



*Cherwell*  
DISTRICT COUNCIL  
NORTH OXFORDSHIRE

# Temporary Accommodation Policy

Overview and Scrutiny  
March 2026

# What we will cover

- What is Temporary Accommodation and when is it used?
- Purpose of the Policy
- Strategic links
- Usage, rates and trends
- Changes in delivery and management
- Homelessness prevention and vulnerable groups
- Improving access to long term housing options



# What is Temporary Accommodation (TA) and when is it used ?

- Temporary accommodation is used when households are homeless and are Priority Need
- The provision of temporary accommodation is part of our statutory duties
- Priority Need is a legislative test
- Temporary Accommodation is provided either within actual units of residential accommodation or within hotels
- When the Council either finds someone permanent accommodation or has no duties to continue housing them, the temporary accommodation duty ends.



# Purpose of the TA Policy

- Outline how the Council will manage and deliver the service
- Ensure that Council is acting in accordance with legislation
- Set expectations and our approach
  - When hotel placements are used
  - What factors are considered when making a placement (size, area etc)
  - Differences between 188 and 193
  - What customers can expect
  - Approach to specific management issues (pets, storing belongings etc)
  - Ending placements



# How TA links to the wider Housing Strategies

## Housing Strategy 2025-30

“Deliver transformed temporary accommodation options, reducing prevalence on those living in nightly charged hotel accommodation”

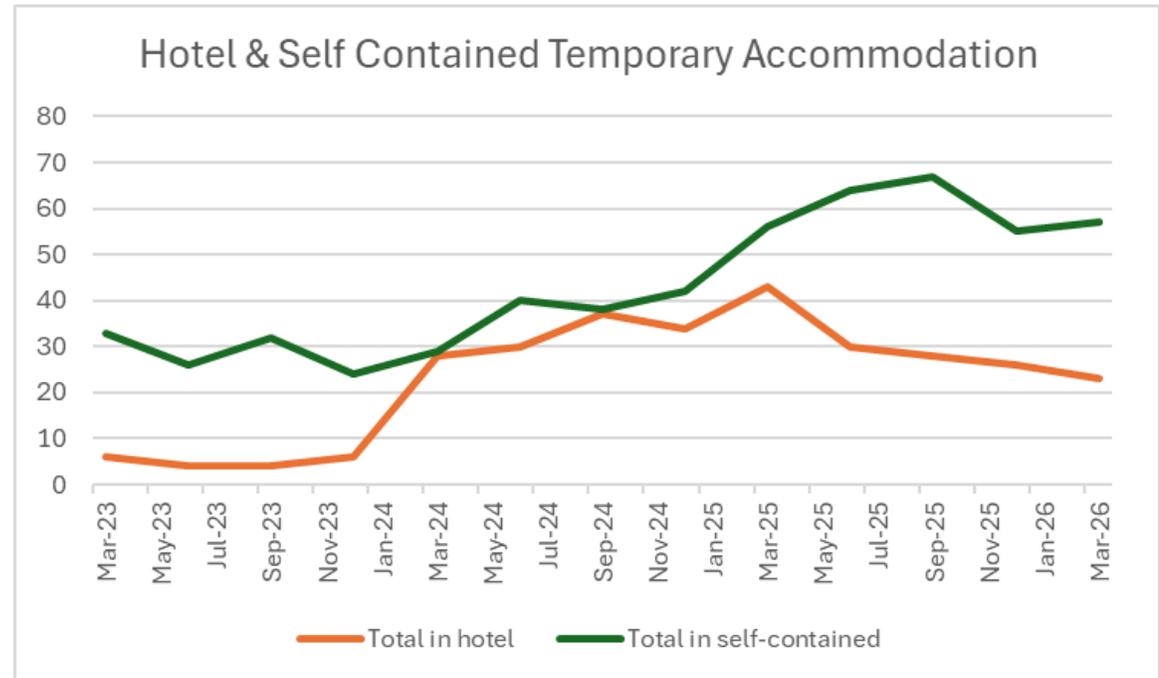
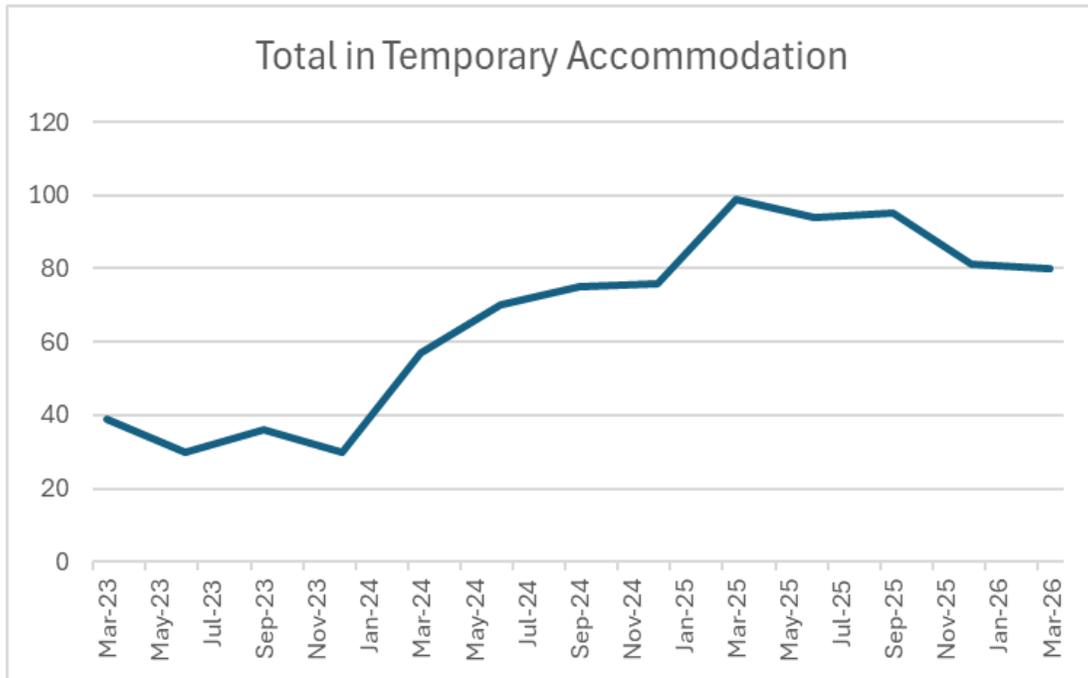
## National Plan to End Homelessness (Policy Paper) - Pillar 4

“Improving temporary accommodation and making people’s experiences better if they do become homeless”.

- Increasing the supply of good quality, affordable TA
- Improving physical quality of TA and the experiences of households living within it



# Usage of Temporary Accommodation



# What is driving the increase?

## High volume of single applicants with complex needs

- Increasing numbers of single people presenting with multiple and overlapping support needs

## Domestic abuse presentations

- A sustained rise in households fleeing domestic abuse has contributed to higher TA demand.
- Many cases require safety measures or placement locations which limits available options and extends time spent in TA.

## Resettlement schemes

- Although numbers have now stabilised, previous peaks in arrivals from resettlement programmes (such as Afghan and Ukrainian schemes) created additional pressure.

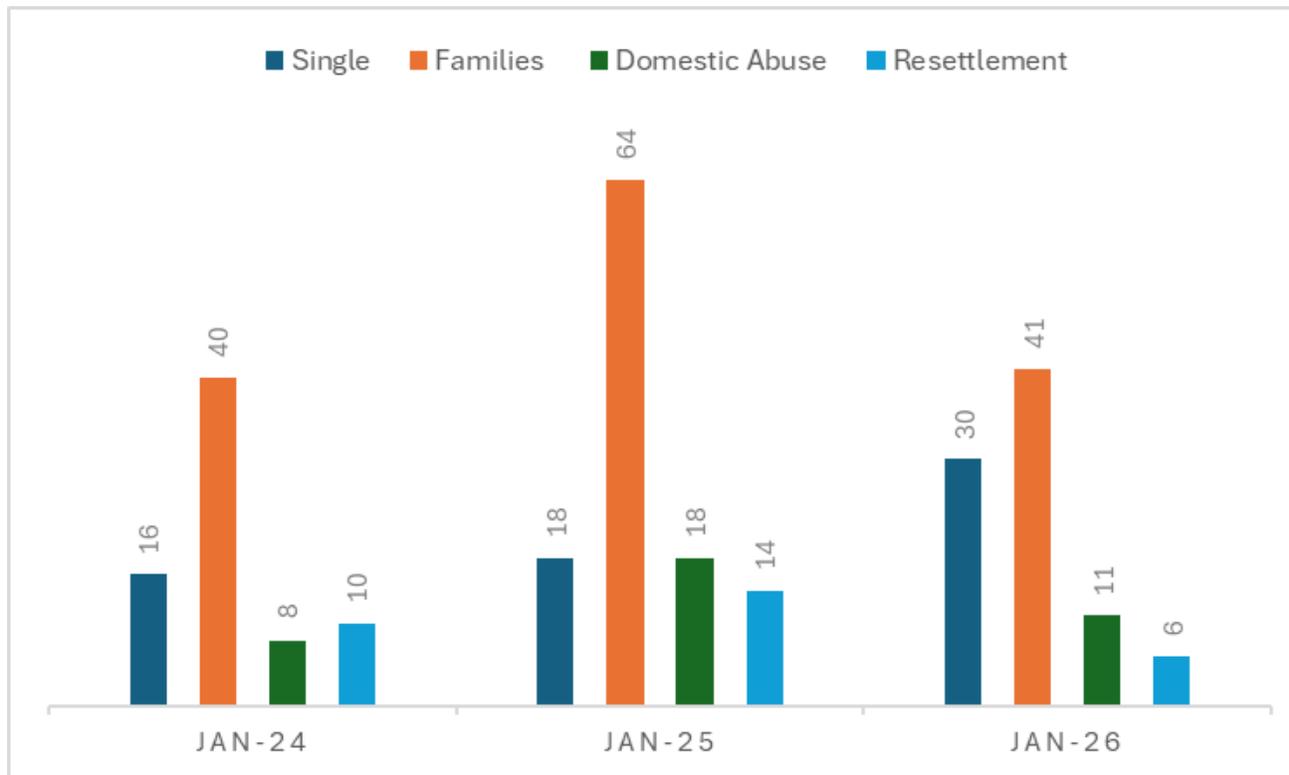
## Affordable Rents

- Increase in private sector rents has also driven demand due to affordability issues and clients being unable to meet to qualifying criteria to rent a property



# Demographics of TA

We currently have 30 single households and 41 families in temporary accommodation, including a total of 81 children.



# Changing our TA Portfolio

Since April 2024, we have secured 57 units of self contained accommodation.

- 6 Additionally through partnership with Sanctuary, totalling 30 units
- 4 LAHF supported new delivery with SOHA
- 19 Conversion of our own stock to TA
- 4 Using Commuted Sums from S.106
- 24 at Town Centre House, following redevelopment

Ended our lease arrangement with the Musketeer.



# Rationale for Change

## Cost

Around £25,000 year per household per year in a hotel.

Having own stock attracts rental income and negates hotel pressure.

## Service Delivery

Hotels unpopular with clients due to lack of facilities.

## Government Guidance

Government guidance advises Council's that stays in hotels of 6 weeks or longer should be avoided.



# Future of the TA portfolio

5 million of Capital investment in TA within 26-27 budget. This is with the aim of purchasing accommodation and potentially developing our own.

We will also receive another c.650k from the LAHF round 4, and this can fund at least 2 TA units.

Due to the imbalance in provision, we are hoping to secure more accommodation outside Banbury.

Considering the number of singles, active consideration of whether TA with support is required



# What the Council does to prevent homelessness

It is the role of the Housing Options Officer to prevent homelessness, and it is part of our statutory duties. A personalised action plan is made with each household with actions for both parties about what each will do.

The Council continues to deliver effective prevention services. In 2024/25, 318 prevention duties were closed with 87 households helped to secure accommodation into the private rented sector (PRS). So far in 2025/26, 261 prevention duties have ended with 85 PRS offers made.

Tenancy Sustainment Officers have successfully helped residents retain both Registered Provider and PRS tenancies through direct support, negotiation, and early intervention. Over the past 12 months, the TSOs have successfully sustained 26 tenancies through negotiation and by securing financial support. They have also completed settlement work on 19 cases.

In total, £65,097.30 in financial support has been secured to help maintain tenancies. This includes discretionary housing payments, benefit backdates, hardship fund awards, and charity or grant funding.

Referrals to services such as BYHP and Connections support provide services such as mediation and tenancy support to enable people to remain in their homes where safe and appropriate. In cases of domestic abuse, property safety improvements are facilitated.



# Homelessness Prevention contd

Shift in the balance between prevention and relief, with more households now presenting at crisis point and requiring relief duties. This trend links directly to increased temporary accommodation usage, as fewer opportunities exist to resolve cases earlier in the prevention stage.

	2023-24	2024-25	To date (end of Q3)/current
<b>Total households assessed as homeless</b>	491	563	410 (Q1-3)
<b>Prevention duty owed</b>	310	311	202 (Q1-3)
<b>Relief duty owed</b>	173	249	192 (Q1-3)

Overall, the Council continues to use a combination of sustainment work, mediation, financial assistance and PRS engagement to reduce homelessness, while responding to rising pressures that are driving demand toward relief and Temporary Accommodation.



# Support for clients

The Council commissions or provides a wide range of support for people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness.

- Adult Homeless Pathway (supported accommodation, outreach support and prevention services)
- Tenancy Sustainment Officers
- Resettlement Team
- YPSA (Young Persons Supported Accommodation)
- Beacon Centre
- Oxford House
- ODAS (Domestic Abuse Pathway)

We will also refer to appropriate third sector or wider commissioned pathways where appropriate.



# Moving households on from TA

Most households to which the Council accepts homelessness duties move to an offer of social housing. In 24/25, the Council housed 128 households who were either owed the Relief Duty or Main Homeless Duty through the Housing Register. In 25/26 109 households have been rehoused through the same route.

Offers through the private sector at this stage are less effective. The affordability of the PRS is the main barrier, as well as the vulnerability of clients.

There are around 2100 total households on the housing register, which includes homeless applicants. The Council, on average over the last 3 years, has let around 550 properties through the register



# Housing Allocations Scheme

CDC Housing Allocation Scheme governs how we allocate social housing in Cherwell.

The scheme was updated in January 2025 to give households in Temporary Accommodation greater priority for allocations:

In 2023/24: 11% of all lettings were allocated to Homeless applicants

In 2024/25: 21%

In 2025/26: 31%

The prioritisation has also resulted in shorter waiting times for those in TA.



# Affordable Housing Delivery

We have had several recent successes delivering additional affordable housing on new build sites in Cherwell, over and above the policy level required.

This includes 2x 100% affordable housing schemes in Banbury, where both shared ownership and rented affordable housing has been delivered.

As a result, affordable housing delivery in Cherwell is higher this financial year than any of the last 4 years.

Recent new build delivery has also helped boost the number of 4-bed social housing homes available for rent which are in very short supply.

More social rent homes - the most affordable rented tenure - has also been delivered in recent years.



Any questions?



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