

**To:** Housing and Homelessness Panel  
**Date:** 6 March 2025  
**Report of:** Director of Housing  
**Title of Report:** Update on Temporary Accommodation and Homelessness Pressures (April to December 2024)

Summary and recommendations	
<b>Decision being taken:</b>	N/A
<b>Key decision:</b>	No
<b>Cabinet Member:</b>	Councillor Linda Smith, Cabinet Member for Housing and Communities
<b>Corporate Priority:</b>	Good, affordable homes.
<b>Policy Framework:</b>	Housing, Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy

<b>Recommendation(s):</b> That Panel resolves to:
1. For Housing and Homelessness Panel to note the report

<b>Report author</b>	Richard Wood
Job title	Housing Strategy and Needs Manager
Service area or department	Housing Services
Telephone	01865 252002
e-mail	<a href="mailto:rwood@oxford.gov.uk">rwood@oxford.gov.uk</a>

**Key Temporary Accommodation (TA) Demand Indicators**

Description	Result at EOY 23/24 (March)	Result December 2024	Comments	RAG rating
1.1 Number of households in temporary accommodation (all types)	246	237	<p>The number of households in TA in Oxford has seen a small decline since March 24. Good progress made between May and Dec with number slowly coming down due to mitigations taken by the Council. However, with homelessness rates and new TA placements still high, significant risk of further increases, keeping the rating at amber. This modest decrease has been made possible by the Council's ongoing investment in homelessness prevention and the expansion of move-on accommodation.</p> <p>Outside of the reporting period, a very challenging January saw a further 63 households placed into TA, so we expect ongoing pressure.</p>	Amber
1.2 Number of households in hotel accommodation	123	107	<p>With the overall decrease in TA numbers, the number of households in hotels and BnB accommodation has also declined. In addition to the previously mentioned factors, this reduction has been further supported by the introduction of new PSL TA accommodation (see mitigation below for details). However, with 107 households still in hotels, the rating remains amber.</p>	Amber
1.3 Number of households with children in hotels over 6 weeks	14	8	<p>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 24 over 6 weeks, whilst trying to source accommodation for those families. Since March a huge effort has led to this number coming down significantly to 3 in September 2024. However, we have since seen an increase and this number has now gone to 8, despite the measures put in place. This is due to an increased presentation rate of families. Mitigations includes more PSL leasing, continued focus on sourcing move on accommodation in social and private sectors, and increased staffing to assist with homelessness decisions and caseworking. RAG rating changed to red due to increase.</p>	Red
1.4 Current weekly placement rate into temporary accommodation (number of households)	10.18 (Oct 23 to Mar 24)	8.97 (April to Dec average)	<p>Despite a slight decrease since March, the number of households being placed in TA remains exceptionally high. On average, 8-9 households enter TA each week, a significant increase from the previous norm of 3-4. While efforts are being made to reduce this through investment in prevention services, broader factors such as housing market conditions and</p>	Red

			economic conditions continue to play a major role. In particular, rising rental costs leading to PRS evictions and discharges from a Home Office Asylum hotel are key contributors to homelessness in the city.	
1.5 Number of accepted homelessness relief cases per quarter (most recent published quarter)	103 (Q4 23/24)	121 (Q3 Oct-Dec 24)	The number of accepted homelessness relief cases remains at historic highs in Oxford, and risen further, linked to factors explained in the previous comment. Two years ago, we typically accepted 30-40 relief cases a quarter, we accepted 121 last quarter, which demonstrates the high levels of homelessness in the city. It's putting considerable strain on the Housing Needs Team to be able to support the increased number of households approaching us, but staffing has been increased.	

Temporary Accommodation Demand Mitigations				
Area	Description	Progress statues	Comments	RAG rating
2.0 Prevention	2.1 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). Due to the success we have extended the resource for at least another year via grant funds.	
	2.2 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. During the first three quarters of the year we have achieved 53.7% prevention, but the recent months have seen more relief taken due to increased homelessness presentations, we continue to monitor and will take action if required.	
	2.3 Percentage of homelessness prevention outcomes being	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	

	positive		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. This is a considerable achievement in the current difficult housing market conditions.	
3.0 Expand TA stock to lower hotel use	3.1 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, including three HMOs. We have now achieved this target, with ODS undertaking works in our HMO units ensuring all meet the same standards as the council owned stock, all units should be in use by April.	
	3.2 Use more Council stock for the purpose of TA, to prevent households having long stays in hotels.	Delivering	We continue to gradually move more housing stock into TA use, whilst seeking to avoid a significant impact on overall supply, in particular to ensure families are not spending long periods in hotel rooms.	
	3.3 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. Work is underway with providers joining the framework, and finalisation is imminent, ready for the first rooms to be purchased from the framework before April.	
	3.4 Continue to develop and seek approval for other schemes to expand the Council's TA stock	Ongoing	Working with Housing Associations and the Council stock to repurpose stock for TA use ahead of redevelopment. Currently Richard Grey Court is being decanted by GreenSq and will be used for TA for a few years ahead of redevelopment. We are also consulting with tenants in Windale House and Northbrook House about redevelopment, with a recommendation to Cabinet on how to proceed in due course. If we proceed with the decant, we will use the blocks as TA between the decant and the demolition.	
4 Increase the move on of homeless	4.1 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 109 new lets to homeless households from April to December.	

households out of TA	4.2 Maximize access to social housing	Ongoing	In order to meet our statutory obligations, we target 40% of all lets to homeless households. Between April and December 35.56% of new lets went to homeless households in TA, up from 24.82% for the same period last year. We are currently not on target for 40%, so the team are focusing on this for Q4.	
----------------------	---------------------------------------	---------	---	--

This page is intentionally left blank