



WEST OXFORDSHIRE
DISTRICT COUNCIL

Delivering great services locally

PERFORMANCE REPORT:

April - June 2025

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A note on performance benchmarking

Benchmarking can be a useful tool for driving improvement; by comparing our performance with other similar organisations, we can start a discussion about what good performance might look like, and why there might be variations, as well as learning from other organisations about how they operate (process benchmarking).

When we embark on performance benchmarking, it is important to understand that we are often looking at one aspect of performance i.e. the level of performance achieved. It does not take into account how services are resourced or compare in terms of quality or level of service delivered, for example, how satisfied are residents and customers? Furthermore, each council is unique with its own vision, aim and priorities, and services operate within this context.

Benchmarking has been included wherever possible ranking against other Local Authorities within Oxfordshire County Council. The Councils included are Cherwell, Oxford City, South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse.

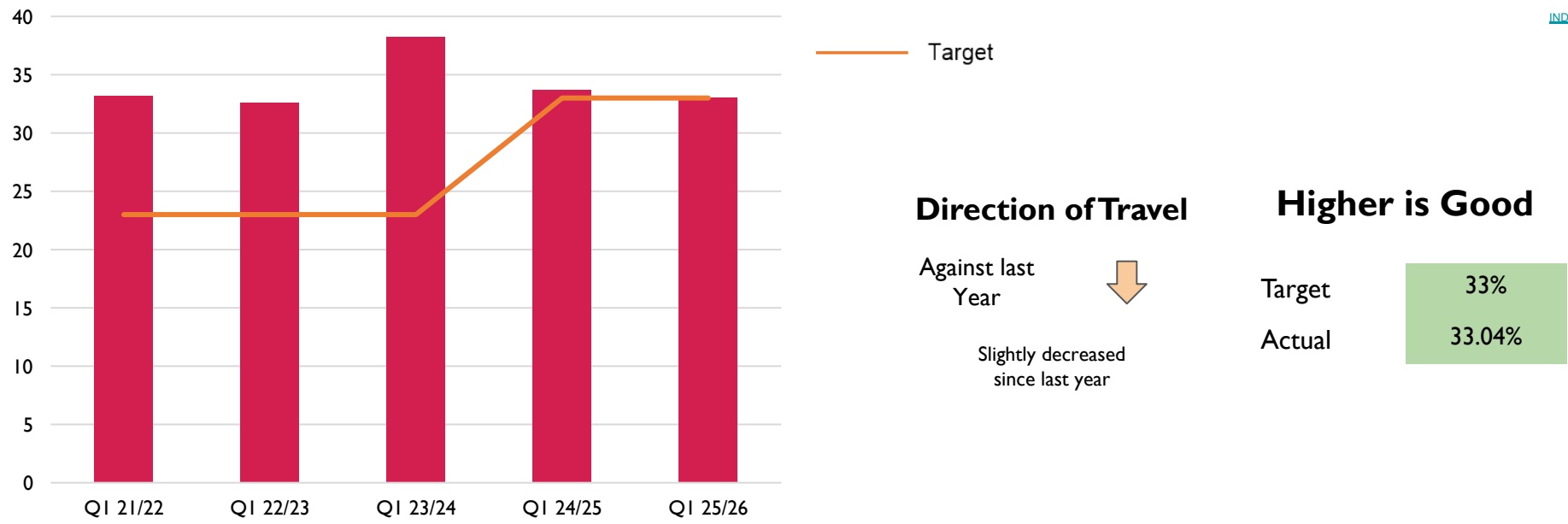
A RAG (red, amber, green) status has been applied to each KPI to provide a quick visual summary of the status of that KPI for the quarter. Additionally, RAG status has been added to the direction of travel for each metric to show how the performance against last quarter and the same quarter compared to last year is progressing.

Overall Performance

Overall, the Council's performance has remained broadly positive, building on the strong foundations laid in the previous quarter. Continued improvements were seen in key areas such as Council Tax and Non-Domestic Rates collection, planning determination times, and customer satisfaction. Leisure centre visits and gym memberships also remained high, reflecting sustained public engagement with health and wellbeing services. Notably, the number of affordable homes delivered in Q1 exceeded the quarterly target. However, some challenges persist. Processing times for Council Tax Support and Housing Benefit change events remained above target, largely due to operational adjustments linked to Universal Credit automation. Additionally, the percentage of household waste recycled continued to decline, impacted by seasonal factors and broader national trends.

Moving forward, the Council remains committed to further enhancing its performance and service delivery. A key focus is on the development and implementation of automation and self-service options, aimed at providing customers with accessible and efficient self-help tools. By enabling customers to independently address their queries and concerns, the Council anticipates a reduction in the need for repeated interactions, streamlining services and improving overall efficiency. The Council will continue to monitor the impact of these improvement programs, assessing their effectiveness in reducing customer contact and enhancing operational processes to ensure the delivery of high-quality services to the community.

Percentage of Council Tax Collected



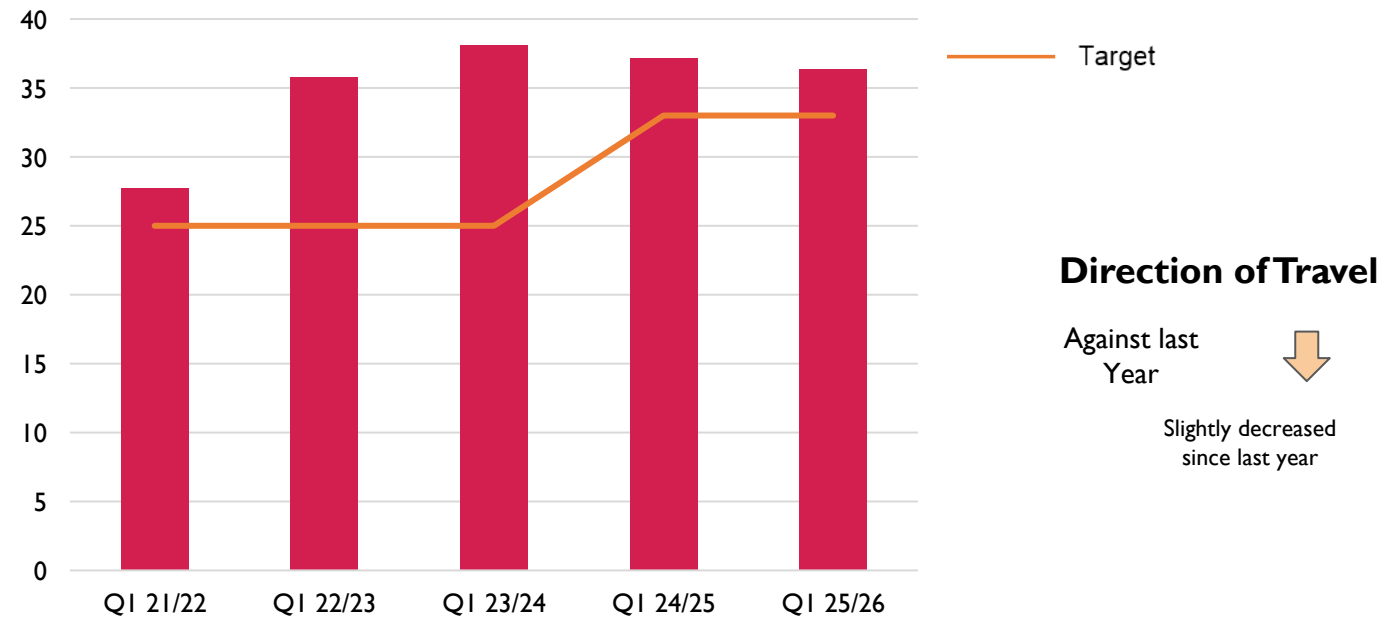
How do we compare?

Benchmarking via Gov.uk Tables and Individual Council Websites using other Local Authorities within Oxfordshire - Current Dataset is up to March '25 (2024-2025)

2024-2025 Benchmark	%	County Rank	Quartile
Cherwell	98.06	1/5	Top
West Oxfordshire	98.02	2/5	Top
South Oxfordshire	97.94	3/5	Second
Vale of White Horse	97.91	4/5	Third
Oxford	96.49	5/5	Bottom

By the end of Q1, the Council met its 33% collection target and exceeded pre-pandemic performance levels with a 2.6% increase, although the growing shift toward 12-month payment plans is contributing to a gradual decline in early-year collection rates.

Percentage of Non-domestic rates collected



Higher is Good

Target	33%
Actual	36.34%

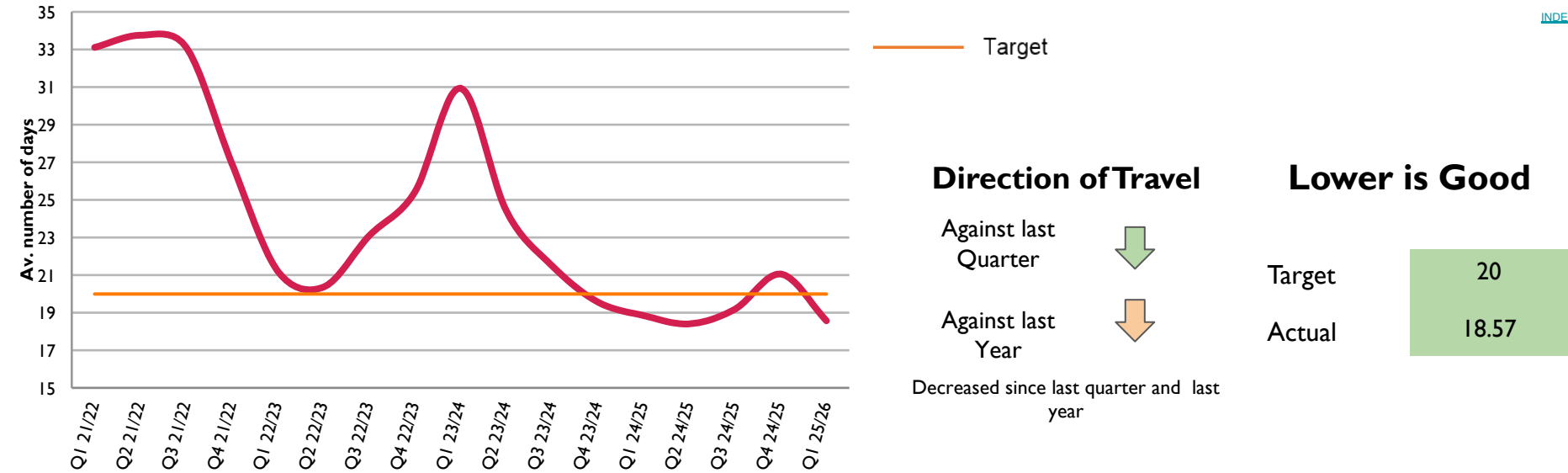
How do we compare?

Benchmarking via Gov.uk Tables and Individual Council Websites using other Local Authorities within Oxfordshire - Current Dataset is up to March '25 (2024-2025)

2024-2025 Benchmark	%	County Rank	Quartile
Cherwell	98.83	1/5	Top
West Oxfordshire	97.66	2/5	Top
Oxford	97.21	3/5	Second
Vale of White Horse	97.08	4/5	Third
South Oxfordshire	96.64	5/5	Bottom

By the end of Q1, West collected 36.34%, surpassing its 33% target, though this was largely driven by a small number of businesses paying in full early, as overall Rates collection has seen a modest decline compared to last year.

Processing times for Council Tax Support new claims



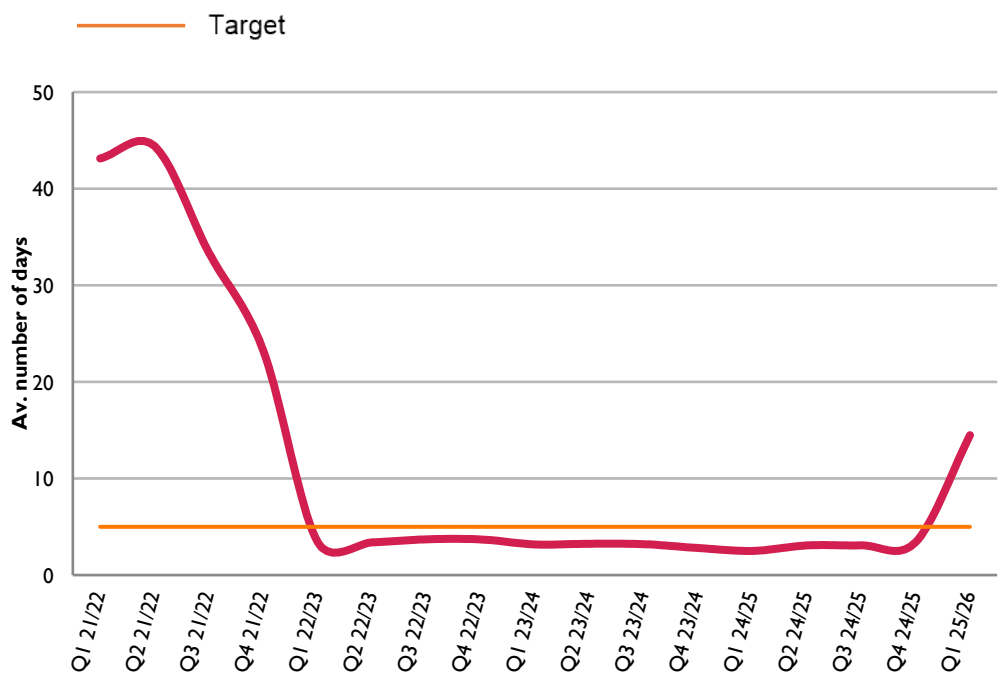
How do we compare?

Gov.uk produces tables to show a snapshot of the number of CTS claimants at the end of each financial year. The below table shows number of claimants at the end of March 2025 and the percentage change from March 2024 for each authority.


	Number of Claimants at end of Sept 2024	Percentage Change since Sept 2023	County Rank (Higher = less claimants)
Oxford	9,105	-6.87%	1/5
South Oxfordshire	4,884	-1.65%	2/5
Cherwell	5,941	-1.51%	3/5
West Oxfordshire	4,449	1.97%	4/5
Vale of White Horse	5,094	6.68%	5/5


Processing times fell to 18.57 days, around 2.5 days lower than last quarter, with a slight year-on-year decrease, reflecting continued service improvement.

Processing times for Council Tax Support Change Events



Direction of Travel

Against last Quarter 

Against last Year 

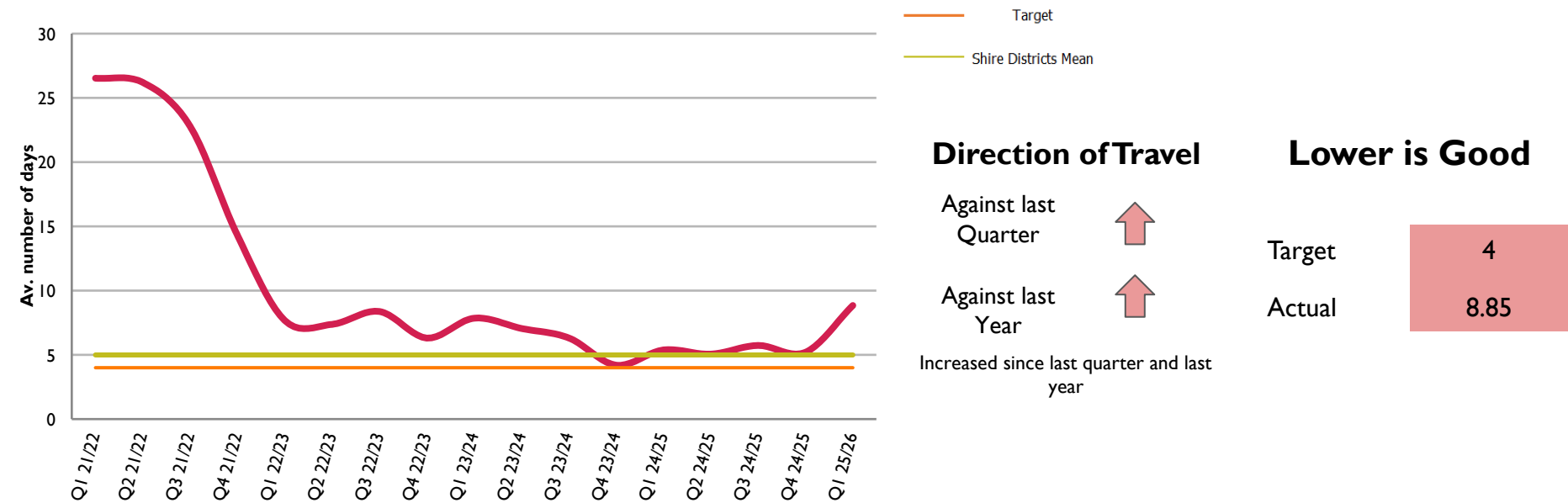
Increased since last quarter and last year

Lower is Good

Target	5
Actual	14.49

Processing times rose sharply in Q1, reaching 14.49 days due to a planned one-month pause in Universal Credit uploads, which allowed the team to reduce the manual application backlog and enhance automation. Since resuming, automation has consistently exceeded 90%, and while processing times are improving, they may not return under target until Q3 due to the cumulative nature of the metric.

Processing times for Housing Benefit Change of Circumstances



How do we compare?

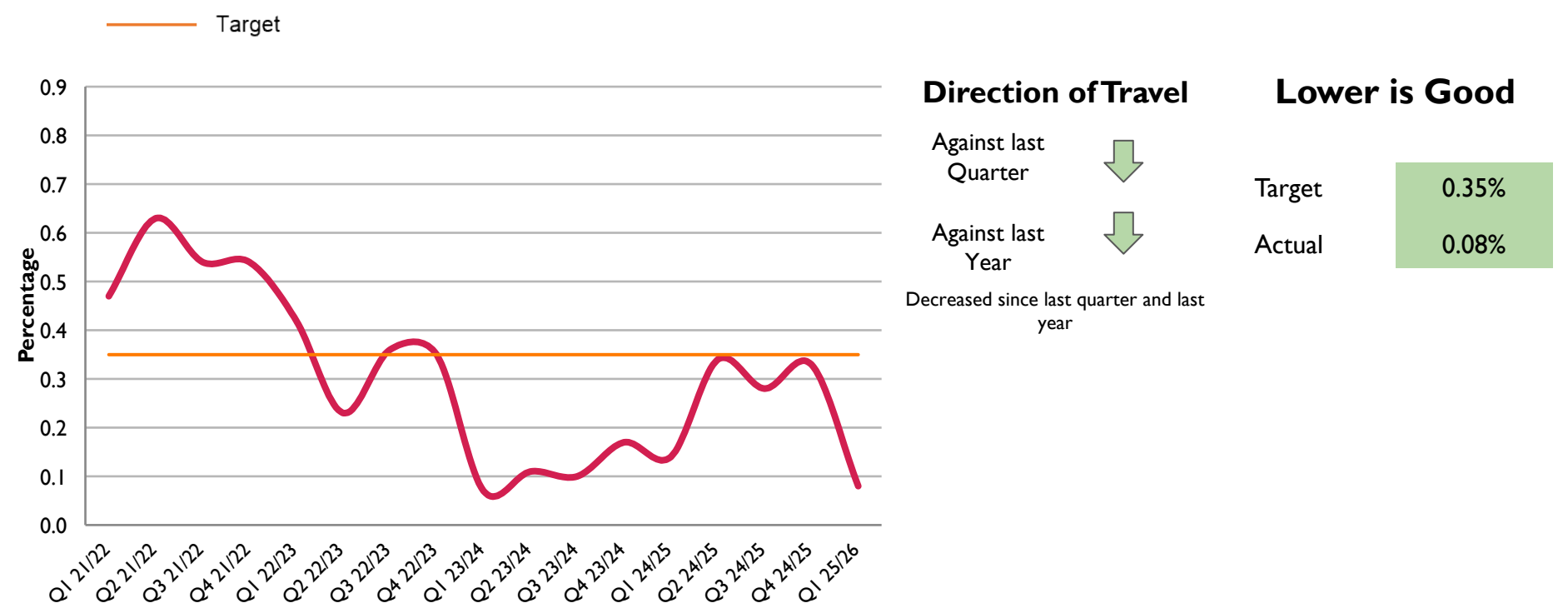
Gov.uk produces tables showing statistics on the average number of days to process a change in circumstance of an existing Housing Benefit claim. Latest Release – October – December 2024 (Q3 24-25)

Q3 24-25 Benchmark	Days	County Rank	Quartile
Cherwell	3.62	1/5	Top
Vale of White Horse	5.88	2/5	Top
South Oxfordshire	6.28	3/5	Second
West Oxfordshire	7.38	4/5	Third
Oxford	18.9	5/5	Bottom

Please see [Processing times for Council Tax Support new claims.](#)

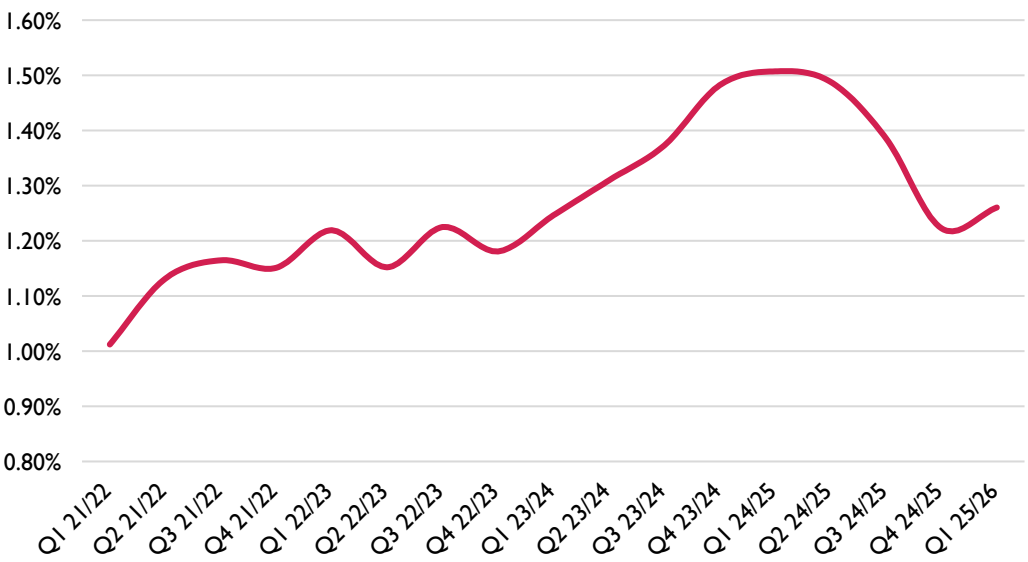
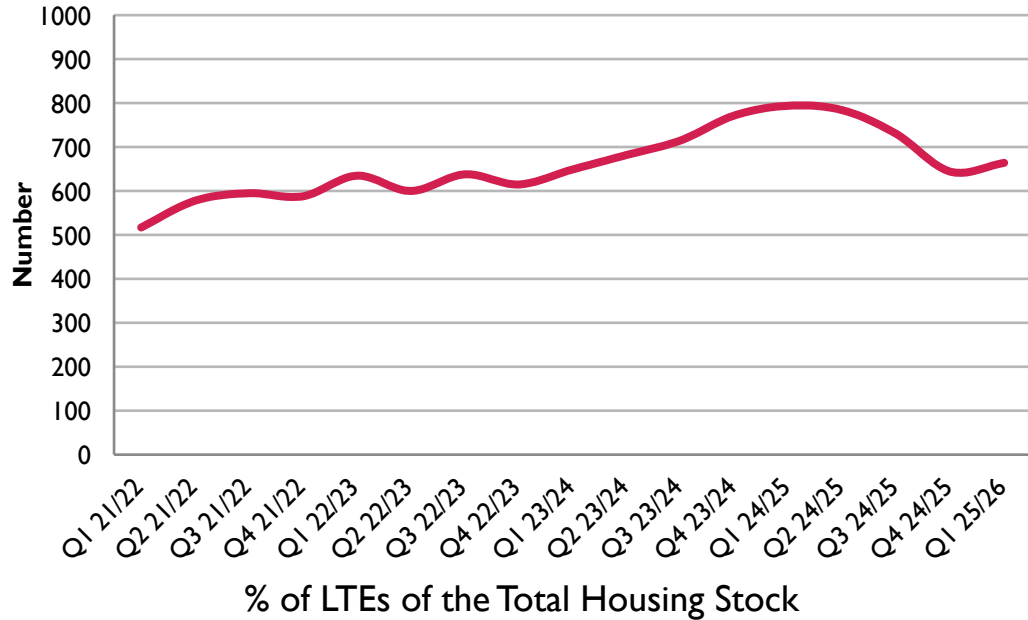
Processing times rose to 8.85 days, moving above the 4-day target and marking a notable increase from previous quarters. This was driven by the added complexity of managed migration to Universal Credit and a planned pause in UC uploads, which temporarily impacted workflows while supporting long-term automation improvements.

Percentage of Housing Benefit overpayment due to LA error/admin delay





The Council remains below the national target of 0.48% and the stricter service target of 0.35%.

(Snapshot) Long Term Empty Properties



Direction of Travel

Against last Quarter 

Against last Year 

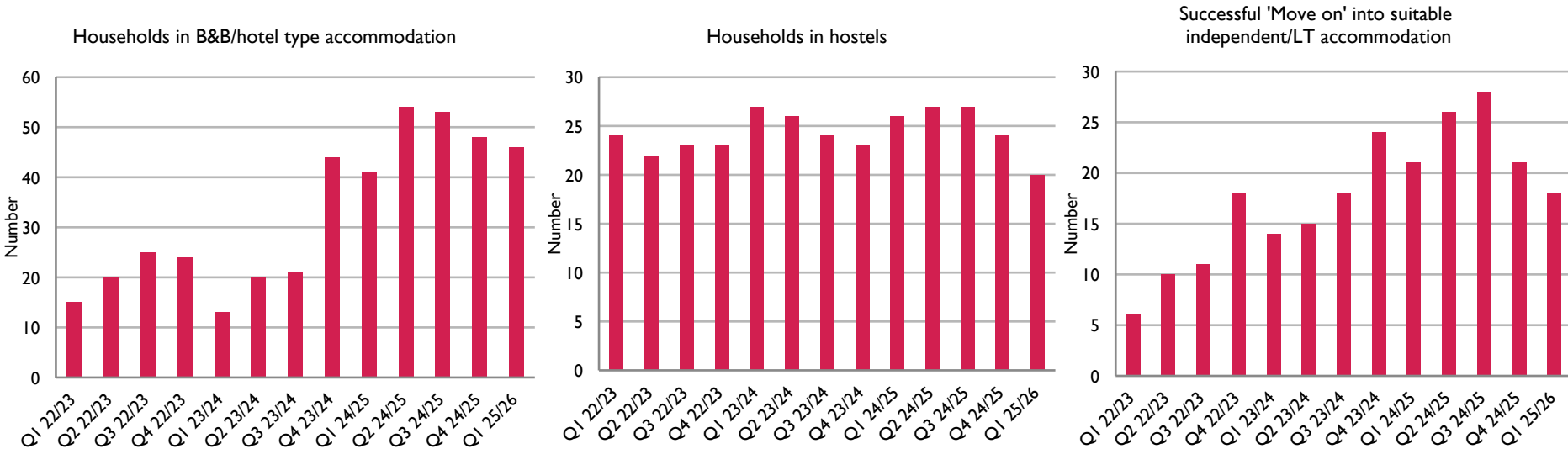
Increased since last quarter but decreased since last year

Lower is Good

664

The Council recorded a modest increase of 20 long-term empty properties since last quarter, attributed to improved reporting systems. These enhancements have enabled more accurate tracking and will support more targeted interventions going forward.

(Snapshot) Number of households in B&B/hotel-type accommodation & Hostels (LA owned or managed); and Number of successful 'Move On' into suitable independent/long-term accommodation from B&Bs/hotels/hostels

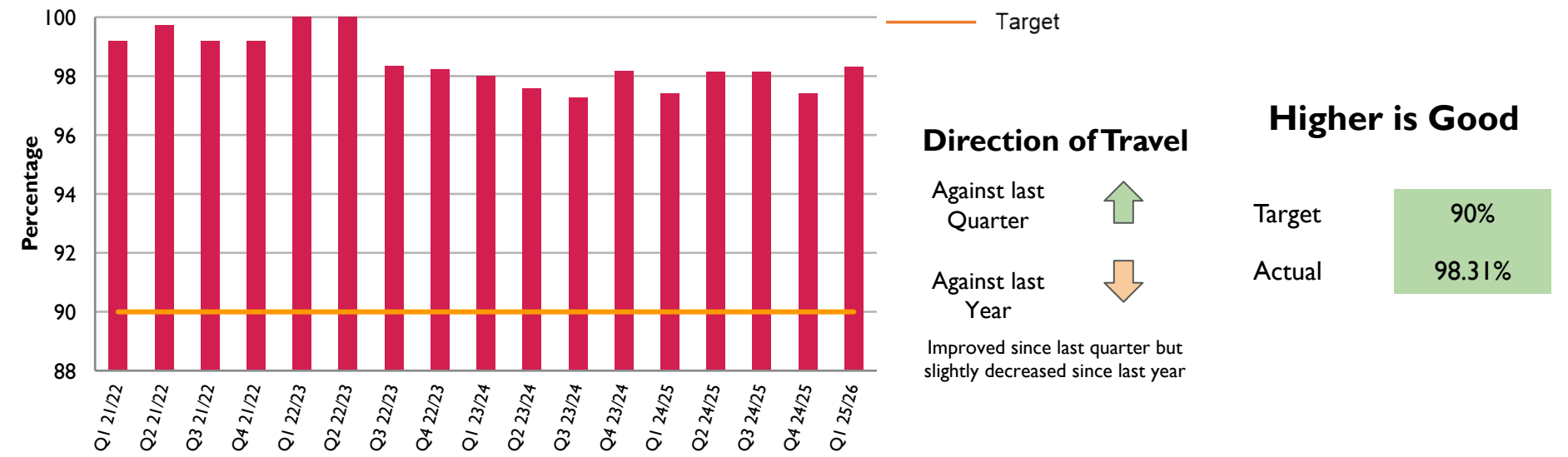


Direction of Travel

Against last Quarter	B&B/Hotels	⬇️
Against last Year	B&B/Hotels	⬆️
Against last Quarter	Hostels	⬇️
Against last Year	Hostels	⬇️
Against last Quarter	Move Ons	⬇️
Against last Year	Move Ons	⬇️

At West, there's been a steady month-on-month decline in the use of insecure B&B-type accommodation. This reflects strong homelessness prevention work and effective partnerships with local providers, including initiatives like the Local Authority Housing Fund to boost self-contained temporary housing.

Customer Satisfaction - Telephone



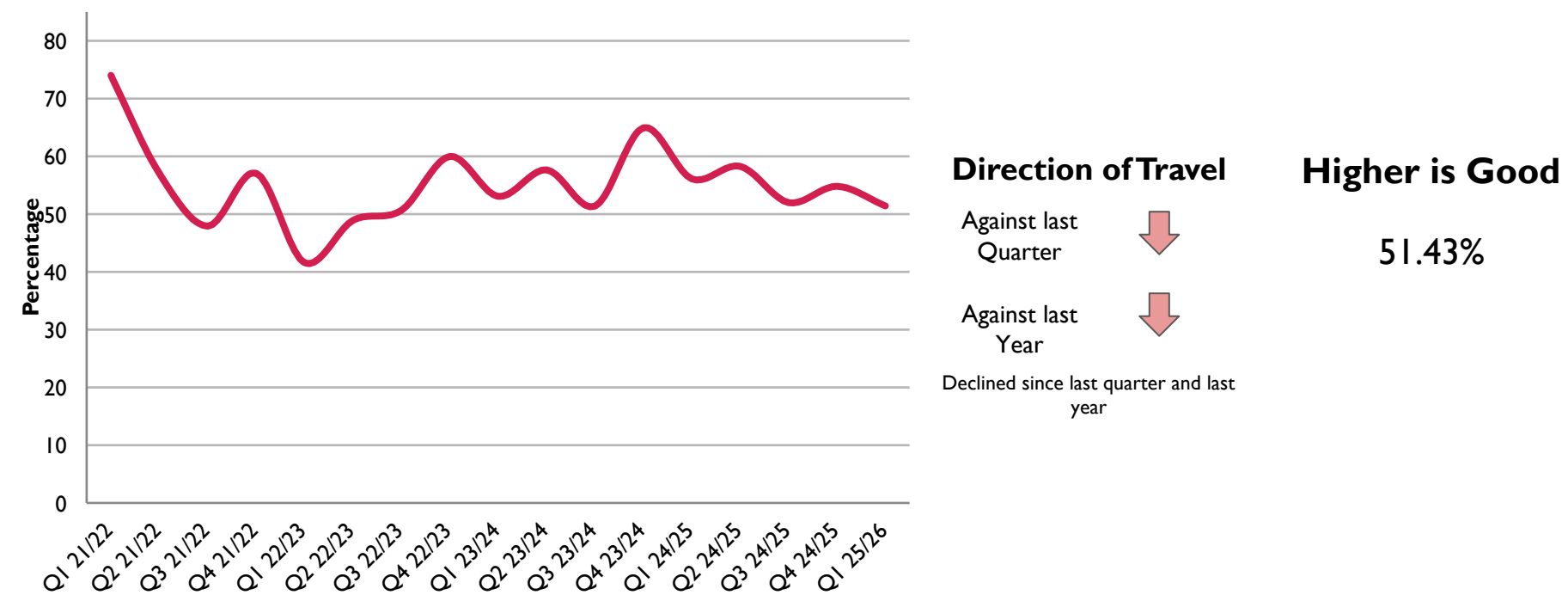
How do we compare?

The Govmetric Channel Satisfaction Index is a monthly publication of the top performing councils across the core customer access channels. At least 100 customers need to be transferred to the survey to be included in the league table so even if satisfaction is high, it may not be included.

A total of 532 residents participated in the survey, of these, 523 customers reported being satisfied with the service, reflecting a high level of overall satisfaction.

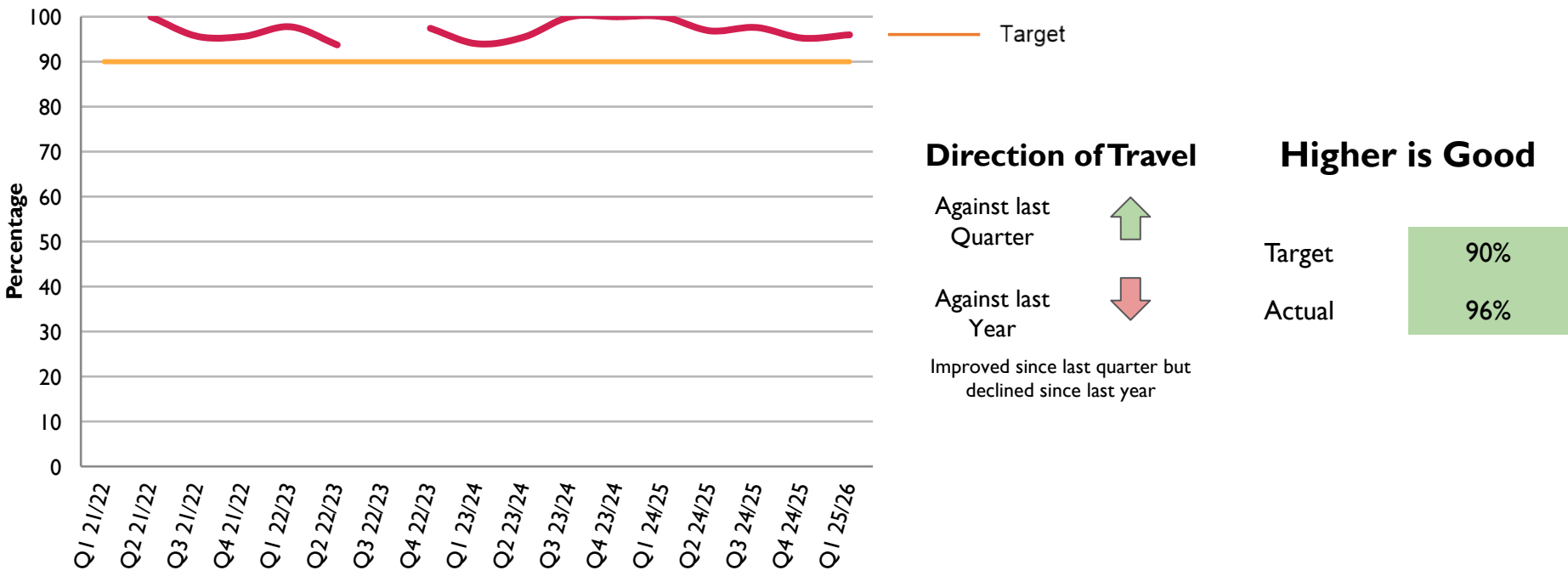
	April Rank	April Net Sat.	May Rank	May Net Sat.	June Rank	June Net Sat.
West Oxfordshire	1	96%	3	96%	2	97%

Customer Satisfaction - Email



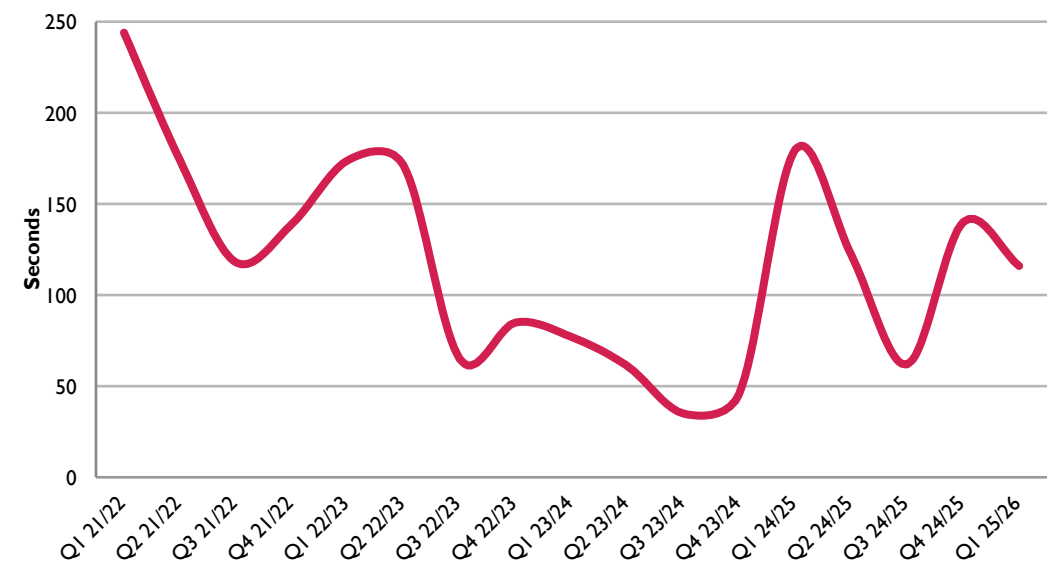
630 residents responded to the survey, with 324 expressing satisfaction (51.43%), down from 54.83% in Q4, with all outbound customer service emails including a survey link. The team continually monitors feedback closely and proactively seeks opportunities to enhance the overall customer experience.

Customer Satisfaction - Face to Face

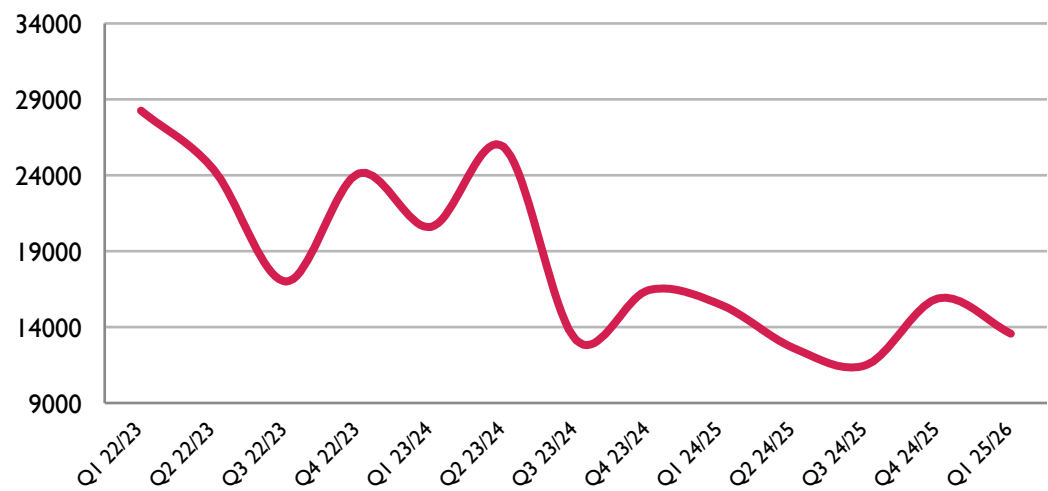


Customer satisfaction with face-to-face interactions remains consistently strong.

Customer Call Handling - Average Waiting Time





Call Volume over Time



Direction of Travel

Lower is Good

Against last Quarter 

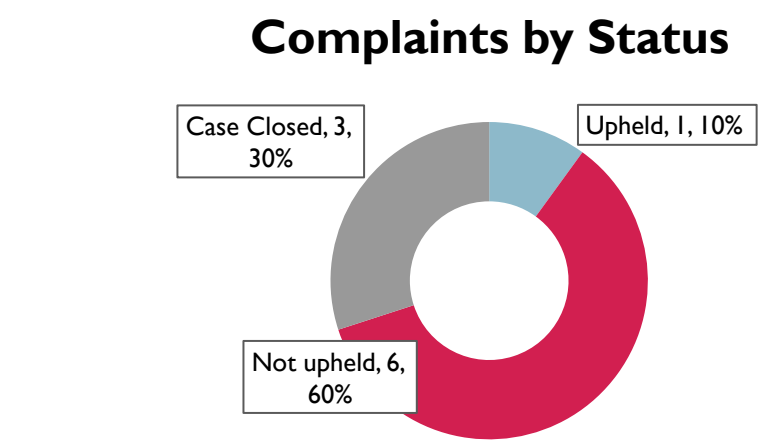
Against last Year 

Decreased since last quarter and since last year

116 Seconds

In Q1, the Council achieved a one-minute reduction in average call waiting times compared to the same period last year. This improvement was delivered while maintaining operational consistency and high levels of customer satisfaction, despite the added demands of onboarding and training during peak periods.

Number of complaints upheld



How do we compare?

The table outlines the complaints received by the Ombudsman over the period, the decisions made on these cases, and the Council's compliance with any recommendations issued by the Ombudsman during this time.

Complaints received by the Ombudsman reflect cases where customers, having completed the Council's complaint process (see to the right), feel that the Council has not satisfactorily resolved the matter.

2024-25	Complaints Investigated	Percentage Upheld	Upheld decisions per 100,000 residents	Percentage Satisfactory Remedy	Percentage Compliance with Recommendations
Cherwell	3	33	0.6	100	N/A
Oxford	2	50	0.6	0	100
South Oxfordshire	1	0	0	N/A	N/A
Vale of White Horse	1	100	0.7	100	N/A
West Oxfordshire	1	100	0.8	0	100

Direction of Travel

Complaints upheld or partly upheld at Stage 1

Against last Quarter

↑

Against last Year

↓

Increased since last quarter but declined since last year

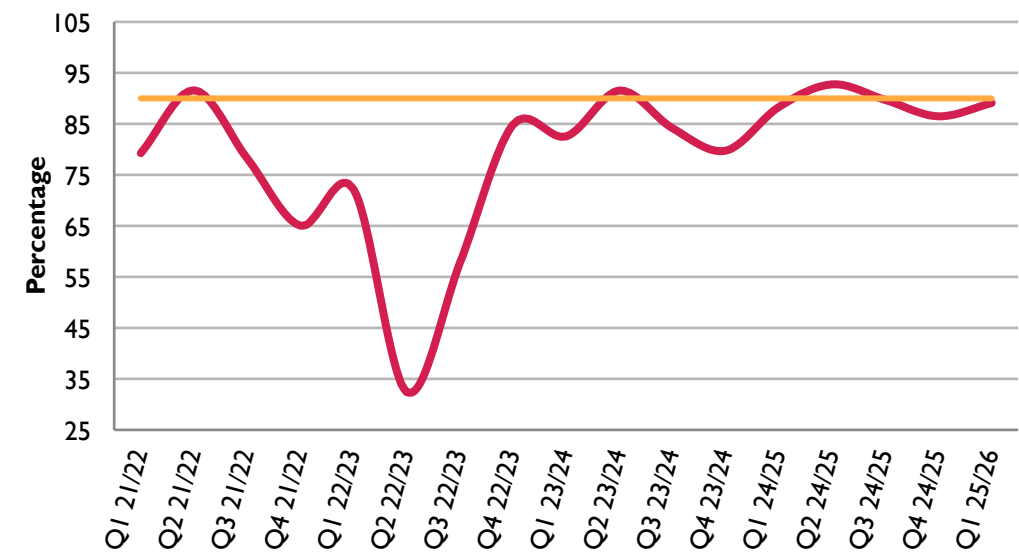
See the table on the following page for a breakdown of those upheld and partially upheld.

- A new Customer Feedback Procedure went live on the 1st April 2025.
- The new process has the following stages:
- Stage 1: A review of the complaint will be undertaken by an Operational Manager within the Service Area to which the complaint relates. A response needs to provide within 10 working days from the date that we advised that the complaint was valid.
 - Stage 2: Requests for Stage 2 will be acknowledged and logged within five working days of the escalation request being received. Upon receipt of a Stage 2 request, an investigation into the complaint will be undertaken by the Complaint Officer or a member of the Complaints Team. A response will be provided to the customer within 20 working days from receipt of the request to escalate the complaint to Stage 2. Stage 2 is the organisation's final response; the complainant can then refer their complaint to the LGO.

Complaints Upheld or Partially Upheld Breakdown

Service area	Description	Outcome/learning	Decision	Response time (days)
West Oxfordshire				
Service Support	Customer upset organisation not recognised and invoice provided was incorrect.	Apology issued.	Upheld	9

Percentage of FOI requests answered within 20 days



— Target

Direction of Travel

Against last Quarter



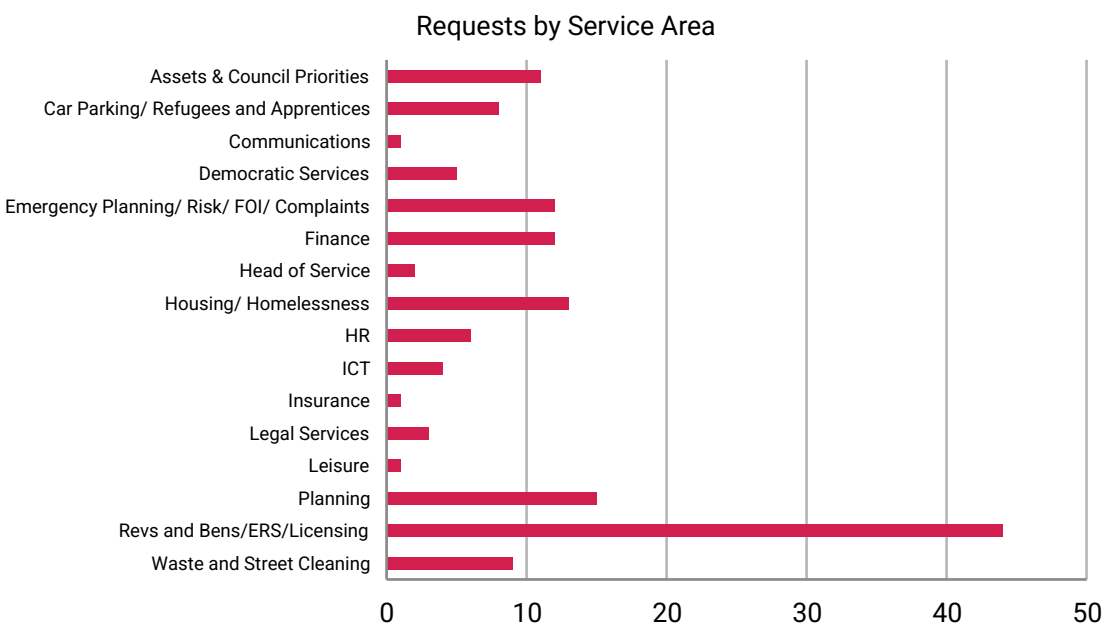
Against last Year



Improved since last quarter and last year

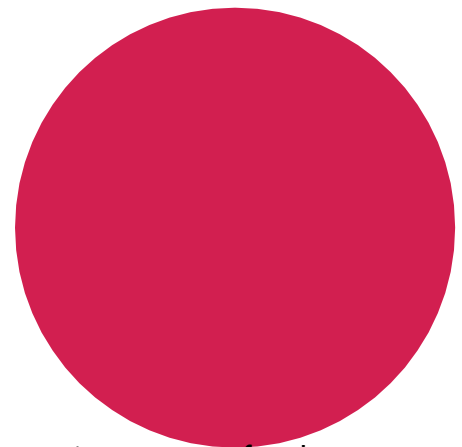
Higher is Good

Target	90%
Q4 Actual	89.1%



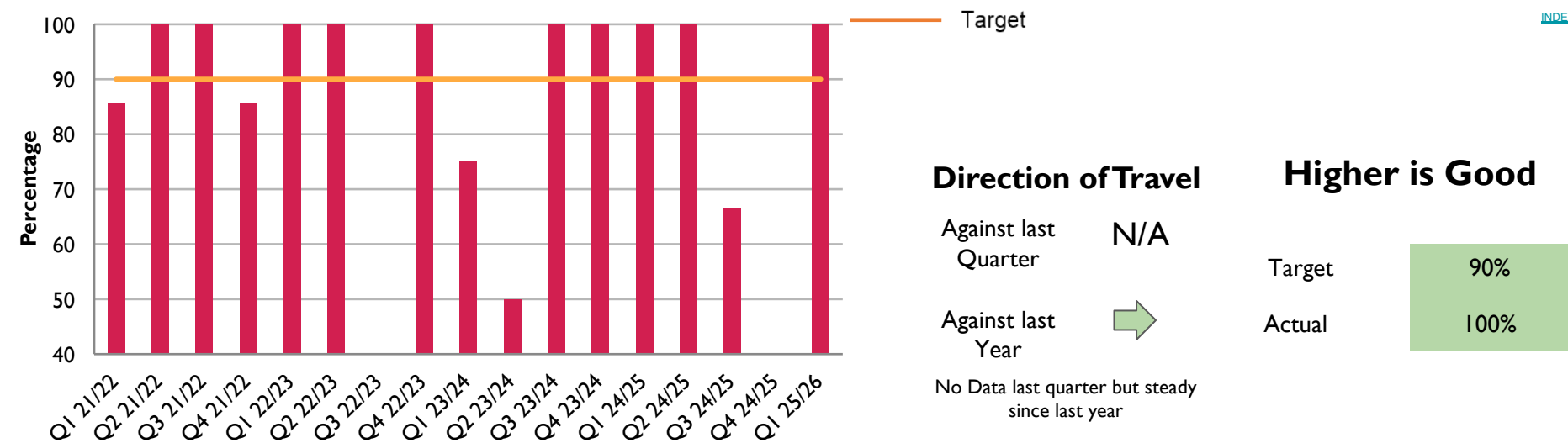
Reason FOI request was not Answered within 20 Days

■ Service Area not provided Information in time



All Freedom of Information requests for the quarter have been addressed.

Building Control Satisfaction



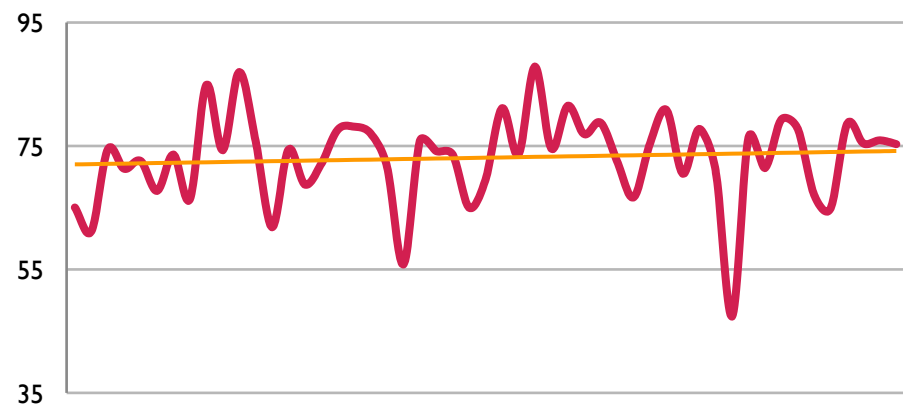
The satisfaction survey data continues to present challenges due to a low number of responses with only two received this quarter. In light of this, the team is exploring ways to improve the process. One option being considered is working with the Data Team to develop a webform, which would be emailed to customers who have received a completion certificate.

How do we compare?

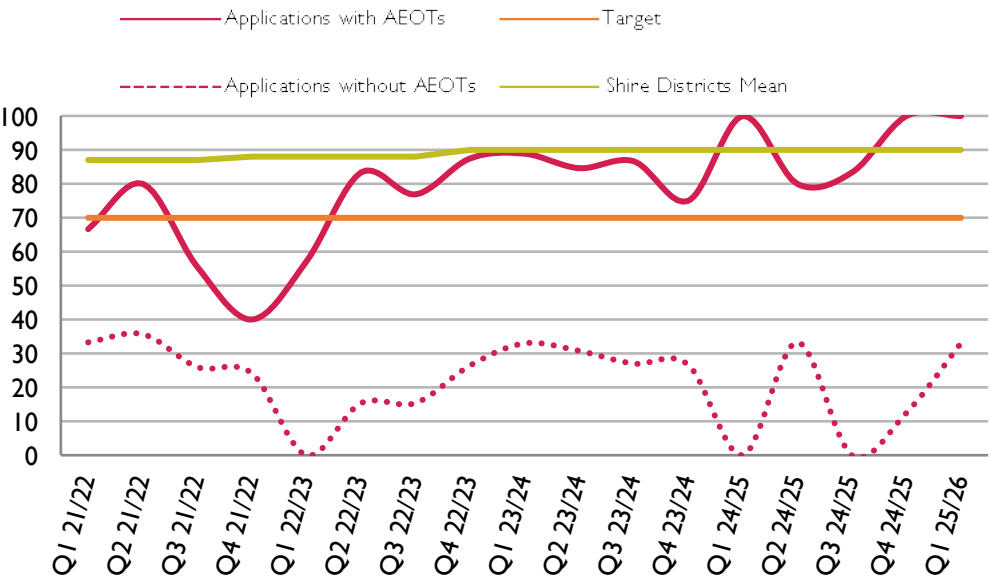
Percentage of share in the market

	Oct	Nov	Dec	Number of Apps for Quarter
West	75%	76%	75%	152

The below chart shows market share over time from April 2021



Percentage of major planning applications determined within agreed timescales (including AEOT)



Direction of Travel

Against last Quarter →

Against last Year →

Same since last quarter and last year

Higher is Good

Target	70%
Actual	100%

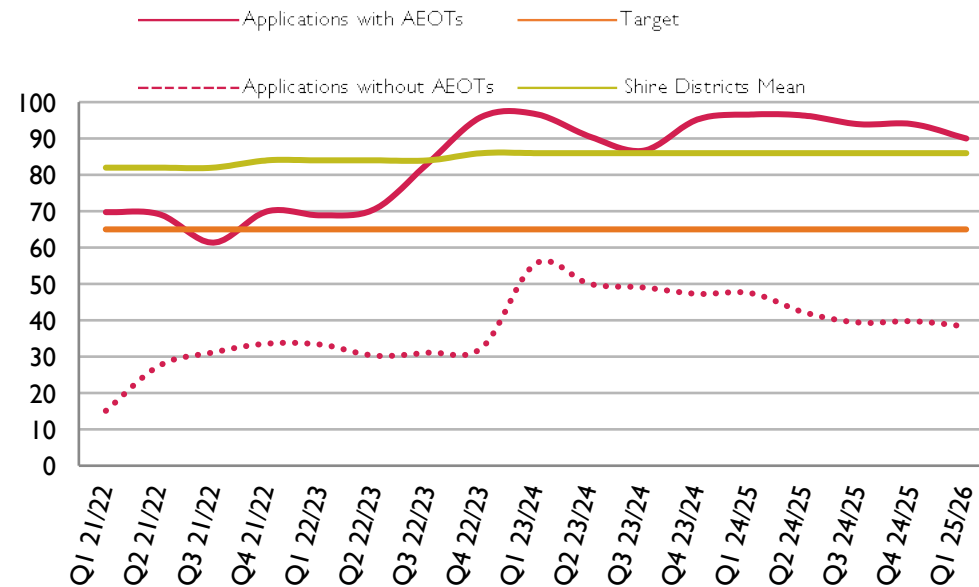
How do we compare?

Major Developments - % within 13 weeks or agreed time – LG Inform

Q4 24-25 Benchmark	%	County Rank	Quartile
Oxford	100	1/5	Top
Vale of White Horse	100	1/5	Top
West Oxfordshire	100	1/5	Top
South Oxfordshire	83	4/5	Third
Cherwell	78	5/5	Bottom

The service demonstrated consistently strong performance in Q1, with all three Major applications processed within the agreed timescales.

Percentage of minor planning applications determined within agreed timescales (including AEOT)



Direction of Travel

Against last
Quarter



Against last
Year



Decreased since last quarter and
last year

Higher is Good

Target

65%

Actual

90%

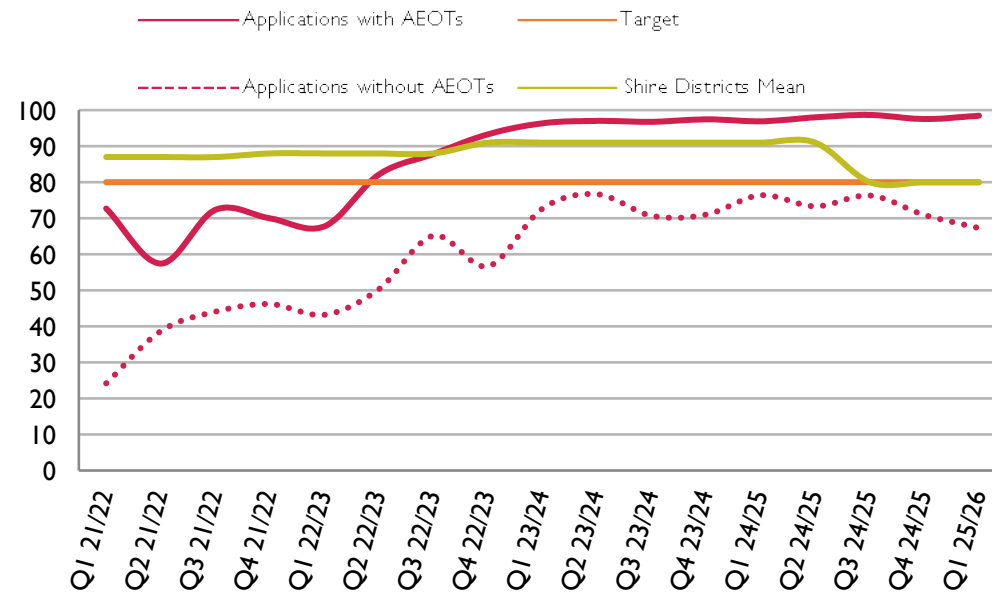
How do we compare?

Minor Developments - % within 8 weeks or agreed time – LG Inform

Q4 24-25 Benchmark	%	County Rank	Quartile
West Oxfordshire	94	1/5	Top
South Oxfordshire	91	2/5	Top
Vale of White Horse	87	3/5	Second
Oxford	85	4/5	Third
Cherwell	78	5/5	Bottom

This quarter, the planning team remains fully staffed, but the absence of a dedicated Landscape Officer is contributing to delays in some areas. Despite this, the team continues to manage workloads effectively while seeking solutions to address the gap.

Percentage of other planning applications determined within agreed timescales (including AEOT)



Direction of Travel

Against last
Quarter



Against last
Year



Slightly increased since last
quarter and last year

Higher is Good

Target

80%

Actual

98.46%

How do we compare?

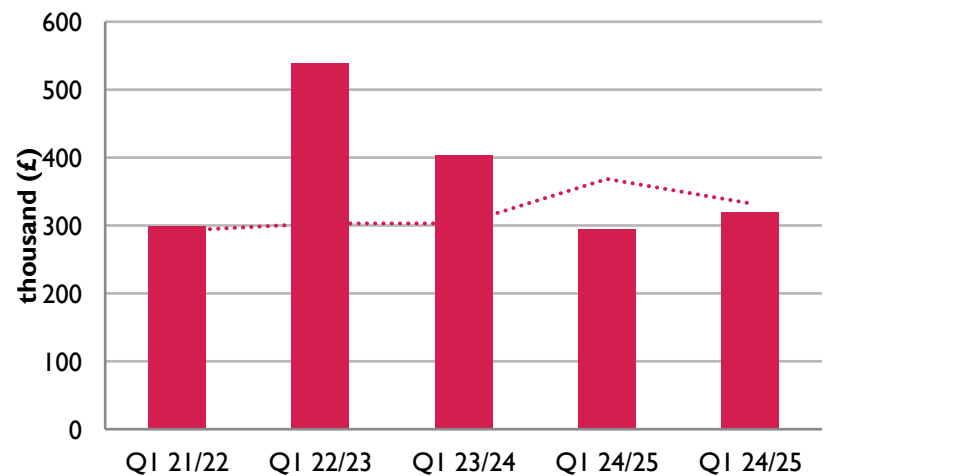
Other Developments - % within 8 weeks or agreed time – LG Inform

Q4 24-25 Benchmark	%	County Rank	Quartile
Vale of White Horse	98	1/5	Top
West Oxfordshire	98	2/5	Top
South Oxfordshire	95	3/5	Second
Cherwell	89	4/5	Third
Oxford	89	5/5	Bottom

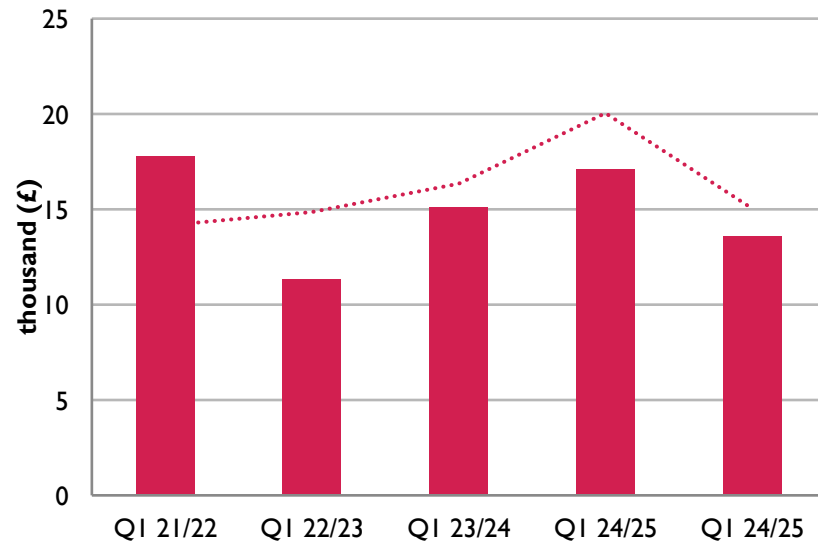
Determination times remain high, with 260 applications processed in Q4, including 256 within agreed timescales.

Total Income achieved in Planning & Income from Pre-application advice

Total planning income



Pre-application income



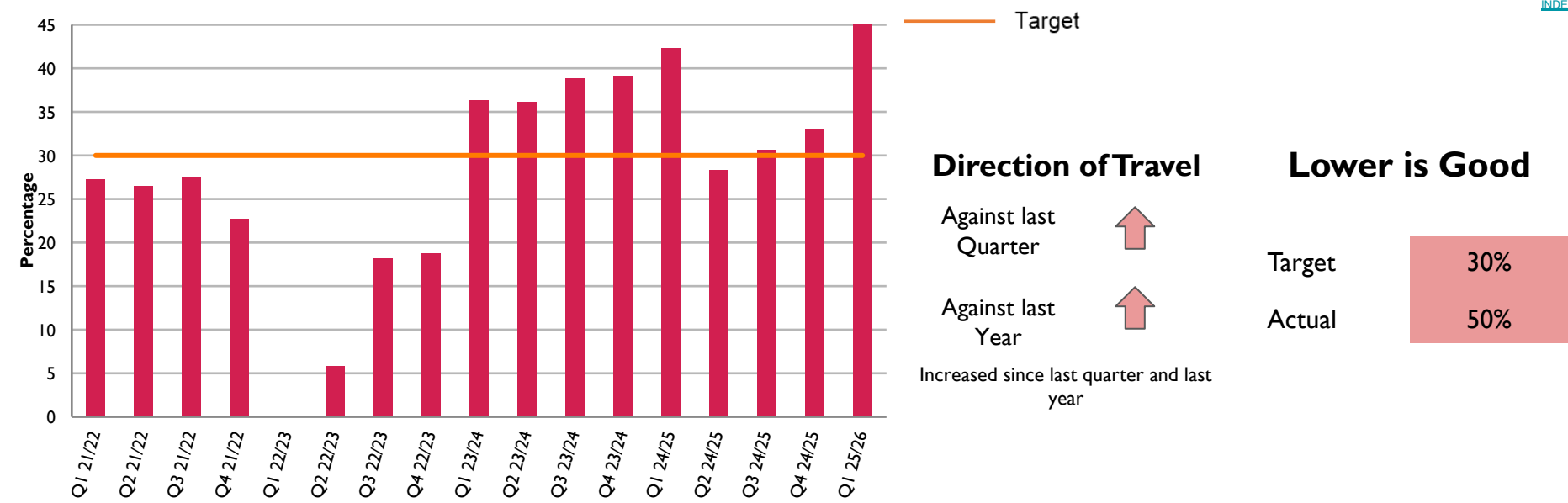
Direction of Travel

Total Planning Income		Higher is Good	
Against last Quarter	↓	Total Planning Income (£)	
Against last Year	↑	Target	332,543
		Actual	318,925
Pre-Application Income		Pre-Application Income (£)	
Against last Quarter	↑	Target	15,043
Against last Year	↓	Actual	13,594

Total Income declined since last quarter but increased since last year
Pre-App Income increased since last quarter but declined since last year

In Q1, the Council experienced a slower start in planning income, falling slightly short of its targets. While pre-application fees increased, speculative activity has yet to pick up, suggesting a delay rather than a decline in interest.

Percentage of Planning Appeals Allowed (cumulative)



How do we compare?

Percentage of planning appeals allowed – LG Inform

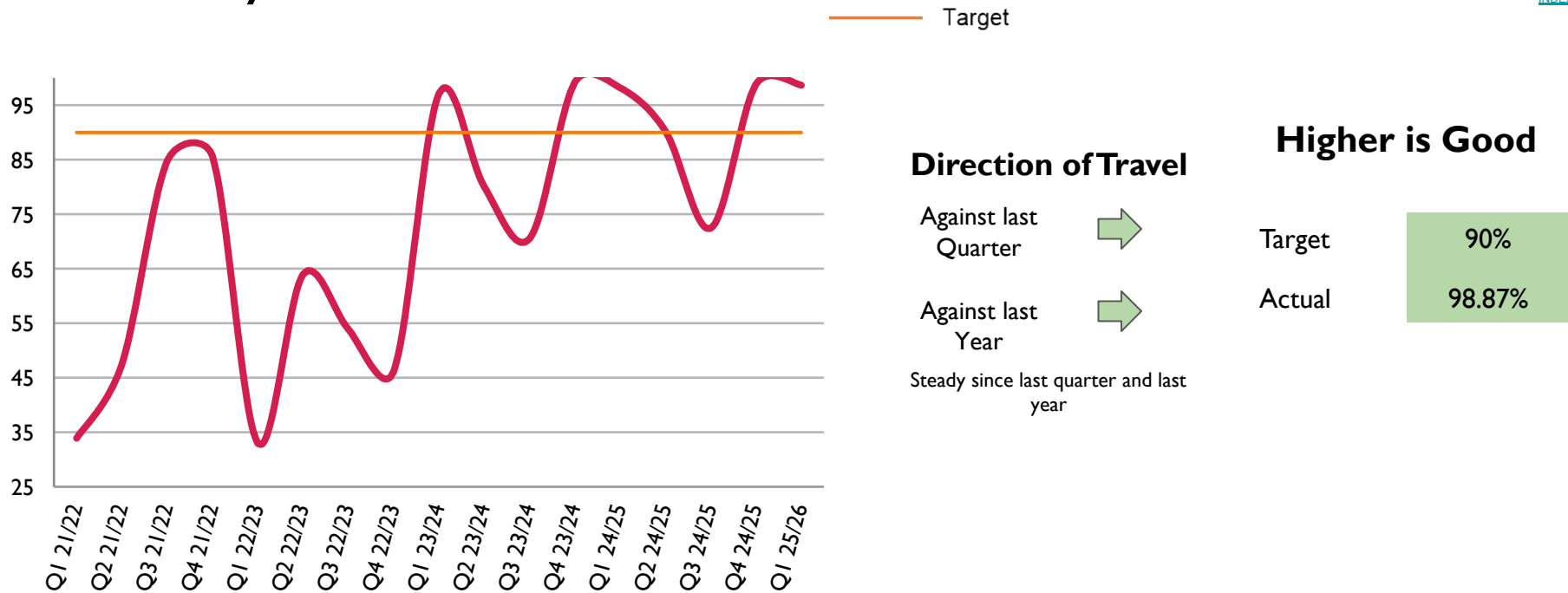
Q4 24-25 Benchmark	%	County Rank	Quartile
West Oxfordshire	25	1/5	Top
Oxford	38	2/5	Top
Vale of White Horse	42	3/5	Second
Cherwell	50	4/5	Third
South Oxfordshire	83	5/5	Bottom

This indicator aims to ensure that no more than 30% of planning appeals are allowed in favor of the applicant, with a lower percentage being more favorable. According to the latest statistics from the Planning Inspectorate, the national average for Section 78 planning appeals granted is 28% (source: [gov.uk](https://www.gov.uk)).

The below shows the appeal split between Uplands and Lowlands for the year;

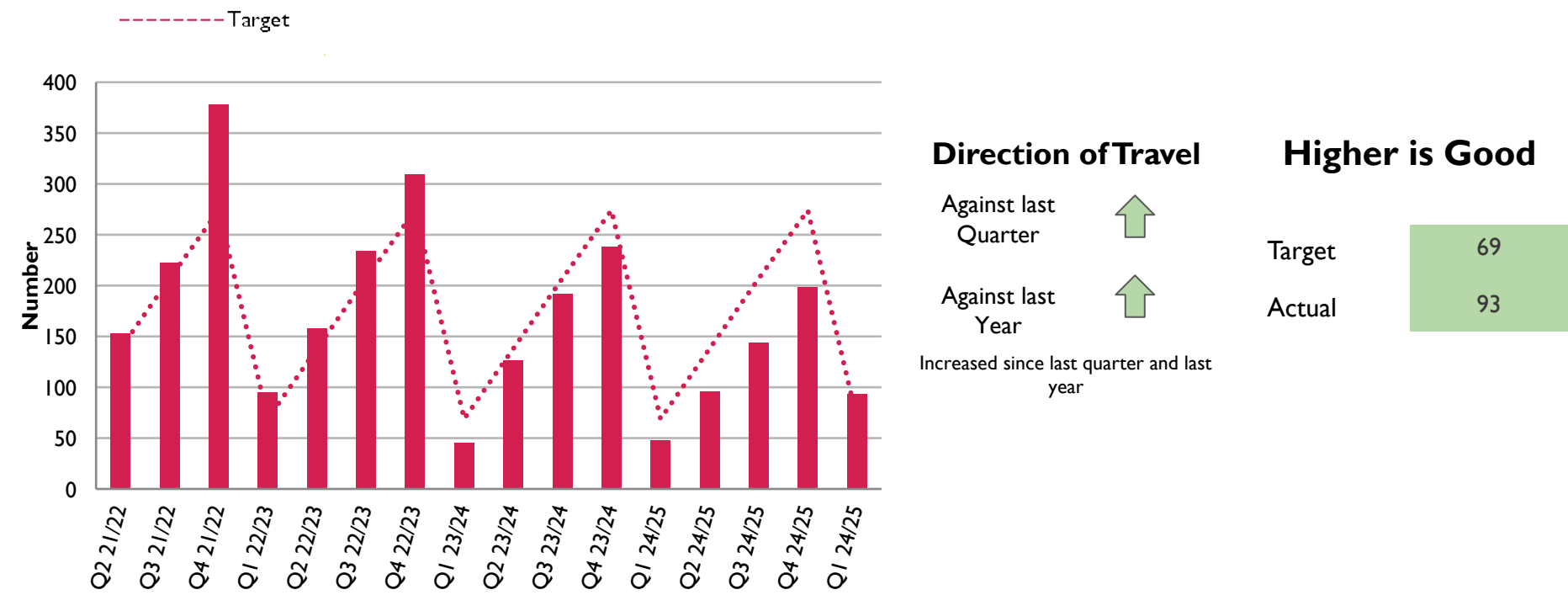
	Decided	Allowed	% Allowed
Uplands	4	2	50.00%
Lowlands	4	2	50.00%

Percentage of official land charge searches completed within 10 days



In Q1, the Council maintained strong performance in completing official Land Charges searches, achieving 98.67% within the 10-day target - well above the 90% benchmark.

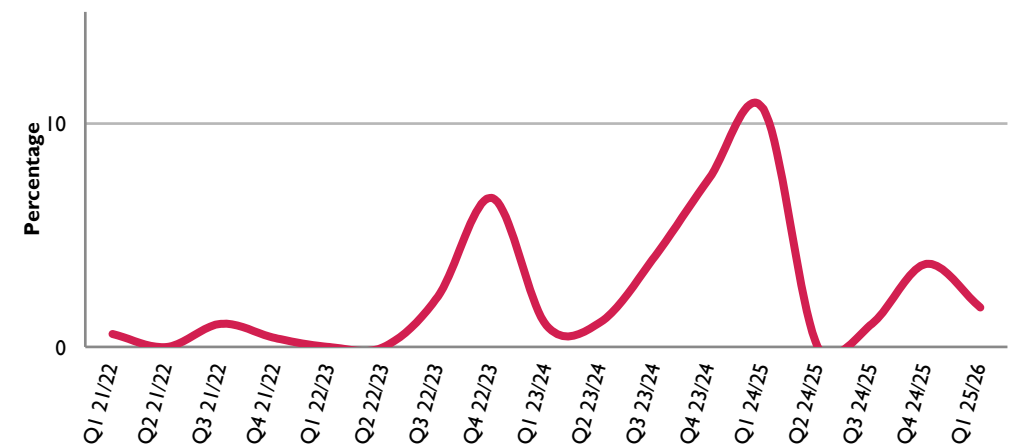
Number of affordable homes delivered (cumulative)



had a strong Q1, delivering 93 affordable homes, including 57 for social rent. Although 40 homes originally expected this quarter have slipped into Q2, the district remains on track for another strong year in delivery. In addition to progressing new housing delivery, the Council is actively addressing the growing need for temporary accommodation. A dedicated working group has been established, and a proposal is now in place to acquire residential properties to support this provision.

Number of fly tips collected and percentage that result in an enforcement action

(defined as a warning letter, fixed penalty notice, simple caution or prosecution)




How do we compare?


Number of Fly Tips reported for year 2023-24 for Local Authorities in England – Gov.uk. The latest dataset available is 2023-24.

	Total Fly Tips	Total Enforcement Actions	Total FPNs	% FPNs per Fly Tip	County Rank	Quartile
Vale of White Horse	445	580	18	4.04%	1/5	Top
South Oxfordshire	873	467	21	2.41%	2/5	Top
Cherwell	1101	1136	26	2.36%	3/5	Second
West Oxfordshire	1135	76	13	1.15%	4/5	Third
Oxford	4959	297	7	0.14%	5/5	Bottom


Direction of Travel


Number of Fly Tips

Against last Quarter 

Against last Year 

Percentage Enforcement Action

Against last Quarter 

Against last Year 

Fly Tips – Declined since last quarter but slightly increased since last year

Enforcement Action – Declined since last quarter and last year

Number of Fly Tips Collected

148

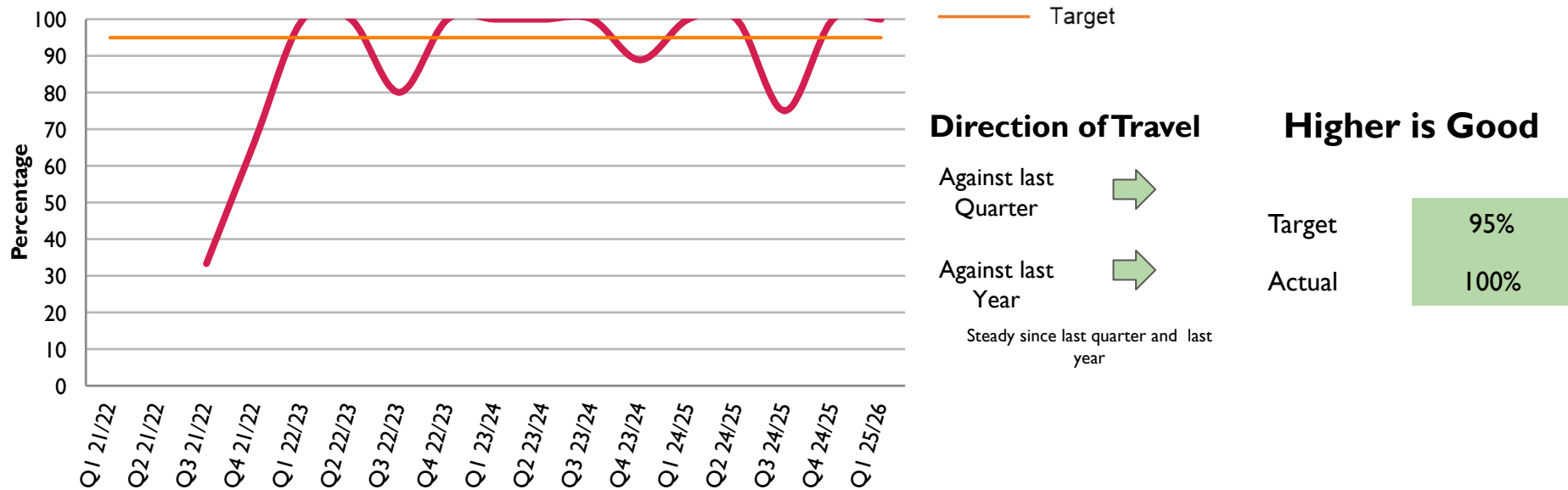
Percentage Enforcement Action

1.77%

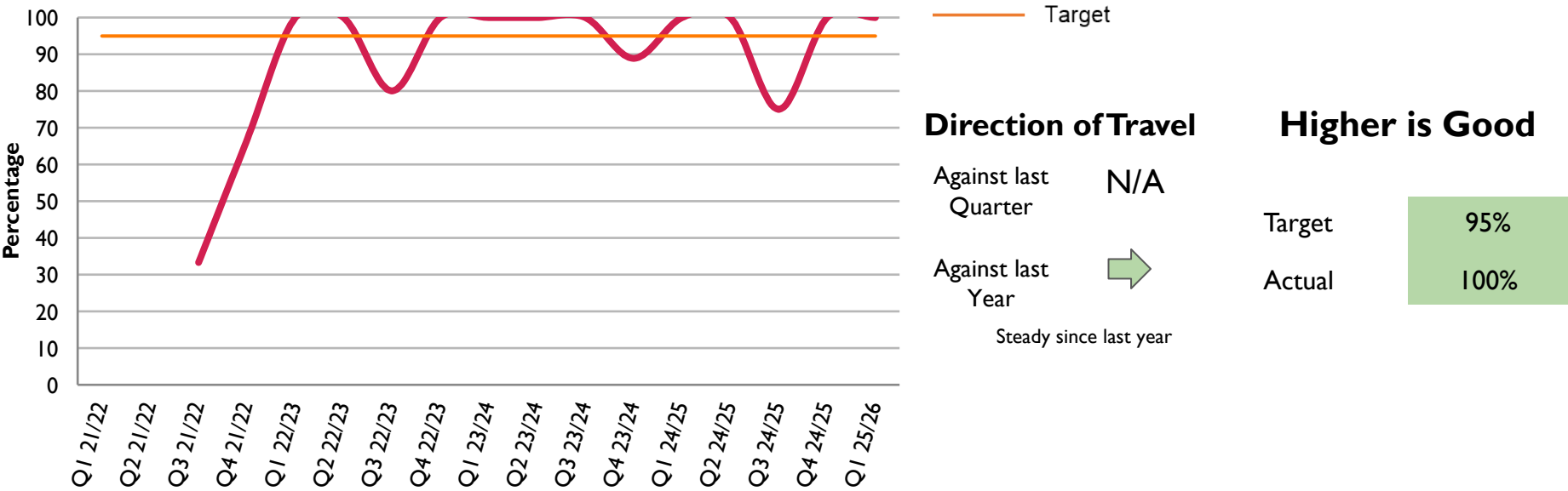
In Q1, the Councils enforcement activity targeted commercial waste offences, particularly among short-term lets, with a focus on illegal burning and missing documentation. The team also supported RAF Brize Norton on abandoned vehicles and is preparing for upcoming Stop & Search operations, public engagement campaigns, and a proposed district-wide PSPO to address dog fouling.

Discrepancies in the number of reported fly-tips has been identified due to incorrect case inclusion, leading to over-reporting. Corrected figures are being recalculated and will be submitted to Waste Data Flow. Additionally, future reporting will further improve with Alloy's Streets module In-Cab technology integration.

Percentage of high risk food premises inspected within target timescales

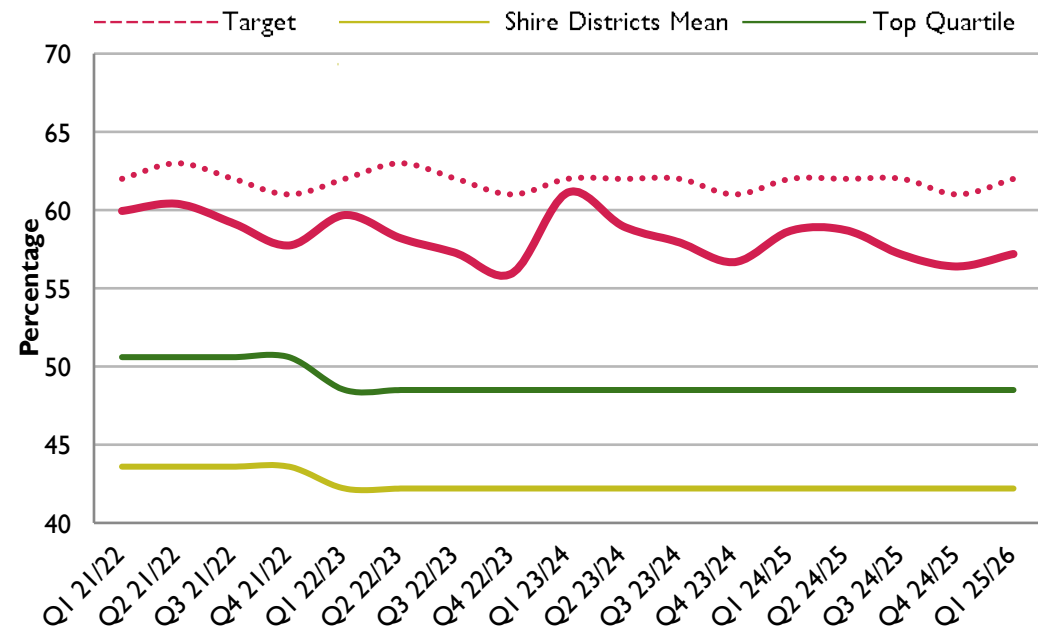


Seven High-Risk food inspection was undertaken during Q1, which was completed within the target timeframes.



Two notifications were received during Q1 which was assessed within one working day.

Percentage of household waste recycled



Direction of Travel

Against last Quarter



Against last Year



Increased since last quarter but declined since last year

Higher is Good

Target	62%
Actual	57.2%

How do we compare?

Percentage of household waste sent for reuse, recycling or composting – Gov.uk. The latest dataset available is from 2023-2024.

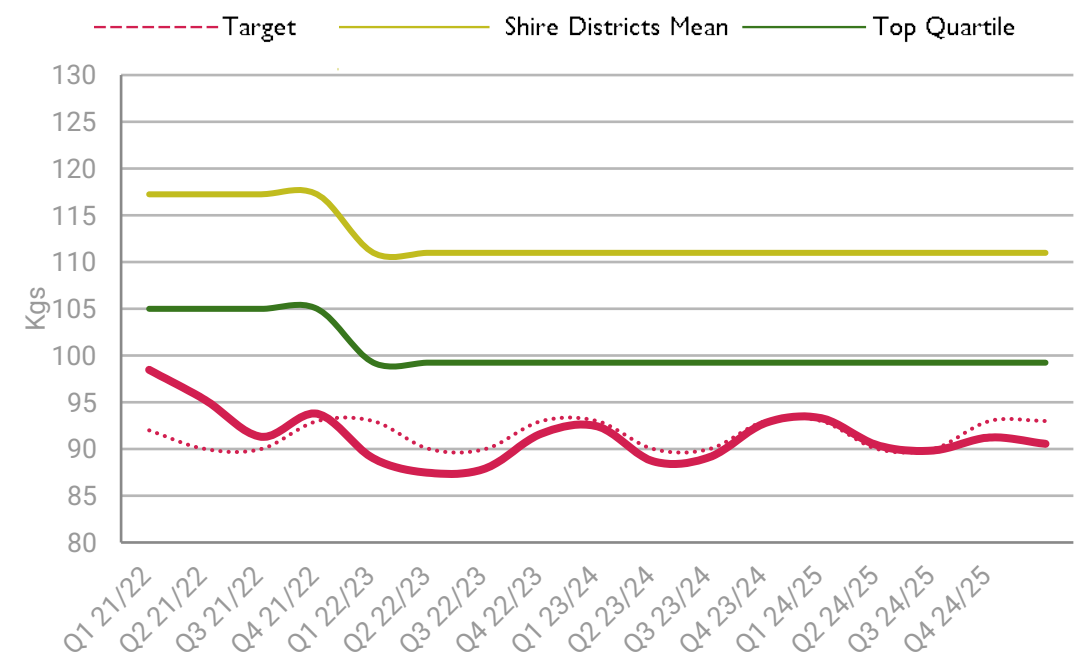
2023-24 Benchmark	%	County Rank	Quartile
South Oxfordshire	62.9%	1/5	Top
Vale of White Horse	60.7%	2/5	Top
West Oxfordshire	57.2%	3/5	Second
Cherwell	53.2%	4/5	Third
Oxford	48.3%	5/5	Bottom

During Q1, there was a slight decline in the household recycling rate compared to the same period last year.


In 2023/24, household recycling rates across England varied widely, ranging from 15.8% to 62.9% among local authorities. The national average recycling rate rose slightly to 42.3%, marking a 0.6 percentage point increase from the previous year.

Amid this national landscape, West Oxfordshire ranked among the top 20 councils in England for household waste recycling for the financial year 2023-2024, highlighting its strong performance and commitment to environmental sustainability.

Residual Household Waste per Household (kg)



Direction of Travel

Against last Quarter 

Against last Year 

Improved since last quarter and last year

Lower is Good

Target	93
Actual	90.56

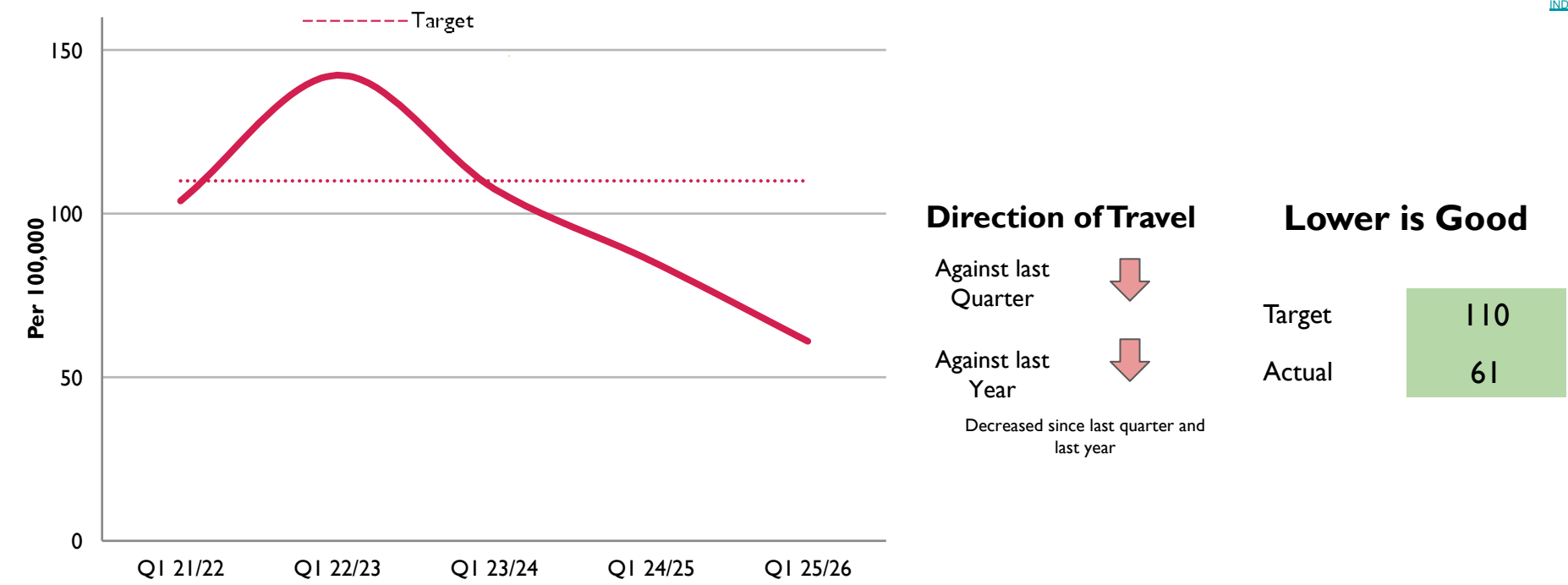
How do we compare?

Residual household waste per household (kg/household) – Gov.uk. The latest dataset available is from 2023-2024.

2023-24 Benchmark	Kg	County Rank	Quartile
Vale of White Horse	303.2	1/5	Top
South Oxfordshire	304.8	2/5	Top
Oxford	335.7	3/5	Second
West Oxfordshire	344.7	4/5	Third
Cherwell	396.9	5/5	Bottom

During Q1, the Council remained below its residual waste target and ranked within the top quartile of English district councils, with levels under 99.25 kg per household—reflecting continued strong performance in waste reduction.

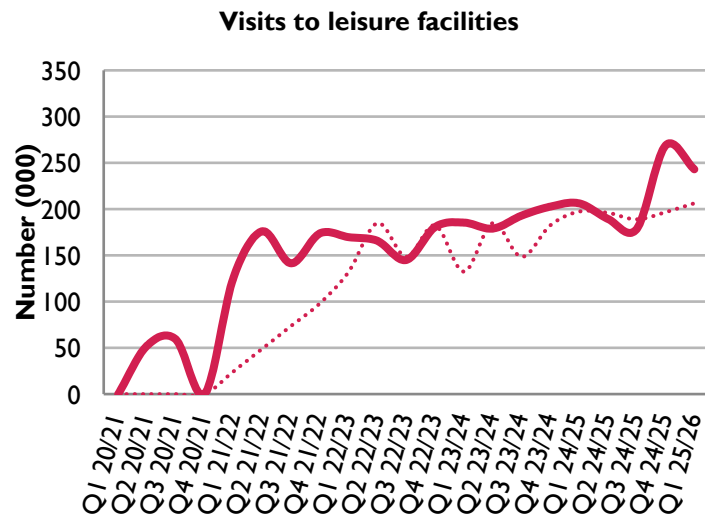
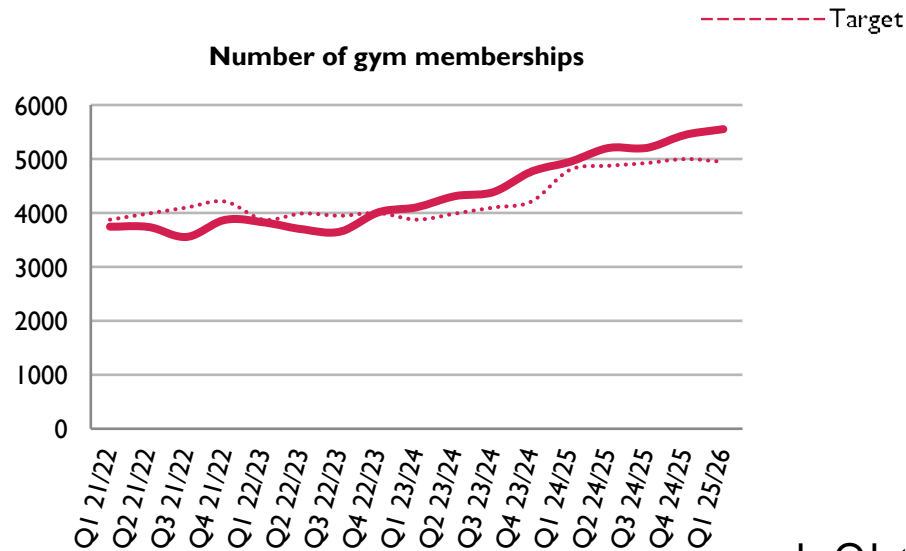
Missed bins per 100,000



The Council recorded 61 missed bins per 100,000 collections during Q1, well within the target of 110. While overall performance remains strong, work is ongoing with Ubico to address persistent issues with missed assisted collections through better use of available technology.

Number of visits to the leisure centres & (Snapshot)

Number of gym memberships



Direction of Travel

Gym Memberships

Against last Quarter



Against last Year



Leisure Visits

Against last Quarter



Against last Year



Gym Memberships – Improved since last quarter and last year

Leisure Visits- Improved since last quarter and last year

Higher is Good

Gym Memberships

Target

4,947

Actual

5,554

Leisure Visits

Target

206,370

Q4 Actual

243,112

In Q1, the Council exceeded targets with 5,554 gym memberships and over 243,000 leisure centre visits, reflecting strong and sustained community engagement.

Breakdown of Leisure Visits per facility:

Facility	Q1 24-25	Q2 24-25	Q3 24-25	Q4 24-25	Q1 25-26
Bartholomew Sports Centre	9,681	9,747	5,506	16,712	20,268
Carterton Artificial Turf Pitch	6,840	6,840	6,840	9,252	858
Carterton Leisure Centre	70,220	62,866	57,100	64,139	57,346
Carterton Pavilion	600	600	600	600	600
Chipping Norton Leisure Centre	22,907	21,717	18,804	54,713	47,750
Windrush Leisure Centre	76,286	65,250	73,237	103,947	95,596
Witney Artificial Turf Pitch	19,320	19,320	16,487	19,640	19,557
Woodstock Open Air Pool	516	3,126	0	0	1137