

Housing and Homelessness Strategy 2023 to 2027

Measuring Success and Monitoring Report – 2024/25

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

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, details how the service has performed against the targets and action plans committed and how the service has built on the success from the previous year.

Summary of Achievements – 2024/25

- 93% of approaches to the service, including single person households, 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;
- 65 placements into the private rented sector despite significant challenging market conditions, saving up to £350,000 in bed and breakfast costs;
- 627 cases received bespoke ongoing support from the prevention and support team, seeing 42% of cases prior to involvement of homelessness prevention team to highlight early intervention and significant 'pre-prevention' work;
- Maintaining minimal levels of rough sleeping within the borough through the progressive work of the Social Inclusion Partnership, with an official rough sleeper count of 2, although the majority (over two thirds) of the year there were either 0 or 1 rough sleepers on a given night;

- Domestic Abuse Housing Alliance (DAHA) accreditation secured, with BDBC only the 5th non-stockholding local authority to be awarded the accreditation;
- Cabinet approval achieved for the purchase and much-needed refurbishment of the May Place House facility – a significant corporate project;
- Winter Night Shelter delivered from December 2024-February 2025;
- 891 property adverts through the council’s housing register, an increase on over 34% from last year;
- Robust management and enforcement of housing safety and standards and almost £2million spent on Disabled Facilities Grants;
- 364 affordable homes delivered in 2024/25 including a substantial increase in social rented homes as well as 4 bedroom affordable houses;
- New low cost home ownership service launched for residents to receive tailored, bespoke options on accessing home ownership within the borough;
- Identification of small council-owned parcels of land for regeneration and delivery of enhanced affordable housing, alongside ongoing large strategic regeneration proposals
- Corporate modelling of pathway to net zero in the borough, with active contribution and participation from key RPs.

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 dialogue with key RPs in the borough to achieve future sustainability improvements on estates, led by RPs.
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	Housing association partners actively contributing to Carbon Trust work to model a pathway to net zero in BDBC, and included in Cllr task and finish group.
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 and net zero pathway project.
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 continue to be proposed within ongoing Local Plan Update.
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 provide detailed technical support for affordable housing proposals, particularly those 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	Met	Climate change and housing teams attending cross-cutting events such as landlord forum /

sustainability in their homes and how to reduce carbon emissions		low cost home ownership events to promote energy efficiency advice within the home. Corporate work ongoing around supporting landlords to improve efficiency of properties in the form of landlord grants.
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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, with 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	118 placements into the private sector and Joshua Tree, with 65 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	Met	DAHA accreditation secured in February 2025.
We will continue our hands-on approach to support international government work regarding refugees and those seeking asylum	Met	Housing pressures managed due to ongoing work with partners at Home Office, HCC, police and health in respect of rapid turnaround asylum hotel within the borough. 124 Ukrainian households provided with advice, assistance or resettlement support since October 2022, and all LAHF units fully delivered and occupied.
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	Service under constant review to adapt to significant market pressures as well as funding changes at local level, including dedicated quality assurance work. Funding streams explored and applied for, including delivery of the exceptional housing cost element of the Household Support Fund again in 24/25.

Priority 3 – Ending Rough Sleeping

Success Measure	Target Met/ Not Met/ Ongoing	Comments
We will regenerate May Place House – commencing in 2023/24	Ongoing	Cabinet approval to proceed with regeneration of May Place House.
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 2, with most commonly 0 or 1 rough sleepers across outreach sessions conducted throughout the year.
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	Under a third of move-ons from commissioned services in 24/25 due to evictions, despite often multiple complex needs within this more intensive supported accommodation.
We will explore options for emergency provision over the winter periods in partnership with the SIP, local churches and the voluntary sector	Met	Winter night shelter delivered from December 2024 – February 2025 with 60% of those accessing supported into more secure accommodation during their stay at the night shelter.

Priority 4 – Affordable Housing Supply, Quality and Standards

Success Measure	Target Met/ Not Met/ Ongoing	Comments
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	Met	364 affordable units delivered in 24/25 with medium and long-term affordable housing delivery remaining strong.
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	Small council-owned sites identified for potential affordable housing delivery with a delivery strategy to regenerate these parcels of land.
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 majority of unspent section 106 contributions earmarked for purchase of May Place House.
We will require 100% nomination arrangements on new affordable housing delivered for rent	Met	Continue to 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, with significant number of affordable 4 bedroom homes delivered in 2024/25.
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	891 adverts through housing register in 2024/25. Annual review of housing register continues to be presented to members.
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	254 complaints dealt with by environmental health team, high proportion of these being damp and mould cases. Mostly in private properties but also often in housing association properties.
We will deliver a risk-based HMO inspection regime incorporating licensed and non-licensable HMOs across the borough to ensure safety	Met	57 HMO inspections with 83 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	145 approved DFGs with £1,877,638 spent and 100% customer satisfaction
We will investigate the implementation of a preferred housing association partner process	Ongoing	Cabinet approved framework of preferred partners scheme with anticipated launch of scheme in Autumn 2025.

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 remain below national average, 132 hits on website and 41 empty homes reported to the team for investigation in 2024/25.
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 1200 applicants on new low cost home ownership register, launch of new bespoke tailored appointment service for residents on accessing home ownership within the borough. 2 low cost home ownership events delivered in 2024/25 as well as 1 further Own Home Loan completion.

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 and environmental benefits of the Winklebury regeneration	Ongoing	Implications of viability of scheme and building contractor ceasing UK operations being considered by VIVID including likelihood of revised planning application, with VIVID to ensure communication with residents and community to ensure any revisions meet local needs.
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 ongoing by SNG to shape the Buckskin and South Ham regeneration, engagement to continue with residents to shape any future planning application whilst making progress of accommodation requirements of the WCA.
We will lead a dynamic partnership group to secure vastly improved facilities at May Place House	Ongoing	Cabinet approval of purchase of May Place House to regenerate the facility.
We will support the corporate Neighbourhood Improvement Programme, with progress monitored against the council's capital programme	Ongoing	Various strands of activity ongoing to improve amenities within neighbourhoods.
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	Regeneration of small sites that arise through RPs that maximises benefits to residents will be supported including at sites in Brighton Hill, Norden as well as council-owned parcels of land, alongside the larger strategic regeneration proposals.
We will collaborate proactively with partners to support regeneration of smaller sites as and when these opportunities arise	Ongoing	

Priority 1: Tackling Climate Change

With roughly 18,000 units of housing within Basingstoke and Deane owned by registered providers (RPs) including rented and shared ownership homes – representing around 20% of the make-up of all homes within the borough – it is crucial that the council supports and influences individual RPs to achieve overarching sustainability targets on organisational, local and national levels.

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 30 years ago. Therefore most of their housing stock within BDBC is made up of older, often 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.

BDBC has involved both VIVID and SNG in work with the Carbon Trust to model a pathway to net zero in the borough – ahead of refreshing the council’s Climate Change and Air Quality Strategy. Both organisations actively participated, including in a subsequent councillor Task and Finish group, demonstrating collaboration and a desire to improve the sustainability of the housing stock within the borough.

The climate change team have been increasing their engagement with both organisations to find ways to work more closely together, particularly in relation to EPC data and cost projections for retrofit programme, with a potential strategic partnership group on climate change on the horizon – to be explored further in 2025/26.

There has been further collaboration with VIVID on opportunities to maximise retrofit programmes in estates with mixed tenures of social, privately owned and privately rented homes, in areas that VIVID are due to invest in, utilising national grant schemes. Further funding investigations and mapping exercises are now underway.

The council’s overarching [Climate Change and Air Quality Strategy](#) and its associated [Action Plan](#), as noted, is due to be refreshed to build on the progress of the current Strategy. Work continues to be done corporately to achieve this which is supported by the housing team. This includes supporting landlords to improve the EPC and energy efficiency of their rental properties via landlord grants towards retrofit measures, working with local letting agents to highlight energy grants available to tenants and offering free energy surveys to landlords and/or tenants via the council’s Green Team. The Green Team has also supported housing-led events such as low cost home ownership events and landlord forums to engage residents on climate change, whilst the housing team continues to be a contributor to the corporate climate change emergency working group.

National planning policy and building regulations requirements have recently introduced standards new homes are required to meet to align with sustainability aspirations. For example, since 2022, all new build homes with an associated parking space have been required to include infrastructure for electric car charging to encourage the use of electric vehicles.

BDBC’s Regulation 18 draft Local Plan Update (consulted upon in 2024) included a range of ambitious policies to mitigate climate change and help the borough to adapt to it. This included policies relating to water use and minimising waste, as well as requiring highly energy-efficient homes that generate as much energy as they use. Due to the new National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF, December 2024) increasing the borough’s housing need figure the council will undertake an additional Regulation 18 consultation in autumn/winter 2025, with the intention of submitting the

plan to the Secretary of State by December 2026. The aforementioned aspirations and requirements with regards to sustainability are likely to remain.

Priority 2: Preventing Homelessness

Bed and breakfast usage

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.

18 families with dependent children or a pregnant family member were placed in emergency accommodation outside of the borough in 2024/25 but these were all due to the household being unsafe to remain in the borough, having no local connection to Basingstoke and Deane (or moving to another area) or there was no emergency provision available within the borough.

In total, there were 143 placements into bed and breakfast accommodation in 2024/25, a 31% increase from 2023/24. 95 of these placements were single people or couples with no dependent children, with the remaining 48 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 14 nights, one night longer than 2023/24's average. For families placed into bed and breakfast the average length of stay was 13.5 nights, slightly down from 14 nights in 2023/24. Maintaining the average length of stay for families placed into bed and breakfast highlights the positive work conducted by the team to source suitable alternative accommodation swiftly once an emergency placement has been made.

Approaches and support needs

There were a total of 1974 approaches to the service for housing advice and assistance in 2024/25, in line with previous years (1910 approaches in 2023/24). Whilst there has been an increase in B&B placements compared to 2023/24 as well as a slight increase of total approaches to the service, just 7% of approaches resulted in placement into bed and breakfast accommodation, meaning 93% 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 2024/25 were those who had been living with family who had been asked to leave (15.3% of approaches to the service), those seeking rehousing options (11.6%), being served a section 21 notice (11.5%) and those fleeing domestic abuse (10.4%). This shows a slight increase in family evictions and domestic abuse, as well as those who may not be under notice but wanting to understand their options, highlighting a large amount of 'pre-prevention' work. There has been a slight decrease in the percentage of those approaching the service due to being served a section 21 notice (12% in 2023/24).

Of those households who approached the service for advice and assistance in 2024/25 who had support needs, almost a fifth (19%) of these suffered with mental health issues, with 18% suffering with physical ill health and disability and 10.1% being at risk of or experienced domestic abuse. These specific support needs are in line with previous years although there has been a slight decrease in the percentage of those who suffered with mental health issues (21.1% in 2023/24) and an increase in those suffering with physical ill health and disability (13.8% in 2023/24).

Prevention, relief and main housing duties

Of those applicants who were owed a prevention duty, almost two thirds (59.9%) of households secured existing or alternative accommodation for 6+ months and the duty was ended. This is roughly in line with 2023/24 (64.3%) and demonstrates success in sourcing or negotiating accommodation 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), the same percentage as 2023/24.

Of the households who were owed a relief duty, 47.2% secured suitable accommodation for 6+ months, down from 57.2% in 2023/24. 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.

68 main duty decisions were made in 2024/25, with 39 of these being a full housing duty acceptance. This is different to previous years where there were minimal full housing duty acceptances being made up until 2023/24 (59 main duty decisions). 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.

Reviews and support

In 2024/25 there were 13 reviews sought on housing-related decisions, up from 2 in 2023/24, reflective of the increase in main duty decisions being issued. There were 10 reviews sought from a main duty decision (being found not homeless, not eligible, intentionally homeless or not in priority need), 2 reviews on the discharge of a relief duty and 1 review on the discharge of a main housing duty. Aside from 2 withdrawn reviews and 1 review that remains open, all reviews were upheld, indicating the service is acting reasonably with its duties.

The prevention and support team assist households to stay in their homes for various reasons including financial issues, resettlement support or other support needs. 627 cases were referred to the prevention and support team in 2024/25, with 41% of these for tenancy support (including pre-eviction interview support, support in court) and 31% for general support (including moving arrangements, removals, setting up utilities), with the remainder of cases for financial support (including budgeting, debt advice/signposting) and benefit support (help with applying or appeals / tribunals). 42% of cases referred were done so prior to intervention by the homeless prevention team, further demonstrating the early 'pre-prevention' work that occurs within the service. The team are actively working on over 100 cases on an ongoing basis as of April 2025.

Private sector and Joshua Tree

The housing team made 118 placements into the private sector / Joshua Tree in 2024/25, with 65 private sector placements and 53 Joshua Tree placements. On top of this there were 60 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 regard 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 65 placements into the private sector would have otherwise cost c. £350,000 in bed and breakfast costs based on a 56-day relief duty period – highlighting the significant cost benefit of the 2 Landlord Liaison roles within the service. Whilst there were no landlord forums delivered in 2024/25 one was hosted at the end of March 2024 and a further forum is planned for May 2025. Building the private landlord portfolio is crucial at this time to deliver service objectives and prevent and relieve homelessness, whilst future legislative changes such as the upcoming Renters Rights Bill may change the private rental landscape, so showcasing the Landlord Liaison team's unique service for potential landlords is important to maintain placements into the private sector.

Domestic abuse

BDBC secured Domestic Abuse Housing Alliance (DAHA) accreditation in February 2025. BDBC is only the fifth borough or district council in England without directly owned social housing stock to be awarded the accreditation – demonstrating the significant effort and achievement in securing this accreditation. The housing team have recruited a DAHA Coordinator as well as a Corporate Domestic Abuse Lead to

ensure that DAHA standards continue to be met and are regularly updated to ensure re-accreditation. As noted above, over 10% of approaches to the housing service in 2024/25 were from those at risk of or fleeing domestic abuse, a trend which is slowly rising, and the DAHA accreditation displays the council's commitment and action to provide safe accommodation and support for victims of domestic abuse and embracing the requirements of the Domestic Abuse Act.

International and asylum

There were further developments in the response to support global work with regards to refugees and those seeking asylum in 2024/25. There remains one hotel in the borough under commission by the Home Office as a rapid turnaround hotel, designed as short stay for asylum seekers before they move on to dispersed Home Office accommodation countrywide. The 48-hour agreed stay is adhered to in all but a handful of cases. Residents in the hotel have minimal impact on the housing team operations as they are the responsibility of the Home Office under Section 95 of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999. BDBC remain part of regular meetings with the Home Office, Hampshire County Council, Police and health colleagues to monitor any wider impact on services within the borough. Maximum capacity at the hotel remains at 282. There remains 1 active dispersed accommodation unit in the borough (a 2 bedroom flat).

With regards to Ukrainian refugees, 84 guests are currently in hosted arrangements in the borough across 60 hosts. The Ukraine housing lead has provided housing advice and assistance and/or resettlement support to 124 households since the introduction of the post in October 2022. The Ukraine housing lead supports guests whether in hosted arrangements or their own accommodation to ensure accommodation is maintained. The first tranche of guests who arrived in early 2022 are now required to apply for the Ukraine Permissions Extension Scheme in order to extend their visas.

BDBC continue to commission Basingstoke Voluntary Action to provide a community caseworker to support the Ukraine cohort to secure meaningful employment and education opportunities and access mental health, financial and community support. BDBC officers continue to attend regular project and community meetings with Hampshire County Council and district partners to keep up to date with changes to the scheme. The meetings are used to cover finance updates and planning, share partner updates and troubleshoot common issues.

All 18 Local Authority Housing Fund (LAHF) units are now occupied by Ukraine guests or ARAP/ACRS Afghan refugees, following completion of the final 4 units delivered by Winchester Housing Trust in April 2024. Families receive continuing support to ensure the tenancy is sustained and that households have access to ESOL provision, health services, schooling and benefits.

Summary

As highlighted above many of the team's homelessness-related performance remains in line with previous years, which is an achievement within itself given the increasingly significant challenges within the housing sector as a whole, maintaining

strong 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.

The service continually reviews the housing options available both within the district as well as in surrounding areas. There has been investment in a dedicated quality assurance role within the service to ensure adherence with legislation and good practice and standards. The prevention and support team work with households to ensure that they are maximising their household income, whilst the team also continuously seeks to explore grant funding opportunities – particularly in light of wider funding decisions from Hampshire County Council to cease funding for homelessness and social inclusion services from April 2026 – to increase the quality and quantity of accommodation options to various cohorts of households, including the conclusion of the LAHF scheme as mentioned above, as well as the AFEO fund for ex-offenders. BDBC also spent all of its £110,000 allocation of exceptional housing costs of the Household Support Fund in partnership with VIVID and SNG, directly supporting 285 households. The team structure is constantly reviewed to ensure it is fit-for-purpose and meets the borough's prevailing homelessness needs whilst reacting to these wider funding impacts.

Priority 3: Ending Rough Sleeping

The proposed purchase of May Place House gained significant momentum with the in-principle approval from Cabinet to deliver the purchase and much-needed improvements to the accommodation. The project will need to go through the full due diligence and terms and conditions of the purchase, decant and refurbishment programme alongside a re-tendering of the housing management and support services with a registered housing and support provider. Progress on these fronts will continue in 2025/26.

2024's official rough sleeper count was 2, 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 is heavily dictated by individual circumstances. Most commonly across 2024/25 there were either 0 or 1 rough sleepers on any given night verified by Julian House outreach team (on 167 separate nights across the year). Less commonly there were 2, 3 or 4 rough sleepers counted (on 72 separate nights across the year) On very rare occasions 5, 6 or 7 rough sleepers were counted (on 8 separate nights across the year), and when these rare instances occurred there was almost an immediate drop, showing the crucial early intervention to maintain minimal levels of rough sleeping. Maintaining these minimal levels 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 (official count)
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
2024/25	2

Importantly there were very few instances of recurring rough sleepers and instances, on the whole, 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.

These low-level supported schemes allows service users greater flexibility to move out of the pathway when they are ready to live independently, generally in private rented or social rented accommodation. This is achieved through joint working with Julian House outreach team's in-reach worker who has been able to offer transitional and ongoing support outside of the pathway.

Including bed and breakfast placements for those single people who would otherwise have been rough sleeping, there have been a total of 233 placements through the homelessness pathway (including 141 placements at May Place House, Mary Rose Court, Group Homes, Viables, Blackdown Close, Cheviot Close, RSAP and Housing First schemes), plus 120 clients being referred to Julian House outreach team in 2024/25. In terms of move-on through May Place House and Mary Rose Court/Group Homes, 15/48 (31.25%) of tenants were evicted for rent arrears or ASB - meaning the majority of move-ons were for positive reasons (mainly moving through into alternative accommodation).

Outside of the pathway, the team's successful bid for funding through the AFEO scheme as noted above has led to 15 placements in the private rented sector for those who have been released from prison in the previous 12 months in 2024/25.

Further work from this bid has led to establishing a local pre-release panel and specific relationships with private landlords, whilst feeding into NHS-commissioned work around homelessness and the criminal justice systems.

Working in partnership with both commissioned and voluntary partners through the Social Inclusion Partnership (SIP), a winter night shelter was hosted by local churches between December 2024 and February 2025. Close working relationships allowed effective work through Julian House, the Camrose Centre and other key partners in order to provide bespoke options and support for some of the most vulnerable members of the community – giving them the building blocks to move forward with their aspirations and allowing the SIP to effectively tackle all types of homelessness. The SIP remains nationally acclaimed and respected and celebrates its 10th year in October 2025.

The average length of stay at the winter night shelter was 36 nights, and 60% of those who accessed were supported by BDBC to secure accommodation during their stay. 18% of those who accessed had accommodation available to them, accessing the service for the companionship on offer at the shelter. 8.5% of those who accessed had no recourse to public funds, and 87.5% had a local connection to BDBC.

Priority 4: Affordable Housing Supply, Quality and Standards

There were 364 completed units of affordable accommodation delivered in 2024/25, plus 5 units delivered by Winchester Housing Trust to conclude the LAHF scheme. This exceeds the annual target as set out in the Local Plan. Despite the encouraging delivery figures it remains important to consider medium and long-term affordable housing delivery since individual years may fluctuate for various reasons. BDBC's medium and long-term affordable housing delivery remains strong, with an average of 306 units completed annually over the last 5 years and an average of 289 affordable units completed annually over the last 10 years which, whilst slightly under 300, takes into account particularly low delivery for two years in 2015/16 and 2016/17.

As well as the high number of completions, there has been a significant number of social rented units completed in 2024/25, with 108 units completed at social rent levels. The proportion of rented units at social rent levels (compared to affordable rent) is also substantially higher than previous years, at 44% (compared to 5% in 23/24, 9% in 22/23 and 14% in 21/22). In addition to this there were 43x 4 bedroom affordable houses delivered, considerably higher than previous years. 10 of these 4 bedroom units were at social rent levels.

The increase in social rented delivery and larger unit delivery is largely down to RPs purchasing additional affordable units directly from developers. Whilst the council's Interim Policy Statement on First Homes set out the expectation for rented units to be at social rent levels, central Government's update to the planning system in December 2024 removed the mandatory requirement for First Homes, meaning the Interim Policy Statement holds very little weight in planning terms and future delivery is likely to revert back to the 70/30 rented/intermediate split as per Local Plan policy CN1. Whilst the team will continue to push for enhanced levels of social rented units

where possible this is not mandated by the Local Plan, but these aspirations will continue to be fed into the Local Plan Update.

The accelerated affordable housing programme has identified a small number of sites in council land ownership that is suitable for delivering affordable housing. The project will progress these sites further through a bespoke delivery strategy to identify a suitable RP development partner to deliver these units of accommodation, regenerating parcels of land and providing enhanced levels of affordable housing delivery.

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 vast majority of the current s106 pot is currently committed 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 and will form a requirement of RPs being part of BDBC's upcoming preferred partnership scheme.

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, deeper annual review solely of the housing register which will be presented at a members briefing in 2025, and the key headlines from the housing register include almost 60% of households on the register being single people / couples; 98% of households remaining in Band 2 of the housing register and a total of 891 adverts placed through the choice based lettings system in 2024/25, up from 664 in 2023/24. 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 4 years for larger 4+ bedroom accommodation from Band 2. Waiting times are more steady for 2/3 bedroom properties – roughly 2-3 years for these properties from Band 2 although waiting times for 2 bedroom flats are shorter and can be obtained in 1-2 years.

Further progress has been made to the proposed preferred partnership scheme, with Cabinet approving the framework of the scheme in March 2025. Housing associations have been consulted on the proposed content of the application process and the draft Memorandum of Understanding will be finalised and housing associations formally invited to apply to the scheme in autumn 2025. Operating the preferred partnership scheme will enable the opportunities to enhance relationships with key RPs as well as holding them to account, agreeing expectations and monitoring performance to ultimately deliver positive services to tenants.

Empty homes in the borough remain low compared to the national average, with 1.74% of properties in the borough being empty, up from 1.58% in 2023. However the percentage of long term (over 6 months) empty properties in the borough as of

October 2024 is 0.35%, down from 0.63% in 2023. 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. The empty homes webpage received 132 hits and there were 41 reports of empty properties to the team across the year which were investigated.

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 2024/25, with a total of 123 attendees across the two events, although one event had attendance levels hampered due to adverse weather conditions on the day. The newly-formed low cost home ownership register now has roughly 1200 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 was one further completion through the Own Home Loan scheme in 2024/25, taking the total number of completions to 10. Improvements to the scheme have however been made whereby the maximum purchase price has been increased to £300,000, up from £250,000, to reflect the increase in purchase prices since the scheme was launched, as well as taking into account feedback from prospective buyers.

The low cost home ownership team also launched a bespoke service to offer appointments for residents to discuss their home ownership options and aspirations, as a dedicated, tailored 1-2-1 service. This has received overwhelmingly positive feedback, with 51 appointments conducted with 100% satisfaction rates. This represents a unique offer for residents which will continue to be rolled out in 2025/26.

The council's Environmental Health team has dealt with 254 complaints about housing safety concerns in 2024/25 – with the majority of these complaints relating to damp and mould concerns. This is broken down to 158 private sector properties and 96 properties owned by social landlords. The Environmental Health team also completed 57 HMO inspections, with 83 licensed HMOs in the borough.

The Housing Standards team completed 145 Disabled Facilities Grants (DFGs) in 2024/25, including level access showers, ramps and through floor lifts. The team spent £1,877,638.05 in 2024/25. 76% 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 satisfied with the works.

Priority 5: Regeneration and Place

The ambitious aspirations for the Winklebury regeneration scheme remain the same and the collaborative approach to bringing forward proposals continues. However,

the scheme has faced a number of obstacles over the last year that have hampered progress, most notably VIVID's proposed building contractor ceasing operations in the UK. VIVID are now looking at the implications of this in relation to the overall design and deliverability of the scheme and the resulting need to submit a revised planning application. VIVID are looking to plan further engagement and face-to-face contact with the local community and key stakeholders in the coming months to get feedback on any proposed changes and to ensure the scheme aligns with local needs.

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. The council and SNG have undertaken further work 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. The new Kings café in a former butcher's shop was opened last year following extensive refurbishment. This has now been supplemented by the acquisition of the former Beacon Pub to provide an additional community hub. WCA are currently working with SNG and partners to look at how the building can best be refurbished and used to meet local needs. It is anticipated that following refurbishment works, WCA will take on the management of the building towards the end of 2025.

Following initial background research and extensive community engagement, SNG continue work to bring forward ideas for regeneration in South Ham and Buckskin. At this stage, no firm proposals have been put forward and further engagement will continue to ensure that proposals are shaped by local communities.

As noted previously the ongoing project to acquire and improve the facilities at May Place has gained approval by BDBC's Cabinet 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.

A dedicated schedule of works to improve the amenities within neighbourhoods in the borough is completed as part of business as usual activities, including the improvement of play areas, dealing with flytipping and littering and spend of developer contributions. This has been boosted by additional investment into grounds maintenance teams, and these activities improve environments and the feeling of 'place' within a neighbourhood.

The housing team continues to support the regeneration of smaller sites when these arise, for example SNG's proposed regeneration of Malmesbury Fields, which would see an underperforming building which is not fit for purpose converted into c. 20 homes, improving the sense of place in the locality and delivering an increased number of bedspaces than currently.

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, as well as the previously mentioned accelerated affordable housing programme for sites in council land ownership.