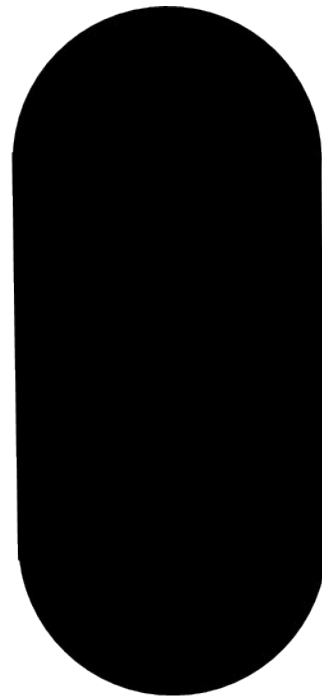
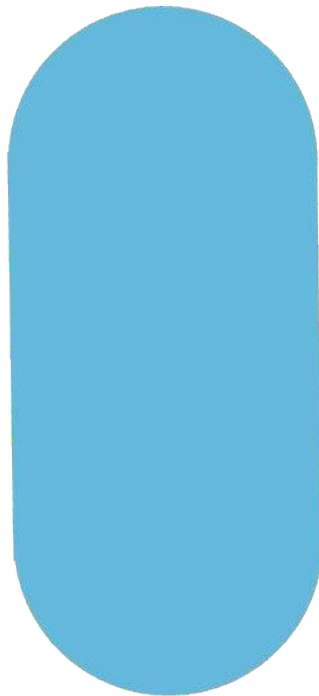


LAND AT SPENCERS WOOD WOKINGHAM

**OLDER PERSON'S HOUSING NEED ASSESSMENT
PREPARED ON BEHALF OF RICHBOROUGH ESTATES LIMITED**

FEBRUARY 2026





CONTENTS

1. Introduction.....	1
2. Planning Policy Context	2
3. Local Planning Policy Evidence Relating to Housing for Older People	7
4. Current Supply of Specialist Accommodation for Older People within Wokingham	13
5. Future Pattern of Specialist Housing for Older People within Wokingham	14
6. Summary and Conclusions	17



1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This Report has been prepared by Marrons on behalf of Richborough Estates Limited and their proposed development on land at Spencers Wood, Wokingham Borough.
- 1.2 As part of the development, accommodation is proposed for later living, and in this context the report provides an assessment of Older Persons Housing Needs within Wokingham Borough.
- 1.3 The Report follows the same methodological approach in assessing the need for older person's accommodation as set out in the guidance issued by the Housing Learning Improvement Network (Housing LIN)¹ which is one of the methods followed in Wokingham Borough Council's most recent assessment of housing need.
- 1.4 The Report utilises demographic data from the ONS, including 2021 Census data and the most recent population estimates (mid-2024), the recently published 2022-based sub national population projections, and existing older persons accommodation supply data sourced from the Elderly Accommodation Counsel.
- 1.5 The Report is structured as follows:
 - Section 2 summarises national and local Planning Policy relating to specialist older persons accommodation.
 - Section 3 reviews the Council's evidence base in respect of older persons accommodation need.
 - Section 4 analyses the current supply of older person's accommodation; and
 - Section 5 assesses the future pattern of need for specialist older persons housing in Wokingham, taking account of existing shortages in supply.

¹ https://www.housinglin.org.uk/_assets/Resources/Housing/Support_materials/Toolkit/Housing_in_Later_Life_Toolkit.pdf



2. PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF, December 2024) and Planning Practice Guidance (PPG)

- 2.1 The National Planning Policy Framework (December 2024) is very clear in requiring local authorities to support the Government's objective of significantly boosting the supply of homes, and in doing so considers it important that the needs of groups with specific housing requirements are addressed.
- 2.2 To this end Paragraph 63 of the NPPF confirms that the size, type and tenure of housing needed for different groups in the community should be assessed and reflected in planning policies.
- 2.3 These groups are said to *"include (but are not limited to) those who require affordable housing; families with children; older people (including those who require retirement housing, housing-with-care and care homes); students; people with disabilities; service families; travellers; people who rent their homes and people wishing to commission or build their own homes"* (our emphasis) by Paragraph 63.
- 2.4 It is important to note how prior to 2023 paragraph 63 did not include reference to 'retirement housing, housing-with-care and care homes', only referring to 'older people'. This reflects an acknowledgment that a variety of housing types are needed.
- 2.5 This was an important change to the NPPF introduced in late 2023 and retained in the December 2024 NPPF, now identifying that different forms of housing for older people are required, and the need for these different types of housing should be assessed and determined.
- 2.6 The Government separately released PPG in 2019 to strategic plan makers on 'Housing for older and disable people'.
- 2.7 The Guidance confirms that:
- *The need to provide housing for older people is critical – people are living longer, and the proportion of older people is increasing. The population aged 85 and over is projected to double to 3.2 million by 2041.*
 - *Offering older people a better choice of accommodation to suit changing needs can help them live independently for longer, feel more connected to their communities and help reduce costs to the social care and health systems. (our emphasis)*



- 2.8 In identifying the housing requirements of older people, the PPG confirms that, *“The age profile of the population can be drawn from the Census data. Projections of population and households by age group can also be used. The future need for specialist accommodation for older people broken down by tenure and type (e.g. sheltered housing, extra care) may need to be assessed and be obtained from a number of online tool kits provided by the sector.”*²
- 2.9 The PPG provides a glossary of the different types of specialist housing designed to meet the diverse needs of older people as follows:
- *Age-restricted general market housing: This type of housing is generally for people aged 55 and over and the active elderly. It may include some shared amenities such as communal gardens, but does not include support or care services.*
 - *Retirement living or sheltered housing: This usually consists of purpose-built flats or bungalows with limited communal facilities such as a lounge, laundry room and guest room. It does not generally provide care services, but provides some support to enable residents to live independently. This can include 24 hour on-site assistance (alarm) and a warden or house manager.*
 - *Extra care housing or housing-with-care: This usually consists of purpose-built or adapted flats or bungalows with a medium to high level of care available if required, through an onsite care agency registered through the Care Quality Commission (CQC). Residents are able to live independently with 24 hour access to support services and staff, and meals are also available. There are often extensive communal areas, such as space to socialise or a wellbeing centre. In some cases, these developments are known as retirement communities or villages - the intention is for residents to benefit from varying levels of care as time progresses.*
 - *Residential care homes and nursing homes: These have individual rooms within a residential building and provide a high level of care meeting all activities of daily living. They do not usually include support services for independent living. This type of housing can also include dementia care homes.*³

² Paragraph 63-004, Planning Practice Guidance

³ Paragraph 63-010, Planning Practice Guidance



Wokingham Borough Core Strategy (Adopted 29 January 2010)

- 2.10 The 2010 Core Strategy is the most recently adopted Plan. It is proposed to be replaced by the 'Right Homes, Right Places' Local Plan Update which was submitted to the Secretary of State for examination on 28th February 2025. However, the examination is yet to begin at the time of writing.
- 2.11 Chapter 2 of the 2010 Core Strategy set out the 'Spatial Issues for the Borough' and within this chapter the 'Community Services' sections recognised the extent to which the Borough was projected to age.
- 2.12 At paragraph 2.37 it states, *"We expect a significant increase in the numbers of older people and those with disabilities in Wokingham Borough over the next 20 years. In particular the numbers of those over 85 will rise by over 100%. We need to find new, cost effective ways, to provide the necessary support and care to these members of our community. Our aim is to reduce the proportion of people who are cared for in residential and nursing homes and to enable people to stay in their own homes (including extra care and supported housing) with the accessible care and support they need."* (our emphasis)
- 2.13 At paragraph 2.34 the Core Strategy states, *"The Community Care Service vision is to contribute to the health and wellbeing of all Wokingham residents. Its key priority is to support those with health and social care needs to be as independent as possible and remain within their own homes and communities. In line with national and local policies we aim to support the dignity of older people and other groups of vulnerable adults and to facilitate their inclusion in all levels of community life."*
- 2.14 Under the 'Housing' sub-section of Chapter 2 the Core Strategy (paragraph 2.39) states, *"For older people, delivering more choices in the housing and care available to them, including extra care housing, is a priority."* (our emphasis)
- 2.15 The Core Strategy then sets out the need for older persons housing at paragraph 2.40, stating *"Over the next 10 years, an additional 400 units of extra care housing of mixed tenure will be required as well as an additional 100 enhanced sheltered housing units. These should be delivered in a range of schemes across the Borough providing 40 to 120 units each. To respond to the increasing numbers of those over 85, approximately 80 housing units for people with dementia will be required provided in a number of 8–12-unit schemes. Conventional sheltered housing for rent, which is a less attractive option for older people and which does not always meet their increasing care needs, will be reduced as other accommodation and care options become available. We will*



support voluntary and commercial organisations to develop extra care housing options for older owner occupiers. We will encourage existing providers of residential and nursing homes to diversify and modernise so they are able to offer options in line with our strategic aspirations. These targets will be monitored and reviewed annually to address changing patterns of need. Housing for the growing numbers of key workers who will be needed to provide the care and support to people in their own homes will also be a priority.” (our emphasis)

Right Homes, Right Places: Wokingham Borough Local Plan Update 2023-2040

- 2.16 The emerging Draft Plan was submitted for examination on 28th February 2025 and proposes to plan for the 2023-2040 period. The Plan remains at the public examination stage at the time of writing.
- 2.17 Under the ‘social’ heading of its ‘Sustainable Development Principles’ (Policy SS1) at paragraph 5.8, the Draft Plan states how it will ensure that development proposals contribute towards meeting the local needs of residents for suitable housing. This will include meeting *“the specialist accommodation needs for the increasing proportion of older people and other specialist needs.”*
- 2.18 The Draft Plan incorporates the need to provide older persons accommodation in policies SS11 (Arborfield Green Strategic Development Location), Policy SS12 (South Wokingham Strategic Development Location), and Policy SS13 (Loddon Valley Garden Village).
- 2.19 Policy H7 then discusses specialist accommodation, including for older people, in detail and in the context of the Council’s ‘Local Housing Need Assessment’ (LHNA).
- 2.20 At paragraph 9.79 the supporting text to Policy H7 states, *“The Local Housing Need Assessment (LHNA) has assessed the likely level of need for bedspaces for older people (within use class C2), based on projections of how many people are likely to suffer from issues such as reduced mobility and dementia. It identifies an indicative need to plan for around 925 housing places over the period 2021-2040 to be provided through a mix of sheltered and extra care housing and domiciliary care to accommodate people with specific requirements, such as the older population and vulnerable people, including people with disabilities.”* (our emphasis)
- 2.21 The evidence for this figure is set out in the 2023 Local Housing Need Assessment which we review in the following section of this report.



Summary

- 2.22 In summary this section identifies how the NPPF has recently identified the need for different types of housing for older age groups. This is an important development in the evolution of national planning policy and reflects the critical need for older person's accommodation. The supporting PPG provides detailed definitions of the different types of housing expected.
- 2.23 More locally Wokingham's Development Plan has identified the need for specialist accommodation for the older population for over 15 years now since the adoption of the Core Strategy in 2010, and the emerging Plan states there to be a need of 925 units of accommodation of the later living sector between 2021 and 2040. The following sections of this report appraise whether this reflects true need in the Borough, and then determines what the existing and future need is.



3. REVIEW OF THE LOCAL PLANNING POLICY EVIDENCE RELATING TO HOUSING FOR OLDER PEOPLE

Introduction

- 3.1 The most recent assessment of housing need for older people in Wokingham Borough is set out between pages 74 and 87 in the 2023 Local Housing Need Assessment (LHNA) prepared by Opinion Research Services (ORS).
- 3.2 In summary the LHNA presents two approaches to determining existing and future need for later living accommodation. The first is informed by the Housing Learning and Improvement Network (Housing LIN) SHOP resource pack methodology (2012).
- 3.3 The Housing LIN approach set out in the LHNA shows an existing need for 2,327 units of sheltered housing and extra care accommodation (owned and rented) as of 2021.⁴
- 3.4 The LHNA then assesses future need for the 2021-2040 period based on the Housing LIN method. This results in need of an additional 2,364 units of sheltered housing and extra care accommodation.⁵
- 3.5 In total the Housing LIN method therefore shows a need for 4,691 units of sheltered housing and extra care accommodation to 2040.⁶
- 3.6 However, the LHNA concludes *“This number of additional dwellings is clearly excessive given that it is over one third of the total LHN. Wokingham Borough Council low waiting list numbers evidence that there is sufficient Extra Care and Sheltered stock at present.”*⁷ (Our emphasis)
- 3.7 Alongside the Housing LIN approach, the LHNA therefore presents an alternative method which results in no unmet need as of 2021, and a newly arising need of 923 units in total between 2021 and 2040 (i.e., 19.7% of the Housing LIN approach).
- 3.8 There is a significant contrast between the conclusions of both methods (4,691 units from Housing LIN and 923 from the LHNA's alternative method).
- 3.9 It is imperative that the need isn't understated, and we therefore review the approaches in this section.

⁴ Paragraph 7.20, page 78, Wokingham Local Housing Needs Assessment 2023, November 2023

⁵ Figure 61, page 78, Wokingham Local Housing Needs Assessment 2023, November 2023

⁶ Figure 61, page 78, Wokingham Local Housing Needs Assessment 2023, November 2023

⁷ Figure 61, page 78, Wokingham Local Housing Needs Assessment 2023, November 2023



Review and Critique of the LHNA method

- 3.10 Given the significant difference in need determined by the two methods set out in the LHNA, we review the two methods below.
- 3.11 Firstly, the statement from the LHNA we have referred to in paragraph 3.6 (above) is outdated. At the time of the LHNA the National Planning Policy Framework's (NPPF, 2024) standard method for calculating minimum overall housing need showed need for all types of housing in Wokingham to be 748 dwellings per annum (dpa) and therefore 14,212 dwellings 2021-2040.
- 3.12 Following the revisions of the NPPF in December 2024 and the introduction of a new standard method, need is now 1,317 dpa, or 25,023 dwellings over 19 years. This means the LHNA assessment of older persons accommodation using Housing LIN would be less than 19% of all need, far from a third.
- 3.13 In addition, the above statement includes existing and future need. Our contention is that it should only include the *future* need in line with the future need for all housing. This would mean the future need for the older population (2,364 dwellings determined by the Housing LIN approach) would be less than 10% of all need. This is not considered to be 'excessive' as the LHNA suggests.
- 3.14 Furthermore, in the intervening period since the LHNA was published, the ONS have published 2022-based Sub National Population Projections (SNPP, June 2025) which project an increase of 10,545 people aged 75+ in Wokingham between 2022 and 2047.
- 3.15 The 75+ age group therefore represents 25% of all projected population growth in Wokingham (42,604 people) over the same period emphasising the future impact of this sector.
- 3.16 Additionally, the projected 75+ population as of 2047 (26,313 people) will be a 67% increase from the 2022 population (15,768 people), higher than neighbouring authorities Hart (66%), Windsor & Maidenhead (64%), and Reading (58%) and higher than the south east (64%) and England (62%) averages.
- 3.17 These new projections indicate a rapid increase in the older population of Wokingham Borough and if we were to take the 75+ population increase between 2022 and 2047 (25%) and apply it to minimum overall housing need it would equate to over 6,000 dwellings for the 75+ age group – significantly in excess of the figure which resulted in the LHNA using the Housing LIN method.



- 3.18 Moving on, when seeking to justify its alternative approach and the lower need of 923 units between 2021 and 2040, the Wokingham Borough Council Adult Social Care Market Position Statement 2022-25 states *“there is evidence of low levels of additional demand.”*⁸
- 3.19 However, the same document states *“As the number of older people increases (and particularly those aged 85+), the number of older people with care and support needs will increase. We therefore expect the demand for extra care to increase.”*⁹ (our emphasis)
- 3.20 Furthermore, the document comments on the location of existing extra care schemes by stating, *“three of the four extra care schemes are in Woodley, and one is in the Wokingham Town Council area, so many older residents in other parts of the borough could only access Extra Care provision by moving out of areas where they may have family and friendship ties that are important for their wellbeing.”*¹⁰ (our emphasis)
- 3.21 It is common knowledge that the majority of older people are reluctant to move a significant distance, preferring to stay close to family, friends, and communities they know. This is emphasised by the *‘What older people want: A rapid evidence assessment on what older people want, and can afford, when it comes to their housing choices when looking to move’* document published by the independent Older People's Housing Taskforce (OPHT).
- 3.22 In the OPHT document analysis of the geography of people who had moved in the year prior to its publication revealed *“the majority of moves took place over a relatively short distance. Just over two thirds of respondents who had moved in the previous year (USoc) moved within 20 km of their previous home (68%), including a third who moved within three km of their previous home (33%).”*¹¹
- 3.23 The ‘Final Report of the Older People's Housing Taskforce’ also included a summary of their call for evidence which included 178 responses from professionals and organisations. The most common themes included ‘geographical location’ and *“a need to increase investment and housing supply in all parts of the country to ensure people do not feel forced to leave their communities and relocate (which could increase social isolation and loneliness), due to choice and access issues.”*¹² (our emphasis)

⁸ Paragraph 7.23, page 79, Wokingham Local Housing Needs Assessment 2023, November 2023

⁹ Page 69, Market Position Statement Adult Social Care 2022-2025

¹⁰ Page 68, Market Position Statement Adult Social Care 2022-2025

¹¹ Page 42, What older people want: A rapid evidence assessment on what older people want, and can afford, when it comes to their housing choices when looking to move, MHCLG

¹² Page 112, Report of the Older People's Housing Taskforce, MHCLG and DHSC, 26th November 2024



- 3.24 This is important in the context of the statement set out in paragraph 3.20 above. Existing facilities are concentrated in Wokingham Town and this needs to be considered in the context of the Borough being over 23km north to south and over 14km east to west. New facilities are needed to ensure residents can stay within their existing communities.

Planning Appeals

- 3.25 Past appeal decisions should also be considered in the context of the Housing LIN rates. A key decision in this context was Little Sparrows, Sonning Common, Oxfordshire (APP/Q3115/W/20/3265861) on 25th June 2021.
- 3.26 This appeal decision endorsed the Housing LIN rates we use for our assessment later in this report, and which Wokingham Borough Council's LHNA uses but ultimately concludes uses "*benchmark rates which are very high*", preferring the alternative method in the LHNA.
- 3.27 In conflict with the LHNA's contention that the Housing LIN rates are too high the Inspector in the Sonning Common decision considered the rates to be conservative. He stated, "*In my view, there is a strong case that Mr Appleton's 45 per 1,000 overall, with 30 per 1,000 to market extra care, should be far more ambitious given not only the true tenure split in the District but also what it could mean for the ability to contribute towards addressing the housing crisis. Mrs Smith conceded that the figure of 30 per 1,000 was hardly ambitious and, if anything, was underplaying the scale of the potential need.*" ¹³ (our emphasis)
- 3.28 The Housing LIN rates were therefore considered to be conservative over four years ago by an Inspector and local authority witness, and in the intervening period it is reasonable to assume that demand will have increased. Indeed, other consultants promote rates which are higher than the Housing LIN rates described by ORS as 'very high.'
- 3.29 Furthermore, the OPHT report discusses a potential target for delivery and states "*To be effective such a target would need to be ambitious, translated to a local level and align with the national housing target.*" ¹⁴ (our emphasis)
- 3.30 The Housing LIN rates were also endorsed in appeal reference APP/A1910/W/22/3309923 (Land bound by Bulbourne Road and Station Road, bisected by Marshcroft Lane, Tring, Hertfordshire, HP23 5QY) on 07 March 2023 when

¹³ Paragraph 40, page 9, Appeal Decision APP/Q3115/W/20/325861

¹⁴ Page 64, Report of the Older People's Housing Taskforce, MHLCG and DHSC, 26th November 2024



the Inspector stated *"The only approach to comprehensively address planning for specialist housing need is set out in 'Housing in Later Life' by applying the target provision rates published therein. This is preferable to the Council's assessment, which is constrained by current levels of provision"*¹⁵ (our emphasis)

- 3.31 This appeal decision was called in by the Secretary of State who agreed with the Inspector that the provision of 140 extra care units should carry substantial weight in the context of the Housing LIN approach to determining need.
- 3.32 Part of the LHNA's justification for a lower level of provision also relates to increasing the level of domiciliary care. Indeed, the conclusions of the LHNA state *"The number of older people with domiciliary care packages has increased and the intention is to continue that trend in Wokingham Borough. Care at home is a preferred alternative to sheltered and extra care housing for many people."*¹⁶ (our emphasis)
- 3.33 However, a more recent appeal decision (26th September 2024) in Wokingham Borough at Oak Dale, Lower Wokingham Road, Crowthorne (APP/X0360/W/23/3336000) criticised the approach of the LHNA in respect of domiciliary care. The appeal decision stated, *"while there may be a local preference for people to receive care in their own homes, I find no compelling evidence that this would be a reasonable and practicable option for all older people in the borough. Indeed, as clarified in the Framework's Glossary, housing for older people can encompass a diverse range of need."*¹⁷ (our emphasis)
- 3.34 The Inspector also refers to evidence which post-dates the LHNA in stating *"while the evidence for the past four years shows some fluctuation over this period, it does not show a significant decline in the demand for residential and nursing home care placements over the period March 2022 to June 2024."*¹⁸
- 3.35 The Inspector subsequently concluded, *"this development would address an identified local housing need for different groups in the community. This amounts to considerable benefit, and in turn I attach considerable weight to these benefits in this appeal."*¹⁹
- 3.36 Furthermore, a recently (14th February 2025) allowed appeal in nearby Beaconsfield (Buckinghamshire Council) incorporated a need assessment from the appellant which used the Housing LIN rates which ORS seek to discredit in the LHNA. This evidence

¹⁵ Paragraph 179, APP/A1910/W/22/3309923

¹⁶ Paragraph 7.62, page 87, Wokingham Local Housing Needs Assessment 2023, November 2023

¹⁷ Paragraph 130, Appeal Decision APP/X0360/W/23/3336000

¹⁸ Paragraph 128, Appeal Decision APP/X0360/W/23/3336000

¹⁹ Paragraph 139, Appeal Decision APP/X0360/W/23/3336000



of need was accepted by the Inspector who also noted how the development would *“contribute to the wider housing market, stating the scheme would deliver a substantial number of new homes for older people in need of care. Evidence suggests that this would release some 134 under-occupied homes on to the market. The scheme would therefore have the important double benefit of providing specialist housing for those in need.”*²⁰

Summary

- 3.37 In summary this section has reviewed the approach of the 2023 Wokingham Borough LHNA in determining the need for older person's accommodation. We consider the LHNA's favoured approach, i.e., to ignore the assessment of need using the Housing LIN prevalence rates, vastly underestimates need in a local authority which is projected to grow at a faster rate than average in terms of the 75+ population.
- 3.38 Furthermore, as we have evidenced in this section the Council's *'Adult Social Care Market Position Statement 2022-25'* states how the expectation is that need for extra care will increase, and that existing provision is predominantly focussed in one small area of the Borough.
- 3.39 There have also been appeal decisions in which the Housing LIN approach has been endorsed as the only approach for comprehensively assessing need, and in one appeal decision also considered a conservative estimate of need.
- 3.40 The OPHT report has clearly stated how any targets for provision should be ambitious, and the Housing LIN rates have been described in the past as 'hardly ambitious.' They could therefore be considered to show a minimum level of need, and we consider this section of our report justifies their use.

²⁰ Paragraph 62, Appeal Decision APP/N0410/W/24/3348677



4. CURRENT SUPPLY OF SPECIALIST ACCOMMODATION FOR OLDER PEOPLE WITHIN WOKINGHAM BOROUGH

4.1 This section of the Report reviews the existing supply of older persons' accommodation within Wokingham Borough. Supply data, including tenure, is sourced from the Elderly Accommodation Counsel (EAC).

4.2 According to the EAC, there exists a total of 1,779 units of specialist older persons housing within Wokingham Borough, including Age Exclusive Housing, Sheltered Housing, Enhanced Sheltered Housing, Extra Care Housing (excluding residential and nursing bedspaces). The 2022 Wokingham Borough Adult Social Care Market Position Statement identified 1,471 units in the Borough²¹, indicating an increase of 308 units in the intervening period between the position statement and this report.

4.3 The detail of provision in Wokingham Borough is set out in Table 4.1 below.

Table 4.1 Provision of Existing Places for Older People in Wokingham Borough

	Type	Existing Number of Units/ Places	Per 1,000 People Aged 75+ (16,834 in 2024)
n/a	Age Exclusive to Rent	57	3
Housing with Support	Sheltered Housing to Rent	664	39
Housing with Care	Enhanced Sheltered Housing to Rent	0	0
	Extra Care Housing to Rent	124	7
	Total Housing to Rent	845	50
n/a	Age Exclusive for Leasehold	185	11
Housing with Support	Sheltered Housing for Leasehold	634	38
Housing with Care	Enhanced Sheltered Housing for Leasehold	55	3
	Extra Care Housing for Leasehold	60	4
	Total Housing for Leasehold	934	55
	Total Housing all Tenures	1,779	106
Care Beds	Residential Care Beds	329	20
	Nursing Care Beds	703	42
	Total Care Beds	1,032	62

Source: EAC

²¹ Table 14, page 68, Wokingham Borough Adult Social Care Market Position Statement 2022-25



5. FUTURE PATTERN OF SPECIALIST HOUSING FOR OLDER PEOPLE WITHIN WOKINGHAM BOROUGH

- 5.1 Section 3 of this report outlined the approach to determining older persons housing need in the 2023 Local Housing Need Assessment (LHNA) prepared by Opinion Research Services (ORS) for Wokingham Borough Council (WBC).
- 5.2 The LHNA used the 2012 Housing LIN SHOP prevalence rates in determining need, an approach which Marrons endorse and an approach which has been regularly supported at planning appeals. However, an alternative method was favoured by the LHNA and indicated a much lower level of need for the Borough than the Housing LIN method.
- 5.3 Some updates have been published since the LHNA's preparation, most notably new 2024 population estimates, alongside 2022-based population projections.
- 5.4 For comparability with the LHNA, this assessment adopts the same prevalence rates (start and finish) as the Housing LIN method set out in the LHNA, updating the analysis with the latest position as of August 2025.
- 5.5 The resident population aged over 75 years of age in mid-2024 was 16,834 people as published by the Office for National Statistics (ONS) in the recent (30th July 2025) Population estimates for England and Wales: mid-2024.
- 5.6 The 2022-based ONS Sub National Population Projections (SNPP) were published on 24th June 2025 and project there to be 23,265 people aged 75+ by 2040, the final year of the emerging Local Plan.
- 5.7 We have used these very recent population figures in determining existing and future need.



Table 5.1: Indicative Levels of Provision of Various Forms of Accommodation for Older People, Wokingham Borough – Current Shortfall as of 2025

	A	B	C	D
	Existing Units/ Places in Wokingham	Required provision per 1,000 of the population aged 75+ based on the 2012 Housing LIN rates	Units required based on 2012 Housing LIN rates and 75+ population (16,834 people) of Wokingham in 2024	Increase in Units Required to Meet Housing in Later Life Benchmarks (C – A)
Sheltered Housing to rent (incl Age Exclusive)	721	60	1,010	289
Enhanced Sheltered Housing to rent	0	10	168	168
Extra Care Housing to rent	124	15	253	129
Total Housing to rent – all types	845	85	1,431	586
Sheltered Housing for leasehold (incl Age Exclusive)	819	120	2,020	1,201
Enhanced Sheltered Housing for leasehold	55	10	168	113
Extra Care Housing for leasehold	60	30	505	445
Total Housing for leasehold	934	160	2,693	1,759
Residential Care Beds*	329	65	1,094	765
Nursing Care Beds*	703	45	758	55
Total Care Beds*	1,032	110	1,852	820

Source: EAC, August 2025; Housing in Later Life 2012. ONS 2024-based Mid-Year Population Estimates

Figures may not sum due to rounding

*Housing LIN 2008 rates

- 5.8 Table 5.1 summarises the existing level of supply as of 2025 across all types of older person's accommodation (by tenure).
- 5.9 At the present time, there exists a need for all forms of older person's accommodation in Wokingham whether for leasehold or rent. This is most noticeable in sheltered housing (including Age Exclusive) where nearly 1,500 units (289 rent and 1,210 leasehold) are required as of 2025.
- 5.10 Table 5.2 assesses the future need for older person's accommodation in Wokingham Borough as of 2040, the final year of the emerging Local Plan.



Table 5.2: Indicative Levels of Provision of Various Forms of Accommodation for Older People, Wokingham Borough – Future Need in 2040

	A	B	C	D
	Existing Units/ Places in Wokingham	Required provision per 1,000 of the population aged 75+ based on the 2012 Housing LIN rates	Units required in 2040 based on 2012 Housing LIN rates and 75+ population (23,265) of Wokingham in 2040	Increase in Units Required to Meet Housing in Later Life Benchmarks (C – A)
Sheltered Housing to rent (incl Age Exclusive)	721	60	1,396	675
Enhanced Sheltered Housing to rent	0	10	233	233
Extra Care Housing to rent	124	15	349	225
Total Housing to rent – all types	845	85	1,978	1,133
Sheltered Housing for leasehold (incl Age Exclusive)	819	120	2,792	1,973
Enhanced Sheltered Housing for leasehold	55	10	233	178
Extra Care Housing for leasehold	60	30	698	638
Total Housing for leasehold	934	160	3,722	2,788
Residential Care Beds*	329	65	1,512	1,183
Nursing Care Beds*	703	45	1,047	344
Total Care Beds*	1,032	110	2,559	1,527

Source: EAC, August 2025; Housing in Later Life 2012. ONS 2022-based Sub National Population Projections

Figures may not sum due to rounding

*Housing LIN 2008 rates

5.11 We summarise the change between the existing and future need in the following section of the report. However, as Table 5.2 illustrates there will be an increase in need across all forms of provision over the next 15 years (2025-2040).



6. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

- 6.1 This Report has been prepared by Marrons socio-economics team on behalf of Richborough Estates Limited and provides an assessment of Older Persons' Housing Needs within Wokingham Borough.
- 6.2 Central Government recognises the critical need to provide housing for older people in Planning Practice Guidance (PPG), and that offering older people a better choice of accommodation to suit their changing needs can help them to live independently for longer, as well as feeling more connected to their communities and help reduce costs to the social care and health systems.
- 6.3 The Older People's Housing Taskforce (OPHT) was launched in 2023 to look at options for the provision of greater choice, quality and security of housing for older people. Its objectives were to increase supply and improve options for older people in later life. Its report was subsequently published and highlighted the need for any subsequent housing target for older people's housing to be ambitious.
- 6.4 The 'Housing in Later Life' report was published by the Housing Learning and Improvement Network (Housing LIN), and as the Foreword by the Chair of the All Party Parliamentary Group on Housing and Care for Older People confirms, *'if the UK delivers housing that better attracts our ageing population – with well-designed, accessible, care-ready accommodation – thousands of family homes will be released onto the market to meet the acute needs of younger generations as well'*.
- 6.5 The publication refers to the HAPPI 2 Inquiry by the All Party Parliamentary Group on Housing and Care for Older People which found that it is vital to offer older people choice and opportunity in old age, including the right housing and care solutions, at the right time. The toolkit is said to provide an indicator of need in accommodating the housing needs of older people.
- 6.6 The assessment undertaken in this Report utilises the prevalence rates contained within 'Housing in Later Life'. This approach was endorsed by the Secretary of State and the Planning Inspector in the Tring planning appeal²² who described the rates as *"The only approach to comprehensively address planning for specialist housing need"*. The rates have also been endorsed in other appeals proposing the delivery of older person's accommodation. They have also been described as 'hardly ambitious' in appeals and are therefore considered to result in a conservative estimate of need.

²² APP/A1910/W/22/3309923



- 6.7 As we have explained in section 3 of this report the use of the Housing LIN rates should be preferred to the alternative method used by Wokingham Borough Council's Local Housing Need Assessment of 2023 for several reasons.
- 6.8 Although we have used this widely endorsed approach, it is important to recognise that whilst the prevalence rates test the need based upon a rate per 1,000 people aged 75 plus, the identified need will be met by people of all ages includes those younger than 75. Indeed, the provision of later living accommodation is considered to begin for the age of 55. The assessment is therefore considered to be conservative in nature.
- 6.9 The exercise has demonstrated a current older person's specialist housing need within Wokingham Borough (based upon the population in 2024) of a net additional 586 units of housing for rent, and 1,759 units of leasehold housing as of 2025.
- 6.10 This need increases over the course of the period to 2040 (the final year of the emerging Plan) to 1,133 units of housing to rent, and 2,788 units of leasehold housing.
- 6.11 The assessment has also revealed a current need for 820 care beds, increasing to 1,527 care beds by 2040.
- 6.12 These results are summarised in Table 6.1:

Table 6.1: Summary of Older Person's Housing Need in Wokingham Borough

Type	Tenure	Existing Need in 2025 (Dwellings)	Projected Need by 2040 (Dwellings)	Increase in need 2025-2040 (Dwellings)
Housing with support	Rented	289	675	+386
	Leasehold	1,201	1,973	+772
Housing with care	Rented	297	458	+161
	Leasehold	558	816	+258
Total Housing		2,345	3,922	+1,577
Care Beds		820	1,527	+707

- 6.13 To help put the existing level of supply into context, at present there are only 1,779 specialist forms of housing for older people (of all tenures) within Wokingham Borough, and 1,032 care beds.
- 6.14 The existing market is predominantly made up of sheltered housing with 1,540 of the 1,879 units (82%) being within this category. However there remains a need for this type



of accommodation and all other forms of older person's accommodation across the Borough.