

Homelessness Demand and Temporary Accommodation Regular Update – October 2024 – Richard Wood and Kieran Edmunds

Key Temporary Accommodation (TA) Demand Indicators				
Description	Result at EOY 23/24 (March)	Result September 24	Comments	RAG rating
Number of households in temporary accommodation	246	238	The number of households in TA in Oxford has dropped slightly since March, but homelessness and new TA placements remain high so could rise again, so rated amber. Despite a continued high placement rate, this marginal decline has been achieved, as a result of the Council's investment into homelessness prevention and the increase in move on accommodation the Council has delivered.	Amber
Number of households in hotel accommodation 37	123	105	Linked to the overall reduction in TA numbers, the number in hotels and BnB accommodation has also dropped. As well as the factors mentioned in the previous comment, the drop in hotel placements has been further helped by the start of delivery of new PSL TA accommodation (see mitigation below for explanation). 105 households in hotels is still a high number, so rated amber.	Amber
Number of households with children in hotels over 6 weeks	14	3	The Council has a responsibility to avoid hotel placements for 6 weeks and over for households with children. We had 14 families in hotel accommodation in March, whilst trying to source accommodation for those families. Since March a huge effort has led to this number coming down significantly to 3, due to the measures on prevention and move on. Rated amber until we reach zero.	Amber
Current weekly placement rate into temporary accommodation (number of households)	10.18 (Oct 23 to Mar 24)	8.71 (April to Sep)	The placement rate in TA remains at a very high level, despite a small drop since March. It means we place 8-9 households on average a week into TA, when the historic average was more like 3-4. We are investing into prevention services to try to lower it, but fundamentally it's influenced by the housing market and government policy, with major sources of homelessness in the city being PRS evictions linked to high rental inflation, and evictions from a Home Office Asylum hotel.	Red
Number of accepted homelessness relief cases per quarter (most recent published quarter)	103 (Q4 23/24)	109 (Q1 24/25)	The number of accepted homelessness relief cases remains at historic highs in Oxford, linked to factors explained in the previous comment. Two years ago we typically accepted 30-40 relief cases a quarter, we accepted 109 last quarter, which demonstrates the high levels of homelessness in the city. It's putting considerable strain on	Red

			the Housing Needs Team to be able to support the increased number of households approaching us, but staffing has been increased.	
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Temporary Accommodation Demand Mitigations					
Area	Description	Progress statuses	Comments	RAG rating	
38	Prevention	Delivery of Homelessness Prevention "Invest to Save" to increase teams capacity to focus on prevention	Completed	A fixed term investment has been made into the Councils Housing Options and Early Intervention teams from a central government grant, with 4 new officers recruited, and is supporting a large increase in number of households being supported and an increase in successful outcomes achieved (see points below)	
		Homelessness Prevention 50% or more of all duties taken	Ongoing	A good indicator of health in statutory homelessness services is the balance between how much activity a Council does at the prevention stage v. how much it does in relief (once someone is already homeless). Therefore we target 50% or more of our duties to be Prevention Duties. In Q1 we achieved 55.1%, taking 134 Prevention duties, to 109 Relief duties.	
		Percentage of homelessness prevention outcomes being positive	Ongoing	We have also seen an increase in the number of prevention cases we close with a successful outcome. In 23/24 we achieved 52.5% having a successful outcome (with the rest either homeless or lost contact). So far in 24/25 we are achieving 62.8%, an increase in positive cases, breaking down to 40 households sustained in current accommodation, and 63 households supported to move to alternative accommodation before becoming homeless.	
Expand TA stock to lower hotel use		Develop and expand a private sector leasing (PSL) scheme	Delivering	We have successfully established a PSL scheme targeting an initial 30 units to be used as TA, mostly HMOs. As of September we have secured 30 units, with 18 already in use. We will closely monitor these HMOs as they can be potentially more difficult to manage, and have increased staffing to do so, rated amber as still in early stages.	
		Use more Council stock for the purpose of TA, to prevent households having long stays in hotels.	Delivering	Approximately 15 units have been moved from general needs use to TA over the last 12m, we will continue to move more over if required, in particular to ensure families are not spending long periods in hotel rooms.	
		Launch a new Temporary Accommodation Procurement Framework, to drive up standards and drive down cost.	Delivering	Cabinet approved the creation of the framework in May. The framework has now been established and providers are joining it, ready for us soon to start to successfully appoint providers to begin to deliver.	

	Continue to develop and seek approval for other schemes to expand the Council's TA stock	Ongoing	We continue to look at developing other schemes to expand the council's TA stock. These include talks with Housing Associations and developing plans to de-designate accommodation in the Council housing stock awaiting redevelopment to use as TA in the interim following consultation with tenants. We are also considering investment opportunities to purchase units for TA use. Rated amber as complex projects that are in early design stages.	
Increase the move on of homeless households out of TA	Maximize PRS move on	Ongoing	Service development and investment in our PRS Procurement Team continues to deliver in a very challenging market, with them securing 59 new lets in the first 5 months, up from 50 this time last year.	
	Maximize access to social housing	Ongoing	In order to meet our statutory obligations, we allocated 40% of all lets to homeless households in the first 5 months of the financial year (75 properties), compared to 19% (44 properties) for the same period last year, as outlined in the Council's letting plan. We will continue to allocate to this plan as long as demand for TA remains high to ensure we have sufficient move on.	

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