

CABINET MEMBERS REPORT TO COUNCIL

August 2025

COUNCILLOR WENDY FREDERICKS - CABINET MEMBER FOR PEOPLE SERVICES

For the period up to 31st August 2025

1 Progress on Portfolio Matters.

Benefits

Caseload (August)

By the end of August 2025, we saw a decrease in our caseload of 15 cases compared to the previous month. We currently have 2,425 households claiming Housing Benefit and Council Tax Support, and 4,583 households claiming Council Tax Support only.

Workloads and Speed of Processing Times – (August)

The table below shows our processing times for August. Our targets are:

16 days for processing new claims

10 days for processing changes in circumstances

We prioritise processing changes that affect Housing Benefit to minimise overpayments. This approach reduces the financial impact on customers and helps the council avoid potential losses in Housing Benefit subsidy, as well as the need for recovery action.

In August, our Housing Benefit and Council Tax Support processing times decreased for both new claims and change of circumstances.

	Number received in August	NNDC number of days to process (August)
New claims HB	150	2.70
New claims CTS		16.20
Changes in circumstances HB	5913	7
Changes in circumstances CTS		6.20

Discretionary Housing Payments

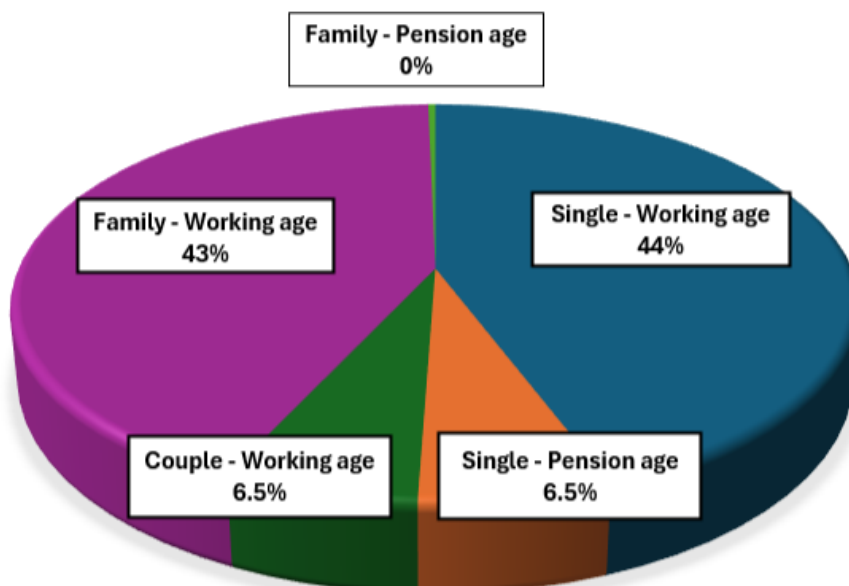
We continue to administer Discretionary Housing Payments (DHP) to support tenancy sustainment, homelessness, and to support people to stay within the community.

For 2025/26, North Norfolk has been allocated funding of £103,037.00, and up to 31st August 2025 we have spent 41% of our allocation across 46 households.

A breakdown of how the Expenditure has been allocated across the 46 households can be seen below.

Household Type	Number of Households paid	Expenditure across households
Single - Working age	23	£ 18,592.68
Single - Pension age	2	£ 2,648.62
Couple - Working age	2	£ 2,673.11
Couple - Pension age	0	£ -
Family - Working age	18	£ 17,958.31
Family - Pension age	1	£ 136.05
Totals	46	£ 42,008.77

TOTAL EXPENDITURE PER HOUSEHOLD TYPE



Financial Inclusion (Pro-active workstreams)

We are continuing with our Financial Inclusion (pro-active) Delivery Plan. We have recently contacted over 90 households who have been identified as in crisis using the LIFT Dashboard. Using data analytics, we can identify households who may be struggling to pay their priority bills. Our work involved contacting residents by phone and in person, to understand their

household circumstances, offer support through benefit and welfare checks, and to identify missed income.

Our results from these campaigns are currently being analysed and will be presented shortly.

We will shortly be contacting households who are eligible to support through the NHS Healthy Start campaign and through Free School Meals. Households will be sent a letter providing further information on the schemes and signposting to the NHS and Norfolk County Council websites.

Our Business Support Officers are looking at Council Tax Support take up and are phoning customers to complete a benefit entitlement check and to offer support in claiming missed benefits.

In September, we will be starting to prepare for first tranche of targeted payments under the Household Support Fund, to support low-income vulnerable households with food, energy, and wider essentials over the Autumn/Winter months. A second tranche of targeted payments will be issued in January 2026.

IRRV Performance Awards – Benefits Team of the Year

The team met with panellists from the IRRV and provided a presentation to support the nomination for Benefits Team of the Year. The team presentation showcased the impact of the team, supported through evidence and stories. The results of the nominations will be held on the finals night on Thursday 2nd October 2025 in Telford.

Housing Options and Homeless Prevention

Your Choice Your Home

The demand for social and affordable housing options remains high within the district and far exceeds the availability and supply. As at the 31 August 2025 there were 2,220 households on the housing list with (22%) being on the Housing Register – this register contains those qualifying applicants who have the most urgent housing needs, including homeless households and households living in Temporary Accommodation.

The tables below highlight the makeup of housing need and the size property that is required by applicants on the housing list. Although the greatest demand for housing is those with a 1-bedroom need, there are significantly fewer larger properties allocated with a current demand for 4 bed+ properties being 273.

	Housing List by Bedroom Need				Homes Let by Property Size (Bedrooms)			
	Housing Register	Housing Options	Transfer	Total	Housing Register	Housing Options	Transfer	Total
1 Bed	210	874	160	1244	45	0	0	45
2 Bed	103	319	89	511	49	2	1	52
3 Bed	70	81	41	192	21	0	1	22
4 Bed	90	104	42	236	3	0	0	3
5 Bed+	15	15	7	37	0	0	0	0
Total	488	1393	339	220	118	2	2	122

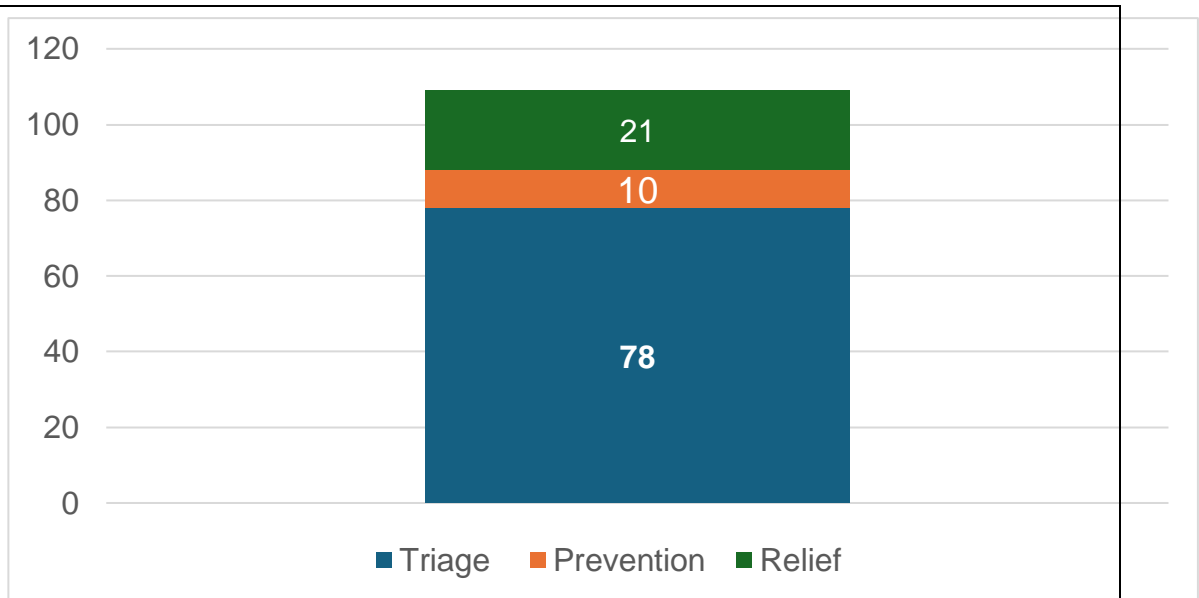
Some properties have a minimum age requirement, for example, in some cases only people over 55 years of age, this applied to 13% of the properties let between 01 April 2025 to 31 August 2025.

Households Assessed and Duty Owed

When a household becomes homeless, or is at risk of homelessness, their local authority owes them a duty. There are three main types of homelessness duties:

1. Prevention duty: Local authorities owe prevention duties to help stop households at risk of homelessness losing their accommodation.
2. Relief duty: If a household is homeless, the local authority owes them a relief duty to provide some sort of accommodation.
3. Main housing duty

Approaches to the service remain high, during the month of August 2025 we have opened 109 new cases with 31 households being assessed as owed a statutory duty to prevent or relieve homelessness.



Assessment of approaches August 2025

Causes of Homelessness

The three most common triggers of homelessness of last settled home during the month were:

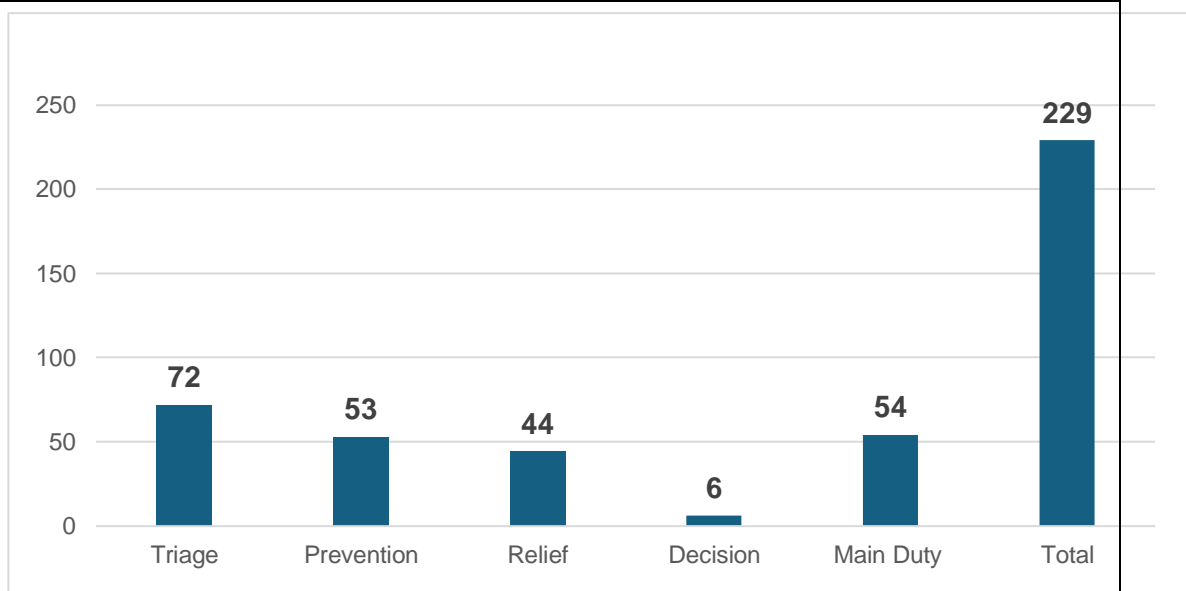
- Domestic Abuse
- The loss of private tenancy
- Relationship breakdown

Year to date

During the period we have opened 507 homeless cases with 185 households being assessed as being owed a statutory duty to support households

Open cases

On the 31 August 2025 there were 229 open cases.

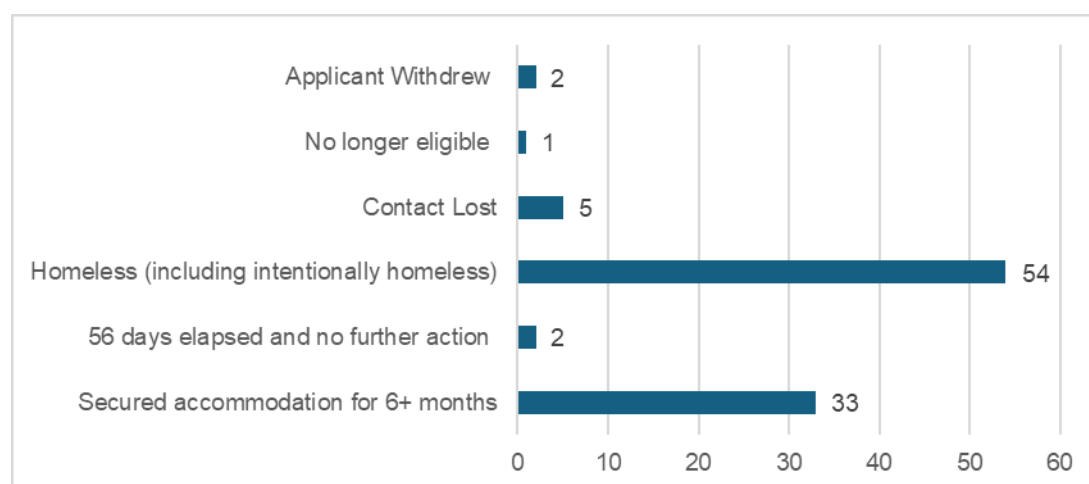


Outcomes of homelessness duties April to August 2025

Where homelessness cannot be prevented or relieved a decision is taken whether the applicant is owed the Main homelessness duty. This describes the duty a local authority has towards an applicant who is unintentionally homeless, eligible for assistance and has priority need. Households are only owed a main duty if their homelessness has not been successfully prevented or relieved.

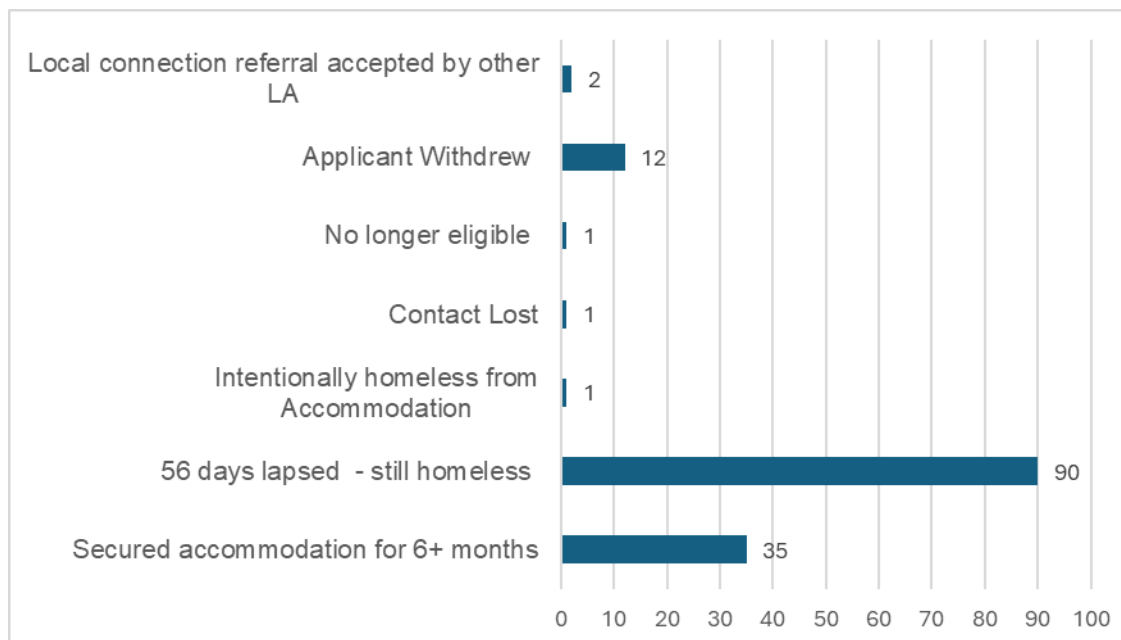
Outcomes of homelessness prevention duties

Of those households whose prevention duty ended in the period (April to October) 34% (33 households) found secure accommodation and 56% (54 households) could not have their homelessness prevented.



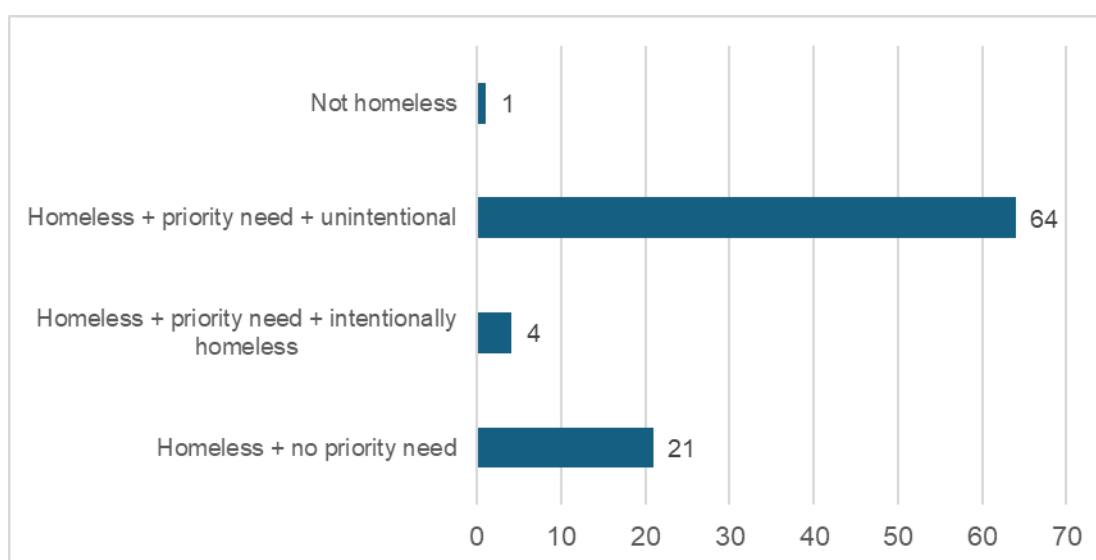
Outcomes of homelessness relief duties

Of those households whose relief duty ended in the period (April to October) 25% (35 households) found secure accommodation and 63% (90 households) were still homeless.



Outcomes of homelessness main duty assessments

Where relief duty ended during the period, a main duty was owed in 90 cases.



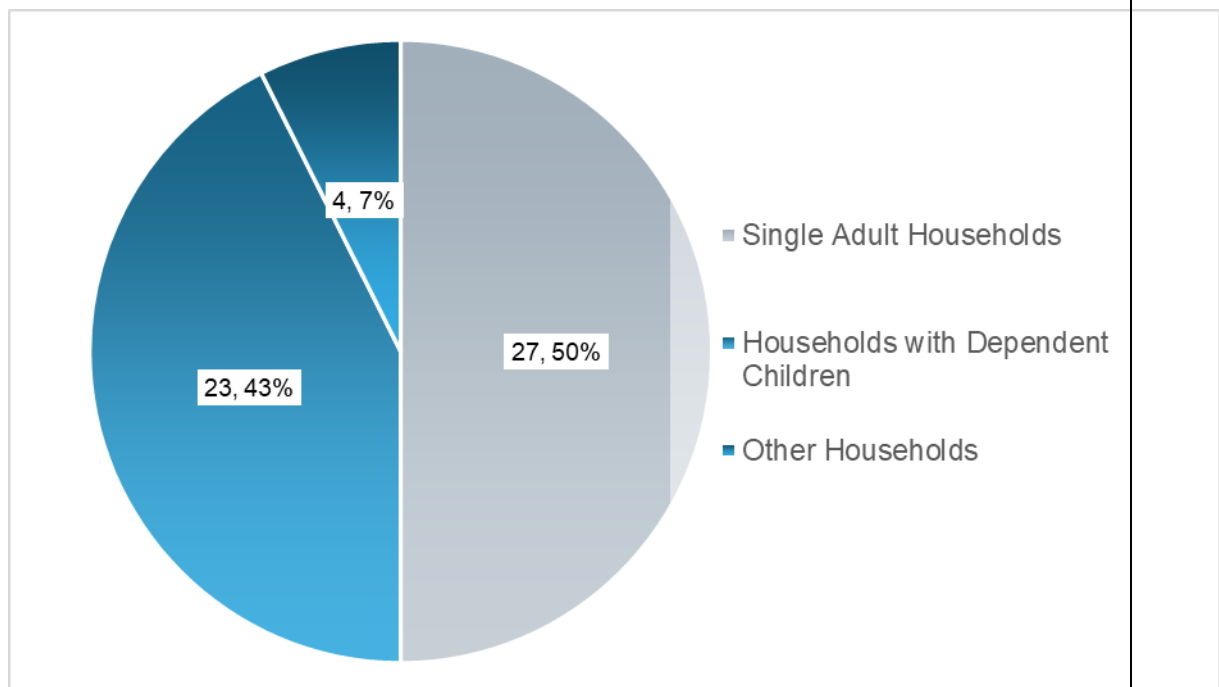
Where a local authority has accepted a main housing duty to an application, Section 193 accommodation duty arises. This requires the local authority to ensure that the applicant has access to suitable temporary accommodation until the applicant is rehoused and the Section 193 duty is discharged.

100% of main duties have been discharged with 86% households accepting an offer of social housing, 6% moving into private rented, 1% returned home to family and contact being lost with 7% of applicants.

Temporary Accommodation

As at the 31 August 2025 there were 54 households in Temporary

Accommodation. Included within the 23 family households there were 62 dependent children.



41% of households were in Temporary Accommodation owned by North Norfolk District Council, and there are currently no families with children in accommodation with shared facilities.

Nightly paid, privately managed accommodation (Shared Facilities)	15
Nightly paid, privately managed accommodation (Self-contained)	14
Accommodation within NNDC stock	22
Accommodation within registered provider stock	3
Total	54

The table below looks at temporary accommodation numbers taken as a snapshot at the end of each month and provides a comparison with the previous year.

	Apr	May	Jun	July	Aug
2025-26	64	62	59	54	54
2024-25	57	60	57	51	52

Rough Sleeping

During the month of August (at various points in time) 13 people were reported/verified as sleeping rough in North Norfolk. At the end of the month, 8 people remain sleeping rough in the district.

Housing Strategy

Temporary Accommodation

The Council now holds 29 units of Temporary or other homeless accommodation (including five units of move on accommodation for ex-rough sleepers). Value for money analysis of our in-house TA has concluded the homes do provide VFM, especially compared to expensive (and inferior) nightly paid accommodation. A refresh of this analysis is currently being undertaken for 2024/25.

The demand for TA continues and with funding from the government's Local Authority Housing Fund grant (£588k) and Second Homes Council Tax premium, we are purchasing six units of homeless accommodation. Four of these homes have already been purchased (included in the 29 above) and are now in use. A further family home should complete shortly and we aim to secure the remaining home in the next 2 months.

New Affordable Homes

We have a healthy affordable housing scheme pipeline, many of which are 'rural exception' housing sites at various points in the development process. There are over twenty developments which will, subject to approvals, deliver more than 550 new affordable homes in the next few years.

Flagship Housing Association have a current planning application for 9 affordable homes in Pudding Norton at Green Lane.

Blakeney Neighbourhood Housing Society continue to work in partnership with Broadland Housing Association to deliver 8 affordable homes. The planning application has now been submitted.

In West Beckham, 10 affordable rented homes, built by Broadland Housing Association have been completed. A tour for the Parish Council, along with other ward Parish Councillors took place on 6th August.

In Little Snoring, start on site is expected in September with the completion of 10 new affordable homes expected between autumn 2026 and spring 2027.

A 'topping out' ceremony took place in August in Walcott to celebrate the development reaching the highest point in the construction. This development will deliver 23 new affordable homes in early 2026.

Work continues to seek further land in the district which is suitable for affordable housing with some local landowners making contact following recent publicity. Strategic Housing are currently working on the suitability of twelve early-stage sites.

Other

The official opening ceremony for the rural exception scheme at Church Road, West Beckham took place on 27th August.

Social Prescribing

Early Help and Prevention

Although Social Prescribing and Financial Inclusion are being developed into one combined service, for the purpose of this report, the referrals into each service are being counted separately

Social Prescribing

Referrals received into Social Prescribing = **52**

Number of issues identified = **112**

Referral sources have included GP surgeries, Children's services, DWP, Norwich & Norfolk University Hospital, Housing Options team, Community Outreach

YTD received into Social Prescribing = **274**

YTD number of issues identifies = **587**

Key issues in respect of reasons for referrals included benefits/finance, housing conditions, mental health support and social isolation.

Complex referrals are presented to and discussed at the multi-agency Help Hub to get a more holistic view of the person being referred.

Social Prescribing Case Study

Mrs C was injured following a fall. She waited 13 months for a specialist medical appointment and is now awaiting surgery. During this time, her mobility significantly deteriorated which has left her unable to work and feeling isolated. She has been forced to claim benefits and has recently been made redundant. As a result, her mental health has also deteriorated and the symptoms of her PTSD from past trauma have been exacerbated. The Living Well Officer has been assisting Mrs C with migration to Universal Credit, and has successfully completed the switch over, with additional guidance on Council Tax Support given.

A referral was made to Adult Social Care, and as a result an Occupational Therapist has visited and provided Mrs C with aids for mobility and adaptations to the home, improving her confidence and independence and lessening her fear of falling.

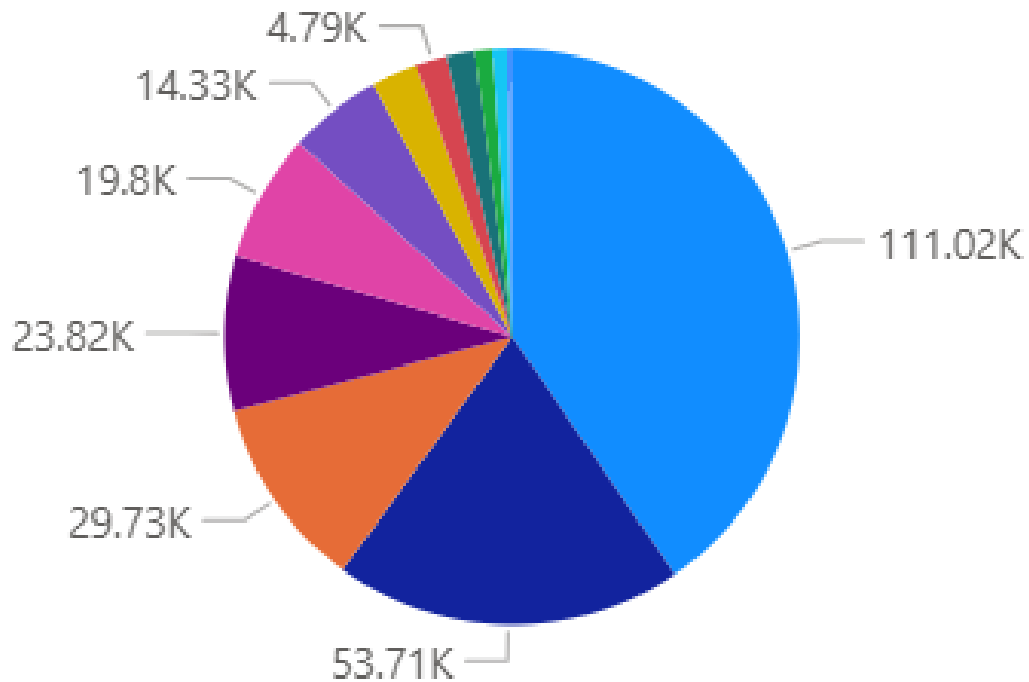
The Living Well Officer has made referrals, resulting in Mrs C being added to the waiting list for complex mental health support as her needs are too high for lower-level support. As well as the referrals to support services, Mrs C has expressed that having someone to listen to her and support her through navigating services has been a positive experience.

Financial Inclusion

Referrals into Financial Inclusion = **42**

YTD referrals into Financial Inclusion = **347**

Annual Income or lump sums obtained through financial inclusion support
YTD 2025/26



Support type

- Attendance Allowance
- Personal Independence Payment
- Housing Benefit
- Pension Credit
- Council Tax Support/ Discount
- Universal Credit
- Carer's Allowance /Premium
- Employment and Support Allowance or Jobseeker's Allowance
- Household Support Fund/ Discretionary Household Support Grant
- Edenred/Argos Voucher
- Discretionary Housing Payment
- Energy Bank Voucher

The figures shown are annual increases in income. It includes ongoing weekly benefit awards as well as one-off payments through vouchers and grants

Support type	Annual income or lump sum award
Attendance Allowance	111,020.00
Carer's Allowance /Premium	7,238.40
Council Tax Support/ Discount	14,329.79
Discretionary Housing Payment	2,268.79
Edenred/Argos Voucher	2,655.00
Employment and Support Allowance or Jobseeker's Allowance	4,786.60
Energy Bank Voucher	777.98
Household Support Fund/ Discretionary Household Support Grant	4,340.81
Housing Benefit	19,797.96
Pension Credit	23,817.04
Personal Independence Payment	53,705.60
Universal Credit	29,732.52
Total	274,470.49

Financial Inclusion Case Study

Mr E was referred to the service due to Council Tax Arrears. The officer assisted with an application for Council Tax Support, which was awarded at £16.99 per week.

Mr E reported that he was still living in the same house as his wife, but that they were no longer a couple. There was difficulty here, as Mrs E was not willing to discuss finances with Mr E and did not contribute towards the bills.

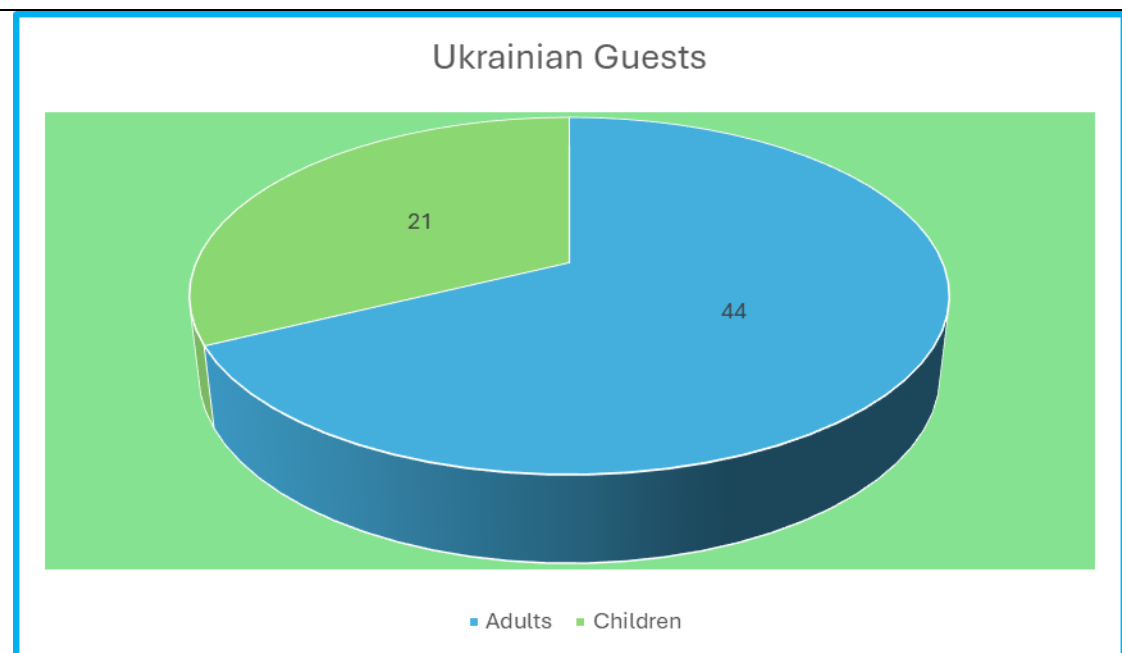
The officer gave advice around this, including the opening of a new bank account, as currently his pension is paid into a joint account. On doing so, and informing the DWP, an overpayment of taxes was flagged, resulting in a refund of £4789.00. This was more than sufficient to clear his Council Tax arrears (£1572.00).

Mr E was supported to apply for Attendance Allowance, which was awarded at the higher rate, due to prostate cancer. This was backdated to June 2025, resulting in around £1,000 back payment.

These income increases have resulted in Mr E also being able to pay to repair a long-broken boiler, improving his home condition, and allowing him to heat his home appropriately.

Homes For Ukraine

There are currently 65 Ukrainian guests being supported in, North Norfolk of which 44 are adults and 21 are children.



During August, our Ukrainian Support Officer has been supporting guests and families with making applications for housing, applying for visa extensions, applications for Council Tax Support, obtaining employment and setting up self-employment.

IHAT

The Council has a statutory duty to provide financial assistance to those who qualify for a Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG) to contribute towards adaptations which help them to safely access their home and facilities within it.

The funding is provided as a capital grant from the government via the Better Care Fund. The government allocation for DFGs for 2025/26 minus 15% staffing top slice and the addition of £400,000 Covid underspend is **£1,797,681**. The spend, as of 31st August 2025 against the budget is **£458,569.39** in mandatory DFG's and **£24,481.02** in Discretionary Grants.

The table below shows the Discretionary Grants breakdown to date:

Waived of assessed DFG contribution	1
Top up funding	0
Home repairs	5
Forget me not grant	1
Architects and surveyor fees	11
Fast track end of life grants	1
Minor adaptations grant	9

DFG assessment and recommendation snapshot year on year comparison

Assessment numbers can fluctuate with demand, staffing availability and complexity.

For example, August figures have been lower than usual, due to Trusted Assessors being up to date with the assessing list in July and focusing on reviews and alternative tasks. August is also a busy month for annual leave.

Assessment Completed	2024	2025
April	5	12
May	7	10
June	6	13
July	15	15
August	19	10

Recommendation Completed	2024	2025
April	12	16
May	7	16
June	5	13
July	26	14
August	18	8

A breakdown of the DFG outcomes and demands is shown below.

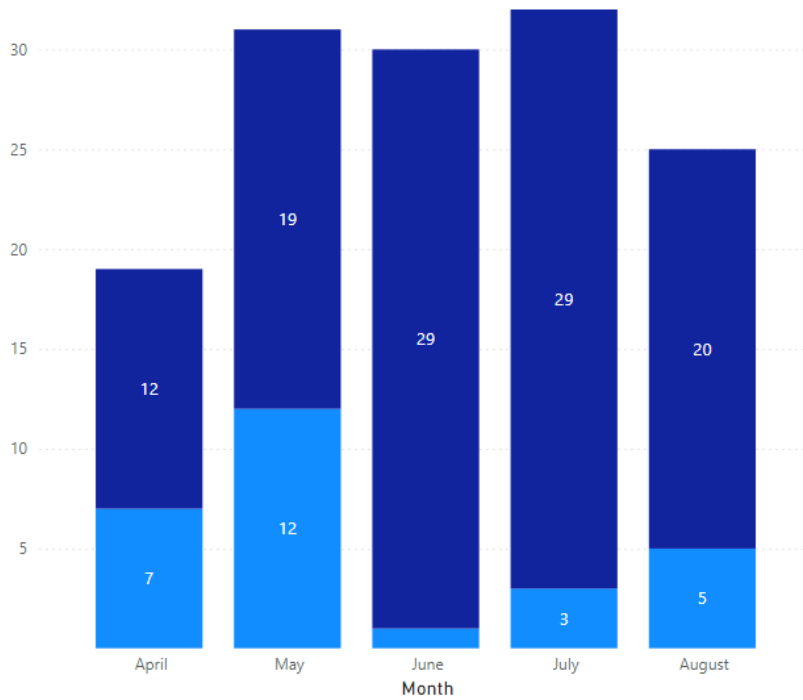
The number of completed Disability Facilities Grants (DFGs) can vary month to month due to complex and multi-stage nature of the process, which depends on factors such as contractor availability, supply chain delays, resident circumstances, and the time lag between approval and completion; a low number in any given month often reflects earlier delays or seasonal factors, rather than a lack of activity or progress. Additionally, a grant cannot be formally recorded as completed until the final invoice is received and processed, which can further delay reporting even when works have finished.

Graph 1: Number of referrals received

NNDC referrals, Norfolk County Council referrals

BY MONTH

● NNDC referrals ● Norfolk County Council referrals

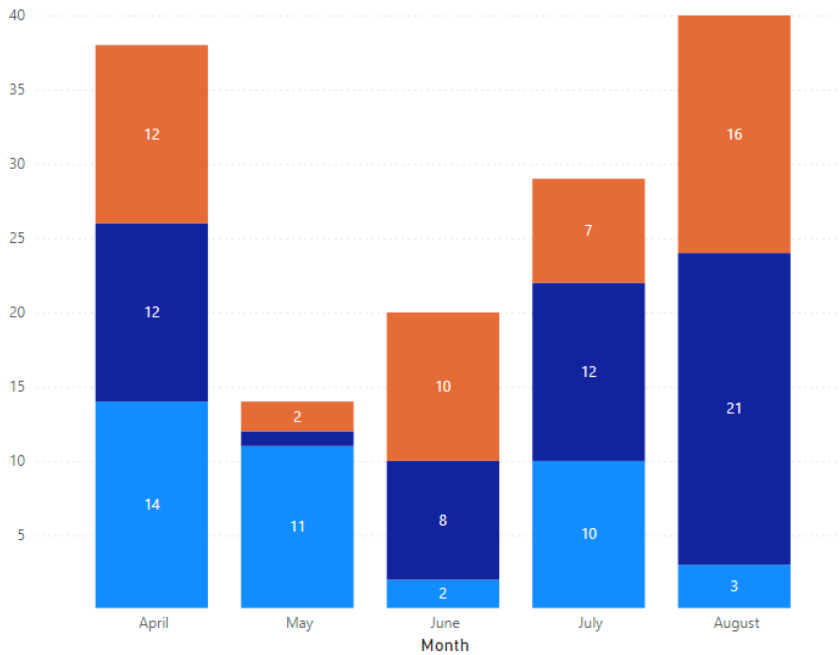


Graph 2: Outcomes of applications

Adaptations Completed, Applications withdrawn/cancelled, Grants Appro...

BY MONTH

● Adaptations Completed ● Applications withdrawn/cancelled ● Grants Approved



Graph 3: Breakdown of DFG spend by amount

The below spend is calculated from completed DFG's. 'Completed DFG's' are when the work has been completed, the invoice has been received, the client is happy to sign off the work and the invoice has been paid. Actual monthly spend is generally higher than completed works spend due to interval payments of DFG's and payment of works from the previous month.

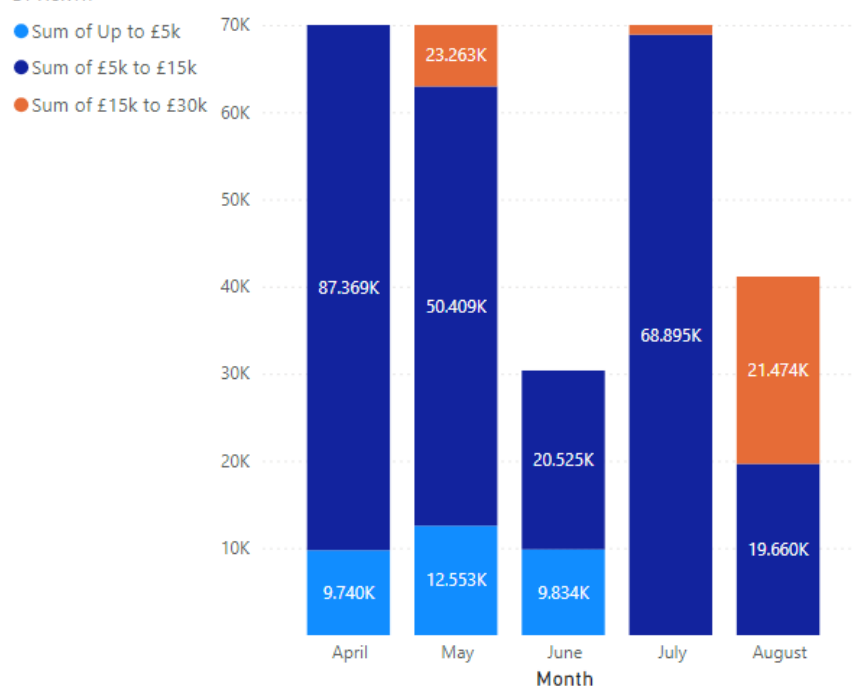
Sum of Up to £5k, Sum of £5k to £15k, Sum of £15k to £30k, Sum of To...

BY YEAR, MONTH

Year	Month	Sum of Up to £5k	Sum of £5k to £15k	Sum of £15k to £30k	Sum of Total expenditure
2025	April	9,740.00	87,368.84	51,243.36	148,352.20
2025	July	0.00	68,895.22	20,080.00	88,975.22
2025	May	12,552.89	50,409.49	23,263.24	86,226.00
2025	June	9,834.00	20,525.00	0.00	30,359.00
2025	August	0.00	19,660.00	21,474.00	41,134.00
Total		32,126.89	246,858.55	116,060.60	395,046.42

Sum of £5k to £15k, Sum of Up to £5k, Sum of £15k to £30k

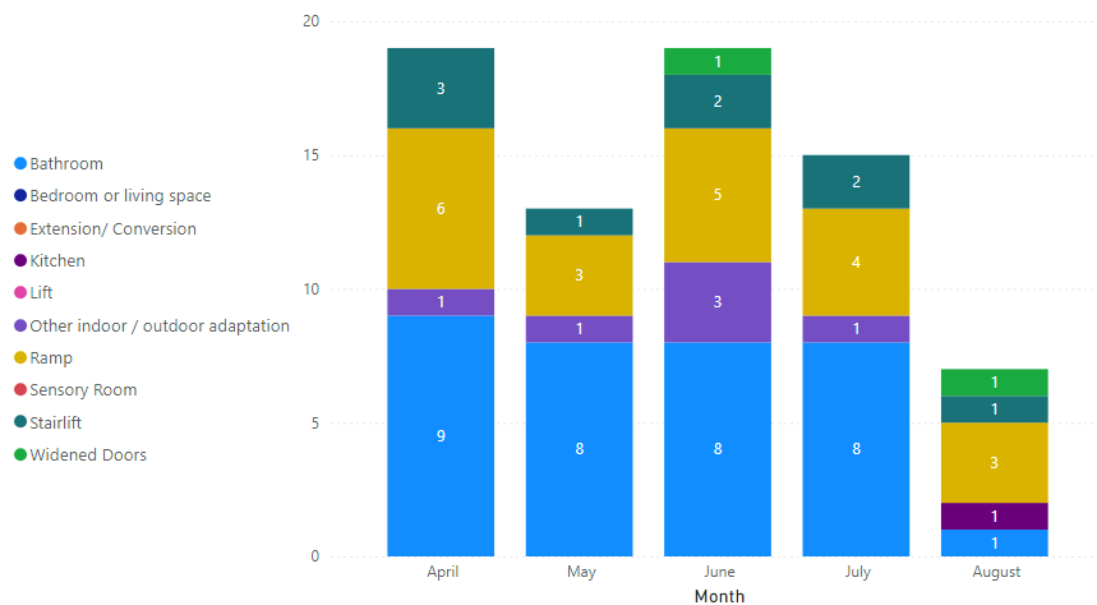
BY MONTH



A summary of how the funding has been used is shown below along with the demographics of clients

The figures for types of adaptations completed are higher than the monthly figures for completed DFG's. This is the result of holistic assessing and clients may require more than one adaptation. E.g. a stair lift is required as well as a level access shower.

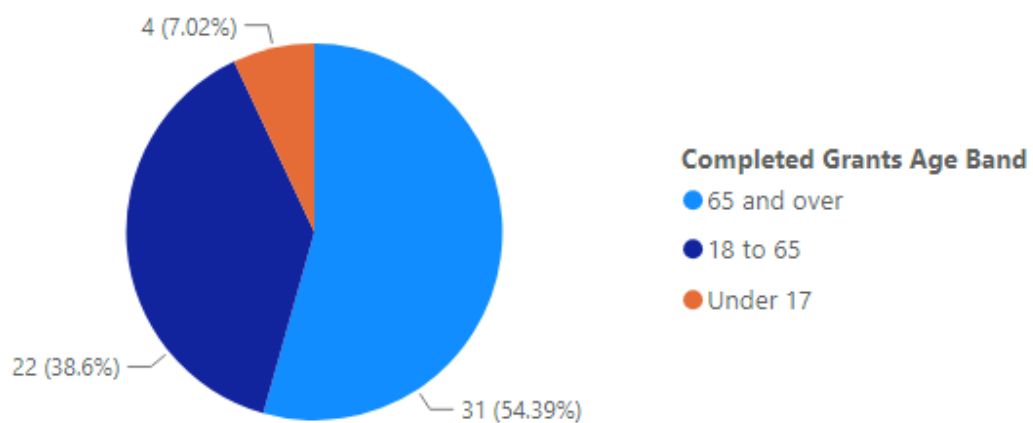
Graph 4: Types of adaptations completed



Graph 5: Accumulative demographics of households received grants 2025/26

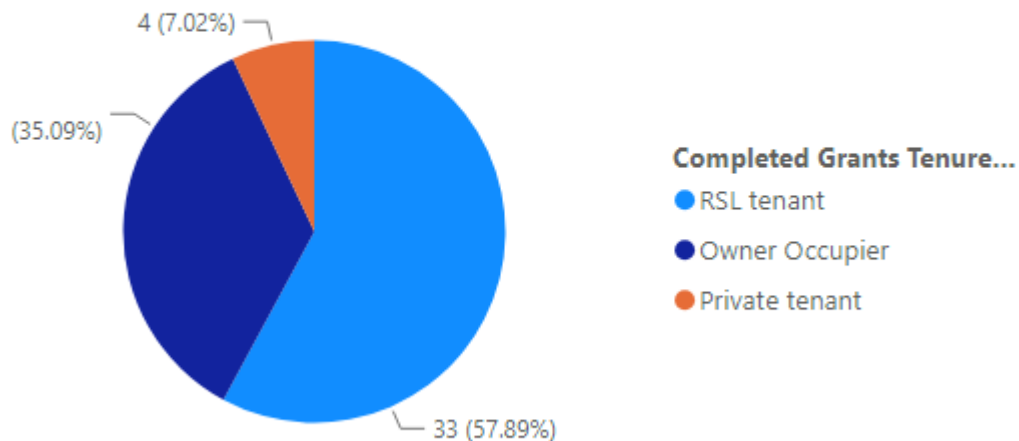
Accumulative Figure for Demographics

BY COMPLETED GRANTS AGE BAND



Accumulative Figure for Demographics

BY COMPLETED GRANTS TENURE TYPE



Key service updates:

The process mapping project is nearing the end and has been reviewed with the team, including discussion around best practice and better ways of working to improve the service provided by IHAT. Pinch points have been identified, those that can be executed in the current resource of staffing have been put into action or are in the process of being rolled out.

Forthcoming Activities and Developments

Registered Social Landlords have made up 58% of completed DFG's this financial year. Therefore, joined up working and a smoother transition between services is essential going forward. The first meeting with Flagship Housing Association in July proved successful with positive outcomes including fresh ideas for how we can provide a more joined up service. The August meeting including individual case discussion and problem solving. Importantly case reflection to learn from previous cases and how to improve going forward.

Ongoing monthly meetings have been accepted from both parties to support North Norfolk's Flagship tenants. Actions from the meeting included producing shared recording of stages in the DFG process to improve time scales and communication between the two services.

Meetings attended

Ongoing IHAT weekly meetings to review and discuss DFG applications using the whole IHAT service expertise.

Six-weekly local delivery group meeting with partners of Norfolk County Council.

Ongoing meetings with architect, technical officers and OT for high-cost DFG projects and review of outstanding cases.

2 Forthcoming Activities and Developments.

3 Meetings attended

Catchup with Hastoe Housing Association
Anglian Water Workshop
Mundesley Parish Council Full Council
Cabinet
Business Planning
Opening of West Beckham homes with BHA
Video for Cromer Artspace