

Housing and Homelessness Scrutiny Panel

November Feedback

Update Feedback

Please find below the responses from Richard Wood further to the questions asked in relation to the Housing Performance Monitoring item from October's meeting.

Request for further information on targets and profiles for affordable housing development

The Affordable Housing programme is still seeing quite significant changes – not least as schemes and milestones get reset in the post lockdown/ pandemic situation, and some work on this is still ongoing, so things are likely to adjust again.

However, in broad terms, the general three-year ambition is for AH supply of 1,000 or more affordable homes, of which we would seek to secure 700 or more at social rent (including acquisitions but excluding anything build outside of Oxford).

The profile we use is based on identifiable sites and plans. If we look at the three years 21/22 to 23/24 at present that expects to deliver 1,036 units, of which 623 are currently Social Rent (This is via the HRA/ Housing Company and RPs).

Request for a gender breakdown for Everyone In

The gender breakdown for people accommodated under "Everyone In" is 48 Female (18.4%) / 213 Male (81.6%). This correlates closely to the proportion of people previously rough sleeping, and also currently rough sleeping.

Question if any of the latest MHCLG bidding was for specific support (such as for drugs/alcohol/ mental health)?

The latest funding is not specific to any type of specialist support. However there is a separate Substance Misuse bid that Public Health submitted this month, and which we have supported, which hopefully will see close to £500k of funding come in to Oxford for this over the next two years.

Thursday 5 November Meeting

Mr Wilding – Rough Sleeping Manager started the meeting with an update concerning the second lockdown in which he stated the government has relaxed certain aspects of this second lockdown in respects to what can stay open, who you can visit, support bubbles and exercise. **See attached link for 9 ways the second lockdown is different:**

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/explainers-54793959>

An update report on the Council's activities in relation to Rough Sleeping, particularly in light of COVID-19, to include consideration of Floyds Row, the impact of the 'everyone in' policy, and future plans around 'everyone in' (with specific reference to the availability of move-on accommodation).

Aspire, St. Mungo's, Crisis, Transition by Design are all working closely with the Oxford City County rough sleeping department to give the homeless community support with substance misuse, health, and accommodation through the Everyone In initiative. St. Mungo's regularly checks on the homeless through street work and to ensure that they receive the relevant support to meet their needs.

In the summer, MHCLG launched the NSAP, which provides two funding streams. The first delivers funding to local authorities to continue accommodating people housed under "Everyone In" on an

interim basis. The second funding stream supports the development of longer-term accommodation solutions for this cohort. At the time of writing this report MHCLG had announced awards under the first stream, but not the second.

Under the interim accommodation funding the council received the following:

- Provision of accommodation at YHA/Canterbury House - £897,233
- Development of Aspire's Beckett Street project - £106,276
- Winter provision - £36,036
- Access to the private rented sector - £25,000

Aspire have been gifted five townhouses on Beckett Street on a temporary basis pending the redevelopment of Oxford's West End. They have opened two of these as HMO properties for people who have previously been homeless or are at risk of becoming homeless. The NSAP funding will allow Aspire to refurbish the other three properties in order for them to be used on the same basis.

Funding has also been provided to support the additional costs of this year's winter provision (see section below on SWEP) and to help secure access to the private rented sector. On this latter item we are partnering with the organisation Greater Change, who are match funding the £25,000. Typically this funding will be used to help with deposit and rent in advance payments.

Please see Wendy Hind's blog, "Housing, Homelessness & Housing First" in the Involved Blogger section of The Notice Board website for additional information on homelessness:

<https://www.tenantinvolvement.com/post/housing-homelessness-housing-first-submitted-by-wendy-hind>

The "Everyone In" initiative has seen 261 individuals accommodated (213 men and 48 women), of whom 103 have moved on to settled accommodation. There are 110 people currently accommodated in Canterbury House and YHA, with a further 48 people having left this accommodation due to eviction, abandonment, or commitment to prison. Where these people remain in Oxford, they will continue to be supported to find accommodation solutions. Whilst the Rough Sleeping team have been focussed on the "Everyone In" work, the core function of managing the Adult Homeless Pathway (AHP) has continued alongside this. The AHP consists of 190 units of accommodation in two hostels and a number of dispersed housing projects.

The issue of Oxford's hidden homelessness community was also discussed on the meeting and how the support services are working towards helping those who are not living on the streets. The availability of assistance with Housing has changed radically since the 2011 Crisis report on "hidden homelessness". Single people are no longer excluded from this provision and are visible to housing services.

This is especially the case in Oxford where we have a thriving homelessness sector. People who are new to rough sleeping are quickly identified and are supported to access interim accommodation. We have great information about people sleeping rough in Oxford thanks to the collaborative work of the St Mungo's Outreach team, the Council's Community response team and Thames Valley Police. This is supported by an engaged public who regularly report incidences of people rough sleeping. People who are sofa surfing are approaching the council for help when these arrangements come to an end. The impact of Covid-19 on these numbers has not been that great, suggesting that there is a reasonable awareness of the help available from the council in these circumstances. Although we don't know the number of people who might not be aware of this help, the worst outcome would be that someone ends up rough sleeping, and as described above, in this event support would be provided very quickly.