

Adult Social Care Market Position Statement 2026



**Wokingham
Borough Council**



**WOKINGHAM
BOROUGH COUNCIL**

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Section 1 - Introduction

1.1 What is a Market Position Statement (MPS)?



It is a strategic document produced by local authorities under their market-shaping duties in the Care Act 2014.



It describes current supply and demand, and what this is likely to look like in the future.



It helps providers, commissioners, partners and residents understand and plan for gaps, opportunities and challenges.



It is the starting point of a conversation - not a definitive plan.

1.2 Document refresh cycles



- The MPS will be refreshed regularly to ensure it reflects the latest data.
- Charts and datasets will be refreshed annually (where possible they will be revised sooner).

Section 1 | Introduction

1.3 Who is this for?

This document is designed for:

- ✓ **Care providers** - existing and new.
- ✓ **Voluntary and community partners.**
- ✓ **Health partners.**
- ✓ **Anyone** who would like to know more about the care market, including internal colleagues.



By sharing our insights, we support providers in shaping their future plans, designing effective services, and collaborating with us to ensure residents remain safe, independent, and fulfilled. **Please note that this document should not be used as the basis for financial decisions or investments. The Council does not accept liability for actions taken based on its contents.**

1.4 What is it for?



The MPS is designed to be clear, concise and accessible - analysing as well as describing the care market.



The MPS draws on the most up-to-date, relevant data available, with figures and charts focused on the most important trends.



Benchmarking against neighbouring councils (Bracknell Forest, West Berkshire, Windsor & Maidenhead, Reading) helps us understand local market dynamics and labour pressures.



This is the start of a market-shaping process - we look forward to working with our partners to build on shaping our local market

1.5 Key terms - what we mean



This slide explains some commonly used social care terms in plain language to help everyone understand our plans and services, and what these mean in everyday life.

Care providers

Organisations or people who give care and support to people. This is different from a Personal Assistant (PA), who is usually employed directly by an individual to provide support.

Residential care

Care provided in a care home where people live. Staff are available day and night to help with daily life.

Nursing care

Care provided in a nursing home where people live and receive care from registered nurses as well as care staff.

Domiciliary or home care

Support given in a person's own home. This can include help with washing, dressing, meals, medicines, and everyday tasks.

Carers or unpaid carers

Family members, friends, or neighbours who provide care or support without being paid.

Day care or day services

Support provided during the day, often in a community setting. People return to their own homes afterwards.

Supported living services

Housing where people have their own home and get support to live as independently as possible.

Supported employment services

Services that help people find, get, and keep paid work, with support personalised to their needs.

We use clear language because social care should be easy to understand for everyone.

1.6 Why is a MPS important to Adult Social Care in Wokingham Borough?

It is important that we plan now so that adult social care services in Wokingham Borough remain inclusive, sustainable, and able to respond to growing and changing demand. The MPS helps us do this by focusing on prevention, early support, and community-based solutions, not just traditional or long-term care.



Our changing local population: 177,500 residents in the borough (2021 Census), with those aged 75+ expected to almost double by 2041. Many of these individuals are likely to need care and support. By 2030, the 65+ population in Wokingham is projected to experience a significant rise in care needs. This means we must plan services that help people stay well, independent, and connected for as long as possible.



Social Care Needs: Local data projects there will be a growing number of people with social care needs with notable increases relating to drug dependence, autism and learning disabilities for working age adults and hearing loss, falls and dementia for older aged adults. These trends highlight the importance of early intervention and timely support to prevent needs from increasing.



Health and deprivation : 19% of residents report a long-term health condition or disability (2021 Census). The council would like to support as many people as possible to remain independent and live in their own homes with the right level of support.



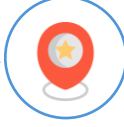





Increasing diversity: The borough ethnic minority population grew from 12% (2011) to 20% (2021), shaping future service need. Services must be flexible and inclusive, recognising different cultures, backgrounds, and protected characteristics, and supporting people in ways that work for them.

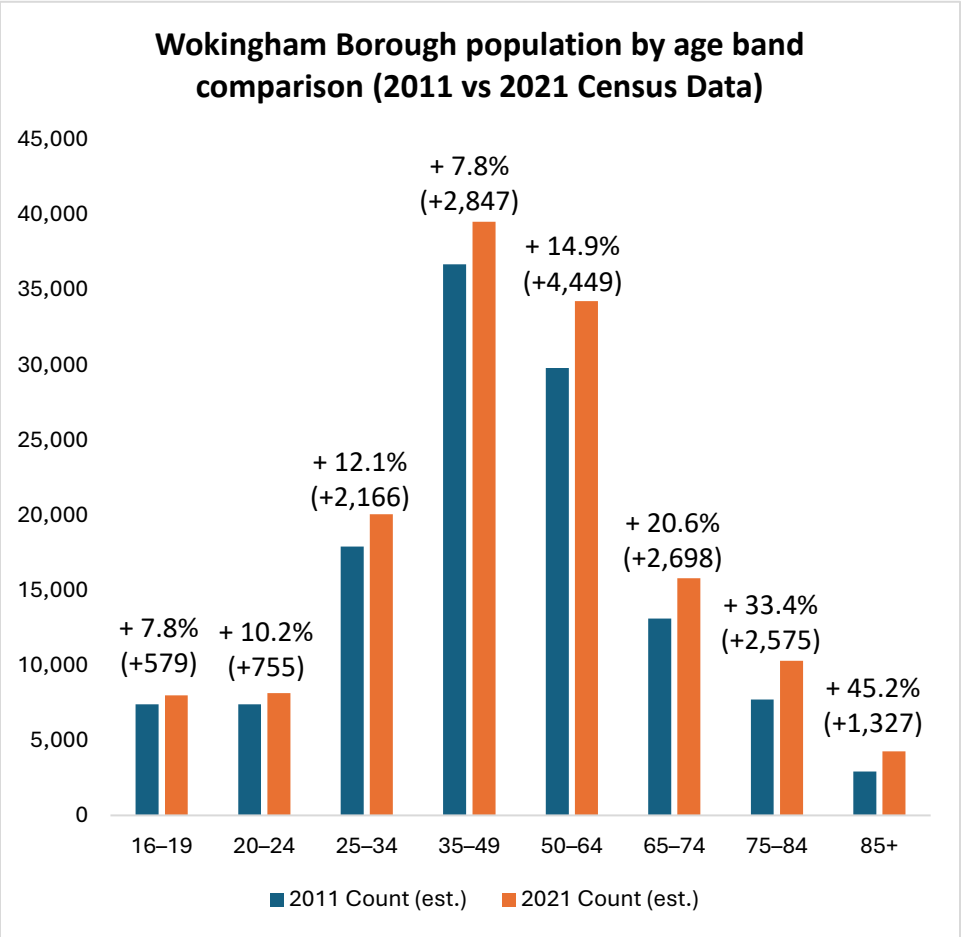
Section 1 | Introduction

1.7 Wokingham Borough at a glance



-  Population: **177,500** (2021 Census, up from 154,000 in 2011), median age of 41 years (slightly higher than national average).
-  A mix of **rural villages, market towns and suburban areas** - green, vibrant and well-connected.
-  Ranked as the **best town in Berkshire** to live in (The Times, 2024) and has **strong local economy** with global employers (Microsoft, Oracle).
-  One of the **least deprived areas** in England (85% of neighbourhoods in least deprived 20%).
-  Rated **amongst the highest performing Adult Social Care service in the country** (to date) by CQC in August 2025 with a score of 81%.
-  Developing a **new care and support framework** that promotes independence and positive outcomes for everyone.

1.8 Our changing local population



Census data for our borough highlights a significant shift over the past decade, with the following implications for the provision of adult social care services:



The fastest growing age group is 85+, which increased by 45.2% from 2011 to 2021. This shows a growing need for care and support, which we aim to address through early help, community-based services, and support that helps people stay independent.



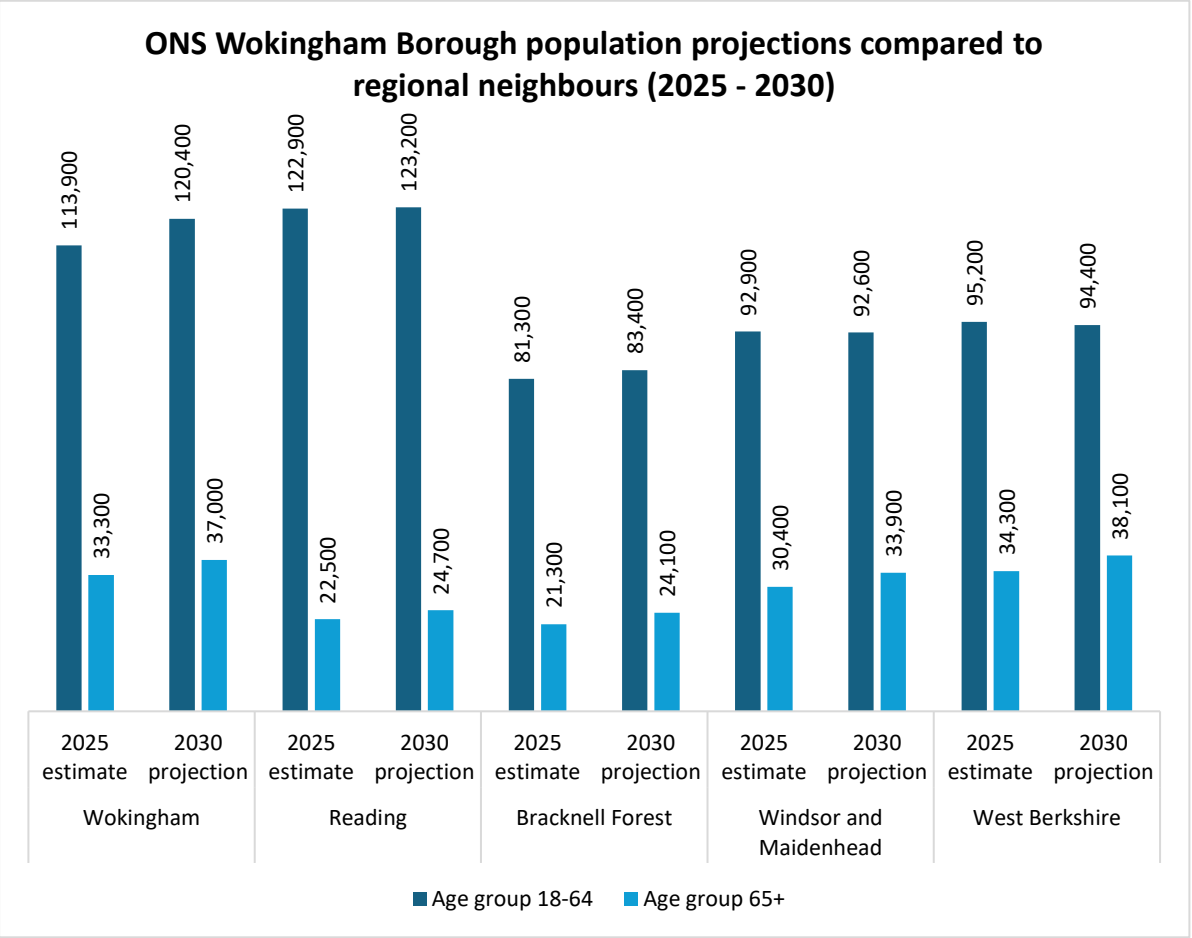
The 35-49 age group remains the most populous, highlighting the importance of supporting working-age adults who may be balancing employment with caring responsibilities.



There has been a rise (33.4%) in the 75-84 age group and a 20.6% increase in those aged 65-74. These shifts indicate rising demand for preventative services that promote independence for longer.

These demographic changes require the Council and our partners to adapt adult social care services, focusing on prevention, early support, and meeting the evolving needs of residents.

1.9 Population projections



Drawing on the latest census data and ONS population projections, we are expected to experience a notable increase in our population over the next 5 years, which will have significant implications for our services.



The number of residents aged 65+ is projected to rise by 11%, from 33,300 in 2025 to 37,000 in 2030 - slightly higher than neighbouring authorities.



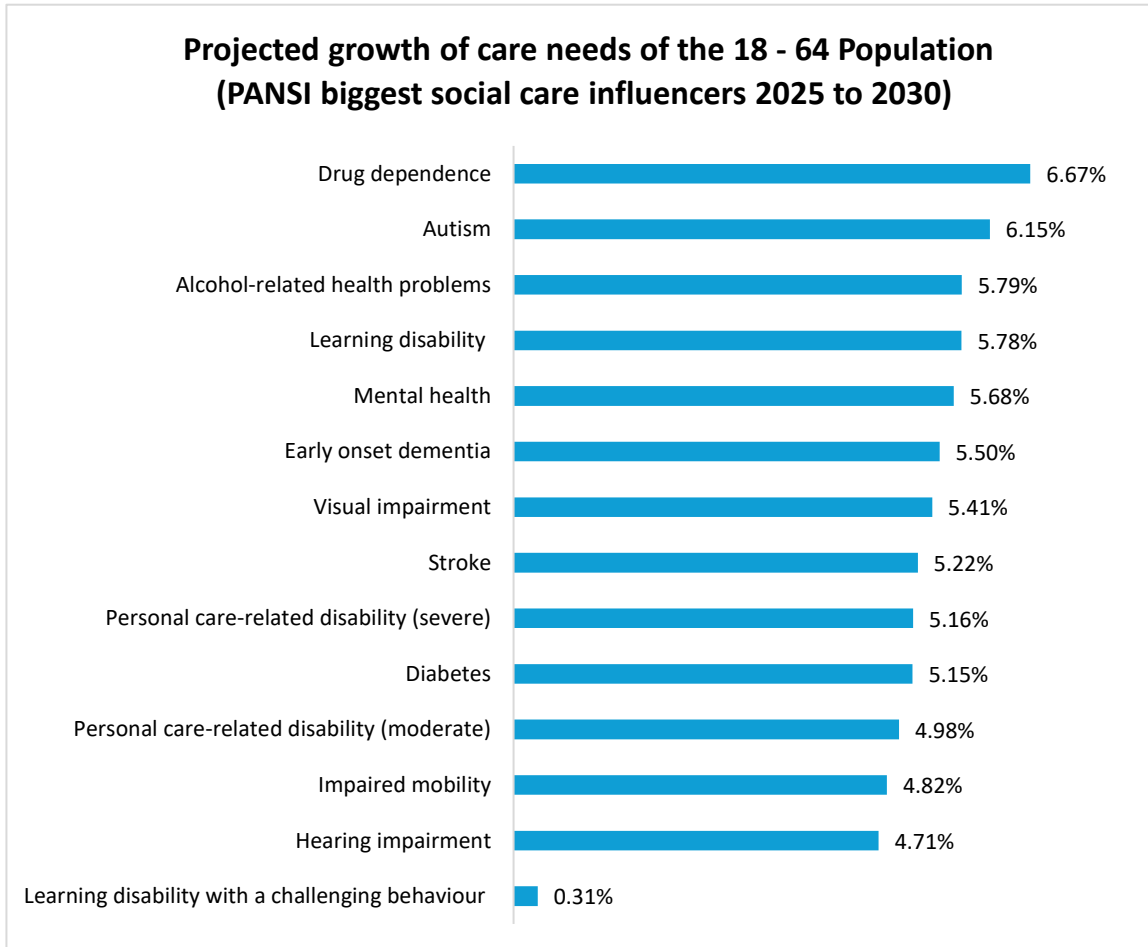
The population projections indicate that Wokingham is likely to experience a relatively faster ageing trend locally.



At the same time, the Wokingham working-age population is projected to grow more modestly (5.7%) which may affect the local care workforce and the balance of service provision.

The increase in older residents highlights the need to continue proactive planning, focusing on prevention, early support, and sufficient adult social care capacity to meet rising demand.

1.10 Social care population projections for 18 - 64-year-olds in Wokingham



By 2030, Wokingham is expected to see a steady increase in the number of working-age adults with health and support needs. This growth will have implications for adult social care, prevention services, and commissioning priorities.

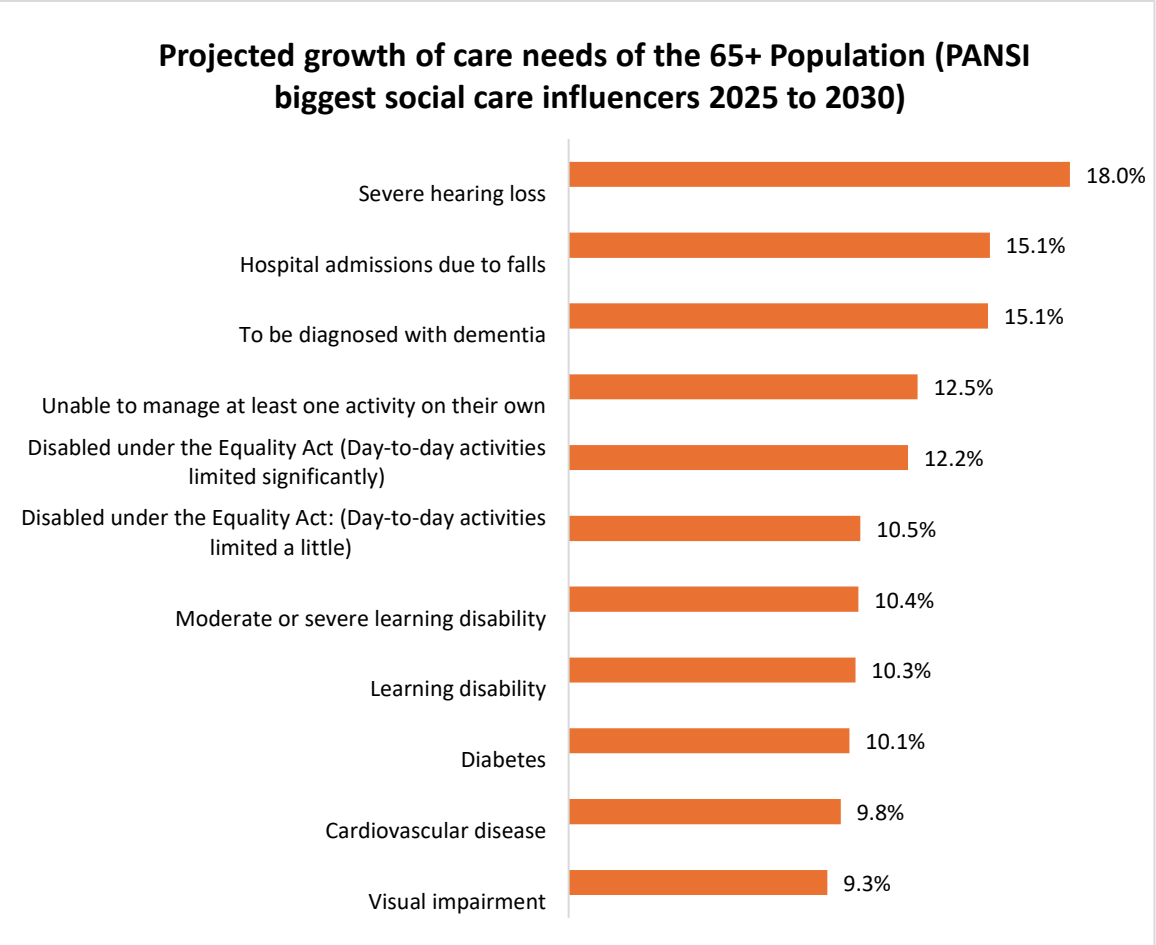
Top 3 largest projected increases from 2025 to 2030:

- 1 Drug dependence, from 3,746 to 3,996 (+6.67% growth)
- 2 Autism from 1,122 to 1,191 (+6.15% growth)
- 3 Alcohol related problems from 5,510 to 5,829 (+5.79% growth)

Whilst percentage increases appear gradual, they reflect growing complexity, population pressure and increased demand for targeted support.

These trends are closely linked to wider determinants of health, highlighting the critical role of Adult Social Care in not only responding to demand, but in working proactively to reduce, prevent and delay the escalation of need through early intervention, promotion of healthy lifestyles, and community-based prevention activity.

1.11 Social care population projections for 65+ year-olds in Wokingham



By 2030, the 65+ population in Wokingham is projected to experience a significant rise in care needs.

This reflects both population ageing and the increasing complexity of support needed by older residents.

Top 3 largest projected increases from 2025 to 2030:

- 1 Severe hearing loss, from 2,772 to 3,321 (+18% growth)
- 2 Falls related hospital admissions from 1,087 to 1,265 (+15.1% growth)
- 3 Dementia from 2,509 to 2,918 (+15.1% growth)

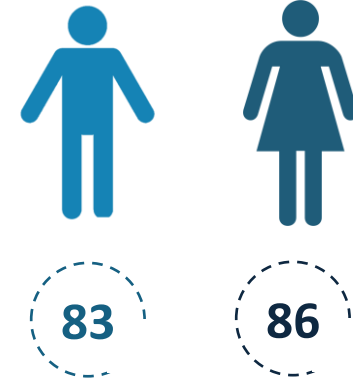
The projected growth in dementia will increase pressure on residential care, home care and carer support services.

The projected rise in sensory impairments, particularly severe hearing loss highlights the importance of accessible communication and technology enabled care services to support maximise people’s independence.

1.12 Health and deprivation

Healthy lifestyle expectancy

- Residents in the borough continue to have **one of the highest healthy life expectancies in England** - 83 years (men), 86 years (women) (Wokingham Council, *Our Borough 2024*).
- This indicates a generally healthy population, which may reduce immediate demand for intensive adult social care services. However, it also suggests a continued need for services that support independent living, prevention, and long-term wellness, **especially as the population ages**.



Households with limiting health conditions

24%

24% of households in Wokingham had at least one person with a limiting long-term health problem or disability, significantly lower than the national average of 33% ([Census 2021](#)).



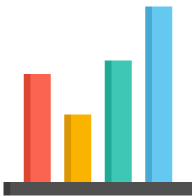
Although fewer households may require support compared with the national average, it **remains essential** for us to continue to provide services that meet the needs of those living with long-term conditions or disabilities, **ensuring they receive the care and support necessary to live well**.

1.13 Health and deprivation

Employment for adults with learning disabilities

20.7%

Approximately 20.7% of working-age adults with learning disabilities in Wokingham are in paid employment, compared to 4.8% for the England average in 2021-22 ([WBC MTFPT 23/24](#)).



This higher employment rate suggests that many adults with learning disabilities are **leading active, engaged lives**. Planning will focus on **continued accessible employment services and community initiatives**.

Deprivation levels

23.7%

Wokingham is generally an affluent borough, but some areas experience higher levels of income deprivation. In the most affected parts, **up to 23.7% of residents are estimated to be income-deprived**, highlighting disparities within the borough (2021 Census).



These pockets of deprivation highlight the importance of **targeted services and interventions**. It remains essential to ensure that social care, financial advice, and community support are **accessible** to those experiencing economic hardship, so that inequalities do not widen.

1.14 Diversity in the borough

20%

According to the 2021 Census, approximately one in five (19.9%) Wokingham Borough residents identify with an ethnic group other than White, up from around 12% in 2011. As the population becomes more diverse, adult social care services must continue to be culturally responsive and accessible to meet the varied care and support needs of all communities.



Wokingham is seeing a rise in greater religious diversity, with 49% identifying as Christian, 40% reporting no religion, and around 4% identifying as Hindu (ONS 2021). This highlights the importance of delivering adult social care that respects individuals' faith, beliefs, and cultural practices when planning and providing support.



Approximately 3.2% of the national population aged 16 and over identified as lesbian, gay, bisexual, or another sexual orientation. Applying this national figure to Wokingham's 2021 population of 177,500 suggests around 5,680 residents identify as LGBTQ+ (ONS 2021). This emphasises the need for inclusive adult social care services that address the diverse experiences and support requirements of LGBTQ+ individuals in the borough.

Recognising all protected characteristics

Adult social care must take into account all protected characteristics, including age, disability, sex, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, and sexual orientation. For an MPS, this means decisions must consider how different groups experience services and avoid reinforcing inequalities. To meet diverse needs, the council and partners must continue to embed equality, diversity, and inclusion in commissioning, workforce practice, and service delivery. Staff must have the skills, knowledge, and awareness to respond to people's identities and lived experiences, and services should be designed with input from the communities they serve. Later sections of this document explore demographic data further.

Section 2 - Adult Social Care in Wokingham Borough Council

2.1 Social Care Future Charter (SCF)

The Council is committed to the SCF Charter, committing to an approach that puts people at the heart of social care. This means:



Communities where everyone belongs...



...living in the place we call home...



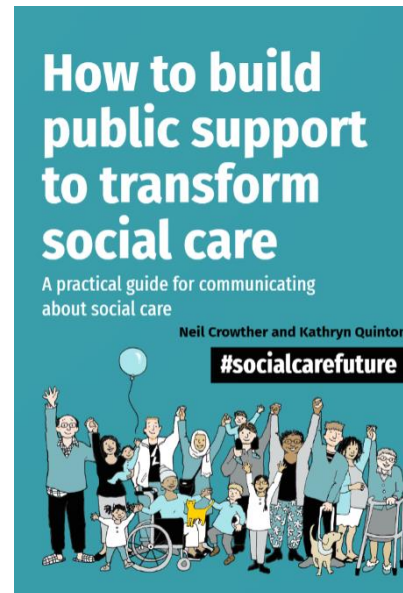
...leading the lives we want to live...



...more resources, better used...



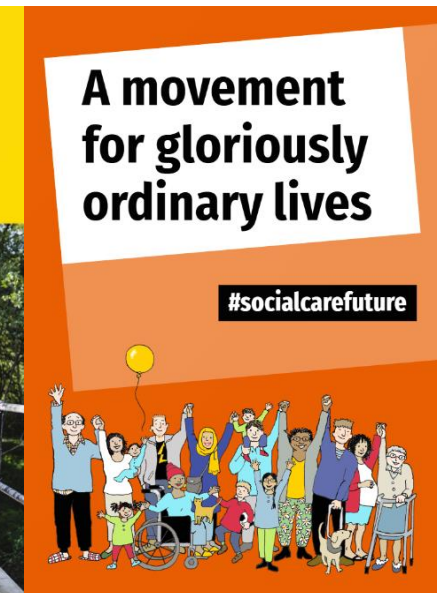
...sharing power as equals.



[Click here to view](#)



[Click here to view](#)



[Click here to view](#)

For more information on Social Care Futures, [click here](#).

2.2 Social Care Future engagement

We work closely with residents and people with lived experience of social care to understand what matters most to them. We regularly run engagement sessions, surveys, focus groups, and one-to-one discussions to gather their views and feedback.

Through this ongoing engagement, 3 key themes consistently emerge as the things people value most in their care and support:



1. Choice in support personnel

People want to have a say in who provides their care and support, so they feel comfortable and confident with the staff who work with them.



2. Flexible support

Residents value support that fits around their lives, needs, and preferences, rather than being rigid or one-size-fits-all.



3. Safety and happiness with services

Feeling safe, respected, and happy with the care they receive is a priority and should drive how we plan and deliver services.

By listening to people and embedding these priorities into the design of services, we can make sure adult social care in Wokingham is personalised, responsive, and centred on the people who use it.

2.3 Our key themes for delivering Adult Social Care in Wokingham Borough



Prevention and early intervention



Reducing inequalities and promoting wellbeing



Strengths-based approach



Supporting wellbeing and meaningful participation in communities



Supporting independence and choice



Personalised, high-quality care and support



Using TEC to maximise independence

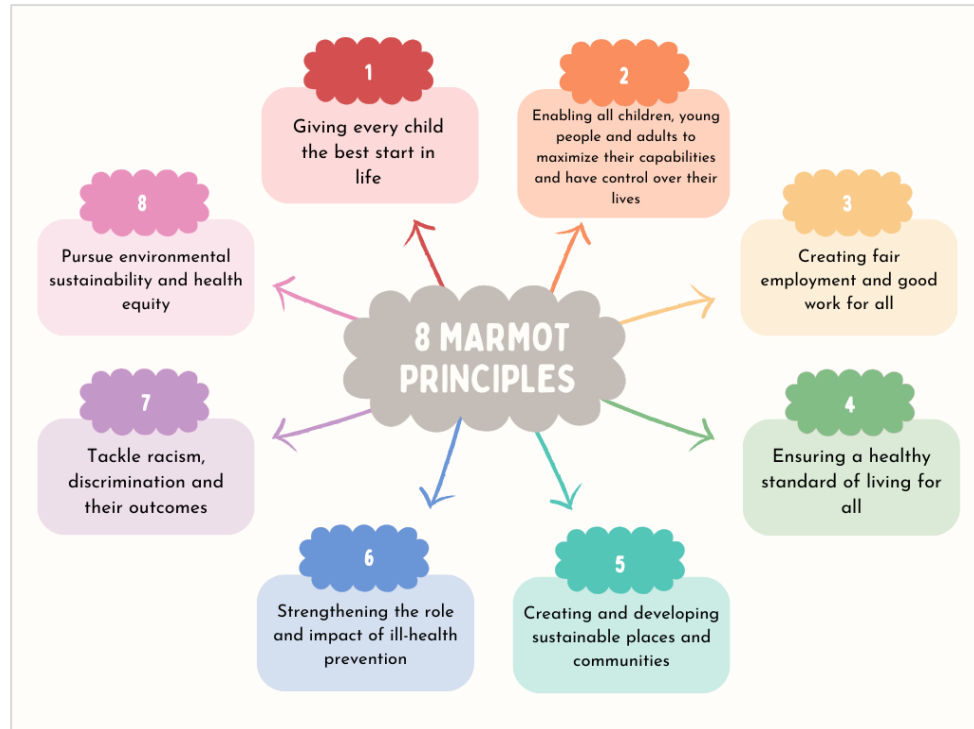


Person-centred, inclusive, empowering, and shaped by the voices of the people who use services

2.4 Embedding MARMOT principles

We've partnered with the Institute of Health Equity to become a Marmot Place - driving a cultural shift towards a fairer, healthier Wokingham

This initiative tackles preventable inequalities by focusing on the key building blocks of health, creating opportunities for everyone in our communities to live well



8 Marmot Principles, 2026



A Marmot Borough recognises that our ability to thrive is shaped by the conditions in which we are born, grow, live, work and age.



It takes action to improve outcomes for everyone with a focus on those who have the greatest need and the worst outcomes.



Section 2 | Adult Social Care in Wokingham Borough Council

2.5 Adult Social Care Funding

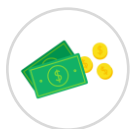
Over the last five years, Adult Social Care has operated within a context of sustained financial pressure and historic underfunding, with budget increases largely reflecting more people using the service and the escalating costs of delivering care.

Adult Social Care budget against total Council budget

Area	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26
Total Council Budget	£143.48m	£147.76m	£161.31m	£180.08m	£190.33 m	£203.06m
Spend on Adult Social Care	£51.37m	£55.82m	£61.34m	£66.36m	£71.45m	£75.86m
% of budget	35.8%	37.8%	38.0%	36.9%	37.5%	37.4%



A breakdown of the 2025/26 Adult Social Care budget is shown in the following pages.



The Council has successfully delivered adult social care services within budget while continuing to invest strategically to meet local needs and our ambition for Wokingham to be a leading borough for adult social care performance.



While budgets have increased in recent years, Adult Social Care has historically been underfunded nationally and locally, meaning that councils have had to carefully prioritise resources to ensure essential services continue to meet residents' needs.

Section 2 | Adult Social Care in Wokingham Borough Council

2.6 Adult Social Care budget by service type 2025/26

The 2025/26 Adult Social Care budget for Wokingham Borough Council totals just under £71 million, reflecting our continued commitment to delivering a broad range of care and support services. The breakdown below shows how this funding is allocated across key service areas.

Area	Total Spend (£)	% of spend
Nursing & Residential	19,179,900	25.28
Respite	382,410	0.50
Homecare Services	8,282,970	10.92
Day Opportunities Services	4,653,430	6.13
Direct Payments	6,661,300	8.78
Other Care	227,100	0.30
Carers - voluntary organisation	462,300	0.61
Shared Lives	211,100	0.28
Supported Living	16,188,030	21.34
Supported Employment	439,810	0.58
ASC Staffing	16,416,400	21.64
Commissioning	2,337,780	3.08
Dols	193,720	0.26
Equipment	133,560	0.18
Public Health & BCF	-1,646,550	-2.17
Non-statutory services	1,699,000	2.24
Other	43,700	0.06
Total	75,865,960	



2 of the largest allocations are to Nursing & Residential care (£19.17m) and Supported Living (£16.18m), reflecting market conditions and the high cost and complexity of 24-hour care services.



Over £8 million is invested in Homecare Services, alongside £4.65 million for Day Opportunities, helping residents to maintain independence in their own homes and communities.



Funding is also directed to services such as Respite care, Carers' support, Shared Lives, and Supported Employment, which play a vital role in prevention and inclusion.

2.7 Optalis

Optalis was set up in 2011 by Wokingham Borough Council to address the challenge of increased demand and decreasing government funding. The Council also jointly owns Optalis Ltd with the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead.

100%

As Optalis is 100% owned by Wokingham Borough Council and the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead, this ownership gives the Councils control over quality, delivery and strategic direction of the services.



Optalis is not only one of the largest providers of care and support in Berkshire, but one of the most diverse. Optalis delivers a broad range of Adult Social Care services to customers with a variety of needs in the community.



During 2025-26, Optalis supported over 700 people per year from Wokingham Borough Council across community services, specialist accommodation, and homes.



Over the next few years, Optalis will continue to be a key strategic partner for the Council. They will continue to provide a proportion of adult care services on behalf of the Council and we will work with them to grow and develop new services in the local area.

For more information on Optalis, visit [here](#).

2.8 Optalis local schemes

Care homes



- Bluebell House
- The Hollies
- Suffolk Lodge

Extra care



- Beeches Manor
- Alexandra Place
- Fosters
- The Birches

Supported housing



- Oakfield Court
- Hillside
- Loddon Court



2.9 Quality Overview

We take an active, strengths-based approach to monitoring and improving the quality of care services across the borough. This is led by our Care Quality team and includes regular engagement with providers, safeguarding reviews, ongoing quality monitoring meetings, and shared learning through our provider hub.



Our approach is aligned with Social Care Futures, focusing on supporting people to live good lives, with choice, control and strong community connections, rather than focusing only on services.



It also reflects the principles set out in the Marmot Review, recognising the importance of prevention, reducing inequalities, and supporting people to stay well and independent for longer.



This approach helps us maintain oversight of current performance and work closely with providers to ensure people receive safe, reliable and high-quality support.



While CQC inspection ratings provide useful independent assurance, they are not always up to date. We therefore use them alongside our local intelligence to build a more complete and current picture of quality.

Our approach to supporting and working with providers to improve quality is detailed in Section 5.

2.10 CQC Assessment of our Adult Social Care Provision - 2025

Following its new local authority assessment framework, CQC inspected our Adult Social Care services in 2025.

Key findings from the inspection include:

81

We achieved a "Good" rating (81%) and "outstanding" for partnership working, reflecting effective leadership, person-centred support, and strong safeguarding practices.



Inspectors found evidence of co-production, accessible services, and proactive planning for population needs.



Collaborative working was highlighted as a strength, particularly in our engagement with people with lived experience and partners to shape services we deliver.

This rating reflects our commitment to delivering safe, high-quality, and person-centred care in partnership with our communities and providers. [Click here](#) to read the full report.



Section 3 - Local Market Dynamics

Section 3 | Local Market Dynamics

3.1 Marketplace overview



Wokingham Borough Council works closely with partners and providers to support a diverse and sustainable market which will meet the care and support needs of residents in Wokingham Borough in line with the Care Act 2014

Our local market is influenced by:



Geography



Self-funders



Recruitment



Workforce



Housing



Cost of living



Transport



Innovation and efficiency

These factors have bearing on the functioning of the entire local social care market and are of interest to this MPS. They will be explored in further detail as part of this section.

3.1 Marketplace overview

Wokingham Borough has a diverse and evolving care and support market, spanning regulated services, community-based provision and preventative support.

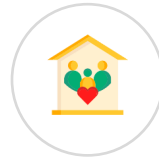
We aim to continue working closely with providers who deliver services that reflect what residents have told us matters most:



Choice in who provides support



Flexible support tailored to individual needs



Safety and happiness with services

These themes will be central to the design of our new Care and Support Framework, which is expected to go live in November 2026.

By focusing on prevention, early support, and community-based solutions, and by partnering with providers who share these values, we can ensure care is personalised, responsive, and meets the evolving needs of residents.

Our broad and evolving care market



Applying Social Care Futures and Marmot principles to involve people in decisions and design of their care.



Working with providers and partner organisations to promote and build a culture of innovation in services that we offer.



Encouraging provider collaboration, shared learning and workforce development partnerships.

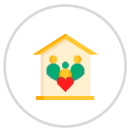


Using smart technology to target reduced isolation and loneliness.

3.2 Geography

Wokingham Borough sits in the heart of the South East, offering excellent connectivity to London, Reading, and surrounding areas.

The borough is bordered by multiple local authorities, including Reading, Bracknell Forest, West Berkshire and Windsor & Maidenhead each with differing market sizes and pricing.



Our market spans beyond local authority boundaries, with providers, staff, and individuals often operating and using services outside their host borough.



Combines thriving towns and residential communities with attractive greenbelt and rural areas. Well-served by major road (M4, M3) and rail links, providing easy access across the South East and beyond.

The central position enables Wokingham to work closely with neighbouring authorities, supporting collaboration, growth, and regional connectivity.



Map of South East region



Map of Berkshire

3.3 Self-funders

As per the Care Act (2014) Local authorities are required to assess the needs of their whole population, to keep people active and to empower them to make choices about what types of care they receive, regardless of their financial position.

Central Government itself does not collect data nationally and most local authorities have little knowledge of people who pay for their own care in their area, despite this group accessing a range of services and forming a significant part of the total care market.



Self-funders represent a significant part of the care market and shape demand, provider sustainability and future commissioning priorities.



According to the [Office of National Statistics](#), from 1 March 2022 to 28 February 2023 (latest release as of September 2025), an estimated 23% of people using community care services were self-funders (83,844) and 77% were state-funded (279,916), which is not a significant change in the proportion of self-funders since the previous year.



The South-East remained the region with the highest proportion of self-funders in community care services (33.2%), which is statistically significantly higher than North-East, which had the lowest proportion of self-funders (16.2%).

3.4 Self-funders in the borough



A report conducted by the [ONS \(2023\)](#) estimated the percentage of self-funders (last reported) within Wokingham Borough to be approximately **58.7%**. This is higher than the South-East average of **53.9%**. Research carried out by People too (2023) estimated 619 homecare self-funders and 569 residential self-funders.

How this informs our ways of working:

- **Planning and capacity:** We will continue to work with the care market to ensure enough high-quality options are available, responding to demand from both self-funders and council-funded residents.
- **Market shaping:** The Council will encourage a diverse range of care services that meet different needs and budgets, helping residents access the right support in the right setting.
- **Support and advice:** We will provide clear, timely information and advice to help people plan for future care. This includes sharing guidance through newsletters, social media, and community channels, and offering support so everyone can make informed choices about care.

The [IPC self-funder toolkit](#) has been produced to help local authorities ensure that they comply with the requirements of the Care Act, helping them understand their self-funder population so that they can facilitate and shape their local care market to meet the needs of the whole population.

This has been rewritten following the implementation of the Care Act (2014) and includes new information on estimating numbers as well as updated case studies. The Council will seek to use this toolkit to improve its understanding of self-funders within the area.

Section 3 | Local Market Dynamics

3.5 Overview of the South East workforce

Employee jobs by industry (March 2025)	South East	England
Agriculture, forestry & fishing	0.01	0.01
Mining & quarrying	0.00	0.00
Manufacturing	0.06	0.07
Water supply, sewerage, waste	0.01	0.01
Construction	0.06	0.06
Wholesale & retail trade	0.14	0.13
Transport & storage	0.05	0.05
Accommodation & food service activities	0.07	0.07
Information & communication	0.05	0.05
Financial & insurance activities	0.02	0.03
Real estate activities	0.02	0.02
Professional scientific & technical activities	0.09	0.10
Administrative & support service activities	0.08	0.08
Public admin & defence; compulsory social security	0.04	0.04
Education	0.10	0.08
Human health & social work activities	0.14	0.14
Arts, entertainment & recreation	0.04	0.03
Other service activities	0.03	0.03

Source: [ONS workforce jobs by region and industry March 2025](#)



As of 2025, the Office for National Statistics (ONS) no longer publishes detailed “employee jobs by industry” data at local authority level. Industry-level data is now available only at regional level.



The most recent figures (March 2025) therefore allow comparison between the South East region - which includes Wokingham - and England as a whole.



The South East also has a relatively strong labour market. The region reports a higher job density than England overall, meaning that, on average, there are more jobs available per working-age person in the South East than nationally (0.14).



That means it is relatively easy to find employment in the South East compared to the country as a whole. However, due to changes in reports, it is not possible to determine whether the Borough currently has a higher or lower share of employment in this sector.

3.6 Affordability

According to data from [ONS](#), as of March 2025:

Properties in Wokingham Borough had an average price of around £503,000 in August 2025 (Office for National Statistics). This represents an increase of approximately 3.9% compared with August 2024. Whilst growth is slower than in some regions, house prices in the borough remain significantly above the national average. For instance, the average property price in England was around £296,000 in March 2025 (up 6.7% year-on-year).



The website payscale.com calculates the average hourly rate of pay for a care worker to be £12.00 per hour as of December 2024, equivalent to an annual salary of around £22,800 based on 37 hours per week across 52 weeks per year. Data from April 2025 for caregiver/ personal care worker roles puts the average salary at £25,637.



These figures suggest that even higher-earning care workers cannot, on their own earnings, easily afford to enter the local owner-occupier property market in Wokingham Borough, given local price levels and borrowing constraints. Therefore, a single person working in this sector could not afford to buy property here based on their wages alone.



According to ONS, for February 2025, the average rental cost per month in the UK for a new tenancy in the United Kingdom was £1,381 per calendar month, an increase of 8.3% from the previous year. In the South-East the average cost was £1,390. In Wokingham Borough the average monthly rental cost was £1,458 in September 2025, up from £1,352 in September 2024 (7.8% annual increase), nearly 6% more expensive than the UK average.

3.7 Recruitment



In the current market environment, recruitment presents both significant challenges and opportunities for the Council as we aim to secure the right workforce to deliver our services. In this section, we have summarised key market dynamics implications for the Council and our approach.

The UK labour market is showing signs of cooling in some respects (e.g., broad vacancy levels, slowing pay growth) but remains highly competitive in many skills-areas (digital, analytics, hybrid working). The 2025 changes to the skilled worker visa have also had a significant impact on this.

Changes to skilled worker visa

There have been substantial and ongoing changes to the UK immigration rules for the Skilled Worker visa and related work-visa routes. These include:



From 22 July 2025, the Skilled Worker visa threshold increased from RQF Level 3 to Level 6, limiting eligibility for many roles previously open to overseas applicants. A Temporary Shortage List (TSL) exists for lower-level roles (RQF 3–5), but it is time-limited, conditional on employer workforce development, and restricts dependent rights for migrant workers.



Adult social care roles will gradually lose eligibility for overseas recruitment by 22 July 2028, reflecting a UK policy shift toward domestic workforce supply.

In the Wokingham Borough home care market, there are over 2,000 employees, with around 300 overseas workers (Capacity Tracker, September 2025). These changes mean we will face reduced access to overseas care workers, higher costs for sponsorship, and increased roles to support domestic workforce development. Commissioning strategies will focus on training, retention, and local recruitment to meet adult social care needs.

3.7 Recruitment cont.

Alongside changes to skilled work visas, there are other ongoing recruitment challenges in the borough. These include:



Fair pay and funding: Attracting and keeping staff depends on offering competitive pay. Councils and care providers must balance rising care costs with funding limits.



Housing and cost of living: High housing costs and limited affordable options can make it harder for staff to live locally, particularly in a borough like Wokingham.



Promoting the profession: Social care is sometimes undervalued or poorly understood. We need to raise awareness of the rewards, career paths, and opportunities in adult social care.



Other factors: Recruiting staff with specialist skills, providing training and career development, and supporting workforce wellbeing are also essential to retaining a stable, skilled workforce.

We aim to work closely with providers to attract and retain a skilled and motivated workforce, promote social care as a rewarding career, and ensure that residents have access to safe, high-quality, and personalised care and support.

Section 3 | Local Market Dynamics

3.8 Workforce trends

Data from the [2024/25 Skills for Care Local Area Summary report](#) provides an overview of Wokingham's adult social care workforce, including size, turnover, vacancies, demographics, qualifications, and employment patterns

Total adult social care posts in Wokingham: 5,400

Filled posts: 5,100

Vacant posts: 300

Turnover rate: 21.2% (lower than South East average - 25.2% and similar to national average - 23.7%)

59% of new starters were recruited from within the sector

Approximately 30% of direct care staff hold a relevant adult social care qualification, lower than regional (40%) and national (45%) rates

In independent sector: 85%

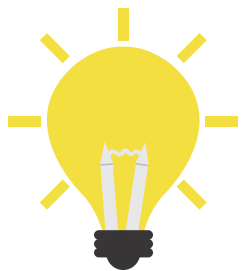
In local authority: 6%

Direct payment recipients: 9%

Average job experience: 9 years

Gender: 76% female, 24 % male

Age profile: Workers aged 55+ account for 26% of the workforce, with projected retirements estimated to impact on approximately 1,200 posts over 10 years



The Skills for Care report shows that we have a lower proportion of qualified adult social care staff compared with regional and national averages, alongside a workforce that does not reflect the wider local population. The workforce is also ageing, which raises longer-term concerns about replacing skills and experience as people retire.

Working with providers, the council will focus on strengthening the workforce through training, development, and broader recruitment, supporting a more sustainable and diverse workforce. This will help ensure care and support services are well placed to enable people to live as independently as possible.

3.9 Training the workforce

At Wokingham Borough Council, we are committed to working with adult social care providers to create opportunities for staff to develop professionally and personally. Investing in workforce training ensures residents receive high-quality care and supports a motivated, skilled, and resilient workforce.



We have published the [Adult Social Care Workforce Strategy](#), providing a clear framework of priorities and actions to support workforce development across the Borough.



Training opportunities have been expanded via the My Learning platform and the Care Quality portal, giving care providers access to courses including reablement and other essential skills.



We actively encourage collaboration between providers, sharing resources such as training venues, best practice, and networking opportunities, and working with partners including Skills for Care, colleges, and universities to enhance learning pathways and career progression.

Through these initiatives, we aim to build a skilled, confident, and sustainable workforce, ensuring care workers have the knowledge and support needed to deliver excellent services to residents.

3.10 Housing



The number of new housing in the borough is increasing, with over 800 houses built in 2023/24, reflecting the council’s growth ambitions. New developments include a mix of market, affordable, and specialist housing, but pressures remain on affordability for key groups (older people, those with disabilities).



Increased housing supply supports independence, but creates demand for accessible, adaptable housing. As with care provision, housing growth interacts with neighbouring authorities, with some residents seeking properties outside the borough and vice versa.



We worked with colleagues from across the Council to develop an award-winning provision of specialist accommodation for vulnerable residents. This resulted in 36 people with new homes adapted to their needs, gaining independence and acquiring new skills for living. Building on this success, we have developed a pipeline of need and identified council assets to support delivery of further accommodation



Engagement and survey results shows that people prefer a mix of accommodation options, including clusters of one-bed flats with on-site staff, 4 - 5 bed homes shared by 3 - 4 people with a room for sleep-in night cover. We will continue to work alongside residents to better understand the needs of working-age and older adults, shaping support that enables people to live as independently as possible.

Monitoring Year	Completions
2006/07	1,011
2007/08	482
2008/09	369
2009/10	226
2010/11	217
2011/12	267
2012/13	390
2013/14	488
2014/15	454
2015/16	675
2016/17	967
2017/18	1,528
2018/19	1,284
2019/20	1,555
2020/21	1,206
2021/22	1,440
2022/23	865
2023/24	841
Total	14,265

Annual housing completions across Wokingham Borough

3.11 Key Worker Housing Schemes



Property schemes such as the [Wokingham Borough Key Worker Housing scheme](#) – is available to prioritise key workers to ensure those providing essential services are able to buy or rent homes in the areas where they work. The definition of a key worker should be determined locally and could be any person who works in any profession that is considered essential for the functioning of a local area.

Wokingham Borough Council define a key worker as a public sector employee who is considered to provide an essential service. This covers, but is not exclusive to the following:

- Social workers
- Care workers
- Educational Psychologists, and Therapists
- Clinical National Health Service staff (except doctors and dentists)
- Teachers and nursery nurses

The change in definition of a key worker is significant, as previously care workers wishing to buy or rent a property in the area were not included in the key worker scheme, as nurses, social workers and other NHS staff were originally prioritised. The Council will work closely with providers to ensure care workers can access the key worker scheme. Historically the Council has struggled to fill key worker accommodation despite informing anyone on the housing register who qualifies as a key worker of any voids coming up. Given the additional demand expected due to the shortage in the care sector and as a result of providers recruiting from abroad it is essential that the Council has a firm understanding of the need and demand for key worker units over the next few years.

3.12 Inflation

The rate of inflation is the change in prices for goods and services over time. Measures of inflation and prices include consumer price inflation, producer price inflation and the House Price Index.



Reports from the ONS show that the Consumer Prices Index including owner occupiers' housing costs (CPIH) rose by 3.4% in the 12 months to March 2025 (previously CPHI rose by 3.8% in the 12 months leading up to March 2024).



As an increase in inflation correlates with a rise in living costs, we will work with providers and partner organisations to minimise the adverse impacts of this on our residents.



As mentioned in Section 1, this will be done by engaging carefully and thoughtfully in dialogue with providers about how to balance the funding pressures we are under, with the cost pressures faced by the care market while delivering a quality service to meet the needs of our residents.

We will continue to monitor inflation trends closely and work collaboratively with providers to ensure that funding decisions support a sustainable care market while protecting the quality and accessibility of services for residents.

Section 3 | Local Market Dynamics

3.13 Transport

Transport is a vital underpinning of independent living for many residents in Wokingham Borough. As the population grows and ages, ease of mobility across the Borough becomes increasingly important both for social inclusion and access to care, health, shopping, community services, and employment.



Wokingham Borough is served by several rail stations, including Wokingham town centre station, as well as stations at Winnersh, Winnersh Triangle and Earley, with strong rail connections also available from nearby Reading and Twyford and around 30 registered bus routes. Across the borough, over 7.5 million journeys are made by public transport each year - to, from and within Wokingham ([WBC Public Transport Plan](#)).



The bus network is concentrated around urban / more densely populated areas - including Wokingham town, Woodley, Earley, and along key corridors (e.g. A329) - providing links to neighbouring urban areas. However, public transport usage remains modest relative to car travel: only about 5% of residents travel to work by bus, with the majority of those journeys destined for nearby urban centres such as Reading ([WBC Public Transport Plan](#)).



For residents who cannot easily use conventional bus or rail services, the borough benefits from community transport schemes and active travel routes. For example, Keep Mobile provides door-to-door transport suitable for wheelchair users or people who struggle with regular public transport. Other local schemes such as Readibus provide pre-booked transport services to support those with limited mobility or other accessibility needs.



In 2025 the Council committed nearly £2 million to improving bus frequency, evening and weekend services, and stop infrastructure, reflecting a recognition of transport as a key enabler of social care access and independence. As part of this plan, there are proposals to increase frequency on key routes (for example, making weekday and Saturday services on some routes more frequent and improving evening and Sunday provision) — changes that could better support people working shifts, attending appointments, or participating in social activities ([source](#)).

As the borough's population grows and the demand for social care becomes more complex, transport improvements and social care planning must work together to provide flexible, person-centred support tailored to individual needs. This joined-up approach will help ensure residents can access support and employment in ways that feel safe, reliable and supportive of their wellbeing and happiness, reflecting what residents have told us matters most to them.

Section 3 | Local Market Dynamics

3.14 Innovation and efficiency

Digital technologies have tremendous potential to improve the services that our Adult Social Care is able to offer. Among their many benefits, they can increase people's care choices and independence while freeing up staff time for more one-to-one care.

To maximise efficiency, we would like with providers and partner organisations to promote and build a culture of innovation in services that we offer. We believe this can enable more and better care to be delivered to residents in Wokingham Borough, whilst also driving financial efficiency throughout our Adult Social Care service.

Examples of current working



Using smart technology to target reduced isolation and loneliness.

Through the Smart Cities programme, we pioneered an innovative digital service which enables improvements in connecting isolated older people to services.



Using TEC to support people with neurological conditions, mobility problems and other long-term conditions.



Offering interactive signposting to advice, guidance and support services at the Front Door.

Our aspirations



Scale up these successes so that as many people's lives are improved as possible.



Work with providers to increase use of technology and equipment to support greater independence.



Utilise both the experiences and preferences of those receiving care and the knowledge of care providers.



Promote independence and reducing the need for support for carers across the borough.

Section 4 - Provider markets in the borough (council-funded provision)

4.1 Overview

The care markets play a vital role in supporting residents to live safely and independently. This chapter provides an overview of these markets, including home care (domiciliary), residential and nursing care, day care, supported employment, supported living and carers. This section will explore:



Current and historic activity trends across major provider markets, showing how needs and patterns of support have changed over the last 5 years.



Future demand projections based on demographic change and service usage observed over the last 3 – 5 years, with trends extrapolated forward - they should therefore be interpreted as indicative rather than definitive forecasts.



Commissioning priorities and intentions, including areas where provision may need to expand, diversify or adapt to meet future demand.

Together, this provides a clear understanding of how the local market is evolving, supporting a shared view of future needs and the commissioning priorities that will guide our work with providers.

Section 4 | Provider markets in the borough

4.1.a Home care - summary

£8.2m

The council spends approximately **£8.2 million** per annum on home care.



There are **100 home care providers** in the borough according to the Wokingham Capacity Tracker document.



This equates to over **6,000 hours** per week for council-commissioned homecare.



The Council works with **25 home care providers** across the borough.



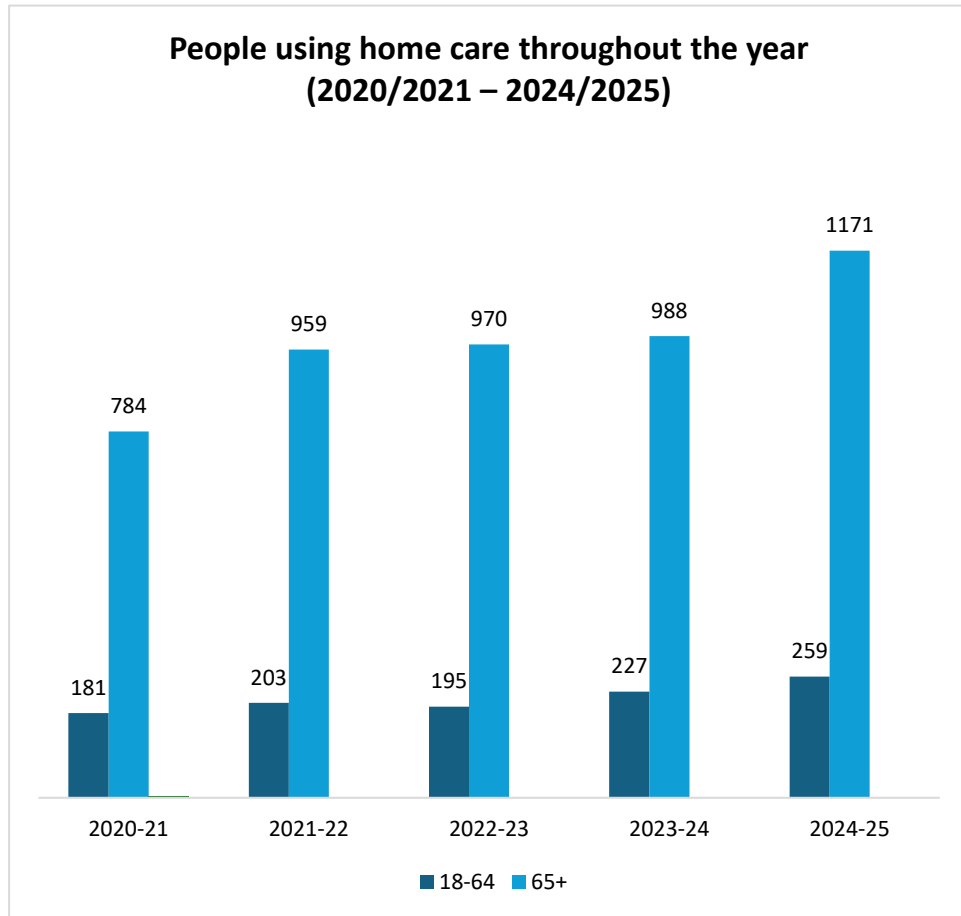
The Council currently supports approximately over **700 people at any one time** via our home care services.



All home care providers we work with aim to work in a personalised and **outcomes-based way** to promote independence and reablement where possible.

Section 4 | Provider markets in the borough

4.1.b Home care - current and historic provision



During 2024-25 the council supported 1,430 people (*please note self-funded care is in addition to this, self-funder detail can be found in Section 3*).



The number of people using home care services has increased year on year, rising from 965 people in 2020-21 to 1,430 in 2024-25 (approximately 48%). This reflects growing demand for care and support delivered at home.



Residents aged 65+ account for the majority of home care usage, with numbers increasing from 988 in 23-24 to 1,171 people in 2024-25. This trend aligns with our local ageing population and increasing complexity of need.



Use of home care among adults aged 18-64 has grown by over 40% since 2020-21. This indicates rising demand for community-based support among working-age adults, highlighting the need to expand and adapt home care provision for this group.

Section 4 | Provider markets in the borough

4.1.b Home care - current and historic provision

Care hours by care group - total hours in year (2020/2021 - 2024/2025)

Primary support reason	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25
Physical support	221,102	247,228	257,112	270,861	280,671
Memory and cognition support	16,340	24,701	24,357	37,257	34,451
Sensory support	11,901	16,931	16,040	13,584	13,947
Learning disability support	4,156	6,618	6,476	8,010	8,872
Mental health support	4,261	3,178	3,645	5,288	7,172
Social support	1,983	1,595	1,212	556	4,855
Carers	21	408	549	883	2,592
Not reported	4,344	16,722	4,797	838	2,100
Grand Total	264,107	317,380	314,186	337,276	354,659



Total weekly care hours per week increased by 34% from 2020-21 to 354,659 in 2024-25.



Physical support remains the dominant driver of demand, accounting for the vast majority of care hours each year.



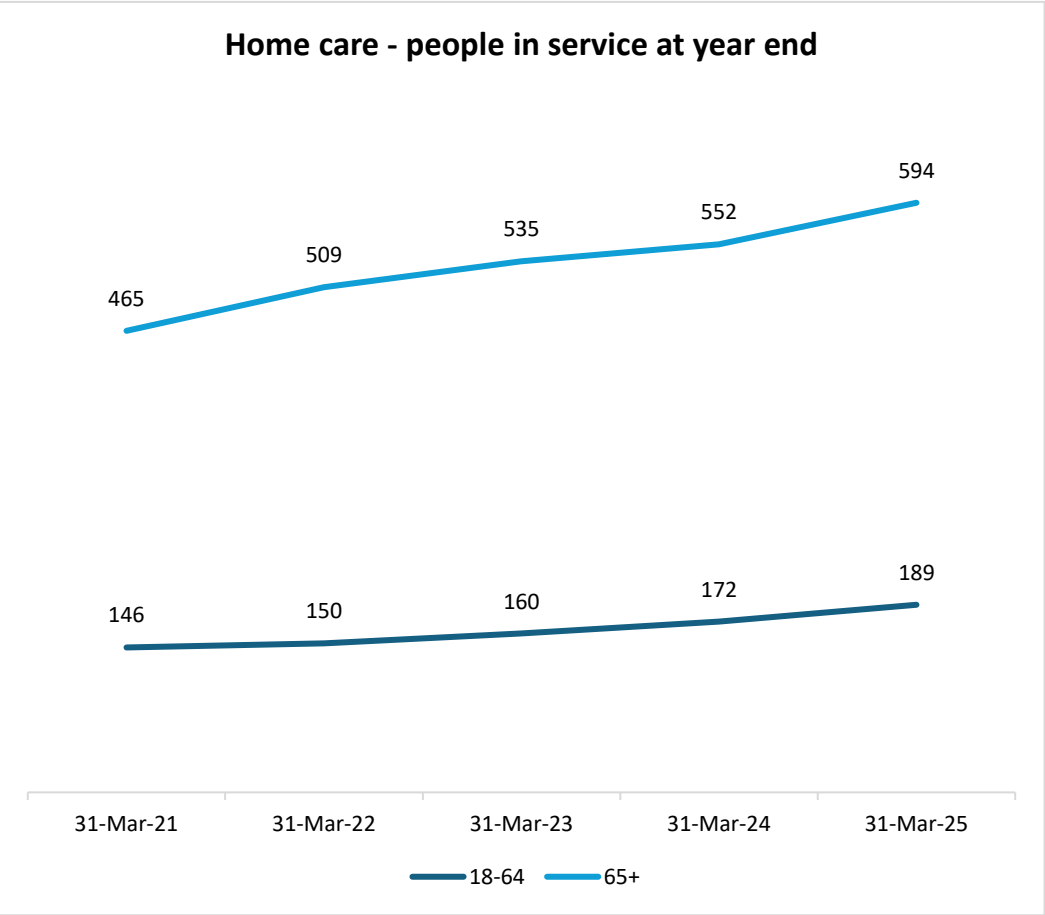
Learning disability support has more than doubled over the 5-year period, indicating a rising demand for tailored home care support.



Mental health-related home care has risen, suggesting increasing recognition of mental health support needs within home care packages.

Section 4 | Provider markets in the borough

4.1.b Home care - current and historic provision



More people are accessing home care services in the last 5 years, with 783 people receiving a service as of 31 March 2025.



Over the past 5 years, 18-64 group increased by 43 people (30%) and the 65+ group increasing by 129 people (28%).



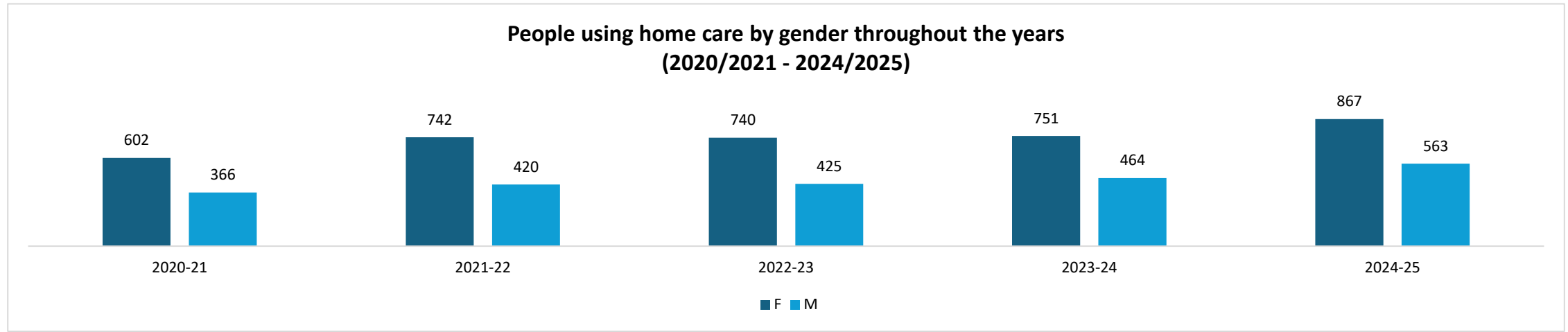
There has been approximately a 9% increase when comparing all people in receipt of home care services from 31 March 2024 to 31 March 2025.







Approximately 80% of people who use home-care services are aged 65+.

Section 4 | Provider markets in the borough

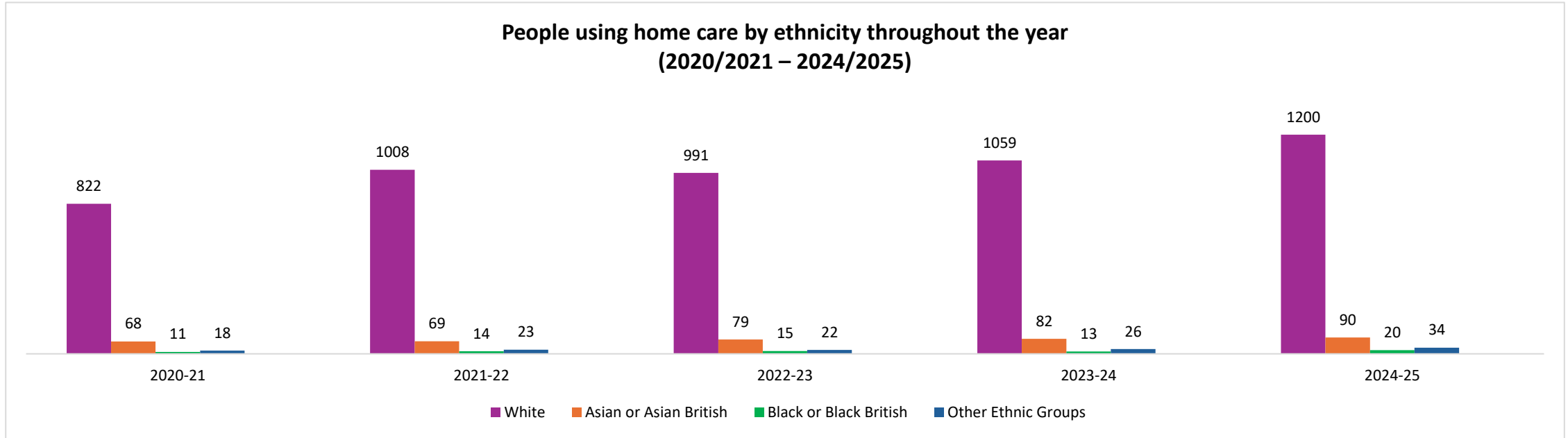
4.1.b Home care - current and historic provision



-  Across the past 5 years, more women than men have used home care services, with a total of 3,702 female users compared to 2,238 male users.
-  Male user numbers have increased proportionately faster over the period, rising from 366 to 563 (an increase of over 50%), while female numbers increased from 602 to 867 (about 44%).
-  The gender profile of home care users broadly mirrors the borough's population split, where the resident population is roughly evenly balanced between males and females (about 49% male and 51% female) according to recent estimates. However, the slightly higher proportion of female users using home care services likely reflects the fact that older age groups include relatively more women due to longer life expectancy.
-  The gender profile of people using home care services reinforces the importance of ensuring the workforce is appropriately skilled, flexible and responsive to differing needs and preferences, including delivering person-centred care that is sensitive to gender, age and cultural considerations.

Section 4 | Provider markets in the borough

4.1.b Home care - current and historic provision



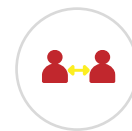
People from White ethnic backgrounds account for the largest proportion of home care service users, with numbers consistently above 80% of total users.



Care use among identifying as either Asian, Black or other ethnic groups have grown by approximately 45% over the last 5 years.



Black or Black British users remain a very small proportion, with 20 people in 2024-25.



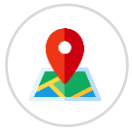
The ethnic breakdown of home care users is not in line with the borough's population, with certain groups underrepresented relative to local demographics. This needs to be an on-going part of service development.

Section 4 | Provider markets in the borough

4.1.c Home care - mapping of provision by people using homecare services

The Council has developed a GIS mapping tool to show where care is delivered across the borough. The mapping tool allows Commissioners to ascertain how providers are spread across the Borough and allows there to be meaningful discussion around rounds as well as efficiencies and allowing for packages to be picked up.

The maps on this page show the location of people receiving home care, not areas where home care is exclusively available.



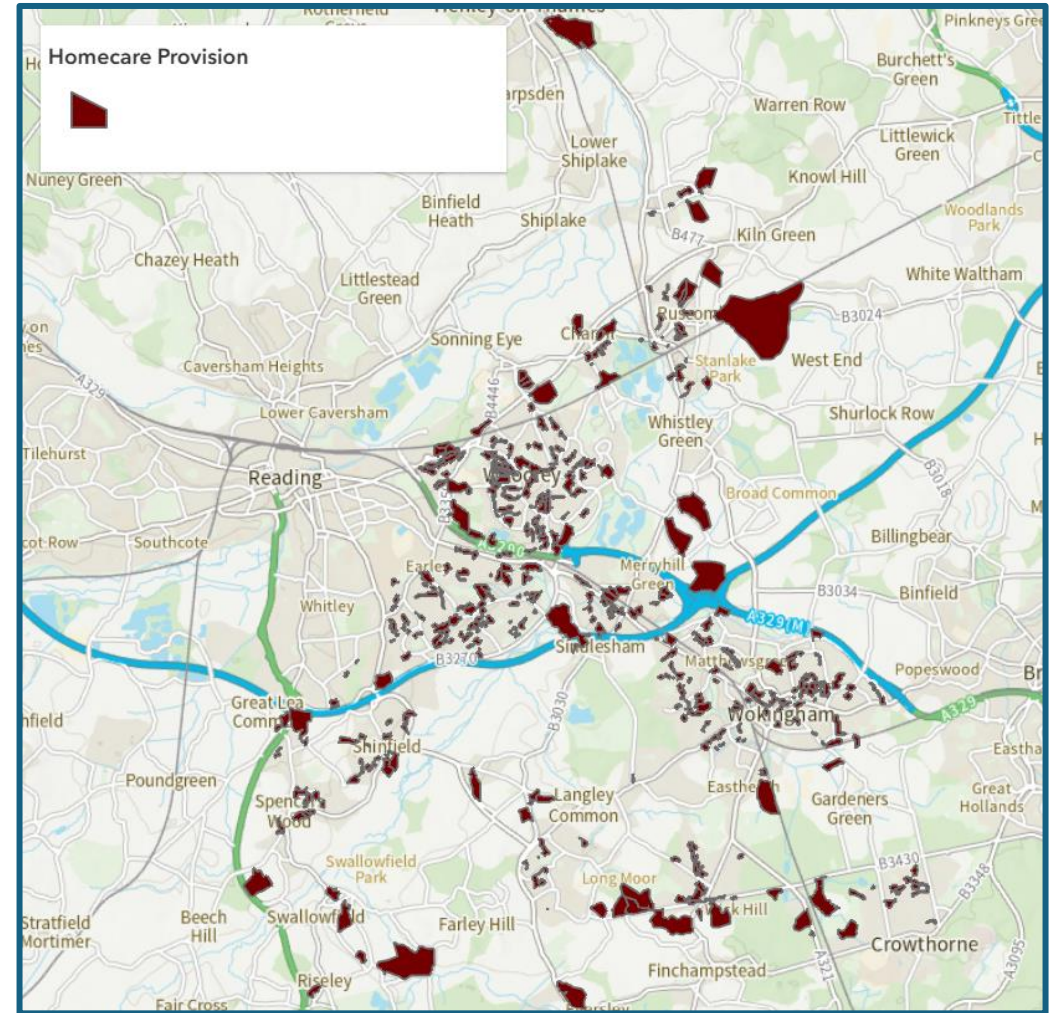
The GIS mapping shows home care providers are well distributed throughout Wokingham Borough, including the rural areas, ensuring residents have available provision.



With providers spread across the borough, this supports more efficient and responsive home care delivery. This geographic coverage helps ensure that residents can receive timely visits and a range of services close to where they live.



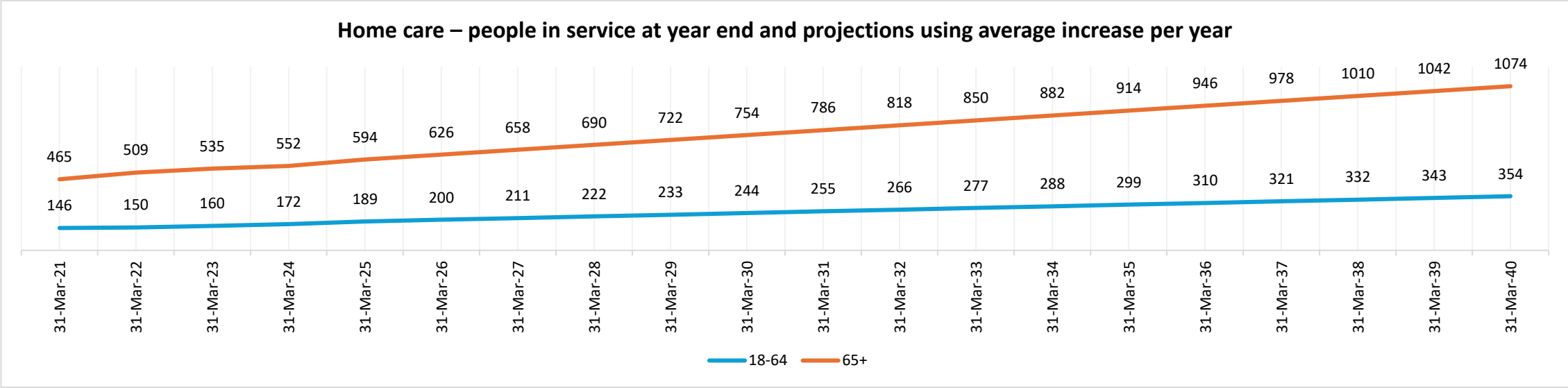
Providers are encouraged to ensure that they operate in the most efficient way including reducing travel time for staff.



GIS map of people receiving home care in the borough, 2025

Section 4 | Provider markets in the borough

4.1.d Home care - future demand projections



Average growth per year	
18 - 64	+11 people per year
65+	+32 people per year



Projections for home care show growth from 146 to 354 for people aged 18-64 and from 465 to 1,074 for ages 65+ between 2021 and 2040, indicating increasing demand across all age groups.



Local services will need to expand capacity, increase staffing, and allocate more resources. The projections for the 65+ group highlights increased demand for elderly care, particularly in areas like Physical Support and Memory & Cognition.

Section 4 | Provider markets in the borough

4.1.e Home care - commissioning priorities

1

We will continue to develop and embed our new Care and Support Framework, ensuring home care services are designed to meet the needs of residents and help them live as independently as possible.

2

The market has developed across wider parts of the borough, resulting in appropriate provision borough-wide; as a result, commissioning will no longer be undertaken on a geographic zonal basis.

3

Day to day, any packages which cannot be taken by framework providers will be offered to non-framework providers who can meet people's care and support needs.

4

Commissioners will work with providers to regularly measure KPIs, address emerging market issues, and explore outcome-based feedback tools to better understand the impact of care on people using services.

5

We will work alongside providers to ensure there is appropriate provision at an affordable rate.

6

We aim for all homecare providers to incorporate reablement elements into care models, working alongside therapists where needed, to maximise people's independence in the community.

7

Block hours contracts with providers have proved successful and may continue to be used in future at critical times to secure capacity in the market.

8

An increase in the use of technology, from care assessment through to delivery of services will be required to help residents to maintain their independence.

Section 4 | Provider markets in the borough

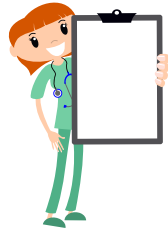
4.2.a Care homes (residential and nursing) - summary

Residential



There are currently 12 CQC registered residential care homes across the borough.

Nursing



There are currently 8 CQC registered nursing homes across the borough.



There are approximately 347 care staff employed, with 38 having international staff licences.

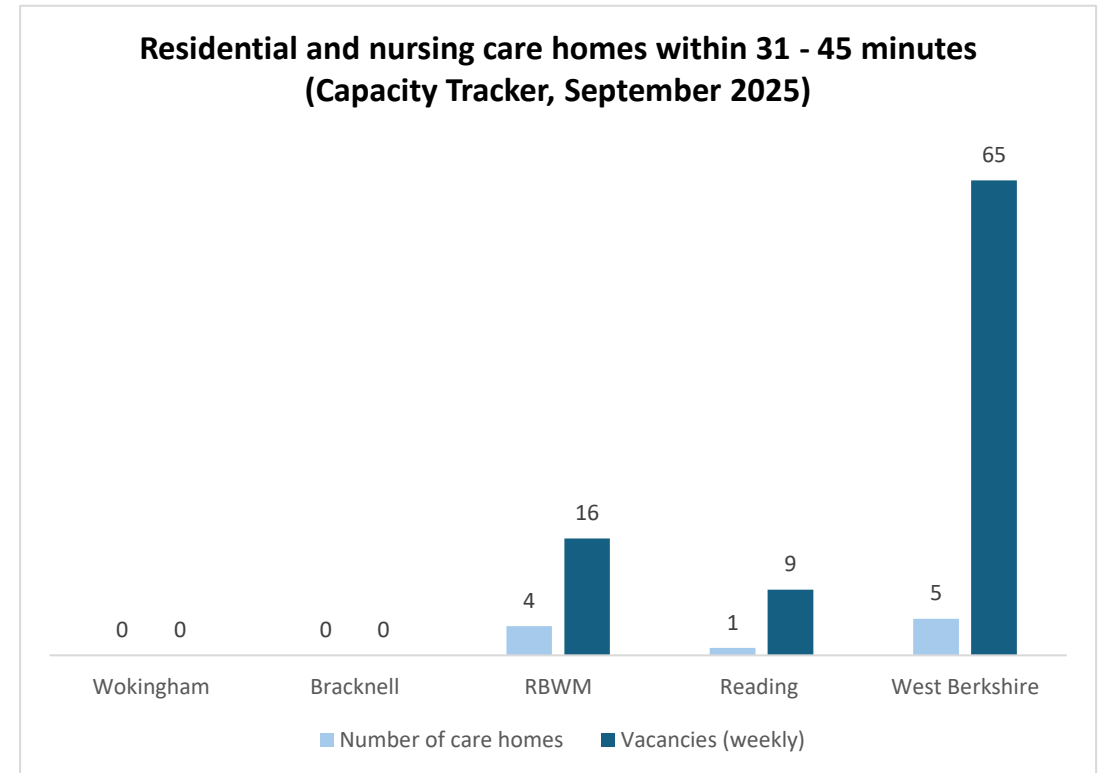
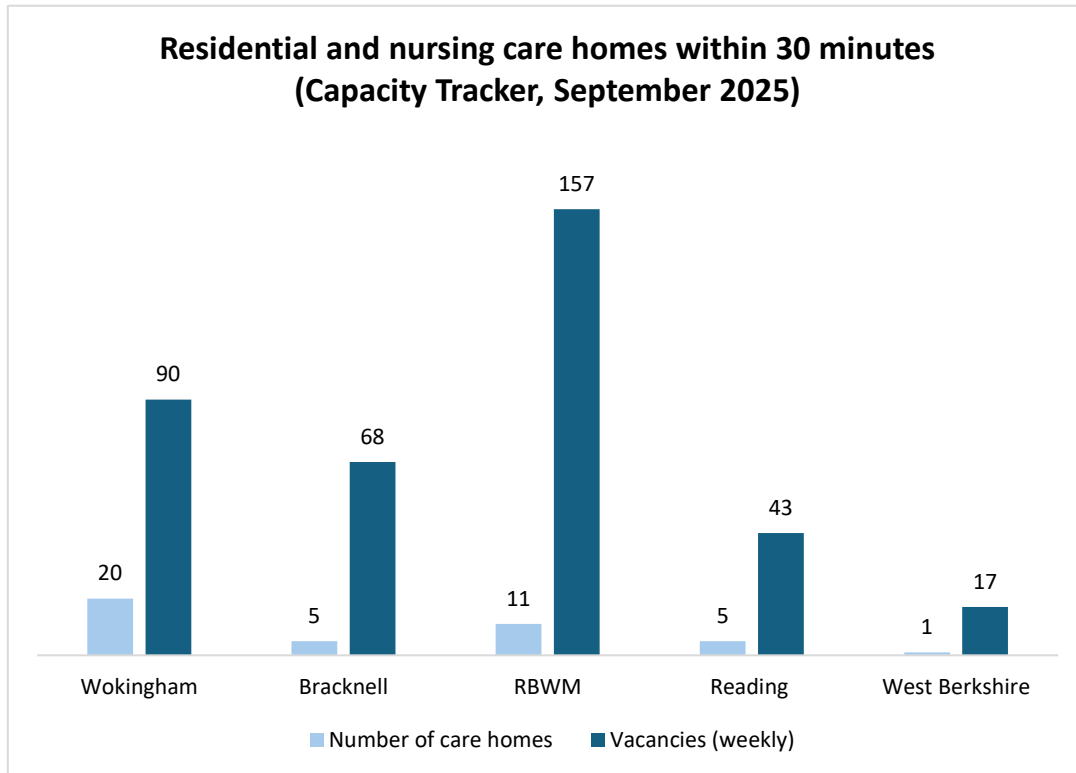


There are approximately 414 care staff employed, with 21 having international staff licences.

Section 4 | Provider markets in the borough

4.2.b Care homes (residential and nursing) - total number of care homes and total number of beds within 30 and 45 minutes

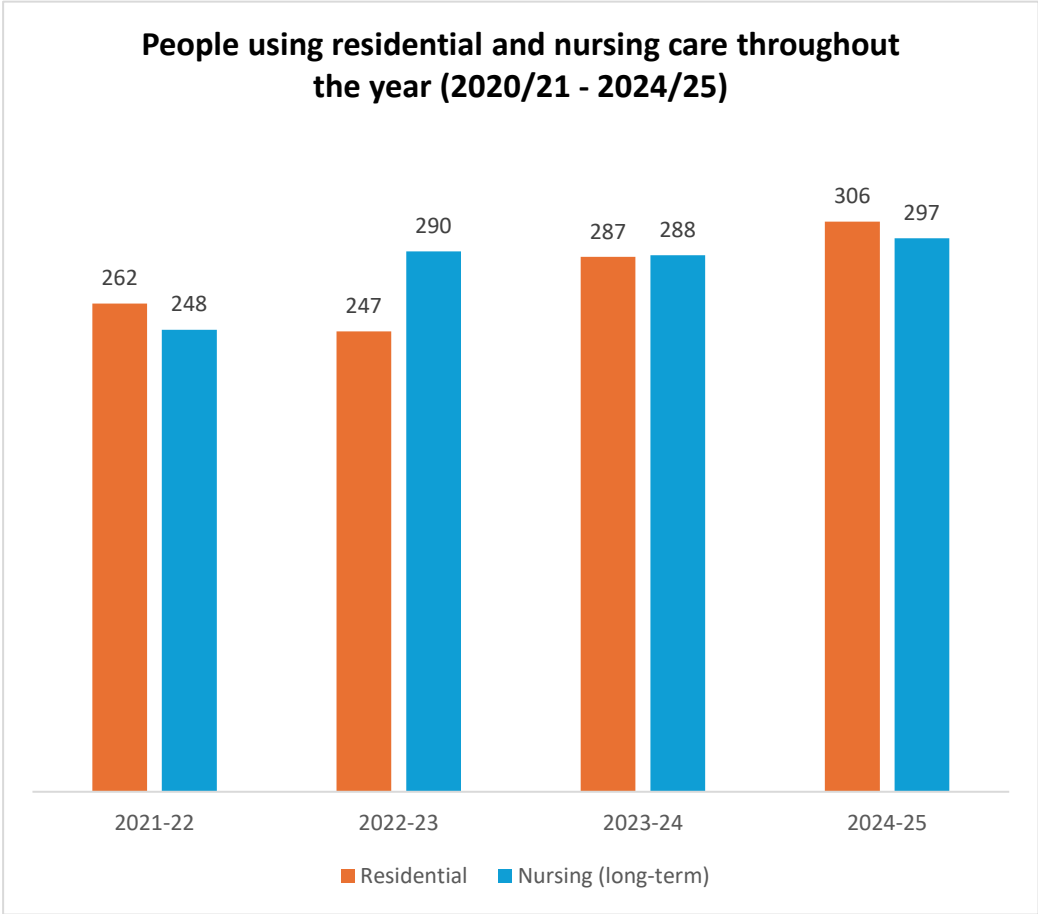
These graphs show the total number of nursing and residential care homes and weekly bed vacancies within 30 minutes and 31-45 minutes of Wokingham. To better understand local pressures and opportunities, we are reviewing needs alongside the available capacity data through the Capacity Tracker. This will help identify where there may be gaps in provision and where additional capacity may be required to meet current and future demand.



Caveat: figures may exclude some council-run homes, very small homes (fewer than 10 beds), newly opened homes, or higher-cost homes, which could affect availability.

Section 4 | Provider markets in the borough

4.2.c Care homes (residential and nursing) - current and historic provision



Use of both placement types has increased across the period. Residential placements rose from 262 to 306 (+16.8%), while nursing placements increased from 248 to 297 (+19.8%), indicating growing demand for long-term care provision overall.



A total of 602 people entered care homes in Wokingham in 2024-25, with 306 entering residential care and 297 entering nursing care.



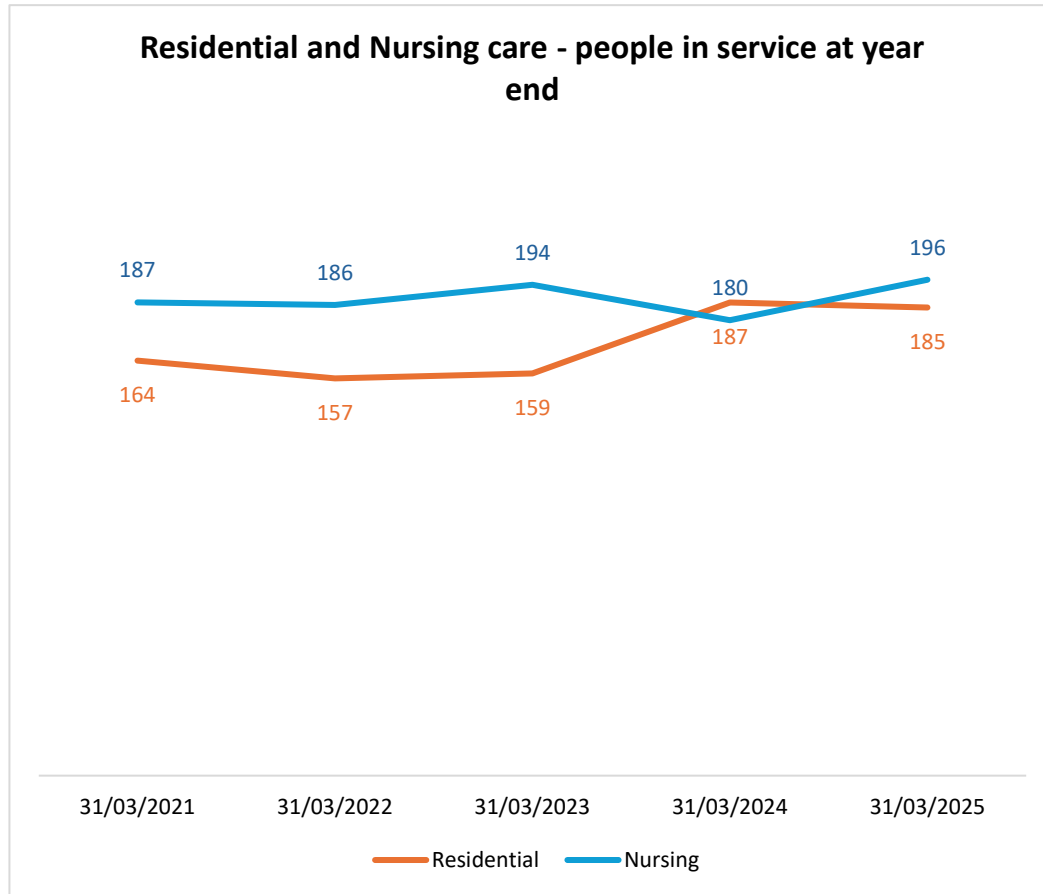
The biggest increase in nursing (long-term) service use occurred between 2021-22 and 2022-23, when nursing placements increased from 248 to 290 (+16.9%), representing the largest single-year change in the dataset.



The largest increase in residential care was between 2022-23 and 2023-24, when residential placements rose from 247 to 287 (+16.2%).

Section 4 | Provider markets in the borough

4.2.c Care homes (residential and nursing) - current and historic provision



More people are accessing care home services in the last 5 years, with 318 people receiving a service as of 31 March 2025.



There has been approximately a 13% increase when comparing all people in receipt of residential care services from 31 March 2021 to 31 March 2025.



There has been approximately a 5% increase when comparing all people in receipt of nursing care services from 31 March 2021 to 31 March 2025.



The rising number of people accessing nursing and residential care over the past 5 years indicates increasing pressure on adult social care resources, suggesting a need for proactive planning to ensure sufficient capacity and sustainable service provision

Section 4 | Provider markets in the borough

4.2.c Care homes (residential and nursing) - current and historic provision

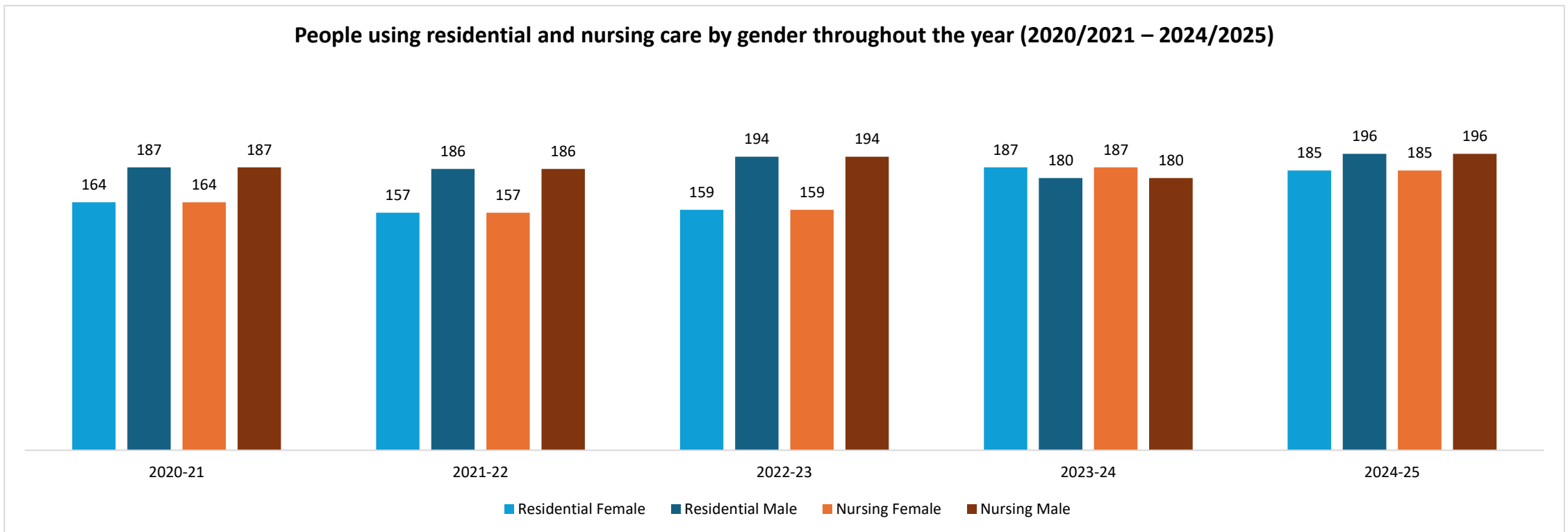


Across both residential and nursing care, there were 196 men and 185 women in each setting for 2024-25.



The largest year-on-year increase occurred in residential care females from 2022-23 to 2023-24 (+28), while nursing care males had their biggest rise over the same period (+14).

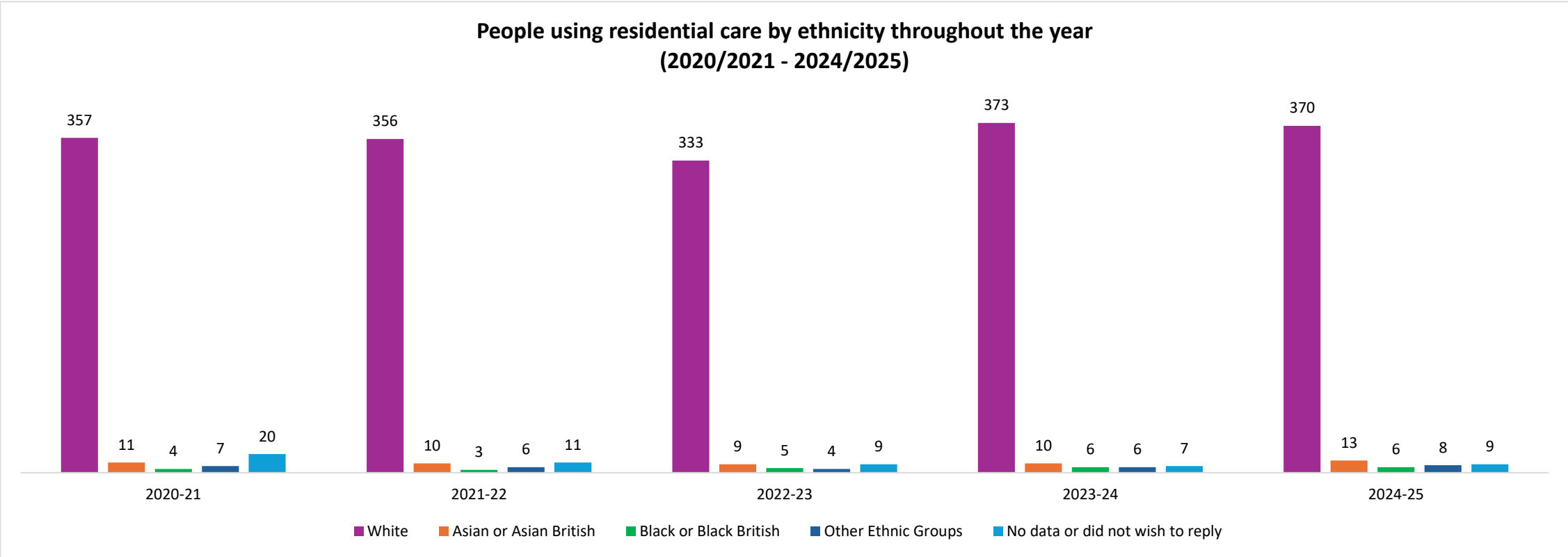
People using residential and nursing care by gender throughout the year (2020/2021 – 2024/2025)



Section 4 | Provider markets in the borough

4.2.c Care homes (residential and nursing) - current and historic provision

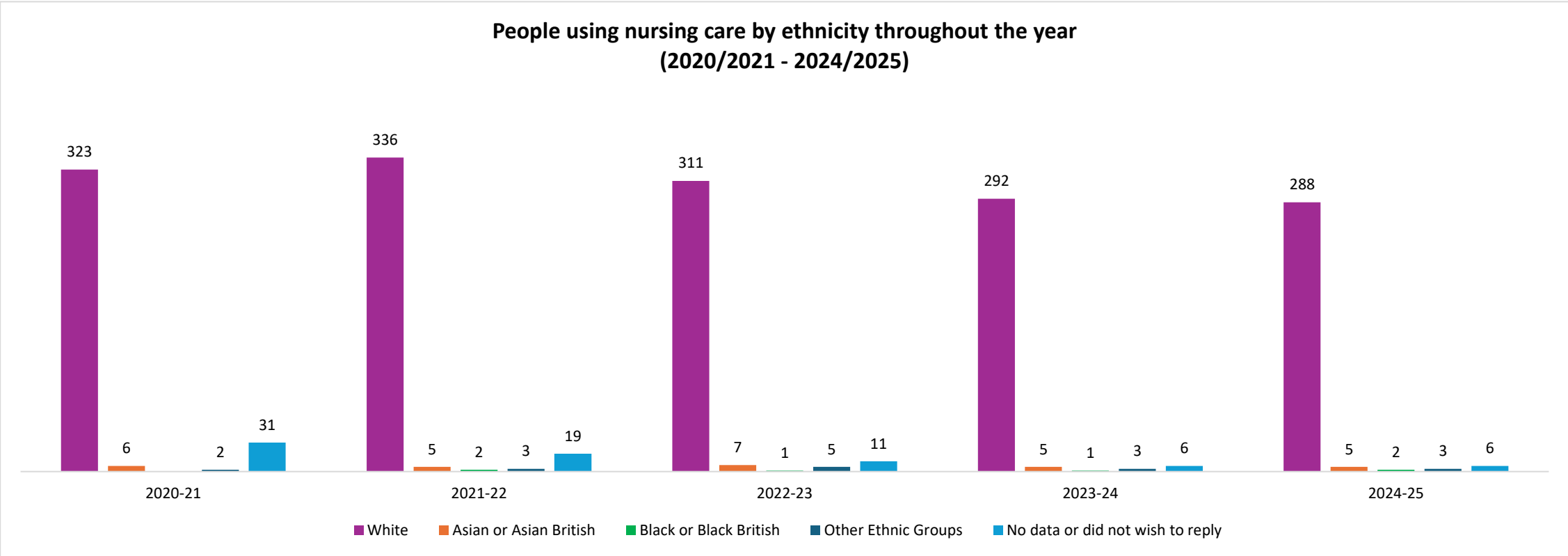
The vast majority of residential care residents are White, with 370 of 406 people in 2024–25 (around 91%) identifying as White. Residents from Asian, Black, and other ethnic backgrounds make up only around 7% of placements, which is not representative of the borough’s overall population. This could reflect barriers to accessing care homes, highlighting the need for investment in culturally appropriate domiciliary care or increased support for ethnic minority residents.



Section 4 | Provider markets in the borough

4.2.c Care homes (residential and nursing) - current and historic provision

The vast majority of residential care residents are White, with 288 of 304 people in 2024–25 (around 95%) identifying as White. Residents from Asian, Black, and other ethnic backgrounds make up only around 3% of placements, which is not representative of the borough’s overall population. This could reflect barriers to accessing nursing homes, highlighting the need for investment in culturally appropriate nursing care or increased support for ethnic minority residents.



4.2.d Care homes (residential and nursing) - financial information

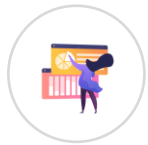
New residential and nursing care packages in Wokingham Borough currently average over £1,000 per week.



Care fees have been increasing steadily over the past several years, reflecting national trends and local market pressures.



Wokingham's geography and location mean that other local authorities buy care in the borough, while a high number of self-funders also affects care home pricing. Additionally, the borough's ageing population, with a large number of people aged 85+ and living with dementia, increases demand for specialist care.



Average weekly care package for residential - £1,198.45 and average weekly care package for nursing - £1,093.30 (B13 report, November 2025).

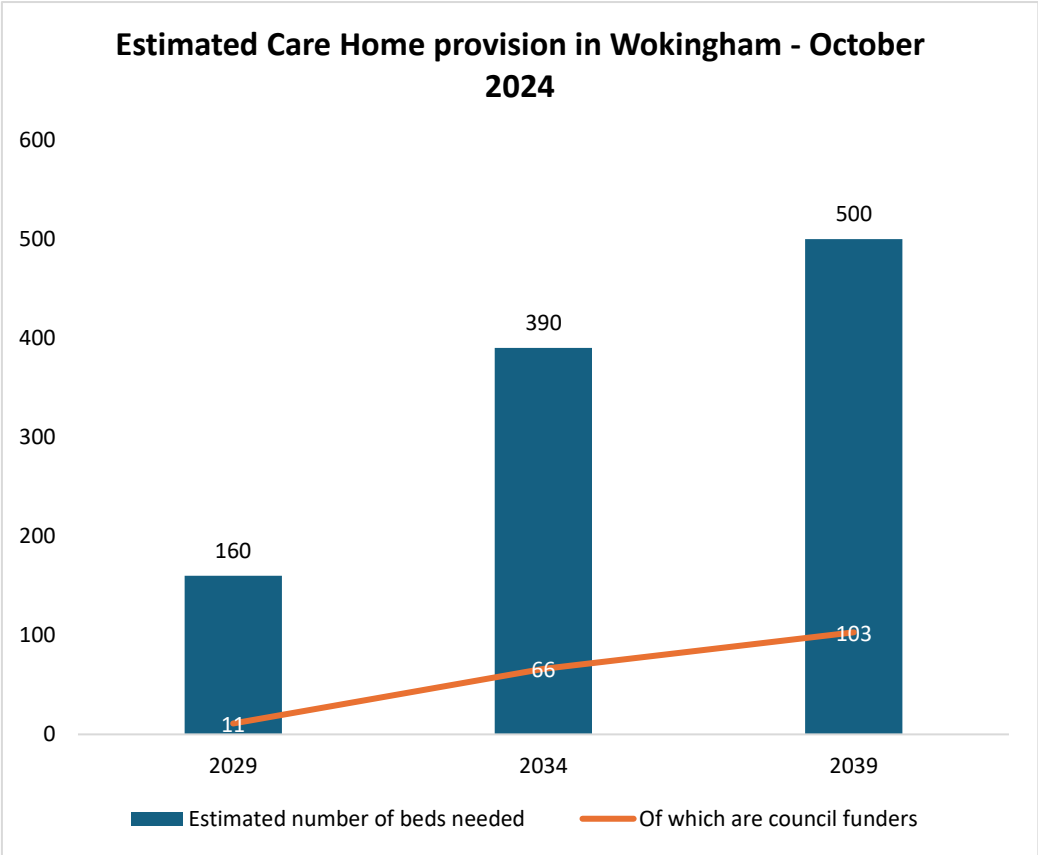
These factors influence commissioning decisions, sustainability of care provision, and the potential value of investing in council-run care homes to improve affordability and choice.



Section 4 | Provider markets in the borough

4.2.e Care homes - future demand projections

The graph shows projections for care home provision in Wokingham, developed by the service in collaboration with Housing LIN, including estimates for self-funders.



Housing LIN projections project a substantial increase in demand for care home provision, with capacity needs rising by around 160 beds by 2029, increasing to 500 additional beds by 2039.



Between 2029 and 2034, projected demand for care home beds more than doubles (from 160 to 390 beds), highlighting increased pressure in the medium term.



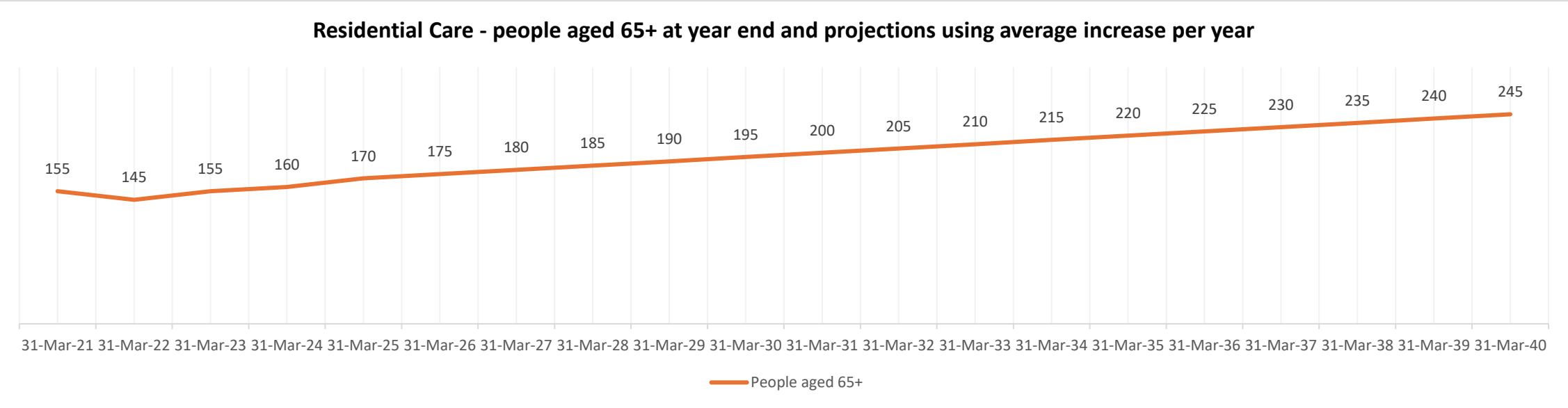
Of the projected totals, the Council-funded requirement is estimated at around 7% of demand by 2029, rising to 17% by 2034 and around 21% by 2039.



The scale and pace of growth indicates a need to consider future market capacity and engagement with providers to meet projected demand.

Section 4 | Provider markets in the borough

4.2.e Care homes (residential) - future demand projections for council-funded people



Average growth per year	
65+	+5 people per year



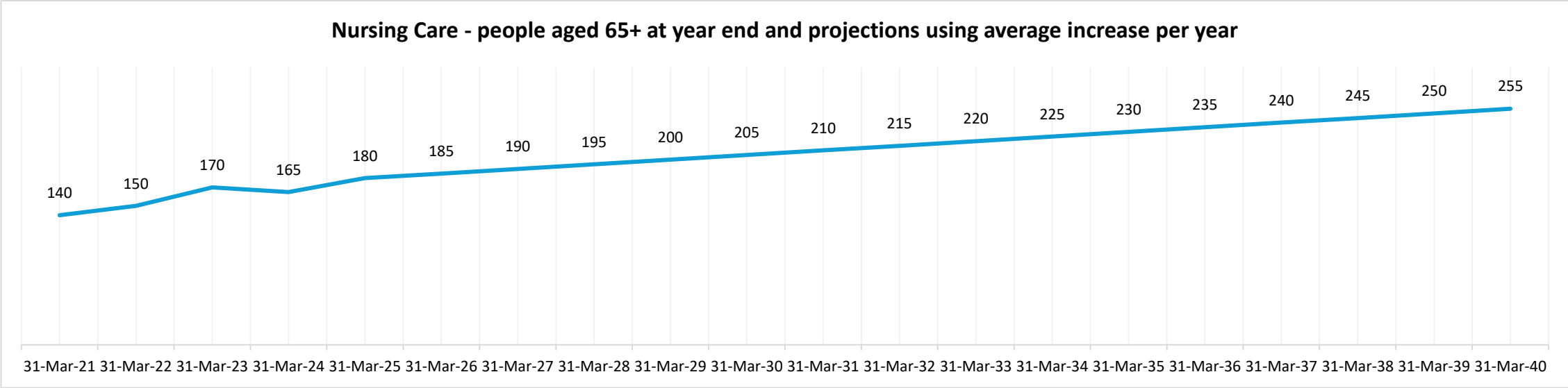
The graph above provides a forecast on the number of people within a residential care service, based on existing demand trends.



This shows that an increase in demand from 155 at the end of 2021-22 to potentially 245 by the end of 2039-40. This increase of around 5 people entering the service per year, reflects a growing need for residential care placements within the borough.

Section 4 | Provider markets in the borough

4.2.e Care homes (nursing) - future demand projections for council-funded people



Average growth per year	
65+	+5 people per year



Nursing care projections indicate that the number of people in long-term nursing support could increase from 140 at year end of 2021 to around 225 by the end of 2040. This estimates around 5 new people per year using the service



This suggests that local services will need to expand capacity (units and beds), increase staffing, and allocate more resources to support people entering nursing care services.

Section 4 | Provider markets in the borough

4.2.f Care homes - pipeline

We currently have 5 care homes in our pipeline, with a total of 325 care home beds expected.

Application (Approved)	Beds	Operator/Applicant	Do the Council work with this provider?
Travis Perkins site, Woodley.	68	Propco (Woodley Green) Ltd	Operator not known
The Mount, Wargrave (demolish and rebuild).	65	Aedifica UK Limited	Operator not known
Toutley, Winnersh.	68	Wokingham Borough Council	Y - Paused
Evendons Lane, Wokingham.	64	Bewley Homes PLC	Operator not known
Oak Dale, Lower Wokingham Road, Crowthorne.	60	Barchester Homes/Crowthorne Care Ltd.	Y - Barchester (West Oak)
Total	325		
Total excluding Toutley	257		

Section 4 | Provider markets in the borough

4.2.g Care homes - commissioning priorities

1

Based on the projected demand and current supply, the Council considers that there are sufficient care home beds to meet the needs of both Council-funded clients and self-funders up to 2029.

2

We will prioritise the commissioning of affordable care home provision that delivers good quality outcomes and represents value for money, ensuring sustainability in the context of ongoing financial pressures.

3

We will continue to support geographically flexible purchasing, including the use of care homes located near to Wokingham but outside the borough boundary, where this offers choice, good quality care, and value for money.

4

We will support self-funders to better understand their future care options. This includes promoting early planning and providing information and advice to help residents make informed decisions.

5

We will explore the development of a potential care home framework to support consistent quality standards and improved engagement with the care home market.

6

We will engage in early discussions with developers to influence future care home provision, ensuring that any new developments align with local need, commissioning priorities, and market sustainability.

7

We will work with care homes to ensure provision can meet the current and projected needs of residents across the borough.

Section 4 | Provider markets in the borough

4.3.a Extra Care - summary



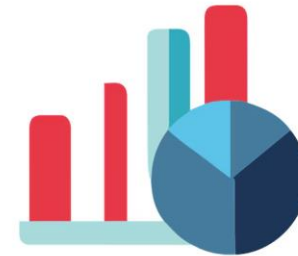
Extra care housing provides self-contained homes with care and support available on-site.

£1.6m

The Council spends approximately **£1.6m** per annum on Optalis extra care provision.



This support enables people to live independently while receiving flexible, person-centred care.



There are 25 extra care schemes across Berkshire, equating to 1,515 flats.



Extra care housing promotes wellbeing through social interaction and community facilities and helps to prevent or delay the need for residential care.



The Council owns 4 extra care schemes in the borough. This equates to 176 flats (combination of 1 and 2 bed-room flats).

Section 4 | Provider markets in the borough

4.3.b Extra Care - Optalis

Wokingham Borough Council works in partnership with Optalis to deliver high-quality extra care services for residents. This partnership supports a coordinated, preventative approach that promotes independence and wellbeing.



The Council commissions and oversees extra care services, while Optalis provide a 24/7 on-site presence to deliver care and support across 4 extra care schemes, working in partnership with the Council and housing providers (see next page for scheme detail).



The partnership enables flexible, person-centred care that can respond quickly as residents' needs change.

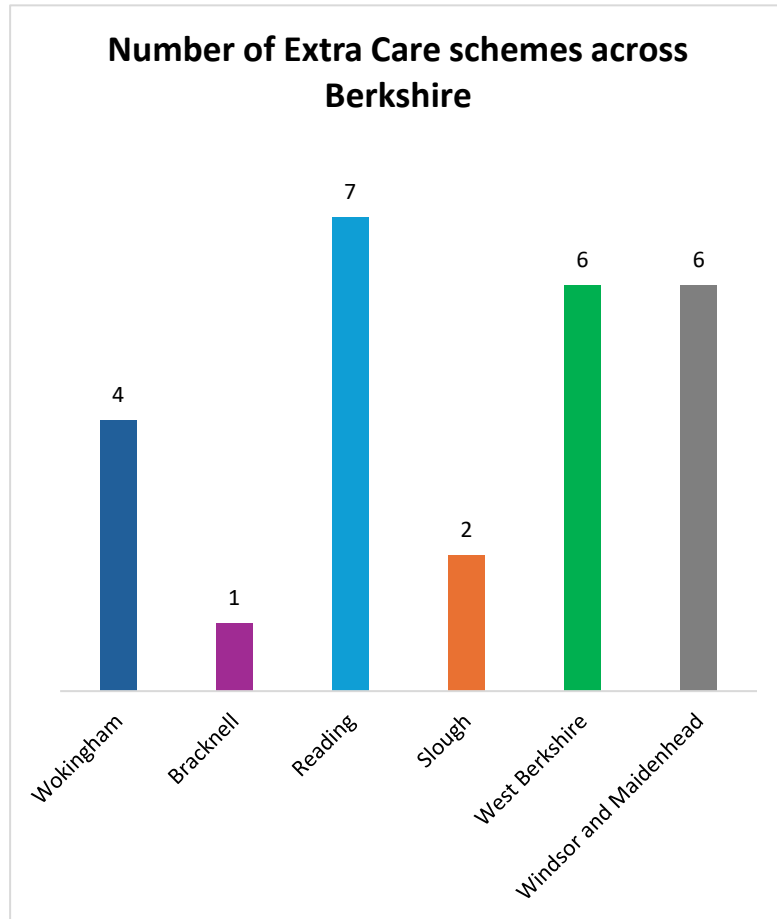


Joint working supports consistent quality and effective use of resources. As Optalis is 100% Council owned, it means that any financial surplus that is generated is returned to the Council to invest back into local services.

Through this partnership, the Council and Optalis ensure that extra care housing delivers positive outcomes for residents by promoting independence, safety, and wellbeing, while enabling people to remain in their own homes for longer with the right support at the right time.

Section 4 | Provider markets in the borough

4.3.c Extra Care - schemes across Berkshire



Area	Schemes	Flats	Names and number of flats per scheme
Wokingham	4	176	<i>Alexandra Place (64), Beeches Manor (18), Fosters (34), The Birches (60)</i>
Bracknell	1	51	<i>Birch Place (51) - link</i>
Reading	7	417	<i>Beechwood Grove (43) - link, Cedar Court (40) - link, Charles Clore Court (47) - link, Chimney Court (57) - link, Cornerstones (41) - link, Huntley Place (129) - link, Oak Tree House (60) - link</i>
Slough	2	126	<i>Northampton Place (56) - link, The Pines (70) - link</i>
West Berkshire	6	339	<i>Alice Bye Court (51) - link, Audley Inglewood (91) - link, Audrey Needham House (39) - link, Pegasus Homes (60) - link, Redwood House (46) - link, William House (52) - link</i>
Windsor and Maidenhead	5	406	<i>Audley Sunningdale Park (125) - link, Lady Elizabeth House (29) - link, Lynwood Village (150) - link, Maudsley House (42) - link, Swift House (60) - link</i>

Assisted living homes & extra care housing in Wokingham, Berkshire : [HousingCare](#)

Section 4 | Provider markets in the borough

4.3.d Extra Care - Council-owned extra care homes

There are **4 extra care** housing schemes in Wokingham Borough (p. 58) operated by Optalis

Alexandra Place:
64 flats. Built in 2011. Sizes 1 bedroom, 2 bedroom
Housing Provider: Central and Cecil

Beeches Manor:
18 flats. Built in 2012. Sizes 1 bedroom
Housing Provider: Housing 21

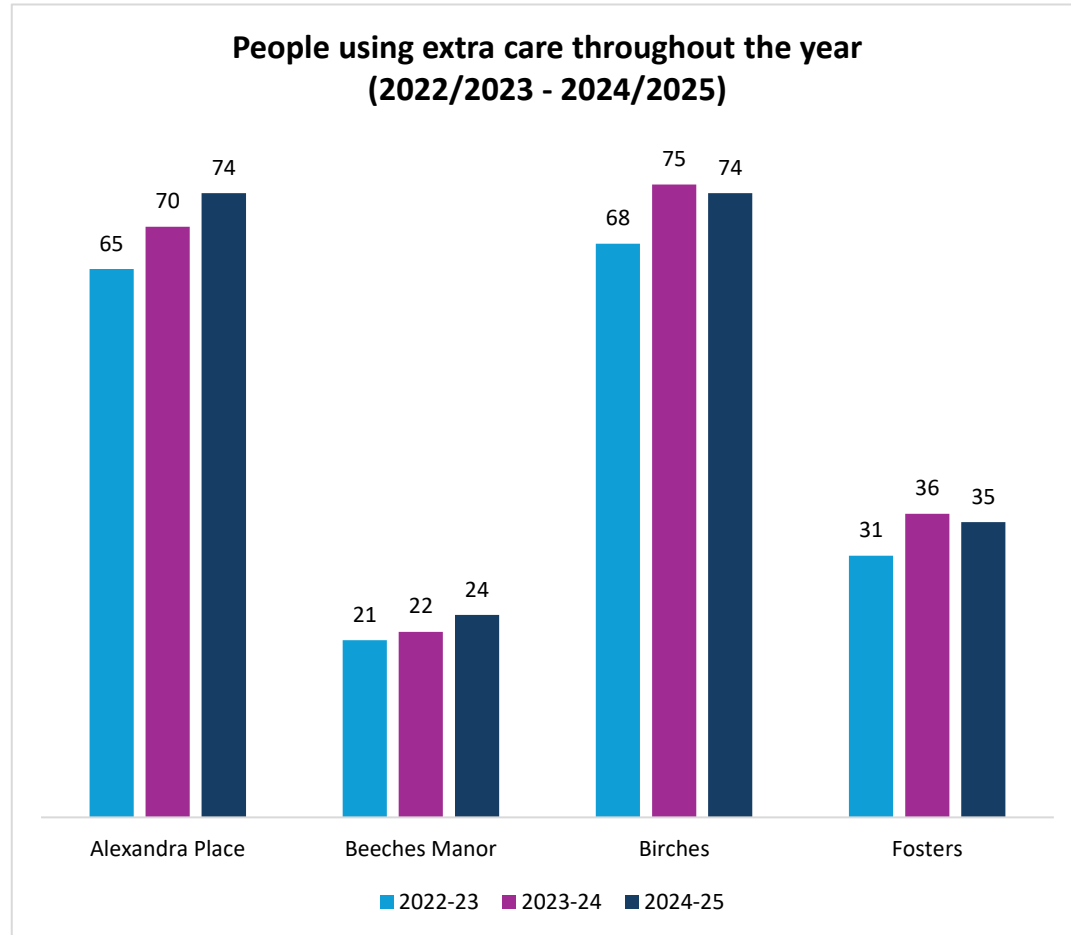
Fosters:
34 flats. Built in 2018. Sizes 1 bedroom
Housing Provider: Loddon Homes WBC

The Birches:
60 flats. Built in 2018. Sizes 1 bedroom, 2 bedroom
Housing Provider: Housing Solutions



176 flats across 4 Council-owned schemes

4.3.e WBC-owned extra care provision - current and historic provision

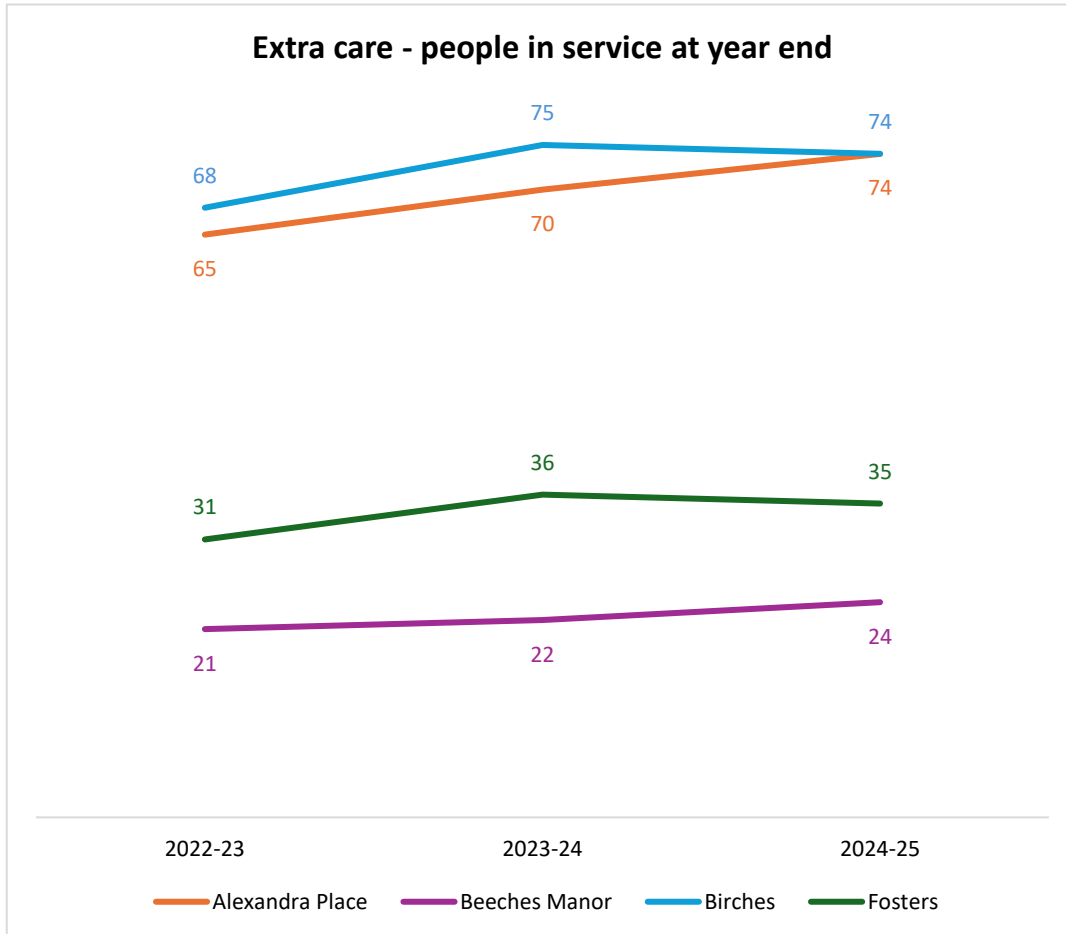


The number of council-funded residents living in extra care accommodation increased overall during the three-year period, rising from 185 in 2022-23 to 207 in 2024-25. This suggests increasing demand for extra care housing as an alternative to more traditional care and indicates that the council is making greater use of these schemes to support residents to live independently.

Alexandra Place has seen consistent growth. Numbers increased from 65 to 70 between 2022-23 and 2023-24 (7.7%) and rose again to 74 in 2024-25 (5.7%), indicating strong demand for the scheme and sustained high levels of occupancy. Beeches Manor has experienced gradual growth. Residents increased from 21 to 22 between 2022-23 and 2023-24 (4.8%), rising further to 24 in 2024-25 (9.1%), suggesting stable demand and improving utilisation of this smaller scheme.

Birches saw an initial increase followed by a small reduction. Numbers rose from 68 to 75 between 2022-23 and 2023-24 (10.3%), before decreasing slightly to 74 in 2024-25 (-1.3%). Despite this small reduction in the most recent year, occupancy remains higher than in 2022-23 and the scheme continues to support a large proportion of residents. Fosters also saw growth followed by a slight decrease. Residents increased from 31 to 36 between 2022-23 and 2023-24 (16.1%), before reducing slightly to 35 in 2024-25 (-2.8%), with the earlier increase indicating improved occupancy and the small reduction likely reflecting normal fluctuations in placements.

4.3.e WBC-owned extra care provision - current and historic provision



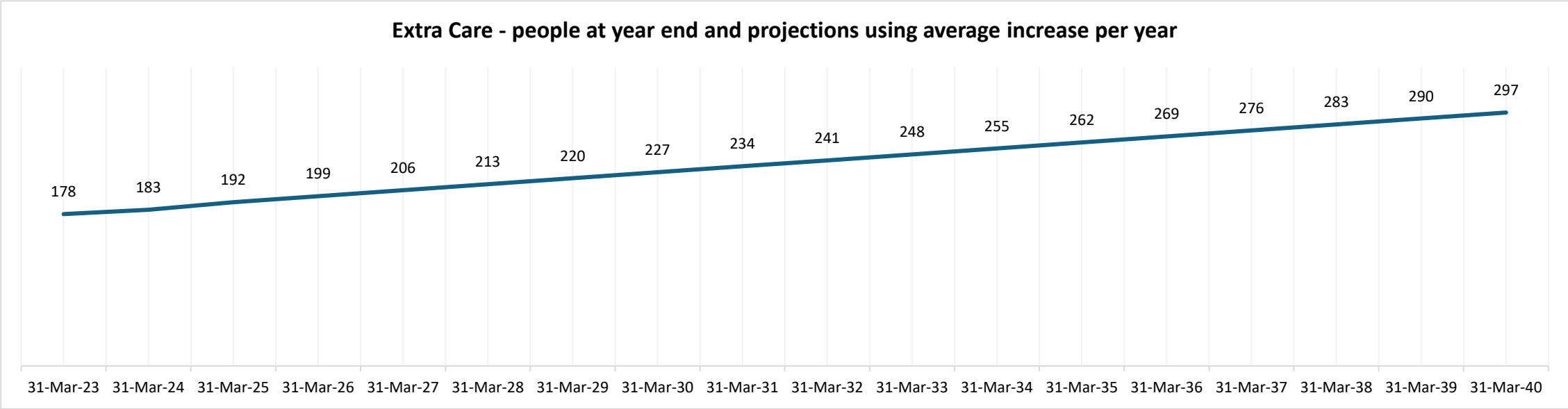
The year-end snapshot of council-funded residents living in extra care accommodation shows an overall increase over the period. Numbers rose from 185 residents on 31 March 2023 to 207 on 31 March 2025, an increase of 22 residents (11.9%), indicating growing use of extra care housing to support residents to live independently.

Alexandra Place has shown steady growth in the year-end position. The number of residents increased from 65 on 31 March 2023 to 74 on 31 March 2025, an increase of 9 residents (13.8%), indicating sustained demand and strong occupancy levels within the scheme. Beeches Manor has experienced moderate growth. Resident numbers increased from 21 on 31 March 2023 to 24 on 31 March 2025, an increase of 3 residents (14.3%), suggesting stable demand and improved utilisation of this smaller scheme.

Birches has remained broadly stable over the period. Numbers increased slightly from 68 on 31 March 2023 to 74 on 31 March 2025, representing an overall increase of 6 residents (8.8%), and it continues to support one of the largest numbers of residents across the borough’s extra care schemes. Fosters has also seen overall growth. Residents increased from 31 on 31 March 2023 to 35 on 31 March 2025, an increase of 4 residents (12.9%), indicating improved occupancy across the period.

Section 4 | Provider markets in the borough

4.3.f WBC-owned extra care provision - future demand projections



Average growth per year	
18 and 65+	+7 people per year



The graph above provides a forecast on the number of people within extra care, based on existing demand trends.



This shows that an increase in demand from 178 at the end of 2021-22 to potentially 297 by the end of 2039-40. This increase of around 7 people entering the service per year.

4.3.g Extra care - commissioning priorities

1

As the number of older people increases (and particularly those aged 85+), the number of older people with care and support needs will also increase. We therefore expect the demand for extra care to rise.

2

However, we will review the needs of our residents and the way we use extra care (and sheltered housing) as a viable alternative to residential care.

3

We are committed to ensuring a quality supply of Extra Care services across the borough, and to ensure the design of any Extra Care schemes meets the needs of our residents and the wider community.

4

This includes looking at how Extra Care can further enable people to remain independent and support those with higher levels of need, reducing social isolation.

5

A primary aim is that more people retain and enjoy maximum independence, receiving skilled and sensitive care and support to enable them so that they are able to enjoy the highest possible quality of life.

Section 4 | Provider markets in the borough

4.4.a Supported Living - summary

£16.1m

The council spends approximately **£16.1 million** per annum on supported living services.



There are **82 supported living providers** in the borough according to the Wokingham Capacity Tracker document.



This equates to over **8,000 hours** per week for council-commissioned supported living services.



The Council works with **13 supported living providers** via the current Care and Support Framework.

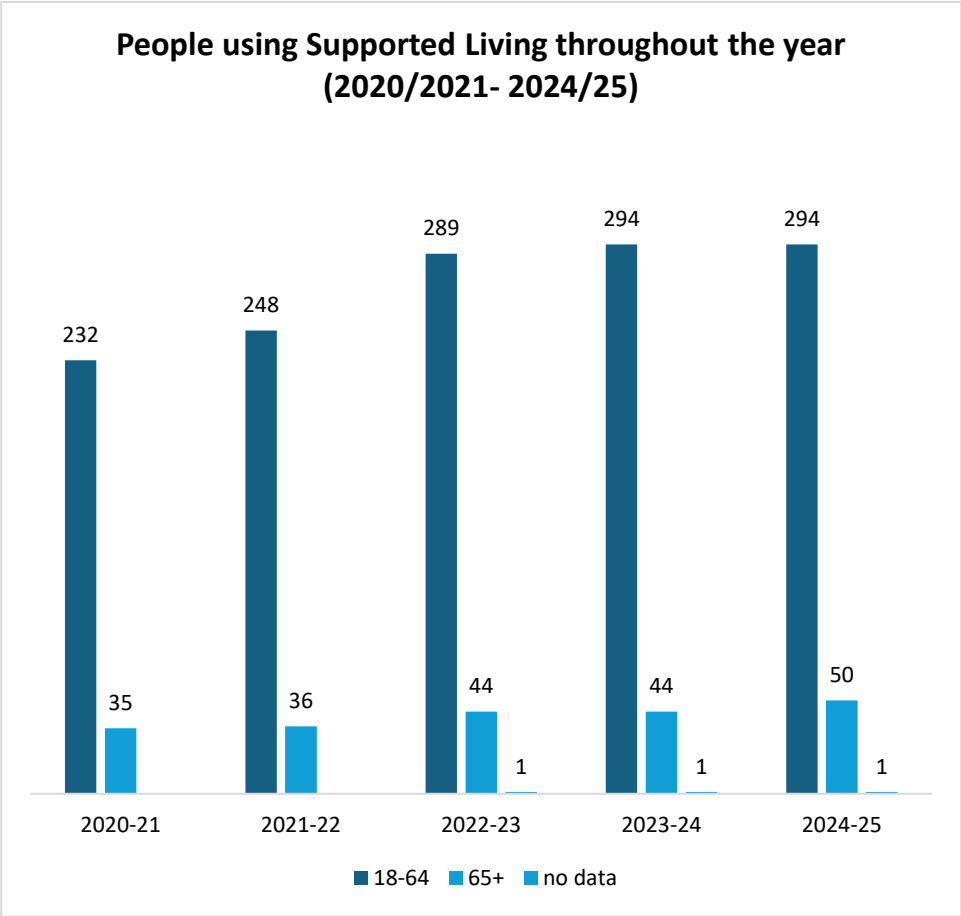


The Council currently supports approximately over **300 people** via supported living services.



All supported living providers we work with aim to work in a personalised and **outcomes-based way** to promote independence where possible.

4.4.b Supported Living - current and historic provision



During 2024-25 the council supported 345 people through supported living services.



The number of people using supported living services has increased year on year, by approximately 29% from 2020-21 to 2024-25. This reflects growing demand for supported living provision.



Residents aged 18-64 account for the majority of supporting living usage, with numbers increasing from 232 in 20-21 to 294 in 2024-25. This highlights the importance of ensuring supported living services are designed to promote independence, employment, and community participation for working-age adults.



Use of supported living for people aged 65+ has increased by approximately 27% over the 5-year period. The rising use of supported living by people aged 65+ highlights the need to ensure services are suitable for older residents, alongside continued demand from working-age adults.

Section 4 | Provider markets in the borough

4.4.b Supported Living- current and historic provision

Total care hours per year by care group (2022/2023 - 2024/2025)

Primary support reason	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25
Learning Disability Support	213,015	321,318	348,407
Mental Health Support	34,247	38,943	38,278
Physical Support	15,922	18,073	20,684
Carers	10,322	9,757	12,728
Sensory support	8,890	12,087	11,638
Social Support	626	768	690
Grand Total	283,022	400,946	432,425



Overall activity has increased significantly, by approximately 39% growth across the last 3 years. The scale of overall growth highlights rising system-wide demand and the need for ongoing planning to support people's independence and ensure service sustainability.



Learning Disability Support remains the primary driver of demand, increasing by approximately 64% growth across the last 3 years. The increase highlights the need to continue to expand and adapt services to meet people's growing and complex needs.



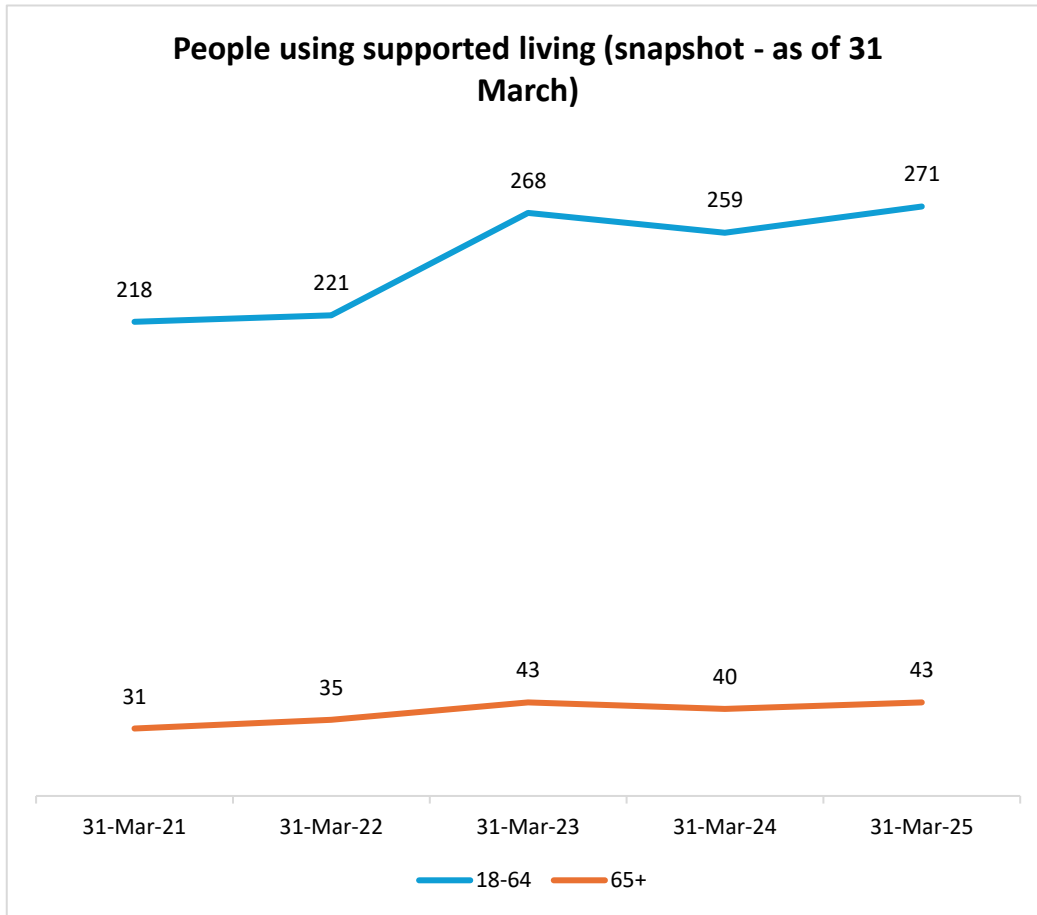
Mental health is the second most common primary support reason for supported living provision. This shows ongoing demand for mental health services, highlighting the importance of maintaining access and quality of support.



Physical Support needs show a steady upward trend, increasing from 15,922 to 20,684 (approximately 30% growth). This indicates the need for planning to support independence and daily living for this group.

Section 4 | Provider markets in the borough

4.4.b Supported Living- current and historic provision



The graph shows more people are accessing supported living services in the last 5 years, with 315 people receiving a service as of 31 March 2025 (271 - working age adults, 43 - older adults).



Both age groups have shown growth over the past 5 years, with the 18-64 group increasing by 53 people (25%) and the 65+ group increasing by 12 people (38%).



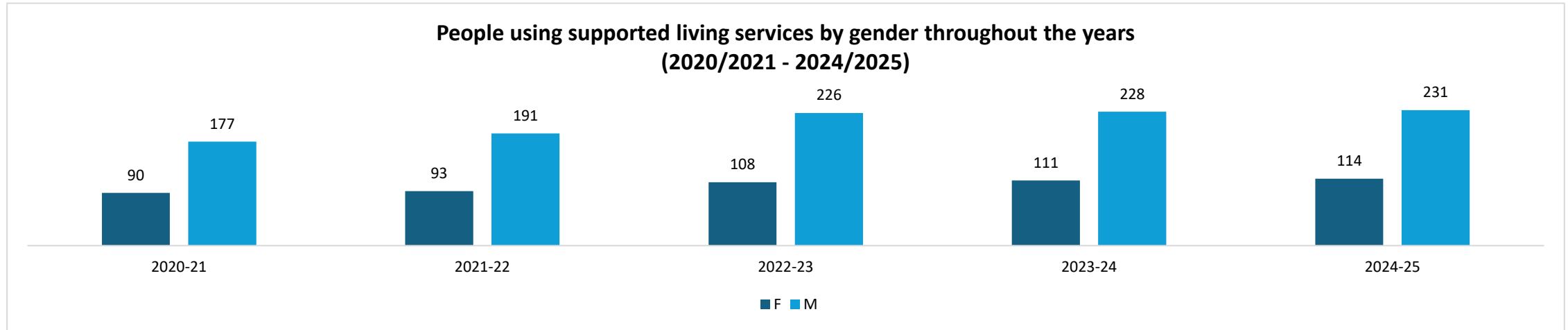
There has been roughly a 5% increase when comparing all people in receipt of supported living services from 31 March 2024 to 31 March 2025.







Majority of users from the 31 March snapshot are aged 18-64, accounting for approximately 86% of all supported living users as of 31 March 2025.

Section 4 | Provider markets in the borough

4.4.b Supported Living - current and historic provision



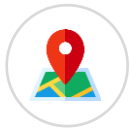
-  Over the past 5 years, more men than women have used supported living services, with a total of 1,153 male users compared to 516 female users (2020-21 to 2024-25).
-  Male users have increased by approximately 31% across the last 5 years, showing steady demand pressures and the need to ensure capacity meets future requirements. Female user numbers increased by 27% growth.
-  The gender profile of supported living users differs from the borough's population, which is roughly evenly split (about 49% male, 51% female).
-  The gender profile of people using supported living services reinforces the importance of ensuring the workforce is appropriately skilled, flexible and responsive to differing needs and preferences, including delivering person-centred care that is sensitive to gender and cultural considerations.

Section 4 | Provider markets in the borough

4.4.c Supported living- mapping

The Council has developed a GIS mapping tool to show where care is delivered across the borough.

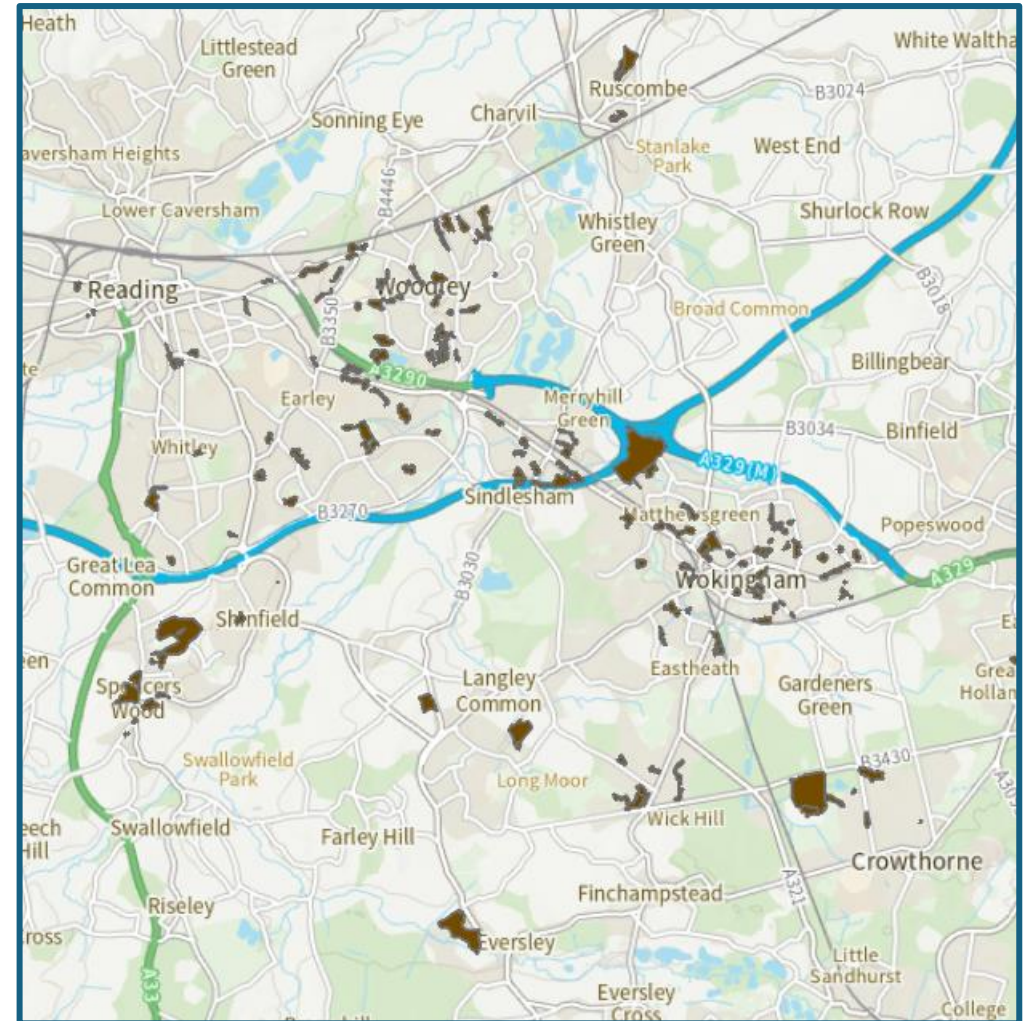
The mapping tool allows Commissioners to ascertain how providers are spread across the Borough and allows there to be meaningful discussion around rounds as well as efficiencies and allowing for packages to be picked up. The maps on this page show the provision of supported living services across the borough.



The GIS mapping shows supported living providers are well distributed throughout Wokingham Borough, ensuring residents in most areas have access to local support services.



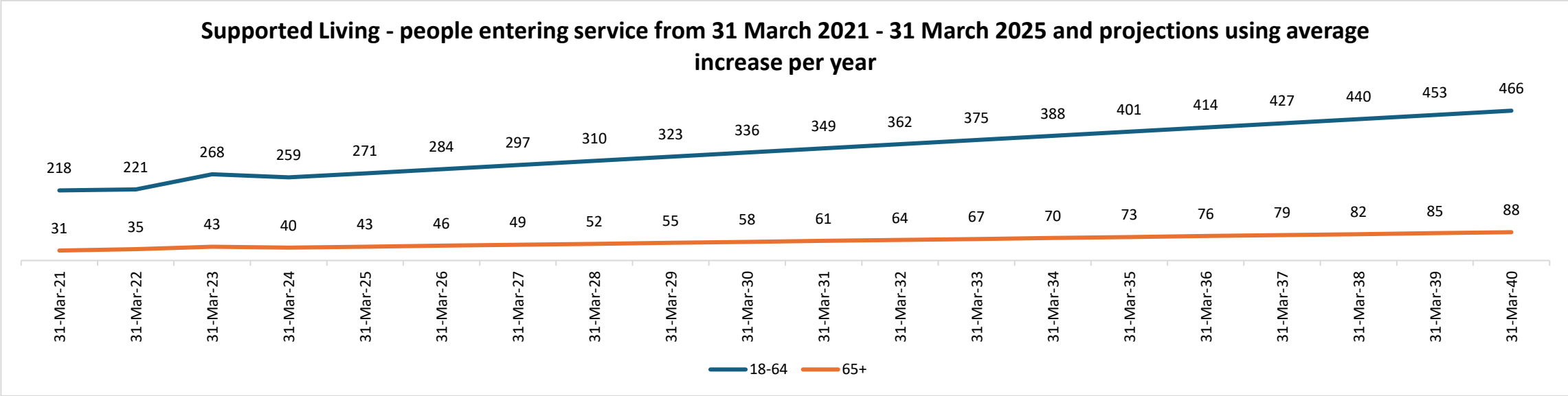
With supported living provision spread throughout the borough, residents benefit from accessible, community-based support. This distribution helps ensure timely assistance and a range of services delivered where people live.



GIS map of supported living provision in the borough, November 2024

Section 4 | Provider markets in the borough

4.4.d Supported living - future demand projections



Average growth per year	
18 - 64	+13 people per year
65+	+3 people per year

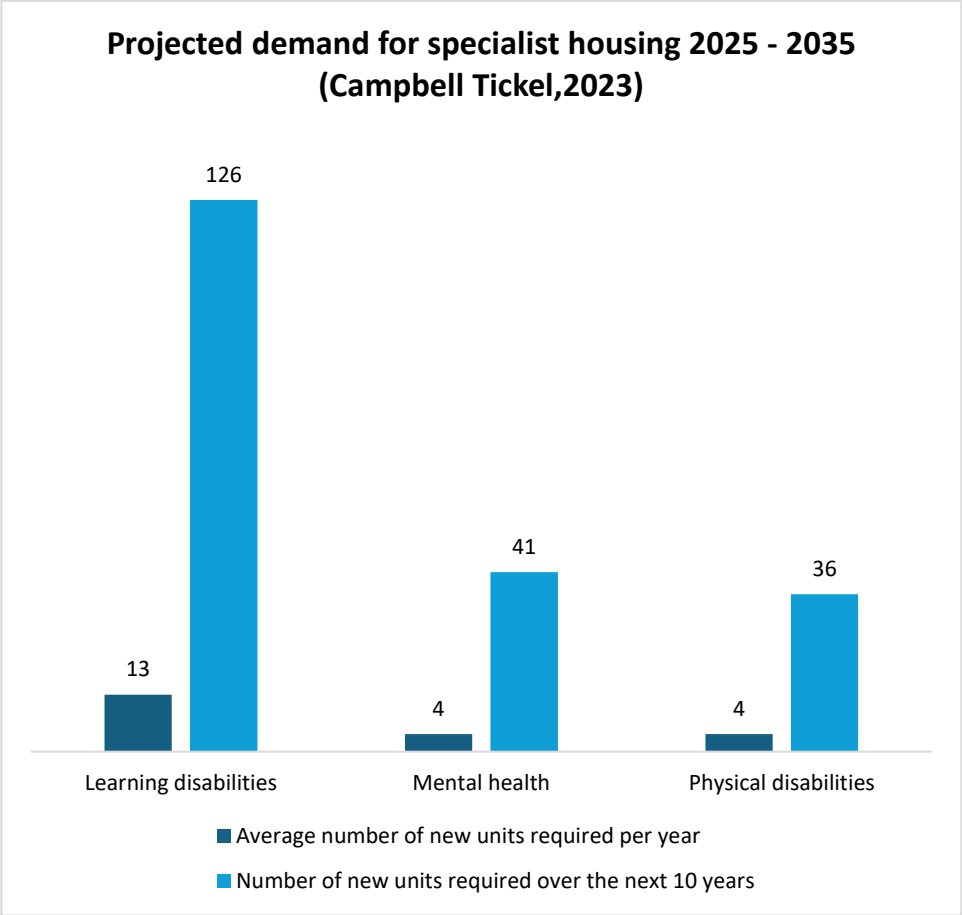


Projections for supported living show significant annual growth for working age adults with 218 people in the service in 2021 to 466 in 2040, a projected growth of approximately 113%. This is more gradual for older age adults with 31 people in the service in 2021 to 88 in 2040, a projected growth of approximately an additional 3 people at year end.



This suggests that local services will need to expand capacity, increase staffing, and allocate more resources to support working-age adults and older people. However, it is important to note that not all of these individuals will require accommodation within supported living; some may only need support visits or other community-based services

4.4.e Supported living - future demand for specialist housing



A Campbell Tickel report produced suggests there is a clear, ongoing need to expand supported living provision, with over 200 new units required across all three groups by 2035 to meet projected demand.



An average of 13 new supported living units will be needed each year for people with LD, resulting in 126 new units over the next 10 years. This is the largest demand among the three groups.



An average of 4 new units per year for people with MH is projected, totalling 41 units over the next decade. Similarly, an average of 4 new units per year for people with PD will be needed, giving a total of 36 new units over 10 years.



This indicates a significant and sustained future demand for supported living within the borough and highlights the importance of continued strategic planning, commissioning and partnership with housing providers to ensure sufficient provision is developed to meet residents' needs and reduce reliance on more costly or out-of-area placements.

4.4.f Supported living - pipeline

We are actively working with Housing and local providers to expand supported living accommodation within the borough. There are currently 31 houses and properties in the pipeline for 2026/27, though not all of these will be used specifically for supported living purposes. We have ongoing plans to develop additional units to meet the growing demand for supported living. This includes:



A total of 31 new supported living units are planned over the next year (April 2026 – May 2027). We are collaborating closely with housing providers, local authorities, and specialist organisations to identify suitable properties and develop proposals for new accommodation.



Our strategic direction is to meet more need through new purpose-built specialist accommodation, rather than retrofitting general housing. We are observing a trend in choice towards more single occupancy housing, although there remains a proportion of shared-living requirements.



We remain dedicated to the sustainability of specialist accommodation within the borough, and our approach to new developments aims to strike a balance between economy of scale through multi-unit developments, whilst retaining the integration of accommodation within wider communities.

Through these measures, we aim to ensure that supported living options are sustainable, accessible, and tailored to the needs of those requiring support within the borough.

Section 4 | Provider markets in the borough

4.4.g Supported living - commissioning priorities

1

We expect that the use of supported living will increase as we promote alternatives to residential care that enable people to live more independently supported where appropriate.

2

We will continue to develop and embed our new Care and Support Framework, ensuring supported living services are designed to meet the needs of residents and help them live as independently as possible.

3

This includes working with providers to deliver flexible, personalised support, promote early intervention and prevention, and ensure that services respond to changing needs, support people in their communities, and improve outcomes for all residents.

4

We particularly want to provide housing designed for people with support needs in areas they want to live in and are familiar with and in particular not outside Wokingham Borough.

5

We recognise that care should be delivered by skilled, trained, and compassionate staff who listen to and support each individual's mental, emotional, and physical needs throughout their life journey, alongside their carers.

6

We will continue to actively engage and support the market development of all providers to ensure excellent standards of care and delivery for people accessing these services.

7

A variety of tenancy agreements should be made available to support independence and accommodate the diverse needs of individuals in supported living.

8

Responsibility for filling vacant supported living spaces should be shared between providers and the council. This should include consideration of shared costs for voids, and providers should actively promote available spaces to potential residents.

Section 4 | Provider markets in the borough

4.5.a Carers - summary

£462k

The Council spends approximately **£462k** per annum on support for unpaid carers (this includes support via VCS services).



We commission a Carers Partnership, working with local voluntary organisations, to provide information, advice, peer support and breaks, shaped by carers' lived experience.



The Council completed over 350 carer assessments during 2024-25.



According to the 2021 Census, there are 12,195 unpaid carers living in Wokingham Borough. This is widely recognised as an undercount, as many people do not identify themselves as carers.



National and local evidence shows that many carers are providing high levels of care, with 61% of carers caring for 50 or more hours per week.



From engagement sessions, carers tell us that what matters most is having a life alongside caring, feeling recognised, being listened to, and being able to look after their own health and wellbeing.

Section 4 | Provider markets in the borough

4.5.b Carers - our ways of working



We work in partnership with health services and voluntary sector organisations to recognise and support carers. The VCS provides carers with targeted information and advice service, as well as other services which support carers to manage caring and to enjoy a life outside caring. These services are available to all adult carers who are Wokingham Borough residents or caring for a Wokingham resident.



In addition, carers in Wokingham Borough can also access support through a number of community services which focus on specific care needs or particular long-term health conditions and take a 'whole family' approach. Support can include advice, training, peer support and opportunities to take part in leisure activities and volunteering.

We currently commission for a range of carers services from a number of different providers. These can be found on the [Council directory](#). Amongst these are:



- The Wokingham Carers Partnership (Age UK Berkshire (AUKB), Promise Inclusion (PINC) & Berkshire Youth)
- The Link Visiting Scheme (LVS)
- The Dementia Partnership (LVS, AUKB & Understanding Dementia)
- Involve Community Navigators

Through these partnerships and services, we aim to support all carers in Wokingham Borough, and our commissioning intentions for future service development are explored in the next section.

4.5.c Carers - Carers partnership

The [Wokingham Carers Partnership](#) was commissioned in April 2023 to provide a joined-up, community-based offer for unpaid carers of all ages. It brings together local expertise to make it easier for carers to find support that works for them.



The Partnership was designed with carers and brings together Age UK Berkshire, Promise Inclusion and Berkshire Youth, ensuring the voices of adult carers, parent carers and young carers are represented.



The Partnership provides information, advice, peer support, activities and breaks that help carers look after their own health and wellbeing and have a life alongside caring.



The Partnership works closely with the Council, health, schools and community organisations to improve identification, reduce duplication and make access to support clearer and more joined up.

The Carers Partnership is central to Wokingham's approach to prevention and early support, helping carers stay well, feel connected and continue in their caring role for as long as they want to. It plays a vital role in delivering outcomes that matter to carers and sustaining the wider health and social care system.

4.5.d Carers - how we want to work with the market

Our approach is rooted in Social Care Future and focuses on what matters to carers, not just what services exist.

This means:



- Seeing carers as people in their own right, not just as part of someone else's care and support.
- Using everyday language that carers recognise and understand.
- Working across organisations in a joined-up way so carers do not have to repeat their story.

Carers tell us they would like:



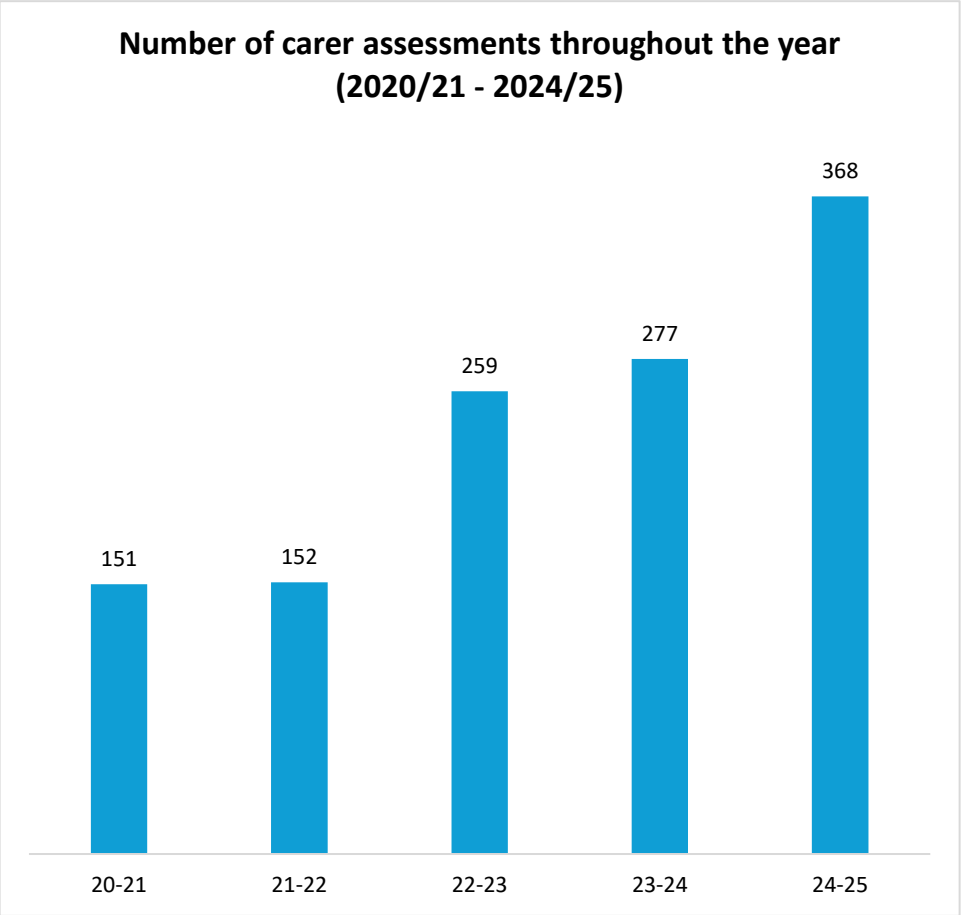
- Support that fits around work, family and culture.
- Help before they reach breaking point.
- To feel listened to and respected by professionals.

We would like to work with providers and partners to:



- Focus on outcomes, such as carers having time for themselves, staying well, and feeling confident.
- Actively involve carers in shaping and improving support.
- Recognise diversity and inequality in carers' experiences, including for young carers, working carers and carers from minority communities.

4.5.e Carers - current and historic provision



The number of carers supported has increased year on year, rising from 151 people in 2020-21 to 368 in 2024-25. This significant increase demonstrates growing demand for carer support and highlights the need for a strong, sustainable local market that can continue to meet carers' needs.

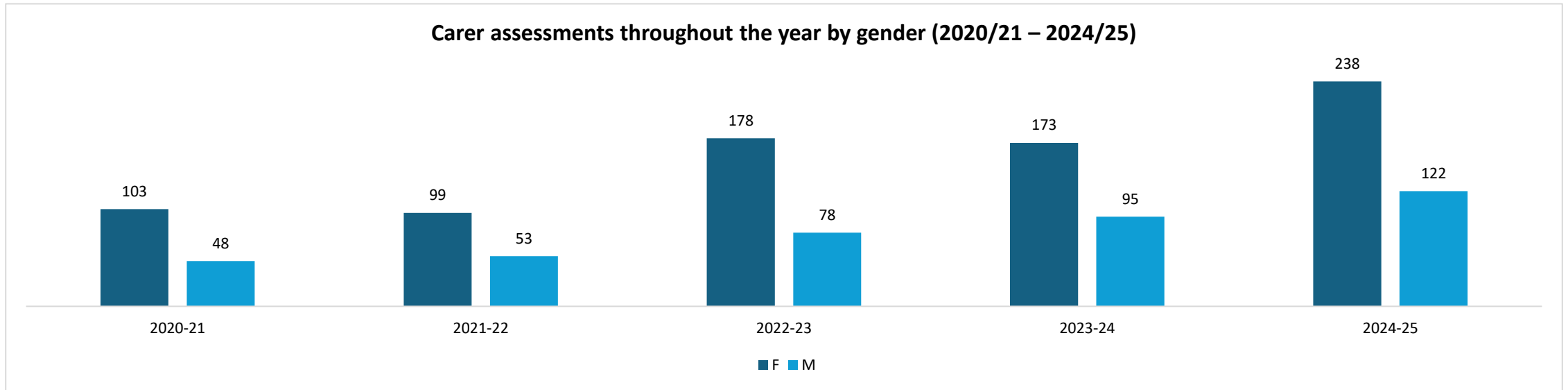


Between 2023-24 and 2024-25, the number of carers supported increased by 91 people, from 277 to 368, representing a rise of approximately 33% in a single year.



This rapid growth suggests that carers are increasingly coming into contact with council-funded support, highlighting the importance of early, preventative interventions that help carers maintain wellbeing and remain in their caring role for longer.

4.5.e Carers - current and historic provision



Females consistently make up the majority of carers supported by the council across all years, accounting for around two-thirds of the cohort, reflecting national caring patterns.



The number of female carers supported more than doubled from 103 in 2020-21 to 238 in 2024-25, indicating sustained growth in demand for support among women with caring responsibilities.



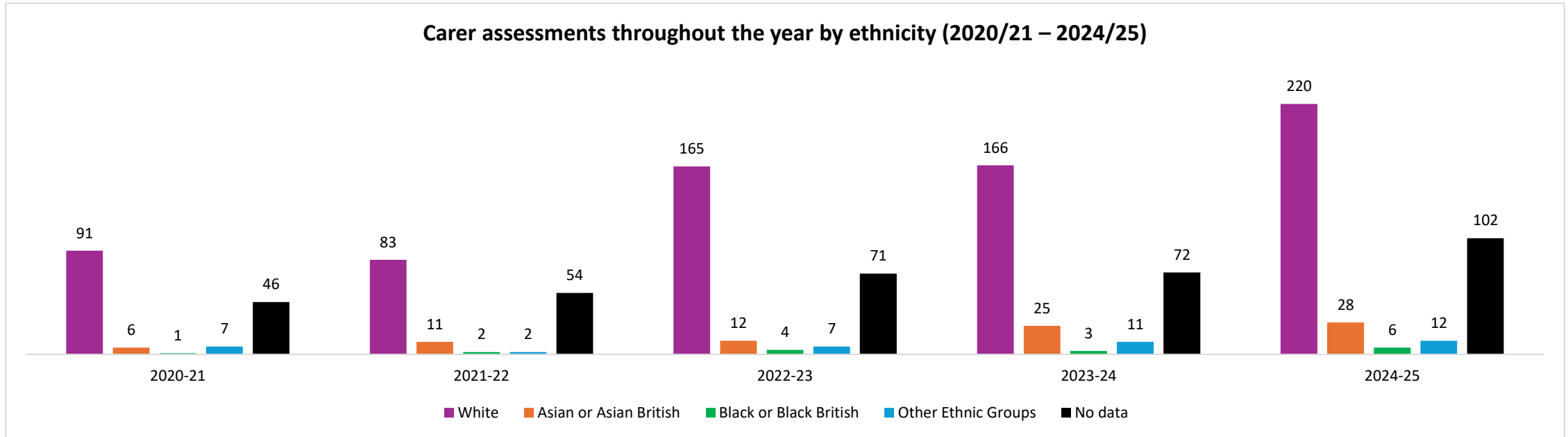
Male carers increased from 48 to 122 over the same period, demonstrating that male carers represent a growing and increasingly visible part of the local carer population.



We would like to work with providers to ensure services are inclusive and flexible for both female and male carers, and that reduce barriers to access for underrepresented groups.

Section 4 | Provider markets in the borough

4.5.e Carers - current and historic provision



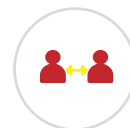
The majority of carers supported identify as White, increasing from 91 in 2020-21 to 220 in 2024-25, reflecting the overall demographic profile of the local population.



Support for Asian or Asian British carers has risen steadily from 6 to 28 over the same period, indicating increasing engagement with services in this community.

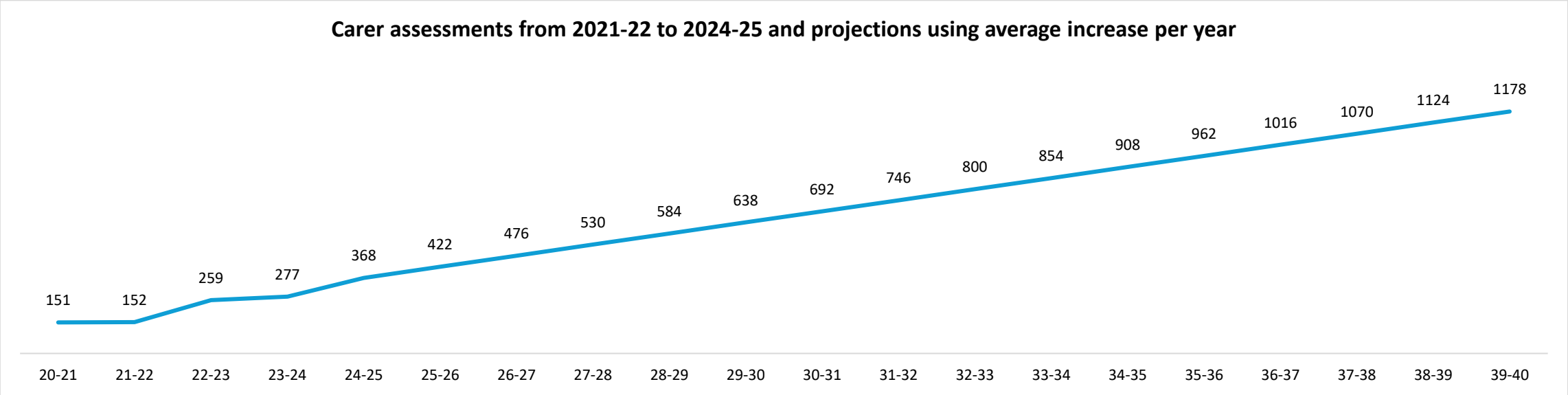


Black or Black British carers and those from other ethnic groups remain a smaller proportion of the cohort, highlighting potential underrepresentation and a need to better understand barriers to access.



We would like to work with providers to ensure services are accessible and culturally appropriate for carers from all ethnic backgrounds, particularly underrepresented groups, and to improve data collection to better understand local needs.

4.5.f Carers - future demand projections



Average growth per year +54 carer assessments



Projections suggest growth from 368 to 1,178 carer assessments for between 2025 and 2040.



The projected growth indicates a rising demand for carer support, highlighting the need for long-term planning, sustainable services, and a diverse market capable of meeting the evolving needs of carers over the coming years. Our commissioning intentions for working with providers to meet this need will be explored in the next section.

**Please note these projections are based on growth observed over the last 3 - 5 years, with trends extrapolated forward - they should therefore be interpreted as indicative rather than definitive forecasts.*

4.5.g Carers - commissioning priorities

1

We will improve awareness so that carers recognise themselves as carers and feel supported from the outset.

2

We will reach carers who are often missed, including working carers, young carers, and those from under-represented communities.

3

We will provide emotional support and opportunities for peer connection to reduce stress and isolation.

4

We will ensure carers have access to clear, consistent, and accurate information and support to look after their own physical and mental health.

5

We will address gaps in short, flexible breaks, including support at home where personal care is not required, with options that work culturally, practically, and emotionally for carers.

6

We will help carers remain in work where they want to, providing advice on rights, flexibility, and financial support, and working with employers to promote carer-friendly approaches.

7

We will foster strong partnership working across social care, health, education, and the voluntary sector to deliver outcomes-focused support.

8

We will embed co-production and “no wrong door” approaches, using carers’ feedback to continually shape and improve services, particularly for young carers and those transitioning to adulthood.

Section 4 | Provider markets in the borough

4.6.a Voluntary and Community Sector - summary



The Voluntary and Community Sector is critical in supporting **prevention, early intervention** and community wellbeing.



There are currently **624 charities** registered to operate in Wokingham Borough through the [charities commission \(2025\)](#).

£2.6m

Adult Services spends approximately **£2.6m** per annum on Voluntary and Community Sector commissioned services.



The [Wokingham Community Directory](#) contains details for hundreds of services, support, clubs and activities enabling people to remain independent and stay connected with the community.



Adult Services currently works with 15 providers, who provide over **25 contracts** across the borough.



The organisations we work with help people remain **connected, independent and resilient** in their communities.

Section 4 | Provider markets in the borough

4.6.b Voluntary and Community Sector - current position



The Council's Voluntary and Community Sector approach sets out a commitment to partnership working with the voluntary and community sector and a focus on prevention, sector sustainability and capacity.



Wokingham Borough Council now has well-established, trusted and effective partnerships with a wide range of local voluntary and community organisations delivering preventative and community-based support.



Services are delivered through commissioned contracts with VCS partners, supported by contract management and community outreach to improve access, integration and outcomes.



Partnership working is underpinned by co-production, with people with lived experience and VCS partners working together on service design, commissioning and continuous improvement.



The [Council's most recent CQC Local Authority Assessment](#) rated Wokingham Outstanding for Partnerships and Communities, recognising high-quality collaboration with the voluntary sector, a wide range of preventative support and a strong commitment to valuing lived experience.

Section 4 | Provider markets in the borough

4.6.b Voluntary and Community Sector - current position

Our strategic alignment sets out how we work with the voluntary and community sector to support residents and promote independence, wellbeing and positive outcomes.



4.6.b Voluntary and Community Sector - current position



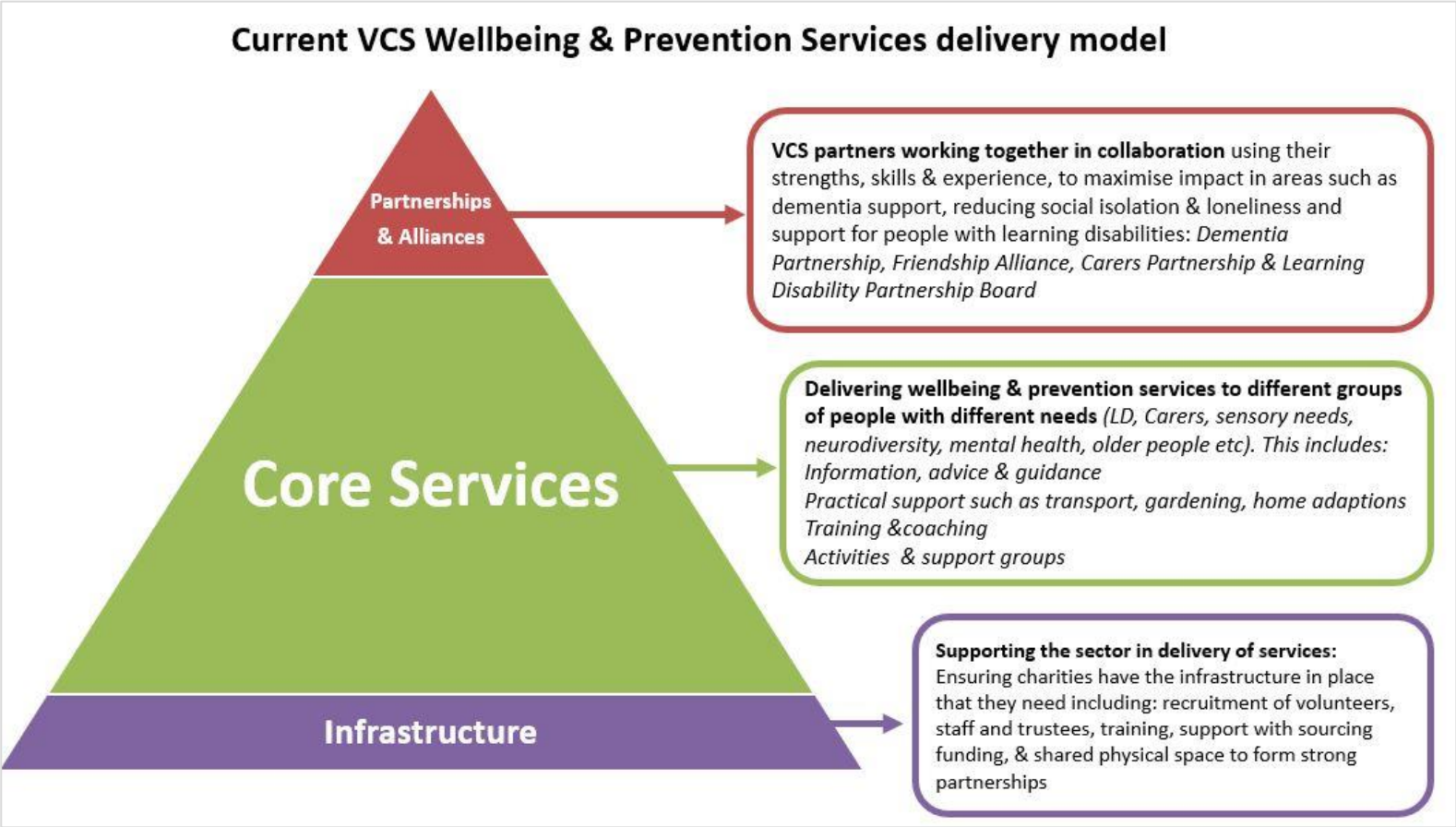
This model provides an overview of our current voluntary and community sector wellbeing and prevention services delivery model.



It emphasises the importance of working together with partners to achieve the best outcomes for our residents and communities.



Central to our approach is a focus on prevention, promoting early support and proactive measures to enhance wellbeing and independence.



Section 4 | Provider markets in the borough

4.6.b Voluntary and Community Sector - current position

The why | purpose



Through partnerships we can achieve better outcomes with everyone's effort' we can accelerate learning and share skills and knowledge' and we can add depth and breadth to our community impact and social value.

The what | aim



A shared common vision and purpose that builds trust and openness and recognises the value and contribution of all members. Shared goals and aims, understood and accepted as being important by each partner; lead to improved coordination of policies, programmes of work and service delivery to achieve better outcomes.

The how | principles and approach



Actively listen, relationship first, outcomes focussed, involve partners, empower action, investment minded.

Working together



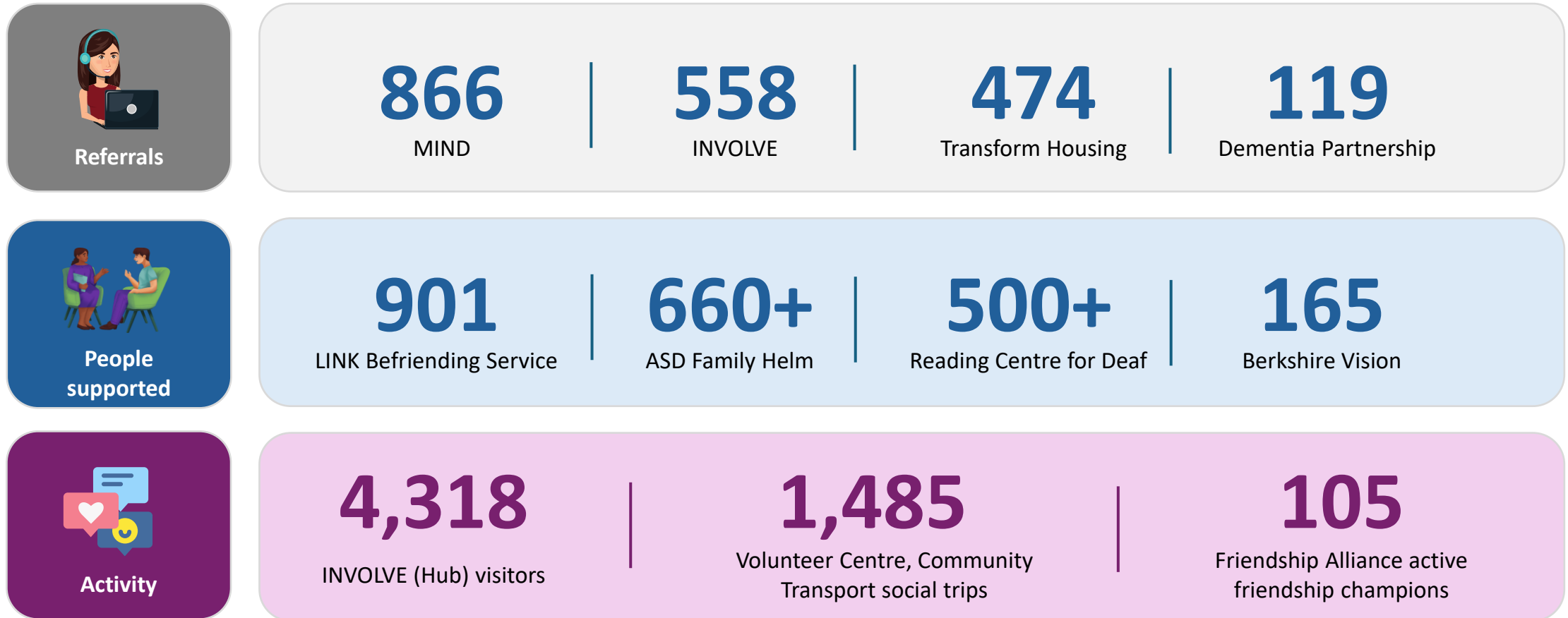
Culture shift, joint project working, social Value, support and challenge, shared vision, procurement and commissioning, learning, shared data and insight.



Section 4 | Provider markets in the borough

4.6.c Voluntary and Community Sector - impact (2024/25)

The following slide highlights the impact of the voluntary and community sector in 2024/25, showing some of the residents we have supported. The nature of the different contracts (detail on next slide) means that the measures recorded in KPI returns are not all the same.



Section 4 | Provider markets in the borough

4.6.d Voluntary and Community Sector - current contracts

Value	Area
£357,433	Block contract for provision of Housing Related Support Service
£256,789	Carers Information, Advice and Guidance
£226,042	Wellbeing and Mental Health Support Service
£207,481	Dementia Partnership
£199,278	Friendship Alliance
£179,830	General Information advice and Support Service (Citizen's Advice)
£128,654	Healthwatch Service to Wokingham Borough
£120,059	Keeping In Touch
£118,816	Befriending Service
£100,815	Provision of mental Health supported living
£91,885	Voluntary Sector Advocacy Service
£73,675	LD Partnership Board and self advocacy service
£71,691	Home From Hospital
£69,338	Handy Person Service
£62,229	LD and Autism Spectrum information and advice service
£59,713	Support and promotion to LD people
£47,231	Community Navigators
£47,097	Gardening Service
£41,786	Volunteer Brokerage & Development
£35,690	Charity & Community Hub (Waterford House) Hub management
£32,907	Home Visit service for visually impaired
£24,441	Information and Support to families re Autism Spectrum Disorder
£20,235	Community Outreach
£16,056	VCS Community Transport Service
£9,188	Support to people who are deaf/hard of hearing
£8,789	Support to the Indian Community



The table shows individual Voluntary and Community Sector contract values and spend, showing a diverse list of contracts ranging from smaller, specialist services to larger, borough-wide provision.



The variation in contract values reflects the breadth of support delivered across the VCS, including housing-related support, prevention and wellbeing, carers' services, mental health support, social connection, advice and advocacy, transport and practical community services.



This profile of spend shows how investment in the voluntary and community sector enables early intervention, supports independence and helps people remain well and connected in their communities.

Section 4 | Provider markets in the borough

4.6.e Voluntary and Community Sector – commissioning priorities

1

Recommissioning of the Community Wellbeing & Prevention services from April 2027.

2

Maintaining and developing strong partnerships both within VCS and across the 'system' including the community & charity hub and further targeted outreach models.

3

To reach diverse and emerging communities through services, aligned to EDI Policy priorities and incorporating the Marmot and Social Care Future principles within commission and delivery of services.

4

Reduce stigma associated with using community services by creating social stories to encourage people to seek support without stigma, shame or judgement.

5

Make services more inclusive by ensuring they are accessible and inclusive to all people in all communities to help reduce inequalities - think about different languages, making services neuro-inclusive and ensuring those with sensory needs can access services.

6

Where possible reduce barriers to accessing services such as transport by increasing outreach and taking services to local communities and making more use of physical community spaces for holistic delivery of services.

7

Ensure service delivery is linked into physical community spaces, especially as system wide community spaces for service delivery are developed and implemented.

8

Continue to encourage more people to volunteer, especially younger people.

Section 4 | Provider markets in the borough

4.7.a Day Opportunities - summary

£4.6m

The council spends approximately **£4.6 million** per annum on day opportunity services.



Majority of people who use council-funded day opportunity services are **aged 18 - 64 (around 68%)**.



This equates to over **1,500 hours** per week for council-commissioned day opportunity services.



The Council currently works with **over 50 day opportunity services providers** in the borough.

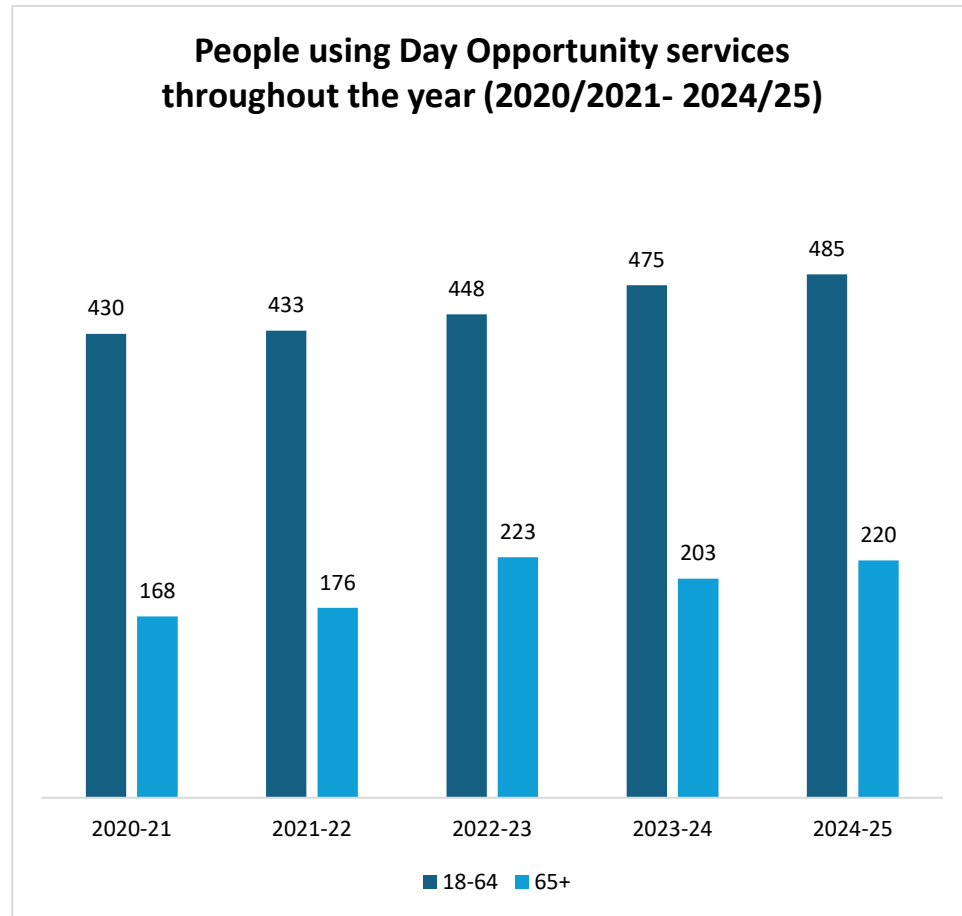


The Council currently supports approximately over **700 people** through day opportunity services.



All providers we work with aim to work in a personalised and **outcomes-based way** to promote independence where possible.

4.7.b Day opportunity services - current and historic provision



During 2024-25 the council supported 705 people through supported living services.



The number of people using supported living services has increased year on year, by approximately 18% from 2020-21 to 2024-25. This reflects growing demand for day opportunity services.



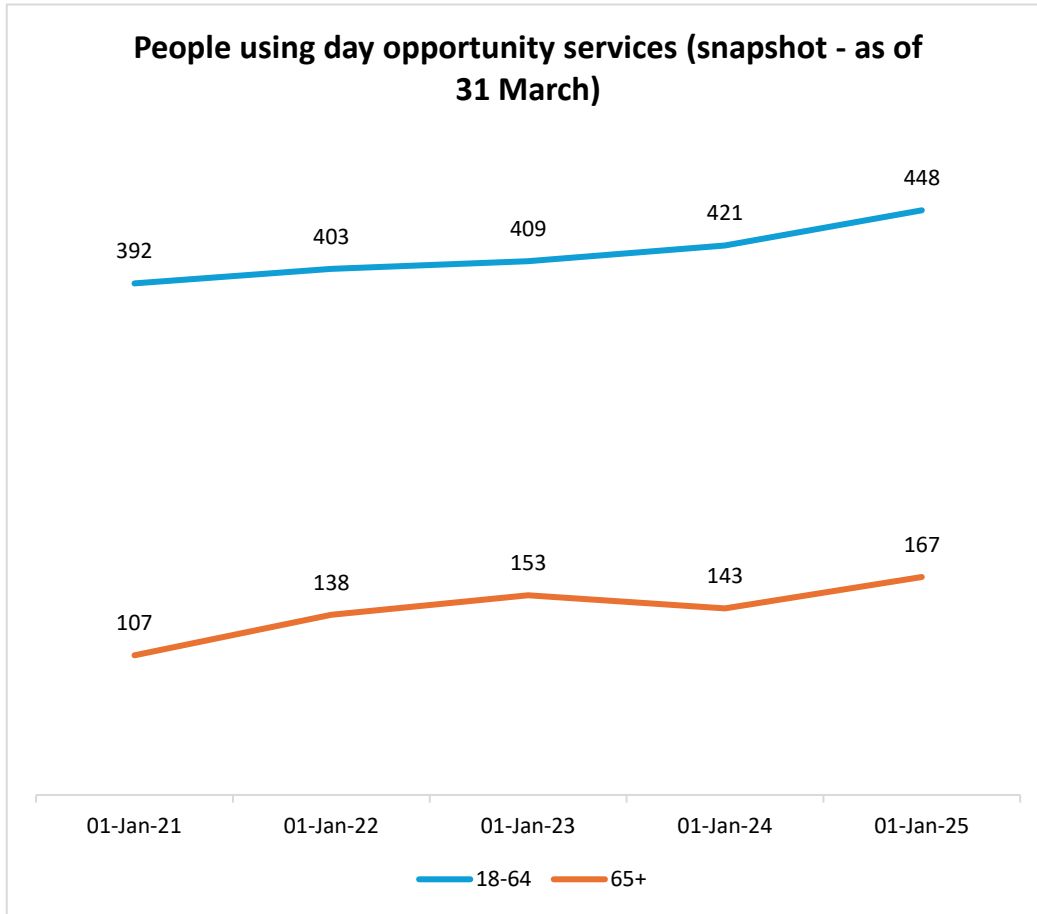
Residents aged 18-64 account for the majority of day opportunity services usage, with numbers increasing from 430 in 20-21 to 485 in 2024-25. This highlights the importance of ensuring services are designed to promote independence, employment, and community participation for working-age adults.



Use of day opportunity services for people aged 65+ has increased by approximately 31% over the 5-year period. This highlights the need to ensure services are suitable for older residents, alongside continued demand from working-age adults.

Section 4 | Provider markets in the borough

4.7.b Day opportunity services - current and historic provision



The graph shows more people are accessing day services in Wokingham Borough over the last 5 years, with 615 people receiving a service as of 31 March 2025.



Both age groups have shown overall growth during this period, with the 18-64 group increasing by 56 people (14%) and the 65+ group increasing by 60 people (56%) between 31 March 2021 and 31 March 2025.



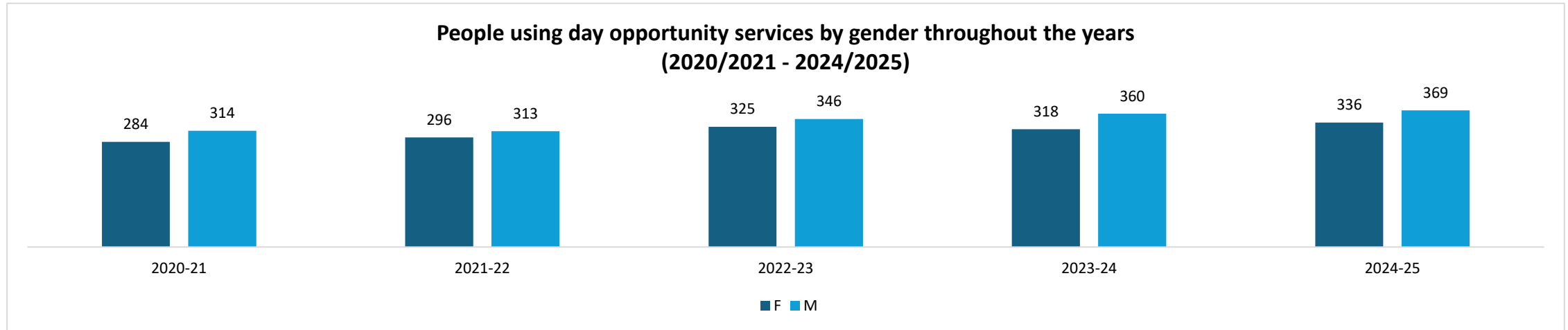
There has been approximately a 9% increase in the total number of people in receipt of day services when comparing 31 March 2024 to 31 March 2025.



The majority of users from the 31 March 2025 snapshot are aged 18–64, accounting for around 73% of all day service users.

Section 4 | Provider markets in the borough

4.7.b Day opportunity services - current and historic provision



Over the past 5 years, more men than women have accessed day services in Wokingham Borough, with a total of 1,702 male users compared to 1,559 female users across the period 2020-21 to 2024-25.



Both genders have shown overall growth over the last 5 years. Male users increased by 55 people (18%), rising from 314 in 2020-21 to 369 in 2024-25. Female users increased by 52 people (18%), rising from 284 to 336 over the same period.



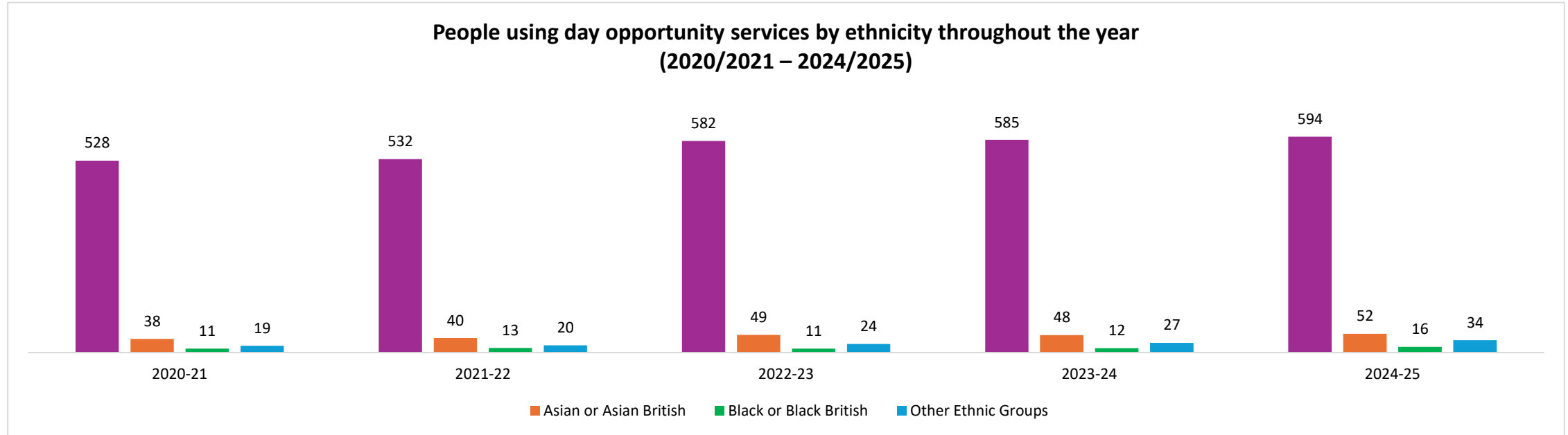
The gender profile of people using day services is weighted slightly towards males, who account for approximately 52% of users as of 31 March 2025, compared to 48% female.



This gender profile highlights the importance of ensuring day service provision and the workforce are flexible and responsive to differing needs and preferences, supporting person-centred approaches that are sensitive to gender, cultural and individual considerations.

Section 4 | Provider markets in the borough

4.7.b Day opportunity services - current and historic provision



People from White ethnic backgrounds account for the largest proportion of day service users in Wokingham Borough, with numbers consistently above 80% of total users across the last 5 years.



The growth in day service use among minority ethnic groups highlights the importance of ensuring that services remain culturally sensitive and inclusive, reflecting the diversity of the borough.



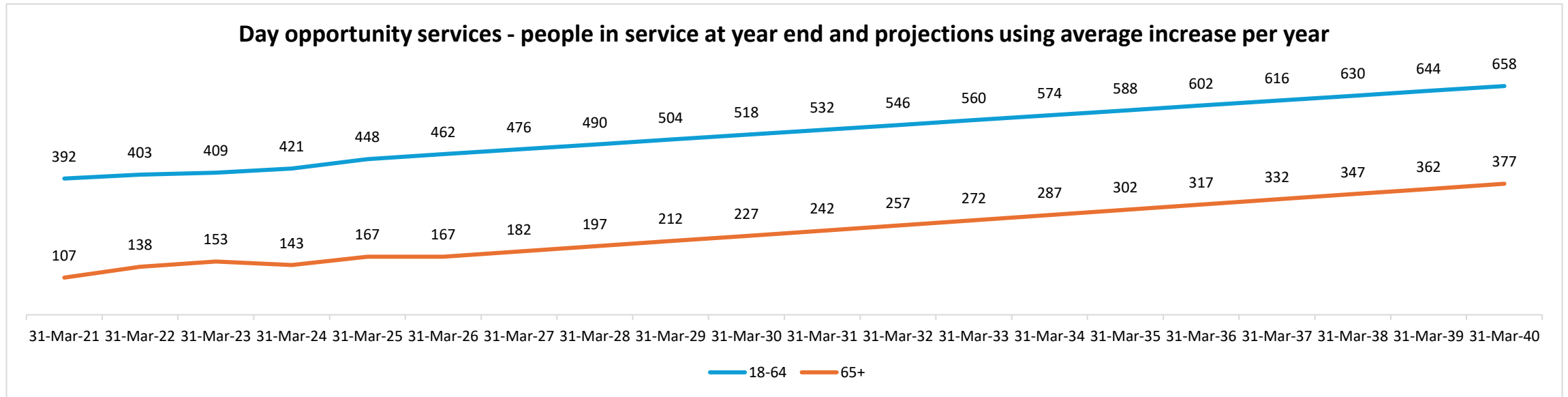
Use of day services among minority ethnic groups has grown over the past 5 years, with Asian or Asian British users up 37%, Black or Black British up 45%, and Other Ethnic Groups up 79%.



The council continues to develop services to ensure they are accessible, welcoming, and responsive to the needs of all communities.

Section 4 | Provider markets in the borough

4.7.c Day opportunity services - future demand projections



Average growth per year	
18 - 64	+14 people per year
65+	+15 people per year



Projections for day opportunity services show growth from 392 to 658 for working age adults and from 107 to 377 between 2021 and 2040.



To ensure both working-age and older adults can continue to live fulfilling, independent lives, access meaningful day opportunities, and receive the right support at the right time, local services will need to plan proactively for this growth and adapt resources, staffing, and programs to meet people’s changing needs

4.7.d Day opportunity services - commissioning priorities

1

We are committed to working with the Voluntary and Community Sector and other partners to enhance community-based daytime opportunities that are inclusive and personalised to people's needs.

2

Our aim is to ensure that all adults can access meaningful activities that promote independence, social connection, and skills development.

3

We recognise the need for greater flexibility in timing and types of activities, including evenings and weekends, to support people in work, education, training, volunteering, and community engagement.

4

Opportunities should build on people's strengths, assets, and aspirations, moving away from traditional, institutional day care models toward personalised, outcome-focused approaches.

5

We would like to work with providers to review current services and better understand current and future demand, projected growth, and opportunities to diversify and personalise the offer.

6

We are committed to ensuring services support people to achieve their goals, while promoting integration with wider health, education, and employment pathways.

Section 4 | Provider markets in the borough

4.8.a Direct payments - summary



Direct Payments (DPs) provide flexibility to manage their own care and support, giving people greater choice and control over how their needs are met.



Day care remains the most common use, with 213 working-age and 35 older people accessing support via direct payments.



346 people received Direct Payments in 24-25, representing around 2.8% of people using adult social care throughout the year.



Home care uptake is increasing among older adults, rising from 53 to 62 recipients, reflecting growing demand for support at home.



Our data shows majority of people using Direct Payments are working-age adults, with a lower but gradually rising older adult uptake.



Our commissioning priorities focus on increasing Direct Payment uptake, widening access, and developing markets to meet personalised care needs.

4.8.b Direct payments - overview



Direct payments give people greater flexibility in managing their care and support. Our [website](#) provides information on direct payments, including how to get started, employing a carer or personal assistant and much more.



The aim is to give more control to people who use services, to meet their particular needs and wishes more closely. For example, some people may decide to use theirs to continue going to the social club they've always been to, instead of going to the day centre the Council may otherwise suggest.



People can use their direct payment to source care themselves. This can include the use of Personal Assistants. The [Assured Care and Support scheme](#) (previously known as Support with Confidence) is a directory and vetting scheme for Personal Assistants, designed to raise standards and provide assurance to people who need care. It is particularly for those self-employed providers who fall outside the Care Quality Commission regulatory framework.



Individual Service Funds (ISFs) are a different way to manage someone's care and support, where the person's personal budget is given directly to the care provider. The provider then works with people directly to agree how they would like to spend their money to meet their needs.

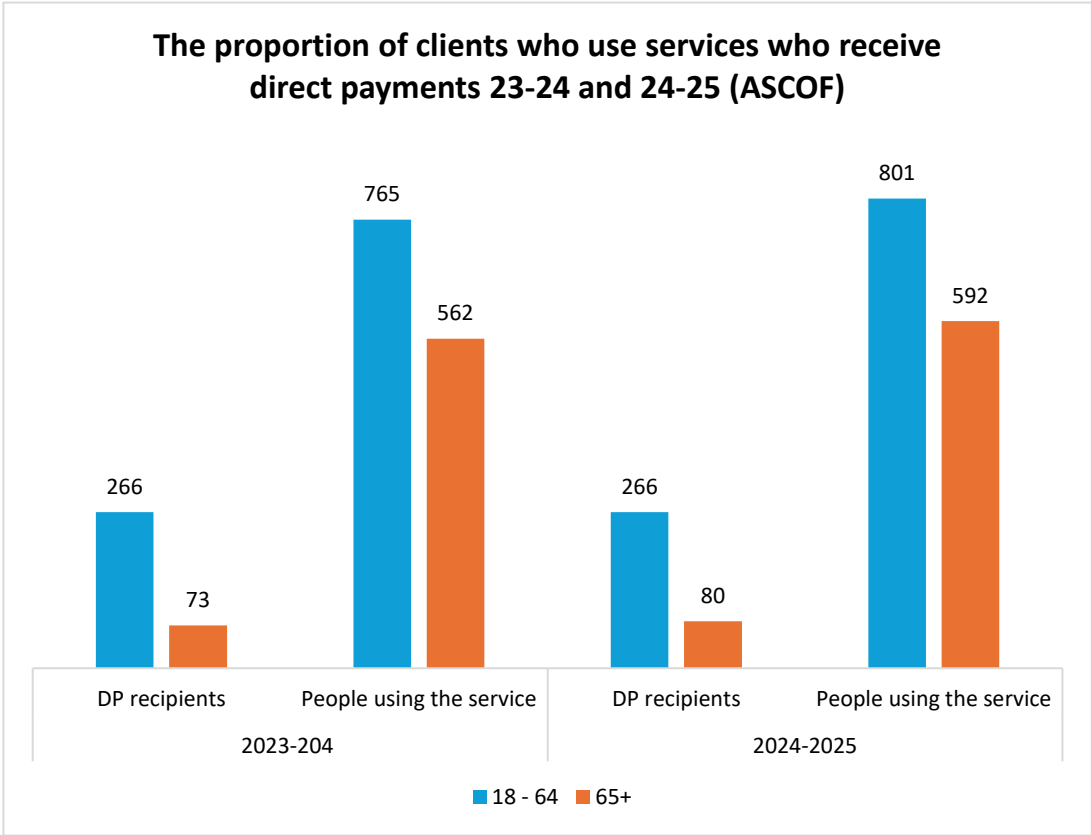


ISFs can be a good alternative for someone who wants to have more flexibility or choice over their care and support but doesn't want (or it wouldn't be appropriate for them) to take on the responsibility of a direct payment.

Section 4 | Provider markets in the borough

4.8.c Direct payments - current and historic provision

Data submitted to the Department of Health and Social Care indicates that a proportion of people using our adult social care services currently receive Direct Payments. The most recent 2 years of ASCOF 3D (Adults Social Care Outcomes Framework) data show the following:



During 24-25, 346 people received a Direct Payment, representing 24.8% of people who used adult social care services.



Compared with 23-24, where 339 people (25.5%) received DPs, the total number of people receiving a direct payment has increased slightly.



The age break-down shows majority of people are working-age adults, reflecting ongoing demand for flexible, person-led support in this group. Uptake among older adults is lower but gradually increasing, indicating potential for further growth.



Maintaining and expanding Direct Payment options remains important for the Council. Monitoring these trends will support future commissioning and service design to ensure Direct Payments continue to meet local needs effectively.

Section 4 | Provider markets in the borough

4.8.c Direct payments - current and historic provision

This chart shows the different ways people spend their Direct Payments. Some people receive a DP for more than one type of support, so category counts may overlap. The total at the bottom of the table represents the total number of people receiving support (sometimes known as unique service users). The figures presented here differ slightly from the official ASCOF returns, as they were drawn from a more detailed dataset collected at a later point in time.

Direct payment spend in ASC	2023-2024		2024-2025	
	18-64	65+	18-64	65+
Day Care	206	37	213	35
Direct Payment - not specified	4	2	3	2
Home Care	65	53	66	62
Equipment	1		1	
Respite	54	5	53	8
Supported Employment	18		17	
Supported Living	16		17	
Total	263	74	265	82



Day Care remains the most common use among both age groups, with 213 people aged 18-64 and 35 people aged 65+ using DPs for this service in 2024-25.



Home Care shows a small increase, particularly among older adults, rising from 53 to 62 recipients aged 65+, reflecting continued demand for home-based support. This suggests opportunities to support more people to manage care at home.



Respite care is also commonly accessed via direct payments, with similar numbers of people in both years, and a slight increase for older adults .



Other services such as Supported Employment and Living continue to be accessed by smaller numbers of people, primarily working-age adults. Monitoring patterns in less common DP uses will help inform future commissioning and development of personalised support options.

Section 4 | Provider markets in the borough

4.8.d Personal budgets and direct payments - commissioning priorities

1

We aim to increase the take-up of direct payments to increase people's choice and control over their care and support and enable the market to provide a range of opportunities for personalised care and support.

2

We want workforces to be more creative in care planning and supporting people to choose the care and support that will best deliver their identified outcomes, and we want everyone to be excited and engaged with the new opportunities in this area.

3

A key part of this is promoting choice of services to people with direct payments and establishing easy ways to purchase these.

4

We are also keen to increase partnership working with micro providers, Personal Assistants, the VCS and small businesses to consider how they can shape their service offer to meet the eligible needs of people, including through direct payments.

5

We would like to work with providers to ensure up-to-date information is easily accessible, and develop clear, easy pathways for DP users to identify and purchase services.

6

We aim to expand approaches to increase DP awareness and uptake among groups with historically lower engagement, such as older adults or those with complex needs.

7

We want to ensure that all eligible people, regardless of age, disability, or background, are informed about Direct Payments and have equal opportunity to benefit.

8

We are also keen to encourage collaboration between providers, VCFS, and small businesses to create shared services or pooled resources that increase efficiency and choice for DP users.

Section 5 - Working with Wokingham Borough Council

5. 1 Overview



Delivering great Adult Social Care is a strategic goal for Wokingham Borough Council. Whilst Adult Social Care sets out the needs, providers of some services may need to engage with other functions and this section describes the key documents, contact points and processes.


5. 2 Key documents

Adult Social Care documents



- [Adult Social Care Strategy](#)
- [Adult Social Care Workforce Strategy](#)
- [All Age Autism Strategy](#)
- [Carers Strategy](#)
- [Health and Wellbeing Strategy](#)
- [Learning Disability Strategy](#)
- [Physical Activity Strategy \(in development\)](#)
- [Voluntary and Community Sector Strategy](#)

Wider Council documents



- [Alcohol, Drugs, Tobacco and Vaping Strategy](#)
- [Berkshire Suicide Prevention Strategy](#)
- [Community Vision](#)
- [Council Plan](#)
- [Equality and diversity](#)
- [Joint Strategic Needs Assessment](#)
- [Medium Term Financial Plan](#)
- [SEND and Inclusion Strategy](#)

Please note, document links will be updated in line with strategy refreshes.

5.3 Working with WBC



We see this MPS document as a starting point for more detailed conversations with existing and potential providers. From an early stage we are keen to work with potential providers to help ensure that concepts are aligned to our direction of travel

5.4 Commissioning



The role of the commissioning team is to establish needs with colleagues in the social care teams, identify potential providers and ensure the procurement process is followed effectively. To contact, please email AdultSocialCareContracts@wokingham.gov.uk.

5.5 Provider Sustainability



The Council works closely with providers to ensure service sustainability, including annual fee review processes. We have a Care Cubed licence for costing, primarily for working-age adult care homes, and have worked closely with CIPFA in the past to ensure sustainable rates for home care. In addition, we collect performance and quality data from commissioned providers to monitor service standards, inform contract management, and support continuous improvement and promote the best outcomes for people in the borough.

5.6 Procurement



We aim to procure goods and services in line with Council Strategies and the Council Constitution. The key driver for procurement is to drive quality, innovation, and ensure best value at all times. In 2026, we are developing a new Care and Support framework, which will enable providers to bid for care packages, benefit from a streamlined procurement process, and gain clarity on service expectations. All procurements are conducted in full compliance with the Council's rules.

5.7 Registration Process



Providers who wish to work with the Council should register with our e-procurement portal, Pro-Contract Providers. This portal is accessible at <https://procontract.due-north.com/Login>. All council contracts are advertised through this portal. Registering your organisation is free and takes a few minutes. Once registered you will be able to express interest in any opportunities when they are made available and you may be invited to tender or quote for work.

5.8 Contracts Register



The contract register is held within pro-contract ([ProContract website - Wokingham Borough Council Contracts Register](#)) and provides details of all the contracts the Council has entered into. This database does not include low value transactional purchase orders or new contracts that are currently being tendered.

5.9 Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise



We actively engage with the Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise (VCSE) sector through the Voluntary Sector Action Group (VSAG). This forum supports information sharing, collaboration, and joint working between the VCSE sector and Wokingham Borough Council, helping to inform service planning and development.

5.10 Supplier Engagement Process



We also engage regularly with providers through dedicated forums, newsletters, and support from the Quality Assurance team. These channels provide updates on commissioning opportunities, guidance on service standards, and a platform for sharing best practice, helping to maintain strong relationships and high-quality services.

5.11 Community Directory



Organisations can sign up to the Wokingham Borough Council Directory by clicking [here](#). This allows services to be easily accessed by residents, Council staff, and partner organisations, helping to ensure that local care and support services are visible, discoverable, and available to those who need them.

5.12 Technology Enabled Care



Wokingham Borough Council is one of the partners in the Berkshire Community Equipment Service which includes the provision of technology enabled care (TEC). Any TEC suppliers who have products or services that they believe would be of interest to the Council can contact our TEC team on TEC@wokingham.gov.uk.

5.13 Joint Strategic Needs Assessment



The [Wokingham Joint Strategic Needs Assessment](#) is the means by which we assess the current and future health, care and wellbeing and needs of the population in Wokingham Borough. It is a way of highlighting the key needs of the borough assesses how we might best meet these needs with a range of partners. For any questions, comments or feedback please contact TEC@wokingham.gov.uk.