

**To: The Head of Housing**

**Date: 20/6/24**

**Report of: The Rapid Re-Housing Manager/Senior Strategy and Service Development Officer**

**Title of the Report: Annual Lettings Plan 2024/25**

### **Summary and Recommendations**

**Purpose of report:**

**To seek approval of the Annual Lettings Plan Targets for 2024/25**

**Policy Framework: Good  
Affordable Homes**

**Recommendations: To note and approve the proposed Annual Lettings Plan Targets for 24/25**

### **Appendices**

**Appendix I: A summary of the new properties expected to be built and let in 24/25**

**Appendix II: A summary of the housing need for 1 bedroom properties on each housing list on 9/5/24**

**Appendix III: A summary of the housing need for family properties on each housing list on 9/5/24**

**Appendix IV: A summary of the number of homeless households in temporary accommodation**

**Appendix V: The Annual Lettings Plan for 2024/25**

## **Introduction & background**

1. The Annual Lettings Plan is designed to set allocation percentage targets, which are set by the Council to determine the proportion of social housing offered to different lists within the Council's Housing Register, in order to best balance their competing demands and needs.

The Oxford Register for Affordable Housing (or the "Housing Register") consists of three separate housing lists:

- **The Homeless List;** for applicants to whom Oxford City Council has accepted a statutory homeless duty and placed in temporary accommodation who are awaiting an offer of secure/permanent accommodation.
- **The Transfer List;** for Council tenants and eligible social housing tenants of Private Registered Providers of social housing (participating in the Oxford Register for Affordable Housing Partnership) living in Oxford and applying for a move to alternative accommodation.
- **The General Register List;** for all other households applying for social housing in Oxford.

2. The Allocations Scheme (section 2.3.1) states:

*"The Head of Housing will approve the Annual Lettings Plan setting out the percentage of allocations to be made to each group."*

## **Supply of Housing**

3. The supply of social housing becoming available depends on the number of new build properties due to be let in the City each year and the number of re-lets of existing social housing. In total there are expected to be around 640 properties becoming available to let in Oxford between 1/4/24 and 31/3/25. The Council and its partner Registered Providers of social housing in Oxford are expecting to build and let at least 140 new properties (see **Appendix I**) and the majority of the rest will be re-lets of existing social housing, where for example, the current tenant has moved. There will also be a small number of properties (around 20) which are purchased to help increase the supply of social housing including some funding which has been bid for from the Local Housing Authority Housing Fund for use as Housing First properties and to house other specific groups.
4. There are expected to be up to 28 new four bedroom houses built and let during 2024-25 to help house some larger families in high housing need. The Council through its Housing Company has in the past extended some suitable properties when they are vacant and also secured some larger properties to be let and will continue to review whether this is possible again in the future.

## Demand for Housing

5. The demand for housing in Oxford continues to greatly exceed the number of properties becoming available despite plans in place to build new properties to help meet this housing need. The Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) completed for Oxfordshire, shows that between 24,000 and 32,000 homes are needed between 2011 and 2031 to meet Oxford's housing need.
6. The Council and its partner Registered Providers of social housing successfully re-housed 563 households in housing need from 1/4/23 to 31/3/24 including 144 homeless households living in temporary accommodation. However, the demand for housing continues to remain very high with over 3400 housing applicants on the Oxford Register for Affordable Housing and more customers are applying all the time.

## Demand compared to Housing Need

7. The number of applicants on the Housing Register clearly demonstrates that there continues to be a high demand for affordable housing in Oxford, however, these figures cannot be looked at without considering the degree of housing need on each housing list. Due to the high demand for affordable housing in Oxford and the limited number of properties that become available it is necessary for the Council to prioritise applications for housing based on applicants' housing need. The Council's Allocations Scheme uses five Priority Bands, to assess housing need, ranging from Band 1 (Exceptional housing need) down to Band 5 (Low or no housing need).
8. When considering the housing need on each housing list this report has focused on the number of households in Bands 1, 2 and 3 requiring family accommodation as they are considered in the greatest housing need on the Housing Register for this type of accommodation. For single applicants and couples requiring 1 bedroom accommodation this report has focused on housing applicants in Bands 1, 2, 3 and 4, as this is more representative of those considered to be in the greatest housing need for non-family accommodation. **Appendices II & III** show a summary of the demand for each type of accommodation by size and list for family and non-family accommodation.

## Housing Need on the Homeless List

9. The number of households threatened with homelessness and approaching the Council for housing assistance remains very high and is increasing (see **Appendix IV: A summary of the number of homeless households in temporary accommodation**). The Council continues to prevent homelessness where possible; however, temporary accommodation will always be needed to help some homeless households. All households on the Homeless List living in temporary accommodation are considered to be in high housing need. On 1/4/24, there were 245 households in temporary accommodation (including 123 in emergency hotel accommodation a mix of mainly singles but also some

families too). The number of households in temporary accommodation has over doubled since 1/4/23 following a sharp increase in homeless presentations (a trend seen nationally and largely due to the current economic climate and lack of affordable housing) and continues to increase and now stands at 279 (as of 20/6).

10. The Council continues to seek to minimise the time households stay in temporary accommodation where practicable and move customers on from hotels and other Temporary Accommodation as soon as possible. The pressure on the Council to secure sufficient temporary accommodation while keeping costs down is higher than ever and a range of options are being considered to help in this area. The Council recognizes, it is not desirable for households, particularly the vulnerable and families, to spend long periods in temporary accommodation. Homeless applicants to whom the Council has accepted a homeless duty and included on the Homeless List are housed as rapidly as possible into more suitable accommodation. It is also essential that there is sufficient throughput from temporary accommodation and for homeless households to be re-housed quickly so there is enough temporary accommodation available to meet the needs of those the Council and our partners are unable to prevent from becoming homeless.

### **One Bedroom Need and Homeless Applicants in Temporary Accommodation**

11. There is acute pressure to maintain sufficient temporary accommodation to meet the needs of customers seeking help - particularly those with a one bedroom need seeking housing assistance/facing homelessness. On 20/6 there were 177 households with a one bedroom need in temporary accommodation (including 168 single applicants) 54 were in OCC owned and managed Temporary Accommodation and 123 in hotels. This number remains very high despite OCC housing 29 homeless households from Temporary Accommodation into social housing and helping 35 households who were threatened with homelessness or actually homeless into Private Rented Sector housing between 1/4/24 and 9/6/24.
12. The supply of one bedroom properties becoming available for 24/25 is slightly higher than last year (around 20 more), however, still remains very low compared to demand. There are expected be around 148 one bedroom general needs properties available to let to applicants aged 18+. Demand greatly exceeds supply and the one-bedroom lettings targets can only go a small way to help house those in housing need from each list – including those on the Homeless List. So many will need to consider other housing options too such as securing accommodation in the private sector with the help of OCC where required.
13. The Lettings Targets proposed for the Homeless List are 45% for general needs one bedroom properties, 25% for designated elderly accommodation (55+) and 25% for the Homeless/Move On for older persons (60+ “sheltered housing” for applicants assessed as suitable for this type of housing). This will allow for over 90 one-bedroom properties to be let to households on the Homeless List in

temporary accommodation during 24/25 (an increase on last year).

14. While more one-bedroom properties may still need to be allocated to the Homeless List during 24/25 there is also other high demand across the Housing Register on the General Register and Transfer Lists too. Including applicants in supported housing ready to move on who will free up much need housing for others in with support needs including the homeless in Temporary Accommodation/Rough Sleepers/Care Leavers and hospital discharges needing housing. There are also existing tenants seeking to downsize, for example to 1 bedroom bungalows or older persons/sheltered housing which in will in turn free up larger housing for families with children in need. There are also applicants assessed as urgently needing to move, for example on health or welfare grounds on the General Register and Transfer Lists too.

**The table below is an extract from the proposed lettings plan and shows the breakdown of targets for general needs (18+) one bedroom properties, designated elderly (55+)/bungalows and older persons (sheltered) housing.**

<b>Non-Family (Non-Designated) Accommodation (excluding Bungalows)</b>							
Property Size		Homeless	Move-on 1, 4 & 5*	Move-on 2*	Transfer	General	TOTAL
1 Bed	<i>Target</i>	45%	25%	10%	10%	10%	100%
	<i>Expected lets</i>	67	37	15	15	15	148
<b>Designated Elderly Accommodation 55+ (&amp; 1 bed general needs Bungalows**)</b>							
Property Size		Homeless	Move-on	Transfer & General			TOTAL
1 Bed	<i>Target</i>	40%	10%	50%			100%
	<i>Expected lets</i>	12	3	16			31
<b>Older Persons Housing/Sheltered Accommodation 60+</b>							
Property Size		Homeless	Move-on	Transfer & General			TOTAL
1 Bed	<i>Target</i>	25%		75%			100%
	<i>Expected lets</i>	14		41			55

*\*Priority awarded to applicants assessed as ready to move on from existing supported housing/pathway; Move 1 Homeless Alliance, Move On 2 – Care Leavers/Young Persons Under 25, Move 4 Mental Health Pathway. Move 5 Housing First & any others.*

*\*\*Bungalows are normally only let to older applicants/those with an assessed health need.*

*\*\*\*Older Persons Housing 60+ and Sheltered Housing is only let to applicants assessed as suitable for living with older vulnerable tenants*

## **One Bedroom Housing Need on the General Register & Transfer Lists**

15. The lettings plan targets to the Homeless List aims to balance with the competing targets of seeking to re-house customers moving on from the Homeless, Mental Health & Young Person's pathways. To free up much needed supported housing for those unable to manage independently and also to re-house Rough Sleepers with Housing First support to properties purchased for this use as well as other individual general needs social housing properties. There are currently 50 singles with move on priority and around a further 15 new referrals are in the process of being assessed.
16. The targets will also enable customers in need on the Transfer List to have some options to move too – most of the around 25 properties to be allocated to this list are likely to go to downsizers moving to smaller properties or successor tenants required to move, freeing up much needed larger homes to re-let to families in need. A small number will also go to other high needs transfer cases. There are currently 7 tenants aged under 55 under-occupying their home seeking to downsize by 2 or more bedrooms and 23 tenants seeking to downsize by one bedroom to a more suitable property. There are also 17 tenants aged 55+ under-occupying their home seeking to downsize by 2 or more bedrooms and 88 tenants seeking to downsize by 1 bedroom to a more suitable property.
17. The targets for General Register List (excluding Move On applicants), allow for around 20 properties to be available to customers in housing need – including those who are threatened with homelessness and/or who need to on health and social/welfare grounds (including hospital discharges) or are otherwise living in unsuitable accommodation. Aiming to help with upstream homeless prevention as many of those on the General Register if not otherwise housed could end up approaching OCC as homeless and meet the priority need threshold duty to provide temporary accommodation. There are also 5 policy successors cases with a one bedroom need who need to downsize from larger family homes too and will be others during 23/24.

## **Families on the Homeless List in Temporary Accommodation**

18. From 1/4/23 to 31/3/24 there were 89 homeless families allocated social housing and re-housed; 52 into 2 bedroom, 33 into 3 bedroom and 4 into 4 bedroom properties. However, demand from Homeless families and the pressure on securing sufficient Temporary Accommodation remains high.
19. On 9/5/24 there were 43 households on the Homeless List with a two bedroom housing need, however, there are expected to be an increase in households approaching OCC as homeless during 24/25 so the lettings target allows for up to 79 two bedroom properties to be allocated to the Homeless List. This will ensure families OCC has been unable to prevent from becoming homeless and placed into temporary accommodation will have the opportunity to apply for two bedroom social housing properties along with considering other housing options too.

20. The demand for larger family properties is high across the Housing Register particularly on the General Register & Transfer Lists with limited options available in Oxford to secure alternative suitable housing in the private sector. OCC has seen an increase in the number of larger families seeking housing assistance including some facing homelessness. With the high rents in Oxford above Local Housing Allowance rates in the private sector (including benefit capped cases) there are only limited options to prevent homelessness – particularly where families need to remain in the City due to schooling etc. The Homeless List lettings targets of 40% and 15% respectively for 3 and 4 bedroom properties are considered proportionate when balanced against the much higher number of families in higher housing need on the other Housing Lists.

21. On 9/5/24 there were 21 households with a 3 bedroom housing need living in Temporary Accommodation on the Homeless List, however the number of larger families requiring Temporary Accommodation is also likely to increase during 24/25. The proposed Homeless Lettings target allows for around 64 such properties to be allocated to this list during 24/25. Giving the opportunity to existing and future families placed in temporary accommodation an option to move on as quickly as practicable. Balanced with seeking to help to re-house some of the large number of competing households on the other Housing Lists living in overcrowded or otherwise unsuitable accommodation in high housing need.

22. On 9/5/24 there were 9 households on the Homeless List with a 4 bedroom need and there are very limited options available to secure affordable housing in the Private Sector. The targets proposed allow for a small number of 4 bed properties to be allocated to the Homeless List – around 8 during 24/25 which will help meet this demand as it arises (or to allocate to other Housing Lists if not). Many larger families with a 4 bedroom housing need including those placed into Temporary Accommodation will also need to consider moving to more suitable 3 bedroom properties to improve their existing circumstances (including 3 bedroom parlour houses). This is another reason for around 64 three-bedroom properties to be let to the Homeless List during 24/25 to help re-house them as soon as possible.

### **Families on the Transfer List in Housing Need**

23. The housing need of tenants on the Transfer List requiring family properties remains high (see **Appendix III**), despite 108 families being re-housed to larger or more suitable accommodation from 1/4/23 to 31/3/24.

24. On 9/5/24 there were 148 tenants on the transfer list in Bands 1 to 3 seeking to move to 2 bedroom properties, however, there are also a large number of customers on the General Register applying for housing too and who could be potentially homeless if not re-housed. The emerging trend of customers with a 2 bedroom need applying on the General Register is expected to continue this year and so this is reflected in the higher Annual Lettings targets to the General Register List while seeking to help re-house those in the most need on the

Transfer List too. The 15% Lettings Target to the Transfer List could help up to around 30 existing tenants move during 24/25. This will help free much needed social housing including 1 bed properties (as overcrowded tenants move from 1 bed to 2 bed properties) and 3 or 4 bedroom properties (as tenants downsize to 2 bed properties from larger homes).

25. There are still a large number of households on the Transfer List with a 3 and 4 bedroom need living in overcrowded accommodation or needing to move, for example, on health grounds. The proposed Lettings Targets of 40% and 42.5% respectively for 3 and 4 bedroom properties will go some way to help re-house around 64 families with a 3 bedroom need and 21 with a 4 bedroom need (including possibly a small number of families with a 5 bedroom need). By moving overcrowded families on the Transfer List to larger homes this will in turn increase the supply available to others on the Housing Register, mainly 2 bedroom homes to be let to smaller families in housing need on the Housing Register including the homeless/those threatened with homelessness.

### **Families on the General Register List in Housing Need**

26. The housing need for family accommodation on the General Register List (see **Appendix III**) remains high. **On 9/5/24** there were 254 customers on the General Register List with a 2 bedroom housing need in Bands 1 to 3 with many more applying all the time. There were over 109 two-bedroom properties allocated to the General Register List last year. The letting target to the General Register List of 45% for 2 bedroom properties represents the need to seek to ensure customers in housing need, including those who are potentially homeless, have an opportunity to be housed balanced with the lower overall demand on the Transfer and Homeless Lists too. Around 89 two bedroom properties are expected to be allocated to the General Register List during 24/25. The demand for 3 and 4 bedroom properties or larger is high on the General Register List although lower than on the Transfer List. The letting targets of allocating 20% of 3 bedroom properties and 42.5% of 4 bedroom properties to the General Register List reflect this. There are expected to be around 32 three-bedroom properties and 21 four bedroom properties (including a very low number of larger properties) allocated to families in need on the General Register List.



**Appendix I: A Summary of New Build Properties and Acquisitions Expected to become available to Let in 24/25**

Development Site	Landlord	Flats			Houses			Total
		1 Bed	2 Bed	3 Bed		4 Bed	5 Bed	
<b>Barton Park</b>	Ox Place	9	24	34		20		<b>87</b>
<b>Lanham way</b>	OCC		2	3				<b>5</b>
<b>Roken House</b>	OCC	1						
<b>Tucker Rd</b>	OCC		3					
<b>Land at Frideswide Square</b>	Sovereign	11	13	12		8		<b>44</b>
<b>Total New Build</b>		<b>21</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>49</b>		<b>28</b>		<b>140</b>
Projected Acquisitions (9/5)		16		2		2		20
<b>Total New Build &amp; Acquisitions</b>		<b>37</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>51</b>		<b>30</b>		<b>160</b>

**Appendix II: A summary of the housing need for 1 bedroom properties on each housing list on 9/5/24**

For single applicants and couples requiring 1 bedroom accommodation this report has focused on housing applicants in Bands 1, 2, 3 and 4, as this is more representative for those considered to be in the greatest housing need for non-family accommodation.

**Demand for One-Bedroom Properties**

**1 Bed Minimum Housing Need (under 55)**

Priority Band	Homeless List	General Register List	Transfer List	Total
Band 1	1	2	16**	19
Band 2		57*	41	98
Band 3	32	90	10	132
Band 4		179	2	181
Total	33	328	69	430

*\* Including 49 move-on applicants assessed as ready to move-on to more secure housing in Band 2 living in supported housing in the City (for example the Homeless Pathway or the Mental Health Pathway).*

*\*\* Including 6 tenants in Band 1 on the Transfer List under-occupying their home seeking to downsize by 2 or more bedrooms and 25 tenants in Band 2 seeking to downsize by one bedroom to a more suitable property.*

**1 Bedroom Minimum Housing Need (55+)**

Priority Band	Homeless List	General Register List	Transfer List	Total
Band 1		2	29**	31
Band 2		22*	118	140
Band 3	5	39	23	67
Band 4		29	6	35
Total	5	92	176	273

*\*Including 17 applicants in Band 2 assessed as ready to move-on from supported housing in the City to more secure housing.*

*\*\*Including 25 tenants in Band 1 on the Transfer List under-occupying their home seeking to downsize by 2 or more bedrooms and 96 tenants in Band 2 seeking to downsize by 1 bedroom to a more suitable property.*

**Appendix III: A summary of the housing need for family properties on each housing list on 9/5/24**

When considering the housing need on each housing list this report has focused on the number of households in Bands 1, 2 and 3 requiring family accommodation as they are considered in the greatest housing need on the Housing Register for this type of accommodation.

**2 Bedroom Minimum Housing Need**

Priority Band	Homeless List	General Register List	Transfer List*	Total
Band 1		2	11	13
Band 2	2	24	77	103
Band 3	41	228	60	329
Total	43	254	148	445

\*The Transfer List includes 6 tenants under-occupying their home in Band 1 seeking to downsize by 2 bedrooms and 42 tenants in Band 2 seeking to downsize by 1 bedroom.

**3 Bed Minimum Housing Need**

Priority Band	Homeless List	General Register List	Transfer List	Total
Band 1			11	11
Band 2		24	47	71
Band 3	21	126	279	426
Total	21	150	337	508

**4 Bed Minimum Housing Need or Larger**

Priority Band	Homeless List	General Register List	Transfer List	Total
Band 1	1		2	3
Band 2	8	20	67	95
Band 3	9	63	64	136
Total	9	83	133	225

# Appendix IV: A summary of the number of homeless households in temporary accommodation

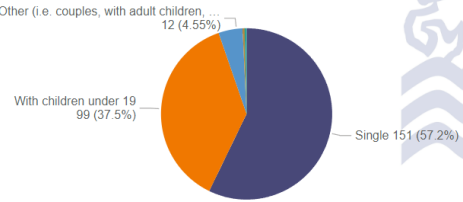
1/4/23 to 31/3/24

## Households in temporary accommodation 2023/24

Fiscal Year  
 2023/24  
 2024/25

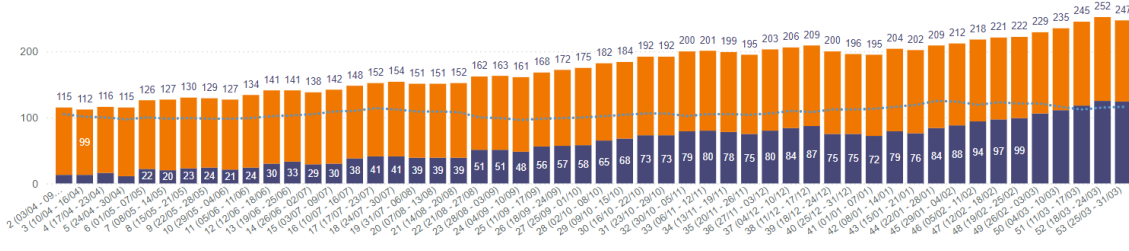
Households Total	Households in OCC TA	Households in B&B
246	123	123

Current number of households by Type



Households CY and LY Total by Week (as of Friday) and BnB (Y/N)

Accom type ● BnB ● TA ● Households LY



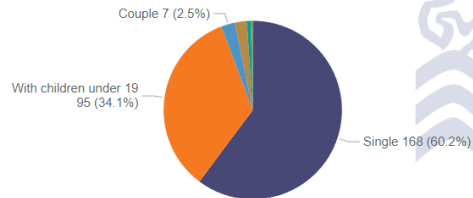
1/4/23 to 20/6/24

## Households in temporary accommodation 2024/25

Fiscal Year  
 2024/25

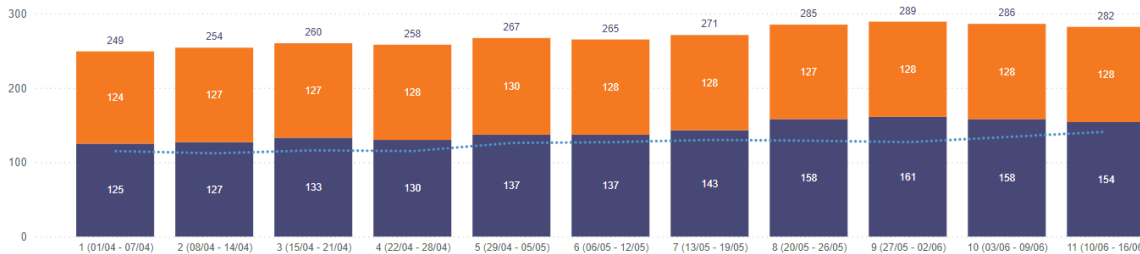
Households Total	Households in OCC TA	Households in B&B
279	124	155

Current number of households by Type



Households CY and LY Total by Week (as of Friday) and BnB (Y/N)

Accom type ● BnB ● TA ● Households LY



## Appendix V: The Annual Lettings Plan for 2024/25

Family Accommodation							
Property Size		Homeless			Transfer	General	TOTAL
Two Bed	Target	40%			15%	45%	
	Expected lets	79			30	89	198
Three Bed	Target	40%			40%	20%	
	Expected lets	64			64	32	160
Four Bed	Target	15%			40%	20%	
	Expected lets	8			2 1	21	50
Non-Family (Non-Designated) Accommodation							
Property Size		Homeless	Move- on 1, 4,& 5*	Move- on 2*	Transfer	General	TOTAL
Studio flat / One Bed	Target	45%	25%	10%	10%	10%	
	Expected lets	67	37	15	15	15	148
Designated Elderly Accommodation 55+ & 1 bed general needs bungalows							
Property Size		Homeless	Move-on		Transfer	General	TOTAL
Any Size	Target	40%	10%		50%		
	Expected lets	12	3		16		31
Sheltered Accommodation							
Property Size		Homeless	Move-on		Transfer	General	TOTAL
Any Size	Target	25%			100%		
	Expected lets	14			42		56

Projected total lets between 1/4/24 to 31/3/25 expected to be: 643

\*Move 1 Homeless Pathway, Move On 2 – Care Leavers/Young Persons Under 25, Move 4 Mental Health Pathway. Move 5 Housing First & any others