

NOTICE OF MEETING

Meeting: HOUSING AND COMMUNITIES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL

Date and Time: WEDNESDAY, 17 SEPTEMBER 2025, AT 6.00 PM

Place: COUNCIL CHAMBER - APPLETREE COURT, BEAULIEU ROAD, LYNDHURST, SO43 7PA

Enquiries to: Email: lee.ellis@nfdc.gov.uk
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PUBLIC INFORMATION:

This agenda can be viewed online (<https://democracy.newforest.gov.uk>). It can also be made available on audio tape, in Braille and large print.

Members of the public are welcome to attend this meeting. The seating capacity of our Council Chamber public gallery is limited under fire regulations to 22.

Members of the public can watch this meeting live, or the subsequent recording, on the [Council's website](#). Live-streaming and recording of meetings is not a statutory requirement and whilst every endeavour will be made to broadcast our meetings, this cannot be guaranteed. Recordings remain available to view for a minimum of 12 months.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION:

Members of the public may speak in accordance with the Council's [public participation scheme](#):

- (a) on items within the Housing and Communities Overview and Scrutiny Panel's terms of reference which are not on the public agenda; and/or
- (b) on individual items on the public agenda, when the Chairman calls that item. Speeches may not exceed three minutes.

Anyone wishing to attend the meeting, or speak in accordance with the Council's public participation scheme, should contact the name and number shown above no later than 12.00 noon on Friday, 12 September 2025.

Kate Ryan
Chief Executive

Appletree Court, Lyndhurst, Hampshire. SO43 7PA
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AGENDA

Apologies

1. MINUTES

To confirm the minutes of the meeting held on as a correct record.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

To note any declarations of interest made by members in connection with an agenda item. The nature of the interest must also be specified.

Members are asked to discuss any possible interests with Democratic Services prior to the meeting.

3. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

To receive any public participation in accordance with the Council's public participation scheme.

4. FREEDOM LEISURE/NFDC PARTNERSHIP ANNUAL PERFORMANCE REPORT (Pages 5 - 12)

To consider the annual review of Freedom Leisure/NFDC Partnership Annual Performance Report.

5. MYTIME ACTIVE/NFDC PARTNERSHIP ANNUAL PERFORMANCE REPORT (Pages 13 - 20)

To consider the MYTIME ACTIVE/NFDC Partnership Annual Performance Report.

6. CORPORATE PLAN: KEY PERFORMANCE DATA (QUARTER 1) (Pages 21 - 48)

To consider the performance data against KPIs identified in the Corporate Plan.

7. STIGMATISATION IN SOCIAL HOUSING (PRESENTATION) (Pages 49 - 54)

To receive a presentation on stigmatisation in social housing.

8. SOCIAL HOUSING REGULATION ACT (2023) PROGRESS REPORT NUMBER 4 (NEIGHBOURHOOD AND COMMUNITY STANDARD) (Pages 55 - 68)

To receive a progress report on the work related to the Social Housing Regulation Act.

9. GREENER HOUSING STRATEGY ANNUAL REVIEW (Pages 69 - 94)

To consider the annual update on the progress of the Greener Housing Strategy.

10. DRAFT HOUSING LANDLORD TENANCY POLICY AND MUTUAL EXCHANGE POLICY (Pages 95 - 150)

To consider the draft Housing Landlord Tenancy Policy and Mutual Exchange Policy.

- 11. MAINTENANCE AND REPAIRS TO EMPTY HOMES AND HOMES UNDERGOING MUTUAL EXCHANGE POLICY FOR HOUSING (LANDLORD SERVICES) PERIODIC REVIEW.** (Pages 151 - 210)
To consider the Maintenance and Repairs To Empty Homes and Homes Undergoing Mutual Exchange Policy for Housing (Landlord Services) Periodic Review.
- 12. HOMELESSNESS UPDATE (PRESENTATION)** (Pages 211 - 216)
To receive an update on homelessness.
- 13. PROGRESS OF THE ANNUAL STRATEGIC PRIORITIES OF THE SAFER NEW FOREST PARTNERSHIP (PRESENTATION)** (Pages 217 - 220)
To receive and update on the progress of the priorities set through the Safer New Forest Strategic Assessment.
- 14. HEALTH AND WELLBEING ACTION PLAN** (Pages 221 - 256)
To receive the annual update on the Health and Wellbeing Action Plan.
- 15. AIR QUALITY STRATEGY** (Pages 257 - 336)
To consider the Air Quality Strategy following public consultation.
- 16. FOOD SAFETY REVIEW PLAN** (Pages 337 - 362)
To consider the Food Safety Performance Report and the service priorities for 2025/26.
- 17. FUTURE MEETINGS**
To agree the following dates for meetings in 2026/27 (Wednesdays at 6.00pm):

2026
17 June
16 September

2027
20 January
17 March
- 18. PORTFOLIO HOLDER'S UPDATE**
An opportunity for the Portfolio Holder's to provide an update to the Panel on developments within their portfolio.
- 19. WORK PROGRAMME** (Pages 363 - 364)
To agree the work programme to guide the Panel's activities over the coming months.

20. ANY OTHER ITEMS WHICH THE CHAIRMAN DECIDES ARE URGENT

To: **Councillors**

Steve Clarke (Chairman)
Kate Crisell (Vice-Chairman)
John Adams
Hilary Brand
Sean Cullen

Substitutes

Allan Glass
Colm McCarthy

Co-optee

Melvyn Utley (Tenant Representative)

Councillors

Richard Frampton
Patrick Mballa
Neville Penman
Neil Tungate
Melvyn Utley

Substitutes

Barry Rickman
Alex Wade

Housing and Communities Overview and Scrutiny Panel – 17 September 2025.

Freedom Leisure/NFDC Partnership Annual Performance Report

Purpose	For Review
Classification	Public
Executive Summary	New Forest District Council commenced its partnership with Freedom Leisure on 1 July 2021. Freedom Leisure is the Council's preferred leisure operator to oversee the management of the five leisure centres within the district until 2032⁽⁰⁰⁾. The following report provides an overview for contract year 4 (2024-2025) of New Forest Partnership with Freedom Leisure operating the following facilities: Applemore Health and Leisure centre, Lymington Health and Leisure centre, New Milton Health and Leisure centre, Ringwood Health and Leisure centre and Totton Health and Leisure centre. The Partnership continues to deliver impactful services across leisure centres and remains focused on enhancing community wellbeing, improving facilities, and driving sustainable growth. The Annual Report will cover the following key performance indicators: - Strategic Objectives and Purpose - Fitness Memberships - Learn to Swim Memberships - Customer Experience - Utilities consumption - Successes and Impact - Participation levels - Capital Projects overview - Healthy Communities Outcome - Social Impact - Financial Performance - 2025/26 Key Objectives

Recommendation(s)	That the Panel note New Forest Partnership Annual Performance Report.
Reasons for recommendation(s)	New Forest Partnership Annual Report is required as set out in Freedom Leisure/NFDC Outsourcing Agreement. The council's review and oversight of the partnership's performance is key in ensuring the council achieves its corporate objectives.
Ward(s)	All
Portfolio Holder(s)	Councillor Dan Poole – Community, Safety and Wellbeing
Strategic Director(s)	Alan Bethune – Strategic Director Corporate Resources & Transformation
Officer Contact	Pav Duchnowski Contract Relationship Officer 02380 285182 pawel.duchnowski@nfdc.gov.uk

Introduction and background

1. The purpose of this report is to provide members with New Forest Partnership Annual Performance overview to cover the period 1 July 2024 to 30 June 2025.

New Forest District Council commenced its partnership with Freedom Leisure on 1 July 2021. Freedom Leisure is the Council's preferred leisure operator to oversee the management of the five leisure centres within the district for the next eleven years.

Freedom Leisure is a not-for-profit leisure trust which manages leisure and cultural facilities on behalf of partners across the UK, to realise their vision of "improving lives through leisure."

2. The New Forest Partnership, operated in collaboration with Freedom Leisure, has continued to deliver a comprehensive and community-focused health and well-being service across five key sites: Applemore, Lymington, New Milton, Ringwood, and Totton Health and Leisure centres. This report outlines, operational achievements, capital investments, community impact and the financial performance of the partnership over the twelve-month period. The overarching aim remains to enhance public health and well-being, promote inclusive

participation, and ensure the long-term sustainability of leisure services in the district.

Operational Performance and Membership Trends

3. The partnership has seen encouraging growth in key performance indicators, particularly in membership engagement:

- Fitness Memberships experienced a substantial increase, rising from 6,228 in July 2023 to a peak of 8,527 in January 2025. This upward trajectory reflects successful marketing, improved facilities, and enhanced customer experience.
- Learn to Swim (LTS) Memberships remained relatively stable, with minor month-to-month variations, indicating consistent demand for swimming lessons across all sites.
- Customer Service Responsiveness:

40% of customer queries were resolved within 2 working days, and

59% within 7 working days.

The majority of queries pertained to fitness class scheduling and swimming lessons availability.

The deployment of digital tools such as Course Pro and the Freedom Leisure App is expected to further streamline customer interactions and reduce query volumes.

Utilities – Successes and Impact Summary

4. The Utilities section of the presentation highlights strategic efforts undertaken by the New Forest Partnership to improve energy efficiency, reduce environmental impact, and enhance the sustainability of leisure operations across the district.

5. Seasonal Trends - Electricity Consumption - Peaks are observed during winter months (likely December to February), which aligns with increased indoor activity, lighting, and heating system usage. A noticeable dip occurs in summer months, suggesting reduced demand due to longer daylight hours and potentially lower operational intensity. Gas Consumption - follows a similar seasonal pattern, with higher usage in colder months due to heating requirements. Consumption drops significantly in warmer months, indicating effective seasonal control and more efficient plant management.

6. **Year-on-Year Comparison and Impact.** A reduction in overall consumption, suggesting the impact of energy-saving measures such as enhanced team environmental training, efficient monitoring of building management systems and plant management, implementation of environmental interventions such as solar panels and shower restrictors.

Participation

7. The participation data contained in the presentation offers a comprehensive, month-by-month breakdown of user engagement across five key leisure centres operated under the New Forest Partnership. This dataset serves as a critical performance indicator, reflecting not only the operational throughput of each site but also the effectiveness of programming, seasonal responsiveness, and community engagement strategies that led to increase in participation year on year by 76,118 visits which is a great result.

8. The participation data directly supports the partnership's strategic objective to increase overall participation year on year. The seasonal peaks and troughs identified in the data provide clear guidance for when and where to focus promotional efforts and programme innovation.

Capital Investment and Service Enhancements

9. A series of capital projects were successfully delivered, aimed at modernising facilities and improving the overall user experience:
 - At Lymington, the gym underwent a comprehensive refurbishment, including the installation of state-of-the-art equipment such as the Half Rack, Plate Loaded Glute Drive, Arc Trainer, and SpeedFlex Blade. The facility also benefited from upgraded flooring, refreshed décor, and an expanded free weights area.
 - The Group Cycling Studio was revitalised with the introduction of IC6 bikes featuring the Coach By Colour system, offering members a personalised and data-driven workout experience.
 - Applemore Health Suite was fully modernised, with enhancements to the steam room and sauna, significantly improving comfort, aesthetics, and relaxation opportunities for members.
 - Sustainability initiatives were prioritised at Applemore, where solar panels and shower restrictors were installed with funding from the Swimming Pool Support Fund (SPSF) - government initiative in England aimed at providing financial assistance to public swimming pools and leisure facilities to ensure

their sustainability and improve energy efficiency. These measures are expected to reduce carbon emissions and lower operational costs.

Healthy Communities Programme and Social Impact

10. The Healthy Communities programme continues to be a cornerstone of the partnership's social value delivery, offering a wide range of inclusive and condition-specific activities:

Exercise on Referral: Delivered 86.5 hours per week across five sites, supporting individuals with medical conditions through tailored physical activity.

Specialised Classes: Including falls prevention, COPD rehabilitation, cardiac rehab, and joint pain cycling.

Inclusive Programmes: Such as SEN swimming lessons, Menofit (menopause support), Mum & Baby circuits, and Forever Active sessions for older adults.

Strategic Partnerships: Collaborations with University Hospital Southampton (UHS) for cancer prehabilitation and Lymington Hospital for stroke recovery support.

Social Impact Testimonials: Participants reported significant improvements in physical health, mental wellbeing, and social connection, with heartfelt stories of recovery and empowerment shared by both service users and healthcare professionals.

Charitable Engagement and Community Outreach

11. The partnership has continued to foster strong community ties through charitable initiatives:

- The Wear It Pink Campaign in October raised £3,031 for Breast Cancer UK, with centres hosting themed classes and a nationwide cycling challenge.
- The Christmas Present Drive, now in its second year, saw over 500 gifts donated to Southampton Children's Hospital, reflecting the generosity and compassion of the local community.

Financial Performance

12. Over the course of the financial year, the partnership generated a total income of £8,468,765, which exceeded the original bid projection of £8,015,466, reflecting strong commercial performance and effective service delivery. However, total expenditure reached £8,618,264, resulting in a net deficit of £149,498.

Applemore Leisure Health and Leisure emerged as a standout performer, delivering a surplus of £145,312, indicative of robust operational management and high levels of community engagement.

Ringwood Leisure Centre also achieved a positive financial outcome, with a modest surplus of £6,556.

In contrast, Lymington, New Milton, and Totton experienced financial shortfalls, with deficits of £147,072, £97,218, and £58,998 respectively, attributable to a combination of operational pressures and fluctuating participation levels.

In summary, since the inception of the New Forest Partnership contract in 2021, the financial trajectory has demonstrated a marked and commendable progress in significantly reducing the deficit. The partnership has transitioned from its foundational phase into a period of sustained financial maturity and operational stability.

A well-structured and forward-looking commercial strategy has been central to the contract's success. The partnership has consistently aligned its service offerings with community demand, while leveraging data-driven insights to optimise pricing, programming, and resource allocation. This has resulted in revenue generation that not only meets but often exceeds bid expectations.

Targeted capital investments totalling £242,400 in year 4 (4,105,422 to date)—such as facility refurbishments, equipment upgrades, and energy efficiency projects—have enhanced the quality of service delivery while simultaneously improving cost-effectiveness. These investments have been carefully prioritised to maximise return and community impact, contributing to both financial and social value.

Operational expenditure has been tightly managed through rigorous financial oversight, procurement discipline, and continuous performance monitoring. This has enabled the partnership to absorb inflationary pressures and unexpected costs while maintaining service standards and contractual obligations.

The financial performance of the contract reflects a well-executed balance between growth, sustainability, and fiscal responsibility. The

partnership's ability to adapt, invest wisely, and manage costs effectively has positioned it as a resilient and high-performing model within the leisure sector.

2025/26 Key Objectives

13. Looking ahead, the partnership has established a clear set of strategic goals designed to drive growth, enhance service quality, and support environmental sustainability:

- Performance and Growth Targets:
- Achieve a 5% increase in overall participation.
- Reduce energy consumption by 3% (measured in kWh).
- Reach a Group Fitness membership target of 8,700.
- Expand the Learn to Swim programme to 5,250+ members, representing a 5% increase.
- Community and Partnership Development:
- Collaborate with the Council's Active Lifestyles referral programme.
- Increase Healthy Communities funding by 6%.
- Grow outreach programmes by 8%, extending the reach of health and wellbeing services.
- Strategic Projects and Leadership:
- Advance planning for the Major Decarbonisation Project, in partnership with external consultants.
- Strengthen leadership capacity through the appointment of a new Area Manager and General Manager, ensuring continuity and driving operational excellence.

Corporate plan priorities

14. The Council's Corporate Plan Priorities includes empowering our residents to live healthy, connected and fulfilling lives. Having a successful leisure partner supports the council to achieve this.

Options appraisal

15. No options appraisals are required.

Consultation undertaken

16. As part of the partnership, there is regular and ongoing dialogue and collaboration between both parties. All matters contained within this report and the appendix have been developed as part of this partnership approach. Freedom Leisure additionally seeks feedback from members and the public via Customer Forums, NPS surveys and ongoing collection of online and on-site feedback.

Financial and resource implications

17. There are no direct financial implications as a result of this report.

Legal implications

18. There are no direct legal implications as a result of this report.

Risk assessment

19. A risk assessment is not required.

Environmental / Climate and nature implications

20. New Forest Partnership joint environmental efforts led to overall decrease in carbon emissions and utilities consumption, suggesting the impact of energy-saving measures such as enhanced team environmental training, efficient monitoring of building management systems and plant management, implementation of environmental interventions such as solar panels and shower restrictors. We continue to undertake further measures through Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme to decarbonise Applemore Health and Leisure centre through 2025-28.

Equalities implications

21. Social Housing Regulation Act (2023) Progress Report Number 4 (Neighbourhood and Community Standard)

Crime and disorder implications

22. There are no direct crime and disorder implications as a result of this report.

Data protection / Information governance / ICT implications

23. There are no direct data protection, information governance or ICT implications as a result of this report.

Appendices: None

Background Papers:

Key Performance Indicators for New Forest Partnership

Housing and Communities Overview and Scrutiny Panel – 17 September 2025.

MYTIME ACTIVE/NFDC Partnership Annual Performance Report

Purpose	For Review
Classification	Public
Executive Summary	Mytime Active are a social enterprise on a mission to improve wellbeing within their staff, members and surrounding community. They are passionate about people living longer, healthier, and happier lives. The charity knows how important physical activity and healthy eating are to making us feel good. But well-being is not just about being active; it is about making small lifestyle changes including healthier food choices and building confidence and self-esteem, whilst forming friendships along the way. They match their passion with their knowledge and experience of operating leisure centres, golf courses and health contracts. Mytime Active currently operates a thirty-year contract with The New Forest District Council for the management of Dibden Golf Centre, ending in 2042. The Annual Report will cover the following items: - Corporate Update - Participation - Golf Memberships - Community Engagements - Capital Projects overview - Financial Performance - Key Aspirational Goals – looking ahead
Recommendation(s)	That the Panel note New Forest Partnership with MYTIME ACTIVE Annual Performance Report.

Reasons for recommendation(s)	The council's review and oversight of the partnership's performance is key in ensuring the council achieves its corporate objectives.
Ward(s)	All
Portfolio Holder(s)	Councillor Dan Poole – Community, Safety and Wellbeing
Strategic Director(s)	Alan Bethune – Strategic Director Corporate Resources & Transformation
Officer Contact	Pav Duchnowski Contract Relationship Officer 02380 285182 pawel.duchnowski@nfdc.gov.uk

Introduction and background

1. The purpose of this report is to provide members with Mytime Active/ New Forest Partnership Annual Performance overview to cover the period 1 April 2024 to 31 March 2025. Please refer to PowerPoint presentation for more details.

Mytime Active are a social enterprise on a mission to improve wellbeing within their staff, members and surrounding communities. Organization aims for people to get more out of life by socializing, being active and eating healthier, to not only improve their physical health but their mental wellbeing.

As an independent charity they reinvest their profit back into achieving their goals. Here at Dibden that is to create a golf center that can be a hub for the local community, not just for golfers but anyone regardless of age or ability, to offer a wide range of facilities from the driving range to the clubhouse encouraging participation from users of all backgrounds.

Mytime Active currently operates a thirty-year contract with The New Forest District Council for the management of Dibden Golf Centre, ending in 2042.

Corporate Update

2. A new senior leadership team is now in place, including CEO Steven May and other key directors.
 - Neil Whitehead – Finance Director

- Rhona Mason – HR Director
- Kelly Stead – Commercial Director

Their Corporate Plan (2023–2026) outlines three strategic goals:

- Increase employee engagement from 33 to 50.
- Improve community wellbeing, with members' Personal Wellbeing Factor (PWF) exceeding the local average by 5%.
- Achieve sustainable EBITDA.

Participation

3. Golf participation data for the year shows a slow start due to poor weather, with a strong recovery in March. Monthly participation for both 9-hole and 18-hole games increased significantly in the final quarter, indicating improved course conditions and growing user engagement. This trend suggests that infrastructure improvements are beginning to yield positive results. The presentation slide provides a comparative view of the previous year's participation levels, helping to contextualise the 2024/25 performance. It highlights seasonal trends and the recurring impact of weather on user activity, reinforcing the need for continued investment in drainage and course resilience.

Mytime Active always believed that golf is more than a game—it's a way to bring people together. This past year, they leaned into that belief. They didn't want to just focus on green fees or membership numbers. They focused on connection. On creating moments that families could share. On making Dibden a place where people come not just to play, but to belong.

They introduced events that celebrated togetherness—Mother's Day cream teas, Father's Day golf and meal packages, and more. These weren't just calendar fillers; they were invitations to experience Dibden differently. To see it as a space for laughter, for bonding, for memories.

But perhaps the most heartwarming transformation has been in their junior golf community. Just two years ago, Dibden Golf Centre had fewer than 10 junior members. Today, they have 43. That's not just growth—it's a movement. Thanks to the passion and dedication of Nathan Cook and his junior golf programme, they have created a space where young golfers feel welcome, supported, and inspired.

Even more encouraging? 30% of these juniors have a parent who is also a member. Golf is becoming a shared experience—a family tradition. And that's exactly what Mytime Active hoped for.

Participation isn't just about numbers. It's about stories. It's about the child who picked up a club for the first time. The parent who

rediscovered their love for the game. The family who made Dibden part of their weekend routine.

This is the kind of growth that lasts. And it's the kind of community Mytime Active are proud to build.

Golf Membership Trends

4. Membership data shows fluctuations throughout the year, peaking in July and August at 546 members, then declining during winter months to a low of 493 in December. By March, membership rebounded slightly to 501. These trends reflect seasonal engagement patterns and the influence of course accessibility. Please refer to Golf Membership slide.

Community Engagement

5. Mytime Active always believed that a golf centre should be more than just a place to play—it should be a place to gather, celebrate, and connect. That belief shaped the response to feedback from the last Housing and Community Scrutiny and Overview Panel meeting, where community outreach was highlighted as a key area for growth.

In 2024/25, Dibden Golf Centre made it their mission to become a true hub for the community, not just a venue for green fees. Mytime Active expanded their calendar to include monthly open events, ranging from quiz nights and themed party evenings to inclusive golf days. These events weren't just about entertainment—they were about opening their doors to new faces and making Dibden feel like home.

The highlight of the year was the 50th anniversary of Bramshott Hill Golf Club, a celebration of its legacy and its connection to Dibden. This event brought together members, visitors, and curious newcomers for a day of golf, fun, and community spirit. It was more than a milestone—it was a statement of who Dibden Golf Centre are becoming. The event served as a powerful reminder of the role Dibden plays in the lives of its members and the wider community. It was a day where golf became a bridge—connecting generations, welcoming newcomers, and reinforcing our commitment to being more than just a sports facility.

6. While open events have helped Dibden Golf Centre reach the broader community, one of the proudest achievements this year has been the growth of Mytime Active junior golf programme.

Just two years ago, Dibden had zero junior members. Today, they have 49—a thriving junior section that includes 19 on the 9-hole course and 20 on the 18-hole course. These young golfers aren't just playing—they're competing, having taken part in over 10 matches with local clubs during the year.

Even more inspiring is the family connection: 35 of these juniors have a parent or guardian who is also a member. Golf is becoming a shared experience, a family tradition, and a pathway to lifelong wellbeing.

This success is largely thanks to Nathan Cook, one of Dibden Golf Centre resident golf professionals, whose dedication and leadership have transformed junior golf at Dibden. His programme has created not just players, but a community of young athletes who feel supported, challenged, and excited to grow.

Capital Works

7. Over the past year, Dibden Golf Centre has undergone a quiet transformation.

One of the most visible changes was the launch of the Aces Indoor Golf Studio. What was once an unused pro shop, closed since 2021, has now become a vibrant space for new and returning golfers. This two-bay studio, equipped with cutting-edge technology, offers a modern, weather-proof way to play and learn—welcoming those who may have felt intimidated by traditional golf.

But that didn't stop there. After countless rainy days and frustrating course closures, Mytime Active tackled one of Dibden's biggest challenges: drainage. Working closely with their greenkeepers, they identified the 9th and 10th fairways as persistent trouble spots. In September, new open drainage ditch was dug—an intervention that has already reduced closure days and improved course recovery after storms.

Beyond that, the work continued to map and clear existing drainage lines across the course, ensuring long-term resilience. And to support these efforts, Mytime Active invested in new maintenance equipment, including a turf iron and Air2G2, tools that help us deliver smoother, healthier greens.

Each of these changes reflects a deeper commitment: to make Dibden not just a golf course, but a community space where people feel heard, valued, and excited to return

Financial Performance - Income

8. As the financial year unfolded, Dibden Golf Centre were met with a familiar but formidable challenge: the weather. Persistent rainfall and prolonged course closures—98 days in total—cast a long shadow over their income streams. Yet, within that challenge, they found opportunities to adapt and innovate.

Their membership income saw the sharpest decline, falling by £26,419. This wasn't just a number—it reflected the frustration of

loyal members who couldn't access the course as often as they hoped. Mytime Active understood their concerns, and it pushed themselves to think more creatively about value and engagement.

Green Fees and Societies also dipped by £11,146, a direct result of fewer playable days. But even as the fairways stayed closed, the clubhouse lights stayed on.

In fact, Food & Beverage income rose by £4,934. This wasn't by accident—it was the result of a proactive events calendar, themed evenings, and a renewed focus on hospitality. Dibden Golf Centre turned rainy days into social opportunities, and the community responded.

Perhaps most encouraging was the Driving Range, which saw an increase of £11,466. With the course closed, golfers turned to the range—and Mytime Active were ready. Extended hours, improved lighting, and the buzz around the new indoor studio helped them turn a challenge into a win.

This year's income story isn't just about what was lost—it's about how Dibden Golf Centre adapted, how they listened, and how they laid the groundwork for a stronger, more resilient future.

Financial Performance – Expenditure

9. While income faced headwinds, the expenditure tells a different story. Let's start with staffing. Costs rose by £12,557, but this wasn't due to inefficiency. It was a conscious decision to maintain service quality and retain the exceptional team. With a 98% staff retention rate, Mytime Active have built a team that knows members by name, understands the course like the back of their hand, and shows up rain or shine.

Repair and Maintenance costs increased by £22,351—and for good reason. Mytime Active invested heavily in drainage improvements, particularly across the 9th and 10th fairways, areas that had long been problematic. These weren't cosmetic fixes; they were foundational upgrades that will reduce closures and improve playability for years to come.

Energy costs also rose by £17,967, driven by the reopening of the pro shop and a new supply contract. While this added to Mytime's overheads, it also marked a return to full service—more lights on, more spaces open, and more reasons for people to visit Dibden.

Every pound spent this year was a step toward a better experience. Mytime Active didn't just spend to survive - they spent to improve, to modernise, and to prepare for the future their members deserve.

Unfortunately, despite continued attempts to overcome various challenges throughout the year the contract recorded a deficit of

£41,960 what makes it even more substantial when adding cost for management charges and central support of £163,933 equalling to total deficit of £205,893.

Aspirational Goals

10. Dibden is known for its welcoming atmosphere, dedicated staff, and a diverse range of facilities that cater to golfers and non-golfers alike. Their reputation as a friendly, inclusive space has helped them become a trusted part of the local community. The improvements made to the golf course and the growing popularity of Food & Beverage offerings have brought more people through their doors, especially in the latter part of the year.

With this clarity, they have set their goals:

- Grow membership to 600 active users.
- Improve retention, encouraging members to stay for multiple years.
- Increase usage and footfall across all services.
- Continue enhancing our F&B offerings to boost satisfaction and revenue.

To achieve these goals, they will be taking the following action:

- Expanding marketing and social media outreach to connect with new audiences.
- Improving customer service, including relocating the pro shop and promoting the indoor studio.
- Investing in course condition and longevity, ensuring year-round playability.
- Aligning all efforts with their 5-year investment and business plan, ensuring that every step forward is strategic and sustainable.

Corporate plan priorities

11. The Council's Corporate Plan Priorities includes empowering our residents to live healthy, connected and fulfilling lives. Having a successful leisure partner supports the council to achieve this.

Options appraisal

12. No options appraisals are required.

Consultation undertaken

13. As part of the partnership, there is regular and ongoing dialogue and collaboration between both parties. All matters contained within this report and the appendix have been developed as part of this partnership approach. Mytime Active additionally seeks feedback

from members and the public via Customer Forums and onsite feedback.

Financial and resource implications

14. There are no direct financial implications as a result of this report.

Legal implications

15. There are no direct legal implications as a result of this report.

Risk assessment

16. A risk assessment is not required.

Environmental / Climate and nature implications

17. There are no direct Environmental/Climate and nature implications as a result of this report.

Equalities implications

18. Mytime Active diverse golf well-being proposition continue to be a cornerstone of the partnership's social value delivery, offering inclusive programme for all.

Crime and disorder implications

19. There are no direct crime and disorder implications as a result of this report.

Data protection / Information governance / ICT implications

20. There are no direct data protection, information governance or ICT implications as a result of this report.

Appendices:

None

Background Papers:

Key Performance Indicators for
Mytime Active Contract

Mytime Active Presentation

Housing and Communities Overview and Scrutiny Panel - 17 September 2025

Corporate Plan: Key Performance Data for Quarter 1 2025-2026

Purpose	For review
Classification	Public
Executive Summary	This report presents the Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) for Quarter 1 (April to June 2025). Measure IDs 1 through 15 only are for Housing and Communities review.
Recommendation(s)	That panel consider and review the Q1 2025-2026 dashboard. Comments will be passed for onward consideration by Cabinet.
Reasons for recommendation(s)	The Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) are a core component of our Corporate Plan 2024–2028. The processes for reporting progress and ensuring accountability against the commitments outlined in the plan are detailed in our Performance Management Framework.
Ward(s)	All
Portfolio Holder(s)	Councillor Jill Cleary, Leader
Strategic Director(s)	Alan Bethune, Strategic Director Corporate Resources S151 and Transformation
Officer Contact	Saqib Yasin Performance and Insight Manager 023 8028 5495 Email address: saqib.yasin@nfdc.gov.uk

Introduction and background

1. The Corporate Plan Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) dashboard is presented for review. The latest dashboard presents data for Q1 covering April 2025 to the end of June 2025, where available.
2. Following EMT approval, the dashboard is now being passed through to panels with associated covering reports. These reports will focus attention to the measures aligned to each panel. Additional feedback from panels will be added to the covering report for Cabinet.
3. The following should be read in conjunction with the Q1 dashboard referenced in appendix 1.

Layout of the dashboard

4. The layout is unchanged from last quarter, key metadata is provided below as a reminder:
 - Target – shows the desired value
 - Desired direction of travel – indicates whether good performance is typified by an increasing or decreasing value
 - Return format – shows the unit of the value being reported
 - Frequency – shows how often the KPI is to be reported
 - RAG status is as per our Performance Management Framework
 - Green, on target or above target
 - Amber, up to 10% below target
 - Red, over 10% below target

Quarter 1 2025/2026

5. Data is presented for 23 of the KPIs. 7 KPIs marked for consideration at Housing and Communities Overview and Scrutiny panel.

Highlights

ID	Observation
Housing and Communities	
1	Homelessness duty cases successfully prevented has always been reported against a stretch target. Performance has been consistent but just below the target, with a reducing number of properties available in the Private Sector.
2	Households in emergency accommodation. This KPI has fluctuated over the year. Homelessness prevention efforts have been strengthened with the appointment of a dedicated Team Leader and the addition of 4 Floating Support Workers, expanding the team to support housing needs, landlord engagement, rent deposits, and mediation. We have supported a new Homelessness Prevention drop-in service in Totton.
3	Number of families with children under 16 in external emergency shared accommodation over 6 weeks. This remains green.
4	Number of Appletree Careline customers. Performance is above our refreshed targets Development of revised promotional material has been created and disseminated across the district, creating partnerships with Age related community-based services to promote the service
8	Education and awareness sessions – 18 train the trainer events were held.
10	Number of cultural events and activities supported by New Forest District Council. – 31 cultural events were held across the District working alongside partners. A high number of one-off commissioned projects have occurred during the period which is reflected in the final data, these are unlikely to be repeated however, a positive start to the new reporting year.

15	Our five safety and compliance management measures performed very well, covering gas, fire, asbestos, water and lift safety.

Overview and Scrutiny panel comments

6. The quarter 1 dashboard will be presented to all three panels:
 - 11/09/2025 – Place and Sustainability Overview and Scrutiny panel
 - 17/09/2025 – Housing and Communities Overview and Scrutiny panel
 - 18/09/2025 – Resources and Transformation Overview and Scrutiny panel
7. The dashboard will then be presented to Cabinet on the 01/10/2025 for final approval.
8. Any comments arising from panels will be added to covering reports as the dashboard makes its way through the reporting cycle.

Corporate plan priorities

9. The dashboard presents the KPIs ordered by our new corporate plan priorities.

Options appraisal

10. The KPI list 2024-2028 has been developed following extensive work and consideration of alternative KPIs and targets. This work was completed in conjunction with the development of the Corporate Plan 2024-2028.

Consultation undertaken

11. The performance team have worked closely with data owners, responsible service managers and Strategic Directors to form the KPI list 2024 / 28. We have sought to identify KPIs which align with corporate plan objectives. Consideration was given to setting a baseline and reviewing benchmarking data (where applicable) for the setting of SMART targets.

Financial and resource implications

12. There are no financial or resource implications arising from this report.

Legal implications

13. There are no legal implications arising from this report.

Risk assessment

14. There are no new risks arising from this report. The nature of KPI reporting means performance is scrutinised at a service level as data becomes available and any associated risks and mitigation are put in place and reported in the KPI narrative as appropriate.

Environmental / Climate and nature implications

15. There are no environmental / climate and nature implications arising from this report.

Equalities implications

16. There are no equalities implications arising from this report.

Crime and disorder implications

17. There are no crime and disorder implications arising from this report.

Data protection / Information governance / ICT implications

18. There are no data protection / information governance / ICT implications arising from this report.

New Forest National Park implications

19. Visibility of our measures promotes good outcomes across the land within the National Park area. Measures within our direct control furthers the interests of the National Park/National Landscape. These include making appropriate planning decisions, dwelling supply, reducing homelessness, managing interventions where there are breaches of the Public Spaces Protection Orders, promoting recycling, garden waste removal, provision of water-filling stations and taking action on fly-tipping incidents.

Conclusion

20. Review of our key performance indicators ultimately provides a sense check of progress against our corporate plan commitments. Passing the dashboard through the levels of governance outlined in our Performance Management Framework promotes accountability.

Appendices:

Q1 Corporate Performance
Dashboard 202526.pdf

Background Papers:

2025/2026 Performance Summary

KPIs are rated RAG (Red, Amber, Green) according to the performance against target.

■ On target or above target

■ Below and up to 10% deviation from the lower threshold of the target

■ Over 10% deviation from the lower threshold of the target

■ KPI marked TBC due to lag in data availability, context and an estimated data availability is provided in these cases.

■ KPI marked N/A due to performance being outside of our direct control and influence, or data not being collected during period.

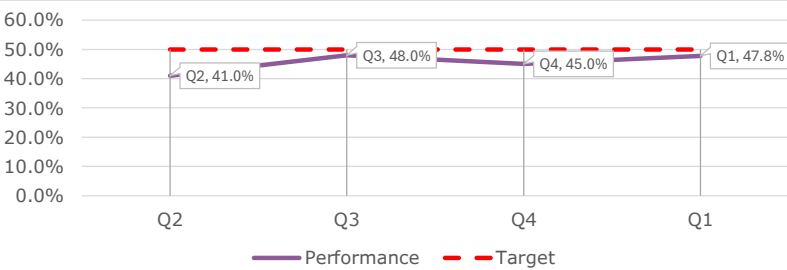
PEOPLE	ID	KPI Name	RAG		
	1	Percentage of homelessness duty cases successfully prevented	■		
	2	Number of households in external emergency accommodation	■		
	3	Number of families with children under 16 in external emergency shared accommodation over 6wks	■		
	4	Number of Appletree careline services provided to customers	■		
	7	Investment in and rollout of public space CCTV system	■		
	8	Number of education and awareness sessions in relation to serious crime	■		
	9	Number of positive interventions in response to Public Spaces Protection Orders (1 and 2)	■		
	10	Number of cultural events and activities supported by New Forest District Council	■		
	11	Number of social housing homes delivered by NFDC and its partners	■	Summary	
	12	Number of affordable council homes delivered against the 2026 target set	■	RED	1
	13	Percentage score for the overall tenant satisfaction with the Council as a landlord (TSMs)	■	AMBER	1
	14	Number of council homes achieving Energy Performance Certification band C	■	GREEN	5
	15	Percentage scores for the 5 safety and compliance management (TSMs)	■	TBC	2
			■	N/A	4
PLACE	ID	KPI Name	RAG		
	16	Percentage of major planning applications determined in time	■		
	17	Percentage of minor planning applications determined in time	■		
	18	Percentage of other planning applications determined in time	■		
	19	Percentage of allowed planning appeals	■		
	20	The total outstanding net dwelling supply as set out in our development plan	■		
	21	Kilogrammes of non-recycled waste produced per household	■	Summary	
	22	Households using our chargeable garden waste service as a percentage of total properties in NFDC	■	RED	1
	23	Emissions from the council's vehicle fleet	■	AMBER	1
	24	Percentage of household waste sent for recycling	■	GREEN	5
	25	Number of fly-tipping incidents per 1,000 people	■	TBC	3
	27	Equivalent number of 0.5 litre bottles filled at water-filling stations – waste averted	■	N/A	1
PROSPERITY	ID	KPI Name	RAG		
	28	Squared metres of industrial/employment land developed	■	Summary	
	29	Level (£) of retained business rates (at source)	■	RED	0
	31	Vacancies of retail premises within town/local centres	■	AMBER	0
	32	Employment rate percentage of working age adults (aged 16-64)	■	GREEN	0
	33	Proportion (in percentage terms) of employee jobs with hourly pay below the living wage	■	TBC	0
FUTURE NEW FOREST	ID	KPI Name	RAG		
	35	Staff satisfaction score with NFDC ICT services	■		
	37	Percentage of vacancies filled first time	■		
	38	Percentage staff turnover	■		
	39	Average number of days sickness absence per employee	■		
	40	Number of council apprenticeships	■		
	41	Percentage variance to Council budget +/- (General fund budget variations)	■		
	42	Percentage variance to Housing Revenue budget +/- (HRA budget variations)	■		
	43	Percentage of Council Tax collected in year	■	Summary	
	44	Percentage of Non-domestic Rates collected in year	■	RED	0
	45	Benefit realisation from ICT investment	■	AMBER	2
	46	Percentage of ICT incidents resolved within SLA	■	GREEN	7
	47	Percentage of annual ICT work programme delivered on time and on budget	■	TBC	0
	48	Percentage unscheduled downtime for critical systems	■	N/A	4

*NOTE KPIs No 5, 6, 26, 30, 34, 36 have been removed.

Housing and Communities Overview and Scrutiny panel

People: Helping those in our community with the greatest need

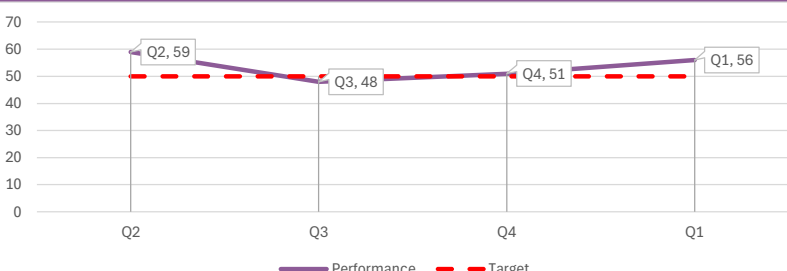
NFDC ID NO.1: Percentage of homelessness duty cases successfully prevented

	2024/5			2025/6	Supporting information	
	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Target	>50%
Performance	41.0%	48.0%	45.0%	47.8%	Desired DOT	▲
Target	50.0%	50.0%	50.0%	50.0%	Format	%
 — Performance — Target					Frequency	Quarterly
					Metric type	Snapshot/point in time
					Leadership team member	Chris Pope
					Portfolio holder	Cllr Steve Davies
					Overview and scrutiny	Housing and Communities
RAG Status						
2024/5				2025/6		
Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1			

Supporting narrative

2024/5 Q2	The prevention duty is where we try to prevent people from becoming homeless by either securing their current accommodation or seeking new accommodation for them. Despite the challenges in the private sector rented sector, the team work hard to support clients by providing advice or practical support.
2024/5 Q3	The current private rented sector remains challenging, with several factors affecting renters. Including the limited number of rental properties, changes to landlord circumstances resulting in sale of the property, increasing demands from letting agents, including rent advanced payments and rent guarantors, all creating barriers and difficulties for potential tenants.
2024/5 Q4	Despite the hard work of our teams to prevent homelessness and relieve those experiencing homelessness, it is recognised that this is a challenge due to the limited supply of both social and affordable private rented sector properties, especially family sized homes. To improve these figures, we have invested in training and are recruiting additional Homelessness Prevention Floating Support Workers to assist residents in sustaining tenancies.
2025/6 Q1	Preventing Homelessness remains a challenge with the reducing number of properties available in the Private Sector however a number of suitable properties were released and the team were able to utilise these by supporting applicants with rent in advance loans and deposit scheme.

NFDC ID NO.2: Number of households in external emergency accommodation

	2024/5			2025/6	Supporting information	
	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Target	<50
Performance	59	48	51	56	Desired DOT	▼
Target	50	50	50	50	Format	%
 — Performance — Target					Frequency	Quarterly
					Metric type	Snapshot/point in time
					Leadership team member	Chris Pope
					Portfolio holder	Cllr Steve Davies
					Overview and scrutiny	Housing and Communities
RAG Status						
2024/5				2025/6		
Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1			

Supporting narrative

2024/5 Q2	The number of people in Emergency Accommodation (EA) fluctuates throughout the year. The reason for the jump in EA usage is due to people being asked to leave family accommodation/private landlords ending tenancies. In these scenarios we try to prevent homelessness by searching for our new private accommodation or using our own Temporary Accommodation (TA) which is an enormous challenge as there are not many available in an affordable price range and our own TA is at
2024/5 Q3	Significant challenge due to increasingly larger families often with complex needs and affordability of private accommodation.
2024/5 Q4	Despite work to prevent and relieve those experiencing homelessness, it is a significant challenge due to the limited supply of social/affordable private sector properties, especially family sized homes. To improve these figures, we have invested in training and are recruiting 2 Homelessness Prevention Floating Support Workers to assist residents in sustaining tenancies. Investment continues with the introduction of a Homelessness Prevention Team Leader, to focus on increasing quality, better managed caseload and outcomes. In total the team have increased support by introducing 4 Homelessness Prevention Floating Support Workers, on top of existing 3 Homelessness Prevention Officers to help people find new homes, liaise with landlords, help with rent deposits, and mediate between parties. On top of this we have provided grant funding to start a Homelessness Prevention drop-in service in Totton and continue to work closely with other voluntary sector services. We continue to explore ways to increase prevention services across the district to provide the right advice at the right time and place for the betterment of our communities.
2025/6 Q1	

NFDC ID NO.3: Number of families with children under 16 in external emergency shared accommodation over 6 weeks

	2024/5			2025/6	Supporting information	
	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Target	<7
Performance	12	7	5	6	Desired DOT	▼
Target	7	7	7	7	Format	Numerical
Q2, 12 Q3, 7 Q4, 5 Q1, 6 — Performance — Target					Frequency	Quarterly
					Metric type	Snapshot/point in time
					Leadership team member	Chris Pope
					Portfolio holder	Cllr Steve Davies
					Overview and scrutiny	Housing and Communities
RAG Status						
2024/5				2025/6		
Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1			

Supporting narrative

2024/5 Q2	A higher number of households with large numbers of children, often with complex needs, requiring accommodation.
2024/5 Q3	EA for families with children is only used when no other accommodation is available in the location that the family needs. Moving families in to accommodation with no shared facilities remains a priority. We must consider the needs of the family when seeking accommodation including school/education, doctor or health facilities, family support networks, employment factors or other complex needs.
2024/5 Q4	To reduce the number of families in EA a dedicated officer is tasked with liaising with landlords to identify possible family sized accommodation and to move families as quickly as possible. Performance is in line with target.
2025/6 Q1	Reducing the need to use shared facilities EA for families remains a key commitment. When keeping a family in shared accommodation, we take into consideration their support needs and local networks whilst searching for long term accommodation.

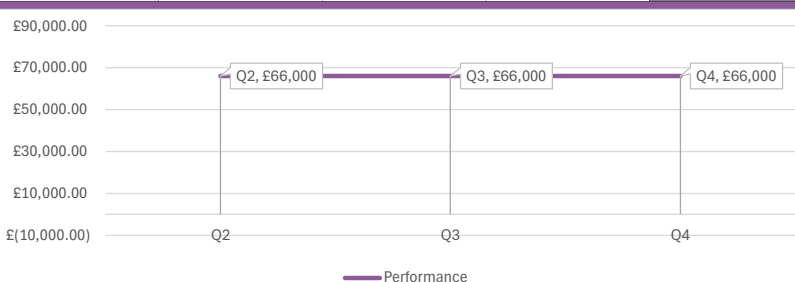
NFDC ID NO.4: Number of Appletree careline services provided to customers

	2024/5			2025/6	Supporting information	
	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Target	3869
Performance	3968	3933	3839	4072	Desired DOT	▲
Target	4040	4089	4139	3869	Format	Numerical
Q2, 3968 Q3, 3933 Q4, 3839 Q1, 4072 — Performance - - - Target					Frequency	Quarterly
					Metric type	Snapshot/point in time
					Leadership team member	Brian Byrne
					Portfolio holder	Cllr Dan Poole
					Overview and scrutiny	Housing and Communities
RAG Status						
2024/5				2025/6		
Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1			

Supporting narrative

2024/5 Q2	Due to the fluctuation in client base and services being delivered changing daily, The highest service by volume was 4004 at the end of July with 3965 at the end of August. In addition to dispersed alarms and services delivered, the service also provides fixed careline monitoring alarms in Housing Extra Care stock to 112 flats which does not form part of this data.
2024/5 Q3	Although 52 new customers joined careline services in October and November, over the same period we experienced higher monthly averages in cancellations of 59 clients, with a reduction of 118 services. Of these 59 clients, 21 were deceased and 31 moved into full time residential or nursing care placements. This is in line with seasonal expectations i.e. flu etc. December
2024/5 Q4	52 new customer installations with over 100 services combined during the quarter. Whilst the growth has continued alongside existing customers being retained and upgraded to digital services, this has been impacted by the death of 29 customers and 37 moving from independent to residential/nursing care accommodation, accounting for a combined loss of 130 services. Current team focus on retention and growth, dedicated resources contacting and managing the switchover from analogue to digital services for existing customers. All Appletree careline literature and promotional material has been refreshed and rebranded highlighting the benefits of digital careline units, in particular highlighting the cost savings to clients no longer requiring fixed telephone lines for service delivery.
2025/6 Q1	Appletree careline continues to transition existing careline customers from analogue to digital services, whilst creating opportunities for revenue growth through the attraction of a new customer base. Development of revised promotional material has been created and disseminated across the district, creating partnerships with age related community based services to promote the service locally.

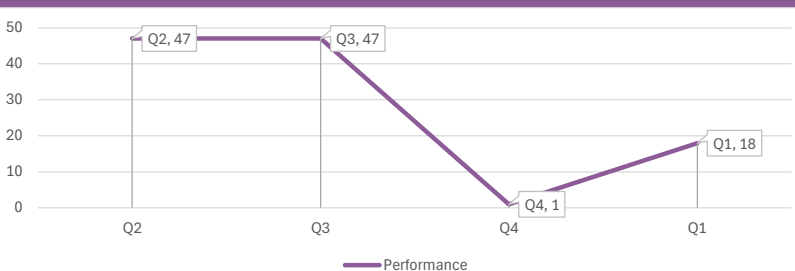
NFDC ID NO.7: Investment in and rollout of public space CCTV system

	2024/5			2025/6	Supporting information	
	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Target	Monitor towards £80,000
Performance	£66,000	£66,000	£66,000	TBC*	Desired DOT	▲
Target	£20,000	£30,000	£40,000	MONITOR	Format	£
					Frequency	Quarterly
					Metric type	Cumulative/year to date
					Leadership team member	Brian Byrne
					Portfolio holder	Cllr Dan Poole
					Overview and scrutiny	Housing and Communities
RAG Status						
2024/5				2025/6		
Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1			
			N/A			

Supporting narrative

2024/5 Q2	66K has been spent on securing 10 x 4g PTZ cameras for rural locations which also includes transmission costs for 2 years. A camera has been installed in Calshot Play park as part of the upgrade to St. Georges Hall providing 24 hour monitoring, live linked to the control room.
2024/5 Q3	The installation plan over Q3 has enabled a partnership to be developed with a large retail store, allowing siting of cameras on their buildings, simplifying the installation process and reducing costs. This will cover locations including Holbury, Bransgore and Fordingbridge. Additional locations have been secured in Fawley, Gangwarly and Ashley. 17 cameras from the Hardley depot have interlinked with the CCTV control room and it is anticipated a further 10 live monitored cameras will be installed by end of January.
2024/5 Q4	Following full handover of the Hardley Depot, A further 10 cameras went live, increasing the total to 28. Fire and security alarms are also live monitored within the main CCTV control room. Electrification works have been confirmed on all proposed public space sites with these being prepared for full camera installation. Terms for a further location on a retail store were agreed in Brockenhurst and a site in Ringwood. Securing these locations provides optimum placement for monitoring whilst negating local disruption.
2025/6 Q1	During the Q1 period, 9 additional cameras have been installed. Additional installations continue to progress. *At the time of reporting, quarterly £ spend figures are pending as we await final invoicing.

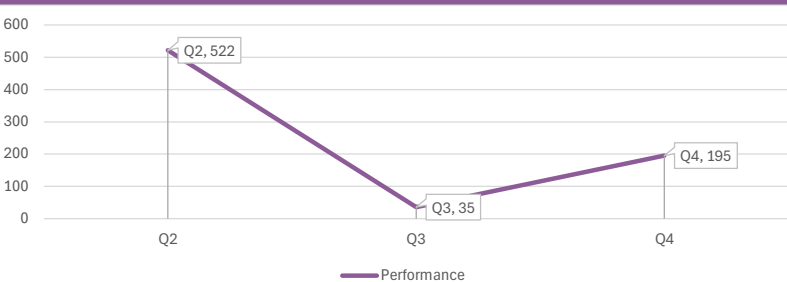
NFDC ID NO.8: Number of education and awareness sessions in relation to serious crime

	2024/5			2025/6	Supporting information	
	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Target	Monitor
Performance	47	47	1	18	Desired DOT	N/A
Target	MONITOR	MONITOR	MONITOR	MONITOR	Format	Numerical
					Frequency	Quarterly
					Metric type	Snapshot/point in time
					Leadership team member	Brian Byrne
					Portfolio holder	Cllr Dan Poole
					Overview and scrutiny	Housing and Communities
RAG Status						
2024/5				2025/6		
Q2		Q3		Q4		Q1
N/A		N/A		N/A		N/A

Supporting narrative

2024/5 Q2	Sessions delivered on weapons prevention between July 1st and September 30th included workshops and assemblies to 130 young people and 47 sessions delivered to 15 individual participants on a 1:1 basis. Lower figure of 47 sessions confirmed and awaiting final number of sessions delivered to 130 people. Final numbers delayed and will be updated at a later date once clarified with partners.
2024/5 Q3	47 sessions were delivered to 289 attendees with participant breakdown being 55% male and 45% female.
2024/5 Q4	129 young people participated in a prevention of weapons education programme. Over the past 12 months, weapons prevention education has been delivered to 563 young people within either group or 1-2-1 sessions across the district.
2025/6 Q1	During Q1, safer New Forest provided 3 days training and learning material for 18 employees of youth services, secondary education, colleges and community safety services. This approach aims to create and embed local resources, acting as points of contacts and accredited trainers to deliver weapons prevention training within local education and community based settings. Funding for delivery was supported by a 10k grant obtained from the Office of Police and Crime Commissioner.

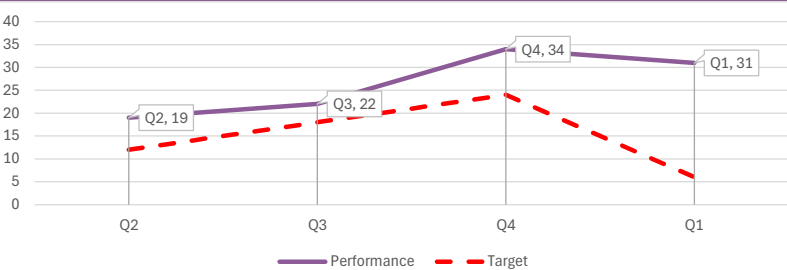
NFDC ID NO.9: Number of positive interventions in response to Public Spaces Protection Orders (1 and 2)

	2024/5			2025/6	Supporting information	
	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Target	Monitor
Performance	522	35	195	TBC*	Desired DOT	N/A
Target	MONITOR	MONITOR	MONITOR	MONITOR	Format	Numerical
					Frequency	Quarterly
					Metric type	Snapshot/point in time
					Leadership team member	Brian Byrne
					Portfolio holder	Cllr Dan Poole
					Overview and scrutiny	Housing and Communities
RAG Status						
2024/5				2025/6		
Q2				Q3	Q4	Q1
N/A				N/A	N/A	N/A

Supporting narrative

2024/5 Q2	Quarterly data is collated by Forestry England and includes data from the National Parks Authority and the Verderers.
2024/5 Q3	Quarter 3 showed a reduced number of interactions which is anticipated outside of the main holiday season. Of the 35 engagements, 2 related to fire with the remaining 33 relating to petting of animals. No interactions required escalation necessitating the issuing of any fixed penalty notices. Yearly fire data compiled for the Safer New Forest annual strategic assessment on crime and disorder, show incidents of fire have reduced over the past year since the order was approved. Further monitoring will continue to consider all aspects that have contributed to this reduction.
2024/5 Q4	Quarter 4 period resulted in 31 reports to services regarding concerns of compliance with the orders with Wednesday being the busiest of days. Direct engagement was held with 195 people, with 180 relating to animals and 15 to fire.
2025/6 Q1	*At the time of reporting we are awaiting final figures from Forestry England (FE). Due to a change within their method of collating data electronically, this has been reverted to a manual count to verify numbers before submission. No indication has been given as to when this data is likely to be made available to us.

NFDC ID NO.10: Number of cultural events and activities supported by New Forest District Council

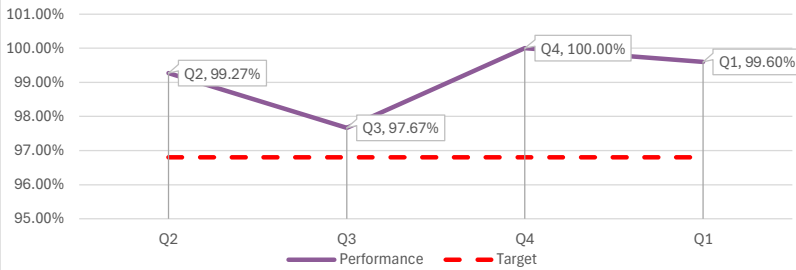
	2024/5			2025/6	Supporting information	
	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Target	24 by end of year
Performance	19	22	34	31	Desired DOT	▲
Target	12	18	24	6	Format	Numerical
					Frequency	Quarterly
					Metric type	Cumulative/year to date
					Leadership team member	Joanne McClay
					Portfolio holder	Cllr Dan Poole
					Overview and scrutiny	Housing and Communities
RAG Status						
2024/5				2025/6		
Q2				Q3	Q4	Q1
Green				Green	Green	Green

Supporting narrative

2024/5 Q2	This quarter we have funded the development of Suitcase Stories, a school based theatre project via SPF funding. As well as providing funding for improved music production at this years New Forest Pride in Lymington. We have also provided project support to Waterside Arts Festival, Artful Scribe's Play on Words festival in New Milton, and the NFDC Litter Nest project. We have also lead Folio in developing their new project ROAM, as well as continued funding, project support and leadership on multiple projects from Q1.
2024/5 Q3	Grant for new project Suitcase Stories in partnership with Forest Forge. Resource and support shared in supporting HCT take over the Folio network and sector support function. Funding allocated to the development of ROAM arts festival, bid writer funded by NFDC at this stage.
2024/5 Q4	5 Projects supported this quarter via SPF are Nightjar, Folio training programme, Folio transition support, Milford on Sea beach event and CODA celebration event. 6 cultural projects were supported by the Community Grants programme in 24/25. 1 project has received CIL funding of £142,000 to improve the access to cultural facilities, locally.
2025/6 Q1	Working with Culture in Common and local Folio Partners we have supported a number of smaller projects around the district. Working in partnership we delivered a series of small commissions which saw a number of activities reach new audiences and ensure that there was a spread of activity across the geographic and demographic communities of the district. A high number of one-off commissioned projects have occurred during the period which is reflected in the final data, these are unlikely to be repeated.

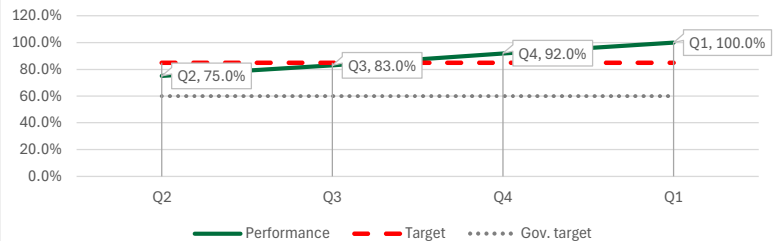
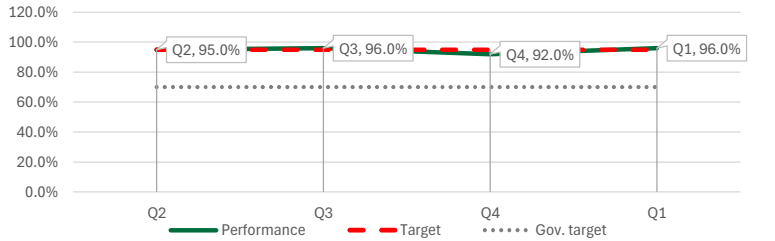
People: Meeting housing needs				
NFDC ID NO.11: Number of affordable homes delivered by NFDC and its partners				
	2024/5	2025/6	Supporting information	
Performance	188	N/A*	Target	199 during period
Target	186	387	Desired DOT	On forecast
Supporting narrative A total of 55 homes (including NFDC and other providers) completed during 2024/25. *Annual data for the 2025/26 period for KPI no.11 will be reported in the Q4 dashboard.			Format	Numerical
			Frequency	Annually
			Metric type	Cumulative/year to date
			Leadership team member	Tim Davis
			Portfolio holder	Cllr Steve Davies
			Overview and scrutiny	Housing and Communities
			RAG Status	
			2024/5	2025/6
				N/A
NFDC ID NO.12: Number of affordable council homes delivered against the 2026 target set				
	2024/5	2025/6	Supporting information	
Performance	375	N/A*	Target	87 during period
Target	373	462	Desired DOT	On forecast
Supporting narrative 36 additional council homes were completed in 2024/25 towards the 2026 target. *Annual data for the 2025/26 period for KPI no.12 will be reported in the Q4 dashboard.			Format	Numerical
			Frequency	Annually
			Metric type	Cumulative/year to date
			Leadership team member	Tim Davis
			Portfolio holder	Cllr Steve Davies
			Overview and scrutiny	Housing and Communities
			RAG Status	
			2024/5	2025/6
				N/A
NFDC ID NO.13: Percentage score for overall tenant satisfaction with the Council as a landlord, as determined in the Tenant Satisfaction Measures (TSMs)				
	2024/4	2025/6	Supporting information	
Performance	84%	N/A	Target	82.1%
Target	81.6%	82.1%	Desired DOT	▲
Supporting narrative 84% represents the final overall satisfaction figure for the financial year 24/25 (up to March 2025). Surveys are carried out twice yearly and collated at year end. This is a 3% increase on 2023/24 satisfaction. This figure has been interrogated and verified independently, and submitted to the Regulator of Social Housing			Format	%
			Frequency	Annually
			Metric type	Snapshot/point in time
			Leadership team member	Kirsty Farmer
			Portfolio holder	Cllr Steve Davies
			Overview and scrutiny	Housing and Communities
			RAG Status	
			2024/5	2025/6
				N/A

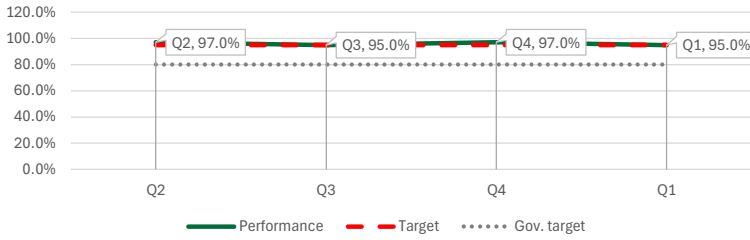
NFDC ID NO.14: Number of council homes achieving Energy Performance Certification band C						
	2024/5		2025/6		Supporting information	
Performance	2744		N/A*		Target	2946
Target	2646		2946		Desired DOT	▲
Supporting narrative Significant progress was achieved in improving housing quality and energy efficiency over the last year. 98 homes were improved under the Government’s Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund (SHDF). Additionally, a further 100 were improved from an EPC rating of D to a more energy-efficient band C through routine maintenance and repairs. These enhancements included the installation of new windows, heating systems, doors, and loft insulation all contributing to warmer, greener, and more cost-effective homes for residents. *Annual data for the 2025/26 period for KPI no.12 will be reported in the Q4					Format	Numerical
					Frequency	Annually
					Metric type	Cumulative/year to date
					Leadership team member	Sophie Tuffin
					Portfolio holder	Cllr Steve Davies
					Overview and scrutiny	Housing and Communities
					RAG Status	
					2024/5	2025/6
	N/A					

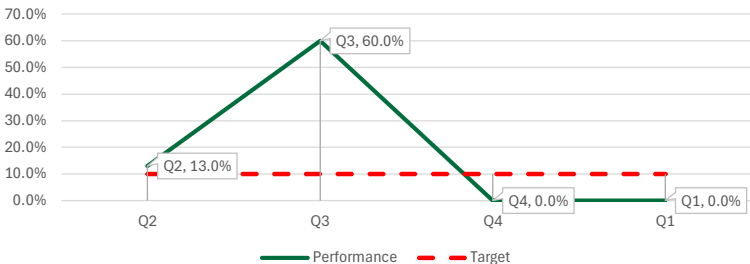
NFDC ID NO.15: Percentage scores for the 5 safety and compliance management Tenant Satisfaction Measures (TSMs)						
	2024/5		2025/6		Supporting information	
	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Target	96.80%
Performance	99.27%	97.67%	100.00%	99.60%	Desired DOT	▲
Target	96.80%	96.80%	96.80%	96.80%	Format	%
					Frequency	Quarterly
					Metric type	Snapshot/point in time
					Leadership team member	Sophie Tuffin
					Portfolio holder	Cllr Steve Davies
					Overview and scrutiny	Housing and Communities
RAG Status						
2024/5		2025/6				
Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1			

Supporting narrative	
Q2	High compliance rates for the end of September for all 5 safety and compliance management measures.
Q3	Our 5 safety and compliance management measures continue to perform very well.
Q4	Our year-end results show strong performance across all five of our safety and compliance management measures, each achieving 100%. These final figures will be submitted to the regulator as part of our annual return.
Q1	Our Q1 value represents excellent performance against our five safety and compliance measures.

*NOTE KPIs No 5, 6 have been removed.

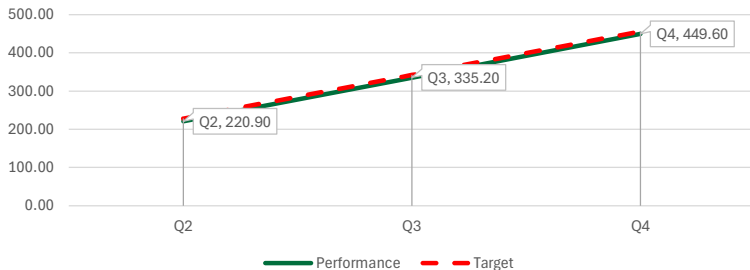
Place and Sustainability Overview and Scrutiny panel									
Place: Shaping our place for now and for future generations									
NFDC ID NO.16: Percentage of major planning applications determined in time									
	2024/5			2025/6	Supporting information				
	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Target	85.0%			
	Performance	75.0%	83.0%	92.0%	100.0%	Desired DOT	▲		
	Target	85.0%	85.0%	85.0%	85.0%	Format	%		
	Gov. target	60.0%	60.0%	60.0%	60.0%	Frequency	Quarterly		
					Metric type	Snapshot/point in time			
					Leadership team member	Mark Wyatt			
					Portfolio holder	Cllr Derek Tipp			
					Overview and scrutiny	Place and Sustainability			
					RAG Status				
					2024/5			2025/6	
					Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	
Supporting narrative									
2024/5 Q2	The prevention duty is where we try to prevent people from becoming homeless by either securing their current accommodation or seeking new accommodation for them. Despite the challenges in the private sector rented sector, the team work hard to support clients by providing advice or practical support.								
2024/5 Q3	Although flagged as amber, should be noted the local target is set at 25% above the Government target of 60%.								
2024/5 Q4	Performance exceeds both local and Government targets.								
2025/6 Q1	Performance is above both government and locally set targets. An increase on last quarter.								
NFDC ID NO.17: Percentage of minor planning applications determined in time									
	2024/5			2025/6	Supporting information				
	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Target	95.0%			
	Performance	95.0%	96.0%	92.0%	96.0%	Desired DOT	▲		
	Target	95.0%	95.0%	95.0%	95.0%	Format	%		
	Gov. target	70.0%	70.0%	70.0%	70.0%	Frequency	Quarterly		
					Metric type	Snapshot/point in time			
					Leadership team member	Mark Wyatt			
					Portfolio holder	Cllr Derek Tipp			
					Overview and scrutiny	Place and Sustainability			
					RAG Status				
					2024/5			2025/6	
					Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	
Supporting narrative									
2024/5 Q2	Improvement on last quarter and above target.								
2024/5 Q3	Improvement on last quarter and above target.								
2024/5 Q4	Although flagged as amber, should be noted the local target is set at 25% above the Government target of 70%. Our performance consistently exceeds Government set targets.								
2025/6 Q1	Performance is above both government and locally set targets. An increase on last quarter.								

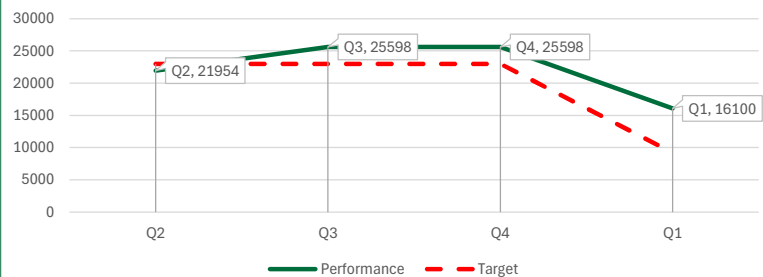
NFDC ID NO.18: Percentage of other planning applications determined in time						
	2024/5			2025/6	Supporting information	
	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Target	95.0%
Performance	97.0%	95.0%	97.0%	95.0%	Desired DOT	▲
Target	95.0%	95.0%	95.0%	95.0%	Format	%
Gov. target	80.0%	80.0%	80.0%	80.0%	Frequency	Quarterly
					Metric type	Snapshot/point in time
					Leadership team member	Mark Wyatt
					Portfolio holder	Cllr Derek Tipp
					Overview and scrutiny	Place and Sustainability
					RAG Status	
2024/5				2025/6		
Q2		Q3		Q4	Q1	
Supporting narrative						
2024/5 Q2	Performance is on target.					
2024/5 Q3	Performance is on target.					
2024/5 Q4	Performance exceeds both local and Government targets.					
2025/6 Q1	Performance is above both government and locally set targets.					

NFDC ID NO.19: Percentage of allowed planning appeals						
	2024/5			2025/6	Supporting information	
	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Target	<10%
Performance	13.0%	60.0%	0.0%	0.0%	Desired DOT	▼
Target	10.0%	10.0%	10.0%	10.0%	Format	%
					Frequency	Quarterly
					Metric type	Snapshot/point in time
					Leadership team member	Mark Wyatt
					Portfolio holder	Cllr Derek Tipp
					Overview and scrutiny	Place and Sustainability
RAG Status						
2024/5				2025/6		
Q2		Q3		Q4	Q1	
Supporting narrative						
2024/5 Q2	Of 15 appeals during the quarter, 2 were allowed and 13 dismissed.					
2024/5 Q3	3 appeals allowed, 2 appeals dismissed. Between October and December 2024 there were 195 decisions made, 173 granted and 22 refused.					
2024/5 Q4	6 appeals, all dismissed.					
2025/6 Q1	The total amount of planning decisions made was 255, 6 were appealed and all 6 were dismissed at appeal					

NFDC ID NO.20: The total outstanding net dwelling supply as set out in our development plan				
	2023/4	2024/5	Supporting information	
Performance	8443	N/A*	Target	8241
Target	N/A	8241	Desired DOT	▼
Supporting narrative			Format	Num
2024/25 target has been determined using targeted 7720 performance and outturn shortfall of 521 as at the end of the previous financial year 2023/4.			Frequency	Annually
*Draft completions data has only just been received and due to the analysis required of future housing supply and projections for delivery timescales we anticipate 2024/5 annual outstanding net dwelling supply figure is not likely to be available until the autumn.			Metric type	Snapshot/point in time
			Leadership team member	Tim Guymer
			Portfolio holder	Cllr Derek Tipp
			Overview and scrutiny	Place and Sustainability
			RAG Status	
2023/4		2024/5		
N/A		N/A*		

Place: Protecting our climate, coast and natural world

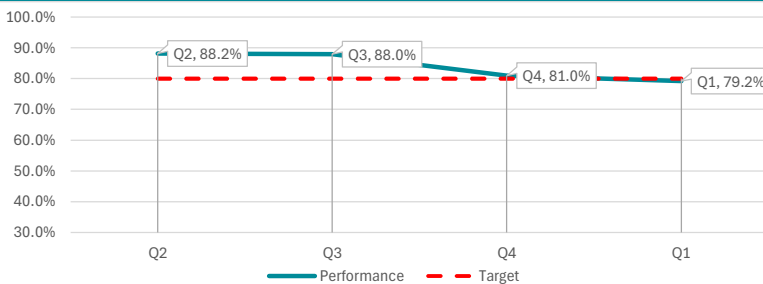
NFDC ID NO.21: Kilogrammes of non-recycled waste produced per household				
	2024/5			2025/6
	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1
Performance	220.90	335.20	449.60	N/A*
Target	228.00	342.00	456.00	110.00
				
Supporting information				
Target	110.00Kg/per HH			
Desired DOT	▼			
Format	kg			
Frequency	Quarterly			
Metric type	Cumulative/year to date			
Leadership team member	Liz Mockeridge			
Portfolio holder	Cllr Geoffrey Blunden			
Overview and scrutiny	Place and Sustainability			
RAG Status				
2024/5		2025/6		
Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	
			N/A*	
Supporting narrative				
2024/5 Q2	-			
2024/5 Q3	-			
2024/5 Q4	NEW - Performance is inline with target.			
2025/6 Q1	*Quarter 1 data will not be available until approx. 2 months after quarter end when returned to us from HCC.			

NFDC ID NO.27: Number of 0.5 litre bottles filled at water-filling stations							
	2024/5			2025/6	Supporting information		
	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Target	9,200	
	Performance	21954	25598	25598	16100	Desired DOT	▲
Target	23000	23000	23000	9200	Format	Numerical	
					Frequency	Quarterly	
					Metric type	Cumulative/year to date	
					Leadership team member	Chris Noble	
					Portfolio holder	Cllr Geoffrey Blunden	
					Overview and scrutiny	Place and Sustainability	
					RAG Status		
					2024/5		2025/6
Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1				
Supporting narrative							
2024/5 Q2	Cooler weather and lower visitor numbers than usual throughout spring/early summer. 3 water meters not registering.						
2024/5 Q3	Short period of operation during Q3 before units turned off for winter. Units are not operational during winter months.						
2024/5 Q4	Units are not operational during the winter months and therefore there is no additional data available for Q4.						
2025/6 Q1	Usage of our water-filling stations during the period was equivalent to filling over 16,000 half-litre water bottles. High temperatures throughout the spring months may have contributed to higher usage rates.						

*NOTE KPI No 26 has been removed.

Place and Sustainability Overview and Scrutiny panel					
Prosperity: Maximising the benefits of inclusive economic growth and investment					
NFDC ID NO.28: Squared metres of industrial/employment land developed					
	2023/4	2024/5	Supporting information		
Performance	21,209	N/A*	Target	Monitor	
Target	MONITOR	MONITOR	Desired DOT	▲	
Supporting narrative *We anticipate that the 2024/5 completions figure for employment floorspace is not likely to be available until August 2025 and will be reported in the 2025/6 Q2 dashboard.			Format	Sqm	
			Frequency	Annually	
			Metric type	Snapshot/point in time	
			Leadership team member	Tim Guymer	
			Portfolio holder	Cllr Derek Tipp	
			Overview and scrutiny	Place and Sustainability	
			RAG Status		
			2023/4	2024/5	
N/A			N/A		
NFDC ID NO.29: Level (£) of retained business rates (at source)					
	2024/5	2025/6	Supporting information		
Performance	£0	N/A*	Target	£450,000	
Target	£0	£450,000	Desired DOT	▲	
Supporting narrative To date, £0 in retained business rates from Solent Freeport activity is recorded which is as expected at this stage. *Annual data for KPI no.29 will be reported in the 2025/6 Q4 dashboard.			Format	£	
			Frequency	Annually	
			Metric type	Snapshot/point in time	
			Leadership team member	Ryan Stevens	
			Portfolio holder	Cllr Derek Tipp	
			Overview and scrutiny	Place and Sustainability	
			RAG Status		
			2024/5	2025/6	
N/A			N/A		
Prosperity: Supporting our high-quality business base and economic centres to thrive and grow					
NFDC ID NO.31: Vacancies of retail premises within town/local centres					
	2024/5	2025/6	Supporting information		
Performance	7.10%	N/A*	Target	Monitor	
Target	MONITOR	MONITOR	Desired DOT	▼	
Supporting narrative The 2024 figure is an average vacancy rate across the town centres of 7.1%, down from 10% in 2023. (Data taken from the most recently undertaken shop frontage survey in September 2024)			Format	%	
			Frequency	Annually	
			Metric type	Snapshot/point in time	
			Leadership team member	Tim Guymer	
			Portfolio holder	Cllr Derek Tipp	
			Overview and scrutiny	Place and Sustainability	
			RAG Status		
			2024/5	2025/6	
N/A			N/A		

Prosperity: Championing skills and access to job opportunities				
NFDC ID NO.32: Employment rate percentage of working age adults (aged 16-64)				
	2023	2024	Supporting information	
Performance	82.3%	78%	Target	Monitor
Target	MONITOR	MONITOR	Desired DOT	▲
Supporting narrative This latest data is from ONS for the year to December 2024 and includes all people in employment - full time, part time and people on contracts. It suggests that resident employment in New Forest decreased but this estimate needs to be treated with caution. Employment estimates are not as reliable as compared to pre-covid. PAYE data from HMRC suggests that the number of PAYE employees decreased slightly from 72, 107 in April 2024 to 71,425 in March 2025. A decrease of 682 PAYE employees.			Format	%
			Frequency	Annually
			Metric type	Snapshot/point in time
			Leadership team member	Jeannie Satchell
			Portfolio holder	Cllr Derek Tipp
			Overview and scrutiny	Place and Sustainability
			RAG Status	
			2023	2024
			N/A	N/A
NFDC ID NO.33: Proportion (in percentage terms) of employee jobs with hourly pay below the living wage				
	2023	2024	Supporting information	
Performance	13.30%	14.20%	Target	Monitor
Target	MONITOR	MONITOR	Desired DOT	▼
Supporting narrative Provisional 2024 data, according to ONS. Data for 2025 will be reported when made available by ONS.			Format	%
			Frequency	Annually
			Metric type	Snapshot/point in time
			Leadership team member	Jeannie Satchell
			Portfolio holder	Cllr Derek Tipp
			Overview and scrutiny	Place and Sustainability
			RAG Status	
			2023	2024
			N/A	N/A

Resources and Transformation Overview and Scrutiny panel										
Future New Forest: Putting our customers at the heart										
NFDC ID NO.35: Staff satisfaction score with NFDC ICT services										
	2023/4		2024/5		Supporting information					
Performance	N/A		88.5%		Target	70%				
Target	70.0%		70.0%		Desired DOT	Maintain				
Supporting narrative Latest ICT staff survey undertaken in Q1 and satisfaction score was 4.32/5.					Format	%				
					Frequency	Annually				
					Metric type	Snapshot/point in time				
					Leadership team member	Rich Bird/Kim Gray				
					Portfolio holder	Cllr Jeremy Heron				
					Overview and scrutiny	Resources and Transformation				
					RAG Status					
					2023/4		2024/5			
					N/A					
Future New Forest: Being an employer of choice										
NFDC ID NO.37: Percentage of vacancies filled first time										
	2024/5			2025/6		Supporting information				
	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1		Target	80%			
Performance	88.2%	88.0%	81.0%	79.2%		Desired DOT	▲			
Target	80.0%	80.0%	80.0%	80.0%		Format	%			
							Frequency	Quarterly		
							Metric type	Snapshot/point in time		
							Leadership team member	Heleana Aylett		
							Portfolio holder	Leader Cllr Jill Cleary		
							Overview and scrutiny	Resources and Transformation		
							RAG Status			
							2024/5		2025/6	
Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1							
Supporting narrative										
2024/5 Q2	45 vacancies were filled first time.									
2024/5 Q3	33 vacancies were filled first time.									
2024/5 Q4	End of year position exceeds target.									
2025/6 Q1	We have had 24 vacancies and filled 19 first time.									
NFDC ID NO.38: Percentage staff turnover										
	2024/5		2025/6		Supporting information					
Performance	13.00%		N/A*		Target	11%				
Target	11.00%		11.00%		Desired DOT	▼				
Supporting narrative We had a total of 108 leavers last year. Exit interviews are optional and rarely completed, making it difficult to track where employees go. Of the 30 interviews conducted last year, 8 were due to retirement. To gain better insight into leaver destinations, HR will carry out a data-gathering exercise and monitor the results to inform future actions. *Annual data for KPI no.38 will be reported in the 2025/6 Q4 dashboard.					Format	%				
					Frequency	Annually				
					Metric type	Snapshot/point in time				
					Leadership team member	Heleana Aylett				
					Portfolio holder	Leader Cllr Jill Cleary				
					Overview and scrutiny	Resources and Transformation				
					RAG Status					
					2024/5		2025/6			
							N/A*			

NFDC ID NO.39: Average number of days sickness absence per employee

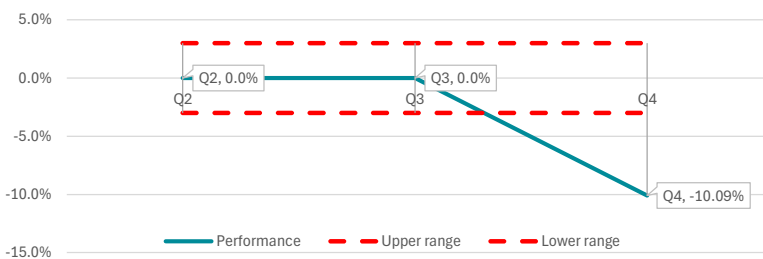
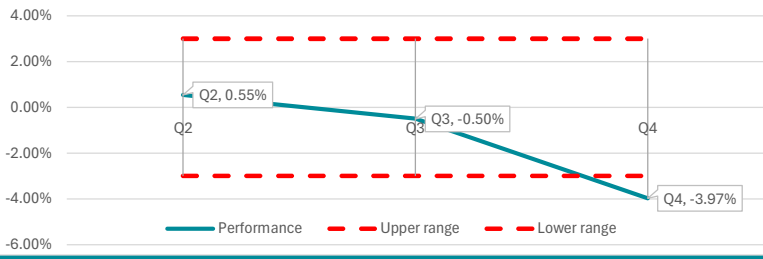
	2024/5			2025/6	Supporting information	
	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1		
Performance	9.78	9.33	8.80	8.00	Target	8
Target	8.00	8.00	8.00	8.00	Desired DOT	▼
					Format	Numerical
					Frequency	Quarterly
					Metric type	Snapshot/point in time
					Leadership team member	Heleana Aylett
					Portfolio holder	Leader Cllr Jill Cleary
					Overview and scrutiny	Resources and Transformation
					RAG Status	
					2024/5	2025/6
					Q2	Q3
					Q4	Q1

Supporting narrative

2024/5 Q2	Between Q1 and Q2, there has been a decrease in short term absence (4.22 to 4.17), but an increase in long term (5.06 to 5.61) which has subsequently increased total sickness days per FTE. As HR now have more capacity, we are able to work more closely with managers to support them in assisting their team back to work sooner following absences.
2024/5 Q3	Whilst we are always finding ways to reduce sickness and absence levels to meet our targets, this is of largely out of our direct control. Every step is taken to be satisfied that sickness absence is genuine, that sickness is reducing and that we are managing sickness effectively to keep this figure reducing. HR work closely with managers to apply our policies effectively to manage sickness.
2024/5 Q4	Sickness per FTE has come down since last quarter and continues to come down as can be seen with historical data.
2025/6 Q1	Although sickness days have reduced since the end of last quarter, FTE has increased, resulting in a reported figure in line with previous performance.

NFDC ID NO.40: Number of council apprenticeships

	2024/5	2025/6	Supporting information	
Performance	18	N/A*	Target	15
Target	10	15	Desired DOT	▲
Supporting narrative Of the 18 apprenticeships from 2024/5: 10 apprentices were existing employees. 6 apprentices were new recruits. 2 individuals were undertaking a second apprenticeship: One transitioned from a Level 3 to a Level 4 qualification in Finance. Another moved from a Level 2 to a Level 4 qualification in Project Management. *Annual data for KPI no.38 will be reported in the 2025/6 Q4 dashboard.			Format	Numerical
			Frequency	Annually
			Metric type	Snapshot/point in time
			Leadership team member	Heleana Aylett
			Portfolio holder	Leader Cllr Jill Cleary
			Overview and scrutiny	Resources and Transformation
			RAG Status	
			2024/4	2025/6
				N/A*

Future New Forest: Being financially responsible														
NFDC ID NO.41: Percentage variance to Council budget +/- (General fund budget variations)														
	2024/5			2025/6	Supporting information									
	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Target	+/- 3%								
	Performance	0.0%	0.0%	-10.09%	N/A	Desired DOT	▲ or ▼							
	Upper range	3.0%	3.0%	3.0%	3.00%	Format	%							
	Lower range	-3.0%	-3.0%	-3.0%	-3.00%	Frequency	Quarterly							
					Metric type	Snapshot/point in time								
					Leadership team member	Paul Whittles								
					Portfolio holder	Cllr Jeremy Heron								
					Overview and scrutiny	Resources and Transformation								
RAG Status														
		2024/5			2025/6									
		Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1									
					N/A									
Supporting narrative														
2024/5 Q2	Indicative figures as at 16 October 2024, final figures will be confirmed as set out in the Financial Monitoring Report taken to Cabinet 6 November 2024.													
2024/5 Q3	Indicative figures as at 21 January 2025, final figures will be confirmed as set out in the Financial Monitoring Report taken to Cabinet 5 February 2025.													
2024/5 Q4	Figures subject to audit. Full details of variations will be set out in the Budget Monitoring report to be presented to Cabinet on 2 July 2025													
2025/6 Q1	No financial monitoring report was released during Q1. The next scheduled report will be September 2025.													
NFDC ID NO.42: Percentage variance to Housing Revenue budget +/- (HRA budget variations)														
	2024/5			2025/6	Supporting information									
	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Target	+/- 3%								
	Performance	0.55%	-0.50%	-3.97%	N/A	Desired DOT	▲ or ▼							
	Upper range	3.00%	3.00%	3.00%	3.00%	Format	%							
	Lower range	-3.00%	-3.00%	-3.00%	-3.00%	Frequency	Quarterly							
					Metric type	Snapshot/point in time								
					Leadership team member	Paul Whittles								
					Portfolio holder	Cllr Jeremy Heron								
					Overview and scrutiny	Resources and Transformation								
RAG Status														
		2024/5			2025/6									
		Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1									
					N/A									
Supporting narrative														
2024/5 Q2	Indicative figures as at 16 October 2024, final figures will be confirmed as set out in the Financial Monitoring Report taken to Cabinet 6 November 2024.													
2024/5 Q3	Indicative figures as at 21 January 2025, final figures will be confirmed as set out in the Financial Monitoring Report taken to Cabinet 5 February 2025.													
2024/5 Q4	Figures subject to audit. Full details of variations will be set out in the Budget Monitoring report to be presented to Cabinet on 2 July 2025													
2025/6 Q1	No financial monitoring report was released during Q1. The next scheduled report will be September 2025.													

NFDC ID NO.43: Percentage of Council Tax collected in year

	2024/5			2025/6	Supporting information								
	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Target	98.5%							
Performance	57.40%	84.96%	98.65%	29.57%	Desired DOT	▲							
Target	57.60%	85.30%	98.50%	29.90%	Format	%							
Q2, 57.40% Q3, 84.96% Q4, 98.65% Q1, 29.57% — Performance — Target					Frequency	Quarterly							
					Metric type	Cumulative/year to date							
					Leadership team member	Ryan Stevens							
					Portfolio holder	Cllr Jeremy Heron							
					Overview and scrutiny	Resources and Transformation							
					RAG Status								
					<table><tr><th colspan="3">2024/5</th><th>2025/6</th></tr><tr><th>Q2</th><th>Q3</th><th>Q4</th><th>Q1</th></tr><tr><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr></table>		2024/5			2025/6	Q2	Q3	Q4
2024/5			2025/6										
Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1										

Supporting narrative

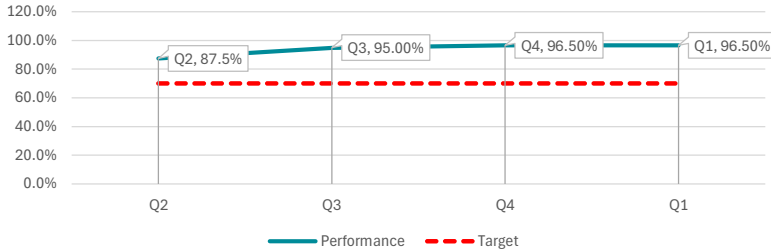
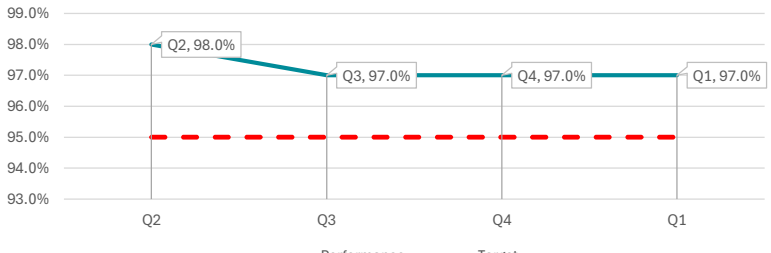
2024/5 Q2	-
2024/5 Q3	Target is cumulative. Some instalments have been spread to March 2025 so collection rates should be maintained come year end. We have also had a number of properties transferring from business rates to council tax as the Valuation Office Agency (VOA) have determined the property is no longer a holiday let, with bills only recently being sent and some disputing the VOA decision.
2024/5 Q4	Performance exceeds target.
2025/6 Q1	No court dates for 25/26 until August, so there is a delay in recovery proceedings. In addition we are receiving more requests for 12 instalments, instead of 10.

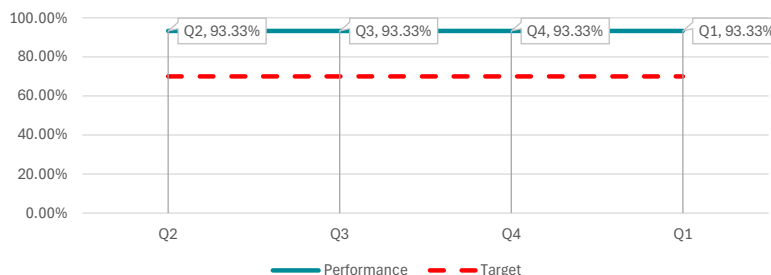
NFDC ID NO.44: Percentage of Non-domestic Rates collected in year

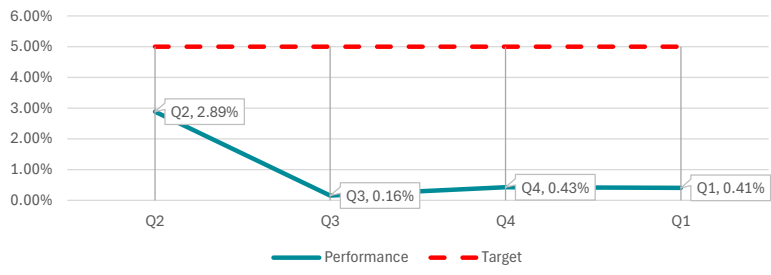
	2024/5			2025/6	Supporting information	
	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Target	98.5%
Performance	57.50%	84.52%	98.62%	28.63%	Desired DOT	▲
Target	57.90%	84.30%	98.50%	29.60%	Format	%
Q2, 57.50% Q3, 84.52% Q4, 98.62% Q1, 28.63% — Performance — Target					Frequency	Quarterly
					Metric type	Cumulative/year to date
					Leadership team member	Ryan Stevens
					Portfolio holder	Cllr Jeremy Heron
					Overview and scrutiny	Resources and Transformation
RAG Status						
2024/5		2025/6				
Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1			

Supporting narrative

2024/5 Q2	-
2024/5 Q3	-
2024/5 Q4	Performance exceeds target.
2025/6 Q1	No court dates for 25/26 until August, so there is a delay in recovery proceedings commencing.

Future New Forest: Designing modern and innovative services								
NFDC ID NO.45: Benefits realisation from ICT investment								
	2024/5			2025/6	Supporting information			
	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Target	70.00%		
Performance	87.5%	95.00%	96.50%	96.50%	Desired DOT	Maintain		
Target	70.00%	70.00%	70.00%	70.00%	Format	%		
					Frequency	Every 6 months		
					Metric type	Snapshot/point in time		
					Leadership team member	Rich Bird		
					Portfolio holder	Cllr Jeremy Heron		
					Overview and scrutiny	Resources and Transformation		
					RAG Status			
					Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
Supporting narrative								
2024/5 Q2	-							
2024/5 Q3	-							
2024/5 Q4	Narrative for April 24 - April 25: Azure Migration project = 100% (9/9) Learning Management System (LMS) project = 86% (6/7) (Security training module is targeting go live on LMS on the 17th Jan) Direct Debit = 100% (5/5)							
2025/6 Q1	Performance is in line with previously reported percentage.							
NFDC ID NO.46: Percentage of ICT incidents resolved within SLA								
	2024/5			2025/6	Supporting information			
	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Target	95.0%		
Performance	98.0%	97.0%	97.0%	97.0%	Desired DOT	▲		
Target	95.0%	95.0%	95.0%	95.0%	Format	%		
					Frequency	Quarterly		
					Metric type	Snapshot/point in time		
					Leadership team member	Kim Gray		
					Portfolio holder	Cllr Jeremy Heron		
					Overview and scrutiny	Resources and Transformation		
					RAG Status			
					2024/5			2025/6
Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1					
Supporting narrative								
2024/5 Q2	-							
2024/5 Q3	-							
2024/5 Q4	Performance is above target and remains steady quarter on quarter.							
2025/6 Q1	Performance is above target and in line with previous quarter.							

NFDC ID NO.47: Percentage of annual ICT work programme delivered on time and on budget								
	2024/5			2025/6	Supporting information			
	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Target	70.0%		
	Performance	93.33%	93.33%	93.33%	93.33%	Desired DOT	Maintain	
Target	70.00%	70.00%	70.00%	70.00%	Format	%		
	Frequency	Quarterly						
	Metric type	Snapshot/point in time						
	Leadership team member	Rich Bird						
	Portfolio holder	Cllr Jeremy Heron						
	Overview and scrutiny	Resources and Transformation						
	RAG Status							
	2024/5			2025/6				
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4				
	Supporting narrative							
2024/5 Q2	-							
2024/5 Q3	-							
2024/5 Q4	Narrative for April 24 - April 25: Azure Migration project = delivered on time in line with board approved project plan. Learning Management System (LMS) project = delivered on time in line with board approved project plan. Direct Debit = delivery delayed by around 1.5 months whilst transition to BAU was better prepared for within business units.							
2025/6 Q1	Performance is above target and in line with previous quarter.							

NFDC ID NO.48: Percentage unscheduled downtime for critical systems								
	2024/5			2025/6	Supporting information			
	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Target	<5%		
	Performance	2.89%	0.16%	0.43%	0.41%	Desired DOT	▼	
Target	5.00%	5.00%	5.00%	5.00%	Format	%		
	Frequency	Quarterly						
	Metric type	Snapshot/point in time						
	Leadership team member	Kim Gray						
	Portfolio holder	Cllr Jeremy Heron						
	Overview and scrutiny	Resources and Transformation						
	RAG Status							
	2024/5			2025/6				
	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1				
	Supporting narrative							
2024/5 Q2	-							
2024/5 Q3	-							
2024/5 Q4	Performance is within targeted expectation.							
2025/6 Q1	Performance is above target and in line with previous quarter.							

*NOTE KPI Nos 34 and 36 have been removed.

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Stigma in Social Housing

49

Melvyn Utley – Involved Tenant NFDC

What is Social Housing Stigma?

How does it affect tenants?

How can we change attitudes?

What is social housing stigma?



- The negative judging and discrimination that takes place against people who rent from social housing landlords.
- It can be in written form, spoken word or actions.
- Stigma can be seen in planning, everyday interactions and operational systems.
- Everyone involved in social housing should be aware of stigmatization, including tenants and their households



Grenfell

‘Residents’ complaints were dismissed and devalued.’

‘There is a wider societal change that needs to take place towards those living in social housing, stopping the stigma towards this important tenure.’

The Housing Ombudsman, Richard Blakeway



Social & Self Elevation

They come from the estate

She is a council house girl

All the same that council house lot

I was brought up in a council house

They live in a council house and earn more than me

Some of my best friends live in council houses

Myths & Mindsets

Scroungers

What do you expect, it's a council house

Tenants don't pay for repairs

At home all day

On benefits

We don't need an appointment



Ways to reduce stigma

COMMUNICATE

**WORK WITH
TENANTS**

**TRUST
RESPECT
EMPATHY**

**HEAR THE
TENANT VOICE**

“Working together in
partnership”

Housing & Communities Overview & Scrutiny Panel 17th September 2025

Social Housing Regulation Act (2023) Progress Report Number 4 (Neighbourhood and Community Standard)

Purpose	To provide Housing and Communities Overview and Scrutiny Panel with an overview of the Council's progress of the Housing Department's landlord function in meeting the requirements of the Social Housing Regulation Act (SHRA 2023). The Act and its associated consumer standards came into force for all stock-owning registered landlords including councils in April 2024. This report focuses on the Council's progress against the Neighbourhood and Community Standard and identified gaps in provision. It is one of the four consumer standards landlords must deliver to meet the regulatory requirements set by the Regulator of Social Housing (RSH) The <i>Neighbourhood and Community Standard</i> as stated by the RSH: <i>"Outcomes landlords must deliver about engaging with other relevant parties so that tenants can live in safe and well-maintained neighbourhoods and feel safe in their homes."</i> Our approach and preparation for improving outcomes for our tenants and preparing for future Inspection by the RSH against this standard is presented in this report.
Classification	Public
Executive Summary	This report provides an update on the Council's progress in meeting the Neighbourhood and Community Standard under the Social Housing Regulation Act 2023. It is the fourth in a series of five reports assessing our compliance with the new housing consumer standards introduced in April 2024.

	The report outlines the results of a detailed self-assessment and gap analysis, which found that the Council is broadly compliant with the Neighbourhood and Community Standard. Most gaps identified are either already being addressed or are considered medium priority. Key areas of focus and outcomes: • Safety of Shared Spaces – No significant gaps identified, ongoing improvements in collaboration with partners being made. • Local Cooperation – A medium-priority gap identified; action underway to tailor services to local needs. • Anti-Social Behaviour and Hate Incidents – Two original high-priority gaps were identified; mostly addressed through policy updates, team restructuring, and improved reporting mechanisms. • Domestic Abuse – One remaining gap identified around staff training and awareness; plans are in place to address this. The Council is also preparing for future regulatory inspection and has procured a mock inspection by competent housing specialists who will follow the same format as the RSH and offer assurance on compliance grading for NFDC. This is planned for November 2025. Implementation of our existing improvement plans will continue before and after the mock inspection.
Recommendation(s)	1. That the Housing & Communities Overview & Scrutiny Panel consider the Housing Department's compliance against meeting the Neighbourhood and Community Standard as part of the preparedness for Inspection and make any further recommendations to

	the Portfolio Holder for Housing and Homelessness.
Reasons for recommendation(s)	This report supports the Council's Corporate Plan 2024–28, particularly in delivering on priorities related to resident wellbeing, housing needs, and community safety. It also outlines the financial, legal, and operational implications of achieving full compliance with the Neighbourhood and Community Standard.
Ward(s)	All
Portfolio Holder(s)	Councillor Steve Davies, Housing and Homelessness
Strategic Director(s)	Richard Knott – Housing and Communities
Officer Contact	Paul Thomas Assistant Director - Housing 02380 285 725 paul.thomas@nfdc.gov.uk

Introduction and background

1. A comprehensive background to the implementation of the Social Housing Regulation Act (SHRA 2023) was given in the January report to this Panel. It was agreed that each of the four consumer standards would then be looked at in turn against our gap analysis at subsequent meetings, in the order where we considered there was the most work to be done.
2. Progress against the Transparency, Influence and Accountability (TIA) standard was considered in March and the Tenancy Standard in June. This is the third report looking specifically at a consumer standard in turn. The focus this time is on the Neighbourhood and Community Standard. This report aims to give an accurate picture of our current state of compliance with the standard and the improvement plans in place. This is to ensure Members receive assurance that the service understands the gaps and has a clear plan to implement the required actions and changes to become fully compliant with each standard.
3. We are waiting to receive confirmation as to when the Regulator plans to inspect NFDC and continue to prepare evidence of compliance against all the four consumer standards, whilst continuing to deliver high quality and improving landlord services to our tenants and communities.

Neighbourhood and Community Standard

4. A gap analysis (more details below under 'Preparedness for Regulatory Compliance') against the Regulator's Consumer Standards, which demonstrates a high-level of compliance with the Neighbourhood and Community Standard. In short, gaps that are either in progress of being closed or assessed as a medium priority with on-going plans in place.
5. As outlined in previous reports, each Consumer Standard is broken down into specific expectations. The following four are within the Neighbourhood and Community Standard.
 - Safety of shared spaces
 - Local Cooperation
 - Anti-Social Behaviour and hate incidents.
 - Domestic Abuse
6. This report examines these specific expectations and measures our performance against the outcomes through the self-assessment and gap analysis process. The self-assessment process has further areas, 'Taking the Lead' and 'Neighbourhood Management.'

These are not part of the consumer standards and relates to the Housing Quality Network's (HQN) professional knowledge base, which questions how aware of the areas within this standard the governing body are.

Preparedness for Regulatory Compliance

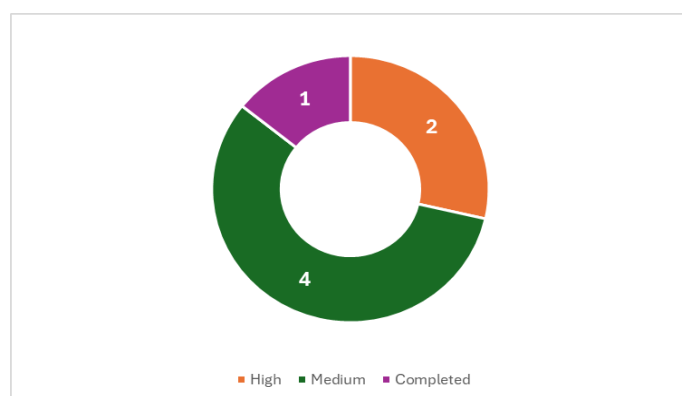
7. The Council continues to take proactive steps to prepare for the new regulatory regime, as outlined in the previous reports to this Panel. Part of the process remains the completion of a self-assessment against the consumer standards, resulting action plans and regularly updating the gap analysis tracker.
8. A full explanation of the methodology of the self-assessment process was provided in the March report to Panel. It is worth noting that our self-assessment includes the specific expectations of the consumer standards as well as areas from the Code of Practice and HQNs professional knowledge, effectively going beyond compliance and striving for excellence in service delivery.

Chart 1: Current Gaps across all standards



Chart 2 below demonstrates the priority rating for the seven identified gaps within the Neighbourhood and Community standard.

Chart 2: Priority Ratings.



Safety of Shared Spaces

9. *'Registered providers must work co-operatively with tenants, other landlords and relevant organisations to take all reasonable steps to ensure the safety of shared spaces.'*
10. There are two items within this specific expectation and there were no identified gaps. The self-assessment identified the actions in place that ensure our compliance.
11. Evidence of working co-operatively with tenants, other landlords and relevant organisations to take all reasonable steps ensuring the safety of shared spaces, includes things such as working with the Tenant Involvement Group to publish information on fire safety and working across the Council, for example with the Place Operations and Sustainability directorate to ensure gritting is completed up to blocks.

12. While assessed as compliant there were some areas of improvement identified. One of these is the need to improve collaboration with other Registered Providers and Landlords where appropriate.
13. The second item looks at working cooperatively with partners to, for example, remove hazardous fly-tipping. As a local authority landlord, we can use internal service level agreements for example, with the street scene team. Issues such as defective street lighting would be referred to Hampshire County Council.
14. In addition, part of the preparation for inspection currently being undertaken is the recent procurement of an external organisation to complete a 'mock inspection.' This will provide both an external audit of our current position against regulatory compliance and an accurate idea of our readiness for inspection.

Local Cooperation

15. *'Registered providers must co-operate with relevant partners to promote social, environmental and economic wellbeing in the areas where they provide social housing.'*
16. Housing Landlord Services has a close working relationship with other Council functions which aids cooperation to promote social, environmental, and economic wellbeing in the areas we provide social housing. This includes the attendance at groups such as the corporate cost of living steering group and attendance at the local children's partnership which brings together local organisations to discuss the wellbeing of children and families.
17. Landlord services also identify and communicate the role played in promoting social, economic wellbeing to our tenants. There are several examples of how this is completed. The key method of communication is the twice-yearly publication and distribution of the Hometalk magazine. A hard copy is delivered to every tenant and includes articles on social and economic wellbeing as well as practical tenancy management.
18. Like the previous standards reported to this panel, it is important to remember the assessment standards are the same for local authority landlords and housing associations. Therefore, some of the wording seems confusing for local authorities. Within local cooperation evidence is required to demonstrate cooperation with the strategic function of the local authority in achieving their objectives. As the authority that delivers the strategic housing function this involves

collaboration with the landlord functions of the housing department and with partner agencies in providing broader services for vulnerable tenants.

19. A gap was assessed under how we tailor our role promoting social, environmental, and economic wellbeing in an area based on our strategic objectives, the views of our tenants and our presence in the area. This was assessed as being of a medium priority due to actions being in place to mitigate the gap. These include increasing neighbourhood walkabouts between the tenant engagement, ASB and Neighbourhoods teams and planning community days.
20. They were driven by feedback from the results of the Tenant Satisfaction Measures, levels of reported Anti-Social Behaviour, identified environmental issues and areas of deprivation. A due date was set for the end of September 2025 to review this gap due to the stated actions taking place over the summer months.

Anti-Social Behaviour and Hate Incidents

21. *'Registered providers must work in partnership with appropriate local authority departments, the police, and other relevant organisations to deter and tackle anti-social behaviour (ASB) and hate incidents in the neighbourhoods where they provide social housing.'*
22. The ASB strategy and accompanying ASB Policy, Hate Crime Policy & Good Neighbourhood Management Policy were presented to Housing and Communities Overview and Scrutiny Panel in January 2025. The ASB strategy was recommended for formal consultation, and the other three policies were agreed and recommended to the Portfolio Holder for Housing and Homelessness.
23. Alongside these policies, restructuring of the tenancy management functions to two separate teams (one focusing on Tenancy Sustainment and the other focusing on ASB and consisting of specialist ASB Neighbourhood Housing Officers) has meant the team's ability to respond to ASB and incidents of hate crime has improved and their knowledge and experience in dealing with these cases is enhanced. When external support is required, a referral will be made to the Victim Support Service or mediation support through NFS Mediation. Local knowledge is also key in ensuring appropriate referrals to resources available such as youth clubs.
24. Tenants are currently able to report ASB and hate incidents via the Housing Hub phoneline, via an online form, or directly to the neighbourhood team. It is expected that the introduction of the new

Netcall Digital Solution will offer a form of self-service which will also assist in reporting and keeping tenants updated with cases of ASB.

25. There were two assessed gaps within this specific expectation. Both of which were identified as being a high priority, and both are already in progress.
26. The first of these items is well underway. The ASB and hate crime policies are now published on the website and an article on the ASB strategy consultation was published in the summer 2025 Hometalk magazine. The policies and strategy include the approach to investigating reports of ASB and hate incidents and the support available to affected tenants and actions to deal with perpetrators. It is anticipated this gap will be completed with the ratification of the strategy.
27. The second identified gap is around considering the diverse needs of tenants in assessing how they report ASB and hate incidents and how we are working to eliminate any barriers to reporting. As mentioned above (para. 22), the introduction of a tenant self-serve portal will eventually give more flexibility with ways of reporting. Another reason for identifying the gap was the lack of accurate tenant data around diverse needs. Following completion of the first phase of a tenant data collection project a second phase is happening. This is a new and on-going service wide approach to acquiring and keeping up to date up household data for all our tenancies.
28. The aim is to improve the reliable data available and as awareness of tenant vulnerabilities increases a more targeted approach to our landlord service offer will aim to remove barriers, and bespoke landlord services to specific households and neighbourhoods as appropriate.

Domestic Abuse

29. *'Registered providers must work co-operatively with other agencies tackling domestic abuse and enable tenants to access appropriate support and advice.'*
30. The items of the Consumer Standard around Domestic abuse have been assessed as compliant. There is one identified gap that comes from the Code of Practice.
31. The corporate Domestic Abuse strategy with appendix Landlord Domestic Abuse Policy was discussed at the March 2025 Housing and Communities Overview and Scrutiny Panel, with agreement that the draft Strategy be supported for Cabinet approval and formal consultation and the draft Landlord Policy be supported for approval by the Portfolio Holder for Housing and Homelessness.

32. As the local authority there is a direct working relationship between the Neighbourhood and Tenancy Management teams and the Council's Community Safety team.
33. The identified gap is about raising awareness and understanding among relevant staff of the approach to domestic abuse, so they can recognise signs, particularly those linked to a tenant's housing circumstances. Currently relevant staff receive level 1 and 2 training and there is a plan in place to have Domestic abuse champions within teams who will receive enhanced training. Further awareness or training now the Landlord Domestic Abuse Policy has been ratified has been planned but has not yet taken place.
34. Information is published on the Safer New Forest pages of the website and housing officers will deliver support, advice, and signpost on to appropriate organisations if necessary. Apart from the publication of the Housing policy there is no further information on the housing pages of the website.
35. When assessing ourselves against the consumer standards the possibility of working toward gaining accreditation from DAHA (Domestic Abuse Housing Alliance) was considered. The decision was to concentrate on implementing the policy and strategy across the Council first and review this in 2026/27.
36. The Co-located Domestic Abuse Housing Advocate post officially commenced on 5 June 2025, as set out in the signed Service Level Agreement between New Forest District Council and Stop Domestic Abuse. This marked the start of a two-year funded partnership, placing a specialist advocate within the Council's housing and homelessness services to provide direct support to victims and survivors of domestic abuse, deliver staff training, and strengthen multi-agency collaboration in line with the Domestic Abuse Act 2021 and the consumer standards. This included the introduction of a 'Flexible Fund' which is a low-barrier fund to help tenants overcome financial barriers to safe housing, such as emergency relocation costs, and essential household items. This fund is accessible without requiring evidence of abuse, making support more equitable and survivor centred.

Taking the lead

37. As previously explained the final two sections are not specific expectations of the consumer standards. They are recommended by HQN as a means of helping landlords meet the Regulator's relevant standards.
38. Since the completion of the gap analysis one of the areas identified here has been completed and is now business as usual. It was identified that the governing body, in the case of local authority this is

the Portfolio Holder, should be receiving information on neighbourhood management, including data about the incidences, severity and treatment of ASB, hate crime and domestic abuse. A dashboard of reported ASB has been developed and an overview of high-level cases is provided to the Portfolio Holder in his monthly briefings.

Neighbourhood Management: General

39. The first area identified as a gap here relates to the tenant data collection project (para. 25) and whether the diversity of the different communities is taken into consideration, ensuring that all tenants have fair and equal access to neighbourhoods and estate management services. Phase 2 of the data collection project will take into consideration how this data will be used to monitor access to services.
40. The integrated communities action plan was published in 2019 and relates to building strong integrated communities where people – whatever their background – live, work, learn and socialise together, based on shared rights, responsibilities, and opportunities. While the Government action plan is not something that has been followed building integrated communities and challenging segregation are fundamental to the work of the landlord services and the Tenant Engagement team are completing Community Days across the district.

Analysis of Inspection Judgements – Neighbourhood and Community Standard.

41. It is important to bear in mind when reading inspection judgements, they are very much a snapshot of the process and conversations between the RSH and the landlord. We can however gain valuable insight into some of the reasoning and issues faced by landlords within this area of regulation.
42. To date, there have been seven landlord judgements that mention failings within the Neighbourhood and Community Standard. Four of the judgements are from C2 inspected landlords. The Regulator's description of what a C2 means there are some weaknesses in delivering the outcomes of the consumer standards and improvements are needed.
43. Of these four judgements one judgement mentions weaknesses in all four standards, two mention weaknesses in the Neighbourhood and Community standard alongside the Transparency, Influence and Accountability standard. One also mentions the Tenancy Standard, and one judgement has the weakness in the Neighbourhood and Community standard to 'a lesser extent' than Safety and Quality and Transparency, Influence and Accountability.

44. The observation is that these three standards, aside from the Safety and Quality standard, are very interlinked where weaknesses in one will translate into weaknesses across the others. The reasoning the RSH has given for these weaknesses include lack of performance oversight, out of date ASB policies or not yet formally ratified, no evidence of meeting service standards in relation to ASB, poor approach to case management, lack of ability to identify trends, and lack of robust mechanisms for regular performance scrutiny.
45. Three are from C3 inspected landlords where there are serious failings in the landlord delivering the outcomes of the consumer standards and significant improvement is needed. Of these, two state the Neighbourhood and Community standard requires improvement but weaknesses are to a lesser extent than other standards. The third has failings in the Safety and Quality, Transparency, Influence and Accountability Standards as well as the Neighbourhood and Community Standard.
46. It should be noted that all seven landlords who have identified regulatory weaknesses or failings under the Neighbourhood and Community Standard have to date been local authority landlords.
47. NFDC's self-assessment and Gap Analysis process as highlighted in this report gives a good picture of the current position against the standards, however, it is of use and interest to look at these judgements in comparison to where we think NFDC is currently positioned which is mostly compliant as outlined in this report.

Corporate plan priorities

48. Priority 2: Empowering our residents to live healthy, connected and fulfilling lives. The Corporate Plan 2024-28 states that delivery of this priority will be supported by the delivery of a new Anti-Social behaviour strategy.
49. Priority 3: Meeting Housing Needs – particularly in relation to the number of council homes achieving Energy Performance Certification Band C and percentage scores for the five safety and compliance management Tenant Satisfaction Measures (TSMs).

Consultation undertaken.

50. Consultation with tenants, Members, senior management as well with colleagues across the housing sector has been a strong focus of the preparation process.

51. Tenant consultation is factored into any service development at the point of project planning and strategy development including our new Landlord Strategy which is currently going through the process of adoption.

Financial and resource implications

52. Any expenditure required by the proposed action plan will be met from existing budgets within the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) and have already been factored in the draft 30-year business plan. New policies and systems of work required in the shorter term at a service level are ongoing to improve service delivery and outcomes.
53. Once the service plan is fully adopted the policies will be updated in line with any changes required and the budget will be continuously reviewed.
54. Failure to raise standards, meet the regulatory requirements of the consumer standards and respond appropriately to complaints could lead to fines and compensation levied by the Housing Ombudsman or the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman.

Legal implications

55. The Regulator of Social Housing launched its new regulatory framework on the 1 April 2024 which outlines our requirements as a social housing provider including compliance with its four consumer standards.

Risk assessment

56. This report gives assurance that NFDC currently provides a good overall service to its tenants as evidenced by the TSMs and the risk profile is acceptable and professionally managed. It is nonetheless considered prudent to add gaps in consumer standards to the corporate risk register due to the unknown timescales for inspection to maintain corporate oversight on this business-critical issue, but also what this means for the satisfaction services deliver to our tenants.

Environmental / Climate and nature implications

57. Whilst the report has no direct implications, the work of NFDC will include improving the energy efficiency of our local housing stock, providing better services on our estates, including open spaces, and the positive contribution to neighbourhoods. This may present further opportunities to contribute to the Council's neighbourhood and climate objectives in the longer term.

Equalities implications

58. The Consumer Standards are likely to have a positive impact on NFDC tenants as there is a requirement under the Transparency, Influence and Accountability standard for landlords to 'understand the diverse needs' of tenants, including those arising from protected characteristics, language barriers, and additional support needs and assess whether all tenants have fair access to, and equitable outcomes of, housing and landlord services.
59. There is a logical read across to the Neighbourhood and Community Standard where improved data collection regarding households and communities will allow us to meet the individual needs of our tenants more effectively.

Crime and disorder implications

60. It is anticipated there will be potential indirect and direct positive impacts on the Council's tenants and neighbourhoods. The interventions proposed through our improvement to tackling Anti-Social Behaviour as part of the consumer standards is likely to lead to an initial increase in the number of cases prosecuted in the courts, or by the Police, whilst long term interventions proposed should lead to a long-term reduction in crime and disorder in our communities, neighbourhoods and estates.

Data protection / Information governance / ICT implications

61. The collection, retention and deletion of tenant data is governed by GDPR and associated guidance. All data will be collected and maintained in line with the required legislation. The Policies are required in the shorter-term at a service level to improve service delivery and outcomes. Once the service plan is fully adopted the policies will be updated in line with any changes required and will be continuously reviewed.

New Forest National Park / Cranborne Chase National Landscape implications

62. The approach of ensuring the Housing Service is fully compliant with the consumer standards including for housing neighbourhoods as well as home may involve increased and better partnership working with the National Park Authority where the Council's housing stock is also located and managed by the housing landlord.

Conclusion

63. NFDC is broadly compliant with the Neighbourhood and Community Standard under the Social Housing Regulation Act 2023, with most

gaps either already being addressed or assessed as medium priority with action plans on place for full compliance.

64. Proactive preparation for regulatory inspection is underway, including:

- Completion of a detailed self-assessment and gap analysis.
- Procurement of a mock inspection to externally validate readiness.

65. Key strengths include:

- Strong internal collaboration across council departments.
- Clear communication with all tenants (i.e. Hometalk magazine).
- Updated policies and restructuring to improve ASB and hate crime response.

66. Remaining gaps are being actively managed:

- Enhancing tenant and household data collection to better understand diverse needs and plan services effectively.
- Improving staff training on domestic abuse.
- Increasing visibility and accessibility of reporting mechanisms.

67. The Council's approach to delivering its landlord services aligns with its Corporate Plan priorities, particularly around resident wellbeing, housing needs, and community safety.

Appendices:

None.

Background Papers:

[Regulator of Social Housing
Consumer Standards](#)

Housing and Communities Overview and Scrutiny Panel - 17 September 2025

Greener Housing Strategy Annual Review

Purpose	This report provides an annual position statement outlining progress made against the Council's four strategic priorities for reducing carbon emissions and enhancing energy efficiency across its homes and the wider district.
Classification	Public
Executive Summary	This is the third annual report providing an update on progress towards achieving the aims of the Council's Greener Housing Strategy (2022–2032). Between September 2024 and August 2025, the Council continued to advance its four strategic priorities, focusing on reducing carbon emissions and improving the energy efficiency of its homes and the wider district. Key actions included raising awareness of available funding to support private homeowners, lobbying central government for policy change, and enhancing the quality of housing data to better target improvements and reduce fuel poverty. Given the significant financial implications of decarbonisation, the Council has maintained a balanced approach focusing on improved building fabrics through the use of external funding where it aligns with long-term value and strategic goals. Officers remain committed to staying informed about advancements in technology through key stakeholder engagement, ensuring the Council is well-positioned to respond to future regulatory change. In recent years, additional resources have been allocated to strengthen the Council's

	approach to Greener Housing. This work is now becoming embedded in the day-to-day operations and culture of Housing Services.
Recommendation(s)	Panel Members to note the progress made from 1st September 2024 – 31st August 2025 to deliver the priorities and actions in the Greener Housing Strategy 2022-32.
Reasons for recommendation(s)	The Greener Housing Strategy supports the Council's Climate Change and Nature Emergency Action Plan. The Greener Housing Strategy is a key document within the corporate plan, which prioritises a reduction in carbon emissions for the Council's own Homes, private sector housing and the wider district. It outlines the high costs and reputational risk associated with decarbonisation to achieve net zero carbon by 2050, identifying improvements and helping plan for interim targets.
Ward(s)	All
Portfolio Holder(s)	Councillor Steve Davies – Housing and Homelessness
Strategic Director(s)	Richard Knott – Director of Housing and communities Paul Thomas - Assistant Director – Housing and Communities
Officer Contact	Sophie Tuffin Service Manager – Housing Maintenance Programmes and Servicing. 02380 285 992 Sophie.tuffin@nfdc.gov.uk

Introduction and background

1. The Greener Housing Strategy details the four main priorities and actions, the Housing Service will deliver on over the next 10 years. These are:
 - i. Strategic Priority 1: Reduce Carbon Emissions in the Council's homes.
 - ii. Strategic Priority 2: Council Housing New Build Standards
 - iii. Strategic Priority 3: Private Sector Housing Decarbonisation
 - iv. Strategic Priority 4: Housing Service Operations
2. Through delivery of the Greener Housing Strategy, the Council aims to improve the energy efficiency of existing council homes and ensure new council homes are built to high environmental standards that eliminate the need for future retrofit and take targeted action to decarbonise its housing. The strategy also seeks to reduce the cost-of-living pressures associated with cold and inefficient homes.
3. This is the third annual report providing an update on progress towards achieving the aims of the Greener Housing Strategy (2022–2032). A summary of the agreed actions from the strategy, along with progress updates for the period September 2024 to August 2025, is provided in Appendix 1.
4. The report has identified that a large majority of the actions in the Greener Housing Strategy action plan have been achieved. A new Action plan will be agreed and issued by October 2025 to ensure that the Council continues to act with ambition and follow industry best practice.
5. The first annual report gave councillors the context to why the council has a Greener Housing strategy, an overview of the delivery challenges it faces and the regulations which set targets for the housing sector in achieving these improved energy efficiencies for the 5,200 homes to meet 2030 and 2050 targets.
6. In year two there were changes to team structures and the award of government funded schemes. Housing teams trailed modelling and resident engagement software and successfully improved the energy performance of 12 flats at Lime Tree Court, Lyndhurst. Using technology like environmental monitors and thermal stores for the first time. It launched wider community tools helping the district to improve the energy performance of homes and was an early adopter of new Future Homes Standards.

7. Year three saw the role of Decarbonisation and Planned Works Manager start in September 2024. Aligning the priorities of the Greener Housing Strategy with the responsibilities of the Housing Asset Manager and the Planned Works team has been essential. This integration ensures that energy performance improvements will be embedded within routine maintenance activities, supporting the Council's wider decarbonisation goals.
8. In 2024, the Decarbonisation and Planned Works Manager led the delivery of planned maintenance schemes that resulted in 185 homes benefiting from repairs or planned works that improved their energy efficiency to meet EPC Band C.
9. From the 01 September 2024, the UK government has re-affirmed its commitment to achieving net zero by 2050, with significant policy and funding pledges. A Plan to deliver Clean Power by 2030, supported by the Great British Energy Act and a revised carbon budget delivery and growth plan expected in October 2025.
10. The Clean Growth Strategy 2017 continues to set timescales for achieving energy performance certificate (EPC) Band C by 2030. The strategy requires the installation of thermal improvements while taking a pragmatic approach to decarbonisation to protect households from the effects of fuel poverty. Further supported by government who committed £13.2 billion to its warm home plan from 2025-2030.
11. Since the Social Housing (Regulation) Act 2023, came into force. The role of the Regulator of Social Housing (RSH) has expanded significantly supporting and overseeing the sector's transition toward energy efficiency and decarbonisation, particularly through its regulatory framework and alignment with government policy. It does this in several ways.

It monitors how the Council uses funding from schemes like the Warmer Homes: Social Fund, ensuring that investments lead to measurable improvements in housing quality and sustainability

It promotes the use of Energy Performance Certificates (EPCs)

It encourages the Council to consider tenant wellbeing in energy upgrades, including reducing fuel poverty and improving indoor comfort

Corporate plan priorities

12. New Forest District Council's Corporate Plan 2024–2028 aligns with the Greener Housing Strategy 2022–2032 in several key areas.

Climate resilience and sustainability: Prioritising carbon reduction, energy efficiency, and environmental protection across the district.

Improving housing quality: Supporting upgrades to council homes and reducing fuel poverty, in line with EPC targets.

Supporting vulnerable residents: Recognising the health and financial impacts of inefficient housing.

Promoting innovation and investment Encouraging green technologies, skills development, and clean energy infrastructure.

Together, these commitments reinforce the Council's long-term ambition to deliver low-carbon, energy-efficient housing and contribute to national net zero goals.

Strategic Priority 1 – Reduce Carbon Emissions in the Council homes.

13. The strategy remains focused on improving the energy performance of the Council's least efficient homes, with a target to upgrade all properties to EPC Band C by 2030. In parallel, the Council is committed to achieving net zero carbon emissions across its homes by 2050, ensuring long-term environmental sustainability and reduced energy costs for residents.
14. Officers are aligning guidance from the Social Housing Regulator to support its home condition reports for 1,400 homes between September 2024 and March 2026. This will ensure the Council maintains a comprehensive and up-to-date understanding of the condition of its homes, while implementing a robust access strategy and using repairs data to support repairs. Expired EPCs will be completed as part of these inspections.
15. To drive performance, a target of 98% will be achieved for home condition reports and in date EPC's on all 5200 homes by 31 March 2026.
16. This information is currently captured within the asset management database (Keystone). Key performance indicators capture incremental energy efficiency improvements for each property, such as those gained from new window and door installations. A points

system increases the energy score until a home reaches EPC Band C. This can trigger a new energy certificate and removes homes from separate more costly retrofit programmes.

Table 1: Identifies the total number of homes improved from 2023 -2025.

Work Type	Number of homes
Incremental Improvements (2023 – 2025)	652
Planned whole house retrofit (2023 – 2025)	240
Total homes improved EPC Band C	892

17. To support improvement planning through to 2030, the Council invested in a specialist software tool designed to model home condition data. This tool has been instrumental in informing both the 30-year Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Business Plan and the Council's 10-year Medium Term Financial Strategy, ensuring that investment decisions are based on robust property data.

Table 2: Identifies a snap shot of progress showing EPC improvements between 2023-2025.

EPC band	2023	2024	April 2025
EPC A	0	0	11
EPC B	54	54	60
EPC C	1911	2258	2600
EPC D	2988	2711	2299
EPC E	167	107	100
EPC F	20	10	10

18. Table 2 shows the Council has increased the number of homes achieving EPC band C from 37.79% in 2023 to 51.37% in April 2025. These figures represent a snapshot in time, which fluctuates where certificates expire, energy performance is assessed, and scoring fluctuates, or homes are without an in-date certificate.
19. Homes rated E and F are those heated by oil or solid fuel, they will continue to remain a priority for improvement.
20. The upgrade of 425 homes in 2025 is expected to contribute to a reduction of around 425 tonnes of CO₂ per year.

21. The UK Government is introducing a new assessment framework known as the Home Energy Model (HEM). Which aims to replace Energy Performance Certificates (EPCs). This will significantly alter how energy technologies are scored, particularly in relation to gas and electric heating systems. Under the new model, carbon efficiency will take precedence over energy cost, meaning technologies like infrared heating and heat pumps may receive more favourable scores. As a result, homes using modern electric systems could achieve higher EPC ratings, better reflecting their environmental performance.
22. In June 2025, there was an update to RDSAP 10 which introduced significant changes to the way EPC scores are calculated. Notably, ventilation systems, solar PV, and gas heating technologies now receive lower scores than previously modelled. Under the revised methodology this shift is expected to impact previous projections and assessed homes, with some properties that were rated EPC Band C potentially falling back into Band D. Work is currently underway to identify the number of homes affected by these changes.
23. 87.3% of the Council's homes are currently heated by gas. While the shift away from fossil fuels and changes to EPC's are welcomed, it is essential to adopt a flexible and inclusive approach to replacement technologies. This will help ensure that residents are not placed at greater risk of fuel poverty or underheating their homes, which could negatively impact health and contribute to issues such as damp and mould.
24. The Council continues to engage with stakeholders like District Network Operators (DNOs) to ensure adequate supplies of electricity, to support the move away from gas are in place.
25. Officers also engage with public consultations like. The Decent Homes Standards (DHS) Consultation; This consultation will close on the 10th September. Proposed changes are likely to have a big impact on social housing providers. Focusing again on damp and mould, Energy Efficiency of homes and improvements for Minimum Energy Efficiency Standard (MEES). The changes are likely to increase costs and in the short term, increase the number of homes classed as non-decent. However, Officers are already working to ensure this risk is minimised.
26. To support the Council's long-term decarbonisation goals, the Decarbonisation and Programme Manager will maintain a focus on a whole-house, fabric-first approach. This strategy integrates planned maintenance and cyclical replacement programmes, prioritising improvements that enhance ventilation to

boost indoor air quality and reduce the risk of damp and mould. Alongside this, addressing property defects and upgrading insulation will help minimise heat loss, reduce heating-related energy consumption, and keep homes cooler during warmer months.

27. Over the past 12 months, the Council has expanded its use of whole-house environmental monitoring. A presentation to the Housing Scrutiny Panel in March 2025 highlighted the benefits of tracking humidity, ventilation, and indoor air quality. The latest monitoring system now includes 10 years of historical data and a resident-facing app, empowering tenants to better understand the causes of damp and mould. This is particularly valuable in cases where no clear or immediate solution is evident, helping to inform more targeted interventions.
28. Upskilling Council employees continues to be a priority across all housing teams with monthly surveyor training and toolbox talks to inform the team of changes in standards and technology. These sessions improve knowledge with the aim of improving customer service.
29. In 2025 two members of the housing team completed level 5 Diplomas in Retrofit Coordination and Risk Management. These qualifications continue to be central to the successful management of retrofit programmes to the Government's required standard PAS 2035.
30. The Decarbonisation and Programme Manager will continue to explore all external sources for potential grant funding. Under the Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund 2.1 (SHDF 2.1), the Council was initially awarded £545,000 of funding, which was matched by the council to improve 70 homes within the district to EPC band C.
31. Due to the successful delivery of all 70 homes in 2023-2024. The Council was offered additional grant funding, completing a total of 240 whole house retrofits, securing a total of £1,686,753.00 of grant funding.
32. Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund, now branded as the Warm Homes: Social Housing Fund (WH:SH), is expected to formally launch in late September 2025. As in previous waves, the scheme will require matched funding, capped at £7,500 per home, regardless of property type or age. For off-gas homes, an additional £7,500 grant is available for low-carbon heating, such as air source heat pumps (ASHPs).

33. To support delivery, the Council has recently appointed a new retrofit contractor, selected through a competitive procurement process to ensure cost-effective and compliant delivery. The contractor will work closely with the Council to align retrofit works with existing planned and cyclical programmes.
34. However, changes under PAS 2035:2023, effective from March 2025, introduced more stringent requirements that may reduce the financial viability of using funded projects. Where costs increase, officers will take a cautious, value-for-money approach, prioritising in-house delivery and day-to-day improvements over participation in the WH:SH scheme.
35. Enhancing the energy efficiency of homes through retrofit directly supports the Council's performance against Tenant Satisfaction Measures.

This includes meeting targets related to:

- Compliance with the Decent Homes Standard
 - Delivery of timely and effective repairs
 - Positive tenant perceptions of a well-maintained home
36. In collaboration with the Tenancy Engagement Team, the Council is hosting a Community Day on 3rd September 2025, supported by officers, contractors, and suppliers. The event will feature a mobile sustainability vehicle, showcasing renewable technologies and offering practical advice on energy-saving measures within the home. The day aims to engage residents in sustainability efforts, promote awareness of retrofit opportunities, and strengthen community relationships.
 37. The Council has actively developed key partnerships. Officers regularly participate in working groups aimed at improving best practice and establishing consistent standards. This includes involvement in the Retrofit Hub Steering Group, and membership of key national and regional networks such as the Retrofit Academy, the Social Housing Retrofit Accelerator, and the Southwest Net Zero Hub.
 38. This engagement enables the Council to stay informed of emerging guidance, funding opportunities, and innovation in retrofit delivery helping to shape a more effective and scalable approach as we approach 2030.

Strategic Priority 2 - Council Housing New Build Standards

39. Implemented in July 2022, the Housing Development Plan outlines the Council's standards for delivering additional affordable housing, with a strong emphasis on quality and sustainability. Due to the varied procurement routes used across schemes, the Plan incorporates flexibility to accommodate different delivery scenarios while maintaining core standards.
40. For homes that are designed, commissioned, and built directly by the Council, the Plan confirms that unless otherwise agreed in exceptional cases, all new properties will be constructed to meet the Future Homes Standard, which is still expected to become mandatory in 2025.
41. The Future Homes Standard aims to ensure that new homes produce 75–80% fewer carbon emissions compared to current building regulations. Key design features include:
 - Homes will be fully electric
 - Air Source Heat Pumps (ASHPs) or equivalent low-carbon heating systems.
 - Enhanced insulation and triple glazing
 - Improved ventilation and airtightness to support energy efficiency and indoor air quality.
42. Penman House completed in January 2024 was the Council's first homes built to the new standards. The scheme was shortlisted for a national housing award in September 2024. Further highlighting its success, the scheme received a visit from Baroness Taylor in July 2025, who commended the development's energy efficiency and took time to speak directly with residents about their experience living in the new homes.
43. Other developments which have successfully followed are Moore Close, New Milton which completed in December 2024.
44. The development of homes at Hythe Hospital and Salisbury Road, are currently being built to the proposed Future Homes Standards.

Strategic Priority 3: Private Sector Housing Decarbonisation

45. The Council continues to hold a unique position of responsibility in supporting energy efficiency improvements across the wider New Forest district. Under the Domestic Minimum Energy Efficiency Standard (MEES) Regulations, all privately rented homes must achieve an Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) rating of E or above to be legally let. Properties falling below this threshold rated F or G cannot be rented out unless a valid exemption certificate is registered on the PRS Exemptions Register. The Council plays a key role in enforcement, landlord engagement, and tenant education, helping to ensure that homes meet minimum standards and that residents are protected from poor housing conditions and fuel poverty.
46. The Private Sector Housing Team continues to work proactively with local landlords, letting agents, and partner landlords participating in the Council's Private Sector Leasing (PSL) scheme. Through regular engagement including the Council's Landlord Forum and routine visits to letting agents. Officers have promoted opportunities to upgrade homes and access available funding to improve property standards. Since the launch of the landlord forum the Council has seen attendance grow rapidly, introducing useful topics which effect the private rental market locally.
47. The next scheduled Landlord forum in September 2025, will discuss the Renters Reform Bill which includes EPC rating requirements, enforcements and Awaab's law applied to ventilation, heating and tenant engagement.
48. Launched in October 2023, Cosy Homes New Forest is an interactive online tool designed to support owner-occupiers and private landlords in improving the thermal performance of their homes. The platform attracts approximately 25- 50 users each month, offering households with a New Forest postcode the ability to simulate a range of home energy improvements.
49. Accessible via the Council's website, the tool also provides tailored funding advice and links to TrustMark the government-endorsed register of approved retrofit contractors helping users make informed decisions and access reputable services.

50. The Council continues to work with local advice centers like the Environment Center who offer help and advice to those on low incomes or struggling with fuel poverty.
51. Warmer Homes: Local Grant which replaced HUG2 offers private homeowners a range of fully funded energy efficiency improvements. Led by Portsmouth City Council, who were awarded £26 million funding working in partnership with 32 consortium members including the Council. These improvements are funded by the Department for Energy Security & Net Zero (DESNZ).
52. The previous iteration of the scheme saw 21 homes within the district receive a combined 41 energy efficiency measures funded at a cost of £297,735.45.
53. The council is awaiting to hear how much it will be awarded to promote the scheme through social media, leaflets, and posters to increase take up of this funding stream.
54. ECO 4 FLEX is a household referral mechanism which sits within the wider ECO4 scheme, which enables Local Authorities to widen the eligibility criteria to allow more people suffering cold and fuel poverty to gain funding for installing measures to their homes. Further helping households within the district.
55. Another scheme being promoted to private homeowners is the Boiler Upgrade scheme (BUS) which runs until March 2026 in its current format. In April 2025 the government announced a new consultation to give people more choice under BUS, which included air to air heat pumps and heat batteries, the consultation proposes to introduce more flexible ways to spread the upfront costs.

Strategic Priority 4 - Housing Service Operations

56. The Housing Service continues to embed initiatives outlined in the Greener Housing Strategy working across departments to reduce the carbon emission impacts of its operations.
57. The Council's tender evaluation process now incorporates climate change and sustainability, with a dedicated percentage weighting applied in bid assessments. Recent procurement exercises have successfully attracted contractors making strong sustainability commitments, including pledges to reduce carbon emissions, improve waste management, and support local supply chains. These commitments will be actively tracked, ensuring that promises made during tendering translate into measurable outcomes.

58. Paperless operations and communication: The tender process for new maintenance is nearing completion, with workshops now underway to support the integration of a new asset management system, followed by the rollout of an appointment scheduler and repairs module. The new systems will enable Housing Teams to digitise previously paper-based processes and enhance customer self-service options. Integration with Locata Housing Management System will further improve the customer journey.
59. Tenant Engagement Software: In 2023 the Housing Service introduced a 12-month pilot of a new digital engagement tool to help gain useful tenant feedback on a range of services. This has been very successful and is now used widely for resident consultation, to communicate the resident retrofit journey and give information and as a tool to inform residents about their homes.
60. Officers continue to collaborate with fleet managers across the Council and with local partners to develop a coordinated approach for transitioning the current fleet of 67 vehicles to electric. This includes identifying opportunities to utilise existing charging infrastructure within the district to support the shift toward low-emission transport.
61. A full home condition report of the council garages is underway, the information collected is now being used to inform future decision making.

Financial and resource implications

62. The Housing Revenue Account Budget and Housing Public Sector Capital Expenditure Programme 2025/26 was approved by Council at its meeting on 22nd January 2025. The policy activities proposed are all contained within existing budgets.
63. It was agreed for there to be an enhanced level of capital spending of £18.939 million to deliver an increased level of improvement works, to include fire safety and statutory compliance as well as decarbonisation works and energy efficiency measures.
64. The greener housing budget for 2025 - 2026 is £1,870,000. This with Government grant funding will be used to complete 170 whole house retrofit by March 2026.
65. The budget setting process for 2026/27 will take account the number of homes requiring improvements by 2030, the available government funding opportunities and existing capital and revenue

housing budgets, while continuing with the Council's future commitments.

66. The Housing Revenue Account Greener Housing Budget will need to take account of projected additional spend of £9,332,000 required to upgrade homes by 2030 and an additional £125m to decarbonise the Council's homes ahead of 2050. It must also be aware that these models are based on current legislation and requirements, as these change cost may adjust.
67. In addition, the delivery of decarbonisation will include internal staff time, procurement, health & safety, legal, planning and building regulations and customer facing roles adding additional cost due to the complex multi-measure whole house approach required. External Impartial retrofit roles, resident engagement and other compliances and specialist surveys and repairs will increase the cost associated to achieve 2030 and 2050 targets. These will be factored into budget setting at the appropriate time.

Legal implications

68. Government funding agreements continue to require legal oversight. Future changes and available funding will consult appropriate experts to minimise risk to the council.

Risk assessment

69. Retrofit projects and funding schemes all have individual risk assessments ahead of works starting and will be monitored throughout, to align with the Council's corporate health and safety risks. Projects are then monitored throughout delivery, with regular reviews to ensure that safety standards are upheld, and risks are managed proactively.

Environmental / Climate and nature implications

70. The strategy is closely linked to the Council's climate change and nature emergency action plan 2023, and Priority 2 of the new corporate plan, Protecting our Climate, coast and natural world.

Equalities implications

71. The measures associated with greener housing aim to have a positive impact on vulnerable residents of the district by helping to alleviate fuel poverty and make services greener and less polluting, benefiting both health and the environment.
72. Tenant and resident engagement remain a key component of delivery, to reduce any negative impact on residents through

development schemes or significant change to their homes or the local environment or neighbourhood. Therefore, officers will seek views and concerns through specific engagement exercises.

Crime and disorder implications

73. Housing providers must ensure that statutory safety work is assessed and carried out to required standards. Renewable technology and complex fabric improvements can have a detrimental effect on building safety. Poorly performing landlords can be fined or prosecuted for failing to take the necessary measures to protect tenants.

Data protection / Information governance / ICT implications

74. Individual projects will require bespoke planning and seek support from internal experts and council processes to comply with individual standards and internal governance.

New Forest National Park / Cranborne Chase National Landscape implications

75. Through presentations and meetings with the New Forest National Park, we are building good working relationships with teams to share knowledge on retrofitting homes in this area and share knowledge of new technology and advances in energy to promote nature, biodiversity and maintain traditional building aesthetics.

Appendices:

Appendix 1 – Strategy Action Plan

Background Papers:

Greener Housing Strategy 2022-32

GREENER HOUSING STRATEGY ACTION PLAN - SEPTEMBER 2024

Completed items removed : [Full report linked here](#)

Priority	Action Required	Progress Achieved	Target Completion Date
Strategic Priority 1 – Reduce Carbon Emissions in the Council Housing			
	Commission an internal working group to establish an appropriate alternative heating source(s) to off gas heating systems by April 2024, ahead of the EPC C target date of 2030. Agree an action plan by April 2024 to retrain the gas servicing operatives on new and replacement technologies	Gas operatives completed Manufacturer ASHP training in October 2025. 5 x Gas operatives are completed a certificate in water regulations and OFTEC qualification in Installation, commissioning, and servicing of Air Source Heat Pumps. 3 x Electricians are completed their LCL Level 3 Award in the installation and Maintenance of Small Scale Solar Photovoltaic systems. 2 x Surveyors completed their Level 5 Diploma in retrofit coordination and risk management. Regular manufacture and new technology training continues offered to improve knowledge. This ongoing training evidence a commitment to colleagues while shielding the council from local trade shortages.	April 2024 ON-GOING

	Target all Council homes with an EPC of lower than C with individual plans to improve energy efficiency to achieve EPC Band C by 2030: Programme retrofit actions to 2030 by November 2023 Review the new Greener Housing budget annually to ensure it meets cost projections to 2030.	All homes with EPC's of E, F and G EPC's continue to be offered energy improvements yearly. Records will be held within LOCATA. A review of the greener housing budget commits £270,000 to improve the EPC performance of the Council's own homes until 2028 2026-2027 budget planning underway and ongoing yearly.	ONGOING 31 December 2029 ON TRACK
	Establish a cost ceiling level where existing homes may be classed as unviable to retrofit. Establish an options appraisal for homes meeting these criteria. Combine this with natural depreciation costs and future maintenance/replacement projections to produce a report to Cabinet seeking approval for disposal, if required	The councils 240 non-traditional constructed homes have been identified. Cleaning of External Wall Insulation in 2025/26 underway to give understanding of current conditions. This will enable a considered long-term plan to be considered which is aligned to local Government restructure.	November 2023 ONGOING
	Combine Asset Management strategy/replacement programmes with the total retrofit requirements to ensure property works are planned efficiently by April 2026 Combine replacement years and plan geographically to provide value for money and limit carbon emissions.	Internal structure revised and contractor appointed to coordinate an approach to meet the 2026 deadline.	April 2026 ON TRACK

	Continue to canvas the Government for national and regional funding to support retrofit schemes toward net zero.	The council continues to be an active member of the District Council Network (DCN) discussions. A member of HCOG and the Retrofit hub steering group, which aims to address local skills shortages. Attendance at several events over the summer. Including national housing event in Manchester. Social Housing Retrofit Accelerator, Southwest net zero Hub round table event, and member of the Retrofit Academy. Attendance at RISE events – run by Turner & Townsend running networking events and retrofit advice linking other local authorities. Round Table discussion to influence future funded government programmes. Raising the profile of the Councils decarbonisation Journey through webinars, published articles and keynote speaker events.	ONGOING
	Explore consortium approaches to funding on all Government funding schemes	areas. Attending regular consortium meetings to continue to build relationships locally and benefit from industry best practice.	ONGOING

	Affordable Warmth Programmes – Educate and promote energy efficiency to tenants and residents to reduce fuel poverty and carbon emissions. Link with local partners – Citizens Advice/HCC Promote initiatives and measures in each Hometalk magazine.	Through a replacement of the Council’s repair scheduling system (DRS) and repair database (Uniclass) advancements in technology will allow customer self-serve and removal of current paper-based practices. A resident page giving advice on retrofitting of homes is available through the Council’s digital platform Go Vocal. This gives a range of user manuals, videos and help and advice on the process and technology for residents having retrofit installed. A retrofit brochure is available to residents giving a step-by-step guide to their improvements and contact numbers to help improve our resident journey. Hometalk will continue to be used to raise awareness of decarbonisation and retrofitting.	ONGOING
	Assess the Housing Services’ wider carbon footprint by April 2026 Embodied carbon in retrofit and demolition activities Material production, delivery, and installation.	Innovative solutions continue to be investigated including carbon credits and heat recovery from data centres We’ve secured a long-term retrofit partner and are strengthening internal expertise and local supply chains, creating partnerships that deliver social value and support the Council’s September 2025 community event.	April 2026 ON TRACK

		As part of the Council's contract with supplier Travis Perkins a small pot of money is made available each year to provide the local community with goods or services that benefit social value. In 2025 and 2026 this is paying for community events around to directly engage with our community. The funds have already paid for new benches, cooking and child equipment and fencing requested by our local communities.	
	Commission an internal working group to establish an appropriate alternative heating source(s) to gas fired boilers by April 2027, ahead of the 2035 installation cut off.	With changes to EPC's, there is an increased focus on alternative solutions for gas central heating, while balancing fuel poverty. Officers are looking at the feasibility of emerging solutions to renewable technology, for instance. Batteries, Wind and PV installations. Adopting a flexible approach to electric and renewable solutions as technology is rapidly evolving. A phased approach to staff qualifications will balance the need to maintain gas homes and introduce ASHP and PV.	April 2027 ON TRACK

	Align Development Strategy with Greener Housing Strategy by agreeing a new component level build standard for our own Council led developments by April 2024, which achieves our greener housing aims and establishes a routine development standard.	New employer requirements have been drafted, awaiting publishing. This document will help officers achieve more accurate pricing, fewer disputes over materials, and better contractor performance. For the repair and maintenance teams, standardising products increases first time fix rates which supports the repair and maintenance of the Councils homes and improves customer satisfaction.	APRIL 2024 AWAITING PUBLISHING
	Assess the location of each development opportunity to ensure the location is sustainable and is built in a location where people want to live and work to reduce the reliance on carbon-intensive modes of transport.	This has been achieved at all Future Homes standard Developments. The Councils shared ownership properties have been sought after, offering accommodation in central and rural locations supporting local people in their area of choice.	ONGOING
	Work with Developers, Registered Providers and Planning Policy to develop greener housing standards for all new build developments in the New Forest	Where possible officers are continuing to collaborate with developers to apply these greener standards to all new build developments in the district.	ONGOING
Strategic Priority 2 – Council Housing New Build Standards	Assess embodied carbon in the building processes on Council led development sites by 2030	Not currently something completed by the council.	APRIL 2030

	Where properties are acquired through off the shelf acquisitions or thorough the buyback scheme a minimum EPC rating of C will be required from April 2029.	Work to access buy back from will start in April, data is being collected to understand how this will achieve the EPC results, be implemented and understand work volume.	APRIL 2029
	Fully support the Warmer Homes Consortium led by PCC to promote LAD 3 and HUG funding in the district through to March 2023 with a joint communications and marketing plan.	Awaiting the latest funded scheme to start to support wider community tack up and support. Officer will utilise social media, Council website, Cosy homes and through leaflets and advertised on hand outs.	ON GOING
	Promote Affordable Warmth Programmes and activities. Educate and promote energy efficiency to tenants and residents to reduce fuel poverty and carbon emissions from July 2022 Link with local partners – Citizens Advice/HCC/NFDIS and foodbanks Establish a communication campaign alongside the Council's new Climate change Manager by August 2022 and refresh annually.	Cosy homes New Forest was released in October 2023. The tool has been promoted at a range of events and social media. The App friendly retrofit plan builder tool is providing property specific information for homes with a New Forest postcode. Cosy homes also provides up to date funding advice to help people realise their retrofit plan. Longer term, the brand Cosy Homes new forest, will be a way to communicate trusted help and advice and develop future campaigns.	August 2022 ONGOING
	Continually identify, where available, and bid for funds to promote energy efficiency and tackle fuel poverty for private owners and landlords.	Officers procured new software, to help model homes within the district that are eligible for funding. This will allow the Council to take a targeted approach, linking with the cosy homes tool to	ONGOING

		increase the take up of retrofit and maximise funding.	
	Attend, support and enhance the existing New Forest Partnership Forum of Voluntary agencies. Target fuel and food poverty Provide specialist training and integrate the new Local Campaigns Manager with Council workstreams where appropriate by March 2023.	Work underway with private sector housing teams. Attendance at Cost of Living Steering Group. Funding awarded under Warm Homes: Local Grant will enable further targeting of food banks and other public buildings and services.	March 2023 ONGOING
	Strategic Priority 3 – Private Sector Housing Decarbonisation	Through Housing Standards work continue to ensure landlords are compliant with the Minimum Energy Efficiency Standards (MEES) regulations, reviewing performance annually.	ONGOING
	Hold a standing Greener Housing agenda item at each Landlord Forum	The Council purchased a software package that includes data linked to homes with F and G EPC data. We can contact these household giving advice on funding and MEESE regulations. The Landlord forum is increasing in popularity covering a range of topics and key speakers and a chance for letting agents and private landlords to network. September's meeting will include updates on funding and changes to legislation.	ONGOING
	Strategic Priority 4 – Housing Service Operations	Quantify the operational carbon footprint of key activities by April 2026.	ON TRACK
	Through 2022 monitor the energy usage of communal areas across the housing portfolio to assess: - Peak demands - Average usage - Reason for use	Underway. Officers understand the energy usage for NFDC communal blocks for gas and electric and the split between personal and communal usage. In 2025 key blocks with communal meters will be changed to	November 2022 ON TRACK

	Alternative provision which reduces costs and carbon emissions. and set service charges for 23/24	individual metering to help customers control their energy usage. Surveys of older fluorescent lighting are underway to replace communal lighting to new energy efficiency lighting on timers.	
	Establish an agreed action plan to target higher polluting practices by April 2027. By April 2029 establish methods, processes and alternative activities which reduce carbon emissions across our activities Working with Vehicle Fleet managers across the Council establish a scheme to replace the housing fleet of 61 vehicles with electric vehicle replacements and agree policies for charging with users by 2027	Cross departmental meetings have taken place to establish the key stakeholders and impacts across the council. These meetings will continue into 2026.	April 2027 ON TRACK
	Maximise Repairs Service Workforce planning to limit unnecessary travel by repairs operatives across the district by 2025. Eliminate paper-based activities where practicable by April 2025.	The Council started a procurement process to replace its asset management, DRS scheduler and repairs modules this process is nearing completion. New Systems will utilise new technology helping the council to reduce unnecessary travel and eliminate paper-based activities.	
	Through our procurement processes support New Forest based Small and Medium Sized Enterprises (SMEs) with advice and assistance to gain low carbon/renewable energy installation certification and additional skills on tendering to help them secure large scale retrofit and installation contracts.	The procurement process incorporates climate change and sustainability which will be taken seriously through contract management performance. Recent decarbonisation frameworks were selected based on SME's with a local contractor being awarded the contract for four years.	April 2026 ON TRACK

	Complete an options appraisal of carbon off setting initiatives to offset the residual carbon emissions generated by our social housing stock, post the completion of retrofit programmes by April 2028.	Works to start in April 2026	April 2028 ON TRACK

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HOUSING AND COMMUNITIES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL – 17th SEPTEMBER 2025

Draft Housing Landlord Tenancy Policy and Mutual Exchange Policy

Purpose	For Review
Classification	Public
Executive Summary	The draft Housing Landlord Tenancy Policy sets out NFDC's approach to managing its housing tenancies in line with the Localism Act 2011, the Housing Act 1985, and the Regulator for Social Housing Consumer Standards. The draft policy supports the Council's Housing Landlord Strategy 2025 – 2028. Aiming to ensure fair, consistent, and effective tenancy management that maximises the use of council housing for residents' needs. The main change to the draft policy is the proposal to move away from flexible fixed term tenancies to secure tenancies after a 1-year introductory period, due to the high level of administration required compared with the benefits obtained. The draft Housing Landlord Mutual Exchange Policy outlines NFDC's approach to facilitating home swaps between eligible social housing tenants moving within and out of the district. It ensures compliance with legal frameworks and aims to provide a fair and transparent mutual exchange process. It supports tenants in finding more suitable housing, addressing under/over-occupation and supports the efficient use of housing stock.
Recommendation(s)	That the panel: 1. Consider the draft Housing Landlord Tenancy policy, including the end of fixed term tenancies and support the policy proceeding to Cabinet. 2. Consider the draft Housing Landlord Mutual Exchange policy and support

	the approval by the Portfolio holder for Housing and Homelessness.
Reasons for recommendation(s)	The Housing Landlord Tenancy Policy and Housing Landlord Mutual Exchange Policy are overdue review and ensuring both policies meet tenant expectations and business needs where legislation allows. The report proposed the end of fixed term tenancies due to the resource requirements to implement them, the lack of significant benefits they provide, the limited use by our local and national landlords and feedback from regulatory inspections.
Ward(s)	All
Portfolio Holder(s)	Councillor Steve Davies
Strategic Director(s)	Richard Knott – Housing & Communities
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Introduction and background

1. The Localism Act and the Regulator for Social Housing, consumer standards require the Council to have a Tenancy Policy setting out the types of tenancies granted by the landlord function, circumstances when particular types of tenancy will be granted, length of time a tenancy will be granted for and how tenancies will be managed towards their end.
2. The Localism Act 2011 introduced a new tenancy type called a Flexible Fixed Term Tenancy (FFTT), which gave local authorities and housing associations the discretion to offer secure fixed-term tenancies (minimum term of two years) instead of traditional lifetime tenancies.

3. The key aims were to improve stock management by allowing providers to reassess tenants' needs over time. Ensure fair allocation of social housing to those in genuine need. Encourage movement and reduce under-occupation. Promote tenant responsibility and engagement with tenancy conditions.
4. Before the end of the fixed term, the landlord must conduct a formal review of a tenant's circumstances. This process usually starts at 12 months before expiry.
5. Factors considered in the review include the household's composition and income, property suitability (e.g. under-occupation or overcrowding), tenancy conduct (e.g. rent arrears, anti-social behaviour) and any changes in vulnerability or support needs. These checks are time consuming and involve a number of staff from different teams to complete e.g. allocations, tenancy management and tenancy sustainment.
6. Following the review, the landlord must decide to renew the tenancy for another fixed term, offer a different type of tenancy, such as a secure tenancy or end the tenancy, with appropriate advice and assistance to help the tenant find alternative accommodation.
7. If the landlord fails to notify the tenant of the outcome as least six months before the end of the term, the tenancy may default to a lifetime secure tenancy. A council's Tenancy Policy would include this detail should FFTTS be adopted.
8. Since April 2014 NFDC have been offering all qualifying new tenants a 1-year introductory tenancy followed by a 5-year FFTT. The redrafted Housing Landlord Tenancy Policy proposes that future new tenants will be offered 1-year introductory tenancies (where applicable) followed by lifetime secure tenancies rather than the current FFTTs.
9. In 2024/25, 96 FFTTs were issued and 167 were reviewed. For 25/26, to the end of July we have reviewed 71 tenancies and expect to review another 136 to the end of the financial year. NFDC have not yet terminated a tenancy through the FFTT review process as none have met the necessary criteria.
10. Nationally and locally, Councils are shifting away from FFTTs towards lifetime secure tenancies to offer tenants greater stability and security in their homes and to promote a stronger sense of community. Potential LGR partners, Winchester City Council do not offer FFTTs and Southampton City Council only offer them on the

rare occasion e.g. to facilitate short life use of properties in regeneration areas.

11. FFTTs are complex, time consuming and costly to administer and have not delivered the positive outcomes expected at the outset.
12. Tenants with FFTTs which began on or after 1st April 2012, often find it difficult to mutually exchange their home with another social housing tenant (as the incoming tenants would, in effect, give up a lifetime secure tenancy for a fixed term agreement). This limits social mobility.
13. Following a review of a tenant's FFTT should they meet a condition (such as under occupation) for ending their tenancy, it is unlikely that there will be suitable alternate accommodation available that would better meet their needs within a time frame to suit the termination process. The Council would be obligated to secure alternative accommodation.
14. The resource pressures on the Housing Landlord Service have increased significantly since the inception of FFTTs. Social Housing Regulation has added additional activities and workloads on housing staff and managers, as well as LGR, increased compliance, new and amended legislation, increased tenant engagement, damp and mould responses, increase from 250 to over 400 voids per year, and a whole new workstream in greener housing. For the Housing Options Team who assess housing need for each FFTT review homelessness and housing register pressures are now even more acute and the number of lettings they administer has increased significantly.
15. There will be legal costs involved in ending a flexible fixed term tenancy if the tenant does not leave the property at the end of the fixed term, as the Council would be required to recover possession of the property through the courts. There would also be costs involved in ensuring the empty properties are repaired and ready for re-let.
16. There are quite specific legal complications surrounding fixed term tenancies that were not clear at the time they were adopted. For example, a High Court case (Croydon LBC v Kalonga [2020]) considered the issue of how local authorities can obtain possession of a fixed term tenancy during the fixed term. In this case, Croydon LBC served a Notice of Seeking Possession on the tenant for breach of the tenancy agreement. The tenant argued that there was no right to determine the tenancy prior to the expiry of the fixed term because the tenancy agreement did not contain a forfeiture clause. The High Court dismissed the possession claim for this reason.

17. The courts have struggled to grasp flexible fixed term tenancies due to their complexity and as a result there is very limited case law to rely on in this area, and this adds to the burden of the work involved should it be necessary to proceed to court, and the likelihood of success.
18. Therefore, the FFTTs are both resource intensive to the Council and have a potentially negative impact on the health and well-being of tenants who may live under the stress of losing their home at the end of their fixed term. The likelihood of a possession being granted through the courts is complex and as yet untried, due to the increasingly fewer landlords who use them.
19. A copy of the proposed draft Housing Landlord Tenancy Policy is attached at **Appendix 1** setting out the types of tenancy this council proposes to offer new tenants in the future, how tenancy fraud will be tackled, how successions will be administered and how tenancies will be brought to an end. This new proposed policy no longer includes the use of FFTTs.

Mutual Exchange

20. The Housing Landlord Mutual Exchange policy has been separated from the Housing Landlord Tenancy Policy to provide tenants with a transparent mutual exchange process. It provides tenants with all the relevant information that they need to decide if a mutual exchange is right for them and the process on how to proceed.
21. The policy sets out NFDC's approach to mutual exchanges, enabling tenants to swap homes with others across the UK. It aims to promote mutual exchange as a housing solution, improve housing options and mobility, make better use of existing housing stock (e.g. tackling under-occupation) and support tenants needing to move for work, family, or health reasons.
22. Tenants with secure or FFTTs have the legal right to exchange, subject to landlord consent and specific legal grounds for refusal.
23. The process is tenant led with tenants find their own exchange partner. Once they have found an exchange partner they submit a mutual exchange application. NFDC carry out a property inspection and issue a report to the tenant on the condition of the property. The Council have 42 days to issue a decision on the mutual exchange.
24. Grounds for refusal are set out in schedule 14 of the Localism Act 2011 and include rent arrears, tenancy breaches, unsuitability of the property and ASB.

25. 41 mutual exchanges have taken place of the last 12 months.

Corporate plan priorities

26. The Housing Landlord Tenancy Policy and the Housing Landlord Mutual Exchange Policy support the Corporate Plan 2024/28 priorities:

People - Helping people in the greatest need and creating balanced, resilient, and healthy communities who feel safe and supported with easy access to services.

Priority 1: Helping those in our community with the greatest need.

Priority 2: Empowering our residents to live healthy, connected and fulfilling lives.

Options appraisal

27. Option 1 (recommended option) – Support the policies as proposed which means the end of Flexible Fixed Term Tenancies.

28. Option 2 – The Council continues with flexible fixed term tenancies, requiring the draft Housing Landlord Tenancy to be amended

Consultation undertaken

29. Consultation has taken place with a wide range of housing officers, including the tenant engagement team, in shaping both policies.

30. The draft policies have been presented to the Tenant Involvement Group on 5th August 2025, EMT on 12 August 2025 and Informal Cabinet on 3rd September 2025.

Financial and resource implications

31. Both the Housing Landlord Tenancy Policy and the Housing Landlord Mutual Exchange Policy will be delivered within existing resources in the Housing Revenue Account (HRA).

Legal implications

32. The Localism Act and the Regulator for Social Housing, consumer standards require the Council to have a Tenancy Policy setting out the types of tenancies granted in the district, circumstances when particular types of tenancy will be granted, length of time a tenancy will be granted for and how tenancies will be managed towards the end.

33. Details of the Mutual Exchange process could have been included in the Housing Landlord Tenancy Policy, but it was felt that having a separate policy allowed for better transparency and detail for the tenants.

Risk assessment

34. The delivery of both policies mitigates legal and financial risk to the Council, as well as aiming to reduce risks faced by tenants in relation to tenancy matters.
35. The work of officers is risk assessed in line with health and safety and lone working procedures.

Environmental / Climate and nature implications

36. Whilst the report has no direct implications, this may present opportunities to contribute to the Council climate change objectives through alternative working practices.

Equalities implications

37. The proposed draft policies will improve the Council's tenant's response to tenancy management. It is recognised that tenants will have unique needs and experiences and sets out clearly how the Council will manage tenancies. It also recognises that tenants wish to settle in a home for the long term and build community and support networks which improves health and wellbeing.
38. In addition, long term stability is supported through the ability to benefit from disabled facilities grants for the long term, without the uncertainty or need to move away from these adaptations.

Crime and disorder implications

39. There are no crime and disorder implications arising directly from this report.

Data protection/ Information governance/ ICT implications

40. The collection, retention and deletion of resident's data is governed by GDPR and associated guidance. All data is collected and maintained in line with the required legislation and shared in accordance with defined and established information sharing protocols and procedures

New Forest National Park/ Cranborne Chase National Landscape implications

41. The new approach to ensuring the housing service positively contributes to housing neighbourhoods may involve increased partnership working with the National Park Authority.

Conclusion

42. The draft Housing Landlord Tenancy policy sets out NFDC's approach to managing its housing tenancies, recommending a shift from flexible fixed term tenancies to lifetime secure tenancies to offer tenants greater stability and security in their homes and to promote a stronger sense of community.
43. The draft Housing Landlord Mutual Exchange policy outlines NFDC's approach to facilitating home swaps between eligible social housing tenants. It aims to provide a fair and transparent mutual exchange process.

Appendices:

List appendices here:-
Appendix 1 – Draft Housing
Landlord Tenancy Policy
Appendix 2 – Draft Housing
Landlord Mutual Exchange Policy

Background Papers:

None



Draft Housing Landlord Tenancy Policy

Housing Resident Services

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1	Kirsty Famer	01/08/25	

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Introduction

The Localism Act 2011 requires the Council to produce and publish a tenancy policy which outlines the Council's approach to tenancy management. This policy has regards to the Council's Landlord Strategy and aims to deliver effective management of the Council's homes.

The tenancy policy must also consider the consumer standards as outlined by the Regulator for Social Housing which require social housing landlords to address the management of mutual exchanges and successions within their Tenancy Policy.

The purpose of this policy is to ensure current and future Council tenancies are managed consistently and that tenants have a clear understanding of their tenancy; their rights and the level of security their tenancy offers them.

Policy Aims and Objectives

This policy is intended to meet regulatory requirements and will set out in a clear and accessible way:

- The types of tenancy the council will grant and in which circumstances
- How a person's circumstances will be considered when deciding the type of tenancy to grant
- The length of time a tenancy will be granted for
- How tenancies with a fixed term will be managed towards the end including the offer of a new tenancy
- The appeals process on tenancy decisions
- The council's approach to requests to succeed to tenancies
- How the council will assist in sustaining tenancies.

The objective of the council's landlord strategy is to ensure council housing is used as effectively as possible to provide homes for New Forest residents who are unable to secure their own accommodation. This can be achieved if the council is able to assist more people to move from council accommodation to alternative accommodation e.g. into home ownership or private rented accommodation.

The aims of this policy are:

- To meet the requirements of the Regulator of Social Housing's Tenancy Standard
- To deliver the objectives and aims of the Housing Landlord Strategy 2025 – 2028
- To clearly outline the types of tenancies offered by the Council and what could lead to a change in tenancy type e.g. demotion
- To ensure tenants understand their rights and responsibilities
- To support the Council's Anti-Social Behaviour and Tenant Engagement Strategies

Related Documents

This policy should be read alongside:

- Housing Landlord Strategy 2025 – 2028
- Housing Anti-Social Behaviour Strategy and Policy
- Tenant Engagement Strategy
- Rent Setting and Service Charge Policy
- Housing Allocation Policy
- Homeless Strategy
- Mobility Scooter Policy
- Mutual Exchange Policy
- Disabled Facilities Grant Financial Assistance Policy

Types of Tenancy

Flexible tenancies

Section 154 of the Localism Act 2011 gives local authorities the power to offer new social tenants flexible fixed term tenancies for a certain term (i.e. fixed term tenancies). A fixed term tenancy is a secure tenancy normally for a period of 5 years but no less than 2 years and a maximum of 10 years in certain circumstances where this is permitted. These tenancies are either renewed for a further fixed term or ended after the tenancy period depending on the tenants' circumstances when reviewed.

Since the introduction of the Localism Act 2011 New Forest District Council (NFDC) has offered new tenants, an introductory tenancy followed by a 5-year flexible fixed term tenancy. The allocation of these tenancies ceased on XXX. However, all existing FFTTs will see out their expected term.

At the end of the fixed term, if the tenant has not breached the terms of it, they will be invited to use the break clause in their current flexible fixed term tenancy agreement and be reoffered a secure lifetime tenancy. Those who are in breach of their tenancy conditions will retain their flexible fixed term tenancy until the breach is remedied.

Introductory tenancies

Section 124 of the Housing Act 1996 made introductory tenancies available for local authorities. They can be used only where a secure tenancy would usually exist and once introduced must be used for all new tenants except where set out below.

The Council believes that introductory tenancies are an effective tool that can be used as part of a comprehensive strategy to deal with anti-social behaviour.

All new tenants will be granted an introductory tenancy for a period of 12 months. This 'trial' period allows tenants to demonstrate that they can sustain a tenancy and comply with the terms of the tenancy agreement. Tenants on an introductory tenancy do not have the same rights as tenants on secure or flexible fixed term tenancies. Introductory tenants cannot:

- make major improvements to the property
- swap properties with another council tenant; and
- apply to buy their property through the Right to Buy scheme.

Upon completion of the 'trial' period the Council will grant the tenant a secure tenancy which includes the rights as listed below under Secure tenancies unless:

- The tenant has broken the tenancy agreement, and the Council has started action to evict the tenant; or
- The Council has given notice of extension to extend the introductory period for a further 6 months

Introductory tenancies will not be used where:

- Someone is a secure tenant of a local authority immediately before the offer of accommodation (not necessarily the same local authority) or a secure or assured tenant of a housing association; or
- Where a secure tenancy is being assigned, including by the way of a mutual exchange.
- Victims of Domestic Abuse who held a previous secure or fully assured tenancy.
- Applicants of pensionable age in appropriately sized accommodation.
- Allocations to Emergency Accommodation via the Homelessness route

The use of introductory tenancies will help the Council to:

- Deter new tenants from behaving anti-socially or criminally
- Reduce Anti-social behaviour and nuisance behaviour among new tenants
- Encourage community stability and cohesion
- Reduce the impact of residents who behave anti-socially
- Enable early action for serious breaches of the tenancy agreement
- Encourage regular payment of rent
- Improve housing conditions

Secure tenancies

A secure tenancy is a lifetime tenancy meaning it cannot expire and can only be brought to an end if the tenant breaches their tenancy conditions or in circumstance specified in the Housing Act 1985.

The Council will grant a secure tenancy if (immediately before the tenancy began) the applicant was:

- A secure tenant
- An assured tenant (not an assured short hold tenant) of social housing where the landlord is a registered social landlord
- An introductory tenant who has successfully completed their trial period
- Existing secure tenant who needs to move or has recently moved from their social home to escape domestic abuse.

A secure tenancy gives the tenant security of tenure and the following statutory rights:

- Right to Buy their home (this does not include extra care)
- Right to repair
- Make improvements or alterations to their home (subject to permission)
- Exchange homes with another tenant via mutual exchange
- In some circumstances pass on their tenancy when they die

A person under the age of 18 years cannot hold a legal tenancy. In cases of minors seeking tenancies, the Council will require another member of the minor's family or another trusted person to hold the tenancy in trust for the minor's benefit until they reach 18 when the tenancy will pass to them.

Demoted tenancies

A demoted tenancy presents the Council with an alternative to suspended possession proceedings in the case of anti-social behaviour. The tenant of a demoted tenancy does not lose their home but has less security and fewer rights. It is broadly like an introductory tenancy.

The Council will serve a four-week notice of its intention to seek to demote a tenancy for 12 months where the tenant, or someone living with or visiting the tenant has:

- Engaged or threatened to engage in anti-social behaviour; or
- Used or threatened to use the property for an unlawful purpose

The Council will apply for a court order to provide authorisation of the demoted tenancy.

If the tenant has complied with the court order at the end of the 12-month period, their tenancy will revert to a secure tenancy. If the tenant has not complied with the order, the Council will:

- Serve a four-week notice with a decision to seek possession of the property; and
- Obtain a possession order to evict the demoted tenant.

A demoted tenant will have the opportunity to appeal the decision to seek to evict and the Council will review the decision if requested. If the outcome review upholds the decision to seek possession of the property, the Council can apply to the Court for a possession order and end the demoted tenancy. If the review finds the Council should not uphold the decision to seek possession, the tenancy will revert to a secure tenancy.

The Council will not demote a tenancy more than once. If a tenant whose tenancy has previously been demoted has reverted to a secure tenancy, then reoffends, the Council will take steps to end the tenancy.

Non-secure tenancies, licenses and Occupation Agreements

A non-secure tenancy, license or occupation agreement are usually given to occupants living in temporary accommodation. These occupants do not have the same security of tenure or rights as a secure tenant. These occupants cannot:

- make major improvements to the property
- swap properties with another council tenant
- apply to buy their property through the Right to Buy scheme

- assign the tenancy (except by a court order)
- sublet any part of the accommodation or take lodgers

In some cases, the Council will have to obtain a Possession order from the court to end this type of occupation.

Temporary accommodation to allow major work to take place

If a Council home requires major works, for example because of a serious fire, a move to temporary accommodation will be offered if the Council considers it unsafe for a household to remain at home during the work. The tenant(s) will be offered a licence agreement for the duration of the works.

When works are complete, the tenant(s) will be served Notice to end the Licence agreement, return to their Council home, and continue their secure or fixed term tenancy.

Sole and Joint Tenancies

The Council offers both sole and joint tenancies to new households moving into a Council home. This is subject to eligibility.

Sole tenancy

A sole tenancy is where one member of the household signs the tenancy and is solely responsible for ensuring the household fulfils the responsibilities set out within the tenancy agreement. Where there is a breach of tenancy, the sole tenant is accountable, even if a member of their household or guest is responsible.

Joint tenancy

A joint tenancy is where more than one person has responsibility for meeting the requirements of the tenancy agreement. Each tenant is entitled to stay in the home until the end of the tenancy and have equal right to the tenancy.

The Council will normally only offer joint tenancies to a maximum of two people. The tenancies listed above could be granted on a joint tenancy basis in the following circumstances:

- The proposed joint tenants are both eligible for housing as defined by legislation; and
- Where the proposed joint tenants are married or civil partners or
- Where the proposed joint tenants live together, and the relationship is an 'established' one i.e. evidence is produced showing they have lived together for at least 12 months prior to the joint tenancy application.
- The Council will not grant a cross-generation joint tenancy (e.g. to a parent and adult child) unless there are exceptional circumstances, for example to protect the occupation rights of a vulnerable person.

Requesting a sole tenancy to a joint tenancy

Requests from existing sole tenants that a joint tenancy be granted to them and another person, are considered on a case-by-case basis at the Council's discretion. These requests are granted very rarely to minimise risk of tenancy fraud.

Any application for a sole tenancy to be converted to a joint tenancy will be refused under the following circumstances:

- The household cannot provide proof of marriage or civil partnership, or a joint residency for at least 12 months prior to the application
- There is outstanding action against the household for breach of tenancy
- There are outstanding rent arrears
- There is a history of tenancy breaches, and a valid Possession order or Notice of Seeking Possession is in place
- The tenancy has been demoted
- The applicant is already named on another tenancy
- The tenancy has already been assigned to the sole tenant
- The tenancy has been succeeded to by the sole tenant

Requesting a joint tenancy to a sole tenancy

In some situations, a household may wish to convert their joint tenancy to a sole tenancy.

Where one or more existing joint tenants' requests to end the joint tenancy, for example due to a relationship breakdown, the Council will not automatically grant a tenancy to the remaining occupant of the property. The Council will consider fully the needs of the household, their behaviour and conduct. The Council will not usually grant a new sole tenancy if:

- The tenant who is requesting the sole tenancy would not be eligible for housing under the Council's Allocation scheme

- The remaining tenant would not ordinarily be allocated the category of property e.g. age restricted accommodation, or any other lettings plan restriction
- There are rent arrears
- There are breaches of the tenancy agreement
- The remaining tenant would under occupy the property.

This list is not exhaustive, and the council will consider all the relevant circumstances. Where an agreement cannot be reached between the joint tenants, those who are married or in a civil partnership will need to seek independent legal advice.

It is worth noting that a notice to end a tenancy submitted by one or more joint tenants ends the tenancy for all tenants.

Ending a Tenancy

Where the tenant wishes to end the tenancy

Tenants may decide to end their tenancy at any time. To terminate a tenancy the tenant must give the Council at least 4 full weeks' notice in writing ending on a Sunday. A termination notice can be submitted to the Council, using the Tenancy Termination Notice form:

- By email to housing.supporthub@nfdc.gov.uk
- In writing to Tenancy Management, New Forest District Council, Appletree Court, Beaulieu Road, Lyndhurst, SO43 7PA

The tenant or the person with Power of Attorney (proof of this status is required) must sign and return our Tenancy Termination Notice.

Once the Council receives the Tenancy Termination Notice, this starts the four-week notice period for the tenancy ending. All tenancies will end on a Sunday.

Up until the tenancy end date, tenants will be responsible for paying rent. If a tenant requires to vacate the property earlier than the four-week notice period, they must advise the Council that they intend to do this. The tenant will not be allowed to enter the property after this date.

When leaving all tenants must give 'vacant possession', which means that the tenant must:

- Leave the property in a clean condition and in a good state of repair and decoration
- Clear all belongings, furniture, items in the loft, gardens and outbuildings and all rubbish; and
- Leave with no people or pets still living in the property.

If a tenant does not leave the property clean and clear, they will be recharged for the cost of cleaning and clearing the property.

Where the Council wishes to end the tenancy

The Council will seek to support tenants and help them maintain their tenancies but may take action to end tenancies in circumstances where:

- The tenant has breached their tenancy conditions, including rent arrears
- The tenancy is for a property which the Council needs possession of so that a redevelopment or regeneration scheme can proceed; or
- The tenancy has been obtained fraudulently

If the Council ends a tenancy because of a tenancy breach the tenant will be referred to the Housing Options team for support.

Council termination of Introductory Tenancy

Where the tenancy is an introductory tenancy, regular reviews of the tenancy will take place in the 12-month introductory period.

If a tenant fails to pass the 12-month introductory tenancy and or subsequent 6-month extension period, the Council may seek possession through the service of notice under section 127 Housing Act 1996 at any time prior to at least 8 weeks before the expiry of the 12 month period.

The reasons for extending may include:

- Rent arrears or irregular payments
- Breaches of tenancy conditions
- Indications that the tenant is having difficulty managing the tenancy, even with support.
- An introductory tenancy can only be extended once.
- The reasons for ending the tenancy may include:
 - High level of rent arrears
 - Anti-social behaviour
 - Significant breaches of tenancy conditions

In these circumstances tenants will be offered the right to review.

Council termination of a Secure Tenancy

The Council may terminate a secure tenancy by seeking possession under the grounds set out in Schedule 2 of the Housing Act 1985. The Council will seek a possession order from the Court if a tenant or household does not leave the property when the notice expires.

This includes mandatory grounds for possession for anti-social behaviour in section 84A of the Housing Act 1985.

Death of a tenant

In the unfortunate event of a death of a tenant, the tenancy can be transferred to an eligible family member. This is known as succession. If there is no eligible family member to succeed the tenancy the Council will accept notice from the estate to formally end the tenancy or the Council will serve notice on the estate to formally end the tenancy.

Assignment

In some cases, the Court will order the assignment of a tenancy between joint tenants. In these cases, copies of the relevant Court order will be requested.

Secure tenants may also have the right to assign their tenancy with the agreement of their landlord where:

- A succession of the tenancy has not previously taken place
- An assignment of the tenancy (other than as a consequence of mutual exchange or by Court order) has not previously taken place and
- The proposed assignee would be eligible for housing under the Council's Housing Allocations policy and is eligible to succeed to the tenancy on the death of the tenant.

Tenant assignments use up the right of succession and a tenancy can only be succeeded once, someone who was granted their tenancy as a succession cannot carry out an assignment as per section 113 Part 4 of the Housing Act 1985.

Succession

When a secure tenant dies, another family member may be entitled to inherit their tenancy. This is known in legal terms as a Succession. There can only ever be one succession to a Council tenancy.

Under Section 86A of the Housing Act 1985, a tenancy that started before 1 April 2012 can be succeeded by the following family members:

- Husband/wife
- Civil partner
- Unmarried heterosexual partner
- Same-sex partner
- Grandfather/grandmother
- Father/mother
- Brother/sister
- Uncle/aunt
- Nephew/niece
- Son/daughter
- Stepson/stepdaughter
- Adopted child
- Grandson/granddaughter

Where the successor is under 18 years of age a trustee will need to be agreed to hold the tenancy in trust for them until their 18th birthday

For secure Council tenancies created after 1 April 2012, there is no right for a family member to succeed, unless the tenancy agreement allows it. As standard NFDC tenancies do not have this clause. In normal circumstances, the following members can only succeed to a tenancy after 1 April 2012:

- Husband/wife
- Civil partner (registered under the Civil Partnership Act 2004)
- Co-habiting partner

To succeed a tenancy, the Council will check:

- The date the tenancy started
- If the individual is one of the persons listed above
- Whether the deceased was using the home as their main or principal home up until the date of death for at least 12 consecutive months
- The successor was also living at the home during this period whilst married, in a civil partnership or co-habiting

The Council will not agree to a succession in the following situations:

- If the applicant is unable to prove that they are a family member or that they live/had lived at the address
- If a tenancy has already been succeeded as it cannot be succeeded again. This also applies if there has been an assignment of the tenancy.

Eligible successors to a Council tenancy will have the same type of tenancy as the person who dies and will inherit the original tenancy start date and balance on the rent account. For example, if they had an introductory or a demoted tenancy, it would remain introductory or demoted until the full 'trial' or demoted period passes.

In cases where the successor is a close family member (described above) and the property they are occupying is considered too large or unsuitable the Council will offer a tenancy of a suitable alternative property to the successor as per Ground 15A of the Housing Act 1985. Notice of seeking possession must be served no sooner than 6 months on notification of death and before 12 months of notification of death.

The Localism Act 2011 changed the legal entitlement to succeed to a tenancy created after 1 April 2012 (limiting the legal right of succession to a spouse, civil partner or co-habiting partner only thereby excluding close relatives living with the tenant at the time of their death) and the Council recognises the possibility that this change could result in more households becoming homeless and seeking assistance with rehousing. The Council therefore reserves the right to use its discretion and put in place measures to mitigate this. Our discretion may include, for example, granting an introductory to fixed term or secure tenancy where the property is of an appropriate size, or treating the household as potentially homeless and allowing them to use and occupy the property pending the household moving to suitable alternative accommodation. The Council will consider each case on its own merits.

Use and Occupation

In some cases, a person or household will be allowed to stay in a property following the end of a tenancy (and where there is no right of succession) or where a joint tenancy has been ended by one of the joint tenants, but the other former joint tenant has been left in occupation. They will be subject to a 'Use & Occupation' charge during this period. A tenancy will not be granted, and the occupiers have no rights of tenancy.

This allows the Tenancy Sustainment and Housing Options teams to consider the housing need of that person/ household in accordance with the Council's Housing Allocation Scheme and our duties. We will then, depending on the outcome of our considerations, subsequently support them with alternative accommodation in an appropriate property (as long as the normal conditions of behaviour are maintained) or request that they work with our Homelessness Officers to source their own accommodation and vacate the property. Failure to vacate will result in an application to the Courts for vacant possession.

Mutual Exchanges

Mutual exchange is the process through which secure and assured tenants can assign their tenancy to another secure or assured tenant. Flexible tenants may also apply to exchange homes in this way and there are special provisions in places when flexible tenants wish to exchange homes with a secure tenant with a tenancy that came into effect prior to 1 April 2012.

For further information on Mutual exchanges please refer to our Housing Landlord Mutual Exchange Policy – [add link](#)

Monitoring and Reviewing Tenancies

Monitoring Introductory and Demoted Tenancies

The council will grant all new eligible tenants a one-year introductory tenancy. The tenant will be monitored throughout the 12-month introductory or demoted tenancy. Tenancy sustainment officers and Tenancy Account Officers will contact and visit introductory or demoted tenants throughout this 12-month period, specifically at 3 and 9 months. At 9 months a formal introductory/ demoted tenancy review will take place and assess whether the tenancy should be allowed to continue, extended, or terminated, as per reasons set out in terminating an Introductory tenancy section.

During visits to the home, officers will assess how the home is being treated and check for any breaches of tenancy on file including rent arrears. Cases of malicious damage will be treated as a serious tenancy breach and the tenant(s) will be charged for any repairs or maintenance carried out to fix the damage.

If the Council choose to extend or end the Introductory tenancy, the tenants will be informed in writing of the outcome of the review. If the tenant disagrees with the outcome, they have the right to appeal, and this process is explained within the relevant Notices. Under section 128 of the Housing Act 1996N to end an IT tenancy and a section 125a Housing Act 1996 to extend an IT tenancy.

Monitoring Secure Tenancies

To monitor secure tenancies, the Council will undertake a programme of stock condition surveys. The purpose of the stock condition survey is to check the condition of the home and to ensure the Councils records are accurate. During these surveys, officers will:

- Check the condition of the tenant's home
- Identify households who may require tenancy support. Ensure the home has not been damaged, or altered without permission
- Update tenancy records
- Note tenant(s) vulnerabilities and update records to ensure reasonable adjustments can be made to the delivery of services

All Council homes will be surveyed at least once over a 5 year-period but will be visited by other Council employees more regularly. Any tenancy issues or concerns identified in the survey will be reported to a tenancy sustainment officer who may carry out additional visits.

Additionally, the Council will monitor contact reports from other residents flagging concerns about a tenant(s) which may prompt a visit from a tenancy sustainment officer or neighbourhood officer.

The Council may carry out an unannounced tenancy visit, in response to:

- Alleged damage to the property or significant disrepair
- Safeguarding concerns for the tenant or a member of the household; or
- Suspected tenancy fraud.

Tenants can update information about themselves and members of their household by contacting the Housing Hub. This includes listing who lives in the home or whether a member of the household has a disability.

Tenancy Sustainment

The Council will help tenants to sustain their tenancies by making:

- At point of nomination, an Affordability Assessment of the proposed tenants to ensure the property is affordable and sustainable.
- A new tenancy visit, or phone call conducted within 6 weeks of the tenancy start date to ensure that all new tenants are receiving the support they need.
- Further structured home visits where necessary during the first 12 months of the tenancy at 3 and 9 months to assess the conduct of the tenancy and if there are any additional support needs that are not currently being met.
- Regular tenancy visits/check ins to update our tenant profile information and ensure properties are being maintained.

The Council will also:

- Update and regularly review web services to ensure that there is clear, concise and easily accessible information for Council tenants on the key points of this policy.
- Provide information and services that go beyond the normal role of the landlord e.g. signposting for debt and welfare benefits advice, financial information, affordable warmth information and assistance to gain and maintain employment and training opportunities.
- Provide training that equips staff with the knowledge of support services available from other agencies and how to access them.

Aids and adaptations

Adaptations for our tenants are administered through the same process as a Mandatory Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG). The DFG must be for a tenant or a member of the household who is registered or could be registered as a disabled person.

DFGs are available for:

- Making it easier to get in to and out of your home;
- Making it easier to get to your bedroom, bathroom, living room and kitchen;
- Making it easier to use the toilet, bath and shower;
- Making it easier to prepare and cook food;
- Improving or installing a suitable heating system to meet the needs of the disabled person,
- Helping you control lighting, power and heating;
- Making it easier to get around your home to help you care for another person;
- Making your home safe for you and other people who live in it; and
- Making it easier to get in and out of your garden

To apply for a DFG email privatesectorhousing@nfdc.gov.uk or call 02380 285151 for further details.

Tackling Tenancy Fraud

It is important that people occupying NFDC homes should be living in them as their main home and have not secured a property fraudulently. The council is committed to preventing, identifying and tackling housing fraud. This includes allegations of non-occupancy, fraudulent requests for succession where the council will investigate, or when allocating properties where the council will undertake thorough verification of applications.

The council will fully investigate reports of alleged fraud in conjunction with the council's Fraud Officer and work with other teams within the council. Where appropriate, the council will prosecute tenants who have committed fraud.

The council is part of the National Fraud Initiative which compares information and there is close liaison between services, including Revenues, Benefits and Estate Management. Where tenancy fraud is identified the council may publicise the outcome to deter further tenancy fraud.

How to feedback

You can get this policy in large print, Braille, audio or in another language by contacting our tenancy management team.

Email: tenancy.management@nfdc.gov.uk

Telephone: 02380 285222.

Compliments

To help us provide the best service we can. We would like to hear tenants' views on the services that they use. If the customer wishes to highlight positive contributions from a member of staff or service, please let us know.

Email: tenancy.management@nfdc.gov.uk

Telephone: 02380 285222

Complaints

If a tenant is unhappy with the service, they can refer to our Corporate Complaint procedure - [Corporate Complaints Procedure](#)

Email: complaints@nfdc.gov.uk

Telephone: 02380 285000

Housing Ombudsman

If a tenant is unhappy, they can escalate to the Housing Ombudsman Service.

Online complaint form: [Online complaint form | Housing Ombudsman Service](#)

Telephone: 0300 111 3000

Review

This policy will be reviewed every 3 years, or amendments will be implemented sooner if required due to legislation changes or feedback from tenants

The Strategic Director for Housing and Communities has authority to make minor amendments in consultation with the Portfolio holder for Housing. This policy will be available on the council's website at www.newforest.gov.uk

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Draft Mutual Exchange Policy

Housing Resident Services

August 2025

Version - Draft

Version	Author	Date	Changes made
1	Kirsty Farmer	01/08/25	New

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Introduction

The Housing Act 1985 and the Localism Act 2011 provides all eligible tenants with the right to exchange their home with another eligible tenant in a process known as 'mutual exchange'. This exchange can involve more than two parties but can only take place with the written permission of all landlords, and subject to a number of provisions outlined further in this policy.

The benefits of increasing home swapping opportunities to social housing tenants and providers alike, as well as the wider public sector, have long been recognised by New Forest District Council and help us to achieve our 3 main People Priorities as part of our Corporate Plan

The Consumer Standards, set by the Regulator of Social Housing (RSH), have also added further requirements around how tenants are treated in all our engagement with them, and the information that they can expect from us.

This policy outlines New Forest District Council's approach to Mutual Exchanges and details the process for all parties.

Scope

This policy applies to all eligible tenants, as defined under the 1985 Housing Act (as amended). This means all New Forest District Council's secure and flexible fixed term tenants, unless that tenant falls under one of the fourteen exemptions in law, would be included.

Policy Aims and Objectives

The aim of this policy is to enable the delivery of New Forest District Council's Mutual Exchange scheme in line with all relevant legislation and guidance, and to allow for the fair and consistent application of the process.

This policy also aims to advise officers, residents and partners how the scheme will operate, the eligibility criteria and grounds for refusal. It will further seek to:

- Promote mutual exchange as an effective option to meet housing needs in the district.
- Improve housing options for social housing tenants within the district, and to those needing to move to the area for work or personal reasons.
- Promote more effective use of the Council's existing housing stock by enabling tenants to move to accommodation more suitable for their needs. This will further enhance efforts to:
 - Address under-occupancy and/or overcrowding pressures.
 - Assist in releasing suitably adapted homes for those that need them.
 - Help to relieve pressure on the Council's Housing Register and Housing Options services.

Understanding the Legal Framework Behind Mutual Exchange

We want tenants to feel confident and informed when considering a Mutual Exchange. That's why our policy follows important laws and regulations designed to protect their rights and ensure fairness. These consist of:

Housing Act 1985 & Localism Act 2011

These laws set out the rules for how mutual exchanges work and who is eligible.

Regulator of Social Housing (RSH)

We follow the RSH's Consumer Standards, which help ensure we provide a fair and transparent service.

Equality and Human Rights

We are committed to treating everyone fairly. Our policy respects your rights under the Equality Act 2010 and the Human Rights Act 1998.

This policy also complies, and is consistent with, the provisions in New Forest District Council's Housing Allocation policy, secure and flexible fixed term tenancy agreements, and has had regard to all relevant internal policies and strategies.

All tenants with secure or flexible fixed term tenancies have the right to exchange their homes with another qualifying tenant. Both tenants need the written consent of the landlord, but this will not be withheld except on one or more of the grounds specified (Appendix A).

Further protection is afforded to those who held secure tenancies prior to April 2012 who exchange with tenants on flexible fixed term tenancies.

Landlords must provide a written decision to the tenant within 42 days of receiving an application for Mutual Exchange, and tenants have the right to enforce decisions via the County Court should landlords fail to do so.

Landlords can also not rely on any of the grounds for refusal if they do not provide a written decision within the time limit.

As part of the RSH's Tenancy Standard, all registered providers are required to provide a service for Mutual Exchange to all eligible tenants free of charge. See section on Right to Exchange for further details of the service we have adopted.

Links to other strategies and policies

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following strategies and policies:

- Housing Landlord Strategy (In development)
- Housing Landlord Vulnerable Persons' policy (In development)
- Housing Landlord Anti-social behaviour strategy and policy
- Good Neighbourhood Management Policy
- Housing Hate Crime Policy
- Housing Landlord Domestic Abuse Policy
- Allocations Policy
- Empty Homes and Mutual Exchange Policy
- Gas Safety Policy
- Electrical Safety Policy
- Condensation, Damp and Mould Policy

Right to Exchange

All New Forest District Housing tenants who have a secure or flexible fixed term tenancy are eligible for Mutual Exchange.

Tenants can exchange with tenants of any private registered provider of social housing anywhere in the country, including:

- Other Local Authorities
- Arms Length Management Organisations (ALMOs)
- Housing Associations, and
- A Housing Trust that is a charity.

Tenants from other organisations or local authorities must be on a secure or flexible fixed term tenancy.

Tenants on introductory tenancies will not be considered for a Mutual Exchange until such time as they have successfully completed their introductory period.

Types of Exchange

In order to exchange properties, tenants first need the written consent of their landlords. If agreed, the transfer of tenancies can only be carried out through one of two methods.

An assignment applies when both tenants hold tenancies with a similar security of tenure. They will be asked to sign a 'Deed of Assignment' which will allow the incoming tenant to take on the responsibilities of the outgoing tenant. In effect, each tenant takes on the other's tenancy.

'Surrender and re-grant' is where tenants surrender their current tenancy and are then granted a new tenancy at the new property with similar levels of security as their current tenancy. This is applicable in those cases where one of the tenants had a secure tenancy that predates 1 April 2012, and which is protected in law. In these cases, tenants effectively take their tenancy with them when they exchange.

Homeswapper

New Forest District Council subscribes to a national exchange scheme called 'HomeSwapper'®. This makes the scheme free to all New Forest District Housing tenants.

Tenants will be required to register on the website in order to advertise their property and to find potential exchanges locally and nationally.

New Forest District Council is only able to make this freely available to tenants of New Forest District Council.

Alternative ways to exchange

Tenants may also use a number of other means to find a Mutual Exchange partner. These may include local shop windows, newspapers and, increasingly, social media providers. There are also a number of other exchange websites that may charge a fee.

It is illegal for tenants to offer incentive payments to each other in order to secure a transfer, or to encourage someone to transfer. Any attempt to do so will lead to the automatic refusal of an exchange and may lead to eviction proceedings if a property is secured in this way.

Mutual Exchange process

The Mutual Exchange process is tenant-led. This means that it is tenants themselves that are responsible for finding a prospective exchange partner.

Tenants are also responsible for ensuring that any checks required regarding the condition of prospective properties are made, and for confirming any outstanding repairs or damage that will become their responsibility, particularly for any non-standard alterations that the previous tenant may have made.

Once a New Forest District Council tenant has found another tenant to exchange with, and they are satisfied as to both the condition of the property and any issues that they may become responsible for, both parties must complete a mutual exchange application form and return it to the Tenancy Sustainment team.

Following this, the Tenancy Sustainment Assistant will arrange a visit for a Maintenance Surveyor to inspect the property and let the tenant know if there are any works to be undertaken before the exchange can proceed.

Both tenants seeking to exchange will be provided with a copy of the inspection report, including any items that have been gifted by the previous tenant and any works (including photos) that are the tenant's responsibility.

Repairs that are the responsibility of the tenant will need to be carried out prior to the exchange taking place, or the incoming tenant will need to sign a waiver agreeing to take the property 'as seen'.

The exchanging tenant will be issued with a final written decision within 42 days of receiving their application. This will also detail any reasons for refusal and outline their right to appeal the decision should they think it is wrong.

The Council cannot refuse an application on any of the grounds specified if we do not provide this written confirmation within 42 days.

The Council retains the right to use our discretion to allow mutual exchanges to go ahead even if one of the 14 conditions for refusal has been met, so long as certain conditions are met, such as the repayment of any outstanding rent arrears.

Overcrowding will only be permitted in very specific circumstances, due to the lack of larger properties in the district. One example may be where a tenant has been assessed as having a four-bedroom need and wishes to swap to a property that has an additional room, such as a separate dining room, which has potential to be used as another bedroom.

Where the proposed exchange is between a New Forest Housing tenant and the tenant of another qualifying organisation, all landlords involved will provide and request references on the outgoing and ingoing tenants respectively.

Once an exchange has been approved, both tenants will be asked to come into the main office at Appletree Court, Lyndhurst and sign a 'Deed of Assignment'

before an exchange can proceed.

If the tenancy is a joint tenancy, both tenants will be required to attend an appointment at the Council office to sign the Deed of Assignment. The exchange cannot be completed without sufficient identification provided at the appointment.

Only once the deed has been signed and all other relevant paperwork is in place can the exchange complete. If a tenant moves without this, then they will be putting the tenancy in jeopardy and could lose their home as a result. Any further duty by the Council to rehouse them is likely to be limited.

Gas and Electrical Safety

New Forest District Council housing team has a statutory duty to ensure that any New Forest District Council owned gas appliances are safe to use at the time the incoming tenant takes up occupancy, and that any tenant owned appliances that were removed do not cause unsafe conditions.

Arrangements will be made for the appropriate gas and electrical safety checks to be carried out, and tenants will be expected to allow reasonable access for this to take place, as set out in their tenancy agreement.

It is the responsibility of the incoming tenant to ensure the safe and legal installation of any household appliance. They must ensure that they instruct, and pay for, a Gas Safe Engineer to connect, test and certify any new or used gas cooker installation or other appliance, or make arrangements for a qualified electrician to connect an electrical cooking appliance.

Guidance and Support

The RSH has implemented several standards that must be met across all Council services. These include action to deliver a fair and equitable outcome for tenants from their dealings with the Council, publicising services and standards, and providing a clear and accessible complaints service.

Mutual Exchanges are, primarily, governed by the Tenancy Standard, which demands that the service is:

- Available without payment of a fee. New Forest District Council achieves this with its provision of an exchange service through Homeswapper®
- Any mutual exchange service(s) must also be publicised, and details can be found on our website.
- Support must be offered to relevant tenants to access services who might otherwise not be able to access them, and
- Information regarding any implications for tenure, rent and service charges must be offered to any tenant wishing to mutually exchange. How this requirement is met is detailed below.

This policy provides detailed information regarding the various procedures used when assessing applications for a Mutual Exchange. Information regarding the scheme, including this policy, will be made available on the Council's website

Tenants will be given the opportunity to discuss any questions regarding the process when initial contact is made, but tenants may also contact their Tenancy Sustainment Officer outside of this if they require further information or support.

The Tenancy Sustainment Assistant will also check for, and inform, the tenant of any potential implications of the proposed move, such as any changes in their current terms and conditions, service charges or any one-off costs that they may be liable for.

Tenants that are considering exchanging into a property that will lead to under occupation will be offered a financial assessment in order to help them establish if the potential property is affordable for them. The assessment will also focus on whether there are any financial implications arising from the move, such as a reduction in their Housing benefit / Universal Credit entitlement.

Any Mutual Exchange tenant that is considering moving to a property that will lead to under occupation will be required to sign a disclaimer stating that they fully understand the financial implications of exchanging into such a property, including the impact on any benefit entitlement and the consequences of falling into arrears on their future housing prospects.

Tenants that are currently living in an adapted property, need to consider if the exchange property will meet their needs as they may not be eligible for further adaptations to the new property.

New Forest District Council will provide any reasonable additional support required to tenants that may not be able to access the Mutual Exchange service

without difficulty. This may range from providing some additional explanation about the process to registering and searching for matches for a tenant.

New Forest District Council will also provide reasonable support to tenants who do not have access to the internet. The Tenancy Sustainment team can signpost to family, friends, local library internet hubs or arrange a meeting at a local office to assist with the online process.

Decision Making

New Forest District Council is required by law to provide a written decision within 42 days of receiving a completed application for Mutual Exchange.

Should New Forest District Council fail to provide a written decision within this time frame, tenants have the right to enforce a decision by applying to the County Court. In this situation, New Forest District Council will no longer be able to rely on any of the grounds for refusal, as set out in law.

It is important to recognise however, that failure to meet the statutory deadlines by New Forest District Council must not be treated as having been given consent to exchange.

New Forest District Council will not unreasonably withhold consent to exchange properties and will only do so based on the grounds set out in schedule 14 of the Localism Act 2011 (see Appendix A below).

Tenants will be informed of the decision in writing, and this may fall into one of three categories; approved, approved with conditions, or refused.

An application for exchange will be approved when all tenants are not in breach of any tenancy conditions that may allow a refusal, and/or there are no conditions that need to be met prior to exchange.

Approval subject to conditions means that approval will not be granted unless certain conditions are met before the exchange takes place. This may be clearing a rent account or remedying any unauthorised home improvements.

An application will only be refused on the grounds set out below in Appendix A.

Discretion

There may be grounds on which New Forest District Council is able to refuse an application for exchange but may choose to exercise its discretion in certain circumstances.

This may apply where a tenant is in rent arrears and/or are impacted by changes to Housing Benefit/Universal Credit and the exchange may help the tenant to reduce their outgoings (such as when they are downsizing). Discretion may also be used if there are extenuating circumstances, and it is considered that the exchange would benefit the health or welfare of the tenant or a member of their household.

The Tenancy Sustainment Manager (or more senior member of the Housing Management Team in their absence) may use their discretion to grant an exchange based on a report from the Tenancy Sustainment Assistant/Officer with supporting evidence. There is no further right of appeal, although tenants may follow the Council's complaints procedure (see section Appeals procedure below) if they remain unsatisfied with the decision.

Appeals

If a Mutual Exchange application is refused, the tenant(s) will be informed of the decision and the grounds for refusal in writing. Tenants will need to go through the formal complaints procedure if they find the reasons for the refusal to be unsatisfactory, detailed in section on Complaint below.

Where an external landlord has refused the application, it is the responsibility of their tenant to appeal the decision directly with them.

Monitoring and Review

This policy is intended to be a working document and will be reviewed and updated as and when any new legislation and / or guidance is issued.

The Strategic Director for Housing and Communities has authority to make minor amendments in consultation with the Portfolio holder for Housing. This policy will be available on the council's website at www.newforest.gov.uk

Confidentiality and Information Sharing

All personal information relating to tenants will be dealt with confidentially and in accordance with the 2018 Data Protection Act, the EU General Data Protection Regulations and the Council's Privacy policy. Tenants also sign a privacy statement when taking on a tenancy.

A copy of our Privacy Notice is found here
<http://www.newforest.gov.uk/privacy>

However, for an exchange to take place, we are required to share certain information about the applicant's tenancy history with the exchanging landlord. All information held or shared will be in accordance with the above.

How to feedback

You can get this policy in large print, Braille, audio or in another language by contacting our tenancy management team.

Email: tenancy.management@nfdc.gov.uk

Telephone: 02380 285222.

Compliments

To help us provide the best service we can. We would like to hear customer views on the services that they use. If the customer wishes to highlight positive contributions from a member of staff or service, please let us know.

Email: tenancy.management@nfdc.gov.uk

Telephone: 02380 285222

Complaints

If a customer is unhappy with the service, they can refer to our Corporate Complaint procedure - [Corporate Complaints Procedure](#)

Email: complaints@nfdc.gov.uk

Telephone: 02380 285000

Housing Ombudsman

If a customer is unhappy, they can escalate the Housing Ombudsman Service.

Online complaint form: [Online complaint form | Housing Ombudsman Service](#)

Telephone: 0300 111 3000

Appendices

Appendix A

Grounds for refusal under Schedule 14 of the Localism Act 2011

Ground 1	Any rent lawfully due from a tenant under one of the existing tenancies has not been paid.
Ground 2	Any obligation under one of the existing tenancies has been broken or has not been performed.
Ground 3	A Court Order (or Suspended Order) for Possession has been made against either property.
Ground 4	Ground 4: The landlord has served a notice of seeking possession on one or more of the grounds 1 to 6 in Part 1 of Schedule 2 of the Housing Act 1985, and that notice remains in force or proceedings have begun.
Ground 5	The landlord has served a notice of seeking possession on one or more of the grounds in Part 2 of Schedule 2 of the Housing Act 1988, and that notice remains in force or proceedings have begun.
Ground 6	The tenant of either property, or someone they live with, has an application pending for, or is already subject of: • An injunction order under s.153 of the Housing Act 1996. • An Anti-Social Behaviour Order • A Demotion Order • A Possession Order under Ground 2, Schedule 2 of the Housing Act 1985 A Possession Order under Ground 14, Schedule 2 of the Housing Act 1988
Ground 7	The property is substantially more extensive than is reasonably required by one of the proposed assignees
Ground 8	The property is not reasonably suitable for one for the proposed assignees or their household.
Ground 9	The property is part of, or close to, a building that is held for non- housing purposes, or is situated in a cemetery, and was let in connection to employment with the landlord or a local authority, new town corporation, housing action trust, urban development corporation, or the governors of a grant-aided school.
Ground 10	The landlord is a charity and the proposed assignees occupation of the property would conflict with the objects of the charity.
Ground 11	The proposed property has been substantially adapted to meet the needs of a physically disabled person and, if the assignment went ahead, there would not be a physically disabled person living there.

Ground 12	The landlord lets properties to people in difficult circumstances (other than merely financial circumstances) and the proposed assignee would not meet these criteria.
Ground 13	The property is let to people with special needs and there is a special service or special facility nearby to the properties to assist people with those special needs, and if the assignment were to go ahead there would no longer be a person with those special needs living in the property.
Ground 14	The property is subject to a management agreement under which the manager of a housing association of which at least half the members are tenants of the properties subject to the agreement, at least half of the tenants of the properties are members of the association, and the proposed assignee is not, and is not willing to become, a member of the association.

Appendix B

Items that tenants should consider before applying for a Mutual Exchange (This list is not exhaustive and is meant as a guide only. Any specific advice should be sought from your Tenancy Sustainment Assistant/ Officer and / or you should take independent advice)

Changes to your tenancy agreement
Tenants with a secure tenancy that started on or after 01 April 2012 who want to exchange with a tenant who has a flexible fixed term tenancy could lose their secure tenancy.
Tenants who had their security of tenure protected by 2011 Localism Act s.158 will be issued with a new tenancy agreement and a start date after 01 April 2012. This means that if they exchange again, they could lose their secure tenancy.
If you are a secure tenant, check whether or not you retain your right to buy or gain the right to acquire if moving to a housing association property. Check the number of years left on a tenancy if you are taking on a flexible fixed term tenancy.
If you are under occupying and on a flexible fixed term tenancy, you may be asked to move to a smaller property during the tenancy review process.
Succession rights for family members may change.
Properties in new developments may not allow parking permits, or tenancy terms regarding the keeping of pets may vary.
One-off financial costs
Connecting gas and/or electrical appliances and providing safety certificates to verify that this has been done by a Registered Gas Safe Engineer or electrician.

Replacement of fixtures and fittings left by the outgoing tenant, or costs to bring any unauthorised alterations back to a lettable standard.
Removals, mail redirection and disconnection/reconnection fees for services such as television or broadband.
Redecoration, and replacement / copy keys. School uniforms, if you have children
On-going costs
Rent and / or service charges, including the impact of the spare room subsidy if under occupying. Utilities and Council Tax
Increased travel costs, for work or school
Property condition
Responsibility for any outstanding repairs or damage that will become the responsibility of the incoming tenant
Responsibility for the maintenance of any alterations or improvements made by the outgoing tenant.

Housing Communities Scrutiny and Overview Panel – 17 September 2025

Maintenance and repairs to empty homes and homes undergoing mutual exchange policy for housing (Landlord Services) periodic review

Purpose	For Review and Consideration
Classification	Public
Executive Summary	This report presents an updated policy for the maintenance and repair of empty homes and homes undergoing mutual exchange. Following a scheduled review, the policy has been rewritten to reflect current standards and responsibilities. It sets out how the Council will meet its legal duties for safety, compliance, and essential maintenance across its homes, managed under the Housing Revenue Account. The revised policy is included in Appendix 1.
Recommendation(s)	That Members: Approve a revised Maintenance and Repairs to Empty Homes and Homes undergoing Mutual Exchange Policy.
Reasons for recommendation(s)	The Council must meet legal safety standards in its housing. This policy supports that by making sure empty homes and those involved in mutual exchanges are properly maintained. It helps keep homes safe, warm, and decent, protects the long-term value of Council owned homes, and ensures tenants receive a high-quality service.
Ward(s)	All
Portfolio Holder(s)	Cllr Steve Davies – Housing and Homelessness
Strategic Director(s)	Richard Knott – Housing and Communities
Officer Contact	Sophie Tuffin Service Manager – Housing Maintenance Programmes and Servicing

	sophie.tuffin@nfdc.gov.uk Ritchie Thomson Service Manager – Housing Major Projects ritchie.thomson@nfdc.gov.uk

Introduction and background

1. The Council owns over 5,200 properties and has a legal duty to inspect, maintain, and repair the structure, fixtures in its homes. This includes empty properties, which must be safe, compliant, and ready for occupation. Maintaining these homes properly helps meet statutory safety standards, protects the long-term value of Council owned homes, and ensures new tenants move into homes that are warm, decent, and fit for purpose.
2. This report outlines the Council's core responsibilities for statutory safety, compliance inspections, servicing, and maintenance for empty homes and mutual exchanges. It introduces a revised policy HLSPOL08: Maintenance and Repairs to Empty Homes and Homes Undergoing Mutual Exchange for review and approval, following a scheduled policy review.
3. This policy better reflects the current legislation and expected standards following a comprehensive review of the Council's Empty home processes. There has been a shift in terminology from 'void' to 'empty home' and 'Stock condition Survey' which is now home condition report.
4. The policy introduces a new category of void standards, allowing for more tailored and consistent approach to incorporate the Council's decarbonisation goals. The revised policy also aligns with current service delivery, making sure the Council offers a realistic, transparent and aligned service offer and resources.
5. The Council is committed to providing an effective maintenance service to comply with its statutory responsibilities, including but not limited to the Landlord and Tenant Act 1985 (as amended) and the Housing Act 2004.
6. The Housing Maintenance Teams, operate under a suite of policies covering the core statutory compliance areas as set out below:-
 - HLSPOL01 Fire Safety
 - HLSPOL02 Gas Safety
 - HLSPOL03 Legionella

- HLSPOL04 Lifts and Lifting Equipment
 - HLSPOL05 Maintenance and Repairs
 - HLSPOL06 Playground and Play Equipment
 - HLSPOL07 Electrical Safety
 - **HLSPOL08 Void and Mutual Exchange**
 - HLSPOL11 Mobility Scooters
 - HLSPOL18 Condensation, Damp, and Mould
7. The Housing Service, introduced a suite of Microsoft 365 digital performance dashboards in April 2023, providing key performance and analytical data across a range of activities which is used to monitor and improve performance.
 8. The council's Housing Statutory Compliance Board, which regularly monitors operational compliance and is made up of senior housing officers and is chaired by the Strategic Director – Housing & Communities and last met on 2 April 2025. Compliance reports are also submitted to the Portfolio Holder on a monthly basis, twice yearly to EMT and the Housing Overview and Scrutiny Panel, and annually to the Council's Cabinet.

Social Housing Regulation Act (2023)

9. The Social Housing Regulation Act 2023 introduces several key measures to ensure compliance and improve the standards of social housing. Here are some of the main principles:-
 1. Safety and Health Standards;
 2. Performance Transparency;
 3. Complaint Handling;
 4. Professional Standards.
10. These measures aim to rebalance the relationship between landlords and tenants, ensuring that tenants feel safe, listened to, informed, and supported in their homes. Compliance with these regulations is crucial for maintaining high standards in social housing.

The Tenant Satisfaction Measures

11. In 2023 the Council submitted its first set of results to the Social Housing Regulator under the Social Housing Regulation Act 2023. The new Consumer Standards, place greater emphasis on tenant safety, and improved tenant services. All registered providers report annually to the Regulator of Social Housing on a wide range of matters, including performance with statutory compliance measures.

Periodic review

12. A periodic review this policy has been undertaken to ensure that it remains fit-for-purpose, sufficiently address the 'Landlord' duties and responsibilities and structured to ensure the Council complies with the requirements of respective legislation covering the Maintenance and Repair of Tenants' homes and empty properties.
13. This policy has been updated to reflect:
 - Changes to job titles and responsibilities.
 - Updates to regulations and building standards.
 - Additions to incorporate relevant definitions.
 - Processes checked by Officers, to confirm adherence to current working practices and procedures.
14. The Policies salient points cover:-
 - i. Legislative and regulatory context;
 - ii. Definitions;
 - iii. Role and responsibilities;
 - iv. Tenant responsibilities;
 - v. Transparency, influence and accountability;
 - vi. Arrangements; and
 - vii. Procedures.

Corporate plan priorities

15. The Council is committed to its legal and moral obligations as a Landlord of social housing. Every Tenant has the right to a warm, secure, safe and decent home and to be treated with dignity and fairness.
16. This policy supports the council's People Priority 3; meeting housing needs and People Priority 2: Empowering our residents to live healthy, connected and fulfilling lives. We are working with our housing tenants to understand their needs and provide high quality service standards in line with the government's new Social Housing Charter and regulatory regime measured through the percentage scores for the 5 safety and compliance management Tenant Satisfaction Measures (TSMs).

Consultation undertaken

17. Consultation has taken place with a wide range of housing officers, including the tenant engagement team, in shaping the revised document. Consideration has been given to national best practice,

Ombudsman spotlight reports, Regulatory Notices, and the learning from corporate complaints.

18. The revised policy draft was presented to the Tenant Involvement Group (TIG) on 7 August 2025 and were positively received. The Tenant Involvement Group receive regular service updates on our approach in dealing with the maintenance and repairs of their homes, and in shaping our tenant guides and content published in Hometalk and on our website.
19. Due to significant changes to the existing Void and Mutual exchange policy, a draft version of HLSPOL08, was sent to TIG for review. Feedback has welcomed changes in terminology. A list of alternative resident friendly words will also be recommended by TIG for future adoption.
20. It is intended that the revised Policy is formally adopted thereafter by Portfolio Holder for Housing and Homelessness Decision.

Financial and resource implications

21. The Housing Revenue Account Budget and Housing Public Sector Capital Expenditure Programme 2025/26 was approved by Council at its meeting on 22nd January 2025. The policy activities proposed are all contained within existing budgets.
22. It was agreed for there to be an enhanced level of capital spending of £18.939 million to deliver an increased level of improvement works, to include fire safety and statutory compliance as well as decarbonisation works and energy efficiency measures.
23. Funding of £2.234 million was approved for 2025/26 cyclical maintenance budget to include resources for the mainstream statutory safety requirements, such as gas and electrical inspections.

Legal implications

24. There are significant risks and implications for the council should the council fail in its compliance duties in any area, including unlimited fines and punitive legal action that can be taken against it.
25. An increased number of complaints may lead to greater intervention by our legal teams and increase in the risk of maladministration findings by the Ombudsman. The Housing Ombudsman can also issue unlimited fines for serious failings or maladministration and will refer wider breaches to the regulator.

26. Poor quality or unmaintained homes increase the risk of tenant harm and property damage.

Risk assessment

27. The policies recognise and acknowledge the serious impact to safety risks and well-being of residents that can arise when statutory regimes are not undertaken:-
- a) **Increased Risk of Accidents and Injuries:** Without proper safety measures, buildings become more prone to accidents, leading to injuries or fatalities.
 - b) **Legal Consequences:** Non-compliance with safety regulations can result in legal actions, fines, and penalties for individuals and the council.
 - c) **Financial Losses:** Accidents and legal issues can lead to substantial financial losses due to compensation claims and increased insurance premiums.
 - d) **Damage to Reputation:** Failure to adhere to safety standards poses the risk of suffering reputational damage, affecting relationships and resident trust in the Council as Landlord.
 - e) **Operational Disruptions:** Safety incidents can cause significant disruptions to operations, leading to delays, decreased productivity and additional cost.
28. The Council foster a collaborative partnership culture to support our tenants and seek to resolve issues raised swiftly. This collaboration supports our tenant engagement strategic priorities of '**listening to our tenants**', '**putting tenants first**', '**knowing our tenants**', and '**how we communicate with tenants**', to ensure everything we aim to achieve is supported by the tenants' voice, and those who will implement the actions.
29. In certain limited circumstances, it will not be possible for the Council to meet the timescales set out within the policies for reasons beyond our control, but we will take all reasonable steps to do so.

Environmental / Climate and nature implications

30. The Council will implement data collection and insight measures, making every contact count to assist with informing us of the possible risks to our properties and residents so that we can undertake proactive measures and prevent repeated visits or reparation work.

31. The Council considers climate change as part of the tender evaluation questions for every tender. Allocating a percentage of the awarded scores to contractors who are working towards a reduction in carbon emissions, or through other improvements like recycling of packaging or commitment to reduce paper-based activities.

Equalities implications

32. Some future tenants may be more vulnerable due to age, health, or other factors, and may struggle to identify or report issues with repairs or equipment. The Council's approach to maintaining empty homes considers these needs by ensuring properties are safe, well-prepared, and compliant before re-letting. Our Tenancy Sustainment Team also plays a key role in helping vulnerable tenants settle into their new homes and maintain their health and wellbeing.
33. Where utility supplies are capped for safety reasons in empty properties, the implications are managed under the Council's Gas and electrical Safety Policy. While this policy focuses on compliance, it also ensures that welfare assessments and practical support are in place for incoming tenants affected by such actions, helping to ensure a safe and smooth transition into their new home.

Crime and disorder implications

34. It is important for housing providers to ensure that statutory safety work is carried out to a high standard. Poorly performing landlords can be fined or prosecuted for failing to take the necessary measures to protect tenants.

Data protection / Information governance / ICT implications

35. The council's asset management system holds all records for the council's properties, the responsive repairs system is used to log all repairs, and the dynamic scheduling system plans all appointments for operatives. These systems are in the process of being replaced due to aging software and potential security concerns.
36. Careful consideration of resident data and their individual needs is critical in maintaining high levels of compliance in all areas.
37. The council receives digital compliance records from several external providers, with these managed with data sharing agreements and internal control procedures.

Conclusion

38. The revised policy sets out how the Council will meet its legal responsibilities as a landlord, ensuring homes are safe, well maintained, and compliant. It clearly defines roles and responsibilities and provides a transparent framework that enables residents to understand our approach and hold us to account.
39. The council prioritises the safety of its tenants and its homes, which is reflected in this report, performance measures, TSMs, its corporate plan, and transformation journey.

Appendices:

1. HLSPOL08 Maintenance and Repairs to Empty Homes and Homes undergoing Mutual Exchange Policy

Background Papers:

None.



Maintenance and repairs to empty homes and homes undergoing mutual exchange policy

Housing Landlord Services

HLSPOL08

Document publish date TBC 2025

Version number 1.1

Version	Author	Date	Changes made
1.1	Sophie Tuffin	30/06/2025	New

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1 Document history

Name of policy	Empty Homes and Homes undergoing Mutual Exchange Policy
Document ref	HLSPOL08
Purpose of policy	New Forest District Council is committed to providing an effective maintenance service in order to comply with its statutory responsibilities, to ensure high levels of resident satisfaction and to protect the value of its housing stock. This policy details the maintenance and repair arrangements covering empty homes and those properties undergoing mutual exchange owned by the Council. Gas safety, Electrical safety, Condensation, Damp, and Mould and general Maintenance and Repairs are not covered by this policy. Separate policies covering these respective areas are in place to support this policy.
Policy applies to	This policy and the subsequent arrangements apply to all directly and indirectly employed housing staff within New Forest District Council and, where appropriate, tenants, contractors, and members of the public.
Lead officer	Sophie Tuffin – Service Manager
First issued	1 November 2019
Latest update	30 June 2025
Version control	V1.0 1 November 2019 V1.1 30 June 2025
Review period	At least every three years from date of issue or because of legislative, organisational change or an incident investigation.
Update overview	June 2025, periodic review, update to structure of service arrangements, roles and responsibilities, updated into new policy template.

2 Introduction

- 2.1 This policy details the arrangements for the statutory inspections thereof and the repair, condition and safety standards of empty properties (commonly called 'Voids') and tenancy transfers resulting from mutual exchange to properties owned by the Council prior to letting. It also details the arrangements to reduce the risk of vandalism, theft, flood and arson, as far as reasonably practicable to properties whilst empty.
- 2.2 The Council is responsible for the maintenance, repair and replacement of the structure and common parts of its properties as set out in the Tenancy Agreement.
- 2.3 The Council will ensure that the management and maintenance activities of empty properties reflects the following overall principles:-
- providing a flexible, customer-oriented empty property management and maintenance service that gives priority to the safety, comfort and condition of properties;
 - take all reasonable steps to protect empty properties from the risk of vandalism, theft, flood and arson;
 - ensuring empty properties are turned around as quickly as possible to minimise rent loss and provide homes to those most in need;
 - repairing and maintaining the empty properties to the Decent Homes Standard;
 - meeting the Council's legal and contractual obligations;
 - ensuring that prior to letting, empty properties meet the safety, performance and quality standards set by the Council;
 - ensuring the services provided are cost effective and obtaining the best value for residents;
 - ensuring the principles of health and safety are central to working procedures and practices;

- maximising economic benefits where possible by creating employment and training opportunities in maintenance related work and by purchasing goods and services locally;
- maximising opportunities for resident involvement in determining the quality of the services delivered;
- measuring and monitoring customer satisfaction to continuously improve services.

3 Legislative and regulatory context

- 3.1 In addition to complying with the terms of the Tenancy Agreement, the Council will ensure that it complies with best practice, relevant policy and statute when repairing and maintaining its properties.

The Building Safety Act 2022

- 3.2 Introduces sweeping reforms to improve the safety of buildings. It aims to ensure that residents are safer in their homes and that those responsible for building safety are held accountable.

The Act created three new bodies to provide effective oversight of the new regime: the Building Safety Regulator, the National Regulator of Construction Products, and the New Homes Ombudsman.

The Social Housing (Regulation) Act 2023

- 3.3 The Social Housing (Regulation) Act 2023 makes provision about the regulation of social housing; about the terms of approved schemes for the investigation of housing complaints; about the powers and duties of a housing ombudsman appointed under an approved scheme; about hazards affecting social housing; and for connected purposes.

Housing Health and Safety Rating System

- 3.4 The Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS) introduced by The Housing Act 2004 is a risk-based evaluation tool to help landlords identify and protect against potential risks and hazards to health and safety from any deficiencies identified in dwellings.

Other Legislation, Approved Codes of Practice and Guidance Notes

- 3.5 Other legislation, approved codes of practice and guidance notes relating to Landlord responsibilities, but which is not exhaustive:-
- a) The Building Act 1984;
 - b) Section 92 Housing Act 1985;
 - c) Section 15 Housing act 1988;
 - d) The Localism Act 2011;
 - e) The Building Regulations 2010 (as amended);

- f) BS 7671:2018 Requirements for Electrical Installations – IET Wiring Regulations (18th Edition);
- g) Chronically Sick and Disabled Persons Act 1970;
- h) Control of Asbestos Regulations 2012;
- i) Defective Premises Act 1972;
- j) Electrical Equipment (Safety) Regulations 2016;
- k) Environmental Protection Act 1990;
- l) Equality Act 2010;
- m) Gas Safety (Installation and Use) Regulations 1998 (as amended);
- n) The Housing Health and Safety Rating System (England) Regulations 2005;
- o) The Landlord and Tenant Act 1985 (as amended by the Homes (Fitness for Human Habitation) Act 2018);
- p) The Leasehold Reform, Housing and Development Act 1993;
- q) The Secure Tenants of Local Authorities (Compensation for Improvements) Regulations 1994;
- r) The Smoke and carbon Monoxide Alarm (Amendment) Regulations 2022;
- s) Fire Safety Act 2021;
- t) CDM Regulations 2015;
- u) Homes (Fitness for Habitation) Act 2018;
- v) General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) 2016

Approved Codes of Practices

- a) Safety in the installation and use of gas systems and appliances (Gas Safety (Installation and Use) Regulations 1998 (as amended))

Guidance Notes

- a) Housing Health and Safety Rating System Operating System Guidance - February 2006;

- b) A Decent Home: Definition and guidance for implementation – June 2006

- 3.6 The policy considers recommendations of the Housing Ombudsman Spotlight Report on Damp and Mould and refers residents to the Councils Condensation, Damp, and Mould Policy.

4 Definitions

Competent Person

4.1 Person(s) whilst not required to process specific academic qualifications but:-

- understand the relevant housing 'Landlord' legislation and responsibilities;
- have appropriate training, knowledge and experience in the principles of property maintenance;
- understand the hazards, risk and other relevant factors with occupants at special risk within the premises;
- if carrying out property safety or maintenance surveys, have appropriate training/experience in this field;
- if carrying out property maintenance activities, have appropriate training/experience in their related trade field.

Duty Holder

4.2 The duty holder is legally responsible for the safety of employees and any relevant persons occupying or using the premises under its control. The duty holder may delegate their responsibilities to another competent person(s) on larger property portfolios.

Energy Performance Certificate (EPC)

4.3 An Energy Performance Certificate shows how energy-efficient a property is. The document includes estimated energy costs, as well as a summary of the home's energy performance-related features.

4.4 The property will be given an energy-efficiency grade between A and G, with A being the most energy-efficient - and G being the worst.

Housing Health and Safety Rating System

4.5 The housing health and safety rating system introduced by The Housing Act 2004 is a risk-based evaluation tool to help landlords identify and protect against potential risks and hazards to health and safety from any deficiencies identified in dwellings. Abbreviated to HHSRS.

Inspection

- 4.6 A visual inspection of a properties condition to establish whether any remedial works are necessary.

Landlord

- 4.7 The owner of property (such as houses, land or flats) that is leased or rented to another.

Notional Life

- 4.8 The expected life expectancy of a component, fitting, product or repair.

Home condition report

- 4.9 A survey to collect information relating to the Government's Decent Home Standard, and about the property in general. An assessment of the main internal and external parts of the property, which identifies when they are likely to require replacing, gathering information on energy efficiency and conducting asbestos management survey on homes built before 2000.

Tenant

- 4.10 A person who occupies land or property rented from a landlord.

5 Roles and responsibilities

- 5.1 The Council will ensure that all Council housing staff are fully aware of their role in meeting the Council's responsibilities as 'Landlord'.

Chief Executive

- 5.2 Responsibility for complying with duties as 'Landlord' rests with the 'responsible person'. The 'responsible person' as Landlord is represented by the Chief Executive together with the Strategic Directors who collectively form the 'Executive Management Team'.

Strategic Director Housing and Communities

- 5.3 The Strategic Director Housing and Communities has overall strategic responsibility for the Council's approach to its empty homes and is responsible for ensuring that the requirements of the Housing Act 2004, Landlord and Tenant Act 1985 and supporting Regulations are applied and implemented and to nominate one or more persons to act on their behalf to discharge their responsibilities.
- 5.4 The Strategic Director Housing and Communities also acts as the registered Lead Officer for health and safety with the Regulator of Social Housing.

Assistant Director - Housing

- 5.5 Nominated Assistant Director Housing to support the Strategic Director Housing and Communities in delivering the Council's strategic housing priorities and approach in maintaining its social housing assets controlled by the Council and is responsible for ensuring that the requirements of the Housing Act 2004, Landlord and Tenant Act 1985 and supporting Regulations are applied and implemented.

Service Manager – Housing Maintenance Programmes and Servicing

- 5.6 Operational responsibility for the overall effectiveness of the Housing Landlord Services including the Empty Homes and Mutual Exchange Policy, arrangements and action plan for social housing controlled by the Council.

Housing Service Managers

- 5.7 Responsible for the delivery of services within their respective areas that impact on the overall effectiveness of the Housing Landlord Services including the Empty Homes and Mutual Exchange Policy and will:-
- support and assist the Service Manager for Housing Maintenance Programmes and Servicing in discharging and undertaking their duties and respond to matters within their respective service areas.

Housing Decarbonisation and Programme Manager

- 5.8 Responsible for leading on housing asset management, maintenance and decarbonisation strategy. Their role also includes responsibilities for developing planned and cyclical maintenance programmes and maintaining property condition data.

Gas and Electrical Manager

- 5.9 Responsible for ensuring the Council's compliance with its landlord statutory duties and obligations, reporting directly to the Service Manager - Housing Maintenance Programmes and Servicing.

Maintenance Delivery Manager

- 5.10 Responsible for the day-to-day management and delivery of responsive repairs and maintenance activities, which are the responsibility of the Council in accordance with detailed arrangements and policy.
- 5.11 Where contractors are being managed, regular monitoring is to be included to ensure risks that could cause harm or injury have been considered and adequate precautions are in place to minimise risk to as low a level as is reasonably practicable.

Maintenance Delivery Planning Supervisor

- 5.12 Responsible for the detailed arrangements necessary in ensuring that empty homes repairs and maintenance activities and statutory inspections, which are the responsibility of the Council are acted upon in a timely manner to minimise rent loss and that empty properties meet the quality standards set out in this policy.

Repairs and Void Supervisors

- 5.13 Responsible for the day-to-day supervision and delivery of empty home activities, which are the responsibility of the Council.
- 5.14 Where contractors are being managed, regular monitoring is to be included to ensure risks that could cause harm or injury have been considered and adequate precautions are in place to minimise risk to as low a level as is reasonably practicable

Housing Tenancy Sustainment and Operations Manager

- 5.15 Responsible for the detailed arrangements necessary in ensuring that repair and maintenance activities, relating to empty homes are acted upon in a timely manner within their respective areas of control.
- 5.16 Where contractors are being managed, regular monitoring is to be included to ensure risks that could cause harm or injury have been considered and adequate precautions are in place to minimise risk to as low a level as is reasonably practicable.

Corporate Health and Safety Team

- 5.17 Responsible for guidance and advice in respect of health and safety to all Council owned housing stock and will:-
- Conduct audits to ensure that the provisions within this Policy are being enforced to the standard required;
 - Investigate accidents and near miss incidents and introduce controls to reduce the risk of such incidents recurring, to reduce financial loss and to improve overall adherence to health and safety legislation.

Employees

- 5.18 All employees of New Forest District Council, irrespective of their position, has a responsibility for safety and will:-
- take reasonable care for their own Health and Safety and that of other persons who may be adversely affected by activities relating to the repair and maintenance of the Council's homes including members of the public, tenants, visitors, and contractors;

- co-operate with the Council and its managers to enable compliance with this policy and the legal duties it holds;
- remove or reduce hazards that, in their opinion, may present a serious risk to health, of themselves or others;
- report hazards that have been removed or that may present a serious risk to users;
- report concerns where vulnerable residents may be at additional risk.

6 Termination

6.1 The Council will deem a property to be empty in the following circumstances, where:-

- the tenant has formally terminated the tenancy by written notice;
- the tenant has died and there is no successor;
- the tenant has abandoned the tenancy, where the appropriate action has been taken to end the tenancy;
- the tenant has been evicted, following court action for possession.

6.2 Upon giving the required notice to quit as per the tenancy agreement, tenancies terminate on a Sunday. Tenants or their representatives are required to deliver all sets of keys to vacated properties to their local housing office by midday on Monday. Where keys are delivered late, unless there are exceptional circumstances, tenants may incur a further week's rent. This decision is at the discretion of the Tenancy Sustainment Manager.

7 Empty homes processing

Objectives and processing principles

- 7.1 Empty Homes (commonly known as voids) will be processed to ensure that properties are turned around at the earliest opportunity, rent loss is minimised and are available to let to a new tenant at an acceptable standard meeting the Council's legal obligations and the terms of the new tenancy.
- 7.2 There are several external factors that may influence the length of time a property lies empty:-
- Moving from temporary or emergency accommodation;
 - Lengthy repair periods (where major repairs are being carried out or if contractors require to order goods);
 - Vandalism or anti-social behaviour.
- 7.3 Five key principles will be applied when processing empty properties these are set out below:-

Statutory

To comply with all regulations and legislation as a social housing provider.

Safe

Properties will be safe and free of hazards arising from faults or deficiencies which could cause harm.

Functional

Properties will be functional for the enjoyment of the incoming tenant:

Flexible

Where items left by the previous tenant and found to be in good serviceable condition, and where following inspection are found to be safe for reuse shall be offered to the incoming tenant.

Clean and Clear

Properties will be clear of waste and to a good standard of cleanliness prior to letting.

Pre-void inspection

- 7.4 The Council will carry out inspections of properties at the earliest opportunity. By appointment with the outgoing tenant, a pre-void inspection may be carried out within 7 working days of a termination notification by the Maintenance Delivery Planning Supervisor or Void Supervisor and where necessary a Tenancy Sustainment Officer or Tenancy Sustainment Assistant to discuss the procedures relating to vacation which must be clearly advised both verbally and in writing.
- 7.5 The pre-void inspection shall determine the overall condition and whether the property can be re-let following statutory inspections or requires repairs to bring it up to the Council's standard. The pre-void inspection shall categorise the properties likely 'Ready to Let' status based on the volume of necessary work. Any repairs deemed to fall outside normal wear, and tear shall be the responsibility of the outgoing tenant, and if not completed or not completed to a standard which the Council is satisfied will be recharged in accordance with the Council's 'Chargeable Repairs' section of the Housing Landlord Services Maintenance and Repairs Policy.
- 7.6 The details of the pre-void inspection shall be clearly recorded, and any chargeable repairs noted and countersigned by the outgoing tenant.

Tenant required works and repairs

- 7.7 The tenant will be advised of repairs they must carry out before they leave where responsibility falls to them under their tenancy agreement, with details being confirmed to them in writing.

Property condition on departure

- 7.8 Tenants are required to remove all personal belongings, including any waste or debris, before vacating the property. Failure to do so may result in the full cost of removal being recharged to the outgoing tenant. Tenants will be liable for any damage caused to the property, including its distributions systems and associated utilities within the property boundary, for example heating pipework and electrical wiring. In such cases, the full cost of the repair and any necessary works or removals will be recharged to the outgoing tenant. This supports the upkeep of our homes and ensure properties are maintained to a good standard for future occupants.
- 7.9 The property must be left in a clean and tidy condition. If additional cleaning is necessary, the full cost of a professional deep clean may be recharged.
- 7.10 Internal decorations must be returned to a neutral or moderate colour scheme prior to departure.
- 7.11 Any alterations made to the property must be reinstated to their original condition unless prior written agreement has been obtained from the Council. Failure to comply may result in the full cost of restoration being recharged.

Provisional allocation

- 7.12 The council operates a choice based letting system, a method to allocate social housing in a more transparent and user-driven way. To ensure that allocations are made giving full consideration of the customer needs, the property and any issues in the local area. Prospective tenants will be selected in accordance with the council's Allocations Policy.
- 7.13 Once the required works have been agreed and the prospective tenant has accepted the property, a tenancy start date will be confirmed. When setting this date, consideration will be given to the scope of the work required and any specific needs of the tenant. Prospective tenants will be informed of the agreed date and notified in advance if delays are anticipated—for example, if additional repairs are identified during the course of the works.

- 7.14 The Council will make every effort to complete all essential repairs to a satisfactory standard. In some cases where external gardening works, fencing or concrete slab removal can be safely completed post tenancy commencement, properties will continue to be offered to the prospective tenant who will be invited to sign the Tenancy Agreement. The terms and conditions of the agreement will be clearly explained to ensure the tenant fully understands both their responsibilities and those of the landlord.
- 7.15 The new tenant will also be provided with appropriate advice about:-
- a) paying their rent.
 - b) applying for benefits, if required.
 - c) setting up utilities
 - d) reporting any repairs.
 - e) fire safety
 - f) use of heating and hot water provision

Private sector leased (PSL)

- 7.16 PSL are properties that are privately owned but leased by the Council to provide temporary accommodation, often for people who are homeless or in urgent housing need. While ownership remains with the private owner, the Council is responsible for limited property maintenance of a low value during the lease.
- 7.17 The Council will work with private sector landlords to resolve major defects, repairs and capital component replacement as they arise.
- 7.18 If a property is being returned to the private owner, the Council will complete work, to return it to the condition presented at the start of the let.
- 7.19 If being relet the council will discuss repairs with the private owners ensuring it complies with the Council's empty homes standard.

Empty property inspection

- 7.20 Upon receipt of the keys, the locks to the property will be changed to a temporary void key. A full empty property inspection will be carried out to determine the overall condition of the property following vacation and whether any repairs deemed to fall outside normal wear and tear, and the responsibility of the tenant have been actioned or require recharge. The properties likely 'Ready to Let' status will be reviewed and confirmed.
- 7.21 The empty property inspection will confirm the schedule of works required prior to commencement and meter readings will be taken for gas, electricity and water utilities and provided to the current utility providers. All Schedules are returned within 24 hours.

Adaptations

- 7.22 Some adaptations may be completed before the tenancy commences, these will be dependent on the individual needs and must be specified in an Occupational Therapist report.
- 7.23 Adaptations left by the outgoing tenant will be where possible serviced and left for the incoming tenant. Mechanical equipment like stair lifts, through floor lifts or warden call systems, will be assessed for age and condition and removed where there is a risk of failure.

Asbestos survey

- 7.24 Prior to any works being undertaken the council will ensure that there is an up-to-date asbestos survey for the property considered appropriate for the scope of repairs being carried out.

Energy performance certification (EPC)

- 7.25 All homes will be let with an in-date EPC. Where this is missing or expired, a registered Domestic Energy Assessor will undertake an inspection as soon as keys are available.

- 7.26 In support of the Council's Greener Housing Strategy, the Council is committed to improving the energy efficiency of its housing stock. Aiming to exceed the national Minimum Energy Efficiency Standards (MEES) By targeting Energy Performance Certificates (EPC) band C by 2028. This proactive approach demonstrates a commitment to sustainability, reducing carbon emissions, and ensuring warmer, healthier homes for our tenants.
- 7.27 Wherever feasible we will retrofit existing homes to meet EPC band C, prioritising a 'fabric first' approach to improve the building envelope. Where appropriate, The Council, will also integrate renewable technologies to boost energy performance and support net-zero ambitions, utilising government funding where available.

Utility management

- 7.28 Meter readings for gas, electricity, and water will be taken and submitted to TSM Services, who complete void energy management services to include:-
- smart meter installation;
 - electric key/gas card resets;
 - remote top-ups;
 - isolation switch installation;
 - consolidated billing;
 - on-site training.
- 7.29 The Council will work with a third-party energy management service, to aid in the management of debt on utility meters which can contribute to extended relet periods.
- 7.30 Pay as you go (PAYG) meters will be transferred into the Council's name, once operational both gas and electrical meters will be loaded with credit ready for void work to start. At the start of the new tenancy, the meter position will be zero for both standing charges and available credit, ready for the new tenant.

Quality assurance

- 7.31 A full quality assurance inspection will be conducted upon completion of all void works. Any identified shortfalls in standards will be addressed as a high priority to ensure the property meets re-letting standards.

8 Security and access

Termination without notice

- 8.1 Termination of tenancy without prior notice may occur under the following circumstances:-

Keys returned without notice

If keys are returned without prior communication, the tenancy will be considered terminated. The notice period will begin from the date the keys are received, and the tenant will remain liable for rent during this period. Where possible, access should be arranged to carry out pre-void inspections and repairs.

Anonymous key return

If keys are returned anonymously, the property will be treated as abandoned in line with the Council's Tenancy Policy.

Death of a Tenant

With No Successor: The Council will work sensitively with next of kin to arrange property clearance and assess whether to recover void-related losses.

With No Next of Kin: The Council will coordinate with third parties to manage and dispose of personal belongings. In complex cases, a full inventory with photographs will be created, pending approval for disposal.

Repossession

In cases of repossession, the tenancy ends on the date specified by the court or through the abandonment procedure. The Council will follow the Void Management Policy, including access arrangements, inventory, storage of belongings, and recharges where applicable.

Property security

- 8.2 New locks will be installed on all empty properties. Keys will be securely delivered to a local Council office for collection by the incoming tenant.

- 8.3 The need for securing empty properties will be assessed on a case-by-case basis, considering property type, location, and risk of vandalism, theft, or squatting. While security is essential, care will be taken to avoid creating a negative perception for existing or prospective tenants.

9 Empty property considerations

Major component replacement

- 9.1 The Council will review the lifecycle dates of planned replacement works such as kitchens, bathrooms, and heating systems against Decent Homes and HHSRS (Housing Health and Safety Rating System) standards. The Council will consider current smoke alarm provision ensuring the minimum category LD3 standard is met and potential for upgrading to LD2 standard. This assessment will determine whether components should be replaced while the property is empty, ensuring compliance and improving living standards before re-letting.
- 9.2 The council may also delay the completion of some works if the property is known to be included on a planned programme in the next 12 months.

Sub-contracted work

- 9.3 To support the capacity of its direct trade workforce and ensure efficient turnaround of void properties, the Council will engage external contractors to help manage workflow and minimise the duration that homes remain unoccupied.

Pests and infestation

- 9.4 Where there is evidence of pests and/or infestation, pest control measures will be taken, and any pest control work carried out in accordance with the Animal Welfare Act 2006, Wild Mammals Protection Act 1996 and Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981.
- 9.5 The property will be inspected for structural defects, holes through walls and-the-like and any such defect repaired and/or made good prior to letting.

Seasonal considerations

- 9.6 The need to take action to protect empty properties in the winter varies enormously between property types, ages and different locations. At the empty property inspection, the decision will be made whether to mitigate frost and flood risk through:-
- Regular inspections;

- Draining down of any water supply pipes and water heating systems;
- Timed, low-level heating.

9.7 Homes empty for 30 days or longer will be reported to the Council's Insurance Risk Officer to assess and support the identification of risk reducing measures of long-standing empty homes.

Legionella

9.8 Where single dwelling properties have been unoccupied for one week or more, the water system will be thoroughly flushed on a weekly basis with the minimum release of aerosol i.e. removal of any shower heads prior to flushing and prior to occupation. These inspections will be logged, confirming the date, time and person completing each flush. Records will be held by the tenancy sustainment team and made accessible to the Gas and Electrical Manager responsible for legionella.

9.9 Where dwellings have been unoccupied for 2 months or more and have not received regular flushing. Risk will be managed by chemically disinfecting the system prior to occupation (where systems permit). This should take place no more than one week from the proposed occupation date and be undertaken by a reputable contractor. These inspections will be logged, confirming the date, time and person completing each flush, and records will be held by the tenancy sustainment team and made accessible to the Gas and Electrical Manager responsible for legionella.

Home condition report

9.10 The Council will take advantage of the opportunity to undertake a Home condition report of a property whilst it is empty, where the Council holds no stock data or where the last inspection undertaken exceeds 5 years or is due to be inspected within the next 12 months.

Post void work inspection

9.11 A quality assurance inspection will be carried out upon completion of all void work and any shortfalls in standards identified will be remedied as high priority.

9.12 Meter Readings managed by TSM Void energy services, will transfer to the incoming tenants.

- 9.13 New locks will be fitted, and keys delivered to the local housing office ready for collection by the incoming tenant.

Completion

- 9.14 The Maintenance Delivery Planning Supervisor will ensure communication with the Tenant Sustainment Manager that all empty home records are recorded on the Councils tenancy/property management database, with the date the property is available.

10 Ready to let priority

10.1 The Housing Maintenance Service categorise the types of empty homes, expected time scales for the completion of repairs and is reflected in the Councils monitoring. 'Ready to Let' target shall be categorised as:-

Category A - Empty homes which are handed back to the council in good condition, requiring minor repairs, which can be relet within 10 working days.

Category B - Empty homes handed back in average condition, these are serviceable and functional but require repairs not exceeding 15 working days.

Category C - Empty homes handed back in poor condition, requiring significant repair. Time scales are defined by the complexity of work required.

Category S - Empty homes handed back, utilising sub-contracted services of local contractors

Category			
A	B	C	S
Good condition	Average condition	Poor condition	Sub-contracted
- Statutory inspections; - Serviceable and functional; - Minor repairs (1-5 days); - Clean & Secure	- Statutory inspections; - Serviceable and functional; - Repair schedule (5-10 days); - Clean & Secure	- Statutory inspections; - Non-serviceable or functional; - Significant repair schedule; - Clean & Secure	- Statutory inspections; - Serviceable and functional; - Repair schedule (20 days); - Clean & Secure
10 working days Or less	15 working days Or less	Defined by Volume of Works (as soon as reasonably practicable)	20 working days Or less

11 Empty property letting standard

- 11.1 Having an empty property letting standard is essential in ensuring a consistent approach is met efficiency of repairs and statutory inspection turnaround, homes are safe, warm and secure, and tenant satisfaction when re-letting properties to achieve a consistent standard.
- 11.2 The Council will provide homes which shall be serviceable, in good working order and free from serious defect. The Housing Maintenance Service shall carry out all statutory obligations in respect of empty property management. Details on individual property component letting standards, can be found at annex 1.

Kitchen and bathroom

- 11.3 Will meet decent homes standard. Be clean, safe and functional with a minimum life expectancy of 12 months or more at the time of letting. Where a kitchen is due to be replaced within 12 months, the Council will decide based on condition to replace while empty or add to a capital replacement programme.

Electrical installation

- 11.4 The Council will take advantage of the opportunity whilst a property is empty, to ensure that the electrical installation meets the minimum design and components standard expected for modern living.

Heating and hot water

- 11.5 A primary source of heating and hot water will be provided which is both safe and reliable. Each habitable room will be provided with a fixed form of heating and be able to maintain a minimum indoor temperature of 18 °C. Hot water provision will provide adequate hot water suitable for washing and bathing.
- 11.6 Heating and hot water systems will be safe and functional with a minimum life expectancy of 12 months or more at the time of letting. Where a heating system is due to be replaced within 12 months, the Council will decide based on condition to replace while empty or add to a capital replacement programme.

Fossil fuel – Secondary heating

- 11.7 The council will remove secondary sources of heat and associated open flued appliances due to the risks to residents, this includes the removal of gas fires, solid fuel and multi fuel burning appliances and open fires, which supports the council's climate change and decarbonisation targets.

Glazing

- 11.8 Will be safe and functional with a minimum life expectancy of 12 months or more at the time of letting. Where windows are due to be replaced within 12 months, the Council will decide based on condition to replace while empty or add to a capital replacement programme.

Gardens

- 11.9 Gardens will be clear and left in seasonal condition. Ground floor flats will be returned to their intended communal condition, with pots, benches, fencing and outbuildings removed. Pedestrian pathways from front gate to front door and rear door to brick built shed (where applicable) will be maintained and free from trip hazards.

Fire doors

- 11.10 Fire rated front doors and where applicable internal doors within houses and flats, will be visually inspected for integrity and requirements to meet the minimum fire door standards. In circumstances where it is not possible to determine if the required standard has been met, the door(s) will be replaced prior to letting.

Occupancy

- 11.11 After a new tenant has accepted the offer of a property, keys will only be provided upon completion of the tenancy agreement and all appropriate paperwork.
- 11.12 The new tenant will be provided with a resident information pack, providing residents with clear, timely, and accessible information as they move into their new home.

Welcome Packs will include key information

11.12 A welcome pack will be provided to all new tenants, which will include key information:-

- Utility setup guidance (including meter readings);
- Key Contact information for repair reporting and tenancy sustainment team;
- Emergency Contact details;
- Copy of gas safety certificate;
- Copy of electrical installation condition report;
- Copy of energy performance certificate;
- Operating instructions for heating system, together with other appliances, as appropriate;
- Asbestos guidance;
- Waste Collection and local services.

Tenant Recharges

11.13 Were damage has occurred which is not considered fair wear and tear, the Council will recharge the tenant the cost of damage. Recharges will be communicated to outgoing tenants at the earliest opportunity. Pictures identifying the damage will be taken and the tenant will be notified of damage and subsequent charge.

12 Measuring quality and performance

- 12.1 The Council is dedicated to delivering its repairs and maintenance services to a consistently high standard, with a strong focus on customer satisfaction. To support this commitment, service performance will be regularly monitored and managed using a variety of evaluation methods and performance monitoring dashboards.
- 12.2 Key measures in relation to empty property management are:-
- a) Number of empty properties;
 - b) Average re-let time Category A – S;
 - e) Average empty property costs. Category A – S.
- 12.3 Performance information and benchmarking data will be reported to the council via the governance and scrutiny framework arrangements, including but not limited to: regular portfolio holder briefings, housing statutory compliance board, tenant involvement group and twice yearly through the publication of the Housing Interim and Annual Compliance reporting regime.
- 12.4 Tenants will be given the opportunity to provide feedback relating to the empty property management and allocations process by completing a New Tenancy Survey. Feedback and satisfaction will be monitored with resident comments used to improve service delivery.
- 12.5 The Maintenance Delivery Planning Supervisor will oversee post void work inspections, which will form the basis of key performance measurements for subcontractors and the Council's own direct trade workforce to monitor quality. Recorded as part of quarterly contract meetings.

13 Homes undergoing mutual exchange

- 13.1 This section relates to the repairs, maintenance and compliance effecting eligible tenants who have a legal right to assignment by way of exchange to swap homes with each other, which is commonly referred to as a Mutual Exchange. Supporting the Council to make the best use of its housing stock to achieve high levels of customer service offered through mutual exchanges.
- 13.2 When tenants apply for a mutual exchange, they are agreeing to swap homes with another tenant. Unlike standard empty homes, mutual exchanges are tenant led. The incoming tenant must agree to accept the condition of the property as seen. The Council will remain responsible for all landlord obligations but will not carry out any improvements or internal decorating unless this work is already scheduled.

Landlord responsibilities

- 13.3 We will ensure compliance with housing legislation, the Regulator of Social Housing's consumer standards and ensure that mutual exchanges are actioned within the guidelines and time periods specified.
- 13.4 We will subscribe to an internet-based mutual exchange service **HomeSwapper** giving residents free access to view other properties and advertise their own.
- 13.5 We will work with other social housing providers to ensure the smooth process of the exchange.
- 13.6 We will effectively communicate with residents to provide help and guidance ensuring the exchange is appropriate and people understand the implications of an exchange, their rights and their responsibilities.

Tenant responsibilities

- 13.7 Incoming tenants agree to accept the property in its existing condition at the time of exchange. It is their responsibility to carry out their own inspection of the property prior to the exchange and to make any necessary arrangements or agreements regarding its condition directly with the outgoing tenant.

13.8 After the exchange has taken place, incoming tenants will assume responsibility for any damage or alterations made by the outgoing tenant, as well as for any outstanding repairs deemed to be the tenant's responsibility. This includes missing doors, flooring, garden condition and structures. It also includes tasks such as internal decoration, minor repairs, cleaning, and the removal of any waste or refuse left at the property.

Pre-inspection

13.9 Prior to a mutual exchange, an inspection of the property will be undertaken to identify repairs required, health and safety issues, damage caused by or alterations made to the property by the existing tenant, confirming the property is in a reasonable condition. Where the property is found to be in poor condition or poses a health and safety risk the exchange may be suspended until items are resolved.

Data protection

13.10 Tenant permission is required for the Council to share information with the other landlord. The tenant gives consent for this when they sign the mutual exchange application form.

Statutory inspections

13.11 The Council will ensure the property is safe and legally compliant at the point of exchange. We will ensure our property has valid gas and electrical certificates before approving the exchange and will arrange for the necessary checks to obtain them. Mutual exchanges will not proceed until these inspections have been completed and valid gas and electrical certificates are obtained. We will:-

- Complete a Landlord Gas Safety Record (LGSR);
- Complete an Electrical Installation Condition Report (EICR);
- Compliance with fire safety regulations;
- Test the safe working of smoke and carbon monoxide alarms;
- Compliance records will be updated in the Council Asset management system;

- A new Landlord Gas Safety Record will be completed once the existing tenant has vacated and before the new tenant moves in;
- Homes with a valid Electrical Installation Condition Report are required to allow the Council access to complete a new report within 5 days of a mutual exchange. Homes without an in-date report will not be permitted to complete a mutual exchange.

Home condition report

13.12 We will carry out an inspection of the property to assess its condition, identify any necessary repairs, and note any damage or alterations that have been made. Both the outgoing and incoming tenants will be informed of any repairs they are responsible for, as well as any works that will need to be completed after the exchange has taken place.

13.13 The Council will endeavour to use this opportunity of access to be transparent with residents involved in mutual exchanges and make the most of every opportunity to identify and address damp and mould, including visits and void periods.

Repair responsibilities during mutual exchange

13.14 We will retain responsibility for all repairs that fall under our obligations as the landlord. Any such repairs reported to us will be completed prior to the exchange, unless our surveyor advises in their report that the work can reasonably be carried out after the new tenant has moved in.

13.15 The outgoing tenant will be required to rectify any damage, neglect, or unauthorised alterations caused by themselves, members of their household, or visitors. They must also complete any repairs deemed to be their responsibility before the exchange takes place.

13.16 In exceptional circumstances such as where there is a health and safety concern or a category 1 hazard under the Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS), we may carry out repairs that are not our responsibility. In such cases, the full cost of the work will be recharged to the outgoing tenant. in accordance with the Council's 'Chargeable Repairs' section of the Housing Landlord Services Maintenance and Repairs Policy. The property must be left clean and free of personal belongings, rubbish and debris.

14 Appendices

Annex 1 Letting component standards

Component	Standard	Action
Utilities		
Water	External stop tap functional. Internal isolation valves functional.	Report to Utility provider. Repair.
Gas	Meter in place & functional. Pre-payment card in place. Debt cleared. Credit on possession.	Utility provder. NFDC. Utility provider. Utility provider to refund outgoing tenant.
Electricity	Meter in place & functional. Pre-payment key in place. Debt cleared. Credit on possession.	Utility provider. NFDC. Utility provider. Utility provider to refund outgoing tenant.
Statutory Inspections		
Gas	Gas Safety Inspection and obtain certificate. Gas fires.	Repair/Replace. Remove.
Electricity	Electrical Condition Report and obtain certificate. Meet Design Standard.	Cat 1 Hazard – Repair/Replace Cat 2 Hazard – Repair/Replace Cat 3 Hazard – Report. Fix, Replace or Install.

Component	Standard	Action
Detection	Smoke detection – functional, in date, hard wired and interlinked, 1 per floor in circulation space, 1 in principal living room and 1 in converted loft spaces (where applicable). Heat detection – functional, in date, hard wired and interlinked with smoke detection, 1 per kitchen. Carbon monoxide detection – functional, in date in each room containing fuelled appliance fixed to wall or ceiling.	Fix, Replace or Install. Fix, Replace or Install. Fix, Replace or Install
Energy Performance	Energy Performance Certificate (Expiry 10 years).	Check/Undertake.
Functionality		
Heating	Functional and no missing components. Test of heating across system	Repair/Replace.
Hot Water	Functional and no missing components.	Repair/Replace.
Gas fires	Service & inspect for safety.	Remove.

Component	Standard	Action
Electric fires	General needs accommodation with gas/oil/solid fuel heating. Older Person accommodation.	Remove.
Kitchen Units	Sink intact. Taps intact. No leaks. Worktop without obvious burns, cracks, breaks or water blown. Door fronts intact. Functional and minimum life expectancy of 12 months or more.	Replace. Replace. Repair. Replace. Replace. Kitchen modernisation.
Cooker space	600 - 620mm cooker space. Gas supply to cooker point. Electrical supply to cooker point.	Provide. Supply and leave capped. Supply.
Washing machine	600 - 620mm washing machine space. No leaks from water supply valves. No leaks from under-sink foul waste connection.	Provide. Cap. Cap.

Component	Standard	Action
Sanitary Ware	Clean bathroom suite. No chips or cracks. Taps intact. No leaks. Toilet pan seat. Cistern flushes. Plugs intact. Functional and minimum life expectancy of 12 months or more.	Clean. Repair/Replace. Replace. Repair. Change in all instances. Repair. Replace. Bathroom modernisation.
As Built Fire Place	No visible sign of damage. Blocked up opening.	Repair. Block up and make good.
Security		
Front Entrance Door	Locks. Glass intact. Handles serviceable. Opens and closes easily. Letterbox intact.	Change in all instances. Replace. Replace. Replace. Replace.
Rear Entrance Door	Locks. Glass intact. Handles serviceable. Opens and closes easily. Letterbox intact.	Change in all instances. Replace. Replace. Replace. Replace.

Component	Standard	Action
Windows	Sound glazing units (excluding misted glazing) Open and close easily. Window restrictors to 1st floor casement. No window locks.	Replace, only where not scheduled on capital work programmes, within 24 months. Repair. Repair. Remove and replace handles.
Joinery		
Floorboards	No serious squeaks. No boards missing. No blown chipboard. No nails protruding. No unhealthy smells or foul stains. No foam carpet residue.	Repair. Repair. Repair. Repair. Clean. Clean. While the Council will not take on the repair and maintenance of flooring and carpets left by the previous tenant, those which are in good, clean condition will be left. Carpets will be cleaned before occupancy.
Bannister, Handrail and Spindles	Intact. Max 100mm C's on Spindles.	Repair. Replace. Where Spindles do not meet current Council standards, they will be over-boarded.

Component	Standard	Action
Internal doors	No holes or visible damage. Handles and latches serviceable. Opens and closes easily.	Replace. Replace. Replace.
Internal glazed doors	Glazing under 1,000mm is laminated	Replace or leave for reuse by incoming tenant.
Decoration		
Plasterwork	Unless otherwise agreed the redecoration of the property is a tenant responsibility, including filling small holes and cracks.	Repairs to spalling areas. Remove nails, screws and fixings. Fill holes. Investigate ceiling cracks. All new plasterwork will be left mist coated, ready for tenant to decorate.
Polystyrene Ceiling Tiles or coving	None present in property	Remove.
Papered Ceilings	None present in property.	Remove.
Decoration Ceilings	N/A	No action
Papered Walls	Patterned wallpaper. Painted Anaglypta style papers in good condition.	Leave where condition is good.
Decoration Walls	N/A	No action
Decoration Woodwork	N/A	No action
External		
Roof	Tiled with no leaks.	Repair.

Component	Standard	Action
PVCU Fascia's, Soffits and Bargeboards	Functional. Clean.	Repair. Clean.
Guttering and downpipes	Intact and functional. Clear of debris.	Repair. Clear.
Paths	No tripping hazards.	Repair.
Steps	No tripping hazards.	Repair.
Fencing	Intact Council boundary fence adjacent to a public footpath or highway. Intact Council boundary fence between adjoining properties. Intact masonry wall	Repair like-for-like or replace before or following tenancy if safe to do so. Repair like-for-like or replace before or following tenancy if safe to do so. Repair or remove and replace with fencing. All fencing as per Maintenance and Repair Policy
Ponds	None.	Infill.
Soft landscaping	Acceptable standard for incoming tenant to maintain.	Cut back overgrown shrubby. In season, avoiding times which risk local and nesting birds. Strim and cut lawn.
Disabled and or Elderly adaptations		
Stair lifts	None unless advised of incoming tenant need.	Remove or service and leave for reuse by incoming tenant.

Component	Standard	Action
Level access shower	Functional.	Leave for reuse by incoming tenant.
Hard wired alarm services	Functional in Extra Care Schemes. None in general needs.	Test. Remove and make good.
Electrical standard		
Bathroom	1 No. Shower (wet room only). 1 No. Shower Isolator (External or Pullcord - Wet Room Only). 1 No. I.P. Rated Light Fitting. 1 No 1 Gang Light Switch External or Pullcord. 1 No. Continuous Ventilation 3 speed Axial Fan. 1 No Triple Pole Fan Isolator (External or Pullcord).	Fix, Replace or Install.
Bedroom	2 No. Double Switched Socket Outlets. 1 No. Light Pendant. 1 No. 1 Gang Light Switch.	Fix, Replace or Install.
Cupboard Housing Immersion Tank	1 No. 20 AMP Double Pole Isolator Switch.	Fix, Replace or Install.

Component	Standard	Action
Hall	1 No. Double Switched Socket Outlet. 1 No. Light Pendant or Batten Holder. 1 No. 1 Gang Light Switch or. 1 No. 2 Gang 2 Way Light Switch for Landing Switching (if applicable).	Fix, Replace or Install.
Kitchen	1 No. Cooker Isolator and Low-level Connection Outlet. 4 No. Double Switched Socket Outlets. 1 No. Fused Connection Switch and Low-level socket outlet for Washing Machine. 1 No. Fused Connection Switch and Low-level socket outlet for Fridge/Freezer. 1 No. Continuous Ventilation 3 speed Axial Fan. 1 No. 1500 or 1800mm Fluorescent LED Light Fitting. 1 No. 1 Gang Light Switch (additional 2 way switching where room has two entrances.	Fix, Replace or Install.

Component	Standard	Action
Landing (Each additional storey)	1 No. Double Switched Socket Outlet. 1 No. Light Pendant / Batten Holder. 1 No. 2 or 3 Gang 2 Way Light Switch for Hall/Additional Landing Switching.	Fix, Replace or Install.
Loft	(If Boiler Located within Loft Space) 1 No. Light Batten. 1 No. 1 Gang Light Switch.	Fix, Replace or Install.
Reception Room (each)	2 No. Double Switched Socket Outlets. 1 No. Light Pendant. 1 No. 1 Gang Light Switch (additional 2 way switching where room has two entrances.	Fix, Replace or Install.
Property Fixtures and Fittings		
Electric over bath shower	Intact and functional.	Electrical check. Remove or leave for reuse by incoming tenant.
Outside lights	Intact and functional.	Electrical check. Remove or leave for reuse by incoming tenant.
External power supplies	Intact and functional.	Electrical check. Remove or leave for reuse by incoming tenant.
Outside tap	Intact and functional with no leaks.	Remove or leave for reuse by incoming tenant.

Component	Standard	Action
Fireplace (freestanding)	None.	Remove and dispose
Sheds / Outbuildings	Intact and functional.	Remove, make good base or leave for reuse by incoming tenant.
Conservatory	Intact and functional.	Remove, make good base or leave for reuse by incoming tenant.
Items for reuse (Left by previous tenant)		
Freestanding furniture	Clear.	Remove and Dispose.
Fixed furniture i.e. Built in wardrobes	Good serviceable condition.	Leave for reuse by incoming tenant or remove & dispose.
Carpeting	Good serviceable condition.	Leave for reuse by incoming tenant or remove and dispose. Remove gripper rods from stairs only.
Vinyl floor covering	Good serviceable condition.	Leave for reuse by incoming tenant or remove & dispose.
Laminate floor covering	Good serviceable condition.	Leave for reuse by incoming tenant or remove & dispose.
Curtain tracks/poles	Good serviceable condition.	Leave for reuse by incoming tenant or remove & dispose.
Curtains	Good serviceable condition.	Leave for reuse by incoming tenant or remove & dispose.
Blinds	None.	Remove & dispose.
Freestanding white goods	None.	Remove & dispose.

Component	Standard	Action
Built in white goods	Good condition, safe and functional.	Visual inspection of condition, clean and leave for reuse by incoming tenant.
Pre handover		
Internal waste	Clear.	Remove and dispose.
Garden waste	Clear.	Remove and dispose.
Loft waste	Clear.	Remove and dispose.
Cleanliness	Clean for incoming tenant.	Arrange property clean.
Internal windows/casements, door frames and glazing. External Windows/casements	Clean for incoming tenant. Cleaned where service chargeable or tenant responsibility	Arrange cleaning. The Council will not clean the outside of buildings on an individual basis, Cleaning will form part of wider programmed approaches.
Locks and keys	New locks and 2 sets of keys.	Replace and supply.
Toilet seat	New.	Replace and supply.
Light bulbs	Fitted and lighting available for incoming tenant.	Replace and supply.
Post handover		

Component	Standard	Action
Items for Reuse	'Items for reuse' left by previous tenant which remain functional and safe will remain at the property for the new tenant. If the new tenant does not want the 'items left for reuse' Housing Maintenance will remove and dispose of items free of charge.	Incoming tenants must sign a disclaimer for their acceptance with the understanding that the Council will not service or repair these items as part of the Councils repair responsibilities. Items not required by the new tenant(s) must be identified prior to signing for the tenancy and Housing Maintenance will arrange for their disposal

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Homelessness Update

Christopher Pope

Key Considerations

- Homelessness Prevention and Relief of Homelessness
 - Emergency Accommodation use
 - Homesearch Housing register application
- Key developments and focus for Homelessness and Housing Options

Homelessness Prevention and Relief



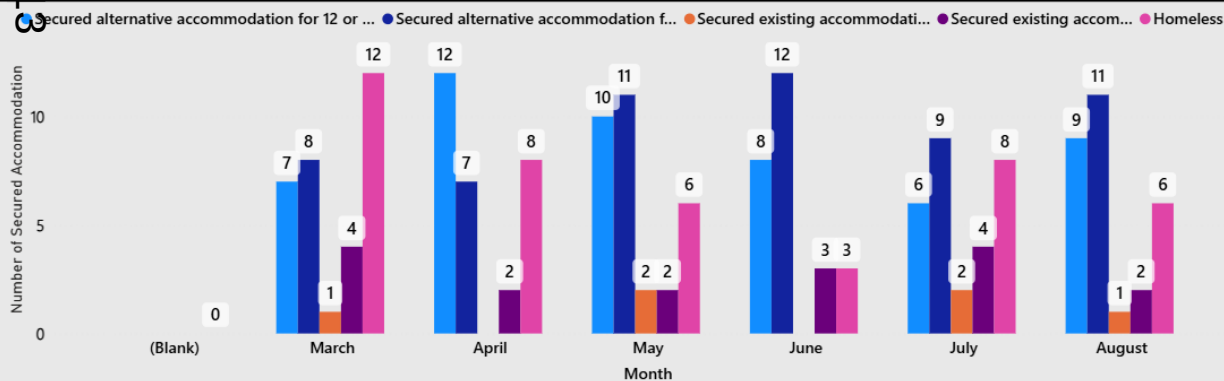
Homeless Prevention Duty

Secured alternative accommodation for 12 or more months
9✓
Last Month: 6 (+50%)

Secured alternative accommodation for 6 months
11✓
Last Month: 9 (+22.22%)

Current Month
August

Prevention Duty Closed Tracker



- Prevention of Homelessness remains the key priority to keep families in their home or find alternative accommodation.
- Understanding client needs remains a driver for identifying alternative accommodation.

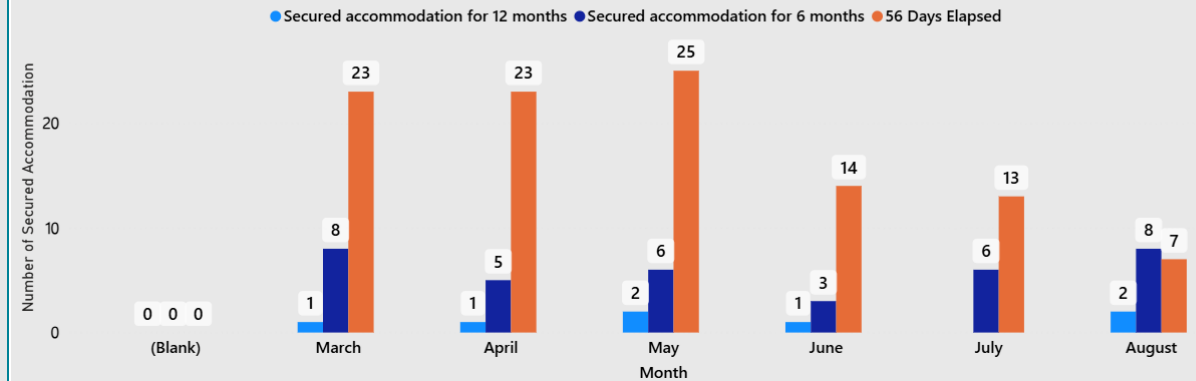
Homeless Relief Duty

Secured accommodation for 12 months
2✓
Last Month: 0

Secured accommodation for 6 months
8✓
Last Month: 6 (+33.33%)

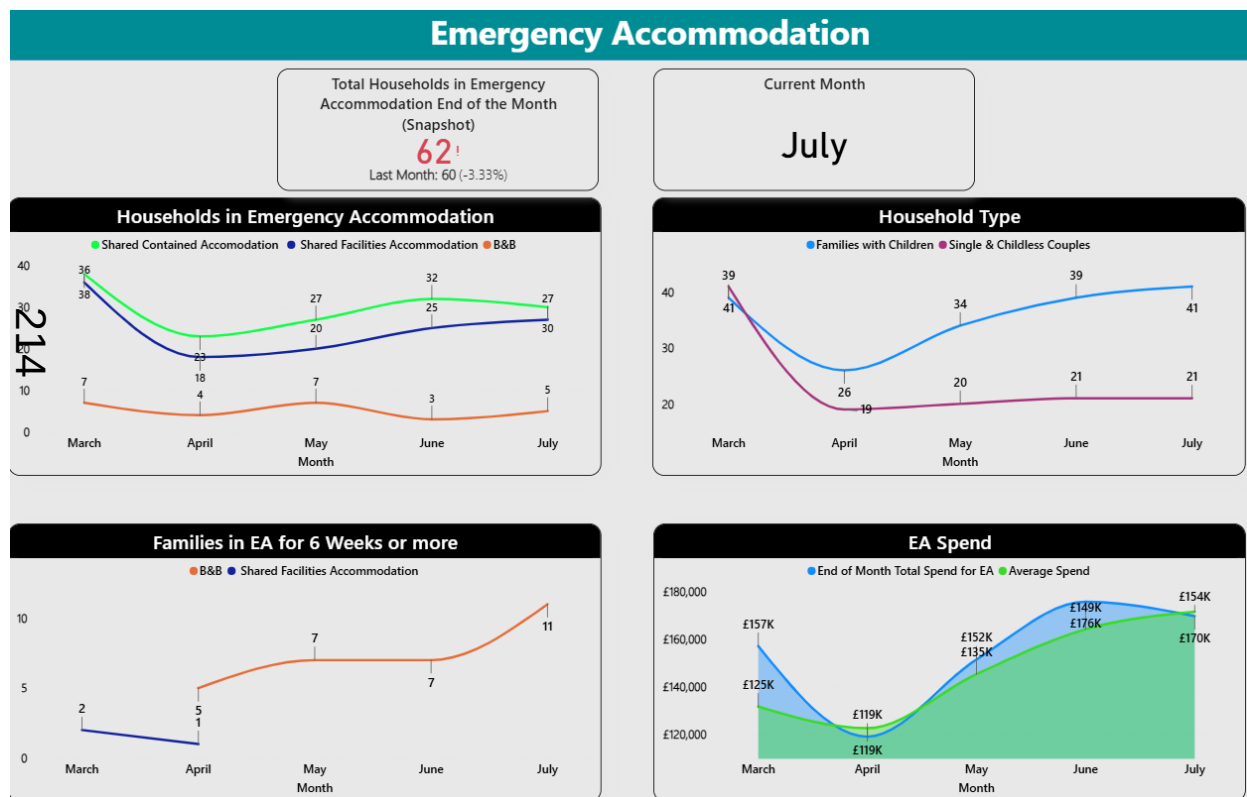
Relief Duty ended due to 56 days elapsed
7✓
Last Month: 13 (+46.15%)

Relief Duty Closed Tracker



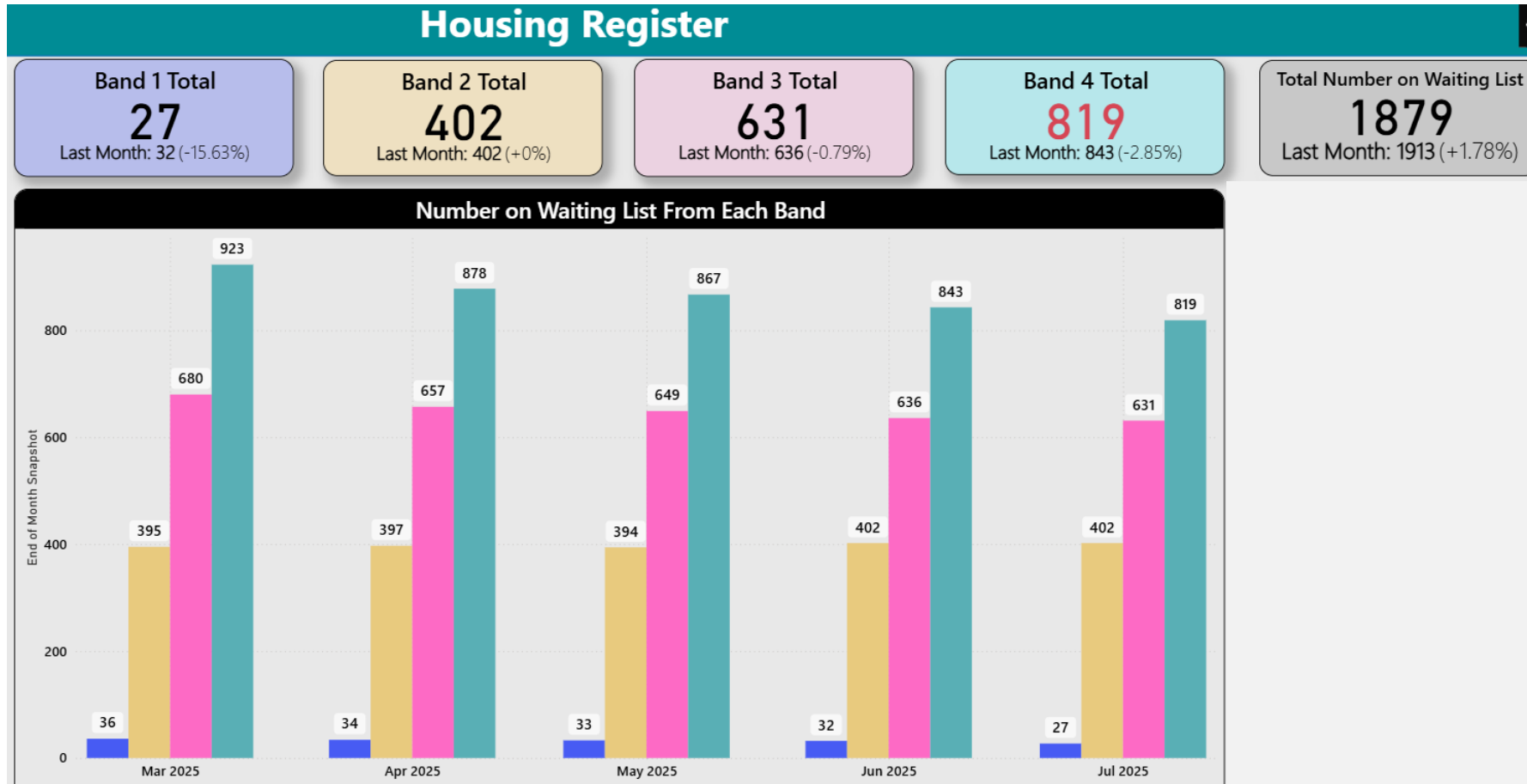
- When the prevention of homelessness is not successful, Relieving Homelessness means identifying alternative accommodation. This can be emergency accommodation or NFDC owned properties.

Emergency Accommodation



- Impacted due to the number of large and complex families often with support challenges.
- Finding properties in the private rented sector remains a challenge but good links with landlords.
- Key reasons for homelessness remain S.21 notices and Friends and Family evictions.

Homesearch Housing Register



- The reduction in the number of applicants in Bands 3 and 4 is mainly due to the applicant not completing the renewal of their application.
- Bands 1 and 2 remain stable with offers of social housing.

Key developments for Homelessness and Housing Options



Homelessness Prevention Team leader



4 additional Homelessness Prevention Floating Support Workers



Supporting Youth and Families Matter and The Crossings to deliver localised advice.



Review of website to include more self help and early intervention.



Dedicated training system



All aiming to increase prevention of Homelessness at an early stage

- Homelessness Strategy in development
- Allocations Policy refresh to be reviewed
- Both to be with Panel in January 2026, cabinet in February 2026 and then wider public consultation.

Progress of the Annual Strategic Priorities of the Safer New Forest Partnership

Brian Byrne

Main points for consideration



SAFER NEW FOREST ANNUAL STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

- Priorities are identified by the Safer New Forest Partnership from data and information provided within the annual strategic assessment.
- As a collective partner agencies are responsible for the development of priorities, identifying resources and a strategy for the delivery of the actions throughout the year.
- The strategy group review progress of each priority area throughout the year with the Partnership Action Group (PAG) meeting monthly for operational oversight.
- 2025/26 Partnership Plan is published on the Safer New Forest website. The priorities identified through the Strategic Assessment are:
 - Domestic Abuse including Violence against Women & Girls (VAWG)
 - Possession of Weapons/Serious Violence
 - Shoplifting & Burglary (Business and Community)

Implications/Issues to consider



- The Partnership Plan runs from 1st April 2025 to 31st March 2026
- The partnership continues to distribute DNA marking kits to neighbourhoods where there is evidence of dwelling burglaries (including outbuildings). Over 190 kits given out this year to targeted properties
- 163 bikes have been uniquely marked this year and added to the national bike register
- To support retailers and businesses the partnership launched UKPAC rollout across the New Forest area and held a crime prevention event in July with over 200 retail establishments approached
- 38 nominals/hotspots have been discussed, and reviewed, at Partnership Action Group (PAG) meetings
- 17 attendees from education, youth services and community safety, participated in NFDC 3-day weapons prevention training programme, in order to equip with the skills to support young people in making positive choices

Implications/Issues to consider



Community Engagement Events

- 8 community engagement events have been held across the district.
- These provide an opportunity for members of the public to undertake a crime and disorder survey, alongside crime prevention information being available.
- 472 surveys completed
- 99.4% surveyed were either satisfied or very satisfied living and visiting the New Forest
- 98.9% surveyed feel safe or fairly safe within the district during the day with 89.9% feeling very safe or fairly safe during the evening
- 6.6% surveyed were affected by anti-social behaviour (speeding, parking, e-scooter concerns)

Housing and Communities Overview and Scrutiny Panel – 17 September 2025

Update and Review of the Health and Wellbeing Plan

Purpose	For Information
Classification	Public
Executive Summary	This report seeks to update the Housing and Communities Panel on the current status of the Health and Wellbeing Plan and identify the priorities of focus going forward.
Recommendation(s)	That Housing and Communities Panel consider the progress and updates to the Council's Health and Wellbeing Action Plan and agree the refreshing of the priorities.
Reasons for recommendation(s)	The current Health and Wellbeing Plan was originally to run 2022 to 2025. This was to tie in with the timing of the Hampshire Health and Wellbeing Board Strategy. The report highlights the successes of the last plan and areas of focus that can best support our most vulnerable residents.
Ward(s)	All
Portfolio Holder(s)	Councillor Dan Poole Portfolio Holder Community, Safety and Wellbeing
Strategic Director(s)	Richard Knott – Strategic Director Housing and Communities
Officer Contact	Jamie Burton Health and Wellbeing Partnership Manager Jamie.Burton@nfdc.gov.uk Joanne McClay Service Manager Environmental and Regulation 02380 285325 Joanne.mcclay@nfdc.gov.uk

Introduction and background

1. In October 2022 the Council agreed to adopt the New Forest Health and Wellbeing Action Plan. This plan identified strategic priorities for the council, which included 'Working in Partnership', 'Increasing Physical Activity', and 'Improving Mental Wellbeing
2. The Health and Wellbeing Plan covers the period from 2022 and 2025 (appendix 1). It was based on and supported the "Strategy for Health and Wellbeing of Hampshire 2019-2024", the Hampshire Health and Wellbeing Board's strategy
3. The New Forest Health and Wellbeing Plan uses the insight from the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (the JSNA) to set relevant priorities. The JSNA is an assessment of the current and future health and social care needs of the local community.
4. The evidence identifies that some parts of the district are disproportionately affected by the causes and impacts of the causes of poor health. Those in more deprived areas are more likely to suffer poor health and have a shorter healthy life expectancy.
5. The causes of poor health are many and varied and it was recognised that the District Council cannot effectively address these issues alone and needed to work along with partners to tackle stubborn health inequalities.
6. There is a recognition that there are some interventions that the District Council can have a more direct impact on, as a result of the work that we have a responsibility for.
7. Physical activity is seen as key to the prevention and management of over 30 different chronic medical conditions.
8. Evidence shows that improving mental wellbeing can improve other aspects of life, and that there are 5 steps that a person can take to improve their mental health and wellbeing. The work of the Council can contribute to supporting the 5 Ways to Wellbeing.
9. The Hampshire Health and Wellbeing Board have released "A Joint Local Strategy for the Health and Wellbeing of Hampshire 2025 - 2035" (background paper).
10. As part of the Corporate Priority review in light of Local Government Organisation the council's plan to launch a new Health and Wellbeing strategy has been shelved. However, the approach to deliver the aims of the corporate plan and previous strategy will continue in our

approach, which will adapt to include any new and emerging priorities based on the insight available.

Programme to Date:

11. The Action Plan is a live document and captures projects and initiatives that are being carried out within the Environment and Regulation service which have had a positive impact on the health of residents and contributed to one of the three priorities.

Highlights from the Action Plan

Priority 1: Working in Partnership

12. St Georges Hall Calshot: Through cross departmental collaboration and working with the local community, parish council and health professionals, a local community asset has been improved, and opportunities for better outcomes have been increased.
13. This opening celebrated the culture and heritage of the local community, allowing an opportunity to increase knowledge and understanding within the community, increase the pride in place and shaping the opportunities for future generations. The adaptations allow for greater programming targeting identified community need.
14. Ringwood Football Facilities: By working with Hampshire Football Association, AFC Bournemouth Community Sports Trust, Ringwood Town FC and Ringwood Town Council, we have delivered a new community facility, including an artificial grass pitch, improved grass pitches, new changing rooms and a pavilion. This facility is professionally managed for the wider community (linked to specific outcomes) and has attracted £2.5million of investment into local facilities.
15. Testwood Artificial Pitch facilities. Working with the Hampshire Football Association, the Rugby Football Union, Hampshire Cricket Board, Testwood School, Pace FC, Tottonians Rugby Club, Totton & Eling Cricket Club and Calmore Cricket Club we have secured a new artificial grass pitch. This collaboration provided multi-club and community facilities at this location for the first time, allowing the partnership to attract £600,000 towards the new facility, including funding from the Lioness Futures Funding to support the growth of female football.
16. There is also a target to support those from lower socio-economic groups and those with disabilities. The work has also improved the grass cricket, football and rugby pitches, enabling two local cricket

clubs to play games, who previously travelled outside of the district for matches, to return to play within the district.

17. Youth Network Group: We have brought together local youth workers and organisations to explore collaborative opportunities, identify gaps and attract support based on local need. This has seen youth work support delivered by experienced organisations in our smaller parishes, for instance the Handy Trust are supporting Sway Parish Council in the development of a local youth club. It has also seen local training needs explored, and we are coordinating local sexual health training for youth workers.
18. Community Forums on Emergency Planning: We have brought together partners, including town and parish councils, regulators, health partners, utility companies and other statutory partners together understand risks within their communities and use their skills and knowledge to be better prepared for emergency incidents.
19. Working with Hampshire County Council Public Health Team and local partners to develop a Live Longer Better Campaign, aimed at keeping older adults active to live a longer life in good health, increasing healthy life expectancy.

Priority 2: Increasing Physical Activity

20. Junior Parkrun: A new junior parkrun has been set up based at Gang Warily community centre in Fawley. This was based on an identified need and based in the most accessible area for those who face the biggest barriers to participate. Over 400 young people have taken part in this parkrun.
21. Menopause Activity: Working with Freedom Leisure we have trained instructors at every centre to be able to deliver advice and support to menopausal and perimenopausal women to stay active and healthy, supporting their healthy life expectancy.
22. Story Trail: A new Story Trail has been codesigned by pupils at a primary school working in partnership with a local author and artist. The story encourages readers to explore the local parkland, where a new play area has been installed, and copse, where new trails had been installed. The area was targeted because of the impact of financial challenges on local families, offering free activities in a local environment, and encouraging them to use local amenities whilst supporting literacy outcomes.
23. Walking Football: As part of the Ringwood football developments, we have ensured that walking football sessions have been developed. There are now more than 50 weekly attendees including 20 people aged over 70 years old.

24. The Applemore Artificial Football Pitch has been highlighted as an example of good practice by Hampshire Football Association, especially in regard to the ability to engage in new groups, and in particular female footballers. The agreements and programmes that we introduced and monitor as part of the development has seen the number of girls playing at the partner club increase from 3 to 160 players whilst the club has increased from 260 to 580 players over the last 10 years.

Priority 3: Improving Mental Wellbeing

25. The Beardy Gardener: Connecting creativity, gardening and wellbeing, the Beardy Gardener (Leigh Johnstone) designed and built a garden with home-schooled children and adult participants of Solent Mind. The garden was named "A Forest of Calm" designed to promote the benefits of nature and creativity for mental wellbeing. The garden appeared at BBC Gardeners World Spring Fair in Beaulieu before being moved to Bramshaw village.
26. Sensory Walks: Working with Hampshire Public Health we have developed two sensory walks in the district. These have utilised existing walks established by town councils but have promoted the wellbeing aspects of walking in nature and utilising the "Take Notice" aspect of the five ways to wellbeing, encouraging people to be aware of the sounds, smells and seasonal changes along the walk.
27. Fluid Motion Drop In: We have invested in a free open access drop-in at Fluid Motion's creative hub in Totton precinct. Fluid Motion are an award-winning arts and health charity that use theatre and other creative activities to improve people's mental health. The hub is a safe, friendly and creative space for children and young people under 18. The hub offers arts activities designed to improve young people's mental wellbeing and can support targeted work for those referred to their service.
28. LGBTQ+ Hubs with SPUD: Working with SPUD, three free creative hubs were delivered, specifically supporting local young people from the LGBTQ+ community to develop their talent and improve their confidence through connecting with mentorship by local artists. This provided positive role models, increased representation and providing a safe space for participants to express their emotions

Future Priorities

29. The evidence from the document "A Joint Local Strategy for the Health and Wellbeing of Hampshire 2025 -2035" and the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment is that the current priorities are still relevant. This has influenced the current service plan (Appendix 3)

30. The key theme of Tackling Health Inequalities is aligned with the District Council's priority of 'Supporting those in Most Need'. Those areas can be identified by the IMD and we will look to prioritise support for those in the NHS's Core 20 areas (those local areas that are in the top 20% most deprived nationally) and those with certain protected characteristics. There will be particular focus on the intersectionality of these drivers of health inequalities.
31. In addition to 'Working in Partnership, Increasing Physical Activity and Improving Mental Health', we will look to support partners to tackle childhood obesity and cardiovascular disease in work age population, as priorities. This will support the NHS 10 Year Health Plan for England which has an emphasis on prevention. The impact of the interventions are often seen over a longer time period however we will use programme appropriate measurements to evidence the benefits of our work. This will include measuring qualitative or quantitative data where practical. The nature of early intervention and prevention means that measuring long term outcomes will largely sit with clinical partners.
32. We also acknowledge the impact of other strategies with different council departments that will support the outcomes of the "Joint Local Strategy for the Health and Wellbeing of Hampshire 2025 - 2035. In particular this includes the Climate Change strategy and the Economic Development strategy, both key themes in the Health and Wellbeing Board strategy.

Corporate plan priorities

Theme: People

Corporate Plan Objective:

33. Helping those in our community with the greatest need and creating balanced, resilient and healthy communities, with programmes that benefit those populations or areas identified as greatest need.
34. Empowering our residents to live healthy, connected and fulfilling lives.

Theme: Place

Corporate Plan Objective:

35. Shaping our place now and for future generations

Options Proposal

36. The areas identified have been done so based on insight and evidence.

Financial and resource implications

37. The work has formed the basis of work programmes and therefore the resources, budgets and grants are within the current available resources.
38. The strategic document will allow us to identify the opportunities to leverage more resources and income via external funding streams.

Legal implications

39. There are no additional legal implications identified.

Risk assessment

40. None identified.

Environmental / Climate and nature implications

41. The Health and Wellbeing Plan will look to support those who are at most risk of the health impacts of climate change and support programmes that will deliver environmental benefits, health and wellbeing benefits and climate change benefits. It will also look to utilise the positive power of connectivity with nature to amplify the benefits of outdoor activity.

Equalities implications

42. Through targeting those suffering the highest health inequalities across the district it is anticipated that it will improve levels of equality and access to services. The work included in the Action Plan will specifically look to support those with protected characteristics, especially where there is an intersectionality with wider health and wellbeing needs.

Crime and disorder implications

43. Tackling the wider determinants of health will seek to have a positive impact on communities across the district, positively addressing some of the causes of crime and disorder.

Data protection / Information governance / ICT implications

44. None identified.

Appendices:

Appendix 1 – The New Forest
Health and Wellbeing Plan 2022-
25

[Health_and_Wellbeing_Report_20
22_v10.pdf](#)

Appendix 2 – Action Plan

Background Papers:

A Joint Local Strategy for the Health
and Wellbeing of Hampshire 2025-
2035

[AStrategyfortheHealthandWellbeingof
Hampshire-final.pdf](#)



Health and Wellbeing Plan 2022-2025

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Foreword

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The health and wellbeing of New Forest residents is of paramount importance to New Forest District Council. We recognise that whilst the area is generally a healthy place to live, there are health inequalities and challenges that affect the wellbeing of residents. The pandemic has also increased the existing health inequalities within our Communities.

Adopting a healthier lifestyle leads to many positive benefits, not just for the individual but also for the wider District, in terms of social, economic and environmental outcomes.

The Council's health and wellbeing plan has been prepared using available evidence to identify issues, agree priorities and develop action plans to tackle health inequalities and improve the health and wellbeing of residents.

I fully endorse this plan and support a coordinated approach by agencies to make it as easy as possible for anyone, whatever age, to improve their health and wellbeing by providing opportunities to live a healthier and more fulfilled life.



Cllr Geoff Blunden

Introduction

.....



The health and wellbeing of residents of the New Forest is pivotal to living a happier, healthier and potentially longer, more fulfilled life but it also has an impact on the District's economy and prosperity, including the desire to create more sustainable communities.

This plan looks to put health and wellbeing at the heart of the Council's services, with the aim to reduce health inequalities and sustain and improve the health and wellbeing outcomes of our local communities.

Population health data, local information, our statutory duties in relation to health and

wellbeing and our partnership working role, have all assisted in the development of the plan and identifying the priorities.

The health and wellbeing plan will be reviewed annually to measure performance against the priorities and actions.

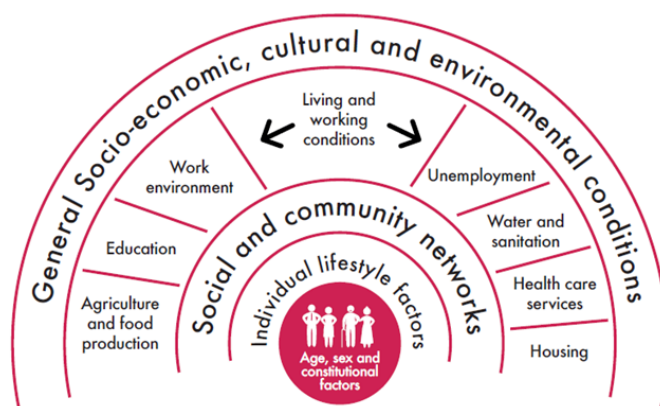
This document will support the Council in evidencing its Corporate Plan priorities and, where possible, attract extra investment to deliver and expand the delivery of interventions that will meet the key health inequalities as evidenced.

National Context

In 2010 Michael Marmot's review (Fair Society, Healthy Lives) helped to shape national government strategy. It identified strong links between non-medical factors and unequal health outcomes. Health is closely linked to the environments within which people are born, grow, live, work and age and inequalities in power, money and resources impact on the health of an individual.

These factors are referred to as the social determinants of health.

The Marmot Review states that action on health inequalities requires action across all the social determinants in order to make an effective impact. The determinants of health can be seen in the diagram below.



Determinants of Health. From Dahlgren and Whitehead (1993)

The Marmot Review ([Health Equity in England: The Marmot Review 10 Years On](#)) identified 6 areas that have the biggest impact and should be a priority:

- Give every child the best start in life.
- Enable children, young people, and adults to maximise their capabilities to have control over their lives.
- Create fair employment and good work for all.
- Ensure a healthy standard of living for all.
- Create and develop health and sustainable places and communities.
- Strengthen the role and impact of ill health prevention.

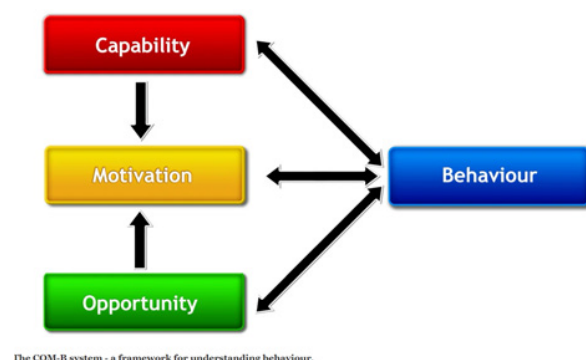
The UK Chief Medical Officers state that “If physical activity were a drug, we would refer to it as a miracle cure, due to the great many illnesses it can prevent and help treat.”

Health professionals all agree that increasing levels of physical activity and decreasing levels of inactivity have the biggest impact on health. Whatever your age, there is strong scientific evidence that being physically active can help you lead a healthier and happier life.

People who exercise regularly have a lower risk of developing many long-term (chronic) conditions, such as heart disease, type 2 diabetes, stroke, and some cancers. Research shows that physical activity can also boost

concentration, educational attainment, self-esteem, mood, sleep quality and energy, as well as reducing your risk of stress, clinical depression, dementia and Alzheimer’s disease.

In order to create behaviour change and increase levels of physical activity everyone need capability, motivation and opportunity. There is also a need to ensure that there are affordable, accessible, and sustainable leisure facilities, and access to green open spaces, and that there are strong clubs, organisations and leaders to ensure that residents have the skills, knowledge and permission to use the facilities.



Physical activity can refer to formal activity (traditional sports and activities), informal activity (i.e. walking for leisure, cycling and informal games), and active travel (activity in order to reach a destination).

According to Sport England data, the demographics that are the most inactive are those most susceptible to the highest health

inequalities. These groups will be targeted within the plan and include:

- Children and young people
- Older people
- Women and girls
- Those with long term health conditions
- Those in lower socio-economic groups

Evidence demonstrates that there are 5 steps that help to improve an individual's mental health and wellbeing. [The Five Steps to Mental Wellbeing](#) are promoted by Mind and the NHS at individual, local and regional level interventions. Supporting programmes that increase some of these aspects of wellbeing will help to improve community wellbeing.

The Five Ways are:

- **Connect**
Good relationships and connecting with others.
- **Be Active**
Regular exercise.
- **Take Notice**
Be aware of the world around you and your feelings.
- **Keep Learning**
Learning new skills.
- **Give**
To the wider community such as volunteering.

Asset-based community development builds on the strengths and potential that exists within communities to create sustainable development. Working with communities and empowering them to have control over their lives and the ability to develop their communities by place shaping and delivering asset-based community development interventions will improve their connection and wellbeing.

Regional Context



There are many organisations and partners delivering the Health and Wellbeing agenda ranging from Government departments to individuals within local communities.

The emerging Integrated Care System will see the development of the Integrated Care Partnership (ICP) which will set the system strategy and priorities for Hampshire and the Isle of Wight. This partnership will oversee the Hampshire Health and Wellbeing Board, which will set the strategy locally, feed in to the ICP and guide the Hampshire Health and Care partnerships. The Council will have a role to play within the structure with other health care providers in shaping priorities, supporting the delivery of transformation programmes and working in collaboration with partners.

The transformation programmes include:

- Children and young people
- Mental health
- Learning disabilities and
- Prevention

The arts and cultural sector have an important role to play in empowering communities to shape their place. Within the District we have some strong cultural organisations, creative individuals and opportunities to develop engagement and participation in the arts for the enhancement of communities.

Energise Me (Hampshire's Active Partnership) consulted widely with people and organisations to produce We Can Be Active, a physical activity strategy for Hampshire & the Isle of Wight. It was co-sponsored by the 4 Public Health Teams, Hampshire, Southampton, Portsmouth, and the Isle of Wight. The Council were contributors to the [We Can Be Active Strategy](#) which will shape some of our delivery.

Hampshire Health and Wellbeing Strategy

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[A Strategy for the Health and Wellbeing of Hampshire](#) was compiled on behalf of the Hampshire Health and Wellbeing Board. The priorities within the strategy are informed by the [Hampshire Joint Strategic Needs Assessment \(HJSNA\)](#). This is the primary source of information as it looks at current and future health and wellbeing needs within our population. This looks at the social determinants of health locally and identifies actions that can impact on the objective of supporting health improvement.

The 'Strategy for the Health and Wellbeing of Hampshire' identifies the key priorities for improvement which will have the biggest impact on health and wellbeing across their 4 priority areas (Starting Well, Living Well, Ageing Well and Dying Well).

These key priorities are:

- Working in partnership
- Increasing physical activity
- Reducing smoking and obesity
- Improving mental health
- Enabling people with long term conditions to live healthier lives for longer

- Creating healthier home environments to allow people to stay independent
- Supporting people at end of life
- Improving access to bereavement support and training for conversations.

Some of these priorities align with those identified in the Council's Corporate Plan. Where this is the case, we may take a lead role or work in partnership with other organisations. Where they are not identified as such, we will look to work with and signpost to other organisations and support them wherever possible in delivering their role across the District.

Local Context



The Council has a number of roles in health which include supporting the delivery of the public health priorities of Hampshire County Council in ensuring the best possible outcomes for our residents. We act as a “networker”, “enabler” and also a “facilitator” and have the local knowledge and expertise to support the delivery of health services for our communities. We will also work with our residents to ensure that they are included in co-designing and co-producing the necessary interventions to ensure that they are sustainable.

The health landscape is a very complex system and we are one of many organisations addressing health and wellbeing. By working closely with our partners we will look to support a whole system approach and deliver efficient, targeted and coordinated health and wellbeing services, ensuring our resources are used in an effective way by working in a delivering, coordinating, advisory, supportive, assisting and sign-posting role.

The Council’s health and wellbeing plan has been created to support the outcomes identified in the “Strategy for the Health and Wellbeing of Hampshire” where they align with the priorities of the Council.

The Council’s Corporate Plan priorities include:

- To work with partners to improve the health and wellbeing of our residents.
- To ensure that public health prevention principles are embedded across all council services.
- To increase the level of physical activity within the District, working with providers for affordable, accessible, and sustainable leisure facilities.
- To help ensure the New Forest is a safe place to live, work and visit.
- Ensuring that new development in the District creates healthy environments.
- Delivering through new development additional open space, play equipment and habitat creation.
- To increase cycling and walking routes across the District.

Many Council services contribute to the social determinants of health which include housing, planning, environmental health, economic development and community safety. This document does not sit in isolation, as other services will be delivering actions which contribute to the priorities in this plan through their own service specific strategies.

The priorities within this plan focus on three areas that are joint priorities identified in both the Hampshire Strategy and the Council's Corporate Plan which are:

- Working in Partnership
- Increasing Physical Activity
- Improving Mental Wellbeing

In order to deliver to a sustainable and effective model of behaviour change we will look to support the ambitions of the Strategy for the health and wellbeing of Hampshire to:

- Improve services so that they deliver good accessible and joined up support for those in most need.
- Champion co-production and engagement so that the voice of residents whatever their age and background is better reflected in the design and delivery of health support.
- Use local networks, knowledge, and partners to ensure activities are joined up and respond to community need.
- Work with partners to ensure our activities are aligned or combined where this is practical.
- Take a whole system approach to tackle the areas of biggest health inequalities.

Deprivation

Evidence shows that there is also a causal link between health inequalities and economic inequalities. People living in the poorest neighbourhoods in England will, on average, die seven years earlier than people living in the most affluent neighbourhoods. People living in poorer areas will also spend more of their lives in ill health.

A key priority will be to support individuals and communities in the most deprived areas, with the aim of improving their health and reducing the level of inequality. The Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) which ranks relative deprivation across neighbourhoods in the UK highlights some areas in the District amongst the top 20 % most deprived in the country.

The locations with the highest levels of deprivation in the New Forest are:

- Holbury and Blackfield
- Langdown and Butts Ash
- Calmore and Totton
- New Milton East and West
- Pennington

The IMD measures different aspects of deprivation and records them in Lower Super Output Areas (LSOA) and are ranked nationally. The Income Deprivation Affecting Children Index (Children 0-5 living in income deprived households) and the Income Deprivation Affecting Older People Index (those aged over 60) are supplementary indices produced alongside the Income Deprivation Domains. As expected, these areas mirror those of the IMD.

Comparing the top areas on the various indices we can see that there are certain places that are represented repeatedly. The table below highlights these areas:

Multiple Deprivation	Deprivation Affecting Children	Deprivation Affecting Older People	Wellbeing Index	Levels of Physical Activity
Holbury and North Blackfield	Holbury and North Blackfield	Holbury and North Blackfield	Holbury and North Blackfield	Holbury South, Holbury North, Blackfield and Fawley
Langdown and Butts Ash	Langdown and Butts Ash	Langdown and Butts Ash	Furzedown and Hardley	Langdown and Dibden Purlieu
New Milton East	New Milton West	New Milton	Milton	New Milton West
New Milton West		Fernhill	Fernhill	Barton on Sea
Pennington	Pennington	Pennington	Pennington	New Milton East
	Totton and Eling	Calmore	Totton East	Totton Calmore and Totton Town
			Ringwood South	Ringwood South

NB-The geographical areas identified above are references to particular areas set out in various documents, including the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment and Sports England data and do not necessarily match Ward boundaries of the District Council.

These areas will require a whole system approach to tackle the issues that are impacting on these communities. Many different organisations are working within these communities and a collaborative approach is required to assist in supporting improved outcomes.

Working in partnership

Tackling the health inequalities across the district is a complex issue and requires a whole system approach. This approach is defined as responding to complexity through a dynamic way of working, by bringing stakeholders, including communities, together to develop a shared understanding of the challenge and integrate action to bring about sustainable long-term systems change.

The Council will look to implement the whole system approach by improving departmental collaboration and through working in partnership with others to deliver the objectives of the plan.

The Council will engage with the Integrated Care System at various levels, including the Integrated Care Board, the Integrated Care Partnership and the Primary Care Networks to support the strategic delivery of local need.

The importance of working with key partners across the New Forest is recognised including the public sector, private sector and voluntary and community groups. Officers will work collaboratively across the Council on health and wellbeing themes and also engage with Town and Parish Councils and other District and Borough Councils to build on their role in delivering action on the wider determinants of health.

To achieve sustainable outcomes and affect behaviour change, we must also ensure that the residents are engaged and empowered to be involved in making the improvements to their health.

The Council is a key contributor in delivering, facilitating and supporting some of the local priorities identified in the strategy for the Health and Wellbeing of Hampshire.

This plan will identify new partnership opportunities which support the achievement of our objectives.

Physical Activity

There are many [benefits of being physically active](#). Those areas which are most at risk from the impact of the wider determinants of health are those in deprivation. We can see a correlation between the activity levels by MSOA (below) and the previous stated areas of deprivation. Those who could benefit the most from being more active are generally

in areas with higher rates of inactivity. There are other factors that may impact on activity levels, such as an older population or long term health conditions and being active is important for continued independent living and to enable residents to live longer, better.

The Middle Super Output Areas with higher rates of inactivity are^[1]:

MSOA Name	Place Name	Inactive by % (less than 30 minutes of activity per week)
New Forest 021	New Milton East	26.67
New Forest 002	Totton Calmore	24.90
New Forest 020	New Milton West	24.48
New Forest 004	Totton Town	24.23
New Forest 011	Langdown and Dibden Purlieu	23.51
New Forest 022	Barton on Sea	23.16
New Forest 014	Holbury North, Blackfield and Fawley	22.52
New Forest 013	Holbury South	22.51
New Forest 012	Ringwood South	22.28

[1] Sport England Small Area Estimates

Mental Health

There can be a wide range of causes of mental health problems. For many people it is likely that there is a complicated combination of factors that can result in ill health. Different people can be affected differently by the various issues. Lifestyle factors such as diet, activity levels, lack of sleep etc, can affect your mental health and your resilience to deal with the impact of the wider causes. However there is often a combination of wider factors which may include economic, social and environmental factors.

Hampshire County Council Public Health have created a [Mental Wellbeing Index](#) which ranks the mental wellbeing of lower super output areas of the county. This looks at the vulnerabilities of those areas against a range of wider determinants. Each area is then ranked with regards to its vulnerability against these determinants. It demonstrates that there is a strong link between poverty and the impact on mental wellbeing. It also demonstrates that within these areas there are also strengths.

Certain groups are more vulnerable to the causes of poor mental health. Those in the Farming Industry, those in poverty and those who are socially isolated are all at heightened risk of poor mental wellbeing. Within the District these groups are represented.

Suicide is a particular problem affecting men. Males account for 77% of suicides, often associated with unemployment, debt, redundancy and social isolation. A specific and concerted programme to tackle some of the specific issues that lead to suicide, will be explored.

Programmes that can implement aspects of the Five Ways to Wellbeing should be promoted and implemented. Arts and cultural activity can play an important role as a key contributor to supporting the mental wellbeing of residents. The Council is a member of the consortium delivering the Culture in Common programme which will be engaging and empowering identified communities across the District to have the ability to shape their place, connect, learn new skills and have pride in contributing to their community.

As we have seen, the stubborn inequalities will need a whole system approach to tackle the issues impacting on communities. To achieve this, a concerted effort will be required in these particular areas and they should form the basis of collaborative working. We will also need to work WITH the communities rather than imposing interventions. It is crucial that communities have the ability to build on local strengths and are empowered to overcome the challenges they face, in order for the impacts to be engaging and sustainable.

Action Plan

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Set out below are the Council's actions against each priority to improve the health and wellbeing of the residents of the District.

Priority 1

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To work in partnership with other agencies to share resources and ensure cross organisational working to achieve better health and wellbeing outcomes for our residents.

We Will:

- Establish a Healthier New Forest Partnership and produce an action plan to target priorities.
- Work with the National Park and local health partners to deliver the Green Health Hub, to maximise the health opportunities of the natural environment.
- Engage with the 'District and Borough Wellbeing Leads' meeting to ensure strong representation to the Health and Wellbeing Board's local priorities.
- Support the reduction of anxiety linked to energy price increases and winter related deaths through continued active engagement with the Warmer Homes Collaboration.
- Support the community safety outcomes for local residents through the Safer New Forest Partnership.
- Work with community organisations and voluntary groups in order to tackle the causes and impact of health inequalities within identified and vulnerable communities.
- Further develop information sharing and collaboration between services within the Council.

Priority 2

.....

To work with partners to increase physical activity and deliver programmes that will increase activity levels within those priority groups.

We Will:

- Work with health care partners to ensure more residents with long term health conditions access the Active Lifestyles activity referral programme.
- Increase in number of Active Lifestyles participants that complete the programme and continue to lead an active lifestyle.
- Work with the School Sports Partnership to increase activity in identified groups.
- Manage the Just Got Home Scheme to ensure that residents leaving hospital are supported to be able to live an independent lifestyle.
- Deliver the healthy walks programme with Community First, growing the number of walkers, trained volunteer walk leaders and number of walks around the district.
- Deliver programmes with partners to keep older people active and connected through sport i.e. walking football.
- Administer NFDC grants (disabled adaptation grants and hospital discharge grants) to support residents living independent lives for longer.
- Work with and support partners to ensure the development of accessible sports facilities with appropriate development plans to increase participation within identified targeted groups
- Support partners to deliver the Holiday Activity Fund to ensure families on Free School Meals can access activity and hot meals through the holidays.

Priority 3

.....

To improve the mental wellbeing of residents by developing strong and sustainable places and communities, increasing connectivity, reducing isolation and empowering residents to effect change and shape place.

We Will:

- Support the delivery of the Culture in Common arts programme empowering targeted communities to co-design and deliver cultural activity locally.
- Work with the Folio network of local arts and cultural organisations to develop opportunities across the district for communities to connect positively through creative activity.
- Support the cultural organisations and creative individuals to increase opportunities to connect our communities through the new Creative and Cultural Development Officer post.
- Work with the Local Children's Partnership to increase the levels of awareness and understanding of mental health issues and empower adults to have conversations about wellbeing through the Back-to-Basics programme.
- Support partners to develop programmes to target young people's mental health issues.
- Provide training for volunteers that support residents that are homeless.
- Work with the School Sports Partnership to support young people to maximise their resilience and capabilities.
- Work to support homeless men with employment support and mentorship.
- Operate a befriending scheme targeting those residents who are homeless.
- Operate the Palliative Grants Scheme supporting residents at the end of life.

Monitoring and Review



Performance and progress against each of the actions within this strategy will be reviewed annually in conjunction with members and stakeholders.

We will look to build on the work that is currently carried out by the Council and the established relationships with a wide range of partners, by taking a more holistic and overarching approach to delivering the Council's health and wellbeing agenda.

We will explore further opportunities and interventions to improve the health outcomes of our residents and further actions may be added.

The key to achieving the priorities set out in this plan, is how we implement the actions and the importance of monitoring and reviewing progress.



Health and Wellbeing Plan
2022-2025



New Forest
DISTRICT COUNCIL

Health and Wellbeing Plan 2025-26

APPENDIX 2

Priority	Action	Lead Officer/Body	Progress and Timescales
Working in Partnership			
Develop a Touring Arts provision - ROAM	- Develop a mobile arts space by working with creative architects and local organisations to develop an innovative approach to the challenges identified around accessing activity. - Identify and establish a key partner to host the arts centre. - Work with Arts and Cultural partners to curate a touring programme post completion.	Joanne McClay Jamie Burton	On track. Spring/early summer 2026.
Grant programme for internal and external (arts organisations) applicants	Work within the agreed perimeters to support the application from community organisations and internal departments for arts, culture and creative activity that support local communities.	Jamie Burton	Process set up
Engage with the “Hampshire District and Borough Wellbeing Leads” meeting to ensure strong representation to the Health and Wellbeing Board’s local priorities.	Ensure that NFDC are represented at meetings to keep abreast of the latest developments in Health and Wellbeing.	Jamie Burton	Ongoing
Work with Partners to deliver projects that support the outcomes identified in the Playing Pitch Strategy and Built Facilities Strategy	- Support the local community organisations to be in the best position to access relevant funding and that they can deliver the wider social impact programmes. - Develop usage plan to maximise facility - Support the development of business plans to ensure sustainable facility; usage plan to maximise community use; development plans to ensure best outcomes for residents. - Support with the application and allocation of funding including from CIL, to support the strategic delivery of identified needs.	Jamie Burton	Ongoing

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Blood Pressure awareness programme Health Checks for working age population targeting men.	• Work with HCC/PCNs to support the testing programme for residents and employees of NFDC • Organise one testing session for working age population	ICB PCNs Jamie Burton	February 2026
GRT Health & Wellbeing programme Support Bricks and Mortar GRT community as a distinctive local community who suffer a high level of health inequality.	• Liaise with ICB and partners to deliver a programme of support for targeted communities where known bricks and mortar GRT live. • Community building in areas of higher level of bricks and mortar GRT. • Support wider health interventions in these areas.	ICB Community Leaders Jamie Burton	Support network in progress
Administer the Community Grants Scheme, supporting organisations that meet the Council's grant award criteria. Total budget of £130,000 (revenue) and £100,000 (capital).	• To deliver the Council's annual Revenue and Capital Community Grants programme. • Monitor the delivery of 25/26 Capital project awards. • Support the application process for the 26/27 awards will open in September. • Develop funding agreements for Capital Grant projects to ensure delivery of 26/27 awards.	Ryan Stevens Jamie Burton	Ongoing
Increasing Physical Activity			
Deliver a Playing Pitch Strategy and a Built Facilities Strategy	• Develop and publish a compliant Playing Pitch Strategy and Built Facilities Strategy • Support its adoption to identify needs and gaps with regards playing pitches and built facilities. • Support the use of the Playing Pitch Strategy and the Built Facilities Strategy to address the identified short falls in facilities. • Develop an Action Plan and implementation of facilities identified to help NFDC achieve its obligations.	Jamie Burton James Smith David Ibsley	December 2025

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Work with health care partners to ensure more residents with long term health conditions access the Active Lifestyles activity referral programme.	Support the promotion of the Active Lifestyles scheme with local stake holders in appropriate forums to ensure understanding and take up by identified patients.	Freedom Leisure Jamie Burton	Continuing support of the programme
Deliver the Live Longer Better project, encouraging older adults to be active to improved Healthy Life Expectancy.	- Establish a Community of Practice and consult with key target groups to identify gaps and needs. - Use the evidence to develop identified projects.		March 2027
Explore the application for the HCC Active Travel Grant	Explore a submission to the grant fund. - Create a programme of activity to increase cycling/walking for submission - A successful grant application is submitted - Work with partners to deliver the projects identified in the plan. - Report back on any M&E as part of the application.	Jamie Burton NFDC departments Sustrans	March 2027
Monitor Strategic Facility Developments and Community User Groups to ensure the delivery of associated development plans	- Attend Community Use Group meetings as appropriate to ensure the delivery of the schemes in line with the identified development outcomes. - Monitor the budget (to ensure sustainability) the usage plans (to ensure community access), and the development plan (to ensure the wider social outcomes are being achieved). Testwood ATP, Burgate ATP, Ringwood Football Facilities Noadswood/Waterside Gym Club	Jamie Burton	Ongoing
Deliver the healthy walks programme with Community First Wessex, growing the number of walkers, trained volunteer walk leaders and number of walks around the district.	- Work with Community First Wessex and New Forest National Park Authority to deliver a Healthy Walks programme. - Community First to run a Volunteer Walk Leader training event to train new walk leaders.	Jamie Burton CFWessex NFNPA	Ongoing

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	• Ensure a networking session is delivered to support volunteer walk leaders, ensuring training is up to date and volunteers are valued. • Ensure that there is a Health Walks programme across the district.		
Deliver programmes with partners to keep older people active and connected through sport such as walking football	• Work with partners to establish a new walking sport activity within the district.	Jamie Burton	March 2026
LGBTQI+ Football Working with key members of the LGBTQI+ community, Hampshire FA to develop a programme that will increase opportunities to be active within the community and to break down barriers of the accessibility of football	• Work with partners to deliver football playing opportunity targeting LGBTQI members of the community. • Explore the sustainability and the development of a team (number and participant dependent)	Jamie Burton	January 2026
Work with and support sport and recreation partners to ensure the development of accessible sports facilities with appropriate development plans to increase participation within identified targeted groups.	• Ensure that the Community Capital Grants funding agreements support the development of opportunities with targeted groups:	Jamie Burton	Ongoing
Dance leadership sessions Build on the successful programme run in New Milton by Culture in Common	• Work with Fawley Parish Council and Youth Dance Lab to develop a programme in Fawley Parish that helps to build confidence and skills of girls attending to be able to support others as young leaders.	Jamie Burton Fawley PC Dance Lab	November 2025

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Develop 4 new Trail Tales using the JSNA to identify the areas of largest impact to encourage children and families to explore open space	• Subject to securing funding, work with schools and communities to codesign story trails in local areas. Look at opportunities to support areas with open space improvements. • Consideration of trails in Pennington, Holbury, Calmore, Dibden Purlieu	Jamie Burton and partners	March 2026
Develop projects to bring activity into public space supporting the redevelopment of NFDC focus areas	• Work with arts organisations to develop infrastructure to encourage exploration and play in public space. • Improve informal physical activity • Increase footfall in high street/ public space	Jamie Burton and partners	March 2026
Improving Mental Wellbeing			
Play a leading role in supporting the cultural organisations and creative individuals to increase opportunities to connect our communities through the new Creative and Cultural Strategy	• Develop a Creative and Cultural Strategy for the district, liaising and engaging with stakeholders to ensure a strategy support the creative sector and the wider community.	Joanne McClay	In progress December 2025
Deliver a Creative Health Workshop to support the understanding of the potential of Arts and Culture to deliver healthy outcomes	• Support Culture in Common to organise a Creative Health Workshop identifying the potential of creative health to support patients and promote the creative health benefits and to health partners. • Explore potential future opportunities to deliver Creative Health programmes locally.	Energise Me Culture in Common	September 2025
Support the delivery of the Culture in Common arts programme empowering targeted communities to co-design and deliver cultural activity locally.	• Attend regular consortium meetings to champion the needs of the wider community and support with the delivery to least engaged sections of New Forest District Council's communities.	Joanne McClay/ Jamie Burton	Ongoing

Girls resilience programme using the Beewell survey to target support for girls in identified “neighbourhoods”	• Work with the School Improvement manager for the New Forest to develop a Girls resilience programme based on evidence of priority need.	Hampshire County Council Jamie Burton	March 2026
A programme of place-based community led art projects on the theme of belonging utilising CIL funding	• Identify priority areas, communities and themes identified for projects • Develop application process for local commissions. • Identify the budget and the number of schemes that can be supported • Work with partner to support the management of the commission programme • Promote, collate and review applications • Award, monitor and evaluate schemes.	Jamie Burton Joanne McClay	Process set up and progressing
Support identified groups to tackle the issues of suicide	• Explore the promotion of the Samaritans support signage in car parks within the New Forest District Council area, including those within the National Park and Forestry England area. • Offer training for open space workers to support them if they discover people at risk of suicide and to know what support is available for those who discover a death from suicide.	Hampshire Public Health, Jamie Burton, NFNPA, FE, Samaritans	March 2026
Sensory Walks Two sensory walks have been identified and developed in the district through working with HCC public health. Mitigation team had stated that they would like more of the mitigation sites mapped as sensory walks	• Create a revised layout for the two sensory walks to ensure they are accessible and appealing to residents. • Identify, map and photograph two more sensory walks in the district.	Jamie Burton Recreation Mitigation Team	December 2025

Housing and Communities Overview and Scrutiny Panel - 17 September 2025

Draft Air Quality Strategy – Public Consultation Report

Purpose	To review the outcomes of the public consultation on the draft Air Quality Strategy and the amended Air Quality Strategy prior to consideration by Cabinet and Full Council.
Classification	Public
Executive Summary	New Forest District Council has no declared Air Quality Management Areas and as directed by The Environment Act 2021; the council must proceed to publish an Air Quality Strategy to ensure air quality remains a high priority. A public consultation on the draft Air Quality Strategy was undertaken between 3 March – 5 May 2025 with 96 responses received. The responses have been considered, resulting in some minor amendments to the draft Air Quality Strategy and some additional points collated to help steer the development and implementation of the Strategy. Following the consultation process the amended Air Quality Strategy is recommended for adoption.
Recommendation	That Housing and Communities Overview and Scrutiny Panel supports the process for Council to consider the Air Quality Strategy for the New Forest District Council, with the recommendation of adoption.
Reasons for recommendation(s)	It is a legal requirement to develop an Air Quality Strategy by Local Authorities with no declared Air Quality Management Areas.
Ward(s)	All
Portfolio Holder(s)	Councillor Dan Poole – Portfolio Holder for Community, Safety and Wellbeing

Strategic Director(s)	Richard Knott – Strategic Director of Housing & Communities
Officer Contact	Rachel Higgins Environmental Protection Team Manager 02380 285339 rachel.higgins@nfdc.gov.uk Joanne McClay Service Manager – Environmental and Regulation 02380 285325 joanne.mcclay@nfdc.gov.uk

Introduction

1. This report advises on the outcome of an 8-week public consultation (from 3 March to 5 May 2025) concerning the draft Air Quality Strategy (AQS) for New Forest District Council (NFDC). The report also provides detail on the resulting amendments made to the draft AQS.
2. The consultation report and amended AQS will be presented to Cabinet and Council, with the recommendation to approve and adopt the AQS for NFDC.

Background

3. Local Authorities have a statutory duty through the Local Air Quality Management (LAQM) regime to review and assess local air quality in their district in accordance with legislation, Government policy and guidance. Where an air quality objective is being, or likely to be, exceeded, an Air Quality Management Area (AQMA) must be declared.
4. The Environment Act 2021 updated the LAQM regime to require local authorities from 2023 with no declared AQMAs to produce an AQS for their district. In August 2023 NFDC revoked its remaining AQMA (Lyndhurst) and officers have progressed work to develop a draft AQS.
5. The LAQM regime of review and assessment of local air quality against the air quality objectives remains and will be maintained alongside the implementation of the AQS.
6. The draft AQS was developed with the assistance of air quality consultants Ricardo-AEA Ltd and relevant stakeholders who

proactively contributed to the text of the draft AQS. The draft AQS was presented to Cabinet on 5 February 2025 who approved the draft AQS for public consultation.

Overview of public consultation on the draft Air Quality Strategy

7. The public consultation on the draft AQS was undertaken between 3 March and 5 May 2025 via an online questionnaire. The consultation sought respondents' views on:
 - air quality within the New Forest area,
 - general concerns about air quality,
 - a district wide Air Quality Strategy,
 - the priorities identified in the Strategy,
 - the representatives proposed to sit on the steering group and
 - understanding what actions, if any, they would be willing to take to themselves to improve local air quality
8. A link to the questionnaire was posted on the New Forest District Council website and publicised via the Council's Facebook page and on the resident email updates. Respondents could request a paper copy of the questionnaire if required.
9. Some questions required a yes or no answer, some asked for activities to be ranked in order of perceived importance and others allowed free text in which the respondent could expand upon their views or concerns.
10. The responses were collated and presented in a consultation report and attached in **Appendix 1**.

Outcome of public consultation on the draft Air Quality Strategy

11. In response to the consultation NFDC received:
 - Online responses: 93
 - Email response from a member of the public: 1
 - Email responses from professional bodies: 2 (New Forest NPA and UKHSA)
12. The majority of respondents agreed with the Council's priority areas within the draft AQS and the stakeholders we intend to work with. Respondents did state they would like to see more involvement from members of the public in the development and implementation of actions to improve local air quality.
13. The consultation highlighted public transport, improving traffic flow and planned development were a concern to the majority of respondents in terms of impacts on local air quality.

14. In response to the public consultation there were 6 minor amendments to the text of the draft AQS. These are noted in Appendix C of the consultation report (attached as **Appendix 1**) and have been completed for the finalised AQS document (attached as **Appendix 2**).
15. The responses to the public consultation will also assist with prioritising, developing and implementing each of the 6 priority areas identified within the draft Air Quality Strategy. The steering group will consider comments such as; ensuring public involvement throughout the process possibly through focus groups, having stronger links with public transport and cleaner transport modes and providing clearer messages on local air quality information and monitoring, when developing an action plan.

Corporate plan priorities

16. The adoption of the AQS for New Forest District Council is a statutory requirement and relates to the following corporate priorities:
17. **Theme:**
Empowering our residents to live healthy, connected and fulfilling lives and protecting our climate.
18. **Corporate Plan Objective:**
Protect and improve the health and wellbeing of our communities.
19. **Service Objective:**
Adoption and implementation of the AQS for New Forest District Council.

Options appraisal

20. **Option 1:**
That Housing and Communities Overview and Scrutiny Panel reviews the AQS prior to Cabinet, considers the proposed amendments to the AQS (following the consultation process) and recommend the revised AQS for adoption by Full Council.
21. **Option 2:**

That the adoption and publication of the AQS is not considered a priority for the Council. However, the Council is legally required to adopt an AQS and failure to approve and adopt may leave the Council open to legal challenge, including by Defra. This option is not recommended given the Council's corporate plan commitments to the health of its residents.

Consultation undertaken

22. Consultation has taken place with the Portfolio Holder, stakeholders and the public through a public consultation process.

Financial and resource implications

23. The cost to develop the AQS has been funded from existing budgets, however there is likely to be an annual cost to implement the actions arising from the Strategy. The cost for implementation of the Strategy will be determined through work plans and stakeholder involvement. Future work may include additional monitoring of pollutants within the district and potential consultancy costs to assess and model pollutants, when necessary, to further develop the Strategy priorities and assess the impact of any measures implemented.
24. Existing budgets will fund part of the costs to implement the AQS. However, further funding opportunities will need to be explored such as securing additional funding from Government grant funding schemes either individually or by working collaboratively with neighbouring authorities to reduce costs and the possibility of funding from planning contributions.
25. There is also resource implication for officer engagement to implement the AQS. This work would be completed by current positions within the Service and across the Council. However, there may be some opportunity for collaborative working with other local authorities to develop and implement specific schemes. There is also an option to continue work with Southampton University using their expertise in air quality data analysis.

Legal implications

26. In accordance with The Environment Act 2021 the Council is required to develop and adopt an AQS where there are no AQMAs within their district. Legal implications of failing to adopt an Air Quality Strategy may result in challenge from Defra.

Risk assessment

27. There is no requirement for a formal risk assessment. Any risks in delivering the Strategy will be reviewed in terms of task-based actions and staffing and financial resources required to deliver the actions which will continue to improve local air quality.

Environmental / Climate and nature implications

28. The development and implementation of an AQS for New Forest should align with policies concerning health, climate and nature, reducing emissions from vehicles and by working with local industry. Actions forwarded within the Strategy will be developed by the steering group and address impacts on the environment, climate and nature.

Equalities implications

29. The Environment Act 2021 has been assessed by Government as being compliant with United Kingdom equalities and human rights legislation. Furthermore, the action areas identified within the draft AQS aim to link areas of health inequalities with air quality to enable suitable targeting of action to reduce the impacts of airborne pollution on those most vulnerable in the New Forest district.

Crime and disorder implications

30. No specific implications.

Data protection / Information governance / ICT implications

31. No specific implications.

New Forest National Park implications

32. The AQS for New Forest covers both the New Forest District Council and New Forest National Park areas. The aim of the Strategy is to improve air quality and therefore benefit these areas, however the development of specific actions needs to ensure any potential negative impacts are identified and appropriately considered.
33. The inclusion of the New Forest National Park in the development of the Strategy, and on the strategy steering group should ensure all partner agencies are included in the development of actions, decision making and delivery. Therefore, avoiding duplications, conflicts of policy or unreasonable impacts.

Conclusion

34. The Council is legally required to develop an AQS for New Forest following the revocation of its remaining Air Quality Management Area in 2023. The draft Strategy has been consulted on with stakeholders and the public and is now seeking final approval for adoption.

Appendices:

List appendices here:

Appendix 1

Air Quality Strategy Consultation Report

Appendix 2

Finalised Air Quality Strategy

Background Papers:

Defra LAQM Policy:

[England \(exc. London\) Policy Guidance | LAQM](#)

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AIR QUALITY STRATEGY CONSULTATION REPORT

NEW FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL

July 2025

Contents

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Appendices

Appendix A - NFDC Summary responses to comments received

Appendix B - Comments received from New Forest National Park Authority and UKHSA

Appendix C - Table of amendments to the draft Air Quality Strategy

Executive Summary

Due to improvements in local air quality, there are currently no declared Air Quality Management Areas in the New Forest district. In such circumstances and as directed by The Environment Act 2021, New Forest District Council is required to publish an Air Quality Strategy to ensure local air quality remains a high priority.

In order to develop a draft Air Quality Strategy for New Forest District Council, workshops were held with relevant partners and stakeholders from across the district. Through these workshops, 6 priority areas were identified, aimed at improving air quality for people living and working in and visiting the New Forest. Following this, a public consultation sought views on the draft Air Quality Strategy including the respondents' general views on local air quality.

Most respondents agreed with the Council's priority areas within the draft Air Quality Strategy and the stakeholders we intend to work with, however respondents would like to see more involvement from members of the public in the development and implementation of actions to improve local air quality. The findings also showed public transport, improving traffic flow and planned development were a concern to the majority of respondents in terms of impacts on local air quality.

The results of the consultation have been used to:

- update the draft Air Quality Strategy where necessary before final Council adoption and publication, and,
- assist with prioritising, developing, and implementing each of the 6 priority areas identified within the draft Air Quality Strategy.

Officer recommendations based on the outcome of the public consultation:

- There is no requirement to amend the draft Air Quality Strategy in terms of the 6 priority areas and how the Strategy will be delivered via a steering group with agreed action plans.
- The draft Air Quality Strategy should be finalised and progressed for adoption by New Forest District Council.

Background

The 2023 Defra document 'Air Quality Strategy – Framework for local authority delivery' required all local authorities without an Air Quality Management Area (an area where air quality fails to comply with government set air quality objective levels) to develop and publish an Air Quality Strategy. The Strategy should set out the steps the local authority intends to take to improve local air quality.

New Forest District Council does not currently have any Air Quality Management Areas therefore a draft Air Quality Strategy was developed with the support of air quality consultants, AEA-Ricardo, and a steering group. The steering group included representatives from New Forest District Council (Environmental Health, Planning and Climate), Hampshire County Council (Public Health and Transport), New Forest National Park Authority, UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA), Environment Agency, the Environment Centre and local industry.

Local Authorities are encouraged to consult with members of the public on the production of an Air Quality Strategy to enable the views of local residents, businesses and employees to be taken into account during the development and implementation of the document. The comments provided could also be used to inform and direct the priorities of the Strategy.

Methodology

Public consultation on the draft New Forest District Council Air Quality Strategy was undertaken between 3 March and 5 May 2025 via an online questionnaire.

The consultation sought respondent's views on:

- air quality within the New Forest area,
- general concerns about air quality,
- a district wide Air Quality Strategy,
- the priorities identified in the Strategy,
- the representatives proposed to sit on the steering group and.
- understanding what actions, if any, they would be willing to take to themselves to improve local air quality.

A link to the questionnaire was posted on the New Forest District Council website and publicised via the Councils Facebook page and on the resident email updates. Respondents could request a paper copy of the questionnaire if required.

Some questions required a yes or no answer, some asked for activities to be ranked in order of perceived importance and others allowed free text in which the respondent could expand upon their views or concerns.

The responses were collated and analysed in this report. With regards to the free text questions, common themes were grouped for ease of understanding.

Interpretation of results

The public consultation is not representative of the overall population but provides information on the opinion of those respondents who engaged.

Results

The questionnaire received:

- Online responses: 93
- Email response from a member of the public: 1
- Email responses from professional bodies: 2

The results of the online consultation are shown below, with other comments received discussed further in Appendix A.

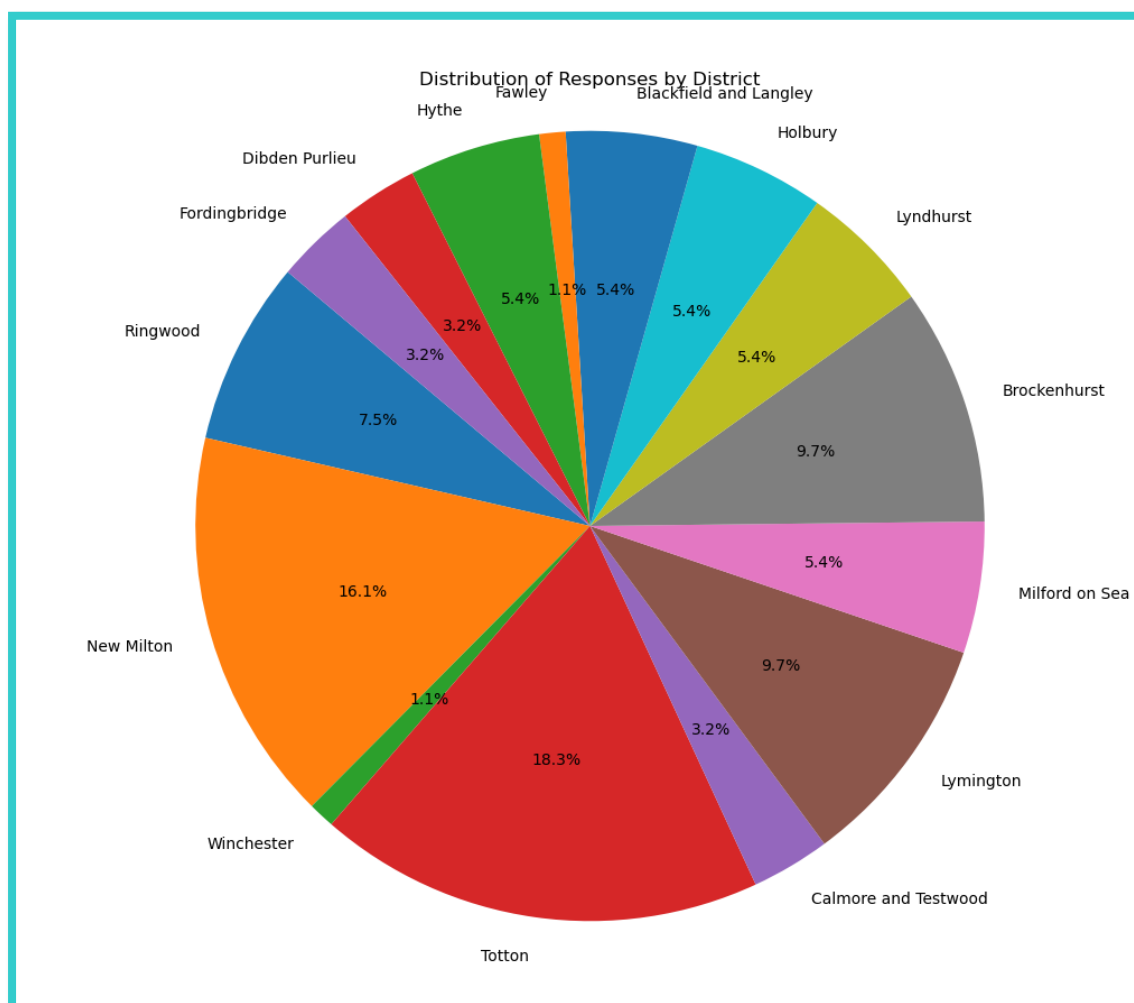
Questions 1-3 collected statistical data to enable analysis of the scope of responses and representation from different demographic groups.

Q1 Name

It was not mandatory to provide a name.

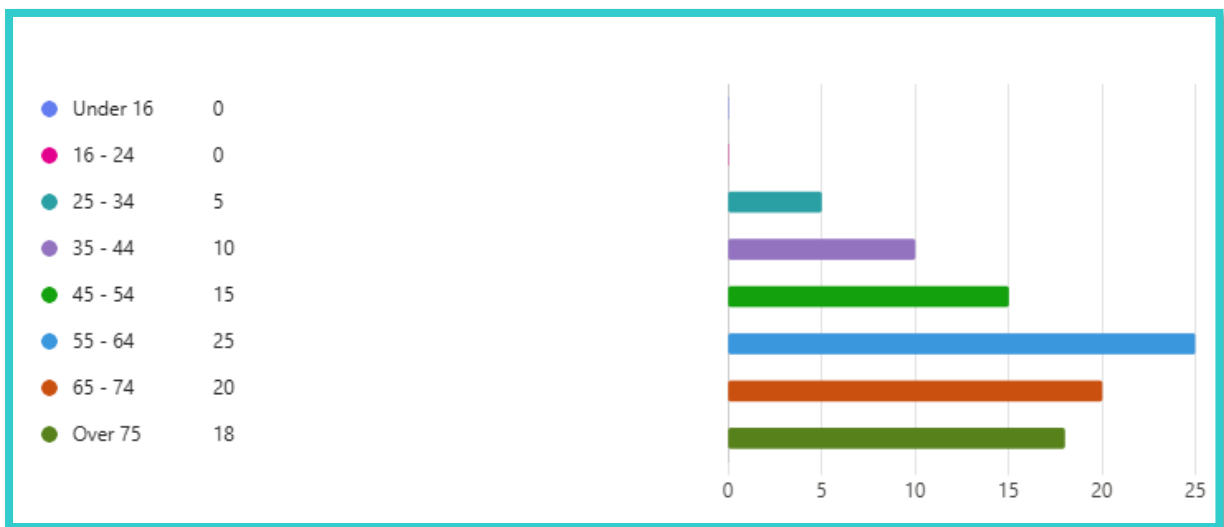
Q2 Postcode

The breakdown of postcode is as follows:



Q3 Age

The largest group of respondents 27% (or 25 respondents) were the 55-64 age group.

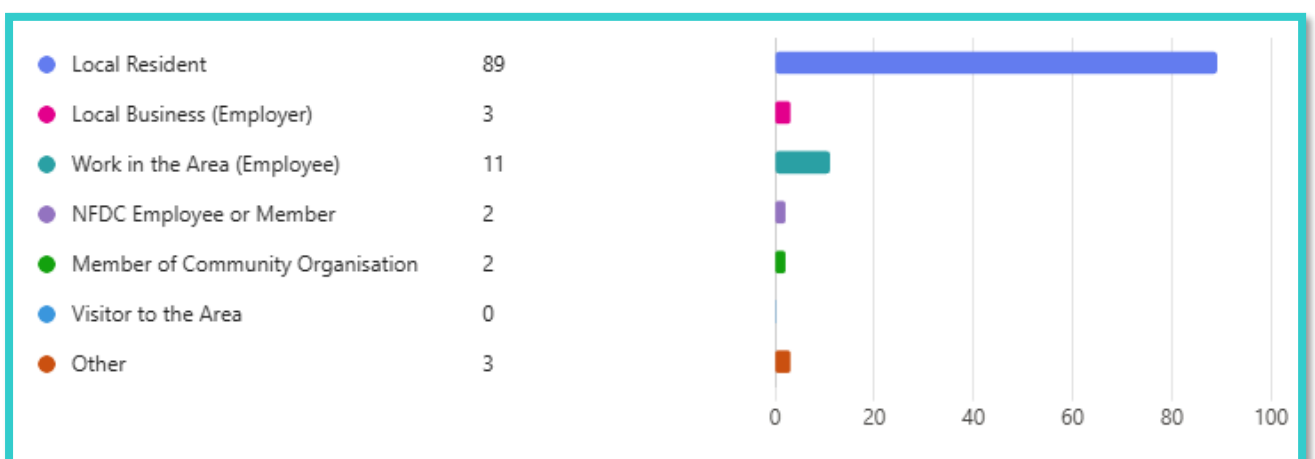


Q4 Commenting as . . .

The majority, 81%, of respondents (89 people) were commenting as a local resident.

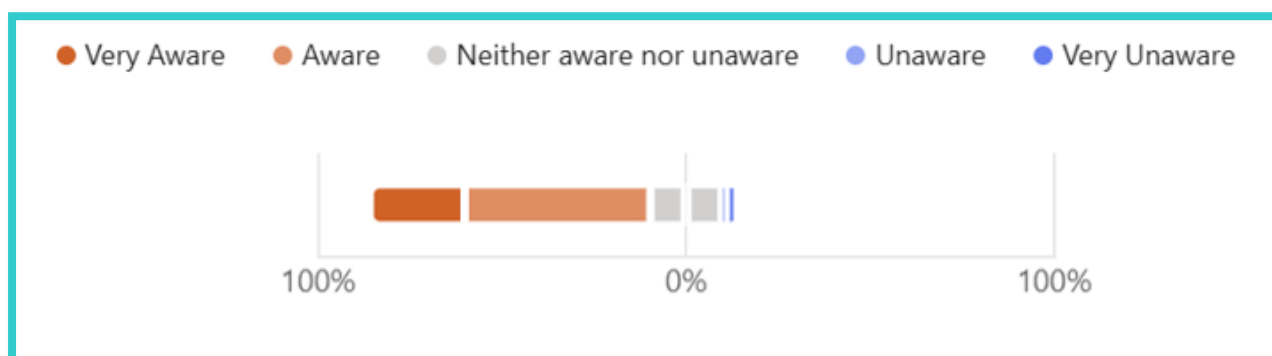
Respondents commenting as an employee within the area were the second highest group -10% of respondents or 11 people.

Note: some responders answered as a member of more than one group and so the graph displays more than 93 results.



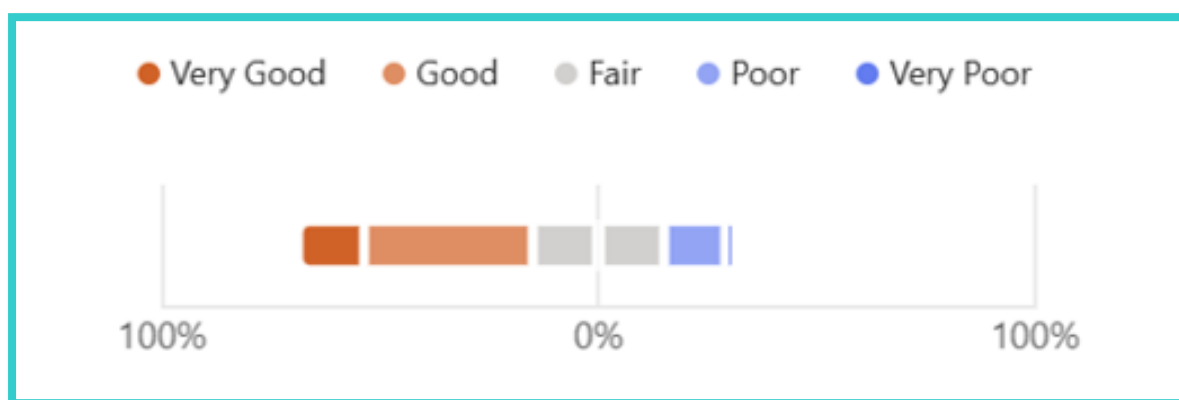
Q5 What is your awareness of air quality within the New Forest area?

The majority of respondents (76%) were aware or very aware of air quality within the New Forest



Q6 How do you perceive air quality in the New Forest?

The majority of respondents (54%) perceived air quality as being good or very good in the New Forest.

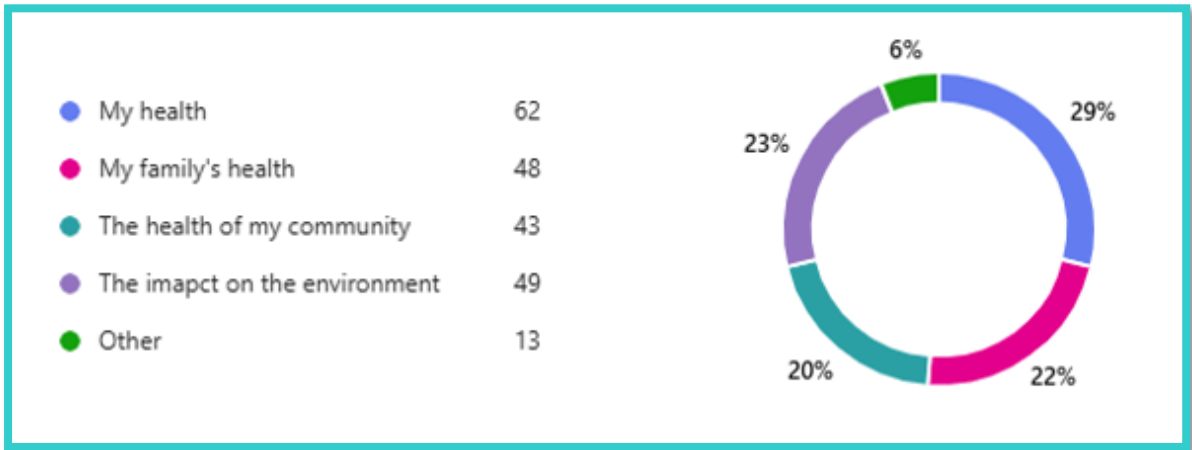


Q7 What concerns you most about air quality.

Respondents were asked to choose up to three categories which were of most concern to them.

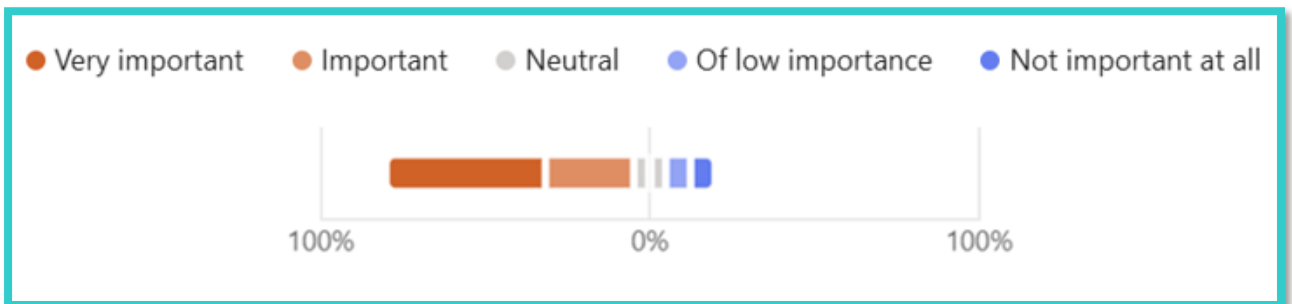
The 'my health' category was cumulatively the most common response receiving 29% of votes.

Note: The pie chart shows the percentage of votes given to each category whilst the numbers refer to the number of votes per category.



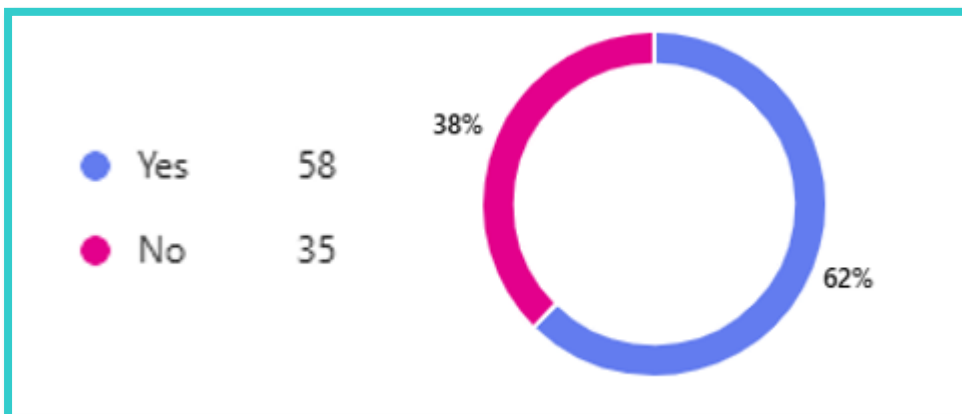
Q8 How important do you think it is to have an Air Quality Strategy to look at improving air quality for the New Forest?

78% of respondents stated this was very important or important.



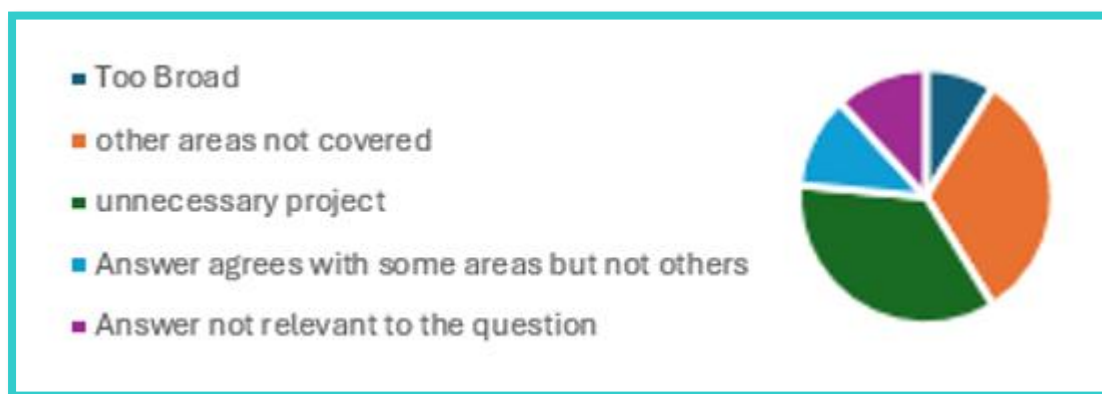
Q9 Do you agree with the summary of priority areas identified in the Air Quality Strategy?

62% of respondents (58 people) agreed this was important, 38%, (35 people) did not.



Q10 If not, why not

This was a free text question to which 34 people responded. The responses were collated into themes:



Other priority areas listed by respondents included:

- Shipping
- Industry
- Public transport (although this would come under the road transport priority area)

Other general comments or concerns included:

- A concern over charging to enter the area (this is not stated in the Air Quality Strategy)
- Concerns over the targeting of woodburning and rural ways of life.

Q11 The 6 priority areas within the Air Quality Strategy are listed. Please rank them in order of importance to you.

This question requested respondents to rank the 6 priorities.

Public awareness and behaviour change was the highest overall priority with 42% of respondents placing this as their 1st or 2nd choice.

However, whilst this priority was the most populous in terms of cumulative ranking, reducing road traffic emissions and reducing the impact of new developments had the joint highest 1st choice responses. It is also noted that reducing the impact of new development also received an equal proportion of 6th choice votes.

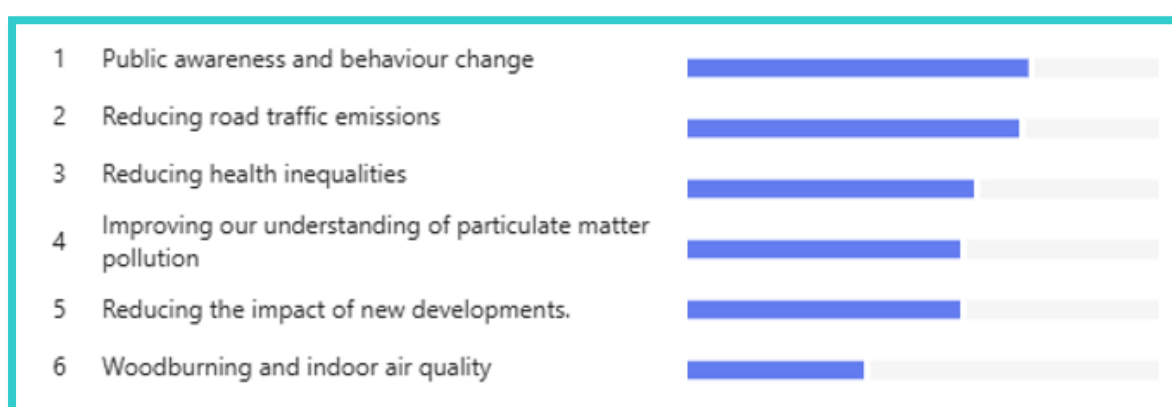
Woodburning and indoor air quality was placed 6th overall but was the highest priority for 11% of respondents.

Percentage of 1st choice votes

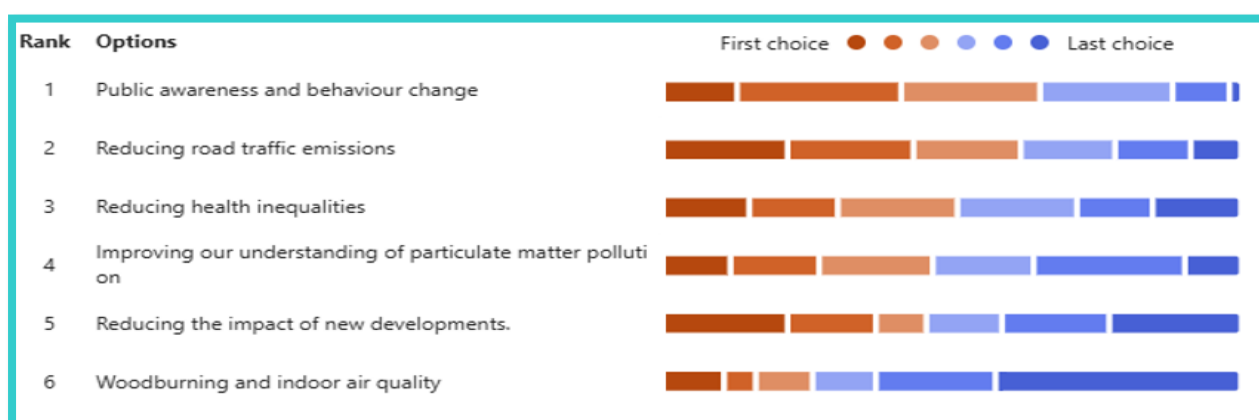
Priority Area	% of 1 st Choice
Reducing Road traffic emissions	23
Reducing the impact of new development	23
Reducing health inequalities	16
Public awareness and behavioural change	14
Understanding particulate matter	13
Woodburning and indoor air pollution	11

Percentage of 6th choice votes

Priority Area	% of 6 th Choice
Woodburning and indoor air pollution	42
Reducing the impact of new development	22
Reducing health inequalities	15
Understanding particulate matter	10
Reducing Road traffic emissions	9
Public awareness and behavioural change	2



The bar chart below shows the distribution of these concerns as first and last choices. Public awareness and behaviour change and reducing road traffic emissions are frequently chosen as top priorities, while woodburning and indoor air quality are often seen as less important.



Q12 Why have you ranked them in this order?

This was a free text question resulting in a varied response.

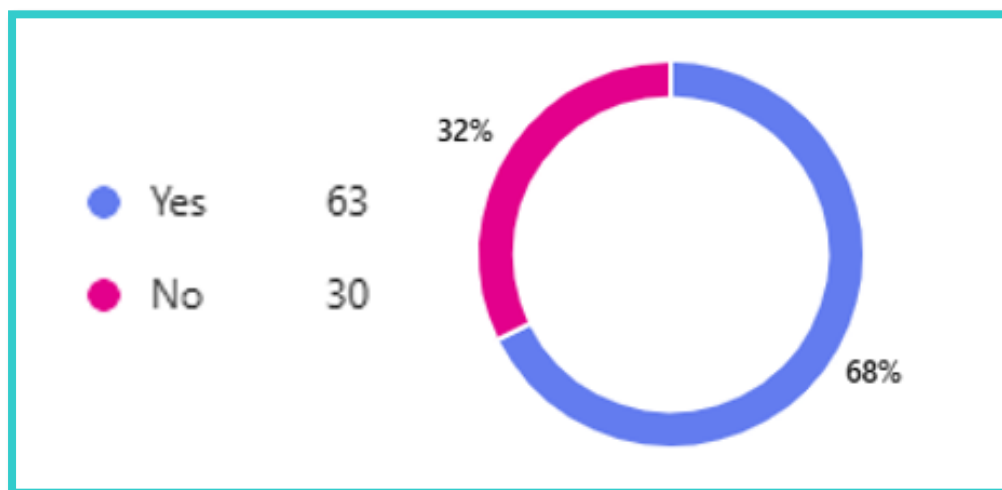
Opinions were too broad to elicit a common response, however common themes in respondent reasonings included:

- Objections to targeting woodburners
- Appeals to ban woodburners
- Concerns relating to traffic / public transport / infrastructure
- Concerns regarding development in the area
- Emissions relating to local industry, particularly the refinery
- Reasoning relating to very localised issues
- Political views on the Air Quality Strategy and other policies
- The Air Quality Strategy is viewed as a waste of money

Q13 Chapter 4 advises how we intend to implement the Air Quality Strategy. Our plan is to oversee the strategy by forming a steering group of relevant officers and local stakeholders who will develop annual work plans to forward agreed actions in a timely manner.

Do you agree with the approach to developing and forwarding local air quality actions?

68% or 63 respondents agreed with the approach. 32% or 30 respondents did not.



Q14 If not, why not?

This was a free text question with 28 responses.

In summary, the main responses were:

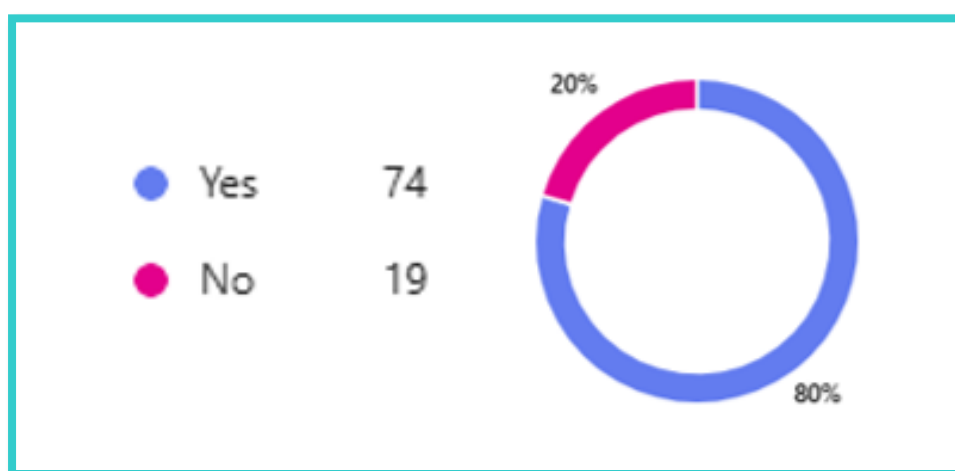
- It will increase the length of the process to take decisions and actions/It adds more meetings to the process/adds to bureaucracy (10)
- Having a stakeholder group would add cost which is taxpayers' money (9)

- The stakeholders are all the same type of officer and therefore would be biased/Trust is eroded/The group should involve the public (4)

Q15 Chapter 4 advises of the partners we intend to work with in the implementation of the Air Quality Strategy.

Partners include (but not limited to) Environmental Health, Public Health, Planning, Transportation, Climate Change, local industry, and the New Forest National Park Authority do you agree we are working with the correct partners?

80% or 74 respondents were in agreement. 20% or 19 respondents were not.



Q16 Are there any other partners we should be working with?

This question gathered 66 responses.

Other suggested partners included:

- Local community members (public, local business, farmers): (19)
- Industry: (7)
- Local schools: (5)
- Associated British Ports (ABP): (5)
- Woodburner suppliers: (4)
- Sustains / cycling advocates: (3)
- Town and Parish Councils: (3)
- Shipping companies: (3)
- Transport suppliers: (2)
- Conservation groups: (1)
- Forestry England: (1)
- Politicians: (1)
- Historic England: (1)
- Other Local Authorities: (1)
- Tourism: (1)
- Chem trail experts: (1)
- Other (8)

Q17 The annual work plans and Air Quality Strategy updates will be published on the Council's website. Are there any other ways you would like to receive this information?

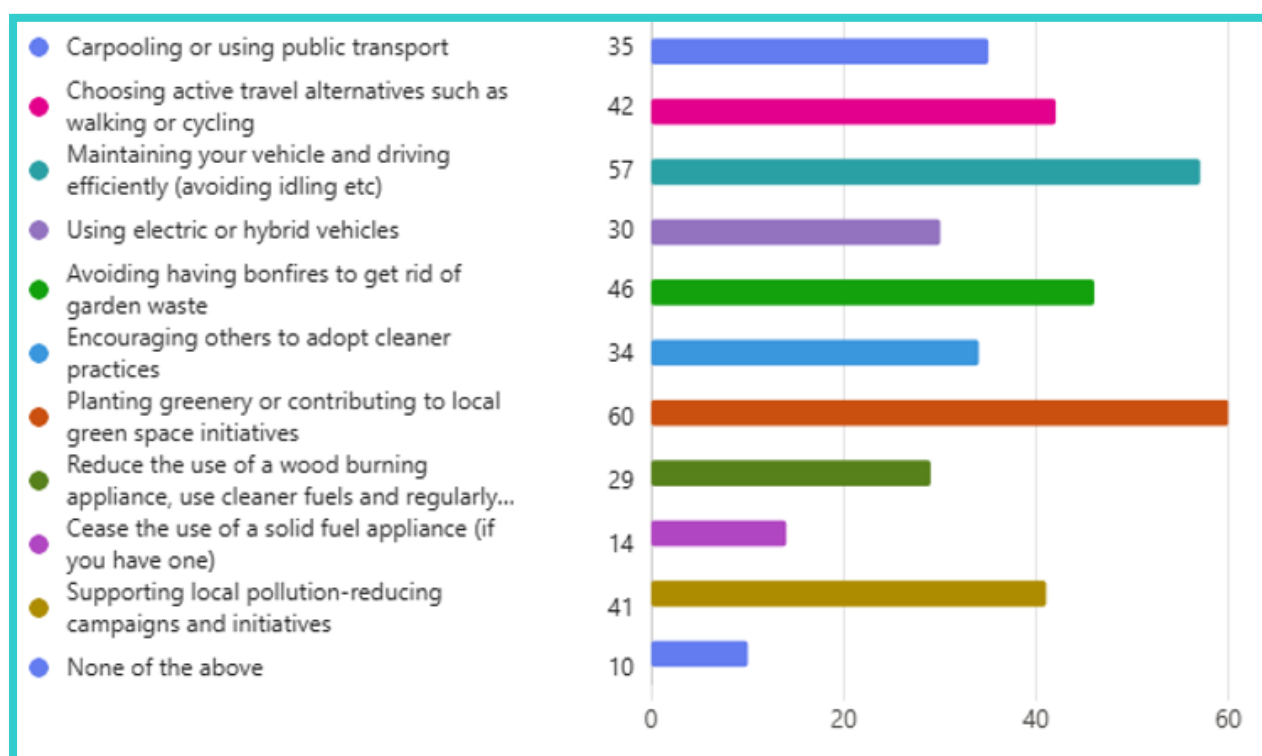
Responses to this question included:

- Leaflet drops / direct mailing
- Facebook
- Newsletters
- Personal email/resident emails/Next door email groups
- Newspapers
- Pigeon
- Community centres
- Via parish/town councils

Q18 We all have a role to play in improving air quality. Which of the actions below would you consider doing to improve air quality in your area?

Responses to this question included:

- Planting greenery or contributing to green space initiatives was the most popular action with 60 respondents highlighting this as an action they would take.
- Maintaining vehicles and driving efficiently were also popular commitments.
- Ceasing the use of a woodburner (if you have one) was the least popular commitment.



Q19 What else can we do to make a positive difference to air quality in the New Forest?

This free text question elicited 62 responses, the most popular included:

Topics already included in priority areas within the draft Air Quality Strategy:

- Improve public transport including from / to Southampton: (11)
- Improving traffic / reducing congestion: (8)
- Encourage cycling / walking in both urban and rural locations: (8)
- Improve enforcement on residents: (2)
- Targeting individual behaviour change: (1)

Topics already noted within the draft Air Quality Strategy for further consideration:

- Reduce development: (5)
- Ban woodburners: (3)
- Journey planning: (2)
- Increase/improve green spaces: (2)
- Stop garden bonfires: (2)
- Stop forest burning: (1)
- Incentives to remove woodburners: (1)
- Cleaner industry: (1)
- Work effectively with other regulators: (1)

Other topics not noted within the draft Air Quality Strategy:

- Stop cruise shipping: (3)
- Stop chem trails: (2)
- Introduce park and ride: (2)
- Planting more trees: (1)
- Restore Hythe ferry: (1)
- Introduce charging zone: (1)
- Shore power for cruise ships: (1)
- Stop incineration: (1)
- Reduce tourists: (1)
- Stop port development: (1)
- Reduce garden waste collection costs: (1)

All comments received from the public consultation on the draft Air Quality Strategy (redacted of personal information) are available on request.

Additional comments received

Additional comments were received from professional bodies:

- New Forest National Park Authority (NFNPA)
- UK Health Standards Agency (UKHSA)

The full comments received from NFNPA and the UKSHA can be found in Appendix B. These comments were supportive of the Air Quality Strategy.

The comments also included some minor amendments to the text as well as broader comments and suggestions which will be taken into consideration as the work to implement the Strategy is progressed.

Changes made to the text of the draft Air Quality Strategy based on comments received from the consultation are stated in Table 1 in Appendix C

Officer recommendations

The consultation highlighted a diverse and often differing public view of local air quality within the New Forest district and how the Council should prioritise its work to manage and improve local air quality for all.

The main themes of concern surrounded:

- Transport and public transport
- Planned development
- The need for clearer information and advice on the work the Council currently undertakes on air quality including:
 - i) more detail on the monitoring requirements and reporting
 - ii) ongoing regulation including of local industry
- Collaborative working
- How and when we will seek to involve other groups/representatives as we develop and implement work plans

It was evident that communication with the public is desired and necessary for transparency, to gather public support for air quality improvements and to ensure clear information on air quality issues is widely available. The responses received from the public consultation will help direct discussion with the steering group and form future actions taking public opinion into account.

Officer recommendations based on the outcome of the public consultation:

- There is no requirement to amend the draft Air Quality Strategy in terms of the 6 priority areas and how the Strategy will be delivered via a steering group with agreed action plans.
- The draft Air Quality Strategy should be finalised and progressed for adoption by New Forest District Council.

Appendices

Appendix A - NFDC Summary responses to comments received

The Council has sought to address frequently raised comments, or questions that can be answered at this time, in the following section.

Q10 Do you agree with the priority areas? If not, why not?

Shipping and industry were other sectors viewed as priority areas for respondents.

Shipping and industry have not been directly listed as a priority area because the initial regional air quality modelling exercise undertaken for the draft Strategy, (Section 3.3) did not advise these sources of emissions to be significant contributors to airborne emissions in the New Forest area. Their contribution is however noted in the modelling outputs provided in the draft Strategy.

Public transport improvements were raised by respondents, and this would be included within the development of the priority areas relating to transport and planned development. It is noted that improvements to public transport was a common theme throughout the responses received.

Q11 The 6 priorities within the Air Quality Strategy are listed. Please rank them in order of importance to you.

The top overall ranked choice was public awareness and behavioural change, which takes into account all the 1-3 ranking votes. Reducing road traffic emissions and reducing the impact of new developments were the most popular first choice groups, although reducing the impact of new development, also received an equal proportion of 6th choice votes.

Respondent views will influence those areas we may seek to develop first in conjunction with other considerations such as available resources, working with other agencies and timescales.

Q12 Why have you ranked the priority areas in this order?

Respondents views were mixed and often varied greatly with many opposing viewpoints i.e. some respondents stating that they perceive nothing wrong with air quality in the New Forest and that the Strategy was a waste of time and money, whilst others perceived air quality to be poor with the Strategy not fully addressing the perceived issues.

The general view was that public awareness of local air quality is important because without a good understanding of air quality impacts, behavioural change and other measures will not be effective.

Q14 Do you agree with this approach to developing and forwarding air quality action plans?

Responses included:

- It will increase the length of the process to take decisions and actions/It adds more meetings to the process/adds to bureaucracy (10)
- Having a stakeholder group would add cost which is taxpayers' money (9)
- The stakeholders are all the same type of officer and therefore would be biased/trust is eroded/the steering group should involve the public (4)

Having a core stakeholder group is seen as an effective and efficient method of working when multiple areas of work are being forwarded through the Strategy. Each priority action area may include different stakeholders to ensure those able to deliver positive action are included. For example, New Forest District Council does not control public transport, but we can include representatives from this sector in our discussions, similarly, New Forest District Council is not the regulator for some of the larger industrial sites such as Fawley refinery, but we will include the Environment Agency and industry representatives in the stakeholder groups.

We take on board the request to involve residents in preparing action plans and will consider appropriate ways to ensure public participation. This may be via:

- individual town and parish councils
- surveys
- public meetings
- resident focus groups

The production and implementation of the Air Quality Strategy is a statutory duty required by Government. It forms part of the Council's required work and officer time is accounted for through existing budgets.

Q16 Are there any other partners we should be working with?

Also see response to Q14.

The stakeholder group will be the drive behind developing and implementing the priority areas using their expert knowledge and regulatory understanding.

However, during the development and implementation of action plans, other groups will be involved as appropriate i.e. schools, ABP, industry and Forestry England. The involvement of local communities will be important, and this would be managed individually depending on the action of concern – for example local

business regarding deliveries, transport concerning a specific village/town, public health / clinicians for health updates concerning specific communities.

Q18 Which of the actions below would you consider doing to improve air quality in your area?

Residents are keen to pursue some actions individually to improve air quality.

Supporting people in doing so may form a part of the Strategy, for example working with local community groups to encourage participation in schemes such as tree planting, car-pooling and promoting garden waste schemes.

Q19 What else can we do to make a positive difference to air quality in the New Forest?

Of the 62 responses to this question, the majority concern transport, alternative modes of transport and better public transport access.

The Strategy includes garden bonfires and heath burning and these are covered in the public awareness priority area.

Some responses such as prohibiting cruise ships and reducing visitors to the area do not fall within the remit of the Council, although we can work to manage them, whilst other suggestions such as building railways and flyovers would be prohibitively expensive.

Some responses called for the introduction of a charging congestion zone. Others opposed it. The Strategy does not consider charging vehicles to enter any part of the New Forest district and there are no plans for the introduction of a charging zone.

Some responses requested the Council carry out air quality monitoring. This has been undertaken by New Forest District Council for over 20 years and the results of that monitoring can be viewed in the annual status reports available on the NFDC website: [Air pollution - New Forest District Council](#)

Some responses called for the ability to report problem bonfires. These can be reported by calling 02380 285411 or emailing eandr@nfc.gov.uk

Appendix B

Comments received from New Forest National Park Authority and UKHSA

Comments received from New Forest National Park Authority

Section	NFNPA comment
1.1	This section confirms that the focus of the Strategy is on the impacts of air quality on human health in the district. It is helpful to have this clarified, as distinct from the air quality impacts arising from planned development on the New Forest's internationally protected habitats and species covered by the Habitats Regulations.
Page 15	Support the reference to the fact that the New Forest National Park Authority has also declared a climate and nature emergency. When combined with the District Council's declaration, this lends further weight to the measures outlined in the Strategy.
Page 21	This section confirms that the District Council will continue, "...to work with Hampshire County Council on the development of the Local Walking and Cycling Infrastructure Plan to improve active travel facilities across the district and encourage people to shift from short car journeys to walking/ cycling/wheeling." Consideration could be given to mentioning in this section that the Waterside LCWIP is adopted and so the focus is on implementation. This is referenced on page 37 of the document.
Section 8.3	This part of the Strategy sets out a commitment to introducing particulate matter monitoring in the New Forest. The National Park Authority welcomes this and would suggest that some monitoring takes place in the rural areas of the New Forest – including the National Park – given that wood burning is a potential source.
Section 9.5	Section 9.5 states that the District Council will continue to raise awareness of the impact of wood burners. We welcome this commitment and the National Park Authority may be able to play a role in this awareness raising, with wood burners particularly relevant within the National Park areas of the District.
Page 38	A minor point, but it is suggested that the penultimate paragraph is amended to read, "The New Forest contains more than 100 miles of waymarked cycle routes, much of it off the public highway and traffic-free. The National Park Authority highlights popular cycle routes and highlights the locations of cycle hire shops in the area."

Regarding the consultation on the New Forest DLC Draft Air Quality Action Strategy

Thank you for the opportunity for UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA) to comment on the New Forest DLC draft Air Quality Strategy. UKHSA strongly supports the continued efforts of the Council to improve air quality in its area and reduce public exposure to air pollution.

We welcome and note the revoking of the last AQMA within the New Forest district, i.e. Lyndhurst AQMA on these grounds:

- Between 2010-2022- NO₂ levels compliant for 8 consecutive years with NO₂ levels decreased by 10µg/m³.
- This is due in part to improvements in traffic sequencing and improvement in vehicular emissions technology.
- A forecast study predicts exceedances unlikely in the future.

For this AQ Strategy we note that whilst there were no exceedances of the Air Quality Objectives for particulate matter and nitrogen dioxide in the New Forest, the strategy document emphasises the importance of continued action to reduce concentrations. We support this position.

We welcome the wide range of departments involved in producing the AQ Strategy.

UKHSA's approach to improving air quality

UKHSA's position is that some pollutants, such as NO₂ and PM, are non-threshold – i.e. there is no known level of exposure below which health impacts don't occur. This means that any improvement in air quality, even below Air Quality Objective Levels and Standards, is associated with benefits to people's health. We support approaches which minimise or mitigate public exposure to non-threshold air pollutants, address inequalities (in exposure) and maximise co-benefits (such as by increasing active travel and physical exercise or improving access to and quality of greenspaces). As outlined in our 2019 [review of interventions to improve outdoor air quality and health](#), we recommend that evaluation is embedded in the design of interventions from their outset and to systematically gather evidence of their impact and effectiveness. We suggest that it is beneficial to seek the implementation of the evaluation methods at the planning stage.

It is important that local authorities keep working to reduce levels of air pollution not only in AQMAs but across the wider local authority area. The evidence around the role of fine and ultrafine fractions in the health effects of air pollution is growing. In 2021 the World Health Organization reduced their guideline level for fine PM (PM_{2.5}) from 10 µg/m³ to 5 µg/m³.¹ In January 2022, the Committee on the Medical Effects of Air Pollutants (COMEAP), an expert committee of the Department of Health and Social Care, published updated [guidance](#) on the health evidence relevant to setting PM2.5 targets.² This was intended to inform the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra's) development of air quality targets under the Environment Act 2021. The advice included that reducing concentrations below the WHO guideline value of 5 µg/m³ would benefit public health.

Recommendations

1. To outline general principles, the UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA) refers to the Public Health England (PHE) review of interventions to improve outdoor air quality and health. PHE was a predecessor agency to UKHSA. This review document recommends a hierarchy of interventions (actions) with preventing, reducing, or replacing polluting activities to reduce emissions as the first priority. Actions to reduce the concentration of air pollution once it has occurred is the second priority, and individual avoidance of exposure is the third. The air quality strategy broadly follows this hierarchy by emphasising public behaviour change and understanding sources of air pollution before devising interventions among other key action point areas being considered.

2. Regarding Section 2 “Why do we need to improve air quality”, the section detailing health effects should be expanded to provide a fuller context of health effects over various timeframes. This response will include standard lines as an appendix.
3. Regarding Section 6 on public awareness and behaviour change, the PHE review found that educational campaigns are most effective when designed around established behavioural change models. The Interventions Report recommends that authorities “help people understand the impacts of air pollution and what they can do to reduce their exposures, using recognised behavioural frameworks if implementing behavioural interventions.”
4. The continuous monitoring and review of the strategy has been emphasised throughout the Air Quality Strategy. PHE’s review of interventions to improve outdoor air quality and health recommended that evaluation should be embedded in the design of interventions from their outset, to gather evidence of their impact and effectiveness.
5. Regarding Section 11, “Reducing the impact of new developments,” poorly planned developments can disproportionately affect certain population groups throughout their development lifecycle—from location selection to construction, operation, and eventual deconstruction. As the Local Authority is reviewing their planning application response process, we encourage where possible, the inclusion of assessments that consider adverse air quality impacts on all and this includes disadvantaged communities and areas.
6. Referring to section 12 “Where to find more information” it may be helpful to expand the table by incorporating additional resources detailed in Table 1 below:

Table 1. Useful links and references

Title	Link	Description
Household air pollution attributable deaths	WHO.int	Global Health Observatory portal shows various indicators for burden of disease attributable to air pollution.
Estimating the morbidity from air pollution and its economic costs	WHO.int	WHO project providing expert technical and advisory support on the adverse health effects of air pollution and the different morbidities it causes, with a special focus on developing economic assessments.
Air pollution: applying All Our Health	OHID.gov.uk	Information to help frontline health and care staff use their trusted relationships with patients, families, and communities to take action on the health effects of air pollution.
Air pollution: outdoor air quality and health: quality standards	NICE.org.uk	NICE quality standard covering road-traffic-related air pollution and its impact on health. It describes high-quality actions in priority areas for improvement.
Public health profiles	OHID.gov.uk	Example public health indicator for air pollution: proportion of local authority population living with an AQMA linked here.
Air Quality - A guide for directors of public health	Defra.gov.uk	Suite of tools produced through collaboration of the Local Government Association, the Association of Directors of Public Health, Defra and UKHSA which will help local authorities to take action to improve air quality.
Review of interventions to improve outdoor air quality and public health	UKHSA.gov.uk	Evidence-based advice available to local authorities, and national actions required to support them, on the most effective practical actions to reduce air pollution and its impact on our health

Concluding remarks

The draft New Forest DLC AQ Strategy addresses the public health impacts of air pollution. Key priorities comprise public awareness and behaviour change, reducing health inequalities, improving understanding of particulate matter air pollution, addressing wood burning and indoor air pollution and reducing traffic emissions. These priorities will be implemented variously through action plans, continuous monitoring and evaluation, partnerships and community engagements.

The strategy notes that while air quality in the New Forest is generally “good” compared to neighbouring areas, continued action is required to safeguard public health. As airborne pollutants including PM and NO₂ are non-threshold, we welcome actions arising from this strategy to address pollution at source and reduce air pollution further below national Air Quality Objectives while addressing inequalities in exposure.

Editorial notes:

Please note that the lettered points (a, b, c, etc.) under each numbered item correspond to observations found on the page number referenced in that item.

1. Page (abbreviated P. thereafter) 5: It might be helpful to cite link to strategies in the main text so readers can readily access references without referring to footnote references.
2. P. 12: It might be more transparent to provide a link for footnote 10 in the table description as well as in the main text
 - a. use of “-1” with table number, makes it look like it is Table 1, Table 2 and Table 3, use Table X.1 if there are more than one table, or just consistent numbering of tables from 1 to n.
 - b. Is there a link for a map for diffusion tubes in the area?
3. P. 14 This page shows source apportionment for PM_{2.5} although no monitoring of it is currently undertaken. It may be helpful to clarify in basic terms, how source apportionment for PM_{2.5} is derived in the absence of specific monitoring.
4. P. 15: When mentioning greenhouse gases, the chemical formula is stated for carbon dioxide, but not methane or ozone (two paragraphs later), chemical formulas should be used consistently
 - a. The link to council’s climate emergency page doesn’t work
5. P. 26: second time Figure is labelled “Figure 7-1”, first one on P 26 (see above), and again Figure description under the figure

Throughout:

6. Remove all subscripts used for the abbreviation of particulate matter, for example PM_{2.5} should be written PM2.5, likewise for all mentions of PM_{0.1} and PM₁₀. We recommend consistency in the use of either national Air Quality Objectives or UK Air Quality Standards throughout the document, for example national Air Quality Objectives is referred to on page 9 and Air Quality Standards on page 10.
7. The figure description should be under the figures not above (example Figure 3-1, P14), and the figure numbering system is confusing, i.e. the figure numbers are led by section number, but often there is no second figure in the section to make the secondary number necessary, except for section 7, but here both figures are numbered 7-1
8. Inconsistency and interchangeable mentions of Defra, or Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs.

Appendix C - Table of amendments to the draft Air Quality Strategy

Table 1 Table of amendments being taken forward.

Organisation	Comment /Amendment	Page Number	Text Amended
NFNPA	Add word 'Authority'	38	
UKHSA	Check use of terminology of AQ Standards and Objectives is correct	9 and 10 and Table 2.1	Text amended in Table 2.1.
UKHSA	Use of chemical formulas should be consistent	15	CH ₄ added after methane
UKHSA	Link to NFNPA climate change document does not work	15	Link checked
UKHSA	Figure 7-1 is used twice	25 and 26	Numbering amended throughout
NFDC	Table Update – new data published	12 Table 3-1	As required

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New Forest District Council: **Air Quality Strategy 2025**

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1

Introduction



The New Forest district covers a wide and diverse area, including towns, industrial areas, and rural regions. The natural beauty of our district, including many protected areas and the majority of the New Forest National Park, enriches the lives of residents, supports businesses, and draws many visitors each year.

Following progress at a local and national level in recent years, large parts of the New Forest now enjoy good air quality. Concentrations at all our monitoring sites are now below National UK Air Quality Objectives for all measured pollutants, so in 2023 we were able to revoke our last Air Quality Management Area in Lyndhurst. However, we need to keep making improvements to safeguard the health and wellbeing of everybody who lives and works here.

Our vision is to continuously improve the quality of the environment in our district, in support of the council's Corporate Plan priorities to deliver a vibrant and prosperous district for the residents of our unique place.

This Strategy will be reviewed and amended as required every 5 years unless there are any significant requirements to do so earlier.

1.1 WHAT IS INCLUDED IN THIS STRATEGY?

This Air Quality Strategy explains why we need to improve air quality, describes current air quality in our district, and sets out New Forest District Council's plans for improving air quality in the New Forest district. The focus of the Strategy is on the impacts of air quality on human health in the district.

We have identified a number of action areas to focus on over the next decade. These include targeting key sources of pollution and improving the information that we provide to our residents and businesses to empower them to reduce their air pollution footprint and their exposure to air pollution.



1.2 HOW WAS THIS STRATEGY DEVELOPED?

This Strategy has been developed with the support of an Air Quality Steering Group. This Steering Group includes New Forest District Council – Environmental Health, Planning, Health and Wellbeing and Climate Change, Hampshire County Council - Public Health and Transport, the UK Health Security Agency, New Forest National Park Authority, the Environment Centre, the Environment Agency, and representatives from local industry.

Furthermore, prior to formal adoption of the Strategy by New Forest District Council, a public consultation was undertaken to enable residents and businesses to provide their feedback on the Strategy.

Working collaboratively allows us to ensure our commitments and actions are inclusive and fair for everyone living in, working in, and visiting the district, and to guarantee that it represents the priorities and perspectives of the local community.

1.3 HOW DOES THIS STRATEGY ALIGN WITH OTHER POLICIES?

Air pollution in the New Forest doesn't only come from inside the district; pollution from other nearby areas also has an impact on our air quality. At the same time, the pollution we produce also affects air quality for our neighbours, so it is important to address air quality at a national and regional level as well as at a local level. We have designed our Air Quality Strategy to align with other strategies, plans and policies at national, regional, and local levels as shown below.

National

- The Clean Air Strategy 2019
- DEFRA Local Air Quality Management Policy Guidance

Regional

- Hampshire County Council Climate Change Strategy 2020–2025
- Hampshire County Council Air Quality Framework Phase 1 Manual
- Hampshire County Council Local Transport Plan 4
- Hampshire County Council Air Pollution and Air Quality Report
- Partnership for South Hampshire
- Hampshire Public Health Strategy 2023–2026

Local

- Air Quality SPD 2022
- Climate Change SPD draft 2023
- Climate Change and Nature Emergency Annual Update 2023/24
- Greener Housing Strategy 2022 to 2032
- Local Plan 2016–2036
- New Forest National Park Local Plan (2019)

2

Why do we need to improve air quality?



Air pollution in the UK has seen significant improvements in recent decades due to the introduction of policies and measures designed to reduce emissions from transport, industry, businesses, and homes. However, although ambient air quality in the UK is generally considered good, elevated pollution levels still occur in many towns and cities across the country.

2.1 HEALTH AND AIR QUALITY

It is estimated that human-made air pollution in the UK leads to 28,000 to 36,000 premature deaths every year.¹ Episodes of higher air pollution increase hospital admissions and mortality, with harmful short-term effects including exacerbating symptoms for those with pre-existing heart and lung conditions, such as asthma.

There is also growing evidence that air pollution is associated with other long-term ailments which are related to reduced life expectancy such as stroke, lung cancer, respiratory conditions and cardiovascular disease, dementia, diabetes, and adverse pregnancy outcomes.^{2,3}

Air pollution affects everyone who lives and works in the New Forest throughout their lives. The most vulnerable groups include young children, the elderly, pregnant women, those living in deprived communities, and those with pre-existing heart or lung conditions.⁴



Elderly



**Those with
lung disease**



Children

1 Office for Health Improvement & Disparities, Air Pollution: applying All Our Health 2022 <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/air-pollution-applying-all-our-health/air-pollution-applying-all-our-health>

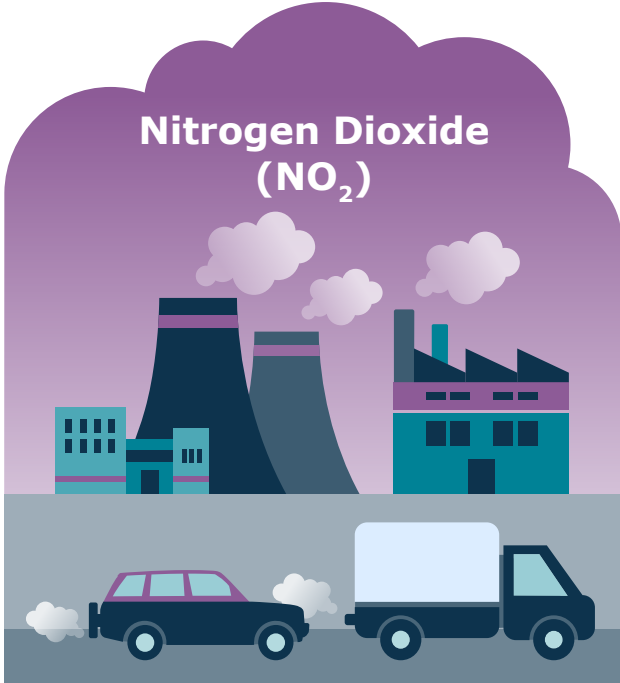
2 Public Health England (2014), PHE-CRCE-010: Estimating local mortality burdens associated with particulate air pollution. Available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/estimating-local-mortality-burdens-associated-with-particulate-air-pollution>

3 World Health Organisation. (2024) Ambient (outdoor) air pollution. Available at: [https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/ambient-\(outdoor\)-air-quality-and-health](https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/ambient-(outdoor)-air-quality-and-health)

4 Office for National Statistics. (2020) Local authority ageing statistics, based on annual mid-year population estimates (2019). Available at: <https://www.ons.gov.uk/datasets/ageing-population-estimates/editions/time-series/versions/1>

2.2 WHICH POLLUTANTS AFFECT OUR HEALTH?

The key pollutants that have an impact on our health are nitrogen dioxide (NO₂) and particulate matter (PM).

 Nitrogen Dioxide (NO₂) What is it? • Colourless gas with one nitrogen atom and two oxygen atoms • One of a group of gases called nitrogen oxides (NO_x) Where does it come from? • Formed during combustion e.g. from power generation, industrial combustion and road transport • Other nitrogen oxides can convert to NO₂ in the atmosphere Where is it found? • High concentrations are often seen near busy roads How does it affect me? • Frequent exposure to high NO₂ concentrations increases risk of respiratory illnesses, cardiopulmonary effects, asthma attacks, and decreased lung function	 Particulate Matter (PM) What is it? • Solid particles (dust) and liquid droplets suspended in the air • Made up of a range of chemicals, some of which can be toxic to human health • PM₁₀, PM_{2.5}, PM_{0.1} are different sizes of particles Where does it come from? • Burning fossil fuels and wood, tyre and brake wear • Also formed by reactions between other pollutants in the air Where is it found? • Across wide areas, but particularly near roads and industry How does it affect me? • Large particles can irritate the eyes, nose and throat, and lead to increased risk of cardio-respiratory illnesses • Smaller particles can enter the lungs and into the bloodstream, affecting the heart and the brain, and have been associated with numerous health impacts

5 PHE. Estimation of costs to the NHS and social care due to the health impacts of air pollution. London: Public Health England; 2018. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/air-pollution-a-tool-to-estimate-healthcare-costs>

PM_{2.5} is the air pollutant that causes most significant health problems and premature deaths. National modelling estimates suggest that a reduction of 1 µg/m³ of PM_{2.5} in 2017 in England could have prevented 50,900 cases of coronary heart disease, 16,500 strokes, 4,200 lung cancers and 9,300 cases of asthma in people aged over 18 by 2035.⁵

Sulphur dioxide (SO₂) is also an important pollutant which is associated with industry. This was historically an issue near the Fawley refinery, but SO₂ concentrations are now well below safe limits in the New Forest due to reductions in industrial emissions following collaborative working between industry, the Environment Agency and New Forest District Council.

2.3 HOW IS AIR QUALITY PROTECTED?

Safe levels for each pollutant are determined based on the latest health evidence. In our Air Quality Strategy, we refer to two sources for these safe levels.

UK Air Quality Limits

In the UK, air pollution concentrations must comply with national Air Quality Objectives. Limit values are set for individual pollutants and are made up of a concentration value, an averaging time over which it is to be measured, the number of exceedances allowed per year, if any, and a date by which it must be achieved.⁶ Some pollutants have more than one limit value covering different averaging times.

Through the Local Air Quality Management (LAQM) system local authorities are required to assess air quality in their area, and to designate Air Quality Management Areas (AQMAs) if improvements are necessary.

In 2023, the UK Air Quality Standards for PM_{2.5} were reviewed to reflect the new WHO guidelines under the UK Environment Act 2021.⁷ The new annual mean PM_{2.5} concentration target is 10 µg/m³ to be met across England by 2040, a 50% decrease from the current UK PM_{2.5} air quality standard.⁸ The Environmental Improvement Plan 2023 for England also set an interim annual mean PM_{2.5} concentration target of 12 µg/m³ at all monitoring stations by January 2028.

Local authorities are expected to contribute to meeting these targets by taking action to reduce emissions and the precursors of PM_{2.5}, and we expect to see a larger focus on actions to reduce particulate matter emissions in the coming years.

In 2021, the World Health Organisation (WHO) set out updated guidelines for air quality that are based on the latest body of evidence on the effects of different air pollutants on human health.

6 Defra, UK Air Quality Limits, accessed at <https://uk-air.defra.gov.uk/air-pollution/uk-limits>

7 UK Environment Act 2021. <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2021/30/contents/enacted>

8 Defra, Air quality targets in the Environment Act, 2022. <https://uk-air.defra.gov.uk/pm25targets/targets-development>

9 World Health Organisation, WHO global air quality guidelines: particulate matter (PM2.5 and PM10), ozone, nitrogen dioxide, sulfur dioxide and carbon monoxide, 2021. <https://www.who.int/publications/i/item/9789240034228>

WHO guidelines

The World Health Organization (WHO) Air Quality Guidelines are a set of global recommendations aimed at reducing the adverse health effects of air pollution. These guidelines are set based on the latest available health evidence. In 2021, the WHO set out updated guidelines for air quality that are based on the latest body of evidence on the effects of different air pollutants on human health.⁹ The new guidelines for PM_{2.5} are based on there being no evidence for a safe level of exposure to PM_{2.5}. Concentrations currently exceed these guidelines across much of the UK and Europe.

Table 2-1: Annual mean pollutant concentration limit values in micrograms per cubic metre (µg/m³)

Pollutant	UK Air Quality Standard	Government Target	World Health Organisation Air Quality Guideline
Nitrogen dioxide (NO ₂)	40	-	10
Particulate matter (PM ₁₀)	40	-	15
Particulate matter (PM _{2.5})	20	10 µg/m ³ to be achieved by 2040	5

3

Air quality in the New Forest



In the New Forest, air quality is generally good and in compliance with the legal limits set by the UK Government.

On average, air quality in the New Forest is better than in other local authorities in Hampshire, excluding the Isle of Wight. In particular, average concentrations in the New Forest are significantly lower than in neighbouring Southampton and Bournemouth. However, there are noted differences across the New Forest and concentrations in our towns are similar to those seen in other towns across Hampshire.

Table 3-1 shows the average $PM_{2.5}$ concentration in each Local Authority in Hampshire, and the percentage of mortality attributable to particulate air pollution.

Table 3-1: Population weighted average PM_{2.5} concentration and fraction of mortality attributable to particulate air pollution in local authorities in Hampshire in 2022.

Source: Office for Health Improvement & Disparities

Local Authority	Air pollution: fine particulate matter	Percentage of mortality attributable to particulate air pollution
Basingstoke and Deane	6.5	4.9%
East Hampshire	6.2	4.6%
Eastleigh	6.5	4.9%
Fareham	6.5	4.9%
Gosport	6.4	4.8%
Hart	6.6	5.0%
Havant	6.5	4.9%
Isle of Wight	5.7	4.3%
New Forest	5.8	4.4%
Portsmouth	7.0	5.2%
Rushmoor	7.1	5.3%
Southampton	6.7	5.0%
Test Valley	6.2	4.6%
Winchester	6.2	4.6%

In 2023, 4.4% of deaths among individuals aged 30 and older in New Forest were associated with long term exposure to particulate air pollution at current levels.¹⁰ This is slightly lower than the national average of 5.2% and is the lowest of all local authorities in Hampshire excluding the Isle of Wight.

3.1 HOW DO WE MONITOR LOCAL AIR QUALITY?

Monitoring air quality provides evidence of air pollution concentrations across New Forest, which helps us to take action if any concerning increases in pollutant concentrations are noted. Air quality is currently measured using four automatic monitors, which assess NO₂, PM₁₀ and SO₂ concentration levels. We do not currently monitor PM_{2.5} concentrations at continuous monitors in the New Forest.

We also monitor NO₂ at 46 diffusion tube sites as of 2024. Most of these sites are in urban areas near roads. Diffusion tube readings are taken once a month and are quality assured following national guidance.¹¹

¹⁰ Office for Health Improvements & Disparities, Public Health Outcomes Framework: D01 – Fraction of mortality attributable to particulate air pollution (new method), 2021 <https://fingertips.phe.org.uk/profile/public-health-outcomes-framework/>

¹¹ [National Bias Adjustment Factors | LAQM \(defra.gov.uk\)](#)

We publish the results of our monitoring each year in an Air Quality Annual Status Report (ASR). These can be found on our website.¹²

The council has also secured a number of portable Zephyr sensors which can be deployed around the district to carry out short-term monitoring of PM₁₀ and PM_{2.5} levels. The results of this monitoring can be used to provide advice and educational resources to residents.



3.2 RECENT SUCCESSES

In recent years, measured NO₂ and PM₁₀ concentrations in the New Forest District have reduced due to a combination of national, regional, and local policies, together with the introduction of cleaner technologies over time. Some recent successes are highlighted below.



Redbridge Causeway

- Defra models NO₂ concentrations along all major roads in the UK to identify roads which exceed the UK Air Quality Objectives.
- High levels of NO₂ were identified on a short stretch of the A35 over the Redbridge Causeway into Southampton.
- As a result, in 2017 New Forest District Council was named in the UK plan for tackling roadside concentrations.
- New Forest District Council and Southampton City Council collaborated on the implementation of measures to improve air quality.
- Detailed local air quality modelling was undertaken and determined that compliance would be achieved by 2019 in a business-as-usual scenario.
- Monitoring since 2019 has demonstrated that concentrations on this road are compliant with the UK Air Quality Objectives.



Revoking the Lyndhurst AQMA

- New Forest District Council declared an Air Quality Management Area (AQMA) in Lyndhurst due to an exceedance of the annual mean NO₂ UK Air Quality Objective in 2005.
- We determined that the main cause was traffic congestion in narrow streets.
- Between 2010 and 2022, NO₂ levels decreased by 10 µg/m³, so concentrations in the AQMA had been compliant with the Air Quality Objective for eight consecutive years leading into 2022.
- This was due to a combination of improvements in traffic sequencing improving traffic flow through the narrowest portions of the road, and improved vehicle emissions technology.
- We commissioned a forecasting study to demonstrate that no new exceedances were likely in future.
- Using this evidence, we revoked the Lyndhurst AQMA in August 2023.

¹² Air pollution – New Forest District Council, <https://www.newforest.gov.uk/article/1002/Air-pollution>

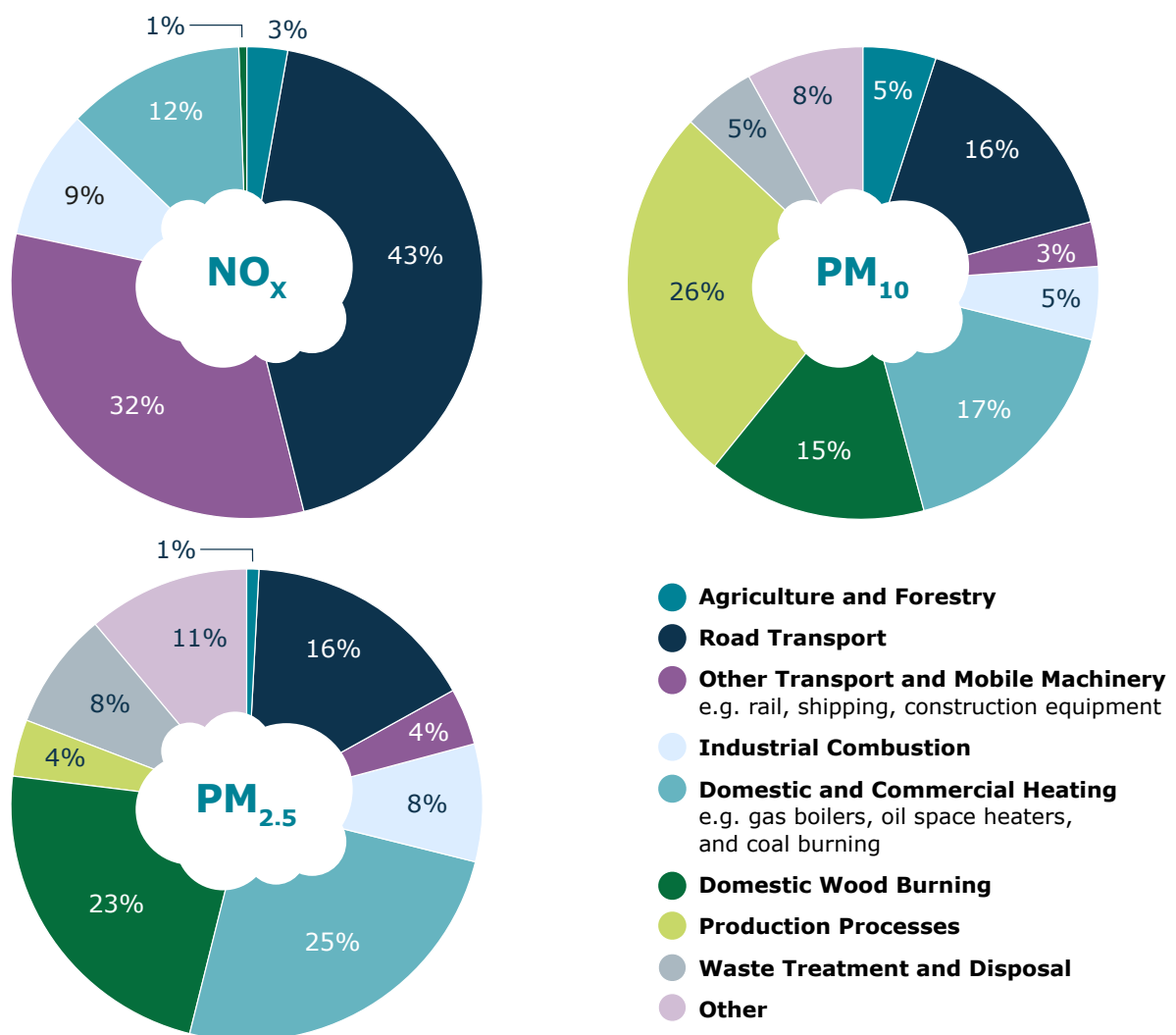
3.3 WHERE DOES AIR POLLUTION IN THE NEW FOREST COME FROM?

Different sources in the New Forest impact air quality. Identifying the sources that have the most significant impact enables us to develop policies that will have the greatest effect on reducing air pollution. **For this strategy, we have analysed emissions in the New Forest using the UK National Atmospheric Emissions Inventory.**¹³

Road transport plays a key role as a primary source of NO₂, PM₁₀, and PM_{2.5}. 96% of visitors arrive to the New Forest in cars or coaches, contributing to these emissions. Other key sources include emissions from commercial, residential, and agricultural sources. Our area is home to one of the largest oil refineries in Europe, as well as significant areas of sand and gravel extraction. As such, local industry is another key source of potential concern for air quality.

Domestic wood burning is also a key source of particulate matter emissions, contributing 23% of total PM_{2.5} emissions in the New Forest District.

Figure 3-1: Sources of emissions in the New Forest



¹³ UK National Atmospheric Emissions Inventory <https://naei.beis.gov.uk/>
As of March 2024, the baseline year for this inventory was 2018.

Air quality is **not just a local issue**, as airborne pollution is not contained within district boundaries and can affect neighbouring areas. As a result, we work with neighbouring local authorities to address air quality issues. An example of this is the 'Burn Better' campaign, developed collaboratively with Southampton City Council, Winchester City Council and Eastleigh Borough Council to inform the public on pollutant issues concerning solid fuel burning. Air quality in the New Forest may also be affected by the proximity of Southampton Port emissions.

3.4 CLEAN AIR AND CLIMATE CHANGE

Many sources of air pollution, such as fossil fuel combustion, industry, and agriculture, are also key sources of emissions of greenhouse gas emissions like carbon dioxide (CO₂) and methane (CH₄). This means that improving air quality by reducing emissions can also help to address climate change.

Which air pollutants can contribute to climate change?

While CO₂ in itself is not harmful to human health, it along with other air pollutants can impact our climate.

Ozone is a significant greenhouse gas formed through complex chemical reactions involving nitrogen oxides (NO_x) and volatile organic compounds (VOCs) in the presence of sunlight. It directly contributes to climate change and prevents plants from absorbing carbon dioxide. Particulate matter can absorb sunlight and contribute to global warming. Other air pollutants can lead to the formation of secondary aerosols. These aerosols can reflect light and therefore affect our climate.

What does this mean for the New Forest?

Limiting the emissions of these pollutants through behavioural change such as shifting away from private vehicle use, improving fuel efficiency in vehicles or improving energy efficiency in homes and workplaces can help to minimise our climate impacts.

In October 2021 the council declared a 'Climate Change and Nature Emergency' as a result of extreme weather and climate impacts at a local, national, and worldwide level. Our Climate Change and Nature Emergency Report and Action Plan¹⁵ outlines our approach for how the Council can demonstrate climate leadership, implementing actions to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and adapt to climate change.

The New Forest National Park Authority has also declared a climate and nature emergency. More information is available at: <https://www.newforestnpa.gov.uk/conservation/partnership-plan/partnership-plan-2021-2026/net-zero-with-nature/>

Ensuring that actions align with long-term prosperity is our ultimate goal and requires a considered approach that balances finances, health, and wellbeing, ecosystems services, cost of living and the needs of future generations.

"Pollutants not only severely impact public health, but also the earth's climate and ecosystems globally."

WHO¹⁴

¹⁴ WHO, Air quality, energy and health, <https://www.who.int/teams/environment-climate-change-and-health/air-quality-energy-and-health/health-impacts/climate-impacts-of-air-pollution>

¹⁵ New Forest District Council. (2023) Climate Change and Nature Emergency Report and Action Plan 2023. Available at: <https://www.newforest.gov.uk/climatechange>

4

How will we implement this strategy?



4.1 DEVELOP ANNUAL WORK PLANS

New Forest District Council will form a **Steering Group** to oversee the implementation of this Strategy. This Steering Group will include representatives from a range of council departments and include key local stakeholders.

Each year, this Steering Group will **develop a work plan** describing the actions we will take over the following year. These actions will be developed from the Air Quality Strategy's action areas. Each work plan will be included in our Air Quality Annual Status Report, which will be made available on our website. The plan will set out who is responsible for each action, how we expect the measure will safeguard the health of our residents and visitors, and how we will ensure that the work plan acts to reduce health inequalities in the New Forest.

**Figure 4-1:
Members of our
Air Quality
Steering Group**



4.2 MONITORING AND REVIEW

To ensure that we achieve our goals, New Forest District Council will implement a **continuous monitoring and review process for this strategy**. Through this process, we will incorporate new data, any updates to relevant regional or national guidance, and any emerging opportunities.

Data for each action will be used to monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the actions in each work plan. Each work plan will include Key Performance Indicators that will allow us to assess the effectiveness of individual measures and make changes where required.

Throughout the life of this strategy we will also **continue to monitor pollution levels in the area and report them annually** in our Annual Status Reports.

4.3 PARTNERSHIPS

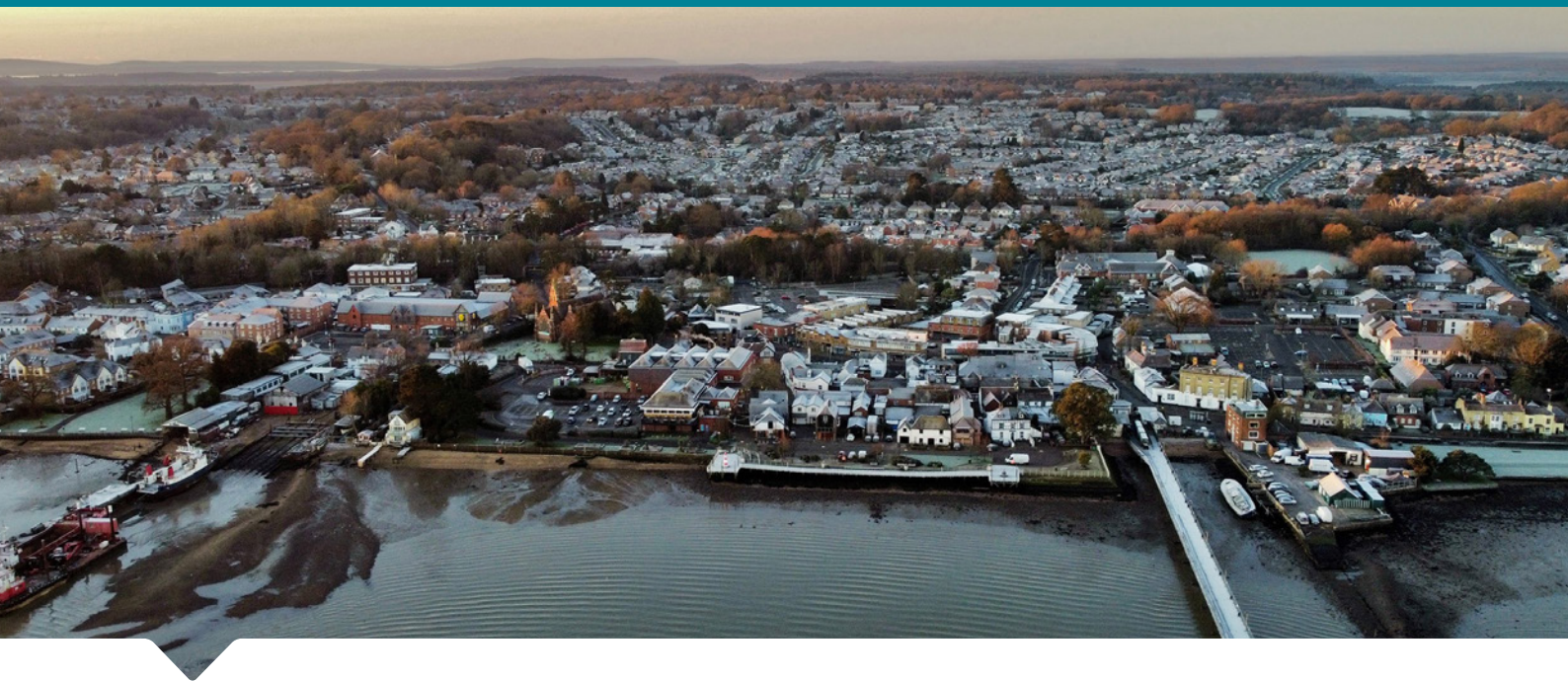
Air pollution is a regional challenge, so **collaborating with neighbouring local authorities and Hampshire County Council is crucial to ensure our success**. We will continue to collaborate with the New Forest National Park Authority and Forestry England for all projects which may affect the National Park and will continue building partnerships with local industry in the district. We will also seek opportunities to join new local and national networks on nature and climate change to deliver regional actions.

We will continue to work as a member of the Partnership for South Hampshire across key areas including energy efficiency, minimising carbon emissions, reducing the need for transport through placemaking, and support for renewable energy development.

For further details on the council's partnership plans, please see:
[Health and wellbeing – New Forest District Council](#)

5

Action areas



As part of this Air Quality Strategy, New Forest District Council has developed actions across multiple key areas with the aim to improve local air quality:



1
Public awareness
and behaviour
change



2
Reducing health
inequalities



3
Improving our
understanding
of particulate
matter pollution



4
Wood burning
and indoor air
pollution



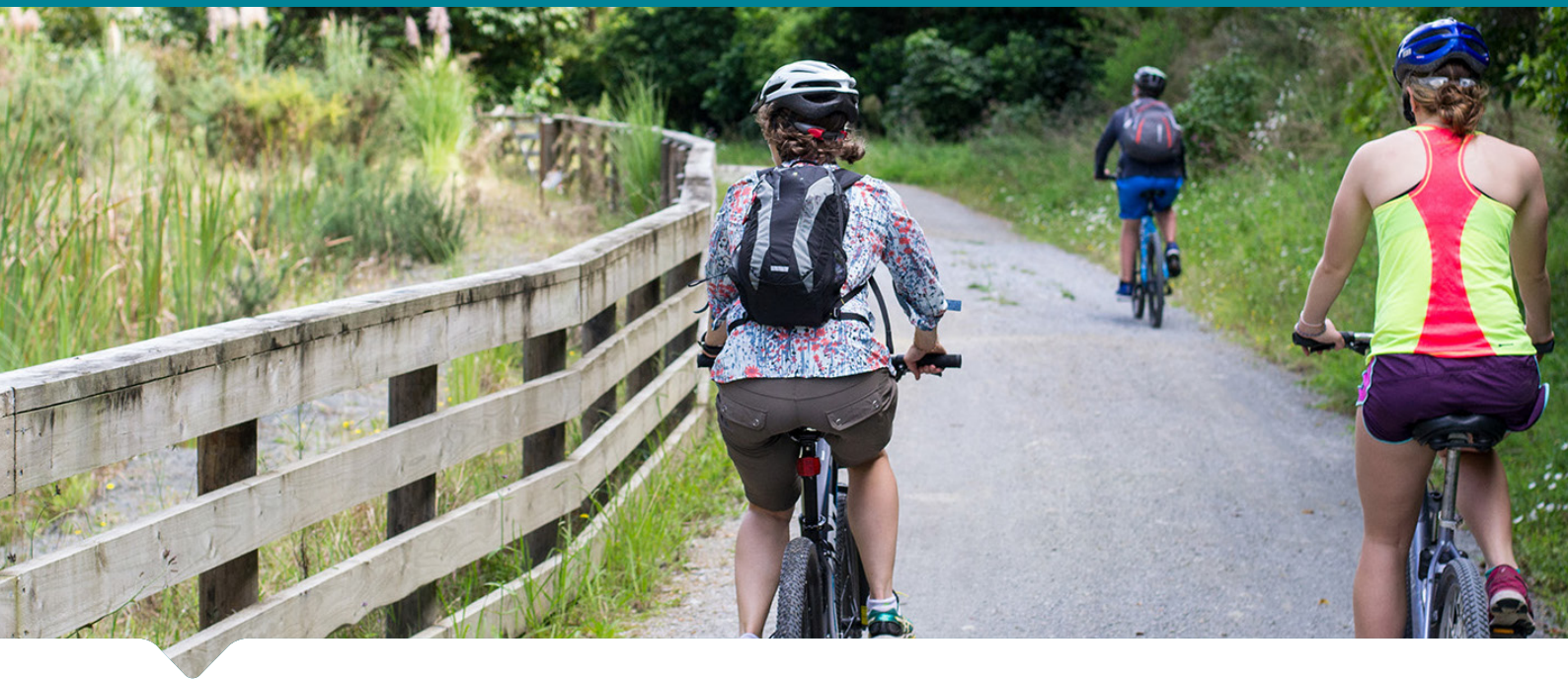
5
Reducing road
traffic emissions



6
Reducing the
impact of new
developments

6

Public awareness and behaviour change



6.1 WHY IS PUBLIC AWARENESS IMPORTANT?

Access to high quality, reliable information on air quality is essential so that our residents can make informed decisions to reduce their exposure to air pollution and reduce their personal emissions of harmful pollutants.

Increased awareness empowers individuals to make informed decisions, such as reducing wood burning or choosing alternative means of transport and can also encourage residents to contribute to initiatives aimed at improving air quality.

This Air Quality Strategy aims to help promote the understanding of air quality in the New Forest, provide information on what is being done to improve air quality, and provide information on how to reduce our individual exposure and emissions.

6.2 WHAT ARE WE DOING NOW?

Publishing air quality information

Our website contains links to our latest air quality reports and monitoring data.

We routinely publish our air pollution monitoring data in map format on the Air Quality England website.¹⁶

We are also required to publish an annual local air quality report for the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra). Annual Status Reports for each year since 2018 can be found on our website.¹⁷

The reports include yearly measured concentrations and an analysis of air pollution in the District. Each report also provides detailed information on the actions that we are taking to improve in the New Forest each year and provides guidance for how you can reduce your own exposure to air pollution.

Public awareness for wood burning

We are currently working with neighbouring authorities (Southampton City Council, Winchester City Council, and Eastleigh Borough Council) and the Environment Centre to promote cleaner fuels and cleaner wood burning practices. They have been promoting the Wood Burning campaign¹⁸ for the past 3 years, raising awareness of the effects of wood smoke on health and the environment through:

- Running face to face events
- Carrying out monitoring in areas where smoke complaints occur
- Production and distribution of flyers to promote clean burning in urban and rural areas
- Engagement with tree surgeons, chimney sweeps, and stove and fireplace suppliers
- Sharing 'Burn Better' information on our social media platforms.



¹⁶ Air Quality in England. (2024) New Forest District Council Monitoring Data. Available at: https://www.airqualityengland.co.uk/local-authority/?la_id=236

¹⁷ New Forest District Council. (2024) Air Pollution. Available at: <https://www.newforest.gov.uk/article/1002/Air-pollution>

¹⁸ The Environment Centre. (2024) Wood burning. Available at: <https://environmentcentre.com/wood-burning/>

6.3 WHAT WILL WE DO NEXT?

Update our air quality website

We are committed to making it easier for our residents to access important air quality information. The main source for air quality information in our area is the New Forest District Council website, so we will **update our website to make it more informative and accessible**. This could include improving access to relevant information, such as showing real-time air quality mapping data from our monitoring stations, providing more detailed health advice, and promoting educational resources.



We will also work with other teams in the council including our Climate and Sustainability Team as they make updates to their web pages, and work with neighbouring councils to identify opportunities to make further improvements.

Work to raise awareness of travel behavioural change

We will continue to work with partners to develop and support **awareness campaigns for a range of audiences across the New Forest**. Providing accurate, reliable information on the potential impacts of different modes of transport on air quality helps inspire those who can make small changes to their daily routines, whether through using alternative modes, or turning off their engines while idling.

Encourage the shift to more sustainable modes of transport

We will work with partners such as Hampshire County Council, National Highways, the New Forest National Park Authority, Forestry England and transport operators to encourage and support people to shift from short car journeys to more sustainable modes such as walking, cycling and public transport. This will include supporting the County Council as the Transport Authority alongside other partners to extend and improve public transport services.

We will also continue to work with Hampshire County Council on the development of the Local Walking and Cycling Infrastructure Plan to improve active travel facilities across the district and encourage people to shift from short car journeys to walking/cycling/wheeling.

Facilitate the shift to zero emission fuels

We will work with partners and the local community to support the uptake of electric vehicles and provision of EV charging infrastructure in new homes and commercial premises as well as work with Hampshire County Council to support the installation of rapid public EV charging points.

We will work with partners and the local community to support the uptake of electric vehicles and provision of EV charging infrastructure in new homes and commercial premises.

Public engagement to understand the most important issues for our residents and visitors

Understanding our residents' concerns allows us to develop more effective public awareness campaigns and develop actions that **address the issues that are most important to those who live and work here.**

Throughout the life of this strategy, we will consider a range of approaches to public engagement to understand the most important air quality issues for our residents, town and parish councils and visitors. We will identify best practice examples from other local authorities to build on the work we are already doing. We will also **identify opportunities** within our existing engagement programme to include air quality information, for example through work with schools.

Develop our partnerships and communications with industry in the New Forest

We will work with our industrial sites such as the Fawley Refinery and other regulators such as the Environment Agency. These partnerships will allow us to **improve awareness and understanding of air quality around industrial sites**, explain how these sites are permitted, and promote the emissions reduction practices that they employ to minimise their air pollution impacts.

Campaign for heathland burning awareness

Controlled heath burning is an essential part of the regeneration cycle in the New Forest and is a crucial tool for maintaining biodiversity and encouraging new plant growth. However, this leads to increased air pollution on burning days, so it is important that residents and visitors have information on why it is done, how it is managed, and where controlled burning is due to take place to allow vulnerable individuals to avoid affected areas. We will collaboratively work to implement **an awareness campaign to help inform residents and visitors about heath burning** and provide more information to enable residents to make informed choices.



6.3 WHAT CAN YOU DO?

We can all take some simple steps to make a big difference in reducing local air pollution and help protect our families and communities.

Figure 6-1: Actions you can take to reduce local air pollution



7

Reducing health inequalities

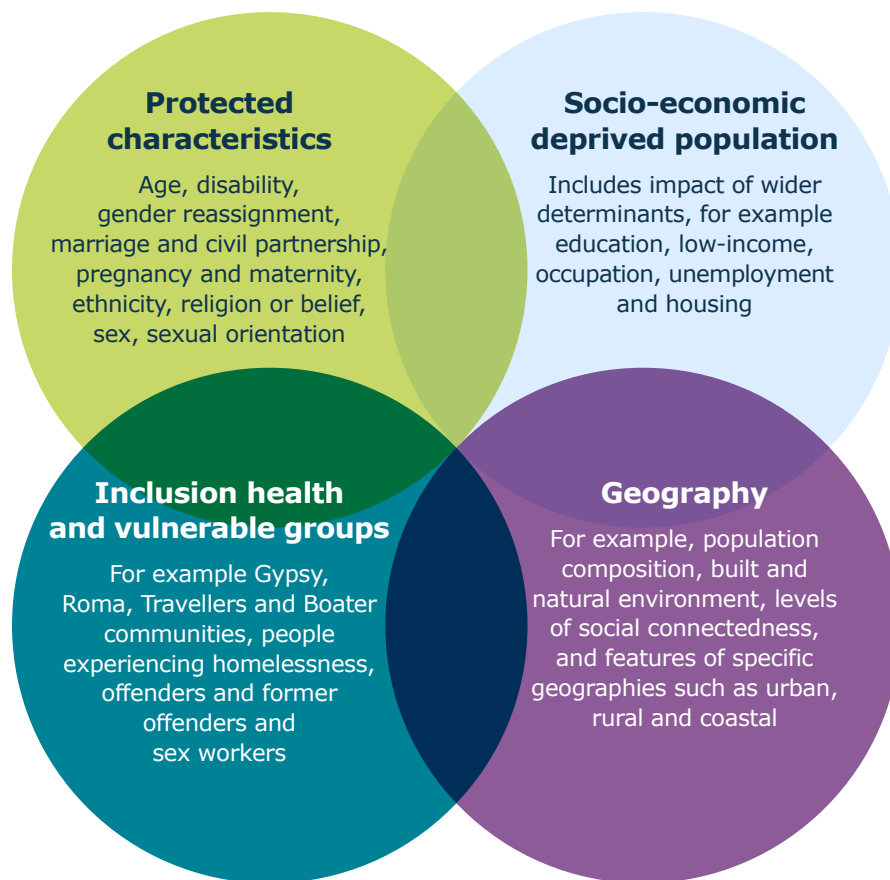


7.1 HEALTH INEQUALITIES AND AIR QUALITY

The environmental conditions around us shape our health throughout our lives.

Differences in these conditions across populations impact access to good health at every stage of life, affecting how we think, feel, act, and, ultimately, our well-being. There are a broad range of individual characteristics that have been identified as contributing to health inequalities.

Figure 7-1: Individual characteristics that have been identified as contributing to health inequalities



Exposure to air pollution disproportionately affects vulnerable populations and can exacerbate existing health disparities. Lower-income communities are more likely to experience the adverse impacts of air pollution as they are more likely to:

- Have existing medical conditions;
- Live in areas with poorer outdoor and indoor environments
- Have less access to jobs, healthy food, decent housing, and green spaces, which all contribute to poorer health.

These disadvantages are often experienced in tandem and may affect people throughout their lives.

7.2 AIR QUALITY AND HEALTH INEQUALITY IN THE NEW FOREST

Air pollution affects everyone who lives and works in the New Forest, but there are some groups that are particularly vulnerable.

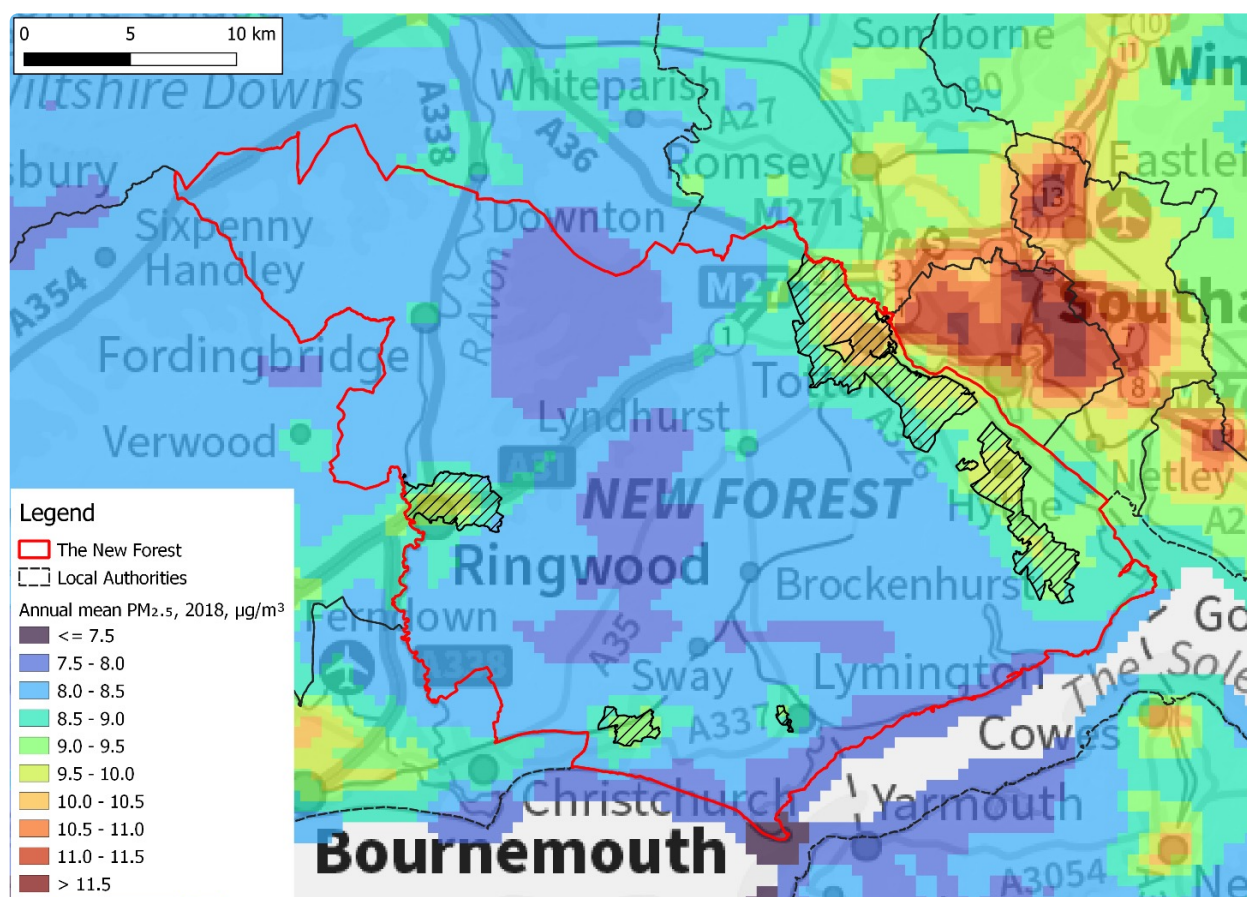
In the New Forest, 16% of the population is aged 15 or under, and 29% are 65 or older. In particular, **the New Forest has an older population than the rest of Hampshire, and as a result our population is more vulnerable to air pollution.**

On average, the New Forest is prosperous compared to the rest of the UK. Unemployment remains low according to the most recent ONS census, with 53% of the population in employment and 33% retired. However, there are a number of more disadvantaged parts of the District, particularly in our towns and in the Waterside area.

As a first step to understanding air quality and health inequality in the New Forest, we have identified vulnerable areas by combining deprivation and population data published by the Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government¹⁹ and annual average PM_{2.5} concentration data for 2018 published by the Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs.²⁰ Figure 7-1 shows areas where the annual average PM_{2.5} concentration in 2018 was within 10% of the new PM_{2.5} target with either:

- a greater proportion of the population aged 60 or over than the average across Hampshire;
- a greater proportion of the population aged 15 or under than the average across Hampshire; or
- an Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) below the average for England.

Figure 7-2: Vulnerable communities in the New Forest overlaid on average PM_{2.5} concentrations, 2018



¹⁹ Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government, English indices of deprivation 2019

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/english-indices-of-deprivation-2019>

²⁰ Defra, Background Mapping, <https://uk-air.defra.gov.uk/data/laqm-background-maps?year=2018>

Our analysis shows that there are **vulnerable communities in several of our towns**, particularly in the Waterside area including Totton, Marchwood and Hythe. Ringwood and parts of New Milton and Lymington are also home to communities that are more vulnerable to poorer air quality.

The majority of these areas are vulnerable as the result of having a high proportion of residents over 60. Parts of the areas highlighted in New Milton, Totton, Hythe, and Blackfield are also vulnerable due to their communities being more deprived than the average. Those living in properties that front busier roads tend to be more deprived than the average. These properties are also more likely to be rental properties or social housing, and those living in these properties are exposed to higher levels of air pollution from traffic emissions than the wider population.

More information on air quality and inequalities is available from the Hampshire Joint Strategic Needs Assessment.²¹ This is a resource for mapping New Forest residents' health and inequalities.

7.3 WHAT WILL WE DO NEXT?

Investigate links between demographics and air quality

We will work with Public Health to **better understand the available data on links between demographics and air quality**, with a specific focus on identifying the areas most vulnerable to health inequalities and understanding ways in which these can be addressed. We will talk to data providers to understand what information is available to us, particularly in vulnerable communities.

Incorporate reducing inequalities into our annual work plans

Our **Air Quality Strategy Steering Group will ensure the equitable distribution of air quality benefits in any action we undertake**. The Air Quality Steering Group will consist of a number of different stakeholders from both public health and environmental health and will meet as frequently as required to discuss potential areas of concern and develop solutions.

In each annual work plan, we will specifically address how the actions will improve health inequalities in the New Forest. We will consult our Public Health colleagues to ensure that each work plan is aligned with our overall strategy for reducing health inequalities.

Identify and deliver targeted measures for vulnerable communities

We will work with relevant stakeholders to conduct a study to **identify, and if appropriate, deliver targeted measures for vulnerable communities** in areas with poorer air quality. These measures could include engagement and public awareness building, making sure that information is accessible to those affected. These measures will be incorporated into our annual work plans.

21 Hampshire Joint Strategic Needs Assessment, available at: <https://www.hants.gov.uk/socialcareandhealth/publichealth/jsna>

8

Improving our understanding of particulate matter pollution



8.1 WHY IS PM_{2.5} IMPORTANT?

Fine particulate matter, known as PM_{2.5}, is considered to be one of the most dangerous pollutants because it can bypass the lung's defences and enter the bloodstream circulating through the body. This can lead to serious health conditions including cardiovascular and respiratory disease, and even cancers. It affects more people than other pollutants and has health impacts even at very low concentrations.

As a result, under the Environment Act 2021, the UK Government has set 2 legally binding targets to reduce concentrations:

- an annual mean concentration target for PM_{2.5} of 10 µg/m³ across England by 2040
- an average population exposure reduction target of 35% in 2040 compared to a 2018 baseline

The Environmental Improvement Plan 2023 for England also set an interim annual mean $\text{PM}_{2.5}$ concentration target of $12 \mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$ at all monitoring stations by January 2028.

This means that **all local authorities, even those where $\text{PM}_{2.5}$ concentrations are below the annual mean target, are expected to take action to improve air quality.**

$\text{PM}_{2.5}$ is a regional pollutant, so many sources of the $\text{PM}_{2.5}$ pollution in the New Forest are outside our control. However, we do have control over significant sources like road transport and wood burning, and our emissions affect concentrations across the region. The UK National Atmospheric Emissions Inventory, published by the UK Government, shows that emissions $\text{PM}_{2.5}$ in the New Forest are higher than in neighbouring areas, mostly as a result of domestic and commercial combustion, and woodburning.

8.2 PARTICULATE MATTER IN THE NEW FOREST

We do not continuously monitor $\text{PM}_{2.5}$ concentrations in the New Forest but we can estimate $\text{PM}_{2.5}$ concentrations using PM_{10} measurements following UK Government guidance. In 2022, $\text{PM}_{2.5}$ concentrations at our monitoring station in Totton were estimated to be around $13 \mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$, which is above the 2040 target of $10 \mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$.

National $\text{PM}_{2.5}$ modelling published by Defra indicates that concentrations away from sources such as roads and industry are likely to be below the target already. This modelling also shows that concentrations in the New Forest are relatively low compared to other local authorities in Hampshire.

8.3 WHAT WILL WE DO NEXT?

Investigate monitoring options for $\text{PM}_{2.5}$

In order to improve our understanding of particulate matter pollution in the New Forest, we will first seek to **introduce $\text{PM}_{2.5}$ monitoring in the New Forest**. This will help us to establish a baseline for current $\text{PM}_{2.5}$ concentrations and ensure that $\text{PM}_{2.5}$ concentrations can be measured to understand changes over time.

Options for monitoring arrangements might include developing a network of low-cost sensors to understand how $\text{PM}_{2.5}$ varies over a wider area, or using continuous analysers, which will provide international reference standard data at limited locations (similar to our current PM_{10} monitoring). We will assess these options to determine the most effective approach.

Identify any PM_{2.5} hotspots

We will use our monitoring data and consider the use of modelling to **identify areas where PM_{2.5} concentrations exceed the 2040 government targets**. Using this information, our Steering Group will be able to decide whether targeted local actions are required for PM_{2.5} in particular areas.

Detailed source apportionment of PM_{2.5} concentrations

We will carry out **detailed source apportionment of PM_{2.5} concentrations if hotspots are identified** to tell us in detail where pollution in any hotspots comes from. This will allow us to develop effective, targeted work plans. It will also help us understand how much of our residents' exposure to PM_{2.5} is from sources that the council controls, helping us set to set our reduction goals.

Develop actions to reduce emissions

Our Air Quality Steering Group, will **develop and agree the best approach to reducing PM_{2.5} emissions in the New Forest**, including targeted and district-wide measures.

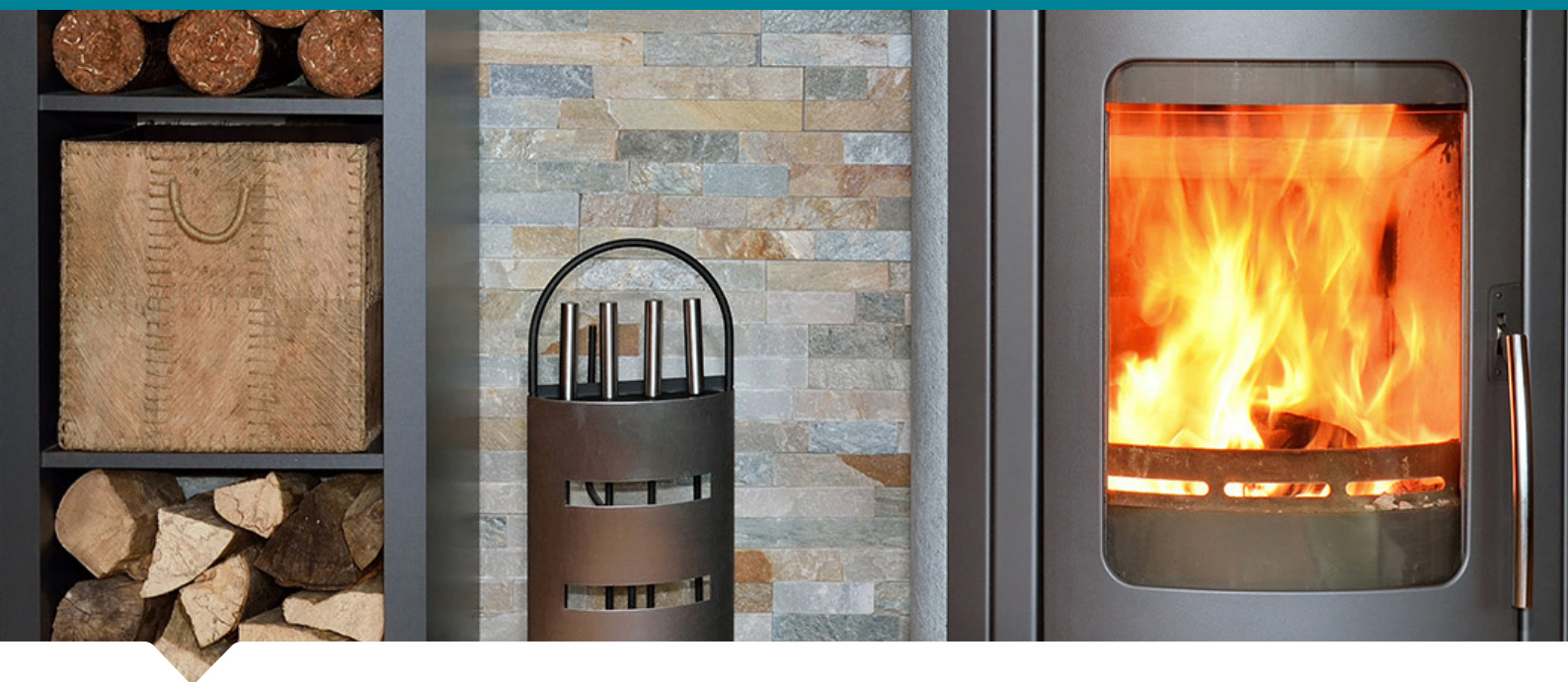
We expect that many of the actions we are already taking will also contribute to reducing PM_{2.5} emissions. However, in the meantime, we are continuing to work on our existing plans that will help reduce particulate pollution, especially our Burn Better Campaign.



We will carry out detailed source apportionment of PM_{2.5} concentrations if hotspots are identified to tell us in detail where pollution in any hotspots comes from. This will allow us to develop effective, targeted work plans.

9

Wood burning and indoor air pollution



9.1 MANAGING OUR EXPOSURE TO INDOOR AIR POLLUTION

Many of us spend the majority of our time indoors, so understanding how our households contribute to air pollution and how to manage indoor air quality is important to safeguard our health and wellbeing.

Our actions as individuals can have a large impact on the health of those around us, for example through wood burning, and on our own health. Common sources of indoor air pollution include cooking and heating appliances, cigarette and e-cigarette smoke, damp and mould, cleaning products, and building materials.

9.2 WOOD BURNING

Wood burners can be a primary source of heating for some households, but the majority of households with a woodburner use them in addition to a central heating system. This is now a major contributor to harmful particulate matter (PM_{2.5}) emissions in the New Forest. We suggest only burning in the home when absolutely necessary to help reduce your exposure to harmful pollutants.

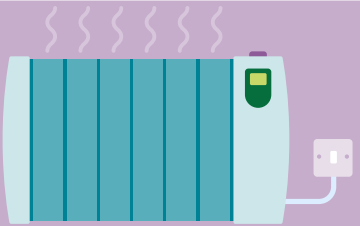
Here is our advice for reducing the air quality impacts of burning wood in your home:

 #1 Burn cleaner Burn cleaner fuels such as smokeless, authorised fuels or dry, well-seasoned wood with low moisture content.	 #2 Burn better Use efficient appliances, don't shut off air or allow the temperature to drop, and service and clean them regularly.	 #3 Burn different If possible, switch heating source to no or low emission fuels, such as renewable, electric or gas alternatives.

9.3 INDOOR AIR POLLUTION

Reducing air pollution in your home is an investment in your health and wellbeing.

These are some simple steps that we can all follow to make sure that we are breathing the cleanest air possible:

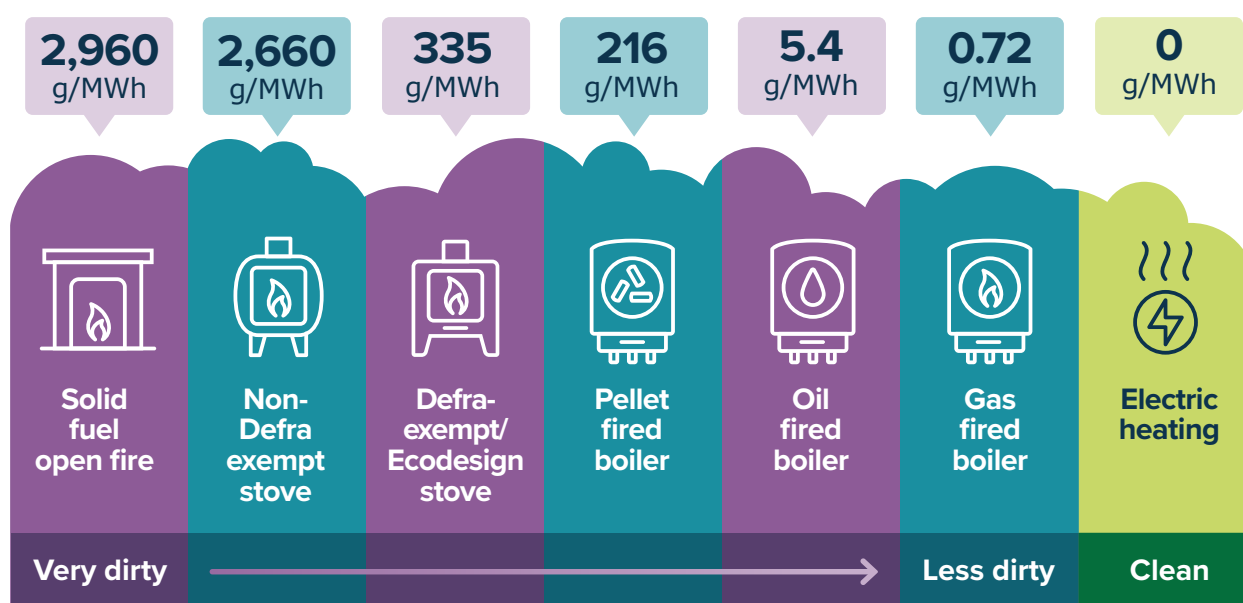
 Avoid smoking indoors	 Use electric or gas heating rather than wood burning	 Open windows when you are cooking, cleaning, burning, or using paint
 Vacuum regularly	 Use a dehumidifier to prevent mould	

9.4 WHAT ARE WE DOING NOW?

Advocating for cleaner burning practices

Not all forms of burning are equally polluting. This figure from the Chief Medical Officer's 2022 report²² shows how polluting different types of heating are. We are collaborating with other Hampshire Local Authorities (Southampton City Council, Winchester City Council and Eastleigh Borough Council) and The Environment Centre to advocate for cleaner burning practices in open fires, stoves, and bonfires.

Figure 9-1: The relative PM_{2.5} emissions from domestic heating methods. Adapted from the Chief Medical Officer's Annual Report 2022.



Improving energy efficiency

Ensuring an efficient and sustainable method of heating your home reduces harmful indoor air pollution and energy costs. However, transitioning to more energy-efficient heating methods can be expensive.

There are several initiatives to make this transition easier:

- **Cosy Homes New Forest Tool:**²³ This tool simplifies the process for residents and landlords to develop a retrofit plan to improve energy efficiency.
- **The Greener Housing Strategy:**²⁴ This strategy focuses on collaborating directly with landlords to ensure compliance with minimum energy efficiency standards.

²² Chief Medical Officer's Annual Report 2022: Air pollution, available at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/chief-medical-officers-annual-report-2022-air-pollution>

²³ Cost Home New Forest. (2024) Start building your free online home energy plan. Available at: <https://cosyhomesnewforest.planbuilder.co.uk/>

²⁴ New Forest District Council. (2022) Greener Housing Strategy 2022 to 2032. Available at: <https://www.newforest.gov.uk/article/3113/Greener-Housing-Strategy-2022-to-2032>

- **The Environment Centre**,²⁵ located in Southampton, provides complimentary guidance to residents seeking to upgrade their homes. They can also help identify relevant funding sources.

9.5 WHAT WILL WE DO NEXT?

Raise awareness of the impact of wood burners

We will **continue to raise awareness of the impact of wood burners**. Currently we are working with the Environment Centre and neighbouring Local Authorities to raise awareness of the impacts of wood burning and also provide information on cleaner heating alternatives, proper usage practices and regulations.

Provide accessible, reliable information on alternatives to wood burners

We will also look for opportunities to **collaborate with regional authorities and suppliers to provide accessible, reliable information for anybody considering alternatives to wood burners** in their home and help users of wood burners minimise their air quality and climate footprint.

Investigate possible approaches to reducing emissions from bonfires

We will **explore the feasibility and effectiveness of adopting a Smoke Control Area in the New Forest**. We will also investigate developing and promoting awareness to reduce bonfire usage within the district following examples set by other Local Authorities. By setting clear guidelines, controls, and enforcement mechanisms, we will be able to help reduce the amount of pollution from bonfires to ensure we maintain compliance with air quality standards.

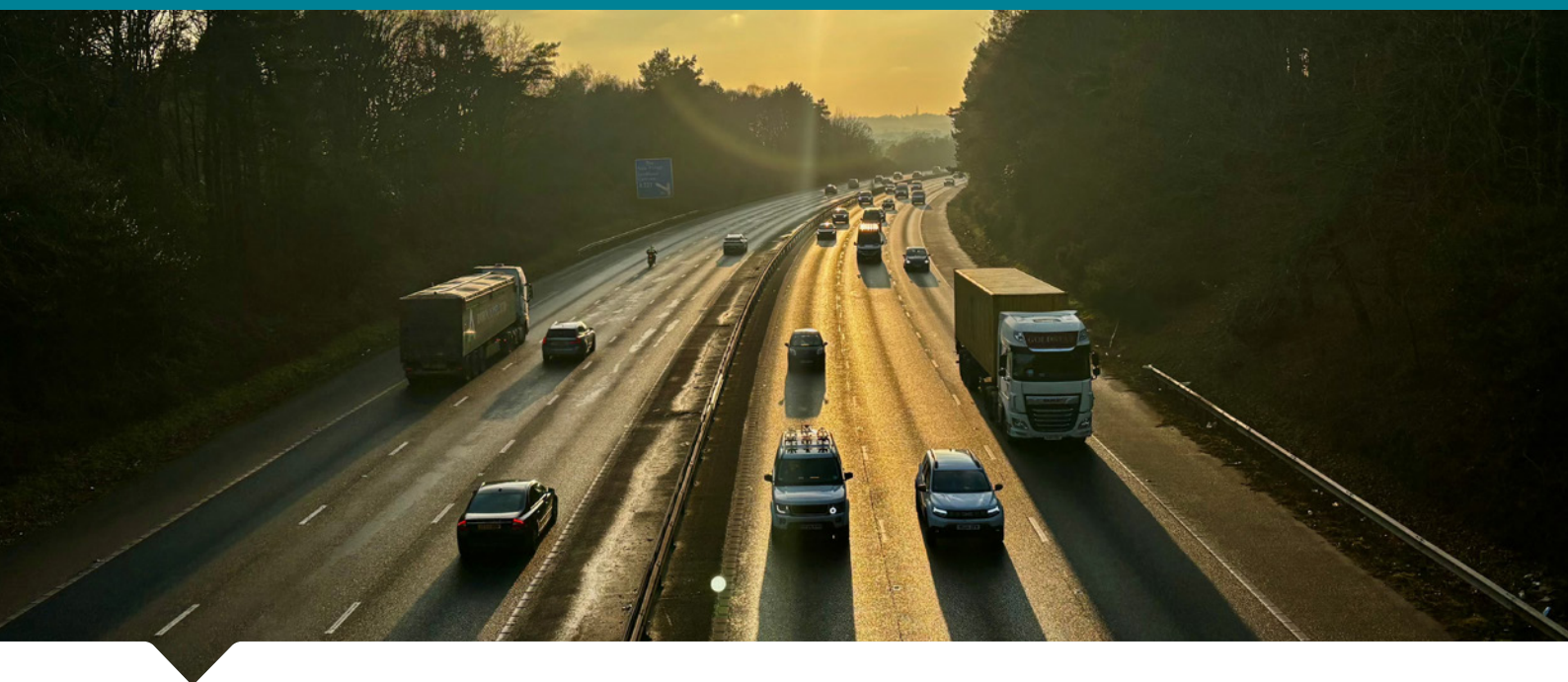
Public engagement on indoor air quality

We will work collaboratively to identify opportunities to **carry out public engagement to better understand how our residents consider and manage their personal indoor air quality**. This could include surveys to find out views on issues including indoor pollutants, mould, and particulate matter to make sure we are tackling the issues that matter most to our residents.

²⁵ New Forest District Council. (2024) Get a grant or loan to improve your home energy efficiency. Available at: <https://www.newforest.gov.uk/article/3437/Get-a-grant-or-loan-to-improve-your-home-energy-efficiency>

10

Reducing road traffic emissions



10.1 ROAD TRANSPORT EMISSIONS IN THE NEW FOREST

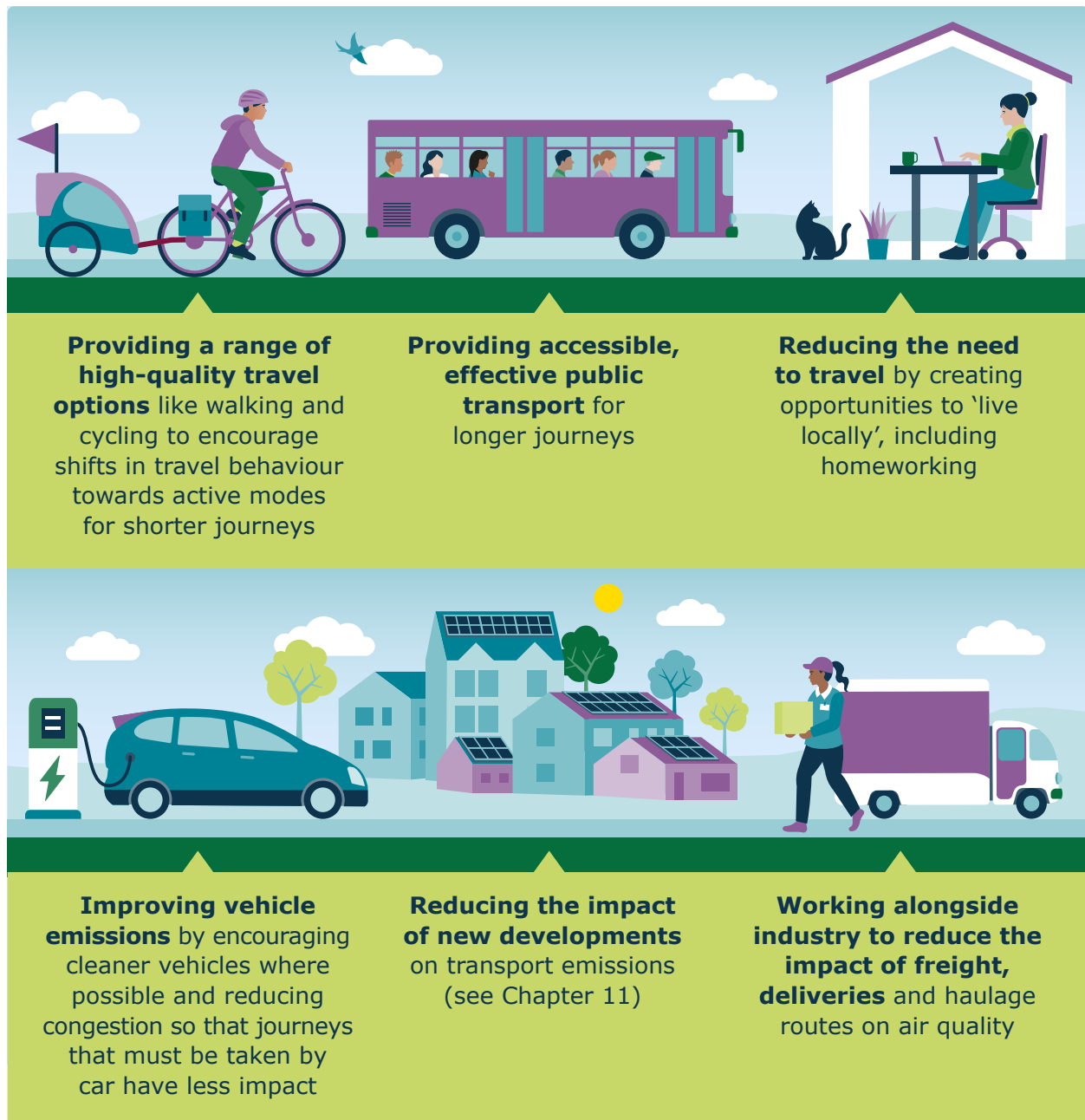
Road traffic emissions have reduced substantially in recent years due to actions and abatement measures that New Forest District Council and Hampshire County Council have implemented, combined with technological advances prompted by vehicle emission standards and other measures and policies enacted by the UK government.

However, **road transport is still the largest source of emissions of NO_x and NO₂ in the New Forest and is a major contributor to particulate emissions.** Just under two-thirds of NO_x pollution in the New Forest comes from road transport, and the highest measured NO₂ concentrations are still seen along major roads.

While the largest contributors to air pollution in the New Forest are private cars, heavy goods vehicles (HGVs) can also be important in areas such as the port, industrial sites, and the oil refinery.

To safeguard the health and wellbeing of everybody who lives and works in the New Forest, we need to continue reducing emissions through a variety of approaches.

Figure 10-1: Ways that we can reduce road traffic emissions



10.2 WHAT ARE WE DOING NOW?

Our transport priorities are set out in several local and regional plans. These outline the local requirements of their respective areas in terms of infrastructure and behavioural change requirements to achieve lower transport emissions and congestion. Policy C8 of the Hampshire Local Transport Plan 4²⁶ gives detail on how Hampshire County Council is managing the harmful health effects of poor air quality.



Enhancing walking and cycling

Shifting to walking and cycling can reduce congestion, improve physical and mental health by encouraging healthier lifestyles and help address air pollution and the climate crisis. **In Hampshire, 1 in 6 commuting trips are less than 1.25 miles, but 51% of these are made by car.**

Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plans are a strategic approach to identifying cycling and walking improvements required at the local level including proposed cycling network improvements and identifying important walking centres. The Waterside Local Walking and Cycling Infrastructure Plan is now complete, and we have partnered with Hampshire County Council and the New Forest National Park Authority to produce a Local Walking and Cycling Infrastructure Plan for the entire District and National Park. We will support the introduction of new infrastructure by promoting active travel and supporting schemes to make it easier to use active travel as set out in Chapter 6.

26 Hampshire County Council (2024) Local Transport Plan 4. Available at <https://www.hants.gov.uk/transport/localtransportplan>

Using the planning system to manage and improve emissions

The New Forest District area is covered by two local plans, prepared by New Forest District Council and the New Forest National Park Authority respectively. New Forest District Council's statutory environmental health responsibilities cover the whole of the New Forest District and our Environmental Health team are a consultee on relevant planning applications within the New Forest District area of the National Park.

Objective SO2 of the Local Plan Part 1 (2020)²⁷ is to manage and where possible reduce or mitigate activities that unacceptably impact on air quality. Policy CCC1 builds on this by being clear that development should not result in pollution or hazards which prejudice the health and safety of communities and their environments, including air quality. It seeks to ensure that appropriate measures are required to prevent, control, mitigate or offset the impacts or risks of development on community health and safety. We require new developments to prioritise safe and convenient pedestrian and cycle access, linking to existing pedestrian networks where possible. Wherever there are existing footpaths, cycle routes, or public transport access to a proposed development, these are required to be retained and improved by the development. We also seek to ensure that development is built in the right place in accessible locations near public transport and services in order to reduce the need to travel by car.

In addition, new developments that may have additional mitigation needs will be required to produce a Travel Plan, setting out measures to promote and encourage sustainable travel.

New Forest District Council's planning guidance on Parking Standards (2022)²⁸ also requires developers to enable the convenient installation of charging points for electric vehicles in residential properties. Furthermore, the council's guidance on Planning for Climate Change (2024)²⁹ seeks net zero carbon development which produces lower carbon emissions (and related particulates) through reduced space heating demand. Related installation of renewable energy generation (e.g. photovoltaic panels) is also encouraged.

Promoting active travel for visitors

The New Forest receives a large number of visitors, 96% of whom arrive by car. As part of our plan to reduce traffic on our roads, we are encouraging these visitors to use public transport or active travel links into the New Forest as well as within the National Park. This includes sustainable travel options such as the New Forest Tour.

The New Forest contains more than 100 miles of waymarked cycle routes, much of it off the public highway and traffic-free. The National Park Authority highlights popular cycle routes and highlights the locations of cycle hire shops in the area.³⁰

We are also promoting active travel for our residents, as described in Chapter 6.

27 New Forest (2016) Local Plan 2016-2036, [Local Plan 2016-2036 Part One FINAL.pdf \(newforest.gov.uk\)](#)

28 New Forest (2022) Parking Standards SPD, [Parking Standards SPD April 2022.pdf \(newforest.gov.uk\)](#)

29 New Forest (2024) Climate Change SPD, [Climate Change SPD Adopted April 2024.pdf \(newforest.gov.uk\)](#)

30 Forestry England (2021) Cycle routes map: The New Forest National Park. Available at: https://www.forestryengland.uk/sites/default/files/documents/New-Forest_Cycle-Routes-Map_2021_0.pdf

Enhancing public transport

For many people, public transport provides an essential means of getting around for their daily lives, and using public transport can reduce congestion and road traffic emissions. Our goal is to work with stakeholders to **make public transport more attractive, cheaper, and accessible to more people**, as the first choice for medium and longer journeys.

Recent schemes include improving bus stops with Real Time Passenger Information (RTPI) in Totton and Hythe, improvements to bus lanes and crossing points in Marchwood, and accessibility improvements at Totton Rail Station.

Reducing the need for travel

Avoiding carbon-intensive activities by providing opportunities to 'live locally' as set out in the Hampshire Local Transport Plan 4 can significantly reduce both the number and length of journeys made every day, leading to significant carbon savings and cleaner air. This includes not only transportation and placemaking improvements, but also expanding digital and mobile connectivity. This will allow residents, particularly those in rural areas, to access jobs, services, and other opportunities and activities online from home if they choose. These priorities are echoed in the Waterside Transport Strategy and Action Plan, with the additional focus of sustainable cargo transport, particularly through the development of rail links to the Waterside area, reducing the dependence on polluting HGVs.

10.3 WHAT WILL WE DO NEXT?

Utilise current road infrastructure to reduce congestion and improve air quality in the locality

Hampshire County Council has identified **reducing congestion, improving accessibility, and improving road safety** on the A326, A35 and A337 as a key objective. As part of this bid to reduce congestion, there will also be an investigation into capacity improvements on the M3, M27 and A31, to allow for smoother traffic flows throughout the New Forest.

Additional improvements could include adding cycling lanes or carrying out measures to improve traffic flow on key roads in the area.

Continue to improve our walking and cycling infrastructure

Actions to encourage a shift to active travel could include installing more bicycle parking in key hubs and ensuring connectivity between our different cycle and walking routes. We will work with stakeholders to investigate opportunities to reallocate road space away from vehicles to walking and cycling healthy streets.

We will continue to work with the County Council, the New Forest National Park Authority and Forestry England to improve our walking and cycling infrastructure and develop our Local Walking and Cycling Infrastructure Plan to **make travelling on foot or by bike as pleasant and convenient as possible**.

Work with Hampshire County Council to increase reach of public transport services

By **increasing the reach of public transport services** and reaching more rural communities, we will work with Hampshire County Council to enable more people to switch to public transport, reducing the need for private vehicle journeys.

This could be achieved by expanding the public transport services, including supporting additional routes, increasing the frequency of bus and rail services, and making improvements to morning, evening, and Sunday services. The new Hampshire Local Transport Plan 4²⁶ and the Hampshire Enhanced Partnership Plan³¹ set out Hampshire Council's plan for improving bus services.

In the longer term, we will support the County Council in exploring more flexible and responsive public transport options to increase the reach of our public transport services.

Reduce emissions from council vehicles

Vehicles are significant contributors to air pollution in the New Forest, so we need to reduce vehicle emissions to ensure the health of our residents and visitors. We will lead by example and will **replace our vehicle fleet with low emission vehicles** as part of our commitment to achieve Net Zero by 2050. We will also seek out opportunities to optimise the total number of trips made by our vehicles and ensure that staff are driving in an efficient and effective manner, reducing fuel use, and avoiding excessive braking where possible, as per the council's Fleet Management Protocol (2024).

Improve infrastructure for electric vehicles

We will seek out opportunities to improve infrastructure for electric vehicles to make it easier to own an electric vehicle in the New Forest. We currently have approximately 60 EV chargers in New Forest District Council car parks, and we will continuously support our partners in assessing the localised need to increase this capacity to make sure that chargers are installed in the right places. We will work with commercial partners and Hampshire County Council to bid for government funding to deliver rapid charging points.

Reduce impacts from freight on air quality

Heavy Goods Vehicles (HGVs) can be a significant contributor to air pollutant emissions in areas with high numbers of deliveries such as the port, industrial sites, warehouses and the oil refinery. We will continue to work collaboratively with local industry to find ways to minimise the impact of vital freight, deliveries and haulage routes on air quality.

³¹ Hampshire County Council (2022) Hampshire Enhanced Partnership Plan, <https://democracy.hants.gov.uk/documents/s91773/Appendix%201.pdf>

11

Reducing the impact of new developments



11.1 NEW DEVELOPMENTS AND AIR QUALITY

New Forest District Council is working to enhance quality of life for local residents and provide more housing and infrastructure to meet both local needs and national policy objectives.

However, **new developments can put pressure on local air quality**, both from the pollution generated during construction and from heating and traffic pollution generated once the developments are complete. Successful developments strike the right balance between growth and conservation, so it is important that the impact of construction and new developments is kept to a minimum.

11.2 WHAT ARE WE DOING NOW?

Planning

Our **Air Quality in New Developments Supplementary Planning Document**³² guides developers on how they should incorporate sustainable development and air quality within their designs. As part of the planning process, developers are required to submit a detailed report assessing the impact of their proposed development on local air quality and propose mitigation measures to minimise emissions. This includes impacts from additional transport to and from the new development, emissions associated with heat and power required by the new development, and emissions from any onsite processes.

Our **Climate Change Supplementary Planning Document**³³ provides guidance for developers on how they should minimise their climate change impact through reducing energy demand. Specifically, the developer should demonstrate how they have considered and plan to mitigate emissions during construction.

The New Forest District also covers the majority of the National Park, which is subject to different planning policies prepared by the New Forest National Park Authority. The planning policies for the National Park area seek to protect the environment of the New Forest from the adverse impacts associated with traffic and other forms of air pollution.³⁴

Protecting our natural environment

Our National Park that covers large parts of the district, together with other protected designations (including part of the Cranborne Chase & West Wiltshire Downs National Landscape and a range of international nature conservation designations), help to preserve our area's beauty and character. However, this also represents a challenge when finding locations for new homes and infrastructure.

Within the borders of the National Park, habitat conditions are monitored at sites close to main roads. We use monitoring equipment as well as regular ecological field work, ensuring nitrogen and ammonia levels do not exceed critical thresholds.

32 New Forest District Council (2022) Air Quality Assessments in New Development: Supplementary Planning Document, https://www.newforest.gov.uk/media/2726/Air-Quality-SPD/pdf/Air_Quality_SPD_FINAL_Version_June_2022.pdf

33 New Forest District Council (2024) Planning for Climate Change Supplementary Planning Document (SPD), <https://newforest.gov.uk/article/3591/Planning-for-Climate-Change-Supplementary-Planning-Document-SPD>

34 New Forest National Park. (2024) Planning. Available at: <https://www.newforestnpa.gov.uk/planning/>

These plans and strategies help to protect and promote green space in the New Forest:

- **The Corporate Plan³⁵** sets out how the council aims to balance growth with conservation efforts.
- **The New Forest District Council Tree Strategy 2020-2025³⁶** seeks to promote, enhance, and protect all trees growing on any and all land owned or managed by the council.
- **The New Forest National Park Local Plan 2016-2036³⁷** lays out requirements for new development within the National Park.

Council housing

We manage over 5,000 properties, and programmes to deliver at least 600 new council homes by 2026 are currently underway.

Improving and maintaining the energy efficiency of these dwellings is important both to reduce heating costs and to limit carbon and air pollutant emissions. We are heavily involved in ensuring the housing stock owned by the council is properly maintained, with planned maintenance programmes worth £6m per year for replacing doors, windows, and roofs for better insulation.

A total of 2,884 energy efficiency measures have been installed in our council housing, with 1,330 of these aimed at heating efficiency through air source heat pumps, photovoltaic schemes, window and door replacements, and insulation.

11.3 WHAT WILL WE DO NEXT?

New opportunities for growth have the potential to drive significant development over the coming decades. The Solent Freeport, one of 12 UK freeports, is expected to drive significant economic growth in our area as the majority of land which makes up the Solent Freeport tax sites is within the New Forest district. This could include the future development of the Dibden Bay area.

It is important that we respond robustly and effectively to new plans to make sure that they deliver benefits to the New Forest while protecting the environment.

Review and monitor our existing policies to ensure that they remain effective

We will use our annual work plans to identify any changes in national air quality guidance or legislation to ensure we are following best practice. We will also use our monitoring data to benchmark our air quality and refine our strategies to maximise their impact on improving air quality.

³⁵ New Forest District Council (2024) Corporate Plan 2024 to 2028 <https://www.newforest.gov.uk/corporateplan>

³⁶ New Forest District Council (2020) Tree Strategy, <https://newforest.gov.uk/media/647/tree-strategy-2020-25/pdf/tree-strategy-2020-25.pdfvc>

³⁷ New Forest National Park (2019) Local Plan 2016–2036 <https://www.newforestnpa.gov.uk/planning/local-plan/>

Review how we respond to planning applications

We will review how we provide air quality advice and our requirements for appropriate assessment and agreed mitigation measures to ensure that we are minimising the impact of development.

Work closely with the New Forest National Park Authority and neighbouring local authorities to share expertise, resources, and best practice

Sharing resources will allow us to help tackle air quality on a regional level. We hope to align our approach to planning and permitting for new developments across the District, including the National Park area, and contribute to the development of air quality policies across the region to address regional air quality challenges.

Engage with businesses to help them achieve net-zero emissions

We will seek out opportunities to engage with businesses to help them achieve net-zero emissions, and work with other Council teams to make sure these schemes deliver co-benefits for air quality where possible. This can include providing incentives, support, and guidance to businesses on implementing sustainable practices, adopting cleaner technologies, and reducing carbon and air quality footprints.

12

Where to find more information



Please refer to the following list of tools and resources to find out more information on actions being taken by the New Forest District Council to improve air quality, the state of air quality in the New Forest, and how air pollution impacts health and wellbeing.

Tool / resource	Description	Link
New Forest District Council	Provides information on air quality monitoring in the New Forest, and provides access to air quality reports	https://www.newforest.gov.uk/airquality
New Forest Corporate Plan	Provides context for the policies on air quality in the new forest	Corporate plan 2024 to 2028.pdf (newforest.gov.uk)
New Forest District Council Monitoring Data	A map of the data collected by the continuous air quality monitoring stations in the New Forest	https://www.airqualityengland.co.uk/local-authority/?la_id=236

Tool / resource	Description	Link
Air Quality in New Developments in the New Forest	Provides information on the adoption of, and measures contained within the Air Quality Supplementary Planning Document	https://www.newforest.gov.uk/article/2934/Air-Quality-in-New-Development
New Forest Waterside Local Walking and Cycling Infrastructure Plan	Provides information on the ongoing development in the Waterside area to improve the walking and cycling experience	https://documents.hants.gov.uk/transportWatersideTransportStrategy-ETEDecisionDayReportAppendix.pdf
New Forest National Park Cycling Routes	Contains maps of cycling routes in the New Forest National Park	https://www.forestryengland.uk/sites/default/files/documents/New-Forest_Cycle-Routes-Map_2021_0.pdf
New Forest National Park – Sustainable Transport	Details the investments made by the National Park in sustainable travel schemes and infrastructure	https://www.newforestnpa.gov.uk/conservation/climate-and-nature-emergency/sustainable-transport/
The Environment Centre – Wood Burning	Provides information on wood burning, and how to burn better	https://environmentcentre.com/wood-burning/
The Environment Centre – Campaign for Cleaner Air	Contains information about the ongoing cleaner air campaign related to the use of log burners in the New Forest	https://environmentcentre.com/the-environment/clean-air/
Hampshire County Council – Climate Change Strategy	Provides information on the County's Climate Change Strategy	https://www.hants.gov.uk/landplanningandenvironment/environment/climatechange
UK Health Security Agency	Provides information about the health impacts of air pollution	https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/health-matters-air-pollution/health-matters-air-pollution
Defra Air Pollution Forecast	Defra's air pollution forecast tool provides the latest outlook for air quality across the UK	https://uk-air.defra.gov.uk/forecasting/

Housing and Communities Overview and Scrutiny Panel –

17 September 2025

Food Safety Performance Report 2025 – 2026

Purpose	For Housing and Communities Panel to consider the report on the performance of the Food and Safety Team for the past 2024-25 year and work plan to deliver food controls for 2025-26.
Classification	Public
Executive Summary	The Food Standards Agency (FSA) requires Local Authorities to produce a plan on how it, as a Competent Authority, intends to deliver and resource official food controls. This report sets out the mandate for local authorities to undertake food controls, details the performance of the food and safety team in undertaking these duties in the previous 2024 - 2025 year, and sets out the work plan for 2025 – 2026 year.
Recommendations	That the Housing and Communities Panel notes the performance of the Food and Safety Team in delivering Food Controls over the past year and supports the work plan for the forthcoming year.
Reasons for recommendation(s)	It is a statutory duty for local authorities to undertake food controls in food businesses in their area. It is important for EMT to have confidence that these statutory obligations are being fulfilled, whilst understanding the challenges to delivery.
Ward(s)	All
Portfolio Holder(s)	Cllr Dan Poole
Strategic Director(s)	Richard Knott – Strategic Director of Housing & Communities
Officer Contact	Ben Stockley Food and Safety Team Manager 023 8028 5348 ben.stockley@nfdc.gov.uk

	Joanne McClay Service Manager – Environmental and Regulation 023 8028 5325 joanne.mcclay@nfdc.gov.uk

Introduction

1. The Food Standards Agency (FSA) Food Law Code of Practice for England dated June 2023 requires Local Authorities to produce a plan on how it, as a Competent Authority, intends to deliver and resource official food controls and how it will work towards addressing variances where the outcomes in the plan may not be met.
2. The Code of Practice also requires the performance of the authority to be reviewed at least once a year and for it to be documented.
3. This report meets these FSA requirements by providing the Executive Management Team, and Members of the Housing and Communities Overview and Scrutiny Panel with a summary of the Food and Safety Team's performance during 2024-25 and identifying how food law controls will be delivered in 2025-26.
4. The work plan takes a risk-based approach to food interventions, which ensures that resources are targeted where they will have greatest impact in protecting and improving the health of residents and visitors to the New Forest.

Background

5. The Food Standards Agency Food Law Code of Practice sets out a framework and guidance that Local Authorities must follow when enforcing food law.
6. It requires the Council as a Competent Authority to set up, implement, maintain and carry out food controls in accordance with documented plans, policies and procedures. These documents ensure that the Authority appoints competent, authorised officers to carry out the full range of official food controls including an intervention programme, investigation of incidents, alerts, complaints, outbreaks, undertaking sampling and taking follow up action or enforcement when required.
7. The intervention programme which is part of the work plan has been drawn up in line with the Code of Practice to ensure that inspections and other interventions are effective, appropriate and consistent. All food businesses are categorised and given an inspection frequency,

based on the size and scale of the business, types of food handled, and the standards observed during the inspection.

8. Following inspection, food businesses receive an inspection category which is used to determine the frequency by which they are inspected. This category is based on several factors, including types of food, scale, and business compliance. A category A business is classed as high risk, due to a combination of poor standards observed at inspection, high risk foods being handled or a sizeable scale of operation. These businesses receive frequent inspections every 6 months. A category E business is classed as low risk, due to a combination of, small scale, low risk foods, and higher standards. An example is a home-based cake maker which will receive less frequent 3 yearly inspections.
9. Following an inspection, most businesses also receive a food hygiene rating, between zero (0) and five (5), which is a measure of the food safety standards found during the inspection. This rating is available on the Food Standards Agency website and is designed to allow the public to make informed choices on where they may wish to eat and shop.
10. Whilst most businesses receive an inspection, the code of practice provides some flexibility of approach to interventions, enabling targeting of resources at businesses of greatest risk, whilst providing a lighter touch approach to lower risk businesses.
11. An example of this light touch approach is the strategy for contacting low-risk businesses and gathering sufficient information to confirm that the business operator is competent, and that since the previous inspection, the activities have not changed. This prevents the need for a physical inspection at such premises.
12. The Food Standards Agency is currently developing a new modernised food hygiene delivery model to assist Local Authorities in undertaking their role. This is considering options such as National level regulation for the largest food businesses, enhanced registration of businesses, the extension of the roles of regulatory support officers, as well as the use of remote inspections and triaging certain types of businesses. Once this approach has been tested and agreed nationally, it will be implemented into future work plans.

Work Performance in 2024 – 2025

13. Whilst the Food and Safety Team is responsible for the food controls discussed in this report, it is also responsible for a wide variety of other functions including health and safety enforcement, animal welfare licensing, skin piercing and caravan site licensing. In 2024/25 the team consisted of four full time Environmental Health Officers,

assisted by one part time Environmental Health Apprentice. There were two vacant posts within the food team during the majority of the year.

14. The total time devoted to food safety work last year was equivalent to approximately 2.6 full-time equivalent staff. This was supported by a food safety contractor funded for 6 months by the vacancy savings.
15. The team has successfully recently recruited into the two vacant posts following a review of the service structure and creating career graded posts. It is anticipated that the team will be up to full strength by September 2025.
16. The team carried out a total of **718** food hygiene inspections in 2024/25 which were prioritised on risk, compared to **636** inspections in 2023/24. In addition to these, **438** low risk premises were reviewed via visit, telephone call or email, (of which 157 were still trading and 281 had closed) compared to 125 in the previous year.
17. The ability of the team to undertake more inspections and other interventions than in the previous year, is due to a number of factors including utilising our two apprentices to support the wider team, employing the contractor for a longer period of time, improved systems for capturing data for low risk businesses and the continued flexible approach to interventions as detailed in the Food Law Code of Practice.
18. All 84 (**100%**) high risk due inspections were completed. These high-risk businesses may have a risk category of A or B (typically food manufactures, businesses undertaken complex activities, care homes and children's nurseries) or be poor performing businesses, which are those with a food hygiene rating of 0, 1 or 2.
19. **98%**, (184 of 188) due category C medium risk inspections were completed. Two premises had permanently closed and the other two were not inspected as they were closed based on being seasonal businesses.
20. In addition, **80%** (270 of 338 due) category D lower risk inspections were undertaken.
21. A total of **68%** (486 of 709 due) lowest risk E rated interventions were undertaken – some were inspections of new low risk businesses, some a review of existing businesses, and some the closure of businesses which have ceased trading. This is a significant improvement on 26% undertaken in the previous year. This improvement can be attributed to the development of improved IT to make the process more streamlined for businesses and the team alike.

22. During the year, 268 new business registrations, across all ratings, were received, and of those 169 (**63%**) received an inspection. This is broadly similar to the 65% reported the previous year. Upon registration, all newly registered businesses are sent a questionnaire which is used to determine the priority schedule of inspection, based on the food safety activity taking place. The team aim to inspect lower risk businesses within 4 months of operating, where resources allow.
23. A total of **328** food related complaints and requests for service were received during the year, as well as **397** notifications of infectious disease to investigate. This is comparable to the previous year when we received 436 food related complaints and 345 infectious disease notifications.
24. A total of **161** food samples were taken during the course of the year. Sampling is carried out in manufacturers where there may be higher risk processes, in premises where an inspection has revealed potential concerns, at some new businesses to verify the food safety management system, or as part of national and local campaigns based on emerging issues.
25. A total of 5 hygiene improvement notices were served in 2024/25. The notices were served due to various failures identified during inspections such as food businesses not implementing food safety management systems, poor hygiene, and out of date food. Food business operators are given a set time to comply with the notice and officers revisit after this time to ensure the work has been completed. Further formal action would be considered if the work had not been undertaken, but this was not the case with these premises.

Work Plan For 2025 – 2026.

26. The Food Safety Service priorities for 2025-26 are detailed in Appendix 1. This aligns closely with priorities set within the Food Standards Agency Food Law Code of Practice and the Council's Corporate Plan objective - to protect and improve the health and wellbeing of our communities, through implementation of the Food Service Plan.
27. The work plan prioritises high priority enforcement work according to risk, which will protect the consumer but also support trade and the export of goods.
28. All due high risk or poor performing businesses will be inspected in the year; approximately **3** A and **69** B category businesses, and **15** businesses with a poor 0, 1 or 2 food hygiene rating. (see appendix 2) These are similar numbers to the previous year.

29. All high priority newly registered businesses will be inspected promptly. It is anticipated that we will undertake about **134** new business inspections.
30. If a business does not agree with the rating awarded following the inspection, they can apply (following payment of a fee) for a re-inspection. This is undertaken within 3 months of the application. It is anticipated that we will undertake approximately **30** re-inspections in the year.
31. All due category C food businesses (**207**) are required to receive an inspection or audit. This is significantly more than the previous year (122) and is in part due to the use of a contractor to undertake these inspections 18 months ago. We are again looking at appointing a contractor (funded from previous vacant posts) to assist the team in completing this work.
32. We will systematically work through the **329** D rated premises undertaking an appropriate intervention and the newer member of the team who is due to start in mid-September will initially focus on this work.
33. A total of **328** E rated food businesses are due intervention in 2025/26 as part of the backlog. Whilst the priority is the highest risk premises the FSA's Code of Practice still requires these interventions to be undertaken. Alternative strategies have been used in the past to assess these premises, which include questionnaires and intelligence gathering visits, rather than inspection; and significant headway has been made over the past 12 months with the total due falling from 749 to 328. It is expected these will be completed during the year.
34. Appendix 2 highlights the strategy being employed to effectively and flexibly deliver the food safety controls and what measures are being implemented to review and where possible, increase resources.
35. The work plan will be monitored by the Service Manager on a quarterly basis and will be reported to the Strategic Director of Housing and Communities and the Portfolio Holder for the Service during briefings.
36. The Food Standard Agency also continues to monitor local authorities' delivery of food controls against expectations set out in the Code of Practice through bi-annual data returns and where required, local authority audits.

37. The FSA will intervene where local authorities are not delivering official food controls in line with their statutory duties. They have previously written to Chief Executives and Finance Officers setting out concerns about resourcing and delivery, reminding them of the statutory role when setting budget allocations. Performance managers are allocated to underperforming local authorities, to develop improvement plans to address the issues.

Corporate plan priorities

38. **Theme:** Prosperity
39. **Corporate Plan Objective:** supporting our high-quality business base and economic centres to thrive and grow.
40. **Service Objective:** Implementation of the Environmental and Regulation Service Plans.

Consultation undertaken

41. The Food Service Plan has been reviewed by the Executive Management Team and the Portfolio Holder for Communities.

Financial and resource implications

42. The delivery of a food service is a statutory duty. There are costs associated with the operation of the service the work proposed within the service plan is based on the annual budget provided. Costs are recovered when permissible, through the re-inspection of food businesses.

Legal implications

43. The Food Service Plan is written in accordance with the nationally agreed Framework Agreement with the FSA and the Plan sets out how the authority will meet its statutory obligations.

Risk Assessment

44. Risk assessments are in place for premises inspections by officers.

Environmental / Climate and nature implications

45. There are no direct climate implications.

Equalities implications

46. The service supports all applicable businesses across the district, providing varying levels of support to businesses as appropriate and

required. The Council does not wish for local businesses to fail and therefore will provide support to any proprietor to carry out necessary actions.

47. Interventions by the team ensures all members of the public interacting with food businesses remain safe.

Crime and disorder implications

48. There are no direct crime and disorder implications.

Data protection / Information governance / ICT implications

49. There are no direct implications.

Conclusions

50. The report and appendices explain the strategy that the service will take in delivery of food controls to safeguard the health of residents in the New Forest. This will be achieved by targeting resources to ensure that appropriate action is taken to support and control poor performing and higher risk food businesses, whilst making full use of flexibility provided in the Food Law Code of Practice to address lower risk food businesses.

Appendices

Appendix 1 – Service Plan Priorities
Appendix 2 – Service Workplan
Appendix 3 – Full Service Plan

Background Papers:

Food and Safety Team - Work Plan 2025 – 2026

Introduction	
The food and safety team is responsible for a range of functions, including undertaking food safety regulation, the monitoring and enforcement of workplace health and safety and a range of licensing functions, including animal activities, caravan sites and skin piercing and for operating the event safety advisory group (SAG). This workplan is a summary of those priorities contained within the team's overall service plan relating to the delivery of the food hygiene and safety service. The aim of the food service plan is to protect the public from potentially dangerous foods and poor food hygiene practices.	
High priority / Programmed service	
1	To undertake full inspection or audit of all due high risk food premises – i.e., businesses with a food hygiene rating of 0, 1 or 2 (non-broadly compliant), or businesses with a risk rating of A or B. To also inspect all due approved businesses.
2	To triage all newly registered food businesses, and to promptly inspect all identified as high risk due to foods proposed, scale, frequency and any specified processing.
3	To support the operation of the national food hygiene rating scheme by providing businesses with and publishing their rating following food hygiene inspections, and by offering businesses safeguards, including the opportunity to be re-inspected and provided with a new food hygiene rating.
4	For businesses due an inspection, with a risk category of C which are broadly compliant, to alternate between an inspection/audit or another official control, which takes less time and is less burdensome on the business.
5	Infectious Disease: To investigate notifiable foodborne infections and suspected food poisoning outbreaks in line with UK Health Security Agency guidance. To take any necessary actions arising from the investigation and to report outcomes, to assist in national surveillance.
Reactive service	
6	To respond promptly to certain notifications to safeguard residents. This may include responding to 'Food Alerts' as directed by the Food Standards Agency; taking local action as necessary to withdraw, seize or detain food; due to notification of food incidents or food hazards; or, through the closure of a food business where an imminent risk to health is identified
7	To respond to and when appropriate to investigate complaints and requests for service such as food complaints and premises complaints.
Lower priority	
8	To inspect triaged lower risk newly registered businesses within 4 months of commencement.
9	To undertake the sampling of food and food business environmental sampling to support work locally and nationally. To investigate where unsatisfactory results are identified.
10	To carry out an appropriate intervention on due D rated food businesses, as well as complete outstanding D rated food businesses inspections – this may be either inspection/audit, or another 'official control', or another action which may be undertaken by new or unqualified staff.
11	To carry out alternative enforcement action on lower-risk E rated establishments. This may be an inspection if there have been substantial changes to the business, but in many cases will consist of gathering information on the business.
12	As directed and by agreement with Hampshire Trading Standards or the Food Standards Agency, to inspect some primary production businesses, particularly those for which enforcement may be shared. This may include fishing vessels, deer larders and fruit farms.

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Work Plan for 2025-2026

Environmental & Regulation: Food & Safety Team

This work plan explains the proposed delivery of food controls which will be carried out by the Food and Safety Team in the year 2025 – 2026. The Food and Safety Team is responsible for several key activities:

- The responsibility for enforcing food hygiene and food safety legislation in all food premises in the district.
- Carrying out proactive inspections and interventions of food businesses, investigating food and premises complaints, as well as cases of suspected food poisoning and water borne diseases.
- Programming the frequency of inspections of the around 1850 food business in the New Forest area; this number remains relatively stable, despite new businesses opening, and some businesses ceasing trading.

Whilst inspection and support of food businesses is the single largest area of work for the Food and Safety Team, it is also responsible for many other work areas including workplace health and safety regulation and caravan and animal welfare licensing.

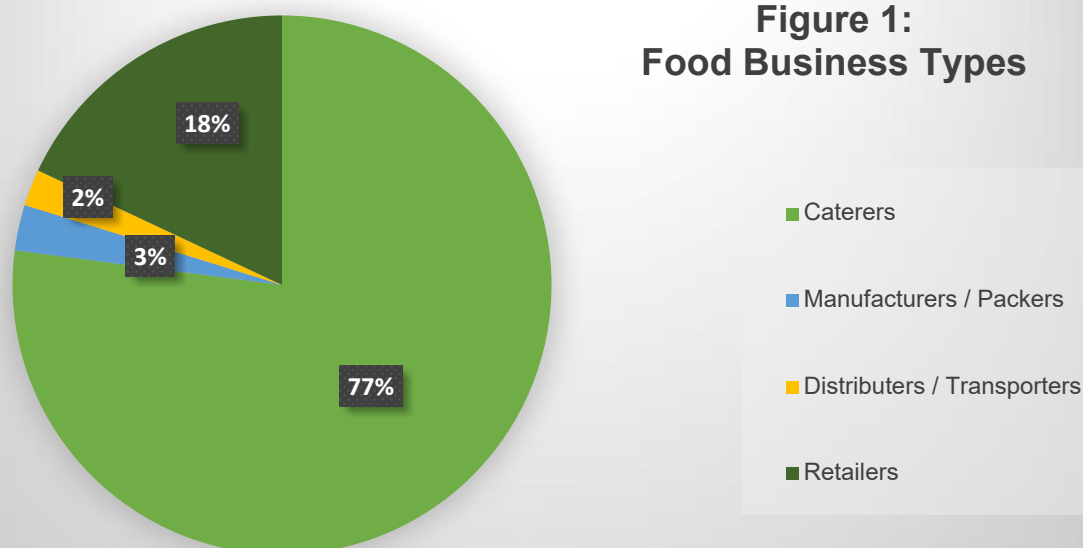
Food Businesses in the New Forest

As of 1 April 2025, there were 1827 food businesses in the district, with **77%** (1407) being caterers, and **18%** (329) retailers. The remaining **5%** of businesses are manufacturers / packers, or distributors / transporters. This is illustrated in Figure 1.

The catering businesses can be subdivided into 268 restaurants, 137 public houses, 110 takeaways, 109 care/nursing homes, 100 clubs, 89 schools, 95 mobile caterers, and 75 hotels/guest houses, as well as a number of caterers.

As of 1 April 2025 there were **9** approved premises (manufacturers of dairy, meat or fish products) which are subject to enhanced controls, as well as **26** businesses which may be subject to initial inspection but no further intervention. These include primary food producers and include fishing vessels, fruit farms and deer larders.

**Figure 1:
Food Business Types**



Risk profile of food businesses

All businesses generally receive unannounced visits, and at the end of the food hygiene inspection, the business is scored and given a risk rating which dictates when the next routine inspection will be due. This risk rating is based upon the scale of the business, the types of food handled, whether the business undertakes any specific high-risk processing or primarily serves vulnerable groups, and how well the business is performing.

The risk categories are A, B, C, D and E, where A and B are often larger or poor performing businesses, C and D are mainly caterers, and E rated are often small-scale home-based businesses. Figure 2 shows the current profile of businesses in the New Forest.

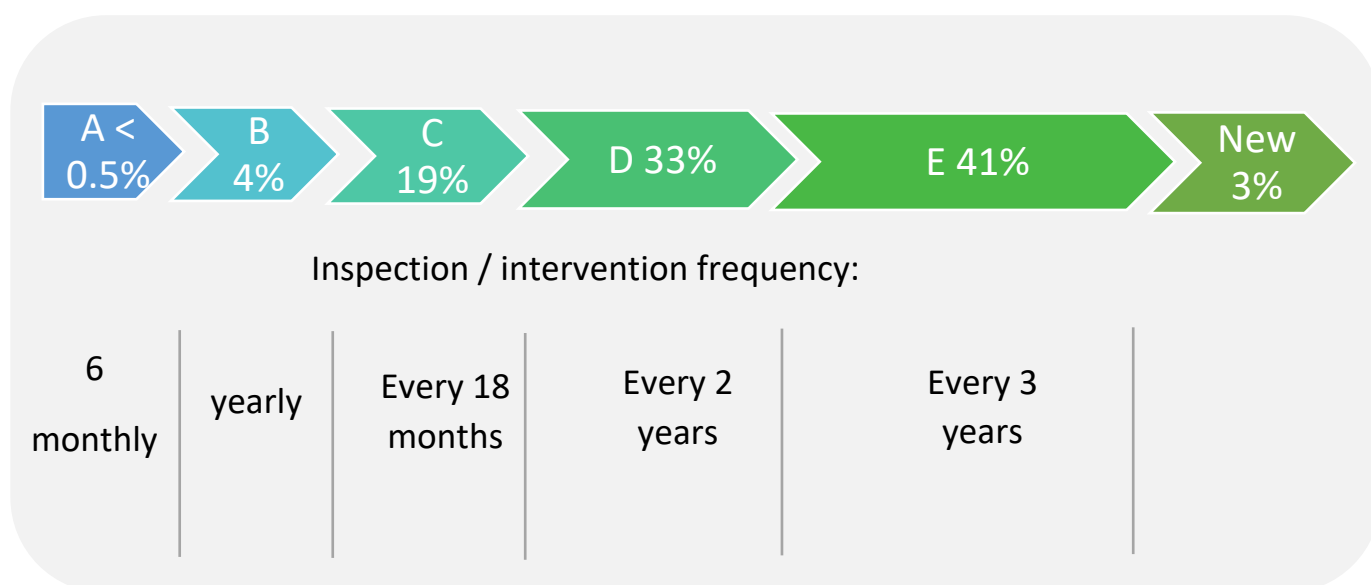


Figure 2 – Profile of food businesses in the New Forest

The purpose of the risk rating is to ensure that local authority resources are effectively targeted towards higher risk or poor performing businesses requiring assistance, whilst reducing the burden on lower risk, compliant businesses.

Over 40% (740) of all businesses are lower risk – often domestic cake makers, childminders, and small retailers, and these are contacted and/or visited less frequently, usually every 3 years. Officers' time is prioritised on the 23% of premises which are a higher and medium risk (A, B and C rated premises).

It should be noted that not all higher risk A and B rated businesses are of a poor standard. They could be rated higher risk, due to being large food manufacturers producing large quantities of high-risk food or they may be premises serving vulnerable groups (care homes) which require more frequent inspections.

Food Inspections and Interventions due in 2025-26

Based upon the risk rating above, all category A and B premises will be due inspection in the forthcoming year, as well as on average two-thirds of category C premises, and half of category D premises. The number can vary significantly year on year.

Figure 3 shows the interventions due in 2025-2026 by risk category. Given that 'A' category premises are inspected at least once every 6 months, should any businesses be scored as an A, these may also become

due during the year. Figure 3 does not include businesses which will request a re-inspection – see below for more information.

These interventions consist of both inspections for 2025 – 26 and those outstanding from the previous year.

The ‘unrated’ column consists of newly registered food businesses which have not yet received an inspection (63), and the estimated number of new registrations likely to be received based on previous year’s data.

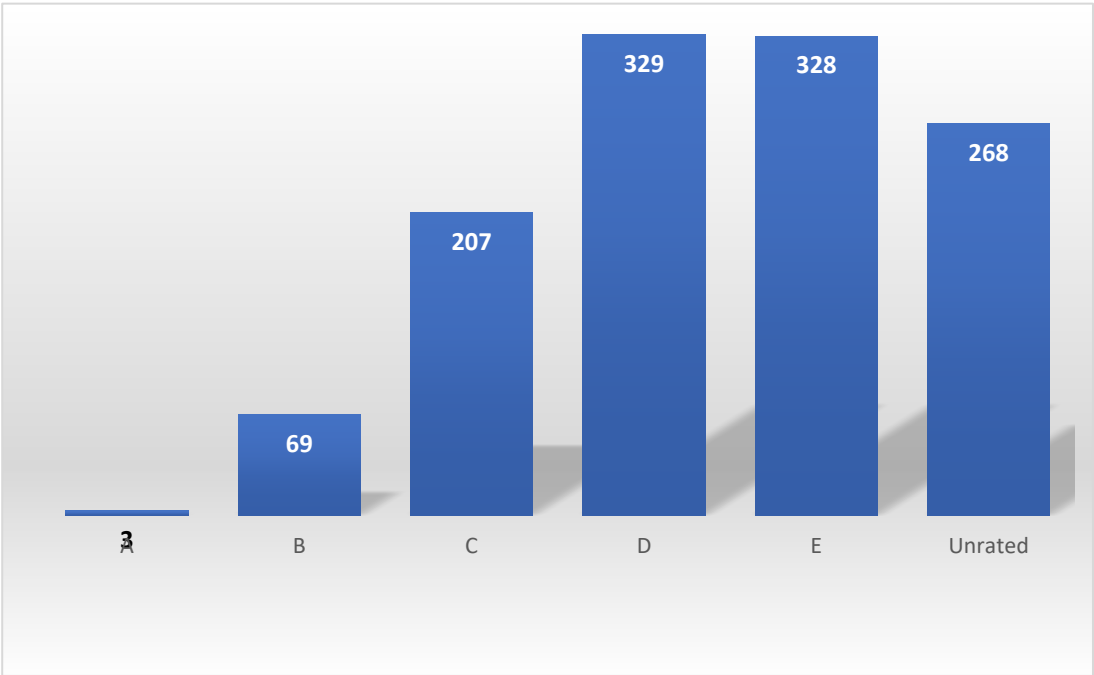


Figure 3 – interventions due by risk category

Food Hygiene Rating Scheme



In addition to the risk rating generated following a food hygiene inspection, businesses will also receive a food hygiene rating. This national scheme is designed to allow consumers to make informed choices on places where they eat out or shop for food whilst encouraging businesses to improve their hygiene standards.

The ratings range from 5, (very good) to 0, (urgent improvement necessary). A business is given a window sticker which displays the rating and the score awarded. In England, businesses are not obliged to display their rating, however all ratings are available for the public to view on the Food Standards Agency website.



The majority of businesses in the New Forest have received a rating of 3 or above.

Currently 98% of businesses have a rating of 5 (very good) 4 (good) or 3 (satisfactory) – against the national average of 97%. Only a 2% minority of businesses currently have a rating of 2, 1 or 0 requiring improvement, urgent improvement or very urgent improvement – against a national average of 3%. These businesses are given actions to carry out and a revisited to ensure standards improve or further enforcement action is taken.

The rating is kept by the business until the next inspection, unless the owner applies and pays for

a re-inspection. An officer will then carry out a further inspection and a new rating is issued.

Figure 4 – distribution of food hygiene ratings

There is a fee of £233 for a re-inspection, as this is a discretionary service. Many businesses recognise the importance of having a good rating and the team are seeing an increase in requests for re-inspections (in 2024-25, 41 businesses applied for a re-inspection).

Official and non-official controls

Risk Category of premise	Frequency of intervention	Type of intervention
A	Every 6 months	Inspection or audit
B	At least every year	Inspection or audit
C	At least every 18 months	Alternate between inspection and another 'official control' where the business is broadly compliant. Official controls are normally verifying an aspect of the business or monitoring the business.
D	At least every 2 years	Alternate between inspection and another 'non-official control'. A non-official control could be information gathered not by qualified staff (apprentices)
E	At least every 3 years	Flexible strategy which may include an official or non-official control.

Figure 5 – official and non-official controls

Figure 5 shows the range of controls which are given to local authorities when a food business becomes due an inspection. Whilst high risk premises must receive an inspection or similar, lower risk premises may be subject to lesser controls which enable resources to be targeted towards areas of higher risk.

Investigations and Advice

Across all areas of responsibility, the Food and Safety Team receives over 1,400 requests and complaints each year. Of those, typically, around half relate to food matters, including infectious disease. This figure has been relatively stable for a number of years.

Generally, a third of these are complaints made by members of the public about food purchased or consumed, or standards of hygiene observed at a premise. They also receive complaints from people claiming that food they have eaten has made them ill and although difficult to investigate where there is no physical evidence, further investigations are carried out where more than one complaint is received. The team are notified of over 300 cases of infectious disease per year, most of which are as a result of food poisoning bacteria, such as salmonella and campylobacter. Their role with these cases, is to determine how the individual became unwell, whether a food business could be implicated and if it is a single isolated case or a potential outbreak.

Food Sampling

The Food Standards Agency places considerable emphasis on the importance of sampling as part of the delivery of a local authority's food service. Sampling can be used as both a means to support business, to verify that they are producing safe food, and also to emphasise when their food safety controls are inadequate. Local high-risk businesses are sampled, such as approved premises, manufacturers, especially those carrying out specific processing, including sous-vide foods, fermentation, or aseptic packaging.

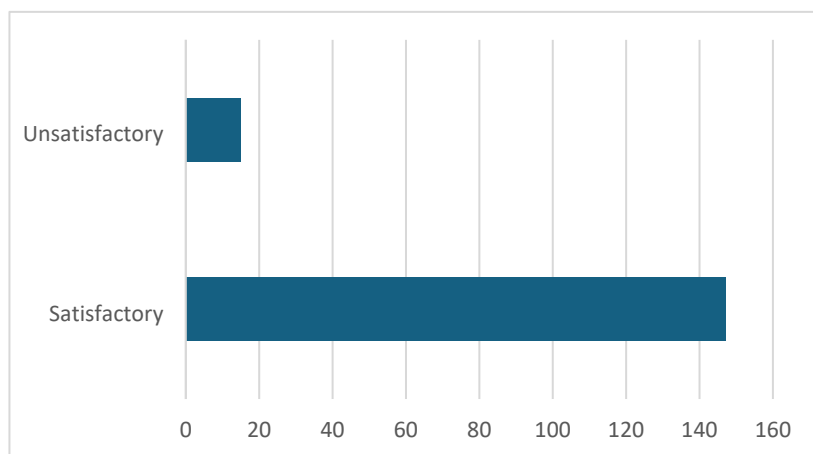


Figure 6: Samples taken 2024 - 25

The Food and Safety Team also participates in national and local Hampshire wide sampling projects which are identified by emerging issues and epidemiological data. In the coming year, it is planned that the team will participate in studies of dried fruit, nuts and seeds, and root vegetables.

Last year 162 food samples were taken and sent for analysis and a similar number is planned to be taken this year. Whilst the majority of samples taken are satisfactory, last year 10% were found to not meet food safety requirements.

In these cases, officers support the businesses in investigating what went wrong and will re-sample where necessary to demonstrate that any additional measures put in place by the business have been successful. The role of the team is to ensure that measures are taken to prevent unsafe food from being placed on the market.

Strategy for delivery of the food service

Local Government is facing significant workforce and recruitment challenges which is particularly evident in the environmental health field. The food and safety team are currently operating at a reduced staff capacity as a result of the challenging recruitment market, which has an impact on the number of inspections and other interventions undertaken. Interventions are always prioritised based on risk and in addition the following strategy has been adopted to assist in the effective delivery of the food safety programme and work towards increasing the number of lower risk interventions.

1. Ensuring that interventions are undertaken based on risk and using the full flexibility in delivery of food controls outlined in the Food Law Code of Practice, i.e., undertaking partial inspections, targeted audits, information gathering instead of full inspections in all premises.
2. Triaging newly registered food businesses, identifying those undertaking high risk activities and requiring immediate inspection, from those which are lower risk and are not such a high priority.
3. Reviewing our business systems to ensure that they are as efficient as possible, and that time taken to undertake individual inspections is optimised. For example, providing inspection reports and rating stickers on site for 4 and 5 rated businesses to reduce time in sending inspection paperwork after the visit.
4. Undertaking a recruitment and retention review of Environmental Health Officer and Technical Officer posts, benchmarking salaries across Hampshire and supporting career grading of posts. Once completed, a further recruitment campaign will take place.
5. Appointing and training apprentices through a 4-year degree course to become qualified Environmental Health Officers. Whilst not qualified to undertake inspections, these team members are able to carry out sampling, complaint investigations etc. which frees up the time of authorised staff.
6. Flexible working and overtime for Environmental Health Officers to enable them to inspect businesses during their operating hours which includes evenings and weekends.
7. Appointing qualified agency staff on a short-term basis when available to cover the current vacant posts within the team.

By applying this strategy, the Food and Safety Team aim to complete all high and medium risk A, B, C rated premises and then prioritise the D rated inspections and use alternative inspection strategies with the E rated premises. It should be noted that with current resources not all D and E rated inspections will be completed.

Progress is reviewed on a quarterly basis, by the Service Manager, to ensure that this strategy is effective in best utilisation of resources to delivering the statutory food safety function. Feedback will also be provided to the Strategic Director and Portfolio Holder on a quarterly basis.

Food, Health and Safety, Animal Welfare, and Caravan Sites Service Plan 2025 – 2026

Service: Environmental and Regulation – Food and Safety Team

Service aims: To protect the public from potentially dangerous foods and poor food hygiene practices.
To prevent the death, injury and ill health of those at work and those affected by work activities.

NFDC Corporate Plan 2024 – 2028: [Corporate plan 2024 to 2028.pdf \(newforest.gov.uk\)](#)

People priorities

1. Helping those in our community with the greatest need.
2. Empowering our residents to live healthy, connected and fulfilling lives.

Place priorities

3. Shaping our place now and for future generations.
4. Protecting our climate, coast and natural world.

Prosperity priorities

5. Maximising the benefits of inclusive economic growth and investment.
6. Supporting our high-quality business base and economic centres to thrive and grow.

Future New Forest

HIGH PRIORITY / PROGRAMMED SERVICE

Objective	Timescale	Milestones	Lead officer	RAG rating	Comments / risks / Climate impacts	Link to corporate objectives National or legal requirements
(what we are going to do)	(when)	(how we will know when completed or we have achieved it)	(who)	(on target)		

1	High risk food inspections: A, B, non-broadly Compliant C rated Premises and Approved premises: To carry out a full inspection or audit of all food premises due an intervention with a category of A or B, non-broadly compliant category C or due approved establishments (including category E as per CoP para. 4.4.1.4). Approx. 3 A, 69 B, 15 C, 9 approved.	31 March 26	Performance monitoring – quarterly review of completed interventions against the plan, Monthly ‘missed list’, 1-2-1 meetings, flash reporting, end of year reports. Review of all approved premises files.	BS		Risk from FSA intervention if not completed. Reliant on having suitably qualified officers. No climate impacts.	National requirement. Link to 2, 6.
2	New business food inspection (high risk): To inspect all high risk newly registered food businesses. All newly registered businesses are triaged and categorised for either immediate, or deferred inspection, based on risk. [low-risk are covered in reactive service]. Approx: 134 (50% of all registrations)	31 March 26	Performance monitoring – quarterly review of completed interventions against the plan, Monthly ‘missed list’, 1-2-1 meetings, flash reporting, end of year reports.	BS		Risk from FSA intervention if not completed. Reliant on having suitably qualified officers. No climate impacts.	National requirement. Link to 2, 6.
3	FHRS re-inspections: Food Hygiene Rating Scheme Re-Inspections: To carry out all re-inspections of qualifying businesses. Approx. 30	31 March 26	1-2-1 meetings, review of monthly report.	BS		Risk from FSA intervention if not completed. Reliant on having suitably qualified officers. No climate impacts.	National requirement. Link to 2, 6.
4	Broadly Compliant C Rated Food Premises: To inspect (including partial inspection/audit) all due category C broadly compliant premises. Inspection can be alternated with	31 March 26	Performance monitoring – quarterly review of completed interventions against the plan, Monthly ‘missed list’, 1-2-1 meetings, flash	BS		Risk from FSA intervention if not completed. Reliant on having suitably qualified	National requirement. Link to 2, 6.

	another official control (monitoring and surveillance, or verification) Approx. 207 C.		reporting, end of year reports.			officers. No climate impacts.	
5	Animal Welfare Licensing: To undertake all due and new inspections of businesses subject to licencing under The Animal Welfare (Licensing of Activities Involving Animals) (England) Regulations 2018, Zoo Licensing Act 1981 and Dangerous Wild Animals Act 1976, including mid-term visits. Approx. 54 inspections and 56 mid-term, plus 3 zoo inspections/visits.	31 March 26	Regular AW team meetings, regular reports run by admin, interrogation of database.	NJ		Risk of DEFRA intervention if not completed. Reliant on having suitably qualified officers. No climate impacts.	National requirement. Link to 2.
6	Health and Safety – Investigation of incidents and complaints, including accident investigation: To investigate accidents and incidents in accordance with NFDC Incident Selection Criteria. Full investigation of approx. 40 accidents per year – (1/3 of 120 reported).	31 March 26	All RIDDOR notifications triaged by team member and recorded on database, 1-2-1 meetings, update meeting during and at conclusion of investigation, interrogation of database.	BS		Risks to public health and safety if investigations not carried out. Reliant on having suitably qualified officers. No climate impacts.	National requirement. Link to 2. HSE Incident Selection Criteria Guidance (LAC 22/13 rev 1).
7	Health and Safety – HSE national planning priorities: health/safety topics based on HSE regulatory intelligence (Annex A LAC 67/2), some of which may have proactive inspection element (the List – Annex B LAC 67/2). Also, matters communicated directly to LAs by HSE. For detail see National Planning Priorities 25-26 for service plan. Summary as follows:	31 March 26	Standing item at team meetings and 1-2-1 meetings, visit report record.			These priorities form the basis of work for LAs to consider and will be targeted largely based on local intelligence or complaints. Reliant on having suitably qualified officers. No climate impacts.	National requirement. Link to 2, 6. Corporate objective, LAC 67/2 – 2025/2026 Work-Year, Annex A and Annex B.

	• During FH inspections, to hazard spot the following: ○ CO from gas appliances or solid fuel cooking equipment ○ Electrical safety – particularly hospitality settings with outdoor equipment • During any premises visit, awareness of: ○ Planned preventative maintenance – maintenance of work equipment ○ stress when relevant. ○ dust (if minor building work being undertaken) ○ control of asbestos (pre 2000 premises) ○ security procedures at premises with lone late-night working ○ MSDs, (esp. retail / care home [excl. person handling]) ○ Adequacy of hearing protection when used & health surveillance • Possible pro-active inspection of open farms. • During SAG consultation/events visits, consider: ○ Review of safe operation of inflatable amusement devices ○ Risk of explosion from LPG ○ Review of crowd management controls • Review of register of cooling towers in District - Control of legionella						

8	Health and Safety – Matters of evident concern: appropriate will be taken to deal with any matters of evident concern identified during any visit or brought to our attention. reference to OC 18/12 - Version 3	31 March 26	visit report record.			Risks to public health and safety if investigations not carried out. Reliant on having suitably qualified officers. No climate impacts.	National requirement. Link to 2.
9	Caravan Sites: To determine licence applications for new caravan sites, amendments to existing licences, licence transfers, and Fit and Proper Person applications. Approx 15 applications of all types.	31 March 26	Standing item at team meetings, regular catchups of caravan sites lead officers.	GN/OM		Risks to public health if work not completed. Reliant on having suitably qualified officers. No climate impacts.	National requirement. Link to 1, 2, 3.
10	Skin Piercing: To inspect and register all new personal / premises applications to undertake skin piercing activities. Approx. 24 premises and 33 personal registrations.	31 March 26	Allocated on receipt by duty officer, review at 1-2-1 meetings. Regular feedback from lead officer	OM		Risks to public health if work not completed. Ensuring consistent approach between Hampshire LAs. No climate impacts.	National requirement. Link to 2, 6.
11	Infectious Disease: To investigate notifiable foodborne infections and suspected food poisoning outbreaks in line with UKHSA Single Case Plan and response targets. 83 of total of 397 cases – most Campylobacter cases are no longer investigated.	31 March 26	Review of daily line listing, action by admin/duty officer, review at 1-2-1 meetings.	BS		Single case plan to be amended to remove the need for Campylobacter letter. No climate impacts.	National requirement. Link to 2.

REACTIVE SERVICE

	Objective (what we are going to do)	Timescale (when)	Milestones (how we will know when completed or we have achieved it)	Lead officer (who)	RAG rating (on target)	Comments / risks / Climate impacts	Link to corporate objectives National or legal requirements
12	Urgent Response to: - Food Alerts for Action (FAFA) - Local food issues where food withdrawal/ seizure/ detention or voluntary surrender may be required – i.e., food incidents and food hazards - Premise identified as imminent risk requiring intervention or voluntary closure. Approx. 10 per year.	31 March 26	Daily review of FSA emails.	BS		Risk from FSA intervention if not completed. Reliant on having suitably qualified officers. No climate impacts.	National requirement. Link to 2.
13	Reactive work: to triage, respond to and investigate complaints and requests for service in line with service response times, relating to: - food hygiene and safety (including planning consultation) - health and safety (including SAG consultation) - infectious disease – animal licensing - caravan and camping sites Approx. 1200 per year.	31 March 26	Allocated on receipt by duty officer, review at 1-2-1 meetings.	BS		Risks to public health if work not completed. Reliant on having suitably qualified officers. No climate impacts.	Council requirement to investigate. Link to 1, 2.

LOWER PRIORITY

	Objective (what we are going to do)	Timescale (when)	Milestones (how we will know when completed or we have achieved it)	Lead officer (who)	RAG rating (on target)	Comments / risks / Climate impacts	Link to corporate objectives National or legal requirements
14	New business food inspection (low risk): To inspect all newly registered food businesses identified as being low risk via a triage process undertaken when registrations are received. Approx. 134 (50% of all registrations)	31 March 26	Performance monitoring – quarterly review of completed interventions against the plan, Monthly ‘missed list’, 1-2-1 meetings, flash reporting, end of year reports.	BS		Risk from FSA intervention if not completed. Triage considers food types and scale. Lower risk businesses to be inspected if resources allow.	National requirement. Link to 2, 6.
15	Sampling To follow the NFDC sampling programme: - participate in national and regional sampling – i.e., studies 83 (ready to eat dried fruit, nuts and seeds) and 84 (root vegetables). - Assessing food business compliance; re-sampling and investigation when necessary - Sampling at approved premises, and high risk/high profile manufactures Follow-up in relation to FSA surveillance sampling programme.	31 March 26	Attendance at HIOW sampling group meetings, standing item at team meetings, 1-2-1 meetings.	OM		This work is currently undertaken by trainee officers and does not impact on overall delivery of the service.	Identified as priority in Food Law Code of Practice. Link to 2, 6.

360	16	D Rated Food Premises: To carry out an appropriate intervention on all due category D food premises. This can be either an official control or an unofficial control. 329 D (including 68 backlog from 2024-25 year)	31 March 26	Performance monitoring – quarterly review of completed interventions against the plan, Monthly ‘missed list’, 1-2-1 meetings, flash reporting, end of year reports.	BS		Risk from FSA intervention if not completed. Code of practice requires inspection of D rated businesses; however higher risk businesses are prioritised	National requirement. Link to 2, 6.
	17	Health and Safety – LA local priorities (projects): • Inspection of riding establishments during animal welfare visits • Swimming pools • Assessment of health and safety at food inspections (e.g., pressure vessels, guarding, cellar safety) • Inspection of special treatment premises (those with lasers, or providing botox, dermal fillers, PRP treatments) • Review of cooling towers register	31 March 26	Standing item at team meetings.			Projects are prioritised based on NFDC or Hampshire priorities. The majority of such work is resource dependent.	National requirement. Link to 2, 6.
	18	E Rated Food Premises: To carry out an alternative enforcement strategy on due category E food businesses Approx. 328 E (including 233 backlog).	31 March 26	Regular review of spreadsheet and during 1-2-1 meetings.	BS		Risk from FSA intervention if not completed. Initial information gathering undertaken by trainee officers and AES is signed off by EHO.	National requirement. Link to 2, 6.

APPENDIX 3

19	Caravan site inspection: To undertake yearly inspection of all relevant protected (residential) caravan sites in the District, communicate findings to licence holders and to take appropriate action to secure compliance. 35 per year.	31 March 26	Review and allocation at beginning of year and thereafter via team meeting review.	BS		Risks to public health if work not completed. As a paid for function, all sites inspected. No climate impacts.	National requirement. Link to 1, 2, 3.
20	Primary Authority: To maintain existing PA partnerships and as appropriate to offer to enter into new PA partnerships with businesses operating in the District and/or in the area.	31 March 26	Regular review of PA relationships and discussion at team meetings.	BS		Currently two active primary authority partnerships. Further partnerships will only be considered as resources allow in the future.	National requirement. Link to 2, 6.
21	Primary Producers: To carry out hygiene-based inspection of primary producers, in line with Hampshire TS agreement.	31 March 26	Review of worklists, discussion at team meetings and 1-2-1 meetings.	BS		When available, inspections generate income; however, this work is resource dependent.	National requirement. Link to 2, 6.

	RAG Colour
Significantly behind schedule	
In progress but behind schedule	
In progress and on track	
Completed	Whole line green

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HOUSING AND COMMUNITIES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL

WORK PROGRAMME 2025/2026

ITEM	OBJECTIVE	METHOD	LEAD OFFICER

21 JANUARY 2026			
PSPO Extension Review and Summary of Public Consultation	To consider the PSPO extension review and summary of public consultation	Report to Panel	Brian Byrne
Community Grants 2026/27	To consider the recommendations for Community Grant allocation for 2026/27 from the Task and Finish Group	Report to Panel	Ryan Stevens/ Jamie Burton
Housing Landlord Strategy	To consider the Housing Landlord Strategy following public consultation	Report to Panel	Paul Thomas
Social Housing Regulation Act Progress	To receive a progress report on the work related to the Social Housing Regulation Act	Report to Panel	Paul Thomas
Housing Revenue Account Budget and the Housing Public Sector Capital Expenditure Programme for 2026/27	To consider the HRA budget and the housing public sector capital expenditure programme for 2026/27	Report to Panel	Richard Knott / Kevin Green
Homelessness Strategy	To consider the draft proposed Homelessness Strategy	Report to Panel	Chris Pope
Housing Allocations Policy	To consider proposals to amend the Housing Allocations Policy	Report to Panel	Chris Pope

ITEM	OBJECTIVE	METHOD	LEAD OFFICER
Corporate Plan: Key Performance Data (Quarter 2)	To consider the performance data against KPIs identified in the Corporate Plan	Report to Panel	Saqib Yasin
18 MARCH 2026			
Corporate Plan: Key Performance Data (Quarter 3)	To consider the performance data against KPIs identified in the Corporate Plan	Report to Panel	Saqib Yasin
Social Housing Regulation Act Progress	To receive a progress report on the work related to the Social Housing Regulation Act	Report to Panel	Paul Thomas
Homelessness Update	To receive an update on homelessness	Report to Panel	Chris Pope

NOTE:

*The Resources and Transformation Overview and Scrutiny Panel on 20 November 2025 will consider the half year update complaints performance and service improvement, this will include housing complaints. The Housing and Communities Overview and Scrutiny Panel members are invited to attend the meeting in relation to this item.