



## **Borough of Telford and Wrekin**

### **Cabinet**

**Thursday 17 July 2025**

**10.00 am**

**Council Chamber, Third Floor, Southwater One, Telford, TF3 4JG**

---

<b>Democratic Services:</b>	<b>Jayne Clarke / Paige Starkey</b>	<b>01952 383205 / 380110</b>
-----------------------------	-------------------------------------	------------------------------

<b>Media Enquiries:</b>	<b>Corporate Communications</b>	<b>01952 382406</b>
-------------------------	---------------------------------	---------------------

<b>Lead Officer:</b>	<b>David Sidaway - Chief Executive</b>	<b>01952 380130</b>
----------------------	--	---------------------

---

#### **Cabinet Members:**

Councillor L D Carter	Leader of the Council
-----------------------	-----------------------

Councillor R A Overton	Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member: Highways, Housing & Enforcement
------------------------	---

Councillor P Davis	Cabinet Member: Communities & Civic Pride
--------------------	---

Councillor Z Hannington	Cabinet Member: Finance, Governance & Customer Services
-------------------------	---

Councillor C Healy	Cabinet Member: Neighbourhoods, Planning & Sustainability
--------------------	---

Councillor A D McClements	Cabinet Member: Leisure, Tourism, Culture & The Arts
---------------------------	--

Councillor K Middleton	Cabinet Member: Public Health & Healthier Communities
------------------------	---

Councillor O Vickers	Cabinet Member: The Economy & Transport
----------------------	---

Councillor S A W Reynolds      Cabinet Member: Children & Young People, Learning, Employment & Skills

Councillor P Watling              Cabinet Member: Adult Social Care & Health

### **Invitees**

Councillor T J Nelson              Conservative

Councillor W L Tomlinson      Liberal Democrat

---

	<b>Agenda</b>	<b>Page</b>
<b>1.0</b>	<b>Apologies for Absence</b>	
<b>2.0</b>	<b>Declarations of Interest</b>	
<b>3.0</b>	<b>Minutes of the Previous Meeting</b>  To approve the minutes of the previous meeting held on 19 June 2025.	<b>5 - 12</b>
<b>4.0</b>	<b>Leader's Announcements</b>  To receive a verbal update from the Leader of the Council.	
<b>5.0</b>	<b>Adult Social Care Market Position Statement 2025 - 2028</b> <b>Cllr Kelly Middleton - Cabinet Member: Public Health &amp; Healthier Communities</b> To receive the Adult Social Care Market Position Statement for 2025 – 2028.	<b>13 - 66</b>
<b>6.0</b>	<b>Draft Housing Strategy 2025 - 2030</b> <b>Cllr Richard Overton - Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member: Highways, Housing &amp; Enforcement</b> To receive the draft Housing Strategy for 2025 – 2030.	<b>67 - 126</b>
<b>7.0</b>	<b>2025/26 Financial Monitoring Report</b> <b>Cllr Zona Hannington - Cabinet Member: Finance, Governance &amp; Customer Services</b> To receive an update on the Council's financial monitoring position.	<b>127 - 144</b>
<b>8.0</b>	<b>Annual Customer Feedback Report 2024/25</b> <b>Cllr Zona Hannington - Cabinet Member: Finance, Governance &amp; Customer Services</b> To note the Annual Customer Feedback Report for 2024/25.	<b>145 - 322</b>
<b>9.0</b>	<b>Child Friendly Telford</b> <b>Cllr Shirley Reynolds - Cabinet Member: Children &amp; Young People, Learning, Employment &amp; Skills</b>	<b>323 - 332</b>

To approve the adoption of the Child Friendly Telford programme as part of the wider Telford and Wrekin Children and Young People's Strategy.

**10.0 Culture & Communities**

**333 - 350**

**Cllr Angela McClements - Cabinet Member for Leisure, Tourism, Culture & the Arts**

To receive the draft Culture Strategy.

If you are reading these papers on an electronic device you have saved the Council £15.22 and saved 6.1kg of CO<sub>2</sub>, based on average agenda printing costs for the 2022/23 municipal year.

This page is intentionally left blank



## **CABINET**

**Minutes of a meeting of the Cabinet held on Thursday 19 June 2025 at 10.00 am in Council Chamber, Third Floor, Southwater One, Telford, TF3 4JG**

**PUBLISHED ON WEDNESDAY 25 JUNE 2025**

**(DEADLINE FOR CALL-IN: MONDAY 30 JUNE 2025)**

**Present:** Councillors L D Carter (Chair), R A Overton (Vice-Chair), P Davis, Z Hannington, C Healy, A D McClements, K Middleton, S A W Reynolds and O Vickers.

**Also Present:** Councillor T J Nelson

**Apologies:** Councillors W L Tomlinson and P Watling

### **CAB-1     Declarations of Interest**

None.

### **CAB-2     Minutes of the Previous Meeting**

**RESOLVED** – that the minutes of the meeting held on 15 May 2025 be confirmed and signed by the Chair.

### **CAB-3     Leader's Announcements**

The Leader congratulated the whole of the Local Authority, the administration and partners who had helped deliver a successful budget. This achievement, he said, was second to none.

The Leader reported on the recent success in securing the Local Government Chronicle award for Council of the Year 2025, which recognised the hard work that had been undertaken by Members, partners and stakeholders to deliver the best for local residents. He said that the Council had officers who were amongst the best in the country and thanked them all for their hard work.

The Leader thanked everyone that had played a part in bringing major investment by Rheinmetall to the former GKN site in Hadley. This multi-million-pound investment would play its part in the defence of the realm and the security of the country alongside the depot in Donnington. The development would bring a better quality of work life for those employed at the factory through access to green spaces, leisure services, good housing supply and the lowest Council Tax in the midlands. The Council had pitched against four other areas and this was wonderful news for the borough.

#### **CAB-4     2024/25 Financial Outturn Report**

The Cabinet Member: Finance, Governance and Customer Services presented the 2024/25 Finance Outturn Report, which set out the final outturn position for the year in relation to the revenue budget, capital programme and income collection.

Since the Medium-Term Financial Strategy was approved in 2024, the economic climate had continued to be challenging with costs pressures being experienced, particularly in relation to the provision of Adult Social Care.

The funding outlook for the medium-term remained very uncertain and regular updates in relation to the projected financial position for 2025/26 would come before Cabinet during the 2025/26 municipal year.

Despite the significant pressures faced during 2024/25, the Council ended the year within budget, a considerable achievement. This demonstrated strong financial management and resilience and had been achieved through a range of measures such as maximisation of external income, in year grants, trading income, capitalisation of revenue spends and one-off savings from vacancy management.

The gross revenue budget for 2024/25 was £529m with the net budget at £157m with the revenue outturn position being within budget by £0.091m (0.06% of net budget). The position at year end allowed a small number of one-off investments in key areas in order to support the Council's priorities and future financial sustainability and the budget strategy reserve remained at £21.7m. The council will continue to feel the impact of inflationary pressures, a continued demand for services and uncertainty in relation to the changes to the local government funding system due to be implemented in April 2026.

It was very pleasing to report that Children's Safeguarding & Family Support ended the year within budget, an unprecedented position compared to previous years and a clear demonstration of the positive work being undertaken by the service.

The key pressure area during the year had been Adult Social Care (ASC), with £8.8m of essential additional investment being required. This included the impact of market price increases, more complex needs, higher demand and longer periods of care being required. Work continued to deliver care which maximised prevention and independence where possible.

Capital spend at year end was £87.17m against an approved budget of £93.15m. Some re-phasing of expenditure would be required into 2025/26 as a result of re-profiling spend which would generate some treasury management benefits in 2025/26.

Non-Domestic Rate (NDR) collection was ahead of target at year end whilst Council Tax and Sales Ledger Debt were slightly behind the targets set.

NuPlace Ltd unaudited accounts had received rental income of £5,046m in 2024/25 which had generated £0.448m of profit after investment and taxation. A dividend of £0.302m had been paid to the Council as its sole investor. During 2024/25, the Council had received a total of £2.0m which included the dividend, additional interest and other marginal costs. Housing stock now sat at 608 homes which added £5.6m to the asset value.

Cabinet Members welcomed the report but noted that adult social care remained the biggest pressure nationally. The quality of service had been rated good by CQC and highlighted the support to residents via the hybrid assessments which could be used as a best practice. NuPlace was a good news story generating income to support front line services whilst providing good quality homes, security of tenure and developing brownfield sites. The Council continued to have a strong budget position by investing in front line services and prudent projects such as the solar farm and NuPlace and it was important to note that this was not the same nationally. Investments and expansion to the school estate, good local jobs and leisure facilities enabled the Council to protect, care and invest in order to be a better borough.

The Leader of the Conservative Group congratulated the Council on winning the Council of the Year award. He raised concerns in relation to good and bad borrowing and the interest on the debt, capitalisation and revenue expenditure. He asked that both now and in the future that the Council be conscious of future costs and that they be more explicit where capitalisation was being used.

The Leader responded that capitalisation measures allowed funds to be raised and be used for revenue spending. Investment focussed on both children's and adults' services, tripling the investment in these key areas. Financial challenges had been significant with important decisions required to avoid cutting services. Where opportunities presented, these were taken for the benefit of the residents. Support from the local MP had further aided efforts and there had been a 2.6% real terms growth in the budget year on year. He highlighted the improvements to free school meals, breakfast clubs, local transport schemes, active travel initiatives and infrastructure projects. If money was removed from the budget it would mean charges for green waste collection, car parking and require increased bus fares above £2.

**RECOMMENDED TO FULL COUNCIL that:**

- a) the performance against the 2024/25 Net Revenue budget which resulted in outturn being within budget by £91k be noted;**
- b) the revenue outturn position for 2024/25, which remained subject to audit by the Council's external auditors, and related virements be agreed;**
- c) delegated authority be granted to the Chief Executive, in consultation with the Section 151 Officer, to approve the transfers to reserves, and associated approval to the relevant members of**

**the Senior Management Team, after consultation with the relevant Cabinet Member, to spend the reserves in relation to the Income/Budget equalisation reserve;**

- d) the capital outturn position and related supplementary estimates, re-phasing and virements as summarised in the report be agreed;**
- e) delegated authority be granted to the Director: Finance, People & IDT to make any changes required, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Finance, Governance and Customer Services**
- f) the performance against income targets be noted; and**
- g) the suite of Medium-Term Financial Strategy reports approved by Full Council on 27 February 2025 be the Council's Efficiency Strategy for 2025/26, to enable new capital receipts to be used to fund the revenue costs of transformation and efficiency projects which will support the future financial position.**

#### **CAB-5     Biodiversity Duty Consideration and Action Plan**

Councillor C Healy, Cabinet Member Neighbourhoods, Planning & Sustainability presented the report which sought the adoption of the Biodiversity Duty Consideration Report and Action Plan following the Government's implementation of an Environmental Improvement Plan (EIP) in 2023. This EIP set out how the UK would meet its international obligations by 2030 and its commitments up to 2042.

The Council, as a significant landowner, had set out an action plan with a wide ranging impact both inside and outside of the borough and included the protection of the borough's natural environment, taking a leading role in tackling climate emergency, holding a Tree City of the World designation, signatories to the West Midlands' Biodiversity Pledge, reducing its carbon emissions by over 60% and protecting green spaces through statutory and non-statutory designations.

In advance of these commitments, the Environment Act 2021 set out the requirements to deliver a step-change in nature conservation across England. These include Section 102 of the Environment Act 2021, which had amended the pre-existing Biodiversity Duty on public bodies in England (Section 40 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006), which included conserving and enhancing biodiversity. Section 40a of the Act prescribes the requirement for monitoring and reporting and included the timetable for monitoring, reporting and subsequent reviews. The Act also included significant changes in relation to Biodiversity Net Gain, Local Nature Recovery Strategies and had set up a new national body which would oversee environmental compliance.

The Action Plan followed the Government's published guidance which had set out the SMART based actions and the actions were identified in the Plan at part 2 of the document.

The Environment Act required the Council to publish its first monitoring report by the 26 March 2026 to include the specific elements on the delivery of Biodiversity Net Gain. Following this report the corporate Biodiversity Duty Plan must be reviewed and reported at least once every five years.

Cabinet Members welcomed the report and the work that had gone into it to ensure the legislation had been complied.

The Leader of the Conservative Group noted the national target dates of 2030 and 2042 which would allow time for changes to be made. He noted that Telford had been awarded Tree City Status which he considered an interesting concept. The Local Plan referenced that 8,000 houses would be built on food production land which he considered inappropriate. In relation to the Transport Plan, it was important to have a range of investments and contractors to maintain alternative forms of travel such as cycle paths and walkways. He noted that the report did not list allotments within Newport. In relation to leaving areas uncut, it was important that the public had confidence that these areas had been allocated and not neglected. He noted the ambition was to have more rain gardens but asked how many the borough currently had and asked if the council had a baseline for the number of species of trees and whether this would improve biodiversity. It was important to ensure that developers were not buying their way out of biodiversity net gain or greenwashing and in relation to the overall context he considered that the borough was a nature depleted disaster.

Cabinet Members, in response to these comments, confirmed that the term 'Tree City' referred to cities or towns. The borough had a very good active travel network with investment into Newport, Oakengates and other town centre areas, together with the Silkin Way. Work would continue around grass cutting and mowing but there would be a mix of wildflower meadow and seed mix planting and it was important to note that some of these areas would not flower but were equally important to wildlife habitats. The council would continue to look for opportunities for tree planting and replace tree cover where ash die back had occurred. In relation to the baseline, work was being undertaken on the local nature recovery strategy across both Telford and Wrekin and Shropshire in order to enhance and connect up areas following the hierarchy set out in the Local Plan but if it was not possible within the borough then this would link back to the Local Nature Recovery Plan and areas such as wetlands which were an international important habitat.

**RESOLVED that:**

- a) the importance of protecting and restoring biodiversity for the borough and its residents be noted;**

**b) the commitment to safeguard, enhance and improve biodiversity in accordance with the Biodiversity Duty be approved; and**

**c) the Biodiversity Duty Consideration Report & Action Plan be adopted.**

**CAB-6     The Green Pledge**

Councillor Carolyn Healy - Cabinet Member: Neighbourhoods, Planning & Sustainability presented The Green Pledge which set out the introduction of a Green Pledge scheme to encourage the protection and management of non-council owned green spaces within the borough.

The Green Pledge would provide long-term management and safeguarding of green spaces which were of local importance and were not in the ownership of the Council. This would assist the Council in its commitment to the provision of locally accessible green spaces for local communities and to protect wildlife, the provision of leisure and recreation and offering positive health and wellbeing for families.

Cabinet Members welcomed the report which was a voluntary initiative to support the ongoing commitment to climate action, improve biodiversity and create a strong community partnership to protect and enhance greens paces. It would contribute to the health and wellbeing commitment to tackle health inequality and reduce obesity, stress and depression and the wider health impacts.

The Conservative Group Leader thanked officers for the report and he welcomed the concept of the green pledge and the commitment to manage land in a more positive way. He asked the Council to be wary of greenwashing and cautious in relation to land ownership. This was an opportunity to undertaken engagement with residents on the estates and with management of the industrial estates to improve the green spaces what were not particularly managed well and to ensure these were safe and welcoming environments. In relation to engagement and decision making, was there an opportunity to widen the decision-making process to include more people.

In response, Cabinet Members confirmed that they would work with residents paying a management fee to bring forward schemes on the open spaces and develop other schemes as they came forward. Criteria of schemes would need to be really clear and monitored, particularly around the issues of ownership/management and greenwashing. The priority would be to work closely with those closest to the site where issues could be teased out. A paper would come forward setting out the criteria but in the meantime, it could be considered how to bring others into the decision-making or whether an annual review or a group be set up to oversee how schemes were progressing.

**RESOLVED: that**

- a) the creation of the Green Pledge scheme be approved; and
- b) Delegated authority be granted to the Director of Prosperity and Investment and the Director Policy and Governance, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Neighbourhoods, Planning & Sustainability to complete the declaration process of Green Pledge sites.

**CAB-7     Outside Bodies Report 2025/26**

The Cabinet Member: Finance, Governance & Customer Services presented the report on the Representation on Outside Bodies 2025/26 which sought delegated authority for the Monitoring Officer to approve nominations to Outside Bodies which required annual appointments.

**RESOLVED – that:**

- a) the outside bodies to which the Council has historically nominated be noted: and
- b) delegated authority be granted to the Monitoring Officer, in consultation with the Cabinet Member: Finance, Governance and Customer Services, to consider which bodies to nominate to and which Councillor is nominated.

The meeting ended at 10.53 am

**Signed for the purposes of the Decision Notices**

Anthea Lowe  
Director: Policy & Governance  
Date: **Wednesday 25 JUNE 2025**

Signed .....

Date: Thursday 17 July 2025

This page is intentionally left blank





Telford & Wrekin  
Co-operative Council

Protect, care and invest  
to create a better borough

## Borough of Telford and Wrekin

### Cabinet

Thursday 17 July 2025

### Adult Social Care Market Position Statement 2025 - 2029

---

<b>Cabinet Member:</b>	Cllr Paul Watling – Cabinet Member: Adult Social Care & Health Systems Cllr Kelly Middleton – Cabinet Member: Public Health and Healthier Communities
<b>Lead Director:</b>	Simon Froud – Director: Adult Social Care
<b>Service Area:</b>	Adult Social Care
<b>Report Author:</b>	Stacey Norwood – Group Manager Joint Commissioning
<b>Officer Contact Details:</b>	<b>Tel:</b> 01952 388910 <b>Email:</b> stacey.norwood@telford.gov.uk
<b>Wards Affected:</b>	All Wards
<b>Key Decision:</b>	Key Decision
<b>Forward Plan:</b>	Not Applicable
<b>Report considered by:</b>	SMT - 17 June 2025 Business Briefing - 26 June 2025 Cabinet - 17 July 2025

---

#### 1.0 Recommendations for decision/noting:

It is recommended that Cabinet:

- 1.1 Approves the new Market Position Statement 2025 - 2029

#### 2.0 Purpose of Report

- 2.1 Telford & Wrekin Council, in partnership with its main commissioning partner, NHS Shropshire and Telford & Wrekin Integrated Care Board (ICB) is committed to developing a diverse, vibrant and high-quality health and social care market to meet the needs and aspirations of the people of the Borough who require support now or who may do so in the future.

- 2.2 This report seeks Cabinet approval for the Telford and Wrekin Market Position Statement (Appendix 1) which sets out how we will work with the market to manage demand for adult social care.
- 2.3 This report will give an overview of areas within the Market Position Statement (“MPS”) and explain how the Council intends to work with Providers for adult services to meet needs now and in the future.
- 2.4 The MPS provides an overview of the local context of working within the health and social care system and its challenges. It details the current work the Council is progressing to with a clear focus on reducing demand, facilitating early intervention and prevention to enable people to live and age well supported by a stable and innovative Provider market.
- 2.5 If approved the MPS will be launched in September 2025 for immediate use with the market.

### **3.0 Background**

- 3.1 The Care Act 2014 places a duty on Local Authorities to facilitate and shape our care and support market, to ensure sustainability, diversity, and to be continuously improving and innovating services. The MPS will allow the Council to demonstrate and evidence how it fulfils its duty under the Care Act.
- 3.2 The Council have statutory duties to meet the care and support for adults, and the MPS highlights the opportunities to align resources to support this.
- 3.3 Managing the market is essential to ensure demand is met now and in the future in the most cost-effective way that meets people’s outcomes. The MPS sets out a four-year plan which includes our commissioning principles and intentions to ensure we have a sustainable market.
- 3.4 The MPS has been developed and taken direction from a range of documents and key partnership arrangements including Telford & Wrekin Council’s Plan, Health and Wellbeing Strategy and Telford Vision 2032.
- 3.5 The MPS document has been informed by provider engagement, Making it Real Board and will be used to underpin ongoing dialogue with providers through a number of activities including established provider forums.
- 3.6 In 2024 Telford and Wrekin Council commissioned a service wide review of Adult Social Care focusing on modernising the service, to identify and harness opportunities for transformation and sustainable developments. The review called Making Prevention Real built upon a solid foundation of service improvement activity that is already underway in Adult Social Care to improve outcomes for people, as well as reducing cost pressures. This review has helped shape our commissioning intentions and models of care and support within the MPS.

## **4.0 Summary of main proposals**

4.1 The MPS supersedes the document produced in 2021. It has a much wider focus than the previous MPS that now includes a Joint approach with ICS on managing the market. The document also has a stronger focus on early intervention, prevention and improving person-centred care and describes the work underway in the neighbourhoods to strengthen and re-design community services.

4.2 Since publication of our previous MPS key achievements include:

- Development of additional specialist supported accommodation for adults with learning disabilities and/or autism or those with significant needs associated with their mental ill health which facilitates more independent living
- A successful bid for Accelerating Reform Grant monies which has been used to fund several projects centred on delivering alternative methods of support with a particular emphasis on supporting informal carers, digital technology solutions and Shared Lives Scheme
- Award of funding to identify, scope and support the number of international recruits employed in Telford and Wrekin, assess the risk to both individual recruits and the wider care market should sponsorship become unstable, and identify a cohort of ethical employers who are willing to train, mentor or re-employ displaced International Recruits.
- We successfully secured funding to support care providers in implementing a digital social care records solution. As a result 94% of care providers across the Borough have now adopted this system. By transitioning care plans from paper to electronic formats, care workers and managers can access vital information more quickly, respond more effectively to individuals' needs, reduce risk to safety and spend less time on administration and reporting.
- A new placement framework for Adult Social Care and Children's services has been developed, with approximately 40 providers now signed up. The framework covers a wide range of services, including residential and nursing care homes, homecare, supported living placements, and short breaks for children and young people.

4.3 The MPS will support the market to inform business decisions and ultimately ensure quality care and support is provided.

4.4 The document sets out that the population of Telford and Wrekin continues to grow at above national rates. Demand for Adult Social Care continues to rise each year, people are living longer and there are more people living with long-term health and care needs.

- 4.5 We describe the resource pressures facing the Council in providing social care, arising from increasing demand for services especially for older adults and people with disabilities and or mental health. The length of a person's stay in a care home and increased complexity of individuals has seen increasing costs. We however set out the Council's long track record for sound financial management.
- 4.6 The MPS outlines our commitment to supporting people in Telford and Wrekin to Live and Age well.

***Living Well:***

- We want to make sure that everyone can live a happy and healthy life. To do this we will work with our communities and organisations involved in those communities to develop support that makes sense to them. Our approach will be to work with groups of people and organisations to develop, design and where necessary change the way services are provided. This approach will help people get support early and avoid people escalating into a crisis and/or needing further long-term support.
- Early intervention and prevention is at the core of our approach to reducing the overall need for high-cost social care services and improving overall outcomes and health inequalities. We aim to commission services that promote health, wellbeing and independence, enabling people to have choice and control. When people need more support, we want a market with the right housing and care options to enable them to continue living the life they want.

***Ageing Well:***

- People are living longer, and statistics show that the numbers of older people are increasing both locally and nationally, therefore demand for services is increasing. We are proactively working to ensure we have a vibrant and diverse care market ensuring that people are supported with a strengths-based approach to enable and maintain their independence, whilst also ensuring that we can provide support for those with more complex needs, particularly those living with early and advancing dementia.
- We know that our population of adults with learning disabilities is ageing, therefore we need to ensure our services are accessible to older people with learning disabilities. We are working strategically to develop partnerships with traditional older people's services to adapt and diversify to meet the needs of ageing adults with a learning disability.

4.7 Commissioning is all about the most effective and efficient way of using all available resources to improve outcomes for people. Within the MPS we have set out our commissioning principles which include:

- Outcome focused
- Involvement
- Value for money
- Evidence based
- Proportionate
- Provider diversity
- Equality, Diversity and Inclusion
- Transparency and fairness
- Innovative
- Proactive prevention

4.8 Commissioners analysis of the data drives our strategic commissioning intentions, the MPS sets out our joint commissioning intentions which include the following key themes:

- Promoting independence by reviewing how people access Adult Social Care services
- Review and expand day opportunities and respite offer
- Addressing identified gaps in service provision
- Continue to support principle of a strength-based approach that promotes health, wellbeing and independence
- 'Home First approach' to reducing our use of long term and enablement bed- based care and further development of our specialist supported accommodation offer
- Expanding the use of technology, digital solutions and artificial intelligence

4.9 The MPS will be published, reviewed, and updated regularly and we intend to publish an annual Market Sustainability Plan outlining market change and improvements. An action plan will be developed to support the implementation of the key commissioning intentions and will report to the Adult Social Care Commissioning and Market Oversight group.

## **5.0 Alternative Options**

5.1 There are no alternative options.

## **6.0 Key Risks**

6.1 The Care Act 2014 places a duty on Local Authorities to facilitate and shape our care and support market, to ensure sustainability, diversity, and to be continuously improving and innovating services.

- 6.2 Quality and supply is monitored regularly to ensure a quality and sustainable market is accessible across the Borough.
- 6.3 Regarding risks to health and wellbeing of residents, the highest risk relates to doing nothing which is likely to lead to an adverse impact on the long-term health and well-being of residents and an increased dependency on adult social care services and/or a lack of suitable care provision within the Borough to meet the needs of residents.
- 6.4 The ICB is undergoing significant changes and reshaping its joint working arrangements. We continue to work closely with the ICB to manage the market and address any associated risks.
- 6.5 Due to increasing demand and complex needs, there is significant and growing resource risk that must be considered over the lifetime of this MPS.

## **7.0 Council Priorities**

- 7.1 The MPS report and subsequent action plan aligns with the Council's priorities, particularly when considering 'Every child, young person and adult lives well in their community' and 'all neighbourhoods are a great place to live'.

## **8.0 Financial Implications**

- 8.1 There are no direct financial implications arising from adopting the Market Position Statement. Financial modelling is used to forecast the financial pressures arising from the increasing demand for adult social care and rising market prices, and considers strategic changes within the market required to deliver future care requirements.
- 8.2 The results of the above models are then used to inform the Council's Medium Term Financial plan which considers the priorities and strategic direction of the Council and the grant and tax resources available in order to deliver a robust budget.
- 8.3 Therefore, the financial implications of changes in the future provision of care set out in the MPS will be considered as part of the Council's 3 year budget strategy.

## **9.0 Legal and HR Implications**

- 9.1 S.5 of The Care Act 2014 imposes a duty on Local Authorities to promote diversity and quality in provision of services and specifies in subsection (2) matters that must be regarded. The accompanying statutory guidance at Chapter 4 details the role of the Local Authority in market shaping and commissioning adult care and support, including integrated services and joint commissioning. This is also with reference the Statutory Guidance on JSNA and Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategies and any strategy should adhere to general standards, relevant laws and guidance - including the Committee of Standards in Public Life principles of accountability.

9.2 Further, in developing its services to meet local need, the Council must always be minded of its obligations under The Equality Act 2010m including s.149 and having due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, advance equality, and foster good relations between those with a protected characteristic and those who do not share it.

9.3 As regards contracts awarded by the Local Authority it must comply with the Procurement Act 2023 and the Council's Constitution, specifically the Contract Procedure Rules.

## **10.0 Ward Implications**

10.1 The MPS will have a Borough-wide impact for all adults living within Telford and Wrekin with care and support needs.

## **11.0 Health, Social and Economic Implications**

11.1 There are no negative health, social or economic implications arising from the MPS.

## **12.0 Equality and Diversity Implications**

12.1 A strengthened care market is deemed likely to assist with reducing health inequalities.

## **13.0 Climate Change and Environmental Implications**

13.1 This report has no direct climate changes or environmental impact.

## **14.0 Background Papers**

None.

## **15.0 Appendices**

1 Telford and Wrekin ASC Market Position Statement 2025 - 2029

## **16.0 Report Sign Off**

<b>Signed off by</b>	<b>Date sent</b>	<b>Date signed off</b>	<b>Initials</b>
Director	09/06/2025	09/06/2025	SF
Finance	13/06/2025	13/06/2025	RP
Legal	13/06/2025	13/06/2025	ON

This page is intentionally left blank



Telford & Wrekin Council and Shropshire, Telford and Wrekin Integrated Care System

# Joint Market Position Statement for Adult Social Care in Telford and Wrekin

2025-2029







# Introduction

*We recognise and thank all care workers for the high-quality care and support you provide to individuals every day.*

The Care Act 2014 instructs Telford & Wrekin Council to set out our understanding of demand for care and how that demand may change over time. This Market Position Statement helps us meet our legal duty to sustain and shape our market.

Following on from the previous Telford & Wrekin Council Market Position Statement, we want to transform **social care** and **health services** to achieve and focus on **early intervention, prevention** and **improve person-centred care**.

Common with other local authorities, we continue to face financial pressures. However, we strive to ensure the provision of **safe, good quality, accessible** services that meet **individual needs**, while ensuring **best value** and **real choice**. **Coproduction** is embedded within everything that we do, putting local people at the heart of commissioning and the delivery of services.

This document is aimed at existing providers, potential providers and voluntary sector services of health and social care. It is considered to be the start of dialogue between the Council, Health, people who use the services, carers, providers, and others about the vision for the future of health and social care markets.

We will continuously review progress and will publish an annual Market Sustainability Plan, providing an overview of our demand for social care services and how we would like to work with the market.

Telford & Wrekin Council's Adult Social Care services inspected and rated by Care Quality Commission as GOOD. Committed to delivering innovative and exceptional services.



**Cllr Paul Watling**

Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care and Health



**Cllr Kelly Middleton**

Cabinet Member for Public Health and Healthier Communities



**Fliss Mercer**

Executive Director: Adult Social Care, Housing and Customer Services



**Simon Froud**

Director: Adult Social Care

Inspected and rated

Good





# Contents

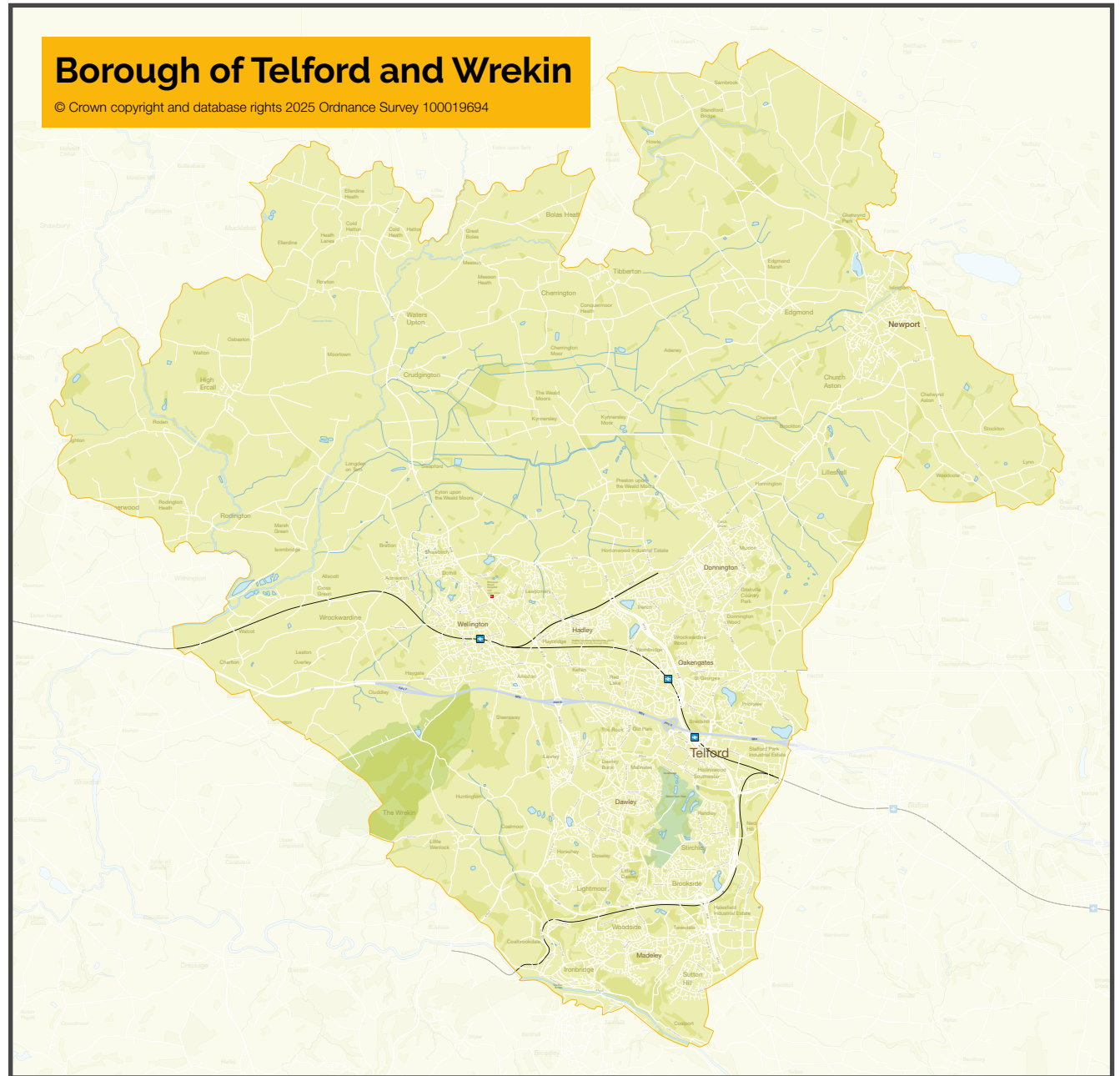
About the Borough of Telford and Wrekin	page 6
Understanding our demand	page 8
Resource pressures	page 10
People matter in Telford and Wrekin	page 11
Local Health Care System – Neighbourhood Health	page 12
Our commissioning principles	page 13
Co-production and engagement with people who access Adult Social Care services and partners	page 15
Living Well in Telford and Wrekin	page 17
Ageing Well in Telford and Wrekin	page 19
Information, Advice and Guidance	page 21
Independent Living Centre	page 22
Enablement	page 23
People with Learning Disabilities and Autism	page 25
Physical disabilities	page 27
Acquired Brain Injury	page 28
People with Mental Health needs	page 29
Care and Support at home	page 31
Specialist Accommodation	page 33
Direct Payment and Micro providers	page 34
Support for Carers	page 35
Community support	page 37
Digital and technology enabled care	page 38
Workforce	page 41
How you can play your part	page 45





# About the Borough of Telford and Wrekin

Telford and Wrekin is a place of contrasts, a distinctive blend of urban and rural areas, with green open spaces alongside contemporary housing developments and traditional market towns.



The population of Telford and Wrekin continues to grow at above national rates. The growth of the population between 2022 and 2023 (1.5%) continued to be at a greater rate than England (1.0%). The Borough saw one of the largest increases in population aged 65 plus in England in the decade to 2023, with an increase of 28.5% (England 16.1%). As the Borough grows, it is also becoming increasingly diverse, particularly amongst our younger residents.

Telford and Wrekin is a place of socio-economic contrasts. Parts of the Borough are amongst the most deprived in England, with deprivation rates comparable to inner cities, whilst other areas are amongst the least deprived in England. There are notable inequalities in the Borough which are affecting outcomes for residents, and overall health in the Borough is below average.

One of the biggest challenges for the Borough is still health inequalities. It is important to emphasise that the health of the Borough is improving overall, however, for several key measures the health of the population is not as good as the national average. This gap to the national position is most evident in the most deprived communities of the Borough with key challenges including a lower life expectancy, higher rates of long-term illness and disabilities, high obesity rates and high rates of admissions to hospital for a variety of conditions.

## Telford and Wrekin key facts

### Borough population



**191,915**

### Local demographics



**114,800** 18-64  
**35,100** 65+  
**3,900** 85+

## Population projections

### Borough population 2035



**203,500**  
**116,200** 18-64  
**45,100** 65+  
**6,300** 85+

Read more about Telford and Wrekin Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) [here](#)

Local Authority population projections are due out July 2025. You can find out more by visiting [understanding Telford and Wrekin](#).

# Understanding our demand

## Mental Health support

The number of people with a Mental Health need has consistently been around 150 people over the last two years

Read more about Understanding Telford and Wrekin [here](#) 

## Highest growth age group

62% increase of over 85 year olds in comparison to national growth of 43% over the last 10 years

## 65+ year olds with dementia

2,200 currently with the potential increase to 3,100 by 2035

## Disabilities

2,700 of 18-64

living with learning disabilities and 9,366 older people with a limiting long term illness



## Number of unpaid carers



13,400 18-64  
4,000 65+

## Supporting people to live as independently as possible



To date we have supported

**447 individuals**

with learning disabilities and/or mental health to have their own front door

## Enablement or long-term home care



At any one time we have approx.

**870 people**

receiving enablement or long-term home care. In 2024 we supported over 2,300 people through our system, commissioning over 1 million hours of homecare



## Local demand

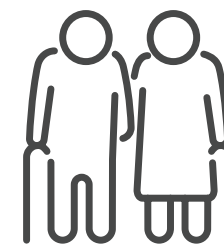
Demand for Adult Social Care continues to rise each year, people are living longer and there are more people living with long-term conditions, complex needs particularly dementia within residential and home care.

Page 29  
There are increasing numbers of young people in transition to Adult Social Care with complex needs.

Learn more about Commissioning Strategy and Market Position Statement for Children's Safeguarding and Family Support [here](#) 



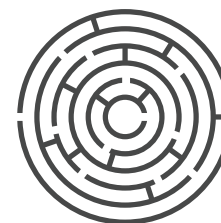
**Increasing number of discharge notices**  
3,080 **discharge notices** received to support people leaving hospital. This is an **average increase of 6%** since 2001



**Adults are living longer with poor health and disabilities**  
which means there is more longer-term need to support and the number of people with **complex needs is also increasing.**



We are seeing a **significant increase**  
in the number of adults awaiting autism diagnosis.



We have an **increasing need for complex**  
elderly mental health and dementia health care.



We continue to see an **increase in demand for mental health services**  
as a legacy from the pandemic.

# Resource pressures

The Council is facing significant budget challenges in providing social care, especially for older adults and people with disabilities. The length of a person's stay in a care home and increased complexity of individuals has seen increasing costs and increasing demands. However, Telford & Wrekin Council has a long track record of sound financial management. The points below set out some of the context to the Council's medium term financial strategy:

- The funding position nationally is uncertain with a one-year funding settlement from Government for 2025/26 and a funding review in the near future.
- Pressure on the budget from increasing costs and high demand for services such as Adult Social Care and Children's Safeguarding.
- Significant funding gap suggested by the Local Government Association for Councils over the next two years of over £6bn.
- Locally Adult Social Care 2025/26 net budget around £77.2m and Children's Safeguarding 2025/26 budget around £49.6m making up around 75% of the Council's net budget.
- Savings required ongoing commencing 2025/26 around £11.8m, with a total already delivered since 2009/10 of £181.7m.
- Adult Social Care pressures from population growth and growth in unit cost per person growing significantly year on year in all 18+ age groups.
- For 2025/26 the Council approved a general Council Tax increase of 2.99% plus a 2% increase for the Adult Social Care precept to meet the current high levels of financial pressure arising from the increased demand for and cost of Adult Social Care and the uncertainty facing the Council. All the funding raised through the council tax increase is being invested in the provision of Social Care services for the most vulnerable children and adults in our community.



## Action

We need to continue to look for the best value solutions to meet people's needs, which will not only deliver better outcomes but will enable us to address the significant financial pressure that we are facing. Through our commissioning intentions we will explore service remodelling, best practice and negotiation with service providers. We want providers to work with us to address this challenge.

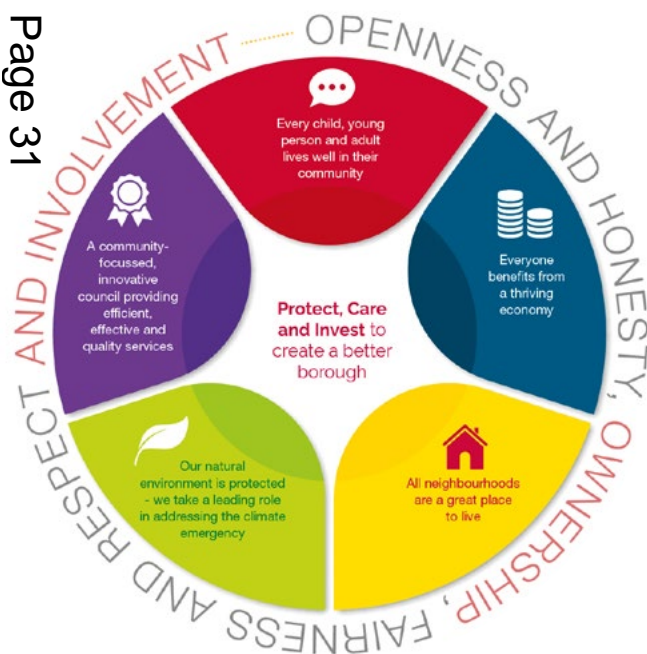
# People matter in Telford and Wrekin

■ **Telford & Wrekin Council's Plan**, highlights our priorities and underpins this Market Position Statement. Every child, young person and adult lives well in their community. Our vision is to protect, care and invest to create a better Borough. The further development of the integration of health and social care, alongside the development of collaborative strategic commissioning across the Borough will help us to achieve this aim.

■ Improving the health and wellbeing of adults is an overarching theme in our **Health and Wellbeing Strategy**. There is a focus on adults affected by poverty, poor mental health, domestic abuse, alcohol and drugs and specialist educational needs and disabilities.

■ **Telford Vision 2032** partnership ambitions supporting all adults to live well for longer, to live independently and enjoy the place where they live.

Page 31



# Local Health Care System – Neighbourhood Health

The Integrated Care System (ICS) brings together health and care organisations across Shropshire, Telford and Wrekin to collaborate more closely. Our ICS, known as Shropshire, Telford and Wrekin ICS, is responsible for:

- improving outcomes in population health and health care;
- tackling inequalities in outcomes, experience and access;
- enhancing productivity and value for money; and
- helping the NHS support broader social and economic development.

Page 32



Learn more about the Shropshire, Telford & Wrekin Integrated Care System [here](#)

Supporting the ICS to achieve those outcomes is the Telford & Wrekin Integrated Place Partnership (TWIPP). TWIPP's role is to agree and drive the delivery of proactive, preventative, high quality community centred health and care integration at place, contributing to delivering of the health & strategy priorities.

The work of TWIPP builds on already existing ways of working and looks to support improved outcomes for three priority areas for 2024 to 2026:

- supporting General Practice by working together to reduce and manage demand for GP services/appointments;
- improving mental health services and support for children, young people and adults (prevention, early intervention and specialist services); and
- healthy ageing (with a focus on preventing, reducing and delaying frailty).

The 2024/25 NHS priorities, as outlined by the government in its 10-year plan, focus on recovery and improving core services, with a strong emphasis on moving care to communities, leveraging technology, and prevention. There is an urgent need to transform the health

and care system and a need to move to a neighbourhood health service that will deliver more care at home, or closer to home, improve access, experience and outcomes and ensure sustainability of delivery. TWIPP have identified four neighbourhoods within Telford and Wrekin, which are currently aligned to the [Primary Care Networks](#):

- Newport & Central PCN
- South East Telford PCN
- TELDOC PCN
- Wrekin PCN

Work is underway in the neighbourhoods to strengthen and re-design community services to meet local needs, to improve coordination and communication locally, and to identify and deliver approaches that support a more integrated approach across health, local authority, VCSE and the community to improve people's outcomes.

View more information on the role of systems, places and neighbourhoods [here](#)

As this work evolves, joint commissioning in neighbourhoods will identify and commission services to meet the needs of people in those specific areas. This work will be built from the commissioning intentions identified throughout this document.

# Our commissioning principles

Putting people and prevention at the heart of everything we do. We will commission based on the following principles.

## Outcomes focused

Our primary focus is on the delivery of improved outcomes for the people who live in Telford and Wrekin, their unpaid carers and families. With an early intervention and prevention approach to reducing and delaying someone needing long term care being a priority we will only commission provision that:

- delivers our priority outcomes
- reduces inequality
- maximises personalisation
- gives choice and control, and
- supports maximized independence.

## Involvement

We aim to ensure that the views of the people who use our services to shape commissioning decisions. We are committed to developing innovative ways of engaging people, for example, through co-design and co-production. The voice of the people that need our services alongside private, voluntary and third sector

care and support providers, will be part of all commissioning activity and subsequent performance management framework design.

## Value for money

We aim to achieve maximum value for money from all services and commissioned activity. Every pound we spend on behalf of the taxpayer must demonstrate its worth. We will always seek to allocate expenditure to achieve maximum impact, which can mean decommissioning services and to reduce expenditure where expected benefits are not being realised; however, whilst the price we pay for services is important to us, we recognise that it is not the only measure of value; the outcomes, quality delivered and the social value achieved are also of importance.

We will look to benchmark and work regionally to ensure we are achieving a price that offers value for money for the Council and partners and is also sustainable and appropriate for the service delivery. Comparing care provider fee rates is challenging with variable costs and each area having their own unique position, therefore we will review care costs independently, considering our financial landscape.

## Evidence based

We will base commissioning decisions on the evidence available to us, whether this is through an analysis of needs and gaps, an understanding of what works in achieving desired outcomes, an assessment of best practice, or an options analysis.

## Proportionate

Our commissioning arrangements range from multi-million-pound contracts with large private sector companies, to grants of less than a thousand pounds with small voluntary organisations. We aim to differentiate our commissioning processes so that they are proportionate; for example, to the amount of spend, the level of risk involved, and the type of provider. A fundamental principle is that our arrangements and processes for sourcing and procuring provision should be as simple and streamlined as possible.



## Fairness for all

As part of our commissioning process, we will ensure that all projects and services are designed to meet the diverse needs of individuals and communities, promoting fairness and inclusivity.

## Provider diversity

We aim to encourage a diverse provider market operating locally to stimulate quality and greater value for money. We are seeking to work together to develop services, and to be in a position where placements are prioritised with good or outstanding providers.

It may sometimes be more effective to commission block contracts or to structure services on a cluster or neighbourhood basis, depending on the specific needs of the population and the nature of the care being delivered.

## Transparency and fairness

Our commissioning processes and decisions will be underpinned by principles of transparency and fairness. We will develop new provider and market forums to enable open dialogue and will inform providers of

the reasons for our decisions. We will build on existing provider forum networks and see this statement as the beginning of the partnership journey in how we get there.

We aim to simplify and streamline the process for Voluntary, Community, and Social Enterprises (VCSEs) to compete for and win Council contracts, fostering greater accessibility and transparency.

## Innovative

We will seek to improve our commissioning practice, including the development of alternative models of delivery, procurement, funding and payment.

## Proactive approach

A proactive preventative approach that maximises health and wellbeing, independence, and self-care in or as close to people's homes as possible in order to reduce people's need for health and care services.



# Co-production and engagement with people who access Adult Social Care services and partners

We have established strong partnership arrangements with Partners in Care, a not-for-profit membership organisation that represents local care providers. Throughout the year, we host provider forums where care providers and commissioners come together to share insights, collaborate on service development, and help shape the future of care delivery in the Borough.

Through a wide range of people who use adult social care services, their families and carers, as well as the Making it Real Board and a variety of Partnership Boards co-production, co-design and engagement is prioritised, to shape how services are designed, improved and developed.

The boards work in co-production with officers and members making recommendations on how different service areas can improve and develop, also using the strategy action plans to drive progression towards person-centred, community-based support.

Find out more about our approach to Co-production [here](#) 

## Care control and choice

We support and work to the Making it Real principles:

- Wellbeing and Independence – living the life I want, keeping safe and well;

- Information and Advice – having the information I need, when I need it;
- Active and Supportive Communities – keeping family, friends and connections;
- Flexible and Integrated Care and Support – my support, my own way;
- When Things Need to Change – staying in control;
- Workforce – the people who support me.







# Living Well in Telford and Wrekin

## Our Commissioning Intentions

Telford & Wrekin Council commissioned a service wide review of Adult Social Care focusing on modernising the service, to identify and harness opportunities for transformation and sustainable developments. The review called Making Prevention Real built upon a solid foundation of service improvement activity that is already underway in Adult Social Care to improve outcomes for people, as well as reducing cost pressures. This has helped shape our commissioning intentions.

Our commitment is to ensure that everyone has the opportunity to lead a happy, healthy and fulfilling life. We believe that meaningful support comes from strong communities and the partnerships within them. To do this we will work with our communities and organisations involved in those communities to develop support that makes sense to them. Our approach will be to work with groups of people and organisations to develop, design and where necessary change the way services are provided. This approach will help people get support early and avoid them escalating into a crisis and/or needing further long-term support.

Early intervention and prevention is at the core of our approach to reducing the overall need for high-cost social care services and improving overall outcomes and health inequalities. We aim to commission services that promote health, wellbeing and independence, enabling people to have choice and control. When people need more support, we want a market with the right housing and care options to enable them to continue living the life they want.

Our approach to prevention will be based on a better understanding of our local populations health needs and we will work closely with colleagues from Public Health to understand how we can commission services that support the wider determinants of health.



## Message to the market Living Well

- In 2025 we will review the front door offer from Adult Social Care to ensure that we can proactively support people at the right time.
- We will review our day service and respite offer for older people, people with learning disabilities or autism with a view to expanding services to support our prevention agenda; we will work with providers who can offer creative and innovative solutions that are value for money and can support carers and provide enjoyable experiences.
- Our Flexible Care Arrangements framework for learning disabilities, autism and mental health is due to end. We are currently reviewing this arrangement and looking to develop a broader disability services framework to be released to the market during 2025.
- Working with Housing Strategy and Commissioning who will act as the single point of contact, we would like to work in partnership with developers earlier to shape the supply of accommodation and ensure all accommodation meets the care needs of people within our Borough, including maximising digital technology.
- We will encourage creative practice and the use of digital technology to support people and their carers.
- We will explore specific specialist provision that will support a small but emerging need for people who have been discharged from long stay hospitals, or who are experiencing crisis and require unplanned emergency accommodation to prevent hospital admission.
- We will continue to review the need for specialist and skilled local provision for Adults with Complex Needs including adults with acquired brain injury, developing a robust accreditation process for providers wishing to work in this area and once the market has developed, explore repatriation opportunities.
- We will work in partnership with local organisations, community groups and the voluntary sector to develop opportunities to reduce social isolation, encourage engagement and create meaningful activities for people to stay active, well and independent.
- We will work with the market to help shape and deliver targeted proactive prevention and early intervention programmes.
- We will continue to ensure the quality of all providers to increase the uptake of Direct Payments, to support choice, control and flexibility.
- We will continue to innovate and work proactively with partners where there are opportunities to do joint commissioning.

# Ageing Well in Telford and Wrekin

## Our Commissioning Intentions

People are living longer, and statistics show that the numbers of older people are increasing both locally and nationally. Demand for services is already increasing and as our older population increases, we expect further demand on already limited services and resources.

We are proactively working to ensure we have vibrant and diverse care markets ensuring that people are supported with a strengths-based approach to enable and maintain their independence, whilst also ensuring that we can provide support for those with more complex needs, particularly those living with early and advancing dementia.

We know that our population of adults with learning disabilities is ageing, therefore we need to ensure our services are accessible to older people with learning disabilities. We are working strategically to develop partnerships with traditional older people's services to adapt and diversify to meet the needs of ageing adults with a learning disability.

The Ageing Well Strategy starts from a position of supporting people to live well for longer, so that people have a life, not a service.

Learn more about Ageing Well in the Borough [here](#) 





## Message to the market Ageing Well


- We will continue to work with innovative providers to ensure we can support people using strength-based approach to live well for longer.
- We will further develop our services to ensure they are accessible to older people with learning disabilities and that we work strategically to develop partnerships with traditional older people's services to adapt and diversify to meet the needs of ageing adults with a learning disability.
- We will continue to explore opportunities and innovative contracting to commission a diverse range of services that prevent, reduce and delay needs for formal care and support, ensuring that older people are supported to be as independent as possible.
- We would like to see a growth in preventative community-based services, including those that promote healthy lifestyles, that are accessible for all and create stronger local communities across the Borough.
- We want to work with our stakeholders locally to continue to explore integrated falls pathways and reduce the number of emergency hospital admissions caused by falls.
- We will continue to work jointly on palliative and end of life care pathways.
- We look to providers to support us in developing additional specialist extra care provision within our Borough as an alternative to residential care.
- We will increase the number of people benefiting from enablement care and continue to commission enablement provision in a variety of ways that meets the 2-hour response time to support same day discharges across seven days per week.
- We would like to work with providers to improving outcomes for individuals receiving enablement care, ensuring they achieve greater independence, well-being, and quality of life.
- In 2019 we introduced a geographic zone model, segmenting home care provision into 5 zones. We are seeing an oversupply of this market, therefore our intention in 2025 is to review this model to ensure we can effectively manage support demand.



# Information, Advice and Guidance

We know from talking to residents of the Borough that seeking the right information, advice and guidance can sometimes be a challenge, and planning for the future is often only considered when the need arises.

We co-ordinate and maintain services that provide accessible, up-to-date, accurate, comprehensive, but proportionate, advice and local information relating to care and support. This is embedded in our prevention approach to prevent, delay and/or reduce needs. Our information and advice is available to everyone, regardless of their eligibility for other services from Adult Social Care.

You can find out more about our information, advice and online services [here](#) 

## Live Well Telford

Live Well Telford is an all age, online community directory for Telford and Wrekin. It enables people to search and access community provisions in their area. Local communities, voluntary sector groups, faith groups and service providers are encouraged to include and maintain their services on Live Well Telford. We ask all local community groups and service providers to take an active role in ensuring your service offer is updated.

Read more about Live Well Telford [here](#) 

The Council will continue to grow its 'Live Well' Hubs across the Borough of Telford & Wrekin, so that we can enable people to access support from universal services earlier and will continue to develop our local offer to ensure that individuals can receive the right advice, information and guidance at the right time, in a way that is appropriate for them.

## Message to the market Ageing Well

- We want to work with providers to make it easier for people to access and share information about the care and support they are receiving in a timely way
- We want to ensure we are all using clear and inclusive language and alternative formats to explain to people what Adult Social Care and Health offers.
- We aim to provide timely advice, information and guidance to help prevent people from needing formal care services, by supporting them to access and make the most of community-based resources.


# Independent Living Centre

We have an Independent Living Centre (ILC) which is an all-purpose environment to promote independent living. People can find out more about the following in the ILC:

- Assistive Technology solutions
- Digital solutions
- Occupational Therapy early help assessments
- Information and advice
- Community engagement and participation
- Sensory Impairment and drop-ins

As well as being a health and support hub, it is our digital and technology shop for our residents. We also have a 'Virtual House', through which people can virtually walk and look at the technology that is available to support them in a discreet and aesthetically pleasing way.

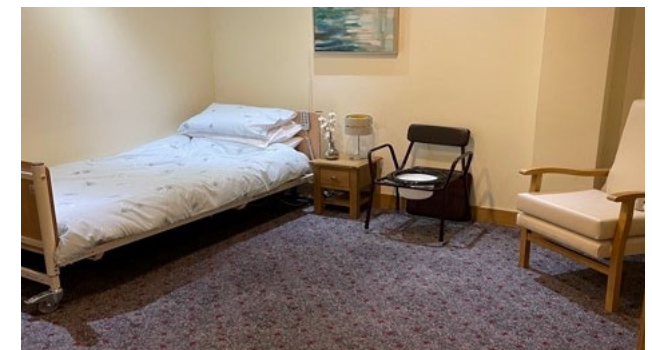
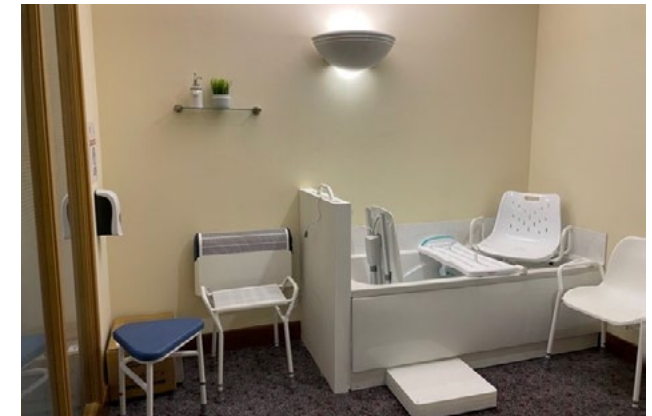
The ILC allows people to see what is available, to test and feel technology and be able to become familiar and at ease with using this in their own homes.

Learn more about the Independent Living Centre [here](#) 



## Message to the market Ageing Well

- We expect all providers to maximise use of technology to increase and develop independence and prevent the need for long term care and support.





# Enablement

Social care has a long history of delivering effective enablement with our partners. We work alongside Shrewsbury and Telford NHS Hospital (SATH), Shropshire Community NHS Trust (ShropCom) and other health professionals as integrated teams:

- Care Transfer Hub to support hospital discharge
- Telford Integrated Community Assessment Team or TICAT to support people through their enablement journey; and
- the Urgent Community Response Team to provide alternatives to hospital admission.

Whenever identified as having additional therapy or care needs, people leaving hospital will be supported to recover at home or within a care setting through the provision of short-term enablement or rehabilitation. At the end of their enablement interventions, people will be assessed for any ongoing care needs at home or care setting. Enablement support may also be provided as part of the support to avoid a hospital admission.

## Home-based enablement

Further commissioning for home care enablement will take place in 2025, using our Dynamic Purchasing System providers under mini competition. Providers will be required to accommodate a response to accept each person within 2 hours to support same day discharges across seven days per week. This will include live-in options and mobile night care alternatives while people recover and have enablement support.



We want to see the enablement home care offer to maximise support for enablement goals of:

- encouraging independence;
- single handed care where realistic and safe to do;
- support the use of digital technology; and
- flexible care overnight to support people's night needs.

We would like to invite people with ground floor living to join our Shared Lives Carers. We would like micro providers and voluntary organisations to consider how they can support the Pathway Zero where people may not need personal care following hospital treatment but are identified as needing support within their local communities to maintain their independence and well-being.

Enablement gives a regular flow of support and as such lends itself to full employment contracts rather than zero hours, which also supports retention of care staff. This would give a more stable working pattern and provides more consistency for the looked after person.

## Message to the market

All partners are seeking to support a 'Home First' approach. We aim to reduce our use of enablement bedded care. Therefore, our utilisation of enablement home care is expected to increase.

## Bed based enablement - (Nursing or Residential)

Due to the increased needs of individuals requiring bed-based enablement we have seen a move from the residential level care needs to nursing and nursing with dementia care beds.

We want to work with the market to ensure that people are supported with a strengths-based, person-centred approach to enable and maintain their independence and improve their outcomes after a period of illness.

## Message to the market

- We predict a continued increase in overall demand for enablement; therefore, we are planning to commission additional block-contract

bed capacity in the future. These will be for nursing and nursing with dementia care levels.

- Commissioned block-contracted beds provide certainty of capacity for bed-based enablement. This requires providers to be flexible and take same day admissions up to 7pm (except across weekends) and provide consistency of the enablement approach, including in-house or arranged therapy offer to maximise therapy, independence goals and reduce the length of stay.
- We are looking to providers to support discharge for hospital patients within 2 hours, including the discharge of people with complex needs into community provision.
- We will increase the number of people benefiting from enablement care and increase the effectiveness and monitoring of enablement goals to help reduce the need for people needing long term care and support.
- We will review alternative models of step-down enablement care, including the potential to expand extra care housing as people transition from hospital to home.



# People with Learning Disabilities and Autism

A significant proportion of the Council's Adult Social Care annual expenditure is supporting people to access Learning Disability and Autism services.

Across Telford and Wrekin, there are an estimated 2,727 people aged 18 plus who have a learning disability currently. This number is expected to rise to 2,800 by 2030. The number of people aged 18 plus who have autism is 1,400 (made up of 1,100 aged 18-64 and 300 aged 65+). Only people with an eligible care need are known to Adult Social Care. We fully recognise that the needs of people with autism are distinct from those of people with learning disabilities.



Telford & Wrekin's Learning Disability Strategy is due to be reviewed in 2025/26 and will set out the local vision for how statutory services (health and care) will continue to work together to ensure the right services are available to meet current and future needs of people with a learning disability. We want to continue to make sure people with learning disability and/or autism are treated equally and respected, that their rights are recognised and that they can access the support they need closer to home.

The Autism Strategy 2023-2028 has system support with its actions being overseen by the Autism Partnership Board. Early intervention plays a pivotal role in enhancing outcomes for autistic people. Timely diagnosis and targeted support, contribute to the development of essential life skills and overall well-being. The Autism Strategy's key priorities are:

- good information, advice and guidance;
- supporting raising awareness/acceptance;
- supporting to improve inclusion;
- focusing on education, training and employment opportunities;
- supporting healthy living;
- supporting young people in preparing for adulthood; and
- working with the criminal justice system.

In October 2024, there were 662 people who are awaiting an autism assessment; this has risen to 800 people in January 2025.

Support in the community is commissioned through a range of options, including day services. 85% of day services for adults with learning disabilities and/or autism are delivered through the Councils internal provider My Options, provision includes a skills hub and building based services. They provide opportunities to meet other people develop friendship and learn new skills.

Read more about how we can support people in the Borough who have a learning disability [here](#)   
Learn more about the Autism Strategy [here](#) 



## Action

Throughout 2025 and beyond, we will:

- Implement the Autism Strategy Action Plan;
- Refresh the Learning Disability Strategy;
- Review our existing services for people with a learning disability or autism;
- Co-design a new vision and future model with people who use services, their families and providers;
- Develop the preventative offer for Autistic adults with a particular focus on those transitioning to adulthood;
- Develop local provision that meets the needs of adults with disabilities including young adults with complex needs, people with autism and people who are or may be at risk of entering criminal justice system;
- We will review our Day service opportunities for older people, people with disabilities, young adults and people with an ABI;
- Tender for any service opportunities in 2025/26.



# Physical disabilities

Support for adults with physical disabilities and sensory impairments is commissioned through varying options, including micro-providers, direct payments, community activities and a small amount of more traditional day opportunities for adults.

## Action

- We will work with people with physical disabilities to explore opportunities to develop our local market with a new vision, focused on:
  - person centred support;
  - employment opportunities;
  - developing new skills; and
  - technological solutions
- We will review our day services provision and co-design a new vision and future model with people who use day services, their families and providers.
- We will review our community led support offer for adults with physical disabilities.
- We will work closely with colleagues in Housing Strategy and Commissioning to support access to adopted and accessible properties available in the Borough.



## Message to the market

- We would like to work in partnership to improve employment opportunities for working-age adults.
- We are looking to care providers to work with us to develop a community led support offer.



# Acquired Brain Injury (ABI)

We have an increasing number of residents in the Borough who have an acquired brain injury.

Nationally ABI admissions in the UK have increased by 12% since 2005-06, with there being 356,699 admissions to hospital in 2019-20.

Limitations and gaps within our market locally often means that people with ABI have to receive care and support outside of the Borough. It is a commissioning priority to understand our local needs in greater depth and the Council recognises it must work proactively with the market to develop the local market to support individuals to live within Telford and Wrekin.

The Council would like to explore development of a Live Well Strategy throughout the duration of the Market Position Statement which will formalise our strategic intentions for adults with acquired brain injury and/or physical disabilities.

## Action

- As a partnership we will review our existing demand and pathways to inform our commissioning intentions.
- Develop an accreditation process for providers wishing to work within this area.
- Explore opportunities to develop an all-age disabilities strategy.
- We will also work proactively with our colleagues in strategic housing, to develop accommodation-based opportunities to proactively support adults with an ABI, when we have developed our local care market.

## Message to the market

- It is a commissioning priority to understand our local needs in greater depth and the Council recognises it must work proactively with the market to support individuals to live within Telford and Wrekin.



# People with Mental Health needs

In 2025, there are approximately 21,000 people living in Telford and Wrekin living with a common mental health disorder. This will increase by a predicted 600 people by 2030. Of those known to Adult Social Care, a considerable number have two or more psychiatric disorders.

Additionally, the JSNA tells us that diagnosed depression in those aged 18+ (QOF prevalence) is reported as 16.2% of the population in 2022/23, which is higher than the prevalence for England (13.2%). This equates to around 25,579 people (source: PHE Fingertips depression prevalence 2022/23).

Self-reported wellbeing from responses to the Annual Population Survey within Telford and Wrekin were similar to England across all four indicators in 2022/23 (happiness, satisfaction, wellbeing and anxiety).

The rate of emergency hospital admissions for intentional self-harm per 100,000 population was similar in Telford and Wrekin to England for females, males and persons in 2021/22. The rate for females was 86.9% higher than males.

We know that 60% of females in contact with secondary mental health services live in stable and appropriate accommodation, which is 3.5% higher than for males. We also know the gap in employment rate is 22.5% higher for males than females for those in contact with secondary mental health services.

Telford & Wrekin Council currently supports 308 people who have eligible care needs under the Care Act within the mental health category. The cost of commissioned mental health support between April 2024 and end of January 2025 was just short of £4million.

Work is currently underway to develop an all-age Mental Health Strategy for Telford and Wrekin. The strategy vision is to make sure people can access the support they need, when they need it. We aspire to achieve parity of esteem between physical health and mental health.

The Council is committed to several key priorities related to mental health and these include:

- The promotion of positive emotional health and wellbeing
- Reducing the stigma associated with mental health
- Ensuring our strategy and services are developed alongside people with lived experience.

Early engagement with people who use services has identified the following emerging priorities.

- Information, advice and guidance
- Prevention and early help
- Support in a crisis
- Time to listen

## Action

- We will co-produce with our residents (including children and families) our priorities for service developments and mental health support resulting in a mental health strategy for Telford and Wrekin.
- Continue to work with the community and voluntary sector to ensure a broad range of services in the community which promote wellbeing, prevention, early help, focus on recovery and independence and reduce the likelihood of people going into crisis.
- We will work with Safer Stronger Communities to ensure the broadest community connections.
- We will work to ensure a robust offer of low level/preventative services.
- We will work to develop opportunities to support the parts of the community that are harder to reach.
- Continue to work with our partners across Shropshire (other Local Authorities and NHS organisations) to deliver local priorities, ensure care and support is delivered closer to home, improve outcomes and ensure efficiency.
- Ensure residents, including those in transition to adulthood and care leavers have access to a range of housing options to meet their needs.
- Support the development of the rehabilitation offer in Telford and Wrekin.

Through commissioned services and our approach to partnership working we support people to remain independent through community-based support. By working together and ensuring easy access to support, we aim to prevent reduce the delay the escalation of mental health needs reaching crisis point.

A number of services work collaboratively to achieve this, including:

- working with the rough sleepers' task force to prevent and reduce homelessness;
- working with partners across health, care and the voluntary sector to explore joint working solutions to better engage individuals;
- mental health hubs which offer peer led support; and
- Calm Cafes which offer improved access to support in a crisis.

## Message to the market

- We would like to work with the market to ensure people have access to specialist provision closer to home.
- We would like to develop our prevention offer with a particular focus on those transitioning to adulthood.
- We want to work with providers to develop recovery focused approach which focuses on independence and gaining new skill.
- Continue the use of assistive technology to promote greater opportunities for independence.
- We want to develop the prevention offer and work with providers to maximise existing community led infrastructures.

# Care and Support at home

Supporting people in their own homes is an important part of our local offer and key to helping people maintain their independence.

- It is recognised that there continues to be people move on from Extra Care to residential care, and the Council would like to explore opportunities to look at high needs Extra Care to prevent this from occurring.
- We would like to work with providers to develop alternative and flexible models of care and accommodation including Extra Care and models of support that is inclusive to those with learning disabilities, physical disabilities and autistic people.

The Council commission home care within the Extra Care Schemes in the Borough and local schemes have their own respective agreements with tenants for Peace of Mind (24-hour support). Although there is a wide provision of Extra Care in Telford and Wrekin, we have identified that there is a growing need for people under age 55 to access Extra Care accommodation. It also recognised that there continues to be people move on from Extra Care to residential care, and the Council would like to explore opportunities to look at high needs Extra Care to prevent this from occurring.

View the Housing Strategies [here](#) 

Page 51

## Message to the market

- We know our local home care market is very buoyant, and we have a high provision of providers working within the area who have capacity to increase business locally.
- We would like to work with providers to develop a home care model that integrates the latest innovation in digital technology to deliver an effective and sustained model of home care.
- We will work with the market to develop a flexible night-time care offer.

## Care and Accommodation

We know that good housing is an enabler to support people to both live and age well, and that there needs to be a wide range of choice and options for older people to maintain their independence.

Extra Care Housing in Telford and Wrekin has grown significantly in the past few years, in line with ambitions within the Specialist and Supported Housing Strategy. There are seven Extra Care schemes within the Borough of Telford & Wrekin, with a further two developments set to open in 2025. The number of apartments varies by scheme. Each scheme is managed by a Registered Social Landlord, with a registered provider delivering care and support.

## Action

We will continue to work with Housing Strategy and Commissioning as the single point of contact, Registered Social Landlords, Registered Care Providers and developers earlier to shape the supply of accommodation and ensure all accommodation meets the care needs of people through our Extra Care offer locally.







# Specialist Accommodation

We have seen rapid growth in specialist supported accommodation in Telford and Wrekin over the last 2 years. These developments, of varying size and purpose, have offered a significant number of residents the opportunity to receive the right support in a place they can call home.

Offering specialist supported accommodation has been a priority for Telford & Wrekin Council. Since the publication of the specialist and supported accommodation strategy we have seen significant growth in this area.

We want to have total oversight of all developments within Telford and Wrekin so we can ensure that any development has an evidenced need, commissioner support and that we are fair to the whole market. We are also looking to providers, landlords and developers who are willing to work within Council agreed processes.

## Action

We will continue to review all existing supported accommodation for adults with learning disabilities in Telford and Wrekin. This will inform our future commissioning intentions in this area.

## Message to the market

- We will review all supported accommodation before proceeding with any new developments.
- We want to explore potential models of Extra Care for people under 55 years and low-level supported accommodation.

## Specialist Residential Care

The partnership is committed to supporting people to have their own front door and we only commission residential care placements for those people with the highest needs.

We do not have a need to expand the residential care market for adults of working age, however, would like to work with our existing residential providers to develop care models to support our ageing population who require specialist services.

## Message to the market

- We would like to work in partnership with developers and providers before any design stage to manage the supply of accommodation and ensure all accommodation meets the care needs of people within our borough, including maximising digital technology
- We are looking to housing developers, social care providers and Registered Social Landlords or/ non-for-profit landlords to identify new opportunities and to develop our strategy for future development.

# Direct Payments and Micro providers

Direct Payments are a key element of the personalisation agenda. We would like to increase the uptake of direct payments, enabling people to choose their own care and support.

Individuals in receipt of direct payments and others who are self-funders wanting to support other members of their family can engage with the most suitable service to meet needs.

We support very small, community-based care and support services (called micro-providers) that:

- provide personal, flexible and responsive support and care;
- give local people more choice and control over the support they get; and
- offer a different option to more traditional services.

To be a micro-provider you must have eight or fewer paid or unpaid workers and be totally independent of any larger organisation. Examples of micro-services could include:

- support to keep well, socialise and remain independent;
- support to people living in their own homes;
- short breaks and holidays;
- support to access employment, education and leisure;
- day support and help around the home.

Read more about micro-providers [here](#) 

## Action

We will review our micro-provider offer

We want to expand the Direct Payments provision to support personalisation



# Support for Carers

The role of carers continues to be vital to the whole social care system, providing significant support to the people they care for. Our vision in Telford and Wrekin remains and continues to be, that carers are recognised, thanked and valued by the wider community and statutory agencies, for the significant support and care they provide to vulnerable adults.

Approximately 18,000 people identify themselves as unpaid carers living within the Borough. We know many unpaid carers do not recognise themselves to be carers.

The All-Age Carers Strategy 2024-2029 sets out the key priorities and vision for carers in the Borough of Telford and Wrekin and is focused on a number of key areas:

- Further develop the all-age approach to supporting carers across the Borough.
- Empower and co-produce with carers to drive change across the Borough.
- Support carers to have good physical, mental health and wellbeing.
- Work in partnership with carers and the wider community to promote a carer friendly Borough.

Our Carers Partnership Board (re-launched in January 2025) drives the implementation of the All-Age Carers Strategy, alongside advocating and championing the role of unpaid carers living within the Borough. We recognise that we need to raise awareness of unpaid carers across the Borough and learn from their experiences to develop our local offer to carers in the future.

Our respite services are either predominantly spot purchased and bed based with a small provision of block commissioned support, these services provide traditional support and facilitate overnight care and support.

The Council commissions an All-Age Carers Centre in conjunction with Children's Social Care, delivered by Telford and Wrekin CVS.

The Council has significantly grown the number of carers assessments taking place within the Borough and undertakes person centred support planning to ensure that carers can access support in a way that is meaningful to them, moving away from traditional bed-based care where appropriate to do so.

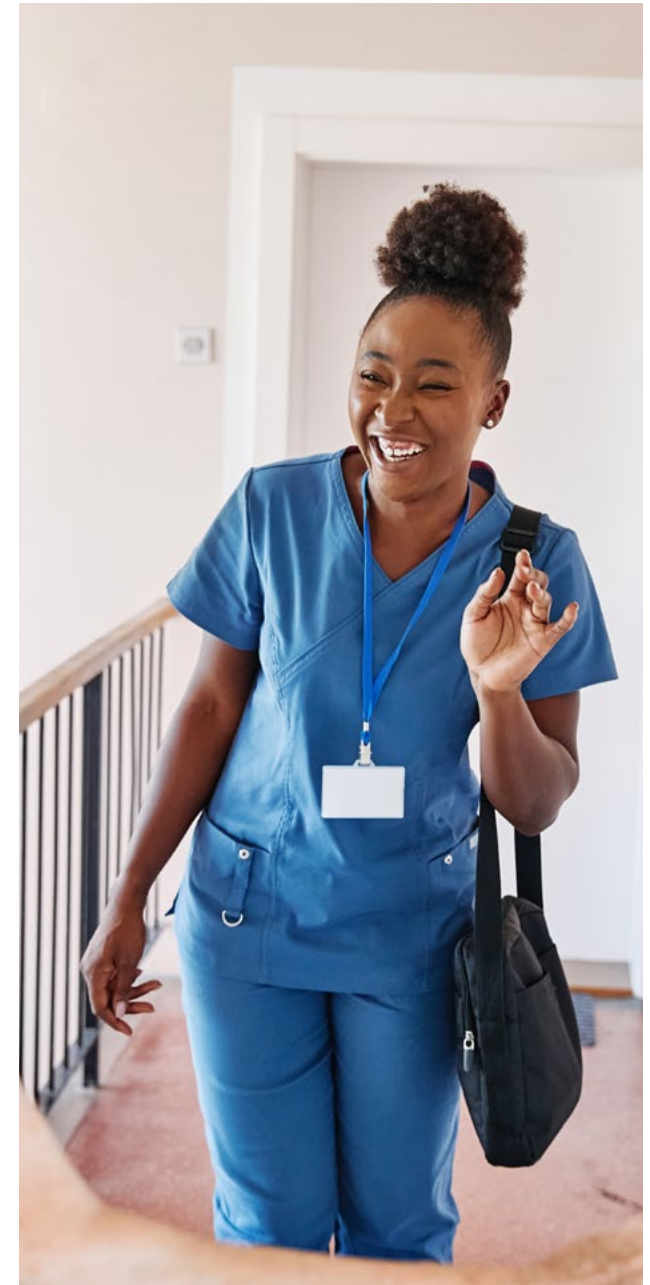
We recognise that we still have a way to go to ensure that carers can be supported proactively and effectively within their caring roles, recognising that we see carer breakdown across social care.

View the Carers Strategy [here](#) 

## Action

To support the welfare, wellbeing and sustainability of our unpaid carers In Telford and Wrekin, we want to:

- Champion and advocate for unpaid carers, through the Carers Partnership Board;
- Explore opportunities for innovation within more traditional services, such as the Emergency Carers Response Service and replacement care;
- Continue to develop an all-age Carer Friendly Borough;
- Review and develop our existing carers contract, to ensure it meets the needs of all adult carers and fosters opportunities for innovation;
- Raise the awareness of who a carer is through media campaigns and across all the work we do;
- Explore and develop respite opportunities available to carers, and the information advice and guidance available to them;
- Work with universal services to ensure their services are accessible for carers for example leisure services;
- Support carers to have good physical, mental health and well-being;
- Work with seldom heard carers, to understand how we can develop and enhance our local services.





# Community support

Support in the community is commissioned through a range of options, including Day Services. We want to support the development of community led activities through a range of universal and commissioned services enabling people throughout their life to achieve greater independence contribute to and make and connections with people in their local communities.

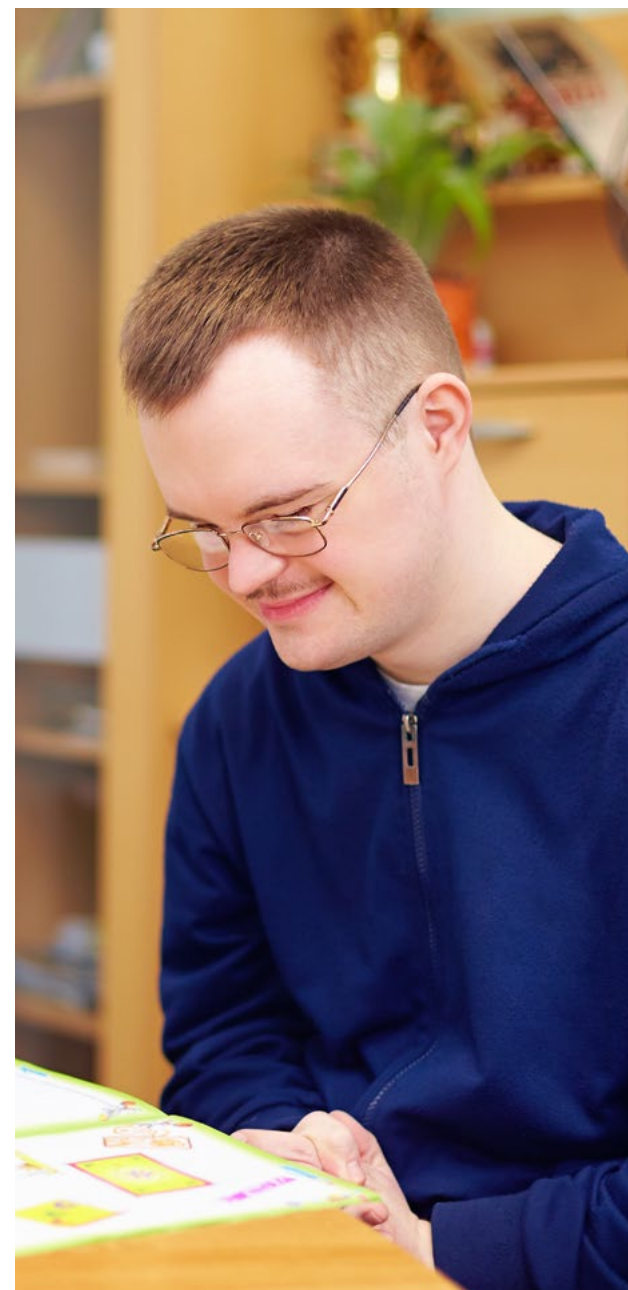
Currently, there are limited opportunities across the Borough to support adults with learning disabilities and/or autism to achieve any form of employment status. We know that when

people have access to the right support, greater independence can be achieved. We are committed to working with people with learning disability and/or autism and their families and carers to make the improvements happen. To assist with this, we want to work with organisations who can support more adults to connect to work including digital and peer programmes, work placements, volunteering and work experiences.

We want a model which offers choice by being more integrated with existing community assets, services, and organisations as well as building-based services for those who require greater levels of support, offering a range of options to suit what people want and where they live. To achieve this, we want to work with innovative providers, the voluntary sector and organisations who understand our vision to help design the community led support model of the future, whilst utilising existing assets and services.

## Message to the market

- We are looking for care providers to offer day opportunities for working aged adults that focus on developing skills for employment and evidencing progression through the development of life skills were possible.



# Digital and technology enabled care

Telford & Wrekin Council  
digital strategy 2024-27:  
Telford connected –  
creating a better Borough  
through digital innovation

The strategy has five digital themes:

- Digital Customers
- Digital Care and Support
- Digital Economy and Skills
- Digital Place
- Digital Council

## Digital Care and Support

We will maximise the potential of digital technology in how we communicate and engage with our customers and partner organisations through providing the right digital environment within communities. Giving people the right digital access and skills so they can:

- do more for themselves encouraging and supporting digital inclusion
- promoting accessibility
- supporting new skills, and
- helping people live well and independently for longer.

We will work with our communities and our partners across our Integrated Care System (ICS) to **Digitise, Connect and Transform services**, providing the core foundations to promote independence. This will align with the ICS Digital Strategy, working with our partners including health and housing, using digital technology, to empower and enable people to fulfil their potential, be actively involved in their communities, stay safe and live healthy independent lives for longer in Telford and Wrekin.

The Local Care Transformation Programme, for example, will see the delivery of virtual wards; enabling people to get the care they need at home safely and conveniently rather than being

in hospital; to deliver a sustainable health and care system for the residents of Telford and Wrekin, and deliver digital solutions for children and young people's mental health services, as well as adult mental health transformation.

Population Health Management will use data to accurately predict and understand current health care needs and what the local population will need in the future.


With a focus on 'making prevention real' we are continuing to work to manage demand and promote independence across Adult Social Care services. The programme of work will review our approach to delivering our statutory duty to prevent, reduce and delay the need for care and support. This will include digital transformation and the use of predictive analytics and AI.





## Examples of our Digital and Technology innovations

**Care Technologies:** To empower individuals, their families and carers to take control of their own care, promote independence and enable people to live well as part of the community and make the provision of social care more efficient and effective, releasing time to care for social care workers. This includes investments with providers in sensory-based falls technology and digital social care records to enhance care quality and efficiency.

**Virtual Care:** Introduction of virtual care systems like 'Ethel', which enable remote support for vulnerable individuals. If an individual meets Care Act eligibility for support, then the allocated worker will consider and discuss the Ethel as a possible route for meeting the needs identified in the Support Plan. We will then work with home care provider to train and support them with delivering the care support via the virtual hub. Learn more about assistive technology [here](#): 

**Planned and non-planned overnight care support:** Telford & Wrekin Council have partnered with a home care provider to provide care support over night for people as an alternative to 24hr care provision. The individuals are provided with an 'Oysta' device. The Oysta device coupled with the care provision has supported many people to stay living at home when previously they would have needed support in a 24hr provision.

**Digital Portals:** Development of portals for adult social care services, client finance management, and care providers portal to streamline operations and improve user access.

**AI Tools:** Pilot of AI-powered tools like Magic Notes to automate documentation and improve productivity.

**One Health and Care (OHC):** A shared digital care record system to consolidate and share information among local health and social care organisations.

**Digital Switchover:** Transition from analogue to digital alarm systems to ensure reliability with the national PSTN migration by 2027. We moved all our telecare customers over to a new digital Alarm system in readiness for the national switchover during 2024. We are the first local authority across the West Midlands to complete the analogue to digital switchover

## Message to the market

- We will continue to seek opportunities to work with providers to expand the use of technology, digital solutions and Artificial Intelligence (AI)
- We want provider information to be accessible, and with the use of digital care records to be used to assure loved ones of the level of care being delivered.

## Action

- We will find new ways to provide updates to people about the services they are getting or have applied for. This includes using digital tools and automatically generated information.
- We will ensure that our providers use assistive technology and explore digital solutions where possible and lead the way with innovative applications and devices which help promote independence and keep individuals safe. We are keen to ensure that assistive technology is used to encourage greater independence, including the reduction of night support.

Telford & Wrekin Council are proud to be a provider of Ethel assistive technology, a digital screen in the home that empowers residents to live independently, enhancing communication and autonomy for those benefiting from supported living arrangements.

## Kevin's story

Kevin is 59 and lives in his own flat in a supported living scheme in Telford. He has COPD and previously lived in a mental health facility.

With coronavirus, I got pneumonia and was in hospital for a month. I'm lucky to be alive.

Now I have an oximeter machine that measures my oxygen, and I do readings four times a day. It's linked to my tablet and the readings go to care staff. If it's over 88% then it's ok. But when it's low they have to get the ambulance out.

That happened three times last year – it was scary. Sometimes the paramedics check me, but in the end, I don't need to go to hospital.

At night I wear an oxygen mask. I'm often short of breath and suffer from nerves, I can feel anxious and worried. But with the readings and this tablet, it feels reassuring.

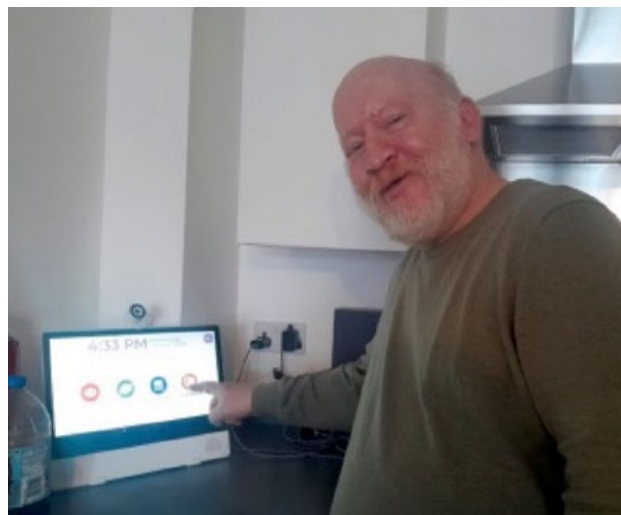
I also have a pendant alarm that works with the tablet. If I'm in trouble when I'm at home or out, I press the button, and it goes straight to SOS,

and I speak to someone. I've never had to use it though but it's there if I need it.

I used to live in a mental health community home with 24-hour staff but now I have my own new flat with a new cooker, washing machine and dishwasher. Although I never use the dishwasher!

I watch a lot of football, and my team is Leeds – the 'Barmy Army' – they're at the top of the league! I also go to Calm Cafes run by Mind. We have a cup of tea and a chat, and you can play cards and dominoes.

And I love singing – I'm a karaoke kid! We have events and I'm on the mic all night. It makes me feel good and you don't need alcohol to sing. It fills you with energy.



Jackie Scott is a Mental Health Recovery Manager for Creative Support, promoting the independence, inclusion and wellbeing of people with care and support needs.

When Kevin first came here, he was very withdrawn, and he wasn't sure about the technology. But once he got used to it, he has excelled. He's much more outgoing, he feels reassured that he has the tablet, oximeter and pendant alarm.

If he doesn't provide a reading, the care staff will respond straightaway via video call on his tablet to find out if he's forgotten or he is unwell, and they can help him access health services quickly. It's completely changed his life. He now has autonomy, and you see this true character shine through. Especially when he's singing – It's so beautiful.



# Workforce

Recruitment and retention for providers is an ongoing challenge. We will continue to work collaboratively with providers to support them to recruit, develop and retain high quality care staff.

The latest Skills for Care return, and our own provider feedback, highlights that recruitment and retention of nurses, care staff, night shift and weekend carers is exceedingly difficult.

**Size and Structure:** In 2023/24, the adult social care sector in Telford and Wrekin had 303 CQC locations and an estimated 18,000 total posts, an increase of 0.6 % since 2022/23. Of these posts 16,500 were currently filled by a person, an increase of 1.3 % since 2022/23 and 1,200 vacant posts (vacancies) that employers were actively seeking to recruit somebody into (a change of -29.2 % since 2022/23). There were an estimated 16,500 filled posts. There were 1,400 filled posts in local authorities, 14,000 in the independent sector and 1,100 filled posts working for direct payment recipients.

**Recruitment and Retention:** In Skills for Care Summary 2023/24 it is estimated that the staff turnover rate in Telford and Wrekin was 30.7%, which was higher than the region average of 26.7% and higher than the England average of 24.8%. Not all turnover results in workers leaving the sector, around half (53%) of starters were recruited from within the adult social care sector, therefore although employers need to recruit to these posts, the sector retains their skills and experience. With the requirement to increase enablement, Shropshire, Telford and Wrekin ICS are actively recruiting therapy support workers.

We continue to work with Partners in Care and Citizens Advice to support the care sector and have implemented resources for international care workers seeking support and for care providers who have employed people from overseas.

**Workforce demographics:** The majority (86%) of the workforce in Telford and Wrekin were female, and the average age was 42.5 years old. Workers aged under 25 made up 9% of the workforce and workers aged 55 and above represented 24%. Given this age profile approximately 1,300 posts will be reaching retirement age in the next 10 years.

## Action

- We will continue to work in partnership with Partners in Care and providers to develop a sustained workforce
- Continue to develop workforce knowledge, skills and confidence in prevention programmes such as suicide awareness training.



# Commercial considerations

## Procurement legislation

Telford & Wrekin Council is a contracting authority as defined within Regulation 2 of the Public Contracts Regulations 2015. This means that contracts above the relevant threshold must be tendered in accordance with the Regulations and all contracts are subject to the treaty principles of transparency, equal treatments and non-discrimination, proportionality and mutual recognition. The legislation changed on 24 February 2025 to the new Procurement Act 2023 and secondary legislation the Procurement Regulations 2024; however, the requirements for the Council to adhere to both elements of legislation remain.

Following the development of the Governments new Procurement Act 2023 we encourage all suppliers to ensure that they register on the Government's Central Digital Platform (CDP) to facilitate the purchasing of goods and services. The Procurement Act 2023 will only allow us to engage with potential providers who are registered on this platform.

NHS England and NHS Improvement have replaced procurement legislation for procuring NHS healthcare services through the NHS Provider Selection Regime 2023. The aim of the new regime is to create more flexible

arrangements that better support the NHS ambition for greater integration and collaboration between NHS organisations and their partners, while reducing administrative bureaucracy. These proposals include services commissioned by Public Health and some social care services.

The Council currently run several commercial frameworks for specific service areas. These are:

- Dynamic Purchasing Systems (DPS): Physical disabilities and older people (adult home care, adult residential care, adult nursing care and adult day care services). **Visit the In-Tend website to apply for Support and Personal Care DPS** unique reference number is TWC000027

The Dynamic Purchasing system (DPS) is used by Telford & Wrekin Council for Support and Personal Care Service for Adults and Children. This is a flexible agreement for Support and Personal Care Services that works to The Authority Commitment Statement; Right Help, Right Time to Promote Independence. It holds five lots:

- Lot 1 – adults home care
- Lot 2 – children's community care and support
- Lot 3 – residential services
- Lot 4 – nursing services
- Lot 5 – day services

This DPS is aligned to the national range of Government policies and initiatives for Support and Personal Care services and with it, the Authority seeks Providers who are focussed on a whole family approach.

The DPS sets out guidelines for the governance of contracting terms, quality standards and expectations from both parties. For any provider wanting to actively deliver services within the Borough, this will form the foundation of the business relationship.

- Flexible Contracting Arrangements (FCA): Learning Disabilities, Autism and Mental Health. **Please note** this arrangement ceases at the end of March 2026. **AMCV 295 - Flexible Contracting Arrangement for Mental Health and Learning Disability Services | Delta (delta-esourcing.com)**

This is an All-Age Learning Disability, Autism and Mental Health Care Flexible Contracting Arrangement (FCA). This framework enables us to meet the needs of support approach and/or have forensic needs.

We are currently reviewing this arrangement and looking to develop a broader disability services framework to be released to the market during 2025.

- In some instances, we will support block contracts arrangements for services.



## Social Value

The Council is required to consider whether to consult on how the economic, social and environmental well-being of the Borough might be improved through commissioning and procurement.

## Provider Quality Assurance

We are fully committed to working with all care providers to achieve high quality, person-centred care services. Our Council Quality Assurance team works with all care providers to monitor and support the delivery of good quality care in line with the Quality Assurance Framework.

The QA team works with Shropshire, Telford and Wrekin ICS, social work teams, safeguarding teams, the Care Quality Commission and Healthwatch to gather information. A monthly governance meeting takes place with key partners where providers of concern are discussed, and appropriate actions are agreed. This could result in a provider who has defaulted on the terms within their contract being placed in suspension of any new care placements until their action plan has been completed and any associated concerns addressed to the satisfaction of the wider governance group.

## Quality and Safety Initiatives

Focused efforts on antimicrobial stewardship, with particular emphasis on the management of urinary tract infections (UTIs) in care settings. This initiative aims to reduce the overuse and misuse of antibiotics, preventing the development of antibiotic resistance and ensuring that residents receive appropriate, evidence-based treatment for UTIs and other infections.

### Action

- We will continue to work with local providers to improve quality of care and consistency of the offer in terms of CQC ratings for residential and home care
- We will ensure quality of all providers to increase the uptake of Direct Payments, to support choice, control and flexibility
- We will work with providers to increase the focus on individual outcomes with an approach to maximising independence within neighbourhoods

## Safeguarding

Safeguarding is central to everything we do. This includes our commissioning, contracting and procurement processes. We believe that every adult has the right to be treated with dignity, have their choices respected, and live a life free from fear.

## Message to the market

All providers must demonstrate commitment and adhere to both Telford & Wrekin Council and Shropshire, Telford and Wrekin Integrated Care System safeguarding policies, procedures and good practice guidance. Governance is provided by the Safeguarding Adults Board. We take cases of suspected abuse very seriously and all partners work closely together, using an overarching policy to make sure that safeguarding enquiries are completed when allegations of abuse, neglect or exploitation are presented and that people at risk are protected from harm.

Learn more about the Safeguarding Adults Board [here](#) 

### Pharmacy and Medicines Optimisation Support

Provision of guidance on the safe and effective prescribing, administration, and storage of medications. This support aims to ensure that medicines are managed in accordance with the latest clinical standards and regulatory requirements, optimising outcomes for residents and minimising the risk of medication errors.

### Training and Education

Offering comprehensive support, training and educational resources for care setting staff, with a specific focus on medication safety and best practices in medicines management. This support aims to empower staff with the knowledge and skills necessary to manage medicines safely and efficiently in a care setting.


### Partnership and Governance

The recent introduction of the Medicines Management Self-Assessment Tool, an important initiative that allows care settings to conduct an annual audit of their medicines management practices. This tool aids local authorities in evaluating the quality and governance of medicines management within care settings, providing valuable insights into areas for improvement. Furthermore, it allows the medicines optimisation team to track trends, identify potential problems, and tailor ongoing training and education to address these findings as well as identifying, celebrating and sharing good practice.

### Communication and Engagement

Distribution of the “Medicine Matters Home Page” newsletter, a key resource for care settings and healthcare professionals. This newsletter provides timely updates, practical guidance, and expert insights on a range of medicines-related topics, ensuring that care staff are kept informed about the latest developments, regulations, and best practices in medicines management. It also serves as a platform to share good practice and for ongoing engagement and dialogue within the healthcare community.

### Equality Diversity and Inclusion (EDI)

As a partnership, we remain committed to promoting and delivering equality and inclusion for all. You can find out more [here](#): 





## How you can play your part

We want the Market Position Statement to stimulate more conversation and collaborative working to transform our market.

We welcome further enquiries from providers and other organisations who would like more information or would like to work with us on any of the topics outlined in this document.

For further information or a conversation please email ASC [MarketSustainability@telford.gov.uk](mailto:MarketSustainability@telford.gov.uk)

## Have your say

Please tell us what you think of our Market Position Statement so that we can continue to make it better.

<https://forms.office.com/e/qj5T53GiaG>







Telford & Wrekin  
Co-operative Council

Protect, care and invest  
to create a better borough

## Borough of Telford and Wrekin

### Cabinet

Thursday 17 July 2025

### Draft Housing Strategy 2025 - 2030

---

<b>Cabinet Member:</b>	Cllr Richard Overton, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Housing, Highways & Enforcement
<b>Lead Director:</b>	Katherine Kynaston, Director Housing, Commercial & Customer Services
<b>Service Area:</b>	Housing, Commercial & Customer Services
<b>Report Author:</b>	Ravi Phull - Housing Strategy & Regeneration Service Delivery Manager
<b>Officer Contact Details:</b>	<b>Tel:</b> 01952 381731 <b>Email:</b> ravi.phull@telford.gov.uk
<b>Wards Affected:</b>	All Wards
<b>Key Decision:</b>	Not Key Decision
<b>Forward Plan:</b>	Not Applicable
<b>Report considered by:</b>	SMT – 17 June 2025 Business Briefing – 26 June 2025 Cabinet – 17 July 2025

---

#### 1. Recommendations:

It is recommended that Cabinet:

- 1.1 Approve the launch for consultation of the Council's draft Housing Strategy 2025 – 2030, included as Appendix 1.

#### 2. Purpose of Report

- 2.1 To report on progress with the delivery of the Council's current Housing Strategy, outline work undertaken to date including stakeholder engagement to develop the new Strategy 2025-2030 and the proposed next steps following Cabinet approval and public consultation.

### 3. Background

- 3.1 Housing runs at the heart of everything we do. A decent place to live, sets the foundation from which health, education and work can flourish. Housing is the building block of thriving communities and neighbourhoods.

#### **Why do we need a housing strategy?**

- 3.2 As a Council committed to **Protect, Care, and Invest**, we are continually evolving our policies and services in response to the changing needs of local residents. This strategy provides a framework for identifying those needs and sets out our approach to meeting them over the next five years. This will include a focus on:
- Ageing housing stock – We will work with partners and regulatory services to ensure the safety, quality and thermal efficiency of our existing housing stock for our residents in all tenures and prioritise attracting more investment to support further regeneration.
  - Affordable and Social housing supply - In line with our needs assessment, we will work with developers, social housing providers, landlords and directly deliver new homes, including affordable and specialist properties, to meet the growing and diverse needs of local people.
  - Supporting our vulnerable residents – We will provide targeted support and resources to those most in need, including our elderly residents, those with disabilities, low-income families, our care leavers and veterans.
  - Developing communities – We will focus on building safer, stronger and sustainable communities for our residents.
  - Supporting our local economy – We will encourage economic regeneration by leveraging housing development to support local businesses and create job, training and apprenticeship opportunities.
- 3.3 Telford and Wrekin Council adopted its existing housing strategy in 2020. This set three objectives:
- To create sustainable, accessible, affordable and integrated communities
  - To make the BEST use of our existing homes
  - To provide homes to support and empower the Borough's most vulnerable people
- 3.4 Working with a range of partners much has been achieved since 2020:

<b>Delivering</b> <b>312</b> <b>long term</b> <b>empty</b> <b>properties</b> <b>back into use</b>	<b>Delivering</b> <b>800</b> <b>new homes</b> <b>for private rent</b> <b>and affordable</b> <b>rent through</b> <b>Nuplace</b> <small>to over 1,500 residents with a 95% tenant satisfaction rate</small>	<b>Refurbishing</b> <b>56</b> <b>properties</b> <b>through Telford &amp; Wrekin Homes</b> <small>providing accommodation for some of our most vulnerable</small>	<b>Preventing or relieving the</b> <b>homelessness of</b> <b>over 4,000</b> <b>people</b> <b>including 239</b> <b>who were rough sleeping</b>	<b>Providing advice and support to</b> <b>over 7,000</b> <b>fuel poor residents</b> <small>and grant funding 400 households to improve energy efficiency of their homes. Estimated CO2 savings 596 tonnes</small>	<b>Supporting</b> <b>1,933</b> <b>residents living in private rented properties,</b> <small>by engaging with landlords and eliminating over 1,200 hazards such as excess cold, damp &amp; mould and electrical hazards</small>
<b>Improving the quality of</b> <b>766</b> <b>private rented properties</b> <small>through our building safer stronger communities programme</small>	<b>Delivering</b> <b>over 1,200</b> <b>new and affordable homes</b> <b>each year</b>	<b>Supporting the delivery of</b> <b>over 600</b> <b>homes for older people</b>	<b>Providing</b> <b>over 2,000</b> <b>grants per annum</b> <small>to make adaptations to enable residents to live, independently at home</small>	<b>Secured</b> <b>an average of</b> <b>30%</b> <b>affordable housing across all housing development</b>	<b>Conducting</b> <b>30+</b> <b>prosecutions and civil penalties for breaches of housing legislation</b>

#### 4. Summary of Main Proposals

- 4.1 Our new Housing Strategy 2025-2030 continues to be concerned with all types of housing, tenure and housing needs. It sets out the Council's long-term vision for housing and the actions that it will take to address the housing needs of the borough, seeking to ensure that every local resident has access to safe, affordable, and quality housing. The strategy outlines the Council's commitment to improving the availability and standard of housing, while also focusing on sustainability, community empowerment and regeneration.

#### 5. Local Context

- 5.1 Since the adoption of the Council's last strategy, and in line with national trends, the Council has seen changes in the borough's population:

13.5% population increase between 2013 and 2023 to 192,000

Between 2013 and 2023 the borough's population aged 65 and above grew by 28.5%

21.2% (16,197) privately rented (Census 2021), increase of 6.2% from 2011 & greater than England (20.5%)

18.0% (13,784) in social rented accommodation in 2021, smaller proportion than 2011 (19.7%) greater than England (17.1%).

12,900 or 16.3% households living in fuel poverty (2022) - higher than England rate of 13.1%

15.6% residents (29,400) live in areas ranked 10% most deprived in England. 24.3% in 20% most deprived.

2021 Census, 1 in 5 of the borough's population (age standardised) reported a disability, greater than the proportion for England (17.7%)

- 5.2 We have also seen some new challenges affecting the Borough's residents, including the cost-of-living crisis and energy price hikes. These are disproportionately affecting the Borough's lowest earning households.
- 5.3 The Council has seen a significant increase in people presenting as homeless to whom the Council owes a housing duty. The main reasons given for the loss of previous accommodation include loss of private rented tenancy, breakdown of relationships, and domestic abuse.
- 5.4 We are also seeing landlords leaving the housing market due to financial pressures and impending policy reforms.
- 6. National Context**
- 6.1 Nationally the delivery of new homes, particularly social and affordable housing options is a real focus with a new Affordable Homes Programme launched by Government.
- 6.2 New policies are emerging to shape housing design, quality, physical accessibility, environmental performance, and safety.
- 6.3 The new National Planning Policy Framework is focussed on increasing the quality and quantity of supported specialist and affordable housing provision through up-to-date Local Development Plans.
- 6.4 Through the introduction of the Supported Housing (Regulatory Oversight) Act 2023, we are set to see a new framework for regulating supported exempt accommodation in England and Wales.
- 6.5 Additional regulation of the rented sector is proposed through the Renters' Rights Bill, with the abolition of Section 21 'no fault' evictions and tenancies moving from fixed term to periodic.
- 6.6 The Government also plans to introduce new rules for housing conditions and disrepair by extending the Decent Homes Standard and Awaab's Law to the private rented sector.



## **7. Housing Strategy 2025 – 2030**

7.1 Following review and initial stakeholder engagement the Council is proposing to retain the three objectives from the previous strategy, with an increased emphasis on its commitment to deliver safe and connected communities.

7.2 The proposed objectives are:

- To make the BEST use of our existing homes
- To support safe, clean, green, healthy, connected communities
- To provide homes to support and empower the Borough's most vulnerable people

## **8. Objective 1 – To make the BEST use of our existing homes**

8.1 Through the Council's Better Homes for All programme, we will:

- Ensure all properties we inspect are safe and free from hazards, with a particular emphasis on damp and mould, excess cold and overcrowding. Ensuring compliance with national energy efficiency standards.
- Take a strategic approach to Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs) using our mandatory licensing power effectively and exploring further measures including Article 4 and additional licensing, where HMOs are having a negative impact on neighbourhoods.
- Working closely with partners providing welfare and homelessness services Citizens Advice Bureau and Marches Energy Agency to help private tenants struggling with the cost-of-living crisis, putting them at risk of homelessness.
- Taking a multi-agency approach grow our proactive survey programme of blocks of flats in the Borough to ensure fire safety.
- Continue to refurbish homes through Nuplace's Telford & Wrekin Homes Programme setting a standard for other providers
- Respond to the changing regulatory landscape by implementing the Renters' Rights Bill, decent homes standard and Awaab's Law. Work with the Council's social landlords to support their compliance with the social housing regulator.
- Continue to implement our Affordable Warmth Strategy launching a new Warm Homes: Local Grant alongside existing Warm and Well Telford, On and Off gas property support and loan funding for Owner occupied and Private rented properties
- Empty Property Strategy - Continue to bring long term empty homes back into use.
- Working with Registered Social landlords to maximise the number of vulnerable and homeless individuals and families successfully rehoused through nominations - maximising access for the most vulnerable.

## **9. Objective 2 - To support safe, clean, green, healthy, connected communities**

9.1 To achieve this objective, the Council will:

- Adoption of the new local plan that will deliver 20,000 new homes by 2040.
- Work to maintain housing supply of c1,000 new homes pa - aligning with planning reforms
- Work with partners and the police to focus on safe, clean, well-maintained neighbourhoods continuing to drive the Council's safer, stronger communities programme
- Shape how development delivers through implementation of new policies including -:
  - Homes for All Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) - delivering adapted, accessible accommodation and all age friendly estate design
  - Climate Change SPD with a focus on fabric, design - and sustainability measures including footpaths, enhanced green spaces and transport links
  - Tackling stalled sites causing blight in our communities through a proactive focus on derelict, vacant sites
  - Continuing to lobby for Government investment into estate regeneration

## **10. Objective 3 – To provide homes to support and empower the Borough's most vulnerable people**

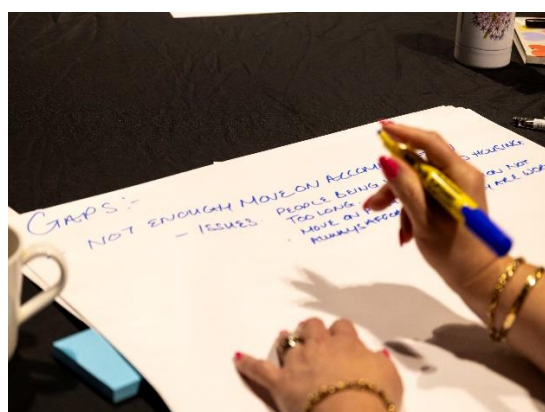
10.1 To achieve this objective, the Council will:

- Continue to prevent and relieve homelessness and support the most vulnerable clients to become tenant ready
- Continually review its temporary accommodation usage to ensure there is sufficient supply to minimise the use of emergency accommodation and B&B.
- Ensure the Council's Supported Accommodation offers good quality support and accommodation and work with partners to continually monitor and review effectiveness.
- Ensure that there is a place of safety available through emergency accommodation for all people experiencing domestic abuse, in accordance with its status as a White Ribbon Town.
- Work with Veterans and Care Leavers to explore models such as Housing First and Shared Lives as additional accommodation options.
- Work with the Council's local Registered Social Landlords using the joint nominations agreements to ensure continued Local Authority priority to refer into affordable and social rented accommodation for those most in need.
- Co-ordinate access into the Council's Specialist & Supported accommodation to ensure access for those most in need.

- Provide support to foster carers to overcome accommodation barriers that may prevent them from continuing to foster or from accepting additional placements.
- Work with partners to influence the future supply of affordable and social housing that targets areas of unmet need including increasing 1 bed and 4+bed homes
- Work with partners to influence the future supply of adapted affordable and social housing that can meet the needs of the Borough's ageing population and those with physical disabilities including those adults and children living with families and requiring larger properties.

## 11. Consultation

11.1 The Council has engaged with a number of internal and external partners to help shape the draft strategy. This included a very successful event in May 2025, with over 70 organisations in attendance.



11.3 Key themes that have come through consultation so far are:

### **Affordable / Appropriate Supply**

- More 1 bed accommodation and move on accommodation with some having to stay too long in supported accommodation

- Lack of suitable funding for on-going long term, preventative support for clients with more complex needs.
- Affordable is not affordable for all
- A need for more accessible accommodation
- With an ageing population increasing numbers of elderly are remaining in inappropriate accommodation including too large and hard to maintain.

### **Infrastructure**

- New housing needs to be supported by appropriate social infrastructure e.g. social groups and activities for older people moving away from their established network and community

### **Data**

- Sharing of data on hidden groups e.g. those not known to adult social care or homelessness teams, e.g. learning difficulties living at home
- More partnership working particularly with health to join up data/intelligence on housing need, e.g. data from GP surgeries.

### **Age of Stock**

- Housing stock coming to the end of its build life (New Town Estates).

### **Private Rented Sector**

- Cost of living / additional regulation means private landlords are leaving the market or increasing rents.

11.2 The Council is continuing to explore these issues and others working with a range of key groups including:

Health & Wellbeing Board	Mental Health Partnership
Ageing Well Partnership Board	Making it Real Board
CYP commissioning	Expert by Experience Groups
Carers Partnership	Armed Forces Covenant
Learning Disability Partnership	Care leavers group
Autism Partnership	Foster Carers group
Town and Parish Council Clerks meeting	Registered Social Landlord Partners
Developers	Wrekin Landlords Association

## **12. Public Consultation and Communications Plan**

- 12.1 Subject to Cabinet approval, it is proposed that public consultation commences on 21<sup>st</sup> July 2025 for a period of 6 weeks. A communications plan will be in place to promote the consultation.
- 12.2 This phase will include engaging with key lived experience groups such as care leavers, older people etc. as well as wider public consultation.
- 12.2 Public consultation will be in the form of an online survey available on a dedicated webpage at [www.telford.gov.uk/housingstrategy](http://www.telford.gov.uk/housingstrategy)

### **13. Next Steps**

- 13.1 It is proposed that the final strategy is brought back to October Cabinet for final approval and adoption.

### **14. Alternative Options**

- 14.1 Whilst it is not a statutory requirement in itself for the Council to have a Housing Strategy, Cabinet could decide not to proceed. To do so would however mean that the Council would adversely affect all the excellent work being done in the Borough to help meet the needs of its residents.

### **15. Key Risks**

- 15.1 In carrying out the consultation, there is a risk that consultation will not reach enough people and, therefore, feedback is not representative of all residents living in the borough. To mitigate this risk, across Telford and Wrekin, Voluntary Organisations such as Age UK, Marches Energy Agency and housing charities such as Maninplace will be supporting the delivery of the consultation to ensure widespread awareness of the opportunity to comment on the draft strategy and engage with the consultation exercise.

### **16. Key Council Priorities**

- 16.1 This strategy will build on existing initiatives and links closely to the themes of Telford & Wrekin Council's plan to protect, care and invest to create a better borough with the priorities:
- All neighbourhoods are a great place to live
  - A community-focussed, innovative Council providing efficient, effective and quality services
  - Everyone benefits from a thriving economy
  - Our natural environment is protected, and the Council has a leading role in addressing the climate emergency
  - Every child, young person and adult lives well in their community
- 16.2 The strategy also links closely with the priorities identified in the Health and Wellbeing Board vision – happier, healthier fulfilled lives.

### **17. Financial Implications**

- 17.1 The approved Capital Programme includes funding which will support the objectives identified in the report.

### **18. Legal and HR Implications**



- 18.1 There is no legal requirement for the Council to have a Housing Strategy, the previous duty being removed by the Deregulation Act 2015.

However, preparation of such a strategy is deemed good practice serving as a useful policy document setting out the Council's aims, objectives and intended outcomes in respect of all housing matters.

There are no other legal implications arising from this report.

The proposals contained in this report can be delivered using existing resources

## **19. Ward Implications**

- 19.1 All wards will be impacted upon by these proposals.

## **20. Health, Social and Economic Implications**

- 20.1 It is intended that this programme of work will contribute to improve health and wellbeing outcomes within the borough.

## **21. Equality and Diversity Implications**

- 21.1 This strategy is about how the Council can work to deliver housing for all. In setting out its proposals the Council has paid due regard to the Public Sector Equality Duty, ensuring that equality considerations have been embedded throughout the process. The Council has actively considered how its decisions and actions will affect people with different protected characteristics, and has sought to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity, and foster good relations within the communities it serves, particularly in relation to access to safe, affordable, and suitable housing in line with our statutory responsibilities under s149 Equality Act 2010.

## **22. Climate Change and Environmental Implications**

- 22.1 This strategy delivers on a number of actions under the Telford and Wrekin Council Corporate Climate Change Action Plan, such as Affordable Warmth, including work with the Telford Energy Advice line and direct delivery of retrofit programmes to the most carbon inefficient properties in the borough. Biodiversity & Carbon Sequestration, such as work with the review of the local plan to consider opportunities to enhance tree and woodland protection and Planning Policy by using the review of the Local Plan to develop robust policy that supports and promotes a move to carbon neutrality. This includes consideration of how development will need to adapt to the impacts of climate change and promotes opportunities to maximise carbon sequestration in the future.

## **23. Background Papers**

- 1 Housing Strategy 2020 – 2025

## **24. Appendices**

**25. Report Sign Off**

<b>Signed off by</b>	<b>Date sent</b>	<b>Date signed off</b>	<b>Initials</b>
DR	03/06/2025	03/06/2025	DR
AH	03/06/2025	11/06/2025	AH
SH	03/06/2025	13/06/2025	SH

This page is intentionally left blank



Telford & Wrekin  
Co-operative Council

Protect, care and invest  
to create a better borough

# Telford and Wrekin's housing strategy 2025-2030

Page 79

**JUNE 2025**  
**Draft for consultation**



# FOREWORD

A decent home is the foundation on which people build their lives and communities thrive. That's the driving principle of our new housing strategy, which we're sharing with you today.

A decent place to live is the foundation on which people build their lives. If you've got a good quality home, then health, employment, educational achievement and a happy family life are often much easier to obtain.

It's been five years since we launched our last housing strategy. It was at a time when the world was in the depths of the covid pandemic and navigating unprecedented challenges from the demands on health and social care systems, the uncertainty of global economies and a level of disruption to education not seen before.

The pandemic also brought great uncertainty to the housing market, causing delays in the supply of building materials and the progress of developments, disrupting demand and affordability and putting pressures on both the rental and private markets.

Against the backdrop of the significant challenges of the last five years, we're immensely proud of what has

been achieved through our housing strategy for the benefit of residents in Telford and Wrekin.

In 2020 we set out three very clear objectives, to create sustainable, accessible, affordable and integrated communities, to make the best use of our existing homes and to provide homes to support and empower our most vulnerable people.

You can read in detail about how the many projects we've delivered against those objectives in detail on [page 9](#).

Some of the biggest achievements include bringing hundreds of empty homes back into use, preventing more than 2,000 people from becoming homeless and offering bespoke and specialist support to some of our most vulnerable residents. We've also built on our carbon credentials with the delivery of a number of sustainable projects.

We recognise there's always more to do and we are a Council that is continually striving to improve and is





always open to best practice and opportunities to learn.

As we set out our plan for the next five years, we need to think of more recent challenges too. We've seen rising energy bills, a cost-of-living crisis, the continued demand for housing and new Government targets for building homes.

In this housing strategy, which is currently at draft stage, we outline our objectives for the next five years. In fact, we've kept our objectives the same, with some minor adjustments to reflect feedback we've had on the 2020-2025 strategy.

If you turn to **page 32**, you'll be able to read about our plans for the next five years. Addressing homelessness and delivering housing to support our residents will remain a key priority as well as delivering sustainable housing projects, which support plans to reduce the Borough's carbon footprint and tackle climate change.

We recognise that we cannot deliver our objectives without the support of our partners at a local, regional and national level.

## The next steps...

Before we finalise our new housing strategy, it's really important we get the views of local people and partners. We want to know what we've done well and

what we can improve on in the future. We're currently running an online consultation and would welcome your feedback.

This will allow us to create a real and meaningful document, that reflects the needs of our communities and support the Council's vision to protect, care and invest to create a better borough for all.



**Councillor Richard Overton**

Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Highways, Housing and Enforcement



**Councillor Carolyn Healy**

Cabinet Member for Neighbourhoods, Planning and Sustainability



# CONTENTS

<b>Foreword</b>	<b>2-3</b>
<b>Introduction</b>	<b>4-9</b>
Achievements since the adoption of our last strategy	9
<b>Local context</b>	<b>10-15</b>
Our housing market	12
Our housing conditions	15
<b>Our housing achievements</b>	<b>16-29</b>
Objective one 2020-2025: To create sustainable, accessible, affordable and integrated communities	17
Objective two 2020-2025: To make the BEST use of our existing homes	22
Objective three 2020-2025: To provide homes to support and empower our most vulnerable people	27
<b>The national picture</b>	<b>30-31</b>
<b>Housing strategy 2025-2030</b>	<b>32-48</b>
Objective one: To make the BEST use of our existing homes	33
Objective two: To support safe, clean, green, healthy, connected communities	38
Objective three: To provide homes to support and empower our most vulnerable people	42
Ensuring fairness	48
Consultation	48

# INTRODUCTION

Telford and Wrekin's housing strategy 2025-2030 is concerned with all types of housing, tenure and housing needs. It sets out our long-term vision for housing and the actions that we will take to address the housing needs of our Borough, seeking to ensure that every resident has access to safe, affordable, and quality housing. This strategy outlines our commitment to improving the availability and standard of housing, while also focusing on sustainability, community empowerment and economic regeneration.

Our vision is to create **vibrant, inclusive, healthy neighbourhoods where people can thrive**. To achieve this, we will work collaboratively with stakeholders, including residents, partners, local businesses, and government agencies. The strategy will maximise the potential of existing properties through refurbishment and regeneration as well as the development of new housing. It will also drive innovative solutions to create more sustainable homes able to adapt to changes in climate and to meet the diverse and changing needs of our population enabling people to live longer, independently, in their communities.

This document will appeal to a broad audience, including existing residents, those seeking to establish their home in the Borough, investors, developers, registered providers, town and parish councils, non-statutory and voluntary bodies.

Achieving the right balance of high-quality homes that are affordable, sustainable, and offer variety, choice, and accessibility is crucial for the economic prosperity, health, and well-being of the people in our Borough, while helping to address health inequalities.

## Our housing strategy sets out three objectives:





We will achieve these objectives by:

### **Increasing housing supply**

- 🏠 Boosting the number of new homes including affordable and specialist properties to meet the growing need of local people.

### **Enhancing quality and standards**

- 🏠 Ensuring that all housing meets high standards of safety, comfort, and energy efficiency.

### **Promoting sustainable communities**

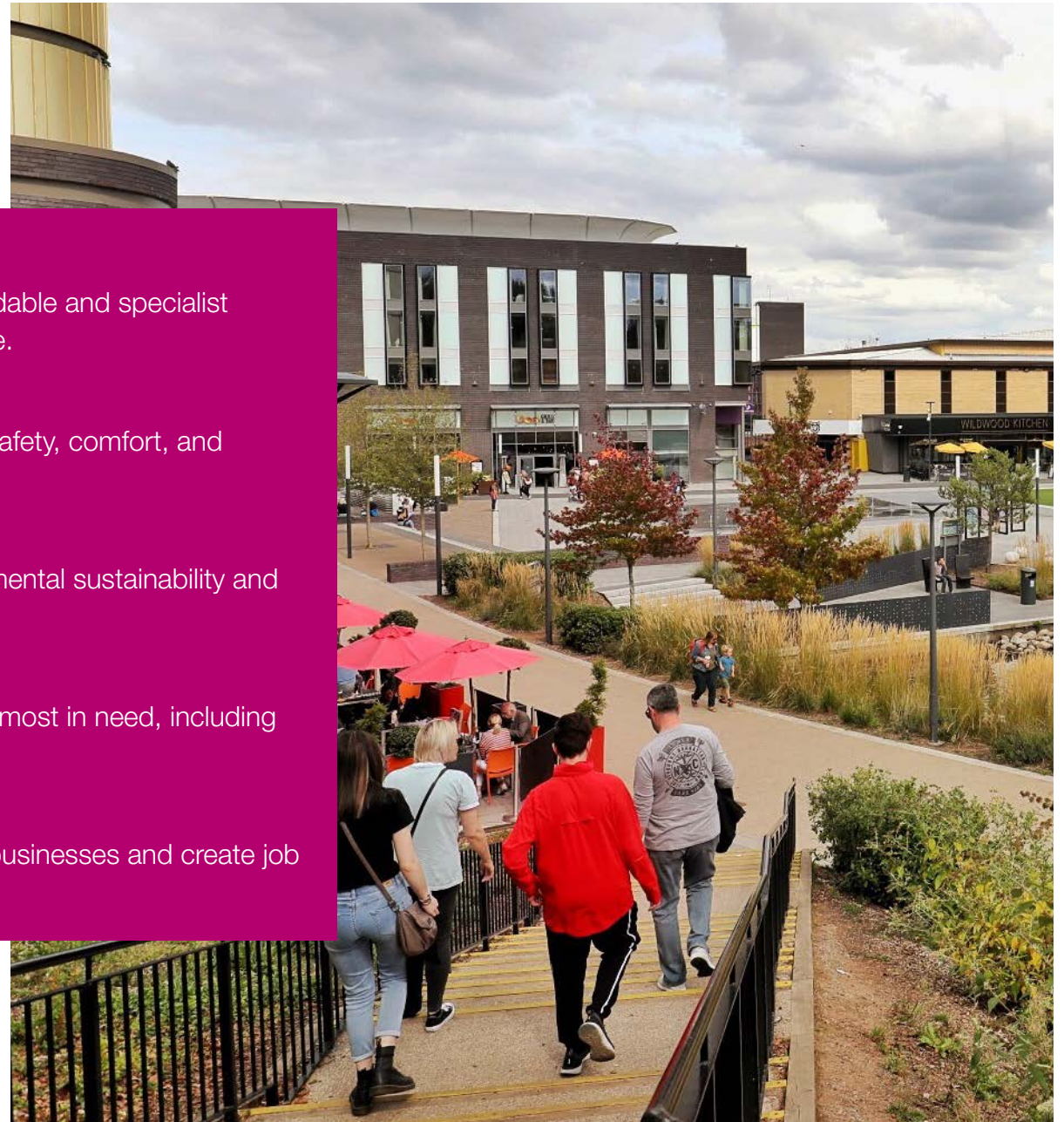
- 🏠 Developing housing solutions that support environmental sustainability and foster strong, connected communities.

### **Supporting vulnerable populations**

- 🏠 Providing targeted support and resources to those most in need, including the elderly, disabled, and low-income families.

### **Encouraging economic regeneration**

- 🏠 Leveraging housing development to support local businesses and create job opportunities.

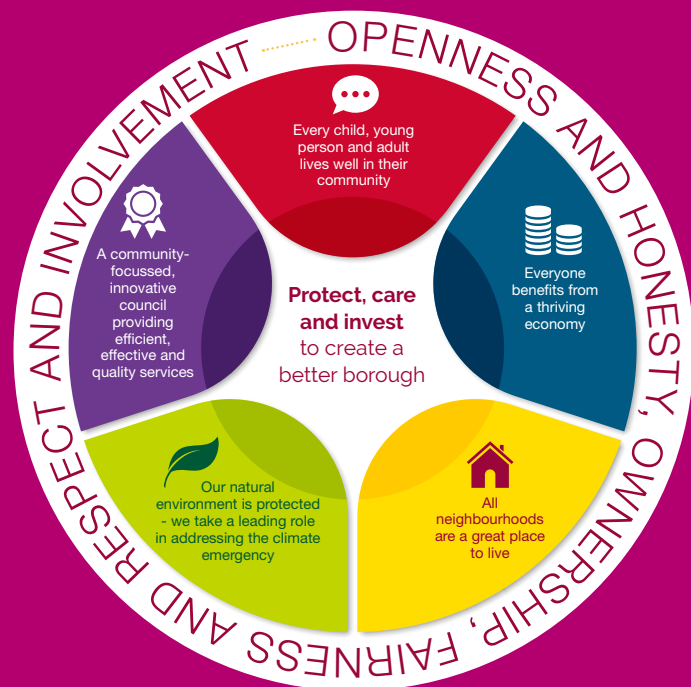


Through this strategy, we are dedicated to making a positive lasting impact on the lives of our residents, fostering a sense of pride and belonging in our communities.

By addressing the current challenges and anticipating future needs, we aim to build a foundation for **a brighter, more equitable future for all.**



## Our corporate vision, priorities and values



## Vision 2032 – our 10 year vision for Telford and Wrekin





Housing runs at the heart of everything we do. A decent place to live, sets the foundation from which health, education and work can flourish. **Housing is the building block of thriving communities and neighbourhoods.**

## Health and Wellbeing Board vision – happier, healthier fulfilled lives



**Housing and homelessness** are a key theme of our **Health and wellbeing strategy**. As a wider determinant of health, housing is critical to the way we live and our health and wellbeing outcomes and often referred to as ‘the causes of the causes’.



**Better homes  
FOR ALL**

Everyone deserves to live  
in a better home

## Our housing achievements – since the adoption of our last strategy

**Delivering**  
**312**  
**long term**  
**empty**  
**properties**  
**back into use**

**Delivering**  
**800**  
**new homes**  
for private rent  
and affordable  
rent through  
**Nuplace**  
to over 1,500 residents  
with a 95% tenant  
satisfaction rate

**Refurbishing**  
**56**  
**properties**  
**through Telford**  
**& Wrekin Homes**  
providing  
accommodation for  
some of our most  
vulnerable

**Preventing or**  
**relieving the**  
**homelessness of**  
**over 4,000**  
**people**  
**including 239**  
**who were rough**  
**sleeping**

**Providing advice**  
**and support to**  
**over 7,000**  
fuel poor  
residents  
and grant funding  
400 households  
to improve  
energy efficiency  
of their homes.  
Estimated CO2  
savings 596 tonnes

**Supporting**  
**1,933**  
residents living  
in private rented  
properties,  
by engaging with  
landlords and  
eliminating over  
1,200 hazards such  
as excess cold,  
damp & mould and  
electrical hazards

**Improving the**  
**quality of**  
**766**  
**private**  
**rented**  
**properties**  
through our  
building safer  
stronger communities  
programme

**Delivering**  
**over 1,200**  
**new and**  
**affordable**  
**homes**  
**each year**

**Supporting**  
**the delivery of**  
**over 600**  
**homes**  
**for older**  
**people**

**Providing**  
**over 2,000**  
**grants per**  
**annum**  
**to make**  
**adaptations**  
to enable residents  
to live, independently  
at home

**Secured**  
an average of  
**30%**  
**affordable**  
**housing**  
**across all**  
**housing**  
**development**

**Conducting**  
**30+**  
**prosecutions**  
**and civil**  
**penalties**  
**for breaches**  
**of housing**  
**legislation**

# TELFORD AND WREKIN LOCAL CONTEXT

Telford and Wrekin is a successful and growing Borough with a diverse housing market and population and continuing housing needs.

A unitary Local Authority, located in the West Midlands, the Borough is a distinctive blend of urban and rural areas, with **green open spaces alongside contemporary housing developments and traditional market towns**. The Borough includes the central urban Telford area, the market town of Newport and large surrounding rural area that accounts for more than two thirds of the Borough's area. Along the banks of the River Severn in the south of the Borough is **Ironbridge, the birthplace of the industrial revolution** and now a **World Heritage site**.

Part of the Borough was designated as **Telford New Town** in 1968, growing rapidly in the 1960s to the 1970s, mainly through social rented housing provided by the Telford Development Corporation. Following the closure of the Development Corporation in the 1980s, growth has continued through new housing development by private developers and registered providers.

With a population of around 192,000<sup>1</sup>, between 2013 and 2023 the Borough had the **greatest growth rate in population of all upper tier local authorities in the West Midlands**, increasing by 13.5% (22,900 people). This was twice the rate of growth in neighbouring Shropshire (6.8%). As the population grows it is also ageing, between 2013 and 2023 the Borough's population aged 65 and above grew by 28.5% compared to 10.6% for those aged between 16 and 64 and 11.3% for those aged 15 and under.

Internal migration from elsewhere in the UK now accounts for the greatest proportion of population increase in the Borough. Between 2022 and 2023 net internal migration to Telford and Wrekin was 1,650 people, with the majority arriving from the Black

**c192,000 population  
in the Borough**

**The proportion of  
the Borough's  
population  
aged 65 or above  
grew by  
28.5%**

**17%  
of the Borough's  
population were  
from a  
minority ethnic  
background  
compared with 10.5%  
in 2011**

**24.5%  
of residents  
live in areas  
ranked in the  
20% most  
deprived  
nationally**

**In the 2021 Census  
36,500  
people  
reported that  
they had a  
long-term  
health problem  
or disability**

<sup>1</sup><https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/populationandmigration/populationestimates/bulletins/populationestimatesforenglandandwales/mid2023>

Country and Birmingham. By contrast, natural change (births minus deaths) accounted for a population increase of 100 people.

The population of Telford and Wrekin is also becoming more ethnically diverse. In 2021, 17.0% of the Borough's population were from a minority ethnic background compared with 10.5% in 2011. The Borough also has a sizeable armed forces veteran community with 5.4% of the population aged 16 and above having previously served in the armed forces compared with 3.5% regionally and 3.8% nationally.

While some parts of Telford and Wrekin appear prosperous, there are clear differences across the Borough. 10.5% of the Borough's population live in areas ranked in the **20% least deprived in England**, however **4.5% of residents live in areas ranked in the 20% most deprived nationally**. With 14.6% (11,320 households) living in fuel poverty, this is compared to an average of 16.7% across the West Midlands and 11.4% in England. The majority of these neighbourhoods are

areas with new town estates built by the Development Corporation in the 1960s and 1970s.

The Borough's population faces some **significant health challenges**. Overall life expectancy and healthy life expectancy at birth is currently worse than that for England. In the 2021 Census 36,500 people reported that they had a long-term health problem or disability<sup>2</sup>.

The Borough is home to **around 7,000 businesses**<sup>3</sup> with key sectors including advanced manufacturing and agri-tech, defence, engineering, plastics, IT outsourcing and data centres, construction, retail, food and drink and tourism. Unemployment rates in the Borough are consistently **below the regional and national averages** and GVA per head in Telford and Wrekin is the third highest in the West Midlands region behind Solihull and Warwickshire.

More information and sources of our population data can be found at [www.telford.gov.uk/insight](https://www.telford.gov.uk/insight)

The Borough has a key role as an urban powerhouse within the Marches Local Enterprise Partnership and as a competitive inward investment destination



Mafeking Road, Hadley

<sup>2</sup><https://www.ons.gov.uk/census>

<sup>3</sup><https://www.nomisweb.co.uk/reports/lmp/la/1946157172/report.aspx?town=telford>



## Our housing market

The number of new homes being built in the Borough has been **growing at a faster rate than the regional and national average** growing by 19% between 2013 and 2023 compared to 8% for the West Midlands region and 9% for England<sup>4</sup>. Over the last three years the net number of additional dwellings in the Borough has grown by an average of 1,400 dwellings per year<sup>5</sup>.

Around 60% of homes in the Borough are owner occupied and remain **more affordable to buy than West Midlands and national average**<sup>6</sup>. House prices are consistently lower with a median house price of £217,000 compared to £240,000 for the West Midlands and £290,000 for England (September 2024)<sup>7</sup>. The ratio of house prices to earnings in Telford and Wrekin is 6.1, compared to 6.9 for the West Midlands region and 7.7 for England<sup>8</sup>.

The rental sector – both private and social – makes up around **40% of housing stock** in Telford and Wrekin. In the 2021 Census, the proportion of rented homes in the Borough (39.2%) was greater than both England (37.6%) and the West Midlands region (36.2%).



Nuplace residents, the Maher family

<sup>4</sup><https://www.gov.uk/government/statistical-data-sets/live-tables-on-dwelling-stock-including-vacants>

<sup>5</sup><https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/housing-supply-net-additional-dwellings-england-2023-to-2024>

<sup>6</sup><https://www.ons.gov.uk/census>

<sup>7</sup><https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/housing/datasets/medianhousepricesforadministrativegeographies>

<sup>8</sup><https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/housing/datasets/ratioofhousepricetoworkplacebasedearningslowerquartileandmedian>



14,000 homes (18%) in the Borough are rented from social housing landlords or registered providers. Housing Plus Group (formerly Wrekin Housing Group) are the largest provider but the market is diverse with a growing number of housing providers active in the Borough.

The **private rented sector accounts for around 1 in 5 homes** within Telford and Wrekin and is a key component of the Borough's housing market. There is considerable variation across the Borough with significant concentrations in the centre and south. These areas include the new town estates built in the 1960s and 1970s where many homes previously in the social rented sector were sold to their tenants. Census 2021 data showed that Woodside had the greatest proportion with 40% of homes privately rented. The lowest proportions were in Muxton and Lilleshall and Lawley, Horsehay and Lightmoor where 12% of households were privately rented. The sector is diverse catering for different housing needs including single property owners through to portfolio landlords. **The Council is now the Borough's single largest private rent landlord** providing rented homes for c.2,000 residents through its wholly owned company **Nuplace**.

The average monthly rent in Telford and Wrekin is **consistently lower than the regional and national averages**. In March 2025 the average monthly rent in the Borough was £785 compared to £920 for the West Midlands region and £1,386 for England<sup>9</sup>.

Private rented homes in the Borough are **more affordable than in other parts of the West Midlands and England**. In the year March 2023, private renters in Telford and Wrekin could expect to spend 21.9% of their income on an average-priced rented home compared to 25.4% for the West Midlands and 34.2% for England. For this period, Telford and Wrekin was the **fifth most affordable of thirty local authorities in the West Midlands** region<sup>10</sup>.

## Affordable Homes

Despite the relative affordability of buying or renting a home in Telford & Wrekin compared to other parts of the country, many people still cannot afford to. There is an ongoing need for affordable housing to meet local demands. Recent data indicates the necessity for around **700 new affordable homes annually** with the majority (75%) required for affordable or social rent.

Between 2020 and 2024 over **1,250 new affordable homes have been built** but homes – particularly social housing – continue to be lost to the sector through sales and redevelopment.

While it is difficult to quantify the extent of shared accommodation in the Borough, we have seen an increase in licensed houses in multiple occupation (HMO). We now have **280 licensed HMOs** in the



New College, Wellington

<sup>9</sup><https://www.ons.gov.uk/economy/inflationandpriceindices/bulletins/privaterentandhousepricesuk/april2025>

<sup>10</sup><https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/housing/bulletins/privaterentalaffordabilityengland/latest>

Borough. This is a 16% increase since the adoption of our last strategy. HMOs provide a vital housing solution for those seeking to establish their first home, starting employment or study and for those who only qualify for the shared room rate housing benefit.

## Homelessness

Since the last Housing strategy, we have seen a **significant increase in people presenting as homeless**. In 2024/25 over 3151 households sought our advice of which 1248 we owed a duty too under the Homelessness Reduction Act. However, since the last strategy we have also seen an **increase in the number of people we have been able to relieve from homelessness** with 958 pa where we've prevented/relieved homelessness. As a result, over the past 12 months on average only 70 family each month people have had to be placed into emergency accommodation (B&B) per month. We have **increased the units of temporary accommodation** stock we own, which has reduced the numbers and amount of time people must spend in bed and breakfast. This includes a **dedicated eight unit women's refuge** to support those fleeing domestic abuse.



The main reasons given for the loss of previous accommodation include loss of private rented tenancy, breakdown of relationships, and domestic abuse

# Our housing conditions

Telford and Wrekin’s housing stock presents **a range of challenges**. A significant part of the Borough was developed as a new town but around long-established communities. 17% of the Borough’s housing stock was constructed in the mid-1960s to mid-1970s but 1 in 3 of our homes have been built since 1990 – 15% since 2012.

Alongside this are older homes, 6% pre-dating 1900, including across the rural area and Newport.

Latest estimates put the proportion of non-decent homes in the Borough to be around 10% which is **significantly lower than the regional and all England average** of 15%<sup>11</sup>. The challenges are greatest in the private rented sector with the lowest rates related to the local social housing sector. The **condition and quality of Telford’s new town estates is a significant concern**; there has been investment into some areas to improve public infrastructure including rebuilt schools and local centres and a limited amount of new/replacement housing. There is a **pressing need to secure significant and sustained investment in the estates** to fully address the poor housing conditions.

## Percentage of non-decent homes

Area	Owner Occupied	Private Rented	Social
Telford and Wrekin	10.5	12.0	9.5
West Midlands	15.1	17.5	14.2
England	13.8	22.9	11.2

There is a correlation between energy efficiency and housing quality as well as health indicators. With a high proportion of newer homes, the energy efficiency of properties in the Borough is better than regionally and nationally<sup>12</sup>. The social rented sector has the highest proportion of homes with an EPC rating of C or above with almost 3 in 4 homes meeting this standard.

Currently 1.5% of dwellings have the lowest energy efficiency rating with many located in the rural area.

## Percentage of dwellings with EPC Band ‘C’ or above

Area	All Dwellings	Owner Occupied	Private Rented	Social
Telford and Wrekin	60.7	43.5	54.4	72.7
West Midlands	46.1	33.6	39.4	58.2
England	49.8	36.6	43.5	62.7

<sup>11</sup><https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/english-housing-survey-local-authority-housing-stock-condition-modelling-2020>  
<sup>12</sup><https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/housing/articles/energyefficiencyofhousinginenglandandwales/2024>



# OUR HOUSING ACHIEVEMENTS

In our previous Strategy we set out three objectives:

## Objective one 2020-2025

To create sustainable, accessible, affordable and integrated communities

## Objective two 2020-2025

To make the BEST use of our existing homes

## Objective three 2020-2025

To provide homes to support and empower our most vulnerable people

Working proactively with partners and communities we have made significant progress in implementing these objectives while recognising that there is more still to be done



Jenny Athersmith Gardens,  
Dawley

# OBJECTIVE ONE






## 2020-2025:

**To create sustainable, accessible, affordable and integrated communities**

## PROGRESS AND IMPLEMENTATION

Since 2020 we have been undertaking a range of actions to support this objective linked to policy, delivery and partnership working:

### Policy and regulatory

-  Securing 25%+ of affordable homes on all major development sites and supporting 100% affordable schemes.
-  Delivery of a new **Local plan** (submission draft) following two rounds of consultation, with a target of **over 20,200 new homes by 2040** (over 50% of the homes new homes are on sites that already have planning permission or are under construction) introducing new policies to shape the delivery of **new affordable and specialist homes**, whilst ensuring the right infrastructure is developed alongside new homes to create communities.
-  Implementing **Developer climate change supplementary planning Document** (SPD) - this has seen the Council lead the way with its focus on **sustainable developments** including Nuplace developments such as Donnington Wood Way which features on plot renewable energy generation and electric vehicle charging.
-  Implementing our **Specialist and supported supplementary planning document** requiring the delivery of **more adapted and accessible accommodation**.
-  Using our housing and planning powers to raise standards in our existing housing stock and that new housing developments meet need and **contribute positively towards our carbon reduction commitments** and ensure homes cost less to run for residents.



- Ensuring that there are **suitable homes for all**, especially for our most vulnerable residents including those fleeing domestic abuse, young people and those who have served in our armed forces.

## Delivery

- Enabled the **delivery of 1,200+ new homes every year** (the third best nationally), partly by the use of Council land and assets.
- Accelerated the delivery of over 750 new homes, through our unique **Land Deal** with Homes England.
- Direct delivery by March 2025 of **608 new rented** homes through the Council's wholly owned company, Nuplace, **with a further 222 in delivery**.
- Providing **high quality rented accommodation** for over 1,500 residents, leading the private rental market with a consistently high satisfaction rate of 95%.



Nuplace and Telford & Wrekin Homes lead the private rental market with consistently high satisfaction rates

🏠 Delivering **multi-generational, mixed use, sustainable development** including energy efficient and affordable homes – 329 at Wildwalk, Donnington, in partnership with Lovell and Wrekin Housing Group.

🏠 **Regenerating 48 acres of brownfield land** and bringing back into use, 4,656sqm of redundant floorspace.

## Partnership Working:

🏠 **Working in partnership** with Homes England, registered providers, private sector landlords, letting agents, developers, and voluntary and community groups to achieve successful communities.

🏠 Delivering a comprehensive, forward-thinking planning service dedicated to the **creation of sustainable communities** — powered by strategic tools like Planning Performance Agreements to streamline and elevate the planning process.

🏠 Working as **master developer on major regeneration schemes** such as Station Quarter, leveraging in public and private sector investment to support the creation of a new **city living** housing market.

🏠 **Securing £5.633m** from WMCA to support the delivery of 263 new homes within the Borough on brownfield sites.

🏠 Increased the number of new affordable homes for rent and shared ownership provided every year from 100 to 300, through **joint working with local housing associations and Homes England grant**.

🏠 Attracted **annual housing investment of over £5m** from Homes England.





## CASE STUDY

# WILD WALK, DONNINGTON

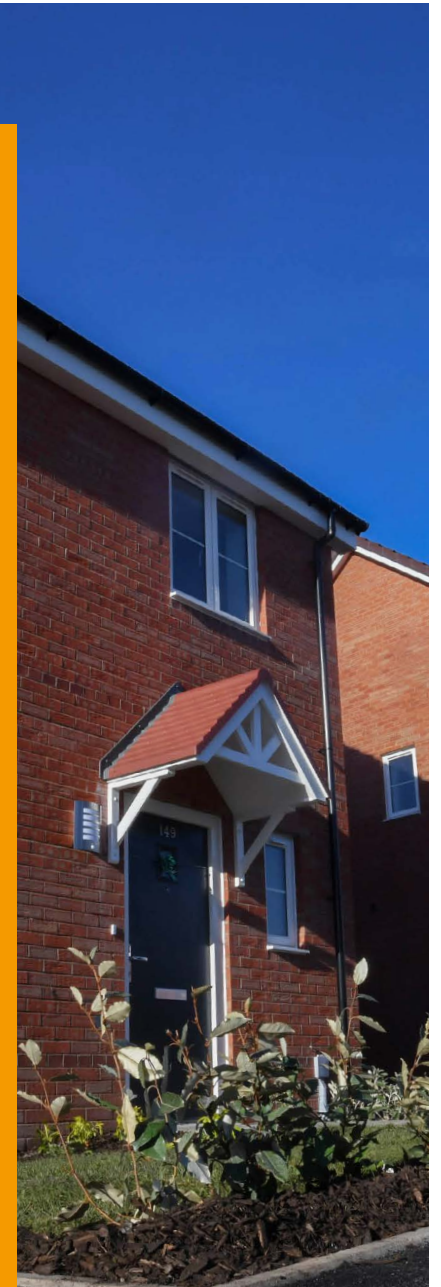
This mixed tenure development of 329 homes, off Donnington Wood Way, has seen the regeneration of a constrained 14.85ha brownfield site, peppered with 23 mineshafts.

The scheme was brought forward by a partnership including the Council, Nuplace Ltd, Lovell Partnerships Ltd and Wrekin Housing Group, supported by funding from the Local Enterprise Partnership and Homes England.

The housing mix and masterplan was developed by the Council to serve the needs of the local community. In line with the Council's Housing Strategy, the scheme focused on bridging gaps in housing provision, striving to create an intergenerational scheme that provides housing choice as needs change over time.

The site comprises of 186 affordable homes including Extra care, dementia care and supported living dwellings, 66 private rent homes alongside 77 for open market sale, providing housing choice for people of all ages and stages.

The supported living accommodation is located at the heart of the scheme and accommodates a **Community Hub** providing café and bistro facilities, space to work with free Wi-Fi as well as learning suites which can be used by local schools and community groups, alongside a fabulous new play facility to



Majestic Way, Aqueduct



foster inter-generational relationships that benefit all age groups.

The scheme also sets a benchmark in terms of its sustainable credentials, with all homes featuring **low carbon design, PV panels and EV charging points**. Nuplace also piloted the delivery of their first 18 **Future Homes properties\***, reducing energy bills and running costs for residents.



**\*Future Homes:** The Future Homes Standard, is an amendment to Part L of the Building Regulations which has yet to come into force but which mandates that new homes be 'zero carbon-ready' and significantly more energy-efficient than those built under previous regulations. This means a focus on low-carbon heating, high-performance insulation, and potentially rooftop solar to reduce carbon emissions and energy bills.



Blossom Walk, Hadley

# OBJECTIVE TWO

## 2020-2025:









To make the **BEST** use of our existing homes

## PROGRESS AND IMPLEMENTATION

Taking a multi-agency approach we have together made great strides in improving the quality of the existing housing stock in the Borough.

### Better Homes for All Programme

Under our programme we have:

-  Through our **'Engage, Educate, Enforce'** approach supported 1,933 residents in private rented properties, by engaging with landlords to improve their housing conditions, by eliminating 1,219 hazards, such as excess cold, damp and mould and electrical hazards.
-  Ensured all properties we inspect have the correct **minimum energy performance rating**.
-  Introduced the **Landlord, Tenant Co-Ordinator role** to support landlords and tenants to sustain tenancies.
-  Licensed 280 **houses in multiple occupation** (HMO) with regular targeted area-based campaigns.
-  Using a multi-agency data led approach undertaking targeted action to address the activities of our poorer performing landlords leading to **more than 30 prosecutions and penalty offences**.
-  Implemented **monthly multi agency exercises** with partners such as police and fire service, targeting known offenders associated with illegal practises.
-  Introduced a **Hoarding Panel** working across services to identify support and actions to address those whose lives are at risk due to hoarding.
-  Implemented a **Supported Accommodation Panel**, which reviews all providers seeking to establish or grow their supported accommodation ensuring conditions and support are compliant protecting the lives of our most vulnerable.



- 🏠 **Continually updating information on our website** with housing advice and support for landlords, tenants and homeowners.
- 🏠 In collaboration with our local credit union providing low-cost **Better homes for all loans** to support homeowners and landlords to carry out essential repairs to their properties.

## Safer Stronger Communities

- 🏠 **Invested £2.5m into a Safer and Stronger Communities Programme** working with partners and residents to support the continued regeneration of our existing estates, reducing levels of crime by 10%, Police recorded ASB by 3%, fly tipping by 3% and noise complaints by 25% in 2024/25 compared with 2023/24.
- 🏠 **Proactively inspected 766 private rented properties**, improving housing standards and through work with communities reaching vulnerable tenants who may not have come to us.

## Long Term Empty Properties



We understand that now more than ever, every empty property is a wasted resource whilst attracting anti-social behaviour and blight to neighbourhoods. Since our last housing strategy we adopted a **Long-term empty property strategy**, giving us a challenging target to bring 375 long term and problematic empty properties back into use by 2026. Since the adoption of the strategy, we have:

- 🏠 Brought **321 long term empty properties back into use** targeting those empty longest and most problematic and providing new homes for families



Queen Street, Wellington

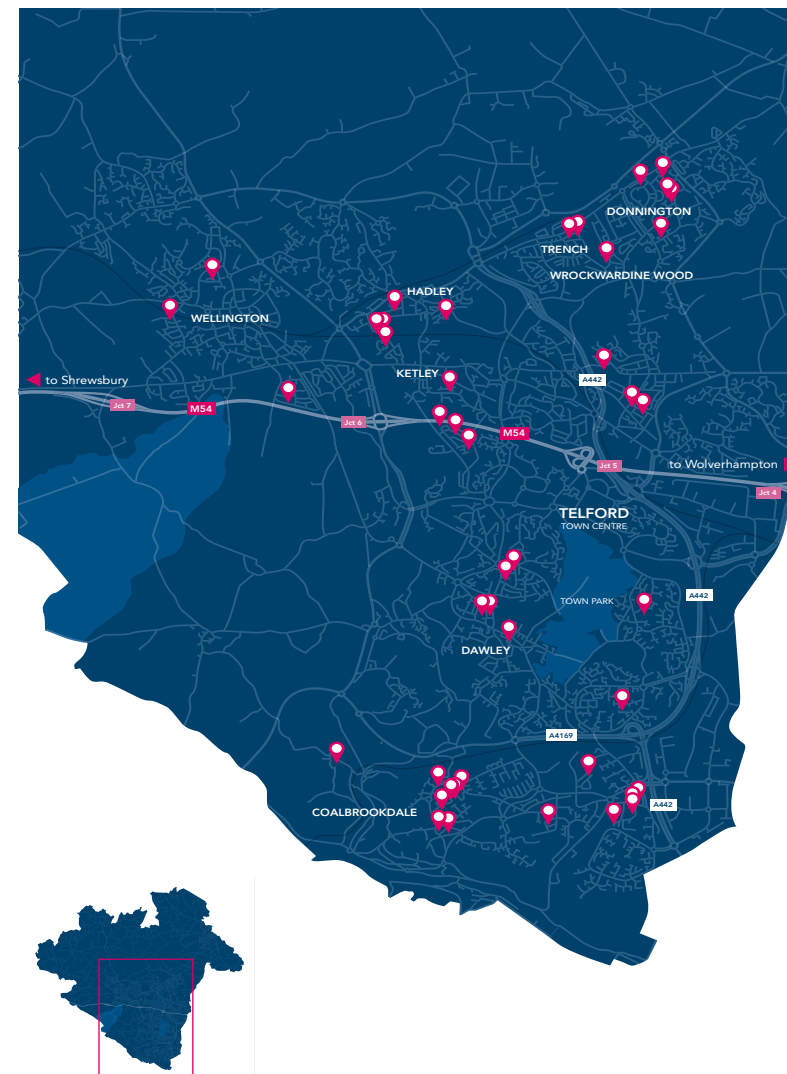
and people at risk of homelessness.

-  Acquired **a number of former social rented properties** to meet the specific needs of our residents.
-  Extended our **Better homes for all loan** for people wanting to bring empty properties back into use.

## Telford & Wrekin Homes

Established in 2021 as a sub brand of **Nuplace**, it has **acquired and brought back into use 56 properties across the Borough**. We are:

-  **Investing in and protecting existing housing stock** through high quality renovations, which help to address issues of poor housing in communities.
-  **Raising standards in the private rented sector** including in some of our most deprived neighbourhoods, demonstrating high quality property and tenancy management on a broader geographic scale.
-  Providing a **home for life** for tenants with a focus on providing housing options for a range of priority client groups, including those leaving temporary accommodation, and to support those providing foster placements.



### Making the BEST use of our existing homes:

Properties acquired to end March 2025 as part of Nuplace's Telford & Wrekin Homes programme



## CASE STUDY

# NUPLACE PROPERTY

Making the BEST use of our existing homes:  
Internal and external transformation of an empty home acquired as part of Nuplace's Telford & Wrekin Homes programme. Now being resided in by a local family.



Regent Street, Madeley



Nuplace competition winner, Leo



## Affordable warmth and climate change

In 2021 we adopted our **Affordable warmth strategy**. The subsequent energy price rises, and ongoing cost of living challenges have impacted across communities but disproportionately lower-income households. We have provided support by:

- 🏠 Funding a dedicated **Telford energy advice phone line** provided by a local energy charity (Marches Energy Agency) which has supported over 7000 fuel poor households, including advice, home visits, provision of energy saving devices and referrals to other agencies including Telford Crisis Support.
- 🏠 Directly **providing thousands of energy saving light bulbs**.
- 🏠 **Channelled external grant** to support 367 households to improve energy efficiency of their homes by retrofitting measures such as insulation, double glazing, solar panels, air source heat pumps etc, with an estimated CO2 savings 596 tonnes.
- 🏠 Ensuring all properties receiving measures have the **correct ventilation measures** to eliminate damp and mould and excess heat in line with our climate change action plan.

🏠 **Retrofitted many of our temporary accommodation properties** bringing them to up to an EPC rating of C.

🏠 The Council has **invested £470,000 into the Warm and Well Telford scheme**, directly supporting 'in the gap' fuel poor households, who do not qualify for central government funding but are still classed as being in fuel poverty. We have retrofitted a number of properties with windows, doors and smart radiator controls.

🏠 Using our **emergency welfare assistance to distribute gas and electric vouchers** to over 437 people on low incomes in an emergency situation.

🏠 Through our **Financial Welfare Partnership Group**, working with partners to ensure residents are receiving consistent, up to date advice and making referrals to maximise income and benefits including hardship funds.



Octavia Court, Dawley








# OBJECTIVE THREE

## 2020-2025:

**To provide homes to support and empower our most vulnerable people**

## PROGRESS AND IMPLEMENTATION

### Homeless prevention and relief

-  Preventing or relieving the homelessness of **over 4,000 people and families** including 239 who were rough sleeping.
-  Directly investing to acquire **over 80 units of accommodation to prevent homelessness**, including Housing First (housing with support aimed at housing complex cases) and temporary accommodation minimising the use of B&B emergency accommodation and length of stay.
-  Through the **Rough Sleeper Task** working collaboratively to provide wrap around, bespoke support and accommodation offer.
-  Providing **flexible solutions to prevent or relieve homelessness** through incentives such as rent guarantee schemes, rent deposit payments and supporting clients with rent in advance.
-  Providing **Tenancy sustainment team** to work with the most vulnerable tenants to ensure they develop skills to help them manage and maintain their tenancies going forward, preventing further homelessness.

### Support for key groups

-  Providing **safe accommodation and specialist support** to victims fleeing domestic violence with specialist domestic abuse support to help clients to feel safe and supported to find their future suitable accommodation.
-  Through new nomination agreements delivering **300%+ increase in successful nominations to social housing** prioritising for those most in need.
-  Used our allocations policy to give **priority to those fleeing domestic abuse, care leavers, and armed forces veterans**.

## Specialist and supported accommodation provision

- 🏠 Implementing a **Specialist and supported accommodation strategy** to effectively stimulate and guide the supply of accommodation to meet the needs of our vulnerable residents.
- 🏠 Supporting the delivery of **over 600 homes for older people** including housing for sale, shared ownership, affordable and social rents and c.300 units of social and affordable **Extra care housing**.
- 🏠 Delivery of **80 units of supported accommodation to meet the needs of those with mental health needs or learning disabilities**.
- 🏠 Delivery of **supported accommodation for children in, and leaving, care**.
- 🏠 **Developed bespoke solutions** across key partners to address accommodation barriers for foster carers, children and young people and families with disabilities and large families.

## Our Independent living offer

- 🏠 Under our Independent Living offer provided **2,313 grants to adapt people's home** to help residents live as independently as possible.
- 🏠 Continued the work of our Independent living centre providing advice and support on how residents can use **equipment and technology** to make their home safe and accessible.
- 🏠 ASC strive to **encourage individuals to remain living in their own homes** safely, reducing and minimising risks for as long as possible. For those who require additional support options such as extra care living are explored as part of aspirational outcomes for those we support
- 🏠 Continued to commit ongoing local authority funding for non-statutory, preventative housing related support to **help the most vulnerable to live independently**.



Telford & Wrekin  
Co-operative Council

Protect, care and invest  
to create a better borough

## Housing solutions for foster carers





Helping to create more homes for the vulnerable children and young people of Telford and Wrekin.





### Who can apply?

Anyone can apply, regardless of your occupier status. You can apply if you are:

- a homeowner
- with a registered social landlord
- with a private landlord
- in a Wrekin Housing Group property.

### How we can meet your needs and increase our capacity to care.

- with adaptations to your home
- supporting you with a house move
- supporting you in conversations with your landlord.

## CASE STUDY

# ENABLING A PERSON TO BUILD THEIR LIFE

In 2019 Mr A was a successful businessman with his own company, living with his family in a 3-bedroom home.

At the end of 2019 Mr A started to go through some challenges with his business losing a major client and falling into debt. At the start of 2020 Mr A went through a series of stressful events that led to an emotional breakdown. He lost his business, house, and family leaving just with his dog and no belongings.

He felt very isolated and alone resulting in him living rough and addicted to alcohol and drugs. Rock bottom came in Aug 2022 when he was found on the wrong side of a bridge wanting to end his life his life. After receiving support to withdraw from addiction and rebuilding his relationship with his Mum he was offered a property specifically for rough sleepers under the RSAP Programme (known as **Telford Housing First**) - a two year project to support people to become tenant ready. Mr A moved into a one bed flat with his dog.

Through personalised support from a Council Tenancy sustainment officer, he is rebuilding his life and having been previously in the armed forces, also now supported by the charity **Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen and Families Association**.

Mr A is ready to move on at the end of the project and will be fully supported into his permanent home.



Giving people who have experienced homelessness, chronic health and social care needs a stable home to rebuild their lives.

# THE NATIONAL PICTURE

The national policy context for housing is complex and changing with key themes summarised below:

- 🏠 There remains a significant focus on the development of new housing nationwide, with central government setting an ambitious target of 1.5 million homes to be built nationwide in the next five years, with a particular focus on social and affordable housing options with a new **Affordable Homes Programme**.
- 🏠 Through planning and housing policy targeting all providers to **increase and expedite new housing delivery**.
- 🏠 New policies, such as the future homes standard, to shape housing design, quality, physical accessibility, environmental performance, and safety.
- 🏠 Welfare reform changes are continuing, however planned changes to the funding of specialist housing have **not** been introduced.
- 🏠 New National Planning Policy Framework focussed on increasing the quality and quantity of supported, specialist and affordable housing provision through up-to-date **Local Development Plans**.
- 🏠 Through the introduction of the **Supported Housing (Regulatory Oversight) Act 2023**, implementing a new framework for regulating supported exempt

accommodation in England and Wales.

- 🏠 Additional regulation of the rented sector is proposed through the **Renters' Rights Bill**, with the **abolition of Section 21 'no fault' evictions** and tenancies moving from fixed term to periodic.
- 🏠 Central government are also consulting on making all private rented properties a **minimum EPC rating of C**.
- 🏠 The government also plans to introduce new rules for housing conditions and disrepair by extending the **Decent Homes Standard** and **Awaab's law** to the private rented sector.
- 🏠 There continues to be limited national funding for housing renewal and improvement, with the exception of **Disabled Facilities Grants** and related measures.

## Cost of Living

It is estimated that the **cost of living nationally will continue to rise** over the next few years driven by energy prices and influenced by international political instability, increasing demand and rising production costs.



Freestone Avenue, St Georges



## Affordability

As the population continues to increase and people live longer, **house prices are expected to continue increasing**, while financial uncertainty will continue to make borrowing difficult. This means home ownership will continue to be **unattainable** for many.

Social housing providers also report financial challenges with increasing and maintaining their housing supply.



Housing being built as part of  
our Telford Land Deal

# HOUSING STRATEGY 2025 - 2030

A huge amount has been achieved since we adopted our first strategy, and we have built a strong foundation of partnership working and co-production and from this a deep knowledge base of the housing picture and challenges in our Borough.

In developing this draft strategy, we have talked to a range of partners and those with lived experience to understand their priorities and concerns at this point. Some of the challenges we have heard relate to the increasing complexity of lives and how this is impacting housing choices, the need for homes that can adapt through life and that will support people live independently longer whether in old age or with health concerns, in their communities, and the impact on some of our most vulnerable including children and young people and armed forces veterans. Affordability, housing quality particularly in key areas of the Borough and also how we minimise and adapt to climate change, continue to be key themes.

Following review and the ongoing commitment of partners we are proposing to retain the existing objectives but with some updates to further emphasise health, safety, community and how we work to achieve carbon neutrality by 2030.

The following sections outline how we propose to address these objectives over the next five years.







## OBJECTIVE ONE:

To make the **BEST** use of our existing homes



To maintain progress towards this objective, we will continue to improve property conditions by:

### Improving standards – Better homes for all

- 🏠 **Educate and engage** with landlords and tenants to provide the best outcomes and sustain tenancies.
- 🏠 **Working closely with partners** in Homeless Services, Citizens Advice Bureau, Marches Energy Agency to help private tenants struggling with the cost of living crisis, putting them at risk of homelessness.
- 🏠 Ensuring all properties we inspect are **safe and free from hazards**, with a particular emphasis on damp and mould, excess cold and overcrowding.
- 🏠 Ensure all properties are **compliant with gas, electrical, smoke, carbon monoxide** and **minimum energy efficiency standards**.
- 🏠 Programme of **surveying all blocks of flats** in the Borough to ensure fire safety.
- 🏠 Respond to the changing regulatory landscape by implementing the **Renters' Rights Bill, Decent homes standard** and **Awaab's Law**.
- 🏠 Work with our social landlords to ensure they are **compliant with the social housing regulator**.
- 🏠 Continue to work with partners to **support owners of hoarded properties**.
- 🏠 Under the Supported Housing (Regulatory Oversight) Act 2023 **improve the quality and standards of supported housing** by implementing licensing schemes, national standards, and continue to focus the work of our expert advisory panel.
- 🏠 **Continue to communicate our services** through public events, social media channels and our website.

- 🏠 Work with partners to **reach people who may not have access to our services** due to issues such as digital exclusion and language barriers.

## Building safer, stronger communities

- 🏠 Working with partners in our **'safer stronger' areas** with high levels of private renting to ensure safety in properties and support community cohesion.
- 🏠 Building a programme of **education and support** for residents where English is not their first language.

## Houses in multiple occupation (HMO)

- 🏠 Continue **mandatory HMO licensing** in the Borough and ensure compliance with licence conditions.
- 🏠 To continue to **monitor and manage the number of HMOs** in the Borough building on an evidence base for the introduction for further licensing schemes and article 4 directions.
- 🏠 Work with partners, through our safer stronger programme on programmes of education in key estates, to **limit any negative impacts of HMOs**, such as overcrowding and anti-social behaviour.
- 🏠 Focusing **Multi Agency Operations on HMOs**

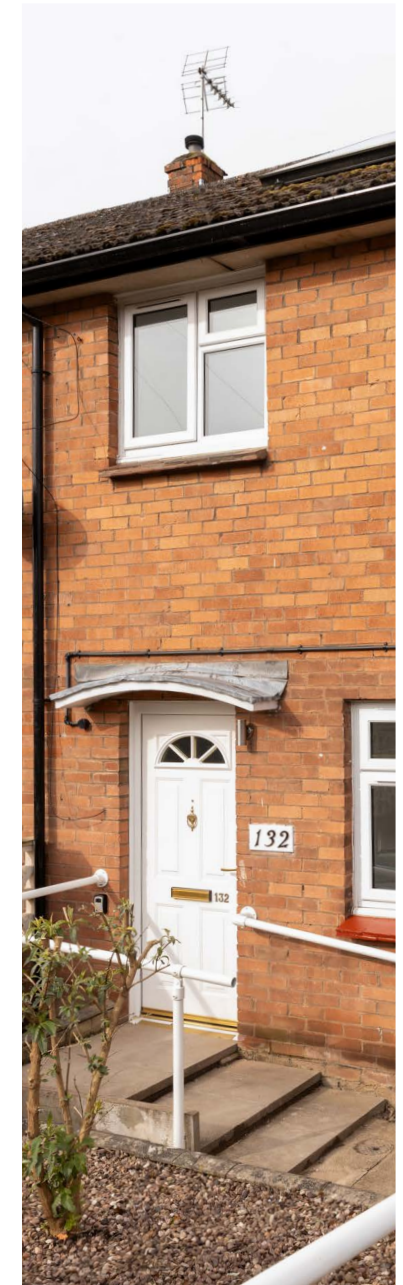
associated with overcrowding and anti-social behaviour.

## New town legacy

- 🏠 Continuing programme of work to promote completed action plan for Sutton Hill with partner agencies and bodies, including Homes England, West Midlands Combined Authority and RP partners to **lobby government for investment**.
- 🏠 Concentrating proactive programme of **tenant and landlord education** to ensure safety in private rented properties, using enforcement as a last resort, where compliance is not forthcoming.
- 🏠 Focussing energy efficiency government grants in new town estates to **improve energy efficiency of properties**.

## Financial support

- 🏠 Continue to offer our **Better homes for all loan for households** struggling to carry out essential repairs to their property.
- 🏠 Continue to provide financial support through our **financial welfare support group** for struggling homeowners and tenants.



Hills Lane Drive, Madeley



## Enforcement

- Ensuring we take **robust enforcement action** against landlords where compliance is not forthcoming.
- Through partnership multi agency work, we will continue with our **proactive, intelligence based, targeted enforcement**.

## Partnership working

- Build on our partnership working with private sector landlords to provide **advice and support** for our most vulnerable tenants.
- We will work with partners to **identify and protect vulnerable tenants** such as older renters, victims of human trafficking, modern day slavery and individuals working through international recruitment agencies who are at greater risk of exploitation by criminal landlords.

## Affordable warmth strategy

- Support the Telford Energy Advice line** for our residents who are in fuel poverty or at risk of becoming fuel poor.
- Direct **delivery of retrofit measures through targeting investment** from the government's Warm Homes programme to eligible properties.
- Delivery of measures to **support fuel poor households** through the Council funded **Warm and well Telford** scheme.

- Expand the Council's **emergency boiler programme** for vulnerable residents with no heating provision.
- Maximise grants through the **Energy company obligation grants**
- In collaboration with Marches Energy Agency, **help the 'able to pay' market navigate the complex market of retrofit**, through surveys, advice and the provision of the 'retrofit home' operating as a show home for people to go and experience different measures.
- Promoting **green measures to landlords** in the private rented sector.

## Long term empty property strategy

- Meet our target of **bringing 375 long term empty properties back into use** by June 2026.
- Publishing a new **Empty property strategy in 2026** setting ourselves another ambitious target focusing on the properties which have been empty the longest.
- To continue working with national bodies to **lobby government** to make bringing empty properties back into use and raise awareness of the importance of this work, by **making it a statutory requirement**.

## Better homes for later life

Working in partnership with Age UK Shropshire Telford & Wrekin implement a scheme for our older residents providing:

- 🏠 **trusted support and advice** for those who may find themselves inappropriately housed.
- 🏠 support to navigate the complex market of repairs, working with our **procured contractors**.
- 🏠 Through Telford & Wrekin Homes exploring options to **support people downsize through acquisition or lease** and to find more suitable accommodation releasing larger properties to meet family's needs.

## Direct delivery

- 🏠 Continuing to **grow our Telford & Wrekin Homes portfolio of refurbished properties** working with local Registered Providers to acquire and seek to retain affordable housing stock particularly in key parts of the Borough. Delivering a minimum of 100 acquisitions by 2027/28.
- 🏠 Exploring the implementation of a **retrofit programme on Nuplace's existing estates**, including the installation of PVs and batteries to reduce their carbon footprint and reduce energy bills for tenants.



Southwater Way, Telford

## Case Study

# Warm & Well Telford

Warm & Well Telford is an energy efficiency scheme for Telford and Wrekin households funded by Telford & Wrekin Council.

Householder A applied for the Warm & Well scheme as their front door was wooden and rotting away letting in draughts, in addition to old and ineffective TRVs.

Through the scheme both the front door and TVRs were replaced, with householder A commenting, "Excellent service, work was carried out very neat and very happy with the service".

Householder B, an elderly person living with a terminal health condition, applied to the scheme as their bay window was very old and the living room always felt cold.

Their window was replaced through the scheme with

householder b commenting, "Brilliant job, So pleased, thanks very much. Fitters came on time and have done a lovely job, left site very clean and tidy. Thanks so much".

The scheme is seen by many as excellent and a help to those who are struggling financially.







## OBJECTIVE TWO:

**To support safe,  
clean, green, healthy,  
connected communities**



We are committed to ensuring that in all roles the Council plays in relation to housing deliver, that we focus on the creation of safe, vibrant, interconnected places where people feel a sense of belonging and support.

Our approach goes beyond simply constructing buildings and focuses on fostering social connections, local amenities, and shared spaces that promote community engagement and preserve and enhance the environment. In order to continue to secure delivery against this objective we will:

### Local plan

The Council are finalising the review of the **Telford and Wrekin local plan** which is anticipated to reach formal Examination in Public in 2026. The plan sets out the Council's **overall vision and growth strategy for the Borough up to 2040**. It proposes sites for future housing and employment, policies to shape the tenure, type and standard of housing to be delivered and maintains a focus on developing It is anticipated that 20,200 net new homes (including affordable homes) will be delivered by 2040 with over 50% of these already under construction or with planning permission.

Through the policies in the local plan, we will:



Take a **data led approach** to assessing and quantifying the local evidence base around the housing needs of our community including young, elderly and of limited physically ability, including the Economic and Housing Development Needs Assessment (EHDNA) and the Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment (GTAA).



- 🏠 Use this evidence base to support the development and adoption of new and updated policies that secure the delivery of a range of housing types and sizes to nationally space standards that **meet the diverse housing needs of residents including elderly, less mobile and care leavers**.
- 🏠 Maintain delivery of **affordable homes for social and affordable rent and share ownership**, whilst maximising other routes to delivery such as through Homes England grant via Registered Provider partners.
- 🏠 Implement new policy to **use Section 106 funding to help fund affordable homes to meet unmet need**, including housing for people with dementia, care leavers and larger families.
- 🏠 Implement new policy to support the delivery of proposals for **new town estate regeneration schemes** to provide a strong policy framework which will help support the principle of regeneration and future funding bids.
- 🏠 Develop and adopt new policies that will address stalled development sites that blight local communities to regenerate brownfield land and provide new homes in accessible locations. This will strengthen the Councils approach in the use of Compulsory Purchase Order powers where necessary to **bring 'problem' buildings and sites back into productive use**.
- 🏠 Work to increase the supply of housing that provides **flexibility in the long term** by being delivered, wherever possible, to:
  - 🏠 The Nationally Described Space Standard (NDSS).
  - 🏠 Part M (4) Category 2 of the Building Regulations (roughly equivalent to the 'Lifetime Homes Standard').
  - 🏠 Part M (4) Category 3 (wheelchair standard).
- 🏠 Secure more sustainable development through the implementation of the Climate Change Supplementary Planning Document, linked to the Borough's **Climate change action plan**, including a focus on building fabric and



Principal Point, Wellington

design, including clean energy generation building on our track record of solar PV on Nuplace properties, as well as improved footpaths, cycleways, public transport links and biodiverse spaces to support the creation of green, well-connected communities.

-  Examine opportunities to **increase housing supply through new approaches**, for example, community-based housing.
-  Continue to implement the adopted Homes for All Supplementary Planning Document to secure delivery of **adapted accessible accommodation and all age friendly estate design**.
-  Engage constructively with other adjacent regional local authorities and other stakeholder agencies to **maximise learning and partnering opportunities in the field of housing delivery**.
-  Work with the construction industry (including SME companies) and training providers to **address skills gaps in the Borough's workforce**, including housing design, construction and new building technologies, such as modular construction.
-  Work with house builders to embed **modern methods of construction** into their development plans where this can speed up delivery, address viability and affordability issues and **contribute towards the Council's carbon reduction commitments**.

## Delivery

-  **Maintaining housing supply at c1,000/pa** - aligning with Governments planning reforms and ensuring this meets local

housing need. Continuing to deliver high quality and sustainable private and affordable rent homes through Nuplace, bringing the portfolio to over 1,000, including delivering properties to higher accessibility standards setting a market standard.

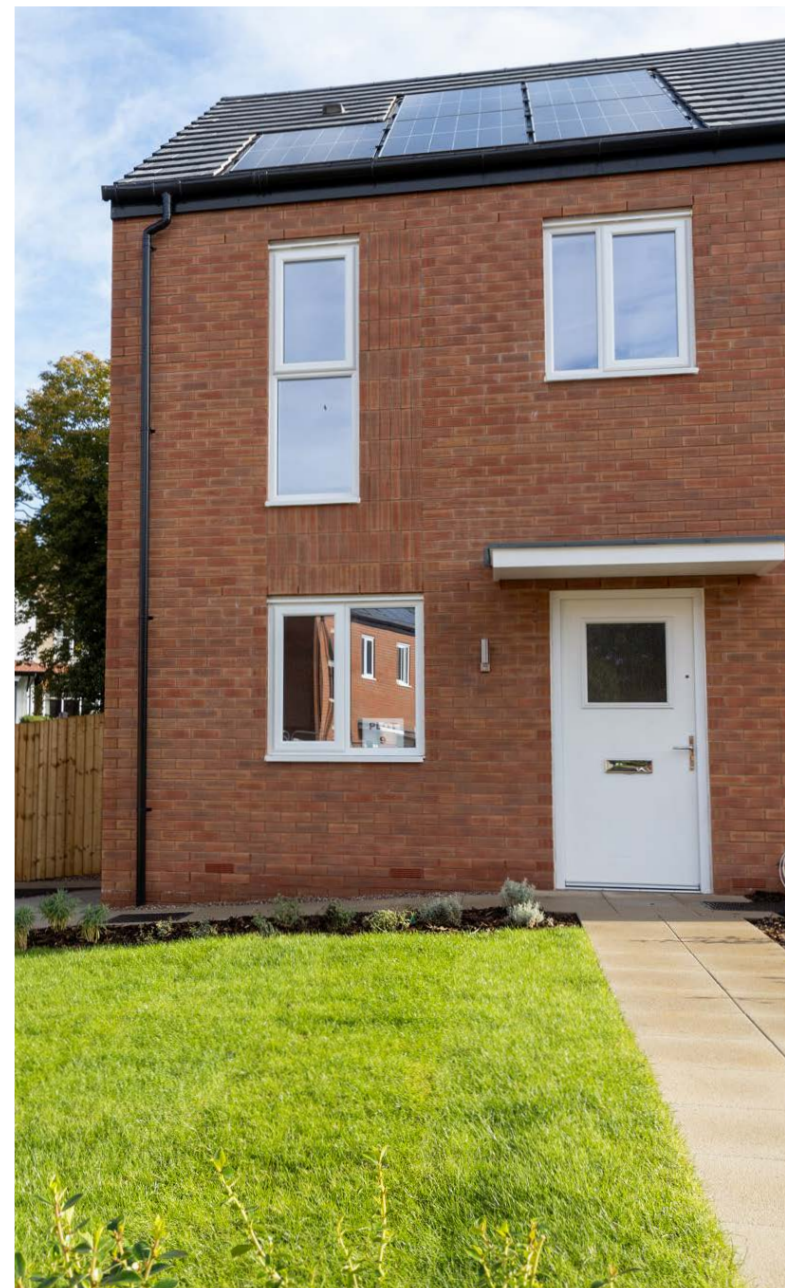
-  Creating a new model of town centre living delivering new affordable and rented homes at **Station Quarter** in the Telford town centre and reviewing opportunities to deliver further homes in the town centre directly and in partnership.
-  Supporting the **regeneration of our Borough towns** creating new opportunities for housing to create vibrant mixed-use centres with a focus on Oakengates Theatre Quarter and Wellington creating vibrant mixed-use centres bringing new housing and vitality into our key centres.
-  Enabling the delivery of **affordable homes in rural areas** through planning exception policies and puts arrangements in place to give priority to existing residents of these areas, or those with a strong local connection.
-  Working with the WMCA to **secure investment to unlock stalled brownfield sites** that blight communities and undermine viability and housing delivery. Working with development partners to ensure new housing site allocations deliver sustainable, connected communities supported by necessary infrastructure.
-  Working with affordable providers through initiatives such as Telford and Wrekin Homes to **retain good quality stock and slow losses**.



## Partnership working

- 🏠 Focus on **safe, clean, well-maintained neighbourhoods** continuing to drive safer, stronger communities programme with a key focus on housing standards.
- 🏠 Continue to support skills development in the Construction Sector through the **Built by you initiative**, a partnership between the Council, Lovell Partnership and Telford College providing training and support to help people gain valuable qualifications and skills for careers in the construction industry.
- 🏠 Provide a **supportive and 'business friendly'** development management approach including providing pre-application advice, support and viability assessment.
- 🏠 Assist developers to **deliver schemes that are stalled and/or with unimplemented planning consents** through access to a range of support and funding.
- 🏠 Early engagement with housing associations to support their development programmes and help ensure that their proposals will **most effectively meet local needs**.
- 🏠 **Co-ordinate and secures external investment** from Homes England and the West Midlands Combined Authority.

The Council will continue to use all its powers and to review opportunities to intervene in the housing market including directly delivering new homes where there is a specific housing need or market failure, and it makes service or financial sense. This will include through both Nuplace and under the Council's Registered Provider status. The latter is anticipated to focus on delivery of more specialist accommodation.





## OBJECTIVE THREE:

**To provide homes to support and empower our most vulnerable people**



Everyone should have the opportunity to access good quality and affordable housing to meet their needs, but for some of our most vulnerable residents this is particularly challenging.

This may be due to health or age, their family situation or because of resulting circumstances including addiction, rent arrears and homelessness. The Council will continue to work with local housing associations, developers and other organisations to provide **quality homes for all, including the most vulnerable**, and to work with individuals and families to support them into accommodation.

In addition to supporting the delivery of suitable homes for all, the Council will continue to strive to ensure that our available housing across the Borough is **prioritised for those most in need**.

Our focus will always remain on **working to prevent homelessness** and in cases where prevention isn't possible, or people are not ready to engage our aim will be to work across agencies to **support and move people into independence as swiftly as possible**.

Whilst the delivery of housing to support and empower our most vulnerable people has accelerated, it is acknowledged that there remain several gaps that future housing delivery should look to meet. The Council will be working closely with partners to ensure that ongoing housing delivery is **targeted** to fill these gaps and ensure the Borough has a **variety of accommodation**.



To support this objective the Council will be making data about the need for specialist and supported accommodation **available online**, in the next 12 months, **for developers and registered providers to use to shape supply**. This will also be shared with Planning Officers to consider in negotiating affordable housing contributions



and with Homes England and funding partners to prioritise their investment. We will support this through an annual review of delivery against forecast demand and will also include, where possible, a geographical representation of existing supply and remaining gaps. Regularly updated and easily accessible data will help to ensure it remains as accurate and up to date as possible and can continue to effectively stimulate the required future housing delivery for our vulnerable people.

To meet this objective the Council will:

# 1. Continue to prevent and relieve homelessness and support the most vulnerable clients to become tenant ready

-  Work closely with clients, landlords and registered providers to **understand any tenancies at risk** and work in partnership to negotiate, mediate and prevent homelessness where possible.
-  Work with those who **have lived experience** to coproduce future services.
-  Continually **reviewing our temporary accommodation usage** and consider purchasing additional units to meet our severe weather emergency protocol requirements to ensure there is sufficient supply to minimise the use of emergency accommodation and B&B.
-  Support clients to **access funds towards housing costs** to prevent and relieve homelessness.
-  Support local homeless charities and third sector organisations by **providing funding to deliver services** for homeless clients and those sleeping rough.
-  Provide a homelessness and housing advice service, with a strong **emphasis on preventing and relieving homelessness**.
-  Continue to **fund and provide housing related support to clients** to enable them to learn life skills to manage a tenancy, understand what it means to be a good tenant and prevent homelessness.
-  Utilise the **local authority funded short term supported accommodation services** to accommodate individuals who are not tenant ready and through the delivery of support progress them to be tenant ready within a maximum of two years.
-  Ensure our Supported Accommodation offers good quality support and accommodation and work with partners to **continually monitor and review effectiveness**.
-  Work closely with supported accommodation providers to support individuals who have progressed to be able to live independently,



Mafeking Road, Hadley

to **access move on accommodation** via our nominations into social housing.

-  Provide **target hardening schemes** to enhance the security of a residence to increase safety, to enable victims of domestic abuse to remain living at home safely.
-  Ensure that **there is a place of safety available** through emergency accommodation for all people experiencing domestic abuse, in accordance with the Council's **Domestic abuse policy** and our status as a **White Ribbon Town**.
-  Work with veterans and care leavers to explore models such as **Housing First, Shared Lives** as additional accommodation options.
-  Continue to operate the multi-agency Rough Sleeper Task Force to support those **most vulnerable** living on the streets to **access accommodation and support**.
-  Provide emergency accommodation and support to those faced with **sleeping rough during severe weather**.

## 2. Help people identify and secure suitable accommodation

-  Work with our local Registered Social Landlords using the joint nominations agreements to ensure continued **local authority priority to refer into affordable and social rented accommodation** for those most in need.
-  Will proactively work with ex-Service personnel and their families to provide the support to find suitable housing, in accordance with the Council's **Armed Forces Community Covenant**, ensuring access to funded housing related support services and giving additional

priority for Veterans via our nominations into social housing.








-  Continue to develop a wider range of initiatives to support care leavers in finding move-on accommodation with approved Landlords, in accordance with the Council's **Care Leaver's Covenant** ensuring access to funded housing related support services and giving additional priority for Veterans via our nominations into social housing.
-  Provide wrap around support to unsure victims of domestic abuse are **supported to find safe and secure move on accommodation**.
-  Co-ordinate access into our **Specialist and supported accommodation** to ensure access for those most in need.
-  Work closely with Adult and Children's Social Care services to **identify those unsuitable housed** and work in partnership on a case by case to identify accommodation solutions.
-  Provide **support to foster carers to overcome accommodation barriers** that may prevent them from continuing to foster or from accepting additional placements.
-  Work with Children's Services to closely monitor those children who will become care leavers and ensure **identification of suitable accommodation** in a timely manner.
-  Ensure support services **help people to access employment and education, increasing affordability and future housing options**.
-  Ensure information on our website is up to date allowing individuals to **understand the variety of accommodation options available**.

### 3. Continue to work with key partners to deliver good quality accommodation that meets the needs of older and vulnerable people

- 🏠 Work with partners to **influence the future supply of affordable and social housing that targets areas of unmet need** including increasing one bed and four+ bed.
- 🏠 Work with partners to influence the future supply of adapted affordable and social housing that can **meet the needs of our ageing population and those with physical disabilities** including those adults and children living with families and requiring larger properties.
- 🏠 Focus further delivery to ensure a good geographical spread across the Borough **supporting people to remain in the local communities**.
- 🏠 **Identifying more affordable models of one bed self-contained accommodation** that can be used to support vulnerable groups such as care leavers and veterans to live independently.
- 🏠 Explore delivery of high-quality HMO models of service that can be used **specifically for our care leavers**.
- 🏠 **Expand our Housing First approach** to care leavers and other groups that may find it more difficult to secure a tenancy.
- 🏠 Support Housing providers and developers to continue delivery of **older people specific accommodation** across the Borough with a focus on delivery of retirement and extra care for owner occupiers and bespoke models of extra care that can support those older people with dementia to remain living in their own accommodation, including with loved ones where desired.
- 🏠 **Stimulate the market to continue to deliver a range of accommodation offers for older people** including for sale, shared ownership, market and affordable/social rent models.





-  Continue to promote the delivery of supported accommodation to **meet the identified needs of our vulnerable groups** such as those with mental health needs and learning disability and Autism.
-  Explore the expansion of extra care and sheltered housing models that currently focus on over 55's to an **all-age model to offer a long term supported accommodation model for other vulnerable groups**.
-  Use the Supported Housing (Regulatory Oversight) Act 2023 to manage the local market and increase the oversight of **quality and quantity of supported accommodation provision**.
-  **Review and streamline our supporting independent living offer** including Disabled Facilities Grants and will work to make this as efficient and accessible as possible.
-  Ensure we have **one point of contact for housing information and advice including good quality information on our website and links to our Independent Living Centre**. Supporting people to understand and access available accommodation options and to adapt and make homes more accessible to promote independent living.
-  **Support housing partners to access available funding** for ongoing housing delivery that meets local need.
-  **Provide emergency accommodation** to those faced with rough sleeping, during severe weather conditions and to provide support to access long term accommodation offers.





## CASE STUDY

### MS C

Ms C moved into Telford & Wrekin Council's women's refuge due to having a baby and being unable to stay with the baby's father due to domestic abuse. There was historical domestic abuse between the baby's father and his ex partners. Social services raised concerns due to the history of the father and the vulnerability of Ms C and her new baby.

Ms C came into refuge after leaving the hospital with baby. She was very nervous about being a first time Mum and having no home. She said her experience was 'very interesting from the other side' as she previously worked at a different refuge on security. She said 'it was very relaxed and it was nice to be in a house where she could ask for help if needed'.

Whilst in the refuge Ms C received support around domestic abuse. She was supported in accessing Claire's law and is still receiving support around the outcome of the findings. She was supported in finding a new home for herself and her new born baby, and received help with tenancy start up. Ms C was supported in applying for and receiving further support from welfare crisis who provided her with essential items for her to be able to start up her new home. Ms C was helped with setting up her bills and informing the local council that she had moved.

Ms C said 'My experience was positive. My family has now settled down and life is easier'. She said she knows how to access support in the future if it is needed.



Queen Street, Wellington

# Ensuring fairness

This strategy is about how we can work to deliver housing for all. In setting out our proposals we have paid due regard to the **Public Sector Equality Duty**, ensuring that equality considerations have been embedded throughout the process. We have actively considered how our decisions and actions will affect people with different protected characteristics, and have sought to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity, and foster good relations within the communities we serve, particularly in relation to access to safe, affordable, and suitable housing in line with our statutory responsibilities under **s149 Equality Act 2010**.

## Consultation

This is a draft strategy developed with the involvement of a range of stakeholders.



We recognise its wide-ranging impact and are keen to gain further views on the proposals and to ensure that the actions we set out reflect the challenges our residents face and collective action.

The **public consultation** will commence on the **21 July 2025 for six weeks**.

We welcome input from everyone in the Borough. In order to provide your feedback please visit our website to complete our survey:

**[www.telford.gov.uk/housingstrategy](http://www.telford.gov.uk/housingstrategy)**



Telford & Wrekin  
Co-operative Council

Protect, care and invest  
to create a better borough

## Borough of Telford and Wrekin

### Cabinet

17 July 2025

### 2025/26 Financial Monitoring Report

---

<b>Cabinet Member:</b>	Cllr Zona Hannington - Cabinet Member: Finance, Governance and Customer Services
<b>Lead Director:</b>	Michelle Brockway - Director: Finance, People and IDT
<b>Service Area:</b>	Finance, People and IDT
<b>Report Author:</b>	Pauline Harris – Finance Manager
<b>Officer Contact Details:</b>	<b>Tel:</b> 01952 383701 <b>Email:</b> pauline.harris@telford.gov.uk
<b>Wards Affected:</b>	All Wards
<b>Key Decision:</b>	Key Decision
<b>Forward Plan:</b>	21 May 2025
<b>Report considered by:</b>	SMT – 17 June 2025 Business Briefing – 26 June 2025 Cabinet – 17 July 2025 Full Council – 17 July 2025

---

#### 1.0 Recommendations for Decision/Noting

It is recommended that Cabinet:

- 1.1 Notes the 2025/26 revenue budget position, which shows that the Council is projecting to be within budget at year end, without having to use the Budget Strategy or General Fund reserves;
- 1.2 Notes the position in relation to capital spend; and recommends that Full Council approve the changes to the Capital programme detailed in Appendix C and all associated changes to the Medium Term Financial Strategy, including Treasury and Prudential Indicators

1.3 Notes the collection rates for NNDR, council tax and sales ledger.

It is recommended that Council:

1.4 Notes the 2025/26 revenue budget position, which shows that the Council is projecting to be within budget at year end, without having to use the Budget Strategy or General Fund reserves;

1.5 Notes the position in relation to capital spend and approves the changes to the Capital programme detailed in Appendix C and all associated changes to the Medium Term Financial Strategy, including Treasury and Prudential Indicators.

1.6 Notes the collection rates for NNDR, council tax and sales ledger.

## **2.0 Purpose of Report**

2.1 To provide Cabinet with the latest financial monitoring position for the year relating to: the revenue budget, capital programme and income collection.

## **3.0 Background**

3.1 The Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) 2025/26 to 2028/29 was approved at Full Council on 27 February 2025, which included the 2025/26 revenue budget and medium term capital programme. Since the MTFS was approved, the economic climate has continued to be challenging with cost and demand pressures being experienced, particularly in relation to the provision of Adult Social Care.

3.2 Good financial management is an essential element of good governance and long-term service planning which are critical to ensuring that local service provision is sustainable and the use of resources is maximised in order to meet the needs of our residents.

3.3 Financial management is the responsibility of budget holders and is supported by Finance staff using a risk-based approach: more focus is given to higher risk areas (high value/more volatile) whilst less frequent financial monitoring is undertaken on budgets deemed to be medium to lower risk. Financial monitoring provides Cabinet and Senior Management Team with a focussed view on the Council's financial performance, to inform and support decision making and to ensure financial sustainability.

3.4 This Financial Monitoring Report for 2025/26 provides the latest projections in relation to the projected outturn position i.e. how projected net revenue spend compares to the budget set for the year - progress against the approved 2025/26 capital programme - the key issues to be highlighted; together with a summary of collection information in relation to Council Tax, Business Rates and Sales Ledger income.

3.5 The Government has committed to reforming the Local Government Finance System with the intention that 2026/27 will be the first year of a new funding regime for Local Authorities. The new system will include an updated assessment of relative needs and resources and a reset of the Business Rates Retention Scheme.



While there will be some transitional measures to smooth the impact of changes, the detailed implications for individual authorities are unlikely to be known until December 2025. As part of the process, a consultation was launched in June: The Fair Funding Review, which is seeking views on determining new funding allocations for local authorities and outlines proposals to update the overall funding system. This will feed into a Policy Statement to be published in the Autumn. This context makes financial planning extremely challenging. The funding outlook for the medium term therefore remains very uncertain and will clearly continue to be challenging, particularly given the Council has already had to deliver £181.7m ongoing budget savings since 2009/10.

- 3.6 There is a statutory duty for local authorities to set a balanced and robust budget each financial year and to take timely action to address financial pressures. In order to support unforeseen pressures the approved budget for 2025/26 includes contingencies of £7.2m (£3.95m General contingency and £3.25m specific contingencies including £2m for Adult Social Care). This supports the Council's aim to continue to deliver quality services whilst ensuring a balanced budget.

#### **4.0 Summary of main proposals**

- 4.1.1 Nationally, Councils continue to face extreme challenges in 2025/26 with unprecedented pressures driven by high costs and high demand for services – particularly Adult Social Care, Children's Safeguarding and School Travel Assistance.
- 4.1.2 On 11 June 2025 the Chancellor announced the Spending Review which set out budgets for all government departments for the period 2026/27 to 2028/29, and up to 2029/30 for capital investments.

The Local Government settlement showed an additional £3.3 billion grant funding in real terms for local authorities in 2028/29 compared with 2023/24, resulting in an average overall real terms increase in local authority core spending power between 2023/24 and 2028/29 of 3.1% per year.

The key announcements relating to local government at a national level include, additional housing investment, early intervention funding for the prevention of homelessness, additional funding for Adult Social Care (via increases to NHS budgets), funding to transform Children's Social Care, a SEND reform (with a White Paper due in the Autumn) and consolidation of the Household Support Fund into a new Crisis and Resilience Fund for households..

The Spending Review also reaffirmed the Government's commitment to multi-year allocations and moving to a more up-to-date assessment of each council's needs and resources as part of the 2026/27 Local Government Finance Settlement.

Overall, the Spending Review provides some additional investment for local government which is welcome however financial pressures will continue in 2025/26 and detailed information for individual council is unlikely to be fully available until the Local Government Finance Settlement is announced in December 2025, and further detail relating to grant funding is available, to determine the implications for Telford & Wrekin Council.

- 4.1.3 Whilst inflation is expected to reduce in the medium term, current indicators show that the economy will be slower to recover than was expected when the Council's budget was set. In May 2025, CPI was 3.4% which is above the Bank of England's 2% target. The Bank of England reduced base rate from 4.5% in April to 4.25% in May but is still higher than was anticipated when the Council's budget was set.
- 4.1.4 Given these factors, monitoring for 2025/26 indicates a number of variations from the approved budget, notably relating to Adult Social Care where in order to meet the needs of the most vulnerable residents, additional investment is required.
- 4.1.5 Strong financial management and prudent financial planning mean that the Council has budgeted contingencies in place, £3.95m General Contingency and £3.25m specific contingencies including £2m for Adult Social Care, to meet the financial pressures currently being projected. This will ensure that the overall position will be within the budget set at year end.
- 4.1.6 The Council has an excellent track record of strong financial management and Cabinet Members and budget holders will continue their work to manage budgets as effectively as possible during the year.
- 4.1.7 Projections will continue to be refined as the year progresses. Whilst extremely challenging, the Council's aim is to continue to deliver quality services to the residents of the borough and protect critical front-line services.
- 4.1.8 A summary of the current projection for the year end position is:-

	£m
Net Revenue Budget	167.640
Projected Net Revenue Outturn	172.503
Projected Pressures	+4.863
Use of One off Budgeted Contingency (earmarked for Social Care Pressures)	-2.000
Use of One off Budgeted Contingency (earmarked for general pressures)	-0.750
Use of General Budget Contingency	-2.113
<b>Projected Year End Variance i.e. net spend will be within budget</b>	<b>0.000</b>

- 4.1.9 There are a number of variations from the approved budget, detailed in Section 5. The key variance is Adult Social Care (ASC), with £5.6m additional investment currently being required relating to the cost of providing care packages across all client groups. This includes the impact of market price increases, more complex needs, higher demand and longer periods of care being required; all of which are being analysed by the Service with the aim of refining projections and managing spend. This is after additional net investment of £7.7m into ASC in 2025/26 as part of the Medium Term Financial Strategy.

## 4.2 Capital

The capital programme totals £138.6m for 2025/26 which includes all approvals since the budget was set. Schemes are in progress and at the time of compiling this report spend is projected to be under budget which indicates that there is likely to be re-phasing into 2026/27 at year end. It is, however early in the year and the programme will continue to be monitored and updates brought in future reports.

## 4.3 Corporate Income Collection

Income collection rates are currently behind the targets set, however it is early in the year and work continues to actively pursue all income due. Ultimately, all debt will be pursued and will continue to be collected after the end of the financial year with all appropriate recovery avenues being pursued.

## 5.0 Additional Information

5.1 The overall 2025/26 monitoring position against the budget is summarised in the table below:

Service Area	Budget	Total Current Variation
	£m	£m
Finance, People & IDT	18.836	0.000
Policy & Governance	1.282	0.045
Adult Social Care	77.235	5.569
Housing, Commercial & Customer Services	6.253	0.000
Children's Safeguarding & Family Support	49.565	(0.004)
Education & Skills	14.308	0.483
Health & Wellbeing	0.828	0.000
Neighbourhood & Enforcement Services	31.612	0.001
Prosperity & Investment	(6.318)	0.000
Council Wide	(25.960)	(1.231)
<b>Total Pressures</b>	<b>167.641</b>	<b>+4.863</b>
<b>Use of Budgeted Contingencies</b>		<b>-4.863</b>
<b>Projected Year End Position - Within Budget</b>		<b>0.000</b>

5.2.1 Projected variances over £0.250m are highlighted below, all other variances over £50k are detailed in Appendix B.

Service Area	Variance £m
<b><u>Adult Social Care</u></b>	
<b>Longer Term Care Purchasing</b> –expenditure relating to block and spot contracts continues to be under significant pressure. The trajectory of growth is being monitored closely. The service continues to work on delivering care which maximises prevention and independence where possible.	+5.370
<b>Income</b> – anticipated to be higher than income targets	-0.433
<b>My Options – in house purchasing</b> - the impact of increased demand and increased charges.	+0.950
<b>Short-term Reablement Care &amp; Prevention</b> Work continues with the ICB to reduce the pressure on the Better Care Fund budget, this will be closely monitored through the year	
<b><u>Children’s Safeguarding &amp; Family Support</u></b>	
<b>Children in Care, Leaving Care Team &amp; Speciality Services, Family Solutions:</b>	
<b>CIC placements, Post 18 Staying Put &amp; Leaving Care Support</b> – lower than budgeted costs which includes the full year impact of savings from the work with Impower and ongoing work on prevention, early intervention and review of placement costs.	-0.257
<b>Homelessness</b> – relates to homelessness accommodation costs	+0.353
<b><u>Education &amp; Skills</u></b>	
Employee costs – additional costs due to inflationary pressures relating to historic teacher pension costs	+0.268
<b><u>Council Wide</u></b> - various underspends, including higher than budgeted Business Rates Retention Section 31 grant and release of provision for savings which do not benefit general fund.	-0.989



### 5.2.2 Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG)

Dedicated Schools Grant sits within Education & Skills and is monitored separately to the Council's General Fund position shown in Section 5.1. Excluding funds passed to academies and colleges, Dedicated Schools Grant totals £130m in 2025/26. DSG deficits are currently required to be held in a separate reserve in local authorities' accounts.

Telford & Wrekin's DSG had a deficit of £4.66m at the end of 2024/25 which has carried forward into 2025/26. This was made up of £1.82m deficit carried forward from 2023/24 plus the 2024/25 in year overspend of £2.84m.

The deficit arises because of high needs budget pressures. This is a national issue, illustrated by most upper tier Councils having a DSG deficit by the end of 2023/24 which totals £2.148bn nationally. In order to alleviate pressure on the 2025/26 high needs budgets, Telford & Wrekin's schools forum again agreed to transfer 0.5% of the schools block to high needs, amounting to £0.9m. This agreement illustrates the positive relationships with schools and other providers which are invaluable in assisting the Council to maintain budgetary control of DSG, whilst ensuring that we meet our responsibilities to young people.

The increase in the Government's 2025/26 high needs funding allocation to Councils, including Telford & Wrekin, is higher than in 2024/25, which will assist in meeting cost pressures. The Council has established a cost improvement plan to address high needs budget pressures and continues to work hard to tackle the high needs pressures in partnership with the Forum, schools and other providers of education. However, with continuing growth in demand for high needs support, the budget situation will remain challenging in 2025/26.

The way in which local authorities account for DSG deficits was altered in 2020. DSG deficits are now required to be held in a separate reserve in local authorities' accounts and is disregarded from the measure of local authority reserves. These regulations currently apply up to 31 March 2026. The Government is proposing to extend this to March 2028 and will work with local authorities to manage DSG deficits. Further detail is anticipated as part of the provisional Local Government Finance Settlement later in the year.

The position is being closely monitored and updates will be included in future reports when more information is known.

### 5.3 CONTINGENCIES, RESERVES & BALANCES

- 5.3.1 The 2025/26 budget includes a general revenue contingency of £3.950m which is set aside to meet any unforeseen expenditure or income shortfalls during the year and a one-off contingency of £3.250m set aside specifically for Social Care pressures, PIP and other pressures.

The current projected position would require use of all of the one-off contingency earmarked for Social Care and would leave a balance of £1.837m in the general contingency and £0.5m in the other contingency for the remainder of the year (see table in 4.1.8).

5.3.2 There is also a contingency amount held centrally for contractual and pay inflation. Any residual balance, when the pay award and inflation requirements are known, will be applied to support the overall position.

5.3.3 The Budget Strategy Reserve remains at £21.7m.

## 5.4 CAPITAL

### 5.4.1 2025/26 Capital Programme

The 2025/26 capital programme totals £138.6m. The financial position is shown in the table below and shows projected spend at £135.7m which indicates that there will be some re-phasing into 2026/27 required at year end. It is early in the year and the programme will continue to be monitored and updates brought in future reports.

Service Area	Approved Budget	Spend	% Spend	Year End
	£m	£m		£m
Prosperity & Investment	72.96	4.79	6.57%	71.87
Policy & Governance	0.07	0.00	0.00%	0.07
Education & Skills	21.65	1.85	8.57%	21.65
Adult Social Care	0.09	0.00	0.00%	0.02
Neighbourhood & Enforcement Services	21.13	0.87	4.10%	21.13
Hsg, Commercial & Customer Services	14.97	0.95	6.35%	13.58
Finance, People & IDT	5.89	0.46	7.87%	5.91
Corporate Items	1.81	0.00	0.00%	1.51
<b>Total</b>	<b>138.57</b>	<b>8.92</b>	<b>6.4%</b>	<b>135.74</b>

5.4.2 The 2025/26 capital programme is underpinned by capital receipts as part of its funding. Capital receipts included in the medium term budget strategy are kept under continual review and any changes will be reflected in future budget projections but are currently projected to be on target.

5.4.3 Changes to the capital programme are shown in Appendix C for approval.

## 6.0 CORPORATE INCOME MONITORING

6.1 The Council's budget includes significant income streams which are regularly monitored to ensure they are on track to achieve targets that have been set and so that remedial action can be taken at a very early stage. The three main areas are Council Tax, NNDR (business rates) and Sales Ledger. Current monitoring information relating to these is provided below. The Council pursues outstanding debt vigorously, until all possible recovery avenues have been exhausted, but also prudently provides for bad debts in its accounts.

- 6.2 In summary, collection is outside the targets, however it is early in the year and work continues to actively pursue all income due.

INCOME COLLECTION – MAY 2025			
	Actual	Target	Performance
Council Tax Collection	18.82%	19.09%	0.27% behind target
NNDR Collection	23.99%	24.25%	0.26% behind target
Sales Ledger Outstanding Debt	9.34%	6.00%	3.34% behind target

### 6.3 Council Tax (£127.3m)

This measure represents the percentage of the current year liability for council tax which the authority should have received during the year, as a percentage of annual collectable debit. The measure does not take account of debt that continues to be pursued and collected after the end of the financial year in which it became due. The final collection figure for all financial years exceeds 99%.

Year End performance 2024/25	97.1%
Year End Target for 2025/26	97.3%

Performance is cumulative during the year and expressed against the complete year's debit.

Month End Target	Month End Actual	Last year Actual
19.09%	18.82%	18.97%

Collection rates are slightly behind target. There are more accounts paying by 12 monthly instalments than this time last year which should have a positive impact on collection rates by year end.

### 6.4 NNDR-Business Rates (£86.8m)

This measure represents the percentage of business rates for 2025/26 that should have been collected during the year. This target, as for council tax, ignores our continuing collection of earlier years' liabilities.

The measure does not take into account the debt that continues to be pursued and collected after the end of the financial year in which it became due. As a general rule the final collection figure for any financial year exceeds 99%.

Year End performance 2024/25	98.1%
Year End Target for 2025/26	98.1%

Month End Target	Month End Actual	Last year Actual
24.25%	23.99%	24.25%

Collection rates are slightly behind the monthly target and performance last year, although this does not cause concern so early in the financial year.

## 6.5 Sales Ledger (£96.9m)

This includes general debt and Social Care debt. Debt below 2 months is classified as a normal credit period.

The target percent is set relating cumulative debt outstanding from all years to the current annual debit. The targets and performance of income collection for 2025/26 are as follows:

	Annual Target %	May 2025	
		£m	%
Total	6.00	9.051	9.34

Sales ledger performance is outside of target, although there are some larger organisational debts which we are working with Finance colleagues to liaise with the debtor to recover.

## 7.0 Alternative Options

- 7.1 Budget holders will investigate a number of options to seek to deliver required service outcomes from within budgeted resources. Options to deliver savings and additional income have been explored.

## 8.0 Key Risks

- 8.1 Budget holders actively manage their budgets and the many financial risks and challenges that council services face, examples include the risk of a particularly harsh winter which would impact adversely on the winter gritting and adult social care budgets, the increasing dependency on income from a wide range of activities and the risk of interest rate movements and further inflationary pressures, the risk of changes in legislative or accounting requirements impacting on budgets etc. The Council has comprehensive risk management arrangements in place, which are reviewed and updated by the Senior Management Team.

## 9.0 Council Priorities

- 9.1 Delivery of all Council priorities depends on the effective use of available resources. Regular financial monitoring in the financial management reports helps to highlight variations from plan so that prompt action can be taken to effectively manage the Council's budget.

## 10.0 Financial Implications

- 10.1 The financial impacts are detailed throughout the report.

## 11.0 Legal and HR Implications

- 11.1 The S151 Officer has a statutory duty to monitor income and expenditure and ensure that the Council takes action if overall net overspends /shortfalls emerge. There is also a legal requirement to ensure that the statutory service provision meets demands.



- 11.2 Legal services will provide ongoing advice in relation to specific proposals relating to the making of savings, including on any requirement to undertake consultation as such proposals are brought forward for consideration, the impact of any proposed savings on the delivery of statutory services and any other legal matter arising.

## **12.0 Ward Implications**

- 12.1 There are no impacts on specific wards

## **13.0 Health, Social and Economic Implications**

- 13.1 There are no Health, Social and Economic Implications directly arising from this report.

## **14.0 Equality and Diversity Implications**

- 14.1 There are no Equality & Diversity implications directly arising from this report. Proportionate impact assessments are carried out and a range of consultation mechanisms are used where appropriate.

## **15.0 Climate Change and Environmental Implications**

- 15.1 There are no Climate Change and Environmental Implications directly arising from this report.

## **16.0 Background Papers**

- 1 Medium Term Financial Strategy 2025/26 to 2028/29 Council 27/02/2025

## **17.0 Appendices**

Appendix A	Summary of 2025/26 Projected Variations
Appendix B	2025/26 Revenue Variations over £50,000
Appendix C	Capital Approvals

## **18.0 Report Sign Off**

<b>Signed off by</b>	<b>Date sent</b>	<b>Date signed off</b>	<b>Initials</b>
Director	11/06/2025	20/06/2025	MLB
Finance	10/06/2025	20/06/2025	ER
Legal	11/06/2025	19/06/2025	ACL

This page is intentionally left blank

APPENDIX A

**2025/26 Revenue Budget Variations**

Service Area	Budget	Total Current Variation
	£	£
Finance, People & IDT	18,835,600	0
Policy & Governance	1,281,868	45,000
Adult Social Care	77,234,567	5,569,397
Housing, Commercial & Customer Services	6,252,783	0
Children's Safeguarding & Family Support	49,564,539	(4,753)
Education & Skills	14,308,065	483,367
Health & Wellbeing	827,948	0
Neighbourhood & Enforcement Services	31,611,541	972
Prosperity & Investment	(6,317,526)	0
Council Wide	(25,959,705)	(1,231,000)
<b>Total</b>	<b>167,639,680</b>	<b>4,862,983</b>
	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>

2025/26 Revenue Budget Variations				
Description		Budget	Total Variation	Comments
		£	£	
Finance, People & IDT				
Finance, People & IDT	Variations under £50K	18,835,600	0	
Total Finance, People & IDT		18,835,600	0	
Policy & Governance				
	Variations under £50k	1,281,868	45,000	
Total Policy & Governance		1,281,868	45,000	
Adult Social Care				
All long term care purchasing-Spot & block for all ages and short-term intermediate care	Spot & block purchasing	90,974,325	5,370,121	The long term care projection continues to be under significant pressure. The trajectory of growth is being monitored closely. The management team continue to focus on delivering care which maximises prevention and independence wherever possible.
Short term reablement care & Prevention		7,132,817	0	
Health funding contributions-all ages and care types	Joint Funding	(7,486,218)	0	The team are continuing to focus on maximising joint funding contributions, including historical claims
Income	Client Contributions	(14,195,690)	(433,000)	
Prevention & independence - Older People & Disability	Staffing & Operational expenditure	3,425,444	(93,890)	Mainly from vacancies
My Options in house purchasing	In House purchasing (from My Options)	8,086,352	949,882	Increase in costs linked to increasing demand and increase in charges
Service Improvement & efficiency	Staffing & Operational expenditure	1,699,487	(65,264)	
	Variations under £50k	(12,401,950)	(158,452)	
Total Adult Social Care		77,234,567	5,569,397	
Housing, Commercial & Customer Services				
Housing Strategy & Regeneration	Income	(424,000)	155,000	Income target shortfall; will be delivered when Housing Schemes become operational; Red Lion development due in Q3 of 2025/26. There is a benefit in relation to lower borrowing costs which is included in the Treasury benefit reported under Finance.
	Contribution from Reserves	-	(155,000)	
	Variations under £50k	6,676,783	0	One off use of reserves to mitigate above pressures.
Total Housing, Commercial & Customer Services		6,252,783	0	



2025/26 Revenue Budget Variations				
Description		Budget	Total Variation	Comments
		£	£	
Children's Safeguarding & Family Support				
Children in Care, Leaving Care Team & Speciality Services, Family Solutions	CIC Placements, Post 18 Staying Put & Leaving Care Support	29,911,232	(257,445)	Net (of health funding) reduction in placements budget from 2024/25 of £1.07m. Children in care numbers remain stable. Assumed costs include all known and agreed inflationary increases for 2025/26. Projected placement costs are £1.15m or 4.4% lower than 2024/25 spend as we see full year impact of savings from the work with Impower and ongoing work on prevention, early intervention and review of placement costs.
	Health funding	(6,437,780)	107,154	Income currently projected in line with health income received in 24/25 by way of % of placements costs. Projected to receive £187k less than in 24/25 . Ongoing risk of funding being cut by ICB.
	Children with Disabilities	2,086,020	(56,941)	The realigned budget is now more realistic for this area, but there continues to be a high demand for support for children with disabilities.
	Operational expenditure	1,360,285	39,091	Non placement related expenditure across Children in Care, Leaving Care Team & Speciality Services, Family Solutions
Child Protection & Family Support, Parenting Assessment & Contact Teams	Income	(1,169,550)	(127,032)	Difference between budgeted grant income and actual grant received
	Operational expenditure	678,270	(444)	
Family Safeguarding Service Wide	Operational expenditure	2,102,620	(63,653)	Includes vacancy factor saving of £299,000 and historic pressure of out of hours team, offset by savings from vacancies across service.
	Staffing expenditure	20,006,882	27,465	
Independent Review	Homelessness	130,000	352,944	Majority of overspend relates to accommodation (housing) costs and homelessness
	Income	0	(200,000)	Includes one of use of £200k reserve to offset pressure above
	Staffing expenditure	731,420	35,184	Use of one agency staff to cover sickness
	Operational expenditure	122,741	37,725	Overspends in interpreter fees
Variations under £50k		42,399	101,199	
Total Children's Safeguarding & Family Support		49,564,539	(4,753)	
Education & Skills				
Specialist Services		885,526	100,000	Pressure arises from the Educational Psychology service. Increased internal staffing will mitigate the pressure arising from use of external agency staff, but will not be in place until the Autumn and the volume of statutory assessment work means that income targets for traded services to schools are unlikely to be achieved
Employee Costs		1,139,024	268,349	This policy ceased some years ago however, the local authority remains responsible for any historic pension costs and additional costs are due to inflationary pressures.
Insurance		25,806	89,340	The conversion of maintained schools to academies has led to a reduction in insurance contributions from schools.
Variations Under £50,000		12,257,709	25,678	
Total Education & Skills		14,308,065	483,367	

2025/26 Revenue Budget Variations				
Description		Budget	Total Variation	Comments
		£	£	
Health & Wellbeing				
Health & Wellbeing	Variations under £50K	827,948	0	
Total Health & Wellbeing		827,948	0	
Neighbourhood & Enforcement Services				
Enforcement	Income - Car Parking	(56,220)	160,000	Shortfall against budgeted income from parking
	Variations under £50k	709,033	(42,122)	
Neighbourhood & Environmental Services	Variations under £50k	5,770,975	9,044	
Highways, Engineering & Project Delivery	Supplies & Services - Street Lighting	2,111,130	70,437	Increased Maintenance Costs to be funded by special fund
	Income - Use of Reserves	0	(70,437)	Use of Special Fund to mitigate overspend
	Variations under £50k	9,814,746	(30,000)	
Strategic Transport & Highway Network Management	Supplies & Services - Concessionary Travel	1,653,680	(57,861)	Reduction in operating costs
	Variations under £50k	(3,638)	(100,000)	Projected overachievement against budgeted NRSWA (New Roads & Streetworks Act) income
Safer & Stronger Communities	Variations under £50k	(2,207,585)	16,948	
Waste & Neighbourhood Services	Waste Treatment	13,829,430	45,046	Initial Waste pressure due to projected annual tonnage increases in disposal costs
	Variations under £50k	(10,010)	(83)	
Total Neighbourhood & Enforcement Services		31,611,541	972	
Prosperity & Investment				
	Variations under £50k	(6,317,526)	-	
Total Prosperity & Investment		(6,317,526)	0	

2025/26 Revenue Budget Variations				
Description		Budget	Total Variation	Comments
		£	£	
Corporate				
Purchase Rebates		(430,000)	(242,000)	Additional WMS Rebate
Council Wide			(989,000)	Various council wide underspends, including additional BRR Section 31 grant and provision for savings not benefitting general fund
Council Wide	Variations under £50K	(25,529,705)	0	
Total Corporate		(25,959,705)	(1,231,000)	
Total		167,639,680	4,862,983	

# APPENDIX C

## Capital Approvals - by Service Area

### Slippage

Scheme	Service Area	Funding Source	25/26 £	26/27 £	27/28 £	28/29 £
Climate Change	Housing Commercial & Customer Services	Prudential	(507,989.58)	507,989.58		
Affordable Housing Programme	Housing Commercial & Customer Services	Prudential	(2,346,386.00)	2,346,386.00		
All Other School Schemes	Education & Skills	Grant	(14,328,019.36)	14,328,019.36		
All Other School Schemes	Education & Skills	Capital Receipts	(1,200,000.00)	1,200,000.00		
Pride in Your High Street	Prosperity & Investment	Prudential	(644,258.08)	644,258.08		
Housing Company - Housing	Prosperity & Investment	Prudential	(3,323,904.00)	(966,031.00)	(8,710,065.00)	13,000,000.00
Levelling Up Fund	Prosperity & Investment	Grant	(6,441,054.37)	6,441,054.37		
Playing Pitch Investment	Prosperity & Investment	Capital Receipt	(500,000.00)	500,000.00		
Stronger Communities	Prosperity & Investment	Prudential	(1,000,000.00)	1,000,000.00		
Towns Fund - Wellington	Prosperity & Investment	Prudential	(38,000.00)	38,000.00		
Towns Fund - Oakengates	Prosperity & Investment	Prudential	(189,855.00)	189,855.00		
Towns Fund	Prosperity & Investment	External	(98,689.19)	98,689.19		
Towns Fund	Prosperity & Investment	Prudential	(1,331,759.79)	1,331,759.79		
HE liability Sites	Prosperity & Investment	Prudential	(700,000.00)	700,000.00		
HE liability Sites	Prosperity & Investment	External	(600,000.00)	600,000.00		
Regeneration Funding	Prosperity & Investment	Prudential	5,284.69	(5,284.69)		
Regeneration Funding	Prosperity & Investment	Grant	(408,560.00)	408,560.00		
Property Investment Programme	Prosperity & Investment	Prudential	(2,595,925.00)	2,595,925.00		
Property Investment Programme	Prosperity & Investment	Capital Receipts	(1,151,805.00)	1,151,805.00		
Property Investment Programme	Prosperity & Investment	External	(1,197,424.00)	1,197,424.00		
Capital investment Fund	Corporate Items	Prudential	(65,367.00)	65,367.00		
Managing the Funding of the Capital Programme	Corporate Items	Capital Receipts	2,851,805.00	(6,851,805.00)		4,000,000.00
Managing the Funding of the Capital Programme	Corporate Items	Prudential	(2,851,805.00)	6,851,805.00		(4,000,000.00)
Efficiency Schemes Capitalisation	Corporate Items	Capital Receipts		(2,000,000.00)		2,000,000.00
Legal Fees	Policy And Governance	Prudential	(90,000.00)	90,000.00		
ICT Investment Programme	Finance, People & IDT	Prudential	1,770,000.00	(1,421,000.00)	(349,000.00)	
			<b>(36,983,711.68)</b>	<b>31,042,776.68</b>	<b>(9,059,065.00)</b>	<b>15,000,000.00</b>

### New Allocation

Scheme	Service Area	Funding Source	25/26 £	26/27 £	27/28 £	28/29 £
Affordable Housing Programme	Housing Commercial & Customer Services	Grant	25,000.00			
Housing	Housing, Employment & Infrastructure	Grant	2,862,309.00			
Violence Against Women & Girls	Neighbourhood & Enforcement Services	Revenue	(181,810.93)			
Social Care Capital Grant	Adult Social Care	Grant	(5,497.52)			
ICT Investment Programme	Finance, People and IDT	Capital Receipts		950,000.00		
			<b>2,700,000.55</b>	<b>950,000.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>





**Telford & Wrekin**  
Co-operative Council

**Protect, care and invest**  
to create a better borough

## Borough of Telford and Wrekin

### Cabinet

**17 July 2025**

### Customer Feedback Reports for 2024-25

---

<b>Cabinet Member:</b>	Cllr Zona Hannington –Cabinet Member for Finance, Governance & Customer Services
<b>Lead Director:</b>	Katherine Kynaston – Director: Housing, Commercial and Customer Services
<b>Service Area:</b>	Customer Relationships and Welfare Services
<b>Report Author:</b>	Lee Higgins - Service Delivery Manager: Customer Relationships and Welfare Services
<b>Officer Contact:</b>	Rebecca Zacharek - Customer Relationship Manager
<b>Details:</b>	<b>Tel:</b> 01952 383890 <b>Email:</b> rebecca.zacharek@telford.gov.uk
<b>Wards Affected:</b>	All Wards
<b>Key Decision:</b>	Not Key Decision
<b>Forward Plan:</b>	Not Applicable
<b>Report considered by:</b>	SMT - 17 June 2025 Business Briefing - 26 June 2025 Cabinet - 17 July 2025

---

#### 1.0 Recommendations for decision/noting:

It is recommended that Cabinet:

- 1.1 Note that Telford & Wrekin Council has been awarded ServiceMark accreditation by The Institute of Customer Services. The first Council to achieve a ServiceMark, this recognises excellence in customer service standards across the public and private sector.

## Customer Feedback Reports for 2023-24

- 1.2 Review the Customer Feedback Reports for 2024-25 in respect of Adult Statutory Complaints, Children's Statutory Complaints and Corporate Customer Feedback, and the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman Review Letter 2025.
- 1.3 Note the improvement in complaint handling performance and the increase in positive feedback.

## **2 Purpose of Report**

- 2.1 The Council through its existing Customer Strategy is committed to work collaboratively with our customers to develop quality services that are accessible to all.
- 2.2 The purpose of this report is to update Cabinet on the Council's customer feedback received between 1 April 2024 and 31 March 2025, to provide assurance that the Council is actively listening and responding to the views of our customers, and that services are learning from complaints and wider customer feedback to continuously improve.
- 2.3 The last year has seen an ongoing increase in the number of compliments received from customers, with complaints representing a very small proportion – less than 1% - of the many thousands of interactions with customers each year. As an early adopter and pilot authority for the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman's new complaint handling code our response times have surpassed the forthcoming targets. We continue to offer multi-channel access, which is recognised by our customers.

## **3 Background**

- 3.1 The Council has a well-established process for customers to tell us when things have gone well, they have received an excellent service, or we have exceeded their expectations and if they need to raise any concerns regarding the service they have received.
- 3.2 Our new Customer Strategy, which will be presented to Cabinet in September 2025, will reiterate our commitment to service excellence and will further embed the existing 'Everything Speaks' approach, paying attention to detail and reporting any issues they see with our services. As part of our established Customer Insight Programme, we have recruited Mystery Customers who help us to review our services from the customers' perspective, providing valuable feedback that allows our services to continually improve.
- 3.3 Following a rigorous external assessment the Council recently became the first Local Authority to receive a ServiceMark accreditation from the Institute of Customer Service (ICS). ServiceMark is a national standard, independently recognising an organisations commitment to customer service and to upholding high standards as part of a long-term embedded strategy.

- 3.4 Through the Institute of Customer Services (ICS), we are able to benchmark our services against public and private sector organisations across the UK. In September 2024 we completed our second customer benchmarking survey. The feedback from this and the accompanying workforce survey was excellent allowing the Council to be considered for a ServiceMark accreditation by the Institute.

Key results from the benchmarking survey include

- Our UK Customer Satisfaction Index Score improved from 72.1 achieved in 2022 to 74.0. Demonstrating a clear improvement in our customers experiences. Our score is more comparable to the scoring across all sector organisations in the UK, such as Amazon and John Lewis (76.1) than other public services (71.0)
- Our Net Promoter score also improved from 18.0 in 2022 to 19.4, demonstrating that an increasing number of our customers are likely to promote our organisation to others
- A Customer Effort Score of 4.3, this score reflects the effort our customer must make to access our services (the lower the score the better). This is an excellent score comparing to the average for other local councils which was 5.8 and exceeding the average for Public Services at 5.1 and the average for all organisations across the UK which is 4.5. This is a clear indicator that improvements to our online offer and service access is being received positively by residents.

- 3.5 Following the assessment the Council became the first Council to be awarded the ICS ServiceMark reflecting our performance and continued ambition to listen to our customers and to drive further improvement. The assessor confirmed that *'Telford & Wrekin Council's commitment to service excellence is evident in its strategic direction, the engagement and motivation of its workforce and the effectiveness of its day-to-day service delivery'*. This accreditation fulfils our ambition when developing our 2021 Customer Strategy which was titled 'Our journey to excellence by 2025'. The accreditation provides us with a platform for continual improvement and to shape our 2025 Customer Strategy.

- 3.6 Our customers can also raise issues directly with the Council's Leader, Cabinet and Ward Members via our Cabinet and Member Enquiry processes, which also allows any trends to be identified and highlights any service development opportunities.

- 3.7 Compliments and positive feedback are shared across the Council and within teams, to inspire, motivate and build confidence and ensure that examples of best practice are used to help develop services.

- 3.8 To demonstrate a robust approach to responding to customer feedback and complaint handling, the Council produces an annual report on complaint handling for Children's Statutory Complaints, Adult's Statutory Complaints and Corporate Feedback. These reports can be found at Appendices A, B and C.

- 3.9 Our residents are continuing to experience the impact of ongoing cost of living pressures. These impact upon almost every aspect of our residents' lives, including their health and wellbeing, their housing options and family life. This in addition to the boroughs growing and aging population has resulted in the Council continuing to see significant demand, rising expectations and increased pressure on, all its services.
- 3.10 The ICS continues to report that across all organisations customer's needs and expectations have changed and there is a general increase in complaints as a result. Nationally, customer satisfaction has fallen.
- 3.11 In 2024/25 the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman published their new complaint handling code. While not due to be formally monitored until 2026/27 Telford and Wrekin Council became early adopters of the code in May 2024 and have been working with the Ombudsman as part of a pilot of a small group of unitary authorities to assist in the development of guidance for Council's when using the code.

## **4 Summary of main proposals**

### **4.1 Corporate Feedback Report (Appendix A)**

- 4.1.1 The Corporate Feedback Report shows that there has been a sustained increase in compliments. The Council has seen a 128% increase in compliments in the last 6 years – 17% in the last 2 years.
- 4.1.2 The Customer Insight Programme now has 235 volunteers registered as Mystery Customers and undertaking assignments to help us shape and improve our services. We have seen a 9% increase in volunteers during 2024/25.
- 4.1.3 During 2024/25 the Customer Insight Programme completed a number of reviews of different elements of the customer experience focussing particularly on our access channels including physical locations, digital channel, telephone services and Ask Tom Telephony. This feedback has shaped the development of the new Customer Strategy.
- 4.1.4 Alongside the Customer Strategy reviews, Mystery Customers have also completed other reviews including the new Community Calendar. During the year 158 Customer Insight assignments were completed with an overall 86% satisfaction with the experience when using the Council's services, across all the assignments completed.
- 4.1.5 Feedback from customers in relation to our Corporate Contact Centre indicates that performance is excellent. Customer satisfaction on our contact centre telephone calls was 95%, an increase on 93% in 2023/24. In addition, 98% of customers also expressed satisfaction with the experience of using our online Automated Assistant, Ask Tom.



## Customer Feedback Reports for 2023-24

- 4.1.6 During 2024/25 focused work has begun on improving the overall satisfaction of logging jobs through MyTelford. The total number of jobs logged through MyTelford during 2024/25 was 86,749. A satisfaction survey was included on all job closure emails to customers. There is also an ongoing review of all closing emails that are sent to customers to ensure that the information provided is clear and outlines the reasons why the job has been closed. Whilst this work is ongoing, there have been clear improvements in our customers satisfaction particularly with the use of the MyTelford App with satisfaction improving from 52% in January 2024 to 72% by the end of March 2025.
- 4.1.7 There continues to be a range of ways that our customers can provide feedback e.g. QR Code Surveys, automated telephone surveys at the end of calls, Mystery Customer programme and other mechanisms such as the Making It Real Board. Any improvements made are included on our 'You said, We did' webpage, which can be found here [You said, We did](#).
- 4.1.8 In 2024/25 a total of 790 complaints were received across the Council, including statutory complaints, from 735 complainants. This is an incredibly small proportion, less than 1%, of the many thousands of transactions and interactions that take place across the organisation every year.
- 4.1.9 In 2024/25 710 of these were corporate complaints, an increase on the 659 that were received in 2023/24. Sixteen anonymous complaints were received. The remaining complaints were children's and adult's statutory complaints (see Section 4.2 and 4.3).
- 4.1.10 During the year, at the first stage of the complaints process, 12 complaints were not accepted because they were subject to court proceedings, a Tribunal process or related to historic matters. All cases were provided with the details of the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman. 40 complaints were received which were for other organisations including, Police, Wrekin Housing Group, Schools, Telford Town Centre owners. These were appropriately signposted.
- 4.1.11 Of the 711 corporate complaints that were responded to in the year 40% (281) were upheld, this is where services have acknowledged that we could have done better. This is a reduction in the percentage of upheld complaints compared to 2023/24 (42%). 56% (400) were not upheld, 4% of complaints were either withdrawn or resolved by service before the complaint was processed.
- 4.1.12 During 2024/25 the Council has responded to corporate complaints in an average of 8 days (improving on the average response timescale of 10 working days achieved in 2023/24) and well within the new timescale of 10 working days introduced from 16 May 2024 and in accordance with the Local Government Ombudsman Complaint Handling Code. This reduced the required timescale for a stage one response from 15 to 10 working days.
- 4.1.13 Since the new timescale of 10 working days was formally approved in May 2024, 84% of corporate complaints were responded to within this timescale.

## Customer Feedback Reports for 2023-24

- 4.1.14 13% of the corporate complaints received escalated to stage two of the procedure. In terms of numbers. This equates to 91 stage two complaints and is a 30% increase on the 70 that progressed in 2023/24. Of the 87 received in year and completed to date, 26% were upheld.
- 4.1.15 All complaints upheld have been reviewed to ensure wider learning to avoid such issues occurring in the future. There are no major trends, however common themes across all directorates include issues with communication, complaints involving staff, incomplete work/service, lack of action and delays in processing.
- 4.1.16 Examples of positive improvements resulting from learning following complaints can be seen at page 33 of the Corporate Feedback Report (Appendix A).
- 4.1.17 As well as compliments and complaints, the Customer Relationship Team manages the Leader and Cabinet enquiry process, Member enquiry process and MP enquiries. During 2024/25 a total of 796 Leader and Cabinet enquiries were received. A proportion of these enquiries were responded to as urgent enquiries with tight timescales. However, 90% of responses were provided within the target timescales and this is in line with performance targets.
- 4.1.18 Under Telford and Wrekin Council's Registered Housing Provider status we own/manage 219 properties. 5 complaints were received from tenants in these properties during 2024/25. All complaints were responded to in accordance with the statutory code and timescales outlined by the Housing Ombudsman Service and none progressed to the Ombudsman Service.
- 4.1.19 From May 2024 the Policy and procedure for reporting complaints involving Child Sexual Exploitation was combined into one corporate complaint procedure. We have produced a reference document on 'How we respond to complaints involving Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)' which can be found here [Complaints procedures - Telford & Wrekin Council](#). During 2024/25 no complaints were received which involved Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE).

### **4.2 Adult Statutory Complaint Report (Appendix B)**

- 4.2.1 We received 57 Adult Statutory complaints in 2024/25, an increase on the 39 received in 2023/24. A further 24 complaints were resolved under the 24-hour resolution process and were therefore not registered under the statutory procedure in accordance with legislation. Overall, the number of dissatisfactions raised has reduced to 81 compared to 94 in 2023/24. Of the complaints responded to in the year, 44% (25) were upheld – a significant reduction in the 70% upheld in 2023/24.
- 4.2.2 To provide some context, Adult Social Services have received 8,500 contacts from new people in the year and 2,085 people are receiving long term services. Therefore, the number of complaints received equates to less than 1% of all transactions.

- 4.2.3 The Local Authority Social Services and National Health Service Complaints (England) regulations 2009 set a benchmark for all Adult Statutory Complaints to be investigated within six months. When an Adult statutory complaint is received, we negotiate a timescale with the complainants, depending on the complexity of the case, this is typically 35 working days. We aim to respond to all Adult Statutory Complaints within a maximum of 65 working days. In 2024/25 the average number of days to respond was 24 working days a reduction on the 29 working days achieved in 2023/24. Due to the complexity of the cases, two did exceed 65 working days during the year. Whilst these complex cases were being investigated, we kept in touch with the complainants in order to keep them informed.
- 4.2.4 Examples of positive improvements resulting from learning following complaints can be seen from page 11 of the Adult Statutory Complaint Report (Appendix B).
- 4.2.5 Our Adult Social Care service is committed to achieving improved outcomes through continuous learning and improvement. A key area of quality assurance is using feedback from people who use our services, their carers and families to understand experiences and shape improvements, demonstrating a commitment to learning from all feedback, regardless of source, format or process.
- 4.2.6 During 2024 the Care Quality Commission (CQC) carried out an assessment of our Adult Social Care, following which it was confirmed that it had received a 'Good' rating in relation to how well we are meeting our statutory responsibilities to ensure people have access to adult social care and support. The CQC report highlighted many key strengths within the Adult Social Care service, including our innovative approach to co-production, engagement, and inclusion, as well as promoting independence, which places community participation at the heart of strategy and service development. The CQC confirmed that *'As part of the assessment, we received multiple examples of leaders engaging effectively with staff, partners and people using services. People told us of genuine cooperative approaches which made them feel listened to'*. Further *'There was clear evidence learning from concerns and incidents was a key contributor to continuous improvement'*.
- 4.2.7 Quality assurance reports are prepared, shared and discussed at the ASC Quality Assurance Delivery Group and subsequently at the ASC Assurance Board. These include a quarterly report on 'Feedback from people who use our services, their carers and families' that includes issues, areas for reflection and improvement and learning outcomes.

### **4.3 Children's Statutory Complaint Report (Appendix C)**

- 4.3.1 We received 23 Children's statutory complaints in 2024/25, in line with the 23 received in 2023/24. Four cases progressed to an independent Stage 2 investigation during the year. One Stage 3 panel was completed in 2024/25.
- 4.3.2 To provide some context, Children's Safeguarding and Family Support received a total of 6,687 contacts during the year, this includes telephone calls and emails

and had 1,402 referrals into the service completed during the year. Therefore, the number of complaints received equates to less than 1% of all transactions.

- 4.3.3 Of the complaints completed in the year, 43% (10) of the complaints were upheld.
- 4.3.4 The average number of days to respond to Children's Statutory Complaints during the year was 14 working days, which is in line with the 14 working days achieved in 2023/24.
- 4.3.5 At stage 2, three complaints were not upheld, with one which was still subject to investigation on 31 March 2025 subsequently progressing to stage 3. This case was upheld but this related to historical service standards which have subsequently improved.
- 4.3.6 Examples of positive improvements resulting from learning following complaints can be seen from page 10 of the Children's Statutory Complaint Report (Appendix C).
- 4.3.7 Our Children's Safeguarding and Family Support Service is committed to continuous learning and improvement using feedback from customers who use our services, such as parents, carers, professionals, colleagues, children and young people and their families.
- 4.3.8 The service has also introduced a Voice of the Child Team, which includes four young people with lived experience who are completing apprenticeships with the Council. Their goal is to drive positive change by making sure young people's voices are truly heard. They have launched youth forums, delivered participation events all designed to connect, uplift and empower. They are also representing young voices nationally and they are supporting ideas to engage with children and young people which will inform continuous learning and improvement.
- 4.3.9 During 2024 children's services were inspected by Ofsted. The HMI Inspectors judged the overall effectiveness of Telford & Wrekin's Children's Services as 'Outstanding'. The Lead Inspector commented that '*Children and families in Telford and Wrekin continue to experience exceptional social work practice when they are in care and as care leavers.*' Participation and co-production, through having children's and families involved in development of services, was also highlighted as a real strength of the service. '*Participation is a real strength and children's and families' involvement is threaded throughout service developments.*'
- 4.3.10 Feedback from customers about their experiences of children's social care provisions is monitored in accordance with our Quality Assurance Framework. A monthly Quality Assurance meeting is held to discuss issues identified, areas for reflection and improvement and learning outcomes from feedback. All of this ensures that we continue to 'close the loop' to ensure that learning from Quality Assurance is used in a meaningful way. Actions informed by this feedback can be found at page 13 of Appendix C.



#### **4.4 Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman Enquiries (Appendix D)**

- 4.4.1 During 2024/25 a total of 30 new enquiries were escalated to the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman, three remained outstanding from the year before and decisions were received in this year. Two detailed investigations remained open on 31 March 2025 (One corporate and one Children's Statutory complaint).
- 4.4.2 During the year, the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman made the decision that they were not going to investigate 21 of the enquiries. However, they did complete 9 detailed investigations. The Ombudsman upheld six detailed investigations although in three of these cases they did not formally investigate but confirmed the Council's findings. The Council has already implemented remedies in all of these cases, in three of the cases a satisfactory remedy and been provided by the Council before it the complaint reached the Ombudsman. The Ombudsman has confirmed the council has complied with 100% of the recommendations made during the year. Three detailed investigations were not upheld.
- 4.4.3 In all cases where complaints were upheld the Council has apologised to customers and has taken learning forward to improve practices.

#### **5 Alternative Options**

- 5.1 Failure to robustly manage and monitor customer feedback and complaints would not accord with duties placed on Local Authorities to do so and would undermine the Council's ability to deliver continuous improvement in services that meet resident's needs.

#### **6 Key Risks**

- 6.1 Ineffective handling of complaints and management of the complaints procedures may result in reputational damage and financial costs to the Council.

#### **7.0 Council Priorities**

- 7.1 A community- focussed, innovative Council providing efficient, effective and quality services.

Key outcome: Our customer experience is the best possible and facilities are accessible to all.

#### **8.0 Financial Implications**

- 8.1 The cost of dealing with complaints is mainly in the form of officer time and is therefore met from existing Council budgets within Customer Services. If a complaint is upheld, additional costs may be incurred in particular to those that are requested by the Ombudsman re a financial remedy; these costs would also

be met by existing council budgets within this respective service area. The 2024/25 cost of membership to the Institute of Customer Services (ICS) and the mystery customer exercise has been funded from one off reserves.

## **9.0 Legal and HR Implications**

- 9.1 There are no direct legal implications arising from this report. It should be noted, however, that under the Children Act 1989 Representations Procedure (England) Regulations 2006, there are some complaints involving Children's Services and Family Safeguarding which must follow the procedure contained within the Regulations. Where a complaint is made which is of a type that should be dealt with under the Regulations, the Council is required to ensure that this occurs.
- 9.2 Complaints about Adult Social Care Services are governed by The Local Authority Social Services and National Health Service Complaints (England) Regulations 2009 and guidance: Listening, responding, improving: a guide to better customer care.
- 9.3 The policies to which the Council works in respect of customer feedback and complaints is in line with the latest guidance issued by the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman and Housing Ombudsman Service.
- 9.4 The proposals contained in this report can be delivered using existing resources

## **10.0 Ward Implications**

- 10.1 Not applicable

## **11.0 Health, Social and Economic Implications**

- 11.1 Some complaints relate to Social Care, there are strong links into the local health and care system.

## **12.0 Equality and Diversity Implications**

- 12.1 All our complaints policies provide an opportunity for residents to raise any concerns around inequality. Our policies take account of our customers communication accessibility needs.
- 12.2 The policies specifically meet the aims of the public sector equality duty; eliminate unlawful discrimination, advancing equality of opportunity, and fostering good relations, for people who share protected characteristics. To ensure that we continue to meet this enduring duty we collect data on a regular basis on complainants and report on the protected characteristics of complainants and nature of any discrimination or inequality.

## **13.0 Climate Change and Environmental Implications**

- 13.1 Not applicable

## 14.0 Background Papers

### 14.1 You said, We did [webpage](#).

‘How we respond to complaints involving Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)’-  
[Complaints procedures - Telford & Wrekin Council](#)

The Tenant Satisfaction and Complaints Report 2024-25  
[Complaints and compliments annual reports - Telford & Wrekin Council](#)

## 15.0 Appendices

- A Corporate Feedback Report 2024-25
- B Adult’s Statutory Complaint Report 2024-25
- C Children’s Statutory Complaint Report 2024-25
- D Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman Review Letter 2025 link  
to [Telford & Wrekin Council - Local Government and Social Care  
Ombudsman](#)

## 16.0 Report Sign Off

Signed off by	Date sent	Date signed off	Initials
Legal	09/06/2025	12/06/2025	SH
Finance	07/07/2025	08/07/2025	CM

This page is intentionally left blank





# Corporate Feedback Report

## Improving our Customer Experience

### Annual Report 2024/25

# Contents

Report Summary.....	3
Highlights 2024/25.....	5
ICS Business Benchmarking and ServCheck.....	6
Purpose of the report.....	8
Background.....	8
MP/Leader/Cabinet and Member Enquiries.....	11
Compliments.....	12
Customer Insight Programme .....	15
MyTelford Satisfaction.....	18
Ask Tom Telephony.....	19
You said, We did.....	21
Corporate Stage One Complaints 2024/25.....	22
Stage One Complaint Outcomes.....	25
Timescales for responses at Stage One.....	28
Corporate Stage Two complaints in 2024/25.....	30
Learning and outcomes from Corporate Complaints.....	31
Local Government & Social Care Ombudsman enquiries.....	34
Complaints from Council Tenants.....	35
Oversight and support provided by the Customer Relationship team.....	37
Customer Relationship team priorities for 2025/26.....	38

# Report summary

Our residents are continuing to experience the impact of ongoing cost of living pressures. These impact upon almost every aspect of our residents' lives, including their health and wellbeing, their housing options and family life. This in addition to the boroughs growing and aging population has resulted in the Council continuing to see significant demand, rising expectations and increased pressure on, all its services.

The Council emptied 11.1 million bins during 2024/25, issued approximately 160,000 council tax bills, handled 180,546 calls to our Corporate Contact Centre, laid 51 kilometres of road markings, cleaned 15,000 gullies and applied 84,000 square meters of surface dressing, 92,262 people attended events and Telford Theatre on tour, in addition to this the borough welcomed some 3.2 million visitors to Telford.

It is therefore positive that this annual feedback report shows that there has been a sustained increase in the number of residents and customers who have taken the opportunity to give a compliment on the service they have received. Overall, the Council has seen a 128% increase in compliments in the last 6 years from 290 in 2019/20 to 660 in 2023/24 and a 17% increase since 2022/23 (566).

In January 2022, the Council became members of the Institute of Customer Services (ICS). During our first year of membership, we asked our customers to complete a benchmarking survey in order to allow us to measure our improvement over the next 3 years. In September 2024 a further benchmarking survey was completed which has informed our new Customer Strategy, which will be published in September 2025. The feedback from this survey and the accompanying workforce survey was recognised as excellent by the Institute who invited the Council to be considered for a ServiceMark Accreditation.

Following a rigorous external assessment of performance the Council was awarded the Institute's national customer service standard- ServiceMark. As the first Local Authority to achieve this accreditation from an Institute with both public and private sector members this is a notable achievement and further demonstrates that we are committed to driving continuous improvement in customer satisfaction. We are also pleased that the assessment showed how committed our workforce are to ensuring they deliver exceptional services for our customers and truly understood the aims and ambitions of our Customer Strategy. This accreditation also

fulfils the ambition of our Customer Strategy in 2021 which was called 'Our journey to excellence by 2025'. This accreditation gives us a platform to continually improve, which is at the heart of our new Customer Strategy 2025. More details can be found at page 6.

We have also seen an increase in the complaints received across the Council in 2024/25. Corporate complaints increasing from 659 in 2023/24, to 710 in the last year. Complaints about council policy and anonymous complaints accounted for 14 complaints and 16 complaints, respectively. When considering the total number of transactions and interactions undertaken by the Council during the year, the data therefore clearly shows that the number of complaints received continues to be well within accepted customer service industry standards and appreciably under 1% of all transactions.

The Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman also states that the number of complaints should not be seen as a negative, as they can be indicative of a well-published and accessible complaints procedure.

The report highlights that the Council continues to manage complaints well, with response timescales improving by 2 days compared with last year's performance from average 10 working days to 8 working days. In addition, 84% of responses have been sent within the 10-working day timescale outlined within the new Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman Code since the new code was adopted. The Council has committed to the revised timescales working with the Ombudsman as an early adopter, 2 years ahead of the point that the Ombudsman will start to monitor compliance by Local Authorities in 2026/27.

The improvements detailed in this report evidence the Council's commitment to respond to complaints positively and seek to put things right where things go wrong. There are areas of opportunity for continued improvement, and the Customer Relationship team will continue to work with senior leadership teams to robustly utilise complaints intelligence and customer feedback to support positive improvements in service delivery.

During 2024/25 the Customer Insight Programme has seen a number of projects completed supporting our new Strategy with Mystery Customers testing all our access channels so that we identify any areas that need to be improved. Mystery Customers reviewed the new Community Calendar and carried out user testing on Ask Tom telephony. More information regarding this work can be found from page 15. The Customer Insight Programme now has over 235 volunteers registered as Mystery Customers – an increase of 9% increase during 2024/25.



Highlights 2024/25

Page 161

<p>Over <b>235</b> <b>volunteers</b> registered to be Mystery Customers</p>	<p><b>158</b> completed <b>Mystery Customer</b> assignments</p>	<p>Institute of Customer Services <b>ServiceMark</b> Accreditation achieved</p>
<p>Average of <b>8 days</b> to respond to corporate complaints</p>	<p><b>84%</b> of corporate <b>complaints*</b> responded to in 10 working days</p> <p><small>*Since new timescale adopted 16 May 2024.</small></p>	<p>UK Customer Satisfaction Index Score of <b>74.0</b> <small>(exceeding the national average for other local Councils 64.4)</small></p>
<p><b>100%</b> LGSCO* recommendations completed</p>	<p>Institute of Customer Services <b>Customer Effort</b> Score of <b>4.3</b> <small>(exceeding average for all organisations across UK- 4.5, a lower score demonstrates ease of accessing services).</small></p>	<p><b>17%</b> increase in Compliments since 2022/23</p>

# ICS Business Benchmarking and ServCheck

In January 2022, the Council became members of the Institute of Customer Services (ICS), allowing us to benchmark our services against public and private sector organisations across the UK. We completed our first Business Benchmarking survey in June 2022 and in September we completed our second round of surveys. The outcome of this led to the Institute inviting the Council to seek Institute ServiceMark accreditation.

On 8 April 2025 following a rigorous assessment of the Council it was confirmed that we had demonstrated that we are meeting the Institute's national customer service standard- ServiceMark. Telford and Wrekin Council are the first Local Authority to achieve this standard representing excellence in performance and also demonstrating that we are committed to driving continuous improvement in customer satisfaction. The results below highlight some of our key achievements in reaching this standard.



## UK Customer Satisfaction Index Score:

**74.0**

An improvement on the 72.1 scored in 2022 and also this is significantly higher than the 71.0 average for other public services. Our score is closer to the average for all organisations across the UK 76.1<sup>1</sup>. This includes Amazon, John Lewis and Nationwide.

## Net Promoter Score:

**19.4**

Another improvement on our 2022 figure and higher than the average for all organisations nationally (18.0) showing that an increasing number of our customers are likely to promote our organisation to others. The average for other local councils which was a negative -33.1 (a negative indicates a larger proportion of customers who would not promote the service (detractors) against those that would promote the service (promoters)).

<sup>1</sup> All scoring as of UKSCI January 2025

**Customer Effort:**

4.3

This score reflects the effort our customers must make to access our services (the lower the score the better). This is an excellent score comparing to the average for other local councils which was 5.8 and exceeding the average for Public Services at 5.1 and the average for all organisations across the UK which is 4.5. This is a clear indicator that improvements to our online offer and service access is being received positively by residents.

A workforce survey (ServCheck) was also completed to measure our workforce's engagement with our customer strategy, culture and processes. The results of this survey were benchmarked with other organisations in the Local Government Sector, which includes local Fire Services, Ambulance Services, Police Services and Councils.

**ServCheck Index Score:**

76.9

Significantly higher than the average for other Local Government sector organisations (70.56) and only slightly below the figure for all sector organisations across the UK (78.36).

**Strategy & Leadership: Credibility Score:**

81.0

This is another strong score exceeding all organisations average score of 80.4.

This is also reflected in responses from our workforce;

- ***“Our organisation has a vision, a mission and goals that deliver great customer service”***
- ***“The Directors/Senior Managers believe that great customer service is important to our business performance”***
- ***“The Senior Management Team fully promote the importance of customer service”***

# Purpose of the Report

- To provide an overview of Telford and Wrekin Council's corporate customer feedback, including complaints and compliments, from 1 April 2024 to 31 March 2025. This includes highlighting areas of positive performance and those for development.
- To outline the key developments and planned improvements to customer feedback processes operated by the Council.
- To consider how learning from customer feedback can be used to gain a better understanding of the experience customers are having accessing council services, drive continual improvement and development of services, prioritise quick wins and ensure that longer-term actions feed into the Customer Strategy.

# Background

The Customer Relationship team co-ordinates complaints relating to three separate complaints processes. These are:

1. The Adult Social Care Statutory Process, reported separately in the Adult Statutory Complaints Annual Report 2024/25
2. The Children's Social Care Statutory Process, reported separately in the Children's Statutory Complaints Annual Report 2024/25
3. The Corporate Complaints Process. These are complaints relating to other services provided by the Council where there is no statutory complaints procedure, our corporate process includes complaints from our Council Tenants and also complaints involving Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)

In addition, the team deals with a wide range of interactions with customers that do not go on to become formal complaints. These include general enquiries, MP Enquiries, Leader and Cabinet Member Enquiries, comments and suggestions, as well as any matters that are exempt from consideration under our complaints policies.

We recognise that our customers have a range of experiences when contacting us, working with us and using our services. Some of these experiences are positive, and we want to recognise and celebrate where good practice is evident, while others fall short of our standards, where it is essential that we learn from them. As an organisation, we provide customers with a mechanism to feedback to

us both positive and negative experiences, and encourage a culture of learning, where the focus is on resolution and continual improvement. Whenever possible, we take immediate action to put things right at the first point of contact, and if this cannot be done, we operate a robust complaints procedure.

Above all, the way we deal with customer feedback is based on our co-operative values, as published on the Council website [www.telford.gov.uk/info/20268/co-operative\\_council/779/our\\_co-operative\\_values](http://www.telford.gov.uk/info/20268/co-operative_council/779/our_co-operative_values) and the following key principles:

- Customer focus – listening to what people tell us and seeing things from the customer's perspective
- Responsiveness – acting on what people say to us
- Promptness – making sure people get answers in good time
- Transparency – dealing openly and honestly with problems
- Proportionality – making sure that the resolution fits the complaint
- Learning – making sure complaints result in changes and improvement

Our policies are also published on the website [www.telford.gov.uk/complaints](http://www.telford.gov.uk/complaints) . A complaint is defined within the Council's Corporate Complaints Procedure as:

**'An expression of dissatisfaction, however made, about the standards of service, action or lack of action or decisions taken by the Council, its own staff, or those acting on its behalf, affecting an individual or a group of individuals'.**

Telford and Wrekin Council operates a two-stage process for all corporate complaints.

For more information regarding corporate complaints in 2024/25, please go to page 22 of this report.



## Accessibility of Council Services

Across the Council we take steps to support access to our services taking into consideration the diverse range of needs of our customers.

- Written materials are simplified, and efforts are made to remove jargon and technical language, so that as many of our customers as possible can understand the information that we provide.
- We make sure that the documents, flyers and written materials we release include information on how to contact us so that we can answer any questions you may have.
- We use clear signage in our buildings to help people get about.
- Staff are trained to greet you appropriately and take account of your needs when supporting you.
- All of our buildings welcome assistance animals and accommodate their needs where appropriate.
- Our safety and evacuation procedures for all buildings take account of the needs of visitors to make sure that they are safe at all times.
- Notes regarding additional needs can be added to some of our systems at your request. If you consider that this will assist your communication with us, please let us know when you make initial contact with our services and they will try to accommodate your request.

These are some of the things that we do to make sure that you can access our services easily, fairly and safely. For more information about how we support access to our services please visit our website at [Telford & Wrekin Council | Supporting access to services](#).

# MP/ Leader/Cabinet and Member Enquiries

During 2024/25 the number of enquiries received from democratically elected members was as follows.

**MP Enquiries-** During 2024/25 a total of 253 MP enquiries were received. A 41% increase on the 159 received in 2023/24. We aim to respond to enquiries from MPs within 10 working days and our average response time was 8 working days with 88% responded to in the timescale.

**Leader Enquiries-** A total of 448 enquiries were received from residents via the Leader of the Council, Cllr Lee Carter and the former Leader Cllr Shaun Davies. The average number of days to respond to these enquiries was 3 days with 89% responded to in timescale.

**Cabinet Member Enquiries-** Enquiries from Cabinet Members amounted to 348. The average number of days to respond to these enquiries was 3 days. 91% were responded to in timescale.

**Member Enquiries-** 302 enquiries were received from Ward Members during 2024/25 a 9% increase on the 277 received in 2023/24. These were responded to in an average of 5 days, 96% within our response timescales.

# Compliments

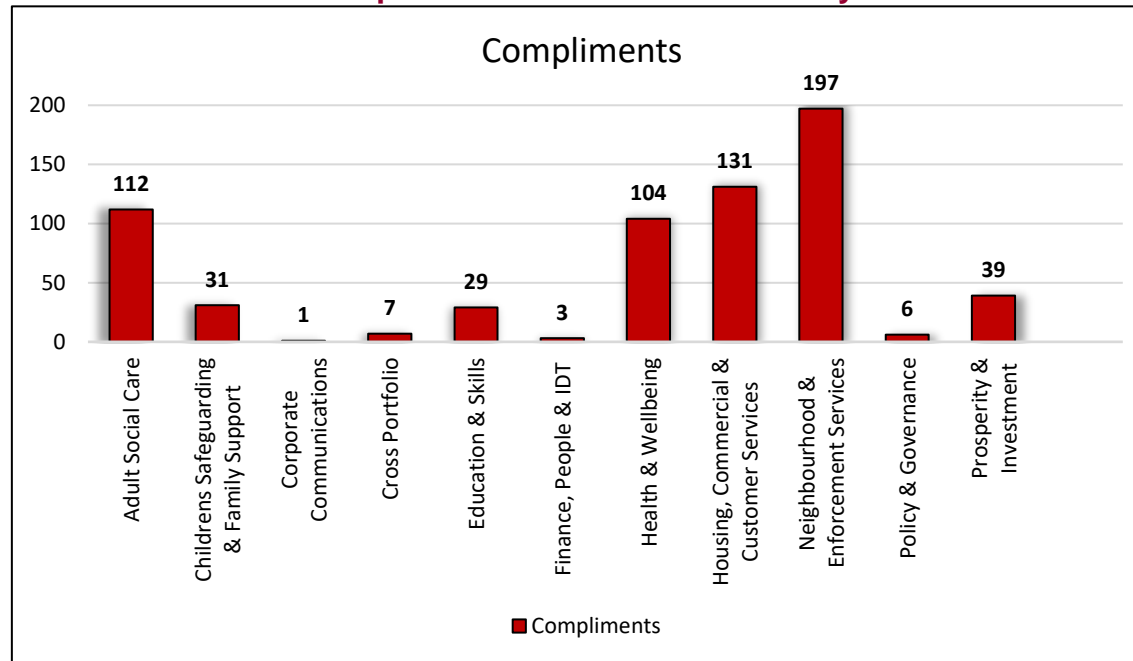
In 2024/25, there was a 3% increase in the number of compliments received – 17% since 22/23. A total of 660 instances were received compared to 639 in 2023/24. The Council has seen a 128% increase in compliments from 290 in 2019/20 to 660 in 2024/25. Compliments are logged and copied to Directors and Line Managers. This is recognised at service level through team briefs/ meetings and individual 'one-to-ones'.

Where a member of staff has gone above and beyond, they may be awarded a Chief Executive Commendation to celebrate their achievement. An Excellent Customer Service Award is also made at our annual Employee Awards. Some examples of where employees have gone above and beyond can be seen below.

Chief Executive Commendation	Chief Executive Commendation	Customer Care Award Winner 2024
<p>Following a customer collapsing during a panto performance at Telford Theatre Officers were first on scene and recognised for ensuring emergency services were called and for working alongside the medics to provide lifesaving support. The customer was very grateful for the actions taken which contributed to saving their life</p>	<p>In recognition of officer's actions and going the extra mile to support our vulnerable residents with their mental health and wellbeing. Working beyond hours of work to ensure the right support was in place. Officers showed real dedication and a great asset to the council.</p>	<p>The award was given to a social worker in the Early Intervention Team for working with people who are in crisis and desperately need support and guidance navigating the social care system. The Officer supported one family that had a negative experience when previously involved with social services. It was difficult for them to trust the system, but the social workers calm, and professional nature shone through, and their faith was restored and together they worked in a positive way to ensure that the customer received the best possible outcome. The Worker also supported peers and offers training and support to new staff.</p>
Telford Theatre	Mental Health- Adult Social Care	Early Intervention Team Social worker

The chart below highlights the compliments received for each directorate during 2024/25.

**Chart 1: Number of compliments received in 2024/25 by directorate**



This year, Neighbourhood & Enforcement Services (169) received the most compliments and saw an increase on the number received in 2023/24 (176). Housing, Commercial and Customer Services (133) also saw a significant increase on the number received for its services in 2023/24 (81) with 30 received by the Customer Contact Centre and 23 by the Housing team.

"Thank you everything you have done to support me over the last few months especially the last couple of weeks. I now have the payments owed and also a new Adult Practitioner (Social Worker). I know you have done more than your job role expects but I just wanted you to know how much it is appreciated."

Adult Social Care

*"I must say it is refreshing to get this level of service, and the ability to fast track certain applications. I can confidently say that I know of no other LPA that offers the same."*

Local Planning Authority



Here are some examples of compliments received during the year:

*"I experienced an issue with my house purchase...I contacted your team member (Land charges officer) who for the past week has been absolutely outstanding in supporting me to urgently obtain all I need for my move to progress. The officer was emailed by me on Friday night and since then has moved heaven and earth to help, keeping me informed of everything each step of the way...I have been blown away by this lady's kindness and professionalism."*

Legal Team

*"I would particularly like to commend your colleague for the sensitive and caring way he handled the matter. Although a young man, he has a maturity way beyond his years and has a great gift and talent when dealing with people. I would certainly recommend his for any promotions that may be available in the future...He gave me sensible advice and for this I thank him and wish him all the best."*

Grounds and Cleansing Team

*"I just wanted to say a huge thank you to you for making this happen for me and my children, after a few years of hardship we now finally have a place of our own to call home! The kids are so excited to be able to have their own space again and it wouldn't have been possible without you! I appreciate all the help and support you have given me! Can't give you a hug in person but here's a small one from me! ☺❤ xx"*

Housing Team

*"It's good I accepted to come on this programme because it has been very useful to me and my family...I enjoyed every bit of it all thanks to the lovely personality who took time to walk me through! Thank you"*

Healthy Lifestyles Team

*"When SF was mentioned to me I never really wanted you to be involved, but now on reflection it was 100% the best decision I have made. You have helped me have an understanding of why I was permanently stressed, why I was permanently nagging my child, permanently feeling that the school thought I was demanding. You have been lovely and helped me tweak things...The meetings are great when you attend, they are no longer daunting for me, you help recap and move things forward. Things are better...you made me stop and think that really none of us are perfect, thank you"*

Strengthening Families



# Customer Insight Programme

Our Customer Insight Programme was launched in October 2019 with the aim of helping us review our services from customers' perspective. The programme is designed to deliver organisational intelligence to drive transformation and continuous development by identifying trends and improvements that could be made to enhance customers' experience of our services. Some key customer satisfaction results from in 2024/25 include:

<p><b>95%</b></p> <p>Of customers were satisfied with <b>call handling</b></p> <p><small>*Corporate Contact Centre Satisfaction</small></p>	<p><b>98%</b></p> <p>Of customers were satisfied with the help given on our website by <b>'Ask Tom'</b></p> <p><small>*Corporate Contact Centre Satisfaction</small></p>	<p><b>92%</b></p> <p>Of customers were satisfied with <b>webchat</b></p> <p><small>*Corporate Contact Centre Satisfaction</small></p>	<p><b>91%</b></p> <p>of customers were satisfied with their overall experience of the <b>Council Tax</b> web pages</p> <p><small>*Mystery Customer Assignment</small></p>
<p><b>89%</b></p> <p>Of customers were satisfied with their experience whilst exploring <b>Community Calendar</b></p> <p><small>*Mystery Customer Assignment</small></p>	<p><b>88%</b></p> <p>Of customers were satisfied with the experience of <b>accessing services</b> at Telford &amp; Wrekin Council</p> <p><small>*Mystery Customer Assignment</small></p>	<p><b>98%</b></p> <p>Of customers were satisfied with their overall experience of <b>Sky Reach &amp; Outdoor Education</b></p> <p><small>*Mystery Customer Assignment</small></p>	<p><b>93%</b></p> <p>Of customers were satisfied with the ease of navigating the <b>Community Calendar</b></p> <p><small>*Mystery Customer Assignment</small></p>

The Customer Insight Programme now has 235 volunteers who have registered with us as Mystery Customers to undertake assignments. We have seen a 9% increase in volunteers during 2024/25, and the team will continue to promote the recruitment of the programme in the coming year.

**158** assignments have been completed across the Customer Insight programme since April 2024 with an **86%** satisfaction score overall.

### Customer Strategy Refresh

In January 2021 we launched our Customer Strategy which set out our commitment to improve our customers' experience over the next 4 years [www.telford.gov.uk/customerstrategyandcustomercontract](http://www.telford.gov.uk/customerstrategyandcustomercontract). Our new Customer Strategy will be launched in September 2025. To inform this we have asked our mystery customers to complete various assignments testing our access channels including Ask Tom online, Ask Tom telephony, MyTelford, Telephone, Website, Front of House/Face to Face.



*"My experience was good and I was pleased with all aspects"*

**89%** of customers were satisfied with the access channels.

### Transport Telephone Reviews Revisited

Our focus for this review was revisiting accessing the Transport service via telephone, reviewing both Dial-a-Ride and our Passenger Transport Team. Recommendations were given to service following this assignment.

An email survey continues to be displayed on all staff members' email signatures to capture customers' feedback. We intend to continue to utilize these email surveys going forward to encourage continued feedback over an extended period.



*"I found this an excellent site, very easy to navigate with helpful links."*

## Real time Customer Feedback

Since April 2021, posters have been in all front facing buildings asking our customers to comment on the service and experience that they receive. These short surveys, designed to take 30 seconds to complete, can be accessed via a QR code on a smart phone or via a website link. Any comments received are shared with services so they can consider if improvements can be made with feedback detailed on our 'You said, We did' web page.

**90%** of customers were satisfied with the service provided at these locations during 2024/25

## Community Calendar Review

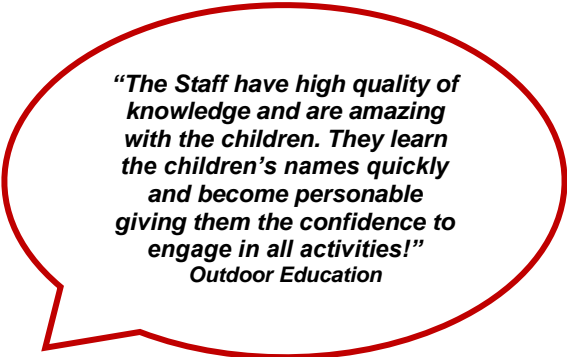
In October, we asked our Mystery Customers to test our 'Community Calendar' during its development to ensure that it would be effective as a community resource.

**88%** of customers advised the community calendar was accessible.

**93%** of customers advised it was easy to navigate.

**89%** of customers were impressed with their experience.

Recommendations taken forward included suggestions regarding improving the look and feel of the calendar.



*"The Staff have high quality of knowledge and are amazing with the children. They learn the children's names quickly and become personable giving them the confidence to engage in all activities!"*  
Outdoor Education

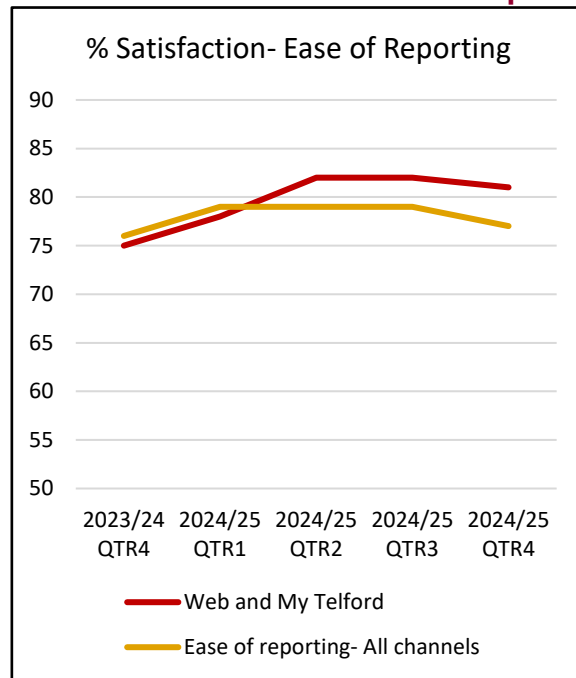


# MyTelford Satisfaction

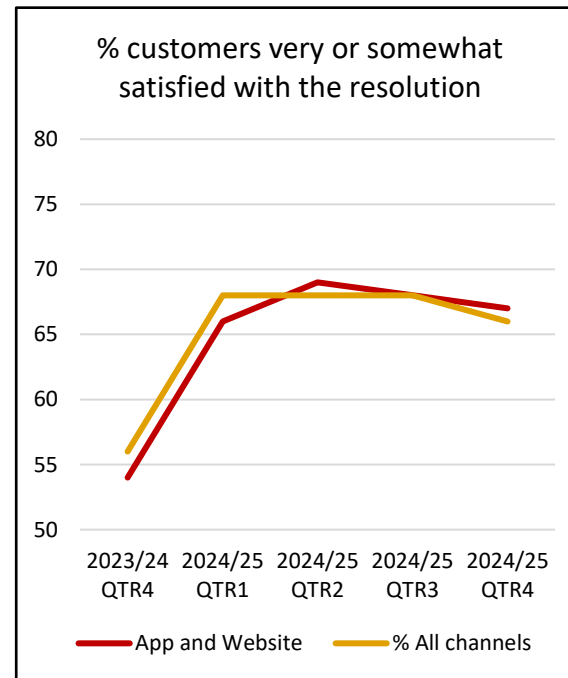
A focus for 2024/25 has been on improving the overall satisfaction with logging jobs through MyTelford. 86,749 of submissions were logged through MyTelford during 2024/25. A satisfaction survey was included on all job closure emails to customers and there is an ongoing review of all closing emails that are sent to customers to ensure that the information provided is clear and outlines the reasons why the job has been closed. This has resulted in clear improvements in our customers satisfaction particularly using the MyTelford app.

As a comparison, the tables below track satisfaction with reporting issues through MyTelford (both app and web-portal) against satisfaction with reporting through all channels, which includes reports through the customer contact centre.

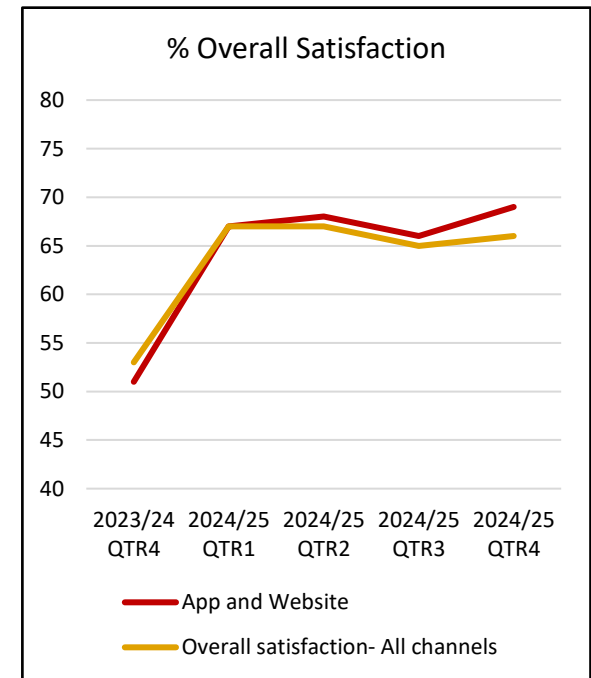
**Chart 2: Satisfaction- Ease of Reporting**



**Chart 3: % satisfied with resolution**



**Chart 4: Overall Satisfaction**



# Ask Tom Telephony



In August 2024, we commenced a trial of Ask Tom Telephony. Ask Tom Telephony is designed to answer the more routine, straightforward and everyday queries, which can then free up Contact Centre Advisors to deal with more complicated enquiries and issues. If Tom cannot answer a customer enquiry, it will transfer the call through to an advisor.

Ask Tom Telephony was expected to be able to handle around 30% of enquiries providing customers with links to the information they require on our website and were requested also providing these links by text message. In practice Ask Tom is consistently handling upwards of 39% of customer enquiries without needing to pass them through to an advisor, this equates to 21,834 calls being handled by Ask Tom from its launch in August 2024 until end of March 2025. This has significantly reduced the average wait time for a call to be answered, cut from average 72 seconds to just 41 seconds. Around 26% of enquiries are

outside of normal office hours – and growing. The out of hours service, is one that the Council was not able to offer until Ask Tom Telephony was introduced.

Whilst the introduction of this technology has seen positive performance improvements, we recognise that experiences were initially mixed, and it represents a change to some regular customers. We are therefore continuously reviewing customer interactions to make sure that the Ask Tom knowledge base is developed and where we have identified gaps or can make an improvement based on customer feedback we've been doing so. We remain committed to continuous improvement.

Some of the most recent updates and improvements include;

- Introduced a new welcome message which reassures and clarifies to customers that they will be transferred to an advisor if Tom is unable to address their enquiry
- Refining the knowledge base meaning Tom can respond to a wider range of leisure, school transport and blue badges inquiries particularly
- Improving how Tom transfers calls to sites or services outside their opening hours to help manage customer's calls.
- Working closely with service areas to review Tom's knowledge base and understand the impact and accessibility of Tom on specific customer groups



- Tom has also been trained to recognise local words and phrases better, for example it now understands that 'Ab-Dab' refers to Abraham Darby
- We're working to develop a better way to capture customer satisfaction with Tom, so we can continue to monitor and improve the service we provide
- Removal of the second clarification question. Tom will now transfer a customer through to the appropriate team if it cannot understand the question on the first attempt
- Expansion of auto escalation keywords which connect the customer directly to an advisor if certain words are used that suggest the call is either urgent or relating to an area where Tom would have difficulty answering a question.

Our Mystery Customers have been involved in testing Ask Tom Telephony from the outset, testing the system before it went live and on a further three occasions since it was introduced. They continue to be engaged as we work to further improve performance.

On each occasion to date Mystery Customers have been positive about the system confirming the following scoring

- Overall satisfaction rate of **87%**
- Ease of using Ask Tom Telephony of **98%**



***"Do you need help, information or advice from Telford and Wrekin council? If so, use the new service call Voice Tom. It's a completely automated service which operates both within and outside of business hours and is very easy to use. It also confirms the advice or answers given by text message which contain links to the council website for your detailed perusal."***

**Mystery Customer**

During the year the Council has received 31 complaints involving Ask Tom Telephony. All have been investigated and just two of these complaints were upheld.

# You said, We did

Our vision is to work with our customers to develop quality services that are accessible to all and to make every contact count. Feedback plays a vital role in our continuous development to make our customer service of the highest standard. Feedback is received via complaints, enquiries, through our Customer Insight Programme and from instant, real-time QR code feedback surveys, which have been introduced into many of our buildings - including libraries and leisure centres. Please find below some of this feedback from 2024/25 and the actions that we have taken as a result.

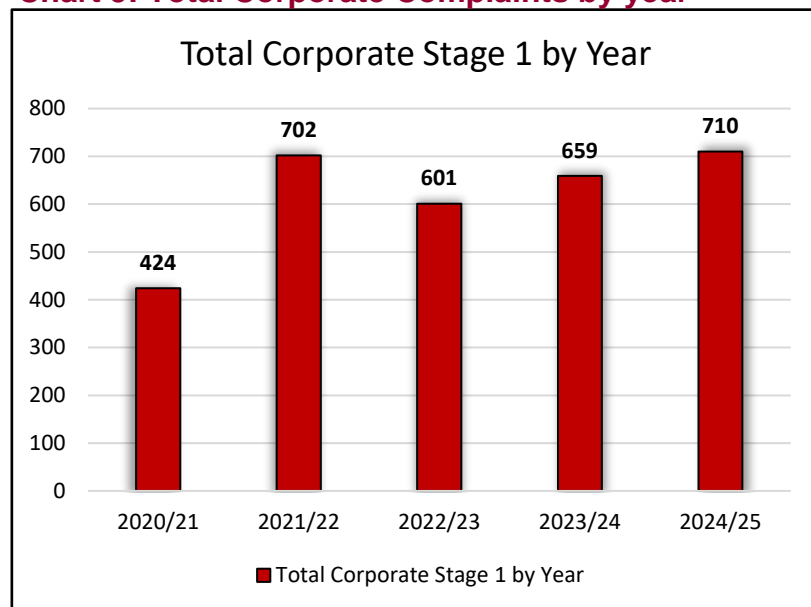
You said	We did
A virtual exercise class at Wellington Leisure Centre was delayed due to an issue with the virtual system.	The issue with the timing of the virtual cycle class has been addressed with the Council's independent system Fitbox which connects the virtual classes via the internet.
A Mystery Customer suggested that information on the website regarding Hartshill Park is updated to confirm availability of car parking	Additional car park information has been added to the Council's webpages
Some of the map signage at Apley Park was dirty, particularly at the North and West entrance	The signs have now been cleaned
Aspirations members were unable to book onto a class at Wellington Leisure Centre.	A waiting list functionality has been added to the booking system. Members can now join a waiting list if the class is full.
SEND Post 16 communication needs improving.	Updated <a href="#">Glossary of Terms</a> , with links direct into content on the SEND Local offer. We have recommended Post 16 providers issue monthly communication via email and face to face meetings. We have engaged with post 16 providers as part of a SENCO network meetings.

For further examples of 'You said, We did' please visit [www.telford.gov.uk/yousaidwedid](http://www.telford.gov.uk/yousaidwedid), and [You Said, We Did - SEND - Local offer](#). Additional examples of improvements that have been made following complaints can be found from page 31 of this report.

# Corporate Stage One Complaints 2024/25

In the year 2024/25, there were 710 corporate Stage One complaints (those dealt with by more than one service simultaneously are counted as a single complaint) from 658 complainants. This is a 7% increase on 2023/24.

**Chart 5: Total Corporate Complaints by year**



Of these 710 complaints, 93 were escalated to Stage Two of our procedure and 11 were the subject of Local Government & Social Care Ombudsman (LGSCO) enquiries (please note that some of these may have been for Stage One complaints prior to 2023/24). One corporate complaint was subject to a detailed investigation, one case remained outstanding with the LGSCO on 31 March 2025. 9 cases were not investigated by the LGSCO.

Stage	Number of complaints
One	710
Two	91
LGSCO	11

For further information regarding Stage Two complaints, please see page 30.

For further information regarding Local Government & Social Care Ombudsman enquiries, please see page 34.

During the year, 7 Stage 1 complaints were refused (were not accepted as complaints), this is because of reasons including that they were subject to court proceedings or a Tribunal process. One complaint was refused as it was related to historic matters. All cases were provided with the details of the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman.

40 further complaints were appropriately redirected because they were for other organisations including, Police, Wrekin Housing Group, Schools and Telford Town Centre owners.

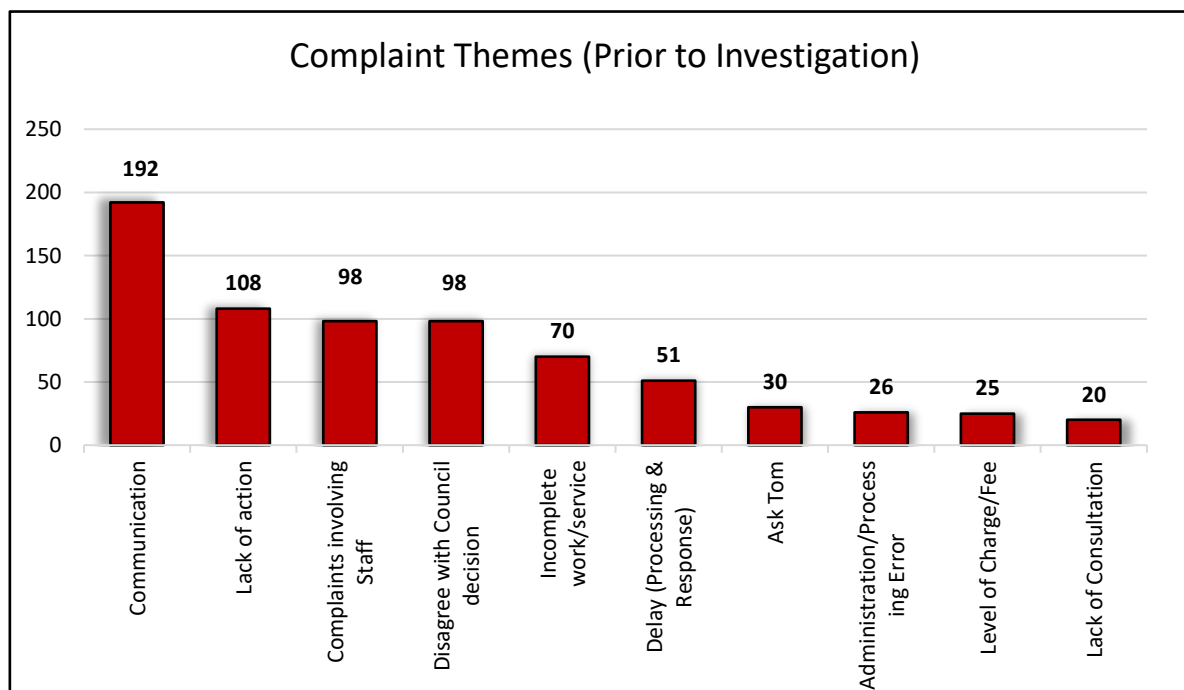
### Customer Access Channels and Digital Contact (Stage One Corporate Complaints):

Complaint channel	Number of complaints
Email	180
Web form	316
Telephone	191
Letter	19
In Person	4
<b>Total</b>	<b>710</b>

In 2024/25, 70% of corporate complaints were received via a digital access channel. While a small reduction on 23/24 this is still the preferred way for customers to make complaints. The number of customers raising a complaint via telephone has increased this year by 22% indicating the importance of continuing to provide an omnichannel service.

### Complaint Themes:

Chart 6: Corporate complaint themes 2024/25



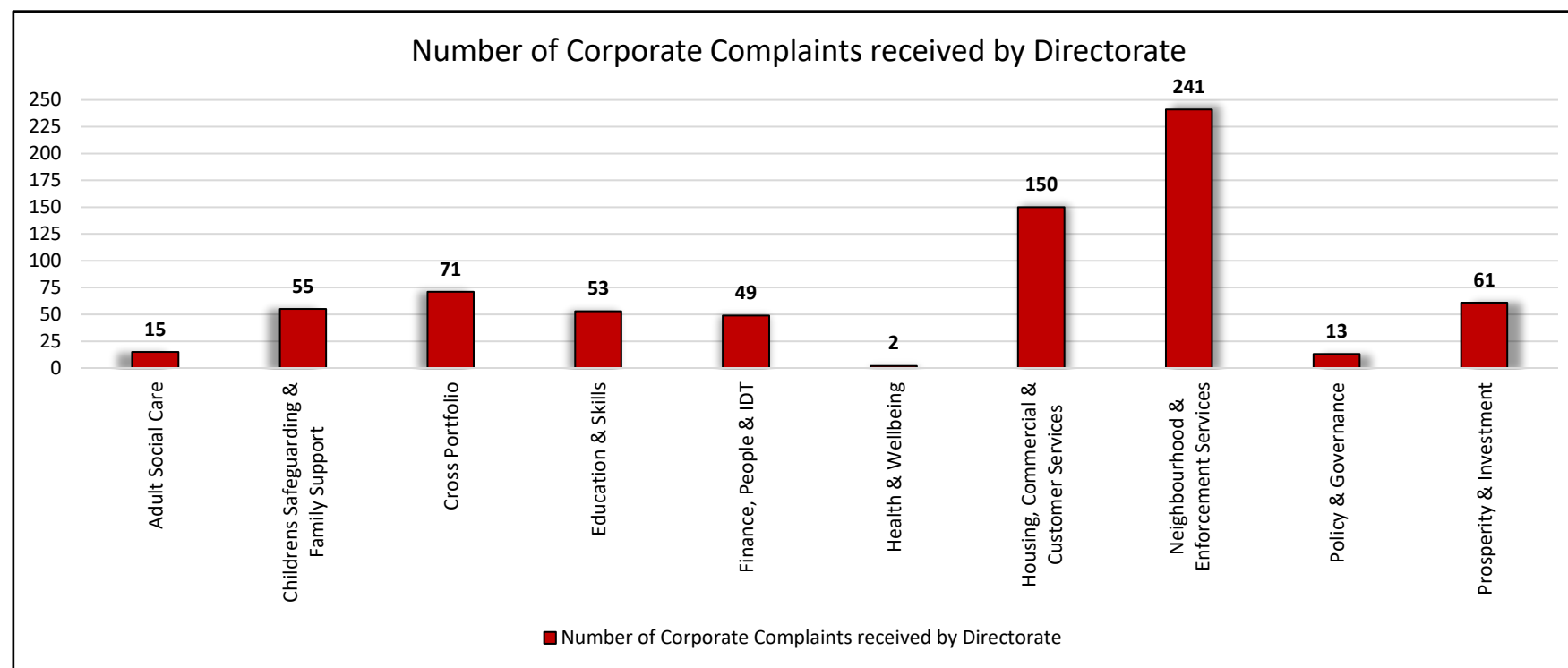
This chart shows the top 10 complaint themes for 2024/25 recognising that some complaints have multiple themes. Communication and lack of action were the most prevalent themes, although this has reduced during 2024/25. However, there is more work to be done in this area.

From May 2024 the Policy and procedure for complaints involving Child Sexual Exploitation has been combined into the corporate complaint procedure. No complaints were received relating to Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) during 2024/25. For more information please see our reference guide on 'How we respond to complaints involving Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)' which can be found here [Complaints procedures - Telford & Wrekin Council](#).

18 Complaints were received that related to discrimination (1 Age, 7 Race, 10 Disability), these complaints were investigated and not upheld. 7 complaints were raised regarding accessibility during the year, two of which were upheld, and the Council has completed improvements.

Further analysis of upheld themes can be found later in this report at page 25.

**Chart 7: Number of Corporate Complaints received by directorate**





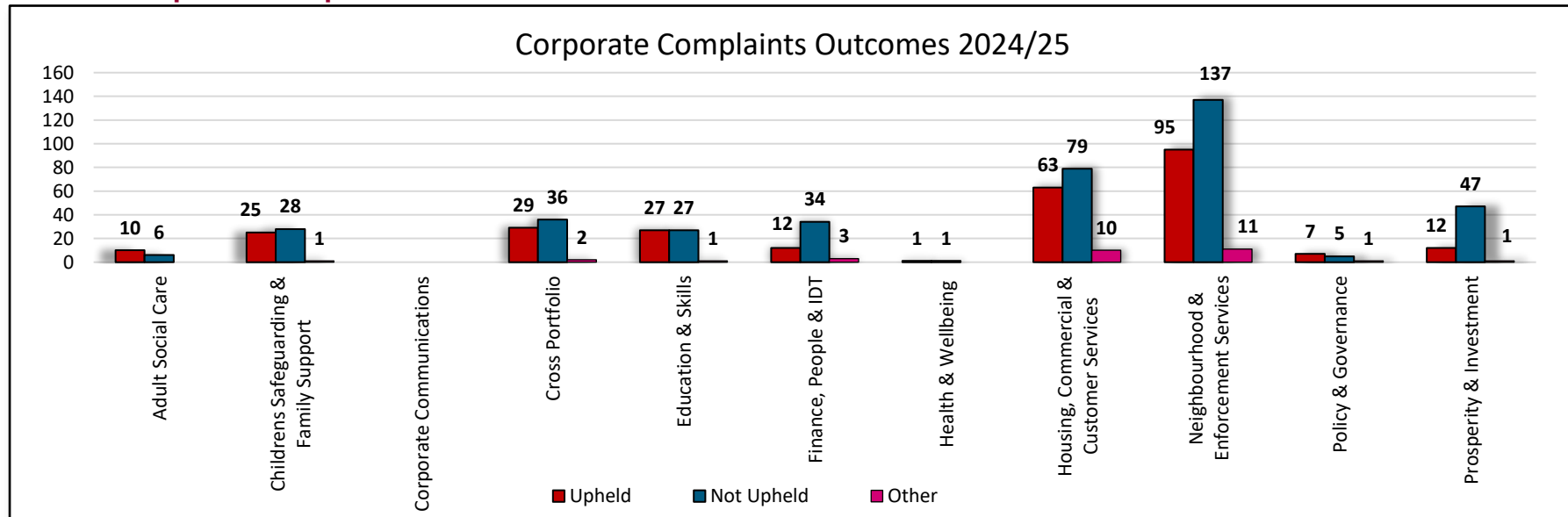
Complaints have increased across all services with the exception of Education & Skills and Health and Wellbeing. The number received by Neighbourhood and Enforcement Services (241) has remained the same as 2023/24. It remains the area where the highest number of complaints are received but given the huge number of customer interactions that take place through Waste, Highways, Grounds Maintenance, Public Protection, Community Safety and Enforcement, this figure is very low. The second highest number of complaints were received by Housing, Commercial and Customer Services (150) this is a newly combined directorate and therefore cannot be compared with previous years. This directorate also handled a very large number of customer interactions including through Leisure Services, Events, Housing and Customer Services. The number of complaints that required investigation across all directorates increased from 46 last year to 71 during the year. However, complaints received continue to represent a very small percentage against the volume of interactions across the directorates and the council as a whole.

## Stage One Complaint outcomes

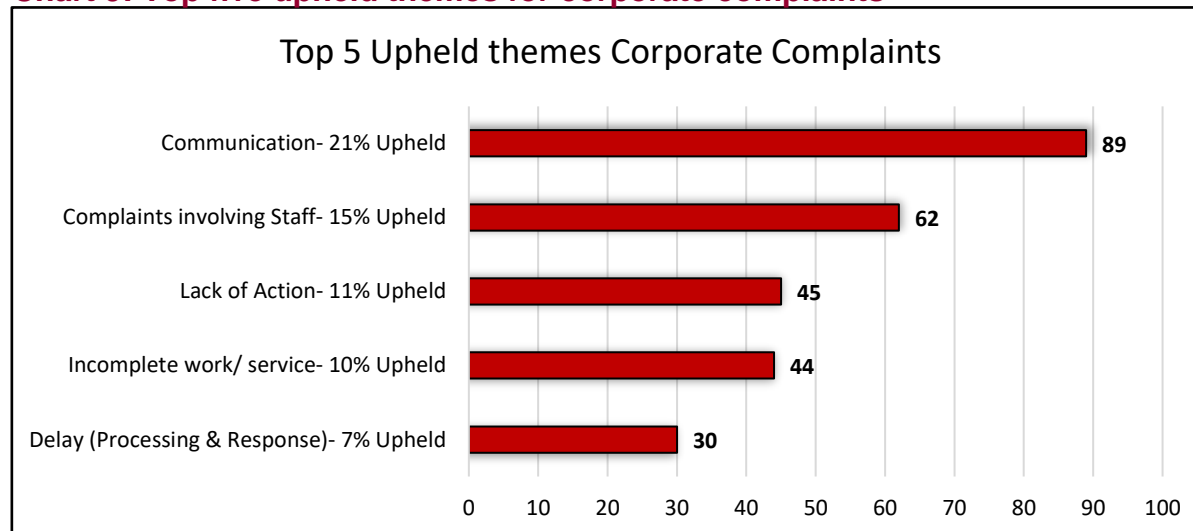
Of the 711 Stage One complaints responded to in the year, 40% (281) were upheld, this is where services acknowledged that they could have done better. The figure for upheld complaints has reduced since last year. 56% (400) were not upheld, 4% of complaints were either withdrawn or resolved by the service before the complaint was processed.

The highest number of upheld complaints were in Neighbourhood & Enforcement Services (95) and Housing, Commercial and Customer Services (63). This is not unexpected given that these directorates responded to the highest number of complaints. The highest percentage of upheld complaints by directorate were in Adult Social Care (63%) which upheld 10 of the 16 complaints received.

The outcomes by directorate can be seen in the following chart. This has been broken down into upheld, not upheld and other. 'Other' can include service resolved, dealt with through courts, out of jurisdiction or withdrawn.

**Chart 8: Corporate complaint outcomes 2024/25**

The top five upheld themes identified corporately at Stage One were:

**Chart 9: Top five upheld themes for corporate complaints**

281 complaints were upheld, some complaints had multiple issues. Across the upheld complaints there were 427 upheld issues.

Please note: For the purpose of this report the percentages upheld is displayed as a percentage of the upheld issues 427.

The top five upheld themes include:

**Communication** was the most prevalent theme across services. The concerns raised included.

- Failure to transfer to the correct service or completing call backs
- Incorrect and incomplete information provided during calls
- Customers not updated regarding delays, or on the outcomes of decisions
- Contacts details not provided to customers and out of office not applied whilst officer away
- Inadequate communication regarding meetings and following meetings,
- Inadequate internal communication
- Calls dropping on call centre due to a technical issue

Reminders have been issued to officers to ensure that they keep customers updated and services have made changes to procedures. There will be ongoing monitoring of telephone calls to ensure a high standard of customer service.

**Complaints involving Staff** represented 15% of the complaints upheld, a slight increase on 2023/24. Concerns included timekeeping and how staff spoke to customers as well as some concerns with conduct of contractors and drivers.

The issues highlighted for the Council's contractors, have been picked up via contract management processes and others via the individual services. In all cases an apology was given, and ongoing monitoring of specific concerns are in place.

**Incomplete work/service** was a theme within 11% of the complaints upheld this is an increase on the 9% in 2023/24. This issue crossed many different services. Cases included failure by contractors to return and complete work, failure to complete work to agreed standard, and where Job closures had not been completed.

Contractor issues were raised in contract meetings for ongoing monitoring; contractors have returned to complete works. In the cases upheld an explanation and apology was given.

**Lack of Action** was a theme within 10% of the complaints upheld, a reduction on the 12% in 2023/24. The issues included delays in response/ action resulting in perceived lack of action as well as failures to provide advice reviews or referrals to other services.

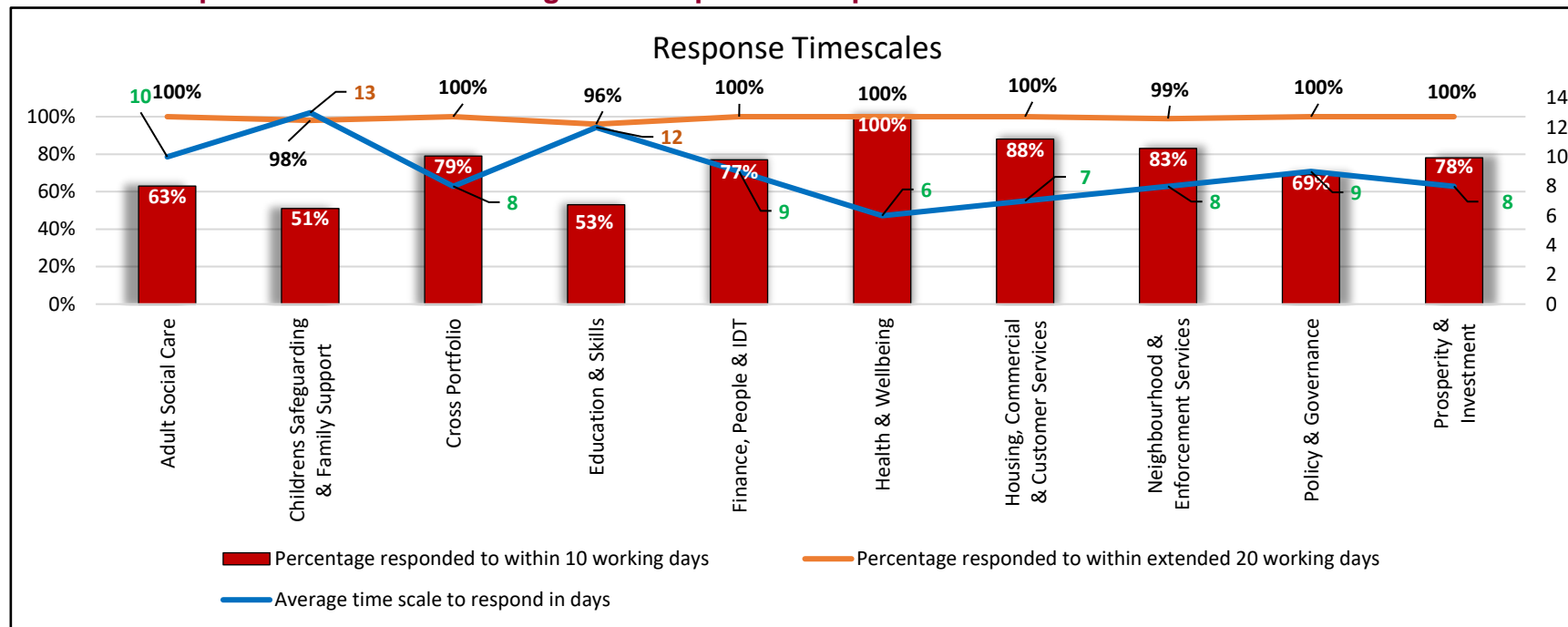
There were no trends with the theme reported across all Directorates. It is noted that this issue is linked to lack of communication which often results in complaints of lack of action. In the cases upheld, an explanation, apology and service were provided. Issues with contractors have been picked up via contract management processes.

**Delay (Processing & Response)** was a theme within 7% of the complaints upheld and an increase on the 4% reported in 2023/24. This issue crossed many different services and included delays in sharing minutes from meetings, responding to enquiries from customers, processing payments, invoices and applications for services. In the cases upheld an explanation and apology was given, and the service was provided.

## Timescales for responses at Stage One

With effect from 16 May 2024 the Council became an early adopter of the Ombudsman's new Complaint handling code effectively reducing the response target for stage one corporate complaints from 15 to 10 days. This may be extended in exceptional circumstances by a further 10 working days.

During 2024/25 the Council has responded to corporate complaints in an average of 8 days, which is well within the 10-working day timescale and an improvement on the 10-day average achieved in 2023/24. Since 16 May 2024 84% of responses have been issued within 10 working days.

**Chart 10: Response timescales for Stage One corporate complaints**

The following chart shows the % of stage one complaints responded too by Directorate meeting the 10 day and extended target, and the average number of days taken.

The data indicates that, given the early adoption of the target in the main, directorates are showing strong performance in meeting the corporate timescale.

Our local target is to respond to 90% of corporate complaints within 10 working days, we will continue to work towards this target. This year Health & Wellbeing (100%) with other Directorates including the two receiving the highest number of customer contacts and complaints, Housing, Commercial & Customer Services (88%), and Neighbourhood & Enforcement Services (83%), performed strongly.

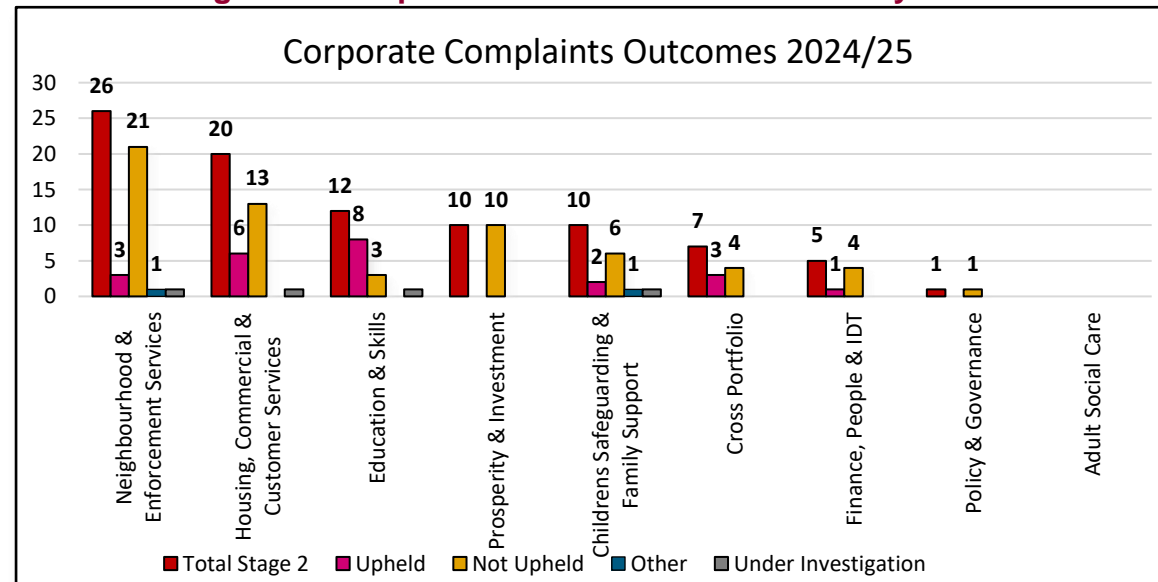


Since the introduction of the complaint handling code 4 complaints were responded to outside of the 20-working day maximum timescale all of which were sent within 22 working days which is a significant improvement on the 26 that exceeded the 20 working days timescale in 2023/24. Reasons for exceeding the maximum timescale included, complex cases and staff absence. In each case the complainant was updated throughout the process and also provided the details for the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman. No complaints handled under the Housing Ombudsman Schemes code exceeded the 20-working timescale, for more information on these complaints please see page 35.

## Corporate Stage Two complaints

During 2024/25, 91 Corporate Stage One complaints progressed to Stage Two of the process. This represents a 30% increase on the 70 that progressed in 2023/24. 87 Stage two investigations have been completed, there are 4 stage two corporate complaints that were still under investigation on 31 March 2025.

**Chart 11: Stage Two complaints received and outcomes by directorate**



A higher volume of Stage Two complaints was seen in Neighbourhood & Enforcement Services (26). Five of the Cross Portfolio cases were also related to Neighbourhood & Enforcement areas including Transport, Neighbourhood Enforcement and Grounds and Cleansing. This is an increase on the 15 received in 2023/24. Housing, Commercial and Customer Services received 20 stage 2 complaints as this is a new combined directorate there is no comparison for previous years. Health & Wellbeing and Adult Social Care were the only directorates that did not have a case escalated to Stage Two in 2024/25.

In line with the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman's complaint handling code the timescales at stage 2 investigations changed with effect from 16 May 2024 reducing to 20 to 40 working days from 25 to 65 working days in 23/24.

No stage 2 complaints were refused with all 87 receiving a full investigation and response. 26% were upheld with an average of 31 working days taken to complete a full investigation. This is a decrease on the 43 days taken in 2023/24. Two particularly complex and exceptional cases exceeded the 40 working day target.

## Learning and outcomes from Corporate Complaints

Complaints are a valuable source of information that can help to identify recurring or underlying problems and potential improvements.

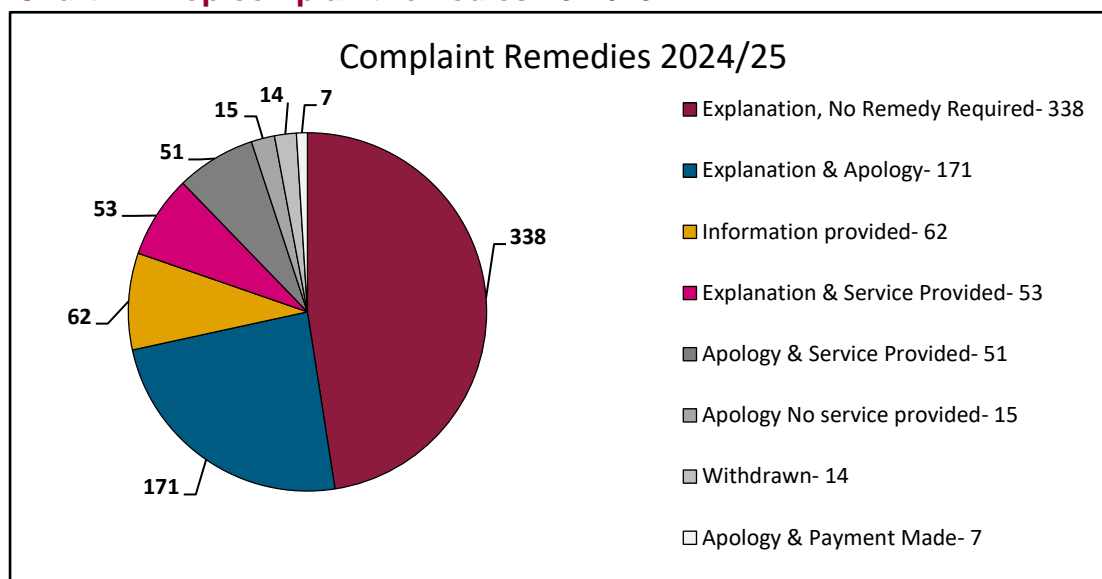
Lessons can usually be learnt from complaints that were upheld, but also in some instances where no fault was found but the Council recognises that improvements to services can still be made.

Occasionally, during an investigation, issues will be identified that need to be addressed over and above the original complaint. The Customer Relationship team will then work with services to ensure that they address the "bigger picture" so that that residents receive the best possible service from the Council.

### **Remedial actions taken from resolved complaints at Stage One in 2024/25**

All 285 complaints where fault was found have been reviewed by the Customer Relationship team to ascertain actions taken by the services involved and to identify any wider learning to avoid such issues recurring in the future.

Remedial action can include an apology or carrying out overdue work or wider actions that may affect a number of customers. On some occasions, the fault has already been remedied - so the complaints process is used to ensure that the appropriate action has been taken.

**Chart 12: Top complaint remedies 2024/25**

Of the remedies recorded against corporate complaints in 2024/25:

- 48% only required and explanation and no remedy was required
- 24% were provided with an explanation and an apology
- 9% were provided with information
- 7% had both an explanation and a service was provided

## Positive Improvements

Throughout the year, we record the learning identified from each complaint to build up a picture of common themes or trends. Learning from corporate complaints is considered alongside that from statutory complaints as part of our quality assurance activities.

Below are some examples of positive changes that have resulted from learning from complaints:

- A recording error for litter bins in the reporting system has been rectified and contractors have been made aware.
- There will be closer and more timely communication with Special Educational Needs (SEND) out of borough placements and the families of young persons placed in them to ensure they understand processes and timescales. There will also be better explanation with regard to decision making processes.
- Reminder to staff that full details are obtained when processing a change of address, including cross referencing the landlord details to ensure the correct property has been identified, before closing down Council Tax Liability.

- Regular monitoring of calls to the contact centre will be undertaken to ensure the customer service, advice and information, as well as the overall call quality is of sufficient standard, this also allows us to identify and address any issues identified.
- Operators of bus routes have completed monitoring of journeys to ensure that standards are maintained. Drivers have also been reminded of their responsibilities. We will continue to engage with the operators to hold them to account and ensure the journeys they perform under contract are completed safely.
- A new process has been introduced to ensure that Adult Social Care brokerage is alerted to urgent placement referrals without delay.
- Learning Disability and Autism will be monitoring any support plans at weekly peer review to ensure there are no unnecessary details which could result in delays in payments made.
- Personal Transport Budget contracts have been reviewed to ensure that the wording is clear on what the budget is related to and what it can and cannot be used for.
- Operatives at the Housing hold recycling centre have been trained on the correct approach when accommodating accessibility at the centre.
- The Neighbourhood Enforcement Team have refreshed their code of conduct and customer service training as part of their learning and development commitment.
- The SEND team will ensure that they consult with parents and carers before placement decisions are made.
- At ticketed outdoor events there will be a dedicated entrance for those with wheelchair accessible tickets and a steward will be positioned within the section to ensure that space is made available for access and wheelchair users. Stewards will be assigned to escort or guide these customers to the viewing area.
- The Google version of the My Telford App was tested for the subcategories fix. The changes have now deployed to a new version of the MyTelford App for Apple and Android.



**"I've been very impressed by how my complaint has been handled and how I've been kept informed throughout the process, and I'm, very satisfied by the outcome."**

- The developers of the new Transport system have launched a way to plan the Travel Assistance taking customers previous assistance into account. This will help give the Transport Team the full picture when planning the Travel Assistance for young people.
- Development Management are exploring new process as part of the council's online system to ensure that pre-application enquiries can only be closed down by authorising officers, ensuring that enquiries remain in officers existing work trays until these have been completed.

The following actions are currently being monitored until completion.

- Family Hubs are in the process of reviewing communication for separated parents and will be developing a practice guidance that is agreed through family support, and this will be completed by the 1 September 2025 in co-production with parents with lived experience of working with Family Hubs. DWP have also agreed funding for new family hub practitioners to undergo training or triple transitions to support parents who are separating or divorced.
- The Social Worker guidance will be updated to reflect that a provisional driving license can be applied for under an alternative address, if necessary.

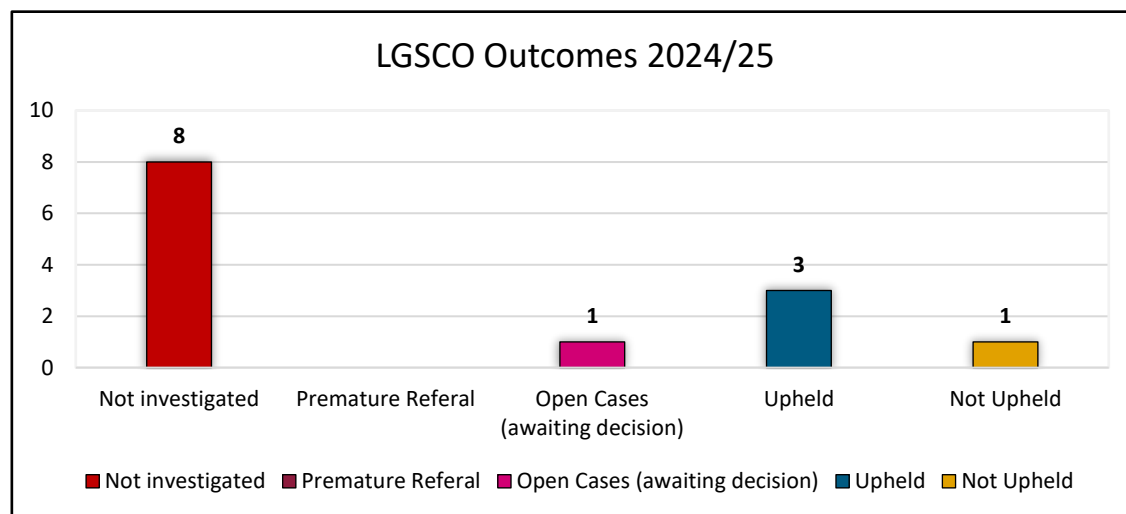
**“Thank you...for your patience with taking the complaint and your empathy and kindness, you were great and so helpful.”**



## Local Government & Social Care Ombudsman enquiries

The Local Government & Social Care Ombudsman (LGSCO) has the authority to investigate complaints when it appears that our own process has not resolved them. Complainants can refer their complaint to the LGSCO at any time, although the Ombudsman will refer them back to us if they have not been through our process first. In exceptional circumstances, the Ombudsman will look at things earlier; this usually being dependant on the vulnerability of the person concerned. During the last year 30 new enquiries were forwarded to the LGSCO. Six new enquiries related to statutory complaints which are detailed in the Adult Statutory and Children's Statutory Complaint Reports.



**Chart 13: Local Government & Social Care Ombudsman Outcomes**

The LGSCO determined it would not investigate 8 of the corporate matters referred to them. Two corporate decisions remained outstanding on 31 March 2024, the decisions have been received during this year and both cases were upheld these are included in the figures detailed in chart 12.

The LGSCO has completed two detailed investigations during the year, one was upheld, and one was not upheld. One corporate complaint remained under investigation at 31 March 2025.

All the recommendations made by the LGSCO have been implemented. More information regarding the Council's performance and LGSCO decisions can be found at: [www.lgo.org.uk/information-centre](http://www.lgo.org.uk/information-centre).

## Complaints from Council Tenants

In September 2020 Telford and Wrekin Council became a registered provider of social housing. As a registered provider we currently have 219 properties.

With effect from 1 April 2024 the procedure for managing complaints from these tenants was incorporated into the Council's Corporate Complaints Policy and Procedure in accordance with the Housing Ombudsman's Service complaint handling code.

During 2024/25 we received **5** complaints from our tenants.

**5** of the complaints escalated to stage 2 of the procedure  
**0** of the complaints were the subject of the Housing Ombudsman Scheme enquiries  
**0** complaints from tenants were refused during the year

### Complaint Themes:

During 2024/25 there were no specific complaint themes. Issues raised related to access to loft space, windows and water ingress, ventilation and anti-social behaviour from a neighbour.

### Complaint Outcomes:

Of the 5 complaints received at Stage1

**2** complaints were upheld, **2** complaints were not upheld, **1** was withdrawn

The upheld issues related too,

- **Access the loft area-** the tenancy agreement did not specifically state that lofts hatches are locked in our properties, where the lofts are not boarded, as they are not suitable for storage. Tenancy agreements have now been amended to state that there is no access permitted to loft spaces.
- **Windows and water Ingress-** An inspection noted that the window to the external washroom area had deteriorated considerably. The window and weather bar were replaced.

Of the **5** complaints investigated at stage 2, one was upheld. This was related to the an inspection that had indicated no evidence of water ingress from the roof but proposed this be monitored. Following this monitoring remedial works have been completed.

### Timescales for responses:

The Council's Complaints policy for Council tenants outlines that a complaint at stage one of the procedure should be responded to within 10 working days. 100% of stage 1 and stage 2 complaints were addressed within timescales with average response time at stage 1 of 3.8 working days.

No cases were escalated to the Housing Ombudsman Service (HOS) and there were no findings of non-compliance with the HOS Complaint Handling Code in 2024/25.

The Tenant Satisfaction and Complaint Report 2024-25, which includes the HOS Self-Assessment 2025 and the Housing Management Board response can be found published on our website at [Complaints and compliments annual reports - Telford & Wrekin Council](#).

## Oversight and support provided by the Customer Relationship Team

The Customer Relationship team continues to support service areas to both manage and learn from complaints. The key services they offer are:

1. To manage and support the Council's approach to customer intelligence, ensuring we robustly manage and learn from our interactions with customers
2. Perform in-depth and snapshot reviews of our services, our key physical front doors and digital front door
3. Provide services with complaints advice and support, including support with persistent and unreasonable complainants
4. Provide reports on the quality of complaint responses and make recommendations for improvement
5. Act as a critical friend to challenge service practice
6. Provide advice on drafting comprehensive responses to complaint investigations
7. Continue to escalate overdue complaints to Directors
8. Provide regular dashboards/ complaints samples to Directors, and performance is reported monthly to the Senior Management Team

# Customer Relationship Team priorities for 2025/26

During 2025/26, the Customer Relationship team will focus on a number of key priorities:

- Supporting all services to meet new response timescales in line with the Ombudsman Service's complaint handling codes
- Continue to drive an improvement in the percentage of complaints responded to within timescales from 87% to 90%
- Complete all necessary self-assessments and providing dashboards of performance data to senior management to drive continuous performance improvement
- Continue to support service improvement through the Customer Insight Programme and utilising our Mystery Customer Volunteers
- Work to maintain low levels of maladministration findings by the Local Government & Social Care Ombudsman & Housing Ombudsman Service
- To develop a new customer service training package
- Support the delivery of our new Customer Service Strategy being launched in July 2025



# Adult Statutory Complaints Report

## Improving our Customer Experience

### Annual Report 2024/25



# Contents

Purpose of the report.....	3
Introduction.....	3
Highlights 2024/25.....	4
Adult Statutory Complaints received in 2024/25.....	5
Themes of upheld complaints.....	8
Timescales for responses.....	9
Learning and outcomes from Adult Statutory Complaints.....	11
Other feedback and actions taken to improve services.....	15
Complaints to the Local Government & Social Care Ombudsman.....	17
Concluding comments.....	18
Oversight and Support.....	19
Customer Relationship team priorities for 2025/26.....	19
Appendix.....	20

# Purpose of the Report

- To report statistical information to Members and Officers detailing Telford and Wrekin Council's Adult Social Care complaints from 1 April 2024 to 31 March 2025.
- To provide an open resource to anyone who wishes to understand feedback about local services.
- To outline the key developments and planned improvements to the complaints processes operated by the Council.
- To consider how the learning from complaints can be used to improve the overall customer experience.

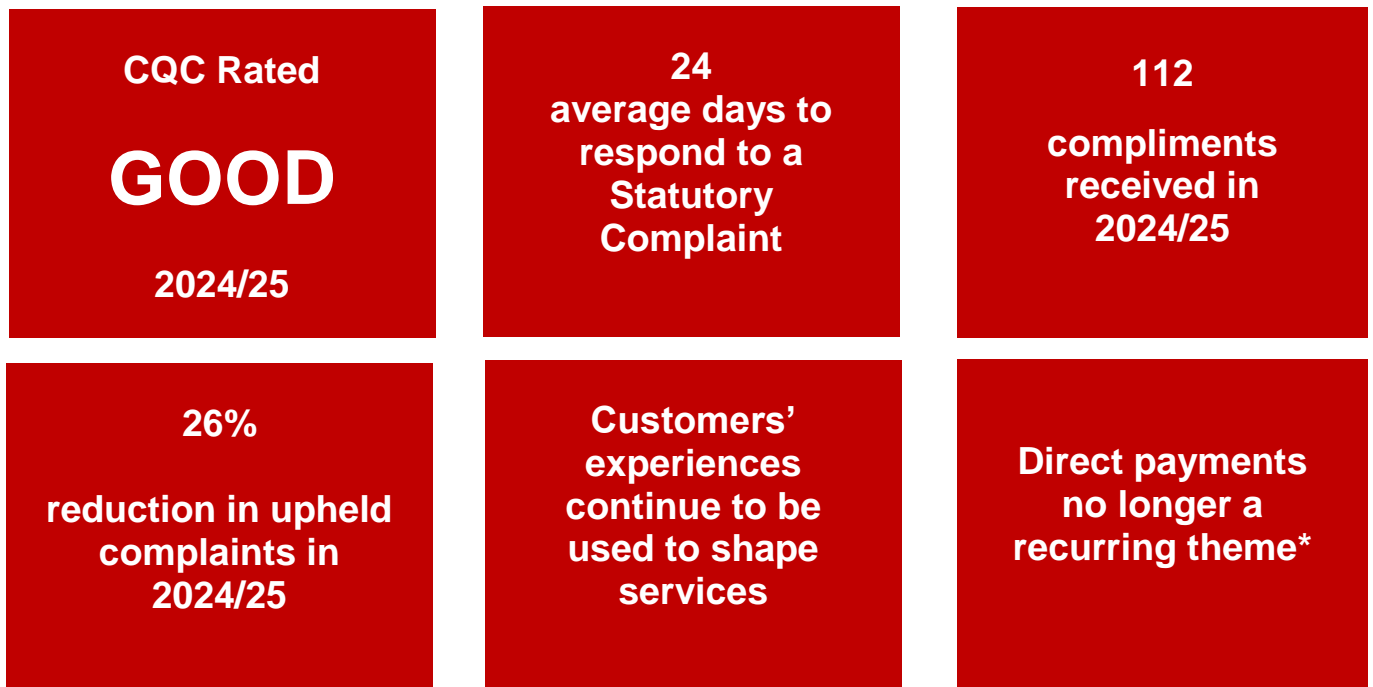
## Introduction

This is the Complaints Manager's Annual Report for Adult Social Care. It is a statutory requirement to prepare an Annual Report each year concerning the complaints activity within Adult Social Care that can be made available to anyone on request. This must:

1. Specify the number of complaints received
2. Specify the number of complaints upheld
3. Specify the number of complaints that we have been informed have been referred to the Local Government & Social Care Ombudsman
4. Summarise:
  - a. The subject matter of the complaints received
  - b. Any matters of general importance arising out of these complaints, or the way in which these complaints were handled
  - c. Any matter where action has been, or is to be, taken to improve services as a consequence of these complaints

This report provides information about complaints made between 1 April 2024 and 31 March 2025 under the Local Authority Social Services and National Health Service Complaints (England) Regulations 2009.

# Highlights 2024/25



\*This was key theme in 2023/24 and it is positive that the improvements made following these complaints have made tangible improvement to service for our customers.

Across Adult Social Care we welcome people's views and ideas to improve experiences and outcomes for people with care and support needs in Telford and Wrekin. Feedback received via complaints, compliments and other sources throughout 2024/25 has provided a valuable opportunity to reflect on what we do well and areas we want to improve. Within Telford and Wrekin, like other areas across the country, there is increasing demand, cost pressures, and uncertainty due to national policy reviews. Against this backdrop, it is positive to see an increase in compliments, where individuals took the time to share their experiences, what they valued most about our service and the difference this made to them.

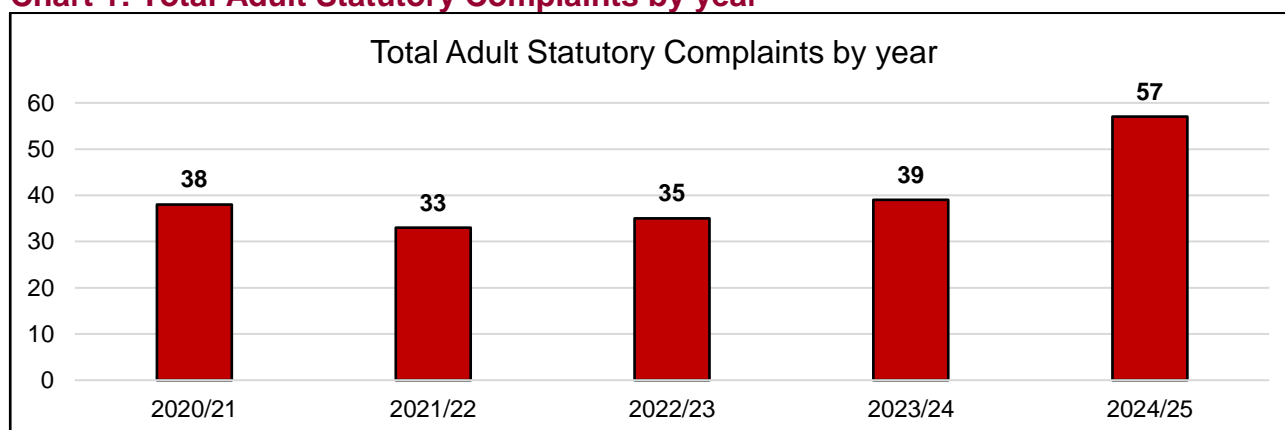
In addition, the Care Quality Commission (CQC) has rated Telford & Wrekin Council as GOOD, in relation to how well we are meeting our statutory responsibilities to ensure people have access to adult social care and support. The CQC report highlighted many key strengths within the Adult Social Care service, including our innovative approach to co-production, engagement, and inclusion, as well as promoting independence, which places community participation at the heart of strategy and service development.

Of the complaints received in 2024/25, fewer were upheld compared to the previous year. The experiences shared have led to a range of positive improvements to our processes and practice as well personal remedies for the individuals involved.

# Adult Statutory Complaints 2024/25

We received 57 Adult Statutory Complaints between 1 April 2024 and 31 March 2025. The chart below compares the number of statutory complaints we have received over the past five years. To provide some context, Adult Social Services have received 8,500 contacts from new people in the year and 2,085 people are receiving long term services. Some cases can be complex, and this is recognised in the complaint handling timescales outlined in the regulations.

**Chart 1: Total Adult Statutory Complaints by year**



There has been an increase in the number of complaints that were formally logged under the statutory complaints process in 2024/25. In 2023/24 39 complaints were received in writing, and therefore formally logged, and a further 55 concerns were resolved under the 24hr resolution process representing 94 concerns/ complaints in total.

In 2024/25 fewer customers raised complaints orally which resulted in more complaints being formally logged rather than resolved under the 24-hour resolution process.

There were 24 oral concerns resolved under the 24-hour resolution process during 2024/25 and therefore were not registered under the statutory procedure in accordance with legislation. This demonstrates an overall reduction in the number of concerns raised during 2024/25, 81 complaints were raised during the year when compared to the 94 received the previous year. The cases resolved within 24hours are also reviewed, and learning identified, and this feedback is used to inform service improvements.

## Customer Access Channels and Digital Contact

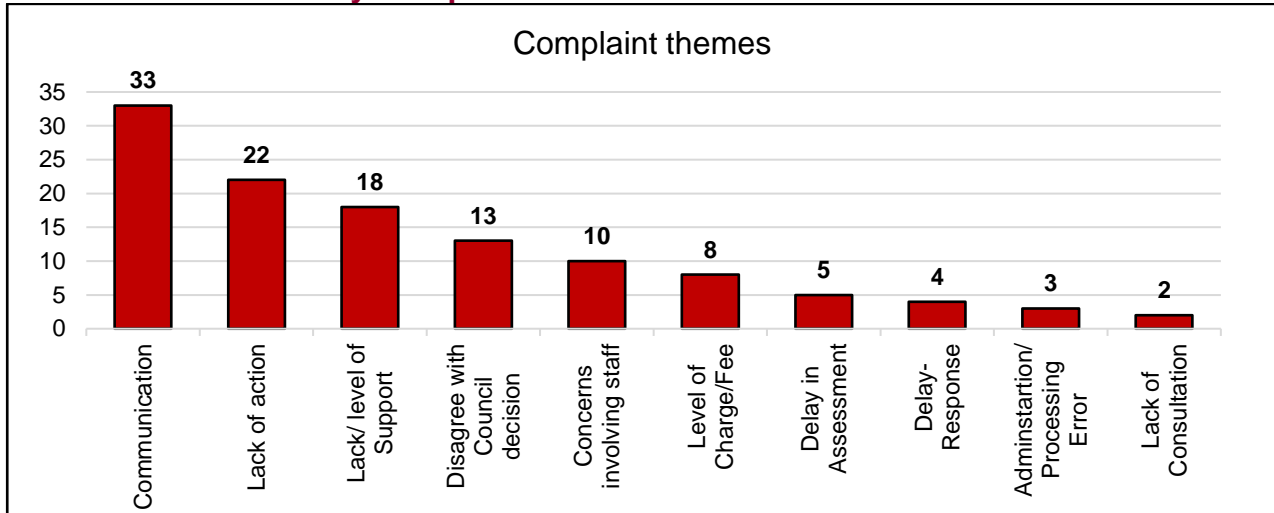
Complainant channel	Number of complaints
Email	30
Web form	15
Telephone	12
<b>Total</b>	<b>57</b>

In 2024/25, 79% of Adult Statutory Complaints were received via a digital access channel, including via our online complaint web form and by email directly to the Customer

Relationship team. This is an increase on the 74% received via these channels in 2024/25, whilst we have seen an increase in customers making contact via digital channels, we continue to ensure that customers can raise concerns via traditional access channels.

## Complaint Themes

**Chart 2: Adult Statutory Complaint themes in 2024/25**



Themes are self-explanatory and give a clear indication of types of concerns raised.

## Complaints received

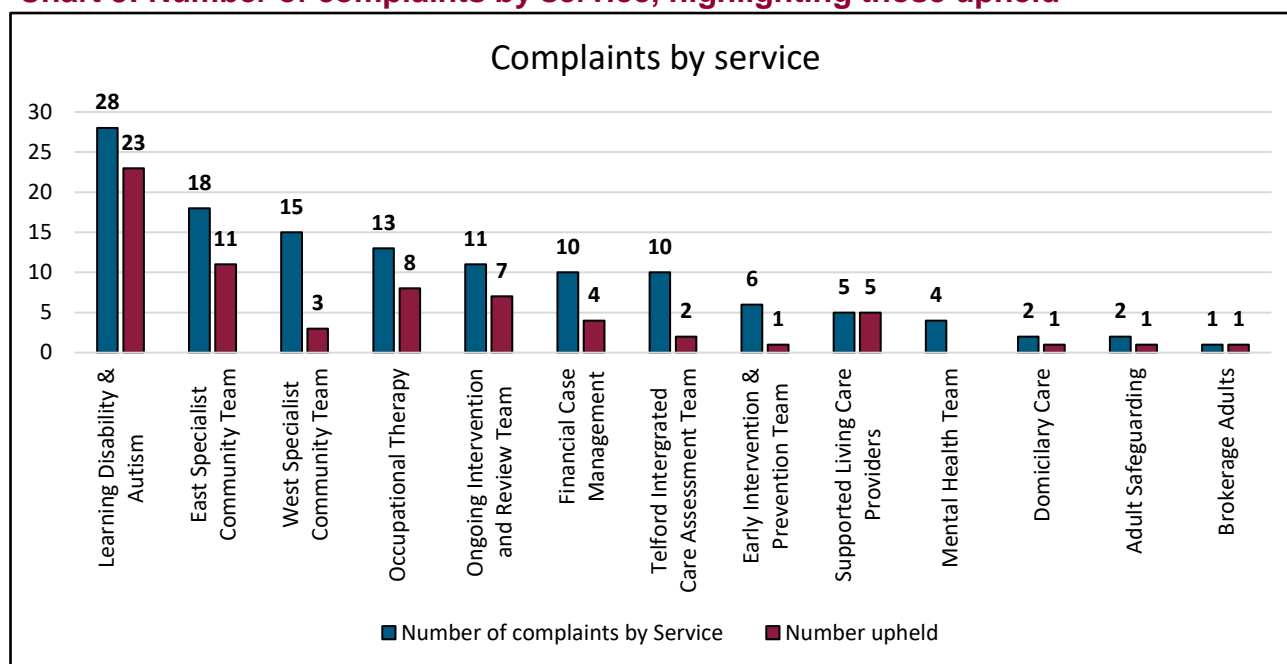
Whilst 57 complaints were received during the year, 57 responses were issued. Of the 57 complaints completed,

- 44% (25) were upheld,
- 44% (25) were not upheld,
- 12% (7) were dealt with via another method.

The chart below includes the number of complaints received by each service. Please note that the number of complaints detailed below is higher than the overall total because some complaints had multiple issues raised with different teams. This chart seeks to show all the services against which issues were raised, meaning that an individual complaint may be counted multiple times within it.

During the year there was also a realignment of the locality teams which saw the East and West Specialist Community Teams transition into two new teams, the Early Intervention & Prevention Team and Ongoing Intervention and Review Team.



**Chart 3: Number of complaints by service, highlighting those upheld**

There were 28 complaints that included issues raised regarding the Learning Disability & Autism Team and of these 23 of these were upheld (82%). Themes included lack of communication from a Social Worker or the team, lack/level of support, lack of action, Level of charge/fee, Delays in assessment and response.

There were 18 complaints received that had an element related to the East Specialist Community Team, 11 of which were upheld (61%). Themes included lack of communication, concerns involving staff, level of support, lack of action, and Administration/ processing error.

There were 13 complaints received that had an element related to the Occupational Therapy Team, 8 of which were upheld (61%). Themes included lack of communication, lack of consultation, issue with equipment and equipment assessments.

There were 11 complaints received that had an element related to the Ongoing Intervention and Review Team, 8 of which were upheld (61%). Themes included delay in making payments, and allocation procedure, disagreements with council decisions, lack of action and concerns involving staff.

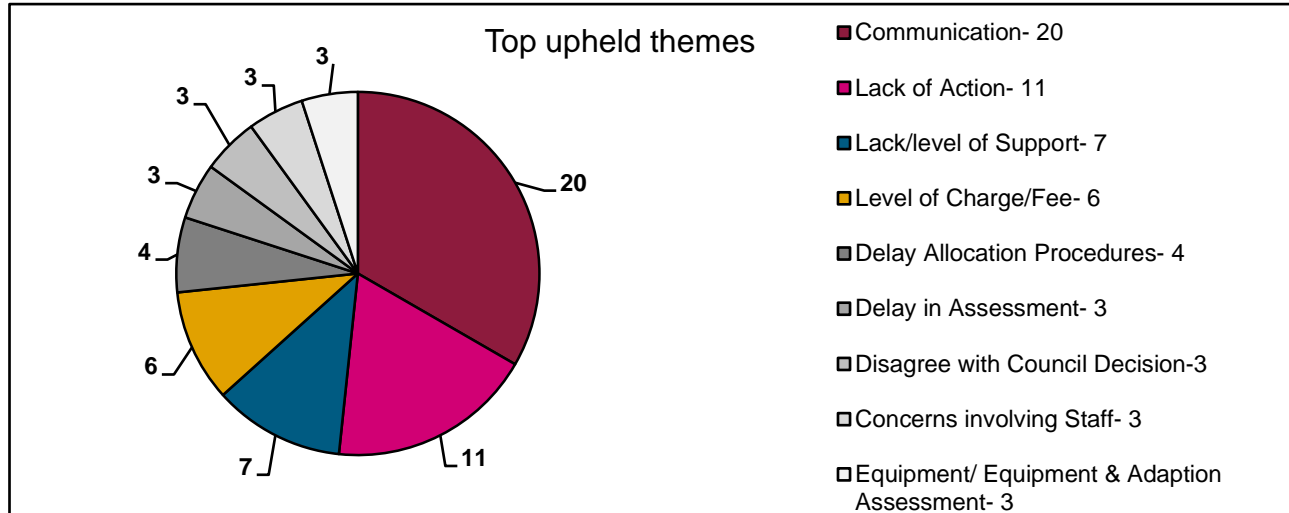
There were 5 complaints that involved care providers of supported accommodation and 2 complaints for a domiciliary care provider, all of which 86% were upheld. Themes included communication, Lack of action, and level of support.

One complaint involved a joint response from the Shrewsbury and Telford NHS Hospital Trust, which involved communication around a discharge, this complaint was found to not be upheld for Telford & Wrekin Council.

# Themes of upheld complaints

Of the 25 upheld complaints, the top themes raised were as detailed in the chart below.

**Chart 4: Upheld themes**



The above categories are self-explanatory and give a clear indication of the overall areas of our service or aspects of our work that had the most upheld complaints. Please note that some themes may be counted twice in the chart above as a complaint may have involved multiple teams and multiple themes.

The chart indicates that communication was a key theme in most complaints, accounting for 20 instances across 17 of the upheld complaints 68%. This covers a variety of concerns including a lack of or inadequate communication from a worker, lack of response to emails, failure to respond to requests made or keep the person or their family/ carers updated on progress.

Lack of Action was a theme in complaints accounting for 11 instances across 9 upheld complaints (36%).

Lack/level of support was a theme in complaints accounting for 7 incidents across 4 upheld complaints (16%)

Charging for Care was also a key theme in complaints accounting for 6 instances across 5 upheld complaints (20%) which includes incorrect invoices being sent, delays in confirming that there would be a financial assessment and that a contribution to fund care would be required and contributions calculation incorrect.

In contrast to the year 2023/24, when Direct Payments (including communication, explanation and processes) had been identified as a theme from complaints and a focus for improvements, no issues arose from complaints received during 2024/25.

# Timescales for responses

The 2009 regulations set a benchmark for all Adult Statutory Complaints to be investigated within six months. When an Adult Statutory Complaint is received, we negotiate a timescale with the complainants, depending on the complexity of the case, this is typically 35 working days. We aim to respond to all Adult Statutory Complaints within a maximum of 65 working days.

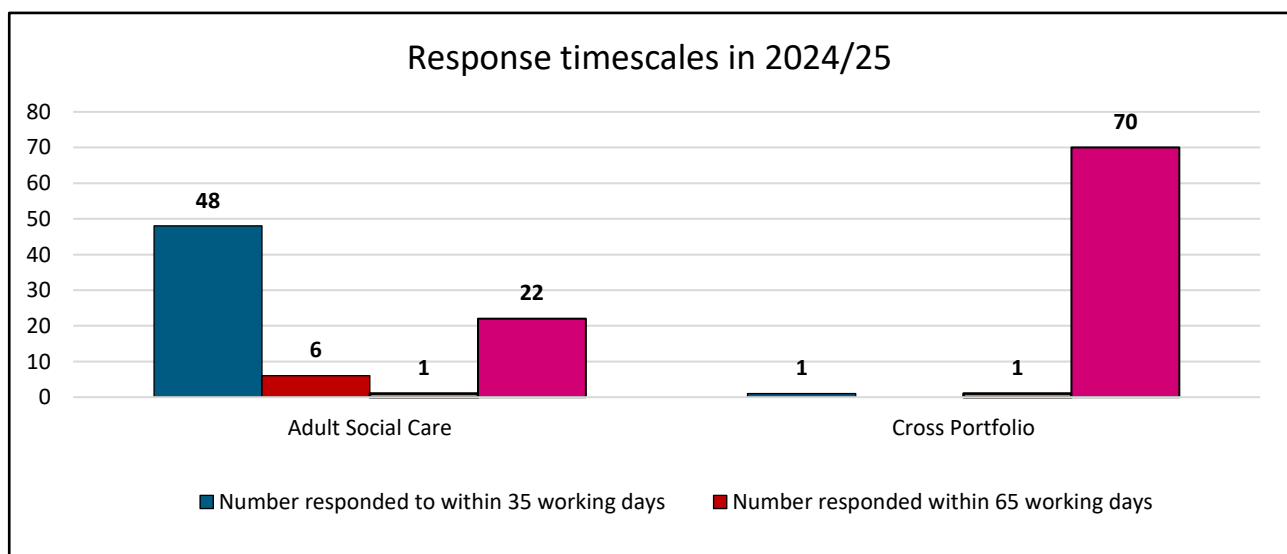
In 2024/25, the average number of working days to respond to an Adult Statutory Complaint across all portfolios was 24 working days. This is a decrease on the average of 29 working days achieved in 2023/24 and significantly lower than the typical 35 working days negotiated for a response.

Adult Social Care took 22 working days to respond to statutory complaints. Two complaints involved cross directorate working, one complaint took 15 working days to respond to and one complaint did exceed the six months outlined in the regulations however this was because it was complex and required external investigation to bring to a conclusion.

Adult Social Care continues to work to maintain good response timescales. Timescales remain significantly lower than past years due to the changes that have been made to the complaint procedure in 2021, which saw the introduction of a negotiated timescale with customers which seeks to better manage customer's expectations. This has also resulted in fewer complaints exceeding the agreed timescale. Additional steps have also been taken at service level to encourage timeliness of responses.

A key function within Adult Social Care is the Assurance and Integration Team, within which the Quality and Complaints Officer supports the complaints management and monitoring processes, alongside the Customer Relationship Team. Complaints are rated based on timescales and allocated to Service Delivery Managers. Performance against timescales continues to be discussed at Leadership Team Meetings. For a breakdown, see the chart below.

**Chart 5: Response timescales at Stage One**



57 complaints have been responded to in year, 49 responses were sent within 35 working days (86%), and 6 further responses were sent within 65 working days and two cases exceeded 65 working days one was sent on day 69 and the other exceeded six months due to the complexity of the case.

## Learning and outcomes from Adult Statutory Complaints

Complaints are a valuable source of information that can help to identify recurring or underlying problems and potential improvements. We know that numbers alone do not tell us everything about attitudes towards complaints and how they are responded to locally. Arguably, it is of greater importance to understand the impact that complaints have had on people and to learn the lessons from them to improve the experience of others.

Lessons can usually be learned from complaints that were upheld, but also in some instances where no fault was found, the Council recognises that improvements to services can still be made.

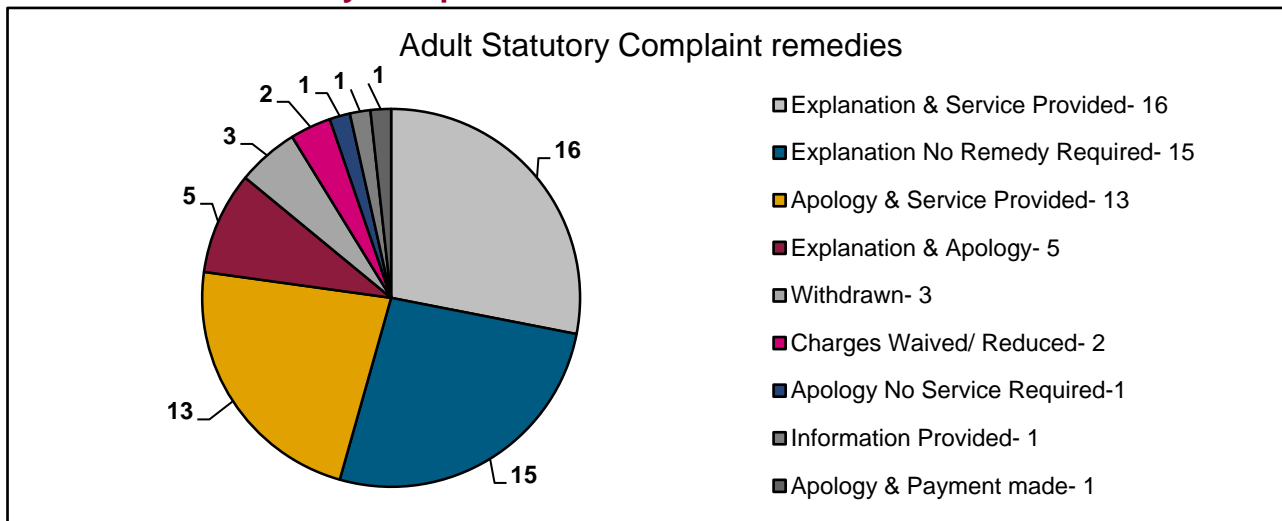
Occasionally, during the course of an investigation, issues will be identified that need to be addressed over and above the original complaint. Working alongside Adult Social Care's Quality and Complaints Officer, the Customer Relationship team will continue to provide daily advice and support to managers around complaints management and resolution, and with responding to representations.

In Adult Social Care, we are committed to achieving improved outcomes through continuous learning and improvement, where people are at the heart of everything we do and have the opportunity to influence and shape the services they receive. A key area of quality assurance is using feedback from people who use our services, their carers and families to understand experiences and shape improvements. We are committed to learning from all feedback, regardless of source, format or process.

Quality Assurance is an integral part of everyday practice within Adult Social Care and measuring the impact of service delivery is central to achieving improved outcomes for adults with care and support needs. Adult Social Care follows an intelligence-led approach of reviewing, reflecting, changing and sharing, ensuring we connect with the right people, learning as we go, and evaluating the difference/impact we have made. This is reflected in the Adult Social Care Quality Framework, of which statutory complaints is a part of.

As part of the Adult Social Care Governance framework, quarterly quality assurance reports are prepared, shared and discussed at the ASC Quality Assurance Delivery Group and subsequently at the ASC Assurance Board. The reports also include a report on 'Feedback from people who use our services, their carers and families' which includes issues identified, areas for reflection and improvement and learning outcomes from complaints, concerns resolved at service level, compliments, comments, enquiries and other sources of feedback. The reports are used to help inform service improvements and development and improve outcomes for people with care and support needs in Telford and Wrekin.

**Chart 6: Adult Statutory Complaint remedies in 2024/25**



Of the remedies recorded against Adult Statutory Complaints in 2024/25:

- 28% were to provide an explanation and a service
- 26% were to provide an explanation where no remedy was provided
- 13% were to provide an explanation or apology and provide a service
- 9% were to provide an explanation and apology

## Positive Improvements

Throughout the year, we record the learning identified from each complaint in order to build up a picture of common themes or trends. Learning from corporate complaints and other feedback about people's experiences is considered alongside that from statutory complaints as part of Adult Social Care quality assurance activities.

Below are examples of positive changes that have resulted from learning from complaints. A range of individual remedies were also completed concerning support plans and assessments, for example, or identifying the best ways of working together and staying in touch.

### Communication with people with care and support needs, family members and unpaid carers

- *Working Together* documents have been embedded in all teams.
- An Adult Portal is being developed which has been coproduced with experts by experience to allow sharing of assessments and documents. Individuals, families and representatives will be able to access and, in the future, add to and amend their own assessments.
- Reminders to teams about effective communication, including sharing information and updates in a timely way.



- Measures put in place to ensure individuals and family/carers are contacted and updated when a worker is on leave (planned or unexpected) and effective handovers are completed.
- Reminders to staff and managers on the importance of ensuring a worker's out of office is on when moving role or leaving the authority so that all those attempting to make contact are aware of the circumstance and provided with alternative contact details.
- Best Practice guidance for Case Summaries on the person's electronic records has been developed (case summaries provide an overview of the person's current situation and identify any ongoing work.
- Reminders to teams about best practice in record keeping.

### **Assessment and support planning**

- Mechanisms reviewed and embedded to ensure a consistent approach to evidence gathering and assessment and reflective discussions with workers and the importance of making clear the reasons questions are asked as part of assessment conversations.
- Additional checks and monitoring have been implemented to prevent delays in support plan processing.
- A carers' assurance process has been introduced to support decision making and ensure individuals are receiving the correct support.
- Written guidance about Disability Related Expenditure (DRE) has been co-produced with our Making It Real Board and other experts by experience. This will be followed by a new form and training for staff to ensure consistency and equity.
- Supervision processes are being reviewed and training for managers and supervisors being developed.
- Reminders to teams about ensuring points of action are completed following meetings, and professionals and people/families are aware of timescales.

### **Charging for care**

- Financial Assessment and service processes reviewed and updated to reduce calculation errors.
- Processes reviewed and updated mechanisms implemented to prevent delays in releasing invoices, and prevent automated invoices being issued unnecessarily.
- Additional training held for staff to improve knowledge and understanding of the ASC Charging Policies and financial assessment processes.
- Additional monitoring in place for joint funding arrangements.

- Reminder to teams about good practice when dealing with queries about outstanding assessments/invoices.

### **Providing care and support**

- New process implemented to alert brokers to urgent referrals.
- Follow up contact with providers implemented to ensure our residents are receiving prompt delivery of equipment and expected timescales are being met.
- Further work identified to improve information shared with people and their families about ordering equipment.
- Reviewed and updated the Market Position Statement for Adult Social Care in Telford and Wrekin, including joint approach across Shropshire, Telford and Wrekin Integrated Care System, to incorporate the needs of working age adults who have an acquired brain injury.

### **Experience of care and support**

- Follow up contacts enabled (Provider Quality Assurance Framework and other processes), supporting providers to implement and embed changes, where needed.
- Placement transition processes have been reviewed to ensure compatibility and support improved experiences for people.
- Follow up to support improved communication and responsiveness to individuals' routines when equipment is provided.

### **Other**

- Review and update to the recording processes of safeguarding concerns.
- Reminder to staff in Adult Social Care about expectations when working from home.
- Review of the training offer for staff delivering information and advice via contracted services
- Customer Services' switchboard directory updated to support enquiries relating to Disabled Facilities Grants/Occupational Therapy assessments.
- Guidance has recently been introduced across the Council to ensure that when an individual has raised concerns via an elected member, the ensuing enquiry response advises how the individual or their representative can access formal complaints procedures should they wish to do so.

# Other feedback and the actions taken to improve our services

We gather feedback from various sources to improve the service we provide to people who use our services, their carers and families. For example;

- Adult Social Care feedback forms – using QR codes, electronic and paper forms to gather feedback from people
- Feedback from Experts by Experience, and Making it Real Board and a number of other partnership boards
- Individual feedback through frontline workers
- Staff forum
- Complaints, compliments and comments
- Experiences of people / carers / families highlighted through employee awards and other mechanisms
- Other surveys
- Mystery Customer exercises
- Feedback from community and voluntary organisations/groups, staff and partners
- Feedback from partners
- Consultations External reviews, including Care Quality Commission assessment framework for local authority assurance.

Actions which have been informed through this feedback include.

- An All Age Carers Strategy has been developed, following extensive consultation and engagement with carers, professionals, organisations and groups across the Borough. This was launched in November 2024
- Carers Wellbeing Guide has been co-produced and re launched. This resource provides practical advice and local contacts to support our resident informal/unpaid carers in their day-to-day life
- A new feedback form has been created to capture the experiences of individuals involved in the Safeguarding process
- Keeping in Touch processes continue to be developed, including advice on how to 'wait well' whilst an assessment is pending
- Public guidance relating to Disability Related Expenditure (DRE) has been developed
- A recruitment drive has taken place to widen representation on our partnership boards

- Adult Social Care Knowing Where to Go has been further developed and promoted. Easy read, video and audio description versions have been created, and further development is planned, with a focus on Mental Health and Occupational Therapy
- Benefits awareness sessions have been delivered by Department of Work and Pensions and the Council's Benefits Team for experts with lived experience, Adult Social Care staff and community organisations
- Telford Voices and Learning Disability Partnership Board have co-produced a new webpage to help adults with learning disabilities and their parent carers to live well in Telford
- Locality team functions and responsibilities have been realigned to further improve the service provided to people with care and support needs
- Artificial Intelligence options are being explored to improve assessment experiences
- We are reviewing our training offer in relation to Mental Capacity Act and Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards
- Community-based assets continue to be promoted within the service
- A new Live Well Hub has been created in Madeley providing a one stop shop for information and advice for residents across a wide range of topics, including Adult Social Care, benefits, healthy lifestyles and more
- New focus areas have been identified for ongoing work, including reviewing the accessibility of documents, with input from experts by experiences; public understanding of assessment processes, and Live Well Telford

All feedback from both complaints and other sources is used to continually improve our services. We will continue to develop our services based on this feedback and also develop new and innovative ways to gather feedback from people, their families and carers to ensure that we continue to provide the best possible service to them.

## **Complaints made to the Local Government & Social Care Ombudsman**

The Local Government & Social Care Ombudsman (LGSCO) has the authority to investigate complaints when it appears that our own process has not resolved them. Complainants can refer their complaint to the LGSCO at any time, although the Ombudsman will generally refer them back to us if they have not been through our process

first. In exceptional circumstances, the Ombudsman will look at things earlier; this usually being dependant on the vulnerability of the person concerned.

Three cases were escalated to the LGSCO in 2024/25. All cases have been determined in the year. Two cases were upheld, one of which the ombudsman was satisfied that the concerns had already been remedied, one case was not upheld.

The Council fully complied with the recommendations made by the LGSCO, and further learning will be taken forward to improve practices in relation funding particularly in relation to calculating capital reductions and ensure that there are no delays. Changes have been implemented to capital reduction processes to reduce the time for referrals.

## Concluding Comments

This annual report shows that the number of Adult Statutory Complaints received in 2024/25 increased from 39 in the previous year to 57, however it is reasonable to conclude that this increase is as a result of less oral complaints, which can be resolved under the 24 hours resolution process, whilst recorded complaints have increased the number that could be resolved within 24hours has reduced so overall the number complaints across the year has reduced to 81 when compared with the 94 recorded and resolved in 2023/24.

Our Adult Social Care services continue to receive a low number of complaints, this report demonstrates that it continues to manage complaints well and is committed to putting right anything that has gone wrong. Whilst the numbers are low it's positive that the numbers of complaints received continues to demonstrate that people are aware of the complaint processes and can easily access them. This report shows that the Council continues to seek to resolve complaints at the earliest opportunity. It also demonstrates that all feedback is welcomed and used to identify lessons learnt and inform service improvement.

The number of Adult Statutory complaints upheld has also reduced to 44% this year in comparison to 2023/24, which saw 70% of complaints upheld.

Adult Social Care welcomes all complaints as a key part of its quality assurance activity, using feedback from people who use our services, their carers and families to understand experiences and shape improvements. The service is committed to reflecting on what could have been better and feedback from complaints contributed to a range of improvements in 2024/25.

Timescales for responding to complaints have decreased to 24 working days from 29 working days in 2023/24. The changes to local procedures and our complaints policy, has continued to impact by reducing timescales by 55% (53 working days) since 2020/21.



# Oversight and support provided

The Customer Relationship team continues to support service areas to both manage and learn from complaints. The key services they offer are:

1. Complaints advice and support
2. Quality assurance of statutory complaint responses
3. Act as a critical friend to challenge service practice
4. Support with persistent and unreasonable complainants
5. Assistance in drafting comprehensive responses to complaint investigations
6. Continue to escalate overdue complaints to Directors
7. Provide regular dashboards/ complaints samples to Directors, and performance is reported monthly to the Senior Management Team

The Quality and Complaints Officer (who sits within the Adult Social Care Assurance & Integration Team) supports the complaints management and monitoring processes within Adult Social Care and works with the service to use feedback from complaints to improve services as part of the Adult Social Care' Quality Assurance Framework.

## Priorities for 2025/26

During 2025/26, the Customer Relationship team and Adult Social Care will focus on a number of key priorities:

- Continuing to improve the Council's record of timely complaint responses
- Continuing to improve and add to the resources available to managers when responding to complaints and other correspondence, while encouraging self-help
- Providing complaint data to senior management monthly, as part of corporate monitoring
- Ensuring recommendations are implemented and learning embedded
- Further development of the digital complaints system to further improve efficiencies in complaint handling, recording of data and performance monitoring
- Working alongside ASC (and experts by experience) to review the ASC Complaint Processes to ensure they are fit for purpose and roles and responsibilities are clear
- Reviewing local response procedure and documentation to support best practice, ensure a personalised approach and maximise learning
- Ensuring our complaints processes are adhering to the ASC Accessibility Information Standards and that responses are provided in a way that meets the individual's needs

# Appendix

## Legislation

Section 5 of the Regulations (2009) requires local authorities to consider complaints made by anyone who:

- Is receiving, or has received, services from the Council
- Is affected, or is likely to be affected, by the action, omission or decision of the Council

A person is eligible to make a complaint where the local authority has a power or duty to provide, or to secure the provision of, a service for someone.

The 2009 regulations set a benchmark for all complaints to be investigated within six months. If the investigation is going to exceed this timescale, the local authority should write to the complainant to advise them of this and explain the reasons why.

The Corporate complaints process is used for anyone else who makes a complaint.

## What is a complaint?

A complaint is generally defined as an expression of dissatisfaction or disquiet about actions, decisions or apparent failings of a local authority's Adult Social Care provision that requires a response. We will always try to resolve problems or concerns before they escalate into complaints. If it is possible to resolve a matter immediately (or within 24 hours), there may be no need to engage in the formal complaints process.

The purpose of a complaints process is to resolve concerns raised by service users and their representatives, to deliver outcomes that are appropriate and proportionate to the seriousness of the issues, and to ensure that changes are made in response to any failings that are identified.

To achieve this, the approach to handling complaints must incorporate the following elements:

- Engagement with the complainant or representative throughout the process
- Agreement with them about how the complaint will be handled
- A planned, risk-based and transparent approach
- Commitment to prompt and focussed action to achieve the desired outcome
- Commitment to improvement and the incorporation of learning from all complaints

A complaint must be made no later than 12 months after:

- The date on which the matter that is the subject of the complaint occurred, or

- If later, the date on which the matter that is the subject of the complaint came to the notice of the complainant

The time limit will not apply if the Complaints Manager is satisfied that:

- The complainant had good reasons for not making the complaint within the time limit, and
- Notwithstanding the delay, it is possible to investigate the complaint effectively and fairly

## **Who can make a complaint?**

A complaint may be made by a relative, carer or someone who is acting on behalf of a person who has died, or is unable to make the complaint themselves because of:

- Physical incapacity, or
- Lack of capacity within the meaning of the Mental Capacity Act 2005, or
- Has requested that the representative act on their behalf

Complaints may be received through a variety of media (phone, letter, email, feedback form, personal visit, etc.) and at various points within the Council (to staff members, via respective web addresses, direct to the Customer Relationship team, etc.).

## **The Adult Statutory Complaints Procedure of Telford & Wrekin Council**

When a complaint is first received, the Customer Relationship team will conduct an initial assessment of it to determine its issues, severity and potential impact, and to identify any other organisations that maybe involved.

When someone contacts the Customer Relationship team to make a complaint, they will acknowledge it within three working days. They will also offer a meeting to the complainant to discuss the matter and establish their desired outcome. Agreement is sought on the following points:

- The detailed account of the complaint
- The complainant's view of the impact it has had on them
- Specific reference to any aspect that requires immediate action within the adult safeguarding/protection procedures
- Details of the outcome(s) that will resolve the matter from the complainant 's perspective
- Whether the subject of the complaint could relate, entirely or partly, to another body (e.g. an NHS body or an independent care provider) and therefore a joint approach may be needed
- How the complaint will be investigated and by whom

- How long it should reasonably take to investigate the matter and provide the complainant with the Council's formal response
- How often, and by what means, the complainant will be updated on the progress of the investigation
- Whether an advocacy, translation or other support service is required
- Whether the involvement of an impartial mediator might contribute to a satisfactory resolution of the complaint

When an Adult statutory complaint is received, we negotiate a timescale with complainants, depending on the complexity of the case. We aim to respond to all Adult Statutory Complaints within a maximum of 65 working days.

The Quality and Complaints Officer supports the complaints management and monitoring processes. When the investigation is complete, the appropriate manager will write a letter explaining what they have found and what they will do to put things right.

If the complainant is not happy with the final decision or how we have dealt with their complaint, they can refer the matter to the Local Government & Social Care Ombudsman (LGSCO).



# Children's Statutory Complaints Report

## Improving our Customer Experience

### Annual Report 2024/25



# Contents

Purpose of the report.....	3
Introduction.....	3
Children's Statutory Complaints 2024/25.....	4
Themes of upheld complaints.....	7
Timescales for responses.....	8
Statutory Stage Two & Stage Three complaints in 2024/25.....	9
Learning and outcomes from Children's Statutory Complaints.....	9
Other feedback and actions taken to improve our services.....	11
Complaints made to the Local Government & Social Care Ombudsman	13
Concluding comments.....	13
Oversight and support provided by the Customer Relationship team.....	14
Customer Relationship team priorities for 2025/26.....	15
Appendix.....	16

# Purpose of the Report

- To report statistical information to Members and Officers detailing Telford and Wrekin Council's Children's Social Care complaints from 1 April 2024 to 31 March 2025.
- To provide an open resource to anyone who wishes to understand feedback about local services.
- To outline the key developments and planned improvements to the complaints processes operated by the Council.
- To consider how the learning from complaints can be used to improve the overall customer experience.

## Introduction

This Annual Report covers all complaints made about Children's Social Care that were received by the Customer Relationship team and dealt with under the statutory complaint procedure during the period 1 April 2024 to 31 March 2025.

The 2006 Social Care complaints guidance 'Getting the Best from Complaints' (Department for Education and Skills (DFES), 2006) requires that an Annual Report be arranged by a local authority's Complaints Manager to provide a mechanism by which it can be kept informed about the operation of its complaint procedure. The report should be presented to staff, the relevant local authority committee, and be made available to both the regulator and public. It should provide details about:

1. Representations made to the Council
2. The number of complaints at each stage
3. The types of complaints made
4. The outcome of the complaints
5. Compliance with timescales, and detail complaints resolved within extended, agreed timescales
6. Complaints that were considered by the Local Government & Social Care Ombudsman
7. A review of the effectiveness of the complaint procedure
8. Learning and service improvements, including changes to services that have been implemented and details of any that have not

Please see the Appendix for details of the legislation and procedure.

### Highlights 2024/25

Ofsted rating  
**Outstanding**

**87%**  
Responses sent in  
20 working days

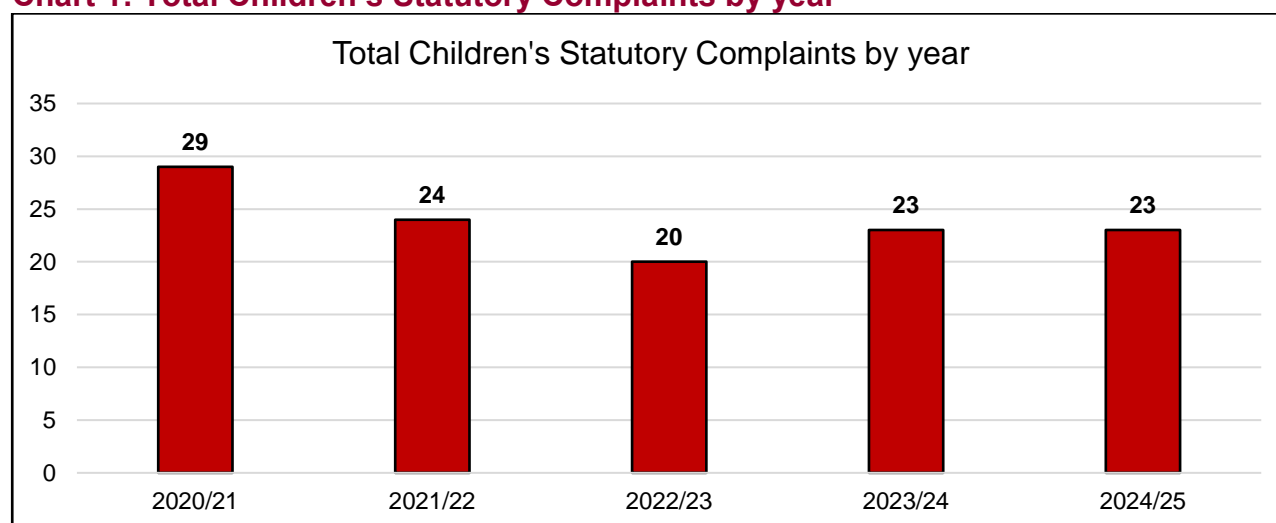
Average of  
**14 days**  
to respond to a  
Statutory  
Complaint

# Children's Statutory Complaints 2024/25

We received 23 Children's Statutory Complaints between 1 April 2024 and 31 March 2025. The number of complaints received is in line with the 23 received in 2023/24. To provide some context, Children's Safeguarding and Family Support received a total of 6,687 contacts during the year, this includes telephone calls and emails and had 1,402 referrals into the service completed during the year.

The chart below shows a comparison of the number of statutory complaints over the past seven years.

**Chart 1: Total Children's Statutory Complaints by year**



The 23 complaints were all dealt with at Stage One, with five progressing to an independent Stage Two investigation.

Stage	Number of complaints
One	23
Two	4
Three	1

Of the 23 Stage One complaints received, 20 were completed prior to 31 March 2025. Four Stage Two complaints were received and independently investigated. One Stage Three Panel was completed in 2024/25.

## Contact Types

Children's Statutory Complaints were received from the following in 2024/25:

Complainant	Number of complaints
Parent	13
Former Service User	1
Advocate/representative	2
Child/young person	4
Foster Carer	2
Relative	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>23</b>

Four complaints were received directly from children and young people in 2024/25. Two were received from a representative. One complaint was received from an adult which related to historical matters.

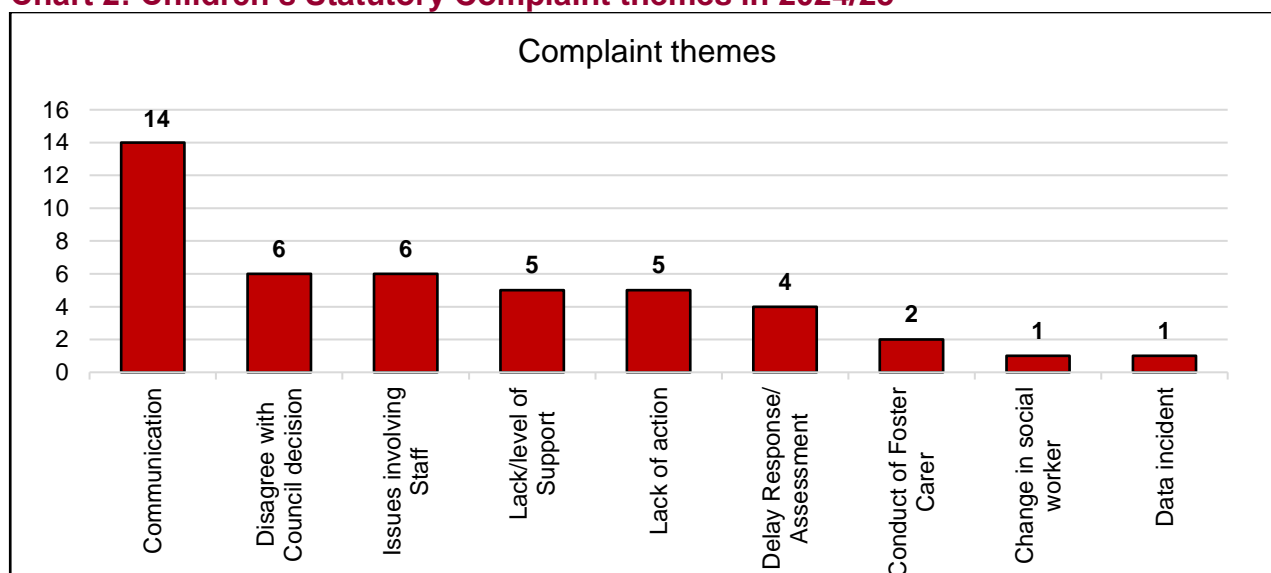
## Customer Access Channels and Digital Contact

Complainant channel	Number of complaints
Email	9
Web form	11
Telephone	2
Letter	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>23</b>

In 2024/25, 87% of Children's Statutory Complaints were received via a digital access channel, including via our online complaint web form and by email directly to the Customer Relationship team.

## Complaint Themes

**Chart 2: Children's Statutory Complaint themes in 2024/25**

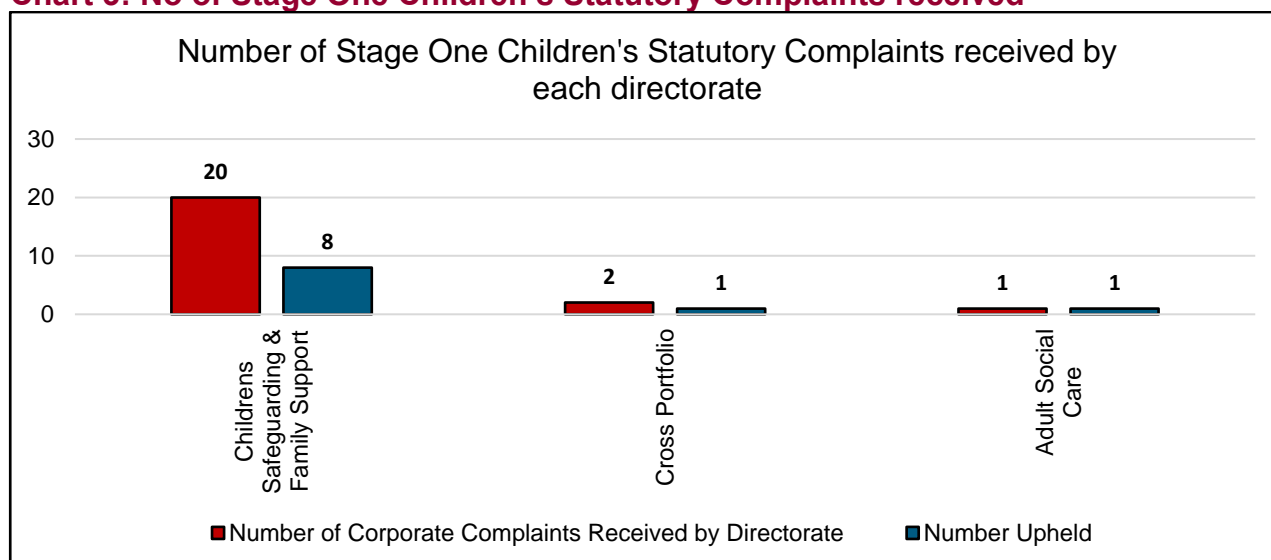


Most of the themes are self-explanatory and give a clear idea about the types of concerns raised in relation to our involvement.

No complaints handled under this process involved Child Sexual Exploitation during 2024/25.

## Complaints received by directorate

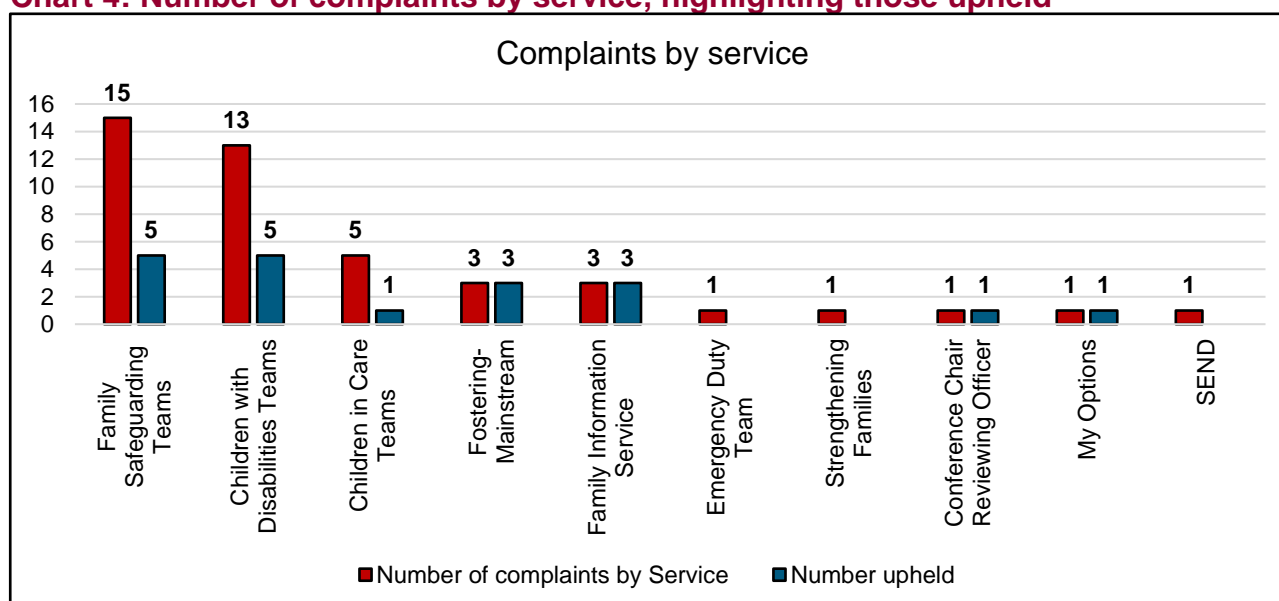
The chart below details the statutory complaints received by each directorate against the number subsequently upheld.

**Chart 3: No of Stage One Children's Statutory Complaints received**

The number of upheld complaints against number received for Children's Safeguarding & Family Support was 40%. Cross Portfolio saw 50% upheld and Adult Social Care complaints saw 100% upheld, one complaint was received. The Cross Portfolio complaints involved cross cutting issues relating to Children's Services and Education & Skills.

Of the 23 complaints responded to in the year, 43% (10) were upheld, 60% (12) were not upheld and 5% (1) was withdrawn.

The chart below includes the number of complaints received by each service. Please note that the number of complaints detailed below is higher than the overall total because certain complaints had multiple issues raised with different teams. This chart seeks to show all the services against which issues were raised, meaning that an individual complaint may be counted multiple times within it.

**Chart 4: Number of complaints by service, highlighting those upheld**

The most upheld complaints were in the Family Safeguarding Teams (5) with 33% upheld and Children with Disabilities Teams (5) where 38% upheld. The Children in Care Teams received 5 complaints and one was upheld.

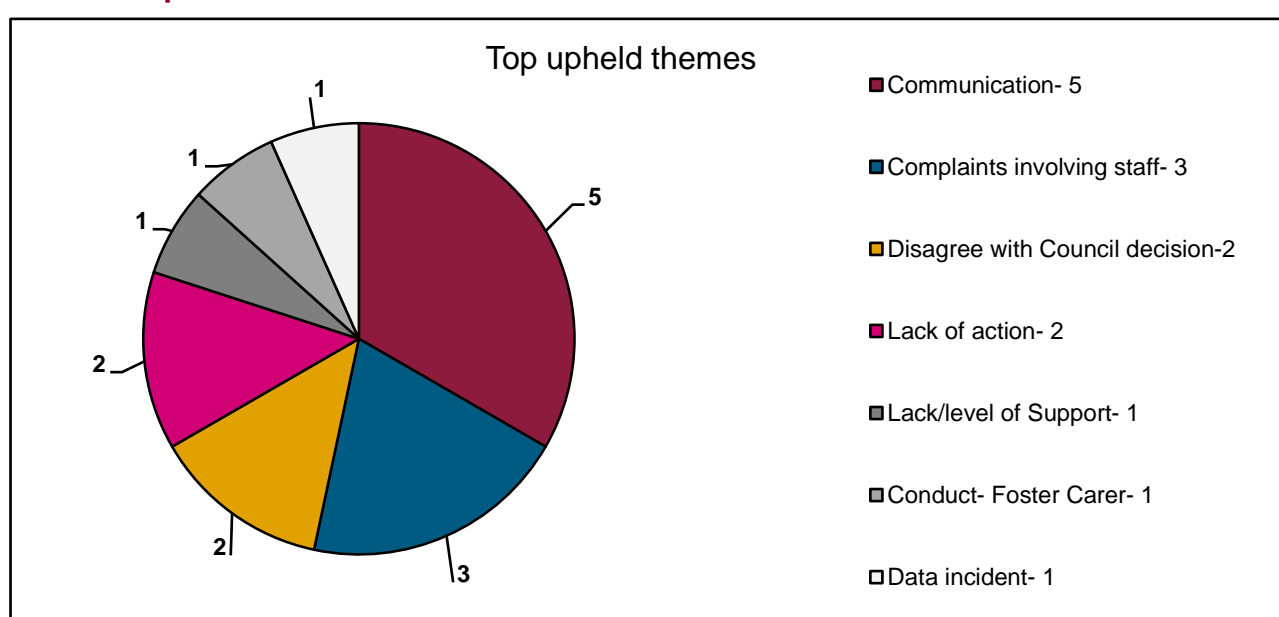


Upheld issues included communication during and around appointments, delay in responding, lack of support from staff, lack of communication during periods of staff absence, plan prior to contact being unsupervised and foster carer practice, Quality Assurance of IFA's, breach in GDPR and delay of funding support.

## Themes of upheld complaints

Of the upheld statutory complaints, the top themes raised were as detailed in the chart below.

**Chart 5: Upheld themes**



The above categories are self-explanatory and give a clear indication of the overall areas of our service or aspects of our work that had the most upheld complaints. This indicates that 33% of upheld complaints had an element of the complaint that related to communication. This covers a variety of concerns including service acknowledging that communication could have been better, inadequate communication regarding meetings, lack of communication during periods of staff absence. Complaints involving staff were the second most common and many of these were linked to communication issues. For instance, while contact was made, it wasn't directly with the complainant, leading to incomplete information sharing.

Individual management reports are shared with service managers on a regular basis, which allows for greater analysis and interpretation of the data.

# Timescales for responses

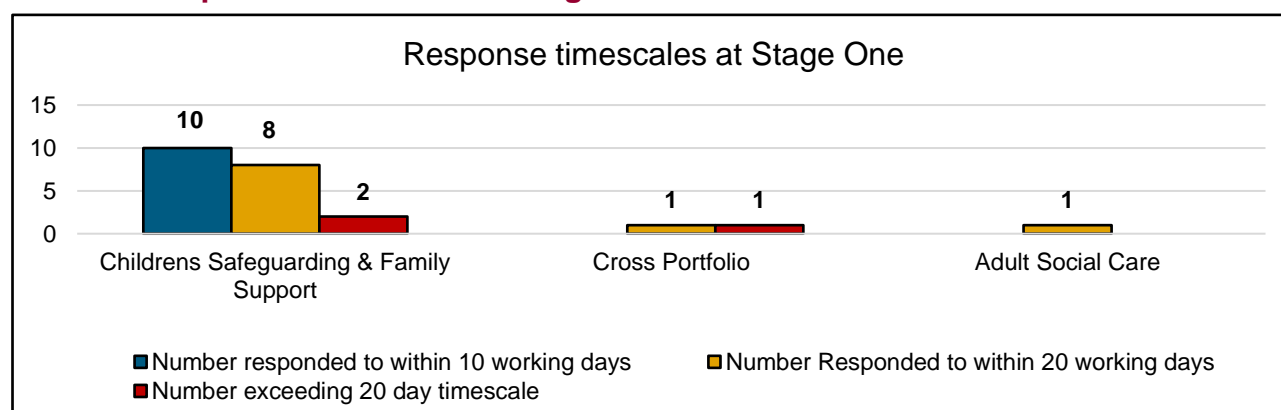
Our Children's Statutory Complaints Policy has been written in line with The Children Act 1989 Representations Procedure (England) Regulations 2006, which outline how Children's Statutory Complaints should be handled and the three stages involved.

Stage One should be an opportunity to resolve the complaint at service level and should be completed within 10 working days. This may be extended to 20 working days in exceptional circumstances and with the prior agreement of the complainant.

Stage Two is an independent investigation that should be completed within 25 working days. This may be extended to 65 working days in more complex cases.

Stage Three is a Panel where the investigations at Stage One and Stage Two are reviewed.

**Chart 6: Response timescales at Stage One**



Of the 23 complaints that were responded to in the year, 10 were responded to within the 10-working day timescale and 10 were completed within the 20-day extended timescale. Three complaints exceeded the extended 20 working day timescale.

The average number of days to respond in Children's Statutory Complaint was 14 working days, which is in line with the 14 days achieved in 2023/24.

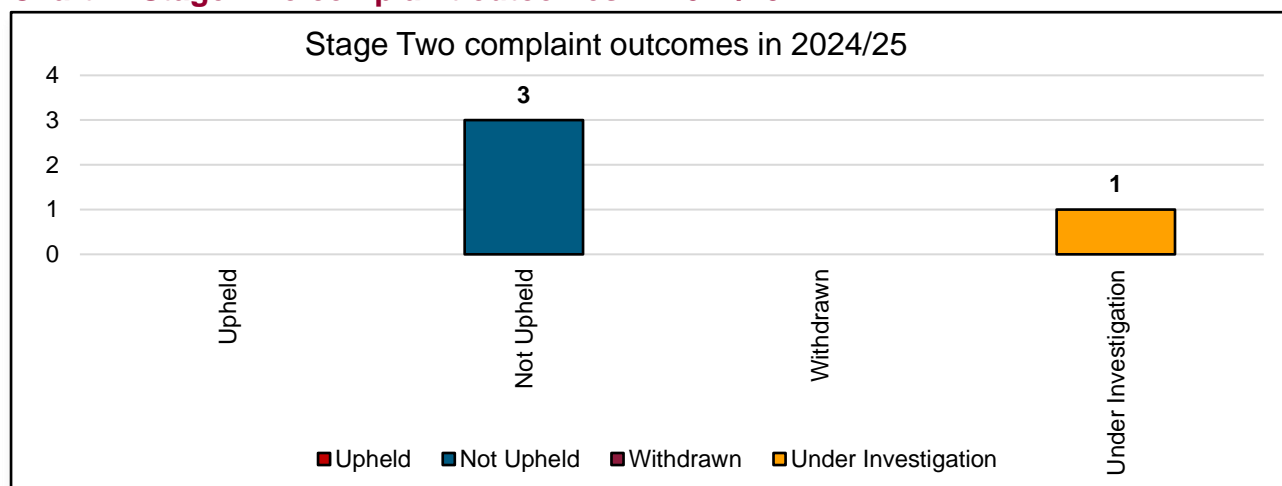
Since November 2020 new procedures have been put in place to improve timescales for responses. Outstanding complaints are highlighted to the Director, Executive Director and Service Delivery Managers on a weekly basis. Six-weekly meetings take place with Directors to review all outstanding cases and learning. The work that has been completed since November 2020 has improved timescales from the levels experienced in 2020/21, more work will be done in 2025/26 to improve these timescales further going forward.

During this year there has been further progress in upskilling Team Managers and Team Leaders in complaint handling which has also improved timescales in some teams. Generally, timescales have improved in the year. However, a few complex cases have impacted the average number of days to respond.

# Statutory Stage Two & Stage Three complaints

During 2024/25, four (17%) Statutory Stage One complaint progressed to Stage Two of the process. One case remained outstanding at 31 March 2025.

**Chart 7: Stage Two complaint outcomes in 2024/25**



Three stage three investigations were not upheld.

The number of statutory Stage Two investigations in 2024/25 remained the same as the previous year where 5 investigations took place. The majority of complaints were resolved locally at Stage One of the procedure.

The average number of days to complete a Stage Two investigation was 71 days, an increase on the 65 days in 2023/24.

Two complaints were resolved at Stage Two of the procedure; however, one proceeded to a Stage 3 Panel. The outcome of which confirmed that the complaint was upheld. As this was a historical case improvement had already been made to the service, however it was agreed that on the balance of probabilities there was a lack of professional curiosity at the time in respect of the concerns raised.

## Learning and outcomes from Children's Statutory Complaints

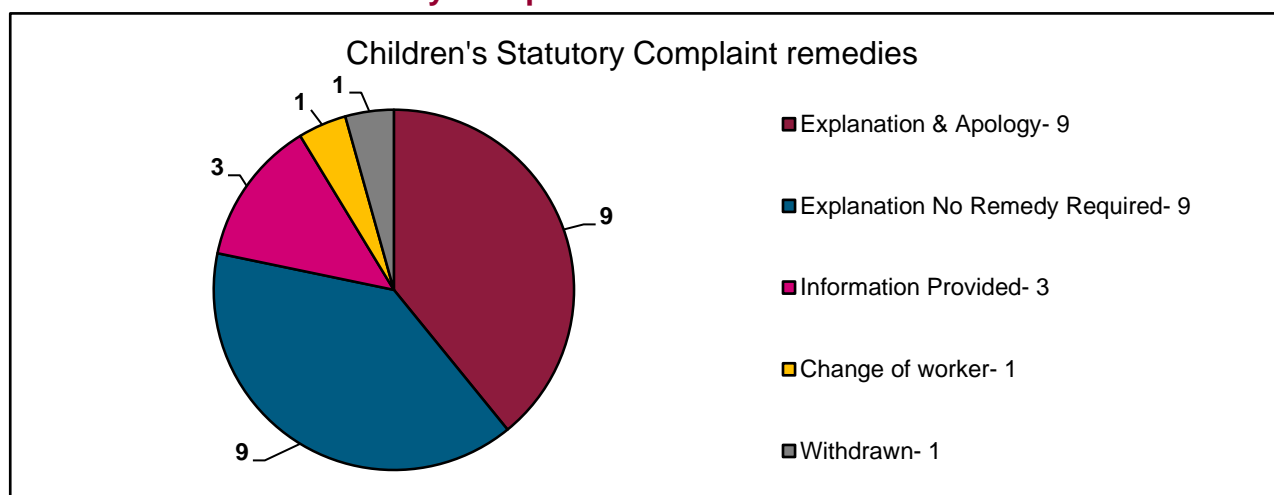
Complaints are a valuable source of information that can help to identify recurring or underlying problems and potential improvements. We know that numbers alone do not tell us everything about attitudes towards complaints and how they are responded to locally. Arguably, it is of greater importance to understand the impact that complaints have had on people and to learn the lessons from them to improve the experience of others.

Lessons can usually be learned from complaints that were upheld, but also in some instances where no fault was found, the Council recognises that improvements to services can still be made.

Occasionally, during an investigation, issues will be identified that need to be addressed over and above the original complaint. The Customer Relationship team will then work with services to ensure that they see the “bigger picture” so that residents receive the best possible service from the Council. The Customer Relationship team will continue to provide daily advice and support to managers around complaints management and resolution, and when responding to representations.

Outcomes are discussed in detail in Quality Assurance meetings which are held monthly. The Quality and Complaints Officer for Children's Services attends this meeting on a quarterly basis where Service Delivery Managers consider the themes and identify additional activities that should be undertaken to share the learning with practitioners.

**Chart 8: Children's Statutory Complaint remedies in 2024/25**



The top four remedies recorded against Children's Statutory Complaints in 2024/25 were:

- 39% were to provide an explanation and apology
- 39% were to provide an explanation and no remedy was required
- 13% were to provide information
- 4% Change of worker

## Positive Improvements

Throughout the year, we record the learning identified from each complaint to build up a picture of common themes or trends. Learning from corporate complaints is considered alongside that from statutory complaints as part of our quality assurance activities.

Below are examples of positive changes that have resulted from learning from complaints:

- Individual remedies have been completed concerning support plans and working agreements, assessments, referrals, meetings, and documentation
- Social workers have been asked to contact carers directly when arranging statutory visits to children and communicate any constraints around times with Foster Carers

- Introduced measures to ensure that changes of address are marked confidential and not shared within other documents bundles
- Training has been provided on the importance of both parents being contacted when reviewing needs of children
- It has been agreed that social workers will support with technology if required in meetings
- Family Hubs are in the process of reviewing communication for separated parents and will be developing a practice guidance that is agreed through family support, and this will be completed by the 1 September 2025 in co-production with parents with lived experience of working with Family Hubs. DWP have also agreed funding for new family hub practitioners to undergo training or triple transitions to support parents who are separating or divorced.
- A reminder has been issued to ensure there are procedures in place to ensure that visits and appointments continue to be completed and where necessary cancelled in the event of staff absence a reminder of the importance of communicating meeting arrangements effectively has also been issued.
- There is an ongoing review into the arrangements and communication between services in respect of moving from Children's Services to Adult Services
- Learning from complaints regarding staff conduct have been shared with Practitioners to improve and support awareness of practice
- New guidance has been drafted relating to the finances around shared care/short breaks.
- Data protection refresher training has been undertaken.

## Other feedback and the actions taken to improve our services

We gather feedback from various sources to improve the service we provide to children and young people, parents, carers and foster carers. For example;

- Childs voice postcard
- Childs Voice Group
- During family time
- Review forms
- Dandelion Group
- Kinship Care Group
- Fostering Forum
- Corporate Parenting and Young People Panel
- Practice Evaluations
- Childs voice apprentices – Voice of the Child Team



Actions which have been informed through this feedback include.

- The Child's voice postcard has been created to capture feedback
- Views are being sort at family time which has influenced training and leaflet design
- Introduced review forms for children and young people who are care experienced
- Young people who have experienced homelessness have supported with relevant leaflets design and training for practitioners
- We have a Voice of the Child Team within the service, which includes four young people with lived experience who are completing apprenticeships with the Council. Their goal is to drive positive change by making sure young people's voices are truly heard. They have launched youth forums, delivered participation events all designed to connect, uplift and empower. They are also representing young voices nationally. They are supporting ideas to engage with children and young people
- Corporate Parenting and Young People panel have provided feedback to the police on their experiences and have supported in implementing the promise to children and young people who are care experienced. "The Promise" refers to a series of commitments made to improve the lives of residents, particularly children and young people, and to ensure everyone benefits from a thriving economy and a great place to live. It's a broad initiative encompassing various aspects of community life, including education, social care, and environmental protection
- Introduction of the peer parent drop in so that parents can get the right advice at the right time with strengthening families
- We have critiqued our information, making then more family friendly and accessible this has included development of leaflets
- We have introduced a parent report for conference ensuring parental planning and voice
- Developed the website for family hubs so that it is more family friendly
- Undertaken some peer led training to ensure parental perspective relational working
- We have developed our mental health offer in family safeguarding which has been informed by parent experiences, mental health training has also been provided to foster carers and professionals
- We have reviewed and amended court documentation for parents so they can easily understand the process
- Parental feedback has been added to our requirement for audit activity
- We have ensured multi-agency input from parents to aid core groups/ conferences

- Kindship Care Group has been set up to explore what works well and the additional information to support with their rights
- A fostering forum has been created to understand the strengths and barriers to working alongside foster carers

All feedback from both complaints and other sources is used to continually improve our services. We will continue to develop our services based on this feedback and also develop new and innovative ways to gather feedback from children and young people to ensure that we continue to provide the best possible service to them.

## Complaints made to the Local Government & Social Care Ombudsman

The Local Government & Social Care Ombudsman (LGSCO) has the authority to investigate complaints when our own process has not resolved them. Complainants can refer their complaint to the LGSCO at any time, although the Ombudsman will generally refer them back to us if they have not been through our process first. In exceptional circumstances, the Ombudsman will look at things earlier; this usually being dependant on the vulnerability of the person concerned.

At 31 March 2024 one case was still being investigated by the Ombudsman, this case has been concluded and was upheld but the ombudsman confirmed that the case had already been remedied.

Three statutory cases were escalated to the LGSCO in 2024/25. One was not upheld and one was not investigated, one case remained outstanding at 31 March 2025.

The Council continues to ensure that it complies with any recommendations made by the LGSCO, and learning is taken forward to improve practices.

## Concluding Comments

This Annual Report shows that the number of Children's Statutory Complaints received in 2024/25 remained in line with the previous year. Our services continue to receive a low number of complaints at a time when there have been major reductions in government funding for local authority service provision. Despite this financial backdrop, the Council continues to manage complaints well and is committed to putting right anything that has gone wrong.

Response times have also remained in line with 2023/24 with the average number of days to respond to a statutory complaint remaining at 14 working days. Overall, in 2024/25, 87% of complaints were responded to within the statutory timescale of 20 working days and 43% were responded to within ten working days, an improvement on the 42% in 2024/25.

The Customer Relationship team continued to update complainants concerning any delays or extended response timescales. They also continued to work with services to further improve on the timescales achieved.

## Recommendations

Our recommendations for this year are:

- That a local complaint procedure is adopted that outlines the expectations for complaint handling, including contacting complainants within 3 days of the complaint being allocated, clear timescales for completing the investigation, response and quality check. A complaint investigation template should also be introduced which ensures that there is a clear record of the actions taken to investigate the complaint.
- When completing a complaint investigation and response, services should assess whether any element of the customer journey could have been improved, even if this does not form part of the complaint. i.e. Could improved communication have prevented the customer's concerns being escalated to a formal complaint?
- Services should continue to upskill Team Managers and Team Leaders in complaint handling to that there are more resources available to meet timescales.
- Services should continue to ensure that they are prioritising complaints and responding within the stated timescales. If there are unforeseen delays, the Customer Relationship team should be notified immediately so that we can notify the customer and advise them of the date they should expect their response.

## Oversight and support provided by the Customer Relationship Team

The Customer Relationship team continues to support Service Areas to both manage and learn from complaints. The key services they offer are:

1. Complaints advice and support
2. Quality assurance of statutory complaint responses
3. Act as a critical friend to challenge service practice
4. Support with persistent and unreasonable complainants
5. Assistance in drafting comprehensive responses to complaint investigations
6. Continue to escalate overdue complaints to Directors

# Customer Relationship Team priorities for 2025/26

During 2025/26, the Customer Relationship team and the Children's Safeguarding and Family Support Quality and Complaints Officer will focus on a number of key priorities:

- Helping to improve the Council's record of timely complaint responses
- Helping to improve the quality of responses and ensure that they comply with the statutory guidance
- Continuing to improve and add to the resources available to managers when responding to complaints and other correspondence, while encouraging self-help
- Providing complaint data to senior management monthly, as part of corporate monitoring
- Working to maintain low levels of maladministration findings by the Local Government & Social Care Ombudsman
- Continuing to provide a quarterly and monthly reporting dashboard of performance data to senior management so that improvement can be driven forward continuously during the year

# Appendix

## Legislation

The Children Act 1989 Representations Procedure (England) Regulations 2006 underpin all representations received from children and young people, their parents, foster carers or other qualifying adults about social care services provided or commissioned by Children's Social Care. The act and regulations set down procedures that councils with social care responsibility must follow when a complaint is made.

The Children's Statutory Complaints Procedure is a three stage process. Stage One is where complaints are investigated at service level, Stage Two is where an independent investigation takes place and Stage Three is where a Panel of Independent Persons will review the investigations undertaken at Stage One and Stage Two.

The Corporate complaints process is used for anyone else who makes a complaint.

## What is a complaint?

We define a complaint as:

'A statement, written or verbal, which expresses dissatisfaction about any aspect of the social services provided by or on behalf of the Service Delivery Units responsible for services to children.'

The purpose of a complaints process is to resolve concerns raised by service users and their representatives, to deliver outcomes that are appropriate and proportionate to the seriousness of the issues, and to ensure that changes are made in response to any failings that are identified.

To achieve this, the approach to handling complaints must incorporate the following elements:

- Engagement with the complainant or representative throughout the process
- Agreement with them about how the complaint will be handled
- A planned, risk-based and transparent approach
- Commitment to prompt and focussed action to achieve the desired outcome
- Commitment to improvement and the incorporation of learning from all complaints

A complaint must be made within 12 months of the event complained about, or when the customer became aware of the matter/ event. Nevertheless, the Council has the discretion to waive this time limit if:

- It would not be reasonable to expect the complainant to have made the complaint sooner, and
- It is still possible to deal with the complaint effectively and fairly



## Who can make a complaint?

A complaint may be made by:

- Children or young people who are receiving, or have received, services provided by the Council, or are entitled to receive such a service because the Borough after looks them, or because they are deemed to be 'in need', as defined by the Children Act 1989
- People who have parental responsibility for these children and young people
- Advocates and representatives of any of the above children and young people (providing that it has been established, as far as possible, that the advocate or representative is reflecting the child's or young person's own wishes)
- Foster carers who want to comment or complain about the service being provided to a child or young person for whom they are caring
- Any other person, providing that they are deemed to have sufficient interest in the child's or young person's welfare to justify the Council considering the complaint

Complaints may be received through a variety of media (phone, letter, email, feedback form, personal visit, etc.) and at various points within the Council (to staff members, via respective web addresses, direct to the Customer Relationship team, etc.).

## Complaint Procedure

When a complaint is first received, the Customer Relationship team will conduct an initial assessment of it to determine its issues, severity and potential impact, and to identify any other organisations that maybe involved.

Whenever a complaint is received from a child or young person, the Customer Relationship team will notify Children's Social Services of the need to offer the complainant an advocacy service within the remit of the 2004 Advocacy (Services & Representations) Regulations. A child or young person whose complaint is being considered within this procedure is entitled to advocacy services throughout the process. Subject to the approval of the child or young person, all correspondence regarding the complaint will be copied to the advocate, who will be entitled to accompany the complainant at any meeting or interview about the complaint they attend.

When someone contacts the Customer Relationship team to make a complaint, they will acknowledge their complaint within two working days. The Customer Relationship team will then pass details of the complaint to the appropriate Service Delivery Manager.

We aim to respond to all Stage One Children's Statutory Complaints within ten working days. However, due to the nature and complexity of some issues, it may take longer, and - in agreement with complainants - the timescale may be longer (subject to a maximum of 20 working days).

When the investigation is complete, the manager concerned will write a letter explaining what they have found and will do to put things right.

If the complainant is not happy with the response or how we have dealt with their complaint, they can request that it is considered at Stage Two of the procedure, where it will be investigated by an independent investigator.

Following this investigation, the findings will be sent to the complainant, at which point they may request that the investigations undertaken at Stage One and Stage Two are reviewed at Stage Three by a Panel.

Following the Panel meeting, if the customer is not happy with the final decision or how we have dealt with their complaint, they can refer the matter to the Local Government & Social Care Ombudsman (LGSCO).

21 May 2025

*By email*

Mr Sidaway  
Chief Executive  
Telford & Wrekin Council

Dear Mr Sidaway

### **Annual Review letter 2024-25**

I write to you with your annual summary of complaint statistics from the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman for the year ending 31 March 2025. The information offers valuable insight about your organisation's approach to complaints, and I know you will consider it as part of your corporate governance processes. We have listened to your feedback, and I am pleased to be able to share your annual statistics earlier in the year to better fit with local reporting cycles. I hope this proves helpful to you.

[Your annual statistics are available here.](#)

In addition, you can find the detail of the decisions we have made about your Council, read the public reports we have issued, and view the service improvements your Council has agreed to make as a result of our investigations, as well as previous annual review letters.

In a change to our approach, we will write to organisations in July where there is exceptional practice or where we have concerns about an organisation's complaint handling. Not all organisations will get a letter. If you do receive a letter it will be sent in advance of its publication on our website on 16 July 2025, alongside our annual Review of Local Government Complaints.

### **Supporting complaint and service improvement**

In February we published [good practice guides](#) to support councils to adopt our [Complaint Handling Code](#). The guides were developed in consultation with councils that have been piloting the Code and are based on the real-life, front-line experience of people handling complaints day-to-day, including their experience of reporting to senior leaders and elected members. The guides were issued alongside free [training resources](#) organisations can use to make sure front-line staff understand what to do when someone raises a complaint. We will be applying the Code in our casework from April 2026 and we know a large number of councils have already adopted it into their local policies with positive results.

This year we relaunched our popular [complaint handling training](#) programme. The training is now more interactive than ever, providing delegates with an opportunity to consider a complaint from receipt to resolution. Early feedback has been extremely positive with delegates reporting an increase in confidence in handling complaints after completing the training. To find out more contact [training@lgo.org.uk](mailto:training@lgo.org.uk).

Yours sincerely,



Amerdeep Somal  
Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman  
Chair, Commission for Local Administration in England

This page is intentionally left blank



Telford & Wrekin  
Co-operative Council

Protect, care and invest  
to create a better borough

## Borough of Telford and Wrekin Cabinet 17 July 2025 Becoming a Child Friendly Borough

---

<b>Cabinet Member:</b>	Cllr Shirley Reynolds, Cabinet Member for Early Years, Children, Young People, Education, Employment & Skills.	
<b>Lead Director:</b>	Helen Onions, Director of Public Health	
<b>Service Area:</b>	Children's Safeguarding and Family Support	
<b>Report Author:</b>	Laura Moore, Service Delivery Manager, Service Improvement and Efficiency	
<b>Officer Contact Details:</b>	<b>Tel:</b> 01952 385658	<b>Email:</b> laura.moore@telford.gov.uk
<b>Wards Affected:</b>	All Wards	
<b>Key Decision:</b>	Key Decision	
<b>Report considered by:</b>	SMT - 17 June 2025 Business Brief – 26 June 2025	

---

### 1.0 Recommendations for decision/noting:

It is recommended that Cabinet:

- 1.1 Approves Telford and Wrekin Council working towards becoming a Child Friendly borough, with SMT operating as the reporting Board for agreeing Child Friendly standards, implementation and impact monitoring.

### 2.0 Purpose of Report

- 2.1 This report outlines the “Child Friendly” programme and requests approval to advance the adoption of our vision for this as part of the wider Telford and Wrekin Children and Young People’s Strategy.

### 3.0 Background

- 3.1 Child Friendly Telford and Wrekin part of our new Children and Young People’s Strategy. It is a whole Council endeavour that will also include a partnership

approach, between the Council, partners and local businesses, to make Telford and Wrekin the best place in the UK for children and young people to live and grow-up in.

- 3.2 The vision for 'Child Friendly Telford and Wrekin' has co-production at its heart, with children and young people across the borough key to driving this forward, and co-ordinating stakeholder involvement.
- 3.3 Current context:
- a) Telford and Wrekin Council already has been graded Outstanding for Children's Services in two consecutive OFSTED ILACS Inspections.
  - b) The local area partnership's has also been Inspected under the Ofsted and CQC SEND Inspection, which recognised that our 'arrangements typically lead to positive experiences and outcomes for children and young people with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND).'
- 3.4 In Telford, the vision is that "every child, young person and adult lives well in their community". This vision is supported by various initiatives focused on children's services, family support, and community well-being. Telford and Wrekin Council is committed to providing support to families and ensuring children have the best possible start in life.
- 3.5 To deliver on this vision, a significant programme of work is already taking place with children and young people front and centre. It is proposed that 'Child Friendly' becomes the overarching umbrella to achieving our local ambition, with existing and new initiatives all feeding in, to ensure that Telford and Wrekin is and continues to be the best place for children and young people to live and grow up.
- 3.6 Some of the examples of our current activities, across multiple service areas demonstrating meaningful coproduction with children and young people include:
- The implementation of Family Hubs, which offer a range of services and support to families, including early help, family support, and help with childcare.
  - 5 by 5 Initiative: This initiative focuses on supporting children's readiness for school by encouraging activities that promote well-being and healthy development.
  - '10 by 10' Programme: This earlier initiative encourages children to complete 10 life-enhancing experiences by age 10, such as visiting a museum; learning to swim; taking part in a performance. It's designed to broaden horizons and build confidence. This includes free swimming lessons.



- Free swimming for children and young people borough-wide.
- Ring-fenced apprenticeship team for young people with lived experience.
- The annual Leader and Cabinet Member Young Person's grant scheme where young people can apply for up to £500 to support with employment, education or training needs.
- The Young People's Forum (YPF) is a consultation action group for 11 - 18 year olds from across the borough.
- The increasingly popular Urban Games initiative, where those aged 8-16 have the ability to participate in a range of sports and physical activity at no cost. During the 2024 summer holidays over 3,000 children and young people attended the free sessions and since launch in 2022 approximately 9,000 children and young people have attended to date.
- Urban Games has been complimented by Telford Kicks which is a Friday night free football offer across the borough that regularly has over 130 children and young people attend each week.
- Working with partnering Town and Parish Councils, investment has supported the development of youth clubs at Park Lane Centre, Woodside, Arleston Community Centre, Wellington, Great Dawley Town Hall, Dawley, with two more opening in Ketley Bank and Wrockwardine Wood. These youth clubs are well attended with 30 children and young people attending weekly.
- Youth Clubs are supported by engagement with education settings to complete safety surveys with pupils to understand safety concerns on the journey to school and any gaps in provision. This invaluable feedback has supported the implementation of additional street lighting and/or removal of vegetation as well as the development of the 'Making A Change' competition where children and young people have the opportunity to bid for funding to implement their ideas. This competition has developed 'art and dance' classes providing children and young people the opportunity to engage with the elderly as well as wellbeing initiatives to take a 'break' from social media. This competition is now in its third year.
- Further specialist youth provision has been commissioned to support children and young people with specific vulnerabilities; this comprised external support through St Giles Trust who provided lived experience mentors to complement the existing offer for young people at risk of criminal exploitation.
- Crucial Crew, which is a training programme designed to teach year 6's essential life skills is in it's 30<sup>th</sup> year, with approx 2,700 pupils taking part this year with a focus on:
  - Road Safety, Water Safety, Electrical Safety, Fire Safety

- Vaping, Alcohol Awareness and Mental Health and Wellbeing
    - Criminal Exploitation and Knife Crime
    - Online Safety and Stranger Danger
  - The Young Person's Year of wellbeing campaign was initially launched by the YPF at their mental health summit in October 2023. This 12 week email campaign encourages young people to take steps to improve their wellbeing, and to date has in excess of 1,000 subscribers. The new web platform SUPER has resulted from this and will be launched in Summer 2025, to evolve the YYoW campaign into an emotional health and wellbeing support toolkit.
  - The Belonging Strategy, provides a framework for partnership working across services and schools to ensure that support is available to develop the sense of belonging for young people in schools. The permeates all practice across education, for example, the Fair Access Panels ensure places are available for young people in schools as quickly as possible and support from the Behaviour Support Advisory Team, where appropriate, to help the integration into school. There is a drive to implement 'Relational Practice' in mainstream schools to ensure that relationships within all schools are positive and respectful and that Behaviour Policies recognise the needs of young people. The multitude of approaches under the umbrella of the Belonging Strategy have ensure that Telford and Wrekin are now has the lowest rate of Permanent Exclusion in the West Midlands.
  - The SEND and Alternative Provision Strategy and approaches described within this supports young people to be successful in a school within their community, where appropriate. This is supported by, for example, the Inclusive Schools Forum which ensures that help and resources are allocated as early as possible. There has also been the development of 'SEND Hubs' and 'Resourced Provisions' in mainstream schools. Both of these initiatives enable young people to thrive and succeed within their local mainstream environment.
  - The Virtual School works closely with services from across the council and with partners in school to ensure the best possible outcomes for Children in Care and Children with a Social Worker. All schools in the borough are members of the 'Attachment Research Community' with the vast majority being recognised with awards for their Attachment and Trauma Informed approaches.
- 3.7 Across Telford and Wrekin, we want everyone to think about 'what is it like to be a child growing up in Telford and Wrekin and how can we make it better'. The Child Friendly initiative is about being proud of our children and young people and including them in everything we do, so that they are valued and engaged, grow into confident adults, stay with us (in borough) and contribute to our economy and help us grow our communities.

3.8 Also, key to Child Friendly Telford and Wrekin is the partnership approach across the borough. While Child Friendly Telford and Wrekin will be largely driven by the Council, there are aspirations for Child Friendly Telford and Wrekin to be viewed not only as a Telford and Wrekin Council initiative but an opportunity for the whole borough to come together for Telford and Wrekin's children and young people.

3.9 Our Child Friendly borough will aim to ensure all children are able to have a meaningful say in, and truly benefit from, the local decisions, services and spaces that shape their lives.

3.10 Child Friendly means that the voices, needs, priorities and rights of children are an integral part of policies, programmes and decisions in Telford and Wrekin. At the heart of this is our ensuring that 7 identified wishes are delivered upon:

- I am healthy.
- I am heard.
- I am safe.
- I am achieving.
- I am independent.
- I have friends and people that I trust.
- I am happy.

3.11 The 7 wishes have been informed by the voice of children and young people in Telford and Wrekin by analysing data and feedback from:

- The UK Youth Parliament's 'Make Your Mark' ballot included votes from 4,855 children and young people aged 11-18 from nine secondary schools and three youth groups in Telford and Wrekin. The top issue concerning young people was identified as health and wellbeing. Following this local focus groups, carried out by members of the Telford & Wrekin Youth Parliament Forum identified mental health as the main issue raised by young people. This also resulted in the Year of Wellbeing campaign for Young People.
- CYP mental health - extensive engagement was undertaken from Jan - March 2025 seeking views of CYP, families, carers and professionals on CYP to inform the recommissioning of the new service.
- Our Health and Wellbeing Strategy. Engagement told us that:
  - Parents of babies and young children want to hear about the support of offer to them, especially the free activities.
  - Parents feel youth activities and clubs are a priority and these should be affordable and in a safe environment.
  - Young people say that exercising and eating well makes them feel healthy.

- Coproduction within the Children's Services:
  - Dandelion's Parents Group who have been supported to become expert parent advisors for the Family Hubs Programme, which has now expanded across broader children's services.
  - The recruitment of a Voice of the Child lived experience apprentice team within children's services.
  - PODS parent carer forum annual survey.
  - Bright Spots surveys through Coram Voice.
  - Young Carers Consultation.
  - Family Hubs engagement.
- Participation events and activities across all services in Children's Safeguarding and Family Support.
- The Children and Young People's Panel, run jointly by colleagues in Education and Social Care, captures the voice of Children in Care against the outcomes of the Corporate Parenting Strategy which has fed into these wishes.
- Make Your Mark Youth Parliament ballot and focus groups.
- [UK Youth Parliament manifestos](#).
- Our local Joint Strategic Needs Assessment.
- Our Youth Officer has been engaging with YP in the community to ascertain their aspirations for further developing our youth offer.
- Our SEND and Alternative Provision Framework is focused on these wishes.
- The borough's mayor, Councillor Eileen Callear, is focusing her mayoral charity work on a charity that helps parents of children with disabilities, Parents Opening Doors (PODS).

3.12 Adopting Child Friendly status will require a robust implementation plan, including the following elements:

- introduce the Child Friendly Telford and Wrekin descriptor within the council;
- identify existing Child Friendly initiatives or ideas across the council;
- align initiatives to our 7 Child Friendly wishes and identify gaps;
- strengthen the voice of children and young people in all areas of local decision making;
- identify levels of need across the borough to target initiatives and activities effectively;
- promote Child Friendly Telford and Wrekin with partners; and
- identify how partners, community and voluntary sector organisations, businesses and communities can get involved,
- appointing 'at least' one Council colleague as wish 'lead' for each wish and asking them to write short-term and long-term goals.
- working with the new Voice of the Child Apprentice Team, School Councils, Young Person's Voice, Youth Forum, and other forums to make sure children and young people are always involved in discussions and decision making.

- developing a blog site and social media channels to keep children and families in the loop.
- raising awareness of each wish through CF social media channels.
- asking new CF ambassadors to select the wishes they are interested in partnering on, when they complete our sign-up form.

3.13 Recognising the importance of branding, communications and design for Child Friendly Status to be adopted, the design has been aligned with existing branding for initiatives such as the Leader and Cabinet Member Young Person's Grant Scheme, the 5 by 5 and 10 by 10 initiatives and our Youth Offer web pages.

Mono version



Colour version



White version





#### 4 Summary of main proposals

- 4.1 The initial phase of work will be to identify the standards that we are seeking to achieve in phase one of our vision for Child Friendly Telford and Wrekin.
- 4.2 Engaging with children and young people is fundamental in establishing Child Friendly Telford and Wrekin. They will help to identify their key priorities and help us understand how Child Friendly Telford and Wrekin should look and feel.



- 4.3 Local networks for example Locality Early Action Partnerships and intelligence will also be used to identify priorities and target promotion and activity.
- 4.4 Across Telford and Wrekin, we want everyone to think about 'what is it like to be a child growing up in Telford and Wrekin and how can we make it better'. The initiative is about being proud of our children and young people and including them in everything we do so that they are valued and engaged, grow into confident adults, stay with us and contribute to our economy and help us grow our communities.
- 4.5 Key to Child Friendly Telford and Wrekin is the partnership approach across the borough as a whole. While Child Friendly Telford and Wrekin will be largely driven by the Council, there are aspirations for Child Friendly Telford and Wrekin to be viewed not only as a Telford and Wrekin Council initiative but an opportunity for the whole borough to come together for Telford and Wrekin's children and young people.

## **5 Alternative Options**

- 5.1 Adopting Child Friendly Status is not a requirement, and the Council can choose not to seek this recognition.

## **6 Key Risks**

- 6.1.1 A full risk assessment will be undertaken as part of the application phase of the activity and be monitored by Service Improvement and Efficiency and reviewed regularly through SMT.

## **7.0 Council Priorities**

- 7.1 This entire approach sits comfortably within the council's "vision" as it relates to the strapline most associated by many staff and public to the Council 'Protect, Care and Invest to create a better borough.'

## **8.0 Financial Implications**

- 8.1 The proposals outlined in this report will be funded from existing base budgets, supplemented by grant and reserve funding where appropriate.
- 8.2 Support will be provided by the Finance team to fully cost future proposals, as and when they arise.

## **9.0 Legal and HR Implications**

- 9.1 Many of the workstreams contained within this report are underpinned by legislative requirements placed upon the Council. Where activities or actions are not as a result of such legislative requirements, the Council has the power to undertake those actions as a way of ensuring that it is meeting its statutory obligations towards children within the Borough. Furthermore, seeking to obtain child friendly status is a way in which the Council can demonstrate it is taking proactive action to meet the Public Sector Equality Duty.
- 9.2 The report recognised the need for clear, robust and transparent oversight as the project develops. As individual proposals emerge, legal advice will be sought on a case by case basis to ensure that the Council acts lawfully.

## **10.0 Ward Implications**

- 10.1 This work would be led by the CYP Directorate but would involve the Council as a whole as well as the majority of public sector partners. It is therefore a key decision as it would affect all wards, Elected Members and all Directorates across the Local Authority.

## **11.0 Health, Social and Economic Implications**

- 11.1 Placing children and young people at the heart of the shared public realm is a moral, economic and public health imperative. Only by engaging consistently with children and young people, considering the evidence and highlighting what works, can we begin to influence policy to give these issues the priority they deserve. By doing this we can then take the steps necessary to create genuinely child friendly communities, towns and neighbourhoods, which will deliver benefits felt by the community as a whole.

## **12.0 Equality and Diversity Implications**

- 12.1 Progressing towards child friendly status would have a positive impact on equality across the borough. As part of the expression of interest phase of activity a full Equality Impact Assessment will be undertaken to ensure that the process maximises opportunity to address inequality across the borough.

Children's capability to generate well-being is shaped through relationships they have with other people and the spatial conditions of their everyday life adopting a child friendly way of working can improve health and wellbeing not only for our younger population but also wider communities and residents.

### **13.0 Climate Change and Environmental Implications**

- 13.1 Adopting a child friendly approach requires the council to analyse the impact decisions have on the lived experiences of children and young people in Telford and Wrekin which includes the commitment to our climate change targets.

### **14.0 Background Papers**

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| 1 | Telford & Wrekin Children & Young People's Strategy – Cabinet Feb 2025 |
| 2 | N/A  |
| 3 | N/A  |

### **15.0 Appendices**

- |   |     |
|---|-----|
| A | N/A |
| B | N/A |
| C | N/A |

### **16.0 Report Sign Off**

<b>Signed off by</b>	<b>Date sent</b>	<b>Date signed off</b>	<b>Initials</b>
Director	20/06/2025	21/06/2025	HO
Legal	23/06/2025	23/06/2025	RP
Finance	23/06/2025	23/06/2025	TD

This page is intentionally left blank



Telford & Wrekin  
Co-operative Council

Protect, care and invest  
to create a better borough

Page 247

# Telford and Wrekin Children and Young People's Strategy

2025-2028



Child Friendly Telford and Wrekin



# Contents

<b>Foreword</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Our partners</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Children and young people matter in Telford and Wrekin</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>CYP Strategy overview</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Strategy vision, aims and objectives</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>Partnership and Strategy context</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>Listening to children, young people, parents and carers</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>Local picture</b>	<b>10-11</b>
<b>Outcomes we want to achieve - performance we want to improve</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>Transforming Family Help</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>Child Friendly Telford and Wrekin</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>Tackling Poverty</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>Delivering the aims and objectives, 2025/26 priority programmes</b>	
• Start Well	17
• Stay Well	18
• Enjoy and Achieve	19
• Keep Safe	20
<b>Proposed governance</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>What we hear from children and young people?</b>	<b>22-23</b>



# Foreword

We are delighted to introduce this Telford and Wrekin Children and People's Strategy for 2025-2028, to support the delivery of the: Council Plan priorities, Health and Wellbeing Board commitments and Safeguarding Children Partnership responsibilities.

Children, young people and families living in Telford and Wrekin build our communities and are the foundations and heart of our borough. This partnership Strategy bridges families and communities, and many organisations alongside the Council, such as the: NHS, community and voluntary sector, specialist providers, the Police, early years settings, schools and other education partners.

This is an overarching strategy which acts as an umbrella for a range of partnerships strategies, plans and transformation programmes. Building on from our excellent Ofsted children's services rating, our strategy vision is that **our borough is home to healthy, safe children who achieve their potential**, with the aims that all our children and young people start well, stay well, keep safe, and enjoy and achieve.

We have listened to local children and young people to understand what outcomes they want. A whole-child approach should maximise aspirations, life chances and outcomes for all children and young people. Alongside this is a focus on narrowing the gap for those who are marginalised or in need, for whatever reason.

Our partnership is committed to listening to, empowering and supporting children and young people, parents and carers, through asset-based community approaches. Celebrating diversity and being inclusive needs to be a clear part of our partnership culture.

Our Family Hubs offer is clearly making an impact on local children and young people. Going forward, as part of the national Homes Built on Love Children's Social Care Reforms, family help with its strong prevention focus will be a key vehicle for change. Family Help is a crucial element of this Strategy's keep safe aim, but it will also contribute significantly to the other three aims.

The Children's Wellbeing Bill, announced in the Kings Speech 2024 will put children and their wellbeing at the centre of the education and children's social care systems, to ensure children are safe, healthy, happy and treated fairly, removing barriers to opportunity. Tackling child poverty is also at the heart of the new Government's mission to improve the life chances of every child. A Ministerial Taskforce is leading the development of a national child poverty strategy due to be published in the Spring 2025. There is clear context for urgent action on child poverty in Telford and Wrekin given our local picture, and this should support the delivery of all the strategy's aims and objectives. Working towards being a child friendly borough will support successful delivery of our aspirations.

A set of delivery priorities for 2025/26 and a performance framework sits alongside the strategy aims and objectives. The implementation and impact of the strategy over the next three years will be steered and overseen by a newly established Children and Young People's Board star chamber.



**Jo Britton**

Executive Director,  
Children's Services  
and Public Health



**Councillor Shirley Reynolds**

Cabinet Member for Children,  
Young People, Education,  
Employment and Skills



**Councillor Kelly Middleton**

Cabinet Member for Public  
Health and Healthier  
Communities



# Children and young people matter in Telford and Wrekin

Children and Young People are front and centre of the refreshed **Telford & Wrekin Council Plan**, with tackling poverty and inequalities in communities at the heart of the plan.

Getting the best start in life is an overarching theme in our **Health and Wellbeing Strategy**. Across healthy pregnancies, support for families in the early years, improving development and education outcomes – there is focus on children affected by poverty, poor mental health, domestic abuse, alcohol and drugs and special educational needs and disabilities.

**Telford Vision 2032** partnership ambitions support all children in getting the best possible start in life, from the day they're born, commits to no child being invisible to key services.



# Partnership Vision – our borough is home to healthy, safe children who achieve their potential

Children live in families, families make communities and communities build our borough



# Telford and Wrekin Children and Young People's Strategy

Partnership Vision – our borough is home to healthy, safe children who achieve their potential

## Start Well

Enabling children to get the best start in life through universal prenatal, antenatal, postnatal and health visiting services and early/family help services.

Empowering parents and carers to care for and nurture their children, with early/family help to avoid issues escalating.

Supporting all children to be ready for school, achieving a good level of development on their language and communication, problem solving and personal-social skills, at home and in early years and community settings.

## Stay Well

Encouraging families to be active, with healthy diet and lifestyles.

Improving children and young people's mental health and emotional and wellbeing.

Reducing health inequalities focussing on mental health, asthma, diabetes, oral health, epilepsy and immunisations.

## Enjoy and Achieve

Promoting access to a quality education offer for all young people across the borough, with holistic wrap around support for families who need it most.

Encouraging aspirations in all children and young people, enabling them to gain skills they need to fulfil their potential, preparing them for independent, successful adulthood.

Offering all young people opportunities to engage in stimulating activity which improves their sense of wellbeing.

## Keep Safe

Creating conditions so every child is safe and feels they belong in their home and educational setting.

Ensuring an environment in our communities where child exploitation is prevented, identified and challenged, resulting in disruption.

Working together to tackle the impact of adverse childhood experiences, such as neglect, alcohol, drugs and domestic abuse – using a whole family approach to empower families and support communities to be resilient.

### Culture

Listening to children and young people through co-production and engagement.

Empowering and supporting using asset-based community approach.

Celebrating diversity and being inclusive.

### Focus

Improving experience and outcomes for all.

Maximising opportunities, aspirations and life chances.

Whole child approach – physical, emotional, social and academic wellbeing.

Narrowing the gap – for children who are marginalised, living in poverty, with disabilities, SEND, care experience and trauma.

# Partnership and strategy context





# Listening to children, young people, parents and carers

The voices from a wide range of groups shape our commitments

Page 255

Local schools and youth councils

Leavers Come First

Young Carers

Youth Parliament

Black and Minority Ethnic  
Groups engagement

Emotional Health and Wellbeing  
focus groups and survey

Young People's Forum

Maternity and Neonatal Voices  
Partnership

Dandelion Parents

VOICE  
(Children in Care Forum)

Family Hubs

Parents Opening Doors (PODs)

SEND Youth Forum

Autism Hub

Shout Out for SEND

# Our local picture

## Population



60,300

children and young  
people aged 0-25. 1 in 3  
people in T&W  
(ONS 2023)



6.1%

increase in 0-25 population  
since 2013, compared to  
2.2% nationally  
(ONS 2023)



22.1%

of young people from a  
minority ethnic background  
(Census 2021)



5%

of the younger population's  
main language is not English  
(Census 2021)



**Higher** proportion of children  
eligible for **Free School Meals**  
than England (27.6% primary,  
25.6% secondary) DfE 2023/24



25.4%

(9,570) children live in low  
income families, compared to  
19.8% nationally  
(OHID 2022/23)



30%

of households with  
dependent children,  
compared to 28.5% nationally  
(Census 2021)



7.8%

(5,973) lone parent  
households, compared to  
6.9% nationally  
(Census 2021)

# Our local picture

## Start well



**29.3  
YEARS OLD**

**Mothers are younger on average** (30.9) ONS 2021



**36.3%**

**of children are breastfed at 6-8 weeks**, lower than England (52.7%)



**45.1%**

**of pregnant women access maternity care early**, lower than national average (63.5%)



**9.7%**

**5,493** younger people disabled under the Equality Act. Census 2021



**50.8%**

**of children are physically active**, higher than the national rate (47.8%) Sport England 2024



**63.9%** of children achieve a **good level of development** at 2-2½, lower than national (80.4) OHID 2023/24



**9.9%**

**A higher proportion of mothers smoke at time of delivery** than nationally (7.4%) OHID 2023/24



**24.6%**

**of children in Reception are overweight (including obese)** – higher than national (22.1%) OHID 2023/24



The number of CYP accessing mental health services across Shropshire, Telford and Wrekin continues to increase. NHSE



**37.3%**

**of children in year 6 are overweight (including obese)** – rate is improving and similar to the England rate (35.8%) OHID 2023/24

# Our local picture

## Enjoy and Achieve



69%

of children achieve a **good level of development** at the end of Reception, compared to 68% nationally OHID 2023/24



61% meet expected levels in **reading, writing and maths** at end of primary school compared to 60% nationally



43.3% achieving **Attainment 8** at end of secondary school compared to 46.1% nationally DfE 2024



35.3%

**Lower rates of children on child protection plan** per 10,000 than national (41.6) DfE 2023/24



96

**A higher rate of Looked After Children** per 10,000 than national (70) DfE 2023/24

5,017

**WITH SEN SUPPORT AND 1435 EHC PLAN** higher rates than national DfE 2023/24



**Lower rate of permanent exclusions from school than national but higher rate of suspensions.**



3.1%

of 16 to 17 year olds **not in education, employment or training**, better than national (5.2%) OHID 2022/23



**Rates of hospital admissions caused by unintentional and deliberate injuries in children** similar to national rates



**Lower rates than national for hospital admissions as a result of self harm**

# Performance and outcomes we want to achieve

Our best start in life, social care and education outcomes are linked to Council priorities and a range of national frameworks.

## Start Well

- Early access to maternity
- Infant vaccination rates
- Infant mortality rates
- Proportion of mothers smoking in pregnancy
- Prevalence of breastfeeding at 6-8 weeks
- Health Visitor: Proportion of New Birth Visits completed in 14 days, infants receiving 6-8 week review and children receiving 12 month review
- Teenage pregnancy rates
- Child development – proportion of children achieving good level of development at age 2-2½

## Stay Well

- Childhood vaccination rates
- Prevalence of overweight and obesity – reception and Y6
- Proportion of physically active children and young people
- Hospital admissions for mental health conditions
- CaMHS waiting times
- Percentage of school pupils with social, emotional and mental health needs
- Hospital admissions for asthma, diabetes, epilepsy
- Dental decay experience

## Enjoy and Achieve

- School attendance rates
- School readiness – children achieving a good level of development at end of reception
- Attainment – proportion of children achieving 5-9 in Maths and English
- Attainment – progress 8 scores
- Rate of children suspended or excluded from school
- Proportion of children not in education, employment or training
- Proportion of children on education, health and care plans
- proportion of children eligible taking up free school meals
- Proportion of 16 and 17 year olds not in education employment or training

## Keep Safe

- Rate of Looked after children
- Rate of Child protection plans
- Repeat referrals to children's safeguarding within 12 months
- Stability of children in care placements
- Proportion of Children and Families Assessments with Domestic Abuse as a factor
- Hospital admissions caused by unintentional and deliberate injuries – children and young people
- Hospital admissions as a result of self harm
- Number of missing children
- Proportion of care leavers in suitable accommodation and in education, employment or training

Our children and young people have told us what is important to them:



## Tackling Poverty

- Children in relative low income families
- Households with dependent children presenting as homeless

# Transforming family help



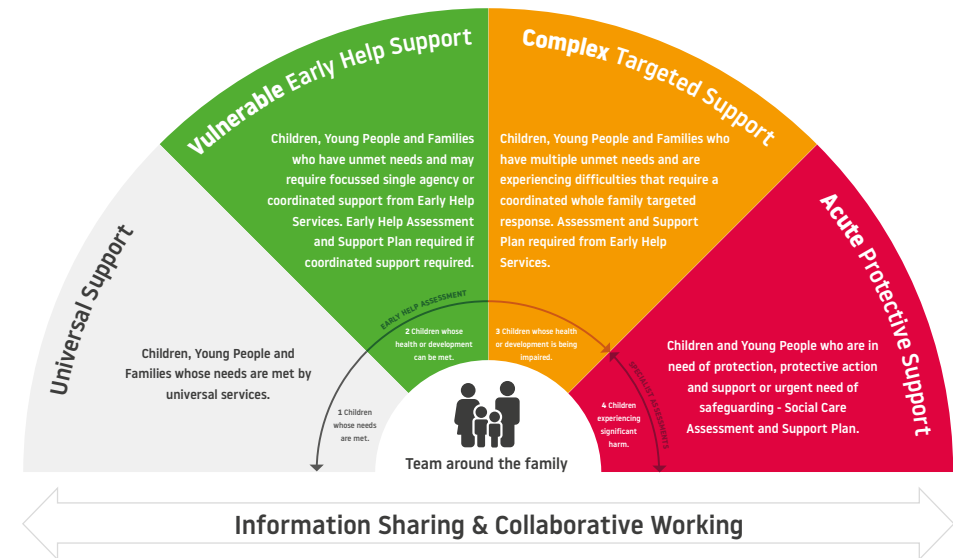
Our Early Help offer is clearly being transformed by Family Hubs. Going forward the Home Built on Love Children's Social Care Reforms, will support a new evidence-based approach called family help, bringing together targeted early help and children in need into a single system.

The transformation will create a Family Help service bring together Family Hubs, our enhanced Strengthening Families Service and our developing youth offer. While Family Help is a key element of this strategy's keep safe aim, it will also contribute significantly to the other three aims – start, well, stay well and enjoy and achieve.

The **Telford and Wrekin Family Hub Locality Service** will provide the following:

- Intense Family Help
- Brief Intervention Support
- Youth and Community Targeted Group Support
- Community Support – Here to help and Telephone support.
- Strengthened participation and engagement with children, young people and parents and will increase peer support and family ambassador roles
- Early Help Coordination support for Partner agencies
- Early Help Training

Family Help has a strong prevention approach and will be led by the Council, but community-based support from local voluntary, sector organisations such as: HomeStart, Families First and MIND are a vital part of the offer. Integration of the healthcare system, part of the Government's Health Mission, should also provide opportunities to offer health services closer to home for families.



We will improve our Early Help System by:

<b>Leaders</b>	Developing and communicating a clear Early Help offer with shared values, language and pathways.
<b>Data</b>	Data and intelligence led services with all partners to include shared Early Help Assessment case management system.
<b>Workforce</b>	Produce a shared workforce training offer to support the implementation of shared values, language and pathways.
<b>Communities</b>	Develop place-based knowledge, communication and sharing across workforce and communities.
<b>Parental Experience</b>	To understand and co-produce an Early Help system which supports the families Early Help journey.



# Child Friendly Telford and Wrekin

Child Friendly communities aim to ensure all children are able to have a meaningful say in, and truly benefit from, the local decisions, services and spaces that shape their lives.

These communities are those where the voices, needs, priorities and rights of children are an integral part of policies, programmes and decisions so that children:

- have a good start in life and grow up healthy and cared for;
- are protected from exploitation, violence and abuse;
- have access to quality social services;
- experience quality, inclusive and participatory education and skills development;
- express their opinions and influence decisions that affect them;
- participate in family, cultural, city/community and social life;
- live in a safe secure and clean environment with access to green spaces;
- meet friends and have places to play and enjoy themselves; and
- have a fair chance in life regardless of their ethnic origin, religion, income, gender or ability.

Engaging with children and young people is fundamental moving forward with a Child Friendly Telford and Wrekin. Their voice will help to identify their own priorities to help understand how a Child Friendly borough should look and feel.

**Across the Borough we want everyone to think about ‘what is it like to be a child growing up in Telford and Wrekin and how can we make it better’**

## Child Friendly Telford & Wrekin priority programme 2025/26

Adopting Child Friendly status will require a robust implementation plan, including the following elements:

- introduce the Child Friendly Telford and Wrekin descriptor within the council;
- understand current Child Friendly initiatives or ideas across the council;
- identify children and young people priorities;
- strengthen the voice of children and young people in all areas of local decision making;
- identify levels of need across the borough to target activities effectively;
- promote Child Friendly Telford and Wrekin with partners; and
- identifying how partners, community and voluntary sector organisations, businesses and communities can get involved.

## Local businesses, partners, and community and voluntary organisations could get involved by:

- offering young people, the chance to be part of an interview panel;
- holding an open day to showcase their organisation and invite schools;
- donating prizes to local events or sponsoring a team;
- becoming a mentor;
- offering apprenticeships;
- offering volunteering opportunities;
- engaging children when making decisions;
- offering discounts;
- creating safe places for children to play close to their homes;
- creating sport and physical activity opportunities; and
- creating Child Friendly places and environments for children to visit.

# Tackling poverty

Over a quarter of families in Telford and Wrekin, 9,570 children live in poverty, which contributes to a wide range of poorer outcomes throughout childhood, and which then persist into adulthood.

The cost of living crisis has made it harder for families to afford the everyday essentials, forcing many more children into poverty. Worrying about money affects young people's development, mood, and their ability to focus.

Food poverty is all too common with on average one in ten families using food banks in 2024. Ensuring children whose families are struggling to make ends meet can access to healthy and nutritious free school meals is crucial.

Poor housing conditions and homelessness add further layers of uncertainty and stress, disrupting young people's lives in ways which can have serious long-term consequences. Ensuring our most vulnerable local young people have a safe, comfortable and healthy home to grow is paramount.

The national child poverty strategy expected in early 2025 will address systemic drivers of poverty, including employment and housing. Building on the Government's wider reform plans, child poverty is being brought together around four key themes:

- 1 Increasing incomes
- 2 Reducing essential costs
- 3 Increasing financial resilience
- 4 Better local support •

**A key commitment for this strategy, focussing especially on the early years, high quality early education and health care. Our community and public sector partners should work together with families to improve access, co-ordination and the quality of services and wider opportunities, for those children of all ages that need them, recognising the particular benefits that early years interventions can have.**

## Tackling poverty priority programme 2025/26:

**Introducing Poverty Aware Practice to support families, by adopting approaches being taken in Leeds and elsewhere through:**

**Language:** guidance on having sensitive discussions with families about poverty

**Community Practice:** drawing on community support to reduce poverty

**Advocacy:** ensuring voices are heard

**Improving Material Circumstances**

**Case Studies:** best practice for working with poverty

**Resources for families experiencing poverty:** highlighting where families experiencing poverty can access support

# Start Well

## Objectives:

Enabling children to get the best start in life through universal prenatal, antenatal, postnatal and health visiting services and early/family help services.

Empowering parents and carers to care for and nurture their children, with early/family help to avoid issues escalating.

Supporting all children to be ready for school, achieving a good level of development on their language and communication, problem solving and personal-social skills, at home and in early years and community settings.

## Start Well priority programmes 2025/26:

- Early/Family Help strategy and extension of Family Hubs programme offer;
- refreshed Healthy Child Programme offer; and
- Local Maternity and Neonatal System to reduce maternal and infant health inequalities.



The Family Hubs/Family Help offer now provides a wide range of information, advice and support for parents to promote healthy development of their little ones. This is delivered in partnership with the community and voluntary sector, the NHS and early years setting and includes:

- Healthy Child Programme – health visiting and family nurse partnership (targeted interventions to vulnerable young parents);
- Antenatal education and Baby First Aid;
- Breastfeeding Network Peer Support;
- Social Prescribing – mental health support for mums;
- Families in Telford and HomeStart community groups;
- 0-2s booklet;
- Talking with your little one – for babies and toddlers;
- Early Years Talk Boost: primary schools and early years setting; and
- Dandelion Parents and Father Champions.

The NHS and councils work together with families through the “local maternity and neonatal system” to make maternity and neonatal services personalised, safe, accessible and fair. Reducing health inequalities is a key focus, especially for people from Black, Asian and Mixed Ethnic backgrounds and deprived areas.

# Stay Well

## Objectives:

Encouraging families to be active, with healthy diet and lifestyles.

Improving children and young people's mental health and emotional and wellbeing.

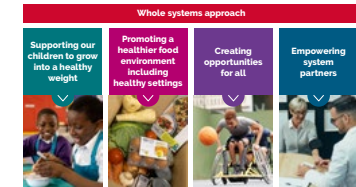
Reducing health inequalities focussing on mental health, asthma, diabetes, oral health, epilepsy and immunisations.

Page 264

### Stay Well priority programmes 2025/26:

- Healthy weight partnership strategy actions for children, young people and families;
- Integrated Care System development of iThrive model offer for social, emotional and mental health; and
- Integrated Care System core20plus5 programme expectations to reduce CYP health inequalities.

Adopting healthy lifestyles in childhood supports health throughout life, and vaping and smoking has become an important issue again in the past decade. Healthy lifestyles is a priority area given our local picture. The Council's healthy lifestyles team, leisure services, School Nurses and our community food work offers longstanding support to families, and now the wider work with partners through the whole systems approach to excess weight is starting to have a real impact.



The NHS healthcare inequalities programme (core20plus5) is an approach which target the 20% most deprived residents (the "core20"), which aligns closely to the child poverty agenda. The plus element covers children and young people who are at increased risk such as asylum seekers or those with SEND. The 5 clinical areas are those requiring accelerated improvement in medical treatment.



Mental health can impact on all aspects of children and young people's lives, including their physical wellbeing, relationships and educational attainment. It is widely acknowledged that mental health issue in children and young people has been increasing and access to mental health services is a challenge. The national i-THRIVE Programme, is an evidence-based framework being used across the country to improve outcomes for children and young people's mental health and wellbeing.



# Enjoy and Achieve

## Objectives:

Promoting access to a quality education offer for all young people across the borough, with holistic wrap around support for families who need it most.

Encouraging aspirations in all children and young people, enabling them to gain skills they need to fulfil their potential, preparing them for independent, successful adulthood.

Offering all young people opportunities to engage in stimulating activity which improves their sense of wellbeing.



## Enjoy and Achieve priority programmes 2025/26:

- boost the achievement of all children across Telford and Wrekin, through continual improvement activity across settings;
- raise aspirations with a focus on those from a disadvantaged background, through Raising the Attainment of Disadvantaged Youngsters programme;
- provide an inclusive educational offer that meets the needs of children with SEND in mainstream settings; and
- prepare young people for life after school, through youth offer and skills strategy.

Recognising the mixed economy of provision (i.e. maintained, academies, private, independent) that now exists within the national and local educational landscape our approach to achieving our key priority outcomes above is via partnership. Our work is driven through the Education Strategic Partnership Board who have oversight of improvement activity across our place and is made up of our local education leaders.

The Board believes that by collaborating, sharing and developing great practice in our organisations all our children can achieve their potential, at each stage in their education and development, to becoming successful young adults who have a real sense of belonging in Telford.

The Board is made up of education leaders from the early years sector, primary, secondary and special schools (maintained and academies), post 16 providers, diocese and the Local Authority. The partnership provides and opportunity for discussion and consultation between leaders of Telford and Wrekin, focused on education and promoting opportunity for all children and young people.

In addition the Council will further develop its holistic offer promoting best start in life, via the 5by5 and 10by10, expand and promote a community youth offer and develop a skills strategy to create a future fit workforce that will support an inclusive economy.



# Keep Safe

## Objectives:

Creating conditions so every child is safe and feels they belong in their home and educational setting.

Ensuring an environment in our communities where child exploitation is prevented, identified and challenged, resulting in disruption.

Working together to tackle the impact of adverse childhood experiences, such as neglect, alcohol, drugs and domestic abuse – using a whole family approach to empower families and support communities to be resilient.

### Keep Safe priority programmes 2025/26:

- delivery of Government's Stable Homes Built on Love, Keeping Children Safe, Helping Families Thrive and Children's Wellbeing and Schools Bill expectations;
- ongoing development of child exploitation prevention programme;
- tackling youth violence; and
- enhancing offer for children and young people affected by domestic abuse.

The Department of Education Children's Social Care Reforms **Stable Homes Built on Love** published in February 2023, is organised under six pillars:

- 1 Family help that provides the right support at the right time so that children can thrive with their families.
- 2 A decisive multi-agency child protection system.
- 3 Unlocking the potential of family network.
- 4 Putting love, relationships and a stable home at the heart of being a child in care.
- 5 A valued, supported and highly skilled social worker for every child who needs one.
- 6 A system that continuously learns and improves, and makes better use of evidence and data.

Across the Council's Children's Safeguarding, Education and Skills and Public Health teams, we continue to drive the recommendations of the Government publications and hold ourselves accountable for the implementation of the reforms both from a local and national context.

Our housing strategy aim to provide suitable high quality housing in the borough, with extra support for those most vulnerable children and families to ensure our young people have a safe environment to live and grow.

We continue to measure our progress in accordance with the legislative context and local delivery to achieve the best possible outcomes for children and their families. We actively engage at a national level with policy and practice change and ensure the implementation of this at a local level, in addition to recognising our strengths and areas of development.



# Proposed governance

## Children and Young People's Star Chamber

A new CYP Star Chamber - including young people, Elected Members and Leaders from the key statutory organisations, will be put in place to provide sharper focus and critically appraise progress against the key commitments in the Strategy to demonstrate impact.

The existing boards below will continue to provide oversight, assurance and monitor outcomes across their current scope of responsibility.

### Health and Wellbeing Board

#### Responsibilities for:

- public health, healthy lifestyles, best start in life, alcohol and drugs, domestic abuse

### Early Help Operational Board

- early/family help transformation

### Community Safety Partnership

- domestic abuse, youth violence

### Integrated Care System

#### Responsibilities for:

- health services, maternity and neonatal system, mental health, child mortality, core20plus5 – health inequalities

### Safeguarding Children's Board

#### Responsibilities for:

- children's social care reforms
- Children Wellbeing and Schools Bill
- SEND and alternative provision
- children in care and care leavers

### Corporate Parenting Strategic Group

### SEND Partnership Board

#### Responsibilities for:

- continued development of first class education system

### Education Strategic Partnership

Start Well

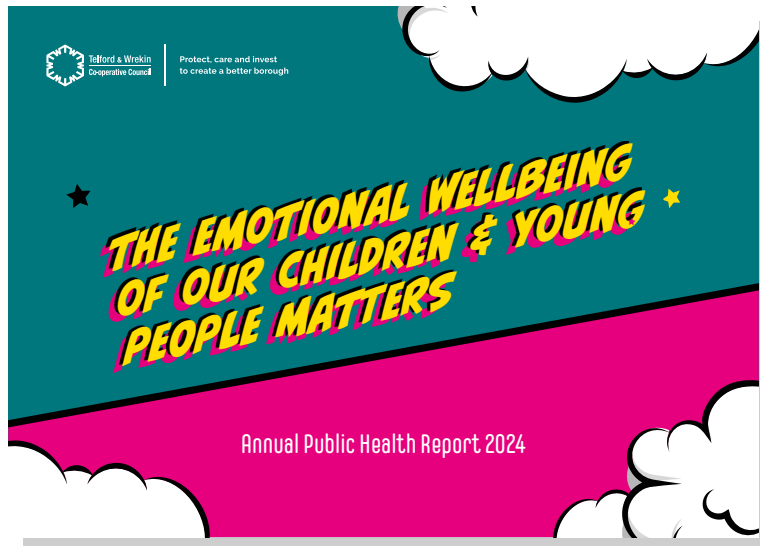
Stay Well

Enjoy and  
Achieve

Keep Safe

# What we hear from children and young people?

Page 268



## WHAT MAKES YOU SAD OR WORRIES YOU

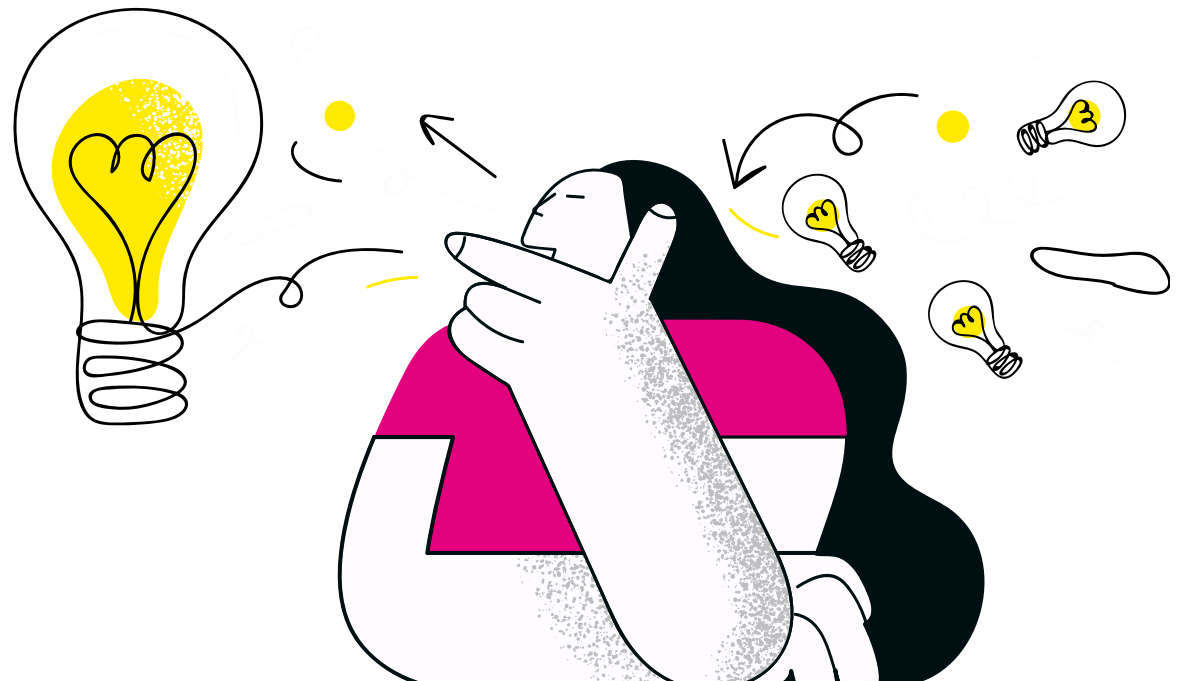
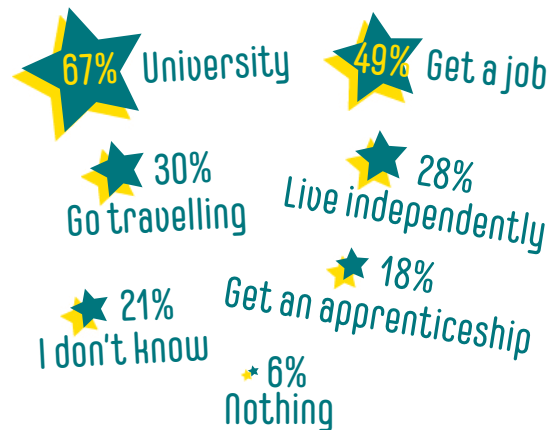
...take it hard when my parents push me to do things or see people that I don't like  
 ...not seeing family...  
 ...being alone...basically I spend every day on my own  
 ...situations you can find yourself in with family...  
 'family drama'  
 ...when my friends start acting up and isolate me for no reason  
 ...anxious about going back to school after the school holidays...everyone finds school difficult at some point...school makes me sad and worried  
 ...bullying and being picked on...being bullied constantly  
 ...not being good enough...disappointing others...  
 being underestimated...sometimes it motivates you

but often it makes you feel like you don't want to try because you aren't good enough.....can have a positive or negative effect..  
 ...carbon emissions, the environment and the climate  
 ...Friends dying and worrying about dying...  
 ...social media...the news can make me sad...  
 ...worry about things that are happening now, things that you can't change but you wish you could  
 ...fake news...altered images...made up stories on social media...avoid all social media...all these images have been edited, they are so fake  
 ...bus times cause me anxiety...I have to get the college bus, which is always crowded and gives me anxiety



## What our YPYoW survey shows:

What are your goals for when you leave school/college? Choose all that apply



# What we hear from children and young people?

Do you feel you have the right support and opportunities to succeed in your goals?

...there is more support that I am looking for but it is hard to find and I don't drive or use buses so getting there can be difficult as I walk everywhere...

...I think there is adequate support out there but it's knowing what there is...

...from secondary school schools and then colleges should start teaching us about independence...

...lots of things that you do at school can help you in the future when you are independent, but many do not...

...some subjects are not relevant to life once you leave education

...education should teach us more practical things like life skills...school and college should help you more...they should teach us about taxes and bills

...family support system, and experience in going to university affects how much support we can get from them in completing applications for university...

...'parents who have no knowledge are less able to support or advise us than parents who do have experience...

...you have to figure things out for yourself if your family can't give you advice or support...

What do you do to keep fit and healthy

Care leavers are entitled to a free leisure centre membership taking part in PE/Gym at school

Going running on the track

Running around school all day

Flip Out in Stoke

Healthy eating was taught to me

I had no guidance about diet and nutrition

Nutrition the body needs

Can join that are similar to the young carers group

Swimming keeps me focused

Running helps me to destress

What our YPYoW survey shows:

What do you do to keep fit and healthy?  
Choose all that apply



This page is intentionally left blank



**Telford & Wrekin**  
Co-operative Council

**Protect, care and invest  
to create a better borough**

## **Borough of Telford and Wrekin**

### **Cabinet**

**Thursday 17<sup>th</sup> July 2025**

### **Culture & Communities**

---

<b>Cabinet Member:</b>	Cllr Angela McClements - Cabinet Member for Leisure, Tourism, Culture & the Arts
<b>Lead Director:</b>	Katherine Kynaston – Director – Housing, Commercial and Customer Services
<b>Service Area:</b>	Housing, Commercial & Customer Services
<b>Report Author:</b>	Jon Bielstein – Group Manager Culture & Events
<b>Officer Contact Details:</b>	<b>Tel:</b> 01952 380992 <b>Email</b> jon.bielstein@telford.gov.uk
<b>Wards Affected:</b>	All Wards
<b>Key Decision:</b>	Not Key Decision
<b>Forward Plan:</b>	Not Applicable
<b>Report considered by:</b>	SMT – 17 June 2025 Business Briefing – 26 June 2025 Cabinet – 17 July 2025

---

#### **1. Recommendations for decision/noting:**

It is recommended that Cabinet:

- 1.1 Approves plans to expand the Council's Theatre on Tour and Headline Events Programmes noting the positive impact these are having across communities
- 1.2 Approves the development and submission of a funding bid to develop the Town Park Amphitheatre to provide a new outdoor performance space
- 1.3 Notes the progress being made with the development of the new Telford Theatre.
- 1.4 Approves the draft Vision and priorities for the Borough's first Culture Strategy and endorses proposals for stakeholder engagement in the Strategy's further development

## **2. Purpose of Report**

- 2.1 Culture is about how we live – our heritage, behaviours, values and beliefs – and how these are expressed. This includes through dance, music, theatre, craft, visual & digital arts, poetry and the creative businesses that make them. It is about how we tell and celebrate Telford's unique stories.
- 2.2 Investing in cultural activity benefits everyone, providing time out for enjoyment and relaxation, supporting health and wellbeing, building ties and understanding across communities, creating jobs, attracting visitors and investment, and building a sense of pride and belonging.
- 2.3 The Council are committed to enabling residents, visitors and businesses to have access to and benefit from cultural activity. The Council's free headline events programme, and Theatre on Tour, is attracting audiences in excess of 100,000 each year – 75% of these local. It is also a key attraction for the 3.2m visitor trips made to the Borough pa which in 2022 generated £220m direct economic impact. Every £1 invested in arts and culture is estimated to return £4 in economic value including through job creation and visitor spend.
- 2.4 The reputation and profile this investment has built and our vision and ambition has attracted in excess of £25m of Levelling Up Funding to develop our cultural offer. This is set to deliver not only a new Theatre but also support the growth of community arts and events spaces in the heart of our Borough Towns including the regeneration of Wellington Market and the Orbit and the creation of new public event space in Station Quarter and Oakengates. This compliments the investment being made into our High Streets through Pride in Our High Street.
- 2.5 The report sets out plans to grow the Council's annual calendar of free community festivals and events, and the Theatre on Tour programme. Central to this is working with funders to regenerate the Amphitheatre in the Town Park providing an exciting, new outdoor event space delivering a programme of dance, theatre, music and fashion shows in a unique and beautiful park setting.
- 2.6 Due to open in 2027, the report highlights progress with the development of the new Telford Theatre. This will provide a larger auditorium to attract a wider variety of shows, a Theatre Studio for developing local talent and showcasing community performance, and a range of other front and back of house improvements increasing access for all and significantly reduce the carbon footprint of the original theatre.
- 2.7 Setting out our ambition for everyone to have access to cultural and artistic activity in their community the report sets out our draft vision and priorities for a new Culture Strategy ahead of further public and partner consultation.

## **3. Background**

- 3.1 Telford & Wrekin is a vibrant, contemporary destination built on a unique heritage as an industrial powerhouse, a blend of old and new, with a network of distinct and individual borough towns bringing a rich diversity of cultures, faiths and communities. It is a centre of creativity and home to a wealth of greenspaces and



beautiful landscapes. All of these elements shape a hugely diverse culture and arts scene.

- 3.1 97% of the more than 1500 respondents to the last theatre customer survey agreed that taking part in arts and cultural activity benefits the local community (74% strongly agreeing). Comments made by stakeholders and members of the public involved in the 2023 Peer Review of the Culture service further illustrated this with quotes including – ‘*culture is a fundamental part of everyone’s DNA ...*’ ‘*its about belonging ...*’ ‘*we’ve got a big story to tell*’.
- 3.2 A vibrant cultural scene can play a significant part in attracting investment - creating a draw to visit, live or work - establishing a reputation and excitement about a Town – and attracting funding.
- 3.3 Cultural activity can change perceptions, connect and revitalise communities, increase access to education, attract and retain young people and bring footfall to our High Streets. It is cross cutting supporting many of the Council’s strategies including Health and Wellbeing, Equality, Diversity & Inclusion, Children & Young People, the celebration of our green heritage as well as our Investment and Visitor Management Plans.
- 3.4 It is at the heart of our Corporate Priorities and Telford’s Vision 2032 –
  - Creating a place where all residents prosper regardless of their background, knowledge, skills, needs or experience – by ensuring cultural initiatives are accessible and representative of our diverse population
  - Supporting collaboration – developing partnerships that will leverage investment for cultural projects
  - Celebrating our heritage and innovation – telling the story of Telford’s historical significance from the Industrial Revolution to a hub for advanced manufacturing while promoting innovation in the arts and cultural sector
  - Enhancing quality of life for all residents – integrating cultural activities and spaces into communities that provides new ways of tackling challenges around health and wellbeing by improving mental and physical health and addressing social isolation

#### **4. Festivals, Events & Theatre on Tour**

##### **Festival & Events Programme**

- 4.1 Telford & Wrekin Council runs an established, vibrant, affordable Festival and Events Programme. The LGA Culture Peer Review emphasised that ‘*Telford & Wrekin has real strength in delivery of free events and some inspirational projects.*’ They quoted those they’d interviewed – ‘*the events team are brilliant*’... ‘*Las Vegas mind(set) on a Telford budget*’.
- 4.2 The Headline Events Programme includes –
  - **Spring into St Georges** – a free family fun day in Telford Town Park featuring jousting by Knights of Nottingham, birds of prey, opportunities to try traditional crafts and many other attractions

- **Telford Walking Week** – a 7 day celebration of walking and the great outdoors with something for all ages and abilities promoting health and wellbeing, tackling social isolation and providing family fun
- **Armed Forces Day** – a popular free annual event at Broadoaks, Donnington celebrating our Armed Forces community with sports, live music and family friendly military displays.
- **Balloon Fiesta** (3 days) – run over August Bank Holiday the much-loved night glow includes illuminated balloons set to music with the daytime including balloon launches, parachute and stunt display teams alongside staged entertainment
- **Telford Carnival** – held on the final day of Balloon Fiesta this is a celebration of the diversity and culture of Telford's communities with a carnival parade featuring groups and organisations celebrating different faiths, nationalities, disability and diversity
- **World Heritage Festival** (fortnight) – a fortnight of events in and around the Ironbridge Gorge World Heritage site with a street market, heritage open days and a coracle regatta
- **Remembrance Day** – held at the War Memorial in the Town Park this marks Armistice Day and regularly attracts a significant community attendance including schools and young people.
- **Christmas Programme of Events** including annual Festive Gardens with a light show trail set to music through the Chelsea Gardens which attracted over 10,000 visitors in 2024 – a c.20% increase on the previous year and feedback such as '*very family orientated and very affordable*' and '*the lights, band and atmosphere were fantastic*'



Social media quotes from those attending Headline events in the last 12 months included

*'a fabulous free family day enjoyed by thousands including my family and a great way to showcase Telford' and 'wow, just wow – that was the best experience we have ever had! (Balloon Fiesta)*

*'Fabulous day, my grandson loved the knights' (Spring into St Georges)*



*'Thank you for having us Kin-Collective Wellbeing Play and Family Wellbeing tent – a smashing event' (Spring into St Georges)*

*'Enjoyed last year so came back this year – was even better' 'Amazing value for money, Loved the light trail and all the technology' (Festive Gardens)*

- 4.3 **VE80** was a week-long commemoration including a public remembrance event in the Town Centre with young people, veterans and cadet groups, and a display of the work of the Armed Forces Network supporting veterans and their families in the Borough. The Council also provided £50k of grant funding to Telford & Wrekin community groups to mark VE80. This supported 43 community events across the Borough including tea dances, family fun days, beacon lighting, film screenings, Veterans lunches and the installation of memorial benches. Events celebrated diversity with a tea party by the Parents Opening Doors Groups welcoming pre-school and SEND young people and their families, events for those with Dementia and a number hosted by different faith and cultural groups including ChineseKind and Hadley Community Cultural Centre. Many were supported by Town & Parish Councils and with additional funding through the Councillors Pride Fund.
- 4.4 In addition to the core programme every year many other events are delivered or supported by the Council including big screening of sport e.g. the Men's Euros final screened in the QE2 Arena. We were also pleased to support AFC Telford by enabling a big screen at their ground for the play-off final which marked the Club's promotion. Other events include Poetry Slams, fairgrounds in Southwater, Wellington Late Night Market and work with community organisations including Interfaith Council, to deliver local events e.g. the Lantern Festival (Bowring Park) delivered with funding from the Inclusive Communities Fund.



- 4.5 Wellington Market is a historic landmark and well loved market which following the Council's acquisition is set to provide an even more vibrant retail, entertainment and food and drink destination for the whole Borough. The popular late Night Market has continued to attract record attendance with live music, entertainment acts and food and drink. During the period of the works at Wellington market we will be continuing to support events through our Wellfest initiative that will co-ordinate and support a range of cultural activities across Wellington. The investment being made through the Council will transform the market safeguarding the historic building, redesigning the layout to create more usable space, increasing accessibility including toilet provision, creating a new covered outdoor space allowing for an increasing range of music, dance and entertainment. This will compliment the

programme already delivered by the Council and partners including the Town Council in the Market Square and local parks and the Pride in Our High Street (PiOHS) programme. This has seen £7.6m investment to date maintaining footfall through start up grants, investment into facades and supporting entertainment on the High Streets – creating more opportunities for residents to enjoy cultural activity on their doorstep.



## Supporting Community Events

- 4.6 The Council Events Team also provide significant support to Town & Parish Councils, local community organisations, artists and individuals looking to put on events on council-owned land. Support can include advice, guidance, funding, links to acts and promotion. This is important in ensuring a thriving calendar of activity across the year in the heart of communities and High Streets.
- 4.7 The Culture Team also work to access funding and commission new pieces of public art for the Town. A recent commission was the covid memorial sculpture in the Town Park.

## Growing the Programme

### Restoring the Telford Town Park Amphitheatre

- 4.8 In its heyday, the Telford Town Park Amphitheatre was a vibrant cultural hub, hosting regular live band gigs and a diverse array of performances, including drama, dance, and classical music, often culminating in spectacular fireworks finales. Telford & Wrekin Council (T&WC) is actively committing funds and pursuing

additional grant funding to restore the amphitheatre to its former glory. This initiative aims to complement the Telford Theatre on Tour's programme of outdoor shows in the borough parks.

The project envisions the refurbishment of the 400-seater venue, nestled in a picturesque corner of the national award-winning Telford Town Park, with the stunning backdrop of Randlay Pool. Subject to work with funders our aspirations for this project include:

- **Revitalising the Local Arts Scene:** By providing a dedicated space for a wide range of performances, we aim to foster local talent and bring diverse cultural experiences to the community.
- **Enhancing Community Engagement:** The amphitheatre will serve as a venue for residents and visitors of all ages and cultures, promoting community spirit and access for all.
- **Boosting Tourism:** With its scenic location and varied programming, the refurbished amphitheatre is expected to attract tourists and add the Town Park offer, contributing to the local economy.
- **Sustainability and Innovation:** We plan to incorporate sustainable practices in the refurbishment process, ensuring the venue is environmentally friendly
- **Health & Wellbeing:** By creating new outdoor performance spaces we will encourage residents to spend more time exploring the Borough's Town and Borough Parks and greenspaces boosting health and wellbeing
- **Educational Opportunities:** The amphitheatre will also be a venue for educational programs and workshops, providing learning opportunities for all ages.

We are excited about the potential of this project to not only restore a beloved venue but also to create a dynamic cultural landmark that will benefit the community for years to come.



4.9 The Council is committed to making its Event Programme inclusive and accessible to all. A focus for 2025/26 is to provide more activity for teens and young people with a dedicated teen zone including graffiti art, basketball and DJing starting at Balloon/Carnival over the August Bank Holiday weekend.

4.10 We have also worked with the Making it Real Board to increase accessibility for all. We already provide dedicated green mat areas for wheelchair users at Balloon, and



this year will add a bespoke trailer based bed/shower unit providing full changing and enhanced accessible toilet provision for all ages. Our Events are also attended by a range of internal services and partners who provide health and wellbeing information and signposting including blood pressure checks, representation from Adult Social Care and mental health services and dedicated calm spaces.

- 4.11 In collaboration with our Pride in Our High Street programme, events including Spring into St Georges and Balloon Fiesta will this year incorporate Makers Markets showcasing local creative businesses drawn from Telford & Wrekin High Streets and Markets. We already work with local businesses to add value with packages for Panto featuring deals with Southwater and Town Park venues.
- 4.12 Christmas 2025 will kick off with a launch event planned for 29<sup>th</sup> November featuring an exciting lantern installation around the Town Park Lake celebrating and telling stories of the unique history and character of Telford, together with a new family carol-oke in the Square, Festive Gardens (this year themed The North Pole) and a new Christmas Market featuring local makers drawn from our High Streets and markets.
- 4.13 We are continually seeking external funding to bring new and exciting content to the Programme. We are exploring with funders potential to develop a new Telford Festival weekend in 2026 including events in our Borough Towns and Town Centre.

#### **Telford Theatre on Tour**

- 4.14 Telford Theatre on Tour aims to provide a wide range of cultural experiences for residents and visitors, in the heart of our Borough Towns, maintaining and building theatre audiences whilst the Telford Theatre is being redeveloped.
- 4.15 In the last year 20,000 tickets have been sold for shows held in venues including the Firefly in Oakengates, the Anstice in Madeley, Bowring and Hartshill Park and the International Centre. Performances have included music, comedy, children's shows, Shakespeare and Panto with 3 outdoor family performances taking place over the Summer.
- 4.16 Panto 24 took place at the Telford International Centre due to the refurbishment of the Telford Theatre. Goldilocks and the Three Bears attracted a 5 star rating from Chris Eldon of What's On who described it as '*loud and proud*' with a '*unique blend of Pantomime and Circus ... a Panto-cus*' ... '*with more than a nod to the Greatest Showman*'. Audience capacity and ticket sales exceeded targets with more than 18,000 attending the 14 day run.



*'We hope the 5 families that visited the theatre this Christmas with the Kindness Tickets we donated had a wonderful time making magical memories at the pantomime'*

*'It was brilliant'*

- 4.17 Panto 25 is Cinderella opening on 16<sup>th</sup> December in a larger auditorium space at the International Centre with more seating and enhanced staging. Building on 2024 theatre goers can again benefit from Xmas package tickets including the Ice Rink and other town centre venues.
- 4.18 Increasing cultural activity throughout the Borough and offering a more diverse programme in venues that people are familiar with is attracting new audiences. It also enables new types of performance to be tested e.g. with a view to increasing participation of young people or culturally specific activities to be celebrated.
- 4.19 Working with Arts Alive and Flicks in the Sticks the Theatre on Tour programme will expand in 25/26 to more venues including Belmont Hall, Wellington, Cosy Hall, Newport, Dawley Town Hall and the Little Theatre, Donnington – alongside our existing partners.
- 4.20 The community focus is increasing footfall and encouraging people to visit other Borough Towns and venues and supporting local creative talent. We will be working further to encourage local cafes and bars to benefit providing pre or post theatre deals and packages. Working with partners we are exploring an exciting programme – Are You Dancing - bringing entertainment into the High Street and celebrating the stories of the music and dance venues in our Borough towns.
- 4.21 We also have a wealth of parks and greenspaces and our programme features outdoor theatre, music and family fun days showcasing these, attracting new audiences and encouraging people to get out in the fresh air improving health and wellbeing.



ODDSOCKS – Julius Ceasar July 2024 – Bowring Park.

### Going Forward

- 4.22 Providing accessible, inclusive and affordable arts and entertainment opportunities for all is at the heart of our approach to culture. Theatre on Tour is proving a huge success bringing theatre to resident's doorstep. It is proposed to continue and build on the touring programme through the growing Telford Venues Network once the new Telford Theatre is open. Developing the New Theatre programme with representatives from the Network will help to establish a popular community led programme for the new Studio Theatre. The new Theatre will sit at the centre of the culture and arts scene branching out through our Borough Town venues and parks, into our communities. Through the Council's Tickets Telford platform, we can provide the network with a ticketing facility and central listing place – a one stop shop promoting the diverse offer across the Borough.



- 4.23 We continue to engage with more partners and funders. This includes linking with English Heritage to explore the potential of hosting outdoor shows at Lilleshall Abbey and working with Arts Alive and neighbouring venues including, The Courtyard Hereford, Wolverhampton Art Gallery, and Theatre Severn to develop

touring and collaborative opportunities. This could open up options to host London touring shows that would not come to Telford alone. We are also working with partners to develop genre specific programme such as new writing, spoken word, folk, jazz, original music, visual arts, and work that reflects our diverse communities and their cultures.

- 4.24 The extent, diversity and community based offer – with the new Theatre providing a new cultural hub – is a huge asset for Telford. We are working to build our communications and marketing plan to extend reach but also to strengthen our engagement with the Arts Council to attract further funding and bid for National Portfolio Organisation (NPO) status when the next Arts Council bid round opens. NPO are arts and culture organisations who receive core funding from Arts Council England and are recognised as leaders in the sector with a responsibility to support the development of the national arts and culture sector. This would enable us to sustain and grow the programme and maximise on the community and inward investment opportunities.

## **5. New Telford Theatre**

- 5.1 Oakengates has been the home of Telford's Theatre – The Place – since the 1980s – attracting local and regional audiences to enjoy a diverse and popular theatre and music programme with over 200 shows per year. Recognised by theatre promoters and audiences *'The Telford venue puts some of the big city centre theatres to shame, the whole team have a real passion...it is the personal touch and welcome that keeps shows, artistes and audience returning.'*
- 5.2 In 2023 the Council won £15.5m of Levelling Up Funding to support the delivery of a new state-of-the-art theatre. The majority of the theatre is set to be demolished and rebuilt transforming the exterior and interior of the building. New facilities include a larger main auditorium with increased balcony seating capacity, a second studio-theatre, a community/art room with outdoor space, new fully accessible facilities and the expansion of the front of house including bar and dining offer.
- 5.3 The new Telford Theatre will be able to offer a more diverse cultural programme, attracting larger shows benefitting existing theatre goers and audiences both local and beyond.
- 5.4 A key priority for the Council is to support the regeneration of town centres, increasing footfall and diversifying the High Street and revitalising the visitor economy. The transformation of the Theatre and Limes Walk, creating a new theatre quarter, with its new retail units, public square linking through to the High Street and town centre apartments, provides an anchor to the regeneration of this area whose catchment includes some of the most deprived communities in the Borough.
- 5.5 Inclusion of a community performance arts studio in the Theatre will provide learning space in the community for Telford College and local schools, creating critical 'out-reach' to inspire young people including those disengaged from study to continue their education and achieve employment. The studio theatre will provide a development space for new shows and creative talent linked with the Community



Venues Network supporting and growing the Borough-wide culture and arts activity and its accessibility.

- 5.6 The new facility will also reduce the theatre's carbon footprint with an estimated 90% reduction and support the local economy by delivering c.12 new jobs and at least 5 new volunteering opportunities each year at the theatre.
- 5.7 The plans which received planning permission in 2024 have been shaped following extensive consultations with residents, businesses, stakeholders and theatre patrons.

Some key headline results were:

- 99% agreed that it was important to have a Theatre/performance venue
- 37% said that The Place Theatre is their most visited venue
- 70% said that if there was a wider choice of things to do in or near the Theatre before or after shows they would be more likely to visit

- 5.8 Works have started on site with the main demolition and rebuild due to begin this Summer. An exciting, new programme of events will start to be announced in Spring 2026 with the Theatre due to re-open in 2027.



## 6. Culture & Communities – T&W Culture Strategy 2025-2030

- 6.1 The Council recognises the importance of culture and events to the Borough and our existing investment shows our commitment to enabling residents, visitors and businesses to have access to and benefit from cultural activity.
- 6.2 We need however to continue to build on this and to maximise how we use our resources and leadership role to leverage investment particularly linked with the new Theatre, strengthen the sector and support community organisations and venues to deliver more cultural activity themselves.

- 6.3 The new Strategy will pick up on the findings of the LGA Culture Peer Review. This made a number of recommendations including being clear on the role of the new Theatre and using time before opening to test, develop and build consensus. It emphasised the need to deepen cultural partnerships and being targeted in where we invest. The latter to be based on a data-led approach linked to understanding local participation levels and types of activity, barriers to engagement and gaps in provision and identifying routes to reach more residents and effectively align the roles of the theatre, events and grassroots development.
- 6.4 The Strategy also needs to align us with the priorities of major funders including Arts Council and their *Let's Create* Strategy recognising that Telford to date has not benefitted from major, sustained external funding to the extent of other areas.
- 6.5 *Let's Create* centres around three objectives:
- **Creative People** – everyone can develop and express creativity throughout their lives
  - **Cultural Communities** – places thrive through a collaborative approach to culture
  - **A Creative and Cultural Country** – England's cultural sector is innovative, collaborative and international
- 6.6 Work has already begun to develop the strategy with a number of facilitated workshops involving 65 partners, a new Culture Club of creative organisations and the growing Community Venues Network. Some of the messages to date include:
- *What's missing is the glue – the connection between us all and what we're doing*
  - *Connecting with people through creative activity keeps your brain active, reduces depression and makes you more positive – it is preventative medicine*
  - *Just by giving a space to creative people you could see some amazing things come from it*
  - *The smaller towns are like the spokes of the wheel with Telford (Theatre) at the hub*
  - *Can we come up with messaging that tells people we're a place where you have a creative career – Telford you can make it here!*
- 6.7 Telford has a rich creative sector with a network of freelance artists and performance arts organisations and a thriving heritage craft sector – it is entrepreneurial – but the feedback is that it is grassroots and can feel fragmented and hidden.
- 6.8 The Borough has strengths in dance and music but also a wide diversity of cultural activity reflecting the increasing diversity in our communities - alongside our industrial heritage and continued economic strength in innovation and advanced manufacturing – a place of makers and shapers.
- 6.9 As a business sector, production and arts are often at the forefront of new technology with local companies engaged in AI, immersive technology, robotics, graphic design and digital marketing. This sector has many crossovers into advanced manufacturing making its growth a benefit to the wider economy. A key



element of the next stage of work will be to map and understand the barriers and potential for growing the creative business sector.

- 6.10 Looking to neighbouring authorities with similar backgrounds including Stoke and its distinctive 6 town structure and history in the Potteries, they have used culture to maximise investment, channelling this to meet the needs of the City, transforming communities and bringing pride of place and regeneration opportunities. Other areas including Milton Keynes have built and capitalised on now internationally renowned Festivals and Events to attract visitors. They have been able to leverage the value of creative assets including their Theatre, Gallery and historic venues like Bletchley Park to attract significant ongoing Arts Council funding.
- 6.11 We have a strong foundation to build on and a real opportunity with the new Theatre and the success of Theatre on Tour to be ambitious and use the new Strategy to be clear on shared priorities as a context for greater collaboration and investment.
- 6.12 Our draft vision is to ***‘grow, connect and unlock the potential of our cultural sector, increasing access to arts and culture for all as a meaningful part of people’s everyday lives’***
- 6.13 We see our scene as remaining diverse and ‘grassroots’ but with Telford Theatre as the toolbox of creativity, the central hub of a cultural web of Telford venues, allowing us to increase collaboration and promotion of Telford’s rich creative offer. Partners want to see more cultural placemaking celebrating the diversity of our communities and Borough towns, support for growing the creative economy and to develop our success with Festivals and Events as a way to put Telford on the map. Potential cross cutting themes identified to date include a focus on culture and health/wellbeing and the engagement and opportunities for young people.
- 6.14 In this context 5 draft priorities are proposed as the basis for the strategy’s development and engagement with partners over the coming months:
- **Fostering collaboration to strengthen the sector and potential for growth**
  - **Expanding our creative offer through a hub and spoke model centred on the new Theatre and reaching out into our communities**
  - **Nurturing talent and our creative business sector**
  - **Maximising economic benefit through securing new arts funding, inward investment and visitor spend**
  - **Widening our audience reach and championing inclusivity and accessibility for all**

## **7. Next Steps**

- 7.1 We will continue to work with our Communications Team to strengthen how we showcase and package what is already happening in Telford and to pursue immediate funding opportunities to grow content for our 25/26 and 26/27 Event programmes.
- 7.2 Subject to Cabinet approval, it is proposed to undertake public and stakeholder engagement in the development of the new Strategy. A communications plan will

be in place to promote this. The engagement will include further discussions with the Culture Club and Venues Network, creative businesses, internal services including Business Support, Visitor Economy, Public Health, Children's Services and Adult Social Care, Town and Parish Councils and local residents and community groups. The latter will include survey work at our major 2025 events as well as working with community organisations to extend reach. We are already working with the Employee-led EDI Groups and the Making it Real Board to understand barriers to participation.

7.3 We will continue to engage with the Arts Council and other funders to align priorities and raise Telford's profile. We are also linking with other venues and authorities including those who have had success achieving NPO status. This will provide learning and also opportunities for collaboration.

7.4 It is proposed that the final strategy is brought back to Cabinet for final approval and adoption.

## **8. Alternative Options**

8.1 It is not a statutory requirement for the Council to have a Cultural Strategy, so Cabinet could decide not to proceed. To do so would however mean that the Council would not capitalise on the social, economic and environmental benefits of expanding the Borough's culture and arts offer. This would adversely impact on meeting the needs of our residents and attracting new investment to support the regeneration of our Borough.

## **9. Key Risks**

9.1 In carrying out the consultation, there is a risk that this will not reach enough people, and feedback is not representative of all residents and stakeholders. To mitigate this, we will be working with colleagues including Business Support, Visit, Education and Public Health and key partners through our Culture Club and Venues Network and Town & Parish Councils to maximise our reach. To address the risk that our Strategy will not have impact in attracting external funding we will work with key agencies such as Arts Council, National Trust and Heritage Lottery to align with their priorities.

## **10. Key Council Priorities**

10.1 This strategy will build on existing initiatives and support the Council's plan to protect, care and invest to create a better Borough, and all our priorities:

- All neighbourhoods are a great place to live
- A community-focussed, innovative Council providing efficient, effective and quality services
- Everyone benefits from a thriving economy
- Our natural environment is protected and the Council has a leading role in addressing the climate emergency
- Every child, young person and adult lives well in their community

- 10.2 The strategy also links closely with the priorities identified in the Health and Wellbeing Board vision – happier, healthier fulfilled lives.

## **11. Financial Implications**

- 11.1 The Council's capital programme includes investment which supports the T&W Culture Strategy, such as funding for the new theatre, the Orbit and public realm, which is financed from Grants (including Levelling Up Grant and Capital Regeneration Projects Grant mentioned earlier in the report), External Funding and Council resources. The Finance Team will provide support, advice and monitoring in relation to capital projects and required grant returns.

The costs associated with Theatre on Tour and Event Programmes are funded from ticket sales income along with a budget approved within the 2025/26 MTFS.

## **12. Legal and HR Implications**

- 12.1 There are no direct legal or HR implications arising from this report, but legal advice will be provided if required on any policy amendments in future.

## **13. Ward Implications**

- 13.1 All wards will be impacted by these proposals.

## **14. Health, Social and Economic Implications**

- 14.1 It is intended that this programme of work will contribute to improving health and wellbeing outcomes across the Borough. Significant inequalities continue to exist between communities and the new Strategy will support and join up with community-centred approaches to improving wellbeing and engaging diverse communities.

## **15. Equality and Diversity Implications**

- 15.1 Increasing participation and social inclusion are central to the Arts Council '*Let's Create*' Strategy and our Strategy will align setting out how we can strengthen support for these priorities to benefit communities and maximise external funding. This strategy is about how we can work to deliver opportunities for everyone to participate and benefit from cultural and artistic activity.
- 15.2 All our proposals will pay due regard to the Public Sector Equality Duty, ensuring that equality considerations have been embedded throughout the engagement process. We have and will actively consider how our decisions and actions will affect people with different protected characteristics, and seek to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity, and foster good relations within the communities we serve in line with our statutory responsibilities under s149 Equality Act 2010.

## **16. Climate Change and Environmental Implications**

- 16.1 The Theatre redevelopment will reduce the carbon footprint of this facility contributing to our commitment to be Carbon Neutral as an Authority by 2030. All our events consider ways to reduce carbon impact e.g. through use of venues and locations accessible by public transport.

16.2 The Arts Council Strategy also includes an investment principle around environmental responsibility stating that cultural organisations should lead the way in responding to the climate emergency. Creative bodies are well placed to innovate and provide solutions to environmental impacts as well as to educate and inform through their art.

## **17. Background Papers**

- 1 Cultural Peer Review – Report to Cabinet April 2024  
LGA Culture Peer Challenge Report – November 2023

## **18. Appendices**

A

## **19. Report Sign Off**

<b>Signed off by</b>	<b>Date sent</b>	<b>Date signed off</b>	<b>Initials</b>
<b>Finance</b>	<b>08/06/25</b>	<b>11/06/25</b>	<b>AM</b>
<b>Legal</b>	<b>08/06/25</b>	<b>11/06/25</b>	<b>EH</b>
<b>Director</b>	<b>11/06/25</b>	<b>12/06/25</b>	<b>KK</b>