WEST OXFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

Delivering great services locally

PERFORMANCE REPORT:

July - September 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

The Council's overall performance remains positive, with continued progress in key areas. Revenue collection for Council Tax and Non-Domestic Rates is ahead of expectations, planning determination times remain well above target and customer satisfaction continues to be exceptionally high. Leisure services also performed strongly, with sustained engagement in gym memberships and leisure centre visits and the delivery of affordable homes significantly exceeded quarterly expectations.

However, some challenges persist. Processing times for Council Tax Support and Housing Benefit change events, while improving, remain above target due to the cumulative nature of the metric and operational complexities linked to Universal Credit migration. Freedom of Information response times dipped below the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) target and performance in Land Charges searches were affected by staffing pressures late in the quarter. Environmental performance also faces ongoing challenges, with household recycling rates impacted by seasonal factors and wider 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

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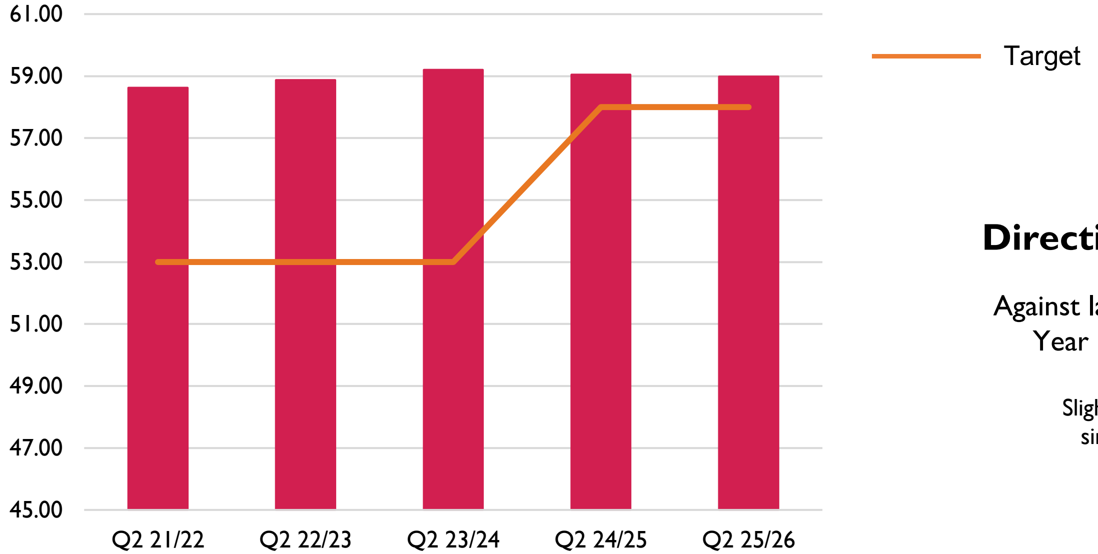

Direction of Travel

Against last Year

Slightly decreased since last year

Higher is Good

Target	58%
Actual	58.99%

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 Q2, the Council met its collection target and surpassed pre-pandemic levels by 1.7%. While 12-month payment plans are slightly reducing early-year collection, the year-on-year drop is just 0.06%, suggesting the trend may be stabilising.

Percentage of Non-domestic rates collected

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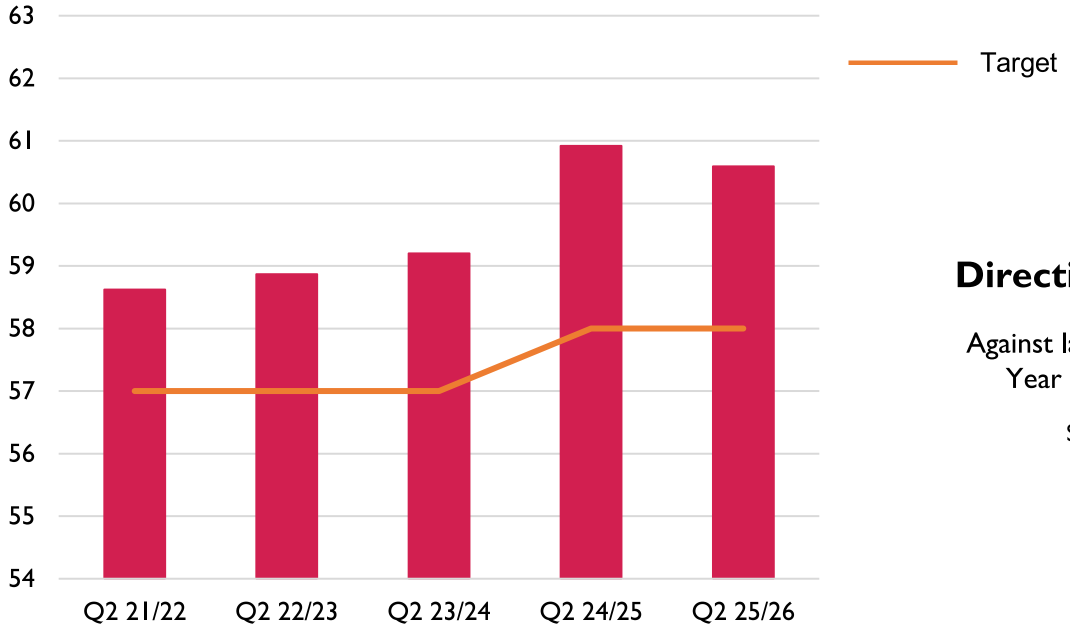

Direction of Travel

Against last Year

Slightly decreased since last year

Higher is Good

Target	58%
Actual	60.59%

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 Q2, the Council exceeded its collection target, with performance just 0.13% below last year. Recovery work is up to date, and earlier staff training has supported flexible working across Council Tax and NDR, helping reduce backlog and strengthen resilience.

Processing times for Council Tax Support new claims

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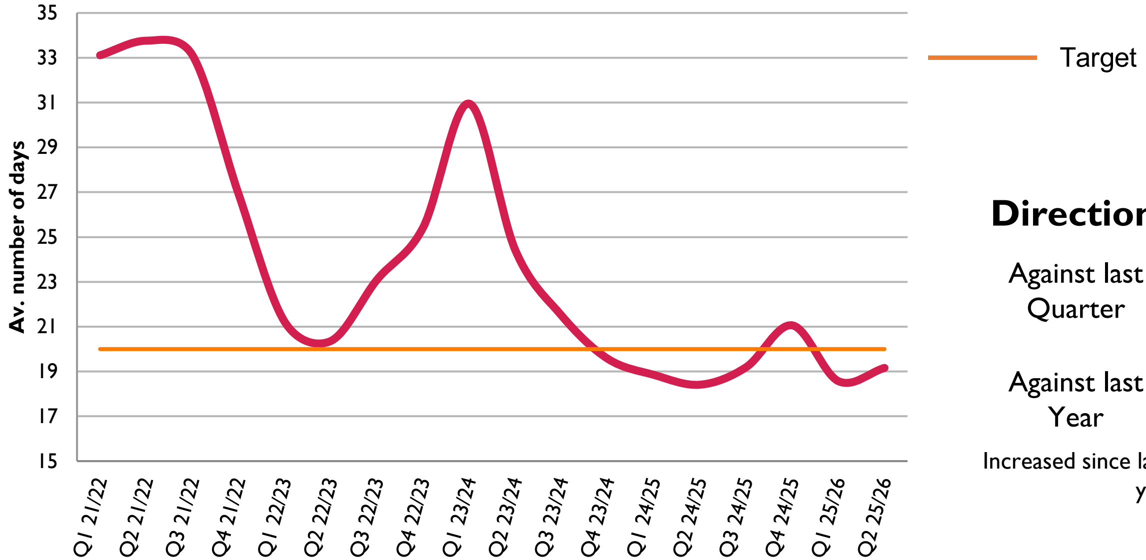

Direction of Travel

Against last Quarter	⇧
Against last Year	⇧

Increased since last quarter and last year

Lower is Good

Target	20
Actual	19.16

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 June 2025 and the percentage change from June 2024 for each authority.

	Number of Claimants at end of Sept 2024	Percentage Change since Sept 2023
Oxford	8,479	-7.33%
Cherwell	5,962	-1.18%
West Oxfordshire	**4,374**	**-0.32%**
Vale of White Horse	5,095	5.79%
South Oxfordshire	5,312	6.58%

Processing times rose slightly this quarter, likely due to a 20% increase in applications between Q1 and Q2, but the 20-day target was still met. Performance remains consistent, reflecting strong operational focus.

Processing times for Council Tax Support Change Events

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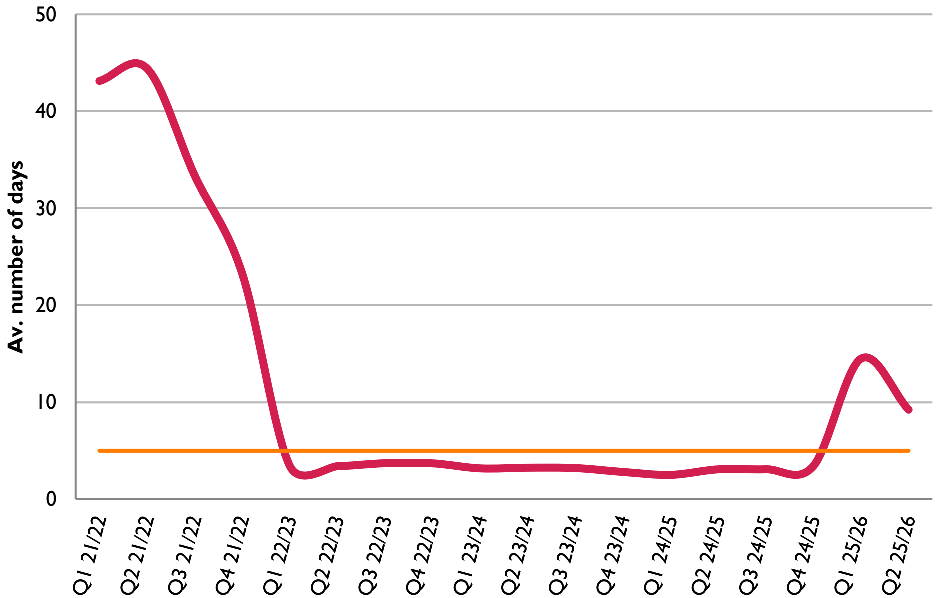

Direction of Travel

Against last Quarter

Against last Year

Decreased since last quarter but increased since last year

Lower is Good

Target	5
Actual	9.23

In Q2, the Councils processing times continued to improve, with a cumulative average of 9.23 days—down 5.26 days from Q1. Automation and backlog clearance contributed to this progress, with quarterly averages well within the 5-day target, reaching just 2.71 days for July-September.

Processing times for Housing Benefit Change of Circumstances

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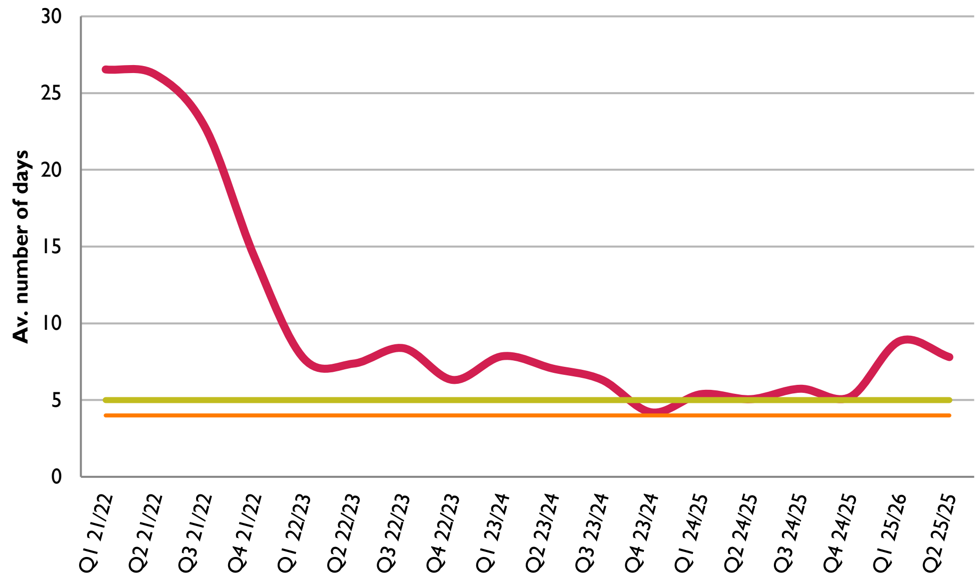

Direction of Travel

Against last Quarter ↓

Against last Year ↑

Decreased since last quarter but increased since last year

Lower is Good

Target	4
Actual	7.8

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 – January – March 2025 (Q4 24-25)

Q4 24-25 Benchmark	Days	County Rank	Quartile
Cherwell	1.79	1/5	Top
Vale of White Horse	2.37	2/5	Top
South Oxfordshire	2.46	3/5	Second
West Oxfordshire	**4.30**	**4/5**	**Third**
Oxford	12.92	5/5	Bottom

In Q2, processing times improved but remained above the 4-day target. Following the migration to Universal Credit, new applications have declined, but the remaining caseload, primarily pension-age and temporary accommodation claims, is sensitive to delays, meaning even minor hold-ups can disproportionately affect processing times.

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

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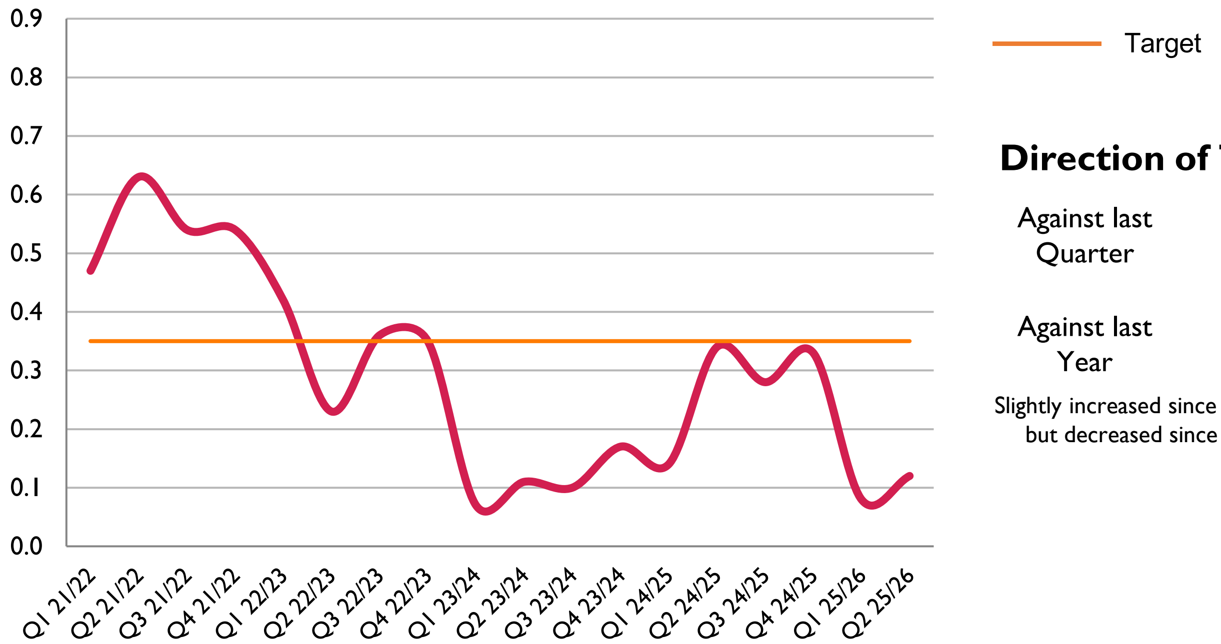

Direction of Travel

Against last Quarter ⇧

Against last Year ⇩

Slightly increased since last quarter but decreased since last year

Lower is Good

Target	0.35%
Actual	0.12%

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

(Snapshot) Long Term Empty Properties

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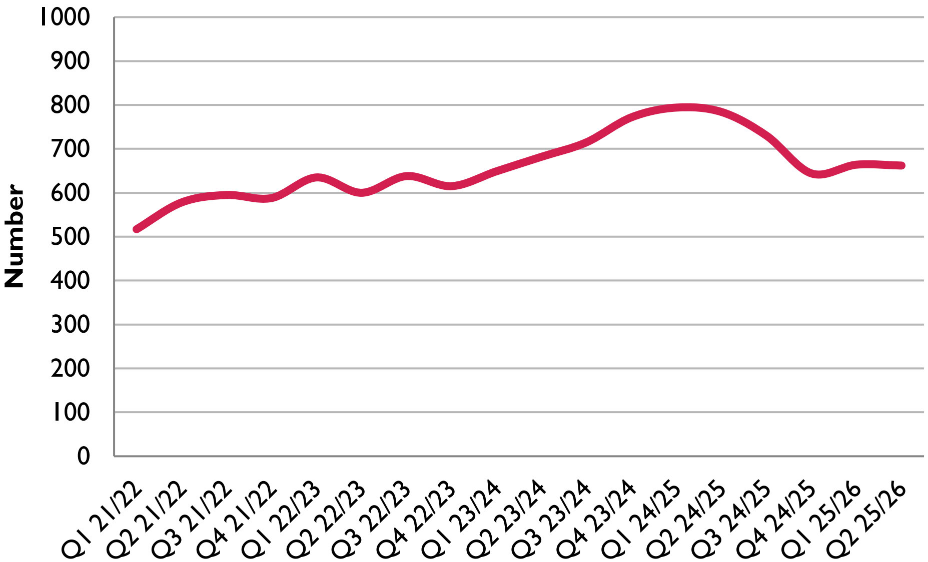


Direction of Travel

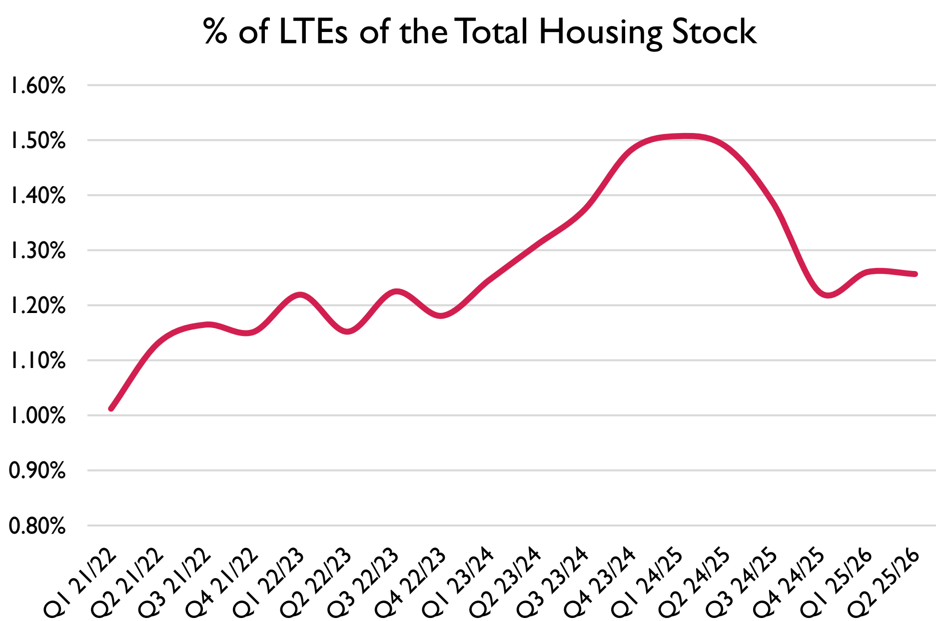
Against last Quarter

Against last Year

Slightly decreased since last quarter and decreased since last year

Lower is Good

662



The Council saw a slight reduction in long-term empty properties, though 38 were newly registered between August and September, 25 of which are currently for sale. This may reflect a broader housing market slowdown, possibly linked to the quieter summer period.

(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

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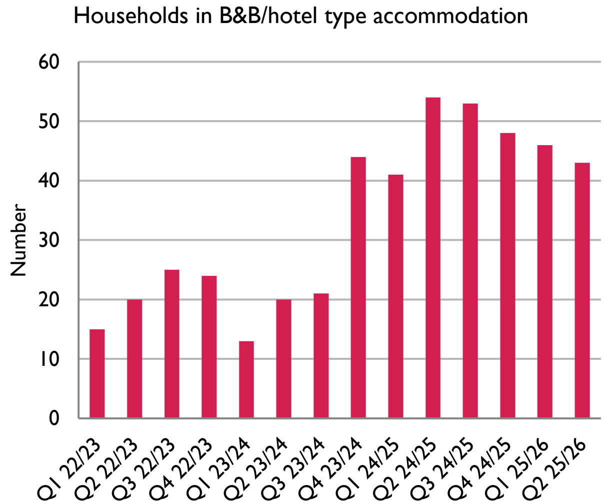

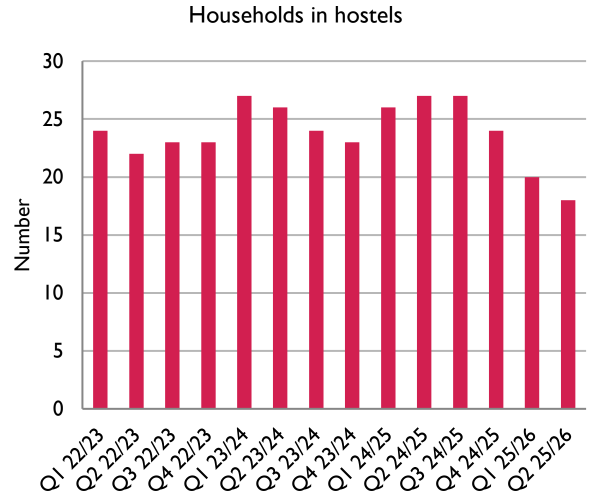

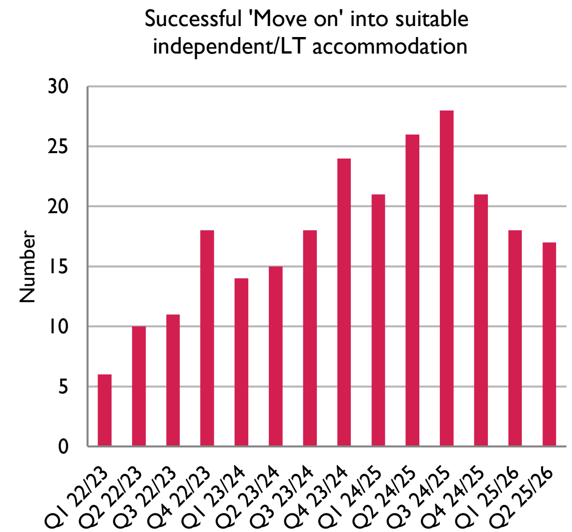

Direction of Travel

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	↓

The number of people in temporary accommodation has steadied, following a reduction in those placed in insecure B&B-style housing during the first quarter. This improvement reflects both strong preventative work and effective collaboration with local housing providers. Programmes like the Local Authority Housing Fund (LAHF) are helping to boost the supply of self-contained temporary units and efforts are underway to expand the council's own own hostel stock by 30 bedrooms by 31st March 2026.

Customer Satisfaction - Telephone

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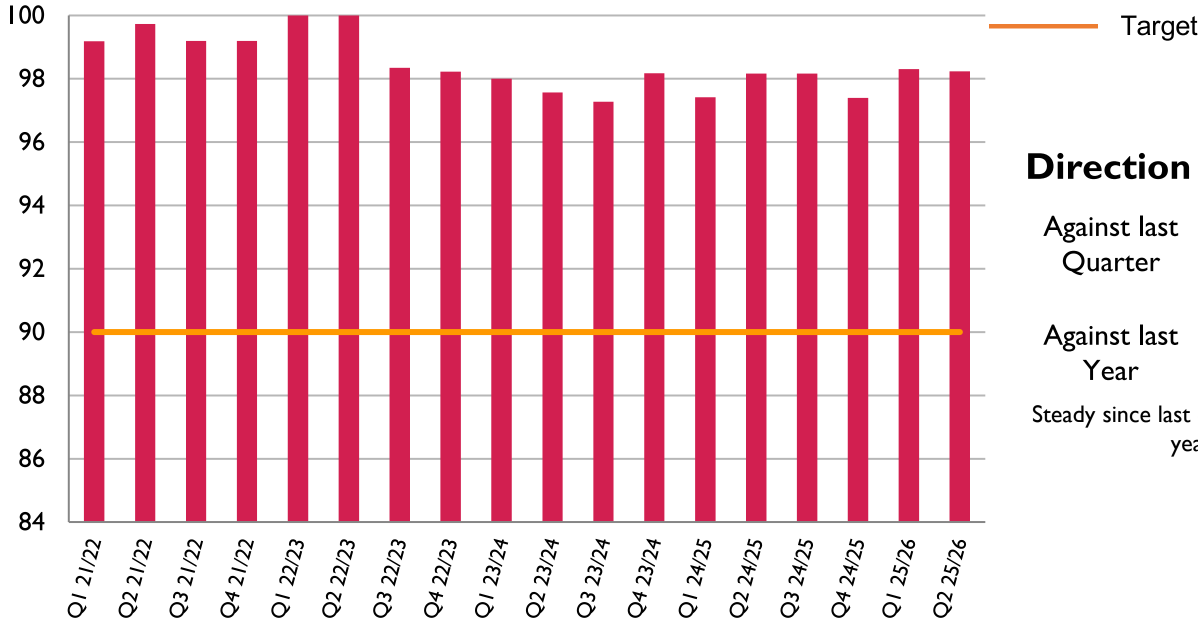

Direction of Travel

Against last Quarter

Against last Year

Steady since last quarter and last year

Higher is Good

Target	90%
Actual	98.24%

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.

	July Rank	July Net Sat.	Aug Rank	Aug Net Sat.	Sept. Rank	Sept. Net Sat.
West Oxfordshire	**2**	**96%**	**4**	**95%**	**2**	**98%**

A total of 569 residents participated in the survey, of these, 559 customers reported being satisfied with the service, reflecting a high level of overall satisfaction.

Customer Satisfaction - Email

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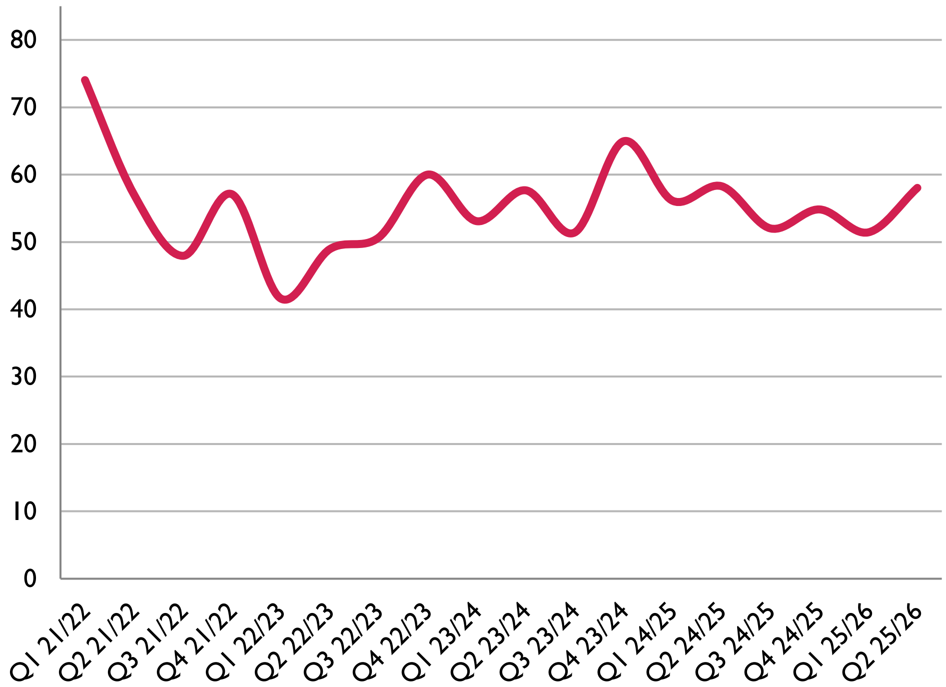

Direction of Travel

Against last Quarter

Against last Year

Improved since last quarter and steady since last year

Higher is Good

58.03%

498 residents responded to the survey, with 289 expressing satisfaction (58.03%), up from 51.43% in Q1, 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

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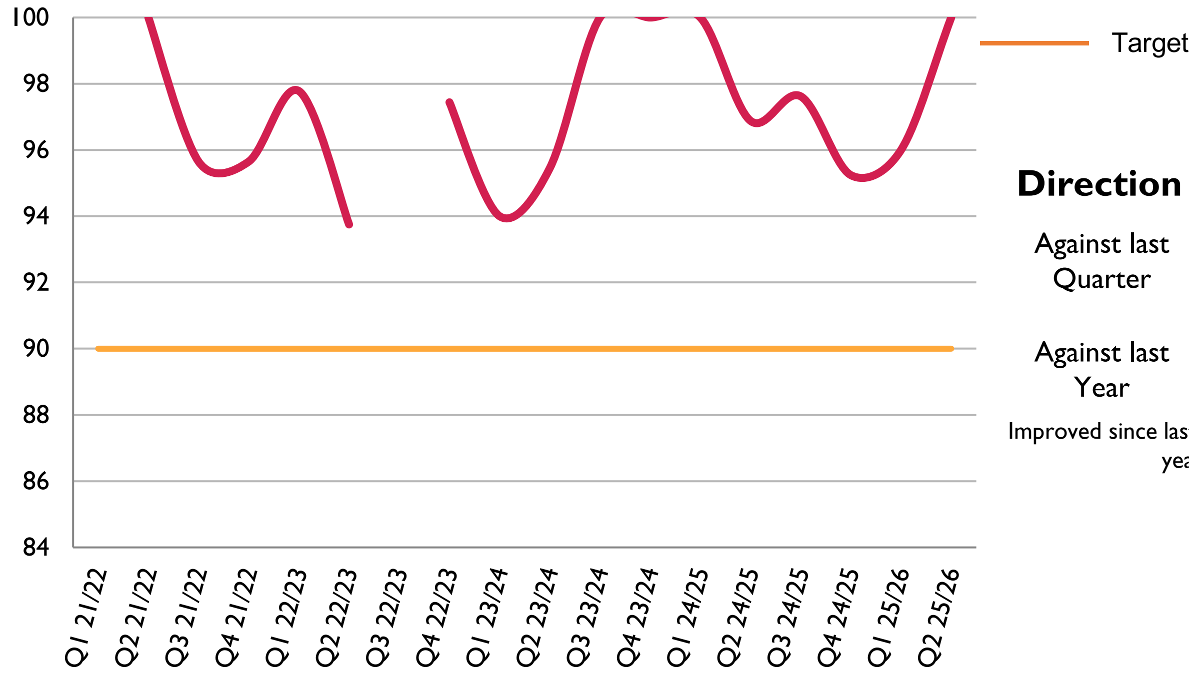

Direction of Travel

Against last Quarter ↑

Against last Year ↑

Improved since last quarter and last year

Higher is Good

Target	90%
Actual	100%

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

Customer Call Handling - Average Waiting Time

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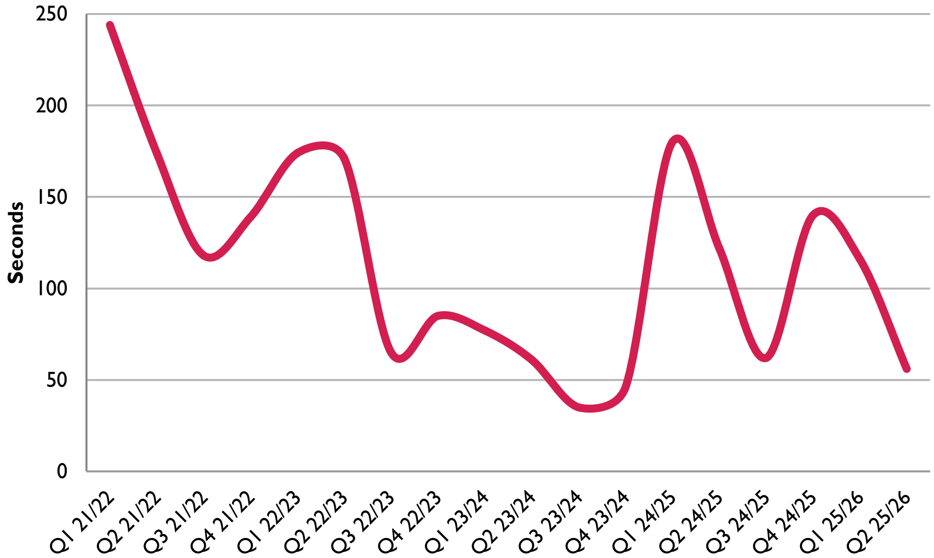


Direction of Travel

Against last Quarter

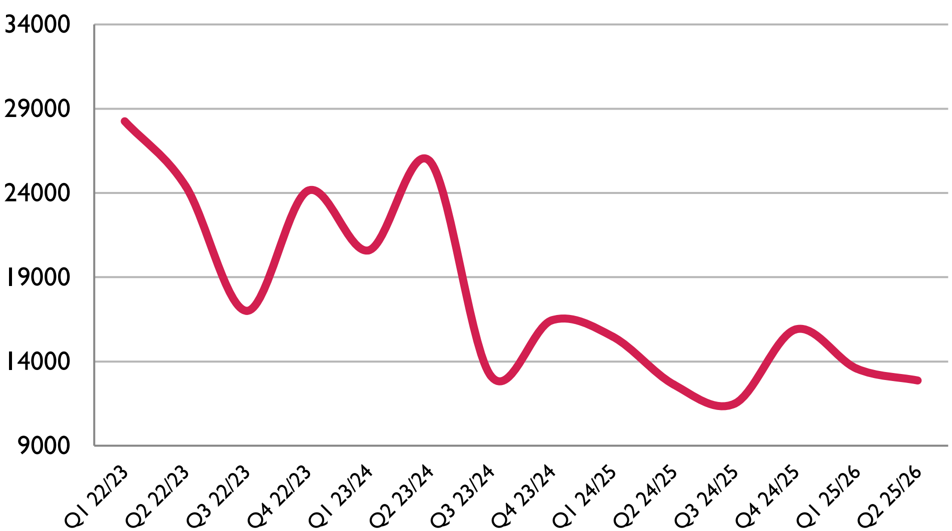
Against last Year

Decreased since last quarter and last year

Lower is Good

56 Seconds

Call Volume over Time



Average call waiting time improved by around a minute compared to the same period last year, despite a slight rise in call volumes. The shift toward digital channels continues to support shorter phone hours and reflects changing customer behaviour, with strong operational oversight and regular staff training helping maintain stable performance.

Number of complaints upheld

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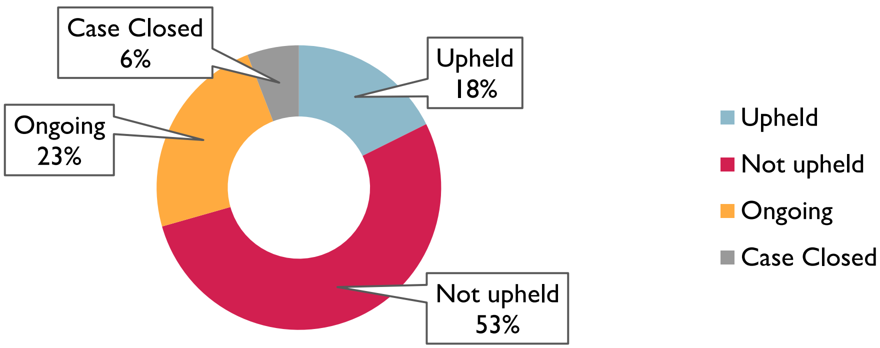
Complaints by Status



Direction of Travel

Complaints upheld or partly upheld at Stage 1

Against last Quarter

Against last Year

Increased since last quarter and last year

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**

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

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Service area	Description	Outcome/learning	Decision	Response time (days)
West Oxfordshire				
Data Protection	Data breach by contractor for sending out mass mailouts.	Apology offered by service.	Upheld	10
Revenues & Benefits	Incorrectly billed for Council Tax.	Apology offered by service.	Upheld	7
Waste & Recycling	Waste not being picked up.	Recollection sent and an apology offered.	Upheld	5
Waste & Recycling	Garden waste bin not being picked up.	Refund offered for licence.	Upheld	9

Percentage of FOI requests answered within 20 days

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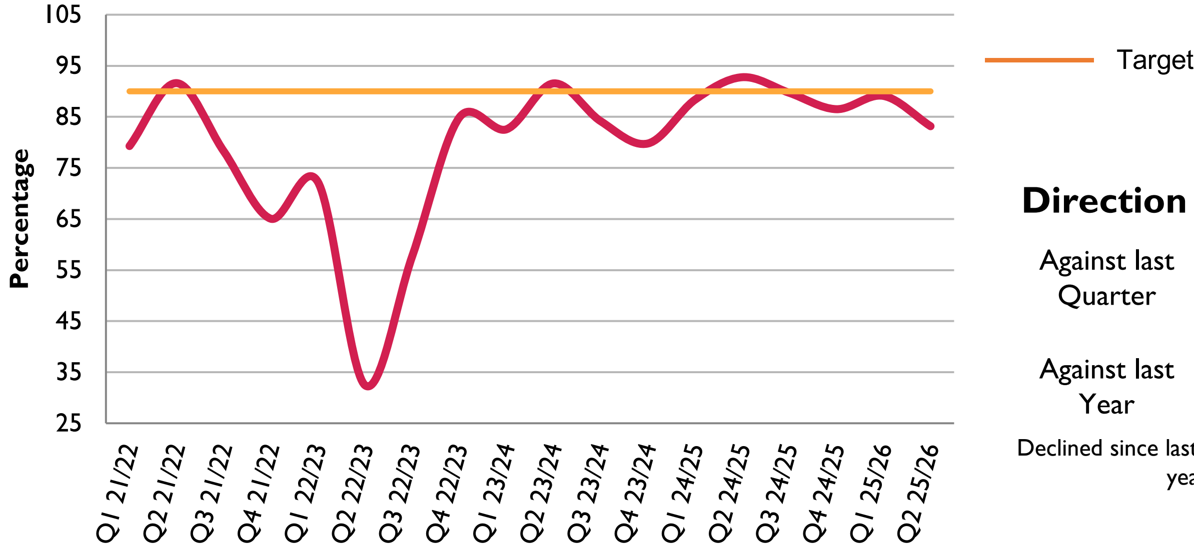


Direction of Travel

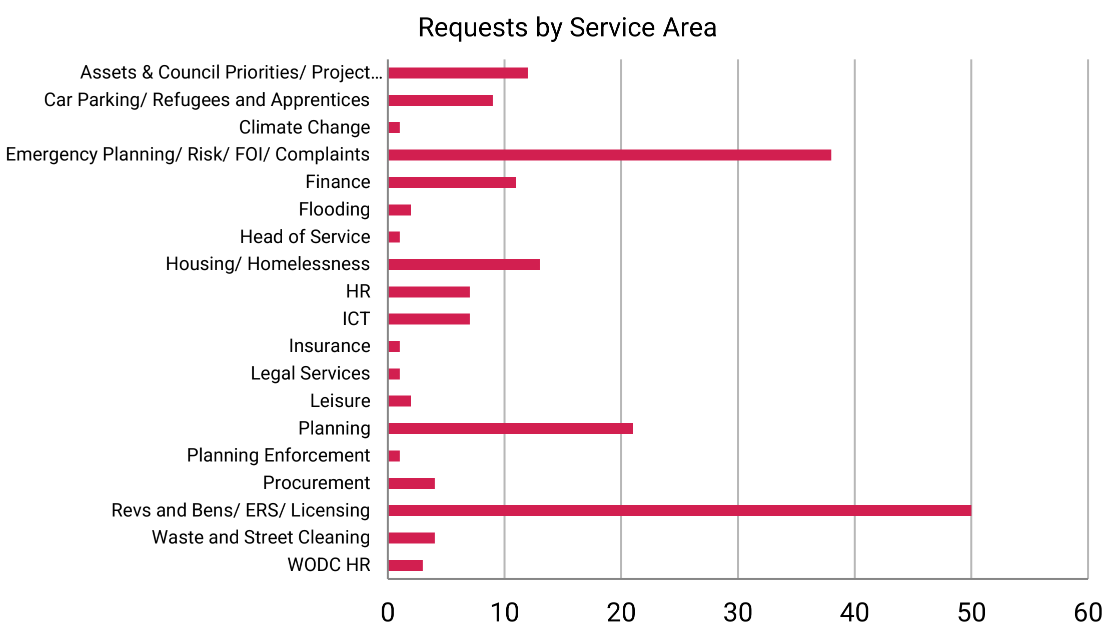
Against last Quarter

Against last Year

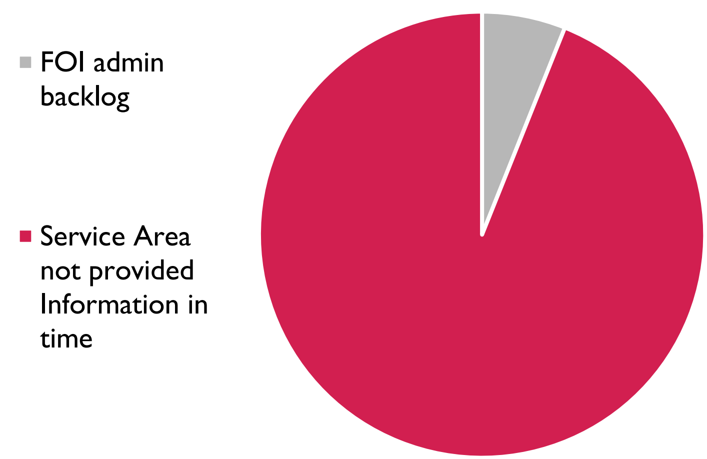
Declined since last quarter and last year

Higher is Good

Target	90%
Actual	83.16%



Reason FOI request was not Answered within 20 Days



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

Building Control Satisfaction

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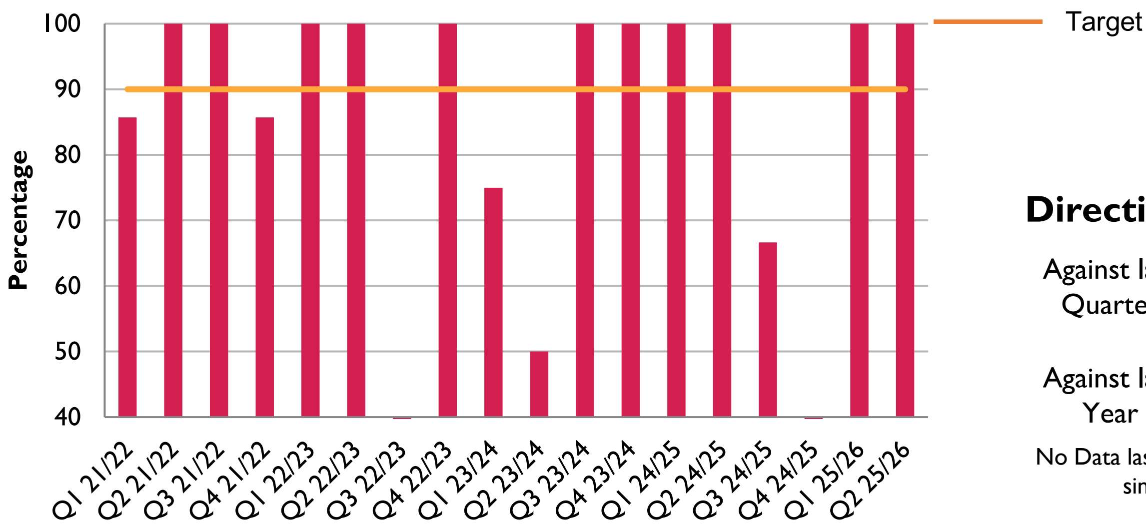


Direction of Travel

Against last Quarter

Against last Year

No Data last quarter but steady since last year

Higher is Good

Target	90%
Actual	100%

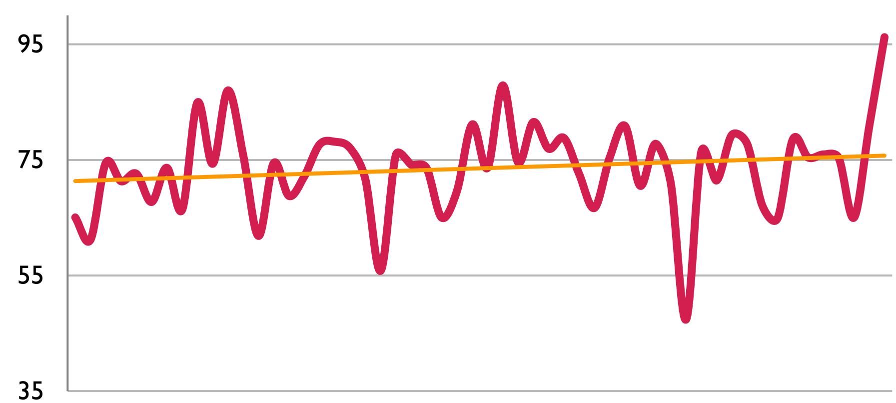
Satisfaction survey data continues to present challenges due to low response rates, with only one received this quarter. To improve this, a webform was developed and has been attached to completion certificates from October onwards.

The below chart shows market share over time from April 2021

How do we compare?

Percentage of share in the market

	July	Aug.	Sept.	Number of Apps for Quarter
West	**61%**	**81%**	**96%**	**148**



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

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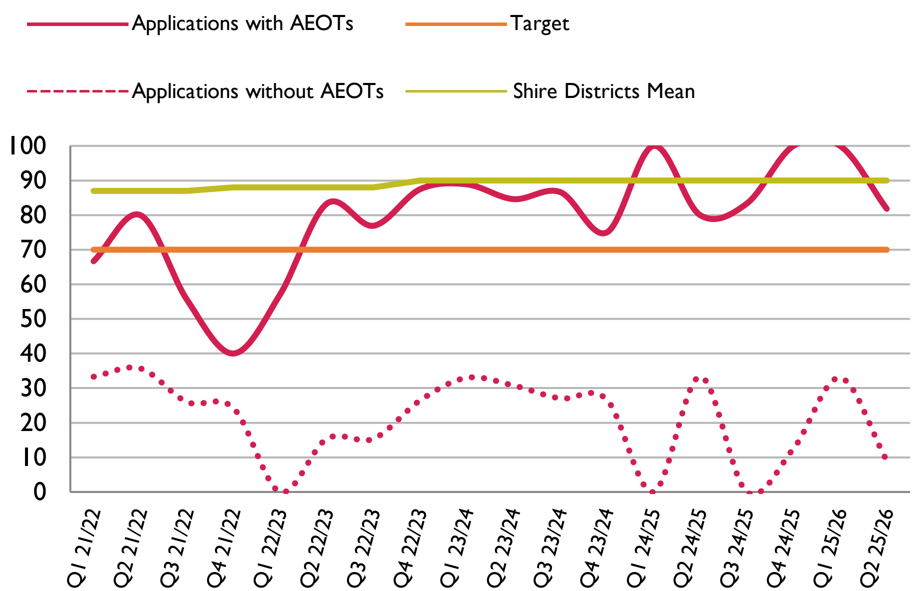

Direction of Travel

Against last Quarter

Against last Year

Declined since last quarter but steady since last year

Higher is Good

Target	70%
Actual	81.82%

How do we compare?

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

Q1 25-26 Benchmark	%	County Rank	Quartile
Vale of White Horse	100	1/5	Top
West Oxfordshire	**100**	**1/5**	**Top**
Oxford	89	3/5	Second
South Oxfordshire	83	4/5	Third
Cherwell	78	5/5	Bottom

The service demonstrated consistently strong performance in Q2, with nine out of eleven Major applications processed within the agreed timescales.

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

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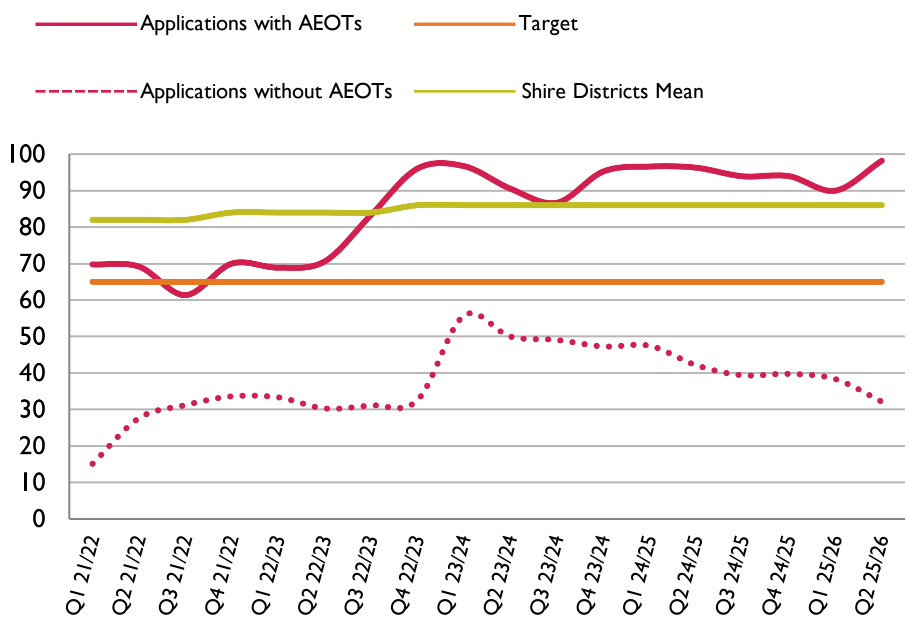

Direction of Travel

Against last Quarter

Against last Year

Increased since last quarter and steady since last year

Higher is Good

Target	65%
Actual	98.21%

How do we compare?

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

Q1 25-26 Benchmark	%	County Rank	Quartile
Vale of White Horse	93	1/5	Top
Oxford	91	2/5	Top
West Oxfordshire	**90**	**3/5**	**Second**
South Oxfordshire	87	4/5	Third
Cherwell	79	5/5	Bottom

This quarter, delays persist due to the absence of a dedicated Landscape Officer, though recruitment is progressing with interviews held. The team is preparing for increased demand from upcoming legislative changes and remains committed to delivering sustainable, high-quality development despite national policy challenges.

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

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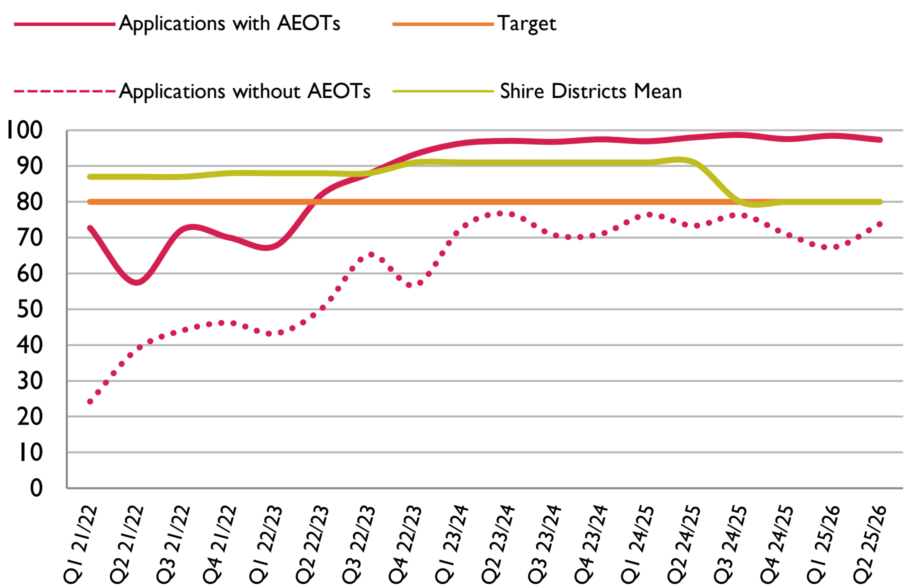

Direction of Travel

Against last Quarter	⇨
Against last Year	⇨

Steady since last quarter and last year

Higher is Good

Target	80%
Actual	97.33%

How do we compare?

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

Q1 25-26 Benchmark	%	County Rank	Quartile
West Oxfordshire	**98**	**1/5**	**Top**
Vale of White Horse	96	2/5	Second
South Oxfordshire	96	3/5	Second
Oxford	88	4/5	Third
Cherwell	79	5/5	Bottom

Determination times remain high, with 187 applications processed in Q2, including 182 within agreed timescales.

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

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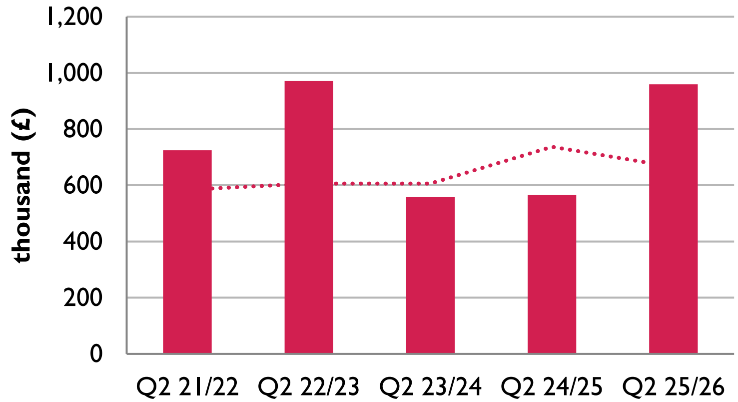
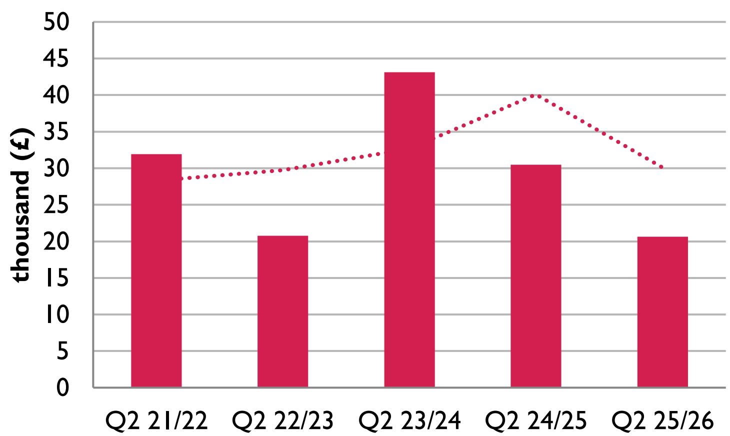
Target

Total planning income



Pre-application income



Direction of Travel

Total Planning Income

Against last Quarter

Against last Year

Pre-Application Income

Against last Quarter

Against last Year

Higher is Good

Total Planning Income (£)	
Target	665,087
Actual	959,309

Pre-Application Income (£)	
Target	30,087
Actual	20,617

Total Income increased since last quarter and last year

Pre-App Income decreased since last quarter and last year

In Q2, the Council recorded high financial performance, with strong income received during the summer months contributing positively towards the annual target. However, pre-application uptake in West remains low, and the team is currently exploring pricing adjustments alongside a renewed focus on Planning Performance Agreements (PPAs).

Percentage of Planning Appeals Allowed (cumulative)

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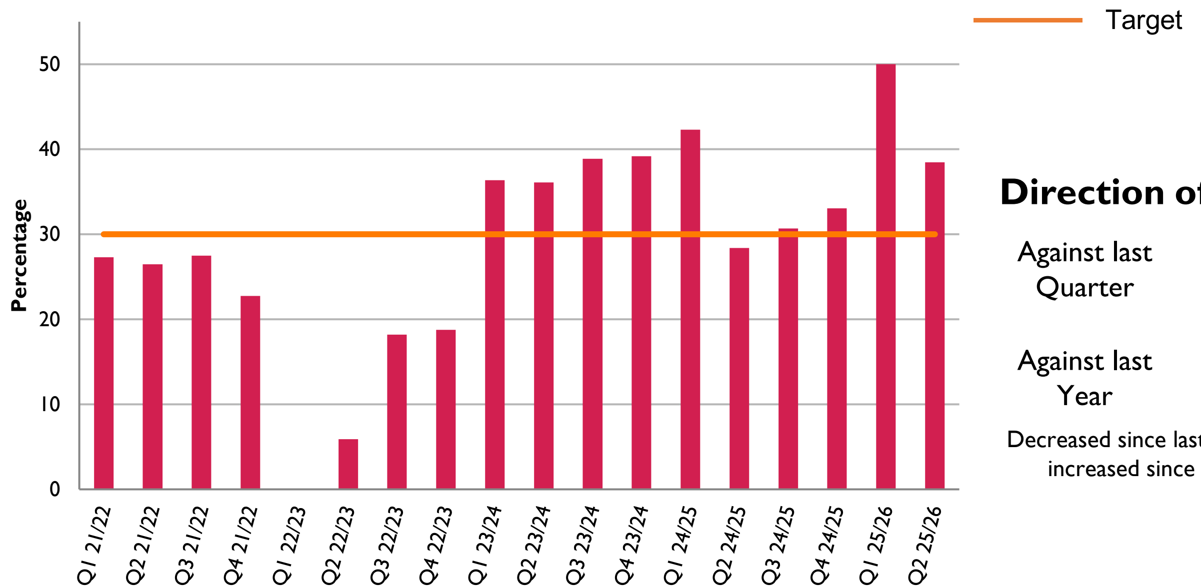


Direction of Travel

Against last Quarter

Against last Year

Decreased since last quarter but increased since last year

Lower is Good

Target	30%
Actual	38.46%

How do we compare?

Percentage of planning appeals allowed – LG Inform

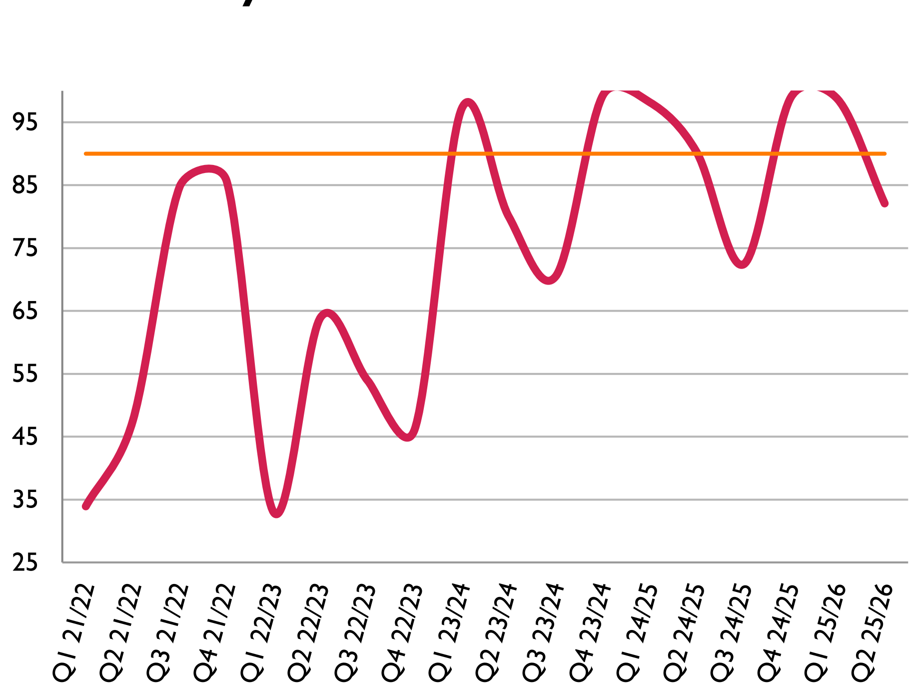
Q1 25-26 Benchmark	%	County Rank	Quartile
Vale of White Horse	17	1/5	Top
South Oxfordshire	27	2/5	Top
Oxford	29	3/5	Second
Cherwell	43	4/5	Third
West Oxfordshire	**50**	**5/5**	**Bottom**

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).

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

	Decided	Allowed	% Allowed
Uplands	7	2	28.57%
Lowlands	6	3	50.00%

Percentage of official land charge searches completed within 10 days



Direction of Travel

Against last Quarter

Against last Year

Declined last quarter and last year

Higher is Good

Target	90%
Actual	82.09%

Performance fell from 98.67% in Q1 to 82.09% in Q2, mainly due to a long-term staff absence from late August. July and August exceeded the 90% target, and additional support has been deployed to improve resilience and restore performance.

Number of affordable homes delivered (cumulative)

WEST OXFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

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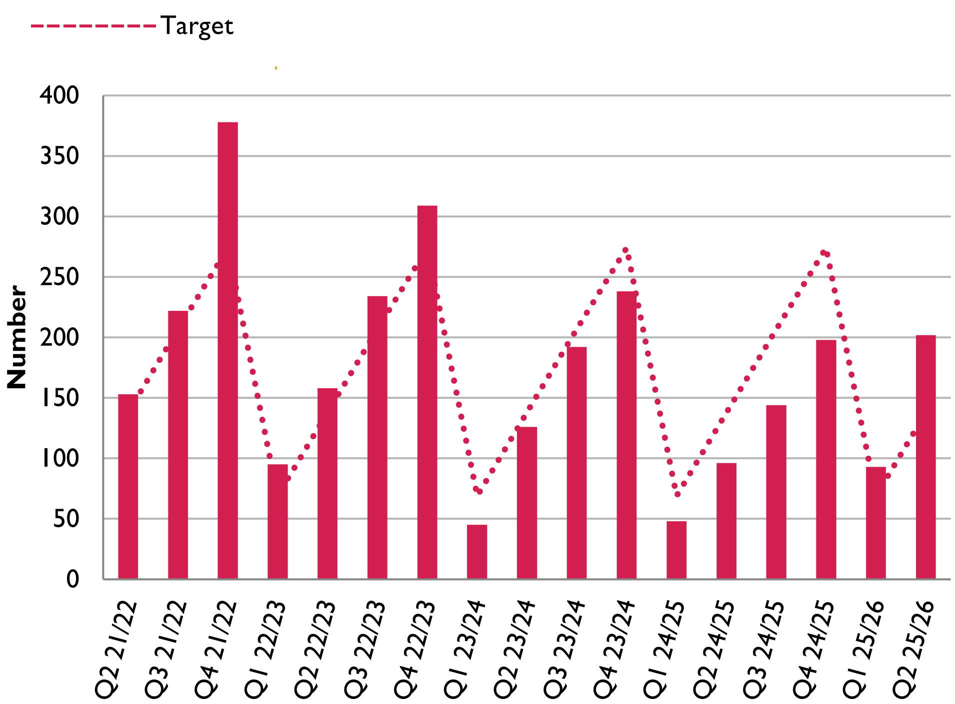


Direction of Travel

Against last Quarter ⇧

Against last Year ⇧

Increased since last quarter and last year

Higher is Good

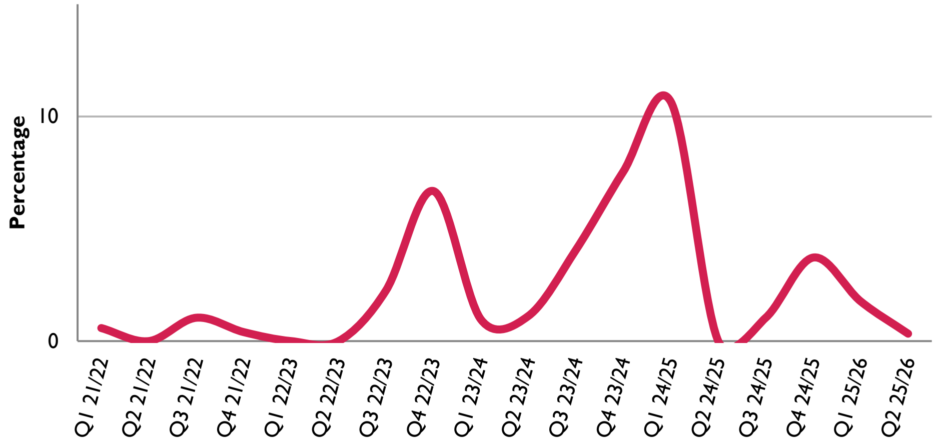
Target	138
Actual	202

The Council delivered 109 affordable homes in Q2, bringing the year-to-date total to 202, with 43 homes for social rent, maintaining a strong focus on genuinely affordable tenures, which now make up 50% of all affordable homes delivered this year.

A key milestone this quarter was the completion of the affordable home development in Aston, delivering 40 new affordable homes through a partnership with Stonewater, supported by Homes England grant funding. The scheme is 100% affordable and includes sustainable features such as solar panels and air source heat pumps, supporting both housing need and environmental goals.

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)



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 and last year
Enforcement Action – Declined since last quarter but slightly increased since last year

Number of Fly Tips Collected

136

Percentage Enforcement Action

0.33%

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

In Q2, the service continued preparations for stop-and-search operations, school engagement, and public awareness campaigns. Consultation began on a proposed district-wide PSPO to tackle dog fouling and require dogs to be under control, with penalties of £100 or up to £1,000 if prosecuted. Work also progressed on plans for PSPOs addressing anti-social behaviour, supported by Police enforcement.

Percentage of high-risk food premises inspected within target timescales

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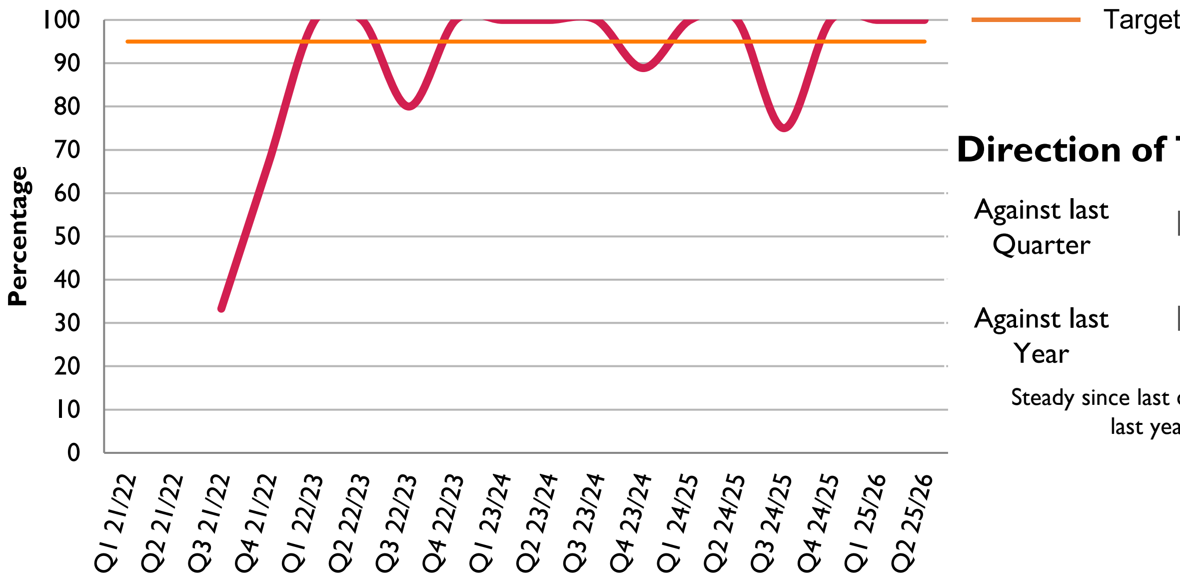

Direction of Travel

Against last Quarter

Against last Year

Steady since last quarter and last year

Higher is Good

Target	95%
Actual	100%

Five High-Risk food inspection was undertaken during Q2, which were completed within the target timeframes.

% High-risk notifications risk assessed within 1 working day

(including food poisoning outbreaks, anti-social behaviour, contaminated private water supplies, workplace fatalities or multiple serious injuries)

WEST OXFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

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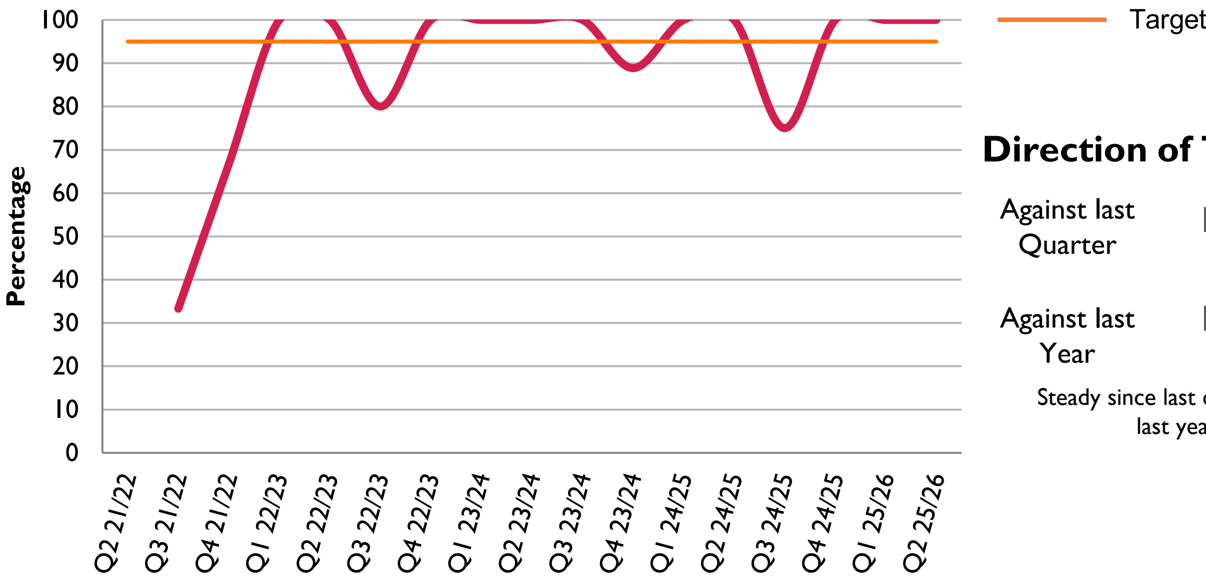

Direction of Travel

Against last Quarter

Against last Year

Steady since last quarter and last year

Higher is Good

Target	95%
Actual	100%

One notification was received during Q2 which was assessed within one working day.

Percentage of household waste recycled

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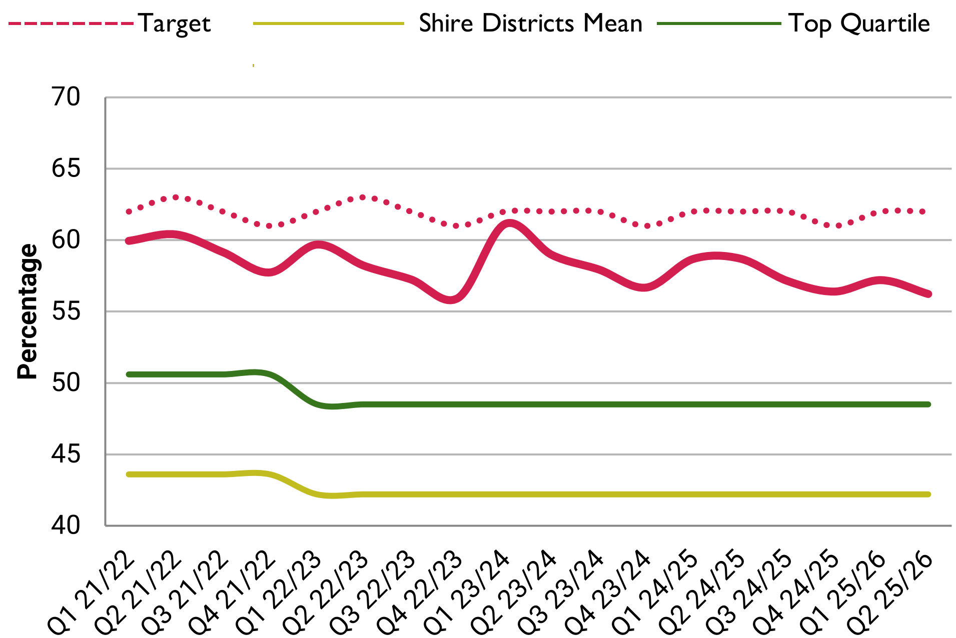

Direction of Travel

Against last Quarter

Against last Year

Declined since last quarter and last year

Higher is Good

Target	62%
Actual	56.23%

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 Q2, there was a decline of around 2.5% 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)

WEST OXFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

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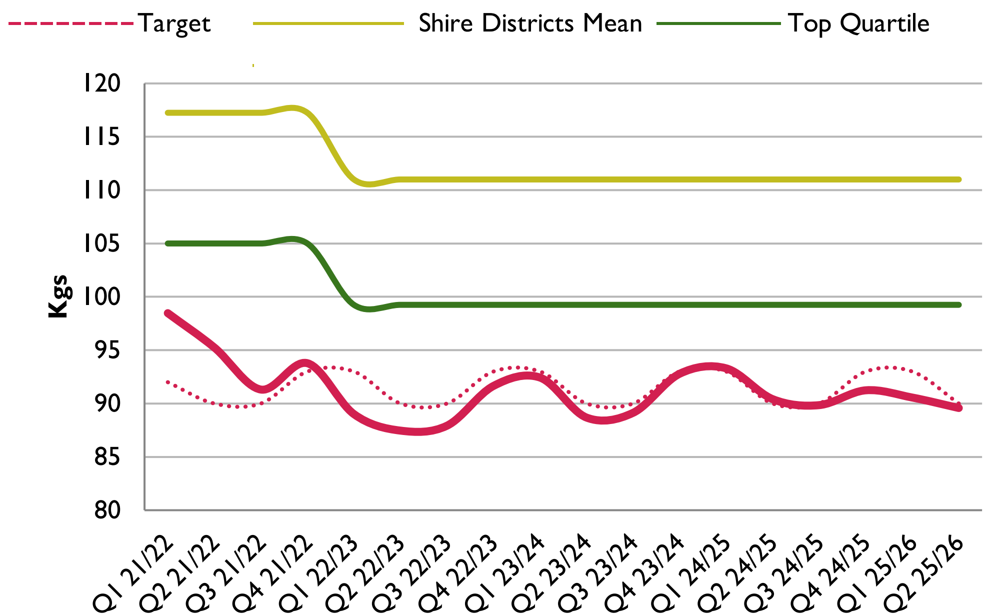

Direction of Travel

Against last Quarter

Against last Year

Improved since last quarter and last year

Lower is Good

Target	93
Actual	89.58

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 Q2, 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

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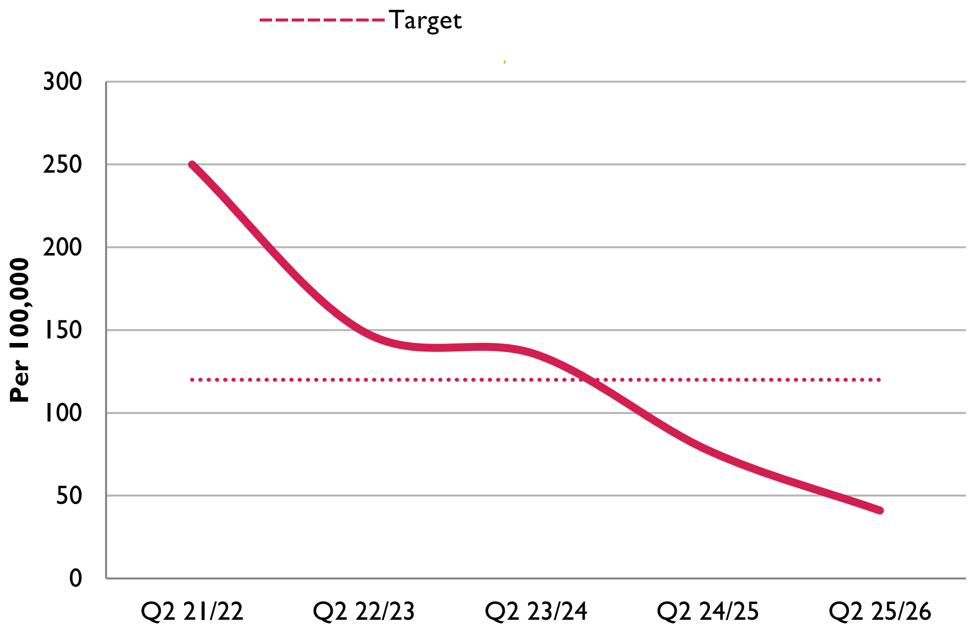


Direction of Travel

Against last Quarter

Against last Year

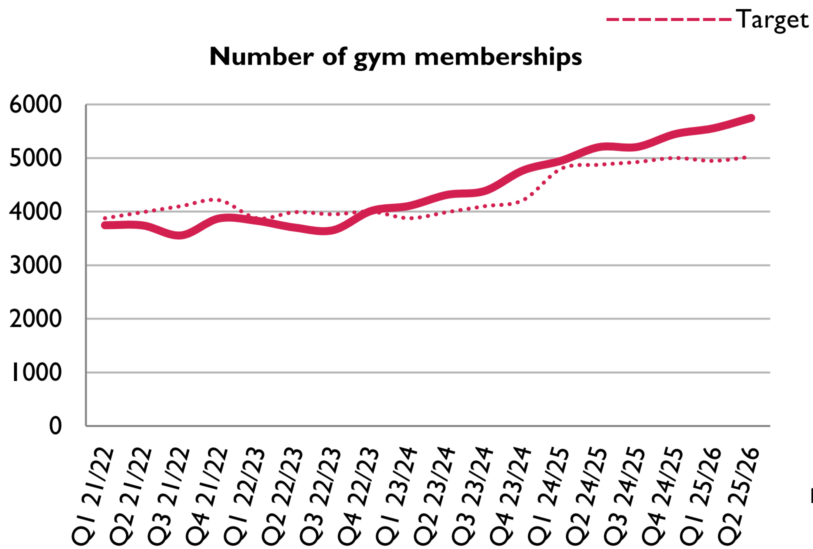
Decreased since last quarter and last year

Lower is Good

Target	120
Actual	41.02

The Council recorded 41.02 missed bins per 100,000, well within target, and overall service performance has improved following recent measures. Whilst assisted collection issues persist, they have dropped by around 60% since last quarter. A vehicle breakdown in August temporarily disrupted services for residents in narrow access areas but strengthened team and contractor relationships continue to support progress.

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- Declined since last quarter but improved since last year

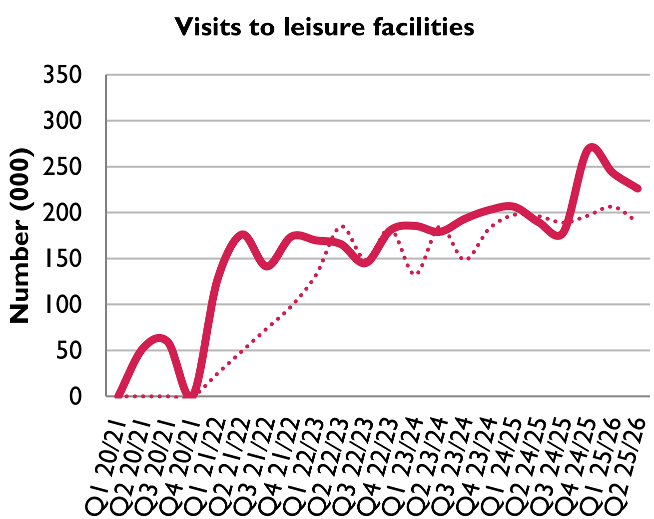
Higher is Good

Gym Memberships

Target	5,023
Actual	5,749

Leisure Visits

Target	189,446
Actual	226,202



The Council exceeded its leisure targets in Q2, achieving 14.4% above target for memberships and 19.4% above target for visits, reflecting strong public engagement with its facilities.

Breakdown of Leisure Visits per facility:

Facility	Q1 24-25	Q2 24-25	Q3 24-25	Q4 24-25	Q1 25-26	Q2 25-26
Bartholomew Sports Centre	9,681	9,747	5,506	16,712	20,268	17,195
Carterton Artificial Turf Pitch	6,840	6,840	6,840	9,252	858	1810
Carterton Leisure Centre	70,220	62,866	57,100	64,139	57,346	63,254
Carterton Pavilion	600	600	600	600	600	320
Chipping Norton Leisure Centre	22,907	21,717	18,804	54,713	47,750	40,080
Windrush Leisure Centre	76,286	65,250	73,237	103,947	95,596	81,676
Witney Artificial Turf Pitch	19,320	19,320	16,487	19,640	19,557	15,724
Woodstock Open Air Pool	516	3,126	0	0	1,137	6,143