

CABINET MEMBERS REPORT TO COUNCIL

August 2026

COUNCILLOR JILL BOYLE - CABINET MEMBER FOR PEOPLE SERVICES

For the period up to 30th August 2026

1 Progress on Portfolio Matters.

Benefits

Performance – Workloads and Speed of Processing (SOP) Times – Housing Benefit and Council Tax Support

During August, workloads remained consistent with previous months' levels. We continued to perform under the local target of **16 days** for new claims and **10 days** for changes in circumstances. The table below illustrates the Council's processing times and the volume of work received during August.

	Number received in August	NNDC number of days to process August
New claims HB	140	3.0
New claims CTS		4.0
Changes in circumstances HB	7,211	7.6
Changes in circumstances CTS		7.9

Housing Benefit Subsidy

Following the external auditor, Ernest Youngs, ending the contract with NNDC, Azets have been procured to complete the outstanding Housing Benefit Subsidy Audits.

Crisis and Resilience Fund Housing Payments

We have continued to administer Crisis and Resilience Fund Payments to support tenancy sustainment, prevent homelessness, and help residents remain living independently within their communities.

As of 31 August 2026, 73% of the available funding allocation had been spent supporting 69 households. While the number of new applications has slowed

expenditure has increased from 69% to 73% of the allocation, and a further 4 households have been supported since the previous reporting period.

The continued uptake of the scheme demonstrates the positive impact the fund has in helping vulnerable residents maintain stable housing, sustain tenancies, and avoid homelessness.

Pension Credit Take-Up Campaign

Previous campaigns run in July, identified 73 households that may be eligible for Pension Credit. The Low Income Family Tracker (LIFT) was used to identify households missing unclaimed benefits.

Following the campaign, 31 households have been supported to submit Pension Credit applications. Of these, 11 households have already received successful awards, generating a combined annual income of **£32,838.00**. This figure is expected to rise significantly as the remaining 20 applications are processed and brought into payment.

We will continue our outreach activity by contacting the remaining households to determine whether they require support with Pension Credit applications and to help maximise their household income through access to available benefits and financial assistance.

Housing Options and Homeless Prevention

During August 2026 there was sustained and complex pressure across the Housing Options Service, with high levels of homelessness demand, continued constraints in housing supply and elevated reliance on temporary accommodation. While available social housing continues to be targeted effectively towards those in greatest need, overall supply remains insufficient to meet demand, particularly for larger family homes.

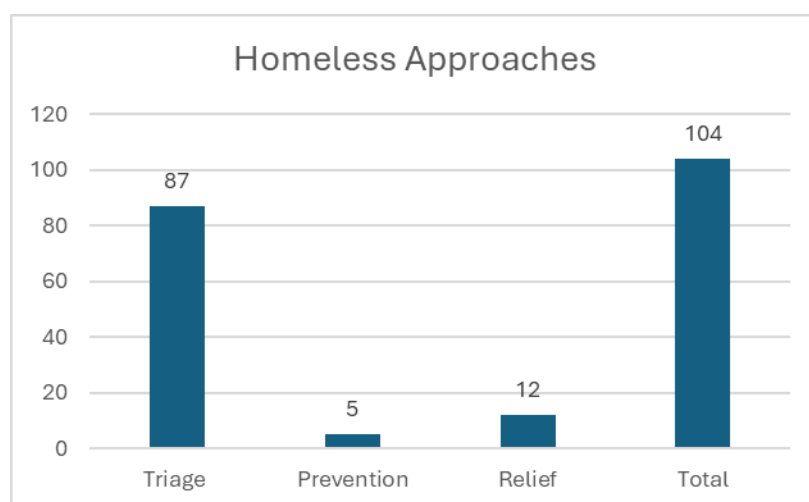
The housing register saw 47 new applications during the month, with over 68% falling within Band E. This underlines the continuing need for clear customer communication, early advice and robust prioritisation so that officer capacity remains focused on households facing the most acute housing need. Demand was concentrated around smaller homes, with 1-bedroom properties accounting for 55% of applications; however, the most significant supply risk remains larger family accommodation, with 181 (30%) of applicants in Bands A to D requiring homes of three or more bedrooms at month end.

There were 28 homes let in August, 43% of which were allocated to Band A applicants. This demonstrates strong alignment between allocations and priority need. 7 properties were let to applicants in a band E, 86% of these properties had a lettings restriction such as age related or local lettings restrictions.

Year-to-date lettings remain 15% lower than the same period last year, creating a risk of longer waiting times, increased homelessness pressure and reduced ability to move households on from temporary accommodation.

Homelessness demand remained high, with 104 approaches, however only 17 cases resulted in a full assessment being completed and a statutory duty owed. The main reason for homelessness was due to family or friends not able to accommodate, accounting for over 52% of cases.

The balance of activity suggests households are presenting at crisis point, with 71% of applicants being owed the relief duty due to already being homeless.



Temporary accommodation remains the most significant operational and financial pressure. 19 new placements were made during August for 13 households, and 77 households were in temporary accommodation at month end, 43% of whom were families with dependent children. The number of households at month end represents a 43% increase when compared to the number of households in Temporary accommodation in August 2025.

During the month 12 people were recorded as sleeping rough in North Norfolk at various points during the month. 7 people were new to the district and at month end, 5 people remained sleeping rough. These figures reflect a seasonal increase that is not uncommon during the summer months. Warmer weather can reduce some of the immediate barriers to sleeping outdoors, and the district may also experience an increase in transient stays. Extreme weather can create additional risks for people already experiencing difficult circumstances.

Overall, the direction of travel is one of the increasing service pressures driven by constrained housing supply, later-stage homelessness presentations and continued reliance on temporary accommodation. The key priorities are to strengthen early prevention, improve access to sustainable accommodation, accelerate move-on from temporary accommodation and maintain a strategic focus on households with the highest levels of need.

Housing Strategy

Temporary Accommodation

At the 31st August the Council had 32 units of Temporary or other homeless accommodation (including five units of move on accommodation for ex-rough sleepers).

We will receive £1,345,143 of LAHF grant in 2026/27 (first payment of £440k received) to help with the purchase of a further nine homes. Offers have been accepted on four of these, and we anticipate the purchase of all nine will complete in 2026/27 to bring our total stock to 41 homes.

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 nineteen developments which are on site, having planning approval or are at an advanced planning application stage. These sites will deliver more than 600 new affordable homes. There are a further 17 projects at earlier stages and project the delivery of over 260 new affordable homes on these sites. Current schemes include the following:

On site:

- Holt – The Norfolk Homes development on Cley Road, with 12 affordable homes, is due to hand over at the end of the year.
- Bacton – 47 new affordable homes are at an advanced build stage, 19 which are for sale as Shared Ownership – these are currently being marketed. 18 of the new affordable rented homes have now been let or allocated, with the remainder being completed in September and October.
- Building of the 61 extra care apartments in Stalham is progressing well. A promotional event will take place on 6th October as part of wider publicity to raise awareness of extra care and this scheme. The building of 34 affordable homes on the adjoining land is progressing well, with handover of new homes from March 2027.
- In Little Snoring, building of 10 new affordable homes on a rural exception site is well underway, with the first completions expected before Christmas.
- In North Walsham, the Hopkins development on Norwich Road is progressing well and will provide 53 affordable homes.
- The Mill Road site in Wells led by Holkham will provide 21 affordable homes for Broadland Housing and Homes for Wells.
- Overstrand Road, Cromer, includes 53 affordable homes to be owned by Legal & General, their first homes in North Norfolk.
- In North Walsham, the former Paston Fields, will deliver 54 affordable homes.

With Planning/expected soon:

- Blakeney Neighbourhood Housing Society continues to work in partnership with Broadland Housing Association to deliver 8 affordable homes. This planning application has now been given approval and will shortly be starting on site.
- In Ludham a planning application is now well advanced, and will deliver 26 affordable homes with a mix of rented and shared ownership.
- Flagship Housing have submitted a planning application for 9 affordable homes in Pudding Norton at Green Lane which we hope will receive planning consent in the coming few weeks.

Early stage work:

- In Wells, Broadland Housing Association are working with the Wells Housing Implementation Group and Homes for Wells on the site at Two Furlong Hill, which is allocated in the Wells-Next-The-Sea Neighbourhood Plan.

Early Help and Prevention

From August 1st to August 31st.

TOTAL INDIVIDUAL REFERRALS RECEIVED: 111

Early Help & Prevention Case Study

Miss B is a single mother of three children, two of which have ADHD and Autism which can create complex issues within the household. The children have not been consistently attending school.

Miss B, who suffers with medical issues of her own, has fled Domestic Abuse and so has been living with her mother. Miss B's mother is in a wheelchair, and care is provided for her by Miss B's Brother who is also present in the three-bedroom property. This is causing substantial issues with space and over-crowding.

In addition to these issues, Miss B and her new partner also have debts totalling over £20k.

The Social Prescriber assisted Miss B to make Disabled Living Allowance applications for the two children, which resulted in successful awards for both. A referral was also made into Citizen's Advice for specialist debt advice, and Miss B continues to work with the debt advisor on getting in control of her money.

The Social Prescriber also supported Miss B to make an application for housing of her own and guidance was given on how to use the Your Choice Your Home bidding system.

Finally, the Social Prescriber worked to connect Miss B with support groups and services, both online and locally, to support her with her own mental health and wellbeing needs.

Miss B continues to work with the Social Prescriber, as they move towards her finding her own accommodation, to build a support network around her and the children. Support to collect and supply housing with information to be able to move forward with housing application.

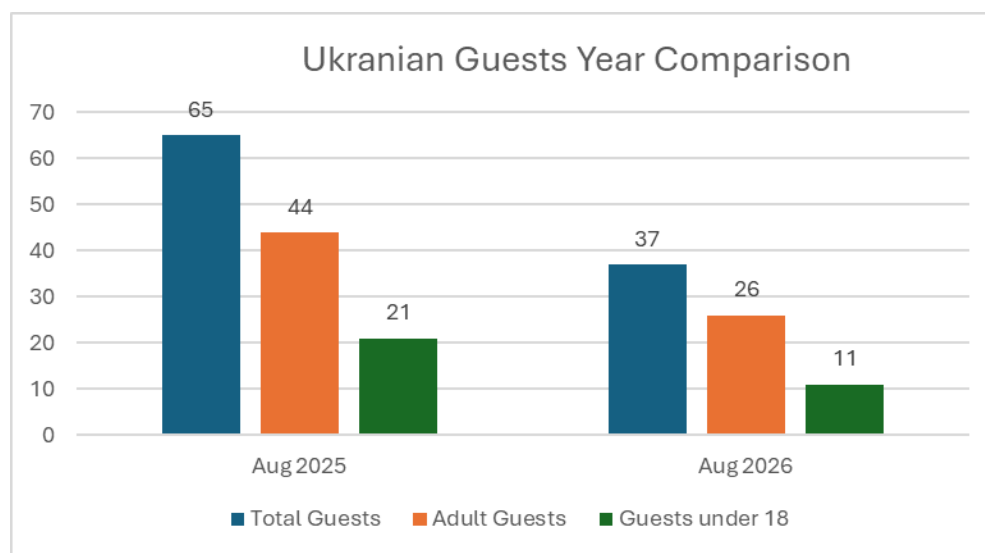
Throughout August, the team have been dealing with incoming referrals, carrying out home visits, telephone appointments, dealing with requests for food and energy support and supporting our residents with a wide range of issues.

Following the closure of the Falls and Frailty Pathway, additional support has been offered to the team through one of the Community Outreach Officers.

Homes For Ukraine

There are currently 37 Ukrainian guests in hosted accommodation in North Norfolk, of which 26 are adults and 11 are under the age of eighteen.

The number of guests in hosted accommodation has decreased in the past year for various reasons. Some Ukrainian guests have returned to Ukraine, others have moved out of area. We also know that there are a number of previously hosted guests who are now living in social or private rented accommodation.



Currently, we have two single Ukrainian guests, who have been given notice from their hosts to leave by November and December this year. The People from Abroad Support Officer is supporting with signposting and finding the best options to move forward.

The officer continues to support Ukrainians with visa extension applications, housing and council tax support, tenancy matters, and general enquiries. The assistance is available not only to the guests who remain with hosts, but also to those who have moved on and continue to live in North Norfolk as part of our community. They often contact when they need help.

As Ukrainian Permission Extension Scheme approaches fast for people who arrived in May-July 2022, we have received a lot of requests to provide technical support with applying for extensions and booking biometrics appointments.

The People from Abroad Support Officer works closely with the Housing team, supporting families who have been given notice to leave their hosts or need help looking for a private rent.

The People from Abroad Support Officer also continues to work with Norfolk County Council in identifying and checking fraudulent visa cases.

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.

Total budget made available for DFG Adaptations & Discretionary grants for 2026/27 is **£1,828,729.30**

Due to the nature of the DFG and cases continually progressing throughout the year, some cases may have grants approved during one financial year period, however these will not complete and be paid within the same financial year. We therefore record “brought forward” approvals as these grant awards remain within the system until completion. These figures are continually changing as cases get completed and new cases are approved.

Brought forward grant approval Values to date at the end of August:

- 2024/25 – 1x outstanding case with a total outstanding approved valued of £14,190.19
- 2025/26 – 13x outstanding cases with a total outstanding approved value of £129,093.30
- 2026/27 Approved cases value YTD - £554,928.61 (59 cases)

- 2026/27 Discretionary (Top-up grant) approved cases value = £56,000 (3 cases)

Total outstanding approval value to date is £705,048.03 relating to 73 individual grant applications.

Actual spend (including partially completed adaptations) for August is £55,736.11 in Mandatory DFG and £2,321.60 in Discretionary grants.

Total spend YTD (DFG & Discretionary combined) = £535,592.32

Referrals received for August (DFG only)

Total referrals received	36
NNDC	14
Social Services	22
Other	0

Fully completed adaptations/grants (not including partially completed works) – August

DFG	5
Discretionary Grants	3

2 Forthcoming Activities and Developments.

Discretionary Disabled Grants Policy – 2026 to 2028
Homelessness & Rough Sleeping Strategy and consultation – 2026 to 2031
Rough Sleeper Programme

3 Meetings attended by Cllr Boyle

SNT Policing meeting
Portfolio holder catch up
Pre Cabinet
Business planning
Homeless & Rough Sleeping policy review, final changes
Cromer RNLI visit with NNDC chairman
Visit to Cromer Community Centre with NNDC chairman
Benjamin Court meeting to discuss potential Mental Health provision
Pier Works meeting