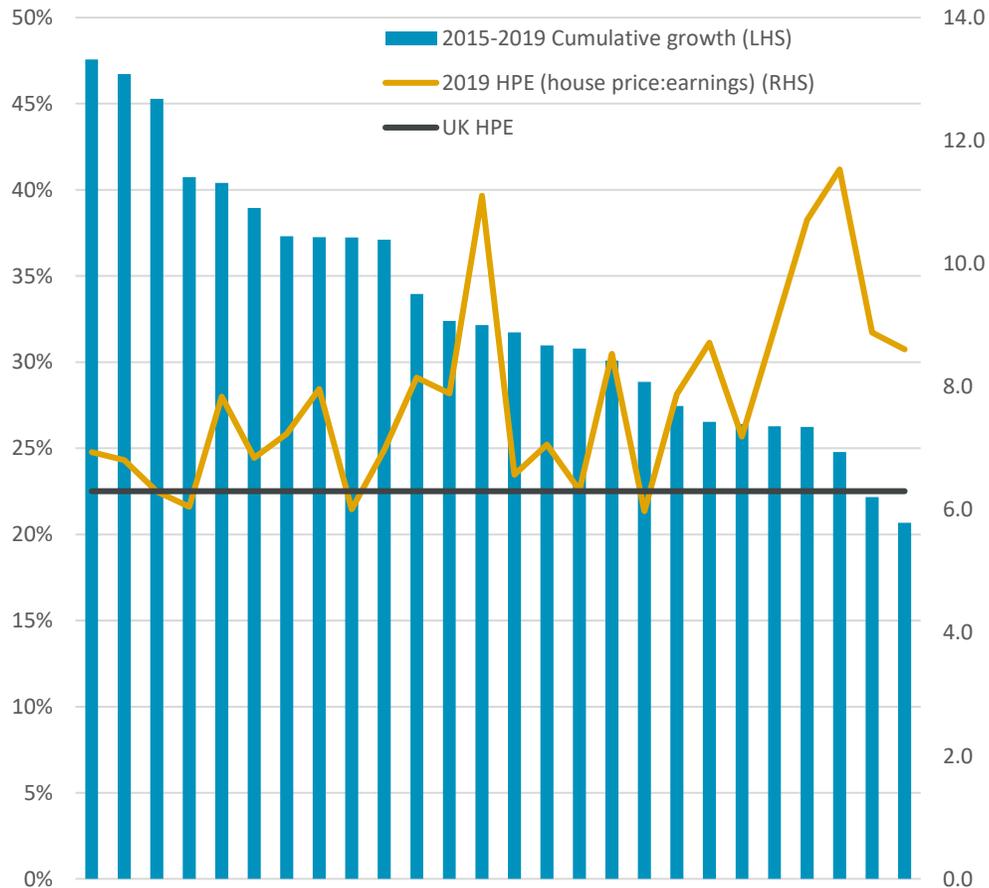
- Current
- Future
- The relevance of the Arc



CURRENT - RECENT DELIVERY



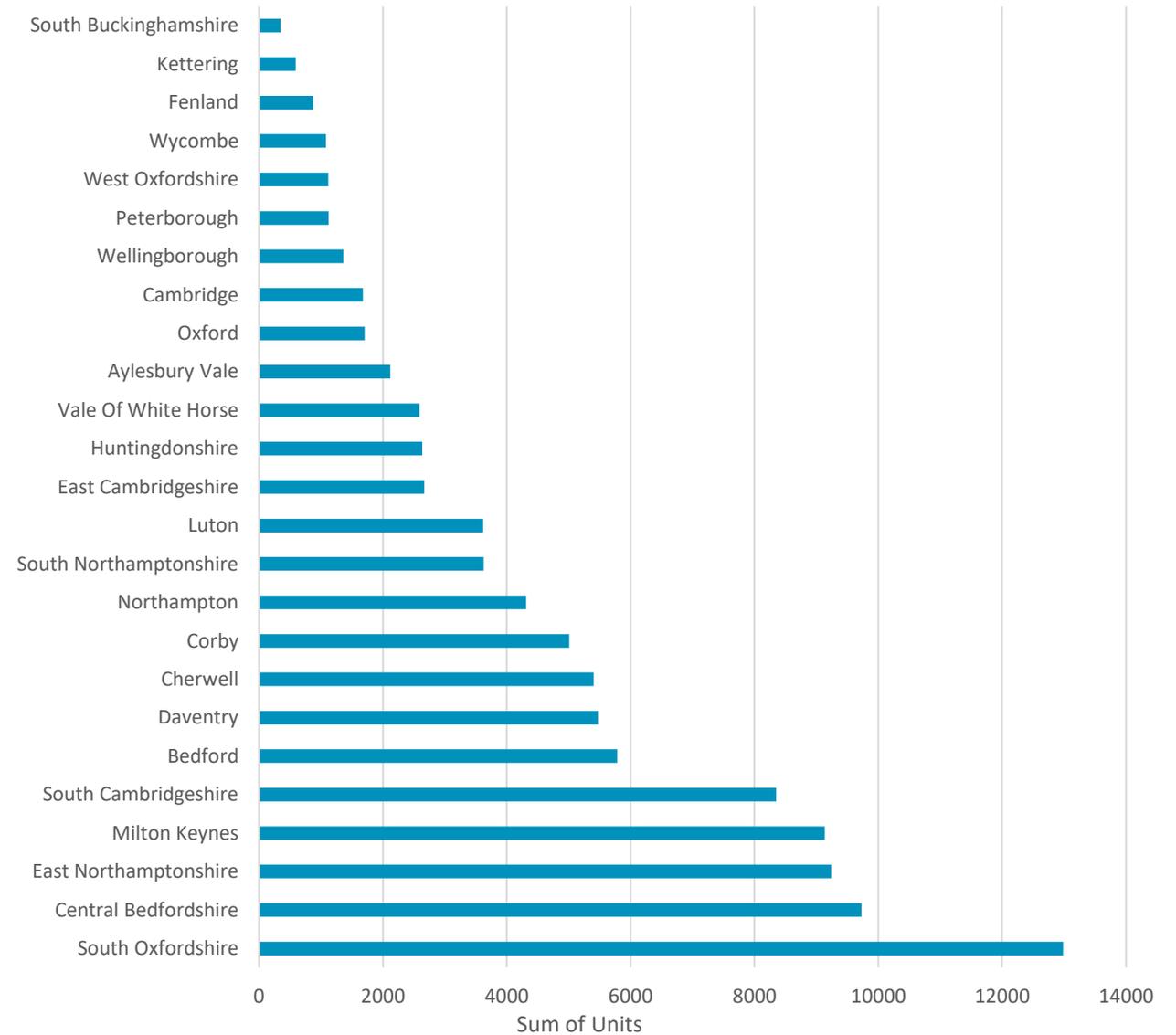
CURRENT – DRIVING GROWTH



- Price ‘signals’
- Land availability
- Infrastructure spending

FUTURE - WHERE

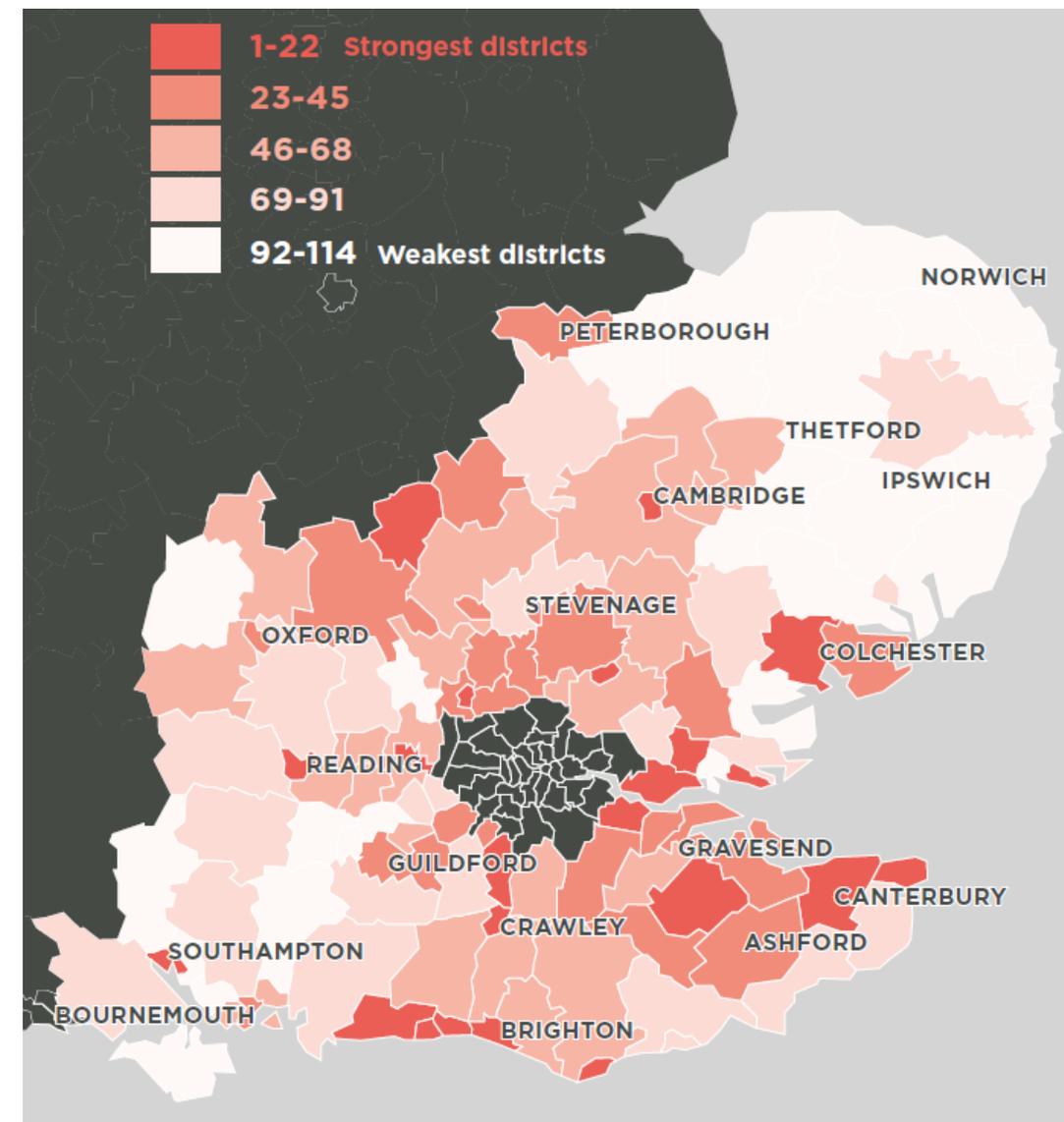
Strategic allocations



FUTURE - ACCELERATION

- Diversifying tenures - Build to Rent:
 - Growth in activity
 - Emergence outside main centres

Market led acceleration



FUTURE - ACCELERATION

- Diversifying tenures – housing types:
 - Affordable housing – delivery is static
 - Housing companies - growth

No fundamental shift in affordable housing delivery



A DEVELOPMENT
BUSINESS



Cambridge
Investment
Partnership

FUTURE - ACCELERATION

- Infrastructure funding/delivery mechanisms
 - Growth deals accelerating delivery
 - Oxfordshire
 - Greater Cambridge
 - Development corporations
 - Little progression
 - Slowing delivery

Specific to individual areas

FUTURE - THE ARC'S RELEVANCE

- Indirect but not negligible
- Direct role limited to major infrastructure
- Ability to create the step change



FUTURE - THE ARC'S RELEVANCE

- The Spatial Framework:
 - Reduced employment requirement
 - Continued large scale infrastructure constraint
 - Greater collaboration

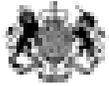
Another 2.5 years...



**CATRIONA
RIDDELL**

**DIRECTOR
CRA Ltd**

Maximising the Arc's Potential – will the Government's approach work?



Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government

*“We recognise that **leadership and effective coordination** is important in order to deliver our ambition for the Arc. The Government has supported the development of **strong and accountable coordination** mechanisms, both at central government level and at the local level. In addition, we will ensure that independent advice and leadership is available to challenge decision-makers and provide fresh ideas. These improved ways of working will ensure that the opportunities and potential of the area can be successfully harnessed to benefit and support local communities while retaining **appropriate democratic accountability**.”*

The Oxford-Cambridge Arc

**Government ambition and joint declaration between
Government and local partners**



HM Government



“To realise the full opportunities and overcome the challenges will require co-ordination of planning functions across the region. Local councils cannot do this on their own because of the level of coordination needed across the areas, and because they do not have all the levers needed to develop a genuinely integrated plan. Government needs to play a supporting role to bring together a strategic approach at the Arc level to support better planning and ultimately better outcomes for the economy, environment and communities.”

Planning for sustainable growth in the Oxford- Cambridge Arc

An introduction to the Oxford-Cambridge
Arc Spatial Framework

Maximising the Arc's Potential – will the Government's approach work?

Is the Arc a cohesive spatial planning area?

Although the Arc has been part of the 'Golden Triangle' for decades, it has never been considered a cohesive strategic planning area - or part of the same planning region. Does this matter?

- Central Government **intervention has shaped spatial planning geography for decades**, especially in this area e.g. transport network, new /expanded towns
- Government has decided that the Arc's assets have the potential to significantly boost the country's overall economy as well as our international green credentials – **Clear leadership nationally will be necessary to secure bigger and faster transformation** than if locally-led.
- There is a **strong history of inter-regional planning** in some parts of the Arc – e.g. MKSM but political leadership at the local level and relationships between councils with no real history of working together can impact on delivery and timescale.
- There must be **clearly articulated 'wins' for all local authority areas** so they can manage local expectations.
- It is vital that **wider functional (but more localised) relationships outside the core Arc area are taken into account.**

How will decisions be made?

Getting the governance & decision-making right is the key to success. The Government is proposing to establish a new Arc Growth Body but little detail is known as to how this will work, what role (influence) individual partners will have and what decision-making responsibilities it will have. Will this work?

- A separate body will help **cut across existing complex governance arrangements**; will ensure all strategic partners are involved so that national and local **spatial and investment priorities are aligned**; and will provide a **resilient governance** model that can survive changes to individual partners.
- The Framework is to be 'vision-led' but this must be a **shared vision** amongst partners, with clarity in terms of what role all partners are expected to play and the right checks and balances along the way to ensure it is delivered.
- **Robust leadership from all local authority partners** will be critical to the level of local buy-in and managing the risks of delivery but it is up to them how they organise themselves, engage with development and delivery of the Framework and choose to influence the outcome.
- Given the level of public expenditure, there will need to be clear lines of responsibility, with **effective scrutiny and challenge** to hold the Government (who will be the ultimate decision-maker) to account.

Maximising the Arc's Potential – will the Government's approach work?

What value will a Central Government owned team add?

Although regional planning has always been owned by Central Government, this is the first time since the 1960s the main technical resource will be 'in-house' with previous regional plans prepared by independent bodies and advised by local authorities. Does this matter?

- A dedicated team can ensure the Framework is based on independent evidence with impartial advice to all partners involved. **Close cooperation between civil servants and LA officers is essential** especially to provide confidence in delivery of the Framework through statutory LPs and LTPs so.
- It is vital that the Framework is **informed by local knowledge** and experience as the Arc is not a homogenous area – there are very different local circumstances and issues that need to be factored in,
- An in-house government team will secure the right level of resources and skills (through a specifically established team) and will have much more **ability to ensure a cross-departmental approach** to deliver a genuinely integrated Framework for 'good' growth.

What other things will impact on the success?

- How the local authorities choose to engage in the process and how proactive they are at collectively influencing the next stages. Leaders grouping already shaped what has happened up until now but it will have to evolve to provide even greater shared leadership, with a **strong unified voice needed to influence progress** from now on.
- What **effective community engagement** looks like and how this influences the Framework's priorities– strong local opposition can significantly impact on timescale and effective delivery.
- Alongside community engagement, what **technical testing process** will be used to develop the spatial vision and strategy (especially testing spatial options and challenge) and how transparent this is.
- Delivery of a genuinely **integrated solution to sustainable growth** and not just using the Arc to address housing challenges.
- How the **Arc will benefit other parts of the country** to support the Government's levelling-up agenda.

The background features a series of concentric, slightly blurred circles in shades of blue and purple, creating a sense of depth and motion. The text is centered on the right side of the image.

Q&A SESSION



**THANK
YOU**