

## **CABINET MEMBERS REPORT TO COUNCIL**

**November 2025**

### **COUNCILLOR JILL BOYLE - CABINET MEMBER FOR PEOPLE SERVICES**

For the period up to 30<sup>th</sup> November 2025

#### **1 Progress on Portfolio Matters.**

##### **Benefits**

##### **Caseload (November)**

During November, the Council's overall caseload decreased by 67 cases compared to the previous month. The reduction in Housing Benefit claims reflects the ongoing migration of working-age households to Universal Credit, with all households expected to have migrated by end of December 2025.

The number of households receiving Council Tax Support (CTS) can fluctuate over time. The Council undertakes targeted take-up campaigns to encourage eligible households to apply, helping to maximise income and ensure that residents receive the financial support to which they are entitled.

Alongside this, targeted reviews are conducted to identify and correct instances of fraud and error within the system, which can result in the removal of ineligible claims. Additionally, natural changes in household circumstances can lead to some residents no longer qualifying for support.

Caseload data for the period is presented in the table below.

	October	November	Difference
<b>Housing Benefit only</b>	265	247	-18
<b>Housing Benefit &amp; Council Tax Support</b>	2,054	1,970	-84
<b>Council Tax Support</b>	4,707	4,742	+35
<b>Total number of cases</b>	<b>7,026</b>	<b>6,959</b>	<b>-67</b>

## Workloads and Speed of Processing Times (November)

The table below illustrates the Council's processing times for October. The local target is **16 days** for processing new claims and **10 days** for processing changes in circumstances.

The service continues to prioritise the processing of changes that affect Housing Benefit to minimise overpayments. This approach helps to reduce the financial impact on customers, prevent potential losses in Housing Benefit subsidy, and avoid the need for costly recovery action.

In November, the team experienced a higher volume of new claims compared with the previous month while the number of reported changes received in the month decreased.

Speed of Processing performance for Housing Benefit claims improved slightly, while performance for Council Tax Support new claims marginally reduced. The reduction in performance for changes in circumstances is primarily attributable to increased workloads and lower staffing levels during the month.

	Number received in November	NNDC number of days to process (November)
New claims HB	174	4.5
New claims CTS		9.0
Changes in circumstances HB	6,536	12.60
Changes in circumstances CTS		12.50

## Financial Inclusion (Pro-active) Delivery Plan

We are continuing to deliver our Financial Inclusion (Pro-active) Delivery Plan.

<b>Council Tax Support take up campaign</b>	<p>In October, we launched a <b>Council Tax Support</b> take-up campaign whereby over 160 households have been contacted to advise of their potential entitlement to Council Tax Support.</p> <p>Where an application has not yet been made, the team are now contacting households by phone to offer support in applying.</p>
<b>Household Support Fund</b>	<p>We will shortly be preparing for the first tranche of targeted payments under the <b>Household Support Fund</b>, 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/February 2026.</p>

<b>Better Off Calculator</b>	<p>The Council is developing the <b>Better Off Calculator</b> (<a href="http://www.north-norfolk.gov.uk/apply">www.north-norfolk.gov.uk/apply</a>), a digital tool for residents and officers to support financial planning and improve household financial resilience. The tool helps users create action plans, set goals, and prepare for changes in circumstances.</p> <p>Since April 2025, <b>84 households</b> have used the calculator, with <b>58 households</b> identified as having unclaimed benefits totaling <b>over £34,300</b>. This includes both households partially claiming benefits and those not claiming any.</p> <p>Data from the calculator will be cross-referenced with the <b>Low-Income Family Tracker (LIFT) Dashboard</b> to ensure missed benefits are claimed and households receive follow-up support. Household characteristics such as age, disability, number of children, tenure type, and employment status will inform targeted interventions.</p> <p>Engagement will be promoted through internal staff training, Council communications, and social media campaigns.</p>
<b>Pension Credit Awareness week</b>	<p>This year's Pension Credit Week of Action ran from <b>27 October to 2 November 2025</b>. We are helping to reach pensioners who may be eligible for, but unaware of, the extra support available to them through posters, social media, and website updates.</p> <p>We also ran a Pension Credit take-up campaign in November where we contacted 92 households who would be eligible to claim but are not yet claiming Pension Credit.</p> <p><a href="https://www.north-norfolk.gov.uk/tasks/benefits/apply-for-pension-credit/">https://www.north-norfolk.gov.uk/tasks/benefits/apply-for-pension-credit/</a></p>
<b>Warms Homes: Local Grant</b>	<p>Norfolk Warm Homes will be receiving around £500k additional funding under the Warm Homes Local Grant. The fund must be spent by 31<sup>st</sup> March 2026. The Benefits team is supporting the Climate &amp; Environment team in targeting eligible households through data analytics using the Low Income Family Tracker dashboard.</p>

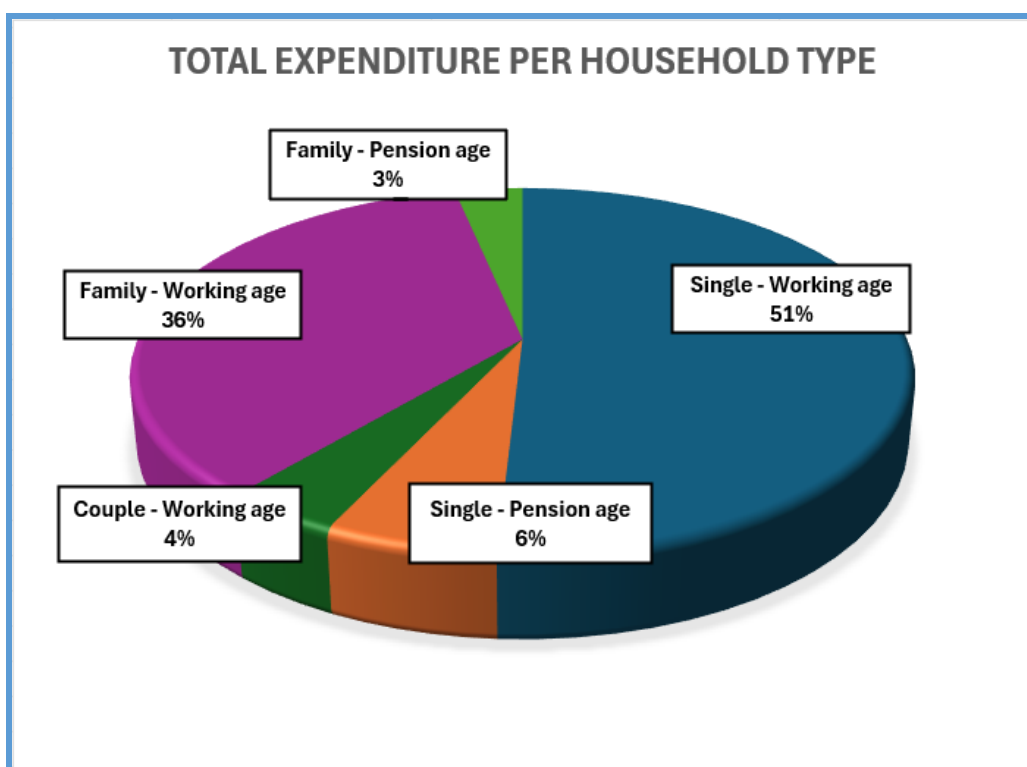
## Discretionary Housing Payments

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 30<sup>th</sup> November 2025 we have spent 72% of our allocation across 82 households.

A breakdown of how the expenditure has been allocated across the 82 households can be seen below.

Household Type	Number of Households paid	Expenditure across households
Single - Working age	42	£ 37,639.03
Single - Pension age	4	£ 4,569.71
Couple - Working age	3	£ 3,051.48
Couple - Pension age	0	£ -
Family - Working age	30	£ 26,261.60
Family - Pension age	3	£ 2,449.76
<b>Totals</b>	<b>82</b>	<b>£ 73,971.58</b>



## Housing Options and Homelessness 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 30 November 2025 there were 1,174 households on the housing list with (32%) 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 reduction from previous monthly reporting reflects the changes being introduced next year to the allocations scheme. Further details are covered later in this report.

The tables below highlight the makeup of housing need and the size property that is required by applicants on the housing list.

	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	154	430	82	666		74	3	3	<b>80</b>
2 Bed	81	129	42	252		75	4	11	<b>90</b>
3 Bed	55	35	24	113		38	1	3	<b>42</b>
4 Bed	75	35	12	121		4	0	0	<b>4</b>
5 Bed +	10	8	5	22		0	0	0	<b>0</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>375</b>	<b>637</b>	<b>165</b>	<b>1174</b>		<b>191</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>216</b>

*Applicants on the Housing List as of 30 November 2025*

*Homes let April November 2025*

### Age Restricted Properties

Some properties have a minimum age requirement, for example, in some cases only people over 55 years of age can apply, this applied to 40 of the properties let between 01 April to 30 November 2025.

### Local Letting Agreements

Local Letting agreements supplement the general housing allocations scheme and refer to properties that have been built to meet the identified local needs of particular parish. If a property has local lettings criteria attached, preference will be given to the applicant who has the strongest local connection to that parish (and the adjoining parishes). This applied to 20 properties (19 general needs and 1 shared ownership) that were let between 01 April to 30 November 2025.

### Changes to the Allocation Scheme

A new housing allocations scheme is coming into effect on 12 January 2026.

The new scheme sets out who is eligible to be considered for social housing within North Norfolk, how their housing needs will be assessed, and what priority their application will be given. It also determines how the Your Choice Your Home housing register will work and how social housing will be allocated across the district.

Existing members of the scheme were contacted to explain the process and were invited to complete a new online application form which will determine if they are still able eligible based on the new criteria set out in the Allocation Scheme.

Between the re-registration dates (27<sup>th</sup> October to 24<sup>th</sup> November) we had **1,183** people complete the re-registration, of which 167 were initially assessed as no longer being eligible. The main reasons for ineligibility were having no local connection or savings/ income above the threshold.

Applicants who went on to complete the full registration will have their applications assessed in line with the new policy prior to the changes coming into policy changes coming into effect in the new year.

We had 997 people who did not complete the re-registration, and they were contacted and advised that their account was now hibernated, meaning they can no

longer bid or be considered for properties advertised. People who wish to re-activate their application can do so before the 22<sup>nd</sup> December, after which their account will be cancelled and if they wish to re-join, they will need to complete a brand-new online application form, and their housing priority date (known as the effective date) will be awarded using the date of the new application. As at 30<sup>th</sup> November 35 applicants had re-activated their application

Additionally, we are now open to new applications which will be assessed under the new Allocation Scheme, meaning applicants will not have full access to the scheme until it goes live in January. We have received over 50 new applications to date.

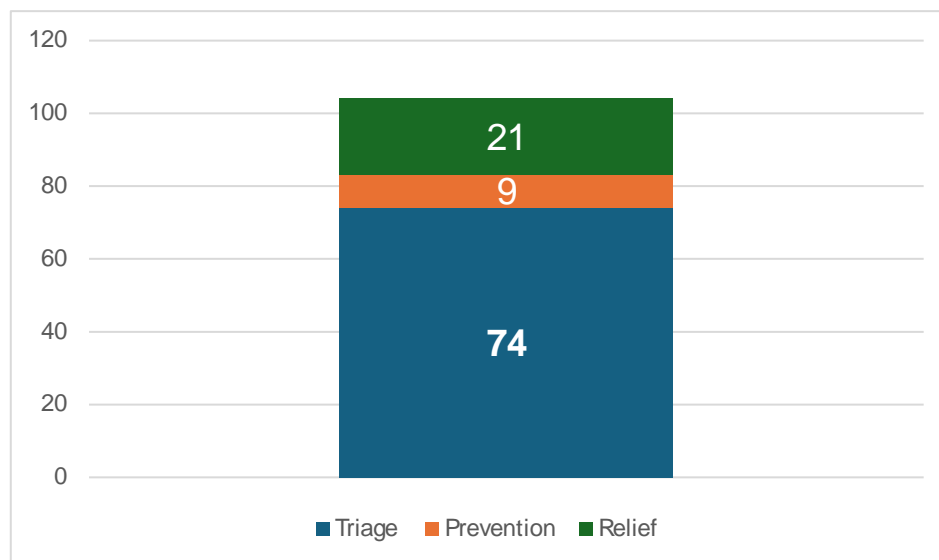
You can read a copy of the new Housing Allocation Scheme [here](#)

### **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.

Approaches to the service are lower than previous months and during the month of November 2025 we have opened 104 new cases with 30 households being assessed as owed a statutory duty to prevent or relieve homelessness, of which 70% of households were already homeless.



Assessment of approaches during November 2025

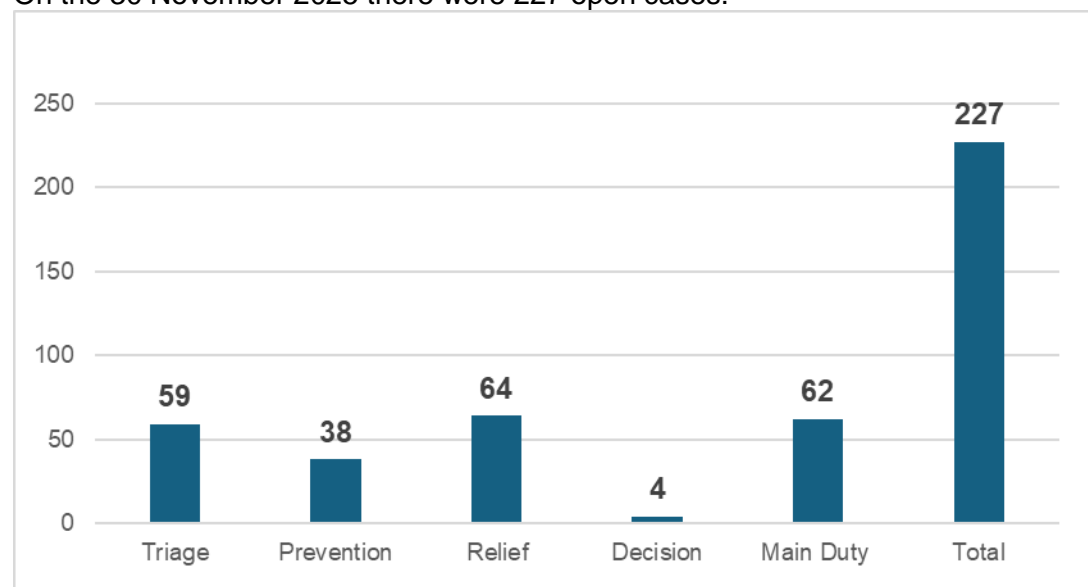
### **Causes of Homelessness**

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

- Family/Friends no longer able to accommodate (33%)
- The loss of a private tenancy (23%)
- Relationship Breakdown (20%)

### **Open Cases:**

On the 30 November 2025 there were 227 open cases.



Open case status as at 30 November 2025.

### **Outcomes of homelessness duties April to October 2025:**

Where homelessness cannot be prevented or relieved a decision is taken to 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 November) 54% (59 households) secured (existing or alternative) accommodation for 6+ months and 30% (33 Households) could not have their homelessness prevented. Other reasons why cases are closed included contact being lost and applicant withdrawing application.

### **Outcomes of homelessness relief duties:**

Of those households whose relief duty ended in the period (April to November) 21% (47 households) found secure accommodation and 65% (143 Households) were still homeless.

### **Outcomes of homelessness main duty assessments**

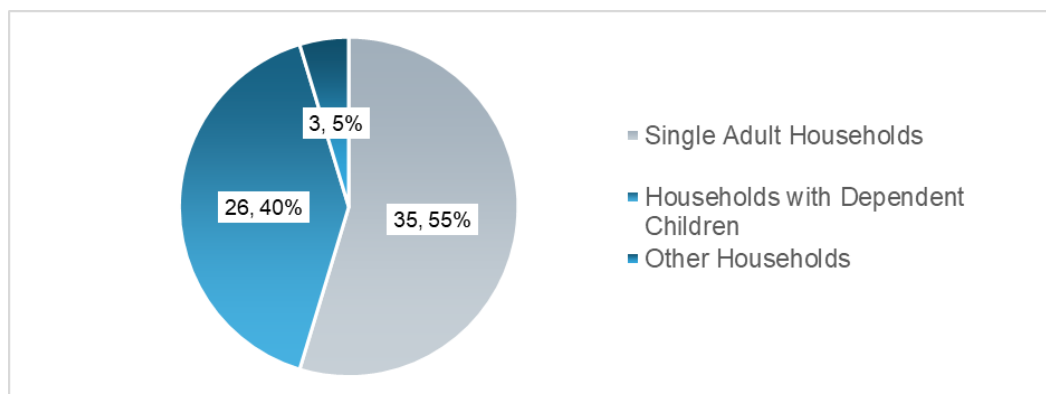
Where a relief duty ended, a main duty was owed in 138 cases. Of these 106 (77%) of applicants were owed the main duty and found to be in priority need and not intentionally homeless.

Where a local authority has accepted a main housing duty to an applicant, 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.

Between April and November, 98 main duty decisions have been closed with 83 (85%) of applicants securing social housing, 4 (4%) securing private rented accommodation. Other reasons why applications are closed include applicant withdrawing application, becoming intentionally homeless from temporary accommodation or refusing a suitable offer of social housing.

### **Temporary Accommodation**

On the 30 November 2025 there were 64 households in Temporary Accommodation). Households with dependent children made up 40% of placements and included 55 children.



Snapshot of Households in Temporary Accommodation 30 November 2025.

The table below looks at households by temporary accommodation placement type. 30% of households were in temporary accommodation owned by North Norfolk District Council.



Nightly paid, privately managed accommodation (Shared facilities)	21
Nightly paid, privately managed accommodation (Self-contained)	21
Accommodation within NNDC stock	19
Accommodation within registered provider stock	3
<b>Total</b>	<b>64</b>

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	Sep	Oct	Nov
<b>2025-26</b>	64	62	59	54	54	60	63	64
<b>2024-25</b>	57	60	57	51	52	53	61	60

### **Rough Sleeping**

During the month of November (at various points in time) 8 people were reported/verified as sleeping rough in North Norfolk. At the end of the month, 5 people remain sleeping rough in the district.

### **DAHA Accredited Member since 2024**

The Domestic Abuse Housing Alliance (DAHA) first accredited us in October 2024 for our approach to raising awareness about and addressing domestic abuse

DAHA accreditation is the UK benchmark for how housing providers and local Authorities should respond to domestic abuse. It is the only project in the UK offering domestic abuse accreditation for the housing sector.

Once accredited we will retain this status for as long as ongoing monitoring shows that standards are being maintained. Whilst no formal reassessment has taken place, we do have quarterly "check-in's" with the DAHA and monitoring of activities, including case reviews. A panel meeting is then heard at the end of each year, and we are delighted that DAHA have confirmed our Accreditation Status remains for 2025/26.

### **[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).

The demand for TA continues and, with funding from the Governments Local Authority Housing Fund Grant (£588k) and Second Homes Council Tax premium,

we are purchasing seven units of homeless accommodation in 2025/26. The LAHF was originally intended to deliver four homes, but we have increased this to seven through use of additional funding from Second Homes Council Tax. Four of these homes have already been purchased (included in the 28 above) and are now in use. A further two homes should complete shortly, and we aim to secure the remaining home in the next 2-3 months.

We have been offered further LAHF grant to help purchase further homes in 2026/27 and Cabinet will decide whether to accept and for how many homes at the January meeting.

### **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 650 new affordable homes in the next few years. Current schemes include the following.

An innovative development in early stages in Mundesley, with collaboration between NNDC, Flagship Housing Association and Mundesley Bowls Club, to create an affordable housing development in the centre of the village with approximately 11 new homes.

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

Blakeney Neighbourhood Housing Society continues to work in partnership with Broadland Housing Association to deliver 8 affordable homes. The planning application has now been submitted and is expected to be determined soon.

Flagship Housing Association's planning application for an affordable housing scheme in Ludham continues to be considered, which, subject to approval, will bring 26 homes for the local community.

New affordable homes continue to be let on the Park View development in Holt with a total on 28 expected to become new homes for those in housing need.

In Walcott, 23 new affordable homes are in the last stages of building work and are expected to be completed in February 2026.

45 new affordable homes have completed so far, and we expect a total of 93 new affordable homes to complete in 2025/26. The forecast is 129 new affordable homes in 2026/27.

Strategic Housing are currently working on the suitability of 15 early-stages sites. Further details will be reported on sites when these have progressed, and we start community discussions.

### **Other issues**

Detailed analysis of 2<sup>nd</sup> & Holiday let homes has been undertaken and a summary report shared with all members. The key points are that the total number of second & holiday let homes has fallen from 8,315 in April to 8,195 in October – a fall of 120. However, the current forecast of collection of the second homes council tax premium is higher than originally estimated, which should result in additional income

to NNDC after end of year reconciliation.

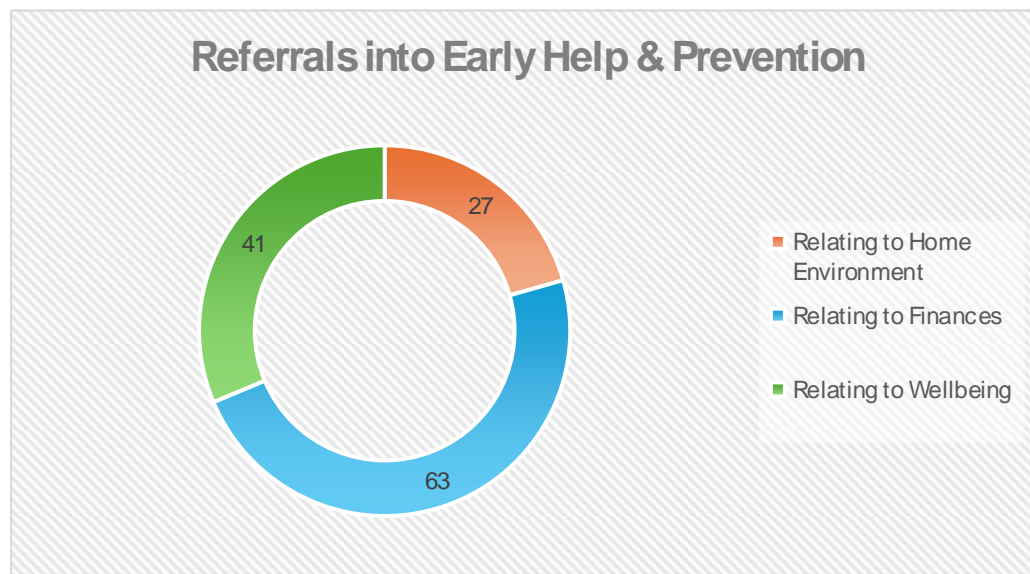
Option agreements with Flagship Housing Association or Broadland Housing are being drafted by Eastlaw for Highfield Road in Fakenham, land behind Mundesley Bowsl Club and adjacent to the existing exception housing scheme in Edgefield.

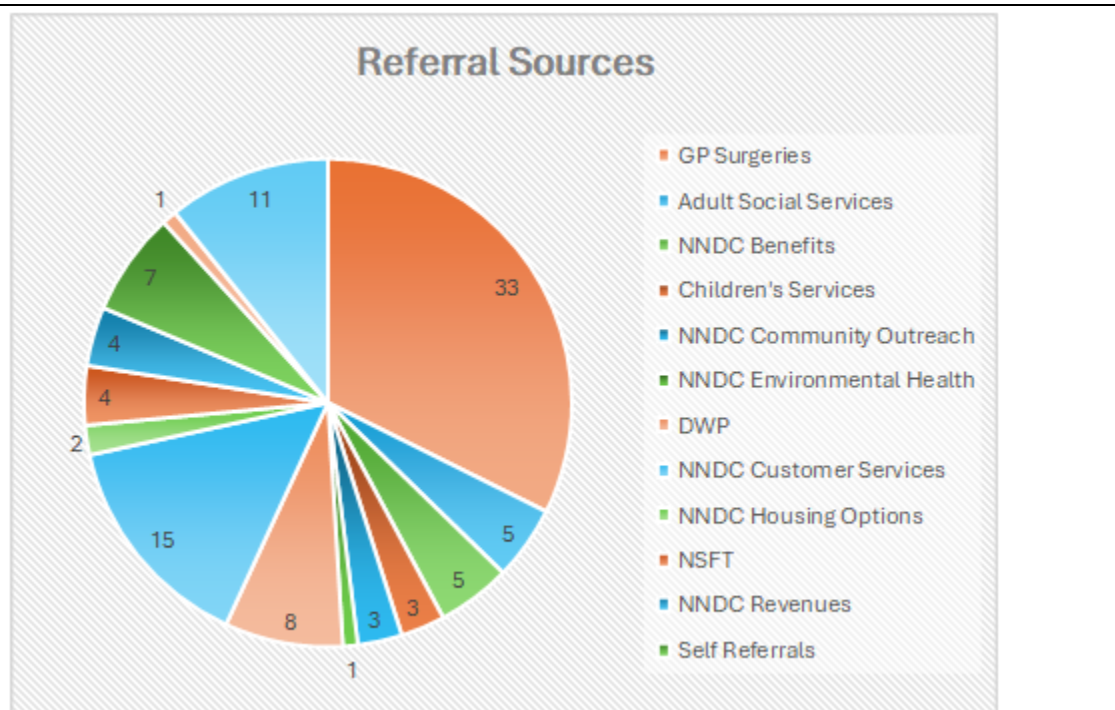
I have written to Flagship Housing Association to raise concerns about the number of homes they are disposing of – so far this year we are aware of 37 homes where disposal has taken place of has been agreed. We await their response.

### Social Prescribing

#### **Early Help and Prevention**

**TOTAL REFERRALS RECEIVED: 102**





### **Financial Inclusion Case Study**

Mrs W contacted Customer Services as she had requested and received her Attendance Allowance form but needed help to complete it.

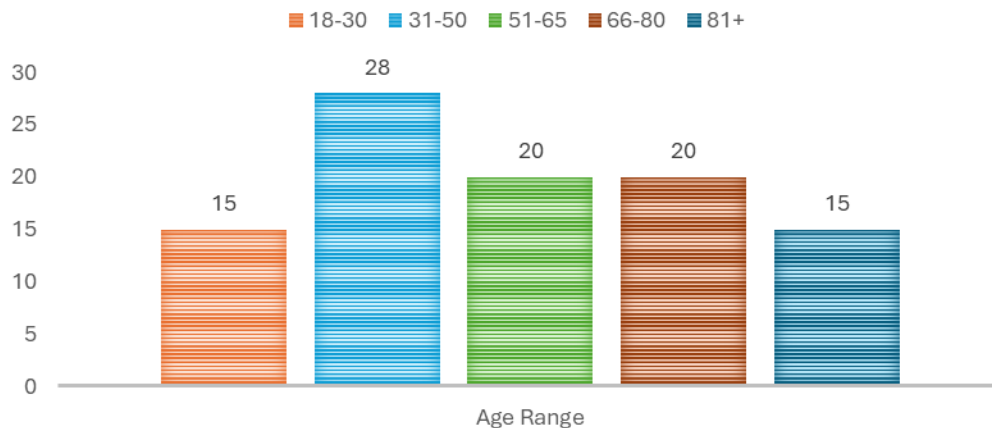
Mrs W was already in receipt of Council Tax Support but having to pay a shortfall of £467.55 for the year.

The Financial Inclusion Officer visited and completed the form with Mrs W and, as a result she was awarded the high rate, increasing her income by £110.40 per week.

From being awarded Attendance Allowance, this then entitled Mrs W to Guaranteed Pension Credit. Assistance was provided to complete the application for this over the phone and Mrs W was awarded this at £39.03 per week.

Due to her being in receipt of Guaranteed Pension Credit it meant she would be entitled to the full Council Tax Support and so no longer had to pay a shortfall towards her Council Tax Bill.

## REFERRALS BY AGE RANGE



### **Social Prescribing Case Study**

Mrs S had been diagnosed with Bowel Cancer in Feb 2025 and after 3 operations she was fitted with a stoma bag which has been life changing for her. At the same time, she was also diagnosed with Type 2 diabetes.

Mrs S has had a very complex difficult life. She suffered abuse from childhood from both parents and siblings and the survived domestic violence from her ex-husband. Tragically, her 2<sup>nd</sup> husband died suddenly 2 years ago.

As a result of all this, she has a diagnosis of PTSD, along with depression and anxiety and has attempted suicide more than once.

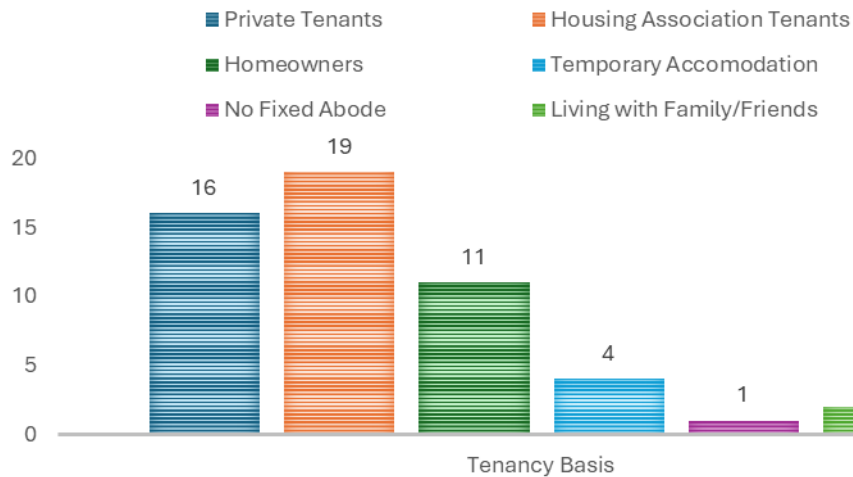
The Social Prescribing officer worked with Mrs S to provide her with support networks and groups to stop the isolation she has faced since her operation, which has made it difficult for her to go out. This included a local good neighbour scheme who can offer longer term support and have now attended to assist with a blue badge application and will support with companionship and visits out.

The officer gave assistance to complete a financial assessment for a care provider. Where Mrs S struggled with managing her garden, the officer helped arrange for this to be cleared, and some safety locks have been installed at the house.

Assistance was also provided to reinstate a non-function home phone, and a new mattress was arranged to replace the old mattress she had been using.

Guidance on where to find gardener and maintenance assistance for ongoing support was provided.

## REFERRALS BY TENANCY BASIS



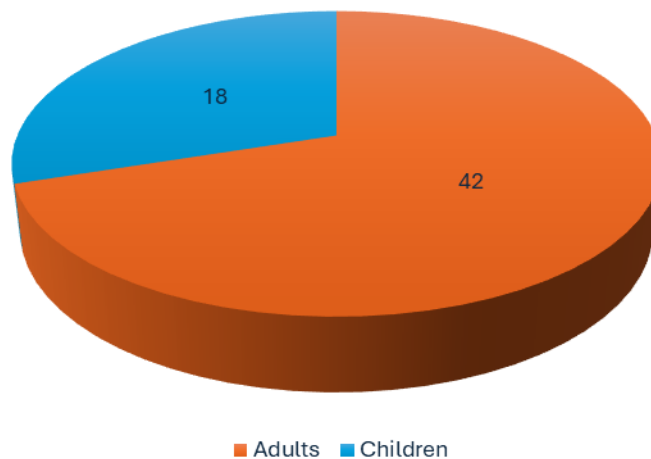
Number of Referrals where children live in the home:

**21**

### Homes For Ukraine

There are currently 60 Ukrainian guests being supported in North Norfolk, of which 42 are adults and 18 are under the age of 18.

#### Ukrainian Guests



During November, our Ukrainian Support Officer has been supporting guests and families with making applications for visa extension, council tax support and tenancy support.

Our Ukrainian Support Officer continues to complete initial and review welfare visit,

helping with applying for visa extension permission scheme, housing applications, council tax support application, tenancy support, etc. In addition, the officer also investigates potential visa fraud cases as provided by NCC.

In cases of breakdown in relationships between hosts and guests, the officer liaises with both sides to make sure that process of relocating guests is done in timely and coordinated manner.

As a new Housing Allocation Scheme will come into effect shortly, the officer has been helping our Ukrainian guests to resubmit their YCYH applications before the deadline.

### 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 the facilities within it.

The funding is provided as a capital grant from the government via the Better Care Fund. The government allocation for DFG's for 2025/26 is £1,680,858 less 15% top slice allocated to staffing costs (leaving a grant available of £1,428,729.30). We also have an additional £400,000 which comes from an underspend of grant accrued from the pandemic. This provides a net grant of £1,828,729.30.

The actual spend as of 30<sup>th</sup> November, including partially completed adaptations against the budget, is **£755,400.76** in mandatory DFG's and **£94,347.84** in Discretionary Grants. A total of **£838,179.35** equating to 83 applications have been approved since April 2025. When reviewing the end of year position, we estimate that we will have spent the core DFG of £1,428,729.30 and we will have utilised the prior year underspends by approx. £340k.

Discretionary grants breakdown to date:

Waiver of assessed DFG contribution	1
Top up funding	3
Home repairs	6
Forget me not grant	1
Architects and surveyor fees	20
Fast track end of life grants	2
Minor adaptations grant	22

### **DFG assessment and recommendation snapshot year on year comparison.**

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

<b>Assessment Completed</b>	<b>2024</b>	<b>2025</b>
April	5	12
May	7	10
June	6	13
July	15	15
August	19	10
September	10	15

October	12	15
November	15	12

<b>Recommendation Completed</b>	<b>2024</b>	<b>2025</b>
April	12	16
May	7	16
June	5	13
July	26	14
August	18	8
September	18	14
October	14	18
November	15	23

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

The number of completed Disabled Facilities Grant (DFGs) can vary month to month due to the 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.

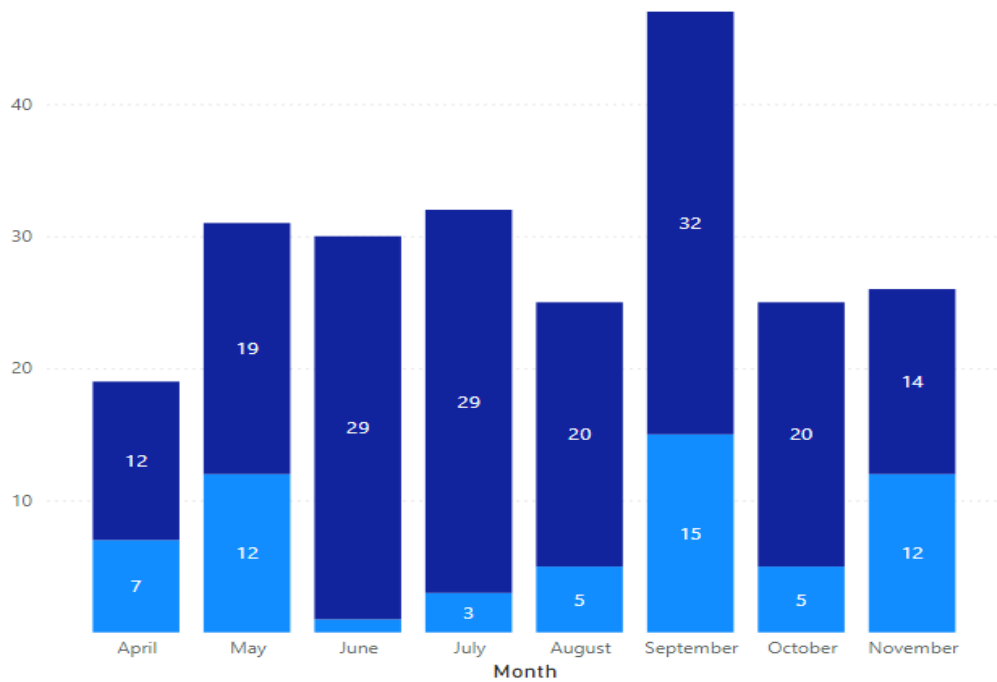
**Graph 1: Number of referrals received**



### NNDC referrals, Norfolk County Council referrals

BY MONTH

● NNDC referrals ● Norfolk County Council referrals

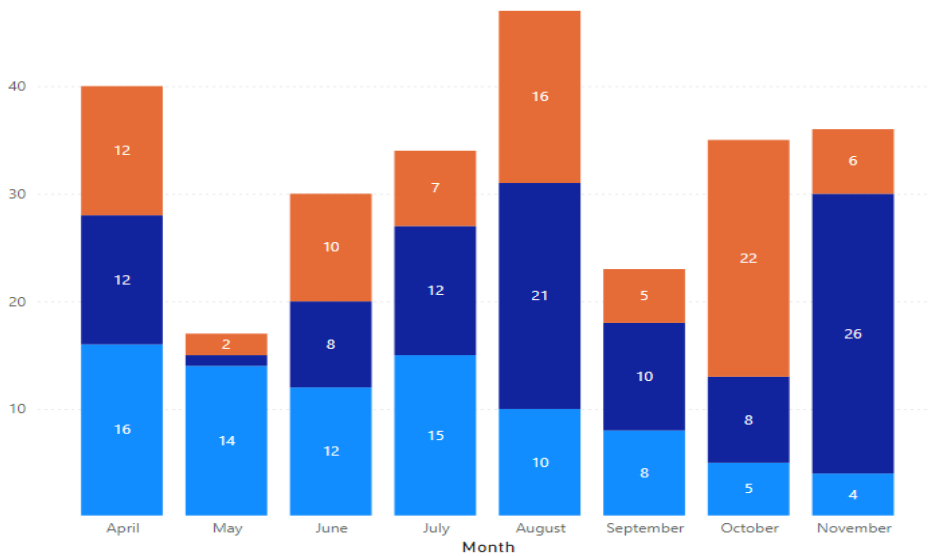


### Graph 2: Outcomes of applications

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

BY MONTH

● Adaptations Completed ● Applications withdrawn/cancelled ● Grants Approved

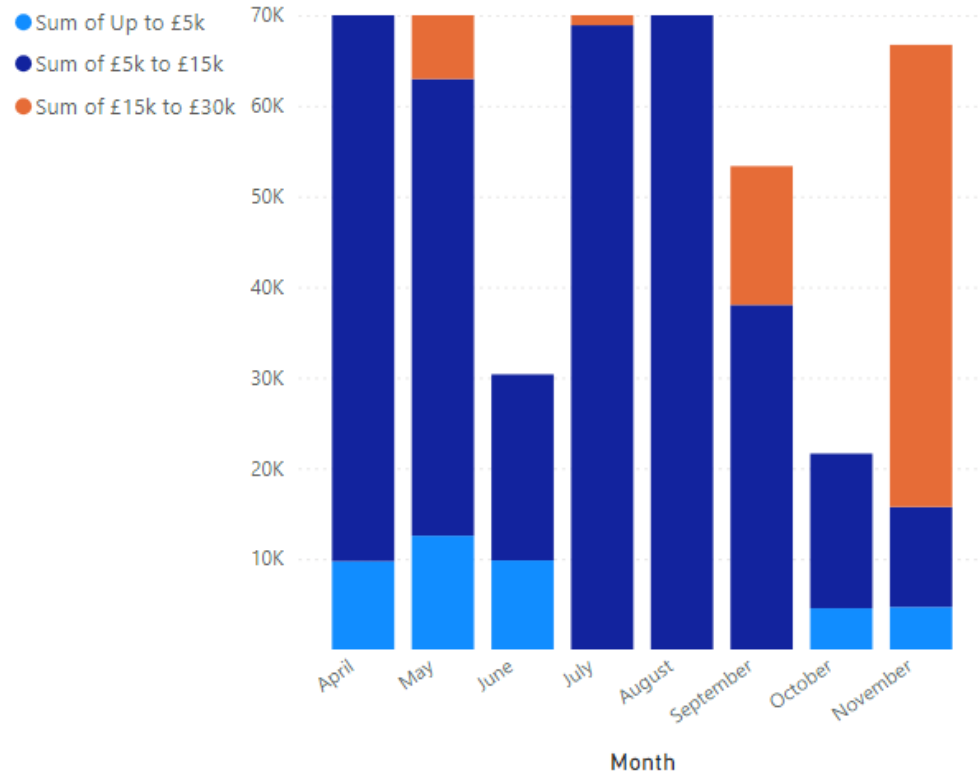


### Graph 3: Breakdown of DFG spend by amount

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 work spend due to interval payments of DFG's and payment of works from the previous month.

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

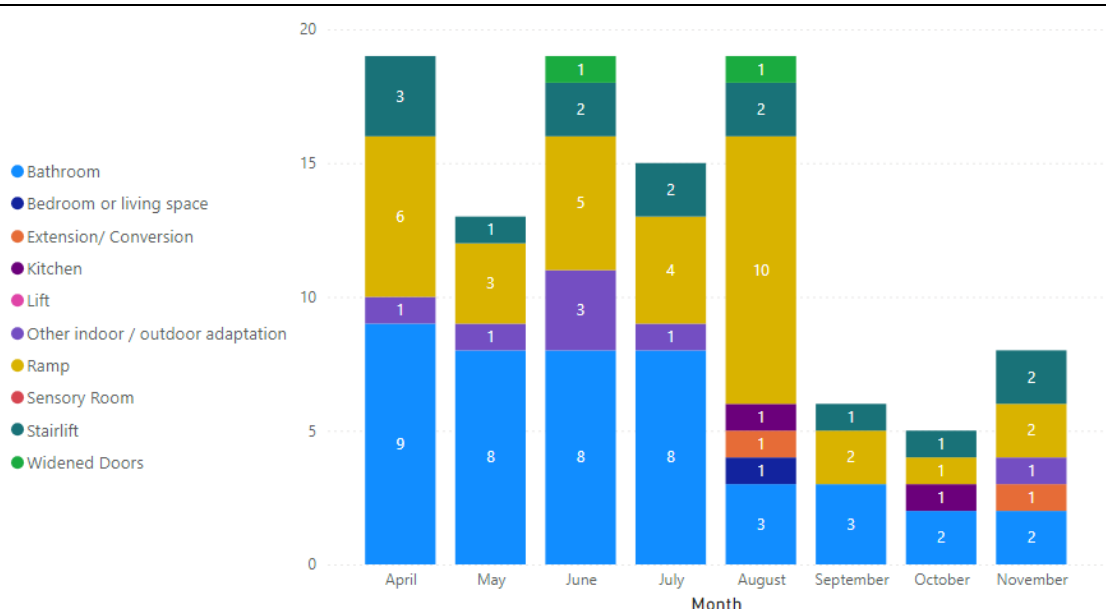
BY MONTH



**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.

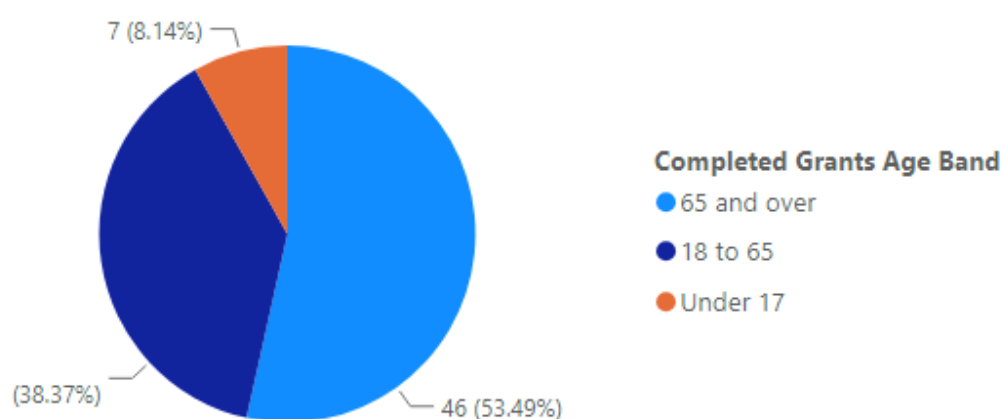
**Graph 4: Types of adaptations completed**



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

### Accumulative Figure for Demographics

BY COMPLETED GRANTS AGE BAND



### Key Service Updates

Good progress continues to be made in the use of discretionary grants for architects' fees and top-up funding. The team has successfully progressed five high-cost adaptations, each involving extensions, through to completion.

Partnership meetings with Norfolk County Council remain productive and supportive of joint working.

The team also holds regular meetings with architects, Technical Officers and the Occupational Therapist to oversee high-cost Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG) projects and to review outstanding complex cases.

In addition, ongoing monthly meetings with Flagship Housing Group continue to work well, facilitating effective communication and helping cases progress as quickly and efficiently as possible.

## **2      Forthcoming Activities and Developments.**

Leadership Academy Warwick  
Overview & Scrutiny  
Independent East Alliance

## **3      Meetings attended**

Homes For Cathy  
GRAC  
Cromer Community  
Norfolk Health Overview Select Committee  
Cabinet  
Rural Health & Care  
Standards Committee  
Coastal Forum