

Housing and Homelessness Strategy 2023 to 2027

Measuring Success and Monitoring Report – 2023/24

Introduction

Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council (BDBC)'s Housing and Homelessness Strategy 2023/2027 ([Housing and Homelessness Strategy 2023 to 2027 \(basingstoke.gov.uk\)](https://www.basingstoke.gov.uk)) sets out a concise overall direction of travel with broad outcome objectives which will be delivered by targeted action plans.

The five priorities of the Housing and Homelessness Strategy 2023-2027 are as follows:

- Tackling Climate Change
- Preventing Homelessness
- Ending Rough Sleeping
- Affordable Housing Supply, Quality and Standards
- Regeneration and Place

This is the first year of the updated Housing and Homelessness Strategy 2023-2027 since its adoption in October 2023. The updated priorities from the previous Housing and Homelessness Strategy have new associated measures of success and objectives, and this report covers the five priorities as set out within the Strategy and details how the service has performed against the targets and action plans committed.

Summary of Achievements – 2023/24

- Over 94% of approaches to the service resolved without the use of bed and breakfast accommodation
- Continued nil use of bed and breakfast for 16/17 year olds and no occupation of bed and breakfast accommodation for longer than 6 weeks for families with children or a pregnant family member
- 85 placements into the private rented sector despite significant challenging market conditions
- Maintaining minimal levels of rough sleeping within the borough through the progressive work of the Social Inclusion Partnership
- Substantial housing pressures caused from the Home Office operations within the borough successfully managed with no consequential increase in rough sleeping levels

- Progress towards Domestic Abuse Housing Alliance accreditation and on track to achieve accreditation during 2024/25
- Extensive work ongoing to progress the potential purchase and improvements to May Place House – a key council project
- 664 property adverts through the council's housing register
- Robust management and enforcement of housing safety and standards and over £2million spent on Disabled Facilities Grants
- Circa 800 households registered on new innovative low cost home ownership register, unlocking routes into home ownership
- Ongoing liaison with partners to progress regeneration projects on strategic sites at Winklebury and Buckskin and South Ham.

Housing and Homelessness Strategy Commitments

Priority 1 – Tackling Climate Change

Success Measure	Target Met/ Not Met/ Ongoing	Comments
We will proactively support work on the climate change emergency including influencing housing association partners' strategies on design of new housing stock and their retrofit programmes for existing properties	Ongoing	Ongoing discussions with key partner RPs and EPC detail will continue to be monitored.
We will work collaboratively with housing providers to deliver improvements to reduce emissions in a co-ordinated approach through the development control process and through exploring grant funding opportunities	Ongoing	National funding available for housing associations to assist with retrofit programmes. Council's climate emergency team issuing loans within the private sector for sustainability improvements.
We will support the work and actions as set out within the Climate Change and Air Quality Strategy and the actions within the associated action plan	Ongoing	Housing remains a contributor to the ongoing corporate climate change emergency project group
We will influence Local Plan policies to seek to achieve sustainable and efficient housing, with access to green space, in order to deal with future climate change and to enable lower carbon lifestyles as appropriate, for example through the inclusion of electric vehicle charging	Ongoing	Progress made in national policy and proposed within Local Plan Update which is out for consultation
We will support new schemes which will address multiple additional issues, with better designed housing more resilient to future climate change alleviating fuel poverty and health issues	Met	Housing team would support affordable housing proposals which meet or exceed key sustainability and efficiency requirements.
We will support the Climate Emergency team to raise resident and tenant awareness on how to improve sustainability in their homes and how to reduce carbon emissions	Met	Climate change and housing teams attending cross-cutting events such as landlord forum / low cost home ownership events to promote energy efficiency advice within the home.

Priority 2 – Preventing Homelessness

Success Measure	Target Met/ Not Met/ Ongoing	Comments

There will be nil use of bed and breakfast for homeless 16/17 year olds	Met	No 16/17 year olds placed into bed and breakfast
No homeless family with children (or pregnant family member) will have to occupy bed and breakfast for longer than six weeks and we will aim to place in emergency accommodation within the borough where safe and available	Met	No families with children or pregnant family member occupying bed and breakfast for 6+ weeks, all placements within the borough where possible.
We will prevent homelessness through private sector and Joshua Tree placements for at least 100 households each year	Met	102 placements into the private sector and Joshua Tree, with 85 of these being placements into the private rented sector
We will secure Domestic Abuse Housing Alliance accreditation by the end of the 2024/25 financial year, providing a framework for good practice across key areas within the council	Ongoing	Significant progress towards DAHA accreditation, new policies and procedures adopted internally. On schedule to achieve accreditation during 2024/25
We will continue our hands-on approach to support international government work regarding refugees and those seeking asylum	Met	Bridging hotel in the borough has closed and housing pressures managed with no consequent increase in rough sleeping. 453 guests welcomed under Homes for Ukraine scheme, over £2.2mil spent through LAHF programme to deliver housing for refugees
We will adapt and continuously review our homelessness prevention options in light of wider housing market pressures including welfare reform and the cost-of-living crisis	Met	Grant funding opportunities explored, working with applicants to maximise household income

Priority 3 – Ending Rough Sleeping

Success Measure	Target Met/ Not Met/ Ongoing	Comments
We will regenerate May Place House – commencing in 2023/24	Ongoing	Significant work ongoing to progress potential purchase and improvements to May Place House as a key project for BDBC
We will drive forward our ambition to end rough sleeping in the borough through the success of the Social Inclusion Partnership (SIP), ensuring that any occurrence of rough sleeping is prevented where possible, and where it does take place it is rare, brief and non-recurring.	Ongoing	Official rough sleeper count of 4, however most commonly 0 rough sleepers throughout the year and most instances of rough sleeping are rare, brief and non-recurrent
We will continue to develop and monitor the range of suitable supported housing and shared schemes for single homeless and vulnerable households in order to meet the specific needs of individuals	Met	Continued success across range of innovative move-on schemes in the borough
We will make best use of the accommodation available within the homelessness pathway to ensure that individuals are in the most appropriate environment for their specific needs to enable a positive transition into more settled accommodation	Met	Vast majority of move-ons from commissioned services positive, low rate of instances of evictions from May Place / Mary Rose Court / Group Homes
We will explore options for emergency provision over the winter periods in partnership with the SIP, local churches and the voluntary sector	Met	Pop up night shelter over Christmas arranged, practical and preventative approach to SWEP over winter, with options for 2024/25 being mapped out

Priority 4 – Affordable Housing Supply, Quality and Standards

Success Measure	Target Met/ Not Met/ Ongoing	Comments
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We will deliver new affordable housing in line with Local Plan targets and enhance and accelerate further delivery of affordable housing for social rent through to low cost home ownership	Not met	140 affordable units delivered, recent delivery average remains high and forecast for upcoming years suggests some recovery
We will map the land in council ownership that could enable the delivery of affordable homes (prioritising social rented homes). We will look at different options to enable the effective delivery of these homes	Ongoing	Work commenced on identifying land ownership and potential sites for affordable housing delivery
We will focus any section 106 contributions designated for affordable housing to enable new affordable housing delivery or improvements to existing or proposed affordable stock	Ongoing	Spend of unspent section 106 contributions earmarked for potential purchase of May Place House
We will require 100% nomination arrangements on new affordable housing delivered for rent	Met	Achieve 100% nominations on rented units through s106 agreements
We will actively support the delivery of new social rented opportunities and feed these aspirations into emerging Local Plan Update policies	Met	Fed into Local Plan Update with social rented aspirations which is included within the proposed updated Plan
We will ensure that the affordable housing delivery meets a range of household needs by size, type, tenure and location to ensure that where possible, it is liveable throughout key stages of people's lives	Ongoing	Range of property types and sizes delivered as part of affordable housing delivery to ensure ongoing churn of accommodation
We will maintain a single point of access housing register for all social housing rented vacancies and deliver annual lettings reviews to Scrutiny Committee	Met	664 adverts through housing register, annual review to Scrutiny Committee in 2023.
We will ensure robust enforcement of housing safety and standards across all tenures – including fire safety, high rise flats and damp and mould management	Met	127 complaints dealt with by environmental health team, high proportion of these being damp and mould cases. EH team led response to safety concerns in large residential block of flats
We will deliver a risk-based HMO inspection regime incorporating licensed and non-licensable HMOs across the borough to ensure safety	Met	35 HMO inspections with 74 licensed HMOs within the borough
We will deliver a Disabled Facilities Grant service which achieves minimum 95% customer satisfaction, supporting the strategic aim of enabling people to live independently in their homes for as long as possible	Met	221 approved DFGs with £2,462,426 spent and 100% customer satisfaction
We will investigate the implementation of a preferred housing association partner process	Ongoing	Work commenced to look to introduce process
We will aim to bring long-term (over 6 months) empty homes back into use for rented opportunities where possible and achievable, whilst ensuring that the number of long-term empty homes within the borough remains under the national average	Met	Empty homes below national average and housing associations held to account for any long term empty stock they hold
We will maintain our enhanced low cost home ownership offer for residents by delivering low cost home ownership events at least twice a year, maintaining the innovative low cost home ownership register, enabling purchases through the Own Home Loan scheme and support the delivery of new low cost home ownership products such as First Homes	Met	Roughly 800 applicants on new low cost home ownership register, 2 low cost home ownership events delivered in 2023/24 and 5 Own Home Loan completions in 2023/24.

Regeneration

Success Measure	Target Met/ Not Met/ Ongoing	Comments
We will take a collaborative engagement approach with key partners including VIVID, ward councillors and the community to maximise the social, economic	Ongoing	Ongoing liaison to finalise s106 agreement to deliver optimum benefits of the regeneration scheme and ongoing liaison with community

and environmental benefits of the Winklebury regeneration		and health stakeholders to maximise local benefit
We will take a collaborative engagement approach with key partners including Sovereign, ward councillors and the community to agree a vision on the regeneration of Buckskin and South Ham	Ongoing	Work progressed to solve accommodation needs of Westside Community Association, whilst SNG have been resourcing to be able to progress the development of major regeneration proposals, including the appointment of master planners, technical and legal advisors and community engagement specialists
We will lead a dynamic partnership group to secure vastly improved facilities at May Place House	Ongoing	Work ongoing to progress potential purchase and improvements to May Place House
We will support the corporate Neighbourhood Improvement Programme, with progress monitored against the council's capital programme	Ongoing	Programme being scoped
We will encourage and enable the delivery of regeneration projects by housing associations and other partners which enhances both the quality and quantity of affordable housing opportunities and 'place making' in the borough, which also meets our climate priorities	Ongoing	Through ongoing project around small sites affordable housing delivery, opportunities to enable enhanced delivery of affordable housing may arise through identification of land in RP ownership or other public bodies' ownership
We will collaborate proactively with partners to support regeneration of smaller sites as and when these opportunities arise	Ongoing	Regeneration of small sites that arise through RPs that maximises benefits to residents will be supported, though focus from major RPs is towards larger strategic regeneration sites.

Priority 1: Tackling Climate Change

Active discussions remain ongoing with key housing association partners to understand and monitor progress on their individual retrofit programmes. There are over 16,000 units of social housing within Basingstoke and Deane across all registered providers (including rented and shared ownership homes), which represents around 20% of the make-up of all homes within the borough. This is therefore a sizeable and significant portion of housing which is required to perform well to achieve overarching sustainability targets set out on an organisational, local and national level.

As a non-stockholding local authority BDBC housing team's role in achieving local climate change aspirations consists of a support and influencing role of partners and internal council teams.

VIVID and SNG housing associations account for over 75% of all social housing in BDBC, with the majority of their properties within the borough comprising of previous council housing which was transferred to them as part of the Large Scale Voluntary Transfer (LSVT) arrangement almost 30 years ago. Therefore most of their housing stock within BDBC is made up of older, underperforming units of housing which represents a significant challenge to improve the EPC and sustainability levels, compared to the stock of other housing associations active within the borough who tend to have newer, higher-performing quality of housing.

Evidence provided by VIVID suggests that most of their properties in BDBC fall into EPC band C, with around 15% of their properties in the borough falling into EPC

bands D-G. This will likely be similar for properties owned by SNG. Their progress will be monitored over the course of this Strategy to track improvements to their housing stock. Funding streams from central government are available to social housing providers to assist with their retrofit programmes, with grants awarded from BDBC's climate change team being focused towards homeowners and those in the private rented sector.

Any new affordable homes proposed meeting a good standard of sustainability or indeed with enhanced sustainability features will be supported by the council's housing team. VIVID's regeneration of Winklebury which was approved at Development Control Committee in November 2023 includes a range of positive sustainability features including some units being manufactured off-site and assembled on-site, which reduces emissions and reduces waste where being produced in a factory, whilst also providing a biodiversity habitat net gain of 28.24%.

National planning policy and building regulations requirements has recently introduced standards new homes are required to meet to align with sustainability aspirations. From 2022, all new build homes with an associated parking space are required to have electric car charging points to encourage the use of electric vehicles, for example. BDBC's Local Plan Update has proposed further requirements that developers would need to adhere to in order to meet higher sustainability features, including requirements relating to water use and minimising waste, as well as seeking highly energy-efficient homes that generate as much energy as they use, which goes beyond current building regulations requirements and beyond the government's 'Future Homes Standard' intended to be implemented in 2025.

The housing team continues to be a contributor to the council's corporate climate change emergency working group, which supports the overarching [Climate Change and Air Quality Strategy](#) and its associated [Action Plan](#). The climate emergency team attended the housing team's landlord forum in March 2024 to provide advice and awareness on sustainability within homes, whilst the low cost home ownership events hosted in June 2023 and January 2024 had sustainability information and leaflets available to attendees.

Priority 2: Preventing Homelessness

The housing team has maintained its achievement of meeting statutory instruments by placing zero 16/17 year olds into bed and breakfast, nor have any families with children or a pregnant family member occupied bed and breakfast accommodation for more than 6 weeks. This is achieved by maintaining solid relationships with Children's Services and finding solutions for any families who are placed into bed and breakfast at an early stage, since accommodation duties can potentially last for far longer than 6 weeks.

Bed and breakfast placements for families are always aimed to be located within the borough wherever possible. However this is not always achievable due to availability of emergency accommodation and often this is not appropriate due to potential risk to safety if a household is fleeing the borough due to violence.

14 families with dependent children or a pregnant family member were placed in emergency accommodation outside of the borough but these were all due to the household being unsafe to remain in the borough, having no local connection to Basingstoke and Deane or there was no emergency provision available within the borough. In 3 of the 14 cases the household were temporarily placed outside of the borough but moved back to emergency accommodation within the borough once this became available.

In total, there were 109 placements into bed and breakfast accommodation in 2023/24, over a 16% reduction from 2022/23. 78 of these placements were single people or couples with no dependent children, with the remaining 31 placements being families with dependent children or with a pregnant household member. The average length of stay in bed and breakfast for those single people / couples was 13 nights, the same as in 2022/23. For families placed into bed and breakfast the average length of stay was 14 nights, slightly down from 16 nights in 2022/23 but down from 21 nights in 2021/22. Reducing the numbers of households going into bed and breakfast as well as reducing the average length of stay by a week for families placed into bed and breakfast highlights the positive work conducted by the team to not just minimise emergency accommodation usage where possible, but to source suitable alternative accommodation swiftly once an emergency placement has been made.

There were a total of 1910 approaches to the service for housing advice and assistance in 2023/24, in line with previous years (1921 approaches in 2022/23). Therefore under 6% of approaches to the service resulted in placement into bed and breakfast accommodation, meaning over 94% of cases were therefore resolved without the use of bed and breakfast – this remains a significant achievement for the service to minimise the usage of emergency accommodation wherever possible and highlights the preventative approach to homelessness within the team.

The main reasons for approaching the service in 2023/24 were those who had been served a section 21 notice and those living with family who had been asked to leave (12.7% of approaches to the service each). This is followed by those becoming homeless or at risk of homelessness due to a relationship breakdown (9.6%), those seeking rehousing options (8.8%) and those sofa surfing (8.2%).

Of those households who approached the service for advice and assistance in 2023/24 who had support needs, over a fifth (21.1%) of these suffered with mental health issues, with 13.8% suffering with physical ill health and disability, 11.9% being at risk or experienced domestic abuse. These are in line with previous years, and many households may suffer from multiple different support needs.

Of those applicants who were owed a prevention duty, almost two thirds (64.3%) of households secured existing or alternative accommodation for 6+ months and the duty was ended. This is in line with 2022/23 and demonstrates success in sourcing or negotiating accommodation in order to prevent homelessness. 12.5% of prevention duty endings were negative (including those who became homeless, didn't co-operate with the duty or refused an offer of suitable accommodation), which is down from 13.4% in 2022/23.

In 2023/24 there were no reviews sought on housing-related decisions, the same as 2022/23 and indicates the service is acting reasonably with its accommodation offers.

Of the households who were owed a relief duty, 57.2% secured suitable accommodation for 6+ months, down from 66.7% in 2022/23. This is reflective of the wider housing market challenges, particularly the shortage of suitable accommodation options within the borough for single people and couples which is echoed by the fact that over half of the applicants on the housing register are single people /couples.

59 main duty decisions were made in 2023/24, with 25 of these being a full housing duty acceptance. This is different to previous years where there were minimal full housing duty acceptances being made. This change in approach has not meant that households are being housed differently, the accommodation is still of a short-term nature, however when households are placed into temporary accommodation following a main duty acceptance it enables appropriate move-on options to be explored and therefore ensures households are housed into settled accommodation as soon as possible, and as such creates a churn of the limited short term accommodation units and potentially shortens the length of time households occupy emergency accommodation. Temporary accommodation also normally falls outside of Universal Credit capped income which enables households to secure employment whilst in temporary accommodation to remove the cap and increase the housing options available to them.

The prevention and support team assist households to stay in their homes for various reasons including financial issues, resettlement support or other support needs. 451 cases were referred to the prevention and support team in 2023/24, with over 53% (241 cases) being referred for benefit support or other financial support. This highlights the recurring theme around affordability issues including the cost of living crisis and welfare reform. 321 of the 451 cases achieved a solution in 2023/24, and there are currently 389 open cases with the team. The prevention and support team also administered Hampshire County Council's Household Support Fund for exceptional housing circumstances, further ensuring that households are maximising the income through the different income streams available to them. BDBC spent all of its £118,805 allocation of exceptional housing costs in partnership with VIVID and SNG, alongside the prevention and support team administering £68,805 of this, directly supporting 270 households.

The housing team made 102 placements into the private sector / Joshua Tree in 2023/24, with 85 private sector placements and 17 Joshua Tree placements. On top of this there were 33 placements into 'ESP' (Existing Satisfactory Purchases) accommodation, units of accommodation owned by registered providers used to fulfil homelessness duties on a short-term basis. The work particularly in regards to placements into the private sector demonstrates a significant achievement considering the substantial challenges the private sector poses in terms of ongoing increases in rental prices, which far outweigh the LHA rates and the availability of private rented accommodation.

The team remains on target to deliver DAHA accreditation in 2024/25. Significant progress has been made against the DAHA framework, transforming the response to victims/survivors and in driving forward significant 'positive change' in the housing service's response to domestic abuse. New policies and procedures have been adopted to support customers and staff and a successful Whole Housing Approach (WHA) bid has secured specialist domestic abuse support workers collocated in the housing service. 7.8% of approaches to the service in 2023/24 were from those fleeing domestic abuse, up from 6% in 2022/23. The service's commitment to achieving safety for residents within the borough therefore remains a key priority.

Many of the team's homelessness-related performance remains in line with previous years, which is an achievement within itself – despite the significant challenges within the housing sector as a whole, maintaining excellent performance across the year is creditable and bucks the wider local and national trends within other local authorities which have seen sharp increases, particularly in terms of emergency accommodation placements.

There were significant developments in the response to support global work with regards to refugees and those seeking asylum in 2023/24. Bridging hotels were procured by the Home Office to provide accommodation for those evacuated from Afghanistan who were eligible for resettlement in the UK as part of the Afghan Citizen's Resettlement Scheme (ACRS) or the Afghan Relocations and Assistance Policy (ARAP), including one within the Basingstoke and Deane borough. In March 2023, the government announced the planned closure of all bridging accommodation. 3-month notices were served to guests on 2 May 2023. The closure date for the bridging hotel in BDBC was set for 2 August 2023. In response to this, BDBC seconded a member of the homeless prevention team to assist the families to secure private sector accommodation for households in their area of choice. BDBC were the first authority in the country to secure suitable offers of private rented accommodation for all residents and the first hotel in the country to close following notices being issued, which is a notable achievement.

Another hotel in the borough was commissioned as a contingency hotel by the Home Office to house asylum seekers, awaiting the outcome of their applications. BDBC were initially assured by the Home Office that residents would be moved to dispersed accommodation prior to receiving their decisions. Despite these assurances, the housing team attended regular meetings with the Home Office, Hampshire County Council, police and health colleagues in order to retain oversight of the operation and continues to attend meetings with these colleagues in regards to the other rapid turnaround hotel for applicants leaving the Manston asylum processing centre (up to 48 hours in the accommodation before being moved to alternative Home Office accommodation). Following the introduction of the Streamlined Asylum Process, the housing team started to see asylum seekers in the contingency hotel receiving positive decisions and making homelessness applications. From May 2023, residents were required to share rooms in order to maximise capacity. This meant that at any time, the hotel could contain up to 250 asylum seekers. From July 2023 the housing team started to see an increase in approaches from the contingency hotel. Due to the unknown level of pressure these

approaches would have on the service, additional resource was bought in to the team to assess our statutory homelessness duties to those applicants who had their asylum applications approved. In total the housing team received 41 approaches from residents of the contingency hotel. The Home Office took the decision to end the contingency contract at the hotel with effect from 31 December 2023. The last residents were moved to alternative asylum provision on 12 December 2023.

To date the borough has welcomed 453 guests (242 households) under the Homes for Ukraine Scheme. Currently 121 guests remain in hosting arrangements through 75 hosts. Destinations of those leaving hosting arrangements include self-secured private rented sector accommodation, private rented sector accommodation secured with assistance from BDBC, return to Ukraine, voluntary move-out with no forwarding details given or a moving to alternative hosting arrangements outside the borough. The housing team's Ukraine lead has provided housing advice and assistance and/or resettlement support to 89 households since the introduction of the post in October 2022. BDBC continue to commission Basingstoke Voluntary Action to provide a community caseworker to connect individuals and families with community services, identify and work in partnership to resolve gaps on community support and services for hosts and guests and to enhance community resilience. The community caseworker has been in contact with 110 hosts/guests in 23/24. BDBC housing officers continue to attend regular project and community meetings with HCC and district partners to keep to-to-date with changes to the scheme. The meetings are used to cover finance updates and planning, share partner updates and troubleshoot common issues.

BDBC were allocated funding as part of rounds 1&2 of the Local Authority Housing Fund (LAHF) scheme and successfully delivered 18 units of accommodation for Afghan and Ukraine refugees, spending over £2.2mil of funding awarded by central government and bolstering the overall affordable housing stock within the borough. These units were delivered through collaborative partnership work with VIVID, SNG and Winchester Housing Trust who partly funded, own and manage these units of accommodation. The units are all scheduled to complete in Q4 2023/24 or Q1 2024/25.

The service continually reviews the housing options available both within the district as well as in surrounding areas. The prevention and support team work with households to ensure that they are maximising their household income, whilst the team also look to explore grant funding opportunities to increase the quality and quantity of accommodation options to various cohorts of households, including the LAHF scheme as mentioned above as well as the AFEO fund for ex-offenders. The team structure is constantly reviewed to ensure it is fit-for-purpose and meets the borough's prevailing homelessness needs.

Priority 3: Ending Rough Sleeping

The proposed purchase of May Place House continues to progress steadily to deliver the much-needed improvements to the accommodation. With a purchase of this significance there are numerous complexities to overcome with work ongoing in the background to progress this. These include planning considerations, landlord considerations, surveys and funding considerations – particularly in light of

Hampshire County Council’s potential funding cuts to homelessness services, which will be unknown until after the General Election in 2024.

2023’s official rough sleeper count was 4, however this was a snapshot of one night and deeper context around the number of rough sleepers in Basingstoke and Deane is needed to demonstrate the council is on track to ensure that rough sleeping in the borough is minimal and where it does occur – any instance of rough sleeping is rare, brief and non-recurrent, in line with government targets around ending rough sleeping.

The numbers of rough sleepers in the borough naturally fluctuates and the official count of 4 represented a night with one of the highest instances of rough sleeping in 2023/24. Most commonly there were 0 rough sleepers but this ranged up to 5 across 2023/24 over single nights as verified by Julian House outreach team. Maintaining these minimal levels of rough sleeping is a significant achievement of the Social Inclusion Partnership, particularly considering the historical rough sleeping picture within the borough, as the table below shows:

Year	Number of rough sleepers
2015/16	20
2016/17	26
2017/18	15
2018/19	8
2019/20	5
2020/21	0
2021/22	2
2022/23	2
2023/24	4

Importantly there were very few instances of recurring rough sleepers and instances mainly appeared to be brief. This shows that solutions are being found that are suitable, sustainable and swift in nature, in order to minimise any occurrence of rough sleeping within the borough.

Bespoke innovative low-level supported schemes developed in recent years in partnership with housing providers have created an additional 13 bedspaces as move-on accommodation from the homelessness pathway, at Cheviot Close, Viables and Blackdown Close. There is additional support at the Cheviot Close and Blackdown Close properties from peer mentors and clinical psychologists also. In addition to this there is a three bedspace female only project that offers low-level support, 5 self-contained units in the community that offer low-level floating support under RSAP funding and 5 self-contained units in the community with intensive support for those with the most challenging needs under the Housing First programme. All of these are intended to offer accommodation for as long as required as opposed to offering quicker, more temporary stays at May Place House / Mary Rose Court through the homelessness pathway.

72% of move-ons from the commissioned homelessness services through Julian House, Two Saints (Mary Rose Court / Group Homes) and Two Saints (May Place House) were positive move-ons, with under 16% being evicted from accommodation

due to rent arrears or ASB, or sentenced to prison. This demonstrates an effective commissioning arrangement with homelessness services in ensuring the vast majority of those moving on through the pathway are for positive reasons whilst minimising instances of evictions.

Working in partnership with both commissioned and voluntary partners, a 'pop-up' night shelter for three nights over Christmas was able to be offered, as well as five weekends (Saturday and Sunday nights) across January and February. The housing team took a 'common sense' approach to activating the Severe Weather Emergency Protocol (SWEPE) over the winter months, alongside the ability to exercise discretionary powers in relation to offering accommodation outside of usual statutory duties. This was alongside the Camrose operating 4 days a week during the day and Julian House working closely with the housing team and partner agencies in order to continue be assertive and responsive to the needs of those presenting to services. This included increasing and varying outreach times, opening up their offices to the public as needed to offer a warm space, signposting to various warm hubs across the town and providing food parcels and gift cards for food outlets for people to get a hot meal, particularly when placed in hotel accommodation – Julian House were also able support those placed out of area by ensuring they had appropriate provisions, linking them in with local services and providing bus/rail travel for them to return to this area as needed in order to connect with services within the borough.

Priority 4: Affordable Housing Supply, Quality and Standards

Including LAHF units, there were 140 completed units of affordable accommodation delivered in 2023/24. This is BDBC's lowest annual delivery figure in 7 years. Whilst this figure is low and does not meet the annual affordable housing delivery target of 300 as set out in the Local Plan, it is important to not focus on individual years in isolation and BDBC's medium and long-term affordable housing delivery remains strong, with 331 average affordable units delivered over the past 5 years inclusive of 2023/24. Low housing delivery is echoed nationally and despite this year's total there is a healthy forecast of affordable housing delivery anticipated for 2024/25 (over 400 affordable units forecast).

Despite the low number of completed units, roughly 75% of completed affordable dwellings were houses, rather than flats. This is a very healthy percentage and up from 40% in 2022/23. 38% of the affordable housing delivery were 3 or 4 bedroom homes, up from 25% in 2022/23.

Although just 3% of affordable homes delivered being social rented units, social rented accommodation remains a significant priority over affordable rented units due to their affordability for tenants. BDBC's First Homes Interim Policy Statement requires planning applications including First Homes to provide the rented units at social rent and the housing team's input into Local Plan Update discussions highlight the ongoing aspiration for all future rented units to be at social rent levels, with this currently being consulted on through the Local Plan Update.

Work is underway through a corporate working group, which housing is a part of, to identify land in council ownership that could accommodate enhanced affordable housing delivery through housing association partners. This is a complex piece of

work and each potential site may have numerous associated constraints which could prevent it from delivering affordable housing. Despite this there have been potential sites identified which could be suitable for delivering additional affordable housing and these are being progressed with partner housing associations.

Section 106 financial contributions designated for affordable housing can be notoriously difficult to spend due to the significant cost of housing development. The housing team has in recent years thought of creative ways to utilise the spend of section 106 contributions, including tenure switches and for an innovative low cost home ownership scheme. The majority of the current s106 pot is currently earmarked for the potential May Place House purchase and refurbishment, to provide significant improvements for tenants within the supported accommodation.

Within section 106 agreements where affordable housing is provided on-site the housing team continues to secure that it holds 100% of nominations for all rented units, and this is accepted by key housing associations within the borough through positive partnership work.

The housing register and choice based lettings system continues to act as the single point of access for social housing within the borough. There is a full annual review of the housing register which goes to Scrutiny Committee yearly, including in Autumn 2023, and the key headlines from the housing register include over 60% of households on the register being single people / couples; 96% of households remaining in Band 2 of the housing register and a total of 664 adverts placed through the choice based lettings system in 2022/23. Waiting times continue to be high through the housing register, particularly for 1 and 4+ bedroom accommodation – circa 3-4 years for 1 bedroom accommodation and over 5 years for larger 4+ bedroom accommodation from Band 2. Waiting times are increasing for 2/3 bedroom properties – roughly 2-3 years for these properties from Band 2.

Work has commenced in 2023/24 to establish a 'preferred partners' process to consolidate the number of housing associations who operate within the borough, to provide the best service to tenants of social housing in Basingstoke and Deane. There are associated procurement and legal issues to overcome which is in progress and the housing team expects to consult with housing associations later in 2024.

Empty homes in the borough remain low compared to the national average, with 1.58% of properties in the borough being empty. The empty homes corporate working group meets on a quarterly basis to discuss long-term empty properties and options for bringing these back into use, whilst actively monitoring those long-term empty properties owned by housing associations to develop action plans to help bring them back into use. 0.63% of homes in the borough are empty for over 6 months, down from 0.67% in 2022/23.

The housing team have worked to build up its low cost home ownership offer for residents looking to access home ownership. 2 low cost home ownership events were delivered in 2022/23, with positive attendance rates. The newly-formed low cost home ownership register had roughly 800 households registered where dedicated messages can be sent to applicants to inform them of properties available for purchase which they may be interested in. Maintaining this register also helps to

inform statistics around demand for low cost home ownership schemes which are used to respond to planning application consultations. This is the most accurate data available since the closure of the Help to Buy website. There were also 5 completions through the council's Own Home Loan scheme in 2023/24, taking the total number of completions through the scheme to 9, with further completions anticipated for 2024/25.

The council's Environmental Health team has dealt with 127 complaints about housing safety concerns – a significant proportion of which have been relating to damp and mould. The team have also led the council response in relation to safety in residential blocks of flats, in particular dealing with significant concerns around a block in the Chineham area. The Environmental Health team also completed 35 HMO inspections, with 74 licensed HMOs in the borough.

The Housing Standards team completed 221 approved Disabled Facilities Grants (DFGs) in 2023/24, including ceiling track hoists, stairlifts, level access showers, through floor lifts, extensions, access works and self-clean WC's. The team spent £2,462,426 in 2023/24 which significantly surpasses any spend in previous years. 81% of these DFGs were completed in housing association properties, increasing the overall accessibility standards within the borough's social housing stock. 100% of customers were either very satisfied or satisfied with the works.

Priority 5: Regeneration and Place

Following the in-principle decision to approve VIVID's planning application for the regeneration scheme at Winklebury, there has been ongoing liaison to finalise the s106 agreement and this is aimed to be resolved by the end of August 2024. The s106 agreement will support maximising the social, environmental and economic benefits of the scheme, including an employment and skills plan to provide opportunities for local residents. Incorporation of a new community space and a health facility are also integral to the scheme and, although these will be delivered in the later phases, there will be ongoing engagement with community and health stakeholders to maximise local benefit. The latest newsletter was circulated by VIVID in June and they are looking to plan further engagement and face-to-face contact in the Autumn once there is a clearer idea on timing for delivery of the overall programme of phased works. The council will work closely with VIVID to facilitate decanting as required and to ensure that residents' needs are appropriately addressed.

Separately to this the council continues to work very closely with SNG and the bespoke regeneration Sovereign Hill Partnership (SHP) on bringing forward ambitious regeneration proposals for the Buckskin and South Ham area. In the short-term the council has been working together to solve the accommodation needs of Westside Community Association (WCA) following the forced closure of the existing community and library building. Recognising the importance of WCA as a key community infrastructure organisation, SHP and the council are looking to provide temporary accommodation pending delivery of bespoke new facilities as part of the longer-term regeneration proposals. A former butchers' shop is being converted into

a community café facility to be run by WCA as part of the solution and other accommodation is actively being explored. Showing serious intent, SNG have been resourcing up to be able to progress the development of major regeneration proposals, including the appointment of master planners, technical and legal advisors and community engagement specialists. Newsletters are released every two months and the council and SNG are working closely together to ensure ward councillors are regularly briefed on progress. SNG are also recruiting local residents to be 'Community Co-design Associates' to inform and review regeneration options as they are developed (roles for which they will be both trained and remunerated). In parallel, the council is working with SNG, and other stakeholders, to explore and address key quality of life issues that emerged as priorities from detailed research: community safety, health, skills and employment. Whilst still very early days, there is a clear commitment to adopting a comprehensive approach to regeneration that has the well-being of local people at its heart.

As noted previously the project to acquire and improve the facilities at May Place is ongoing and will represent a substantial improvement to the quality of living for future residents of the scheme. This regeneration project is small in site size however a significant reputational project that will deliver key tangible outcomes to those accessing the homelessness pathway in the borough.

The Neighbourhood Improvement Programme is in the process of being scoped out according to various areas of attention including play areas, parking and community safety. This should progress further within 2024/25.

As part of the ongoing project to identify sites within council land ownership for potential enhanced affordable housing delivery, this piece of work may identify pieces of land within registered providers or other public bodies' ownership which could be suitable for affordable housing delivery. Continuous strong relationships with key housing associations in the borough would enable the potential to bring forward regeneration of sites of varying sizes to accompany the wider strategic regeneration proposals at Winklebury and Buckskin and South Ham.

Feedback from registered providers indicate that the small sites are likely to be more difficult to deliver due to the associated cost implications, and this is reflected by many housing associations not considering developments of units under 20 homes. This poses a challenge to identify and appropriately deliver any small-site regeneration schemes.