

**HOUSING AND HOMELESSNESS  
STRATEGY AND NEEDS  
ANALYSIS FOR VULNERABLE  
YOUNG PEOPLE AND FAMILIES  
IN OXFORDSHIRE 2019-2024**

## Introduction and Why We Need a Strategy

There is common agreement that safe and suitable housing is a basic human right for children, young people and families. Conversely transient lifestyles and inappropriate housing have been identified as one of the risk factors on the pathway to harm<sup>1</sup>.

Our Housing Needs Analysis for vulnerable young people and families highlighted the difficulties Oxfordshire faces in terms of cost and availability of housing. While there are intense building programmes around the county, affordability is still an issue and the number of homeless people is increasing. Young people in our supported housing pathway have increasingly complex needs and progress through the pathway is hampered by a lack of suitable places for them to move on to. The increasing number of looked after children is creating an ongoing pressure on places in the pathway. We need increased support and housing for vulnerable families as evidenced by the number of families in temporary accommodation. We also need specialist housing provision for young people with disabilities and more support for young people in the youth justice system.

(See Housing and Homeless Needs Analysis for Vulnerable Young People and Families 2019-2021 - Appendix 1)

The government is helping local councils and developers work with local communities to plan and build better places to live for everyone. This includes building affordable housing, improving the quality of rented housing, helping more people to buy a home, and providing housing support for vulnerable people.<sup>2</sup> In addition, the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 with the Duty to Refer requires us to tackle the causes of homelessness further upstream.

Oxfordshire County Council Housing Strategy 2015-2018 identified the following objectives under the priority 'Support the Growth of a Balanced Housing Market.'

- Improve housing market operation;
- Increase the supply of public sector land to deliver new homes; and
- Bring forward key strategic sites to support City Deal and meet housing need.

There are practical reasons why it makes sense to clarify the key issues and requirements.

- To be able to influence the spatial planning agenda and ensure that the housing needs are reflected in Local Growth Plans and housing strategies. 'Up front' work ensures these needs are not overlooked.
- To provide clarity for senior managers about the key priorities to try and resolve them.
- To assist housing and planning officers in each district and the city to know the housing needs of young people and families so that they can reflect these when advising and agreeing new affordable housing planning applications.

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<sup>1</sup> Pathways to Harm, Pathways to Protection: Triennial Analysis of Serious Case Reviews 2011-14'

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/topics/housing>

- To allow housing providers to know the housing needs of young people and families so that they too can consider such provision when building or buying new homes or when considering how to re-model existing stock.
- To provide a consistent and clear set of needs to the property services and planning departments within the City, District and County Councils.
- To enable all relevant agencies to make a more convincing case for capital grant or land subsidy both within the county council and the district councils.

## Vision

Our Vision is that every child and young person in Oxfordshire should have access to a full range of housing services and the opportunity for a decent and affordable home suitable to their needs; and that vulnerable families should be enabled to live in safe and suitable housing as a basis for supportive family relationships and thriving communities.

There are three broad components to achieve improved housing. These can be summarised as:

- the right buildings,
- appropriate support services and
- clear 'pathways' that enable young people and families to access such housing.

### The right buildings

- The District, City and County Councils will work in partnership with, housing and other providers, to ensure that the 'bricks and mortar' to supply new homes are built to the correct design, in the right locations and at an affordable price.
- Where possible and appropriate we will increase new specialist housing capacity by conversion of existing buildings that may no longer be fit for their original purpose, or may be empty.
- We will ensure that buildings are fully inclusive and accessible to consider the needs of families with disabled children, young people and adults. Advice from occupational therapists will be considered in planning the right buildings for the future.

### Appropriate support services

- We will enable creative and flexible wrap-around services for young people and young families in the pathway.
- We will provide support to landlords working with families in danger of eviction and provide targeted support to vulnerable families.

## Clear pathways

- We will devise clear pathways to ensure the right people access the right housing for their needs.
- There is a well-developed multi-agency pathway in place for young people, but there needs to be more creative planning to ensure there is a range of suitable supported accommodation and sufficient move on options.

## Our Key Objectives are:

- 1. To support vulnerable families to maintain secure and long-lasting housing.**
- 2. The provision of a range of housing options, with support and intervention, for Care Leavers and other vulnerable young people including Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Children and young people involved with the Youth Justice System.**
- 3. To increase the supply of affordable housing options to meet the needs of families and single young people, and optimise the use of available property.**
- 4. To maintain partnership working between District and County Councils, housing providers, specialist support services and other stakeholders including young people and families.**
- 5. To resource early prevention work with families and young people at risk of homelessness.**
- 6. To support landlords to mitigate negative perceptions of social care service users and/or benefit claimants**

We will tackle these in the following ways:

- 1. To support vulnerable families to maintain secure and long-lasting housing.**

An iMPower analysis into the work of Oxfordshire Children, Education and Families teams revealed a lack of knowledge and engagement with housing issues among front line staff. In response to this we will:

- 1.1 Equip front line social services teams working with families to identify housing issues at an early stage and support families to maintain their tenancies, thus avoiding eviction and disruption to schooling and family networks.**

- 1.2 Target support for families deemed intentionally homeless to enable them to have a second chance.

## **2. The provision of a range of housing options, with support and intervention, for Care Leavers, including Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Children (UASC), young people involved with the Youth Justice System and young people with a range of disabilities.**

The increase in the number of Looked After Children and Care Leavers has necessitated a review as to how to effectively support all our vulnerable young people to the point of being able to manage an independent tenancy. The proportion of young people with complex needs in the Supported Housing Pathway has increased.

There is also a need for a range of provisions for young people involved in the Youth Justice Service.

In addition, the sharp increase in arrivals of Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Children has accentuated the need for increased accommodation and support within the county for this vulnerable group.

In response to this we will:

- 2.1 Optimise the use of available resources to creatively support young people with complex needs and those with lower level needs.
- 2.2 Find creative solutions for vulnerable young people on the edge of care including re-unification with family where possible or supported lodgings with other trusted adults.
- 2.3 Make specific provision for young people involved in the Youth Justice Service.
- 2.4 Enable more consistent use of intervention services such as Mental Health services for young people who need these up to age 25 in the Supported Housing Pathway.
- 2.5 Support Care Leavers to develop independent living skills including the maintenance of a tenancy and regular employment.
- 2.6 Ensure planners are aware in advance of the specific housing needs of young people with disabilities in each district and the city.

## **3. Increase the supply of affordable housing options to meet the needs of both families and single young people, and optimise the use of available property.**

### **Supply and demand**

The overarching concern is the overall lack of supply of housing - both specialist and generic - and fully inclusive and accessible. Whilst the needs and issues may be different for families, care leavers and vulnerable young people, the housing gaps are a common theme.

In response to this we will:

- 3.1 Seek to influence potential use of empty council buildings for families and young people.
- 3.2 Embed a mechanism across the partner organisations to quantify the types of housing needed and level of demand for families and young people.
- 3.3 Provide clear forecasting of requirements for various types of property including family housing, accommodation for young single people and adapted housing for people with learning disabilities or physical disabilities including those in need of ceiling track hoists.
- 3.4 Seek to influence local planning in a timely manner to enable suitable housing to be located within a reasonable distance from services, schools, colleges and places of work.
- 3.5 Build priorities for young people, young adults and families into the district council Growth Plans and the Joint Strategic Spatial Plan for Oxfordshire 2050.
- 3.6 Work with providers to develop creative solutions for older young people with learning disability such as Autistic Spectrum Disorder.

#### **Affordability**

Oxfordshire's extremely high rents increase the vulnerability of both single people and families who may become reliant on benefits to afford a home. The housing benefit element of Universal Credit is unlikely to cover the full cost of rent. For care leavers there is an additional impact when their housing benefit drops at aged 22.

In response we will:

- 3.7 Assist families and young people with budgeting to maintain regular rental payments as a build-up of rent arrears greatly adversely affects their chances of a future affordable tenancy.
- 3.8 Help Care Leavers to hold realistic expectations of the type of property available to them when they leave the supported housing pathway.
- 3.9 Plan early to allow care leavers to move to affordable accommodation prior to the reduction in their benefit.

#### **4. To maintain partnership working between District and County Councils, housing and support providers and other stakeholders including young people and families.**

Joint working between housing authorities, social services and other statutory, voluntary and private sector partners is required by a range of legislation relating to homelessness, social care and children. (see Appendix 1 Needs Analysis pages 8-9)

In response to this we will:

- 4.1 Hold quarterly meetings of the Joint Housing Steering Group with representatives from the City and each District Council along with key operational and commissioning staff in the County Council.

Through this we will problem solve issues which affect the delivery of this strategy and aim to provide an effective and co-ordinated response to prevent homelessness amongst vulnerable young people, and families.

- 4.2 We will escalate issues, concerns and gaps in service provision to senior officers and members as appropriate to ensure they are informed and able to influence local provision and developments.
- 4.3 Engage with city and district councils, registered social landlords, letting agencies, private landlords and other community and faith groups to develop solutions using properties they may no longer wish to keep.
- 4.4 Develop creative partnerships with skills providers and employers.
- 4.5 Develop co-location opportunities for members of different teams, local authorities and support agencies.
- 4.6 Work to remove the “catch 22” situation around housing allocation for potential foster carers.

## **5. Resource early prevention work with families and young people at risk of homelessness.**

The Homelessness Reduction Act and the Duty to Refer, encourages early intervention into the causes of homelessness by obliging a range of statutory services to address housing issues with families or individuals and to make referrals to the appropriate authority.

In response to this we will:

- 5.1 Increase channels of communication between social services staff and housing and support providers to enable timely intervention.
- 5.2 Increase awareness of housing related issues amongst frontline staff and increase staff confidence in assisting families facing housing issues.

## **6. Support landlords to mitigate negative perceptions of social care service users and/or benefit claimants**

There can be negative perceptions of social care service users by private and social landlords due to issues relating to rent arrears, damage to property, behaviour and disturbance to other residents. Strategies to prepare and support landlords are needed to help mitigate these issues as well as to support and ensure young people and families have the right skills and best chances to sustain their tenancies.

In response to this we will:

- 6.1 Develop a clear programme of support for landlords of social care users with well-defined roles and responsibilities and make sure this is well publicised.

- 6.2 Initiate early conversations with landlords regarding issues with tenants known to social services with a view to providing early intervention to support families and young people at risk of losing a tenancy.
- 6.3 Provide initial financial support to enable vulnerable young people and families to take on a tenancy or move into temporary accommodation.
- 6.4 Provide guarantees/contracts to help a young person secure a tenancy and pay for damage.



## Action Plan

Action	Desired Outcome	Lead Organisation/s	How Success will be measured
<b>1. To support vulnerable families to maintain secure and long-lasting housing.</b>			
1.1 Following on from the current model of an embedded specialist housing worker in front line Children, Education and Families teams, provide a programme of training and resources for front line teams in identifying and tackling housing issues. including a network of housing champions.	Earlier intervention in housing issues including “Duty to Refer”. Locally based housing knowledge and connections available to all front-line Children, Education and Families staff	Oxford City Trailblazer programme until funding ends in 2019 and County Council Housing and Immigration Team	County Council champions recruited, Training taken place, Housing referrals made
1.2 Develop an agreed programme of support to enable families deemed intentionally homeless to have a second chance at maintaining a tenancy.	Families supported into secure tenancies.	Cherwell District Council / County Council Local Community Support Service and Housing and Immigration Team	Agreed programme in each district. Number of families supported into secure housing
1.3 Ensure all staff across partner organisations are aware of funding streams that are available for support e.g. Troubled Families Resources Budget, flexible use of pupil premium budgets.	Optimum use of available funds to support vulnerable families.	County Council Housing and Immigration Team	Training and information on funding given and disseminated
<b>2. The provision of a range of housing options, with support and intervention, for Care Leavers and other vulnerable young people including Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Children and young people involved with the Youth Justice System.</b>			
2.1 Review existing supported	Knowledge of what is working	County Council	Recommendations for new

<b>Action</b>	<b>Desired Outcome</b>	<b>Lead Organisation/s</b>	<b>How Success will be measured</b>
housing pathway provision	well and changes in nature of provision that may be necessary	commissioning team	service written
2.2 Recommission the supported housing pathway in consultation and conjunction with all stakeholders including the providers of the Adult Homeless Pathway.	An effective, safe and value for money service which enables vulnerable young people to move into independence, or other appropriate accommodation in a timely manner.	County Council Commissioning Team/ City and District Councils/provider organisations	Number of young people who move through the pathway and gain independent accommodation
2.3 Create additional provision for Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Children	Local and safe accommodation with wrap around support for UASC	County Council Commissioning Team/Cherwell District Council	Additional provision available
2.4 Ensure that Mental Health support is available to all young people in the supported housing pathway.	Vulnerable young people are supported towards independence	County Council Commissioning Team/Oxfordshire Clinical Commissioning Group	Number of young people in pathway supported with mental health
2.5 Explore the potential to redirect funding to support young people's identified housing and support needs including piloting council tax exemptions	Optimum use of available funds	County Council Operational Team, Cherwell District Council	Increased funding for housing and support needs. Council tax exemptions in place for care leavers in some or all Districts.
2.7 Consider options for additional support for young people in the Youth Justice Service including the recruitment of a team of high tier foster carers.	Appropriate support to keep these young people safe and minimise the risk of re-offending.	Youth Justice Service, County Council Fostering team	Crisis provision for young people in youth justice service in place
2.8 Recruit additional Supported Lodging providers to offer flexible support options for care leavers	Out of term time accommodation for care leavers at university with appropriate level of support.	County Council Commissioning and Care Leavers' team	Additional flexible provision for care leavers with low level support needs
2.9 Negotiate with partners to	Effective and timely intervention	County Council	Specialist professionals ready

<b>Action</b>	<b>Desired Outcome</b>	<b>Lead Organisation/s</b>	<b>How Success will be measured</b>
provide a 'Team around the Worker' to support the lead professional in the supported housing pathway through specialist consultation and advice.	for young people with complex needs.	Commissioning/ partner organisations/pathway providers	to provide support in flexible way to worker with best relationship with young person
2.10 Ensure pathway providers are equipped to identify signs of domestic abuse in the pathway and resourced to support victims and keep them safe.	Young people in the Supported Housing Pathway are safe and know how to obtain support.	County Council, Pathway providers, Action on Ending Violence against Young Women and Girls	Greater awareness of potential Domestic abuse in pathway and prevention strategies in place.
2.11 Start earlier to plan for young people to return to their family where possible and invest resource on whole family approaches such as Family Group Conferences and restorative practice.	Maximise chances for family re-unification and take fewer children into care.	County Council	More children and young people leaving care to return to families
2.12 Provide support for young people with low level needs such as Asperger's Syndrome and their families to prevent the young person becoming homeless	Vulnerable young people and their families are supported to stay together.	Housing Authorities and Commissioned Services for support to families	Fewer young people with low level needs in supported housing pathway
2.13 Work with young people on the edge of care to secure private arrangements with trusted adults where re-unification with family is not possible	Vulnerable young people are cared for by adults they know and trust and pool of approved care providers is widened.	County Council Residential and Edge of Care team	Fewer young people referred into the supported housing pathway
2.14 Develop "The House Project" to support a group of care leavers to take on HMO tenancies and	Young care leavers equipped to take on independent tenancies	County Council	Young people supported to live in nominated properties and begun to move on

<b>Action</b>	<b>Desired Outcome</b>	<b>Lead Organisation/s</b>	<b>How Success will be measured</b>
develop necessary skills to live independently.			
2.15 Work with employers to develop pathways to employment in addition to gaining housing related skills such as DIY, painting/decorating, maintenance, and furnishing.	Young care leavers equipped with employment related skills and able to take on independent tenancies	Pathway providers, County Council "House" project manager	Young people from pathway gain employment in related fields
2.16 Work with planners and Disabled Facilities Grant departments to ensure buildings are fully accessible and inclusive and consideration is given to factors like electric wheelchair accessibility, up to date technical aids to facilitate independence for young people, storage, sound proofing, planned adaptations so that a disabled child can live and play safely.	Adequate supply of appropriately adapted housing in the locations where it is needed	City and District Councils, County Council	Timely supply of appropriately adapted housing
2.17 Consider opportunities for pooled budgets and targeted commissioning to meet housing need for specific groups e.g. learning disability, mental health.	Financially efficient sustainable support for the people who need it.	County Council, Clinical Commissioning Group	Housing developed for specific named groups using pooled budgets
<b>3. To increase the supply of affordable housing options to meet the needs of both families and single young people, and optimise the use of available property.</b>			
3.1 Identify existing data sources, plot pathways and identify gaps. Draw up sustainable mechanism to gather information	Ongoing accurate information on forthcoming needs	County Council	Required data available from LCS or another identified regular source

<b>Action</b>	<b>Desired Outcome</b>	<b>Lead Organisation/s</b>	<b>How Success will be measured</b>
3.2 Look at Oxon and national statistics to identify trends.	Ongoing accurate information on forthcoming needs	County Council	Needs Analysis reviewed at end 2020
3.3 Following the review of empty buildings and land ownership assessment which has identified empty/underused spaces/buildings both by county council and partners and explore the potential to include this in the county council Place Reviews.	Increase supply of sustainable property options for young people and families	City and District Councils, County Council	Underused buildings become available for young people or families
3.4 Work with specialist architects and estate agents to develop community solutions to housing such as building conversions leading to longer term more sustainable solutions such as housing co-operatives or emergency/transitional accommodation like container homes or empty building conversions.	Additional housing through optimising use of existing buildings	City, District and County Council	Increase in available properties, through this route
3.5 Work with specialist providers to clarify what delivery of homes for young people with learning disabilities such as Autistic Spectrum Disorder might look like.	Plan in place	City, District and County councils	Supply of houses built to specification
<b>4. To maintain partnership working between District and County Councils, housing and support providers and other stakeholders including young people and families.</b>			
4.1 Review use and scope of move on agreements with city and district councils in relation to	Joint working across districts and social work teams leading to joined up plans for young people	City, District and County Council	Extended group of care leavers given support

<b>Action</b>	<b>Desired Outcome</b>	<b>Lead Organisation/s</b>	<b>How Success will be measured</b>
extended responsibilities for care leavers up to 25.			
4.2 Improve and increase the use of Multi-Agency Risk Assessment and Management plan (MARAMP) to manage risk more effectively in placement planning particularly in the Supported Housing Pathway	Increased and effective use of MARAMP	Pathway providers, County Council Care Leaver team	Fewer evictions from the pathway
4.3 Develop the role of the 'Team around the Worker' to support lead professionals with specialist advice and consultation in areas such Mental Health and specialist substance misuse.	Specialist advice is in place and used effectively. Workers more confident about response and support/interventions they can offer	County Council Commissioning and operational staff/partner organisations/pathway providers	Specialist professionals ready to provide support in flexible way to worker with best relationship with young person
4.4 Housing providers to be part of the Team Around the Family (TAF)	Housing issues addressed at an earlier stage and support offered.	County Council, City and District Councils and other housing providers.	Fewer homeless families because of earlier, joined up support.
4.5 Agree a protocol between Housing Authorities and Children, Education and Families teams to allow potential foster carers to move into suitable properties to house foster children.	Increased number of Council foster carers leading to a reduction in use of high cost independent fostering agencies	Cherwell District Council, City and other District Councils and Oxfordshire County Council	Increased number of Council foster carers.
4.6 Increase lines of communication between Housing Authorities and Children, Education and Families teams regarding kinship foster carers need for housing.	More children cared for by wider family through access to suitable housing.	County Council operational teams City and District Councils and housing providers	Increase in kinship foster placements

Action	Desired Outcome	Lead Organisation/s	How Success will be measured
<b>5. To resource early prevention work with families and young people at risk of homelessness.</b>			
5.1 Put in place a programme of training and resources to enable front line social services' staff to identify and address housing issues at an early stage.	Housing issues are recognised at earlier stage and homelessness prevention work carried out	County Council, Oxford City Trailblazer	Fewer homeless young people and families because of earlier, joined up support.
5.2 Promote the use of the ALERT portal for referrals of anyone who may be homeless or threatened with homelessness in Oxfordshire.	Young people and families threatened with homelessness are identified earlier and receive support into accommodation	City and District Councils Oxfordshire County Council	Fewer homeless young people and families because of earlier, joined up support.
5.3 Initiate earlier communication and a programme of support for families in danger of making themselves intentionally homeless.	Families threatened with homelessness receive timely advice and support	Cherwell District Council/ Oxfordshire County Council, City and other Districts	Fewer homeless families because of earlier, joined up support
5.4 Initiate earlier conversations between supported housing pathway providers and CEF team regarding rent arrears and other behaviours which are detrimental to gaining an independent tenancy.	Young people are more able to access independent accommodation	Oxfordshire County Council operational teams/pathway providers	Greater throughput through the supported housing pathway
5.6 Work with housing providers to ensure they are part of Team Around the Family meetings, joint visits etc.	Housing issues addressed at an earlier stage and support offered	County Council, City and District Councils and other housing providers.	Fewer homeless families because of earlier, joined up support.
<b>6. To support landlords to mitigate negative perceptions of social care service users and/or benefit claimants.</b>			
6.1 Institute a mechanism for early conversations with landlords and programmes of support for people	Young people and families are supported to maintain a tenancy	City and District Councils, housing providers, County	Fewer evictions and fewer homeless families

<b>Action</b>	<b>Desired Outcome</b>	<b>Lead Organisation/s</b>	<b>How Success will be measured</b>
in danger of breaching their tenancy agreements.		Council operation teams.	
6.2 Make funds available, following strict criteria, to allow families to access temporary accommodation, or private rental accommodation through the provision of deposits, rent in advance and rent for families who are subject to immigration law	Families are supported to gain secure housing and children remain with family.	Oxfordshire County Council Housing and Immigration team	Number of families supported into secure housing
6.3 Work with Registered Social Landlords and the Care Leavers Forum to create a junior tenancy course to help young people sustain housing.	Young care leavers equipped to take on independent tenancies	City and District Councils and Care Leavers Association	Course compiled and delivered





# HOUSING AND HOMELESSNESS STRATEGY AND NEEDS ANALYSIS FOR VULNERABLE YOUNG PEOPLE AND FAMILIES IN OXFORDSHIRE 2019-2024



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# Executive Summary

## The Picture in Oxfordshire

The number of Looked After Children (LAC) in Oxfordshire is rising sharply in line with national figures. There are currently approximately 726. This is significant in a housing context because of the local authorities' increased obligation towards these young people until the of age 25. Oxfordshire poses a hostile housing environment for young people, with Oxford City ranked as the least affordable city in England regarding house purchase, and third least affordable regarding rent.<sup>3</sup>

Recent welfare reform has contributed significantly to a young person or a family's inability to secure a permanent home in Oxfordshire. The housing benefit element of Universal Credit falls short of the median rent by approx. £44 per week in Oxford city £53 per week in Banbury. Falling into rent arrears with one housing provider significantly affects a young person or a family's ability to secure alternative accommodation.

Whilst Oxfordshire is still below the national average on many indicators of social need, there are pockets of exceptionally high need. Areas of Oxford City and Banbury are in the top quintile in the country for social care referrals and domestic violence notifications.

## Families at Risk of Homelessness

Whilst the affordability of rental accommodation is decreasing, the number of people presenting as homeless to the Housing Departments of the City or District Council is increasing. At the same time the numbers of those accepted as unintentionally homeless<sup>4</sup> and in priority need<sup>5</sup> is decreasing. The Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 and the Duty to Refer seeks to bring intervention to families threatened with homelessness at an earlier preventative stage. It is too early yet for any discernible effect to be apparent.

During 2017 83 families who made homeless applications to their local District Council were deemed ineligible for support. 17 of these families were financially supported into temporary accommodation or into private rental accommodation by the Children, Education and Families teams. At the end of 2016/17 there were 161 households in temporary accommodation.

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<sup>3</sup> Oxford City Council 2017

<sup>4</sup> Under Section 191 (1) of the Housing Act 1996, a person becomes homeless intentionally if they deliberately do, or fail to do, anything which causes them to cease to occupy accommodation which was available and reasonable for them to occupy. (Lynda Myers Solicitors <http://www.lindermeyers.co.uk/unintentionally-homeless-what-it-means/>)

<sup>5</sup> Local housing authorities have a duty to secure accommodation for households who are in priority need under homelessness legislation. Categories of priority need are pregnancy, dependent children, vulnerable because of old age, mental illness or handicap, or physical disability or other special reason, homeless because of an emergency such as fire or flood, a child aged 16 or 17, vulnerable because of having been looked after, accommodated or fostered, because of serving in the armed forces or having been imprisoned or ceasing to occupy accommodation because of actual or threatened violence.

## **The Supported Housing Pathway**

The Supported Housing Pathway (SPH) for vulnerable 16-24-year olds currently has 227 bed spaces in a variety of locations and levels of service across the county. If the number of LAC continues to increase at the current rate<sup>6</sup> and the same proportion continue to move into the SHP, there is likely to be an additional pressure of 9 places per year. 30% more provision for Unaccompanied Asylum Seeker Children (UASC) is needed within the pathway.

The complexity of need is increasing amongst young people at risk of homelessness and using the SHP. This is outstripping current provision. There is a need for services for young people with autism/Learning Difficulties and mental health issues. Mental health support for young people in the pathway is currently directed through CAMHS and therefore only serves young people 18 or under. There is a need for mental health provision for young people up to age 25.

There is a need for additional Supported Lodging opportunities for young people either as part of the pathway or for LAC returning from university in the holidays.

A rising number of young people are entering the Adult Homeless Pathway (circa 42 during 2017/18) even though it is acknowledged that this may not offer a suitable environment for a young person.

The effectiveness of the pathway in preparing young people for independent living is hampered by the acute need for more and varied move on options. By December 2020 approximately 140 young single people will need independent accommodation. There is a particular need for early intervention in the pathway with young people falling into rent arrears as this greatly reduces their options for independent accommodation.

## **Young People in the Youth Justice Service**

There is a shortage of provision for young people leaving custody, 60% of whom are Care Leavers. Between 3 and 5 intensive foster placements are needed across the county and 10-15 supported housing places.

## **Young people in transition and other needs**

Approximately 30 young people per year with a learning and/or physical disability will need supported housing per year. Approximately 15 young wheel chair users will need adapted housing with ceiling track hoists over the next 2-5 years.

Young people with low level needs such as Asperger's, mild Learning Disability and emotional and behavioural issues are at risk of homelessness when relationships with their family break down. There is a need for a "cooling off" bed in each district and for low level supported housing for this group.

## **Availability of Data on Housing needs**

There is currently no coherent system wide recording of data on housing needs for young people or families in the County Council. Data is collected according to the requirements of Government reporting. Data for young people deemed to be "on the

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<sup>6</sup> Targets for reduction have been agreed

edge of homeless” is particularly hard to source as housing issues is not a routine area of enquiry or recording for social workers working with families. We are addressing this need through systematic recording of data sources used in this document and identifying future reporting mechanisms. The Children, Education and Families Dept. needs for housing are now collated along with housing opportunities as they become known.

# 1.Introduction Scope and Methodology

- 1.1. Youth homelessness is a growing concern with significant impact on the long-term health and wellbeing of the young people affected. However due to its complex nature it is difficult to gain a clear picture of the extent. One poll of 2,000 16-25-year olds found that one in five had to sofa surf in 2014 because they had nowhere else to go. Approximately half of these sofa surfed for over a month.<sup>7</sup> Oxfordshire has its own set of circumstances which accentuate the issue in some areas of the county.
- 1.2. The government's Troubled Families Programme has enabled holistic intervention work to be done with families experiencing many problems, particularly worklessness, debt, domestic abuse and physical and mental health problems. Housing issues are often identified as a contributing or resulting factor for families such as these, and a systematic way of recording these and of enabling routine early intervention work on housing is being established.
- 1.3. Indeed, attempts to source data for this study have highlighted the hidden nature of youth homelessness and potential homelessness. Available data has been dependent on the requirements of government reporting which change regularly, so consistency in recording over many years is hard to achieve.
- 1.4. The groups of children, young people and families considered in this needs analysis are:
  - Families for whom housing is an issue
  - Looked After Children and Children and Young People in the Residential and Edge of Care Pathway
  - Care Leavers including Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Children
  - Young people with disabilities
  - Young People involved with Youth Justice.
- 1.5. The approach taken is outlined below:
  - Outline the legal and contextual background to the situation in Oxfordshire
  - Plot pathways taken by children and young people, particularly Looked After Children.
  - Consider the interrelation with areas such as Youth Justice and Domestic Abuse
  - Identify and record the currently available data for housing needs
- 1.6. Identify trends and model future needs considering the early input from other stakeholders such as Operational teams and District Council Housing teams.
  - Identify gaps in available data
  - Draw up a sustainable mechanism for gathering data

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<sup>7</sup> *Listening to Our Future* the Health Foundation 2018  
<https://www.health.org.uk/sites/health/files/Listening%20to%20our%20future.pdf>



## 2. Legal Background

- 2.1. There is much legislation relevant to this area. The following includes some of the most relevant Acts and Government briefings and guidance.

### The Children Act 1989

- 2.2. This sets out in detail the categories of children leaving care who are entitled to support. This includes 16 and 17-year olds (later clarified under the Southwark Ruling) and young people in full time education up to the age of 25. The Act requires Local authorities to provide suitable<sup>8</sup> accommodation for relevant<sup>9</sup> children.
- 2.3. Section 17 imposes a general duty on local authorities to safeguard and promote the welfare of children who are in need<sup>10</sup> – this extends to Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Children (UASC). This was updated and expanded in the Children Act Regulations and Guidance April 2011 and again in 2014<sup>11</sup>. This states that UASC will become looked after children after being accommodated for 24 hours and are entitled to the same provision as any other looked after child.

### Children and Young Persons Act 2008

- 2.4. This amended The Children Act 1989 to establish that looked after children must not move from accommodation regulated under the Care Standards Act 2000 to other arrangements without a statutory review of their care plan. Local authorities are required to secure sufficient and appropriate accommodation for children in its care and seek to improve the stability of placements and educational achievement of young people in care or those about to leave care. A move to other arrangements could include moving to semi-independent accommodation.

### The Children (Leaving Care) Act 2000

- 2.5. This widened the duties of local authorities towards children leaving care. Local authorities must now ensure that eligible<sup>12</sup>, relevant and former

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<sup>8</sup> See Fact sheet 3, NHAS, Shelter, Citizens Advice

[https://www.nhas.org.uk/docs/3.Suitable\\_accommodation\\_-\\_what\\_does\\_it\\_mean\\_May16.pdf](https://www.nhas.org.uk/docs/3.Suitable_accommodation_-_what_does_it_mean_May16.pdf)

<sup>9</sup> A 'relevant child' is a child who is not being looked after by any local authority, but was, before last ceasing to be looked after, an eligible child, and is aged 16 or 17. It is the duty of each local authority to take reasonable steps to keep in touch with a relevant child for whom it is the responsible authority, whether he is within their area or not to appoint a personal adviser for each relevant child. If no pathway plan has already been prepared, the authority must carry out an assessment of the child's needs with a view to determining what advice, assistance and support it would be appropriate for them to provide and prepare a pathway plan for him/her.

<sup>10</sup> Children in need are defined in law as children who are aged under 18 and need local authority services to achieve or maintain a reasonable standard of health or development or need local authority services to prevent significant or further harm to health or development or are disabled.

<sup>11</sup> Dept. of Education

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/656429/UASC\\_Statutory\\_Guidance\\_2017.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/656429/UASC_Statutory_Guidance_2017.pdf)

<sup>12</sup> An 'eligible child' is one aged 16 or 17, who has been looked after by a local authority for a period (prescribed under the regulations as 13 weeks), or periods amounting in all to that period, which began after he/she reached 14 years of age and ended after he/she reached the age of 16. It is the duty of the local authority looking after an eligible child to advise, assist and befriend him/her with a view to promoting his/her welfare when they have ceased to look after him/her.

relevant children are placed in suitable<sup>13</sup> accommodation when leaving care.

## **The Southwark Ruling 2009**

- 2.6. Here the House of Lords clarified the responsibilities of children's social care services for the provision of support to homeless 16 and 17-year olds.<sup>14</sup>

## **The Children and Families Act 2014**

- 2.7. This requires a single Education and Health Care Plan (EHCP) to support children with special educational needs, and their families from birth to age 25. It also formalises "staying put" arrangements for young people in care to remain with foster families until the age of 21; and entitles young carers to a needs assessment and support.

## **Keep on Caring 2016**

- 2.8. This is a cross government strategy to transform support for young people leaving care. It describes how the State as corporate parents will support care leavers to achieve 5 key outcomes:
- Young people leaving care should be better prepared and supported to live independently
  - Improved access to education, employment and training
  - Care leavers should experience stability in their lives and feel safe and secure
  - Improved access to health and support
  - Care leavers should achieve financial stability

## **The Housing (Homeless Persons) Act 1977**

- 2.9. This act defined homelessness for the first time and placed duties on local housing departments to house people with dependent children and other vulnerable people.

## **The 1996 Housing Act**

- 2.10. This extended the concept of priority need to young people not qualifying under the Children Act 1989 to anyone under 21 who was a Looked After Child.

## **The Homelessness Act 2002**

- 2.11. This extended entitlements to rehousing to a wider group of single homeless people including care leavers and people fleeing violence. It introduced an essential strategic approach to homelessness prevention.

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<sup>13</sup> Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government, Homelessness code of guidance for Local Authorities

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/homelessness-code-of-guidance-for-local-authorities/chapter-17-suitability-of-accommodation>

<sup>14</sup> Ministry of Housing Communities & Local Government, Dept. of Education

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/705242/Provision\\_of\\_accommodation\\_for\\_16\\_and\\_17\\_year\\_olds\\_who\\_may\\_be\\_homeless.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/705242/Provision_of_accommodation_for_16_and_17_year_olds_who_may_be_homeless.pdf)

## Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 and the Duty to Refer

- 2.12. This shifts the emphasis from crisis management to early identification of homelessness and prevention.
- 2.13. New duties lie specifically in increased information provision and lengthened period of statutory support to anyone eligible who is threatened with homelessness, regardless of priority need, being intentionally homeless or having a local connection.
- 2.14. Anyone threatened with homelessness within 56 days is eligible for assistance.
- 2.15. Public and Statutory services who become aware of the threat of homelessness are obliged to make a referral to the Local Housing Authority
- 2.16. A Personal Housing Plan will be jointly created setting out a series of actions.
- 2.17. The prevention duty continues for at least 56 days.

## 3. The National Housing Scene

- 3.1. The Centre for Cities report 2018<sup>15</sup> ranks Oxford as the least affordable city, out of 62 examined, in which to buy a house.
- 3.2. The table below compares the mean house price and affordability ratio of 7 English cities including Oxford.

City	Mean House Price	Affordability Ratio House prices to annual earnings	Affordability Ranking out of 62
Derby	£162, 871	5.98	51/62
Exeter	£266,301	11.69	8/62
Hull	£111,152	5.35	60/62
Leeds	£193,701	7.18	33/62
London	£592,463	16.78	2/62
Manchester	£186,795	7.34	32/62
<b>Oxford</b>	<b>£523,150</b>	<b>17.5</b>	<b>1/62</b>

- 3.3. The picture is only slightly better in the Oxfordshire districts. The affordability of buying a house in Oxfordshire has halved since 2001. The purchase of a family home now requires a salary of 3 times the median. See chart below.<sup>16</sup>

<sup>15</sup> <http://www.centreforcities.org/city/oxford/>

<sup>16</sup> Source JSNA, ONS Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings; ONS House Price Statistics for Small Areas (rolling year to end Q1 2011 and to end Q1 2016)

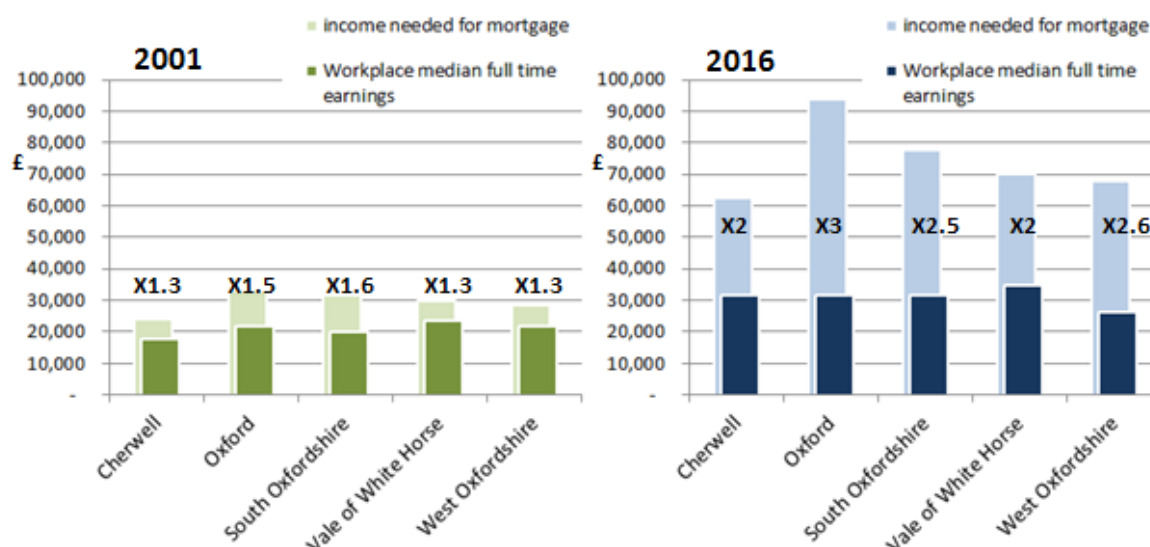


Figure 1 comparison of required income for mortgage compared to workplace median fulltime earnings

3.4. The National Housing Federation Report Home Truths highlights the acute housing crisis in the South East<sup>17</sup>. Over the region a family seeking to buy the average home requires an income of more than £82,000 to afford an 80% mortgage. In Oxfordshire this rises to £91,167. The table below shows how Oxfordshire compares with its neighbours.

County or Unitary authority	Income required to obtain a mortgage on average family home
Oxfordshire	£91,167
Milton Keynes	£65,366
Reading	£72,075
Slough	£73,023
West Berkshire	£88,215
Buckinghamshire	£103,895

## Household projections and new homes in Oxfordshire

- 3.5. 6555,000 people and 260,000 households live in Oxfordshire<sup>18</sup>
- 3.6. By 2039 the number of households is expected to rise Oxfordshire is to approximately 327,000.<sup>19</sup>
- 3.7. The Strategic Housing Market Assessment estimates 5,000 additional homes are required each year<sup>20</sup>
- 3.8. The Growth Deal announced in November 2017 secured Government investment of £215m for 100,000 affordable homes and infrastructure to be developed by 2031. This equates to an average of 7,142 affordable homes per year. It is not clear at this stage how many of these will be additional new homes. Some of this target may be achieved via a change of tenure.

<sup>17</sup> Home Truths 2017/2018

<sup>18</sup> JSNA

<sup>19</sup> Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistical-data-sets/live-tables-on-household-projections>

<sup>20</sup> SHMA [http://www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk/sites/default/files/2014-04-4\\_Final%20SHMA%20Report.pdf](http://www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk/sites/default/files/2014-04-4_Final%20SHMA%20Report.pdf)

## Current Tenure in Oxfordshire<sup>21</sup>

- 3.9. 84% of homes are privately owned and 16% are owned by public bodies (council; MoD or housing associations).
- 3.10. 3.3% of households are overcrowded.
- 3.11. Since 2010 the proportion of social housing has declined in all districts except Cherwell.
- 3.12. The spread of tenure across the county is shown below:

### Current Tenure in Oxfordshire

	Home owners	Private rental	Social rental	Shared ownership	Other
Oxfordshire	66%	19%	14%		1%
Cherwell	69%	22%	12%	1%	
Oxford City	25%	52%	23%		
West Oxfordshire	71%	17%	12%		

## The cost of renting in Oxfordshire

- 3.13. Social rents in Oxfordshire are between 10% (Cherwell) and 18% (Oxford city) above the national average.
- 3.14. The National Housing Federation cite the unaffordability of renting in Oxfordshire as reflected by the number of Housing Benefit claimants who are in employment. See table below:

	Mean monthly private sector rent 2016/17	% of housing benefit claimants in employment
<b>Oxfordshire</b>	£1,168	29%
<b>Cherwell</b>	£930	27%
<b>Oxford</b>	£1,392	30%
<b>South Oxfordshire</b>	£1,181	29%
<b>Vale</b>	£986	28%
<b>West Oxfordshire</b>	£970	29%

Figure 2 Monthly rent and percentage of benefit claimants in employment

## The Effect of Welfare Reform

- 3.15. **The lowering of the benefit cap** in November 2016, affected 618 Oxfordshire households, a sharp increase from 125 in 2015/16. The maximum levels for couples (with or without children living with them) and

<sup>21</sup> The JSNA: Strategic Housing Market Assessment and Local Social Care Records 2017 [Z:\Joint Commissioning Team\Market Development\Supported Living\Children\Strategy](#) And the Building Research Establishment (BRE) stock modelling report March 2018

single parents whose children live with them, fell from £500.00 per week to £384.62 per week. The highest impact was felt in Oxford City.

- 3.16. **Local Housing Allowance (LHA):** People under 35 are usually only entitled to a lower rate of LHA known as the Shared Accommodation Rate. This is set at the lowest 30% of broad market rents for a room in a shared house, and has been frozen since 2016.
- 3.17. The table below shows the LHA rate in 3 areas across Oxfordshire compared to the median rent for a single room in a shared house.<sup>22</sup>

**Local Housing Allowance (LHA) for single people under 35 compared to median rent**

District	LHA Per week	Median rent per week	Difference between LHA rate and median rent	% difference
Oxford City	£82.97	Oxford city £126.92	£43.95	53
Cherwell Valley	£73.53	Banbury £126.92	£53.39	73
		Bicester £135.69	£62.16	85
South Ox	£81.14	Abingdon £147.23	£66.09	81
		Didcot £110.08	£28.94	36

*Figure 3 LHA for single people under 35 compared to median rent*

- 3.18. Care Leavers are usually entitled to the 1 bed self-contained LHA rate up until the age of 22. After age 22 their entitlement drops to the single room rate. This cliff edge can result in a care leaver going into rent arrears after they turn 22.
- 3.19. If a Care Leaver is accommodated in the Supported Housing Pathway the support element of their rent is paid via Housing Benefit/Universal Credit. If the Care Leaver gains paid employment their benefit decreases on a taper according to their earnings. This can act as a disincentive to gain paid work and can also result in rent arrears if the young person fails to meet the full rent.
- 3.20. **Universal Credit.** Existing Oxfordshire benefit claimants will be transferred during 2019, so the full effect has yet to be realised. However, the Trussell Trust reports that in areas further ahead, the six-plus week waiting period for a first Universal Credit payment can lead to rent arrears and eviction as well as foodbank referrals, debt and mental health issues. The Citizens’ Advice Bureau and the foodbanks in Cherwell are already reporting these effects of UC.
- 3.21. **The removal of spare room subsidy** or “bedroom tax”<sup>23</sup> resulted in a reduction in benefit for 2053 households in Oxfordshire. By 2015/16 the number was 2154. In Cherwell District 307 were affected as of 27/02/2018. This adversely affects families already in debt who have a disabled child. It is also a barrier to reunification of families where children

<sup>22</sup> Home.co.uk [https://www.home.co.uk/for\\_rent/oxford/current\\_rents?location=oxford](https://www.home.co.uk/for_rent/oxford/current_rents?location=oxford)

<sup>23</sup> Tenants who are under occupying by one bedroom, have their benefit reduced by 14% of eligible rent, and tenants who are under occupying by two or more bedrooms have their benefit reduced by 25% of eligible rent.



have been taken into care or where a young offender receives a custodial sentence. In addition, where children are looked after their parents' accommodation can be at risk due to the child not being with them for a period. The consequences can be that they are asked to move or charged bedroom tax when they are already in poverty. Parents may also not be offered a property because children are not with them even though this may well have been a significant contributory factor to why they are now looked after.

## Increase in homelessness

- 3.22. There has been an upward trend in people presenting as homeless in Oxfordshire, but a reduction in young people accepted as homeless<sup>24</sup>. In 2015-16 there were a total of 70 people aged 16-24 accepted as homeless in Oxfordshire, the lowest recorded in the past 5 years, with no 16-17-year olds accepted.<sup>25</sup>
- 3.23. The number of families accepted as homeless and in priority need peaked in 2015/16 at 324. See table on page 24 for detail across the Districts.
- 3.24. The number of families in temporary accommodation in 2016/17 was 161. Details across the Districts are on page 25.
- 3.25. The number of rough sleepers in the county is increasing, in line with national figures. In 2015-16 the figure was 90, an increase from 70 in 2014-15. There was an overall rise of 48% between 2016-2017. For a breakdown across the Districts see table below:<sup>26</sup>

Description/ District	CDC	City	South	Vale	West	Total
Number of people estimated to be sleeping rough (Nov 16)	17	47	7	8	0	<b>79</b>
Number of people estimated to be sleeping rough (Nov 17)	9	89	2	10	7	<b>117</b>
Percentage change (Nov 16 to Nov 17)	-47%	+89%	-71%	+25%	-	<b>+48%</b>

Figure 4 Number of rough sleepers in each District in 2016 and 2017

## Vulnerable children<sup>27</sup>

- 3.26. Around 2,800 families have been identified in Oxfordshire for the second phase of the Troubled Families programme. Over half (61%) met the national criteria on worklessness, 47% met the criteria on domestic abuse and 37% were families where children need help (in need or subject to a child protection plan).
- 3.27. The Troubled Families programme does not address housing issues.

<sup>24</sup> A person is considered homeless if there is no accommodation available for them in the UK or elsewhere in which they have an interest, or a licence to occupy, or occupy under a right given to them by law, or by a court order, or it is not reasonable for them to continue to occupy that accommodation.

See definitions

<sup>25</sup> Source Trailblazer project

<sup>26</sup> Source Oxford City Council

<sup>27</sup> JSNA 2018 <http://insight.oxfordshire.gov.uk/cms/joint-strategic-needs-assessment>

- 3.28. Areas of Banbury and Oxford City appear in the top quintile for England of records for domestic violence notifications and social care referrals.
- 3.29. Areas of Oxford City, South, Vale and West all appear in the top quintile for referrals to CAMHS. See Appendix 1

## 4. National picture for Looked After Children

- 4.1. The number of Looked After Children (LAC) rose in England by 23% between March 2008 and March 2017.<sup>28</sup> There was an increase of 3% during the year 2016/17. This was due both to an increase in the number of children starting to be looked after, and a decrease in those ceasing to be looked after.
- 4.2. The number of Looked After Children aged 16 and over has risen sharply since 2013. This is likely to reflect the increase in arrivals of unaccompanied asylum seeker children over the same period. See chart below

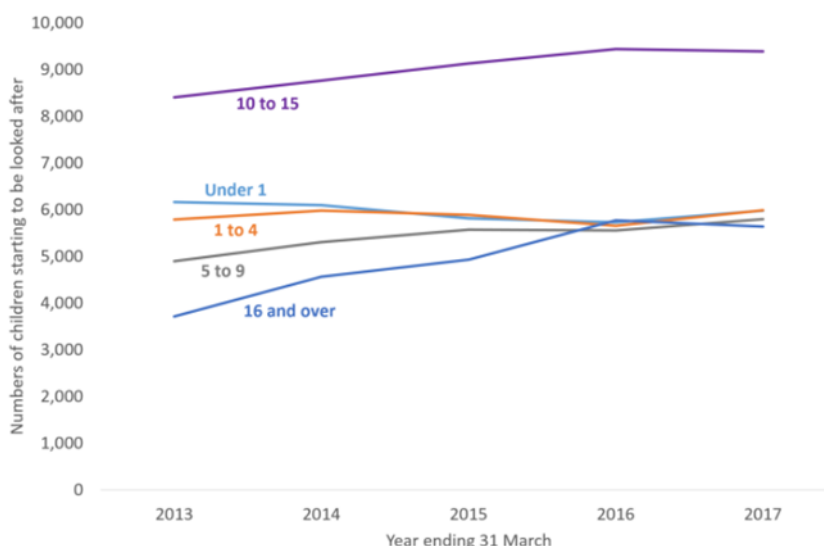


Figure 5 Looked After Children by Age in England

### Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Children

- 4.3. The number of these children has been rising steeply on a national level since a trough in 2013 when they accounted for approximately 8% of LAC. In 2017 UASC accounted for 18% of LAC.

### Suitable Accommodation

- 4.4. The proportion of care leavers in suitable accommodation<sup>29</sup> rose between 2015 to 2017 from 81% to 83%. The highest proportion (35%) were in independent living. See diagram below<sup>30</sup>

<sup>28</sup> Source Department of Education SFR50/2017, 28 September 2017  
[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/664995/SFR50\\_2017-Children\\_looked\\_after\\_in\\_England.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/664995/SFR50_2017-Children_looked_after_in_England.pdf)

<sup>29</sup> As defined by Section 206 of the Housing Act 1996



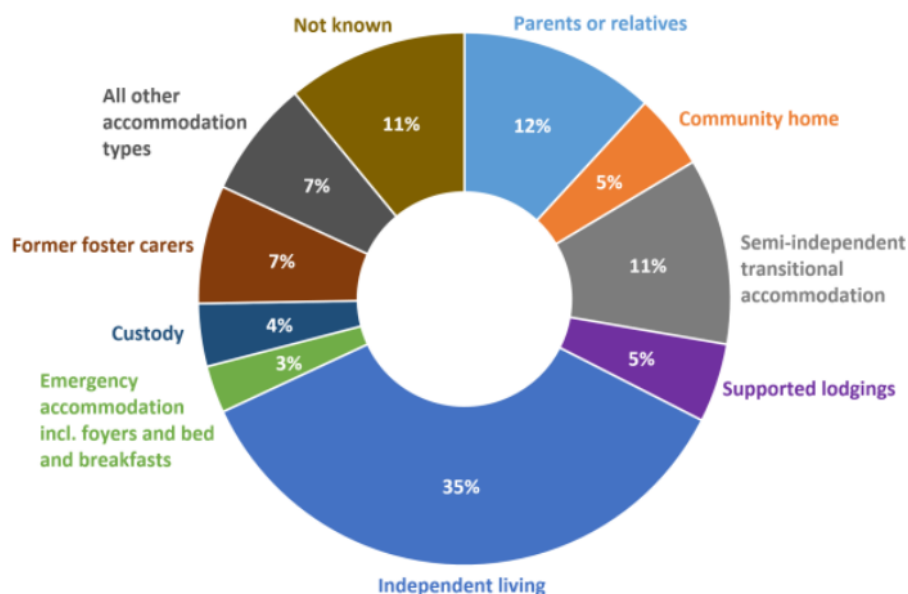


Figure 6 Types of suitable accommodation for Care Leavers aged 19-21 in England in 2017

## 5.Children who receive services in Oxfordshire

### Looked After Children

- 5.1. The number of Looked After Children (LAC) in Oxfordshire increased by 84% from 415 in 2013 to 765 as at 28/10/2018.
- 5.2. In 2013 Oxfordshire had the 6th lowest rate of Looked After Children in England, but is now moving into line with the national picture.<sup>31</sup> See chart below:

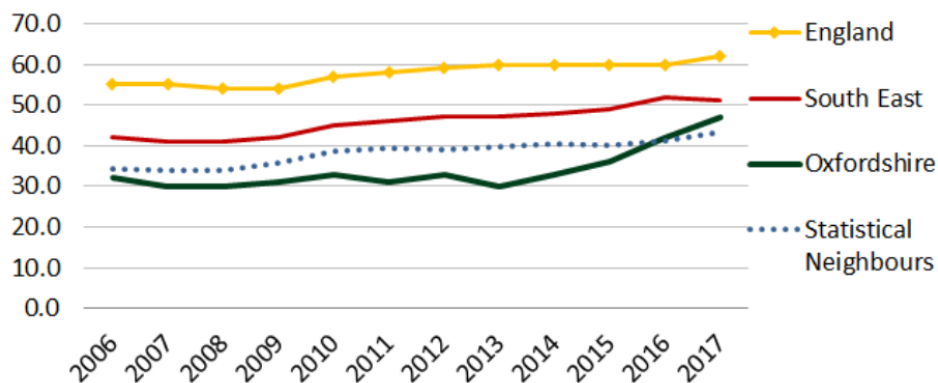


Figure 7 Rates of Looked After Children per 10,000 children

- 5.3. Those aged 10-15 years are the largest group with a growth from 160 in 2013 to 285 in 2017
- 5.4. **The number of LAC aged 16+ (the age when post GCSE children can move into the Supported Housing Pathway) has risen**

<sup>30</sup> Source Dept. for Education as above

<sup>31</sup> Oxfordshire Market Position Statement 2018. Positive Outcomes for Children and Young People in residential and fostering placements. Source: Department for Education SFR50/2017

correspondingly from 100 in 2013 to 187 in 2017. (This represents an average growth of 22 or 16.5% per year for 4 years)

5.5. The growth in numbers of LAC of all ages is illustrated in the chart below:

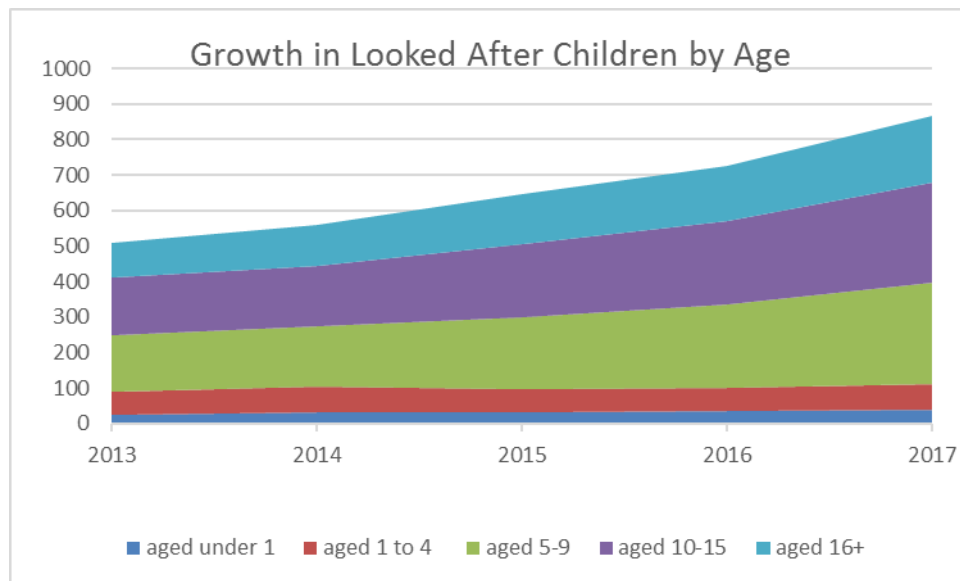


Figure 8 Increase in number of Looked After Children by Age

## Entering and Leaving Care

5.6. As in England, the increase in the number of looked after children in Oxfordshire is caused by the rise in children entering care in addition to a decrease in those leaving.

5.7. Each year since 2013 the number of children entering care has exceeded the number of children leaving care;

5.8. In 2017, 350 children entered care and 285 ceased to be looked after meaning an additional 35 children in care over the year.

## Care Leavers and Keep on Caring

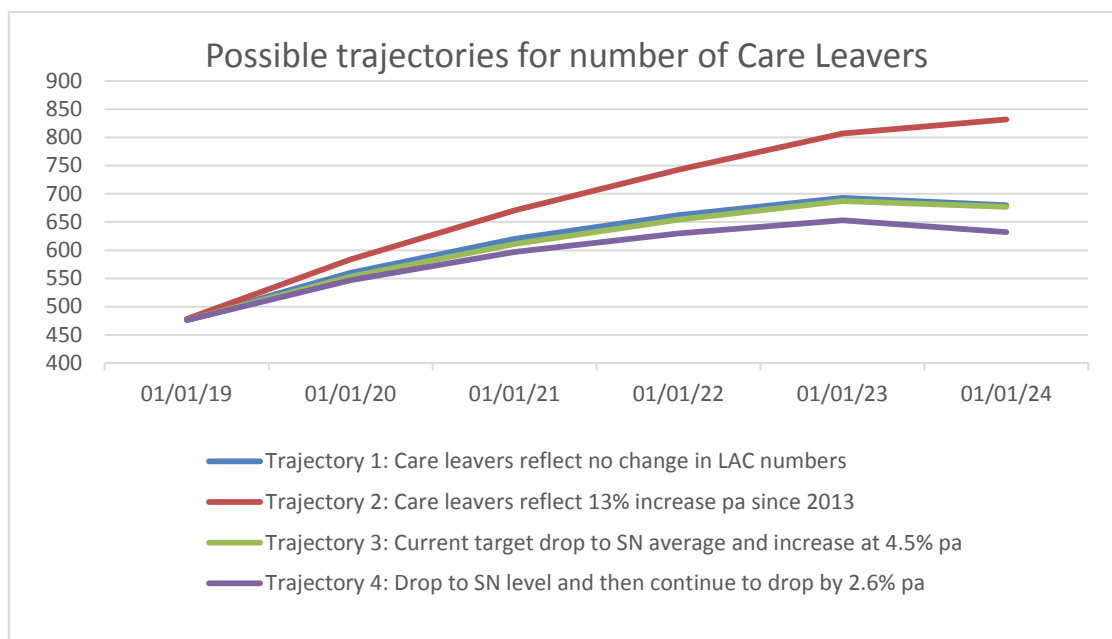
5.9. The increase in the number of LAC naturally follows through to an increase in the number of Care Leavers.

5.10. In addition, the “Keep on Caring” guidelines place an obligation on Social Services Departments to maintain involvement with Care Leavers up to age 25. This includes support to live independently where required.

5.11. Taking this into account we can make predictions regarding our number of future Care Leavers according to various scenarios.

5.12. The graph and table below plots the trajectory of Care Leaver numbers under the following circumstances.

- **Trajectory 1** assumes that the number of LAC does not change in the next six years. (NB the number of Care Leavers will continue to increase due to the current age structure of the present cohort)
- **Trajectory 2** assumes that the overall increase in LAC continues to rise at our current level of 13% pa
- **Trajectory 3** assumes that we meet our target to reduce LAC numbers to that of our statistical neighbours and then maintain the same rate of growth which is 4.5% pa
- **Trajectory 4** assumes we reduce LAC number by 2.6% pa and continue to reduce at this rate going forward.



5.13. Details of figures for each year according to each trajectory are below

Possible Care Leaver Trajectories						
	01/04/19	01/04/20	01/04/21	01/04/22	01/04/23	01/04/24
<b>T1: Care leavers reflect no change in LAC numbers</b>	477	560	620	662	693	680
<b>T2: Care leavers reflect 13% increase pa since 2013</b>	478	584	671	743	807	832
<b>T3: Current target drop to SN average and increase at 4.5% pa</b>	476	553	611	654	687	677
<b>T4: Drop to SN level and then continue to drop by 2.6% pa</b>	476	547	597	630	653	632

5.14. It will be noted that under each scenario the number of Care Leavers is predicted to rise until 2023.

## Children with Disabilities in Transition

5.15. There are 901 young people aged 14-17 on the Disability Register <sup>32</sup>

5.16. 69% of these young people are male and 31% female

<sup>32</sup> The Disability Register is compiled from data from families accessing Short Breaks, Social Care children cases, and MAX cards data (a discount card for SEN or disabled child)

- 5.17. The needs of these young people are generally too high to be accommodated on the SHP
- 5.18. Some will require supported accommodation from age 18 onwards.
- 5.19. Anecdotal evidence suggests that numbers applying for independent housing is artificially low due to the limited availability of supported living accommodation in the county.
- 5.20. **Anecdotal evidence also suggests that approximately 30 young people per year need housing at age 18 and the figure increases with the age of the young person.**
- 5.21. This includes:
- **9 young people** aged between 16 and 19 in residential school placements.
  - **one young person** aged 16-18 placed by an Independent Fostering Agency.
  - **3 young people** aged 16-18 in day or overnight placements.
- 5.22. The table below gives the number of young people on the Disability Register in each district and their age as at 31/03/2018

District Area (14 to 17)	14 years	15 years	16 years	17 years	Total
Cherwell	44	49	37	41	171
Oxford City	58	65	51	38	212
South Oxfordshire	44	41	35	36	156
Vale of White Horse	45	45	44	56	190
West Oxfordshire	37	40	28	28	133
Out of County	4	4	8	6	22
No postcode record	6	5	2	4	17
<b>Total</b>	<b>238</b>	<b>249</b>	<b>205</b>	<b>209</b>	<b>901</b>

- 5.23. The percentage across the districts (excluding those out of county and not known) is Cherwell 20%; City 25% South Oxon 18%, Vale of White Horse 22% and West 15%
- 5.24. Applying the above percentages to the figure of 30 per year suggests the following supported housing will be required over the next 4-6 years:

District	Percentage of disabled children on the Disabled Register	Number of disabled young people in need of housing at age 18 or above
Cherwell	20%	6
City	25%	8
South Oxfordshire	18%	5
Vale of the White Horse	22%	7
West Oxfordshire	15%	4
<b>Total</b>		<b>30</b>

- 5.25. Further investigation is needed to ascertain more specific needs.
- 5.26. Data on YP age 18 and above is held on spreadsheets by the Transition teams in each locality in Adult Social Care.<sup>33</sup>

<sup>33</sup> Source Transition spreadsheet

- 5.27. There are 248 recorded as living in the city, 135 in the North and 121 in the South. This makes a total of 504.
- 5.28. However current or future housing needs are not recorded in an easily identifiable way.

### Physical disability as primary need

- 5.29. There are 47 young people county-wide aged 14-17 with a physical disability as the primary need. The table below shows the spread across the Districts.

District Area (14 to 17 PD)	14 years	15 years	16 years	17 years	Total
Cherwell	6	5	1	2	14
Oxford City	2	2	5		9
South Oxfordshire	3	3		2	8
Vale of White Horse	4	2	2	2	10
West Oxfordshire	3		3		6
<b>Total</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>47</b>

- 5.30. There are 31 wheelchair users including those with Learning Disability or Physical Disability as a primary need. This equates to an average of 7 or 8 per year.
- 5.31. There are currently 15 young people aged 16 and over who use slings for leaving their wheelchair. This indicates a need for properties with ceiling track hoists.<sup>34</sup>
- 5.32. These young people are currently located as shown in the table below:

District	Number of YP requiring property with ceiling track hoist over next 2-5 years
South and Vale	2
Cherwell and West Oxfordshire	4
City	9
<b>Total</b>	<b>15</b>

### Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Children (UASC)

- 5.33. UASC are given special provision for the first six months after their arrival. Following that, depending on their immigration status, they join the main cohort of LAC and subsequently join the Supported Housing Pathway.
- 5.34. The number of arrivals have fluctuated year by year. During 2017/18 there were 42.<sup>35</sup>

<sup>34</sup> Source: Integrated Therapy Service

<sup>35</sup> Source OCC Performance Team

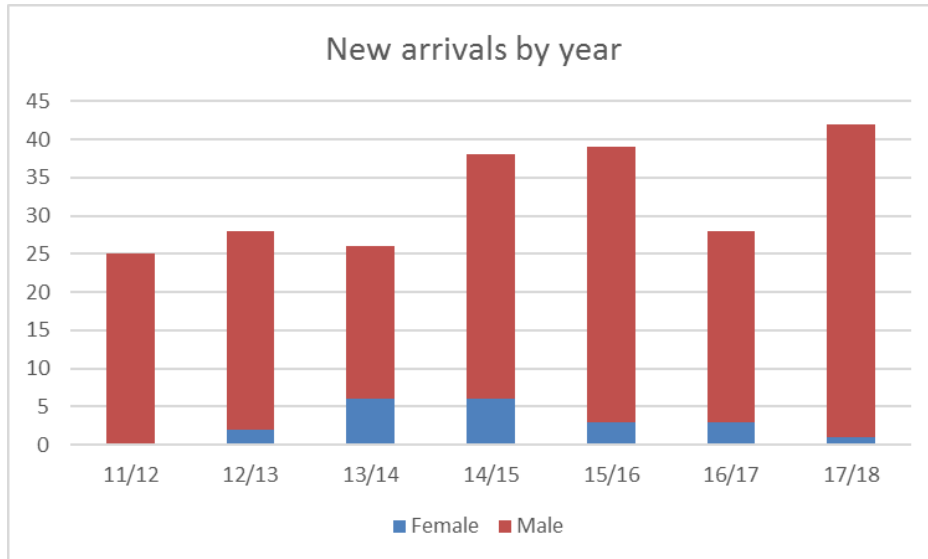


Figure 9 Number of UASC arrivals since 2011/12

5.35. The assessed age of the majority of UASC is between 15 and 17. See below for the spread of ages for 2017/18.<sup>36</sup>

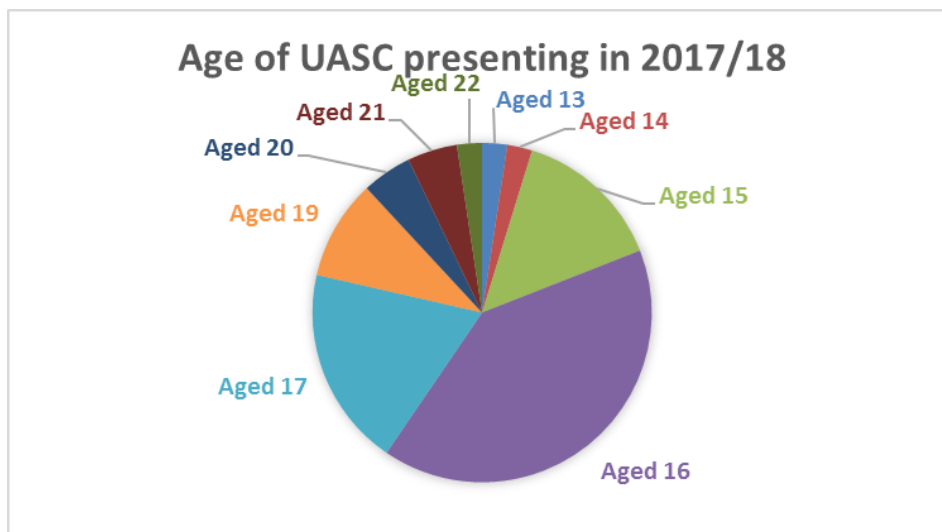


Figure 10 Age of UASC arrivals in 2017/18

5.36. 70% of those arriving have stable placements within Oxfordshire (89% initial placements are within the county), 7% are with neighbouring authorities and 23% are with other authorities.

5.37. Not only is a young person's trauma increased by a further journey and change of location, but monitoring out of county placements is disproportionately heavy on staff resources.

5.38. The highest group of arrivals in 2017/18 were from Albania. See below breakdown of nationalities.<sup>37</sup>

5.39. Young people from Albania are unlikely to be granted leave to remain and are likely to go underground.

<sup>36</sup> Source OCC Performance Team

<sup>37</sup> As above

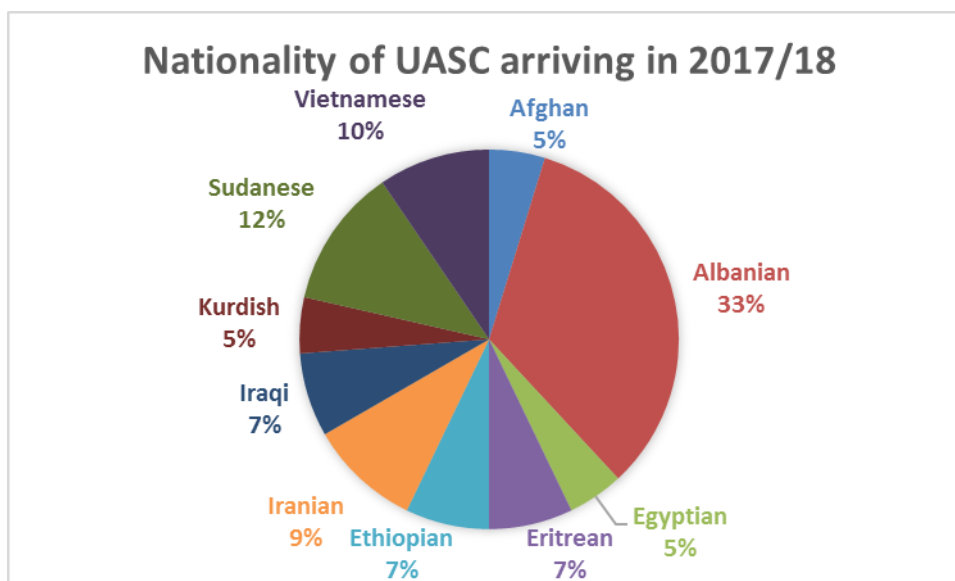


Figure 11 Nationality of UASC arriving in 2017/18

- 5.40. The average number of UASC who are Looked After throughout 2017/18 was 57. 17 of these were accommodated out of county.
- 5.41. **However, 2018/19 has so far seen a sharp rise in arrivals. The current number of UASC accommodated as at 26 October 2018 is 70.**
- 5.42. During 2018/19 we have also been the subject of legal challenges relating to 7 UASC held in police cells. A preliminary age assessment has placed these young people as over 16 but we are being challenged to provide them with accommodation whilst a full assessment takes place.

### National Transfer Scheme for UASC

- 5.43. This voluntary protocol brought in by the Dept. of Education, seeks to enable the safe transfer of UASCs from one authority, the entry authority, to a receiving authority.
- 5.44. It is intended to ensure a more even distribution of UASC among participating authorities, and to enable UASC to access the support services they need.
- 5.45. **Under this scheme Oxfordshire could be asked to take on another 30 UASC.**

### Homeless Young People

- 5.46. The Trailblazer Project based at the City Council and working countywide, recorded the following numbers of homeless 16-24-year olds. See table below.

Young homeless 16-24 accepted by Districts						
	South	Vale	Oxford	Cherwell	West	Total
2016/17	10	3	26	16	21	76
2017/18	5	5	20	17	27	74

- 5.47. Any young person under 18 is referred to the County Council Children's Services and not housed directly by the Districts.
- 5.48. Of those accepted as homeless in Oxford City and Cherwell during 2017/18, the following reasons for loss of settled home were recorded.

<b>Reason for losing settled home</b>	<b>Oxford</b>	<b>Cherwell</b>
Parents no longer able to accommodate	8	10
Other relatives or friends no longer willing or able to accommodate	4	1
Non-violent breakdown of relationship with partner	4	2
Violent breakdown of relationship with partner	0	1
Harassment	1	0
Rent arrears	1	1
Loss of private sector/assured short term tenancy	2	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>16</b>

- 5.49. Records are not currently kept on applications which are not accepted as homeless. However, with the introduction of the Homeless Reduction Act more data will become available on people deemed to be on the edge of homelessness.
- 5.50. Figures collected from adult homeless provision show a sharp decline in the number 18-24-year olds accepted as homeless between 2013/14 and 2015/16. This figure now appears to be rising again. See table below: <sup>38</sup>

<b>Year</b>	<b>Number Accepted County wide</b>
2011/12	122
2012/13	122
2013/14	110
2014/15	95
2015/16	70
2016/17	76

- 5.51. The situation across the individual districts is shown below.

<sup>38</sup> The 2016-17 Basket of Housing Indicators report to the Health Improvement Board



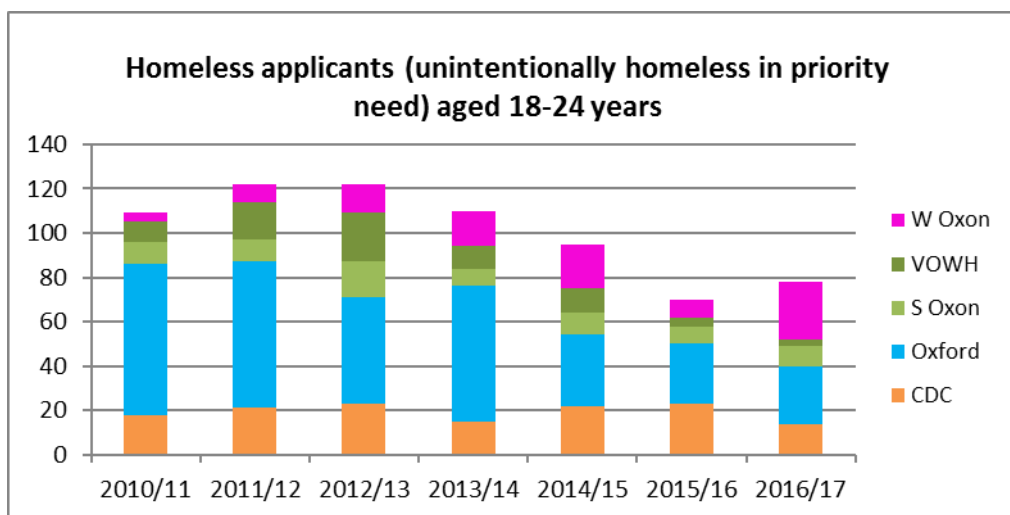


Figure 12 Young applicants accepted as homeless from 2010 to 2017

5.52. New reporting required by the Homeless Reduction Act will enable figures to be collected on how many of the approaches and acceptances of duty relate to single people, young families etc.

### Young People on the Adult Homeless Pathway

5.53. The percentage of young people on the Adult Homeless pathway went up significantly between 2015/16 and 2016/17 and remained high.<sup>39</sup> See table below.

Age Group	2015-16		2016-17		2017-18 (6 months)	
	Count	Percent of total	Count	Percent of total	Count	Percent of total
18 to 24	2	1.7%	40	8.1%	21	13.5%

5.54. Anecdotally it is acknowledged that while the Adult pathway is not a suitable place for vulnerable young people, placements there are made when there is no alternative for instance when a young person has been evicted from the Young People’s Supported Housing Pathway.

### Homeless families and new legislation

5.55. The Homelessness Reduction Act places a duty on Local Authorities to support families who are homeless, or likely to be homeless within 56 days, whether or not they may later be regarded as intentionally homeless or not in priority need.

5.56. Before this new legislation the number of families provided with housing across the county had begun to fall - from 324 in 2015/16 to 304 in 2017/18.

5.57. See table below for distribution through the districts.<sup>40</sup>

<sup>39</sup> OCC report item 7 <Z:\Joint Commissioning Team\Market Development\Supported Living\Children\Adults>

<sup>40</sup> The 2016-17 Basket of Housing Indicators report to the Health Improvement Board. 2017-2018 data not available.

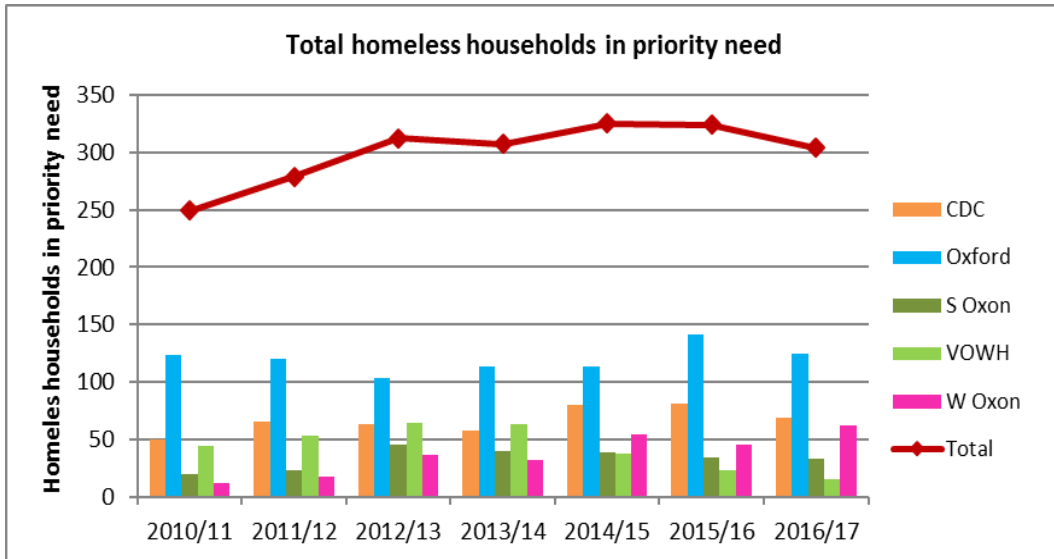


Figure 13 Total households accepted as unintentionally homeless and in priority need

5.58. There were 161 households in temporary accommodation at the end of 2016/17, a reduction of 29 on the previous year. This appears to be a downward trend although the number in Cherwell has risen over the last 4 years. See table below.

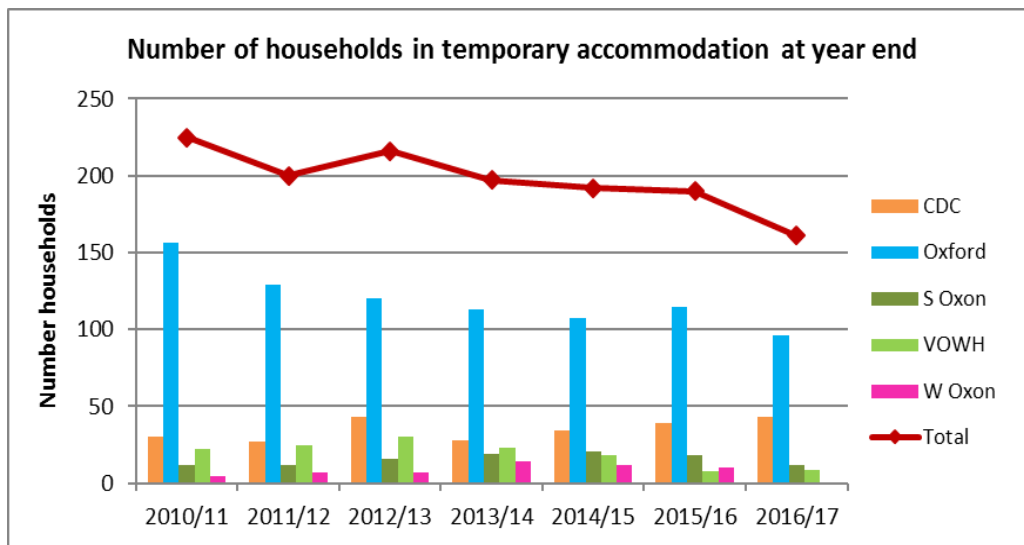


Figure 14 Households in temporary accommodation

- 5.59. Under the new legislation issues of priority need, whether a person or family are deemed to have made themselves intentionally homeless, and if they have a local connection are not considered until the point of housing allocation.
- 5.60. If a family has been deemed intentionally homeless the local authority duties towards them are reduced. They may be suspended from the housing register until they can demonstrate that they have addressed the issues which caused them to become intentionally homeless. The local authority does however still have a duty to offer advice to such families.
- 5.61. All decisions they make in this regard concerning families with children under the age of 18 years will continue to be forwarded to the CEF team.

5.62. During 2017 the following referrals were made by the City and Districts<sup>41</sup>.

<b>Reason for Referral</b>	<b>City</b>	<b>North</b>	<b>South/West</b>	<b>Countywide</b>
Families who have been given Intentionally Homeless Decisions <sup>42</sup>	36	28	1	65
Families who the District council have discharged their duty towards <sup>43</sup>	16			16
Families who have been assessed as not eligible for support from the housing department <sup>44</sup>	2			2
<b>Total</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>83</b>

5.63. These families were offered advice and information on finding their own properties and contact details for support agencies.

5.64. Having gone through this procedure in 2017/18, 17 families remained unable to support themselves or access support from family or friends. They were offered direct support by CEF.

5.65. This support involved either temporary accommodation in a hotel; and/or financial support to pay rent in advance or a deposit to secure private rented accommodation.

5.66. During 2017/18 a total of **£206,092.67** was spent on securing accommodation for the 17 families. The total spent on 13 families during 2018/19 from April to September was **£95,069.22**.

5.67. The highest spend on one family during 2017/18 was **£20,210.00**

5.68. In addition, 8 families with No Recourse to Public Funds<sup>45</sup> have been housed in private rented accommodation.

5.69. Further breakdown of this is given below

<b>Summary of expenditure on homeless families 2017/18</b>	
Temporary Accommodation Costs	£89,605
Deposits provided	£2,863
Rent in Advance provided	£1,225
Rent for families with No Recourse to Public Funds	£112,400
<b>Total</b>	<b>£206,093</b>

<sup>41</sup> OCC CEF Kevin Mannion's team

<sup>42</sup> Families are regarded as intentionally homeless if they fall into rent arrears, or if they or a member of their household is guilty of antisocial behaviour. Or if they have left or been offered and refused a suitable property.

<sup>43</sup> The district council has discharged its duty if they have offered a suitable property which has been refused.

<sup>44</sup> Families not eligible for support or No Recourse to Public Funds (NRPF) are those subject to immigration control. This affects a range of benefits including HB and eligibility to apply for local authority housing.

<sup>45</sup> **No recourse to public funds (NRPF)** is a condition imposed on someone due to their immigration status. The "public funds" include certain Welfare Benefits and access to social housing. However, a person with NRPF may be able to access help from Social Services.

- 5.70. Once families come to the attention of the CEF team at the County Council their options are likely to be worse than those offered by the District Council, with accommodation out of county often being the only offer.
- 5.71. Early conversations are needed between Housing Officers and Social Workers in order where possible to pre-empt a negative decision by a District Council.
- 5.72. The Homelessness Reduction Act's emphasis on prevention of homelessness underlines this need for joint working to reduce the risk of a repetitive cycle.
- 5.73. The introduction of the HRA and the Duty to Refer has highlighted the need for training for operational teams involved with families for whom housing may become an issue.
- 5.74. Increased information is now available and a programme of training is planned.

## **6. Current Service Provision for Looked after Children and Young People in Oxfordshire**

- 6.1. The main types of provision for Looked After Children in the county are:
  - Foster care (accounts for 70% of LAC)
    - OCC foster carers
    - Independent Fostering Agency carers
    - Kinship foster carers
- 6.2. Children homes
  - OCC children's homes
  - Independent children's homes, some of which are out of County

### **Foster Care**

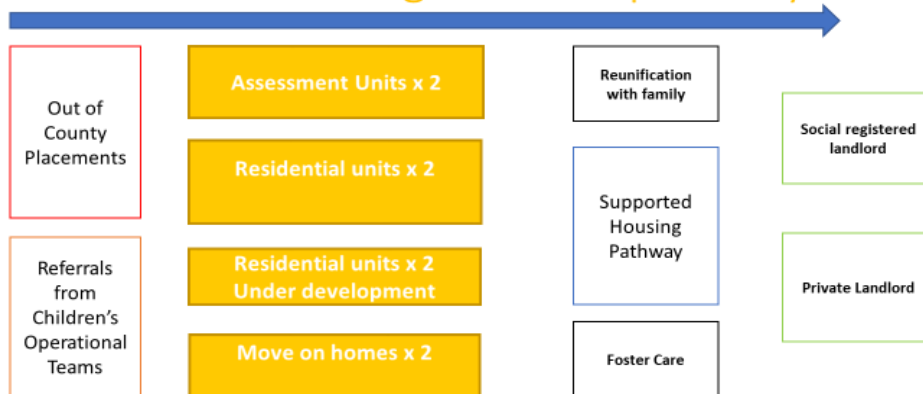
- 6.3. Approximately 70% of our LAC are in foster placements (480 placements)
- 6.4. The number of newly approved unrelated Local Authority foster carers has been consistent over the last 6 years
- 6.5. The number of placements with kinship foster carers has increased by 143% between 2013 and 2018
- 6.6. The number of placements with Independent Fostering agencies has increased by 139% between 2013 and 2018
- 6.7. There is an urgent need to approve more Local Authority foster carers.
- 6.8. Lack of suitable housing can delay the approval of a family to provide foster care. At the same time a suitable sized house cannot be allocated to a family until they have been approved as foster carers.
- 6.9. Protocols are being drafted to allow speedier approval of potential foster carers for housing allocation by the District Councils

### **Residential and Edge of Care Service**

- 6.10. This service offers preventative interventions to families, schools and other agencies where a young person is deemed to be at risk of coming into care.
- 6.11. The service is supported by several subsidiary services offering support either directly to the CYP or to agencies working with them.

- 6.12. 32 places are currently available in OCC run provisions with a further 49 places offered in 7 homes run by a variety of private providers.
- 6.13. Two move on homes allow some LAC currently out of county to come back to Oxfordshire as part of their pathway of support.
- 6.14. The diagram below illustrates the current REOC provision with the expected direction of travel.
- 6.15. The 2018 Review of the REOC service highlighted a shortage in the availability of safe accommodation for vulnerable young people moving on from local authority care.<sup>46</sup>

## Residential and Edge of Care pathway



## Number of Looked After Children Out of County

- 6.16. 262 children and young people are looked after out of county.
- 6.17. 95 of them are aged 15-17.
- 6.18. Of these 18 are expected to need a place in the Supported Housing pathway over the next two years.

## Secure Accommodation

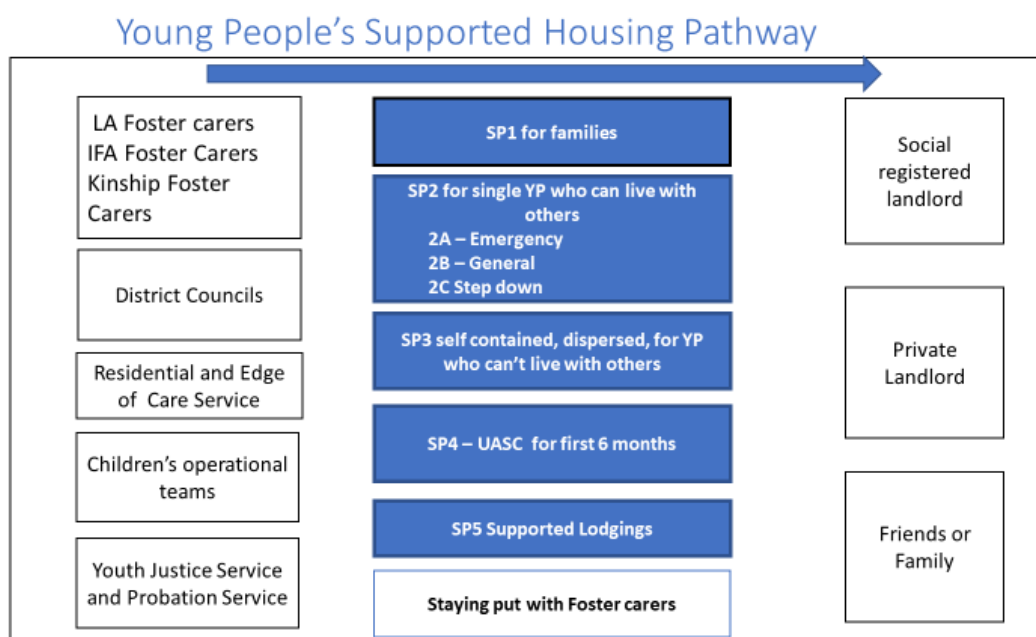
- 6.19. There is a national and local shortage of welfare secure children's home placements. As of 31 December 2017, Oxfordshire had 3 children on a waiting list for a welfare secure bed alongside a national waiting list of 26.

## 7. Current provision for young people aged 16-24 Supported Housing Pathway

- 7.1. The Young People's Supported Housing (YPSH) Pathway is delivered in partnership with the five District Councils in Oxfordshire.
- 7.2. The County Council commissions housing and support services for homeless young people who need accommodation and guidance to reach independence. 227 units of accommodation are provided across the County by 5 providers. A small number of supported lodging units (8) are provided internally and form part of the pathway provision

<sup>46</sup> Evidenced by telephone interviews and stakeholder surveys.

- 7.3. The pathway consists of 5 main types of provision. (see 7.6 for detail).  
 7.4. Young people can enter the pathway from age 16 (post GCSE).  
 7.5. The diagram below depicts the pathway and expected direction of travel.



- 7.6. More detail on the location and capacity of each type of provision is given in the table below.

Service Package	Type of accommodation and main user groups	Location and Number of units					
		C'well	West	City	South	Vale	Total
<b>SP 1</b>	For young parents: self-contained flats with outreach and onsite support	17	5	17	2	2	43
<b>SP2</b>	Shared accommodation for single young people with onsite or outreach support						
2A	Emergency: up to 2 weeks	1	2	1	1	1	6
2B	General	24	19	33	9	15	100
2C	Step Down	10	6	16	3	5	40
<b>SP3</b>	For single young people not able to live with others: includes those in transition. Has outreach support and 24-hour cover	3	2	8	1	2	16
<b>SP4</b>	For UASC needing intensive assessment, intervention and progression						15
<b>SP5</b>	Supported Lodgings						8
<b>Total</b>							<b>227</b>

## Referrals onto the Supported Housing Pathway

7.7. During 2017/18 326 referrals were received onto the pathway<sup>47</sup>.

Referral Agency	Area	Number of YP referred
LAC Team	North	53
LAC Team	City	99
LAC Team	South	33
<b>Total</b>		<b>185</b>
CSC team	North	35
CSC team	City	15
CSC team	Kingfisher	2
CSC team	South	19
<b>Total</b>		<b>71</b>
<b>District Councils</b>		
Cherwell DC		15
City Council		11
West DC		17
South & Vale		11
<b>Total</b>		<b>54</b>
<b>Other Agencies</b>		
By probation		4
Oxfordshire mind		1
Adult MHT and Warneford Hospital		6
Adult SC		2
Out of county		3
<b>Total</b>		<b>16</b>
<b>Total referrals</b>		<b>326</b>

7.8. Of these 270 were accepted<sup>48</sup>

7.9. 56 were declined

7.10. 3 were accepted on a subsequent referral

Reasons given why referrals were declined are tabled below

Referrals declined	Number
By provider because client not deemed suitable	11
By provider due to lack of capacity	4
By the young person due to location offered	4
By the young person for no stated reason	22
Referral declined for other reasons	3
No reason recorded	12
<b>Total</b>	<b>56</b>

7.11. 39 allocations were made on the same day

<sup>47</sup> This does not include referrals from pathway providers as it is assumed these are referrals for a move from within the pathway

<sup>48</sup> Source = Placement Team

- 7.12. The requested moving in date ranged from 1 week (131 referrals) to 6 months (30 referrals)
- 7.13. Of those requesting a moving in date of within 1 week, 28 (21%) waited longer than one week. The longest wait in this group was 39 days
- 7.14. Of those requesting a move in date of within 1 month, 10 (33%) waited longer than 1 month.
- 7.15. There were no waits longer than 3 months.
- 7.16. It is not recorded where YP are living while they wait.
- 7.17. A desk top review of the SHP was undertaken and the Summary and Conclusions are below.

### **Summary and Conclusions from Supported Housing Pathway Review**

- 7.18. There appears to be a shortage of capacity in the Pathway. See above for waits in allocation of places.
- 7.19. The increasing number of Looked After Children will create an additional pressure of approximately 9 places each year.
- 7.20. Young people entering the pathway have increasingly complex needs. These include mental health and needs relating to learning disability/autistic spectrum disorder (ASD).
- 7.21. Mental health support currently comes from Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS) and is only available for pathway providers in relation to young people under 18.
- 7.22. Consistent mental health provision is needed for all young people in the pathway, either by the referring agency or hospital, or from another source.
- 7.23. Young people with learning disability/ASD usually come from our cohort of care leavers.
- 7.24. Large provisions such as foyers can exacerbate the difficulties a young person with learning disabilities or ASD experiences
- 7.25. Usage of pathway places appears high, with some temporary exceptions.
- 7.26. Throughput is low and young people remain in the pathway until they are deemed ready or able to move on.
- 7.27. This limits the capacity of the pathway and does not provide an incentive for providers and other stakeholders to provide intensive support to help a YP achieve greater independence.
- 7.28. Success in moving YP to greater independence has fallen over the life of the contract and particularly in Q3 of 2017/18.
- 7.29. This may be related to the reported increasing complexity of need of YP entering the pathway.
- 7.30. 17 YP left the Pathway during 2017/18 into unsuitable accommodation. This highlights the need for more move on options and better preparation for move on while YP are in the pathway.
- 7.31. The biggest group (33) went into Social Registered Housing.
- 7.32. The messages from other stakeholders (operational colleagues and colleagues from the City and District Councils) tell a consistent story:
  - There is a need for provision for YP with lower support needs such as Asperger's, ADHD and behavioural issues



- There is a need for a “cooling off” bed in each district on the pathway for young people in the above group who have been asked to leave the family home.
- Supported Lodgings often provide an effective option
- There is a shortage of suitable move on accommodation to assist greater throughput on the pathway
- There is a need to better manage rent arrears while on the pathway to enable better move on options.
- Safety of a vulnerable young person on the pathway is a concern – young women and UASC particularly.
- Better preparation of young people for the reality of available accommodation is needed as well as independent living skills. They should be encouraged to look for rooms in shared houses rather than self-contained flats.

7.33. For the full review please see Appendix 2

## Domestic Abuse

- 7.34. National research has revealed that most high-risk victims of interpersonal violence are in their 20s or 30s with the highest number being under 25<sup>49</sup>
- 7.35. This is borne out in Oxfordshire where the biggest increase in victims of domestic abuse was in the age group 18-24.<sup>50</sup>
- 7.36. Supported housing providers report struggling to keep young people safe even in a staffed environment.
- 7.37. Specialist support is required for Pathway providers to address this issue

## Issues with moving on from the Supported Housing Pathway

- 7.38. Young People have unrealistic expectations. A self-contained flat is not realistic option for a young person claiming Housing Benefit/Universal Credit.
- 7.39. They should be encouraged to look for a room within a shared house
- 7.40. There is an acute shortage of one-bedroom accommodation.
- 7.41. There is also a shortage of this type of HMO (house of multiple occupancy) accommodation
- 7.42. Young people falling into rent arrears of over 8 weeks while on the pathway will not be accepted by Registered Social Landlords.
- 7.43. Pathway providers often do not inform social workers working with the young people that they are falling into rent arrears in a timely manner for social work input.

## Youth Justice Service

- 7.44. This service works with children and young people aged 10 – 18.
- 7.45. Young offenders over 18 are referred to the Probation Service, unless subject to an existing Referral Order or a Detention and Training Order.
- 7.46. All young people involved with the Youth Justice Service (YJS) have a current Risk Assessment. Those assessed as presenting a high or very high risk of serious harm, or a high or very high vulnerability, are referred to the YJS Multi Agency Risk Panel which sits monthly.

<sup>49</sup> Walby, S. and Allen, J. (2004), Domestic violence, sexual assault and stalking: Findings from the British Crime Survey. London: Home Office.

<sup>50</sup> JSNA 2018

- 7.47. Government Guidance April 2018 stresses the need for forward planning for young people leaving custody to be adequately accommodated.
- 7.48. Approximately 60% of young people in the YJS are Looked After.
- 7.49. Approximately 25% of those who are not LAC are assessed as living in unsuitable accommodation.
- 7.50. This can include custodial placement and in some cases, those living with parents, where the accommodation is detrimental to the young person's safety and wellbeing.
- 7.51. Lack of suitable accommodation greatly increases the risk in a young person re-offending.
- 7.52. Approximately 10-15 LAC per year are at risk of being put on remand or of receiving a custodial sentence. They require a high level of support due to their challenging behaviour.
- 7.53. They are referred into the Supported Housing Pathway, but this is often not deemed suitable due to the risk they pose to others within the pathway.
- 7.54. Approximately three of these per year would avoid a custodial sentence if an intensive fostering placement were available. This would give the sentencing court confidence that the risk posed by these young people was being managed by a high level of supervision and support.

### Suitability of Care Leaver Accommodation

- 7.55. At the latest snapshot, 88% of Oxfordshire's Care Leavers moved into Suitable accommodation. By 2016/17 we were broadly in line with our statistical neighbours and other authorities in the South-East region having been below from 2013 - 2016. For comparison over the last five years see graph below.<sup>51</sup>

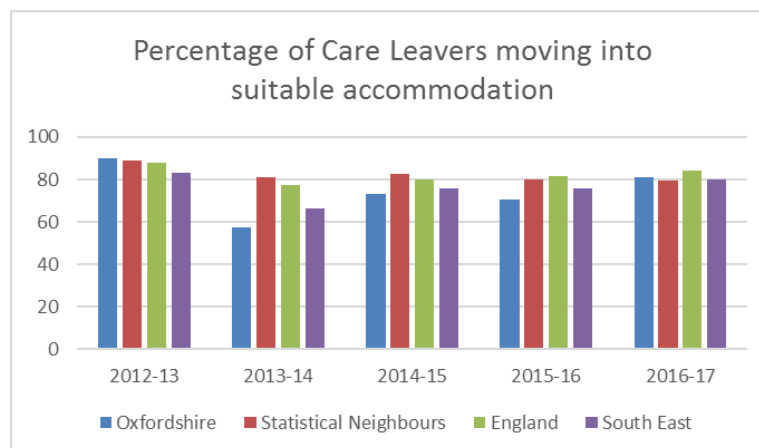


Figure 15 Oxfordshire Care Leavers in suitable accommodation in national context

- 7.56. The table below shows the current accommodation for children and young people who are currently Eligible, Relevant or Former Relevant. (see Footnote 7 for definitions) NB this excludes those aged 16-18 in foster care.
- 7.57. This shows that in 2018 107 Care Leavers out of 282 (34%) moved into the Supported Housing Pathway.

<sup>51</sup> Source Performance Team

7.58. Others moved into various kinds of suitable accommodation (see below) and 35 (11%) are in unsuitable accommodation.

### Care Leaver Accommodation June 2018

Type of Accommodation	Suitable	No of YP people in suitable accommodation	No of YP in unsuitable accommodation	No of YP in SHP	Which District
With parents or relatives (considered suitable)	Yes	34			
With parents or relatives (not considered suitable)	No	0	7		
Community Home (LD and social care needs)	Yes	27			
Semi-independent transitional	Yes	87		87	42 Cherwell 45 City
Supported Lodgings	Yes	6			
Gone Abroad	n/a	0			
Deported	n/a	0			
Ordinary Lodgings	yes	6			
No Fixed Abode/homeless	No	0	8		N/A
Foyers	Yes	20		20	10 in Banbury 10 in Abingdon
Independent Living	Yes	73			
Emergency Accommodation	n/a	0			
Bed and Breakfast	No	0	2		
In custody	No	0	6		N/A
Staying put with former Foster Carer	Yes	29			
Other residential (usually out of county so not suitable for long term)	No	0	5		
LA does not have information, possibly street homeless	No	0	7		Probably Ox City if street homeless
<b>Total</b>		<b>282</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>107</b>	
<b>Total YP</b>	<b>317</b>				
<b>Percentage of Total</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>89%</b>	<b>11%</b>	<b>34%</b>	

## Care Leavers and young people in unregulated accommodation including Bed and Breakfast

- 7.59. This is an area of concern in the county.
- 7.60. Unregulated accommodation is used both for children under and over 16.
- 7.61. It is used as a last resort arising out of capacity issues elsewhere; namely:
- Lack of capacity in the Supported Housing Pathway
  - The Supported Housing Pathway is not suitable due to the vulnerability of the young person
  - There is no social housing available
  - There is nothing affordable in the private sector
- 7.62. Systematic records are not currently kept and so information on the number of episodes and costs are not available.

## Care Leavers' Next Moves

- 7.63. Data is currently collected manually in the operational teams on the next planned move for Care Leavers.
- 7.64. 141 Care Leavers are expected to seek single Council, Housing Association or private rented accommodation by the end of 2020. This includes both those currently in foster care and those in the SHP.
- 7.65. 7 Young families currently in the SHP are expected to move into independence by 2020.
- 7.66. More details are shown in the table below

### Care Leaver's Predicted Moves by End 2020

Singles	Type of Accommodation	District				Total
		Cherwell	City	S & V	West	
	Council permanent	13	62	0	0	75
	Private	5	14	2	4	25
	Housing Association	0	2	29	10	41
	<b>Total singles</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>78</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>141</b>
Young families	Type of Accommodation					
	Council permanent	2	1			3
	Private		1			1
	Housing Association			3		3
	<b>Total families</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>7</b>

## Care Leavers at University

- 7.67. Care leavers at university have a dual need of accommodation in Oxfordshire: firstly, during the university holidays and secondly when their course has finished. In September 2018, 11 care leavers will start university and will need accommodation during the university holidays. Supported Lodging placements are a good solution for this group but there are currently only 8 families in the county offering this provision, with no vacancies.

## 8. Summary of Unmet and Future Need

(Summary table at the end of this section)

## Changes in provision needed

### In the Supported Housing Pathway

- 8.1. **UASC:** All are referred onto pathway but not all can be accommodated there. During 2017/18 there were 57 UASC accommodated, 17 of these out of county. As at 26 October 2018 the total UASC numbers rose to 70.
- 8.2. It is estimated that to keep our current UASC in county approximately 30 more places are needed in the Supported Housing Pathway. This does not provide for a further increase in arrivals or for additional UASC via the National Transfer Scheme.
- 8.3. Two additional properties in Banbury are being procured offering a further 9 beds for UASC.
- 8.4. **Care Leavers in unsuitable accommodation** as well as the 34% of LAC who do move into the SHP, provision should be made for certain of the Care Leavers who move into unsuitable accommodation, namely those with relatives not considered suitable, those in Bed and Breakfast, and those with No Fixed Abode (NFA).
- 8.5. This accounts for approximately 5% or 16 Care Leavers per year, meaning that provision should be made in the SHP for 39% of LAC.
- 8.6. If we meet our target of reducing our increase in LAC to that of our statistical neighbours, our number of Care Leavers will continue to rise by an average of **53 per year until 2023**, taking into account our increased obligations to Care Leavers until age 25. From 2023 the numbers will start to decrease.
- 8.7. It is not clear yet what level of support those over 21 will require. It is assumed that most will not require a place in the SHP.
- 8.8. **If we assume 39% of the current LAC aged 16 require a place on the SHP, this will produce an additional pressure of 9 additional places per year.** This does not include young people currently accommodated in the Adult Homeless Pathway.
- 8.9. Increased intervention and support for young people in the SHP, particularly access to Mental Health services for those over 18.
- 8.10. Increased expertise in pathway providers in the areas of Domestic Abuse, working with Young Offenders

### Young People with lower level needs

- 8.11. Support is needed for young people with conditions such as Asperger's, mild Learning Disability, emotional and behavioural problems who live with family who can no longer cope. This group were never LAC and so do not automatically qualify for a place on the SHP. They do however need support to live independently from their family.
- 8.12. A "cooling off" bed in each District is needed while negotiations take place with family.

### Young Offenders

- 8.13. There is a need for specific supported accommodation, perhaps intensive foster placements, for between 3 - 5 young offenders at any one time who are not suitable to enter the Supported Housing Pathway.
- 8.14. There is also a need for 10-15 Supported Housing placements with specific support for this group.

### **Young People in the Adult Homeless Pathway**

- 8.15. Provision is needed for approximately 40 homeless 18-24-year olds per year who enter the Adult Homeless Pathway.

### **Care Leavers moving into independence**

- 8.16. Approximately 141 care leavers will require single accommodation over the next year two years.
- 8.17. Approximately 7 young families will move out of the Supported Housing Pathway over the next 2 years.

### **Homeless Young People presenting to the Districts**

- 8.18. Approximately 75 young people aged 18-24 per year are likely to be owed duties under housing legislation by one of the district councils. The majority of these will be in Oxford city followed by Cherwell.

### **Young People with Disabilities**

- 8.19. Approximately 30 young people with disabilities will require adapted or supported housing per year. It is likely that approximately 6 will be in Cherwell, 8 will be in the City, 5 will be in South Oxon, 7 will be in Vale, and 4 will be in West Oxon
- 8.20. Over the next 2-5 years 15 young wheelchair users will require properties with ceiling track hoists.

### **Care Leavers at university**

- 8.21. Approximately 11 families offering Supported Lodgings are required to provide holiday time accommodation for care leavers returning from university. The rate offered for this needs to be in line with rate offered by foreign language schools to attract families.

## **Changes in Process needed**

### **Homeless families**

- 8.22. More support is needed to help families maintain their tenancies to avoid eviction and disruption to schooling and family networks.
- 8.23. Earlier communication between District Councils and CEF teams to ensure that families are aware of the consequences of a potentially negative decision from the Districts.
- 8.24. Work is underway on guaranteed support from CEF for families to enable a “second chance” to be offered by the Districts.

### **Young people in the Supported Housing Pathway**

- 8.25. Consistent intervention and support for young people with complex needs in the SHP is required.
- 8.26. More throughput in the pathway is needed with incentives for providers to prepare them for move on to independence or other appropriate accommodation.

### **Families wishing to be foster carers**

- 8.27. Work on this is underway on a protocol between CEF and the Districts is needed to resolve the “Catch 22” around housing allocation for potential foster families.

### **Young Offenders**

- 8.28. In many cases young people involved in crime are Looked After and we have a statutory duty to provide them with suitable accommodation.

However, the lack of accommodation and adequate support often means that this group are left in unsuitable environments.

- 8.29. Increased training and support is required for providers of the SHP to manage the risks associated with drug dealing and violent behaviour in the SHP.
- 8.30. Stronger links are needed between housing providers and the Youth Justice Service

### **Availability of Data on Housing needs**

- 8.31. There is currently no coherent system wide recording of data on housing needs in the County Council.
- 8.32. Available data on current service provision is dependent on the requirements of Government reporting. More data will become available because of the duty to refer people at risk of homelessness in the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017.
- 8.33. Data for young people deemed to be “on the edge of homeless” is particularly hard to source as housing issues are not a routine area of enquiry or recording for social workers working with families.
- 8.34. Work is being done to embed recording on housing in LCS provided by Liquid Logic to enable reports to be easily obtained.
- 8.35. A table of current data sources used for this Needs Analysis is attached as Appendix 3
- 8.36. The housing needs of Children, Education and Families is now collated and regularly discussed along with housing opportunities as they become known.



SUMMARY OF ADDITIONAL HOUSING PROVISION REQUIRED									
Client Group	Presenting Issue	Type of Accommodation required	District					Approximate No & over what period	Comments/Options being pursued
			Ch	Ox	South	Vale	West		
Homeless families	Ineligible or disqualified for help by Districts and referred to CEF	Social Registered or Private Rental	x	x				17 per year	Defined support from CEF to enable Districts to grant a second chance
Care leavers aged 16+	Increase in number of LAC and increase in complexity	SHP, Supported Lodgings, more foster carers for Staying Put						9 per year for next four years	Re foster carers - protocol being developed to enable housing allocation for potential foster carers.
UASC	Not enough capacity in SHP	SHP SP4	15	15				30 one off increase, then included in CL figures	9 additional beds across 2 properties in Banbury to partially accommodate steep rise in 2018. (another 15 needed assuming arrivals continue at level of first half of 2018)
Single young people accepted by DCs	Homeless	Single usually	15	26	10	3	21	75 per year	Not clear how many of these are referred to the SHP
Young people with low level needs	Needs are below current eligibility for support	Supported housing for lower level needs. "cooling off" bed	1	1	1	1	1	5 initially	
Young Offenders	Need additional support	intensive foster placements						3 to 5 at any one time	Consideration of help with housing for high tier foster carers.
Young Offenders	Need additional support	supported housing placements with additional support						10 to 15 at any one time	
Young People in Adult Homeless Pathway	May have been evicted from YPSHP	Provision outside of Adult Homeless Pathway	10	15	5	5	5	40 per year	Not clear if this relates to 40 different YP or multiple entries.
Care Leavers at university	Need accommodation during university holidays	Supported Lodging						11 long term	
Young families moving from SHP	Shortage of affordable social registered housing or private rental		2	2	2	1		7 per year	
Care Leavers seeking independent accommodation	Shortage of single accommodation in Social Sector	Single in social Registered Housing or private rental. Could be HMO or single bed flats	18	78	20	11	14	141 by December 2020	
Young people with LD	Adaptations needed	Need Supported Housing possibly with adaptations for autism	6	8	5	7	4	30 per year	
Young wheelchair users including those LD	Adaptations needed							7-8 per year	
Young wheelchair users requiring ceiling track hoists	Shortage of adapted buildings	Require adapted housing for w/c	4	9	2	x	x	15 in next 2-5 years	
Young people with Disabilities	Adaptations/ bespoke new build needed	Further detail needed for each individual							