

Agenda



Listening Learning Leading

Contact Officer: Kathy Fiander, Democratic Services Officer

Tel: 01491 823649

Fax: 01491 823605

E-mail: Kathy.fiander@southoxon.gov.uk

Date: 24 May 2013

Website: <http://www.southoxon.gov.uk>

A MEETING OF THE

Scrutiny Committee

WILL BE HELD ON TUESDAY 4 JUNE 2013 AT 6.00 PM

COUNCIL CHAMBER, SOUTH OXFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL OFFICES

This meeting will be broadcast live on the council's website and the record archived for future viewing. You can view this broadcast and access reports at www.southoxon.gov.uk.

Members of the Committee:

Mrs Celia Collett, MBE (Chairman)

Mrs Eleanor Hards

Ms Joan Bland (Vice-Chairman)

Mr Steve Connel

Mr John Cotton

Ms Kristina Crabbe

Mrs Pat Dawe

Mr Will Hall

Mr Paul Harrison

Ms Elizabeth Hodgkin

Mr Alan Rooke

Mr David Turner

Mrs Margaret Turner

Substitutes

Mr Leo Docherty

Mr Roger Bell

Mr Felix Bloomfield

Mr David Bretherton

Mr Bernard Cooper

Mr Philip Cross

Mrs Margaret Davies

Mr Mark Gray

Mr Tony Harbour

Mr Marcus Harris

Mr Marc Hiles

Ms Lynn Lloyd

Mrs Ann Midwinter

Ms Anne Purse

Mr Robert Simister

Miss Rachel Wallis

Mr Michael Welply

Mrs Jennifer Wood

Mrs Denise Macdonald

If you would like a copy of these papers in large print, Braille or audio cassette or have any other special requirements (such as access facilities) please contact the officer named on this agenda. Please give as much notice as possible before the meeting

ITEMS TO BE CONSIDERED WITH THE PUBLIC PRESENT

Reports considered with the public present are available on the council's website.

1 Apologies

2 Declaration of disclosable pecuniary interest

3 Minutes

Purpose: to approve the minutes of the meeting on 23 April 2013.
Minutes circulated separately.

4 Board report - a graphical summary of the councils' performance to the end of March 2013 (Pages 5 - 48)

Board report showing performance to the end of March 2013 (**attached**).

Purpose: to discuss the council's performance and make any recommendations for improvement.

If committee members have specific questions, these should be submitted to democratic services in advance to ensure that answers can be given at the meeting.

5 Work programme for 2013/14

Reports proposed for consideration by the committee in 2013/14 are listed below.

The committee is asked to consider this list, the Cabinet work programme, and suggestions from members of the committee, and agree a provisional work programme until April 2014.

Meeting date: 3 September 2013

Regular items:

- Performance review of GLL (leisure contract)
- Financial out-turn 2012/13

Items proposed by officers:

- Annual review of corporate plan
- Performance against customer service standards
- Annual equalities update
- Annual update on the energy reduction programme

Meeting date: 5 November 2013

Regular items:

- Performance review of Capita
- Community safety annual review

Items proposed by officers:

- Council tax reduction scheme for 2014/15

Meeting date: 17 December 2013

Regular items:

- Revenue budget 2014/15 and capital programme update

Meeting date: 18 February 2014

Regular items:

- Revenue budget 2014/15 and capital programme – scrutiny of Cabinet’s proposed budget before the Council meeting

Meeting date: 22 April 2014

Regular items:

- Performance review of Biffa Limited
- Performance review of Sodexo Limited

Items proposed by the committee for consideration in 2012/13 not yet allocated:

- Review of shared services
- Report on customer satisfaction
- Report on good practice in the neighbourhood planning process.

6 Exclusion of the public

To consider whether to exclude members of the press and public from the meeting for the following item of business under Part 1 of Schedule 12A Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 and as amended by the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006 on the grounds that:

- (i) it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraph 3 Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act, and
- (ii) (ii) the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.

ITEM TO BE CONSIDERED WITH THE PUBLIC EXCLUDED

This report is not available on the council’s website.

7 Extension of the waste contract (Pages 49 - 56)

Purpose: to consider the report of the head of corporate strategy.

MARGARET REED

Head of Legal and Democratic Services

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Board report

A graphical summary of the councils' performance

MARCH 2013

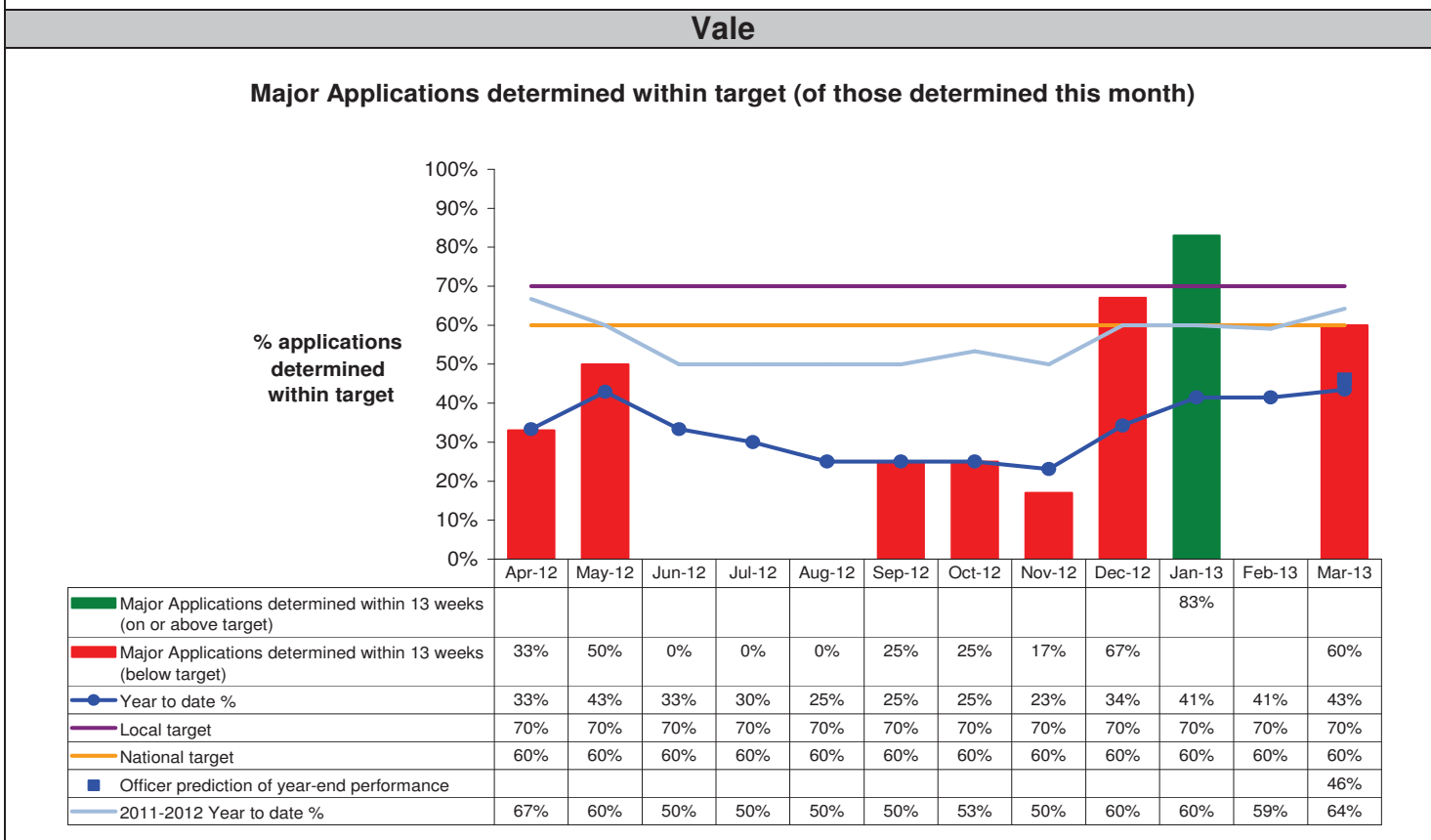
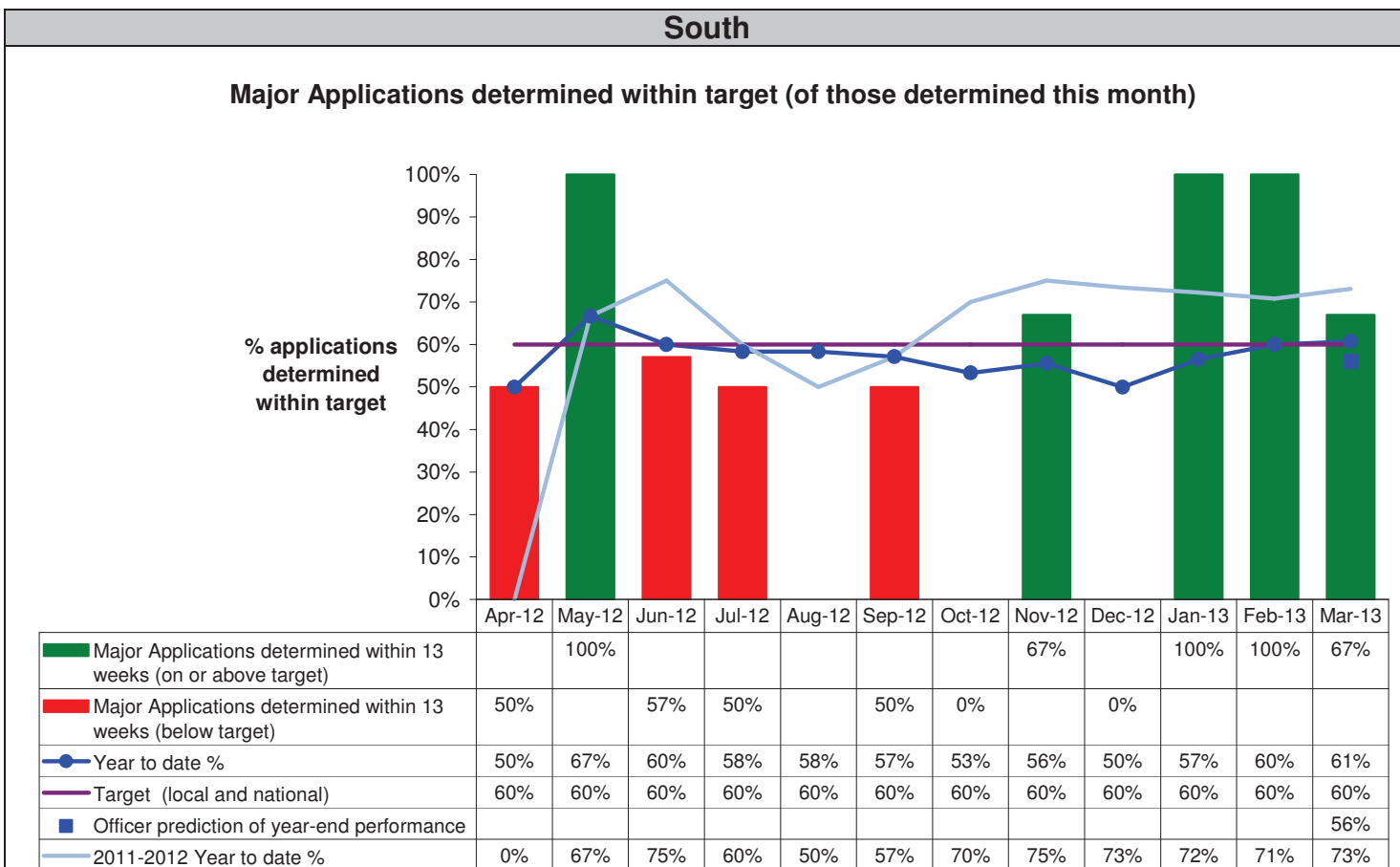
South and Vale board report

MARCH 2013

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SECTION 1 – PLANNING

Major planning applications determined in 13 weeks (high is good)



Notes

1. **Vale** - following the government's publication of its consultation on planning performance and the planning guarantee in November 2012, an action plan has been put in place to focus on improving performance on major applications.

2. **South and Vale** - in line with national planning policy (NPPF) we need to be more enabling to help deliver economic growth and much-needed housing. Experience has shown that this can best be achieved by negotiating improvements to schemes to enable planning permission to be granted. This can result in decisions being made outside the 13 week target, which is why both councils are now making more use of Planning Performance Agreements (PPAs) to ensure decisions are made in a timely manner albeit outside the prescriptive 13 weeks target.

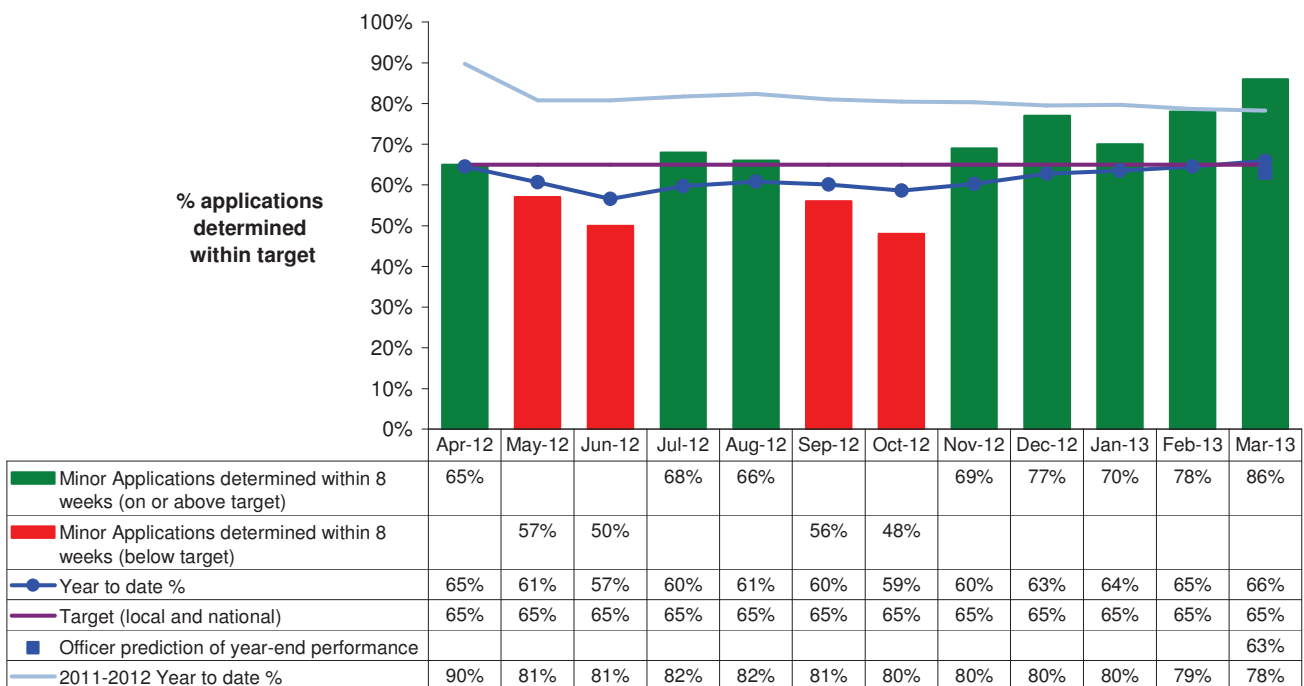
Recognising these facts, South agreed to lower the local target to national levels (60%), but Vale were keen to maintain the local target (70%). However, it was not expected that Vale would reach the locally set target or the national target.

3. **Vale** - only one major application was decided outside the 13-week target period in March - a development of 71 dwellings at East Challow. Section 106 agreements had to be completed, which took time to complete. Over the year, it is clear that there was a step change in performance following the government's publication of its consultation on planning performance and the planning guarantee in November 2012. Year to date performance stood at 23% in November 2012, and improved to 43% by the year end.

Minor planning applications determined in 8 weeks (high is good)

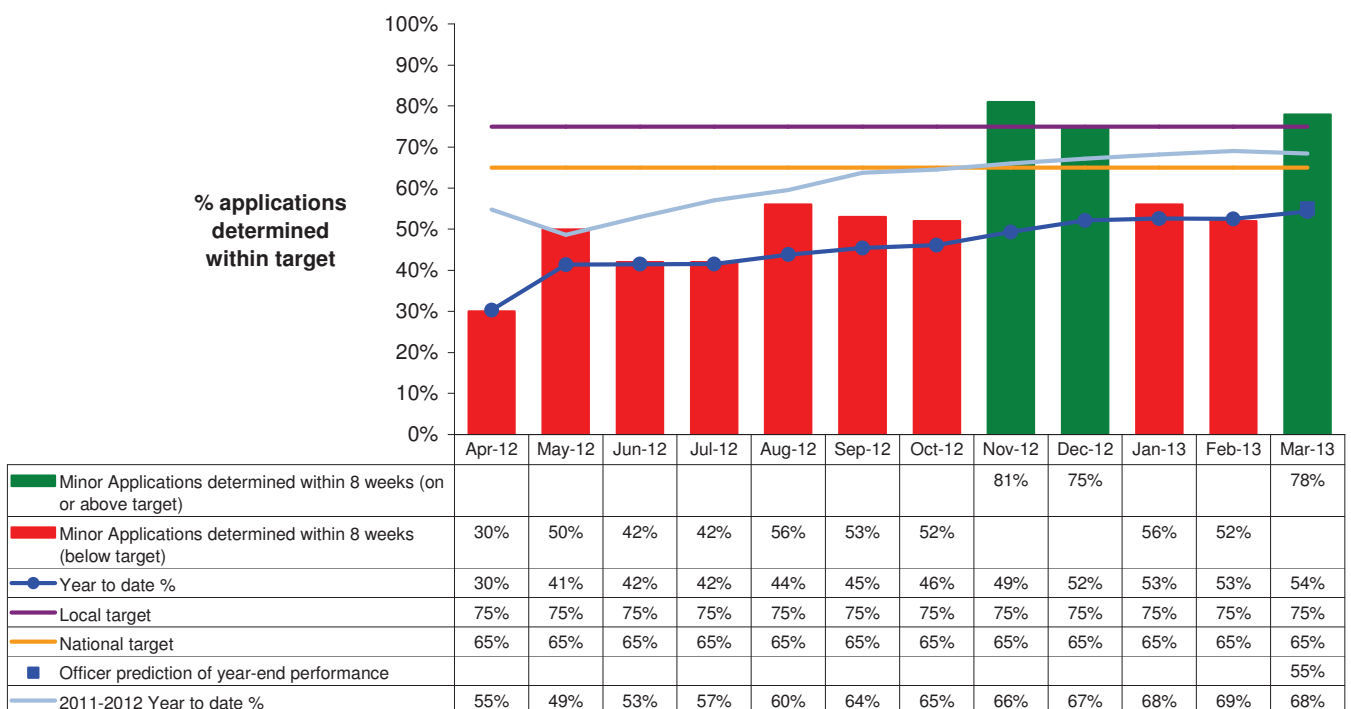
South

Minor Applications determined within target (of those determined this month)



Vale

Minor Applications determined within target (of those determined this month)



Note

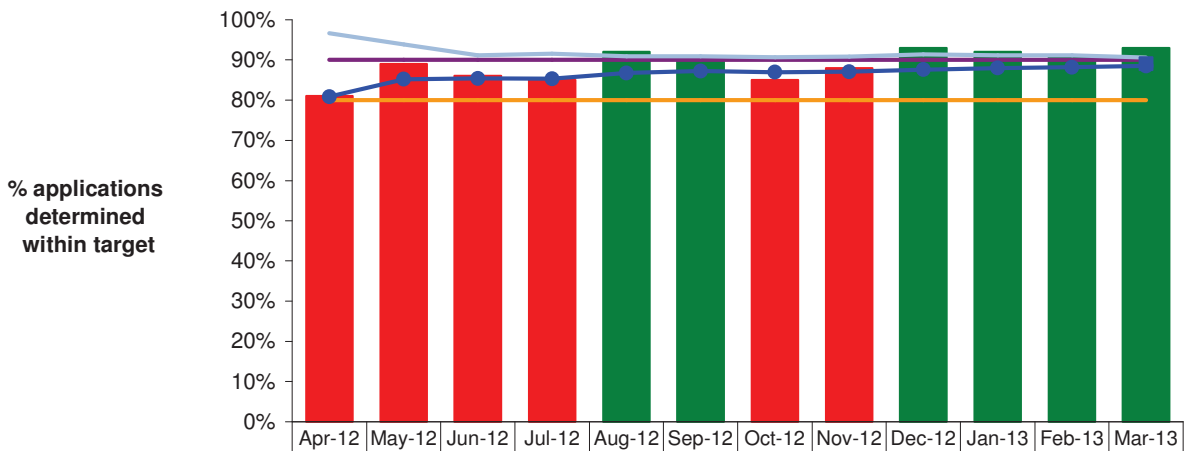
Vale – in the first four months of the year, following the implementation of the new computer system (Ocella) a number of system functions and set up issues for both IT and the Planning staff, resulted in the in-month team poor performance. An action plan was put in place to address

these issues, and 'Year to date %' subsequently improved every month following July. It should also be noted that 38% of all Minor planning applications were submitted in the first four months of the year, rather than the 33% which would be expected if the applications were evenly distributed – this made subsequent recovery by year end more difficult.

Other planning applications determined in 8 weeks (high is good)

South

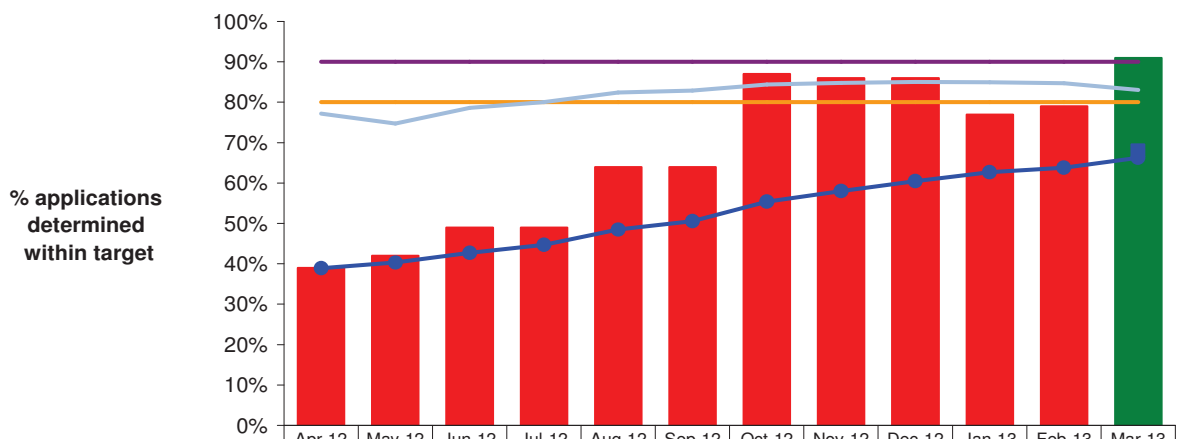
Other Applications determined within target (of those determined this month)



	Apr-12	May-12	Jun-12	Jul-12	Aug-12	Sep-12	Oct-12	Nov-12	Dec-12	Jan-13	Feb-13	Mar-13
Other Applications determined within 8 weeks (on or above target)					92%	90%			93%	92%	91%	93%
Other Applications determined within 8 weeks (below target)	81%	89%	86%	85%			85%	88%				
Year to date %	81%	85%	85%	85%	87%	87%	87%	87%	88%	88%	88%	89%
Target	90%	90%	90%	90%	90%	90%	90%	90%	90%	90%	90%	90%
National target	80%	80%	80%	80%	80%	80%	80%	80%	80%	80%	80%	80%
Officer prediction of year-end performance												89%
2011-2012 Year to date %	97%	94%	91%	92%	91%	91%	91%	91%	91%	91%	91%	91%

Vale

Other Applications determined within target (of those determined this month)



	Apr-12	May-12	Jun-12	Jul-12	Aug-12	Sep-12	Oct-12	Nov-12	Dec-12	Jan-13	Feb-13	Mar-13
Other Applications determined within 8 weeks (on or above target)												91%
Other Applications determined within 8 weeks (below target)	39%	42%	49%	49%	64%	64%	87%	86%	86%	77%	79%	
Year to date %	39%	40%	43%	45%	49%	51%	55%	58%	61%	63%	64%	66%
Target	90%	90%	90%	90%	90%	90%	90%	90%	90%	90%	90%	90%
National target	80%	80%	80%	80%	80%	80%	80%	80%	80%	80%	80%	80%
Officer prediction of year-end performance												68%
2011-2012 Year to date %	77%	75%	79%	80%	82%	83%	84%	85%	85%	85%	85%	83%

Note

Vale – in the first four months of the year, following the implementation of the new computer

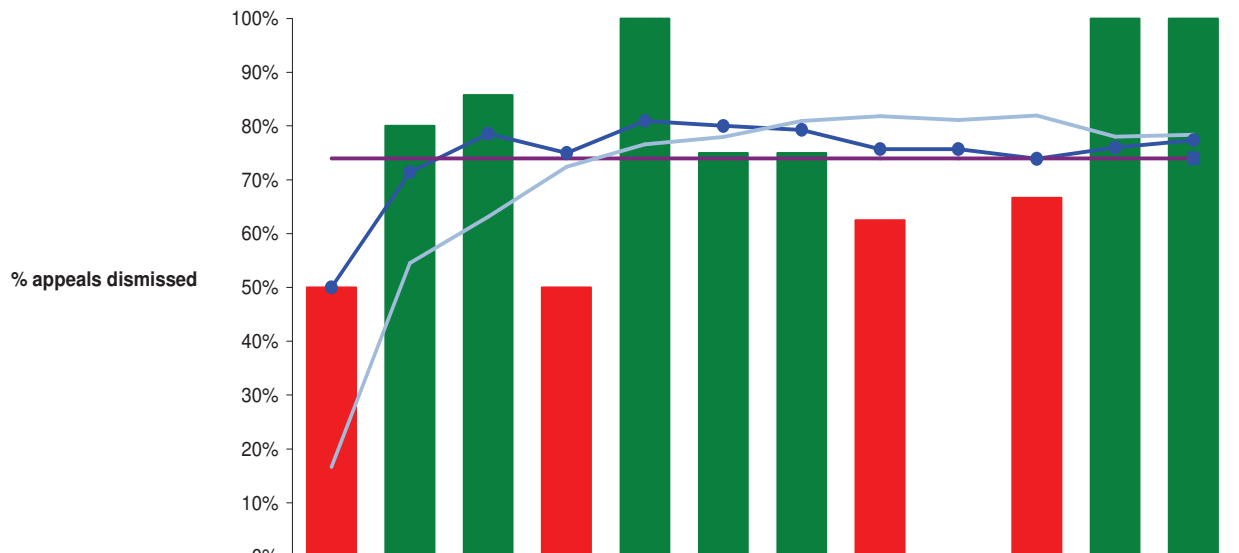
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system (Ocella) a number of system functions and set up issues for both IT and the planning staff, resulted in the in-month team poor performance. An action plan was put in place to address these issues, and 'Year to date %' improved in every month following April. It should also be noted that 37% of all Other planning applications were submitted in the first four months of the year, rather than the 33% which would be expected if the applications were evenly distributed – this made subsequent recovery by year end more difficult.

Planning appeals decisions

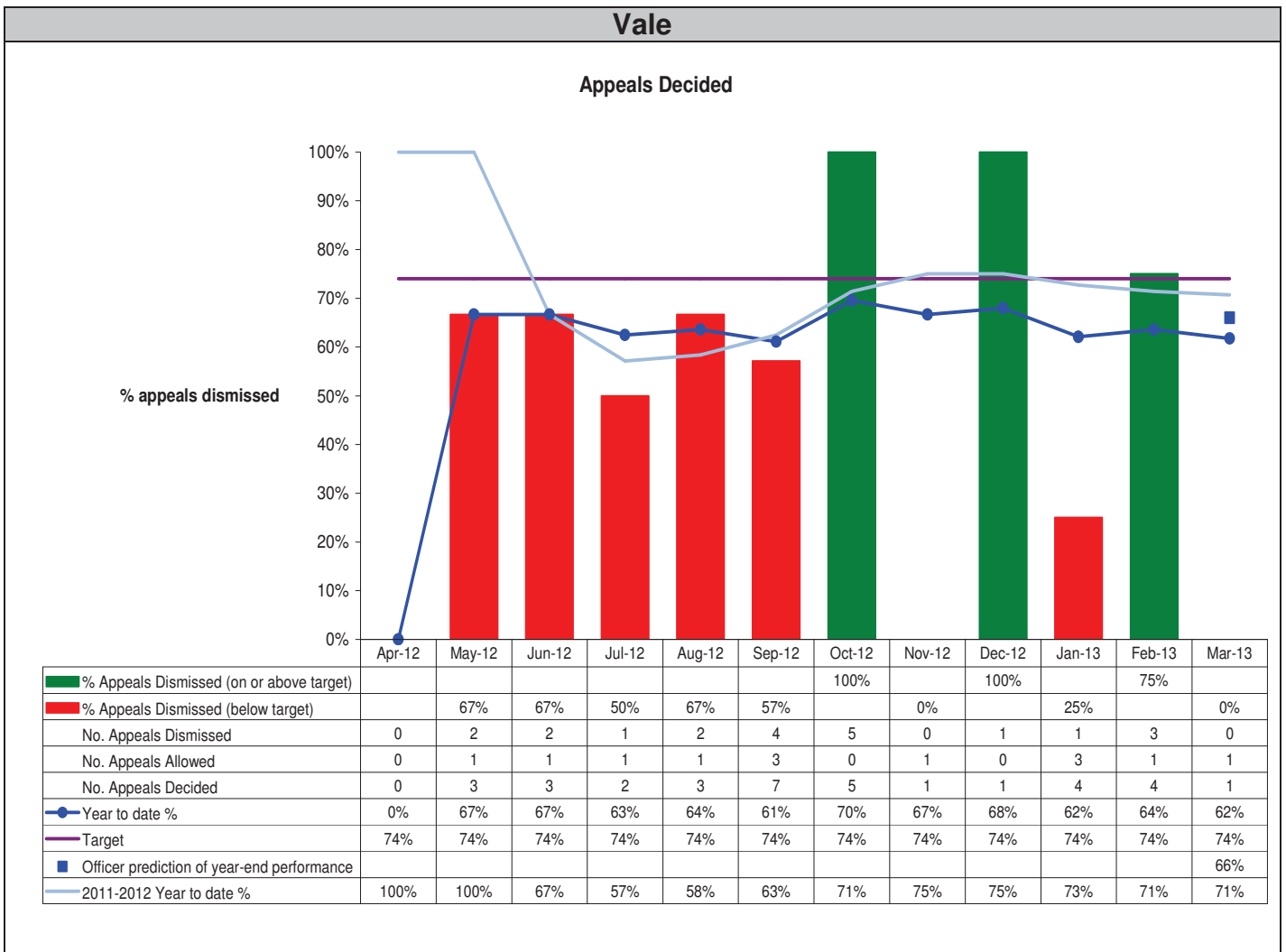
South

Appeals Decided



	Apr-12	May-12	Jun-12	Jul-12	Aug-12	Sep-12	Oct-12	Nov-12	Dec-12	Jan-13	Feb-13	Mar-13
■ % Appeals Dismissed (on or above target)		80%	86%		100%	75%	75%				100%	100%
■ % Appeals Dismissed (below target)	50%			50%				63%		67%		
No. Appeals Dismissed	1	4	6	1	5	3	3	5	0	6	4	3
No. Appeals Allowed	1	1	1	1	0	1	1	3	0	3	0	0
No. Appeals Decided	2	5	7	2	5	4	4	8	0	9	4	3
● Year to date %	50%	71%	79%	75%	81%	80%	79%	76%	76%	74%	76%	77%
— Target	74%	74%	74%	74%	74%	74%	74%	74%	74%	74%	74%	74%
■ Officer prediction of year-end performance												74%
— 2011-2012 Year to date %	17%	55%	63%	72%	77%	78%	81%	82%	81%	82%	78%	78%

Planning appeals decisions

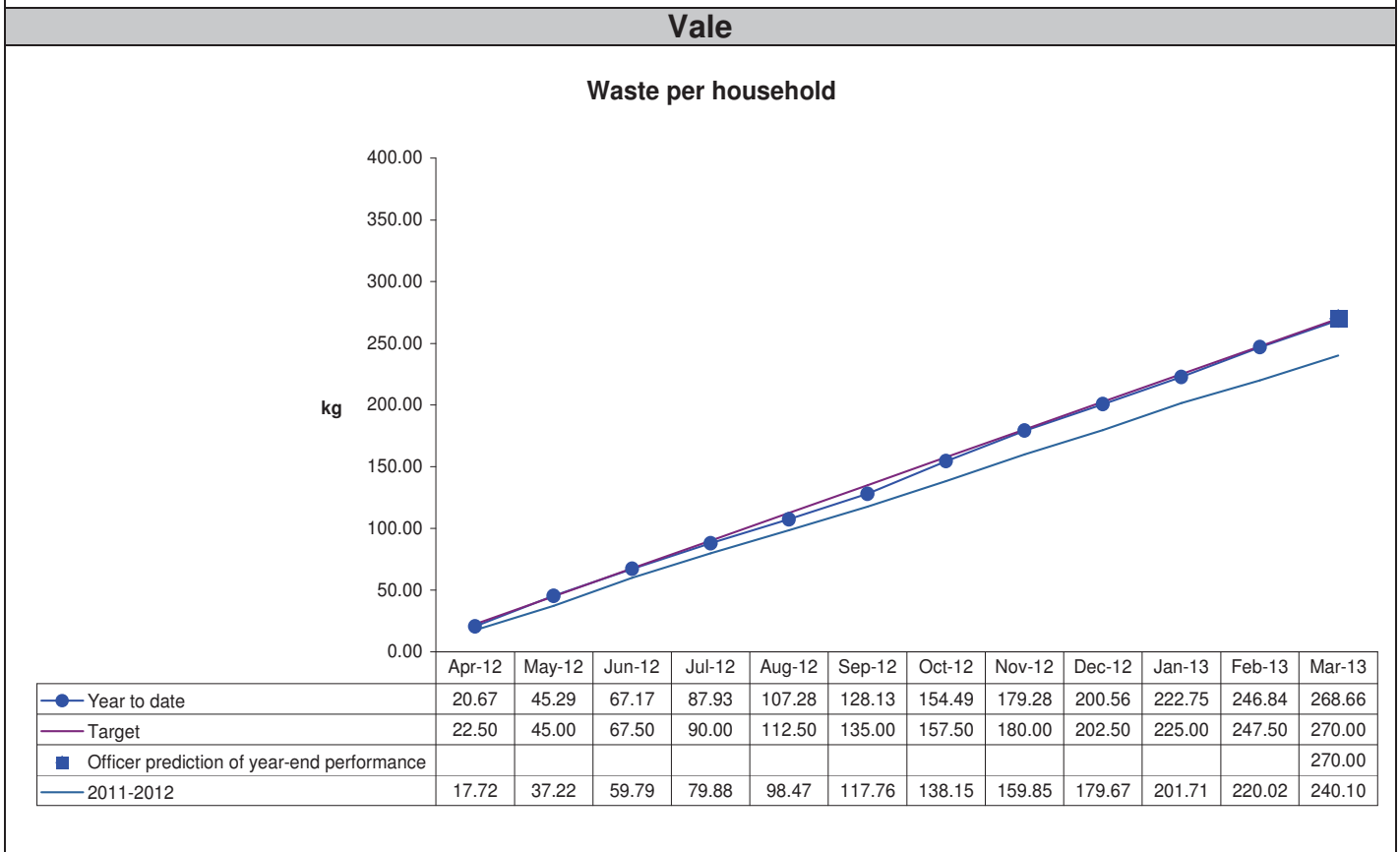
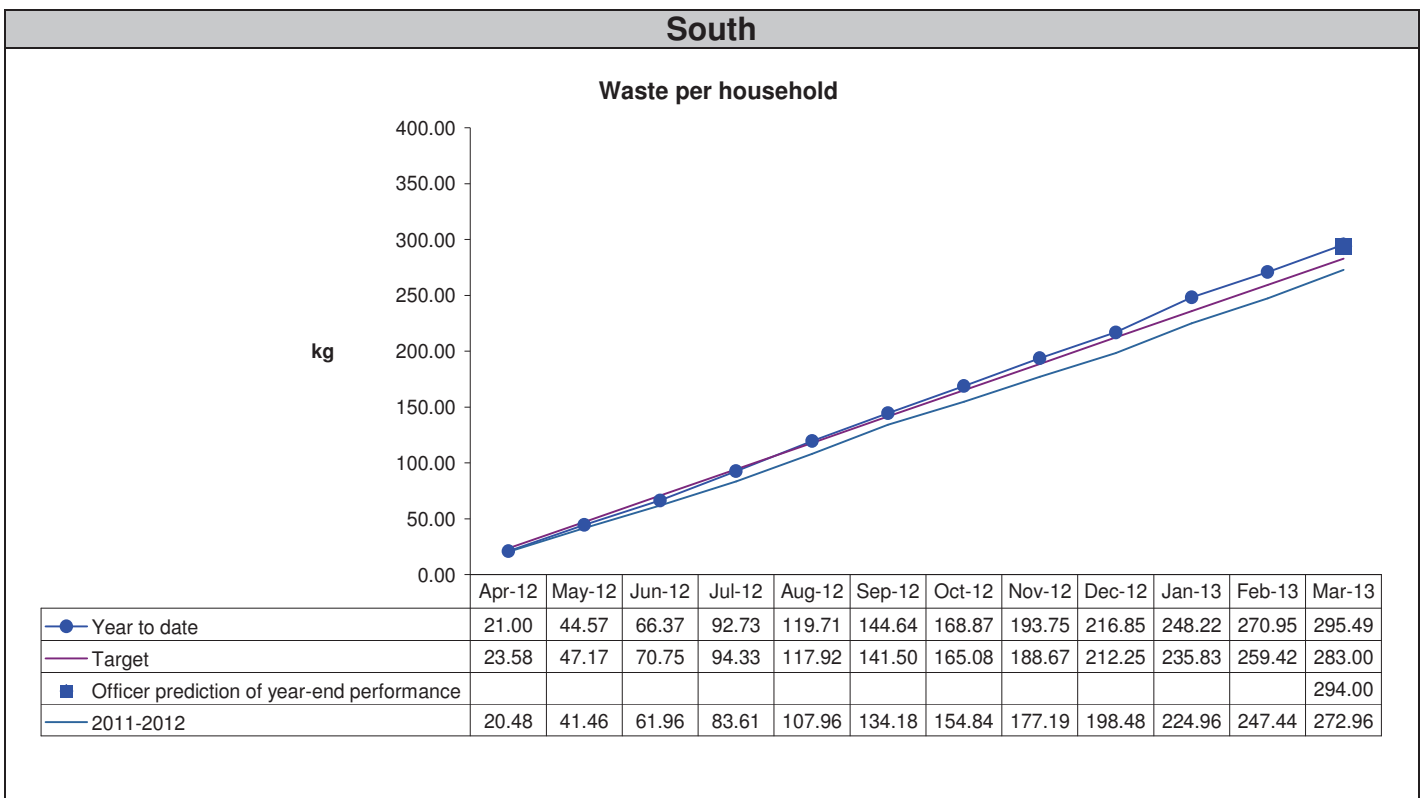


Note

Only one appeal decision was received in March - the appeal was allowed. It was for a detached garage in Goosey, which the inspector did not feel was too large or visually intrusive. Performance for the year was below target, which is indicative of a more permissive stance being taken by the Planning Inspectorate, particularly regarding appeals for new housing.

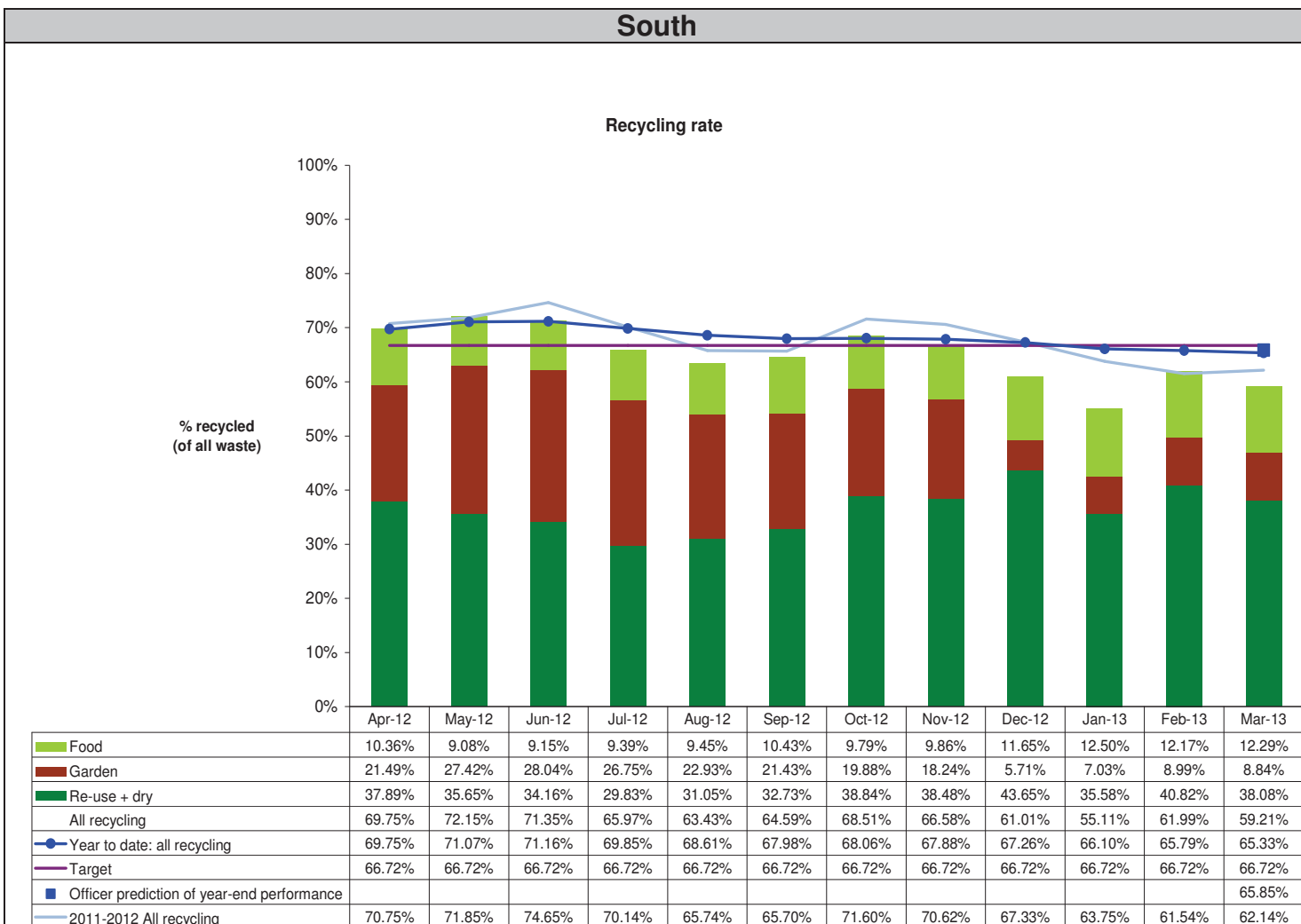
SECTION 2 – ENVIRONMENT

Residual waste (kg/household) (low is good)



Note
South – there has been a trend, throughout the year, of an increased volume of refuse, and this has been reflected across the country by an increase in other districts. It is not yet clear to officers why this is less of an issue at Vale.

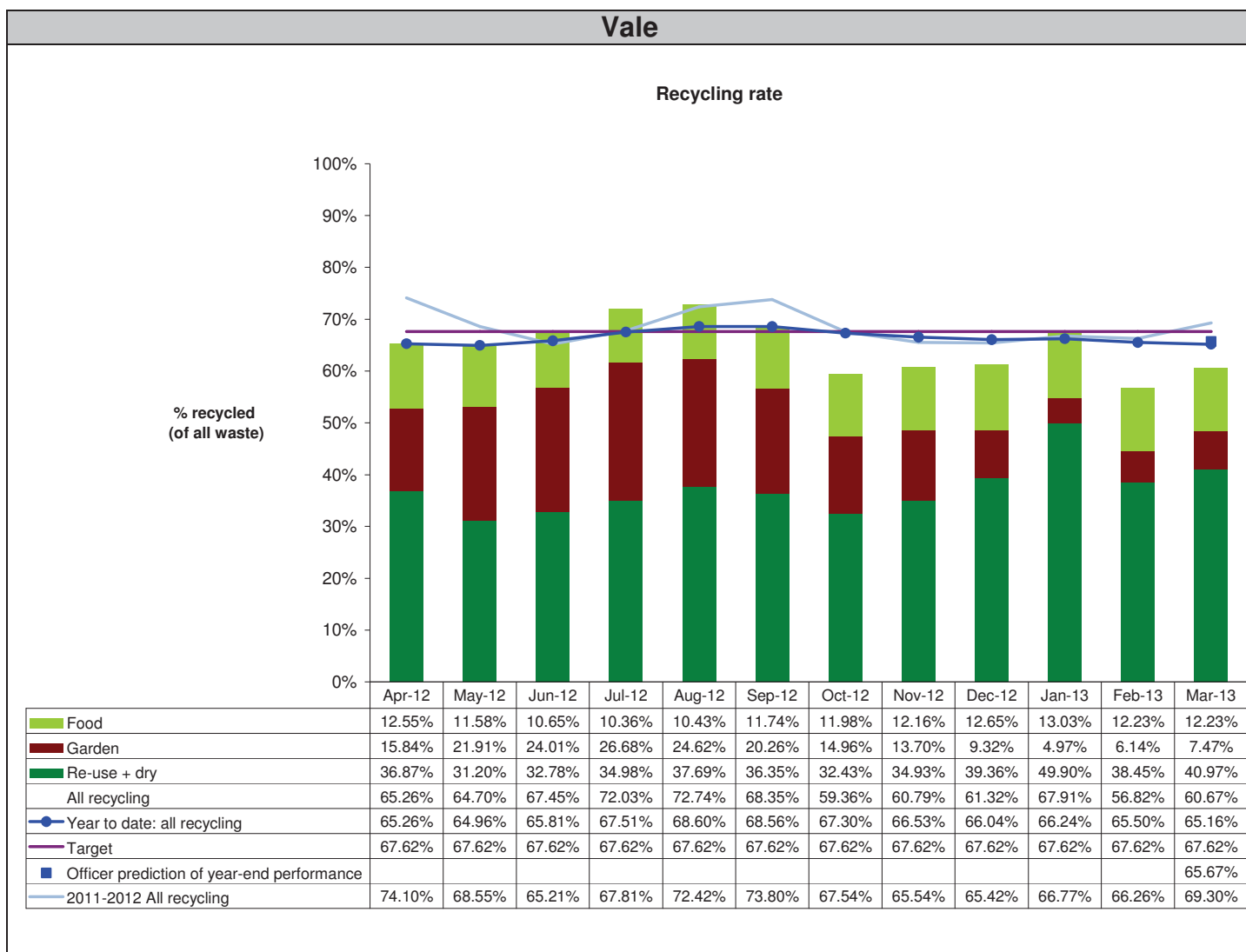
Recycling rate (high is good)



Notes

1. The rejection rate for South this quarter (1 Jan – 31 Mar) is 4.23%. (Rejected recycling goes to landfill.)
2. The ‘Year to date’ all recycling rate, 65.33%, was slightly below the target (66.72%). This was mainly as a result of:
 - Street sweepings having to go to landfill, rather than being recycled – this started in October; and
 - Since December, the cold weather, which lasted several months, has resulted in a reduction in the amount of garden waste. This was in excess of the normal seasonal drop, and has been a national phenomenon.

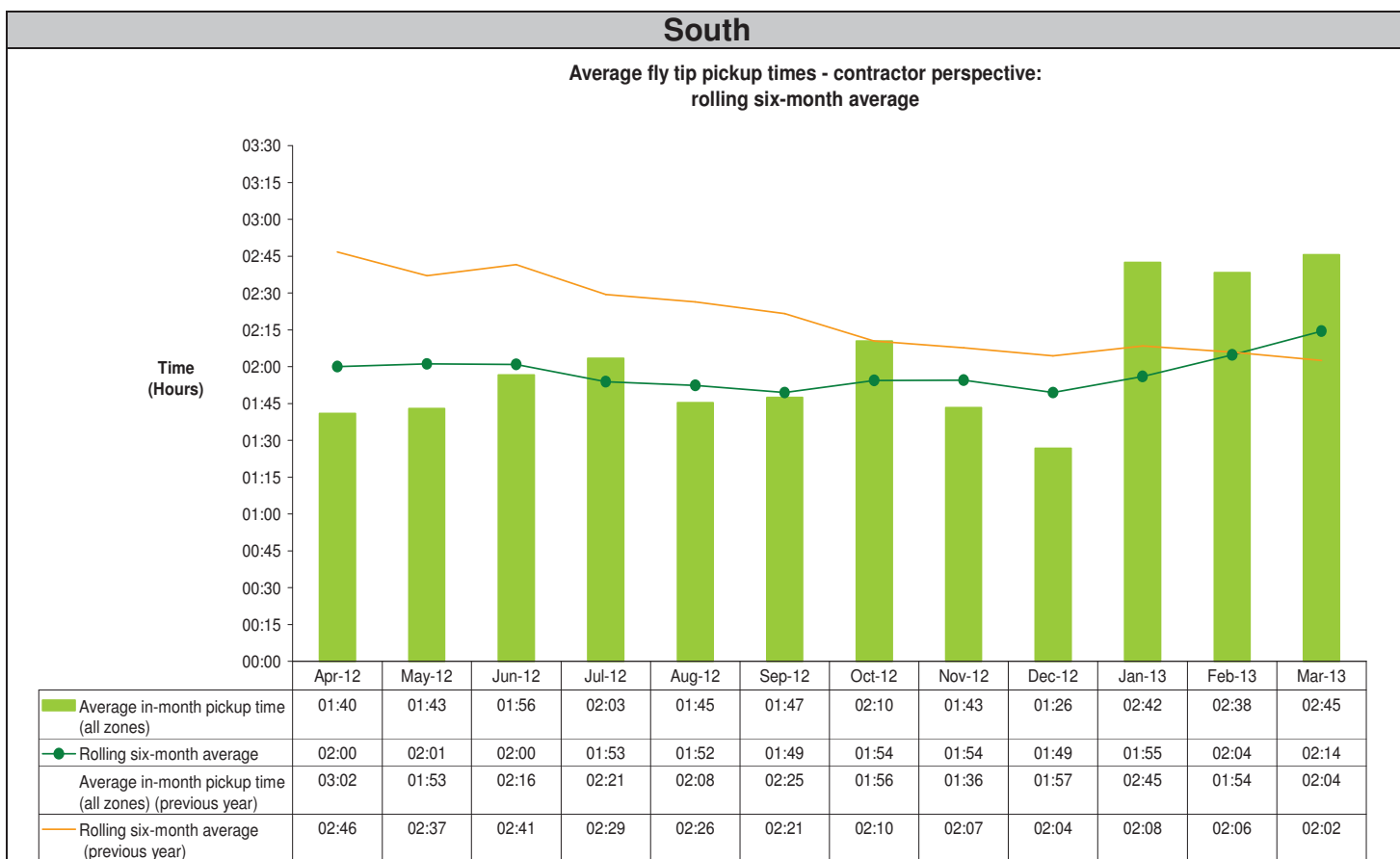
Recycling rate (high is good)



Notes

1. The rejection rate for Vale this quarter (1 Jan – 31 Mar) is 5.94%. (Rejected recycling goes to landfill.)
2. The 'Year to date' all recycling rate, 65.16%, was slightly below the target (65.67%). This was mainly as a result of:
 - Street sweepings having to go to landfill, rather than being recycled – this started in October; and
 - Since December, the cold weather, which lasted several months, has resulted in a reduction in the amount of garden waste. This was in excess of the normal seasonal drop, and has been a national phenomenon.

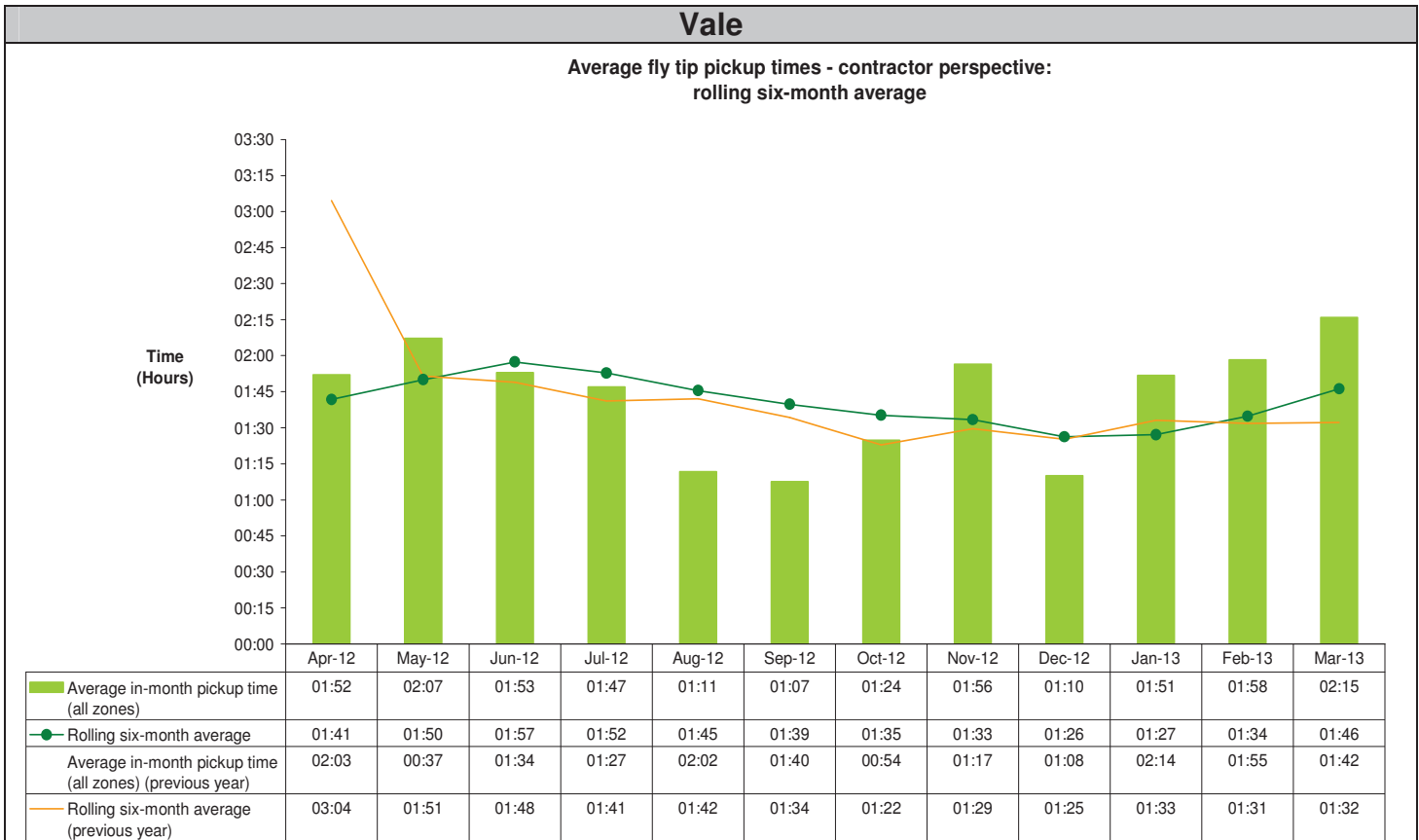
Fly tipping clearance time – contractor perspective (South)



Notes

1. This graph records the average clearance time (in hours) per month for all fly tips. In addition, a six month rolling average of this figure is provided. Equivalent figures from one year ago also appear. For a given fly tip, the clearance time is defined as the time between the contractor's employee receiving a work-sheet detailing the tip to be cleared and the clearance of that tip. The tip is cleared on the same day that the worksheet is received.
2. Does not include private land for either South or Vale since this is the responsibility of the landowner.

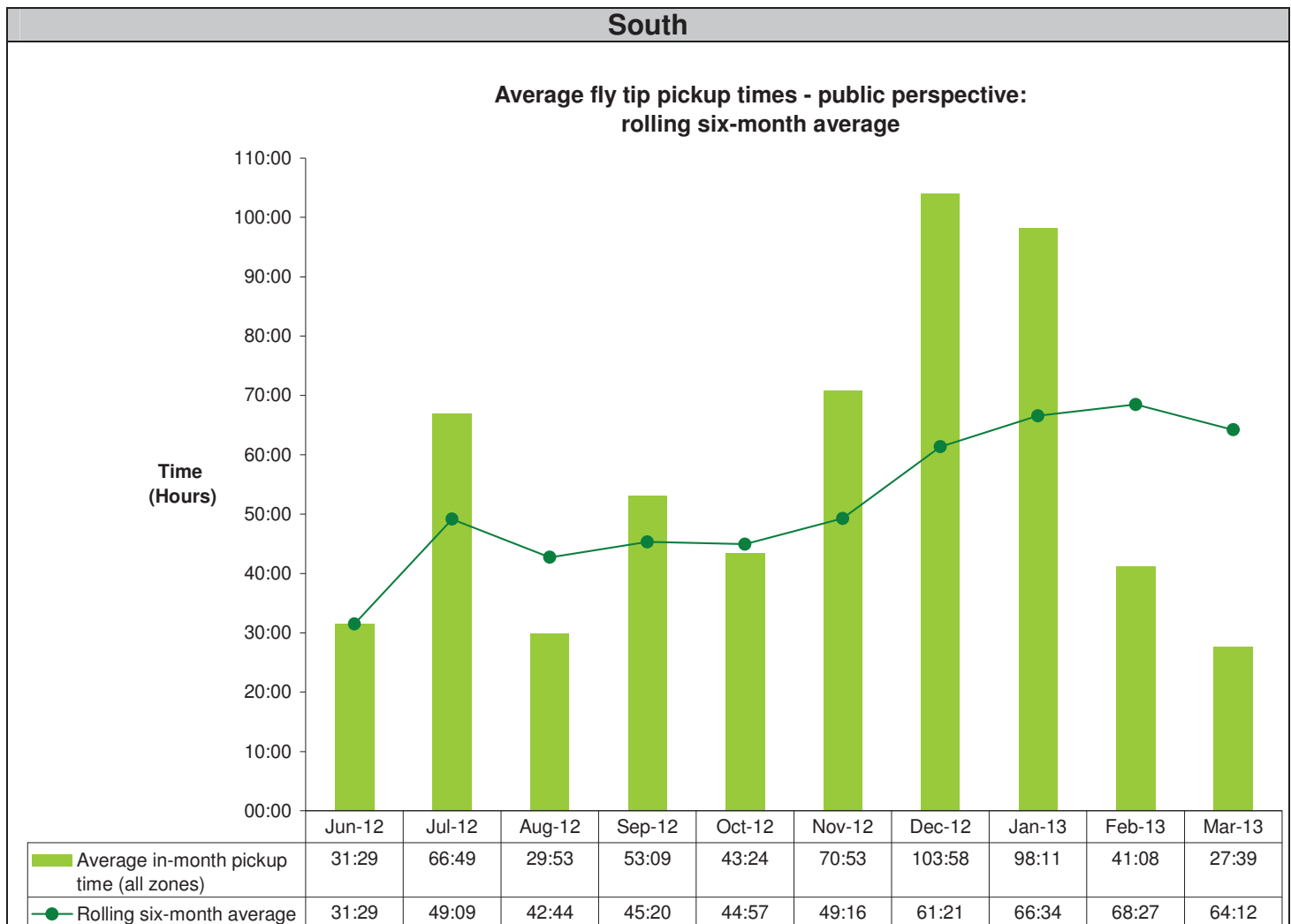
Fly tipping clearance time – contractor perspective (Vale)



Notes

1. Please see **Notes** on page 14 for further details.

Fly tipping clearance time – public perspective (South)



Notes

1. This graph records the average clearance time (in hours) per month for all fly tips. In addition, there is a rolling six month average of this figure. The time measured is the total elapsed time, i.e. it is inclusive of weekends, evenings and bank holidays. For a given fly tip, the clearance time is defined as the time between the receipt of a report about a fly tip from a member of the public and the clearance of that tip.
2. Data is only available from June 2012 onwards.
3. The average times in this graph are higher than those in the corresponding 'contractor perspective' graph. There are several reasons for this, but typical examples would be:
 - For some fly tips, it is necessary to arrange for additional equipment to be brought in;
 - There are some instances where collection of a fly tip will be delayed whilst Environmental Protection officers carry out their initial investigation to sift for evidence amongst the fly tip. The officers prioritise this type of work, and always conduct these investigations as promptly and efficiently as possible;
 - There may be uncertainty around land ownership, which will need to be established before arranging for removal;
 - The contractor's supervisor may need to attend before the crew is actually sent out;
 - It may not be possible to locate a fly tip on the first occasion due to insufficient or

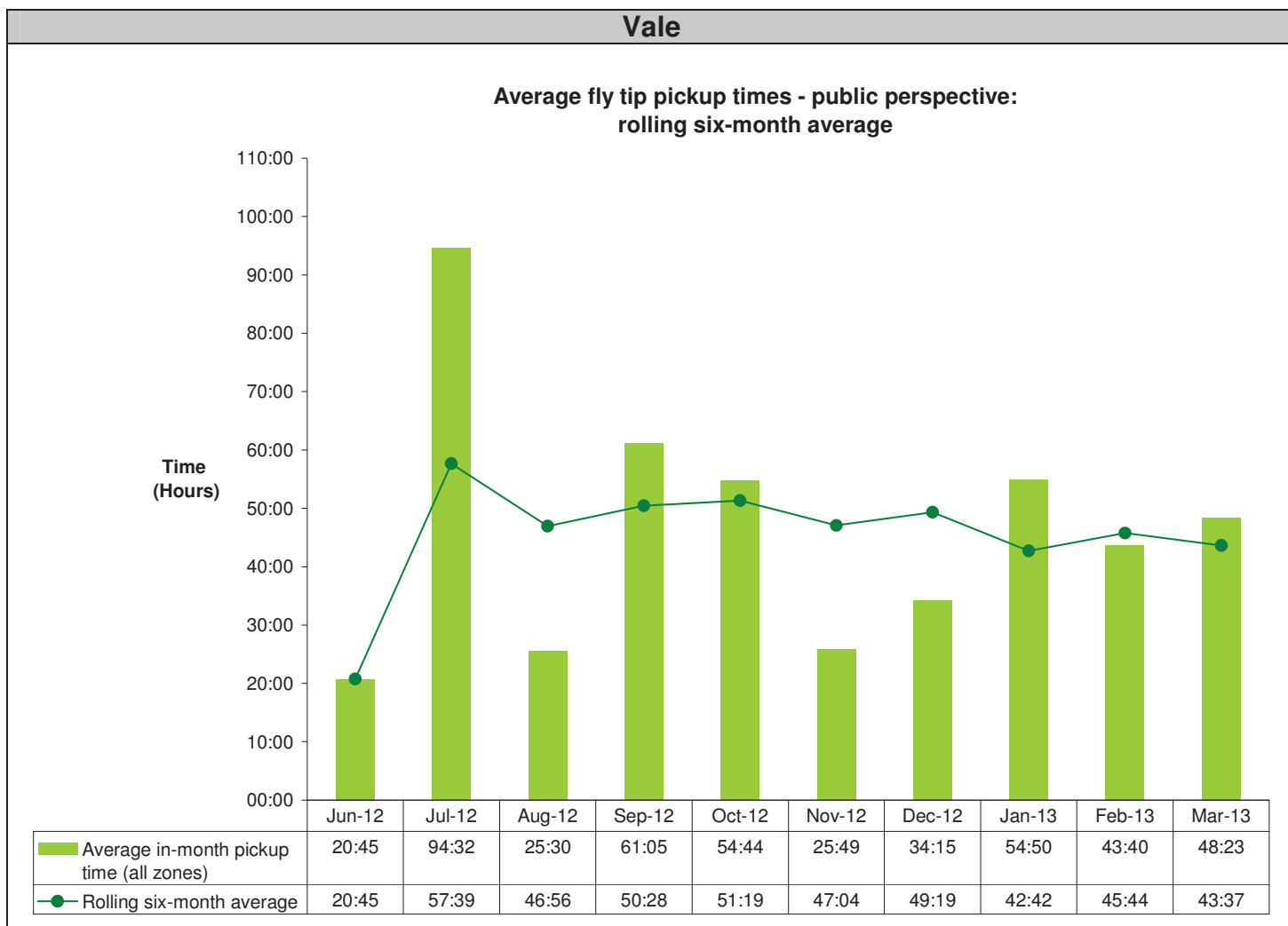
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inaccurate information being provided by a member of the public; and

- Reports received after a certain time will not be issued to crews until the following morning unless the report is considered urgent. Routine reports received over the weekend or out of hours will not be picked up until the next normal working day.

4. Please see **Note 2** on page 14 for further details about land types.

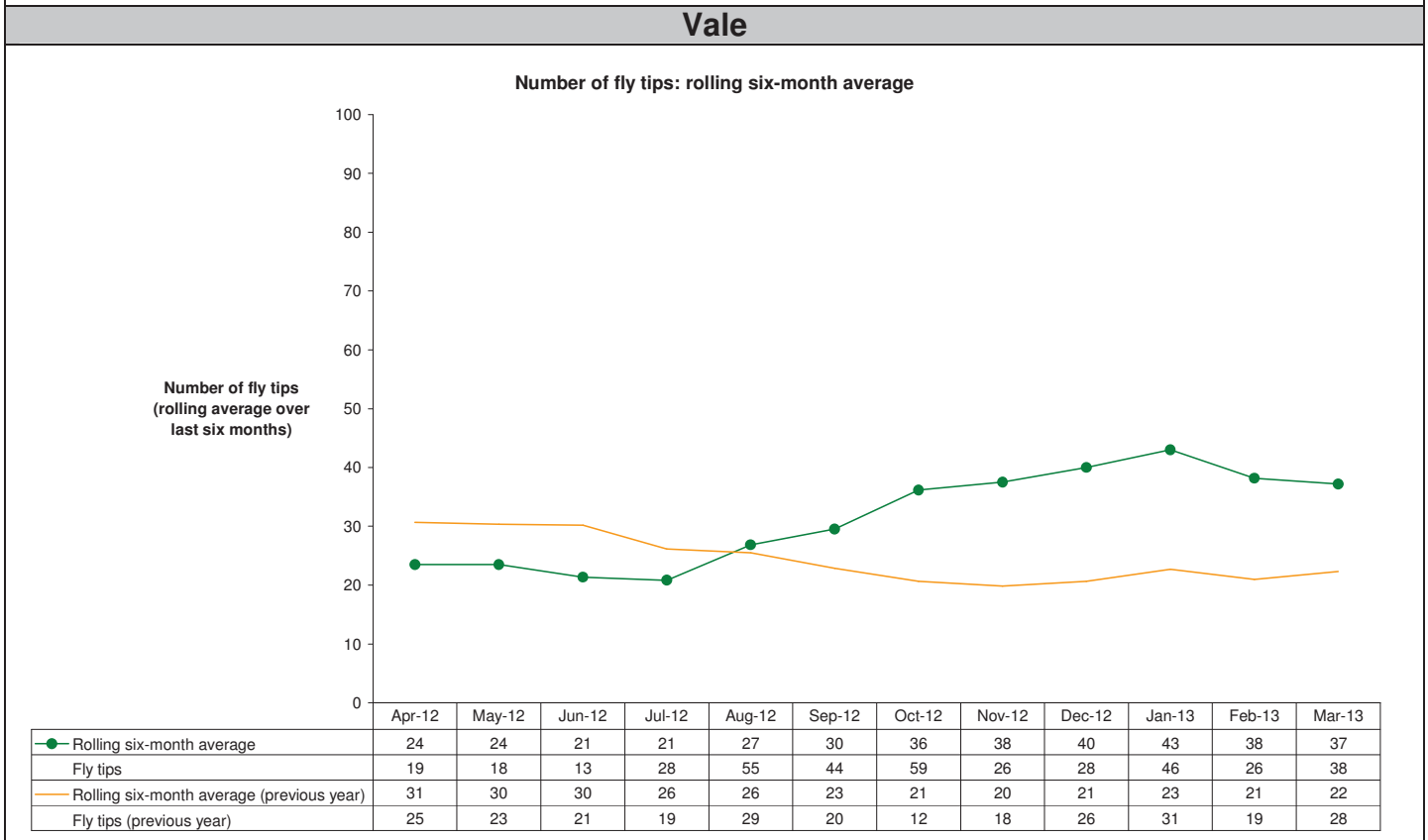
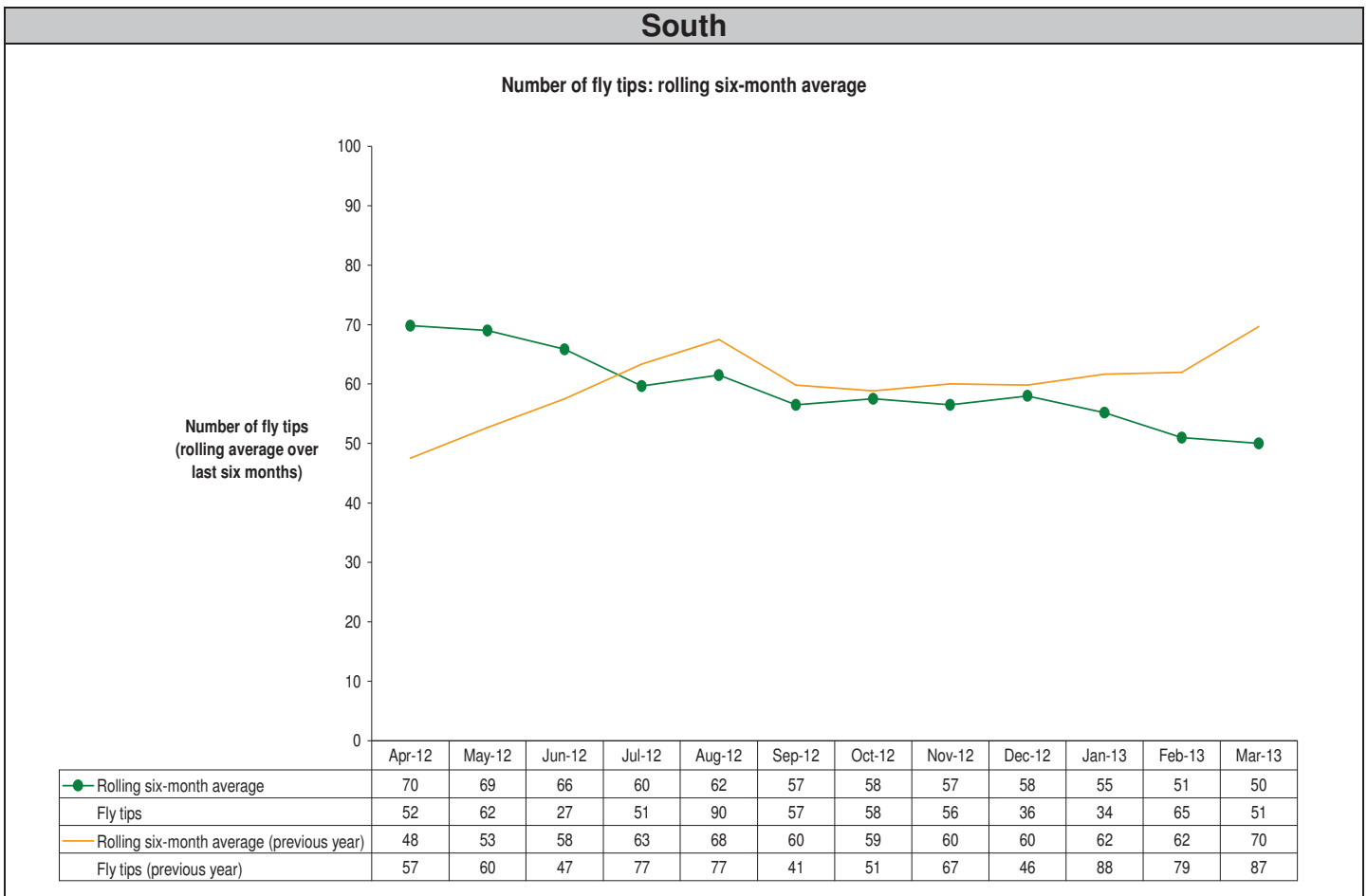
Fly tipping clearance time – public perspective (Vale)



Notes

1. Please see **Notes** on page 16 for further details.

Number of fly tips (rolling six-month average)



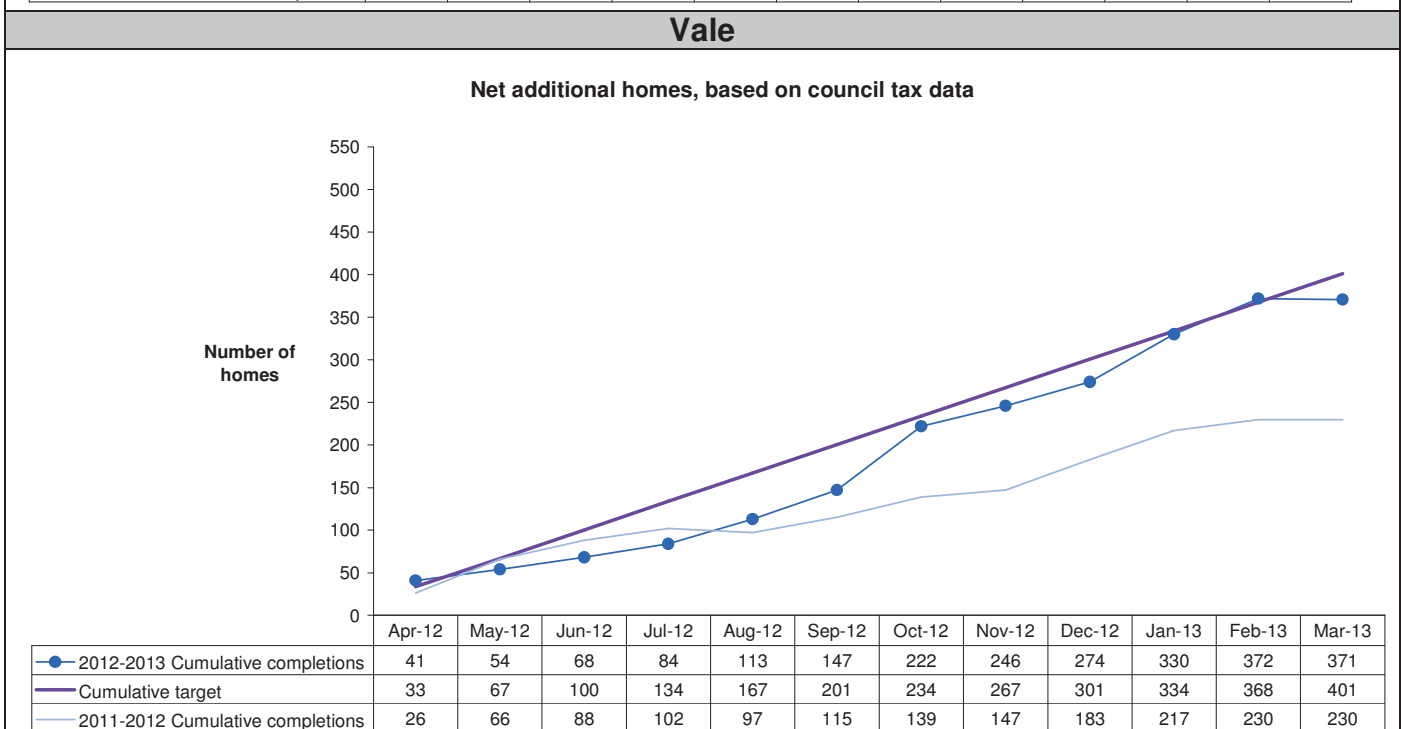
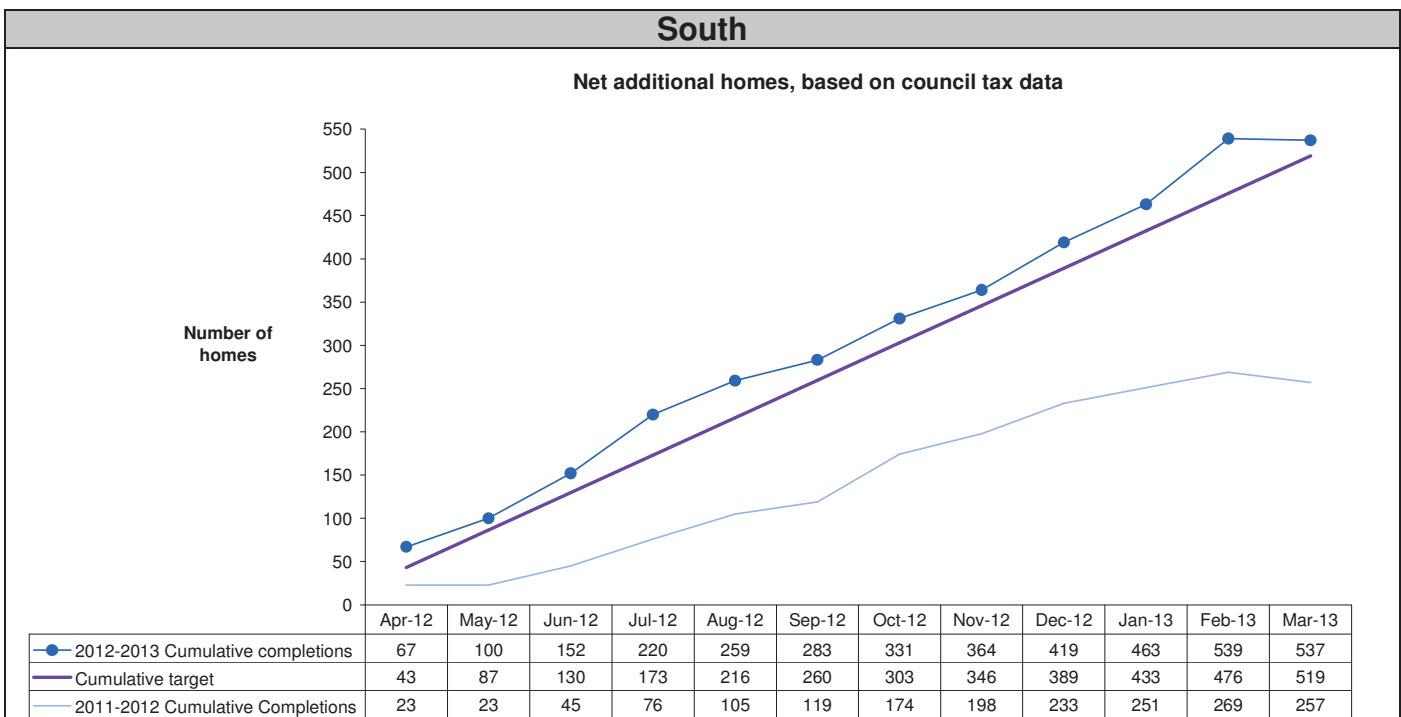
Notes

- Does not include private land for either South or Vale since this is the responsibility of the landowner.

- 2. South** – although there has historically always been higher levels of fly tips compared to Vale, mostly due to the topography of the district, the council is pleased to note that increased enforcement activity, coupled with publicity and education initiatives is reducing fly tipping levels in South to close to levels at Vale. The additional resources applied to this priority by the council is showing benefits and officers expect this trend to continue.
- 3. Vale** – there are many bring sites in supermarket car parks (South have none in supermarket car parks), such as Sainsburys Wantage, Tescos Abingdon and, until recently, Peachcroft Abingdon. There has been a noticeable increase in the amount of non-recyclable bulky material that has been fly tipped at these sites and also at the Gloucester Street car park, Faringdon bring site. On average, figures for fly tipping at these areas accounted for 37% of all fly tips recorded each month. Action has been taken to help reduce this figure by having the bring site closed at Peachcroft Abingdon, which has proven a remarkable success in the cleanliness of the area, with no more recorded fly tips in this area. Also, enforcement action has been taken at Tescos Abingdon by the installation of cameras to help tackle the fly tipping issue at this site. So far, five fixed penalty notices have been issued with further enforcement work pending, which is all helping to send out the correct message that this area is for domestic recycling purposes only. With ongoing education and enforcement, this will help reflect an improvement in the fly tipping figures in the new financial year.

SECTION 3 – HOUSING

Net additional homes, based on council tax data (high is good)

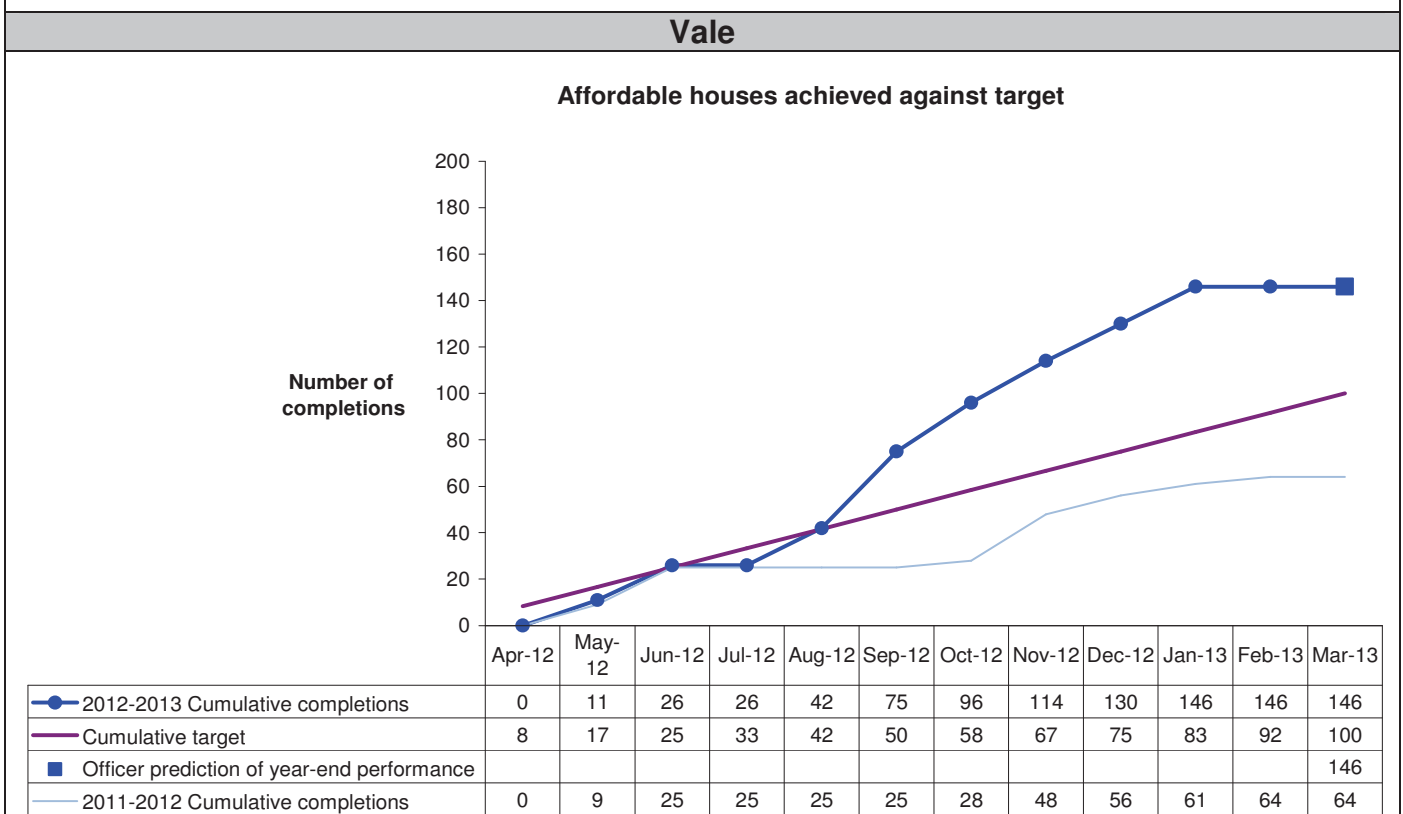
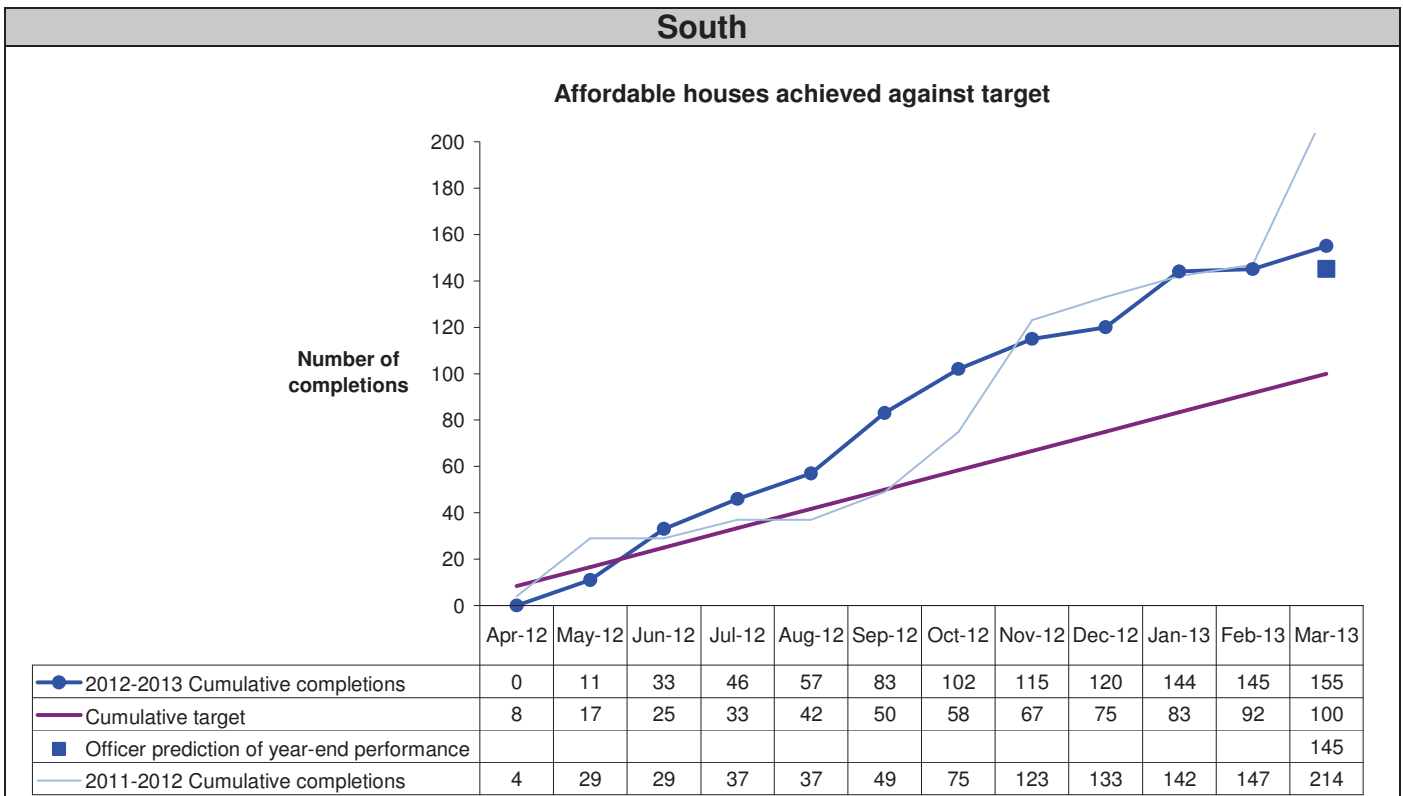


Note

Both of the targets reflect the prediction of total housing to be completed during the course of this year, as supplied by Planning. It should be noted that there is a lag between a housing completion as defined by Planning, and registration for council tax.

It is possible for the total to decrease, as happened between Feb 2013 and Mar 2013 at both South and Vale – this is attributable to demolitions or to conversions.

Affordable housing achieved against target (high is good)

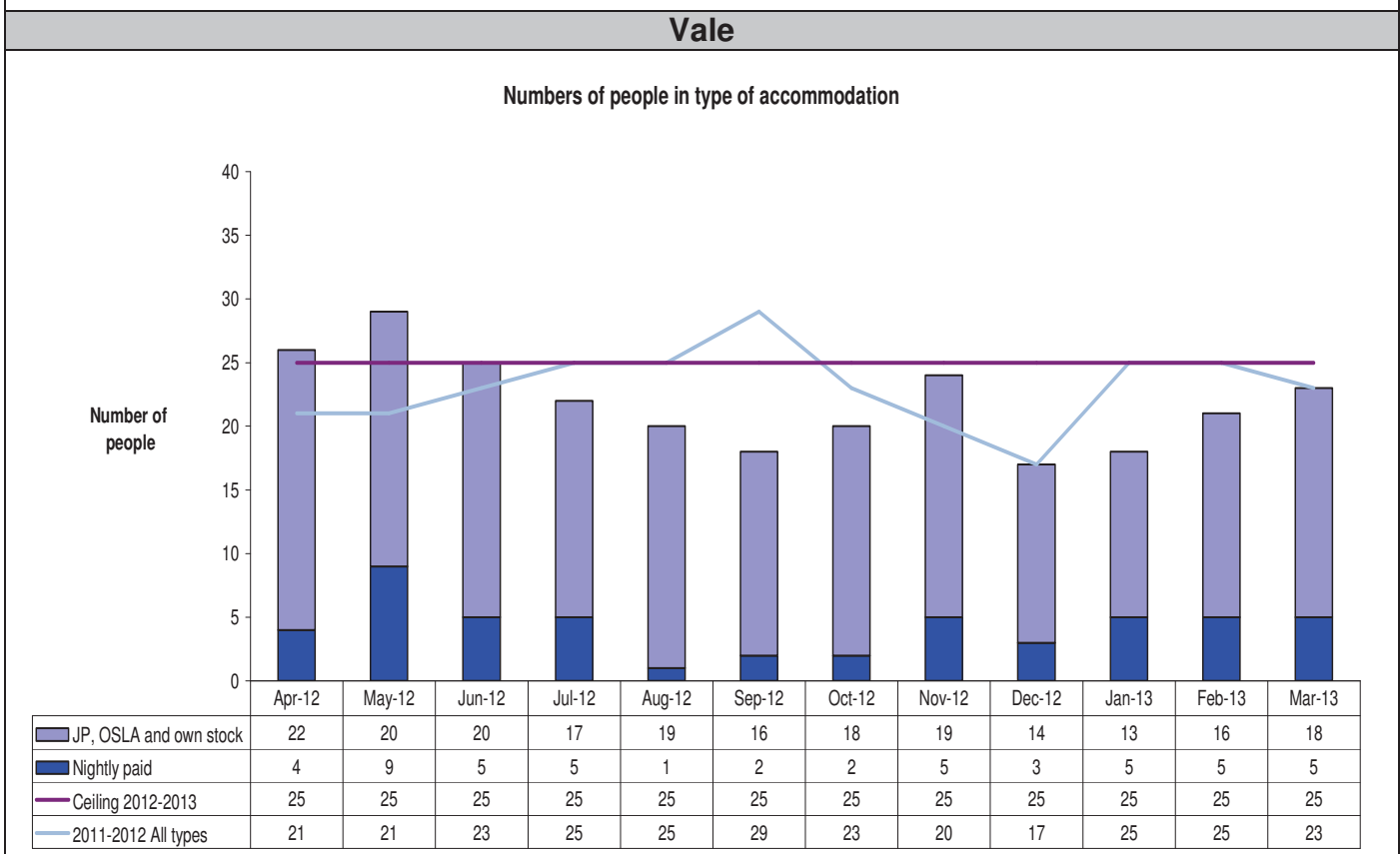
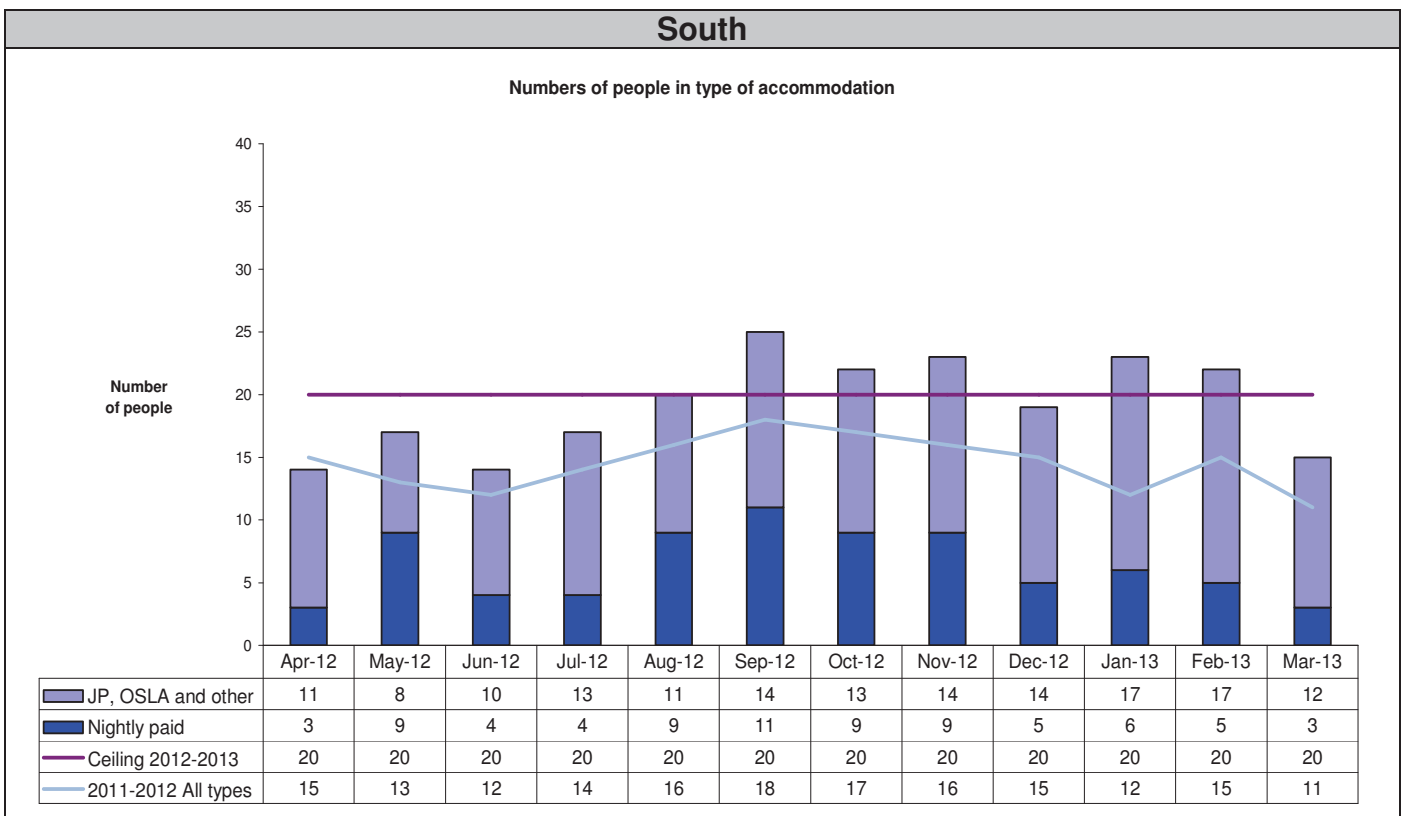


Notes

- South and Vale** – it is not possible to compare the ‘Affordable completions’ and the ‘Net additional homes’ in a given month. This is because affordable completions are reported to us by Housing Associations – at the point of reporting, a given affordable completion is very likely not to be occupied and therefore not to be on the council tax register.

- 2. Vale** – Timbmets has delivered 62 units, equating to more than 42% of all affordable housing delivered this year. Folly Farm is nearing completion with 30 affordable homes completed in 2012-13. Construction on the Chilton Fields site is progressing well with 25 affordable homes delivered this year.
- 3. South** – Great Western Park has continued to be the main provider of affordable housing, accounting for nearly 50% of all delivery this year. The Fairmile development has also contributed 24 new homes this year. Redevelopment of sites owned by Soha Housing, which includes redundant sheltered schemes, has delivered 30 new affordable homes which are a big improvement on the previous housing provision. The Open Market Homebuy Scheme has continued to prove popular, with nine completions so far in 2012-13 and further purchases underway.

Homeless people in temporary accommodation (low is good)



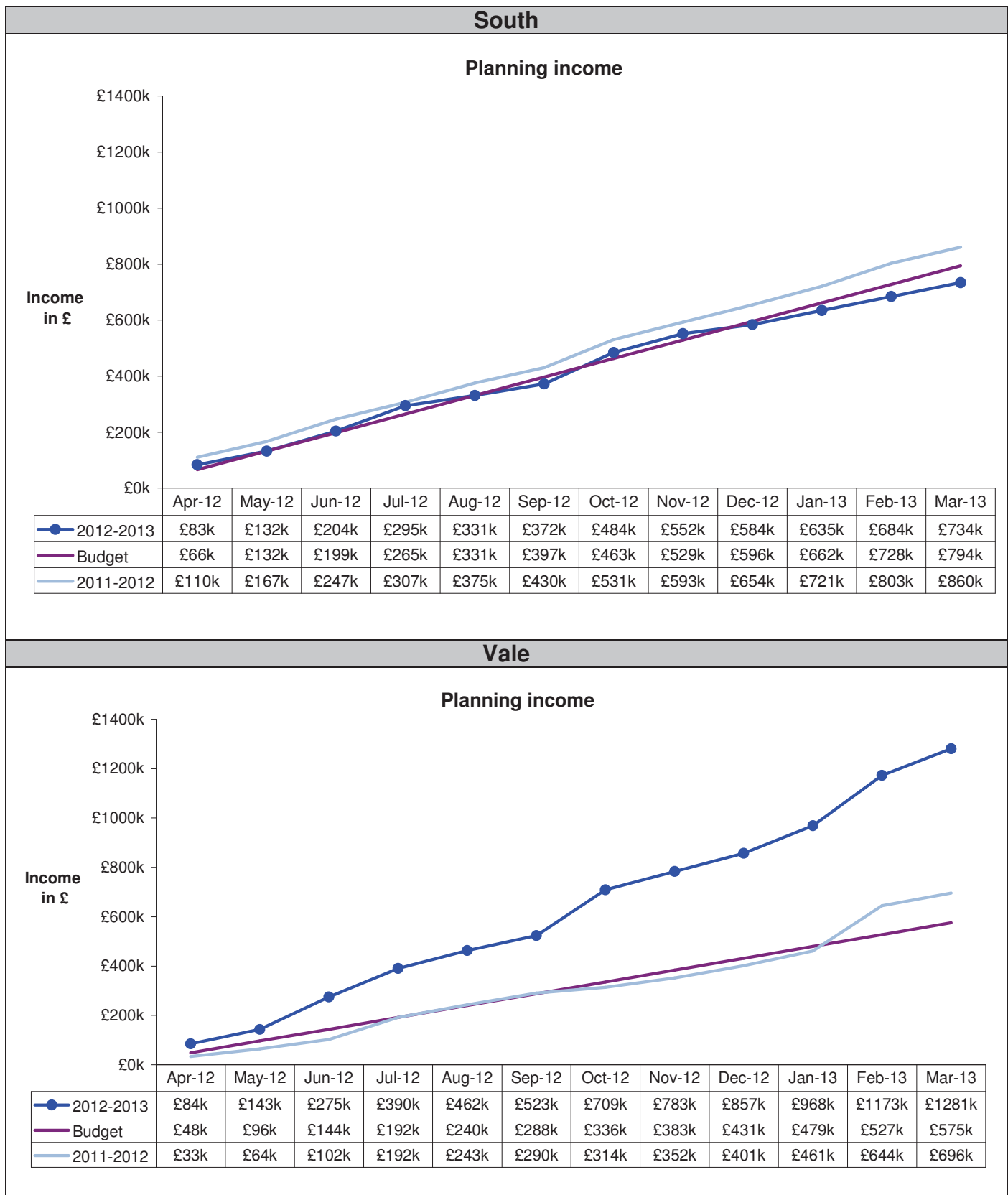
Notes

- JP** – Joint protocol. This refers to protocols between each council and their housing association (Sovereign Vale and Soha Housing) whereby some properties have been retained as temporary accommodation.
- OSLA** – Oxford Social Lettings Agency.

- 3. Vale** – the target for number of people in temporary accommodation (TA) is higher at Vale (25) than South (20) for the following reasons:
- (i) The number of people who present as homeless at Vale (based on data for the last four years) is 37% higher than at South. Since the proportion of people accepted into TA is similar between the councils it follows that the number of people at Vale who are likely to be accepted into TA is higher.
 - (ii) South have access to more alternative supported accommodation than Vale, which means that fewer potentially homeless people would have to apply as homeless. In South, there are 60 plus units whereas in Vale there are 34.

SECTION 4 – FINANCE – INCOME

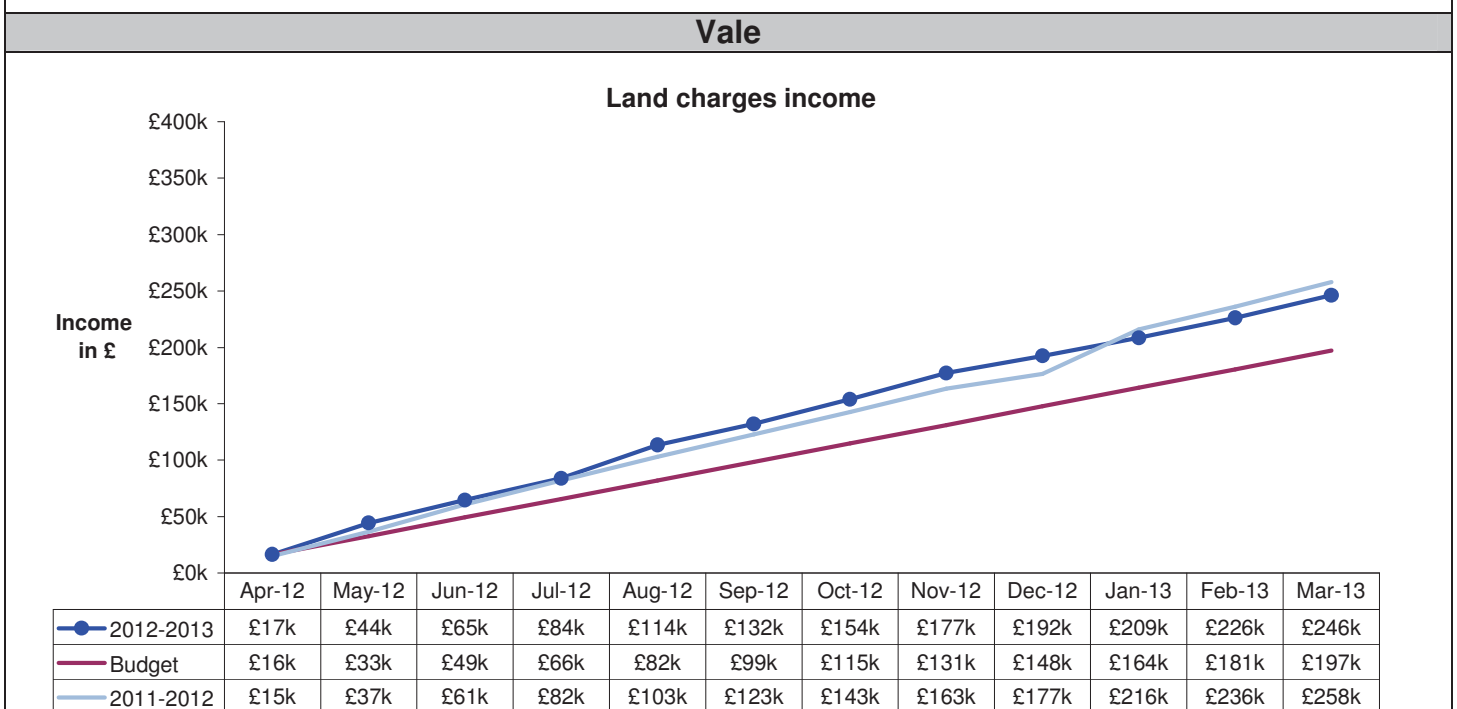
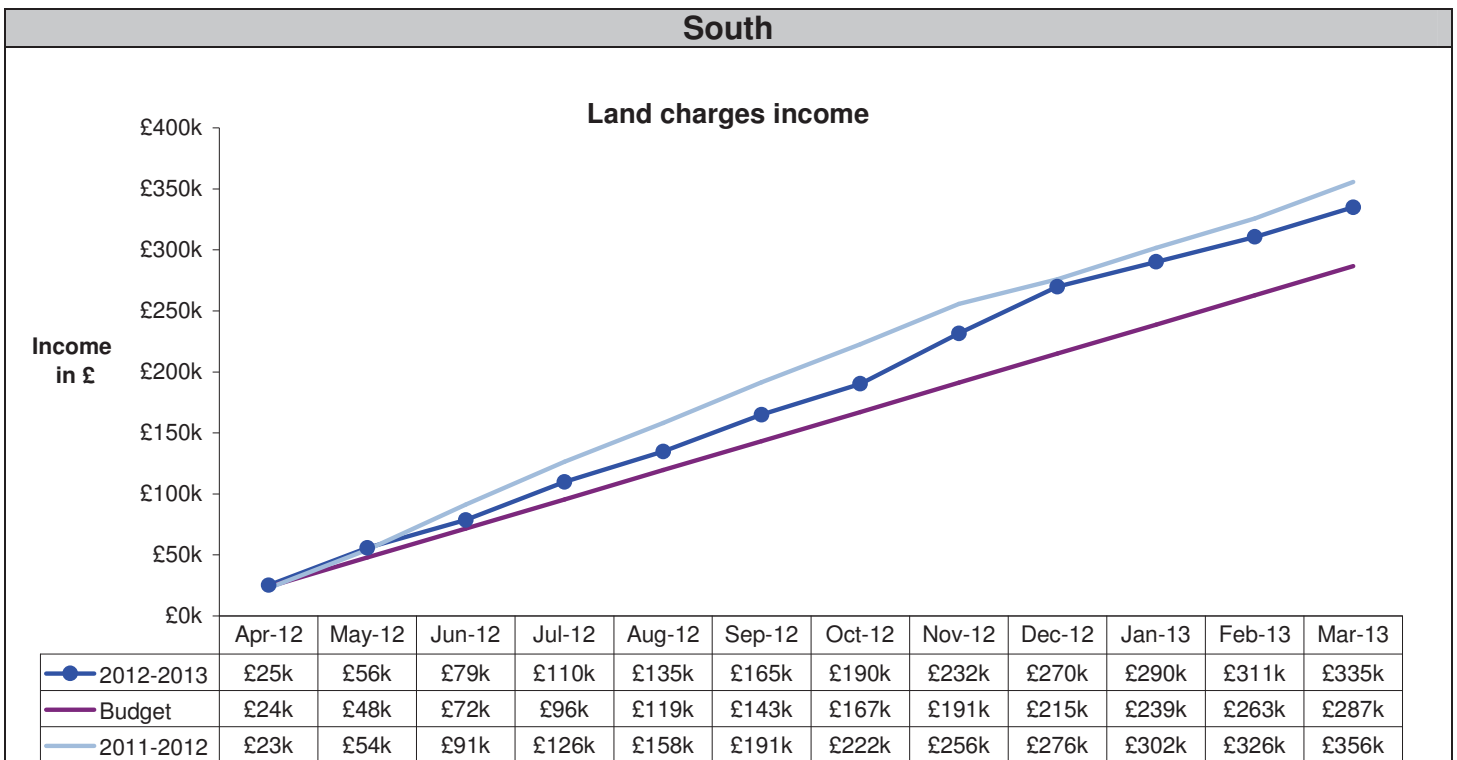
Planning income vs. profile (high is good)



Notes

1. For both councils, the following total net income is shown (building control is excluded):
 - Condition monitoring
 - Pre-applications
 - Minor amendments
 - Planning applications
 - Informal Permitted Development Enquiries
 - Lawful Development (Proposed)
 - Photocopying
2. **Vale** – the high income is due to the high number of major applications received between April 2012 and March 2013, which is double the number of major applications received in the same period in 2011/12. This is a result of the current housing land supply shortage. Extra resources have been brought in, funded by the extra fee income. In addition, an across the board 15% increase in planning application fees came into effect on 22 November 2012.
3. **South** – planning income was lower than last year and just below our prediction for the year, reflecting the fact that planning application submissions in the final quarter of 2012/13 were lower than expected. Other sources of planning income, such as from pre application advice, remained steady.

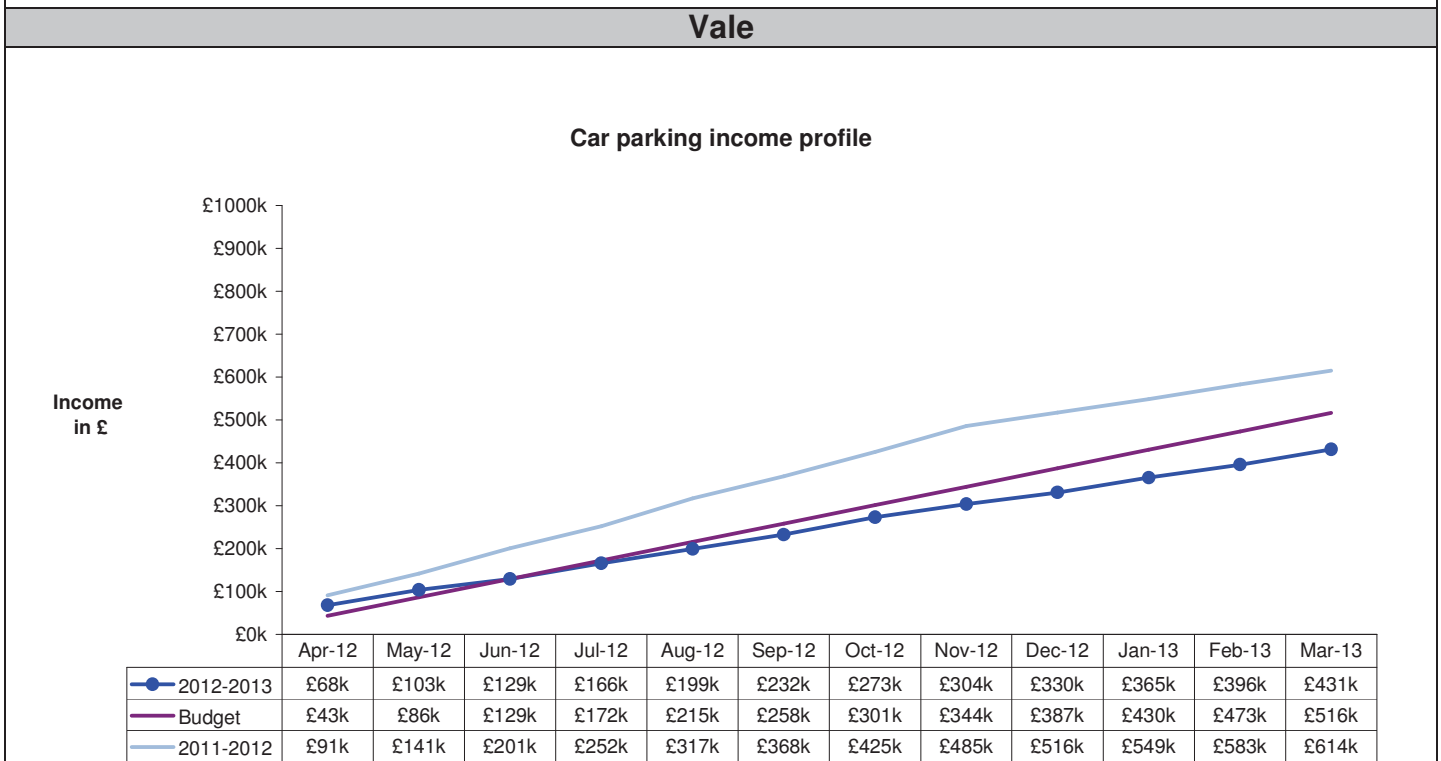
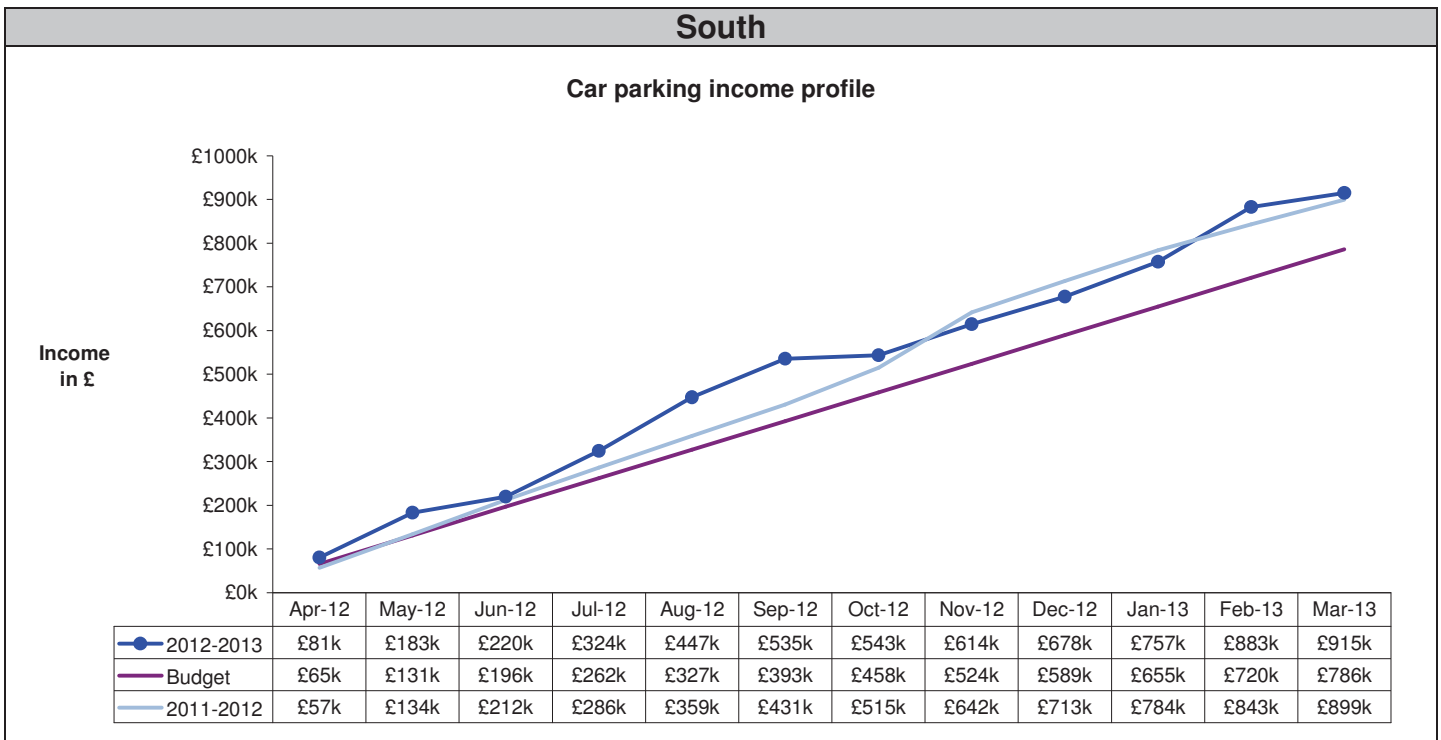
Land charges – income vs. profile (high is good)



Note

South and Vale – in both cases, there have been higher than predicted volumes of searches.

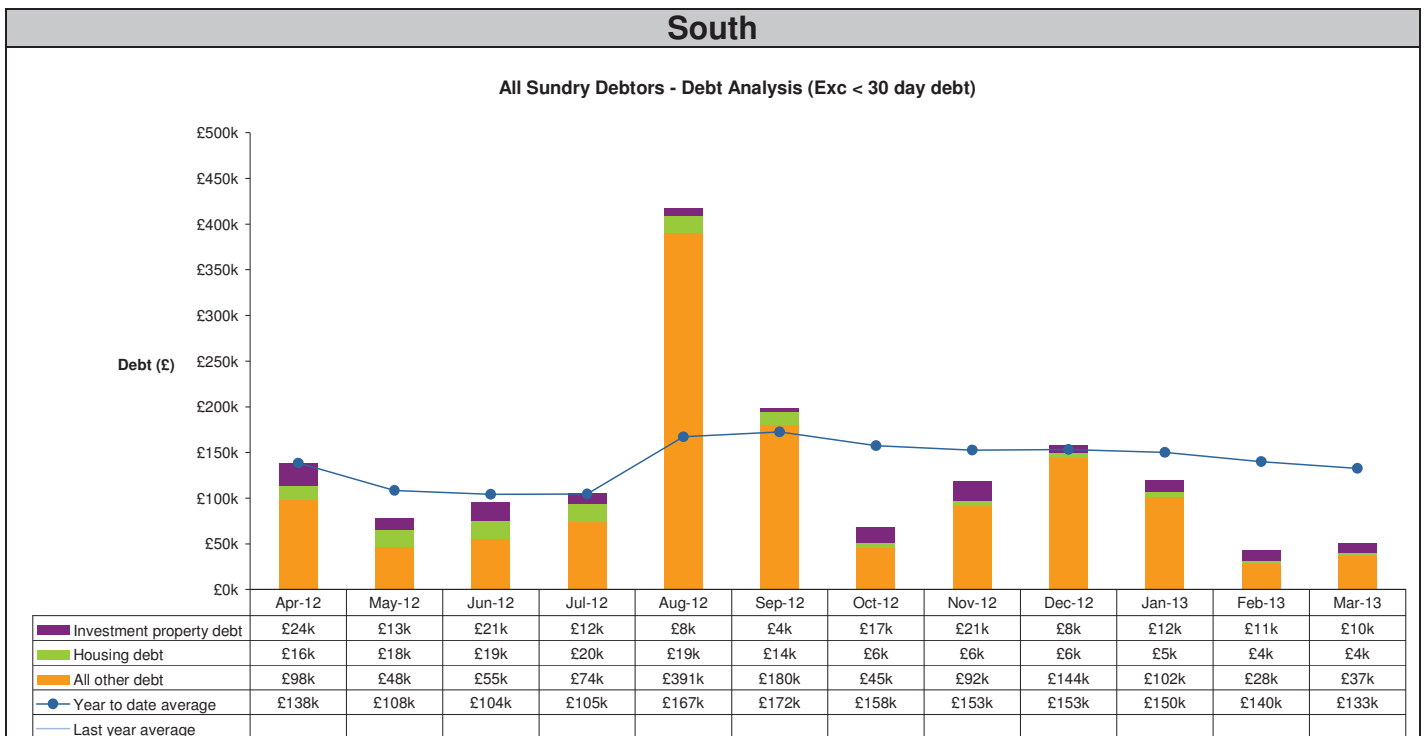
Car parking – income vs. profile (high is good)



Notes

1. **South** - outturn is £129,000 over budget. This is attributable to more income from excess charge notices than anticipated, plus more shared income than anticipated from other car park operators like Waitrose.
2. **Vale** - outturn is £85,000 under budget. This is due to a larger than anticipated reduction in income from the offer of the free two hours' parking.

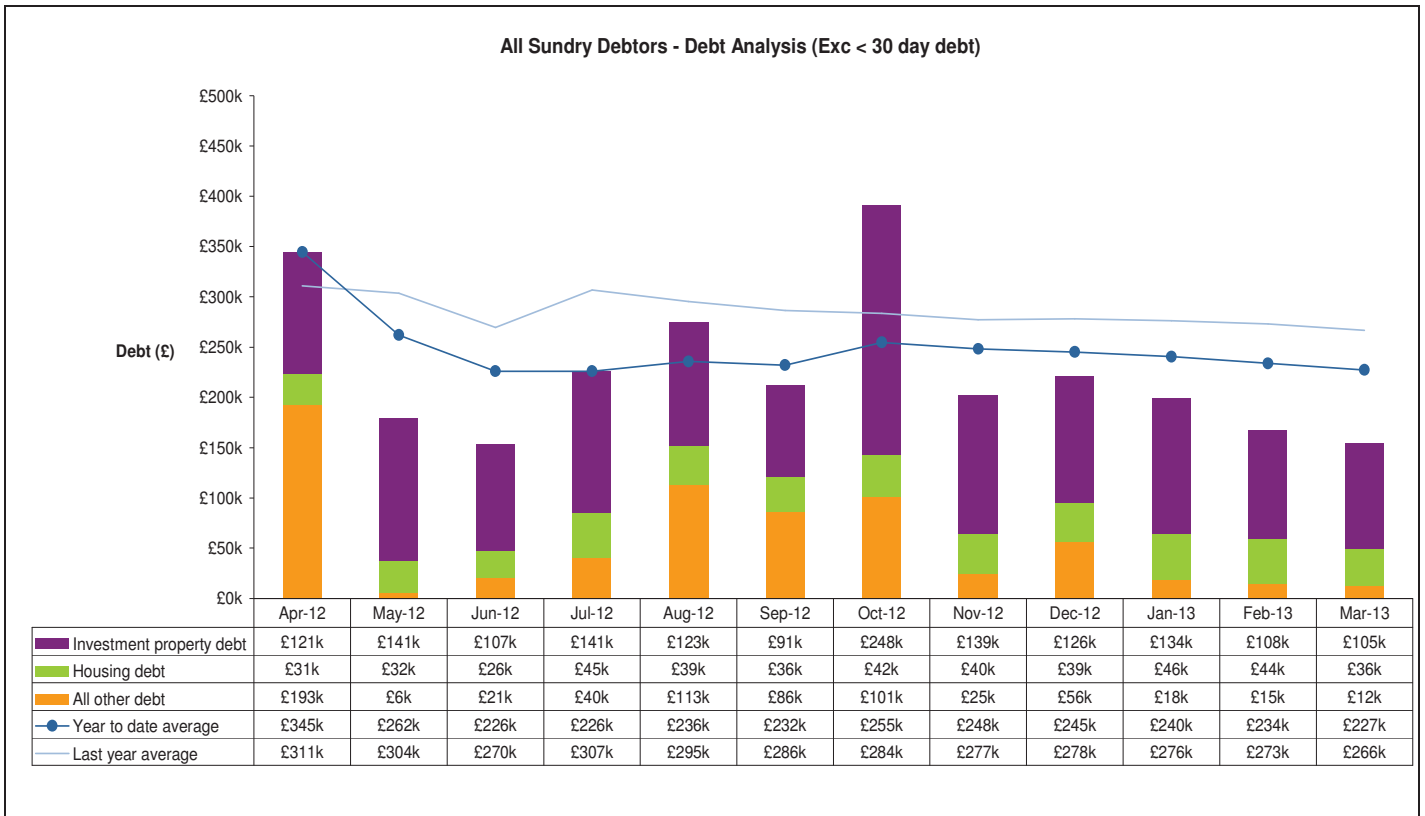
Debt analysis: South – all debts (low is good)



Notes

1. Back data for South is not readily available, so there is no 'Last year average' at present. All data is taken from Agresso.
2. The total debt at year-end (£51k) was an all-time year-end record for South; the previous record, set last year, was £109k.

Debt analysis: Vale – all debts (low is good)

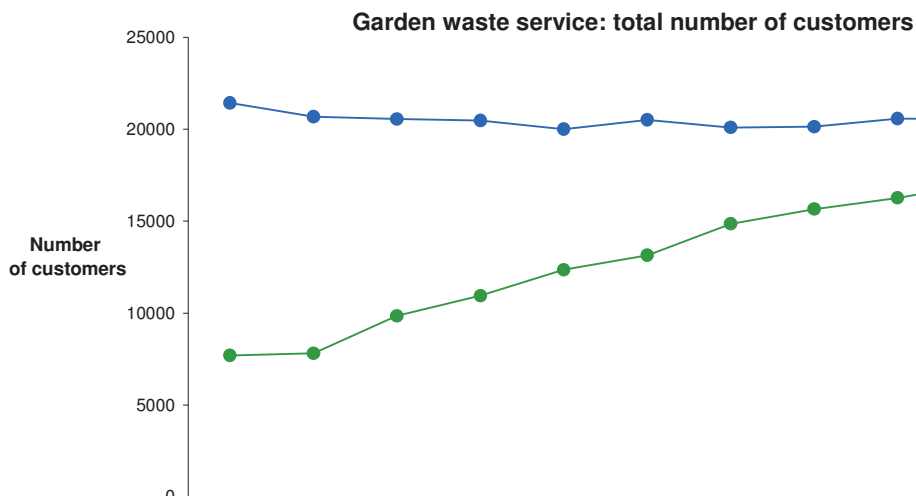


Notes

1. The Vale debt at year-end, £153k, was a record year-end low.
2. The Investment property debt decreased in March. Property and Legal have been actively managing and vigorously pursuing any debtors to ensure any rent and service charges due are paid. There remain a few large debts, all of which either have payment plans or County Court Judgements in place.

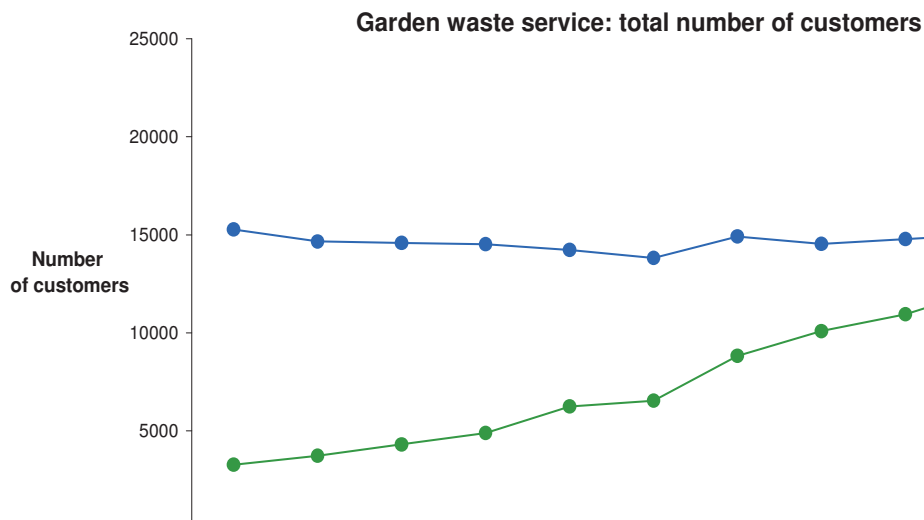
Garden waste service: total number of customers

South



	Apr-12	May-12	Jun-12	Jul-12	Aug-12	Sep-12	Oct-12	Nov-12	Dec-12	Jan-13	Feb-13	Mar-13
● Total number of customers	21439	20689	20560	20485	20021	20514	20110	20148	20591	20577	20586	20630
● Number of customers paying by direct debit	7699	7818	9855	10951	12360	13155	14858	15660	16275	17066	17778	18624
% of customers paying by direct debit	35.91%	37.79%	47.93%	53.46%	61.74%	64.13%	73.88%	77.72%	79.04%	82.94%	86.36%	90.28%

Vale



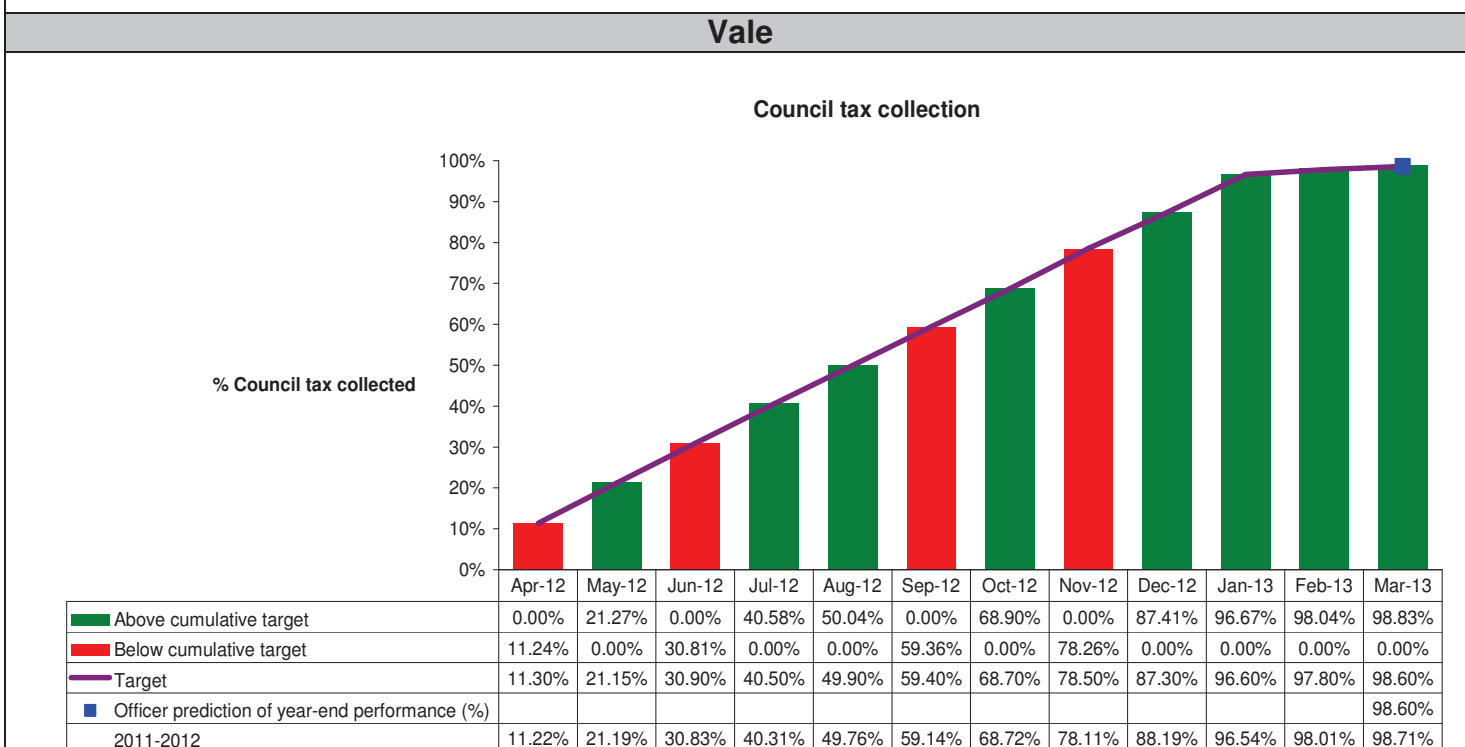
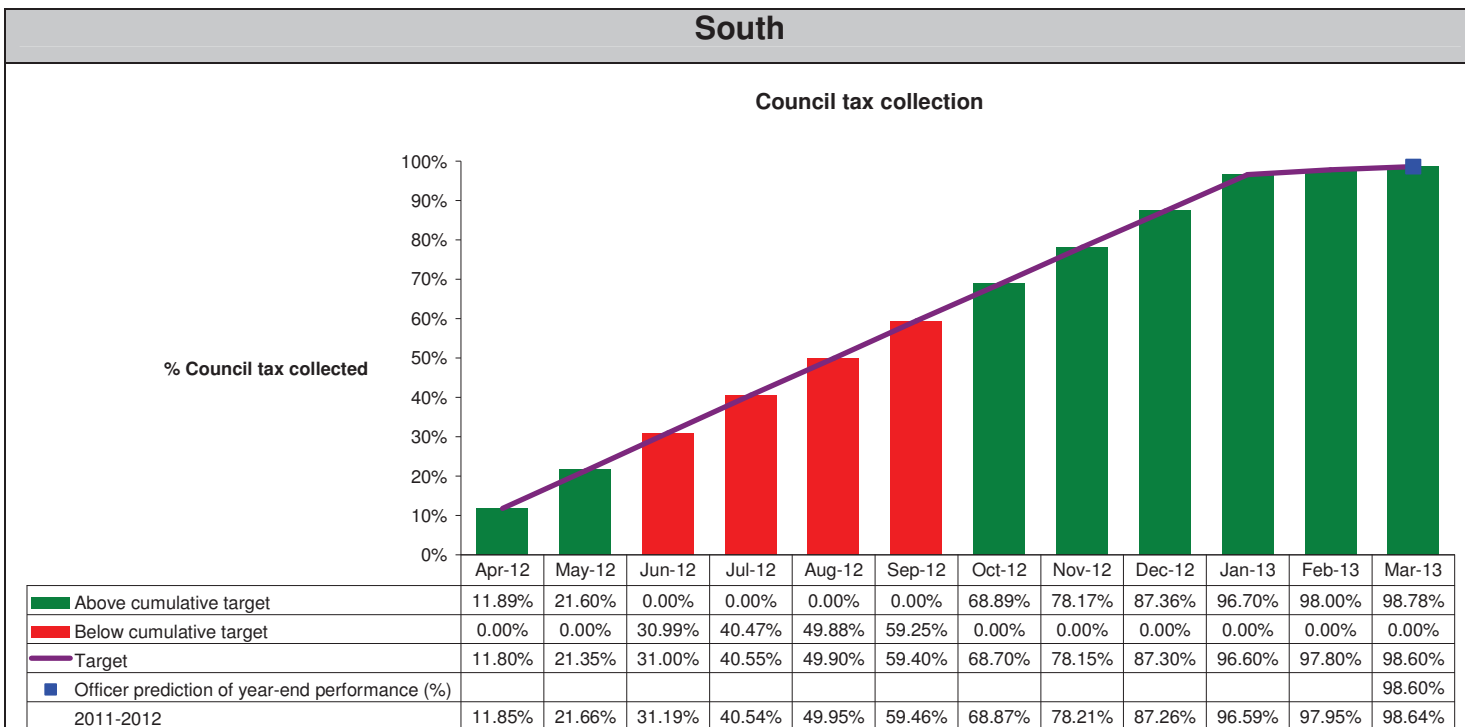
	Apr-12	May-12	Jun-12	Jul-12	Aug-12	Sep-12	Oct-12	Nov-12	Dec-12	Jan-13	Feb-13	Mar-13
● Total number of customers	15272	14656	14584	14524	14238	13813	14927	14530	14785	15031	15039	15156
● Number of customers paying by direct debit	3278	3733	4315	4894	6251	6551	8827	10090	10953	12298	12956	13676
% of customers paying by direct debit	21.46%	25.47%	29.59%	33.70%	43.90%	47.43%	59.13%	69.44%	74.08%	81.82%	86.15%	90.23%

Notes

South and Vale – the garden waste service is being converted to direct debit only. This accounts for the increase in the ‘% of customers paying by direct debit’ in the tables under the graphs above. By April 2013, wherever possible, customers will be paying by direct debit. The use of direct debit enables us more accurately to track customer payments. Therefore, we have a better system for

ensuring that those customers who have a brown bin pay for the service.

Council tax collection (% each month) (high is good)

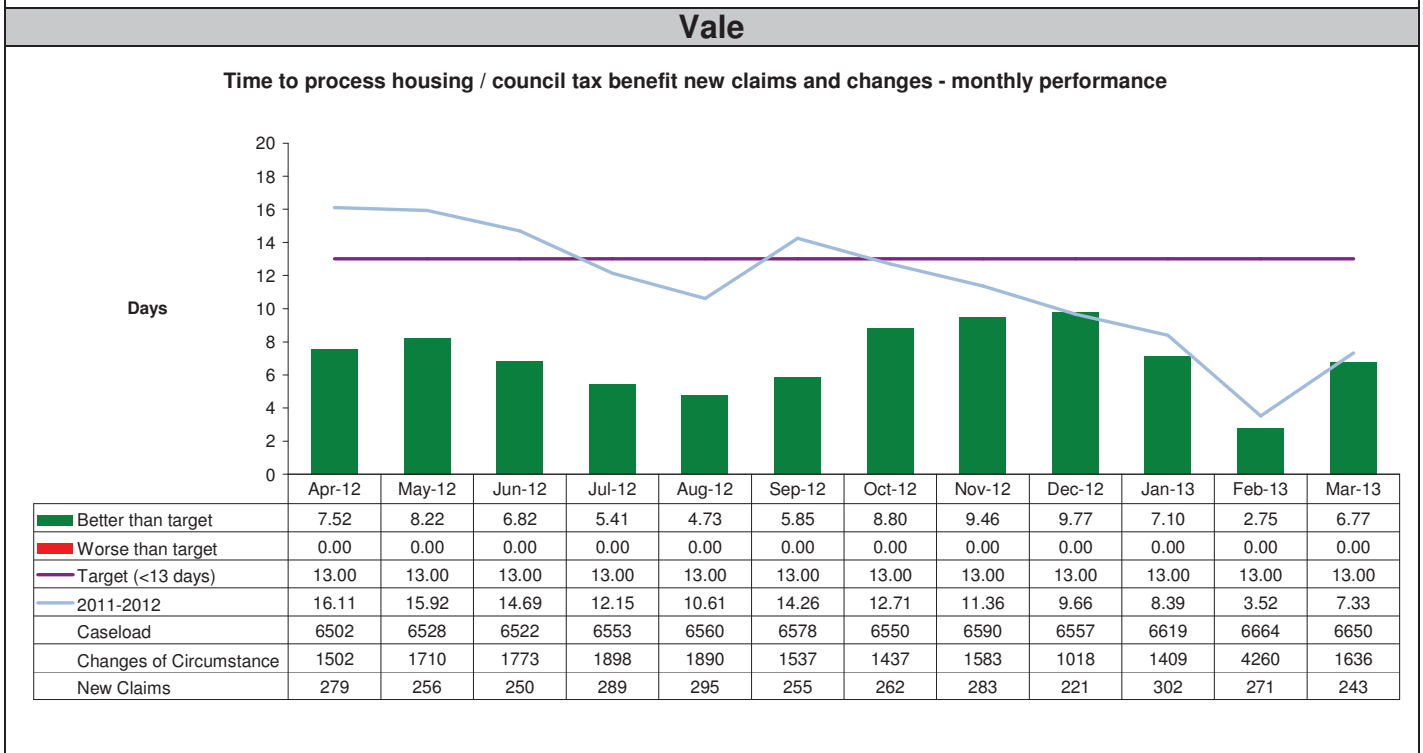
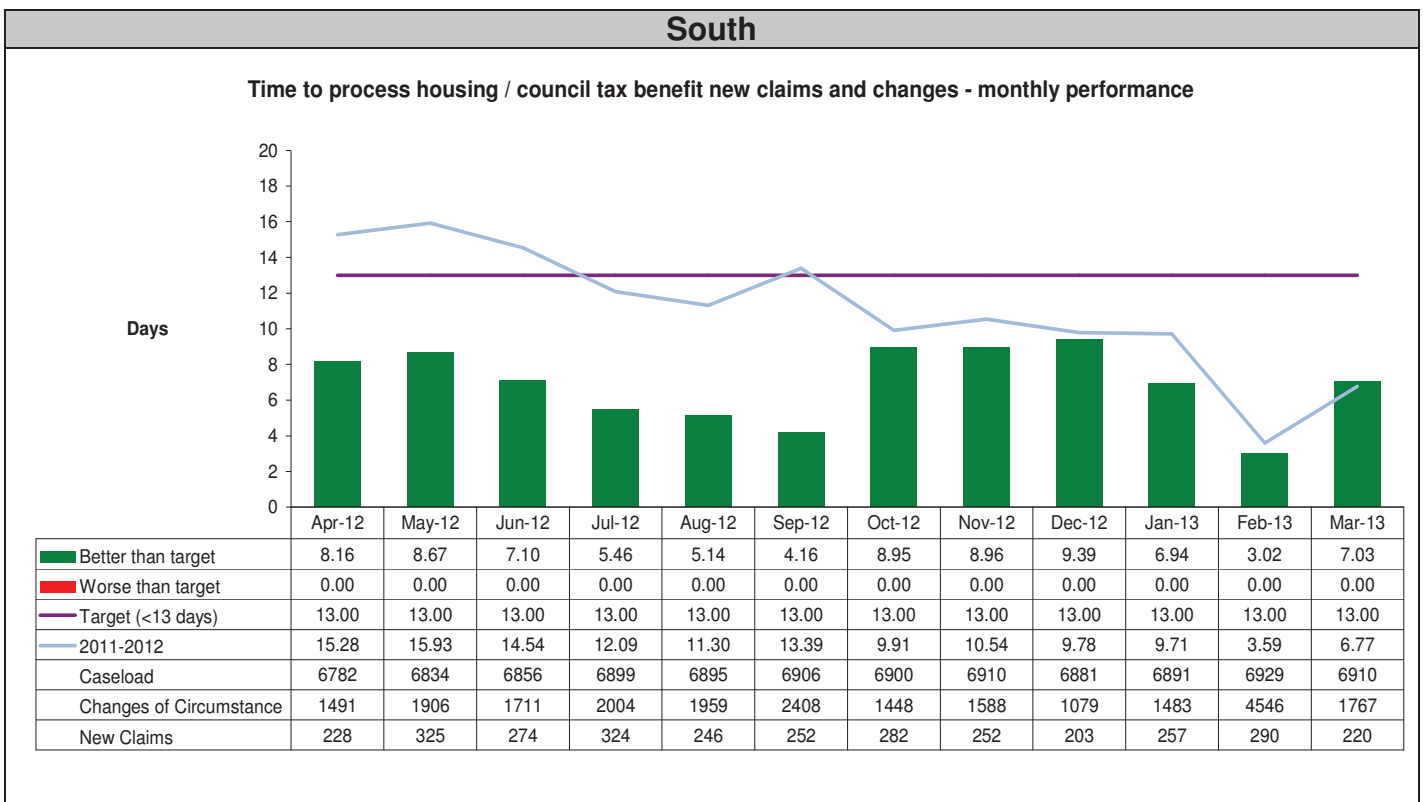


Notes

- South and Vale** – in 2012-13, both councils achieved their highest ever in-year collection rates.
- South and Vale** – although this is a cumulative graph, bars have been used to aid readability, because the performance is so close to the target. The 2011-2012 data has not been plotted, for the same reason, although it does appear in the data table.

SECTION 5 – BENEFITS

Time to process housing / council tax benefit new claims and changes, monthly (low is good)



Notes

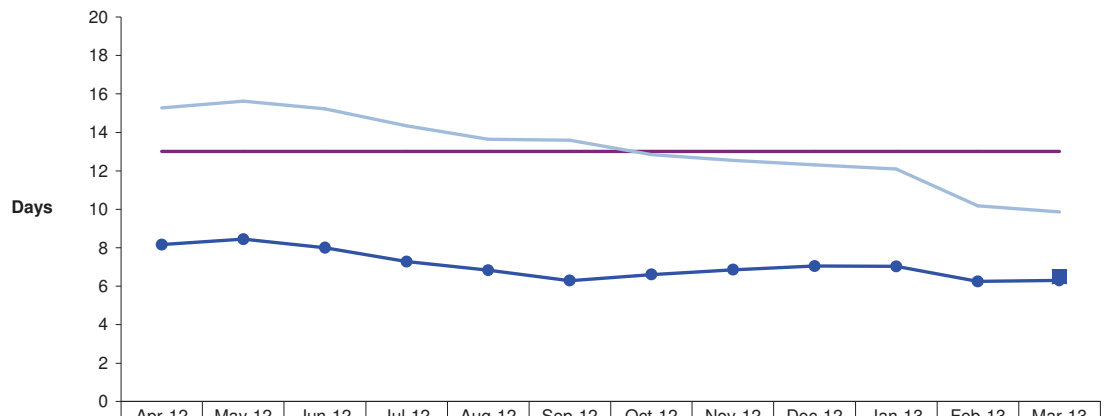
- The **Caseload** is the total number of claimants who have live claims, as measured at the end of each month.

2. **New claims** is the total number of new claims processed in-month.
3. **Changes in circumstance** is the number of amendments made to existing claims during the month. This could be due to e.g. income and capital changes etc and cancellations.
4. **South and Vale** – during February, we begin receiving notifications of rent increases from social landlords, e.g. Soha Housing and Sovereign Vale. This accounts for the relative increase in ‘Changes in circumstances’ in February.

Time to process housing / council tax benefit new claims and changes, cumulative (low is good)

South

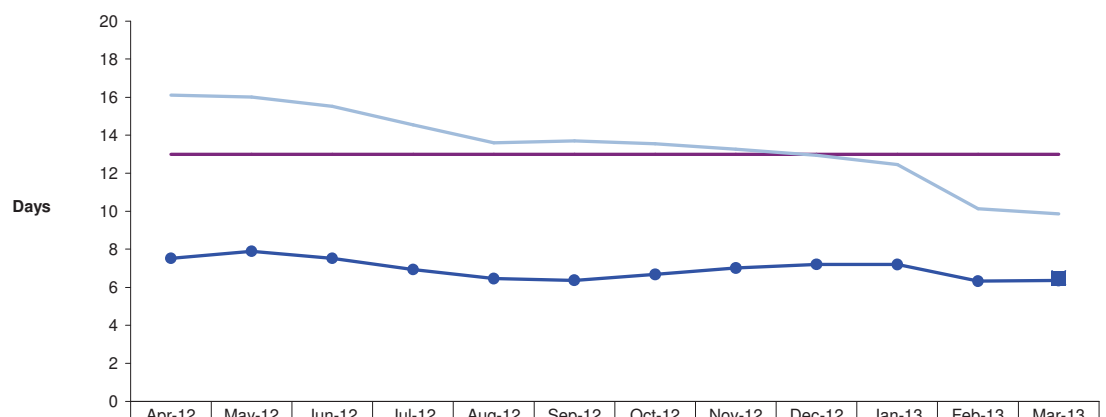
Time to process housing / council tax benefit new claims and changes - cumulative performance since 1 April 2012



	Apr-12	May-12	Jun-12	Jul-12	Aug-12	Sep-12	Oct-12	Nov-12	Dec-12	Jan-13	Feb-13	Mar-13
● 2012-2013	8.16	8.45	8.00	7.28	6.83	6.29	6.60	6.86	7.04	7.03	6.24	6.30
— Target (<13 days)	13.00	13.00	13.00	13.00	13.00	13.00	13.00	13.00	13.00	13.00	13.00	13.00
■ Officer prediction of year-end performance												6.50
— 2011-2012	15.28	15.62	15.23	14.33	13.64	13.59	12.85	12.55	12.32	12.09	10.18	9.86

Vale

Time to process housing / council tax benefit new claims and changes - cumulative performance since 1 April 2012



	Apr-12	May-12	Jun-12	Jul-12	Aug-12	Sep-12	Oct-12	Nov-12	Dec-12	Jan-13	Feb-13	Mar-13
● 2012-2013	7.52	7.89	7.52	6.94	6.46	6.37	6.67	7.01	7.21	7.20	6.32	6.36
— Target (<13 days)	13.00	13.00	13.00	13.00	13.00	13.00	13.00	13.00	13.00	13.00	13.00	13.00
■ Officer prediction of year-end performance												6.50
— 2011-2012	16.11	16.01	15.52	14.54	13.60	13.71	13.56	13.27	12.94	12.46	10.13	9.86

Note

South and Vale – in 2012-13, both councils achieved their best ever low in-year processing times.

Financial accuracy of benefit claims (high is good)

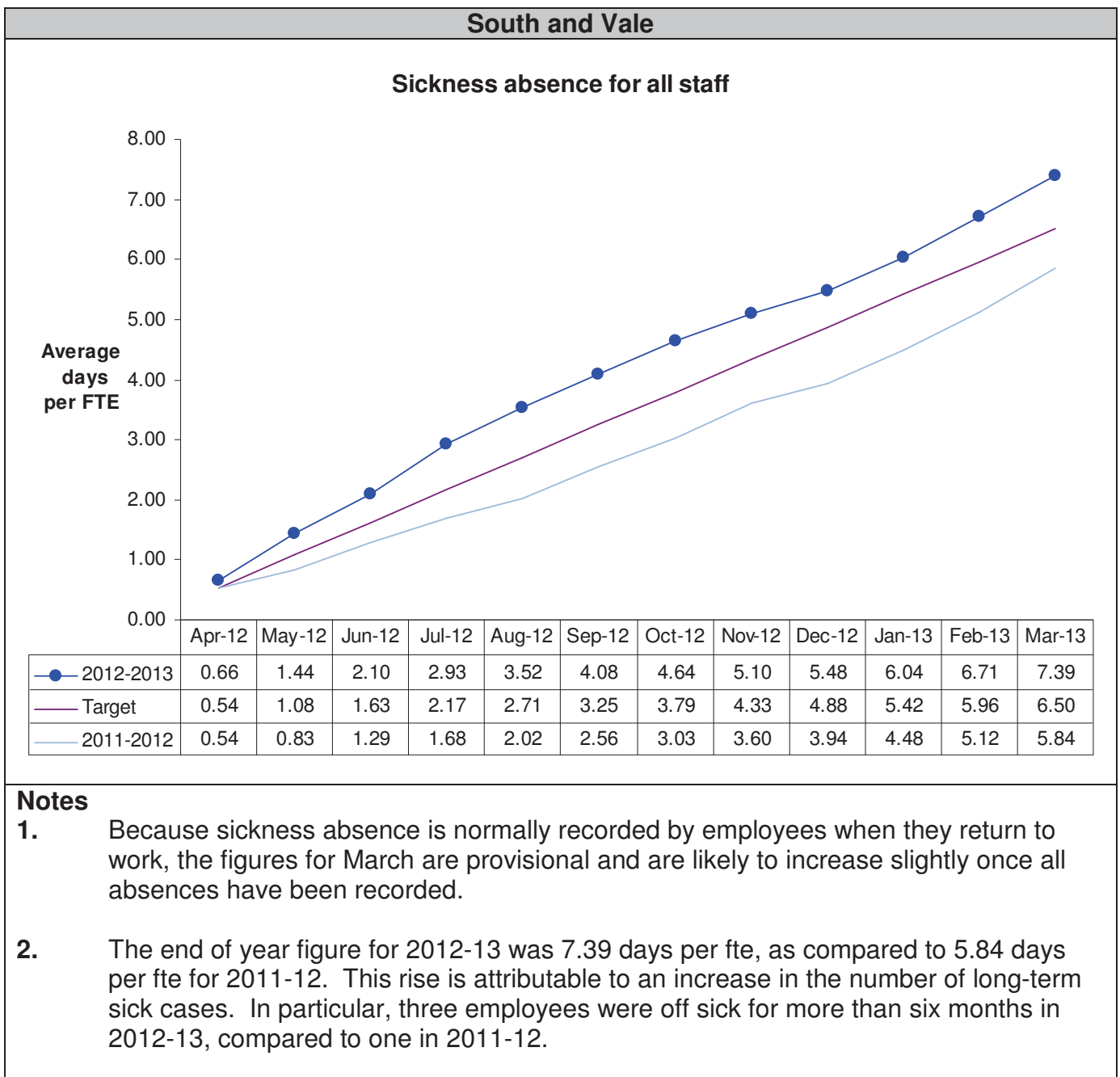


Notes

- 1. South and Vale** – in 2012-13, both councils achieved the highest ever in-year accuracy rates.

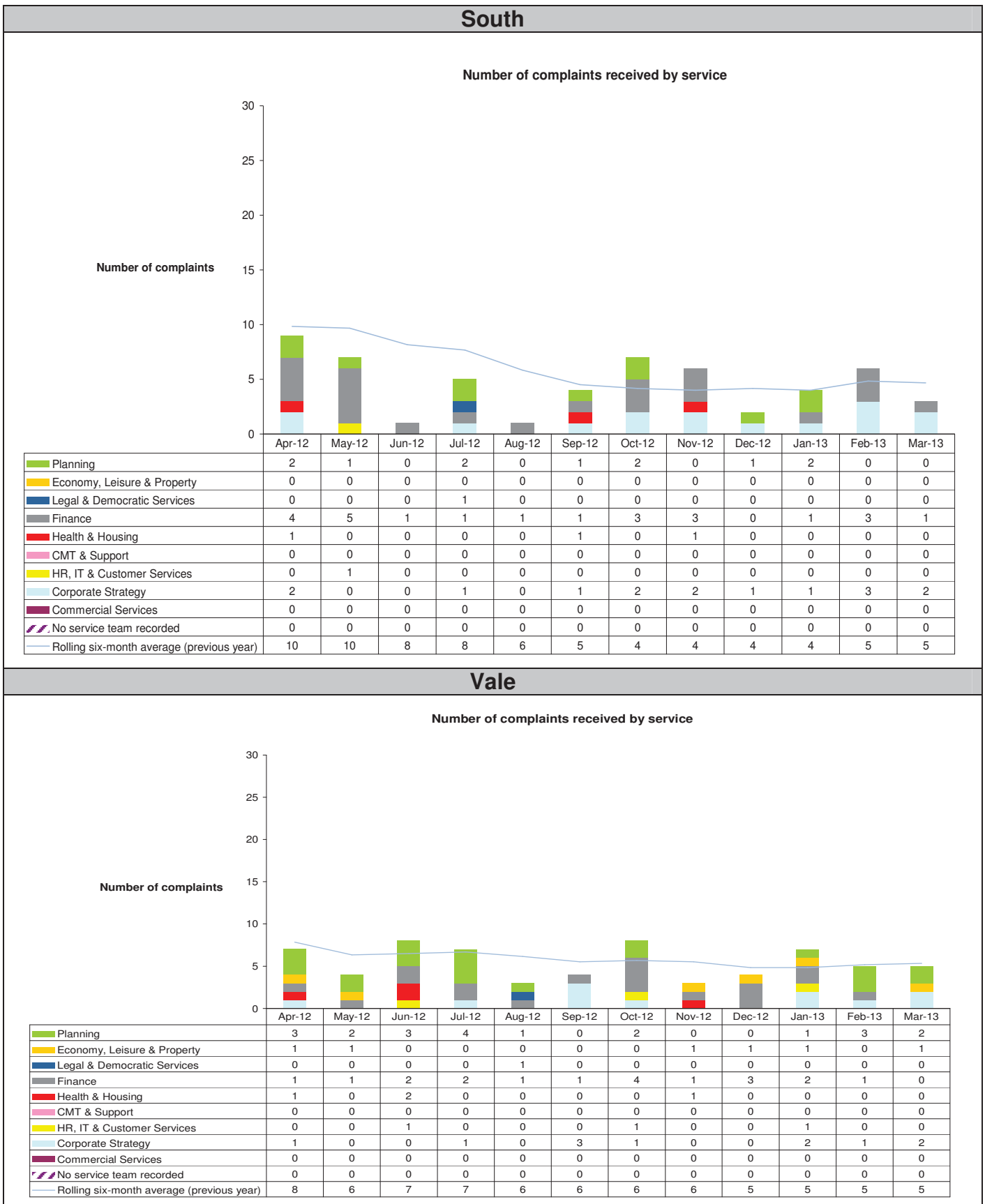
SECTION 6 – HUMAN RESOURCES

Sickness absence for all staff (low is good)

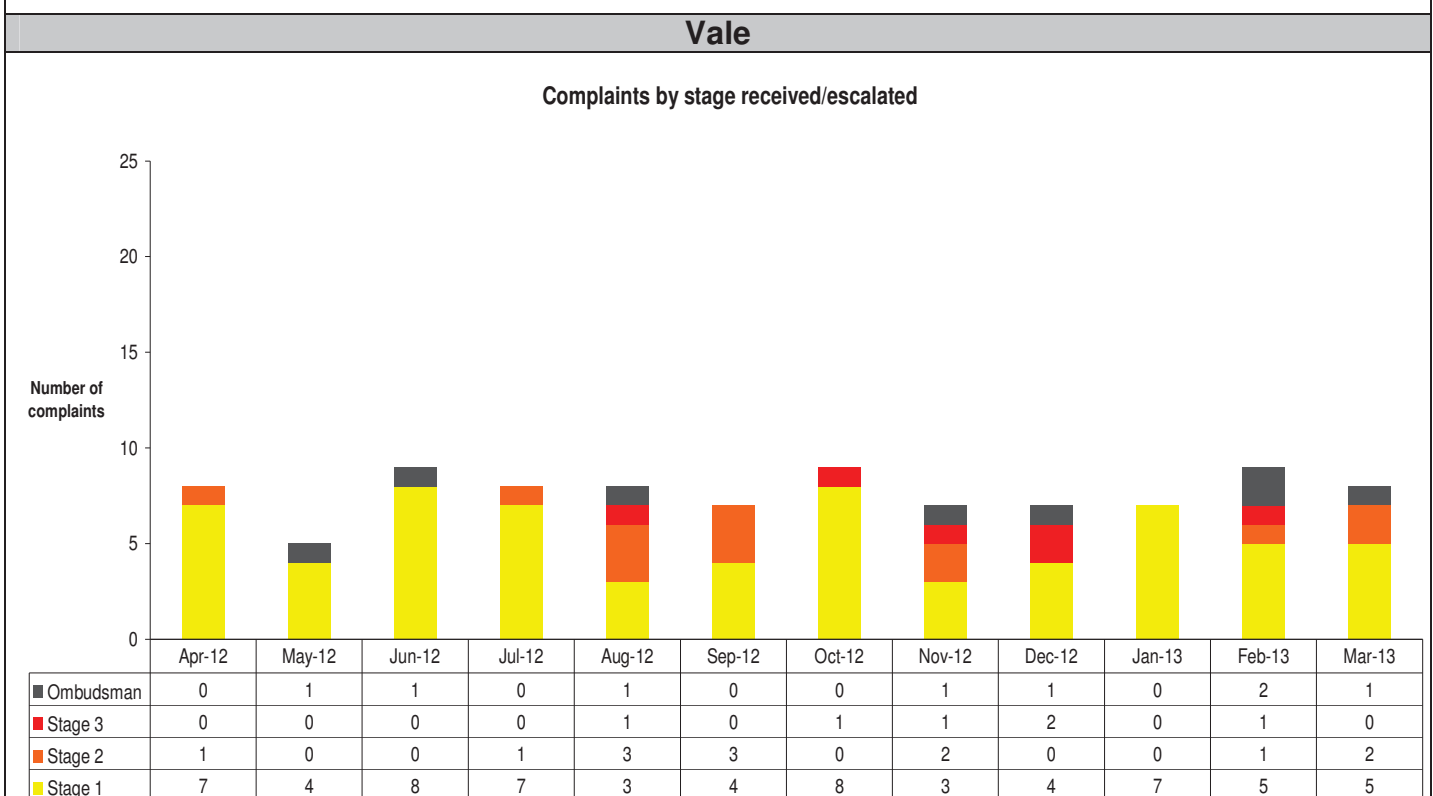
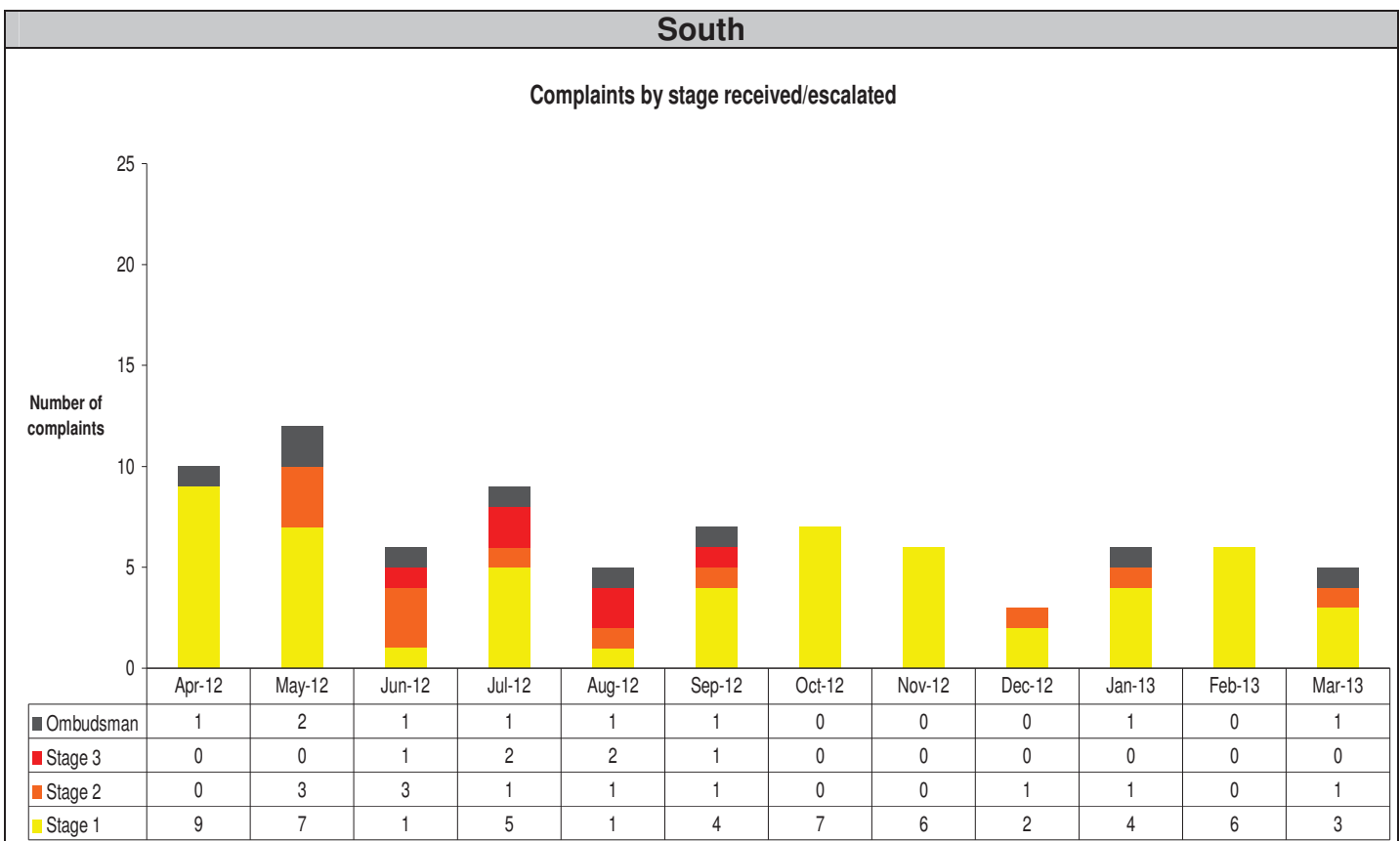


SECTION 7 – COMPLAINTS

Number received per month (low is good)



Number received/escalated per month by Stage of complaint (low is good)



Note

South - a decision was taken by Cabinet to change the complaints process from a three-stage

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system to a two-stage system. The new system started on 1 October 2012, which is why the 'Stage 3' row has zeroes in it from October onwards. From 1 April 2013 onwards, the 'Stage 3' row will be removed for South.

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Agenda Item 7

By virtue of paragraph(s) 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A
of the Local Government Act 1972.

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