

To: Councillor G Dennis (Chair)  
Councillors Eden, Asare, Ayub, Barnett-Ward,  
Challenger, Cresswell, Emberson, Hacker,  
Kitchingham, McCann, Magon, O'Connell,  
Goss, Rowland, R Singh, Tarar and Yeo

Direct: ☎ 0118 937 2368  
e-mail: 0118 937 2368

13 February 2024

Your contact is: Julie Quarmby - Committee Services (julie.quarmby@reading.gov.uk)

**NOTICE OF MEETING - HOUSING, NEIGHBOURHOODS AND LEISURE COMMITTEE 21 FEBRUARY 2024**

A meeting of the Housing, Neighbourhoods and Leisure Committee will be held on Wednesday, 21 February 2024 at 6.30 pm in the Council Chamber, Civic Offices, Bridge Street, Reading. The Agenda for the meeting is set out below.

	<b><u>WARDS AFFECTED</u></b>	<b><u>Page No</u></b>
<b>1. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST</b>		
Councillors to declare any disclosable pecuniary interests they may have in relation to the items for consideration.		
<b>2. MINUTES OF THE HOUSING, NEIGHBOURHOODS &amp; LEISURE COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 8 NOVEMBER 2023</b>		<b>5 - 12</b>
<b>3. MINUTES OF OTHER BODIES</b>		<b>13 - 18</b>
Minutes of the Community Safety Partnership meetings held on 8 November 2023		
<b>4. PETITIONS</b>		
Petitions submitted pursuant to Standing Order 36 in relation to matters falling within the Committee's Powers & Duties which have been received by Head of Legal & Democratic Services no later than four clear working days before the meeting.		
<b>5. QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC AND COUNCILLORS</b>		

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Questions submitted pursuant to Standing Order 36 in relation to matters falling within the Committee's Powers & Duties which have been submitted in writing and received by the Head of Legal & Democratic Services no later than four clear working days before the meeting.

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|--|---|-----------------|
| <b>6.</b>  | <b>GLL ANNUAL REPORT AND PRESENTATION</b>                         | <b>19 - 30</b>  |
| <p>An update on the performance and delivery of Leisure Services and development of new facilities by Greenwich Leisure Ltd (GLL) and to inform the Committee of the Council's success in securing a £1.5m grant from Sport England Strategic Facilities Fund towards the cost of Rivermead and Palmer Park leisure centres.</p>   |   |                 |
| <b>7.</b>  | <b>HIGHWAY MAINTENANCE UPDATE 2023-24 &amp; PROGRAMME 2024-25</b> | <b>31 - 66</b>  |
| <p>A report giving an update on the progress of year-2 (2023/24) of the Council's additional £8M 5-year (2022/23 to 2026/27) Highway Capital Investment Programme and of year-2 (2023/24) of the Council's additional £4M 2-year (2022/23 to 2023/24) Bridges &amp; Structures Capital Investment Programme. The report also informs the Committee of year-3 of the 3-year Department for Transport (DfT) Highway Maintenance Award 2024/25 Local Transport Block Funding (Integrated Transport &amp; Highway Maintenance) settlement, the additional DfT Road Resurfacing Fund Allocation for Reading of £7.726M and provides an update on the completed Highway Maintenance 2023/24 DfT Local Transport Block Funding Capital Works Programme.</p> |   |                 |
| <b>8.</b>  | <b>NEW READING CENTRAL LIBRARY</b>                                | <b>67 - 88</b>  |
| <p>A report providing an update on progress with the new Reading Central Library, indicating improved provision to bookstock in key areas, highlighting the progress being made to withdraw and dispose of elements of library stock where no longer needed and confirming the approach to planning the move.</p>  |   |                 |
| <b>9.</b>  | <b>DISCRETIONARY LICENSING IN THE PRIVATE RENTED SECTOR</b>       | <b>89 - 182</b> |
| <p>A report seeking authorisation to consult on the implementation of a Boroughwide additional licensing scheme alongside the phased implementation of a selective licensing scheme to drive up conditions and improve the management of the private rented sector.</p>  |   |                 |

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## HOUSING, NEIGHBOURHOODS AND LEISURE COMMITTEE 8 NOVEMBER 2023

**Present:** Councillor Dennis (Chair);  
Councillors Asare, Ayub, Barnett-Ward, Challenger, Cresswell,  
Emberson, Goss, Kitchingham, Magon, McCann, O'Connell, R Singh,  
Tarar and Yeo.

**Attended** Councillors Hacker and Rowland

**Remotely:**

### 10. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The Minutes of the meeting of 6 July 2023 were confirmed as a correct record.

### 11. MINUTES OF OTHER BODIES

The Minutes of the following meeting were submitted:

Community Safety Partnership – 13 July 2023 and 14 September 2023.

**Resolved - That the Minutes be received.**

### 12. QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC AND COUNCILLORS

<u>Questioner</u>	<u>Subject</u>	<u>Reply</u>
Mr Philip Brooks	Green Waste Collection	Cllr Rowland

The full text of the question and reply was made available on the Reading Borough Council website.

### 13. READING FESTIVAL UPDATE

James Crosbie, Assistant Director of Planning, Transport and Regulatory Services, introduced Claire Armstrong, Victoria Chapman, Charlotte Oliver and Noel Painting of Festival Republic who gave a presentation on the 2023 Reading Festival. The presentation set out some of the successful initiatives which included the Assistance, Information and Response (AIR) Hubs, a ban on campfires, the Ask for Angela and Challenge 25 schemes, relocation of the silent discos to a single venue and the larger eco-campsite. The organisers had also ensured that festival goers were well informed about sustainability issues, and this was reflected in the 31% decrease in greenhouse gas emissions from the 2019 baseline, 77% of waste being sent for recycling and zero waste being sent to landfill. There had been a 28 tonne decrease in abandoned tents, disposable vapes had been banned from the site, and a three- bin waste disposal scheme had been put in place to help people to sort waste. £1 from each parking fee would be donated to Trees for Cities: the donations from the 2022 event had provided 22 mature trees which had been planted in Spencer Road, Reading, and it was hoped that a similar number would be planted following this year's event. Festival Republic were still finalizing exact figures for the event, and would make these available once they had been completed. Planning for the 2024 event would start in December 2023 and would build on this year's successes.

The Committee discussed the presentation and took the opportunity to ask further questions of Festival Republic including:

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- There had been fewer noise complaints this year;
- Further work would be needed to address attendees arriving before the festival site had officially opened;
- Security staff would continue to be trained to ensure that certain groups were not disproportionately stopped and searched when entering the site;
- The lack of smoke from campfires had been positively noted by local residents;
- There had been a reduction in numbers seen by the major safeguarding partners, as a result of people being helped at or directed straight to the appropriate partner by the staff at the AIR Hubs;
- Thames Valley Police had provided an additional police boat on the Thames, and their work with the Environment Agency and other partners had reduced problems such as illegal water taxis on the river;
- Plans for 2024 included working with Brighter Futures for Children to get involved with schools before the Festival, promoting public health messages and further expansion of the eco campsites.

**Resolved - That Festival Republic be thanked for an interesting and informative presentation.**

**14. WINTER SERVICE PLAN 2023-2024**

The Committee received a report which set out details of the outputs that had been delivered by the Winter Service Plan 2022-23, of the Winter Service Plan review that had been carried out to ensure compliance with the Highway Act 1980 and 'Well-Managed Highway Infrastructure: A Code of Practice' and sought approval for the Winter Service Plan 2023-2024. A copy of the Winter Service Plan 2023-2024 was attached to the report at Appendix 1 and a Financial Implications Report was attached to the report at Appendix 2.

The report explained that the 2022-2023 winter season had been relatively mild overall although interspersed with colder spells including one brief snow event. However, there had been numerous occasions when the temperature reached the trigger point for precautionary salting action, (below 1°C and predicted to go below freezing), resulting in 51 primary runs and five secondary runs. The colder spells, including the single snow event, had not been severe or prolonged enough for activation of the Snow Plan. There had been no issues with salt supply/delivery which had enabled the contractor to maintain stock levels throughout the winter season. There had been no issues with the contractor replenishing the grit bins as and when required. The winter decision making process to determine when to salt had worked well during the last winter season and the Vaisala weather stations had provided the correct data for informed decisions to be made.

The report added that the joint arrangement/agreement with Wokingham Borough Council, through their Consultants, Volker Highways, for providing the decision-making service, had worked well and delivered against the set key performance indicators during the 2022-2023 winter season. The Winter Service Plan 2022-2023 had provided a robust service for the duration of the winter period with no disruption to the primary and secondary road network during the season, except for some inevitable disruption during the snow event.

A review of the Winter Service Plan 2022-2023 had been carried out and the main points, including updates for the Winter Service Plan 2023-2024 were summarised in the report.

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**Resolved -**

- (1) That the outputs delivered by the Winter Service Plan 2022-2023 be noted;
- (2) That the Winter Service Plan review carried out to ensure compliance with the Highways Act 1980 and 'Well-managed Highway Infrastructure: A Code of Practice' be noted;
- (3) That the Winter Service Plan 2023-2024 be approved.

**15. AWARD OF CONTRACTS FOR ROUGH SLEEPING ACCOMMODATION PROGRAMME**

The Committee received a report which sought authority to award and enter into new contract arrangements for The Nova Project and 57 Caversham Road (the Pods) from 1 April 2024 to relieve and prevent rough sleeping in Reading. The contracts would be funded utilising Rough Sleeping Accommodation Programme (RSAP) grant funding from the Department for Levelling Up, Communities and Housing (DLUHC).

The report explained that, under DLUHC's RSAP Round 1 Reading had been awarded three years revenue funding to the value of £2.3m to deliver 50 units of "Move-on Homes" between 2021 and 2024. These units provided an off the streets offer to those rough sleeping, or those who were at risk of rough sleeping having previously and repeatedly been verified. The units had a specific focus on supporting people with mental ill-health issues, substance misuse and preventing re-offending and returns to the streets. Support to ten "Move-on Homes" had been delivered under contract with St Mungo's since 21 December 2020 for females with complex needs requiring a 24/7 supportive environment at The Nova Project. A further 40 units of "Move-on Homes" at 57 Caversham Road had been completed in November 2021, with all clients having moved into their self-contained studio 'pod' with 24/7 on-site staffing presence by January 2022.

The report explained that a waiver to the Council's Contract Procedure Rules (CPR) had been signed off by the Assistant Director of Procurement and Contracts and Executive Director of DEGNS on 23 November 2020 to award a contract for 12 months to St Mungo's from 5 July 2021 until 4 July 2022 under Covid exceptions. Since officers had insufficient time to undertake a procurement without risk to service delivery, a further waiver had been agreed to award contracts to St Mungo's from 5 July 2022 until 31 March 2023. A further open procurement exercise for the Nova Project and 57 Caversham Road had been undertaken in November 2022 following the award of further RSAP grant funding for 12 months. St. Mungo's secured the tender and the contract started on 1 April 2023 and would be coming to an end on 31 March 2024.

The report explained that the current grant conditions did not allow for spend or contract extension beyond March 2025, although there might be opportunity for RBC to bid for further funding from DLUHC for this purpose, but that could not be confirmed at this stage. Clients could be accommodated for up to three years before moving on and multi-agency work to progress move-on from these units was ongoing. It was therefore proposed that, RBC undertake an open tender exercise and award a 12-month contract from 1 April 2024. Options were being explored including a contract extension if further grant funding was secured beyond March 2025.

**Resolved –**

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- (1) That the DLUHC award of funding in the sum of £760,919 from the Rough Sleeping Accommodation Programme (RSAP) to deliver 50 units of “Move-on Homes” in 2024/25 comprising 10 units at The Nova Project and 40 units at 57 Caversham Road be noted;**
- (2) That the Assistant Director of Housing and Communities, in consultation with the Lead Councillor for Housing and Director of Finance, be authorised to enter into a 12-month contract with the successful tenderer in respect of services to deliver “Move-on Homes” from 1 April 2024.**

**16. PROCUREMENT OF EMERGENCY ACCOMMODATION**

The Committee received a report which recommended the establishment of a pseudo-Dynamic Purchasing System (DPS) under the Light Touch Regime to deliver emergency accommodation for families and vulnerable people placed by the Council’s Housing Needs department. This would replace existing processes and formalise arrangements between the Council and Providers. The aim of the DPS was to ensure a continuity of supply of good quality privately managed properties for households placed into emergency accommodation by the Housing Needs department, whilst guaranteeing that the Council was meeting its legal requirement in the procurement of its services and delivering of value for money.

The report explained that all Local Authorities had a duty to provide interim accommodation to certain households whilst investigating their circumstances and temporary accommodation to applicants who were homeless, eligible for assistance, in priority need and not intentionally homeless. In addition, the Council held discretionary powers which could be used for the provision of emergency accommodation to individuals and couples who were not owed a statutory duty, in certain circumstances, such as during periods of severe weather as part of the Council’s Severe Weather Emergency Protocol (SWEP) or in response to an emergency or disaster that was a danger to life as seen during the Covid pandemic.

The Council currently used a range of accommodation to meet both the interim and temporary accommodation needs for those placed into emergency accommodation, including designated blocks of flats, purpose constructed modular units, permanent stock and paid nightly emergency accommodation. Wherever possible the Council avoided the use of paid nightly accommodation provided by an external landlord, including Bed and Breakfast (B&B), however, due to ongoing demand there remained a need for its use as emergency accommodation for homeless households.

The report added that there had been a steady increase in the numbers approaching the Council due to the cost-of-living increase, fuel prices and rising interest rates, putting significant financial pressures on owner occupiers, landlords and tenants, the lack of affordable accommodation in the private sector for people facing homelessness and fewer options to assist households in crisis. The Domestic Abuse Act 2021 had made changes to provisions available to protect survivors and had expanded the definition of domestic abuse. It had also made those approaching as homeless as a result of domestic abuse automatically priority need and entitled them to interim accommodation duties. There had also been an increase in approaches from those fleeing conflict.



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The report also stated that there had been increased grant provision from DLUHC to specifically offer short-term discretionary paid nightly accommodation for those who slept rough to encourage engagement with supported accommodation as well as reconnections to other areas with the overarching aim of reducing rough sleeping numbers in the Borough. Wherever the Housing department used externally sourced accommodation it was subject to a programme of initial checks by the Housing Needs Department to provide assurances for the safety and wellbeing of tenants. However, there were currently no formal contractual arrangements in place between the Council and providers to manage the procurement and ongoing monitoring of the accommodation.

The report explained that arrangements for procuring and managing emergency accommodation had emerged over time and whilst they were robust, they had not been subject to formal procurement processes. Formalising the process of procurement of accommodation was important for:

- Maintaining standards of accommodation within a cohort of landlords who were contractually required to provide accommodation to meet minimum standards regarding property condition, maintenance, and management. The DPS would aid the Council to manage any quality through proportionate entry standards of providers and through ongoing contract monitoring;
- Establishing a pool of providers who were able to provide accommodation as demand dictated. There would be no limit on the number of providers joining the DPS and no obligation on the Council to use any unrequired accommodation. This would allow the Council to manage fluctuations in demand providing flexibility in sourcing and reducing the use of accommodation as required;
- Providing a formal system to allow the Council to direct the market in terms of type and location of accommodation and provide greater clarity to providers regarding projected need;
- Replacing and formalising current arrangements, ensuring that the Council was compliant with the Council's Contract Procedure Rules, EU regulations for the procurement of services and the Public Contracts Regulations 2015. This system would also improve operational process and efficiency, saving officer time and making better use of Council resources;
- Providing a prescribed pricing schedule that would act as a guide for providers to encourage them to set their rates competitively and in line with other landlords. This would set expectations for providers in terms of charges and would ensure that the market remained more stable if there were times of increased demand;

The report also explained that the DPS would provide a mechanism for any providers that fell short of the expected standards to be suspended whilst quality issues were addressed. The DPS would be established in early 2024 and run for a period of five years. The DPS would operate by running a fully compliant open tender procedure to accredit and enrolling Providers onto the DPS to ensure that only Providers that met the Council's standards could join. New Providers could apply and be enrolled during the DPS' period of operation providing they could meet the required standards. There would be a transition period of up to six months providing time for existing placements to be moved onto Providers within the new Scheme.

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**Resolved:**

- (1) That the Assistant Director of Housing and Communities, in consultation with the Lead Councillor for Housing and the Director of Finance be given delegated authority to approve the establishment of a pseudo–Dynamic Purchasing System (DPS) under the Light Touch Regime for the provision of emergency accommodation for a period of five years.**
- (2) That the Assistant Director of Housing and Communities be authorised to (i) enter into call-off contracts with the successful providers and (ii) directly award placements on a spot contract basis where suitable arrangements cannot be made via the DPS; or where crisis or emergency circumstances dictate that it is not possible to do so via the DPS during its lifetime for the provision of emergency accommodation.**

**17. READING CLIMATE FESTIVAL 2023 EVALUATION**

The Committee received a report which gave an evaluation of the 2023 Reading Climate Festival that had taken place from 10-21 June 2023 with the stated aim of ‘inspiring and encouraging positive action on climate change’.

The report explained that the Festival had been run by the Reading Climate Action Network (RCAN), the public-facing brand of the Reading Climate Change Partnership, a multi-agency partnership for which the Council acted as host and accountable body. In 2023 RCAN, the Council, the University of Reading and the Reading Economic & Development Agency (REDA) recognised the potential of a partnership approach to deliver against a number of shared objectives. These included showcasing the important role Reading has played on the world stage in understanding and addressing climate change, informing and engaging the community about the work towards a net-zero, climate resilient town by 2030 and inspiring and facilitating individuals/families to make clear pledges to adopt greener behaviours in support of our community’s effort to address climate change. The Gaia Evaluation Report was attached at Appendix 1 to the report.

The report informed the Committee that the centrepiece of the Festival had been the exhibition of a major international artwork, Luke Jerram’s Gaia, at Reading Town Hall engaging more than 13,000 people over 20 events held across Reading, attracting people from all parts of Reading and the UK. As well as engaging a wide range of people in conversations about climate change, the festival represented a significant cultural, educational and economic event for Reading as a whole. The costs of bringing Gaia to Reading were recovered through income, delivering high value at little or no cost to the public purse. The Committee was shown a video highlighting the installation and related activities.

The report explained that Gaia, as part of the Reading Climate Festival, had helped to engage new people in the climate conversation growing the audience by approximately 1,200% in one year. The combined cooperation and use of each partner’s online resources meant that reaching a wider audience was possible. This event put Reading

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on the map and engaged Reading residents that might not have previously engaged in the festival. Key outcomes from the Festival in 2023 included:

- 12,000 people attended Gaia at the Reading Climate Festival, of whom approximately 24% were from outside the town. A further 1,300 attended other events at the festival.
- The partnership's social media platforms (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, LinkedIn) impressions were 283,772. The Council's reach was 82,893. 100,000 people were reached via newsletters.
- Via the What'sOnReading.com website the Gaia webpage had 23,615 unique page views (16,649 Unique Users) from the 23 March to the 21 June, an impressive number when compared to a Reading favourite, the annual Panto which had 52,049 unique page views (37,844 unique users) for the calendar year of 2022.
- The Committees from both Reading Central and Abbey Quarter Business Improvement Districts (BID), representing over 700 local businesses, voted unanimously to support the installation of Gaia.
- During the Gaia exhibition, the BID sponsored three separate events developed to engage the local businesses and their workforce: including a talk by bushcraft and survival expert, Ray Mears. This engaged with nearly 300 people from 100 local businesses.
- The Festival had enhanced Reading's sense of place and reinforced its identity as a place which was engaged with the climate change issue. In a post-event survey 90% of respondents who were from Reading said Gaia and the ancillary programme had made them feel proud of the town.
- Climate anxiety was a growing concern in the UK, with 80% of those surveyed by Statista having some concern about climate change. Many people reported feeling daunted by the enormity of the problem, and by incorporating the RCAN Small Pledge initiative into the booking process it was hoped that this sense of helplessness could be alleviated and participants given a sense of agency. Details of the impact of these small changes were set out in Appendix 1 to the report.
- Of the 503 people who responded to a post event survey, 25% were moved to join the climate action conversation as a result of seeing Gaia.
- The festival engaged young people: The Reading Museum Education Team and University of Reading managed the schools' outreach programme for Gaia engaging with 18 primary schools and 6 secondary schools.

The report added that plans for the 2024 Reading Climate Festival, centred around Show Your Stripes Day on 21 June, were already in development with the same partners. The partnership was keen to build on the success of the 2023 festival and Arts and Culture would continue to feature strongly and a full legacy plan were set out in Appendix 1 to the report.

#### **Resolved:**

- (1) That the evaluation of the 2023 Reading Climate Festival as outlined in Appendix 1 to the report be noted and the efforts of the partners be recognised;**

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- (2) That the committee note the impact of Luke Jerram's Gaia on participation and engagement in Reading Climate Festival 2023 be noted;**
- (3) That the value of arts, culture and creativity in engaging people in wider social issues, in this case, climate change, be noted.**

(The meeting opened at 6.30pm and closed at 8.25pm).

# Agenda Item 3

## COMMUNITY SAFETY PARTNERSHIP EXECUTIVE GROUP – 8 NOVEMBER 2023

### Present:

Steve Raffield	Thames Valley Police (Chair) (In the Chair)
Cllr Karen Rowland	Lead Councillor for Environmental Services & Community Safety, RBC
Cllr Jason Brock	Leader, RBC
Cllr Liz Terry	Deputy Leader and Lead Councillor for Corporate Services and Resources
Jo Middlemass	Community Safety and Enablement Manager, RBC
Sarah Gardner	Community Safety Partnership, RBC
Jason Murphy	RBC
Zelda Wolfe	Assistant Director of Housing & Communities, RBC
Melissa Wise	Executive Director of Social Care and Health
Zoe Hanim	RBC
Graham Genoni	Project Director, Brighter Futures for Children
Sally Andersen	Senior Wellbeing Commissioning Manager for Drugs & Alcohol, RBC
Giles Allchurch	Brighter Futures for Children
Matthew George	ACRE Reading
Chelsea Piggott	Streetgames
Mike Bridges	Public Health
Amanda Nyoke	Public Health
Sabina	PACT
Verity Barton	Probation Service
Jason Kew	Thames Valley Violence Reduction Unit
Kirsten Willis-Drewett	South Central Ambulance Service
Julie Quarmby	Committee Services, RBC

### Apologies:

Lara Patel	Executive Director, Brighter Futures for Children
Carly Dagg	Probation
Catherine Marriott	Office of the Police & Crime Commissioner
Kathryn Warner	PACT
Emma Tompkins	Thames Valley Police
Martin White	Public Health
John Ashton	Interim Director of Public Health
Keith Townsend	Executive Director for Economic Growth & Neighbourhood Services
Cllr Moore	RBC, Observer
April Smith	Thames Valley Police

### 1. MINUTES AND MATTERS ARISING

The Minutes of the meeting held on 14 September 2023 were agreed as a correct record.

Jo Middlemass confirmed that the Safer Neighbourhoods Review would now be considered at the Housing, Neighbourhoods & Leisure Committee meeting to be held on 1 February 2024.

Jason Murphy reported that he had attended the recent Combatting Drugs event, which had been very useful. He added that the event had highlighted the need for partners to work together and ensure that their strategies aligned to achieve efficiency and best results. Jo Middlemass explained that she would invite Sally Andresen to attend the CSP Chairs Group meeting to discuss communications around the drug-based work being undertaken by the partner organisations. Sally Anderson added that the OPCC dashboard held a considerable amount of helpful data that partner organisations could use.

**Agreed: That Jo Middlemass invite Aaron Cheung to a future CSP meeting to present an update on the latest drug-related data.**

Jason Murphy reported that he had worked with Gail Muirhead to identify the next steps in setting up a Water Safety Partnership. These included an audit of Reading's Waterways and ownership, and a meeting with Parks and Highways officers on 9 November 2023.

**Agreed: That the draft Terms of Reference and Membership for a Reading Water Safety Partnership be submitted to the next meeting of the CSP.**

## **2. YOUNG PEOPLE'S VERSION OF CS/SV STRATEGY DEBRIEF AND ASKS FROM YOUNG PEOPLE**

Further to Minute 5 of the meeting held on 14 September 2023, Jo Middlemass and Sarah Gardner updated the CSP on the Young People's version of the Community Safety/Serious Violence Strategy that had recently been launched. The feedback and concerns had included:

- The need for appropriate, regular communications;
- Preventative police presence;
- Improved streetlighting;
- Use of social media to promote the good things and provide help with the bad ones;
- Education;
- Community had been mentioned in the title, but had not been referred to in the text of the Strategy;
- The perception that Reading was known for knife crime.

The CSP members that had attended the launch reported that it had been a very successful event. The Group noted that there was a need to harness the energy from the event and continue to build on this work with young people.

Young people reported that they felt invisible and were not heard, and it was important to ensure young people knew that they were being listened to whilst still being aware that theirs were not the only voices and opinions to be taken into consideration. Quick visible wins would help to keep young people engaged and ensure that there was not a loss of momentum.

CSP agreed that partners could make better use of social media to involve young people and officers were looking at setting up a working group with young people, who would be responsible for information gathering about issues and problems and suggesting solutions. It was also agreed that it would be helpful to collaborate with young people when preparing communications to ensure that they were relevant to all age groups.

The Knife Crime Delivery Group could use targeted communications and work with schools to inform young people of reality versus perception of knife crime in Reading and work with them to reduce the level going forward.

The young people had set out questions for the partners about how they would ensure that young people continued to be engaged in Community Safety:

1. What commitments will you make now?
2. How will you communicate them?
3. How can young people be involved?
4. How will you make sure you follow through with what you've said you will do?

**AGREED: That the Young People's version of the Community Safety/Serious Violence Strategy be noted;**

**That the partners consider their responses to the four questions set by young people and report to a future CSP meeting.**

### **3. DELIVERY GROUP UPDATE**

Jo Middlemass gave a presentation setting out the progress to date made by the Safer Reading Delivery Groups:

- The Violence Against Women and Girls Group was developing its action plan and finalising priorities. A communications campaign was being finalised for this month to raise awareness and encourage reporting to coincide with White Ribbon day. A Task and Finish Group would be established to focus on the Thematic Review priority to understand the links with VAWG. A Domestic Abuse Operational Group was being established to work across this group and the Domestic Abuse Partnership Board.
- The Knife Crime Delivery Group had held its first meeting on 20 September 2023. The Refreshed Needs Assessment had identified that of the 1388 serious violence offences that occurred between Jan 2018 and April 2023, 78% were knife related with ABH, Robbery and GBH being the top three crimes involving a knife. The delivery group had been tasked with picking up the Thematic Review priority to jointly develop and produce a 'problem profile' summarising key statistical information about risk and vulnerability in relation to serious youth violence, knife crime and child exploitation.
- The Organised Crime Delivery Group had identified a number of areas of focus for partnership activity. The Group would work with Private Landlords to raise awareness in terms of spotting the signs of activity and how to report it. CSP comms plan would include organised crime messaging on a more frequent basis. A Stronghold meeting was already in existence and was predominantly operationally focussed. A regular programme of annual training would be set up. Brighter Futures for Children and other organisations supporting Young People would ensure that workers were aware of the issues and what support was available; this could be delegated to the Adolescent Risk Group to take forward. A review needed to be undertaken to determine if the partnership approach to supporting vulnerable adults who were being cuckooed was working. A Task and Finish Group had been proposed to review cuckooing cases and the impact of interventions.
- The Anti-Social Behaviour and Hate Crime group had now met, and work was being undertaken to focus on priorities. Key areas included agreeing the partnership approach to reporting ASB and how this was communicated, working across the revised problem-solving meetings to strategically respond to Borough wide ASB issues and improve responses to Hate Crime and the support provided to victims. The Community Right to Review process would be overseen by this delivery group.

- The Reducing Crime Delivery Group had met during October 2023. Initial crime data dashboard (data from Jan 2022 – Sept 2023) had been released and further analysis would be undertaken. The Group proposed to focus on Abbey Ward and Borough wide shoplifting for the first year of the plan and a Comms Campaign that would focus on crime prevention messaging throughout the year across the partnership and set out a programme of Love Your Neighbourhood Events.

Jo Middlemass also updated the Group on the Strategic Needs Assessment Refresh. She explained that the Serious Violence SNA Refresh had been undertaken and some additional data requests had been made by the delivery groups. The overarching Community Safety SNA refresh was underway and partners were being asked to provide updated data to include in the refresh. Jo also asked that the Group members ensure their agency fed into the data collation activity. Jo added that the first Delivery Group highlight reports would be due in February 2024 and she would be investigating the best way for these to be presented to the Group.

**AGREED: That the presentation be noted.**

#### **4. PARTNERSHIP FUND BIDS**

Jo Middlemass reported that funding for 2024-25 had reduced significantly and that allocations would have to change to reflect this decrease. The new priority areas for funding included:

- Project Support for key deliverables including Serious Violence Duty, Communication strategies, Community Engagement, Safe Space, potential funding bids, Safer Students Partnership, awareness raising campaigns.
- Drug and alcohol support for young people
- Qualified crime prevention support
- Business crime support outside of Town Centre
- Prevention activity resulting from Thematic Review activities.

**AGREED:**

- (1) That the changes in funding allocation be supported;
- (2) That Partners put forward bids based on the new approach to allocations.

#### **5. YOUNG PEOPLE'S ACTIVITIES & PROGRAMMES GROUP AND STREET GAMES SHOWCASE**

Chelsea Piggott and Jason Murphy gave a presentation on the provision of activities that could benefit young people both in terms of health and fitness and how they could be involved with and give back to their local community. They explained that Activities and Programme Group was a subgroup of the Knife Crime Delivery Group incorporating representatives of agencies from sport, culture, youth work and education settings whose primary goal was to work with young people most at risk. The group had started as part of the 'Armoured Heart' installation and associated programmes of work and had maintained a connection with the Reading Cultural Education Partnership, which was invested in ensuring that young people's experiences of arts and culture grew, was inclusive and was inspiring. The presentation covered the new website, strategic programmes and future activity programmes. Chelsea Piggott explained that the aim was to deliver sports in such a way that young people would be encouraged to do more than just play by providing



opportunities to assist with the organisation of the activities, volunteer and mentor other young people.

Chelsea Piggott also explained that there would be local sport and inclusion boards, with strong and formal referral pathways. Providers could share best practice and there would be regional community events in spring 2024. Chelsea added that, to date, 13 organisations had accessed funding and 190 young people identified as being at risk had been referred to the programmes. There were lots of contact hours and one-to-one support. It was noted that, at present there were significantly more male than female participants and work was underway to include female focused support. The Group noted that other activities such as dance, music and media could be offered in the future for those young people who did not want to engage with sport.

**AGREED: That the presentation be noted.**

## **6. COMMUNITY SAFETY COMMS PLAN & COMMUNITY SAFETY SURVEY**

Jo Middlemass proposed that the next Community Safety Survey be carried out during June and July 2024 to maximise reach and engagement and to tie-in with the Love Your Neighbourhoods events and Anti-Social Behaviour Awareness Week. Officers were planning for a considerable amount of face to face engagement and hoped that these dates would reduce the risk of lack of response due to the summer holiday period. Further details would be submitted to the next meeting of the Group for discussion.

**AGREED:**

- (1) That the next Community Safety Survey be carried out during June and July 2024;**
- (2) That further details be submitted to the CSP meeting to be held on 1 February 2024.**

## **7. PREVENT UPDATE - CTLP RISK ASSESSMENT/READING'S PREVENT ACTION PLAN**

Zoe Hanim gave a presentation updating the Group on the Counter Terrorism Local Profile (CTLP) including the key objectives of the recently agreed Action Plan and progress against the key actions for 2023. These key actions included, an online safety campaign, a prevent survey, a resource pack, a Hate Crime Awareness week, conferences, community engagement work and a venue hire policy. Zoe explained that the Prevent Training and Communications Plans 2023-24 had been drawn up to support the Action Plan. The Prevent Duty set out 10 benchmarks and there was a tiered approach to training depending on whether the participants' responsibilities were operational, managerial or strategic and based on the nature of their role and level of contact with vulnerable people.

Zoe Hanim also reported that the draft Communications Plan aimed to raise awareness to reduce the risk of people being influenced by extremist views. The key actions that would help to achieve this aim included raising awareness of the increasing threat of extremist influence on social media and gaming platforms, promoting the ACT Early advice and support website and the Prevent and Channel Process to professionals, the voluntary sector and business community. Activities over summer 2023 had included an online safety campaign and attending Reading College freshers week, the Reading Voluntary Action AGM and the Hate Crime Awareness Week in October 2023. Future communications would be

linked to the Safer Internet Day during February 2024 and a funding bid to the Home Office would be developed to raise awareness across the Business Sector.

**AGREED: That the presentation be noted.**

## **8. DATES OF FUTURE MEETING**

The next meeting for 2023/24 would take place on:

1 February 2024  
18 April 2024

All meetings start at 9.30am, in the Council Chamber, Civic Offices.

(The meeting commenced at 9.30am and closed at 11.52am)

## Housing, Neighbourhoods and Leisure Committee

21 February 2024



**Reading**  
Borough Council  
Working better with you

<b>Title</b>	GLL Annual Report November 2022 – December 2023
<b>Purpose of the report</b>	<a href="#">To note the report for information</a>
<b>Report status</b>	<a href="#">Public report</a>
<b>Report author</b>	Ben Stanesby, Active Leisure Manager Donna Pentelow, Assistant Director of Culture
<b>Lead Councillor</b>	Councillor Adele Barnett-Ward
<b>Corporate priority</b>	<a href="#">Thriving Communities</a>
<b>Recommendations</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. That Committee notes the contents of the presentation by GLL in respect of the operation of the leisure contract as detailed at paragraphs 3.1 to 3.13 of this report.</li> <li>2. That Committee notes the. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2.1. opening of the new facilities and swimming pool at Palmer Park Leisure Centre &amp; Stadium in December 2022,</li> <li>2.2. opening of Rivermead Leisure Centre in July 2023 and the planned pools opening in summer 2024, both of which have been built to BREEAM excellent sustainability standards,</li> <li>2.3. successful refurbishments at South Reading and Meadway Leisure Centres.</li> </ol> </li> <li>3. That Committee endorses the priorities for 2024/25 as set out in paragraph 3.20.</li> <li>4. That Committee notes the receipt of the Sport England Strategic Facilities Fund grant of £1.5m - a funding contribution towards the construction costs of the new leisure facilities at Rivermead and Palmer Park.</li> </ol>

### 1. Executive Summary

- 1.1. The purpose of this report is to provide an update on the performance and delivery of Leisure Services and development of new facilities by Greenwich Leisure Ltd (GLL) and to inform committee of the Council's success in securing a £1.5m grant from Sport England Strategic Facilities Fund towards the cost of Rivermead and Palmer Park leisure centres.
- 1.2. The leisure contract started on 1 July 2021 and GLL commenced the operational management of the Council's leisure centres at Rivermead Leisure Centre, Palmer Park Sports Stadium, South Reading Leisure Centre and Meadway Sports Centre. This is the second annual report that has been presented to Committee reporting on the contract's performance over the past year.
- 1.3. The Council's £40m investment programme in leisure centres has included significant works to all its leisure centres. Refurbishment works have been undertaken at Meadway Sports Centre to the swimming pool changing areas and works are underway at South

Reading Leisure Centre swimming pool and associated changing areas. The work to the swimming pool includes structural repairs to the pool tank.

- 1.4. The new Rivermead Leisure Centre opened in July 2023 with the pools set to open in summer 2024. This follows the opening of Palmer Park Leisure Centre & Stadium including a new 6 lane 25m community swimming pool in December 2022.
- 1.5. The increasing use of facilities continues to grow as new facilities open, and improvements are made. GLL also continue to broaden the range of services being provided including health initiatives and targeted activities. This shift in focus to the range of services offered is reflected in the priorities for 2024/25 as listed below
  - Continue to develop and grow the Healthwise Programme to increase participation by underrepresented groups and those with specific health conditions.
  - Continue to develop partnerships locally with schools and other community organisations to increase participation in physical activity beyond the boundary of the leisure centres.
  - Continue to improve the quality of service to customers using Trustpilot as the key customer feedback mechanism.
  - Improve data collection and analysis to measure the impact of the services provided and to engage and increase participation by underrepresented groups, reflecting the demographics of Reading.
  - Implement independent quality assessment of services (Quest) at Palmer Park and Rivermead.
- 1.6. This report introduces a presentation by Greenwich Leisure Limited, which will inform the Committee in more detail of the services that are being delivered, people accessing them and progress of the works described above.

## **2. Policy Context**

- 2.1. In August 2023 the Department for Media Culture and Sport published their Get Active strategy aimed at building a healthier nation by tackling high levels of inactivity and making sure that the sport and physical activity sector thrives for future generations. The Strategy sets out how the government will work together with the sector to achieve these aims by ensuring that everyone has the opportunity to get active. Provision of high-quality accessible facilities and services effectively targeted are a key driver in increasing participation in physical activity.
- 2.2. As part of the tender process for the GLL contract, the service specification defined target indicators and performance measures to deliver against the following nine Council objectives.
  - Improving health and wellbeing and reducing health inequalities
  - Providing local economic benefit
  - Ensuring local people have the skills to prosper
  - Supporting safe and inclusive neighbourhoods
  - Promoting community cohesion
  - Educating, protecting and providing opportunities for young people
  - Supporting and caring for vulnerable adults and older people
  - Providing high quality services
  - Sustainability/ environmental improvements.

The contract continues to deliver against these outcomes in a variety of ways.

- 2.3. The Policy Committee on 21 September 2022 delegated to the Executive Director for Economic Growth and Neighbourhood Services in consultation with the Director of Finance, the Assistant Director for Legal and Democratic Services and the Lead

Councillor for Leisure and Culture to enter into Sport England funding agreements for £1.5m in two separate agreements one for Rivermead (£1m) and one at Palmer Park (£500k). £1.45m of the Sports England's Strategic Facilities Fund was received on the 25 November 2022, split one third for Palmer Park and two thirds for Rivermead. The remainder will be paid at the end of the defects period in summer 2025.

### **3. GLL's Performance 2023**

- 3.1. Greenwich Leisure Ltd have operated the Council's Leisure Centres since 1st July 2021. Included within the contract is the operation of existing facilities and the design, build and operation of a new leisure centre and facilities at Rivermead and Palmer Park Sports Stadium respectively. Significant refurbishment has been undertaken at both Meadway and South Reading Centres over the last two years and is ongoing to South Reading's pool and associated changing facilities.
- 3.2. The investments at Meadway and South Reading have lifted tired facilities to a good standard. Work to the swimming facilities at South Reading are currently underway and are the last of the indoor public facilities to be addressed.
- 3.3. The new pool, gym and studio at Palmer Park opened in December 2022 and since opening has welcomed over 218,000 visitors. The numbers of predominantly children and young people participating in swimming lessons across the leisure centres has increased from 8,200 peaking at 10,700 in June 2023, just before the temporary pool at Rivermead closed as services were reconfigured facilitating the demolition of the centre and South Reading's pool closure for repairs.
- 3.4. The Council's £40m investment into leisure centres is reflected in the increased resident satisfaction in sport and leisure services, which has increased by 21% since the contract was started in 2021 and by 11% since 2022.
- 3.5. The gym, sports hall, café, soft play and studios at the new Rivermead Leisure Centre opened in July 2023 and the new pools are due for completion in summer 2024. The delay to the swimming facilities was due to GLL's contractor, Pellikaan Construction, requiring an abstraction licence from the Environment Agency (EA) enabling the ground water level to be lowered sufficiently to allow construction of the new diving pool. The licence to proceed was issued by the EA on 22 May 2023. The new pools are on target to open in summer 2024.
- 3.6. The investment into the leisure centres reflects the Council recognition that the provision of suitable and accessible sports facilities underpins facilitating participation in sports and physical activity and supports the delivery of the social and economic benefits that can be attributed to an active community.
- 3.7. Visits are now approaching a million per year to the Borough's four leisure centres reflecting the investment and improvements made helping meet needs and aligns with the Council's wider policies and priorities, including public health objectives and tackling health inequalities.
- 3.8. Nationally, recovery of attendance at leisure centres to pre Covid levels has been patchy geographically. The presentation by GLL, however, will outline the trends that are being experienced and how well Reading is performing in comparison, which is generally positive. However, direct full year on year comparisons are still difficult to make with extended closures for refurbishments at all centres over the last 12 to 24 months.
- 3.9. In addition, to growing attendance another key element of the contract is the introduction of effectively targeted activities to improve participation in physical activity and health for key groups of Reading's communities. As part of this process the Council has been working collaboratively to better define health programme targets to increase the numbers of people attending, and the quality of targeted activities being provided. These targeted

activities include, adult weight management, cardio rehabilitation, physical activity referral services. In 2024/25, GLL are working towards introducing falls prevention, child weight management, cancer pre/rehabilitation and diabetes programmes.

- 3.10. Work has been ongoing in 2023 between Public Health and GLL to refine the contract specification developing a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with supporting KPIs to measure and evidence the impact of the leisure contract on improving health and wellbeing across the life course through promoting healthy habits, with particular focus on physical activity.
- 3.11. Many of the indicators in the MoU set targets that increase over the 25 year contract period from a baseline set in the first full contract year. With facilities still being built out and opened, the baseline is still to be set to ensure an appropriate starting point is used.

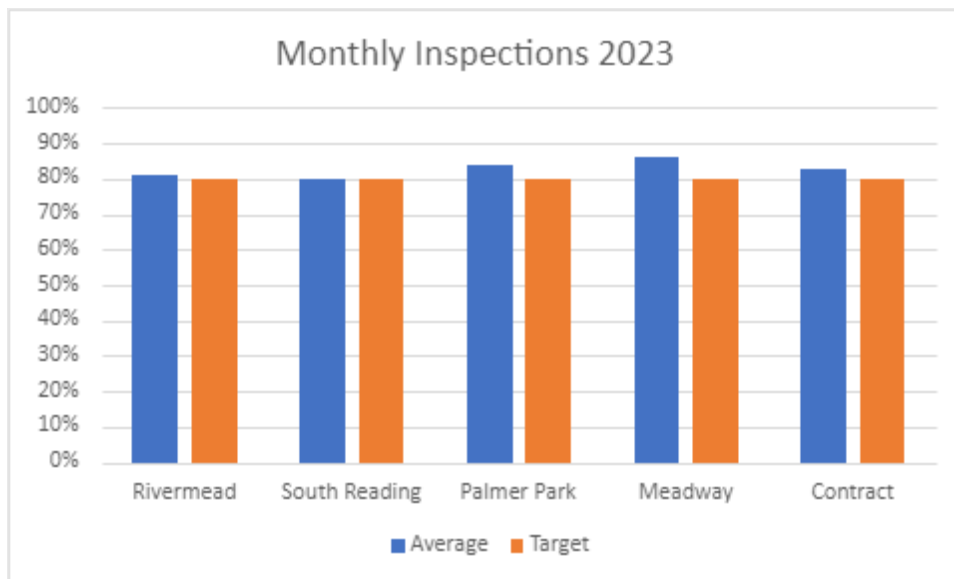
The MoU also sets new, or amends, targets and as this was formally agreed in May 2023 some KPI's are currently only reporting part year information. The targets are also set assuming all facilities are operating normally but for much of the year all facilities except Palmer Park have been partly closed for refurbishment or being built out. The KPI information below does here the less provide an indication on progress being made.

The MoU identifies programmes that will be introduced in the coming year, including Falls Prevention and Cancer Rehab. In future years, a more comprehensive performance scorecard will be reported, illustrating the impact of the service and performance of the GLL.

<b>KPIs from MOU (Memorandum of Understanding) with Public Health</b>	<b>Full Year Target</b>	<b>Actual Year to Date Data</b>
Number of courses and Participants completing Weight Management Programme	12 courses, 144 participants with 70% completing	10 courses each run over 3 months - statistics on people completing will not be available to April 2024 Rivermead 4 courses Palmer 4 Courses Meadway 2 Courses
Number of Participants attending Introduction into physical activity - Give It a Go Programme	180 people	137 – Participants are using multiple centres
Number of free swims provided including SEN (Special Educational needs)/Carers	Target to be set	6,705 swims provided currently there is not a breakdown by category Rivermead 1766 Plamer Park 1424 Meadway 2097 South Reading 1418 (pool closed for 3 months)
% of front-line staff trained in Make Every Contact Count	75% front line staff trained	All front-line staff trained
Number of referrals per year to the Physical Activity Referral Scheme (PARS)	500	484 Jan – Nov. Participants will likely be using more than one centre to access a range of activities. The programme last 3 months so there is a lag in data from starter to completion.

Mini Health Checks	X12 per year, per site	Following the first 7 health check events in centres effectiveness/value was reviewed due to low uptake. From September, health checks were moved to being provided by fitness instructors on request. In addition, health checks are now being provided at outreach and community events.
Health Promotions	X6 per year	12 ran (all promotions ran at all centres) attendees to 2024 programme to be used as target/benchmark in the future.

- 3.12. As more people are attending targeted services, the focus is now moving to collecting and analysing data to ensure that the services are being tailored to benefit those in most need, maximise the use of resources and reach, and identify and mitigate barriers to participation as this service is extended.
- 3.13. The provision of, and growth of attendance at these sessions has been slower than had been anticipated within the contract. This has been partly due to the first two years of GLL operations being focused on business recovery from Covid and build of new facilities. In the last 12months, GLL have employed a Healthy Communities Manager in Reading, specifically tasked with developing the activities targeting those with health conditions and from underrepresented groups. The impact of this post will be part of the GLL presentation along with the change in the breadth, and numbers of people, attending the healthy community programme.
- 3.14. The Council undertake a programme of regular contract monitoring and inspections of all four sites looking at but not limited to:
- cleanliness,
  - service delivery,
  - customer service
  - staffing.
- 3.15. The team conduct ad-hoc inspections accompanied by a manager from GLL. This highlights any issues and areas for improvement. These issues are then formally reported to GLL who must rectify them within a specified timeframe. There has been a constructive approach by GLL to inspections of Centres on average have met or exceeded the target quality throughout 2023.



3.16. The Council regularly meet with both GLL and Pellikaan to monitor the progress of the build programmes against timetable and budget, with the swimming pools at Rivermead on target to open this summer. Detailed progress against the build programme will be presented by GLL.

3.17. In 2023, the operation of the paddling pool at Christchurch Meadows was added into the GLL contract. Refurbishment of the filtration and dosing equipment was undertaken in April and May prior to opening. GLL were contracted to operate the paddling pool for the summer season from the start of the school Spring Half Term to the end of the school summer holidays.

To deliver a cost-effective service, GLL contracted temporary staff and specialist contractors, (to commission and decommission the pool at the start and end of the season) at the outset, with the Council making budget provision accordingly. Investment into the plant and technical contractors for the season provided significantly greater reliability with no days where the pool was closed due to technical failure, but this does reduce flexibility in extending the season at short notice.

3.18. The Council, GLL and Reading Football Club Community Trust (RFCCT) are working together to make better use of underused areas of South Reading Leisure Centre to accommodate a range of social inclusion initiatives run by the Trust. These aim to provide services to young people where mainstream education services are not meeting their educational and social needs. Football is used a vehicle to engage students raising self - confidence, providing greater life skills and facilitating improved educational attainment. The programme delivered from South Reading Leisure Centre will include:

- **Alternative Provision (RAP):** The RAP programme is set up to work with more challenging boys & girls who struggle in mainstream school.
- **Education 16 - 19 year provision:** delivered in partnership with academic providers.
- **Reading College:** Level 1, 2 and 3 in Sport courses being delivered in partnership with the college
- **SCL Education:** Level 1 – 2 courses being delivered in partnership with SCL Education (a 16yr + college specialist college using sport as an educational tool) for both mainstream and SEND (Special Educational Needs and Disability) students
- **Kicks Targeted –** The Trust's Kicks (football sessions) targeted programme offers a package of mentoring & 1-2-1 support which incorporates sessions to reduce offending behaviour, improve life skills and constructive activities for participating young people to reengage them into their local communities.



- **Premier League Kicks:** 22 weekly Kicks sessions engaging with over 300 young people, all these sessions take place in targeted areas within local authorities. Premier League Kicks uses the power of football to connect with young
- 3.19. South Reading Leisure centre is being used as it is close to Reading Football Club Community Trust main base at the Select Car Leasing Stadium club and will contribute towards the Council's Tackling Inequalities Strategy being located within the Council's Place Based Pilot area.
- 3.20. Overall, GLL are making significant strides in delivering good services, with service breadth and quality approaching what would have been expected had there not been the Covid19 pandemic, which caused significant impact to the leisure sector nationally as well as locally. The partnership is moving towards business as usual and direct comparison to the contract as originally envisaged. Therefore, the following priorities have been identified for the partnership to focus on in 2024/25:
- Continue to develop and grow the Healthwise Programme to increase participation by underrepresented groups and those with specific health conditions.
  - Continue to develop partnerships locally with schools and other community organisations to increase participation in physical activity beyond the boundary of the leisure centres.
  - Continue to improve the quality of service to customers using Trustpilot as the key customer feedback mechanism.
  - Improve data collection and analysis to measure the impact of the services provided and to engage and increase participation by underrepresented groups, reflecting the demographics of Reading.
  - Implement independent quality assessment of services (Quest) at Palmer Park and Rivermead.
- 3.21. Craig Woodward, Partnership Manager and Steph Smith, Area Community Sports Manager from GLL will present to the Committee progress made in the key streams of the leisure contract including:
- Improvements made at South Reading and Meadway Sports Centres
  - New Build Programme Update (Palmer Park and Rivermead)
  - Usage Levels
  - Programmes
  - Customer Feedback
  - Targeted Health Activities and Community Engagement

#### **4. Contribution to Strategic Aims**

##### **4.1. Healthy Environment**

- 4.1.1. The Council is working with the leisure provider, GLL, to increase physical activity and transform the leisure offer in Reading to improve the health outcomes for residents. In addition to overarching targets specific health improvement programmes are being introduced.
- 4.1.2. The significant uplift in the quality of facilities is delivering attractive and affordable and accessible services to improve the physical and mental health of residents of the Borough. The presentation by GLL will identify the increased footfall through our centres and the mechanisms in place to provide accessible services.

- 4.1.3. The new leisure facilities at Rivermead and Palmer Park contribute to tackling climate change by being BREAAAM excellent.

## **4.2. Thriving Communities**

- 4.2.1. The Council is working with its leisure partner, GLL, in the delivery of key national and local strategic policies. The investment undertaken across all local leisure centres and action is making a positive difference to people's lives on a local level and will contribute to public health outcomes.
- 4.2.2. Whilst the town's culture and leisure opportunities are accessed by the vast majority of residents there are significant cohorts who face barriers to access. This can lead to increased levels of obesity and poorer health and well-being for both adults and children in respect of physical activity; and poorer quality of life, mental health, social isolation and well-being. A series of activities are being run to lessen these barriers and widen participation and promote them in areas where participation is identified by GLL as being low.

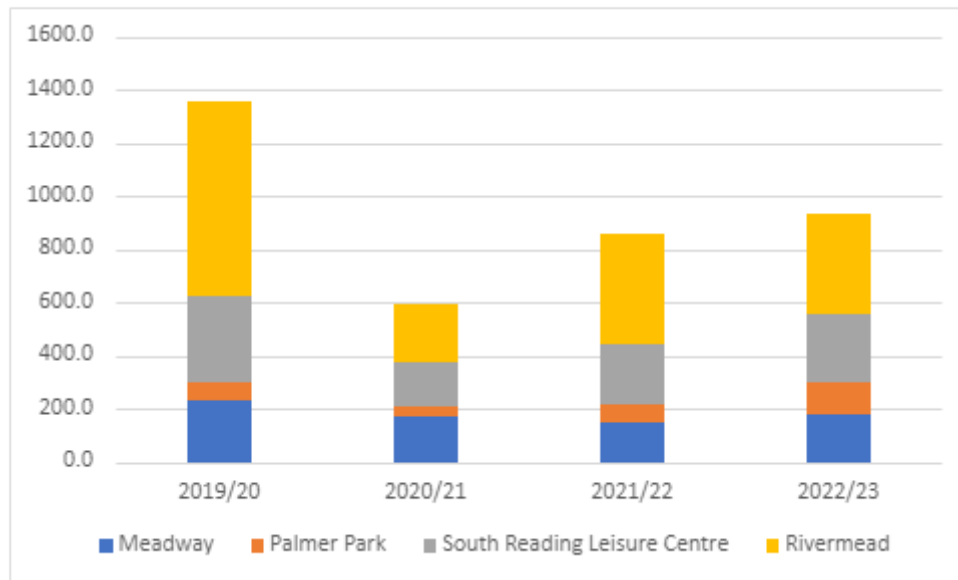
## **4.3. Inclusive economy**

- 4.3.1. The contracts relating to the building of new facilities includes employment of local people and offering local apprentice training. Leisure facilities are predominantly staffed by local people and are providing apprenticeships and training opportunities. Provision of high quality and affordable cultural and leisure facilities are important in ensuring Reading continues to be identified as a great place to live and work.

## **5. Environmental and Climate Implications**

- 5.1. The Council declared a Climate Emergency at its meeting on 26 February 2019 (Minute 48 refers). The old leisure facilities were ageing and do not have the benefit of being built to modern standards including current energy efficiency standards. The new facilities at Rivermead and Palmer Park are being built to BREEAM Excellent standards, using renewables where possible to achieve building control compliance and to help reduce carbon emissions and improve environmental efficiency. A bid was submitted to the Swimming Pool Support Fund for works to improve the energy efficiency of swimming pools. The outcome of the application will be known in March 2024.
- 5.2. Greenwich Leisure Ltd has managed the four leisure centres in Reading since July 2021, with the newly extended Palmer Park facility opening in December 2022. The emissions from these leisure facilities are reported in the Council's 'wider influence' emissions dataset and represent a significant source of emissions within Reading. As such, to ensure continued improvements within its scope of influence, RBC has invested heavily in energy efficiency, decarbonisation and renewable energy generation within the leisure facilities, all of which will support the reduction of the carbon emissions from the operations.
- 5.3. A further opening up and increased use of the leisure facilities post-Covid, combined with the opening of the larger and greatly improved facilities at Palmer Park Sports Stadium, can be seen in 2022/23, with a 26% year-on-year increase on carbon emissions compared to 2021/22. However, when comparing against the last pre-Covid year, 2019/20, which is a more meaningful comparison, the carbon emissions from the leisure facilities as a whole are now 31% lower (see figure 1). In other words, we have greatly enhanced and expanded the leisure centre offer in Reading but reduced emissions from it at the same time.

*Figure 1: Comparison of Leisure Centre emissions 2019/20 to 2022/23*



## 6. Community Engagement

- 6.1. GLL within their presentation will outline how they are engaging with key partners, users and clubs especially as services are disrupted during the improvements being undertaken.
- 6.2. The new facilities at Rivermead and Palmer Park were subject to statutory public consultation as part of the planning approval process leading to planning consent on 31 March 2021.
- 6.3. The presentation from GLL will outline the steps they are undertaking to engage with the local community and local people.

## 7. Equality Implications

- 7.1. In addition to the Human Rights Act 1998 the Council is required to comply with the Equalities Act 2010. Section 149 of the Equalities Act 2010 requires the Council to have due regard to the need to:
  - eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act;
  - advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;
  - foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.
- 7.2. An EIA was not relevant to the decision to accept the Sport England Strategic Facilities Fund. However, part of the conditions of the Sport England grant is to ensure equality of access to services.

## 8. Other Relevant Considerations

- 8.1. None for this report

## 9. Legal Implications

- 9.1. There are no legal implications arising from this report.

## 10. Financial Implications

- 10.1. Since the start of the contract in 2021, the management fee for running the leisure centres has been a payment from the Council to GLL, in 2023/24 this is around £0.600m. However, from 2024/25 the management fee will start to become a payment

to the Council from GLL, eventually rising to over £0.900m. These payments are subject to fluctuations due to inflation and the impacts of utility price rises which the Council is responsible for. The MTFS (Medium Term Financial Strategy) has a total £1.196m reduction in budget/savings over the 3 years 2024/2025 to 2026/2027 reflecting the management fee becoming due to the Council.

- 10.2. The £1.5m Sport England Grant has been included within the capital budgets set for the building of facilities at Rivermead and Palmer Park.
- 10.3. There are no direct financial implications from this report, further financial modelling continues to be undertaken as part of the usual budget monitoring and the budget setting process for 2024/2025 to reflect latest assumptions on Inflation and utilities costs.

## **11. Timetable for Implementation**

- 11.1. A large part of the build and refurbishment programme has been complete with the following items to completed,
  - South Reading Pool Tank structural repairs - Spring 2024
  - Rivermead swimming pools and Diving facility – Summer 2024

## **12. Background Papers**

- 12.1. None.

Project / Proposal Name or Reference:		Date:	Your Name:	
GLL Performance 2022-23		01-Dec-23	Ben Stanesby	
<b>1. IMPACT ON CARBON EMISSIONS</b>				
HOW WILL THIS PROJECT/PROPOSAL AFFECT:	CONSIDERATIONS <i>See guidance below on determining whether negative or positive impacts are High, Medium or Low</i>	IMPACT? <i>Use drop down list</i>	GUIDANCE IF NEGATIVE/NIL RATING HAS BEEN AWARDED	SUMMARISE HOW YOU PLAN TO MANAGE AND REDUCE ANY NEGATIVE IMPACTS
1 ENERGY USE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* More energy will be consumed or emissions generated (by RBC or others) = Negative Impact</li> <li>* No extra energy use is involved or any additional energy use will be met from renewable sources = Nil Impact</li> <li>* Energy use will be reduced or renewable energy sources will replace existing fossil fuel energy = Positive Impact</li> </ul>	Nil	<b>Consider:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Energy efficiency measures</li> <li>- Renewable energy</li> <li>- Reducing demand for energy</li> </ul>	Within the contract for the development of facilities and their management a range of initiatives were included and are being delivered as envisaged. This includes building facilities to BREAME excellent, solar PV, Air source heat pumps and energy benchmarking process within the contract management regime. The Contract is being delivered in line with the agreed contract and no change is being reported. There is greater efficiency in energy use in the new council facilities than in the historic stock they replace.
2 WASTE GENERATION	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* More waste will be generated (by RBC or others) = Negative Impact</li> <li>* No waste will be generated = Nil Impact</li> <li>* Less waste will be generated OR amount of waste that is reused/ recycled will be increased = Positive Impact</li> </ul>	Nil	<b>Consider:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Re-usable/recycled goods</li> <li>- Recycling facilities</li> <li>- Reducing/reusing resources</li> </ul>	The contract is being delivered in line with the agreed specification and waste generation is included within the contract agreed by the Council. As more people use facilities this will generate more waste however the contract includes the need for recycling, use of recycled materials. No deviation from the contract is being reported.
3 USE OF TRANSPORT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* RBC or others will need to travel more OR transport goods/people more often/further = Negative Impact</li> <li>* No extra transport will be necessary = Nil Impact</li> <li>* The need to travel, the use of transport and/or of fossil fuel-based transport will be reduced = Positive Impact</li> </ul>	Nil	<b>Consider:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Use of public transport</li> <li>- Reducing need to travel or transport goods</li> <li>- Alternative fuels/electric vehicles/walking and cycling</li> </ul>	Again no change from the agreed contract is being reported. Again as more people are using facilities, as expected, this will generate more use of transport, as per the specification this is being mitigated by the provision of EV car chargers, use of shuttle buses for school swimming programmes and a geographical spread of facilities to reduce the travel miles of customers.
<b>2. IMPACT ON RESILIENCE TO THE EFFECTS OF CLIMATE CHANGE</b>				
HOW WILL THIS PROJECT/PROPOSAL AFFECT THE ABILITY OF READING TO WITHSTAND:	CONSIDERATIONS <i>See guidance below on determining whether negative or positive impacts are High, Medium or Low</i>	IMPACT? <i>Use drop down list</i>	GUIDANCE IF NEGATIVE/NIL RATING HAS BEEN AWARDED	SUMMARISE HOW YOU PLAN TO MANAGE AND REDUCE ANY NEGATIVE IMPACTS
4 HEATWAVES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Increased exposure of vulnerable people and/or infrastructure to heat stress = Negative Impact</li> <li>* No increase in exposure to heat stress = Nil Impact</li> <li>* Reduced exposure of vulnerable people and/or infrastructure to heat stress = Positive Impact</li> </ul>	Nil	Greater need for cooling, ventilation, shading and hydration methods	The contract is being delivered in line with the agreed specification. A range of measures within the contract were identified to mitigate the impact of the developments such as tree planting.
5 DROUGHT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Water use will increase and/or no provision made for water management = Negative Impact</li> <li>* Levels of water use will not be changed = Nil Impact</li> <li>* Provision made for water management, water resources will be protected = Positive Impact</li> </ul>	Nil	Greater need for water management and perhaps reserve supplies	The contract is being delivered in line with the agreed specification. The new facilities are more efficient in their use of water in comparison to the Council's historic stock. As more people use facilities the use of utilities including water will increase this is in line with the previously agreed specification. Water use is however more efficient in the new facilities than the historic leisure stock it replaces.
6 FLOODING	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Levels of surface water run-off will increase, no management of flood risk = Negative Impact</li> <li>* Levels of surface water run-off &amp; flood risk are not affected = Nil Impact</li> <li>* Sustainable drainage measures incorporated, positive steps to reduce &amp; manage flood risk = Positive Impact</li> </ul>	Nil	Consider flood defence mechanisms or alternative arrangements (business continuity)	The contract is being delivered in line with the agreed specification. There is a net reduction in the hard surfaces and roof areas in comparison to the old leisure centre stock. Run off new roofs is to soakaways
7 HIGH WINDS / STORMS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Exposure to higher wind speeds is increased or is not managed = Negative Impact</li> <li>* No change to existing level of exposure to higher wind speeds = Nil Impact</li> <li>* Exposure to higher wind speeds is being actively managed &amp; reduced = Positive Impact</li> </ul>	Nil	Greater need for stabilisation measures, robust structures resilient to high winds	There is no difference identified in the identified level of exposure to high winds. The old leisure stock that the new facilities replaces were vulnerable to severe weather due to their age and condition
8 DISRUPTION TO SUPPLY CHAINS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Exposure to supply chain disruption for key goods and services is increased = Negative Impact</li> <li>* No change in exposure to supply chain disruption for key goods and services = Nil Impact</li> <li>* Exposure to supply chain disruption for key goods and services is reduced = Positive Impact</li> </ul>	Nil	Source key goods and services locally as it reduces exposure to supply chain disruption and boosts the local economy	There is not identified changes in the exposure to supply chain disruption although the contract does specified locally sourcing goods where possible.
<b>Weighing up the negative and positive impacts of your project, what is the overall rating you are assigning to your project?:</b>		Not Nil	<i>This overall rating is what you need to include in your report/ budget proposal, together with your explanation given below.</i>	

#### Guidance on Assessing the Degree of Negative and Positive Impacts:

*Note: Not all of the considerations/ criteria listed below will necessarily be relevant to your project*

Low Impact (L)	* No publicity
	* Relevant risks to the Council or community are Low or none
	* No impact on service or corporate performance
Medium Impact (M)	* No impact on capital assets; or relates to minor capital assets (minor works)
	* Local publicity (good or bad)
	* Relevant risks to the Council or community are Medium
	* Affects delivery of corporate commitments
	* Affects service performance (e.g.: energy use; waste generation, transport use) by more than c.10%
High Impact (H)	* Relates to medium-sized capital assets (individual buildings or small projects)
	* National publicity (good or bad)
	* Relevant risks to the Council or community are Significant or High
	* Affects delivery of regulatory commitments
	* Affects corporate performance (e.g.: energy; waste; transport use) by more than c.10%
	* Relates to major capital assets (larger buildings and infrastructure projects)

In the box below please summarise any relevant policy context, explain how the overall rating has been derived, highlight significant impacts (positive and negative) and explain actions being taken to mitigate negatives and increase positives. This text can be replicated in the 'Environment and Climate Impacts' section of your Committee Report, though

The Leisure facilities are being delivered as identified within the Contract or with some additional energy saving measures. The report is not reporting changes to or requesting decisions to vary services.

The services are being delivered in line with the decision made to award the leisure contract by Policy Committee on 20th January 2020

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## Housing, Neighbourhoods and Leisure Committee

21 February 2024



**Reading**  
Borough Council  
Working better with you

<b>Title</b>	<b>Highway Maintenance Programme 2024/2025 &amp; 2023/2024 Highway Maintenance Update</b>
<b>Purpose of the report</b>	To note the report for information
<b>Report status</b>	Public report
<b>Report author</b>	Sam Shean
<b>Lead Councillor</b>	Councillor Karen Rowland, Lead Councillor for Environmental Services & Community Safety
<b>Corporate priority</b>	Healthy Environment
<b>Recommendations</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. That the Committee note the progress of year-2 (2023/24) Council's additional £8M 5-year (2022/23 to 2026/27) Highway Capital Investment Programme.</li> <li>2. That the Committee note the progress of year-2 (2023/24) Council's additional £4M 2-year (2022/23 to 2023/24) Bridges &amp; Structures Capital Investment Programme.</li> <li>3. That the Committee is informed of year-3 of the 3-year Department for Transport (DfT) Highway Maintenance Award 2024/25 Local Transport Block Funding (Integrated Transport &amp; Highway Maintenance) settlement.</li> <li>4. That the Committee is informed of the additional DfT Road Resurfacing Fund Allocation for Reading of £7.726M following the reallocation of High-Speed Rail (HS2) budget for the period 2023/24 to 2033/34.</li> <li>5. That the Committee is updated on the completed Highway Maintenance 2023/24 DfT Local Transport Block Funding Capital Works Programme.</li> </ol>

### 1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 To update the Committee on the progress of year-2 (2023/24) of the Council's additional £8M 5-year (2022/23 to 2026/27) Highway Capital Investment Programme.
- 1.2 To update the Committee on the progress of year-2 (2023/24) of the Council's additional £4M 2-year (2022/23 to 2023/24) Bridges & Structures Capital Investment Programme.
- 1.3 To inform the Committee of year-3 of the 3-year Department for Transport (DfT) Highway Maintenance Award 2024/25 Local Transport Block Funding (Integrated Transport & Highway Maintenance) settlement.
- 1.4 To inform the Committee of the additional DfT Road Resurfacing Fund Allocation for Reading of £7.726M following the reallocation of High-Speed Rail (HS2) budget for the period 2023/24 to 2033/34.
- 1.5 To provide the Committee with an update on the completed Highway Maintenance 2023/24 DfT Local Transport Block Funding Capital Works Programme.

## 2. Policy Context

- 2.1 The Council approved Shaping Reading's Future our Corporate Plan. The Plan reflects the Council's priorities for Reading and provides direction for staff in delivering services to meet the needs of the communities within the Borough whilst working to a budget and Medium-Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) to include to current Year-3 priorities.
- 2.2 To secure the most effective use of resources in the delivery of high quality, best value public service.
- 2.3 To make travel more secure, safe and comfortable for all users of the public highway.
- 2.4 To provide a public highway network as safe as reasonably practical having due regard to financial constraints and statutory duties.

## 3. The Proposal

### Background

- **£8M Council Funded 5-Year (2022-2027) Residential Roads & Pavements Investment Programme**
  - **£4M Council Funded 2-Year (2022-2024) Bridges and Structures Investment Programme**
  - **£1.838M DfT Annual Local Transport Plan (LTP) Award for 2024/25 for Bridges and Carriageways**
  - **Additional £7.726M 11-Year (2023/24 to 2033/34) DfT Road Resurfacing Fund for Bridges and Carriageways**
- 3.1 The Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy is informed by and supports delivery of the Council's Corporate Plan priorities including its commitment to address the climate change emergency and seeks to ensure that the Council is "fit for the future", with sound finances that allow the Council's future funding challenges and spending pressures to be met in as sustainable a way as possible.
  - 3.2 The underpinning rationale of the Medium-Term Financial Strategy is to deliver a balanced and affordable budget that ensures the Council's finances are sustainable in both the short (one year) and medium term (three years). The Strategy is also informed by the Council's Vision: "to ensure that Reading realises its potential – and that everyone who lives and works in Reading can share in the benefits of its success", as well as its Corporate Plan priorities:
    - Securing the economic success of Reading;
    - Improving access to decent housing to meet local needs;
    - Protecting and enhancing the life outcomes of vulnerable adults and children;
  - 3.3 The Strategy builds on work over the previous 5-6 years to stabilise the Council's financial position and build reserves back to a more robust level and seeks to facilitate vital investment in core infrastructure to drive efficiency improvements, facilitate service redesign and thereby manage pressures within demand led services. This invest to save approach provides for a robust financial position going forward and enables vital and valued services can continue to be delivered.
  - 3.4 As part of MTFS an ambitious capital investment programme is being delivered with the Council investing £8M (over 5-years from 2022/23 to 2026/27) in Reading's local residential road and pavement network. This welcomed investment is over and above the annual Local Transport Block Funding Grant settlement of £1.838M from the (DfT), the additional DfT Road Resurfacing Fund 11-Year Allocation for Reading of £7.726M and follows on from the successfully delivered £9M Council investment in Residential Roads



& Pavements between 2020/21 to 2022/23, which continues improving the condition of local residential roads and pavements and reverses a deteriorating highway network.

- 3.5 In additional to the Council's investment in Reading's local residential road and pavement network, the Council invested a further £4M in Reading's bridges & structures to address 'very poor' and 'poor' structural assets to improve their condition and reverse these deteriorating Council structural assets over a 2-year period (2022/23 to 2023/24).
- 3.6 The DfT announced additional funding of £7.726M of 11-years (2023/24 to 2033/34) to be allocated to Reading. £232k has to be committed within the current Financial Year (2023/24) and £ 232k in 2024/25. The remaining £ 7.262M to be split over the financial years 2024/25 to 2033/34.
- 3.7 The Council has and will continue to actively bid for appropriate external funding including Department for Transport (DfT) and Department for Environment Food & Rural Affairs (DEFRA) grants to maximise the use of available funding to improve the condition of all highway assets.

### **Proposed Programme - Highway Maintenance Spend Proposal 2024/25**

- 3.8 The Council carried out a Residents' Survey with its Citizen Panel during 2023 as part of the Council's on-going conversation with residents. The aim of the survey was to gather information to inform customer service delivery in a number of ways. More specifically, the survey asks about residents' views of their neighbourhoods and of Council services, which has helped the Council to understand what residents really value.
- 3.9 80% of residents are satisfied with their local area as a place to live. Over 60% of respondents said that they were satisfied with the way the Council runs things overall and 52% felt that Reading Borough Council acts on the concerns of local residents. Respondents were asked what factors they thought needed improving. 33% (compared with 35% in 2022) said that the condition of roads & pavements needed improving.
- 3.10 The annual National Highways & Transport MORI Residents Satisfaction Surveys for 2023 has shown that the Council has 129 national indicators being above average and 45 indicators improving. Although highway maintenance indicators show a decrease in satisfaction from last year, which is in line with National Satisfaction results, Reading remains above the national average for road condition and in dealing with road repairs. The Council recognise that there has been a huge amount of activity on the public highway this last year, not only during the extensive road resurfacing programmes but by Utility companies carrying out urgent and planned repairs, as well as the super-fast broadband rollout, which may have affected the results for Reading. Our residential (unclassified roads) have improved from 35% green (good) condition to 80% green (good) condition and the on-going investment by the Council will further improve this indicator. The remaining 20% of residential unclassified roads are in an 'Yellow Condition' which are roads that are showing deterioration and should be considered for surfacing to prolong the life of the road. The Council do not have any 'Red Poor Condition' residential unclassified roads.
- 3.11 The Council continues to listen to the residents of Reading and the £8M Capital Investment in Residential Roads & Pavements over a 5-year period (2022/23 to 2026/27) will continue to accelerate the resurfacing programmes and reverse the deteriorating condition of our highway assets in Reading's local residential roads and pavements. The additional welcomed DfT 11-year Road Resurfacing Fund following the HS2 reallocation will assist the Council's ambition in bringing our roads to a good overall condition and in maintaining this good position in future years.
- 3.12 The Council's additional investment along with the DfT Grants Awards will deliver a total investment of £7.425M Capital Investment in local Residential Roads & Pavements and

Bridges & Structures during Financial Year 2024/25, as set out in the table below (awaiting LLFA Award):

	<b>2023/24 Spend (Works Only)</b>	<b>2024/25 Spend Proposal (Works Only)</b>
<b>Residential Roads Surfacing</b>	<b>£4,450,000</b>	<b>£3,750,000</b>
<b>Pavement / Footway Resurfacing</b>	<b>£ 450,000</b>	<b>£650,000</b>
<b>Bridges /Structures</b>	<b>£1,200,000</b>	<b>£2,500,000</b>
<b>Tree Planting</b>	<b>£150,000</b>	<b>£175,000</b>
<b>Innovation / Carbon Reduction</b>	<b>£350,000</b>	<b>£350,000</b>
<b>Lead Local Flood Alleviation Grant (LLFA) Funding</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>£450,000</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>£6,600,000</b>	<b>£7, 875,000</b>

- 3.13 With the funding available we have prioritised the schemes based on nationally accepted technical assessment processes as well as visual engineering assessments.
- 3.14 The provisional programme for category 1 and 2 roads (mainly class A and class B roads and roads with high volumes of commercial traffic) surface treatment has been prioritised after assessment of carriageways using information from:
- SCANNER surveys which check the structural integrity and residual life of existing carriageways;
  - SCRIM (sideways-force coefficient routine investigation machine) surveys to check skidding resistance.
  - VIDEO SURVEY ASSESSMENT by Specialist Contractor.

Based on the above assessments the roads/sections of roads listed in Appendix 2 are recommended for treatment during Financial Year 2024/25. These are shown in priority order and will be progressed until the available allocation is spent. To make the most effective use of the budget available only the sections of the roads with a poor and deteriorating residual life, as identified from the SCANNER surveys and visual engineering assessments, will be treated.

- 3.15 Tenders for this work will be invited shortly and the documents will include reserve schemes so that in the event that returned tender prices prove to be more favourable than current estimates suggest, we will be able to undertake further scheme(s) within the available budget. In the event of unforeseen carriageway deterioration on roads not currently on the list, the programme of works would be reviewed and if necessary, a reallocation of funding within the budgets would be made to undertake higher priority carriageway schemes.
- 3.16 For category 3 roads (residential and other distributor roads) there is generally no skid or condition information available therefore priorities have to be established as a result of new video condition surveys to determine deterioration. The common types of

deterioration are, for example, the number of potholes, rutting, the amount of patching and cracking.

- 3.17 A video survey assessment of the road surface condition for minor roads was carried out using a specialist contractor. The assessment process consists of scoring the carriageway condition against various criteria. Those roads with the highest scores are then subjected to a further engineering assessment and those which, again, score highly through this process as well as being considered appropriate, are recommended for inclusion in the next Financial Year's minor roads surfacing programme, subject to budget availability.
- 3.18 Based on the above a list of proposed schemes is detailed in Appendix 2. Estimated costs based on current contract expenditure are shown against each scheme and would suggest that up to 105 roads will be achieved in the programme.
- 3.19 In the event of unforeseen carriageway deterioration outside of the scope of normal maintenance work, the programme of works will be reviewed and if necessary, a reallocation of funding within the budgets will be made to undertake higher priority carriageway schemes.
- 3.20 Due to the size of the 8-Year Council investment programme (2020/27), the Council is engaging with Statutory Undertakers / Utility companies early to reduce the risk of newly resurfaced roads being dug up and also ensure that other planned major transport schemes are considered within the programme. The Council will also issue Section 58 Notices on the new Major Classified Roads that are programmed for resurfacing to protect the new surface as far as reasonably possible.
- 3.21 A number of cycle routes are located on residential roads and have been considered to be included within the Minor Roads Surfacing Programme.
- 3.22 It should also be noted that a number of local cycle routes are on classified main roads, including the new Active Travel Sites (Shinfield Road and Bath Road) and will be prioritised for resurfacing. The annual highway maintenance programme has considered improvements to routes identified in the Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan.

**Pavement / Footway Resurfacing (£650,000) - Financed by the Council's 5-year investment programme and the 2024/25 DfT Local Transport Plan (LTP) Award for Bridges & Carriageways.**

- 3.23 Potential footway resurfacing schemes are identified as a result of visual condition surveys to determine deterioration. An assessment of the pavement surface is carried out on a rolling programme using the Council's agreed criteria. The assessment process consists of scoring the pavement condition against various criteria; those pavements with the highest scores, as well as being considered appropriate, are then recommended for inclusion in the next Financial Year's pavement maintenance programme, subject to budget availability.
- 3.24 It is proposed to continue to split the focus of the Council's Capital Investment pavement programme between a combination of resurfacing and/or reconstructing damaged pavements/stretches of pavements, and surfacing with a slurry sealing or equivalent product, as this cost-effective process which provides a new 'veneer' overlain surface that seals and ultimately extends the life of pavements, and which will accelerate the Pavement surfacing programme considerably. Both solutions will be delivered by the Council's in-house Highway Works Team.
- 3.25 The Council will continue to offer residents discounted vehicle crossings in residential roads where pavement works are being carried out, provided they are requested in advance and satisfy the Council's Vehicle Crossing Policy. To date we have installed 55

no. vehicle crossings as part of the pavement programmes, which is providing affordability to the residents of Reading.

- 3.26 The Council is committed to reducing carbon as far as reasonably practicable with all contract works, using all tools available, including innovation and highway tree planting where appropriate taking into account underground services and sight line visibility/safety requirements, to support the Council's carbon reduction and bio-diversity ambitions. To date 450 no. trees have been planted, with a further 200 no. planned this year. The Council successfully trialled and purchased a fully electric road marking machine that uses cold applied, low carbon MMA (Methyl Methacrylate), as well as low carbon bitumen preservation materials that will become 'business as usual' going forward. The Council will continue to explore, trial and bring low carbon alternatives to Reading.
- 3.27 The Council will continue to install pedestrian dropped crossings at road junctions on the pavements being resurfaced to improve accessibility for all users of the public highway. The Council recognises that Reading is an old established town with historically older roads that were built at a time when accessibility was not considered during the design process. The pavement programme is an ideal opportunity to address this matter and to date 75 no. pedestrian crossings have been installed at road junctions.

**Other Carriageway Maintenance Works – Financed by the Council's 5-year investment programme and the 2024/25 DfT Local Transport Plan (LTP) and the DfT Additional Road Resurfacing Fund Award for Bridges & Carriageways.**

- 3.28 It is recognised that there are roads which repeatedly do not meet the appropriate criteria for inclusion within the major carriageway resurfacing or residential roads surfacing programmes but would benefit from other maintenance treatment(s) to extend the life of these assets. Examples of such maintenance works are explained in more detail below:
- Following a SCRIM (Sideway-force Coefficient Routine Investigation Machine) survey, where a carriageway surface appears, overall, to be in a good condition but would benefit from a surface rejuvenation to improve/restore skid resistance, extending the life of the road. This process would prove to be a cost-effective treatment, when compared with full scale resurfacing, enabling more roads to be treated.
  - There are a number of concrete roads across the Borough which have previously been overlain with a thin flexible surfacing course. Over time this surfacing has locally worn away leaving a 'scabbed' surface. Typically, these areas do not meet the Council's current defect investigatory level to trigger repairs and as long as the underlying concrete slabs are in a stable condition, they are unlikely to increase in depth. Although such deterioration is aesthetically not pleasing, if the underlying concrete slabs are in reasonable condition, such roads do not score/rank as high as other roads for programmed maintenance work. Nevertheless, these roads would benefit from an appropriate treatment whereby the existing surfacing is either rejuvenated or replaced to not only improve the running surface but to also seal and protect the underlying concrete slabs, in turn, extending the life expectancy of these roads.
  - There are also examples of localised carriageway deterioration where the surfacing and/or sub-structure show signs of wear and tear in specific areas but not extensive enough to justify full-scale maintenance work to the complete carriageway area. In these situations, substantially sized patching, whether in the form of a surfacing only repair, a surfacing and base course repair or perhaps a greater depth full reconstruction repair, can rectify the issue locally and help to extend the overall life expectancy of the complete road.

**Bridges & Structures 2022/24 (£2.5M) – Financed by the Additional DfT Road Resurfacing Fund Award**

- 3.29 The Council has maintenance responsibility for around 80 bridges and 300 other structures. Each structure is inspected in line with the Code of Practice for Highway Structures. Appendix 3 shows the proposed 2024/25 bridge and structures programme.
- 3.30 The Council is seeking DfT funding to address the IDR Bridge Bearings and Berkeley Avenue Strengthening schemes and propose to commence the detailed design and preparation works of the project during 2024/25 Financial Year.
- 3.31 The Council will continue to actively bid for appropriate external funding including DfT, Environment Agency (EA) & DEFRA grants to maximise the use of available funding to improve the condition of all highway assets.
- 3.32 The Department of Transport (DfT) 3-year Local Transport Block Funding (Integrated Transport and Highway Maintenance) settlement is for £1.83M per year for Financial Years 2022/23 to 2024/25
- 3.33 This settlement covers general headings of Major Carriageway, Pothole Reduction, Bridge / Structural Maintenance & Lead Local Flood Alleviation. The Highway Authority then needs to demonstrate that it has made suitable use of their allocation in accordance with highway needs and within the general criteria for which LTP maintenance funding is allocated.

#### **Department of Transport (DfT) - Reallocation of High-Speed Rail (HS2) Funding**

- 3.34 The DfT announced an additional Road Resurfacing Fund of £7.726M over 11-years (2023/24 to 2033/34) for Reading. £232k must be committed to the current Financial Year (2023/24) and £232k in 2024/25. The remaining £7,262M is to be split over the next 10 years 2024/25 to 2033/34. This is above the confirmed annual DfT Local Transport Plan (LTP) Year-3 (2022/23 to 2024/25) award of £1.838M. We await confirmation of our Annual LTP Grant Award for future years.
- 3.35 The Department of Transport expect all local highway authorities that are not in Mayoral Combined Authority areas to publish prominently on their websites a detailed plan for the additional resurfacing and other highways maintenance work they will deliver with the new 2023/24 and 2024/25 funding (for Mayoral Combined Authorities, this information should be published at a Combined Authority level). This must be done by Friday 15 March 2024, and a copy of the weblink shared with the Department.

The plan should include summaries of:

- The additional resurfacing and other work either completed in 2023/24 or scheduled in 2024/25 using the additional funding in Budget 2023 and the further funding confirmed in their letter. This should set out the total volumes of additional work completed and specify particular roads, communities, or locations that have particularly benefited from it.
- The further additional work that will be completed during 2024/25 setting out both expected total volumes of additional work and where it is planned.
- How the Authority is introducing innovation in the delivery of highways maintenance and where it plans to go further.
- How the Authority is using its StreetWorks and other powers to ensure that resurfacing works are not undermined by repeated digging up of the same road by utility companies; and
- The total amount of investment in local highway networks for the previous 5 years and planned investment for 2024/25, split between DfT and local funding.

The Department will expect these same Local Authorities and Mayoral Combined Authorities to publish quarterly reports, starting in June 2024, summarising their

resurfacing and other highway maintenance activities, with list of all those roads that have been resurfaced. Once a year these will need to include signed assurance from the Authority's section 151 Officer that the additional funding was spent on highway maintenance activities that would not otherwise have taken place on the 23/24 to 33/34 amount

During 2024/25 the Department will require local highway authorities and Mayoral Combined Authorities without CRSTS allocations to publish a long-term plan for their use of the full 11-year funding and the transformation it will deliver. The Department will provide further advice on these long-term plans in due course, including on the extent to which they should be integrated with other local plans.

The Grant is a Road Resurfacing Fund for local highways maintenance, particularly for the resurfacing of carriageways, cycleways, and footways to prevent potholes and other road defects from occurring, as well as tackling other asset management priorities, such as keeping local bridges and other highway structures open and safe.

- 3.36 In previous years the Local Transport Block Funding settlement has been split into a number of different areas to make best use of the funds available, and it is intended to continue with this approach. (see para 3.12).
- 3.37 The Council has maintenance responsibility for around 80 bridges and 300 other structures, which are inspected in line with the Code of Practice for Highway Structures. Based on these inspections the priority for works within the capital programme is determined and a rolling 5-year programme is developed and updated annually. Appendix 3 details the schemes proposed for 2023/2024 that are achievable within the available budget. Whilst these schemes are all high priority, they will not necessarily be completed in the order they are listed, as other factors have to be considered when developing a scheme and programme to ensure they are achievable within the timescale / financial year. The current bridge backlog is managed by risk assessment, monitoring and if necessary interim measures.

### **Street Lighting - LED streetlighting Capital Programme Update**

- 3.38 The LED streetlighting upgrade programme has upgraded all the Council's standard streetlighting assets and delivered over 60% annual energy consumption saving. The Council's additional investment is addressing those units not included within the original LED programme, including conversion of all sign lighting, subway lighting and bespoke lighting units.
- 3.39 Streetlighting maintenance has reverted to its normal cycle of works, predominantly dealing with emergencies such as RTA damage, column testing and inventory updates. Street lighting is managed according to Highways asset management principles, inventory management and life cycle planning will be managed using the lighting module of the WDM system to coordinate with the pavement management and roads maintenance system. The system will support web based self-serve reporting of street lighting faults via a dedicated portal improving customer reporting and reducing the reliance on the current communication channels.
- 3.40 The Council reviewed its streetlighting specifications to reduce the brightness of the LED lanterns from 4,000k (kelvin), to 3,000k and below to reduce the environmental impact, as well as reducing the power supply to the LED lanterns on residential non-strategic roads from 100% power to 70% power. This power reduction provides an energy saving and reduced carbon for the Council without a noticeable change in lighting levels.

### **Lead Local Flood Alleviation Grant (LLFA) Funding for 2024/25 and later years**

- 3.41 No announcement has yet been made by DEFRA on the Lead Local Flood Alleviation grant for 2024/25. However, should appropriate funding become available this will be

reported accordingly to a future Strategic Environment Planning and Transport Committee.

- 3.42 There are several costly flood risk/surface water management priority schemes identified for Reading under the 'Local Flood Risk Management Strategy' and the 'Surface Water Management Plan'. However, given that these are very costly schemes and, unfortunately, are unsupported by appropriate funding at this moment in time, it is highly unlikely that they will form part of the 2024/25 works programme. It is noted that responsibility for Main Rivers (Rivers Thames & Kennet) and 'Critical Ordinary Water Courses' (COW) remains with the Environment Agency. The Council are responsible for 'Ordinary Water Courses' and ditches.
- 3.43 The Council successfully secured £415k Local Levy Grant Funding from DEFRA (Department of Environment, Food & Rural Affairs) to implement a Flood Alleviation Scheme at Stone Street, Reading.
- 3.44 Any future DEFRA grant will be used to address high flood risk sites and protect vulnerable properties. The Council will continue to carry out the annual ditch cleaning programme and to investigate/progress further schemes identified through flood modelling. A detailed list of works/schemes will be presented to this Committee for approval at a future meeting during the year to keep Councillors updated.

#### **Highway Maintenance Delivery Update 2023/2024**

- 3.45 The Council has carried out an extensive works programme of major carriageway resurfacing, specialist carriageway surfacing of concrete roads, minor residential roads surfacing, pavement resurfacing, streetlighting (LED Replacement), as well as a bridges/structural maintenance programme.

#### **Year-2 of the £8m Council 5-Year Capital Investment in Local Roads & Pavements (Including the DfT LTP 2023/24 Award)**

- 3.46 The Council advertised and awarded competitive tenders to deliver up to 700 local residential 'micro asphalt' and 'hot rolled asphalt' major roads, including concrete roads, refer to Appendix 2 over the full Council's 4-year Residential Roads & Pavement investment programme.
- 3.47 An extensive Communications Strategy was developed to inform residents of the investment and improvement by the Council at the start of the year-1 (2020/21) local residential roads and pavement programme. The Communications Plan included residents' letters, an infographic to visually explain the surfacing process, as well as a colouring competition. An extensive and proactive social media strategy was also undertaken by the Council's Communication Team.
- 3.48 An annual review of the communication strategy is carried out following feedback from residents and Local Ward Councillors a 'lessons learnt' exercise was carried out and these are being incorporated in future work programmes.
- 3.49 The Highways & Drainage (H&D) in-house operations team carried out extensive pre-patching in advance of the residential road surfacing programme. Any defect that warranted attention, irrespective of its depth were repaired, thereby providing added structural integrity to the road construction.

#### **Year-2 of the £8m Council 5-Year Capital Investment in Local Roads & Footway Resurfacing**

- 3.50 As was the case with the first four years of the pavement maintenance programme, it was intended to focus the Council's Capital Investment programme on resurfacing and/or reconstructing damaged pavements/stretches of pavement in 2023/2024 using the

Council's in-house Highway Teams, as they are a competitive and cost-effective team, who are experienced in delivering patching and minor road & pavement schemes.

- 3.51 The residential pavement / footway schemes programme commenced in early April 2023 and is due for completion by the end of March 2024, refer to Appendix 2.

**Bridge/Structural Maintenance - Financed by the Council's 2-year investment (2022/23 to 2023/24) and the annual DfT LTP Award**

- 3.52 The Council has maintenance responsibility for around 80 bridges and 300 other structures. Each structure is inspected in line with the Code of Practice for Highway Structures. Based on these inspections the priority for works within the capital programme is determined and a rolling 5-year programme is developed and updated annually. Appendix 2 details the completed schemes for 2023/2024.
- 3.53 A range of schemes are underway including strengthening of Phase 6 Kennetside Retaining Wall, Reading Station Subway Ceiling Refurbishment (to commence March 2024), bridge inspections & assessments, managing the abnormal loads, planned maintenance and reactive maintenance response.
- 3.54 Appendix 2 refers to the works programme delivered by the Highway Maintenance 2023/2024 award from the DfT Local Transport Block Funding (Integrated Transport & Highway Maintenance) settlement.
- 3.55 Appendix 1 & 2 satisfies the Grant Determination requirements on the use of the funding allocation by the DfT for Local Transport Block Funding (Integrated Transport & Highway Maintenance) 2023/2024 settlement.

**4. Contribution to Strategic Aims**

- 4.1 Reading Borough Council's vision is:

To help Reading realise its potential – and to ensure that everyone who lives and works here can share the benefits of its success.

- 4.2 The Council's new Corporate Plan has established three themes for the years 2022/25. These themes are:

- Healthy Environment
- Thriving Communities
- Inclusive Economy

- 4.3 These themes are underpinned by "Our Foundations" explaining the ways we work at the Council:

- People first
- Digital transformation
- Building self-reliance
- Getting the best value
- Collaborating with others

- 4.4 Full details of the Council's Corporate Plan and the projects which will deliver these priorities are published on the [Council's website](#). These priorities and the Corporate Plan demonstrate how the Council meets its legal obligation to be efficient, effective and economical.

**5. Environmental and Climate Implications**

- 5.1 The Council declared a Climate Emergency at its meeting on 26 February 2019 (Minute 48 refers). Transport is the biggest greenhouse gas emitting sector in the UK accounting for around 27% of total carbon emissions. As set out in our Climate Emergency Strategy



this figure is lower in Reading with transport accounting for around 20% of carbon emissions, however significant investment in sustainable transport solutions is vital in order to respond to the Climate Emergency declared by the Council in February 2019 and to help achieve our target of a carbon neutral Reading by 2030.

- 5.2 A Climate Impact Assessment has been completed which suggests a 'net medium positive' impact arising from adoption of the Transport Strategy.
- 5.3 A key driver to the successful adoption of electric vehicles is the ability to adequately charge vehicles. For some the natural choice will be through home charging in an off-street setting, but this will not be available for many, and Reading has a particularly high proportion of homes that do not have off-street parking. The Council's Electric Vehicle Charging Infrastructure Strategy will provide a framework for a network of charging points across the borough and to remove barriers to EV ownership and help achieve our targets from our Climate emergency Strategy of increasing uptake of zero emission vehicles.
- 5.4 Tenderers will be required to submit an Environmental Implications proposal which will form part of the quality element of the tender evaluation. A social value quality submission will also be included to ensure that the most deprived Wards in Reading benefit.
- 5.5 Tenderers will be required to submit Carbon reduction and improved sustainability targets. The intent is to reduce the amount of carbon used to produce the materials at source, using recycled materials, lower temperature materials, reducing the uncontrolled waste in the environment to reduce pollution of the natural environment, use of electric vehicles and plant, use of cold applied materials with lower carbon emission, as well as how they will achieve their carbon reduction targets.
- 5.6 The Council is committed to a tree planting programme to increase canopy cover, improve biodiversity and reduce localised flooding. The Council is committing up to 1% of the value of the highway capital programmes towards this initiative.
- 5.7 The Reading Climate Emergency Strategy, which was endorsed by the Council in November 2020, highlights the importance of adapting to climate impacts as well as reducing the emissions which are driving climate change. The Council will regularly review design standards, in conjunction with industry bodies, to take into account the extreme weather events (both extreme heat and extreme cold) to ensure sustainability of the public highway network.

## **6. Community Engagement and Information**

- 6.1 Section 138 of the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 places a duty on local authorities to involve local representatives when carrying out "any of its functions" by providing information, consulting or "involving in another way".
- 6.2 The public can report highway defects to the Council via the Council's Web Page [Report a road or street problem - Reading Borough Council](#), the 'Love Clean Reading App', or by email [Highways@reading.gov.uk](mailto:Highways@reading.gov.uk). These include drains, streetlights, road and structures condition concerns, which are assessed and included within the annual review of the highway assets that inform the 'Annual Status Option Reports' (ASOR) with the proposed high priority schemes brought to Committee for consideration and approval should they meet the assessment criteria.
- 6.3 This report will be available on the Council's website following Housing Neighbourhoods and Leisure Committee approval processes.

## **7. Equality Impact Assessment**

- 7.1 Under the Equality Act 2010, Section 149, a public authority must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to—

- eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act;
- advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;
- foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

7.2 The Highway Maintenance programme 2023/2024 consists of improvement work to the Council's existing public highway network and will be making improvements to existing highway assets. There is no overall change to service delivery at this time and all users will have a safe public highway. Should any future updates/amendments be required, which result in service delivery changes, an equality impact assessment will be carried out.

## **8. Other Relevant Considerations**

- Procedural requirements – Applies and to be followed.
- Legitimate expectations of service users and the public to be consulted about changes to policy – Applies, Public Committee Reports and enhanced Communication Strategy in place.
- Public Health implications – Applies and to be included in tender.
- Risk management implications - Applies and to be included in tender.
- Health and Safety risk assessments - Applies and to be included in tender.
- Transparency of information and freedom of information implications - Applies and to be included in tender.
- Effects on the Armed Forces Community (Armed Forces Act 2021) - Applies and to be included in tender.
- Privacy Impact Assessment- Applies and to be included in tender.
- Impact on Human Rights Act duties - Applies and to be included in tender.
- Corporate Parenting - Applies and to be included in tender.
- Regulatory duties (though these may be covered also in legal implications) - Applies and to be included in tender.
- Changes brought about by European Union (Withdrawal Agreement) Act - Applies and to be included in tender.
- Community safety implications - Applies and to be included in tender.

Any other relevant issues - None

## **9. Legal Implications**

- 9.1 The Borough Council, as Highway Authority, has a duty under the Highways Act 1980 to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, the safe passage along a highway.
- 9.2 The Council as Lead Local Flood Authority, has a duty under the Flood and Water Management Act 2010 to reduce the risk of flooding.

## **10. Financial Implications**

- 10.1 The Highway Maintenance programme 2024/2025 (Spending Table Item 3.12 refers) will be fully funded by the following:
- £8M Council Funded 5-Year (2022-2027) Residential Roads & Pavements Investment Programme
  - £4M Council Funded 2-Year (2022-2024) Bridges and Structures Investment Programme
  - The Local Transport Block Funding (Integrated Transport & Highway Maintenance) settlement for 2023/2024).

- Additional £7.726M 11-Year (2023/24 to 2033/34) DFT Road Resurfacing Fund for Bridges and Carriageways
- The Council's £ 1.371M Investment into LED Streetlighting Investment.
- The DEFRA Lead Local Flood Alleviation Grant (LLFA) Funding 2024/2025 (tbc).

## **11. Timetable for Implementation**

- 11.1 Tenders will go out early in the new Financial Year 2024/25
- 11.2 It is anticipated that the successful Tenderer/s will commence delivery and complete works within the new Financial Year 2024/25.

## **12. Background Papers**

- 12.1 There are none.

## **Appendices**

- 1. **Appendix 1: 2023/24 Programme Delivered**
- 2. **Appendix 2: Proposed 2024/25 Delivery Programme**

## FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The financial implications arising from the proposals set out in this report are set out below:-

### 1. Revenue Implications

Use this Table in the report or as an Appendix to set out the revenue implications:

	2023/24 £000	2024/25 £000	2025/26 £000
Employee costs (see note1)	100	100	100
Other running costs			
Capital financings costs			
<b>Expenditure</b>	100	100	100
Income from:	0	0	0
Fees and charges (see note2)			
Grant funding			
(specify)			
Other income			
<b>Total Income</b>	0	0	0
Net Cost(+)/saving (-)	100	100	100

The net cost of the proposal can be funded from existing Revenue Highways & Traffic Services Budgets and capitalisation.

### 2. Capital Implications

Capital Programme reference from budget book: page line	2023/24 £000	2024/25 £000	2025/26 £000
Proposed Capital Expenditure	232	7,425	tbc
Funded by			
Grant (specify) DfT LTP Award		£ 1,838	TBC
Grant DfT Additional Road Resurfacing Fund	£232	£ 948.2	
Section 106 (specify)			
Other services			
Capital Receipts/Borrowing		£4,638.8	
Total Funding	232	7,425	tbc

**Note:** where more than one option /proposal is being made it may be easier to set out the above information in an Appendix.

### 3. Value for Money (VFM)

This is a statutory service provision.

Tenders will be advertised in accordance with Public Contract Regulations 2015 and included a 60/40 split between tender price and quality. The size of the capital programmes will ensure that competitive tenders are received. Ambitious carbon reduction and sustainability targets will be incorporated with the tender evaluation.

#### **4. Risk Assessment.**

The Council has a duty under the Highways Act 1980 to maintain the public highway. The investment programme will reduce the risk to the Council and the public for decades to come. The on-going maintenance costs will be absorbed within existing revenue budgets for highway maintenance. Method statements agreed with winning contractor to ensure delivery during the current financial position and climate changes challenges (flood / heat / drought), as well as ensuring that disruption is minimised. Supply chain for products risk mitigated by the contractor buying large volumes & stockpiling materials based on the size of the capital programme.

Increasing fuel costs is and will remain a risk pressure, which will need to be managed throughout the programme.

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## APPENDIX 1 - 2023/24 PROGRAMME DELIVERED

### £8M RESIDENTIAL ROADS AND PAVEMENT INVESTMENT PROGRAMME AND DFT BRIDGES PROGRAMME 2023/24

#### RESIDENTIAL ROADS INVESTMENT PROGRAMME

#### HOT ROLLED ASPHALT RESURFACING 2023 - 38 ROADS RESURFACED

Road name	Section	Ward
Richfield Avenue	Caversham Road to Cow Lane	Thames
Lowfield Road	Buckingham Drive to Montpelier Drive	Emmer Green
IDR Inner Relief Road	Castle Street off slip North	Coley
Forbury Road	Station Road to Vastern Road roundabout	Abbey
Honey End Lane	Cockney Hill to The Meadway	Norcot / Southcote
Kings Road, Reading	Kingsgate Street to Cemetery Junction	Thames / Redlands / Park
Shinfield Road	South of Beech Road for 200m North	Church
Rose Kiln Lane	Southbound from Matalan Roundabout	Coley/Katesgrove
Hogarth Avenue	Bath Road to Lingholm Close	Southcote
Shinfield Road	North of Wellington Ave Junc	Redlands / Church
Church Road	200m west from St Annes Road	Caversham
Kidmore End Road	Brooklyn Drive to Crawshay Drive	Emmer Green
Bath Road	Castle Hill roundabout to Harrow Court	Coley / Abbey
The Meadway	Park Grove to 300m west	Norcot
A33 Relief Road (Northbound)	Link between Rose Kiln Lane & IDR	Coley
Peppard Road	Cedar Wood Crescent to Fallowfield Close	Caversham / Emmer Green
Church End Lane	Full Extent	Tilehurst
Russell Street	Full Extent	Abbey
Lower Henley Road	Star Road to Henley Road	Caversham / Emmer Green
Caversham Road	Vastern Road to Thames Avenue	Thames
Lowfield Road	Montpelier Drive to Caversham Park Road	Emmer Green
Tilehurst Road	Liebenrood Rd to Parkside Road	Southcote / Battle
Caversham Road	Fire Station to Vastern Road	Thames
Kidmore Road	Richmond Road to Oakley Road	Caversham Heights
Westfield Road	Gosbrook Road to Henley Road	Caversham
Kidmore Road	Sandcroft Road to Borough Boundary	Caversham Heights

Henley Road	Chiltern Road to Grosvenor Road	Caversham
Rose Kiln Lane	Basingstoke Road to Gillette Way	Whitley / Katesgrove
Tilehurst Road	Connaught Road to Cranbury Road	Southcote / Battle
Craven Road	Erleigh Road for 160m South	Redlands
Bath Road	Southcote Lane to Berkeley Avenue	Coley/Southcote
Upper Woodcote Road	Richmond Road to St Peter's Avenue	Caversham Heights
Oxford Road	Russell Street to Eaton Place	Abbey
Overdown Road	Brooksby Road to Larkwood Close	Kentwood
Bridge Street	Caversham Road to Church Street	Thames/Caversham
Church Street	Full Extent	Caversham
Elgar Road South	Full Extent	Katesgrove
Imperial Way	Worton Drive to Basingstoke Road	Whitley

## RESIDENTIAL ROADS INVESTMENT PROGRAMME

### CONCRETE ROAD RESURFACING 2023 - 5 ROADS RESURFACED

**\*TO BE COMPLETED BY MARCH 2024**

Road name	Section	Ward
Evesham Road	St Barnabas Road to Buckingham Drive	Caversham Heights / Emmer Green
Boulton Road	Full Extent	Katesgrove
Buckingham Drive & Peppard Road	Notley Place to Cavendish Road	Emmer Green
Cradock Road	Full Extent	Katesgrove

### PAVEMENTS / FOOTWAY LISTS 2023/2024 - 26 FOOTWAY IMPROVEMENT SCHEMES

Pavement / Footway name	Ward
Hexham Road	Redlands
Cherry Close	Emmer Green
Cockney Hill	Norcot
Kendrick Road	Katesgrove / Redlands
Oak Tree Road	Kentwood
Elstree Close	Kentwood
Romany Close	Kentwood
Thames Side Promenade	Thames
Coley Avenue	Coley
Craven Road	Redlands
Richmond Road, Caversham	Caversham Heights
Sheridan Avenue, 5 -33	Caversham Heights
St Davids Close	Caversham Heights
Surrey Road	Katesgrove



Winchester Road	Katesgrove
Sandleford Close	Whitley
Modbury Gardens	Church
Froxfield Avenue	Coley
Queensway, Footway Around Pond	Emmer Green
Oaklands, Car Park	Park
Vernon Crescent	Whitley
All Hallows Road	Emmer Green
Virginia Way	Southcote
Marchwood Avenue	Emmer Green
Caversham Road	Abbey/Thames
St Marys Butts	Abbey

## 2023/24 CAPITAL BRIDGE PROGRAMME

No	Scheme / Project	Cost Estimate	Cumulative Total	Notes
1	Kennetside Retaining Wall Strengthening - Phase 6 continuation	£ 600,000.00	£ 600,000.00	section of Phase 6 requiring alternative strengthening solution
2	Kennetside Retaining Wall Strengthening - Phase 7 (approximately 40m length of river wall near Silly Bridge plus 300m of parapet replacement on the wall)	£ 600,000.00	£ 1,200,000.00	Trial holes completed
3	Kings Meadow Footbridge Replacement	£ 225,000.00	£ 1,425,000.00	Principal Contractor activities
4	Orbit Footbridge deck repairs and repainting	£ 300,000.00	£ 1,725,000.00	Principal Contractor activities
5	Berkeley Avenue Canal Bridge Refurbishment	£ 60,000.00	£ 1,785,000.00	Design fees only. Actual works delayed till FY24/25 due to increased cost of Kennetside Ph 6
6	Berkeley Avenue Railway Bridge Refurbishment	£ 60,000.00	£ 1,845,000.00	Design fees only. Actual works delayed till FY24/25 due to increased cost of Kennetside Ph 6
7	Denbeigh Place Culvert Strengthening Works	£ 550,000.00	£ 2,395,000.00	Investigation completed; Design underway
8	Heron Island Concrete Repairs		£ 2,395,000.00	delayed till FY24/25
9	Station Subway Ceiling Improvement works	£ 380,000.00	£ 2,775,000.00	Design completed; Principal Contractor activities

10	Load Assessments & Structural Reviews	£ 60,000.00	£ 2,835,000.00	Completed
11	Duke Street Culvert Investigation	£ 9,000.00	£ 2,844,000.00	Completed
12	General Management	£ 35,000.00	£ 2,879,000.00	Completed
13	Repair/Replacement of Stone Parapet on High Bridge (Grade II listed structure)	£ 420,000.00	£ 3,299,000.00	Design completed; Principal Contractor activities

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## **APPENDIX 2 - PROPOSED DELIVERY PROGRAMME**

### **MAJOR ROADS RESURFACING LIST 2024-2026**

<b>No</b>	<b>Road name</b>	<b>Section</b>	<b>Ward</b>
1	Berkeley Avenue	Junc Pell Street to Junc St Saviours Road	Coley / Katesgrove
2	IDR Inner Relief Road	Slip road to Broad Street Mall car park adjacent to Hexagon	Abbey
3	IDR Inner Relief Road	onslip outside hostel from Castle Hill Southbound	Abbey
4	Duke Street	Kings Road to Yield Hall Place	Abbey
5	Queens Road, Reading	Watlington Street to Sidmouth Street	Abbey / Redlands
6	Rose Kiln Lane	East side of Boulton Road to river bridge	Whitley / Katesgrove
7	Market Place / High Street	The Forbury to High Street	Abbey
8	Caversham Park Road	Kingsway to Caversham Park Primary School	Emmer Green
9	Rose Kiln Lane	Admirals Court to Holybrook	Coley
10	Church Road	Church Street to St Annes	Caversham
11	Wokingham Road	Palmer Park Avenue to St Peters Road	Park
12	Burghfield Road	Underwood Road to Railway Bridge	Southcote
13	Kiln Road	full extent	Emmer Green
14	Craven Road/Erleigh Road	junc London Road to outside #2	Redlands
15	Oxford Road	Beresford Road to Kensington Road	Battle
16	IDR Inner Relief Road	clockwise section adjacent to Hook and Tackle	Katesgrove
17	Greyfriars Road	full extent	Abbey
18	Grovelands Road	from Rowe Court to Tilehurst Road jun	Norcot
19	Bath Road	Side of 1 Honey End Lane towards Prospect Park for aprox 150m	Southcote
20	Oxford Road	from Battle Library to past junc Constitution Road	Norcot / Battle
21	Whiteknights Road/Eastern Avenue	junc Upper Redlands Road to o/s 17	Park
22	IDR Inner Relief Road	from Castle Street on slip to Bridge Street offslip	Abbey
23	Honey End Lane	Bath Road to Cockney Hill	Norcot / Southcote
24	Forbury Road	Kenavon Drive to Kings Road Southbound only	Thames
25	IDR Inner Relief Road	on slip from Chatham Street Northbound	Abbey
26	Tilehurst Road	Water Road to Liebenrood Road	Norcot / Battle / Southcote

27	Henley Road	Micklands Road to Montfort Gate	Emmer Green
28	Caversham Road	Railway bridge to Tudor Road	Abbey
29	B3270	From Borough Boundary at Whitley Wood Lane Westbound for 250m	Whitley
30	Prospect Street, Caversham	full extent	Caversham
31	Tilehurst Road	Connaught Road to Western Elms Avenue	Battle / Southcote
32	Chapel Hill	Normanstead Road for 100m west	Tilehurst
33	London Road	De Beauvoir Road to Eldon Road	Redlands
34	Hemdean Road	Church Street to Oakley Road	Caversham
35	Eldon Road	full extent	Redlands
36	Briants Avenue	full extent	Caversham / Thames
37	Forbury Road	Vastern Road roundabout to St James Church Eastbound only	Thames / Abbey
38	Whitley Wood Lane	roundabout jun Whitley Wood Lane to Burlingham Close	Whitley
39	Caversham Park Road	Henley Road to 4 Bramber Mews	Emmer Green
40	Norcot Road	School Road to Sona Gardens	Kentwood / Tilehurst
41	Caversham Park Road	Littlestead Close to Bramber Mews	Emmer Green
42	Wokingham Road	Regis Park Road to Melrose Avenue	Park
43	Overdown Road	Rissington Road to o/s 92	Kentwood
44	London Road	Cumberland Road to St Bartholomews Road	Park
45	Caversham Park Road	Kiln Road to Birchwood Close	Emmer Green
46	Oxford Road	o/s 185 - 235	Abbey / Coley
47	Peppard Road	from Yarnton Close to Borough boundary	Emmer Green
48	Gosbrook Road	Prospect Street to Patrick Road	Caversham / Thames
49	Peppard Road	o/s 57 to Picton Way	Caversham
50	Silver Street	full extent	Katesgrove
51	Christchurch Road	Vicarage Road to The Mount, Reading	Redlands
52	Northumberland Avenue	Christchurch Gardens to George Palmer Close	Katesgrove / Redlands
53	Norcot Road	from Broomfield Road to Oxford Road	Norcot / Kentwood
54	Richmond Road, Caversham	Kidmore Road to Albert Road	Caversham Heights
55	Cockney Hill	full extent	Norcot/Southcote
56	Cavendish Road	full extent	Emmer Green
57	Donkin Hill	full extent	Caversham
58	Ashmere Terrace	full extent	Battle
59	Southcote Road	full extent	Southcote

60	IDR Inner Relief Road	off slip to Chatham Street - Southbound	Abbey
61	Alexandra Road	from Elmhurst Road to Addington Road	Redlands
62	De Montfort Road	full extent	Thames
63	Bath Road	Downshire Square to Coley Avenue	Coley
64	West Fryerne	full extent	Southcote
65	Cumberland Road	full extent	Park
66	Katesgrove Lane	full extent	Katesgrove
67	The Triangle / Walnut Way	full extent	Tilehurst
68	Gillette Way	full extent	Whitley
69	Coley Avenue	full extent	Coley
70	Eldon Square	full extent	Redlands
71	Meadow Road	full extent	Thames
72	Shaw Road	full extent	Coley
73	Gosbrook Road - B3345/20	#300 Gosbrook Road to Star Road	Thames / Caversham
74	Pepper Lane	Full Length up to Borough boundary	Redlands / Church
75	Basingstoke Road	Rose Kiln Lane to Long Barn Lane	Katesgrove / Church / Whitley
76	Tilehurst Road	Prospect Street to Railway Bridge	Coley
77	Park Lane	Borough Boundary to outside water tower	Tilehurst
78	Woodcote Road	Highmoor Road to Richmond Road	Caversham Heights
79	Priest Hill	Full Length	Caversham
80	Southampton Street	Alpine Street to Upper Crown	Katesgrove
81	Upper Redlands Road	Eastern Avenue to Elmhurst Road	Redlands
82	Redlands Road	Elmhurst Road to Upper Redlands Road	Redlands

**MINOR ROADS RESURFACING LIST 2024/2025**

No	Road name	Section	Ward
1	Amersham Road	Star Road to Ian Mikardo Way roundabout	Caversham
2	Ashampstead Road	Full Extent	Southcote
3	Brackendale Way	Full Extent	Park
4	Vine Crescent	Full Extent	Southcote
5	Greenfields Road	Full Extent	Whitley
6	Ambrook Road	Full Extent	Whitley
7	Mayfield Drive	Full Extent	Emmer Green
8	Holberton Road	Full Extent	Whitley
9	Silchester Road	Full Extent	Southcote
10	Deveron Drive	Full Extent	Norcot
11	Swainstone Road	Full Extent	Katesgrove
12	Howard Street	Full Extent	Abbey
13	Hunters Chase	Full Extent	Caversham Heights
14	Tidmarsh Street	Full Extent	Battle
15	Kentwood Close	Full Extent	Kentwood
16	Filbert Drive	Full Extent	Tilehurst
17	Grove Road	Evesham Road to Kidmore End Road	Emmer Green
18	The Willows	Full Extent	Thames
19	Colliers Way	Full Extent	Norcot
20	Oakdale Close	Full Extent	Tilehurst
21	Hayfield Close	Full Extent	Tilehurst
22	Hatford Road	Full Extent	Southcote
23	Chichester Road	Full Extent	Tilehurst
24	Highdown Hill Road	Full Extent	Caversham Heights / Emmer Green
25	Chaucer Close	Full Extent	Caversham Heights



26	Frilsham Road	Full Extent	Southcote
27	Craig Avenue	Full Extent	Norcot
28	St Peter's Road	Full Extent	Park
29	Drayton Road	Full Extent	Norcot
30	Heath Road	Full Extent	Park
31	Brunel Road	Full Extent	Southcote
32	Belle Avenue	Full Extent	Park
33	Henley Road	Full Extent	Caversham / Emmer Green
34	Garston Close	Full Extent	Southcote
35	Newbery Close	Full Extent	Kentwood
36	Filey Road	Full Extent	Park
37	Romany Lane	Full Extent	Kentwood
38	Inkpen Close	Full Extent	Southcote
39	Thirlmere Avenue	Full Extent	Kentwood
40	Richmond Road, Reading	Full Extent	Battle
41	Lyndhurst Road	Full Extent	Kentwood
42	Fontwell Drive	Full Extent	Southcote
43	Elstree Close	Full Extent	Kentwood
44	Appleford Road	Full Extent	Southcote
45	Eltham Avenue	Full Extent	Emmer Green
46	Rodway Road	Full Extent	Kentwood
47	Rossendale Road	Full Extent	Emmer Green
48	Quantock Avenue	Full Extent	Emmer Green
49	Elsley Road	Full Extent	Kentwood
50	Watlington Street	Queens Road to A4 London Road	Redlands
51	Ogmore Close	Full Extent	Tilehurst
52	Lemart Close	Full Extent	Tilehurst
53	Muirfield Close	Full Extent	Redlands

54	Armour Road	Westwood Road to Lower Armour Road	Kentwood / Tilehurst
55	Tower Close	Full Extent	Emmer Green
56	St Michael's Road	Full Extent	Tilehurst
57	The Mount, Reading	Full Extent	Redlands
58	Charles Evans Way	Full Extent	Caversham
59	Chapel Hill	Full Extent	Tilehurst
60	Keswick Close	Full Extent	Tilehurst
61	Hildens Drive	Berkshire Drive to Chapel Hill	Tilehurst
62	Lambourne Close	Full Extent	Tilehurst
63	Lower Mount	Full Extent	Redlands
64	Westwood Glen	Full Extent	Tilehurst
65	Brooklyn Drive	Full Extent	Emmer Green
66	Church Street	Full Extent	Katesgrove
67	Southdown Road (Service Road)	Full Extent	Caversham Heights
68	Crossland Road	Full Extent	Katesgrove
69	Stuart Close	Full Extent	Caversham Heights
70	Cardinal Close	Full Extent	Thames
71	Scott Close	Full Extent	Caversham Heights
72	Vachel Road	Full Extent	Abbey
73	Sheridan Avenue	Full Extent	Caversham Heights
74	Tredegar Road	Full Extent	Caversham Heights
75	Badgers Rise	Full Extent	Caversham Heights
76	Chazey Road	St Peter's Avenue to 40 Chazey Road	Caversham Heights
77	Hungerford Drive	Full Extent	Coley
78	Prince Of Wales Avenue	Full Extent	Battle
79	Carlton Road	Full Extent	Caversham Heights
80	Geoffreyson Road	Full Extent	Caversham Heights

81	Armada Court	Full Extent	Southcote
82	Stapleford Road	Full Extent	Southcote
83	Wilson Road	Full Extent	Norcot
84	Shepley Drive	Full Extent	Southcote
85	Pangbourne Street	Full Extent	Battle
86	Aldworth Close	Full Extent	Southcote
87	Fawley Road	Full Extent	Southcote
88	Brock Gardens	Full Extent	Norcot
89	Meadowcroft Road	Full Extent	Whitley
90	Brayford Road	Full Extent	Whitley
91	Devonshire Park	Full Extent	Church
92	Hillbrow	Full Extent	Church
93	Highmead Close	Full Extent	Church
94	Axbridge Road	Full Extent	Church
95	Exbourne Road	Full Extent	Whitley
96	Heatherdene Close	Full Extent	Whitley
97	Farrowdene Road	Full Extent	Whitley
98	Farmers Close	Full Extent	Whitley
99	Thornbridge Road	Full Extent	Whitley
100	Byworth Close	Full Extent	Whitley
101	Tavistock Road	Full Extent	Church

## Pavements / Footway lists 2024/2025

### Pavement / Footway Name

No	Road	Ward	Status
1	Scours Lane	Kentwood	Reserved for future surfacing
2	Northumberland Avenue	Church / Katesgrove / Redlands / Whitley	Reserved for future surfacing
3	New Lane Hill	Southcote / Tilehurst	Reserved for future surfacing
4	Forbury Road	Abbey/Thames	Reserved for future surfacing
5	St Peters Avenue	Caversham Heights	Reserved for future surfacing
6	Cressingham Road	Church	Reserved for future surfacing
7	Spencer Road	Whitley	Reserved for future surfacing
8	Stanhope Road	Church/Redlands	Reserved for future surfacing
9	Tamarisk Avenue	Church	Reserved for future surfacing
10	Orts Road	Park	Reserved for future surfacing
11	Waverley Road	Battle/Norcot	Reserved for future surfacing
12	Windermere Road	Church	Reserved for future surfacing
13	Sutton Walk	Redlands	Reserved for future surfacing
14	Heath Road	Park	Reserved for future surfacing
15	London Road (Kings Road to A4 Bridge)	Park	Reserved for future surfacing
16	London Road (Kings Road to Eldon Road)	Redlands	Reserved for future surfacing
17	London Road (Queens Road to Eldon Road)	Katesgrove / Park / Redlands	Reserved for future surfacing
18	London Road (Sidmouth Street to London Street)	Katesgrove	Reserved for future surfacing
19	Picton Way	Emmer Green	Reserved for future surfacing
20	St Andrews Road	Caversham Heights	Reserved for future surfacing
21	Alma Street	Battle	Reserved for future surfacing
22	Alpine Street	Katesgrove	Reserved for future surfacing
23	Cheddington Close	Norcot	Reserved for future surfacing
24	Corbridge Road	Redlands	Reserved for future surfacing
25	Dorset Street	Battle	Reserved for future surfacing
26	Elgar Road South	Katesgrove	Reserved for future surfacing
27	Exwick Square	Whitley	Reserved for future surfacing
28	Fawley Road	Southcote	Reserved for future surfacing
29	Gillette Way	Whitley	Reserved for future surfacing
30	Morlands Avenue	Southcote	Reserved for future surfacing
31	Morpeth Close	Redlands	Reserved for future surfacing

32	Norris Road	Park	Reserved for future surfacing
33	Norwood Road	Park	Reserved for future surfacing
34	Overdown Road	Kentwood	Reserved for future surfacing
35	Pell Street	Katesgrove	Reserved for future surfacing
36	Pepper Lane	Church	Reserved for future surfacing
37	Sackville Street	Abbey	Reserved for future surfacing
38	Southcote Road	Southcote	Reserved for future surfacing
39	Stanley Street	Abbey	Reserved for future surfacing
40	Taff Way	Norcot	Reserved for future surfacing
41	Taynton Walk	Katesgrove	Reserved for future surfacing
42	Upper Crown Street	Katesgrove	Reserved for future surfacing
43	Waterloo Road	Katesgrove	Reserved for future surfacing
44	Wilwyne Close	Caversham	Reserved for future surfacing
45	Abingdon Drive	Emmer Green	Reserved for future surfacing
46	Albert Road	Caversham Heights	Reserved for future surfacing
47	Alexandra Road	Redlands	Reserved for future surfacing
48	Barnsdale Road	Church	Reserved for future surfacing
49	Bennet Road	Whitley	Reserved for future surfacing
50	Clarendon Road	Park	Reserved for future surfacing
51	Clayton Walk	Redlands	Reserved for future surfacing
52	Commercial Road	Whitley	Reserved for future surfacing
53	Cornwood Gardens	Church	Reserved for future surfacing
54	Courtenay Drive	Emmer Green	Reserved for future surfacing
55	Denmark Road	Redlands	Reserved for future surfacing
56	Douglas Road	Caversham	Reserved for future surfacing
57	Downshire Square	Coley	Reserved for future surfacing
58	Elm Road	Church	Reserved for future surfacing
59	Forge Close	Thames	Reserved for future surfacing
60	Geoffreyson Road	Caversham Heights	Reserved for future surfacing
61	Grange Avenue	Park	Reserved for future surfacing
62	Hazelwood Close	Tilehurst	Reserved for future surfacing
63	Hewett Avenue	Caversham Heights	Reserved for future surfacing
64	Hewett Close	Caversham Heights	Reserved for future surfacing
65	Kelmscott Close	Caversham Heights	Reserved for future surfacing
66	Kildare Gardens	Caversham	Reserved for future surfacing
67	Kings Meadow Road	Thames	Reserved for future surfacing
68	Kirkham Close	Emmer Green	Reserved for future surfacing
69	Knowle Close	Caversham Heights	Reserved for future surfacing
70	Longhurst Close	Caversham	Reserved for future surfacing
71	Luscombe Close	Caversham	Reserved for future surfacing

72	Maitland Road	Coley	Reserved for future surfacing
73	Matlock Road	Caversham Heights	Reserved for future surfacing
74	Peel Close	Caversham	Reserved for future surfacing
75	Raglan Gardens	Caversham	Reserved for future surfacing
76	Rosehill Park	Emmer Green	Reserved for future surfacing
77	Silverthorne Drive	Caversham Heights	Reserved for future surfacing
78	South Street, Reading (Sidmouth Street to Watlington Street)	Katesgrove / Redlands	Reserved for future surfacing
79	Spring Grove	Katesgrove	Reserved for future surfacing
80	Tyler Close	Caversham Heights	Reserved for future surfacing
81	Waterman Place	Thames	Reserved for future surfacing
82	Waybrook Crescent	Park	Reserved for future surfacing
83	Welland Close	Tilehurst	Reserved for future surfacing
84	Wincanton Road	Whitley	Reserved for future surfacing
85	Winton Road	Church	Reserved for future surfacing
86	Acre Road	Whitley	Reserved for future surfacing
87	Allcroft Road	Redlands	Reserved for future surfacing
88	Arkwright Road	Katesgrove	Reserved for future surfacing
89	Ashburton Road	Church	Reserved for future surfacing
90	Ashby Court	Whitley	Reserved for future surfacing
91	Ashmore Road	Church	Reserved for future surfacing
92	Axbridge Road	Church	Reserved for future surfacing
93	Balliol Road	Caversham Heights	Reserved for future surfacing
94	Belle Avenue	Park	Reserved for future surfacing
95	Benyon Court	Coley	Reserved for future surfacing
96	Beresford Road	Battle	Reserved for future surfacing
97	Blenheim Road, Caversham	Caversham Heights	Reserved for future surfacing
98	Blyth Walk	Katesgrove	Reserved for future surfacing
99	Boulton Road	Katesgrove	Reserved for future surfacing
100	Brayford Road	Whitley	Reserved for future surfacing
101	Brill Close	Caversham Heights	Reserved for future surfacing
102	Brooklyn Drive	Emmer Green	Reserved for future surfacing
103	Brownlow Road	Coley	Reserved for future surfacing
104	Canterbury Road	Katesgrove	Reserved for future surfacing
105	Chagford Road	Church	Reserved for future surfacing
106	Chalgrove Way	Emmer Green	Reserved for future surfacing
107	Champion Road	Thames	Reserved for future surfacing
108	Charles Evans Way	Caversham	Reserved for future surfacing

109	Chelford Way	Caversham Heights	Reserved for future surfacing
110	Chepstow Road	Kentwood	Reserved for future surfacing
111	Chiltern Road	Caversham	Reserved for future surfacing
112	Corinne Close	Church	Reserved for future surfacing
113	Crescent Road	Park	Reserved for future surfacing
114	Darell Road	Caversham Heights	Reserved for future surfacing
115	Darwin Close	Whitley	Reserved for future surfacing
116	Denbury Gardens	Whitley	Reserved for future surfacing
117	Emmer Green Court	Emmer Green	Reserved for future surfacing
118	Fernbrook Road	Caversham Heights	Reserved for future surfacing
119	Francis Street	Katesgrove	Reserved for future surfacing
120	Galsworthy Drive	Emmer Green	Reserved for future surfacing
121	Garrard Street	Abbey	Reserved for future surfacing
122	Green Road	Park	Reserved for future surfacing
123	Hadrian Walk West	Redlands	Reserved for future surfacing
124	Haldane Road	Caversham Heights	Reserved for future surfacing
125	Hartland Road	Church	Reserved for future surfacing
126	Hawkchurch Road	Whitley	Reserved for future surfacing
127	Hay Road	Coley	Reserved for future surfacing
128	Hemdean Rise	Caversham	Reserved for future surfacing
129	Hill Street	Katesgrove	Reserved for future surfacing
130	Hilltop Road	Caversham Heights	Reserved for future surfacing
131	Howard Street	Abbey	Reserved for future surfacing
132	Kelvedon Way	Caversham Heights	Reserved for future surfacing
133	Kennet Side (Part)	Abbey / Park / Thames	Reserved for future surfacing
134	Keston Close	Caversham	Reserved for future surfacing
135	Lamerton Road	Church	Reserved for future surfacing
136	Mellor Walk	Katesgrove	Reserved for future surfacing
137	Mill Road	Thames	Reserved for future surfacing
138	Mortimer Close	Whitley	Reserved for future surfacing
139	Norman Road	Caversham	Reserved for future surfacing
140	Orwell Close	Caversham Heights	Reserved for future surfacing
141	Oxford Road (Prospect St to Wantage Road)	Battle / Coley / Abbey	Reserved for future surfacing
142	Palmer Park Avenue	Park	Reserved for future surfacing
143	Parkhouse Lane	Southcote	Reserved for future surfacing
144	Queens Road, Reading	Abbey/Katesgrove/Redlands	Reserved for future surfacing
145	Redlands Road	Redlands	Reserved for future surfacing
146	Richmond Road, Caversham	Caversham Heights	Reserved for future surfacing

147	Rowley Road	Katesgrove	Reserved for future surfacing
148	Russet Glade	Emmer Green	Reserved for future surfacing
149	Scholars Close	Caversham Heights	Reserved for future surfacing
150	Shenstone Road	Katesgrove	Reserved for future surfacing
151	Southampton Street	Katesgrove	Reserved for future surfacing
152	St Bartholomews Road	Park	Reserved for future surfacing
153	St Edwards Road	Park	Reserved for future surfacing
154	St Saviours Road	Coley	Reserved for future surfacing
155	The Ridgeway	Caversham	Reserved for future surfacing
156	Tilehurst Road (Russell Street to Parkside Road)	Abbey / Coley / Southcote / Battle	Reserved for future surfacing
157	Trafford Road	Thames	Reserved for future surfacing
158	Upton Road	Norcot	Reserved for future surfacing
159	Whiteknights Road	Park	Reserved for future surfacing
160	Whitley Street	Katesgrove	Reserved for future surfacing
161	Whitley Wood Lane	Whitley	Reserved for future surfacing
162	Wrenfield Drive	Caversham Heights	Reserved for future surfacing

#### 2024/25 CAPITAL BRIDGE PROGRAMME

No	Scheme / Project	Cost Estimate	Cumulative Total	Notes
1	Caversham Bridge Deck Waterproofing Replacement and Concrete Repairs	£ 650,000.00	£ 650,000.00	
2	Oxford Road Bridge - replacement of bearings and expansion joints	£ 1,400,000.00	£ 2,050,000.00	cost estimate includes C3 estimate from Thames Water. C4 price to be obtained on completion of trial hole investigations in 2023.
3	Castle Street North Bridge - replacement of bearings and expansion joints	£ 900,000.00	£ 2,950,000.00	cost estimate includes C3 estimate from Thames Water. C4 price to be obtained on completion of trial hole investigations in 2023.



4	Castle Street South Bridge - replacement of bearings and expansion joints	£ 900,000.00	£ 3,850,000.00	cost estimate includes C3 estimate from Thames Water. C4 price to be obtained on completion of trial hole investigations in 2023.
5	Chatham Street North Bridge - replacement of bearings and expansion joints	£ 850,000.00	£ 4,700,000.00	cost estimate includes C3 estimate from Thames Water. C4 price to be obtained on completion of trial hole investigations in 2023.
6	Chatham Street South Bridge - replacement of bearings and expansion joints	£ 850,000.00	£ 5,550,000.00	cost estimate includes C3 estimate from Thames Water. C4 price to be obtained on completion of trial hole investigations in 2023.
7	IDR Kennet Bridge - replacement of bearings and expansion joints	£ 1,350,000.00	£ 6,900,000.00	cost estimate includes C3 estimate from Thames Water. C4 price to be obtained on completion of trial hole investigations in 2023.
8	Berkeley Avenue Canal Bridge Refurbishment	£ 600,000.00	£ 7,500,000.00	repairs to steelwork, masonry, waterproofing and repainting
9	Berkeley Avenue Railway Bridge Refurbishment	£ 600,000.00	£ 7,500,000.00	repairs to steelwork, masonry, waterproofing and repainting
10	Load Assessments & Structural Reviews	£ 50,000.00	£ 6,950,000.00	
11	Podium Structure (Station Approach Understructure East) Infilling	£ -	£ 6,950,000.00	delayed till FY25-26
12	IDR Footbridge Deck Waterproofing Replacement	£ 250,000.00	£ 7,200,000.00	
13	Heron Island Concrete Repairs	£ 250,000.00	£ 7,450,000.00	

14	General Management	£ 35,000.00	£ 7,485,000.00	
15	Caversham Mill Footbridge Deck Replacement	£ -	£ 7,485,000.00	delayed till FY26-27

## Housing, Neighbourhoods and Leisure Committee

21 February 2024



**Reading**  
Borough Council  
Working better with you

<b>Title</b>	New Reading Central Library
<b>Purpose of the report</b>	To make a decision
<b>Report status</b>	Public report
<b>Report author</b>	Donna Pentelow, Assistant Director for Culture Simon Smith, Reading Libraries and Museum Manager
<b>Lead Councillor</b>	Councillor Adele Barnett-Ward
<b>Corporate priority</b>	Thriving Communities
<b>Recommendations</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. That Committee endorses the approach to stock provision for the new library, noting several areas where provision has increased.</li> <li>2. That Committee notes the planned work in relation to stock management and withdrawals, consistent with the Reading Libraries Withdrawal Policy approved by HNL Committee in March 2023 and reported here for information.</li> <li>3. That the Assistant Director for Culture, in consultation with the Lead Member for Leisure and Culture, be delegated to agree the closure period to facilitate the move of Central Library to the Civic Centre.</li> </ol>

### 1. Executive Summary

- 1.1. To provide an update on progress with the new Reading Central Library, to indicate improved provision to bookstock in key areas, to highlight the progress being made to withdraw and dispose of elements of library stock where no longer needed as part of the move of Reading Central Library, in line with the withdrawals policy approved by Committee in March 2023, and to confirm the approach to planning the move.

### 2. Policy Context

- 2.1. In Summer 2022, Reading Borough Council bid for £19.1m of Levelling Up Fund money which included a project to move the library into an extended Civic Centre. The Council was advised of its successful bid in January 2023, with a view to moving into the extended Civic Centre in Spring 2025.
- 2.2. Public consultation on the project was carried in summer 2023, building on the wider library consultation in 2021, to inform the configuration of the new facility. In addition, as part of the bid and grant process, aims and outcomes for the space were agreed.
- 2.3. From the 2023 consultation, which had responses from 1,135 people, 75 percent of people supported plans for a brand-new town central library, believing the move would have a positive impact. Of those who currently do not use the library, 50 percent said they would be interested in using a new library in a new location. A total of 60 percent of

respondents were in favour using the Civic Offices as a new location for Reading Central Library. The full consultation report is at <https://www.reading.gov.uk/leisure/revitalising-the-hexagon-and-central-library/civic-library-consultation/> and this has informed the ongoing design approach.

2.4 Library users and non-users wanted to see

- \* a clear focus on book provision with improved book stock
- \* safer spaces,
- \* better spaces for events
- \* better children's provision
- \* provision for local history retained and improved,

2.5 Reflecting this, the new Central Library will feature

- \* a better stocked Children's Library serving our biggest group of users – increasing shelving in this area by c88 metres (135%)
- \* better provision for a Teen zone, with increased stock (shelving up by 9 metres (33%))
- \* more space for books in non-English languages with increased stock – shelving up by 8 metres (12%)
- \* more space for adult fiction with increased stock – shelving up by 45 metres (14%)
- \* more space for spoken word and large print items with increased stock – shelving up by 13 metres (21%)
- \* well equipped, improved local history section with equivalent shelf provision to now
- \* well-equipped study and working space with over 100 seated spaces, the majority of which will be next to plugs to facilitate work and study
- \* dedicated exhibition space to support visual artists
- \* free PCs and tablets for use on site and free wifi
- \* new event space that can be used for events and activities, including provision for screenings, streaming and projection
- \* an adult learning/multifunctional room for hire

The children's library, teen space, fiction, and non-English book areas will have a higher stock level than presently, reflecting the library strategy and improving these areas in the new space. Children and families are the biggest users of the library service. We have prioritised the key functional spaces and stock and designed accordingly.

2.6 Books and book lending will be the key function of the new space, with additional focus on making spaces better and more usable for events and activities. The new space has a slightly smaller footprint, but the design will accommodate more books on public display as well as more studying space.

2.7 The great opportunity presented by the relocation of Reading's busiest library means that we can prepare for the new space, take what we need with us, inject a quantity of new stock, and create some great spaces for our key areas of provision such as children's and local history.

- 2.8 In order to deliver on these ambitions, some library stock has been identified as surplus to requirements and will be removed in line with the withdrawal policy. The majority of this stock is not currently on public display. The Council has engaged with local, regional and national organisations, and will continue to do so, to facilitate the rehoming of withdrawn stock.
- 2.9 As part of designing and preparing for the new library, we will be withdrawing stock based on use, need, quality and condition, as part of the normal library stock management process. This will create space for an injection of new stock for the new library, to reflect customer demand and in anticipation of higher usage.
- 2.10 These withdrawals will be in line with the withdrawal policy approved at Housing and Neighbourhoods Committee, March 2023, minute 37 refers, but at a higher level than normal. This is because the relocation involves our largest library with a large run of stock, especially on non-public access, Central library having been built as a County resource in 1985 with large, specialist collections that were needed at the time but are not currently used at levels commensurate with space provided.

### **3. Planning for the new Reading Central Library**

- 3.1. The library move will happen in 2025, with this timetable subject to revision and consultation.
- 3.2. The approval for the mechanics of the move, including decant and period involved, is requested to be delegated to the Assistant Director for Culture, in consultation with the Lead Member for Leisure and Culture. This enables us to plan and agree the closure period and arrangements for the decant and move of Central Library in 2025. Several thousand items will need to be moved, both stock and other items.
- 3.3. **Outline of actions relating to library stock**  
As noted above, in order to deliver the requirements of the bid, to increase space for areas identified as priorities, and because we need to vacate our current premises, the move is an opportunity to improve areas by reassessing and changing the balance and volume of stock currently held at Central Library, increasing in some areas and reducing in others.
- 3.4. The replacement library will have around 1,300lm of shelving for public facing stock (maximum), compared to around 1,350lm at present. The current likely breakdown is provided in appendix 2.
- 3.5 There will be greater provision of children's, teen, large print/spoken word and books in non-English languages in the new space as these areas are identified as needing improvement in the library strategic priorities. There will also be much greater provision of study space equipped with charging points.
- 3.6 The area for the new children's library provision will be specially designed and a highlight of the building, to ensure excellent provision, a greater choice of stock on more shelves, and a greater area for the heaviest used books . We will seek to provide an inspirational space for reading, working, enjoyment, activities, events, singing and reading.
- 3.7 The new local history space will provide a quieter space with a staff desk, replicating the current setup at Central library but with better tables, equipment and facilities for customers. The current public facing stock in this area will be retained.
- 3.8 There will be a small increase in adult fiction and a reduction in non fiction reflecting reduced lending of non fiction in recent years, as an significantly more information previously accessed in this way has moved online. This information

can be accessed with library fixed PCs and tablets via the free wifi. There has been a move to more narrative non fiction which will still be well provided for, as will the existing offer in areas such as citizenship, driving theory and business support. The alternative e-book provision will also remain available, as will a pool of well over a million items through the wider library interlending system. The non fiction drop also includes fewer music scores and plays on the open shelves due to reduced demand.

### 3.9 **Items on non-public shelves and withdrawals**

The library was built as a County library for Berkshire, and retains the 'County' sized reserve collections for Music and Drama, Reference and fiction/non fiction. These collections are largely static, and have not been a priority to deal with due to the limited staff capacity to assess. However, the move gives a clear imperative to assess, review and reduce these collections to enable the accommodation of more relevant stock for current users in the new library.

### 3.10 **Local history**

We are prioritising the local history collection as a key, unique and valuable resource for the town. Unless there is unnecessary duplication, or items fit better at Reading Museum or Royal Berkshire Archives, they will be retained within the Library. The consultation demonstrated this is a key area for customers and for Reading and we will be providing a large public local history space with stock on site.

3.11 Where stock is held off site, arrangements to bring items in will be set up. The public shelving space for this stock will not reduce.

### 3.12 **Other Stock**

A large amount of other stock not currently publicly available is no longer required or needed

3.13 A table detailing discrete surplus areas of stock, that is currently not public facing, is at Appendix 1 setting out the stock area, a description, some background, plans, numbers of items, usage and current space used. A summary table is below. Appendix 2 lists organisations contacted so far. Where we are not able to find new homes, or where items are not suited to new home, items will be disposed of in line with the withdrawal policy agreed by Committee

<b>Stock currently in non-public area, summary of approach</b>	
<b>Area of stock</b>	<b>Summary approach</b>
<b>Local History reserve</b>	Default assumption is to retain, unless replicated elsewhere, duplicated, damaged to beyond point of use
<b>Reserve Playscripts</b>	Where not needed, offered to libraries/local cultural organisations, then disposed of per policy
<b>Reserve Vocal score sets</b>	Where not needed, offered to libraries/local cultural organisations, then disposed of per policy
<b>Reserve Music scores</b>	Where not needed, offered to libraries/local cultural organisations, then disposed of per policy
<b>Public reference</b>	Where not needed, disposed of per policy.
<b>Reserve fiction</b>	Where not needed, disposed of per policy.

	Reserve fiction is more of a priority than reserve non-fiction as part of a wider library role in providing free access to older or out of print works by major writers
<b>Reserve non fiction</b>	Where not needed, disposed of per policy – majority of stock low need, demand, poor condition
<b>Reference reserve</b>	Where not needed, disposed of per policy – majority of stock not required. This stock may contain more specialist or unusual items which will all be assessed.

- 3.14 The anticipated breakdown of types of books we are planning for in the public area are below :

**Direct comparison (linear metres) between current library and proposed new library space**

<b>All figures are linear metres</b>	Childrens	Teen	Fiction	Spoken Word +Large Print	Non English	Non fiction*	Local history	Total
Current library (approx)	65	18	325	61	65	614	200	1348
Proposed in new library	c153	c27	c370	c74	c73	c400	c200	c1297
Change (lm)	+88	+9	+45	+13	+8	-214	0	-28
Change (%)	+135	+33	+14	+21	+12	-34	0	-4
<i>*Non fiction measurement includes all plays and scores on open shelves at present Final design not yet confirmed and subject to change</i>								

**3.15 Toy library**

We are investigating alternative ways to provide the toy library service and this will be the subject of a future paper to committee.

**4. Contribution to Strategic Aims**

- 4.1. The Council's new Corporate Plan has established three themes for the years 2022/25. These themes are:

- Healthy Environment
- Thriving Communities
- Inclusive Economy

- 4.2. These themes are underpinned by “Our Foundations” explaining the ways we work at the Council:

- People first
- Digital transformation
- Building self-reliance
- Getting the best value
- Collaborating with others

- 4.3 This project is part of Thriving Communities, by providing a new, purpose built, library, designed around the needs and future needs of users, aligning with work on Hexagon and Minster Quarter, an excellent cultural provision can be made within Reading Town Centre, with wider benefits to the community branch library network.
- 4.4 Full details of the Council's Corporate Plan and the projects which will deliver these priorities are published on the [Council's website](#). These priorities and the Corporate Plan demonstrate how the Council meets its legal obligation to be efficient, effective and economical.

## **5. Environmental and Climate Implications**

- 5.1. The Council declared a Climate Emergency at its meeting on 26 February 2019 (Minute 48 refers).
- 5.2. There are limited environmental impacts arising from this report which have been assessed.
- 5.3. Whilst stock is being disposed of, disposal via a waste stream would be a last resort, when other avenues have been exhausted.
- 5.4. The overall space requirement to house items that are not being used or not required for the overall collection will reduce carbon and cost of energy.
- 5.5. The net climate impact of the areas discussed in this report (rather than the project as a whole) is limited.

## **6. Community Engagement**

- 6.1. The wider library consultation regarding the move in Summer 2023 received over 1,000 responses, and whilst these did not specifically ask about some of the stock areas mentioned in this report, we have used those views to support the overall approach. There was clear feedback on book provision, local history, safety, toilets and overall widespread support for the move.
- 6.2. Consultation relating to the project has also taken place with:
- Reading Youth Parliament
  - Service users, Brighter Futures for Children
  - Children in Reading schools
  - Trades Unions
  - Older People's working group
- 6.3. As part of preparing for this report, we have contacted a variety of organisations to gauge level of interest in organisations receiving some of the areas of stock outlined above and these are listed at Appendix 2 – work will be ongoing on this in 2024 and many more organisations will be spoken to after this initial step

## **7. Equality Implications**

- 7.1. Under the Equality Act 2010, Section 149, a public authority must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to—
- eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act;
  - advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;



- foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

7.2. An Equality Impact Assessment for this report is at Appendix 3.

7.3. It is felt that any issues arising are limited and mitigated.

## **8. Other Relevant Considerations**

8.1 None.

## **9. Legal Implications**

9.1. Under the 1964 Public Libraries and Museums act, local authorities are bound to provide a library service that is 'comprehensive and efficient'. This report meets that aim, and the local authority will continue to comply with the Act.

## **10. Financial Implications**

10.1 There are no direct financial implications arising from this report. There are financial implications of the overall library project that are outside the scope of this report, and will be the subject of reports submitted as part of any budget setting process.

10.2 Per the Reading Libraries Withdrawal Policy, any money raised from the sale of withdrawn items is paid into the libraries revenue code.

## **11. Timetable for Implementation**

11.1. Central library is due to open in the extended Civic Centre in 2025.

11.2. Work is ongoing to determine the extent of the temporary closure and relocation, however it is anticipated being a period of at least one month, with library staff deployed to various aspects of building clearance and setup. A specialist move company will likely be retained for the physical move of items from one site to another.

11.3. It is therefore likely that the existing building will be cleared and withdrawals arising all fully processed by early 2025, with the bulk of the work taking place in 2024.

## **12. Background Papers**

12.1. There are none.

## Appendices – Appendix 1 – Stock area and background/disposal

Area of stock					
Playscripts					
Why/what?	Background	Disposal	Number of items showing on catalogue	Current linear metres of shelving	Issues and users 2023
Large number of playsets, as remainder of County Music and Drama Library. Most play reading groups have ceased, we did have over 200 in 1999, we now have 8. Collection is not being added to.	Previously lent to play reading groups and theatre groups. Now limited demand	Reduced.  Offer to groups who are still members, offered out to cultural institutions, withdrawn and disposed of  Some will be retained	13,553	65	2,149 issues to 81 users
Vocal score sets					
Why/what?	Background	Disposal	On catalogue – number of items (will be a lower number in actuality)	Current linear metres of shelving	Issues and borrowers 2023
Large number of vocal sets, as remain of County Music and Drama Library. Most groups we lend to	Previously lent to choirs. Now no demand.	Offered to groups who are still members, offered out to cultural institutions, withdrawn and disposed of	11,217	43	2 sets to 1 group

have ceased and issues have reduced. Interlending regionally has ceased. Collection is not being added to.					
<b>Music scores</b>					
<b>Why/what?</b>	<b>Background</b>	<b>Disposal</b>	<b>On catalogue – number of items (will be a lower number in actuality)</b>	<b>Current linear metres of shelving</b>	<b>Issues and borrowers 2023</b>
Large number of music scores, as remain of County Music and Drama Library. Most groups we lend to have ceased and issues have reduced. Interlending regionally has ceased. Collection is not being added to.	Previously lent to music organisations and orchestras. Now low demand.	Majority offered to groups who are still members, offered out to cultural institutions, withdrawn and disposed of  Small collection retained	4712	181	571 to 97 users
<b>Public Reference – items for library use only that are on open shelves</b>					

Why/what?	Background	Disposal	On catalogue – number of items (will be a lower number in actuality)	Current linear metres of shelving	Issues and borrowers 2023
Items for library use only	County Reference had a large number of items, and an entire floor of Central on opening. There are now relatively few and a very low expectation of 'reference books' in a modern library where most information these contained is online	For general disposal unless still relevant	1,901	Est20	0
<b>Reserve fiction</b>					
Why/what?	Background	Disposal	On catalogue – number of items (will be a lower number in actuality)	Current linear metres of shelving	Issues and borrowers 2023
Reserve fiction is more of a priority than reserve non-fiction as part of a wider library role in	This is one of the unique areas of libraries, and whilst we would reduce the large	Will withdraw some, will keep some but less of a priority than local collection	6,256	211	1,050 issues to 426 users

providing free access to older or out of print works by major writers	collection, some will be retained where we need to do so.				
<b>Reserve Non-fiction</b>					
<b>Why/what?</b>	<b>Background</b>	<b>Disposal</b>	<b>On catalogue – number of items (will be a lower number in actuality)</b>	<b>Current linear metres of shelving</b>	<b>Issues and borrowers 2023</b>
Older non fiction titles removed from shelves	There is not the need or potential demand for 'old' general non fiction as there once was.	Majority to be removed	4,678	192	208 issues to 111 users
<b>Reserve reference</b>					
<b>Why/what?</b>	<b>Background</b>	<b>Disposal</b>	<b>On catalogue – number of items (will be a lower number in actuality)</b>	<b>Current linear metres of shelving</b>	<b>Issues and borrowers 2023</b>
Residual collection from County Reference reserve	The majority of these items have been retained as 'old'/never looked at. They are not	Majority to be removed	2,494	135	0

	<p>relevant to Reading or a collection and are often in extremely poor condition or irrelevant/obscure. They can have a relatively higher value, although not generally very high given poor condition, and will be assessed individually. The great majority will be disposed of., at a higher rate than normal where possible. All items will need review. Where we do have a non-local connected item in very good condition with a scarcity value, we may look to auction rather than retain</p>				
<b>Area of stock</b>					
<b>Local reserve collection</b>					

note these are reference items not on public display					
Why/what?	Background	Disposal	On catalogue – number of items (will be a lower number in actuality)	Current linear metres of shelving	Issues and borrowers 2023
These are priority items, may be unique and are certainly a unique collection. We would not be removing local items en masse, we may rationalise some if no longer required or duplicated elsewhere. These items cannot currently be borrowed but are for research.	Former County Local History Library, whilst focus is now more on Reading, the resource is a very high quality one. 0.5FTE post attached, chiefly to look out information and items.	<p>Default is to retain unless any reason disposal is an option</p> <p>Off site storage for items that cannot be moved to Civic.</p> <p>Items in current strongroom likely to be moved offsite from Civic.</p>	50,344 items – includes maps, illustrations, photographs books etc that have been catalogued.	456	0

## 2. Appendix 2: Organisations contacted as part of planning, follow-up engagement has and will be occurring throughout 2024 and into 2025 with these and other organisations

Hampshire Library Service  
Oxfordshire Library Service  
Hertfordshire Library Service  
Nottingham Performing Arts Library  
Kent Library Service  
University of Reading  
British Library  
Victoria and Albert Museum  
Bodleian Library  
All library authorities in the South East Library Management System (SELMS)  
All library authorities within Libraries Connected South East region  
Reading Rep Theatre  
Progress Theatre  
Rbl Theatre  
U3A Reading  
Participants of Arts and Heritage Forum  
Aldworth Philharmonic  
Berkshire Music Trust  
Surrey Performing Arts Library

## 3. Appendix 3 : Equalities Impact Assessment for report

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Name of proposal/activity/policy to be assessed:

Directorate: DEGNS

Service: Libraries

Name: Simon Smith

Job Title: Reading Libraries and Museum Manager

Date of assessment: 5/2/23

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### Version History

Version	Reason	Author	Date	Approved By
V1.0	Creation	SS	8/12/23	DP
V2.0	Final approved	SS	5/12/23	DP



## Scope your proposal

- 
- **What is the aim of your policy or new service/what changes are you proposing?**
- 

Changes to library stock arising from the relocation of Reading Central Library

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- 
- **Who will benefit from this proposal and how?**
- 

Library users and non users will benefit by having a focus on the stock that the library needs in order to provide a modern library service for Reading. The reductions in non public stock are in line with the Reading Libraries Withdrawal Policy approved at HNL in March 2023. Stock is being increased in the children's, teen, non-English language, spoken word, large print areas which should benefit children, those with disabilities, those of different backgrounds and support provision of services to current and future families

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- 
- **What outcomes does the change aim to achieve and for whom?**
- 

The changes are to ensure that the available space for the library within the Civic Centre is focused on improved provision of books, study, education, community cohesion and meeting outcomes in the public space, to achieve the greatest benefit and impact. This should benefit all library users and is line with the Levelling Up Fund objectives.

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- 
- **Who are the main stakeholders and what do they want?**
- 

Library customers and non customers have indicated that bookstock should be a priority, alongside safe spaces, children's spaces and study provision.

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## Assess whether an EqIA is Relevant

How does your proposal relate to eliminating discrimination; advancing equality of opportunity; promoting good community relations?

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- **Do you have evidence or reason to believe that some groups may be affected differently than others (due to race, disability, sex, gender, sexuality, age, religious belief or due to belonging to the Armed Forces community)? Make reference to the known demographic profile of the service user group, your monitoring information, research, national data/reports etc.**

Yes : children and young people, students, speakers of non-English languages will all be positively impacted by change.

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- **Is there already public concern about potentially discriminatory practices/impact or could there be? Make reference to your complaints, consultation, feedback, media reports locally/nationally.**

No

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If the answer is **Yes** to any of the above, you need to do an Equality Impact Assessment.  
If **No** you **MUST** complete this statement.

**An Equality Impact Assessment is not relevant because:**

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X

Completing Officer

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X

Lead Officer

# Assess the Impact of the Proposal

Your assessment must include:

- **Consultation**
- **Collection and Assessment of Data**
- **Judgement about whether the impact is negative or positive**

Think about who does and doesn't use the service? Is the take up representative of the community? What do different minority groups think? (You might think your policy, project or service is accessible and addressing the needs of these groups, but asking them might give you a totally different view). Does it really meet their varied needs? Are some groups less likely to get a good service?

How do your proposals relate to other services - will your proposals have knock on effects on other services elsewhere? Are there proposals being made for other services that relate to yours and could lead to a cumulative impact?

**Example:** A local authority takes separate decisions to limit the eligibility criteria for community care services; increase charges for respite services; scale back its accessible housing programme; and cut concessionary travel.

Each separate decision may have a significant effect on the lives of disabled residents, and the cumulative impact of these decisions may be considerable.

This combined impact would not be apparent if decisions are considered in isolation.

## Consultation

How have you consulted with or do you plan to consult with relevant groups and experts. If you haven't already completed a Consultation form do it now. The checklist helps you make sure you follow good consultation practice.

[Consultation manager form - Reading Borough Council Dash](#)

Relevant groups/experts	How were/will the views of these groups be obtained	Date when contacted
Consultation on the move as a whole was carried out		

## Collect and Assess your Data

Using information from Census, residents survey data, service monitoring data, satisfaction or complaints, feedback, consultation, research, your knowledge and the knowledge of people in your team, staff groups etc. describe how the proposal could impact on each group. Include both positive and negative impacts.

(Please delete relevant ticks)

- **Describe how this proposal could impact on racial groups**
  - **Is there a negative impact?** No
- 

As part of the move, a consultation was carried out on the move as a whole. Whilst a separate consultation has not taken place in this area of stock reduction, it is felt that the changes to stock proposed in this report do not negatively impact on racial groups.

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- **Describe how this proposal could impact on Sex and Gender identity (include pregnancy and maternity, marriage, gender re-assignment)**
  - **Is there a negative impact?** No
- 

As part of the move, a consultation was carried out on the move as a whole. Whilst a separate consultation has not taken place in this area of stock reduction, it is felt that the changes to stock proposed in this report do not negatively impact on sex and gender identity, whilst noting as a whole that the library customer user base and staffing is more female than male.

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- **Describe how this proposal could impact on Disability**
  - **Is there a negative impact?** No
- 

As part of the move, a consultation was carried out on the move as a whole. Whilst a separate consultation has not taken place in this area of stock reduction, it is felt that the changes to stock proposed in this report do not disproportionately impact on disability.

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- **Describe how this proposal could impact on Sexual orientation (cover civil partnership)**
  - **Is there a negative impact?** No
-

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**As part of the move, a consultation was carried out on the move as a whole. Whilst a separate consultation has not taken place in this area of stock reduction, it is felt that the changes to stock proposed in this report do not negatively impact on sexual orientation**

- **Describe how this proposal could impact on age**
  - **Is there a negative impact? No**
- 

As part of the move, a consultation was carried out on the move as a whole. Whilst a separate consultation has not taken place in this area of stock reduction, it is felt that the changes to stock proposed in this report do not negatively impact on age

- 
- **Describe how this proposal could impact on Religious belief**
  - **Is there a negative impact? No**
  - **As part of the move, a consultation was carried out on the move as a whole. Whilst a separate consultation has not taken place in this area of stock reduction, it is felt that the changes to stock proposed in this report do not negatively impact on religious belief.**
- 

- 
- **Describe how this proposal could impact on the Armed Forces community (including reservists and veterans and their families)**
  - **Is there a negative impact? No**
- 

As part of the move, a consultation was carried out on the move as a whole. Whilst a separate consultation has not taken place in this area of stock reduction, it is felt that the changes to stock proposed in this report do not negatively impact on the Armed Forces Community

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## Make a Decision

If the impact is negative then you must consider whether you can legally justify it. If not you must set out how you will reduce or eliminate the impact. If you are not sure what the impact will be you **MUST** assume that there could be a negative impact. You may have to do further consultation or test out your proposal and monitor the impact before full implementation.

(Delete numbers below which don't apply)

### **1. No negative impact identified – Go to sign off**

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### **• How will you monitor for adverse impact in the future?**

**Can monitor use of overall stock which will adjust as usage patterns change, this is part of normal business and activity for a library service**

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**X**

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Lead Officer

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<b>Title</b>	Discretionary Licensing in Private Rented Housing
<b>Purpose of the report</b>	To make a decision
<b>Report status</b>	Public report
<b>Report author</b>	Stuart Taylor/Catherine Lewis
<b>Lead Councillor</b>	Councillor Ellie Emberson
<b>Corporate priority</b>	Thriving Communities
<b>Recommendations</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. That the Committee notes the evidence in the report from the commissioned Stock Condition Report, highlighting the scale of poor housing conditions, deprivation, anti-social behaviour (ASB) and other issues linked to the private rented sector in Reading.</li> <li>2. That the Committee authorises the Director of Economic Growth and Neighbourhood Services to commence a statutory consultation exercise with residents, private landlords, businesses and other key stakeholders on proposals for boroughwide additional licensing and a phased introduction of selective licensing, and to propose areas to be included in the consultation on these designations based on the evidence provided by the Stock Condition Report.</li> <li>3. That the Committee notes the initial report findings in Battle, Park and Redlands wards based on the evidence provided by the Stock Condition Report.</li> <li>4. That the Committee notes a further report with the outcome of the consultation will follow the consultation, setting out recommendations as to whether to designate additional and selective licensing schemes and their scope and scale.</li> </ol>

## 1.0 Executive Summary

- 1.1 Discretionary Licensing under the Housing Act 2004 (the 'Act') is a tool which the council can use to improve conditions and management in the private rented sector. This report examines the available evidence, gathered through a Boroughwide Stock Condition Survey against the requirements of the Act and presents options for future service delivery for private sector housing regulation, including the implementation of discretionary licensing schemes. The aim of the schemes proposed is to drive change and provide better homes for residents, which national evidence shows has positive impacts on physical and mental health and for families, better educational outcomes.
- 1.2 The Council currently operates a licensing scheme for larger houses in multiple occupation with 5 or more occupants, this is the national mandatory licensing scheme. The Act contains provisions for the Council to designate discretionary licensing schemes, of which the larger ones require Secretary of State approval.
- 1.3 The Stock Condition Survey found:

- that nearly 40% of the housing stock is in the private rented sector.
- that rents and property possession in Reading are above average for England. Possession relates to the landlord either exercising their right under section 21 of the Housing Act 1988 where a fixed term tenancy ends or through section 8 for issues such as rent arrears or antisocial behaviour.
- that there are over 3,000 houses in multiple occupation (HMO)
- 37% of HMOs are likely to have serious hazards (under the Housing, Health & Safety Rating System) and that,
- HMOs have the highest rates of Anti-Social Behaviour when compared to other tenures.

1.4 Following the completion of a Stock Condition Report and evaluation of a range of evidence, it is recommended that the Council proceeds to consult on the implementation of a Boroughwide additional licensing scheme alongside the phased implementation of a selective licensing scheme. This would drive up conditions and improve the management of the private rented sector. The recommendation for phasing of selective schemes is based on a number of factors, which includes:

- The size of any scheme determines whether Secretary of State permission is required.
- There are significant limitations in the labour market around qualified Environmental Health staff to undertake the work.
- Phasing enables a focussed and targeted approach to achieving the outcomes.
- The evidence needs to be clear and the interventions need to yield the biggest benefit.

1.5 Consideration has been given to the threshold which triggers the requirement for Secretary of State approval and the recommended approach means that this will not be required and therefore it would be possible to deliver schemes subject to consultation to start in April 2025.

## 2.0 Policy Context

2.1 The [Corporate Plan](#), [Housing Standards Enforcement Policy](#) and the [Housing Strategy](#) commit the Council to review evidence in relation to housing conditions and review the need for discretionary licensing schemes as part of wider actions to improve the quality and safety of housing for residents. The Housing Act 2004 sets out the duty to keep housing conditions under review and as part of this, whilst not a statutory requirement, councils undertake a 'Stock Condition Survey'.

2.2 [Berkshire West Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2021-2030](#) identifies that poor housing is one of the determinants of poor health. The Strategy commits the Council to consider the impact on health in work and to 'address the variation in the experience of the wider social, economic and environmental determinants of health'.

## 3.0 The Proposal

### Background

3.1 Poor and unsafe housing can occur in all forms of home ownership and occupancy, but in general the private rented sector has the highest rates of poorer housing. A growing proportion of the population now live in privately rented properties. Evidence shows that privately rented housing has higher levels of damp than other sectors; one in five households are fuel poor; and there are twice as many homes in poor condition<sup>1</sup>. There is a clear link between healthy homes and health inequalities.

- 3.2 The Housing Act 2004 (“the Act”) came into effect in 2006 and brought with it a range of duties and powers to improve the management and conditions across the private rented sector (PRS), including licensing. The Act introduced a statutory licensing scheme covering properties that are 3 or more stories with 5 or more occupants. In 2018, the government extended the scheme to include properties of 1 and 2 storeys, but still being applicable only to properties with 5 or more occupants. Generally, this is restricted to properties with occupants who share amenities.
- 3.3 Licensing allows the Council to inspect, limit occupation, apply conditions and in certain circumstances to take control of a property. The Act sets the criteria for the Council to consider suitability of the property, management arrangements and to determine whether the landlord is a ‘fit and proper’ person to manage. The Council can charge for a scheme, with licences generally being issued for 5 years and individual licence costs based on cost recovery.
- 3.4 The Act also introduced two other forms of licensing:

#### **Additional licensing.**

Description	Criteria
<p>This is a discretionary power to declare all or part of the local authority’s area subject to its controls for no more than 5 years.</p> <p>It can cover ‘smaller’ HMOs that are currently outside of the mandatory licensing</p>	<p>The authority must consider that a significant proportion of the HMOs of that description in the area are being managed sufficiently ineffectively as to give rise, or to be likely to give rise, to problems either for those occupying the HMOs or for members of the public.</p>
<p>A scheme designation could also include certain buildings converted into self-contained flats.</p> <p>In a building that has been converted into self-contained flats and has both owner-occupied and rented flats, the whole building may be required to apply for a licence under an additional licensing scheme. However, it is important to note that this type of licence does not cover the individual flats. Individual flats may be licensable under a selective licensing scheme, so parts of the same building may be required to have both types of licence.</p>	<p>These are buildings that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• have been converted into self-contained flats; and</li> <li>• the conversion did not comply with the relevant Building Regulations in force at that time and still does not comply; and</li> <li>• less than two-thirds of the flats are owner-occupied.</li> </ul> <p>These are referred to as poorly converted buildings (PCBs).</p>

#### **Selective Licensing.**

Description	Criteria
<p>A selective licensing scheme means that all private landlords in a designated area must have a licence. Selective licensing aims to improve the private rented market. It means properties must be of a decent standard for a landlord to rent out. Selective licensing also gives tenants confidence that houses and flats in a designated area will be healthy and safe to live in.</p>	<p>A selective scheme is a discretionary power that councils may use in an area where the following criteria are met.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- low housing demand (or is likely to become such an area) and/or;</li> <li>- a significant and persistent problem caused by anti-social behaviour;</li> <li>- poor housing conditions;</li> <li>- high levels of migration;</li> <li>- high level of deprivation;</li> <li>- high levels of crime.</li> </ul>

	<p>In this context “anti-social behaviour” refers to conduct of occupiers or visitors to, residential premises—</p> <p>(a) which causes or is likely to cause a nuisance or annoyance to persons residing, visiting or otherwise engaged in lawful activities in the vicinity of such premises, or</p> <p>(b) which involves or is likely to involve the use of such premises for illegal purposes. such as crime, nuisance neighbours and environmental crime.</p> <p>It should be noted that licensing is not intended to be a replacement for other statutory powers to control ASB.</p>
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- 3.5 Appendix 2 compares mandatory, additional and selective licensing scheme criteria and the conditions that may be attached.
- 3.6 In order to implement either of these discretionary powers, the Act requires other options are considered, that an evidence base is established and that a statutory public consultation is undertaken with all those affected by the proposal. In certain cases, Secretary of State approval is required, in particular where more than 20% of the local authority area’s geographical area or private rented housing stock is to be covered by a selective licensing scheme.
- 3.7 In addition to these discretionary powers, the Government has published its White Paper setting out proposals for the [Renters Reform Bill](#). The Bill sets out a range of provisions, some of which could overlap with the aims of a discretionary scheme such as:
- Private rented sector database
  - Application of the Decent Homes Standard

A summary of the proposed changes is set out in Appendix 2.

#### **4.0 Current position**

- 4.1 There are currently over 1,400 HMOs licensed in Reading under the current mandatory schemes. It has been difficult to provide an accurate estimation of the number of properties requiring a licence under the scheme. Whilst it is acknowledged that there still may be a significant number of unlicensed HMOs, it has proven difficult to enforce against those who have evaded the scheme, despite investigations, mechanisms such as online anonymous reporting and publicising financial penalties that have been issued for non-compliance.
- 4.2 The Public Protection Service receives service requests relating to housing conditions, Part 2 of the report in Appendix 1 gives further details. Regulatory compliance includes information, advice, inspection, warnings, enforcement and, where there is sufficient evidence and public interest, financial penalties, or prosecutions. Officer’s work also includes partnering with Royal Berkshire Fire & Rescue as part of their risk-based inspection programme, liaison with the University of Reading and the inspection and compliance of Bed and Breakfast accommodation used for Asylum accommodation by the Government.
- 4.3 The current mandatory HMO licensing scheme receives circa 30 applications per month (new and renewal applications) and there are over 140 applications being processed (awaiting a decision whether to grant the licence or not). The backlog is in part linked to

Covid and Homes for Ukraine inspections, which needed to be prioritised over the scheme.

- 4.4 Fees are set based on cost recovery, but a lot of the activity of the team around the enforcement of housing conditions is not recoverable.
- 4.5 There are some additional measures under [Article 4](#) of the Town & Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 in place in wards such as Katesgrove, Redlands and Park which support a predominantly student private rented sector (PRS) population. The Article 4 direction prohibits conversion of family homes to houses in multiple occupation, which would otherwise be permitted development, without planning consent. In addition, work is carried out in the predominantly student areas by the University's own Community Relations team and Students Union.
- 4.6 The Council has also operated a landlord accreditation scheme as part of the Housing Strategy known as [Reading Rent with Confidence](#). The scheme aims to improve standards by encouraging landlords with good management practices and properties. However, engagement with landlords has been difficult and uptake has been low with under 10 properties on the scheme as of November 2023.

### **The stock condition report**

- 4.7 The Council contracted Metastreet to examine data from its own systems, external data relating to the PRS and wider socio-economic factors. Metastreet use modelling to generate estimates, this approach has been widely used by other councils and used by a number to provide evidence to support the designation of licensing schemes. Appendix 1 includes the full report. The key issues identified as part of the study were:
- Reading's PRS is now calculated to be 39.9% of all housing stock and distributed across all 16 wards.
  - Reading has a mixture of high and low deprivation wards. 8 of 16 wards have aggregated Index of Multiple Deprivation rankings below the national average.
  - Reading has a lower proportion of its population in fuel poverty (10.3%) than the national average.
  - Reading has above average rents for England (£1,006) and has above average rented property possession rate nationally, with 11.5 claims per 10,000 households in 2023, reflecting a lack of security of tenure for Reading's renting residents.
  - Reading recorded 3,117 complaints and service requests from private tenants and others linked to PRS properties over 5-years.
  - The Council has recorded a total of 1,980 ASB incidents related to PRS properties over the past five years.
  - 1,084 PRS properties are likely to fail the basic energy efficiency requirement.
  - There are 4,279 private rented properties in Reading that are likely to have at least 1 serious housing hazard, distributed across all wards.

In relation to houses in multiple occupation (HMOs) specifically:

- The HMO stock has been estimated to comprise a total of 3,272 properties.
- Analysis shows that 1,230 HMOs (37%) are predicted to have at least one serious hazard.

- 697 ASB incidents have been linked to all HMOs distributed across all wards over 5 years.
- HMOs have by far the highest rates of ASB (21.3 per 100 dwellings), when compared to other tenures.

## **5.0 Options**

- 5.1 There are several viable options which could be taken forward. Broadly speaking these can be targeted at a combination of the following themes:
- Property conditions.
  - Antisocial behaviour.
  - Houses in multiple occupation.

- 5.2 The option appraisal identifies outcomes and risk factors and evaluates these based on information from other local authorities and the service's own experiences of mandatory licensing. The options explored consider both the type of licensing, but also different scales e.g. Boroughwide versus ward(s). It is clear from the current mandatory scheme model that the implementation and administration of the scheme can be hard to run on a cost neutral basis.

### **Option 1 – Further developing existing powers and tools**

- 5.3 The Council must consider what other options are available, before proceeding with a designation of a new licensing scheme.
- 5.4 Within this option is 'do nothing' and continue to operate the service as now, reacting to complaints about property conditions and continuing to operate the mandatory licensing scheme. However, whilst the current service delivers effectively on a number of levels, there is space to improve outcomes by refocusing services, in particular, by using the data from the survey to target enforcement.
- 5.5 Strategic targeting of the worst property (or areas) could be carried out by:
- Proactive targeting of properties with a low energy rating could be carried out using enforcement powers under the domestic minimum energy efficiency standards regulations or the Housing Act Part 1, which provides for other enforcement powers.
  - Proactive inspections could be targeted at particular areas or particular property types, including the identification of licensable properties potentially evading the mandatory scheme. Through intervention, this would lead to improved standards for residents and a potential reduction in complaints.
- 5.6 These options are likely to be labour intensive and whilst some costs can be recovered where a formal notice is issued, there would not be a licence fee to cover the whole costs of such a scheme.
- 5.7 Joint working between Public Health and Public Protection services can be built upon to improve the health of the population in Reading. The objective would be to reduce the impact of poor, unsuitable housing on both physical as well as mental health and wellbeing. In turn this aims to reduce health inequalities, along with the associated demand for health care and social care.
- 5.8 The Council could also amend the enforcement policy to move the focus to earlier formal interventions such as notices, where there is a risk identified to the tenants. This option might increase cost recovery, for formal action relating to the Housing Act, but not for other types of notice. There is a risk however that this would move away from nationally recognised enforcement approaches such as the Regulators Compliance Code and therefore would increase risks of appeal.

Pros	Cons
Less likely to require new approvals, some adjustments may be possible within scope of existing policies and delegations	Action under this option is unlikely to reach as many properties as is possible under the other options below.
More likely to be achievable within existing resource	Unlikely to achieve cost recovery (as this is not available under all the available powers)
Use of existing powers could be more targeted on the worst properties (looking at individual problem properties instead of a broader area).  Landlords may feel that extending licensing catches all landlords including good ones and is not targeting the worst landlords. This option may therefore have more stakeholder support.	Would not benefit from the publicity and engagement (with landlords and tenants) that a consultation and designation may generate. It can be hard to reach tenants in the worst properties who may not know to approach us or who may be afraid to. Alternative publicity could be carried out to increase awareness to mitigate this.
Can make use of the data from the stock condition report in targeting of areas or of individual properties (without having to also interact with neighbouring properties in the area that are more likely to be compliant).	If increased formal legal action is implemented, landlords may complain or appeal to the court system on the basis that they would have completed the works voluntarily. It also generates wider cost to the organisation which may not be recovered.

## Option 2 - Additional Licensing Scheme

- 5.8 This option would focus on licensing smaller houses in multiple occupation only (in addition to the HMOs covered by the existing scheme). This would cover properties with 3 or 4 occupants forming separate households (usually with shared facilities). There are currently 1,800 HMOs of this type not covered by an existing licensing scheme.
- 5.9 The study does suggest that there are issues around both property conditions and anti-social behaviour in relation to HMOs with shared facilities. The stock condition report did not provide evidence in relation to buildings converted into self-contained flats, which may also be considered as a type of HMO and which may also have poor conditions. The properties could also be covered by a designation, further analysis of the hazard profile will be required to assess whether these should be included in the proposed designations.
- 5.10 The scheme would operate in a similar way to the existing mandatory licensing scheme, with inspections of each property and using similar criteria, though a review of our standards and guidance will be required. The proposed fees are therefore the same as for existing HMO licences under the existing scheme, with a proposed standard fee of £950 (further details in Appendix 5-7). A licence will be issued for a maximum of 5 years.
- 5.11 Enforcement within the area designated will increase as a result of increased levels of inspections and the identification of more non-compliant landlords. In addition, increased awareness amongst residents and landlords could lead to the sector itself driving up standards.
- 5.12 This option is further broken down into large and small areas.

### Option 2 (a) - Large Additional Licensing area (multiple wards, up to the whole Borough)

This would cover a large area of the Borough or the whole Borough, equating to up-to 1,800-2,000 HMO properties with shared facilities (or a larger number if buildings converted into flats were also included).



<b>Pros</b>	<b>Cons</b>
A large scheme treats all HMO landlords equally.	An additional licensing scheme would only licence small HMOs currently not covered by the mandatory scheme. It would not cover other rented properties.
A large scheme would have the greatest impact on the numbers of properties to be improved.	The evidence for taking action is weaker in some wards, so the scheme may be seen by some as disproportionate and more open to challenge.
An HMO-only scheme targets the tenure type which the study shows has the most problems.	If licences are to be processed and properties inspected this will be a major undertaking and not achievable within the existing staffing resource. There is a significant risk of not being able to recruit sufficient staff to operate the scheme, in particular relating to Environmental Health Officers and other inspecting officers where there is a national and local shortage of qualified staff.
Enforcement within the whole borough will increase as a result of the identification of more non-compliant landlords, improved compliance from enforcement and increased awareness amongst residents and landlords, driving up standards.	Conditions that restrict the number of occupants may have an impact on homeless prevention and availability of accommodation. This may be acute in cases where an existing occupant is required to leave in order to comply with a restriction and there may also be longer term impacts on the housing rental market.
This risk of displacement of HMOs from one area to another is reduced (potentially reducing the impact on areas with low concentrations of HMOs at present).	Costs of a scheme are likely to be passed onto both landlords and tenants. Licence fee costs are estimated to be in the region of £950 for a licence lasting up to 5 years, with no controls on how this may affect rent levels.
HMOs are predicted overall to have higher rates of poor property conditions and so the scheme may be viewed as more targeted.	Increased regulation and knowledge of the possibility of a scheme being introduced is likely to result in landlords leaving the market which may impact on housing supply.
	Amongst rogue landlords, there may be increased retaliatory evictions resulting from enforcement intervention.
	Enforcement costs against non-compliant landlords, which might not be recoverable through fees, are likely to be higher due to the larger area and number of properties covered.

### **Option 2 (b) – Small Additional Licensing area**

In this sub-option a smaller area would be selected, typically this would be a ward or a group of wards.

- 5.13 A smaller area-based scheme would cover areas where more issues have been identified with housing conditions.
- 5.14 The number of HMOs that would be included would vary by ward as set out in the table below, showing figures for HMOs with shared facilities. A larger number of properties could be included if buildings converted to self-contained flats are brought into the



scheme designation. The impact of a scheme will also vary by ward, as some have higher rates of issues such as serious hazards or antisocial behaviour.

Wards	No. HMOs	Mandatory HMO Licence applications made	Additional HMOs	Serious hazards (Predicted)	ASB & nuisance incidents
Abbey	770	82	688	159 (20%)	86 (11.1%)
Battle	208	84	124	96 (46.1%)	65 (31.3%)
Park	463	283	180	82 (17.7%)	152 (32.8%)
Redlands	653	336	217	143 (21.9%)	225 (34.5%)

- 5.15 Should a full Borough scheme not be supported, it is therefore recommended to consult on the implementation of an additional licensing scheme (covering smaller HMOs) in a restricted number of wards. Battle and Redlands ward have been identified as the priority areas (341 properties). Abbey ward or part of Abbey ward could be added to incorporate up to an additional 688 properties. A larger number of properties could be included if buildings converted to self-contained flats (poorly converted buildings) are brought into the scheme designation.

Pros	Cons
More likely to be achievable with a modest increase to existing resource (depending on the number of properties in scope).	Does not cover so many properties, so fewer properties are improved
HMOs are predicted overall to have higher rates of poor property conditions and so the scheme may be viewed as more targeted.	An additional licensing scheme would only licence small HMOs currently not covered by the mandatory scheme. As a result, many poorly managed properties occupied by single households would be excluded from the scheme, diminishing the impact. Selective licensing allows for all private rented properties to be covered, rather than just HMOs.
A smaller targeted scheme allows outcomes to be evaluated rapidly by the service and its partners. The scheme could be used as a pilot prior to expansion into further wards. Changes can be made on a smaller scale as necessary and improvements to future schemes may be better informed.	There may be market distortion within the affected areas including loss of some properties from the sector, this may impact on adjoining areas or other parts of the wider area. For example, further conversions to HMOs outside the designation boundary and/or rogue landlords may be displaced into other areas of the borough as a result of licence avoidance.
Some of the negative impacts on landlord leaving the market and evictions may be reduced in size, due to the smaller number of properties affected.	Conflicting priorities between agencies may mean that the areas selected as a priority for housing conditions are not a priority for other departments or agencies (so the benefits of co-operation are reduced),
A focussed neighbourhood approach could more easily incorporate a multi- agency approach as resources can be more readily marshalled.	A requirement to carry out a statutory consultation again if the scheme is to be extended into other parts of the borough.

Capacity/resource can be tested without the same level of financial commitment that may be required by a larger scheme. E.g. if the enforcement resource is insufficient, this can be reviewed as this is a key part of any scheme but is not covered by licensing fees.	We note that further investigation may be required to establish the detail of the property numbers particularly in Abbey ward and whether blocks of modern converted and purpose built housing such as student flats have impacted on this figure.
Starting with a focus on the area evidencing greatest need, the scheme could in subsequent years be extended to cover additional wards with experience fed back in as the scheme progresses.	Landlords inside the area may feel unfairly targeted and tenants outside the designation may feel disadvantaged.

### 5.16 Option 3 Selective Licensing Scheme

5.17 A selective licensing scheme would cover all private rented properties within the designated area, other than where a legal exemption is in place.

5.18 The legislation sets criteria for introducing a selective licensing scheme.

- low housing demand and/or;
- a significant and persistent problem caused by anti-social behaviour;
- poor housing conditions;
- high levels of migration;
- high level of deprivation;
- high levels of crime.

5.19 The study does not provide any evidence in relation to crime or migration and at present there is not sufficient evidence to base a designation on these criteria.

5.20 Drawing on evidence from the Stock Condition Survey, there is some evidence to support a link between antisocial behaviour and HMOs, though the links between antisocial behaviour and the rest of the private rented sector is less clear. As with Option 2 the figures vary across different areas and therefore a targeted approach would be both more readily justifiable and deliverable than a Borough wide approach.

5.21 The report also provides evidence in relation to the poor housing conditions criteria. The report shows that poor conditions are not restricted to the HMO stock and this may justify broader action particularly in the areas with the worst conditions. Key factors relating to housing conditions identified in the report include:

- Abbey (63) and Redlands (45) received the highest number of statutory notices for housing and public health related issues.
- Park (9) and Redlands (9) received the highest number of serious enforcement interventions (financial penalties and prosecutions).
- Church, Park and Redlands had the largest percentage of properties with a poor EPC rating (E,F or G).
- Redlands (484) and Abbey (405) received most private tenant service requests and complaints by private tenants and others to the Council.
- Redlands (605) and Park (490) have the highest number of predicted properties with at least one serious hazard.

5.22 The report does include some information on deprivation. Abbey, Battle, Church, Coley, Katesgrove, Norcot, Southcote and Whitley wards have rankings below the national average on the Indices of Multiple Deprivation. A designation using deprivation criteria would allow the Council to consider:

- the average income of households
- the employment status of adults

- the health of households
- the availability and ease of access to education, training and other services for households
- housing conditions
- the physical environment
- levels of crime.

5.23 The impact on health can also be considered in a designation relating to property conditions, as it would consider the potential harm to health caused by poor housing conditions. This includes damp, cold, mould and their related health effects.

5.24 The recommendation is to make a designation based on property conditions. Housing is one of the fundamental building blocks for a healthy life and all aspects of individual's homes and where they live affect their physical and mental health and well-being. Licencing conditions would consider that for a home to be licenced; it needs to be warm, free of damp and have enough space and be free from significant hazards. The scheme and conditions might also include energy performance of properties, with potential positive impacts on the environment and energy costs.

5.25 Licence applications under this scheme would need to evidence property conditions, a proportion of properties would be inspected and other means of demonstrating compliance may be used in some cases. A lower standard fee (£750) is proposed to take account of not all properties being inspected, details in appendix 5-7. Licences would be issued for up to 5 years and would have conditions applied to ensure property standards are maintained, the scope of the potential conditions is shown in Appendix 3.

5.26 Within this option there are large or small scheme designations:

### **Option 3 (a) – Large Selective Licensing area (multiple wards, up to the whole Borough)**

5.27 A large scheme encapsulating all of Reading's private rented sector could have as many as 30,982 properties within it. Although 4,297 of these properties are predicted to have serious hazards, the rate does vary between wards.

Pros	Cons
A large scheme treats all landlords equally.	A large scheme will need consent from the Secretary of State, which will also increase the timescale and cost for delivery.
A selective licensing scheme could cover a broader range of properties, so may have more impact from covering a greater number of properties. The scheme would therefore have the greatest reach, with the potential to improve the greatest number of properties.	The evidence for taking action is weaker in some wards, so the scheme may be disproportionate and more open to challenge and will cover more properties that are already compliant.
Will capture properties such as those flats which are not covered by the proposed additional HMO scheme.	The resources to process such a scheme would be larger and beyond current capacity.
A selective licence scheme might have more impact on a neighbourhood, through this wider coverage, particularly in areas where the total private rented sector level is high, but the percentage of HMOs is lower.	The selective scheme covering single household dwellings has more differences to the existing licensing scheme than an additional HMO scheme, and so may take more time to design and implement.

A selective licence may not require an inspection in each case, this option therefore requires less resource and results in a lower fee for the landlord.	A greater number of properties that are already safe would be covered by a large scheme.
	A selective licensing scheme may take more time to design and implement.

### **Option 3 (b) Small (area based) selective licensing area (small scheme under 20% threshold)**

- 5.28 Drawing on evidence from the Stock Condition Survey there is strong evidence to support an area-based scheme, covering areas where more issues have been identified with housing conditions. This would be both justifiable and deliverable when compared to a Borough wide approach. It is therefore proposed, if this option is approved, to consult on the implementation of a selective licensing scheme in a restricted number of wards.
- 5.29 According to the study the following wards are predicted to have the highest rate of serious hazards, expressed as a percentage of private rented sector dwellings in that area:

<b>Battle</b>	15.9
<b>Tilehurst</b>	15.9
<b>Church</b>	17
<b>Park</b>	20.1
<b>Redlands</b>	20.1

The following wards are predicted to have the highest number of serious hazards within the private rented sector in those areas.

<b>Katesgrove</b>	404
<b>Battle</b>	429
<b>Abbey</b>	449
<b>Park</b>	490
<b>Redlands</b>	605

- 5.29 Based on this data, officers would recommend the designation of a selective licensing scheme to cover the two wards with the highest rate and number of serious hazards (Park and Redlands). For the third ward officers would recommend a designation in Battle ward, which features both high numbers and a high rate of serious hazards. A discretionary licensing scheme in these wards would cover an estimated 8,149 properties, or 6,825 properties if houses in multiple occupation with shared facilities were licenced separately under Option 1. A full and final recommendation is not made in this report, as it is considered worth further investigating the impact of individual flats in poorly converted buildings on overall housing conditions in a couple of wards.

Pros	Cons
More likely to be achievable than a whole Borough scheme (depending on the number of properties in scope) with fewer additional resources.	Due to the size of the sector even one ward could take significant resource, with up to 5,014 PRS properties within a ward
Will capture properties such as individual flats, which may not be covered by the proposed additional HMO scheme.	Targeting a small number of wards may be seen as unequal, both landlords and tenants may feel that requirements in one

	area are not applied in other areas which may be perceived as unfair.
A selective licensing scheme could cover a broader range of properties, so may have more impact from covering a greater number of properties.	HMOs are predicted overall to have higher rates of poor property conditions and so the scheme covering all PRS may be viewed as less targeted.
A selective licensing scheme might also have more impact on a neighbourhood in areas where the total private rented sector level is high, but the percentage of HMOs is lower.	A selective licensing scheme may take more time to design and implement.
A scheme targeted on a smaller area would concentrate on the worst, so the interventions/applications to reach the poorer properties is reduced (so the benefits weighed against the cost of a scheme may be increased).	
A selective licence may not require an inspection in each case, this option therefore requires less resource and results in a lower fee for the landlord.	

### 5.30 Option 4 Combination of schemes

- 5.31 A combination of additional and selective schemes could be introduced. For example, all HMOs (3-4 occupants) could be licenced under an additional licensing designation across the Borough and all private rented properties in specific wards under a selective licensing designation. Using the criteria outlined in earlier options, it is proposed that a phased implementation of selective schemes be consulted on. This would mean that the evidenced issues within wards could be addressed, but in a more manageable way.
- 5.32 It is noted that of the three wards conditionally proposed, Battle ward has been identified as a deprived ward. The order of phasing for the delivery of an area based selective scheme would therefore take into account markers such as deprivation, to ensure the greatest benefit of delivery. Consultation on all proposed schemes would run together.

In addition to the pros and cons listed in Options 2 and 3:

Pros	Cons
This may be the most targeted approach looking area by area.	The designations may be more difficult to explain during the consultation process and, if made, may remain more difficult to understand which would impact on compliance.
Applying additional licensing to some areas (instead of selective licensing) may make the number of licences more manageable.	The process the Council must follow to set up designations under two parts of the Act may be more complicated.

## 6.0 Conclusions/Recommendations

- 6.1 A targeted approach is recommended based on Option 4. This includes additional licensing of smaller HMOs across the whole Borough, combined with selective licensing of all rented properties in selected wards.
- 6.2 Officers have concluded from the evidence presented within the study that initially a scheme should concentrate on poor management, focused on tackling property

conditions and the impact on occupants. Work to establish an action plan in relation to anti-social behaviour, in conjunction with the Community Safety, Sustainable Communities and ASB Teams and partner agencies could follow as a secondary phase in conjunction with the Strategic Needs Assessment led by that service.

- 6.3 Further work will be completed to support the preferred options, this will include the resources required to design and implement the scheme(s). There will also be some refinement to the ward selection for Selective Licensing. The objective will be to establish whether additional licensing of converted flats may tackle a significant number of the hazards identified where there are a number of older converted buildings, if so this will be included in the consultation on an additional licensing scheme. If it doesn't then consideration will be given as to whether to include additional areas in the selective scheme (subject to threshold criteria being carefully considered).
- 6.4 It is proposed to set the fee at a level that would ensure cost recovery for the scheme. In addition, a fee which is a balance between reasonable cost for licence holders against ensuring the scheme is successful, properly funded and appropriately resourced.
- 6.5 Once responses to the consultation are analysed a further report would need to be presented to the Housing Neighbourhoods and Leisure Committee, including a decision on whether to proceed. A statutory process must be followed. An indicative timetable is included in Appendix 4.

## **7.0 Contribution to Strategic Aims**

- 7.1 'Thriving Communities' theme of the Corporate plan 2020-25. Under the corporate plan we are committed to ensure everyone has an equal chance to thrive wherever they live. The corporate plan also aspires to a place-based approach and for residents to feel safer from risk or harm. The targeted approach set out in the recommendations can contribute to ensuring equal access to a decent home across tenures and across the Borough.
- 7.2 The proposed recommendation to designate licensing schemes also contributes to improve "public health and prevent and reduce health inequality enabling people to live a full and healthy life". Specifically, improving living standards can have a positive impact on mental and physical health and wellbeing, as well as national evidence supporting that poor housing can lead to poorer educational attainment outcomes.
- 7.3 The Council will take a population health approach to improve the stock of good quality homes by integrating Housing and Public Health and addressing the interrelated issues of poor health and housing. The Council will aim to make healthy homes the norm to reduce health inequalities.
- 7.4 The link between poor housing conditions and poor health outcomes is long established. Improving the quality of housing, would have a positive impact on the associated demand for healthcare and social care.

## **8.0 Environmental and Climate Implications**

- 8.1 There is a net medium positive impact to introducing the recommended schemes. The Housing Strategy commits the Council to use the stock condition report to provide information on the energy efficiency rating of dwellings in the Borough to support the delivery (including retrofit of properties) of the Reading Climate Emergency Strategy 2020-25. This will be developed further as part of the Housing Action Plan.
- 8.2 The decisions in this report will impact on climate and environment through improvements in property conditions. The report identifies the number of properties in the private rented sector with poor energy efficiency ratings, a number of the housing hazards referred to

will also relate to excess cold. The inspection programme and compliance actions resulting from a designation of discretionary licensing schemes will result in improved energy efficiency of some properties covered by the scheme.

- 8.3 In relation to waste, HMOs occupied by separate and multiple households, generate more waste and rubbish than single family homes. The Council in its function as the local waste authority can make provision for landlords of HMOs to ensure there are appropriate facilities for storing rubbish their properties generate. All licensed HMOs (including those under additional licensing schemes) will need to comply with the scheme. By providing the correct waste receptacles this enables recycling from these households. A licence holder's failure to comply with the scheme is a breach of the licence and criminal offence.

## **9.0 Community Engagement**

- 9.1 A statutory process must be followed, the local housing authority must consult on the proposed scheme for at least 10 weeks.
- 9.2 Guidance from DLHUC in relation to selective licensing suggests that 'The consultation should be informative, clear and to the point, so the proposal is readily understood. It should inform local residents, landlords, letting agents and businesses about the proposed designation, giving the reasons for proposing it, why alternative remedies are insufficient, demonstrating how it will tackle specific problems together with other specified measures, and describing the proposed outcome of the designation. It should also set out the proposed fee structure and level of fees the authority is minded to charge (if any). Consultees should be invited to give their views, and these should all be considered and responded to.'
- 9.3 The guidance also states that 'Once the consultation has been completed the results should then be published and made available to the local community. This should be in the form of a summary of the responses received and should demonstrate how these have either been acted on or not, giving reasons.'
- 9.4 The Housing Act also requires the Council to seek to adopt a coordinated approach in relation to homelessness, empty properties and anti-social behaviour affecting the private rented sector when designating a scheme. As this must look at combining licensing with other courses of action available to the Council and with measures taken by other persons, it will also be necessary to consult with partner agencies and other interested bodies who interact with and influence the sector. This will include the fire service, police and landlord associations.

## **10 Equality Implications**

- 10.1 The proposals are not expected to have a differential people with protected characteristics (age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex (gender) or sexual orientation), beyond the impact described below.
- 10.2 The proposals in the report will have a beneficial impact to residents in the private rented sector subject to the scheme(s), particularly those occupants of certain ages (particularly the very old and very young) who may be impacted more due to the risk of injury or poor health caused by poor housing conditions.
- 10.3 The improved housing conditions resulting from the proposal will support individuals at high risk of poor health outcomes, a priority in the [Berkshire West Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2021-2030](#).

## **11 Other Relevant Considerations**

- 11.1 The Council must ensure that it has robust evidence against relevant criteria for designations and set the Council ambition, prior to scheme design. The data will need to be examined so see which scheme fits with which ward or other designated area. The staffing resource required to set up the scheme and to implement it (which will vary

depending on size) must be identified. A working group will need to be set up of key staff within Public Protection, Legal, Public Health and Communications teams.

- 11.2 It is good practice to run a pre consultation exercise prior to full consultation to identify some of the barriers and provide information to members and officers around the likely challenges.
- 11.3 Statutory Consultation must take place, this 10–12-week consultation engages stakeholders to consult on scheme approach and requires significant effort in particular to reach all affected groups, some of whom are outside the borough. A 12-week standstill period follows and all consultation responses must be considered and responded to. A post consultation report for committee would follow.
- 11.4 In addition to committee approval, any designation proposal covering more than 20% of the geographical area or 20% of the private rented housing stock would then need to be sent to the Secretary of State. This would take at minimum 3 months from being sent and could take up to 12 months.
- 11.5 In order to implement the scheme development of systems (to process applications) and time to recruit capability and capacity must take place. Officer resources may need to be front loaded to the initial implementation stage to deal with initial applications, this may reduce after an initial period.
- 11.6 As noted above, the progression of the Renters Reform Bill may impact on the regulations facing landlords in this sector and may to some extent duplicate provisions of a licensing scheme. The Secretary of State may also review the types of designation which does not require their approval at any time but following enactment of the Bill. The extent of the additional work required to enforce the Renters Reform Bill (if enacted) is not known, if the other options are pursued this may make it more difficult to find additional capacity to cope with these requirements. Some of the proposals in the Bill may have some benefits such as a landlord register, which may duplicate some of the benefits of a licensing scheme. Registration on a national register would identify more landlords that we are currently aware of. If other options in this report are pursued, this may make it more difficult to find additional capacity to cope with any new requirements resulting from the Bill, if enacted.
- 11.7 The publicity surrounding the proposed schemes, including at consultation and designation stage, may raise awareness of the Council's role in enforcing standards in the private rented sector. As well as the benefits of this, increased awareness on compliance may also lead to increased demand on the service responding to enquiries and complaints about property conditions (as well as about the scheme itself). The design and implementation of the schemes, though proposed to be met through existing budgets, are likely to impact on service delivery in day-to-day operations of the private sector housing team. A further assessment will need to be conducted into the impact on other Council services and stakeholders to ensure that capacity exists.
- 11.8 In order to encourage landlord engagement and upskilling, it is proposed to offer a discount to landlords who are accredited, this is in line with current policy for the existing mandatory licensing scheme. Landlord accreditation schemes such as those operated by the NRLA are voluntary schemes which require completion of training.
- 11.9 Caselaw indicates that the planning status of a property may be a relevant consideration when issuing a licence. Consultations with planning and planning enforcement would likely form part of the scheme design and the issues raised from applications and inspections may impact on these services.
- 11.10 Although it is envisaged that most licences issued would be for the full term of the designation (5 years), there is no requirement for the Council to issue a licence for the full length of the scheme. Issuing a shorter licence is an alternative measure where there are issues at the property, this might include poor management, poor property conditions



or issues around planning permission. In these circumstances, it is proposed that the council would generally issue a one-year licence in the first instance to allow sufficient time to regularise the planning position or other issues. Licence holders could then apply for a further licence. This would apply across the mandatory and additional HMO schemes. It may also apply to the selective licence scheme in certain circumstances. For example, before starting any works to satisfy licence conditions to a protected property or inside a conservation area.

## **12 Legal Implications**

- 12.1 The Housing Act 2004 Parts 2 and 3 contains the provisions under which any selective or additional licensing scheme may be made and also the conditions which can be included on a licence. The legal requirements for designation and for the conditions that may be attached to a licence under each type of scheme are set out in Appendix 2. The Council is required to consider whether alternative courses of action would meet its objectives.
- 12.2 The Provision of Services Regulations 2009 will apply. Local Authorities introducing new requirements for businesses, are obliged to comply with the Regulations. This extends to administrative or procedural rules and practices which are part of authorisation processes, and to conditions that are attached to licences where this condition is a part of the authorisation process. Fees charged by a competent authority under an authorisation scheme must be reasonable and proportionate to the cost of the procedures and formalities under the scheme, and must not exceed the cost of those procedures and formalities. [The Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy \(BEIS\) has published guidance](#) Other authorities have faced legal challenges relating to the requirements of these regulations, in particular relating to fees.
- 12.3 The Council must consult persons affected by any designation and consider the representations made by them. A failure to follow this procedure could result in an application for judicial review, or in the Secretary of State not making the designation where approval is required. A failure to apply legally compliant conditions onto a licence may result in successful appeals against licence decisions to the Residential Property Tribunal.
- 12.4 The proposals in the report are likely to result in an increase in formal enforcement action, due to the number of properties proposed to be brought into the scope of the additional regulation.
- 12.5 A person commits an offence if they have control of or manage a house which is required to be licensed but is not, or if they fail to comply with the licence conditions. Such a person is liable on summary conviction to a fine, or a financial penalty may be imposed by the Council (as an alternative to prosecution) of up to £30,000. Any rent paid to the landlord of a property which was required to be licensed but was not, may be liable to repayment by order of the Residential Property Tribunal.
- 12.6 A management order may be made in respect of a property which is required to be licensed but is not. A management order gives the local authority control of the property.

## **13 Financial Implications**

- 13.1 Licensing allows local authorities to recover costs related to the administration and processing of a scheme – but not its enforcement. Scheme design plays a significant role in determining the service provided and therefore the cost to the landlord/business. The significant costs are staffing for a combination of processing and inspecting officers. Supplies and services (including printing, equipment, health and safety costs) form the other running costs. There is no capital expenditure anticipated, the implications of the decision relate to revenue. Illustrative implications are set out in Appendix 7, however these would need to be further developed post consultation. The principle is that the

scheme should be fully self-funding from fees secured from new applications and renewals.

13.2 The proposed fees and charges are set out in Appendix 5, a comparison with other authority's fees in Appendix 6 as well as the predicted income and expenditure is shown in Appendix 7.

13.3 The income from fees has been set at a level for the schemes to operate on a cost neutral basis.

#### **14.0 Value for Money (VFM)**

14.1 Cost of using an external contractor to support the consultation process will vary based on the scale and complexity of any proposed designation. Discussions indicate these costs could be between £75-180k. The proposed fees have been benchmarked against similar schemes and are within a comparable range. The proposed options, taking account the public benefit and health benefits and cost recovery element of the scheme, presents value for money.

#### **15.0 Risk Assessment.**

15.1 The key financial risks associated with any scheme are:

- Consultation costs can be recovered through the scheme fee but will not be recoverable if the designation is not made. This would include costs incurred from a decision not to proceed following consideration of consultation responses. Consultation and setup costs will also not be met if the scheme cannot proceed due to legal challenge or failure to obtain Secretary of State approval (where required).
- Income does not cover expenditure. Previous models of expected income from the extension of mandatory licensing in 2018 were not met due to a smaller than expected number of applications.
- The licence fee may only be used to recover costs related to the operation of the licensing scheme. Property inspections may identify other deficiencies which require enforcement under different legal provisions, which in most cases do not have cost recovery mechanisms attached for officer time.
- If the services is unsuccessful in recruiting to the posts required to process applications and inspect properties, this may delay the issuing of licences which would impact on a proportion of the fee income. The bulk of the application fee is payable upfront but a proportion is payable once the decision to issue a licence is made.
- At the end of the scheme there is a risk of additional costs relating to redundancies if there is no follow up designation or similar scheme generating licence fee income.

15.2 It is proposed to initially create some of the posts needed to operate the scheme as fixed term contracts, to mitigate the risk of a smaller number of licensable properties or applications coming forwards.

#### **16 Timetable for Implementation**

16.1 An indicative timetable is set out in Appendix 4.

#### **17 Background Papers**

17.1 There are none.

#### **18 References**

1: <https://ukhsa.blog.gov.uk/2015/10/21/bringing-together-housing-and-public-health/>

## **Appendices**

1. Metastreet Stock Condition Survey.
2. Renters Reform Bill Summary of Proposals.
3. Comparison of scheme criteria and conditions which may be attached.
4. Indicative timetable for Consultation and potential approval of a scheme(s).
5. Financial implications – Proposed fees.
6. Financial implications - Fees comparison with other local authorities.
7. Financial implications – Predicted income and expenditure.

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Reading Borough Council  
Private Rented Sector: Housing Stock Condition and Stressors Report

January 2024

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## **Executive Summary**

Metastreet were commissioned by Reading Borough Council to review housing stock in the Town and assess housing stressors related to key tenures, particularly the private rented sector (PRS) and Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMO).

The detailed housing stock information provided in this report will facilitate the development and delivery of Reading's housing strategy and enable a targeted approach to tackling poor housing.

The main aim of this review was to investigate and provide accurate estimates of:

- Current levels of private rented sector (PRS) properties and tenure change over time
- Levels of serious hazards that might amount to a Category 1 or 2 hazard (Housing Health & Safety Rating System (HHSRS))
- Other housing related stressors, including antisocial behaviour (ASB), service demand, population and deprivation linked to the PRS
- Assist the council to make policy decisions, including the possible introduction of property licensing schemes under Part 2 and Part 3 of Housing Act 2004

Metastreet has developed a stock-modelling approach based on metadata and machine learning to provide insights about the prevalence and distribution of a range of housing factors. This approach has been used by a wide range of housing authorities to understand their housing stock and relationships with key social, environmental and economic stressors.

The models are developed using unique property reference numbers (UPRN) and a large range of council held and open-source data, which when combined, provide detailed analysis at the property level.

Data records used to form the foundation of this report include but are not limited to:

Council tax	Electoral register	Other council interventions records	Tenancy deposit data
Housing benefit	Private housing complaints and interventions records	ASB complaints and interventions records	Energy Performance data

## **Key Findings**

- Reading's PRS is now calculated to be 39.9% of all housing stock.
- The PRS in Reading is distributed across all 16 wards.
- Reading has a mixture of high and low deprivation wards. 8 of 16 wards have aggregated IMD rankings below the national average.
- Reading has a lower proportion in fuel poverty (10.3%) than the national average.
- Reading has above average rents for England (£1,006).
- Reading has above average rented property possession rate nationally, with 11.5 claims per 10,000 households in 2023
- There are 4,297 private rented properties in Reading that are likely to have at least 1 serious housing hazard distributed across all wards.
- Reading recorded 3,117 complaints and service requests from private tenants and others linked to PRS properties over 5-years.
- 1,084 PRS properties are likely to fail the basic energy efficiency requirement.
- The council has recorded a total of 1,980 ASB incidents related to PRS properties over the past five years.
- Reading's HMO population has been estimated to comprise a total of 3,272 properties.
- Analysis shows that 1,230 HMOs in Reading are predicted to have at least one serious hazard.
- During inspections, officers identified 701 Category 1 and 2 hazards (HHSRS).
- 697 ASB incidents have been linked to all HMOs in Reading distributed across all wards.
- HMOs have by far the highest rates of ASB (21.3 per 100 dwellings), when compared to other tenures.

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## Introduction & Project Objectives

Metastreet were commissioned by Reading Borough Council to review its housing stock with a focus on the following key areas:

- Residential property tenure changes
- Distribution of the PRS and HMO
- Condition of housing stock in the PRS
- Housing related stressors, including Noise Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB), regulatory interventions and deprivation.

The report provides the council with the evidence base for developing housing policy and service interventions. The report also helps satisfy the council's responsibility to review its housing stock as set out under Part 1, Section 3 of the Housing Act 2004.

The second section of the report details the findings of the stock and tenure modelling, including an introduction to the methodology. A combination of Reading's data warehouse, machine learning, and modelling techniques have been used to pinpoint tenure and predict property conditions within its PRS housing stock. An advanced property level data warehouse has been developed to underpin the process.

For the purposes of this review, it was decided that a ward-level summary is the most appropriate basis to assess housing conditions across Reading, built up from property level data. Four separate predictive tenure models (Ti) have been developed as part of this project which are unique to Reading, they include:

- Private rented sector (PRS)
- Houses in multiple occupation (HMO)
- Owner occupiers
- Serious PRS housing hazards (Category 1 & high Category 2, HHSRS A-D)

The appendices to the report contain a summary of the data and a more detailed report methodology.

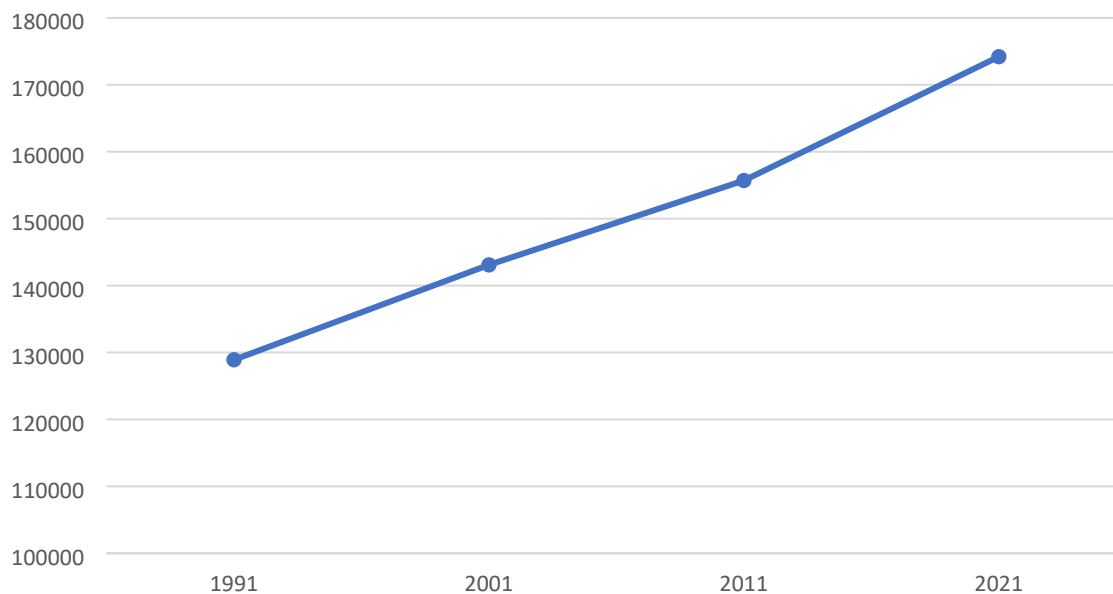
## 1 Reading overview

Reading is an ancient town in Berkshire, England. Most of its built-up area lies within the Borough of Reading. This report relates only to the areas overseen by Reading Borough Council Housing Authority.

Located in the Thames Valley at the meeting of the rivers Thames and Kennet, Reading is 40 miles (64 km) east of Swindon, 25 miles (40 km) south of Oxford, 40 miles (64 km) west of London and 16 miles (26 km) north of Basingstoke.<sup>1</sup>

### 1.1 Population

The Office of National Statistics (ONS) Census 2021 population estimates for Reading was 174,200<sup>2</sup>. Reading has seen significant population growth over the last 30 years (Figure 1).



**Figure 1. Population estimates, 30 years (Census 1991,2001,2011,2021) (Source: Census ONS).**

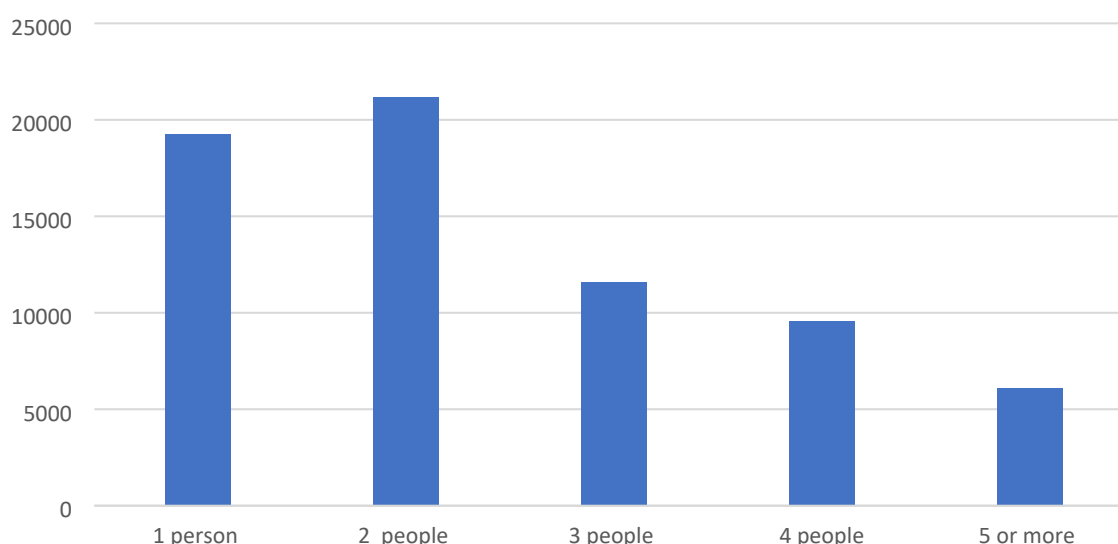
### 1.2 Household size

Household size (all tenures) provides an insight into how dwellings are occupied (Figure 2)<sup>3</sup>.

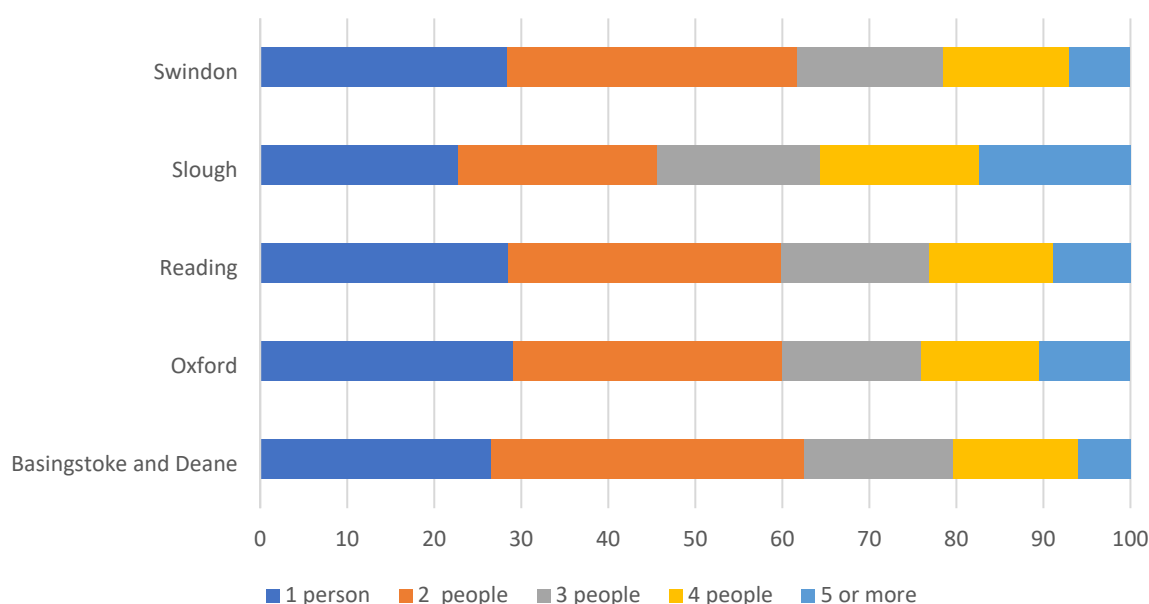
<sup>1</sup> Wikipedia, November 2023, [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Reading\\_Borough\\_Council](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Reading_Borough_Council)

<sup>2</sup> Office for National Statistics – Census 2021, <https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/populationandmigration/populationestimates/bulletins/populationandhouseholdestimatesenglandandwales/census2021>

<sup>3</sup> Office for National Statistics – Census 2021, <https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/populationandmigration/populationestimates/bulletins/populationandhouseholdestimatesenglandandwales/census2021>



**Figure 2. Reading household size (all tenures) (Source: Census 2021).**



**Figure 3. Household size (percent) (all tenures) by selected comparable authorities (Source: Census 2021).**

### 1.3 Deprivation

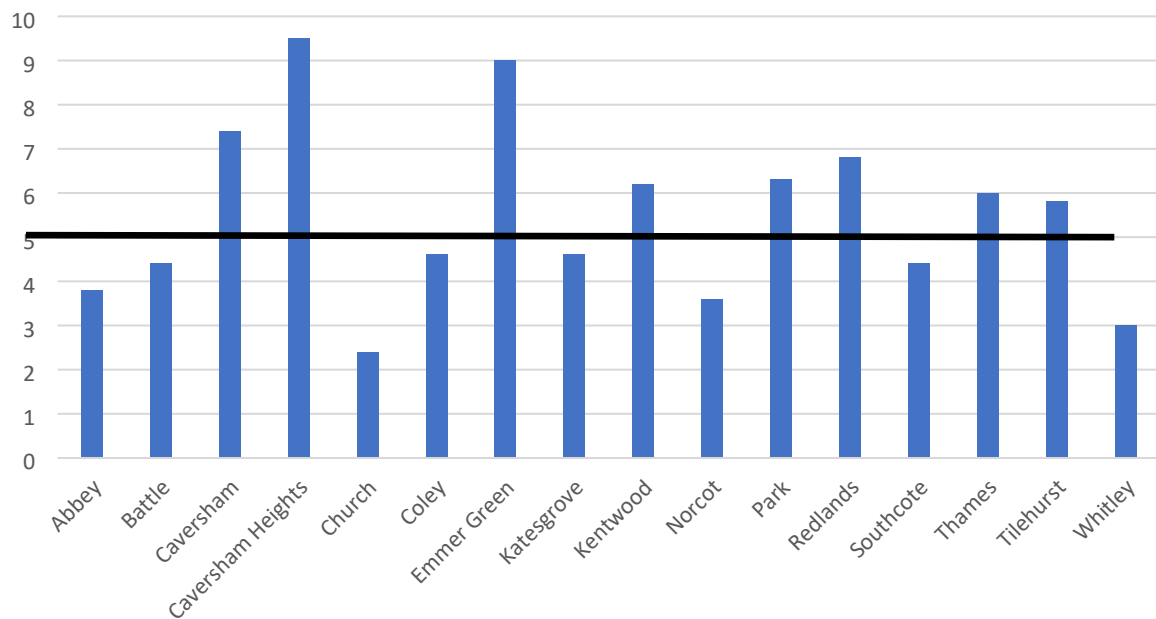
The Indices of Multiple Deprivation 2019 (IMD 2019) provide a set of relative measures of deprivation for LSOAs (Lower-layer super output areas) across England, based on seven domains of deprivation<sup>4</sup>.

To produce the ward level data, LSOAs have been matched to new wards using an Open Geoportal lookup table. It should be noted that LSOA areas that fit all or part in the new wards have been included in that ward. Therefore, some LSOAs have been included within more than one ward due to the poor match between LSOA and new ward areas. An average decile of LSOAs linked to new wards is then calculated. The ward results have not been weighted for population. Average IMD 2019 decile aggregated at ward level reveals a clear picture of ward level deprivation (Figure 4 & Map 1). 1.0 on the graph represents the most deprived 10% areas and 5.0 represents 50% most deprived.

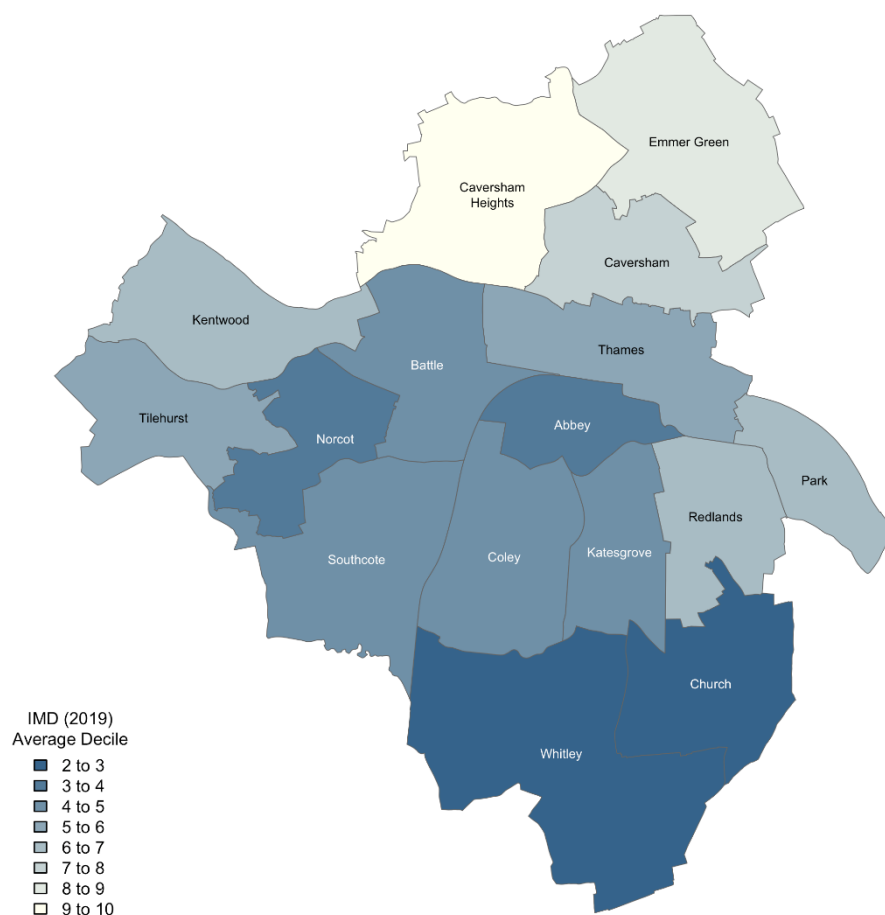
Reading has a mixture of high and low deprivation wards. 8 of 16 wards have aggregated IMD rankings below the national average (Figure 4).

<sup>4</sup> ONS 2019 <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/english-indices-of-deprivation-2019>.





**Figure 4. Average IMD (2019) decile by ward (Source: IMD 2019). Horizontal line shows the national average (5). Figures not population weighted.**

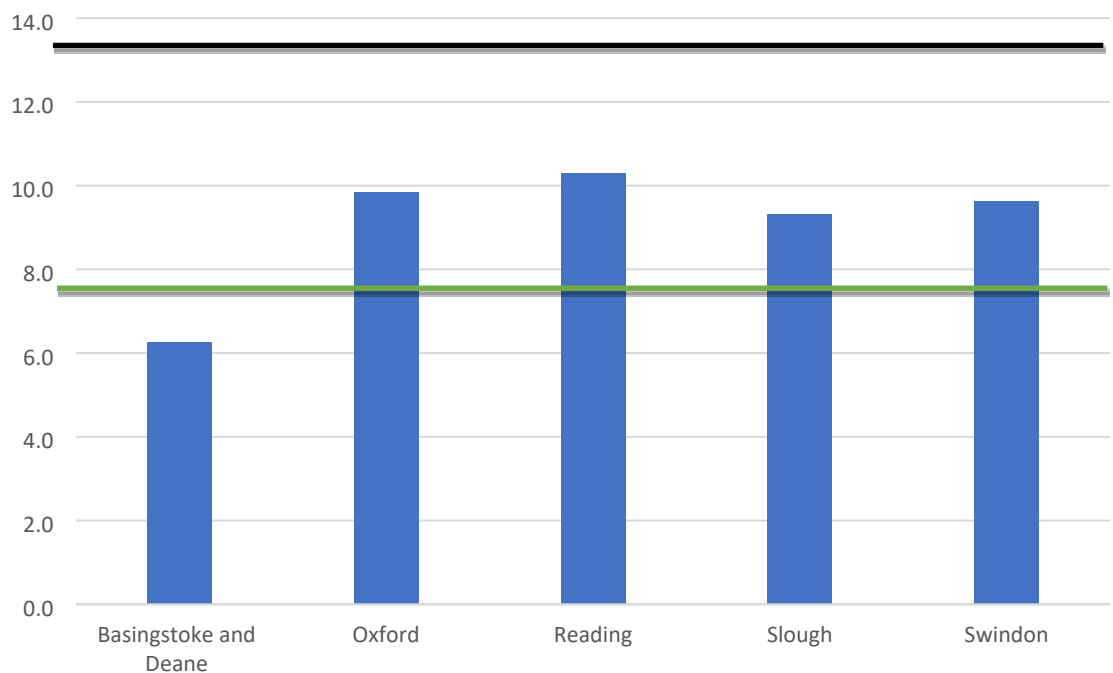


**Map 1. Distribution of Average IMD (2019) decile by ward (Source: ONS 2019, Map by Metastreet).**

### 1.4 Fuel Poverty

Fuel poverty is defined by the Warm Homes and Energy Conservation Act. A household is considered to be fuel poor if they have required fuel costs that are above average (the national median level); and were they to spend that amount, they would be left with a residual income below the official poverty line.

The fuel poverty score was produced by the Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy using 2019 data and published in 2021. Over the next 12 months these figures are likely to change significantly because of acute fuel price increases. Notwithstanding this, Reading has a lower proportion in fuel poverty (10.3%) than the national average (13.4%) (Figure 5) <sup>5</sup>.



**Figure 5. Proportion of households in fuel poverty (%) by selected comparable authorities (BEIS 2019).** Horizontal black line shows England average (13.4%), Horizontal red line shows Southeast England average (7.5%).

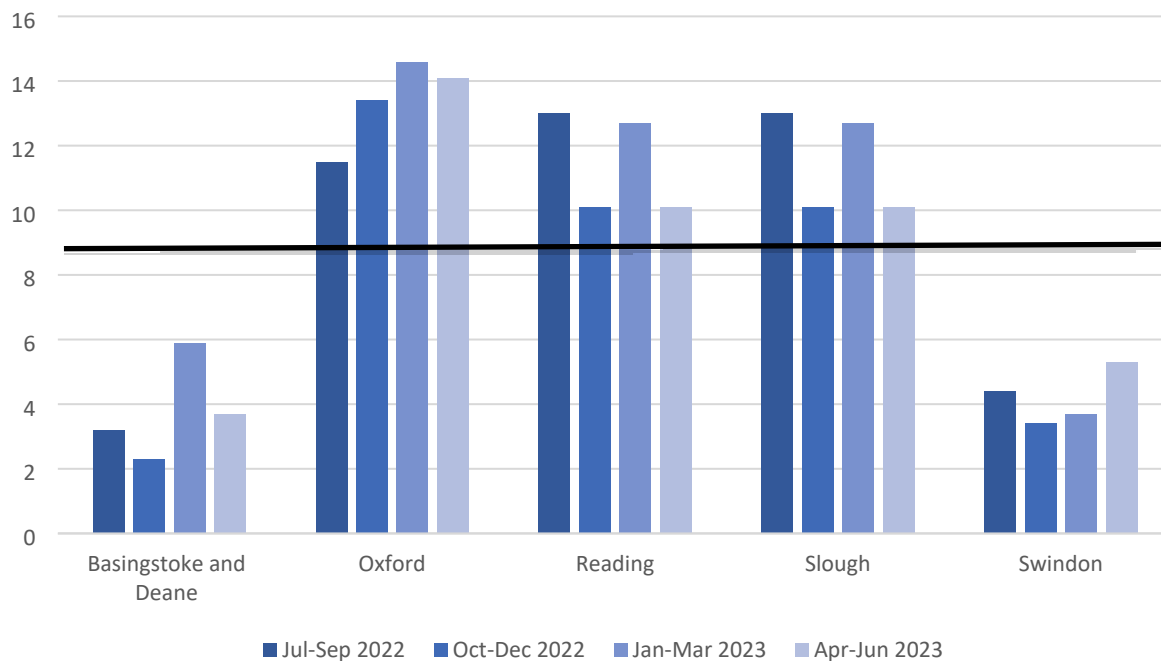
Reading have been compared to a number of comparable authorities the national and subregional average where appropriate.

### 1.5 Rented property possession claim rates

Reading has above average rented property possession rate nationally, with 11.5 claims per 10,000 households in 2023<sup>6</sup> (**Error! Reference source not found.**). The average number of claims for authorities in England was 8.7 per 10,000.

<sup>5</sup> Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy 2021 <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/sub-regional-fuel-poverty-data-2021>

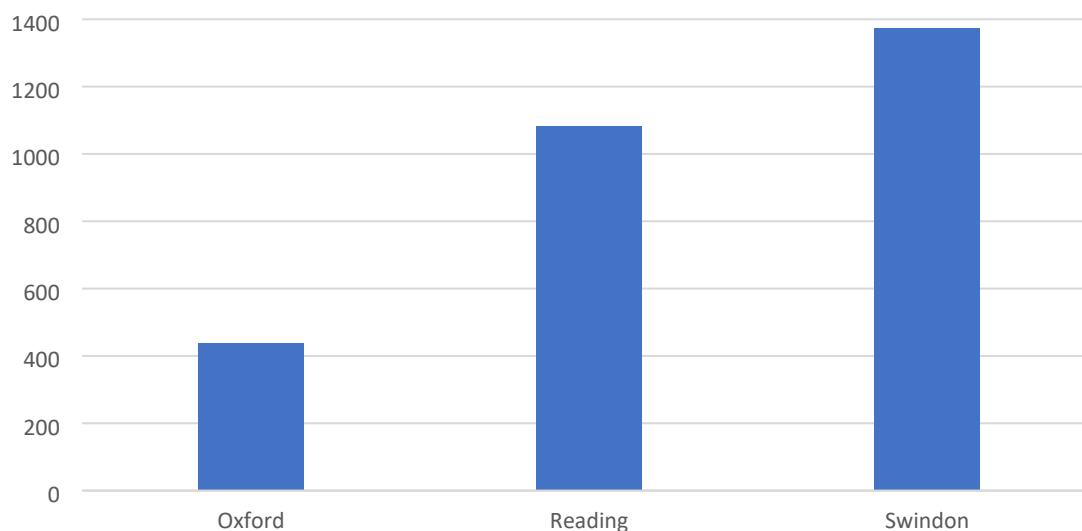
<sup>6</sup> MOJ Possession claims by local authority (2023) [https://lginform.local.gov.uk/reports/lgastandard?mod-metric=3498&mod-area=E06000031&mod-group=AllSingleTierAndCountyLaInCountry\\_England&mod-type=namedComparisonGroup](https://lginform.local.gov.uk/reports/lgastandard?mod-metric=3498&mod-area=E06000031&mod-group=AllSingleTierAndCountyLaInCountry_England&mod-type=namedComparisonGroup)



**Figure 6. Number of possession claims issued by landlords per 10,000 households (selected comparable authorities) 2022/23 (MOJ 2023) Black line equals English authorities mean average 8.7 per 10,000 households (last 4 quarters).**

## 1.6 Homelessness Duty

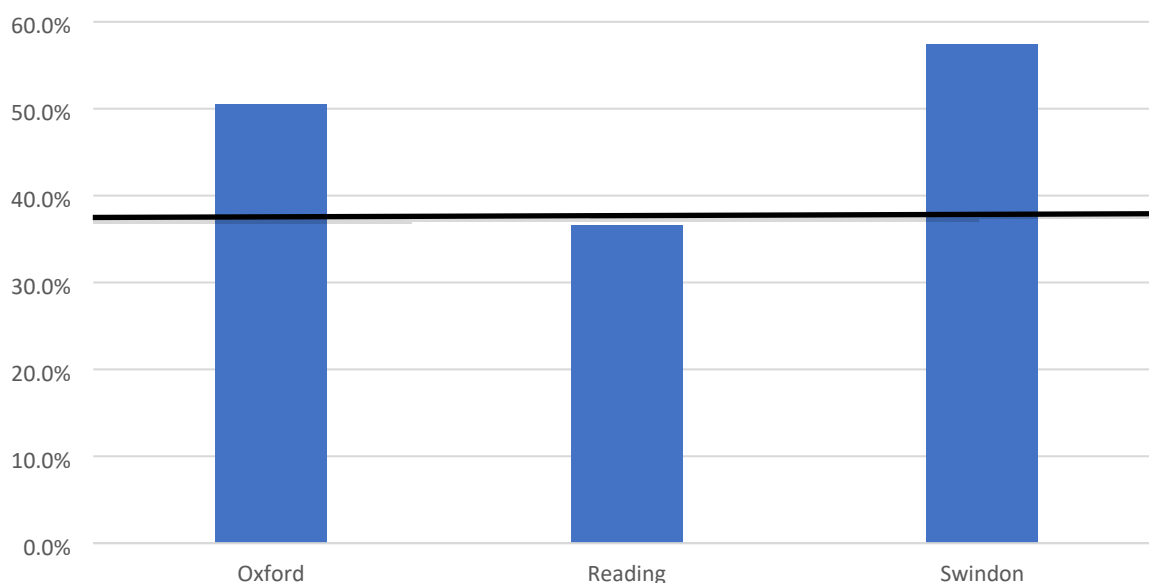
Local authorities are required by law to either provide accommodation to homeless households (the main homelessness duty), work to stop households becoming homeless (the homelessness prevention duty) or relieve homelessness when it does occur (the homelessness relief duty). 1,084 households were owed a prevention or relief duty in the financial year 2022/2023 (Figure 7) <sup>7</sup>.



**Figure 7. Households owed a prevention or relief duty for financial year 2022/2023 (no data available for Basingstoke and Deane & Slough)**

<sup>7</sup> Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, Homelessness, <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistical-data-sets/live-tables-on-homelessness> <https://data.london.gov.uk/dataset/homelessness>

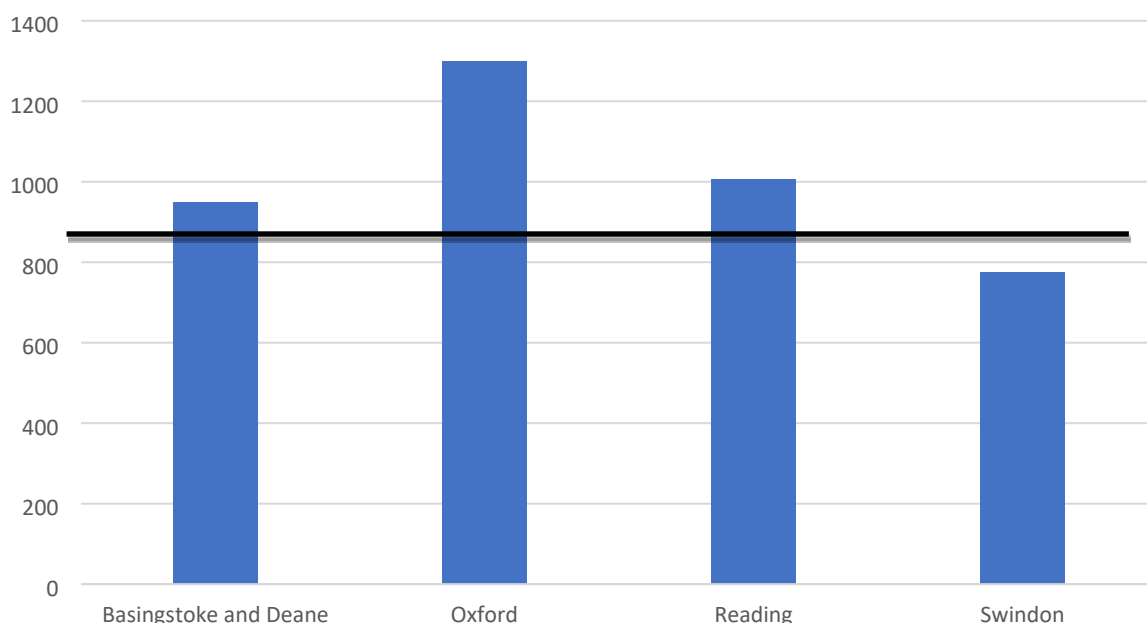
36.6% homelessness prevention or relief duty result from private rented tenancy ending (assured shorthold tenancies) for financial year 2022/2023. This is slightly below the national average (38.6%)



**Figure 8. Percent homelessness prevention or relief duty rates as a result private rented tenancy ending - assured shorthold financial year 2022/2023 (no data available for Basingstoke and Deane & Slough)**  
Black line equals English authorities mean average (38.6%)

## 1.7 Rents and affordability

Private rents vary by area. As this report is concerned with housing conditions and other housing stressors, we have looked at the average (median) rents for all dwelling types (categories). Reading has above average rents for England (£1,006) (Figure 9)<sup>8</sup>. The national average is £889.



**Figure 9. Median monthly rents (1 April 2022 to 31 March 2023) (all categories) (Source: VOA 2023).**  
Horizontal black line shows national average (£889)

<sup>8</sup> ONS Private rental market summary statistics in England: April 2022 to March 2023

<https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/housing/bulletins/private rental market summary statistics in england/april2022tomarch2023>



## 2 Results of housing stock and stressor modelling

### 2.1 Methodology

Tenure Intelligence (Ti) uses council held and publicly available data to identify tenure and analyse property stressors, including property conditions and ASB.

Data trends at the property level are analysed using machine learning to help predict the tenure of individual properties where they are not already known. Metastreet has worked with the council to create a residential property data warehouse. This has included linking millions of cells of council and externally held data to 77,643 unique property references (UPRN), excluding parent (shell properties) and non-dwellings. Therefore only properties that are dwellings have been included in this study, common parts and ancillary properties have been excluded.

Machine learning is used to make predictions for each tenure and property condition based on a sample of known tenures and outcomes. Results are analysed to produce a summary of housing stock, predictions of Category 1 & 2 hazards (HHSRS) and other stressors. To achieve the maximum accuracy, unique models are built for each council and tenure, incorporating individual authority data and using local known outcomes to train predictive models. Where a tenure or outcome is already known by the authority, this will be added to the final model. Once the data warehouse was created, statistical modelling was used to determine tenure using the methodology outlined below. All specified and requested council held longitudinal data is 5 consecutive years, from April 2018 – March 2023.

Different combinations of risk factors were systematically analysed for their predictive power in terms of key outcomes. Risk factors that duplicated other risk factors but were weaker in their predictive effect were systematically eliminated. Risk factors that were not statistically significant were also excluded through the same processes of elimination.

For each UPRN a risk score was calculated using logistic regression. The selected risk factors have a better or worse than evens chance of being predictive. A decision tree model is then used to allocate properties to predefined outcomes.

Several predictive models have been developed as part of this project which are unique to Reading. Known stressors linked to individual properties have been modelled to calculate population level incidences and rates.

It is important to note that this approach can never be 100% accurate as all large datasets and statistical models include some level of error. A more detailed description of the methodology and the specific factors selected to build predictive models for this project can be found in Appendix 2.

### 2.2 Results - Private rented sector

#### 2.2.1 Population and distribution

The private rented sector (PRS) in Reading has grown steadily since 2011<sup>9</sup>.

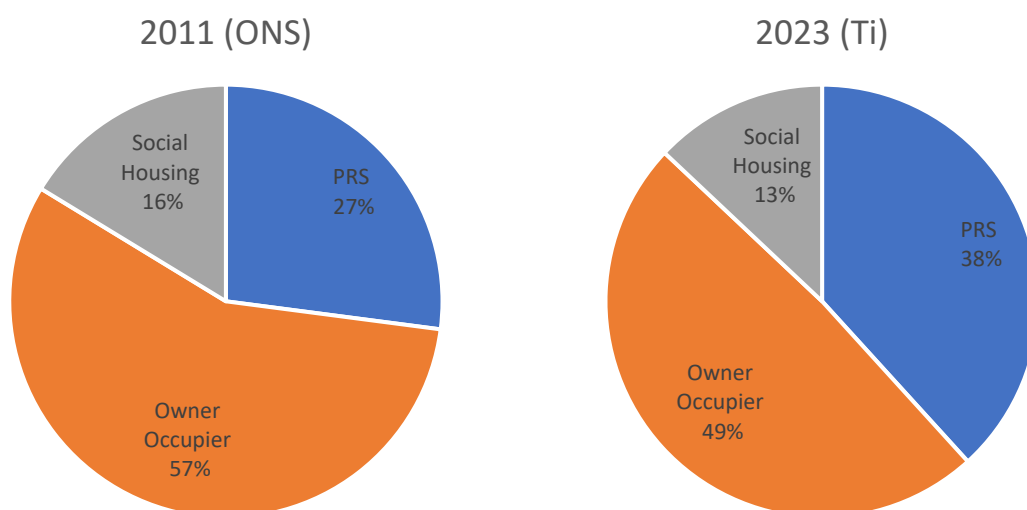
Based on tenure modelling (2023), Reading's PRS is now calculated to be 39.9% of all housing stock (Figure 10). The 2021 Census reports the PRS in Reading to be 32.1%. The difference is likely to be a result of absent student households (national & international) and migrant worker households from the Census data as a result of the March 2021 government-imposed coronavirus lockdown measures<sup>10&11</sup>. Further details of the differences between the Census 2021 and Ti 2023 results can be found in Appendix 2. It's important to note that Census tenure data is based on reported households, while Ti data is based on known dwellings within a local authority area. Some dwellings have multiple households (Table 9).

---

<sup>9</sup>Census 2021 <https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/populationandmigration/populationestimates>

<sup>10</sup>Timeline of UK government coronavirus lockdowns and restrictions, <https://www.instituteforgovernment.org.uk/data-visualisation/timeline-coronavirus-lockdowns>

<sup>11</sup>Onlondon Article (July 2022) <https://www.onlondon.co.uk/london-councils-briefing-warns-that-census-may-have-significantly-undercounted-capitals-population/>

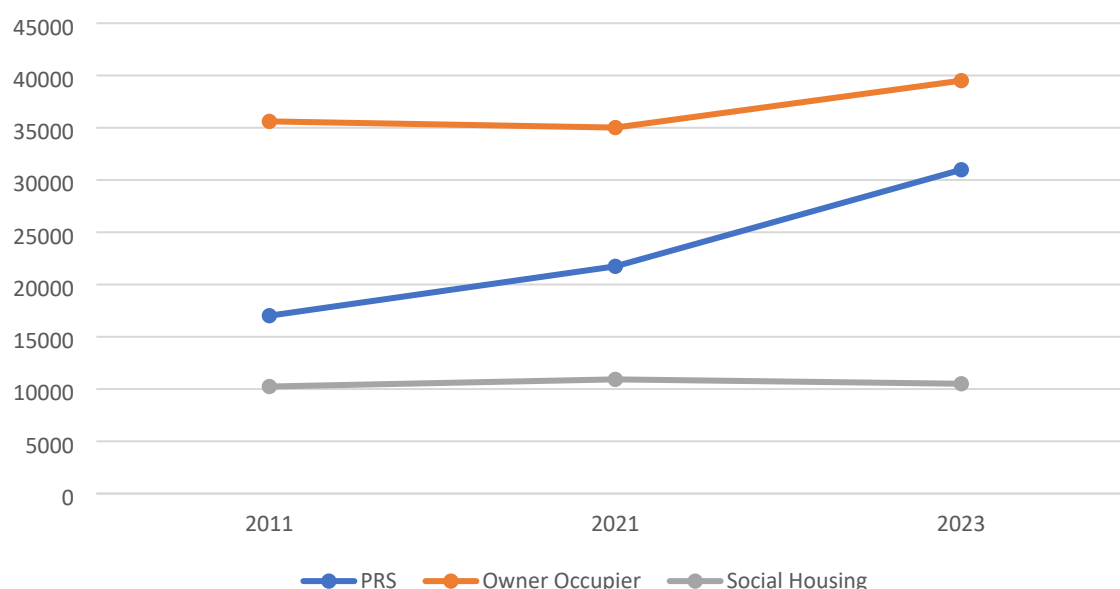


**Figure 10. Tenure profile 2011 & 2023 (Source: ONS & Metastreet Ti model).**

Tenure percentage change over the last two decades in Reading has been consistent with the national trend (Figure 11), owner occupation as a proportion of housing stock decreasing while private renting increasing. This PRS increase is part of a long term nationwide and regional trend.

The PRS in the UK has grown from 9.4% of housing stock in 2000 <sup>12</sup> to 19% of households 2021 <sup>13</sup>. The PRS remains the second largest housing tenure in England. <sup>14</sup>.

In line with the UK average, Reading's PRS stock has continued to grow steadily since 2011. Social rented housing stock has been stable over the last decade (Figure 11).



**Figure 11. Reading tenure change and total housing stock, 2011, 2021 & 2023 (Source: ONS & 2023 Ti).**

<sup>12</sup> The profile of UK private landlords Scanlon K & Woodhead C CML research. LSE London. December 2017 [www.cml.org.uk](http://www.cml.org.uk)

<sup>13</sup> EHS Headline 2021-2022, <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/english-housing-survey-2021-to-2022-headline-report/english-housing-survey-2021-to-2022-headline-report#section-2-housing-stock>

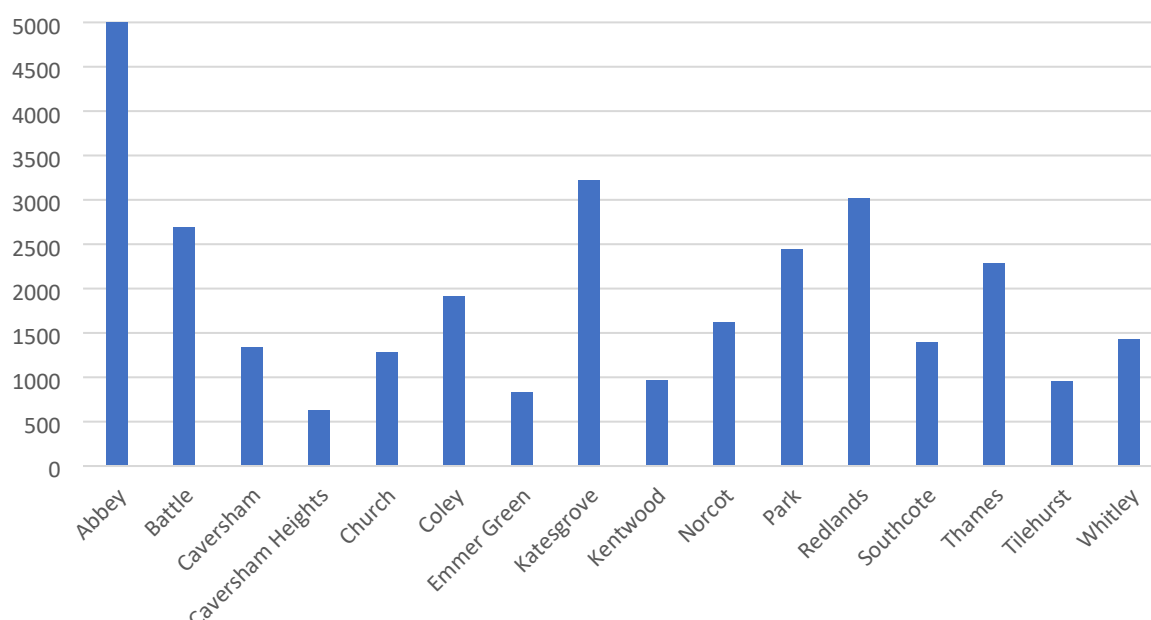
<sup>14</sup> EHS Headline 2021-2022, <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/english-housing-survey-2021-to-2022-headline-report/english-housing-survey-2021-to-2022-headline-report#section-2-housing-stock>

Tenure	2011 (ONS) (households)	2021 (ONS) (households)	2023 (Ti) (properties)
PRS	17,018	21,740	30,982
Owner Occupier	35,609	35,017	36,143
Social Housing	10,242	10,925	10,507
Totals	62,869	67,682	77,632

**Table 1. Number of households & dwellings by tenure 2011, 2021 & 2023 by ward (Source: ONS & Ti 2023).**

The data in Table 1 shows a clear discrepancy between Census recorded households (2021) and the number of known dwellings (Ti 2023), with at least 9,950 households missing from the Census data.

The PRS in Reading is distributed across all 16 wards (Figure 12). The number of PRS dwellings per ward ranges from 5,014 (Abbey) to 627 (Caversham Heights).

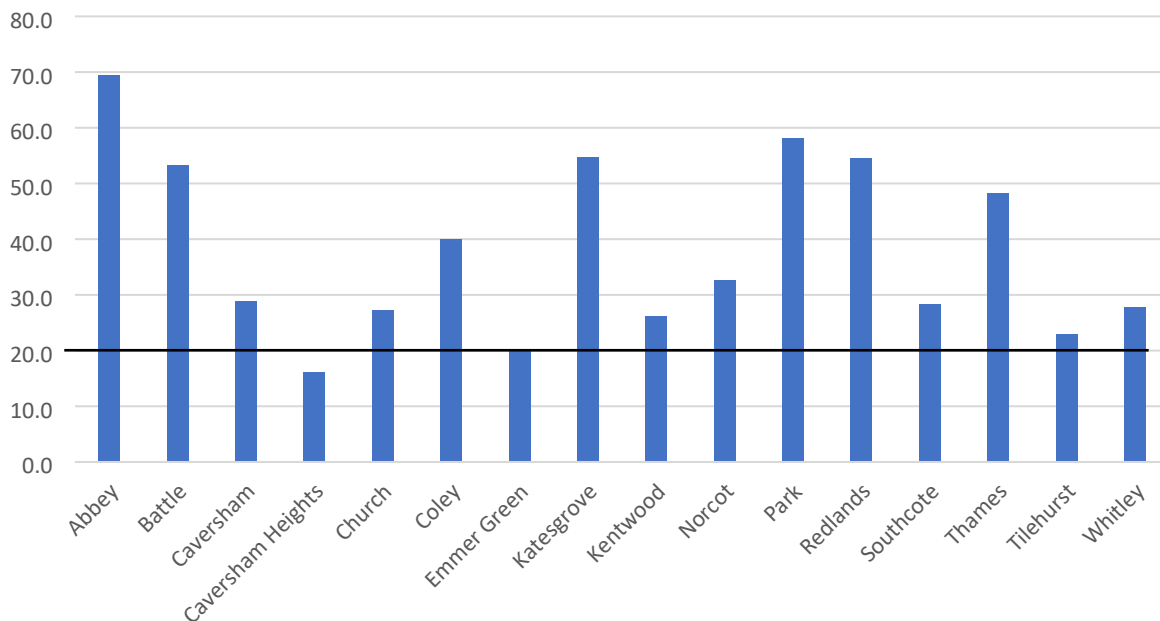


**Figure 12. Number of PRS dwellings by ward (Source: Ti 2023).**

The percentage of PRS properties in each ward ranges between 69.4% (Abbey) and 16.1% (Caversham Heights) (Figure 13). Therefore, 15 out of 16 Reading wards have an equal or higher percentage PRS than the national average in 2022 (19%)<sup>15</sup>.

<sup>15</sup> EHS Headline 2021-2022, <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/english-housing-survey-2021-to-2022-headline-report/english-housing-survey-2021-to-2022-headline-report#section-2-housing-stock>





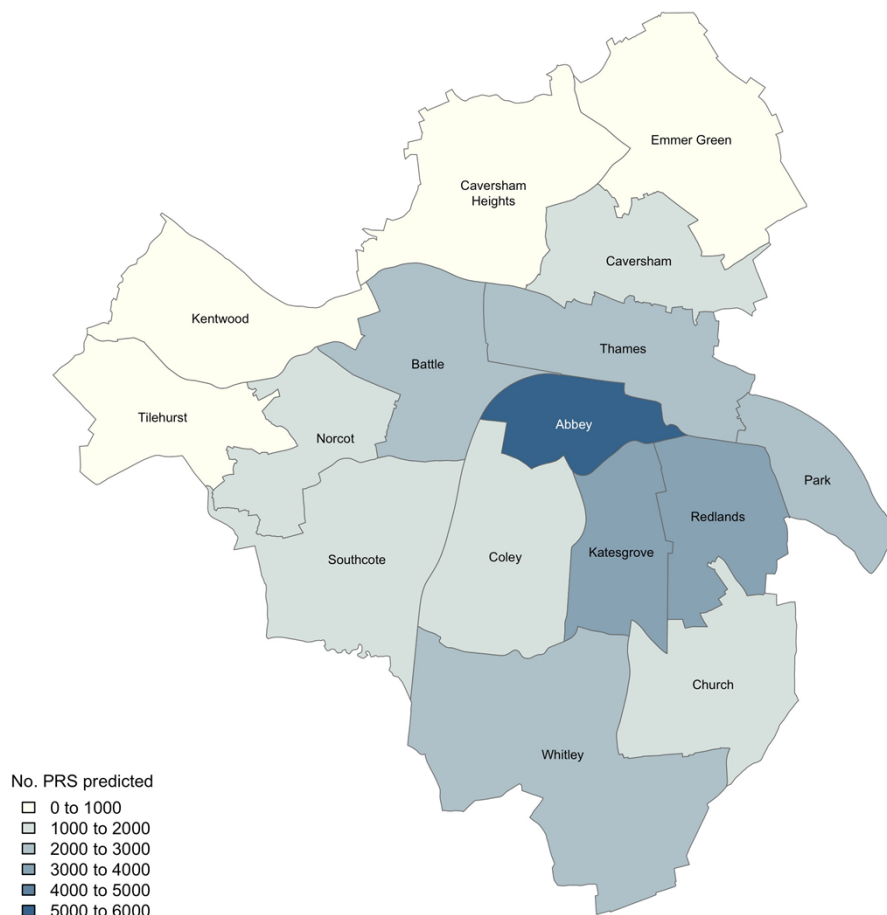
**Figure 13. Percentage of PRS dwellings by each ward (Source Ti 2023).** Horizontal black line shows national average 2021 (19%)

The table below shows the total PRS dwellings in each ward and the percentage PRS compared to the total housing stock.

Wards	PRS dwellings	% PRS
Abbey	5,014	69.4
Battle	2,694	53.3
Caversham	1,332	28.9
Caversham Heights	627	16.1
Church	1,280	27.2
Coley	1,910	40.0
Emmer Green	828	19.9
Katesgrove	3,213	54.6
Kentwood	968	26.2
Norcot	1,614	32.5
Park	2,439	58.1
Redlands	3,016	54.5
Southcote	1,392	28.2
Thames	2,279	48.2
Tilehurst	955	22.8
Whitley	1,421	27.8

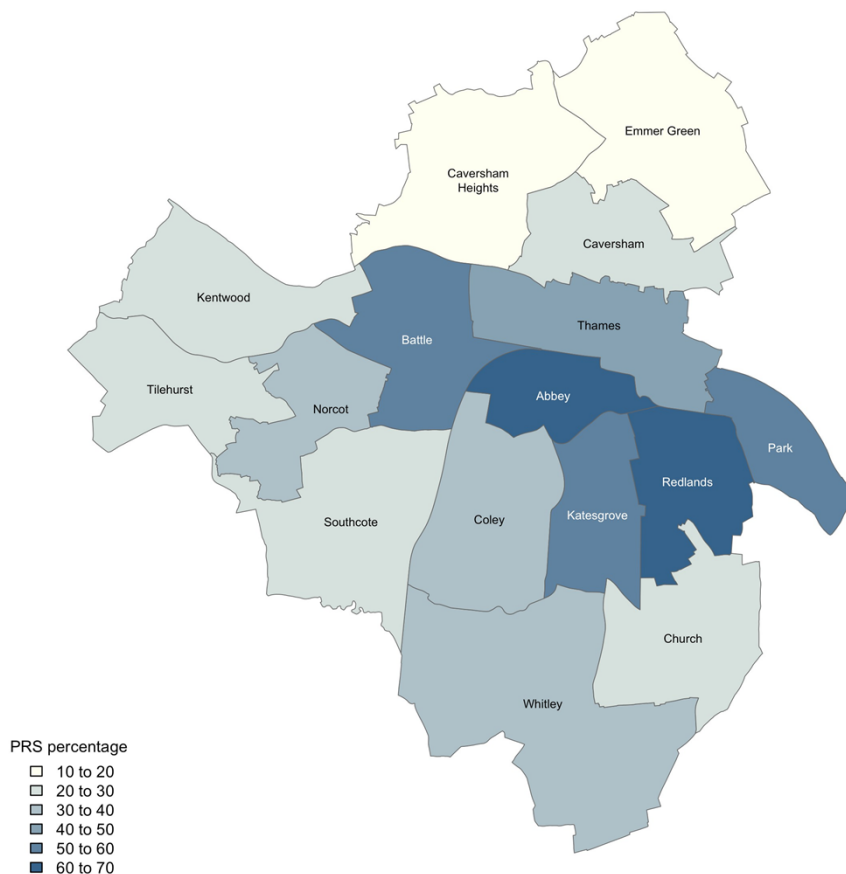
**Table 2. Number and percentage of PRS properties by ward (Source Ti 2023).**

PRS properties are distributed across Reading (Map 2 & 3). There is a clear concentration of PRS dwellings in some central wards.



**Map 2. Number of PRS properties in Reading (Source: Ti 2023, Map by Metastreet).**

Abbey has the highest percent PRS (69.4%) and Caversham Heights has the lowest concentration (16.1%) (Map 3).



**Map 3. PRS properties as percentage of dwellings in Reading (Source: Ti 2023, Map by Metastreet).**

### 2.2.2 Housing conditions

Housing conditions are affected by the level of maintenance and quality of repair, the age of the property, thermal efficiency, and type of construction. Category 1 (HHSRS) hazards have a physiological or psychological impact on the occupant and may result in medical treatment.<sup>16</sup> There is also serious impact on public services, hazardous conditions in the PRS are estimated to cost the NHS £340 million a year.<sup>17</sup>

In 2022, 14% of private rented dwellings in England had at least one Category 1 hazard; this was a higher proportion than the average for the total housing stock (10%). Furthermore, the private rented sector had the highest proportion of non-decent homes (23%)<sup>18</sup>. It is notable that there is a gradient of risk with age of the property, the risk being greatest in dwellings built before 1900, and lowest in the more energy efficient dwellings built after 1980<sup>19</sup>.

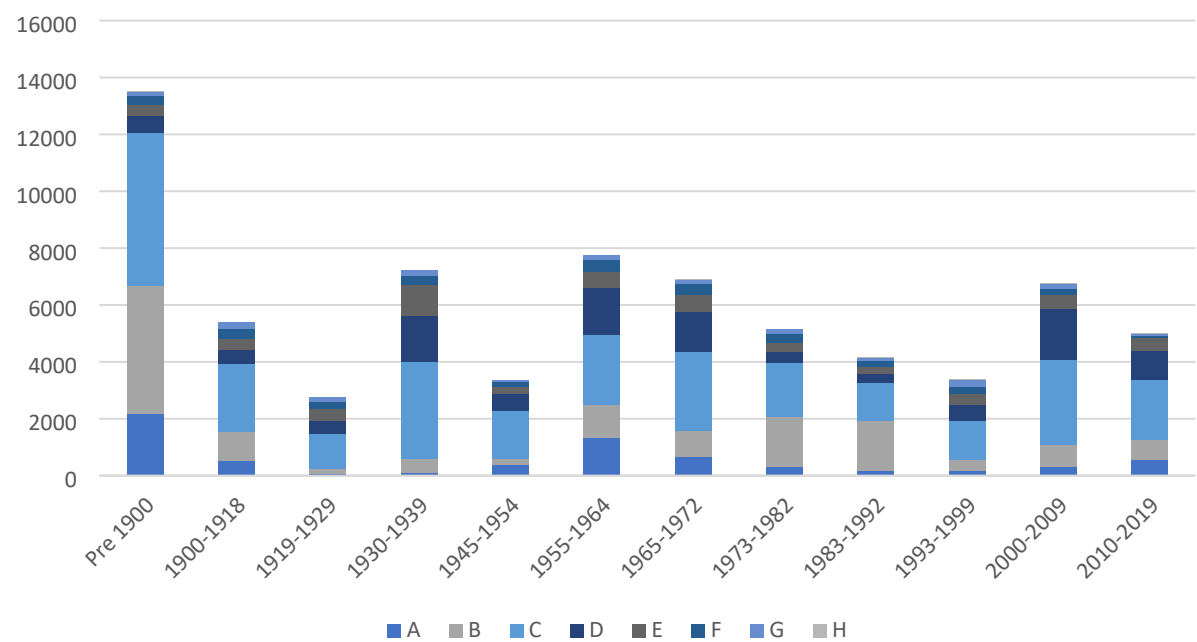
<sup>16</sup> Housing Health and Rating System, Operation Guidance, 2006, [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/15810/142631.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/15810/142631.pdf)

<sup>17</sup> House of Commons Committee of Public Accounts: <https://committees.parliament.uk/committee/127/public-accounts-committee/news/165326/pac-private-rented-housing-failing-far-too-often-to-provide-safe-and-secure-homes/>

<sup>18</sup> EHS Headline 2021-2022, <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/english-housing-survey-2021-to-2022-headline-report/english-housing-survey-2021-to-2022-headline-report#section-2-housing-stock>

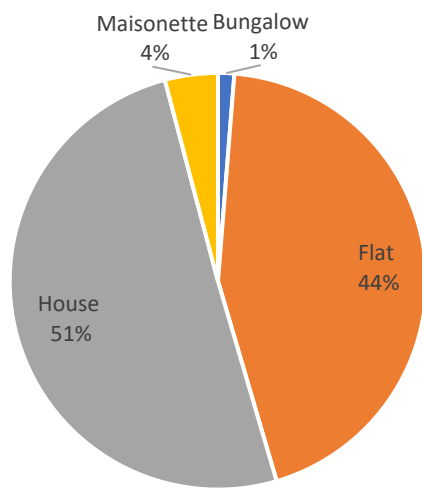
<sup>19</sup> Housing Health and Rating System, Operation Guidance, 2006, [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/15810/142631.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/15810/142631.pdf)

A local authority’s property age profile can have an impact on housing conditions. Reading has a high number of residential properties (40.1%) built pre-Second World War <sup>20</sup>. The council tax band provides an indication of relative distribution of property value in each ward. (Figure 14).



**Figure 14. All housing stock age profile and council tax band (Source: VOA 2019).**

A local authorities property type profile offers an indication of housing density, construction type and other population factors. The most common private rented property type in Reading are houses (51%), while bungalow is the least common property type (1%) (Figure 15).



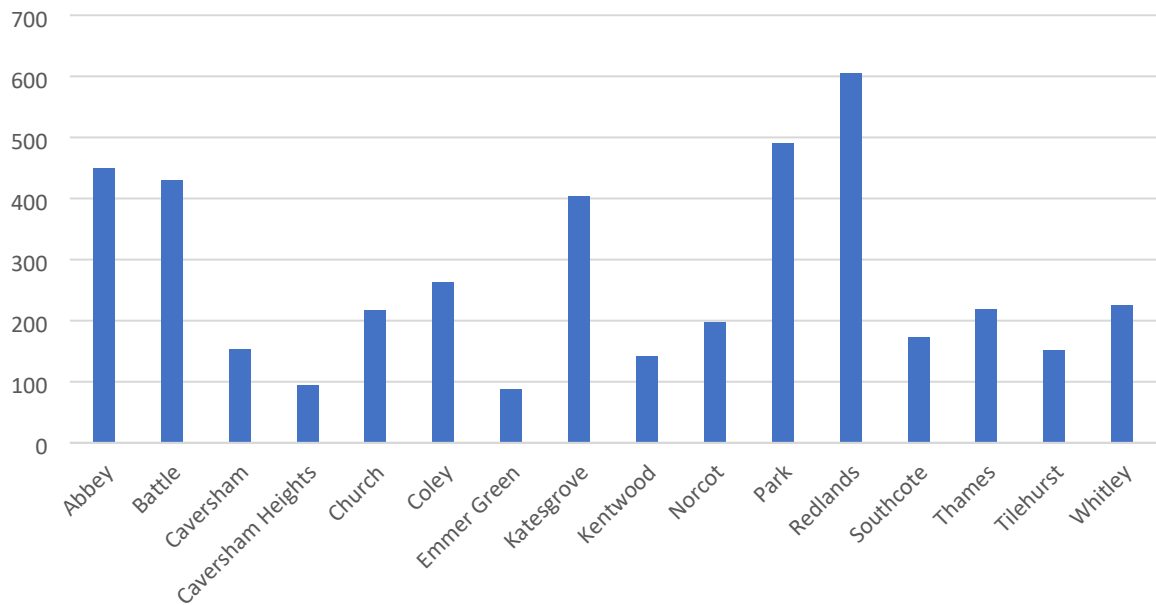
**Figure 15. Private rented property type as a percent of total (Source: RBC matched EPC records 2023).**

Using a training sample of properties that are known to have at least one serious housing hazard (Category 1 and high scoring Category 2, HHSRS), it is possible to predict the number of PRS

<sup>20</sup> VOA 2019 <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/council-tax-stock-of-properties-2019>

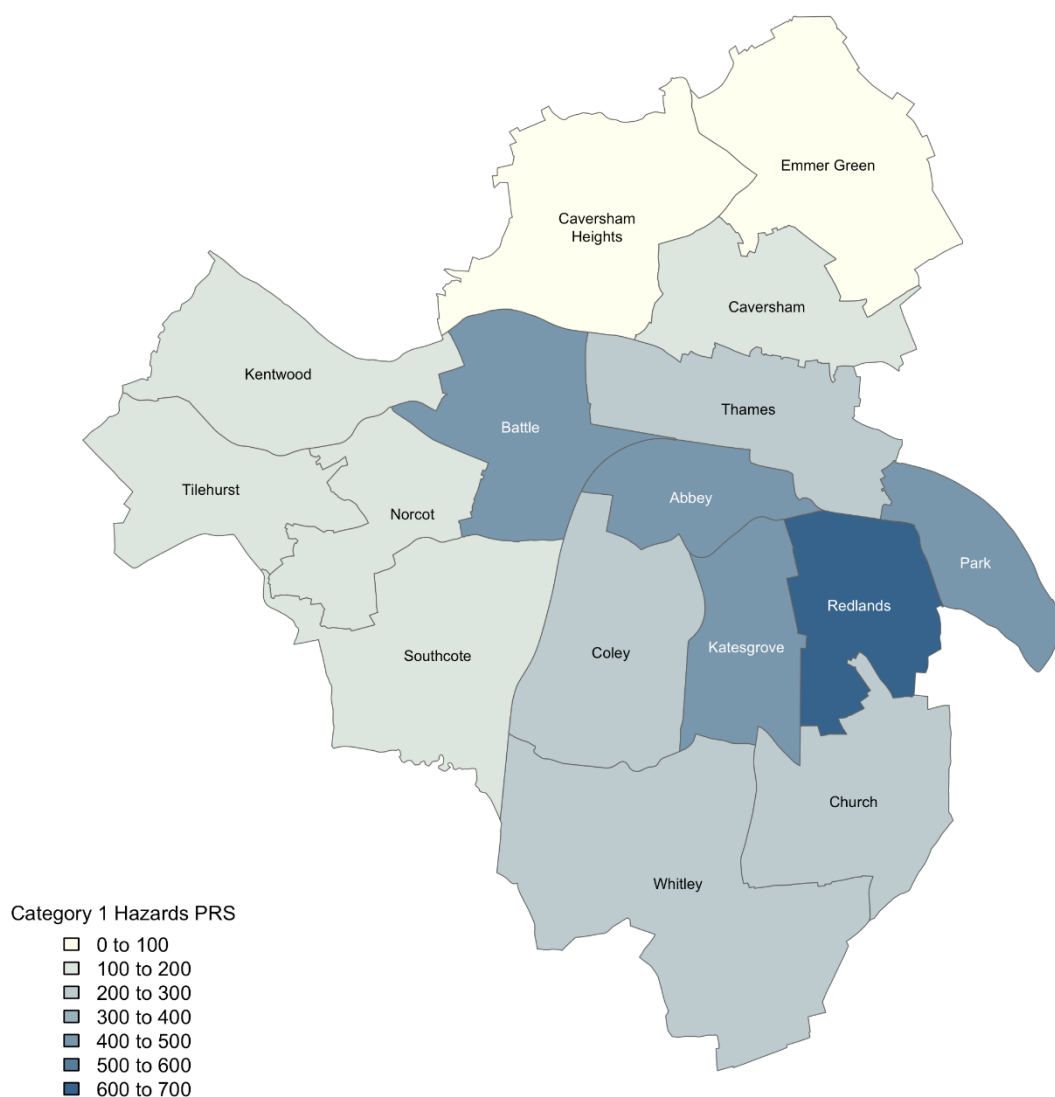
properties with at least one serious hazard across the area (Figure 16), further details of the methodology can be found in Appendix 2.

There are 4,297 private rented properties in Reading that are likely to have at least 1 serious housing hazard (Category 1 and high scoring Category 2, HHSRS). PRS properties with serious hazards are distributed across all wards. Redlands (605) and Park (490) have the highest number of properties with at least one Category 1 & 2 hazard (Figure 16 & Map 4).



**Figure 16. Predicted number of dwellings with serious hazards by ward (Source: Ti 2023).**

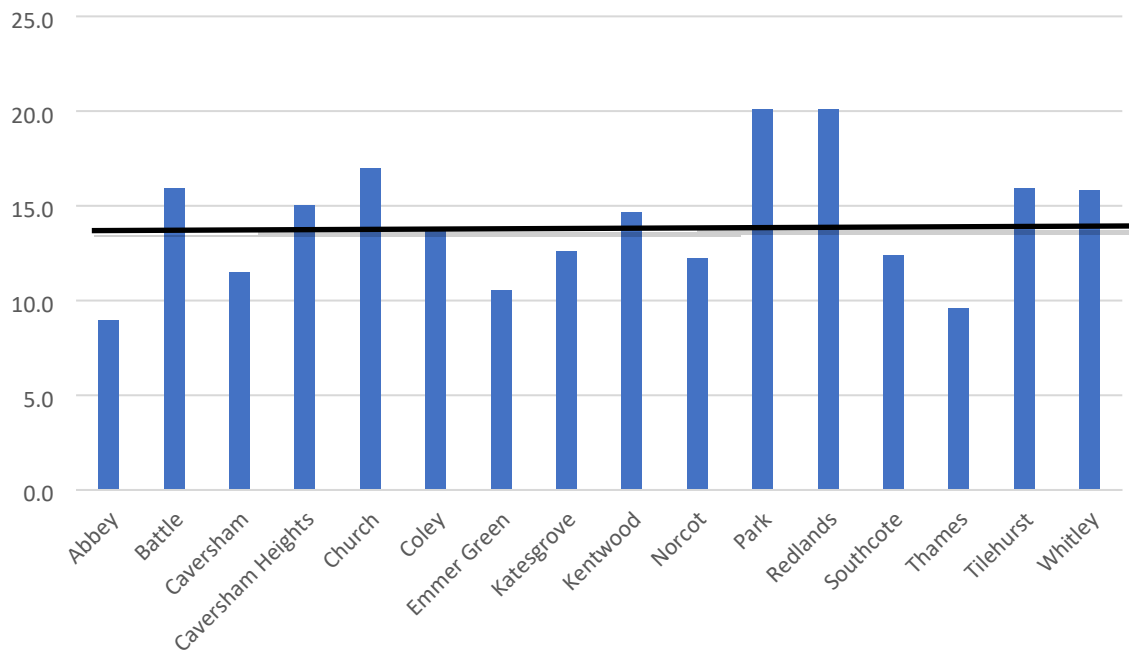
Category 1 & 2 hazards in the PRS are distributed across Reading with concentrations of hazards in some central wards (Map 4).



**Map 4. Distribution of PRS dwellings with predicted Category 1 & 2 hazards (HHSRS) (Source: Ti 2023, map by Metastreet).**

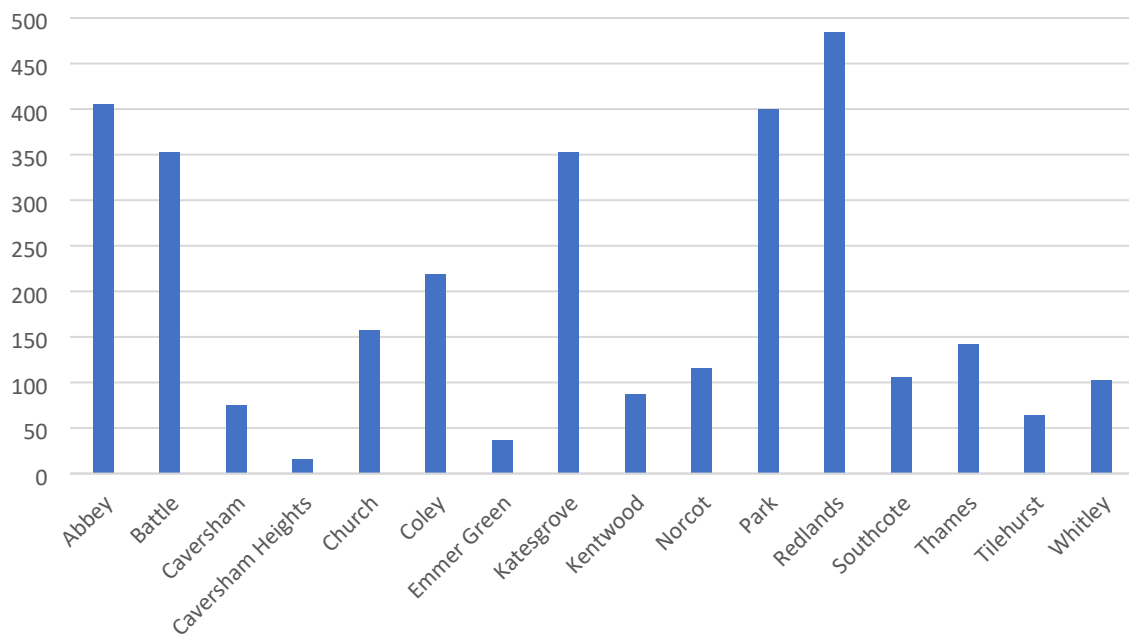
The rates of Category 1 & 2, HHSRS hazards per 100 PRS properties reveals a wide distribution across Reading (Figure 16 & Map 4). Whitley (25.8 per 100) & Redlands (21.4 per 100) have the highest rates of predicted PRS properties with Category 1 & 2, HHSRS hazards. The national average for category 1 hazards in the PRS is 14%<sup>21</sup>. It's important to note that rates are significantly impacted by the denominator, in this case total PRS numbers in each ward.

<sup>21</sup> EHS Headline 2021-2022, <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/english-housing-survey-2021-to-2022-headline-report/english-housing-survey-2021-to-2022-headline-report#section-2-housing-stock>



**Figure 17 Rates per 100 PRS properties of predicted Category 1 & 2, HHSRS hazards by ward (Source: Ti 2023).** Horizontal black line shows national average for Category 1 hazards 2022 (14 per 100)

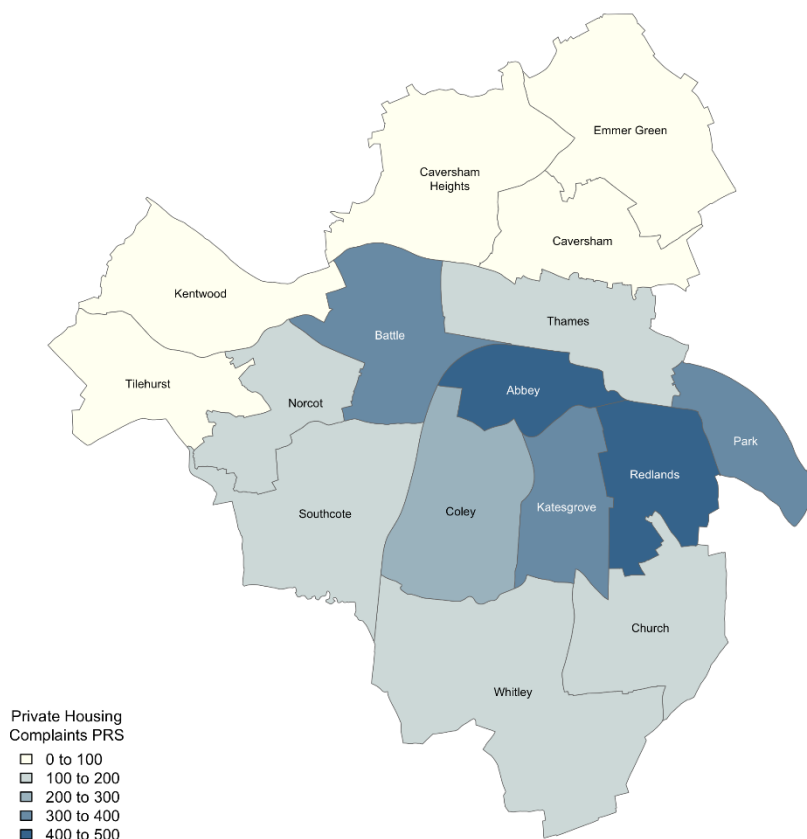
Complaints and service requests made by PRS tenants to the council about poor property conditions and inadequate property management are a direct indicator of low quality PRS. Reading recorded **3,117** complaints and service requests from private tenants and others linked to PRS properties over a 5-year period (Figure 18).



**Figure 18. PRS complaints and service requests made by private tenants and others to the Council (Source Ti 2023)**

<sup>22</sup> EHS Headline 2021-2022, <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/english-housing-survey-2021-to-2022-headline-report/english-housing-survey-2021-to-2022-headline-report#section-2-housing-stock>

Redlands (484) and Abbey (405) received most private tenant service requests and complaints by private tenants and others to the Council (Figure 18 & Map 5).



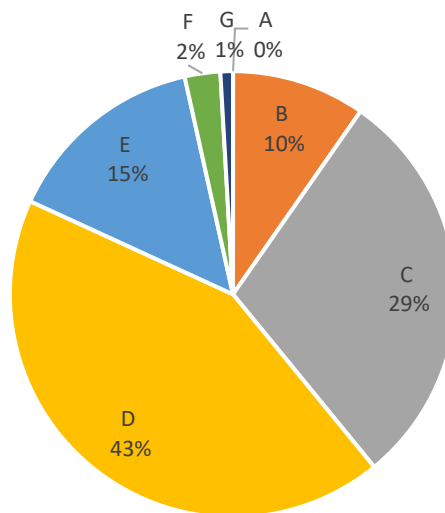
**Map 5. Distribution of PRS service requests and tenant complaints (Source: Ti 2023, Map by Metastreet).**

An EPC rating is an assessment of a property's energy efficiency. It's primarily used by buyers or renters of residential properties to assess the energy costs associated with heating a house or flat. The rating is from A to G. A indicates a highly efficient property, G indicates low efficiency.

The energy efficiency of a dwelling depends on the thermal insulation of the structure, on the fuel type, and the size and design of the means of heating and ventilation. Any disrepair or dampness to the dwelling and any disrepair to the heating system may affect efficiency. The exposure and orientation of the dwelling are also relevant.

As part of this project **24,779** EPC ratings were matched to PRS properties (Figure 19). All figures have been modelled from this group.





**Figure 19. Distribution of Energy Performance Certificate ratings in PRS (Rating A-G) (Source: Ti 2023).**

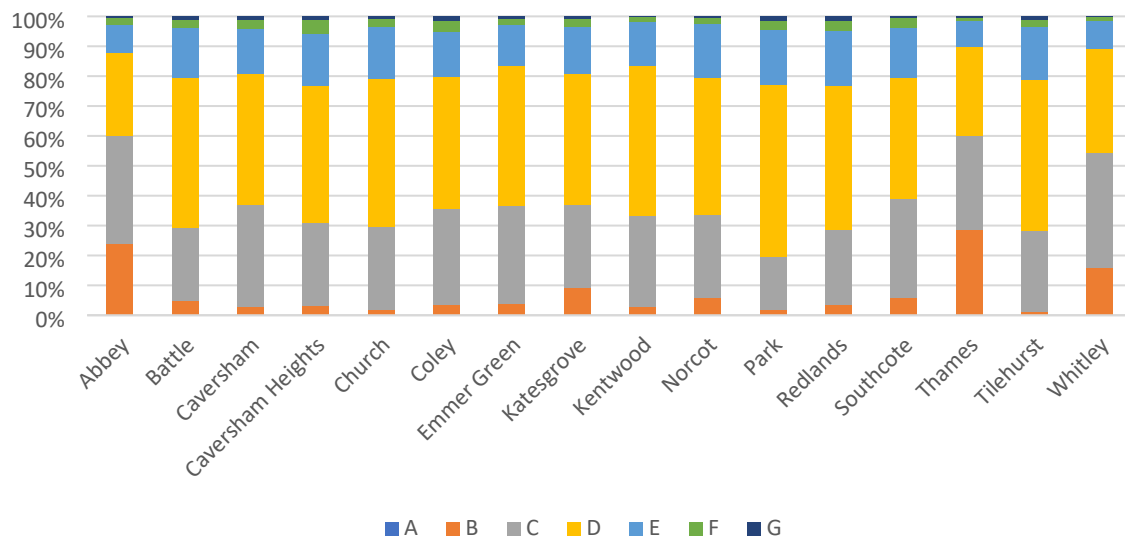
The Minimum Energy Efficiency Standard (MEES) came into force in England and Wales on 1 April 2018. The regulation applies to PRS properties and mandates that all dwellings must have an EPC rating of E and above to be compliant. It has been calculated using the matched addresses that 18.1% of PRS properties in Reading have an E, F, and G rating. 3.5% of PRS properties have an F and G rating (Figure 19). Extrapolated to the entire PRS, 1,084 PRS properties are likely to fail the MEES statutory requirement.

The statistical evidence shows that there is a continuous relationship between indoor temperature and vulnerability to cold-related death<sup>23</sup>. The colder the dwelling, the greater the risk. The percentage rise in deaths in winter is greater in dwellings with low energy efficiency ratings. Children in cold homes are twice as likely to suffer from a variety of respiratory problems<sup>24</sup>. There is a gradient of risk with age of the property, the risk being greatest in dwellings built before 1850, and lowest in the more energy efficient dwellings built after 1980<sup>25</sup>. Therefore, the F and G properties present a serious risk to the occupants' health, particularly if over the age of 65 (Figure 19 & 20).

<sup>23</sup> Housing Health and Rating System, Operation Guidance, 2006  
[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/15810/142631.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/15810/142631.pdf)

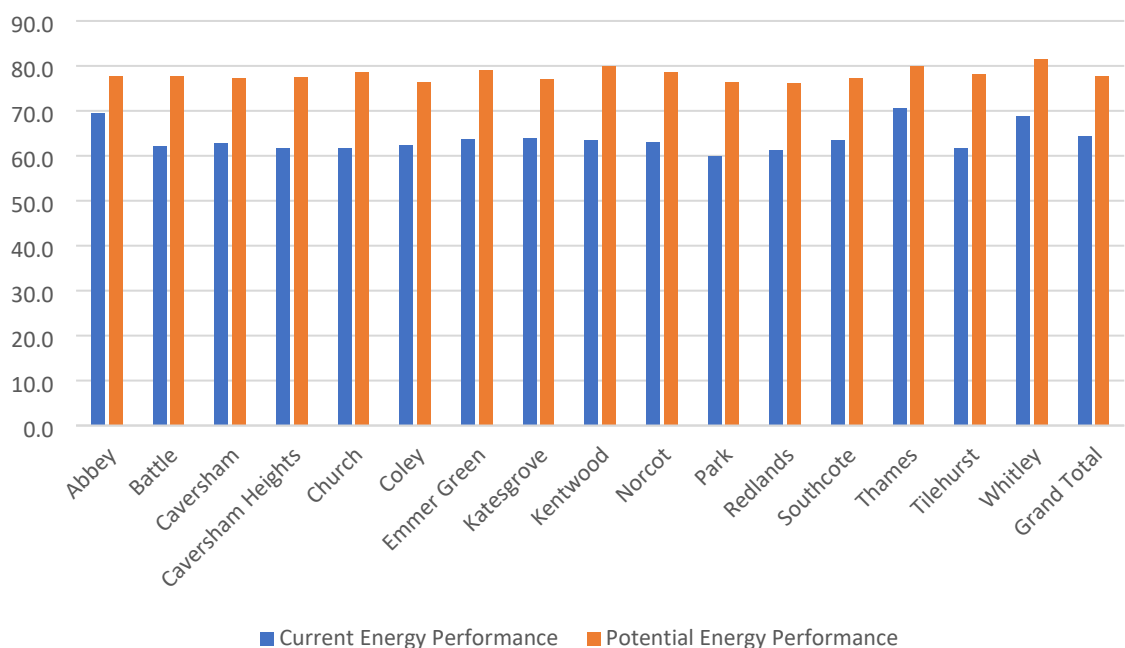
<sup>24</sup> Health Equity in England: The Marmot Review 10 Years On, 2020 <https://www.health.org.uk/publications/reports/the-marmot-review-10-years-on>

<sup>25</sup> Housing Health and Rating System, Operation Guidance, 2006  
[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/15810/142631.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/15810/142631.pdf)



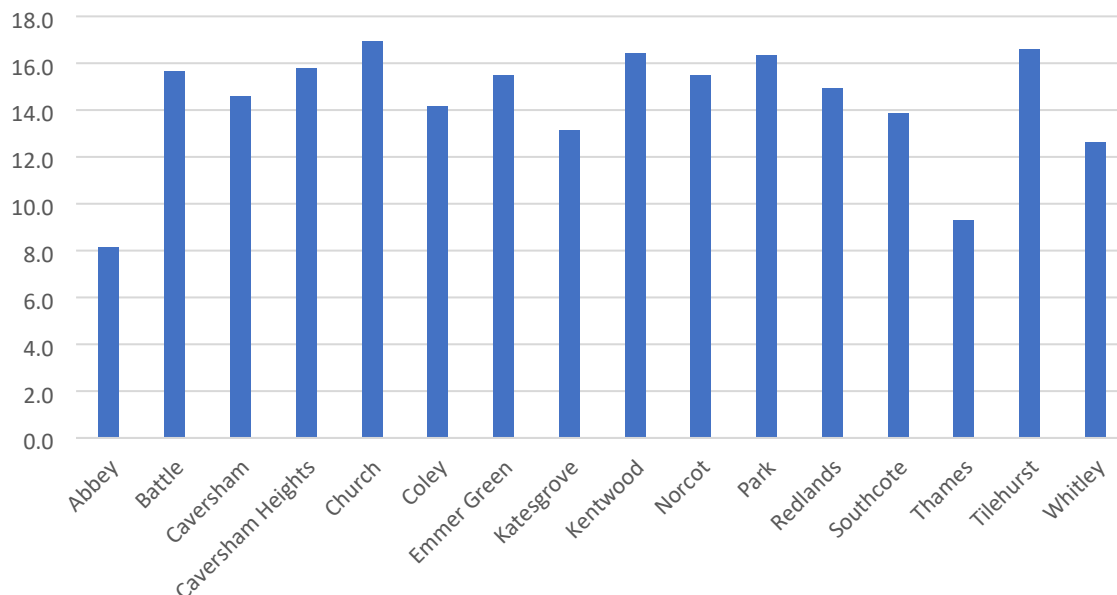
**Figure 20. Energy Performance Certificate ratings in PRS by ward (Rating A-G) (Source: Ti 2023).**

The difference between the current and potential energy performance score (EPC) helps owners of residential property understand what practicable improvements can be made to improve a properties energy performance. The gap between current and potential EPC scores represents the opportunity to improve energy performance within a reasonable economic envelope (Figure 21 & 22).



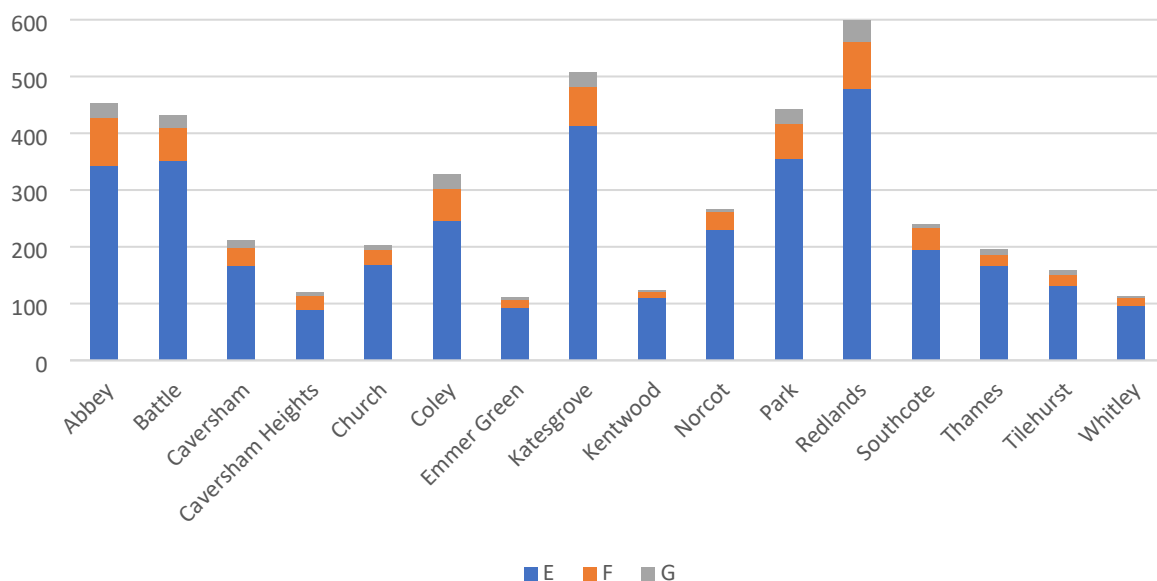
**Figure 21. Current and Potential Energy Performance Certificate score (mean average) in PRS by ward (Source: Ti 2023).**

Church (16.9) PRS stock has the largest difference between current and potential energy efficiency score (Figure 22).



**Figure 22. Difference between Current and Potential Energy Performance Certificate score (mean average) in PRS by ward (Source: Ti 2023).**

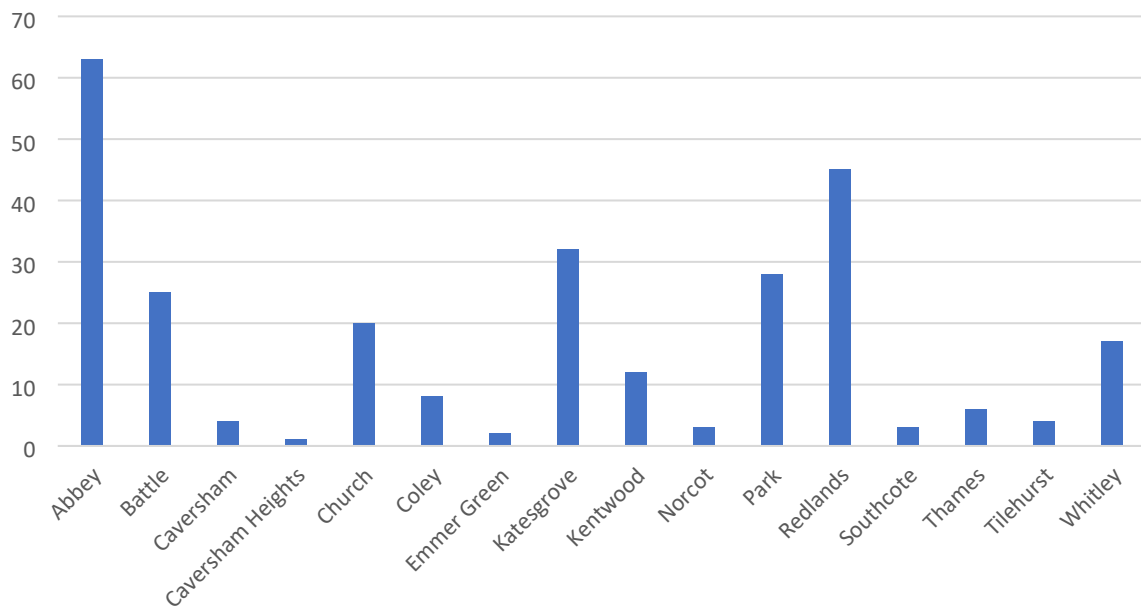
EPC ratings E, F, & G represent properties with the poorest energy efficiency scores. Redlands (479) and Katesgrove (414) have the highest number of EPC ratings E-G (Figure 23).



**Figure 23. Energy Performance Certificate ratings in PRS by ward (Rating A-E) (Source: Ti 2023).**

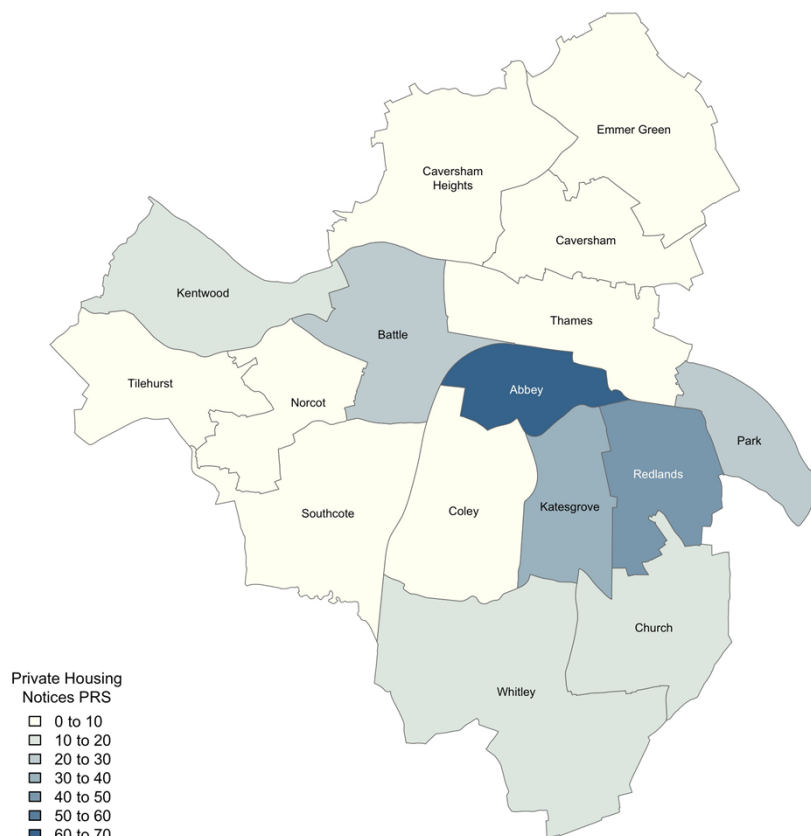
### 2.2.3 PRS enforcement and regulation interventions

Reading uses a range of statutory housing and public health notices to address poor housing standards in the PRS. Interventions can be a result of a complaint being made by a tenant about their accommodation or as a result of a proactive inspection. Over a 5-year period (2018-23) Reading served 273 housing and public health notices (Figure 24).



**Figure 24. Statutory housing notices served on PRS properties (Source: Ti 2023).**

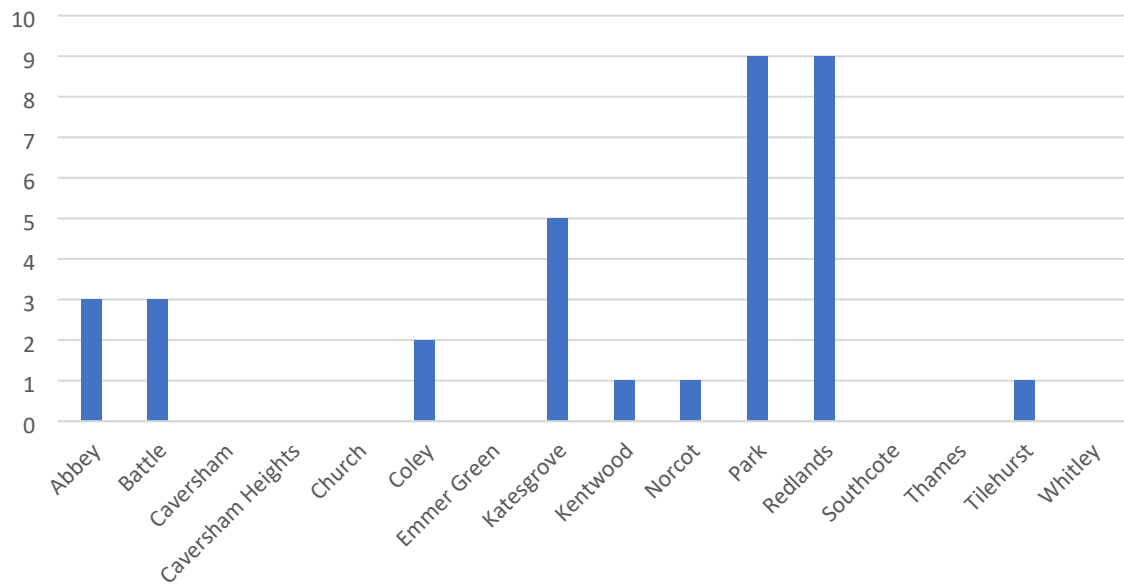
Abbey (63) and Redlands (45) received the highest number of statutory notices for housing and public health related issues (Figure 22 & Map 6).



**Map 6. Distribution of statutory housing notices served on PRS properties (Source: Ti 2023, Map by Metastreet).**

The local housing authority's enforcement strategy involves taking serious enforcement action against individuals who control rented property to ensure compliance with minimum standards.

The type of action taken depends on the nature of the offense and various factors. Between 2018 – 2023 Reading Borough Council instigated 34 financial penalty notices, prosecutions, or a simple caution to address poor housing conditions. Park (9) and Redlands (9) received the highest number of serious enforcement interventions (Figure 23).

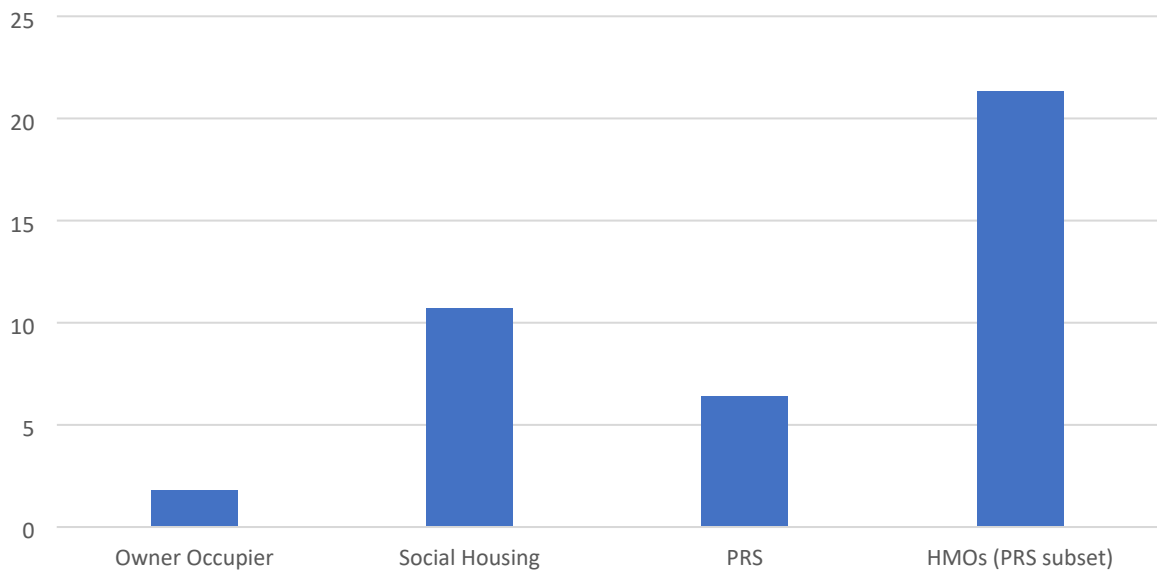


**Figure 25. Private housing prosecutions, simple cautions, and Financial Penalty Notices (Source: Ti 2023).**

### 2.2.4 PRS & anti-social behaviour (ASB)

It's important to note that the study focuses exclusively on ASB associated with residential premises. Incidents, such as those investigated on a street corner, which cannot be linked to a residential property, are excluded from the study.

ASB incidents (over 5 years) have been linked to all main residential tenures. Across the borough, owner occupiers have the lowest ASB incident rates (1.8 per 100 dwellings). Social housing (10.7 per 100 dwellings) and Private rented housing (6.4 per 100 dwellings) have higher rates. Known and predicted HMOs have by far the highest rates (21.3 per 100 dwellings) (Figure 26).



**Figure 26. Rates per 100 properties ASB incidents linked to key tenures (Source Ti 2023).**

The council has recorded a total of 1,980 incidents related to anti-social behaviour (ASB) and nuisance linked to PRS properties over the past five years. Battle (247) has the highest levels of PRS ASB incidents Emmer Green (33) has the lowest (Figure 24 & Map 7).

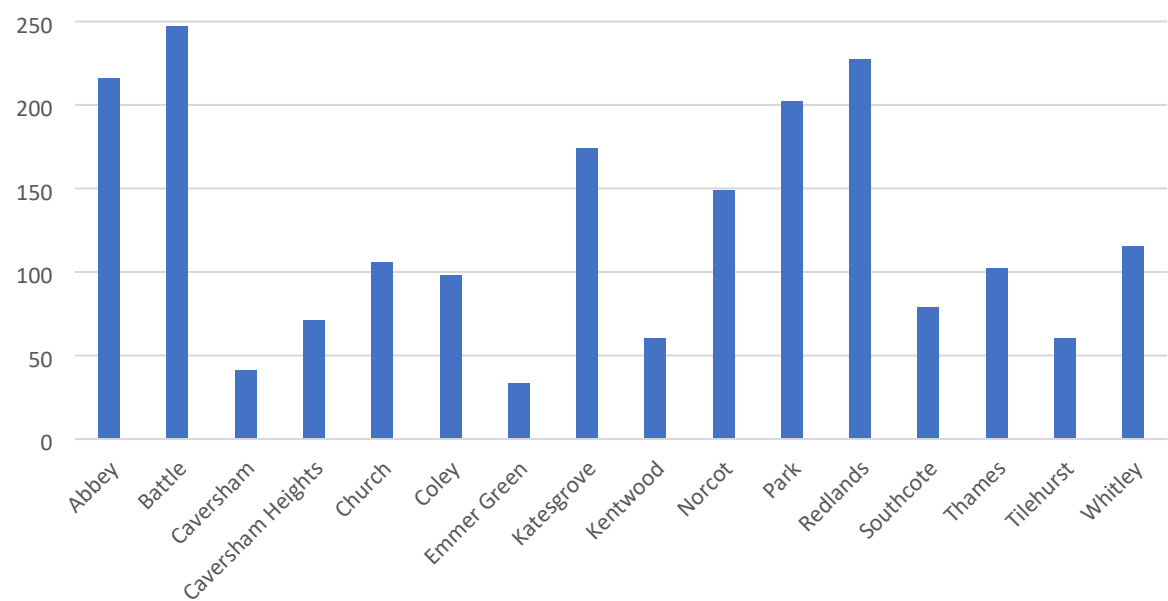
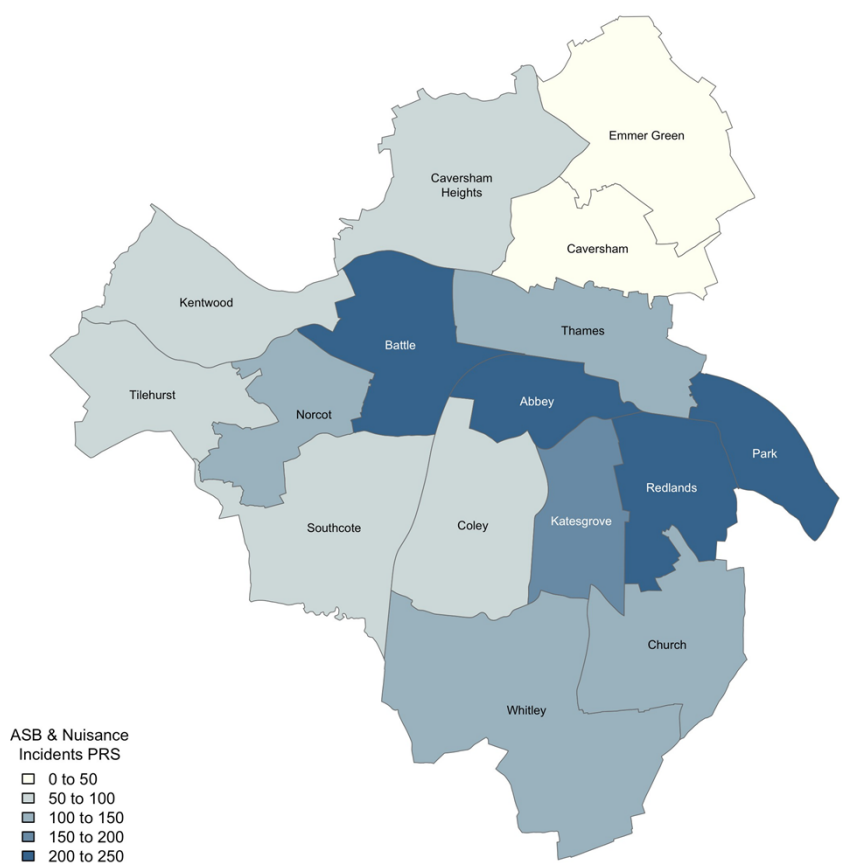
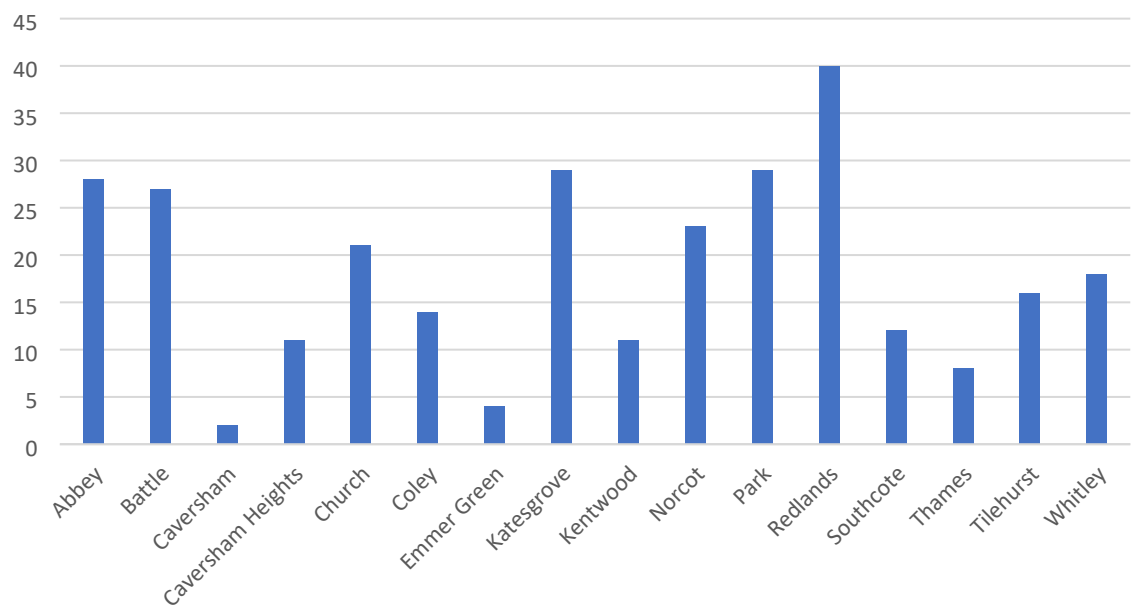


Figure 27. Number of ASB incidents linked to PRS by ward (Source Ti 2023).



Map 7. Distribution of ASB linked to PRS properties (Source: Ti 2023, Map by Metastreet).

Properties subject to repeat ABS incident (2 or more incidents) begin to demonstrate a lack of tenancy management or other underlying issues. Redlands (40) has the highest number of repeat ASB incidents (Figure 25).



**Figure 28. PRS properties with 2 or more ASB incidents by ward (Source Ti 2023).**

2.3 Results - Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMO)

For the purposes of this study shared amenities HMO (section 254) are categorised as buildings or flats that are occupied by two or more households and 3 or more persons that share a basic amenity, such as bathroom, toilet, or cooking facilities.

This type of rented property typically represents the cheapest rental accommodation; rented by room with the sharing of amenities (usually kitchen/bathroom). The Housing Act 2004 defines HMOs of this type as a “dwelling of 3 or more persons not forming a single household”<sup>26</sup>.

2.3.1 Population and distribution

Reading's HMO population has been estimated to comprise a total of 3,272 properties. For this study, the HMO population has been categorised into two distinct groups. The first group consists of known HMOs across 16 wards, which amounts to 1,184 properties. These HMOs have obtained licences from the council in compliance with the mandatory HMO licensing requirements as outlined in the Housing Act 2004, Part 2. The second group is made up of predicted HMOs, which are properties anticipated to meet the standard HMO criteria described above and amounts to 2,088 properties (Figure 26). These are likely to be mainly 3-4 person HMO properties.

Abbey (770) has the highest number of HMOs and Kentwood (40) has the lowest. The known and predicted HMO population is distributed across all wards with concentrations in central and eastern wards (Map 8 & Map 9).

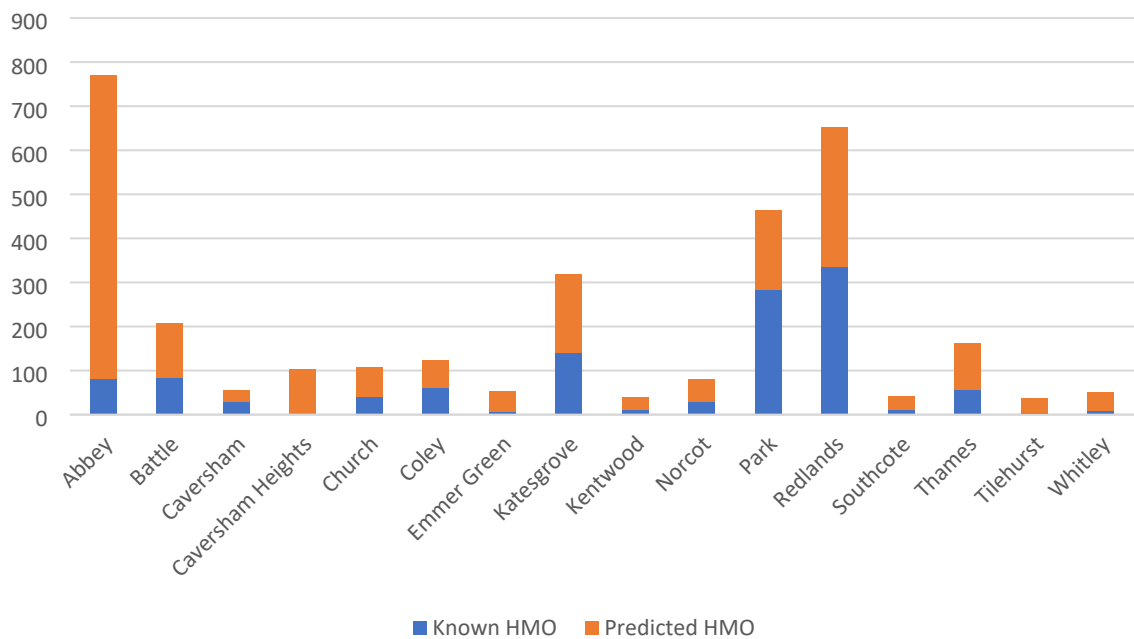
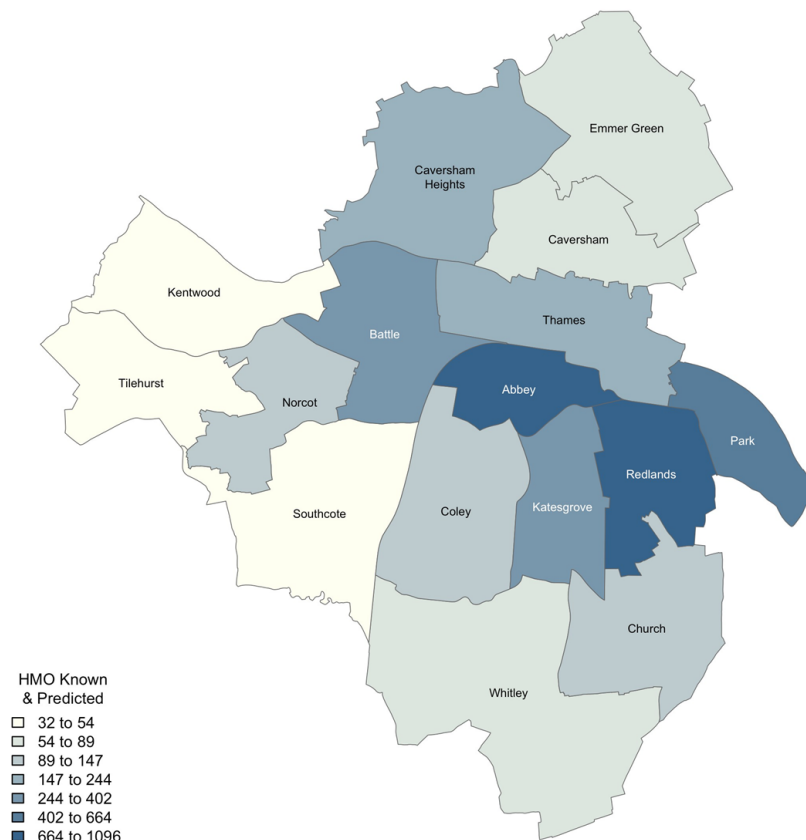


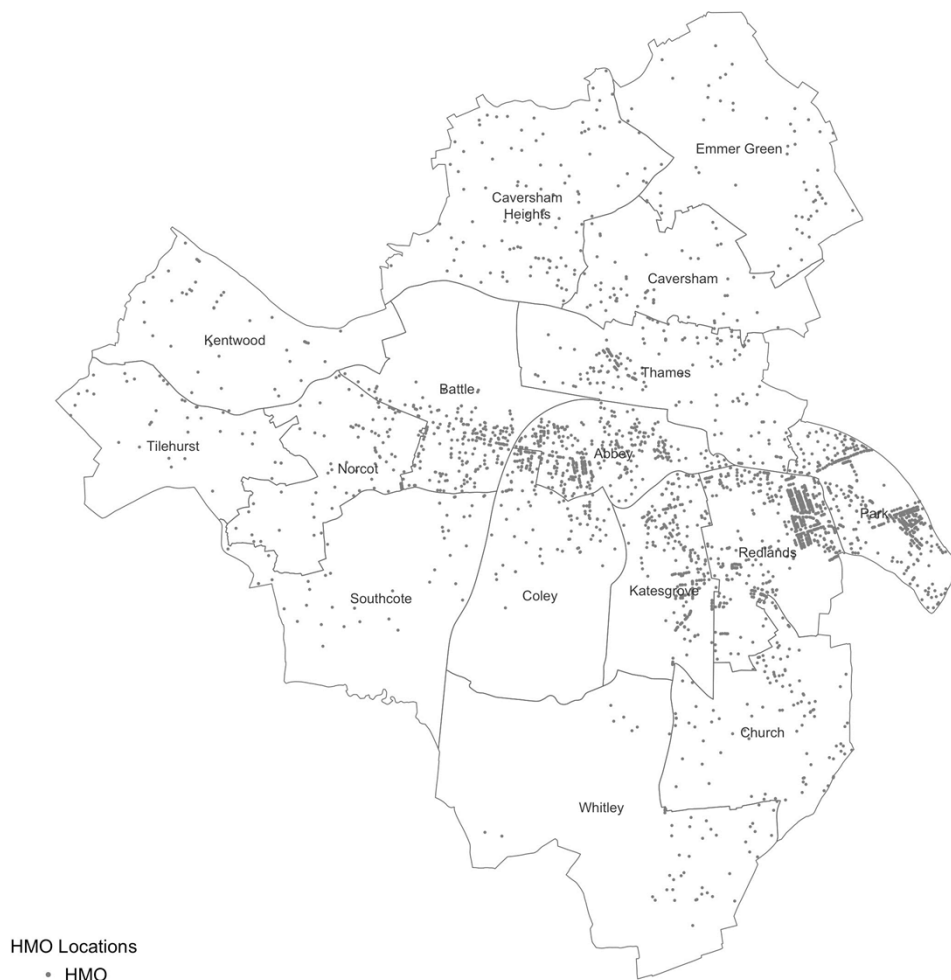
Figure 29. Number of known HMOs by ward (Source Ti 2023)

<sup>26</sup> Housing Act 2004  
<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2004/34/section/254>





**Map 8: Distribution of known and predicted HMOs by ward (Source Ti 2023, Map by Metastreet)**



**Map 9: Location of known and predicted HMOs (Source Ti 2023, Map by Metastreet)**

Shared HMOs tend to be the cheapest form of private housing per unit and have traditionally been occupied by single adults, however in recent years many more couples and children reside in HMOs. Pressure on affordable housing and higher rates of homelessness has driven demand for this type of dwelling.<sup>27</sup>

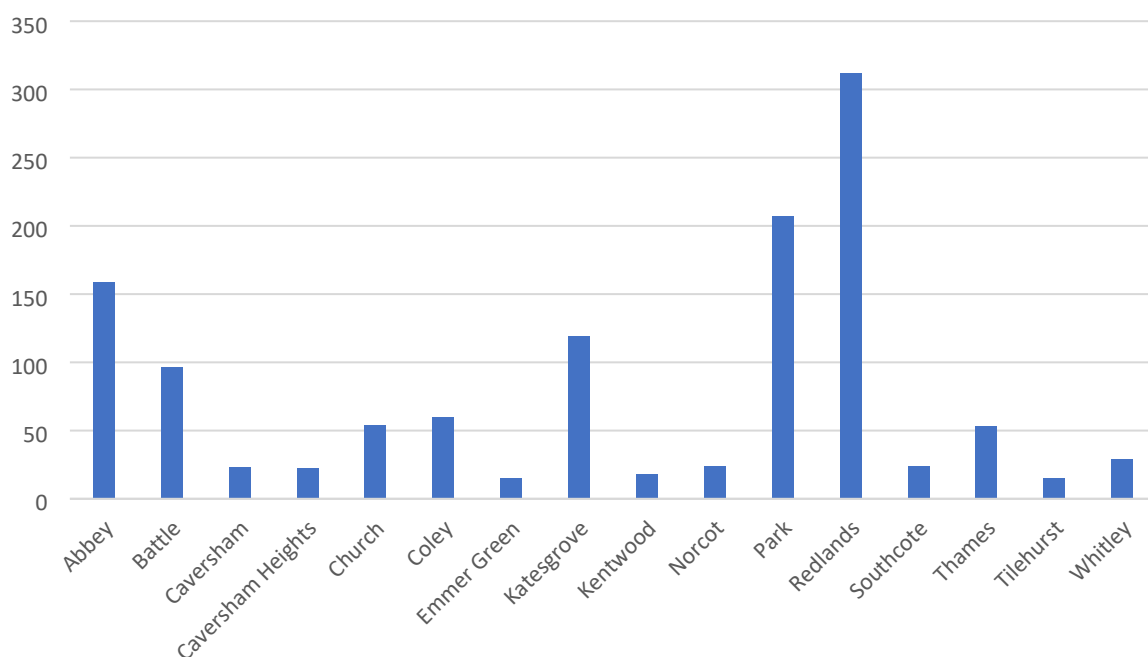
### 2.3.2 HMO & housing conditions

HMOs tend to have some of the poorest housing conditions of any tenure<sup>28</sup>. Analysis shows that 1,230 of 3,272 HMOs in Reading are predicted to have at least one serious hazard (Category 1 and 2, HHSRS).

The number of predicted serious hazards is highest in HMOs in Redlands (312) & Park (207) wards (Figure 30 & Map 10). All wards have HMOs with Category 1 & 2 hazards.

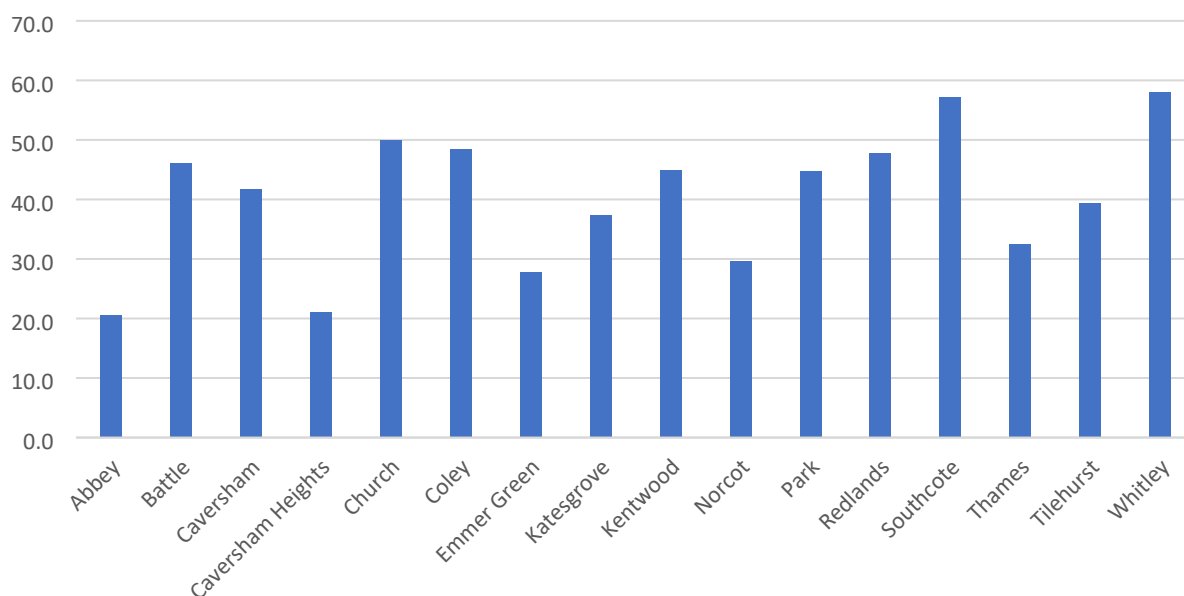
<sup>27</sup> Regulating the Privately Rented Housing Sector, Evidence into Practice, Jill Stewart, Russell Moffatt (2022)

<sup>28</sup> Regulating the Privately Rented Housing Sector, Evidence into Practice, Jill Stewart, Russell Moffatt (2022)



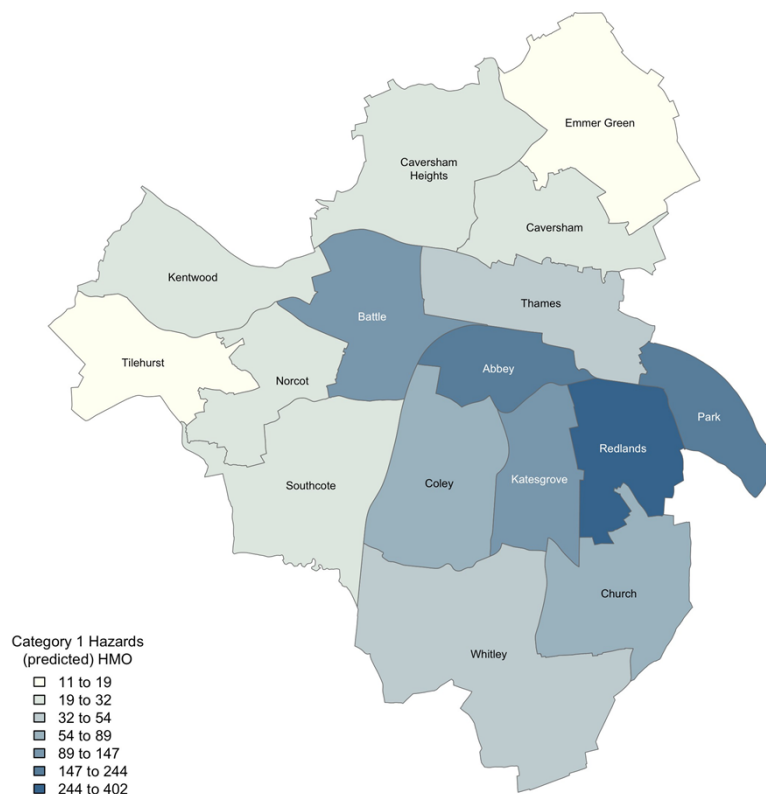
**Figure 30. Number of HMOs with Category 1& 2 hazards by ward (Source Ti 2023).**

The rates of Category 1 & 2, HHSRS hazards per 100 HMO properties reveals a wide distribution across Reading (Figure 30). Whitley (58% per 100) & Southcote (51.7% per 100) have the highest rates of predicted HMO properties with Category 1 & 2, HHSRS hazards. The national average for Category 1 hazards in the PRS is 14%<sup>29</sup>. Hazards in HMOs are distributed across all wards (Map 10).



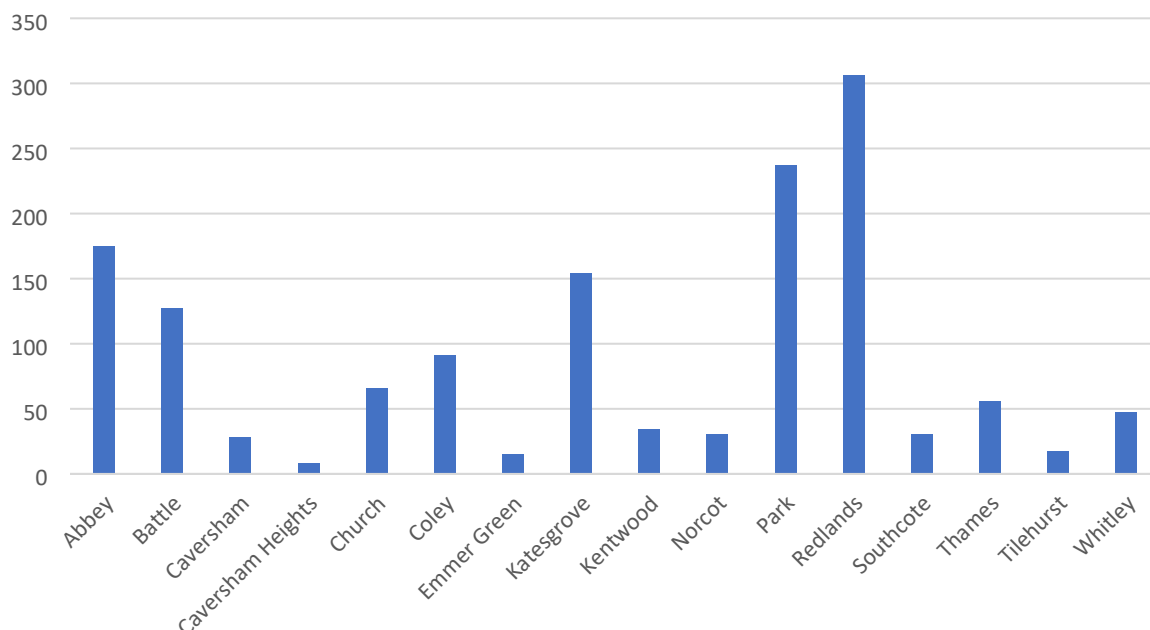
**Figure 31. HMOs with Category 1& 2 hazards rate per 100 by ward (Source Ti 2023).**

<sup>29</sup> EHS Headline 2021-2022, <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/english-housing-survey-2021-to-2022-headline-report/english-housing-survey-2021-to-2022-headline-report#section-2-housing-stock>



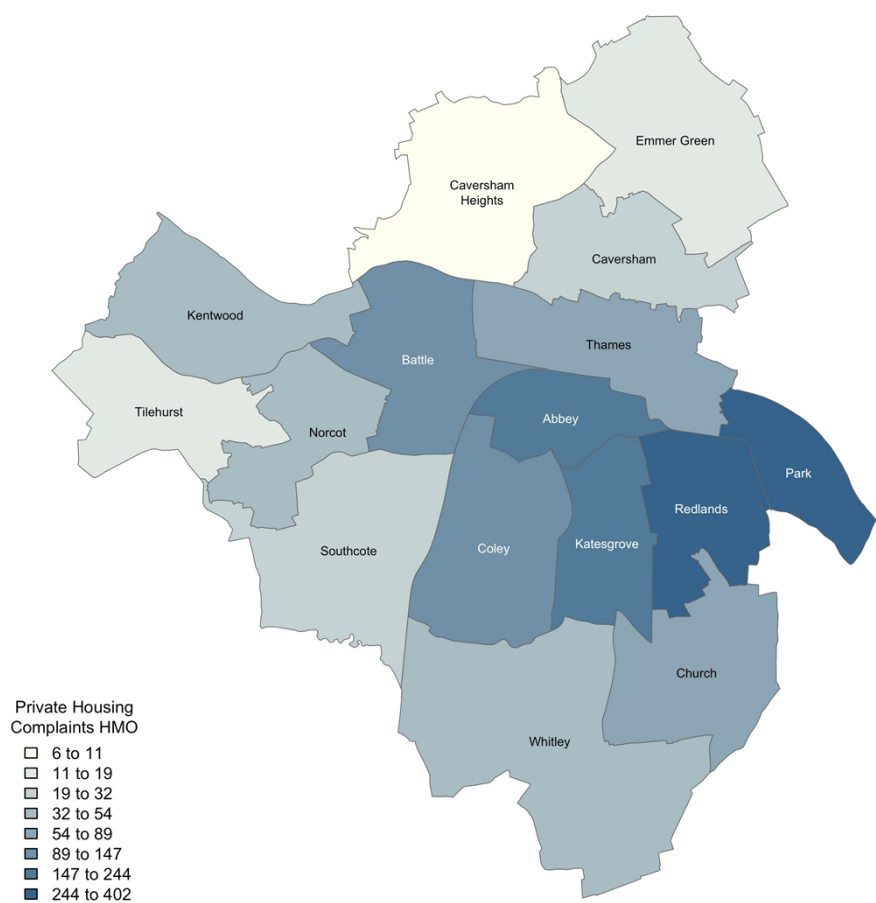
**Map 10: Distribution of HMOs with Category 1 & 2 hazards by ward (Source Ti 2023, Map by Metastreet).**

Complaints and service requests made by HMO tenants and others to the council about poor property conditions and inadequate property management are a direct indicator of low-quality HMOs. Reading recorded 1,421 complaints and service requests from tenants and others linked to HMO properties over a 5-year period (Figure 28).



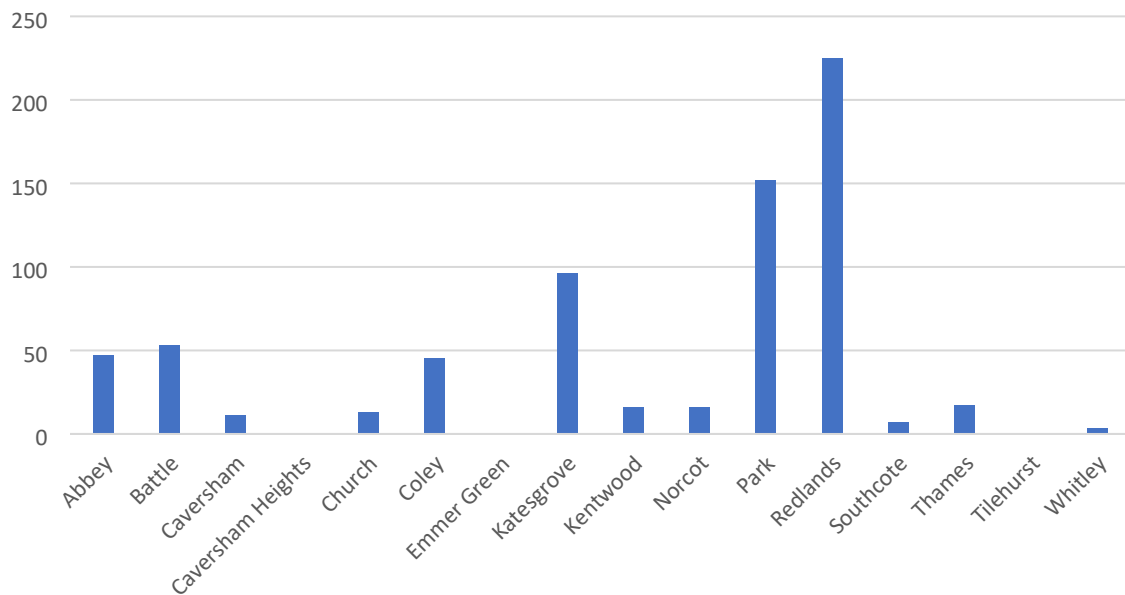
**Figure 32. Number of HMOs service requests and complaints by ward (Source Ti 2023).**

Redlands (306) and Park (237) received most service requests and complaints by HMO tenants and others to the Council (Figure 28). Complaints and service requests were received from all wards (Map 10).

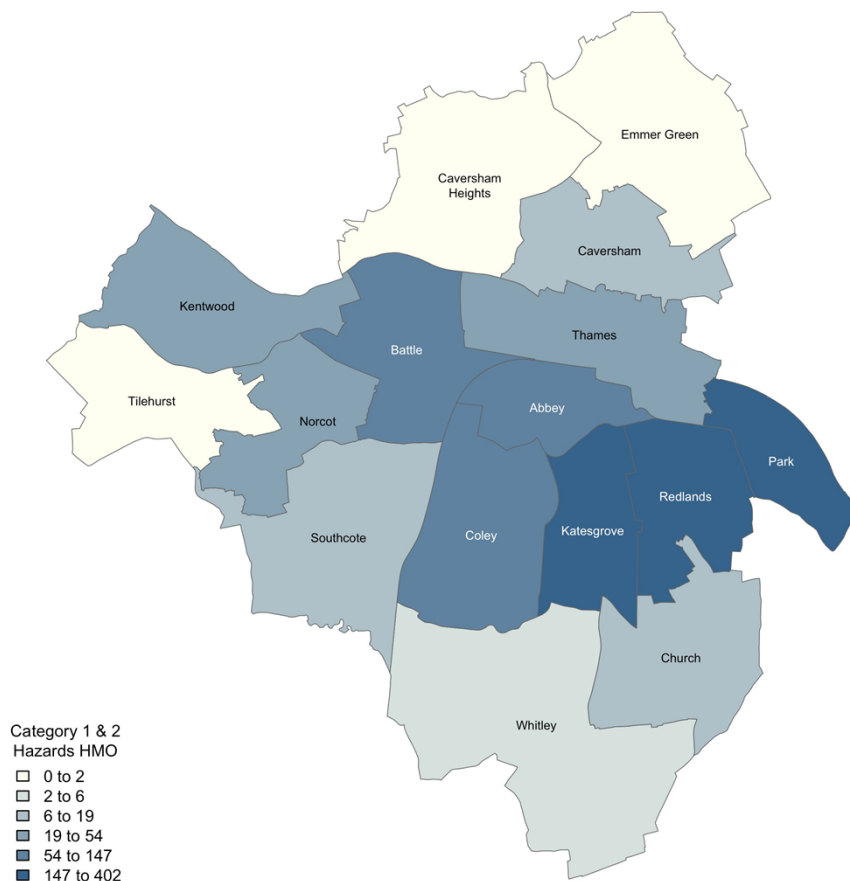


**Map 11: Distribution of HMOs service requests and complaints by ward (Source Ti 2023, Map by Metastreet).**

Reading has a proactive and reactive HMO inspection programme. During those inspections (375), officers identified 701 Category 1 and 2 hazards (HHSRS). HMOs in Redlands were found to have the highest number of hazards (225) followed by Park (152) (Figure 29).



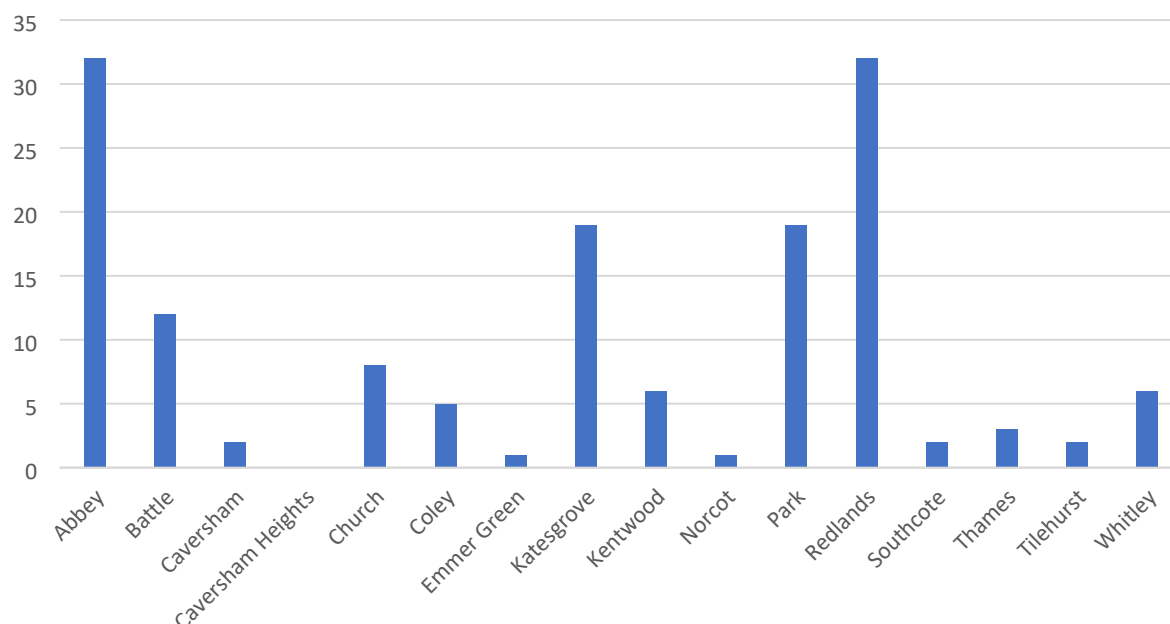
**Figure 33. Inspected HMOs with Category 1 & 2 hazards (Source: Ti 2023).**



**Map 12. Distribution of inspected HMOs with Category 1 & 2 hazards (Source: Ti 2023, Map by Metastreet).**

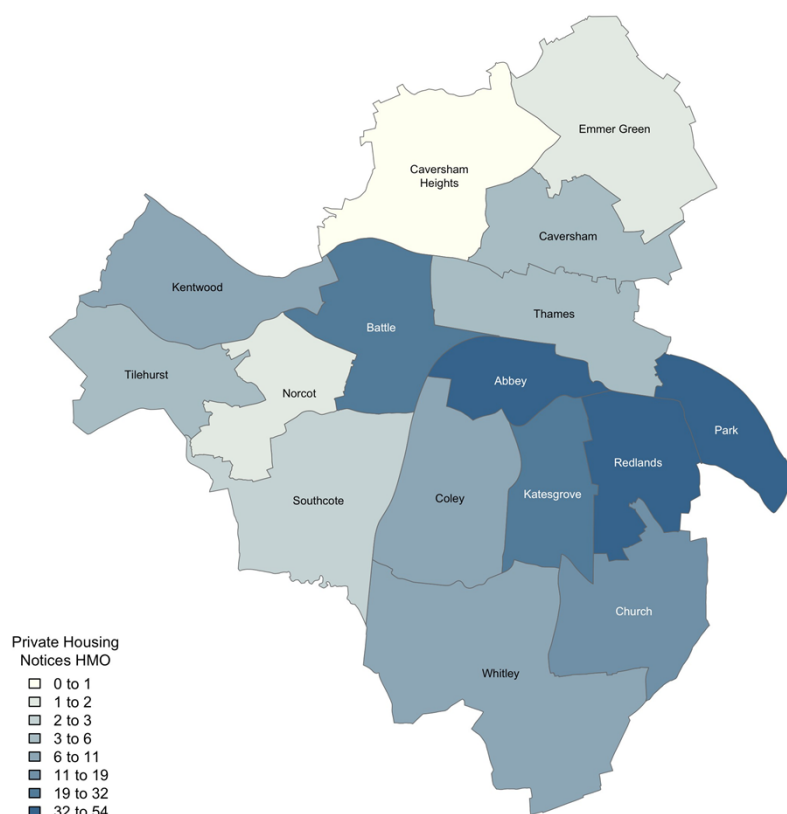
### 2.3.3 HMO enforcement and regulation interventions

Reading uses a range of statutory housing and public health notices to address poor housing standards in the HMO. Over a 5-year period (2018-23) Reading served 150 housing and public health notices (Figure 34 & Map 13).



**Figure 34. Statutory housing notices served on HMO properties (Source: Ti 2023).**

HMOs in Abbey (32) and Redlands (32) received the most housing notices. Notices were served on HMOs in all wards except for Caversham Heights.



**Map 13. Distribution of statutory housing notices served on PRS properties (Source: Ti 2023, Map by Metastreet).**

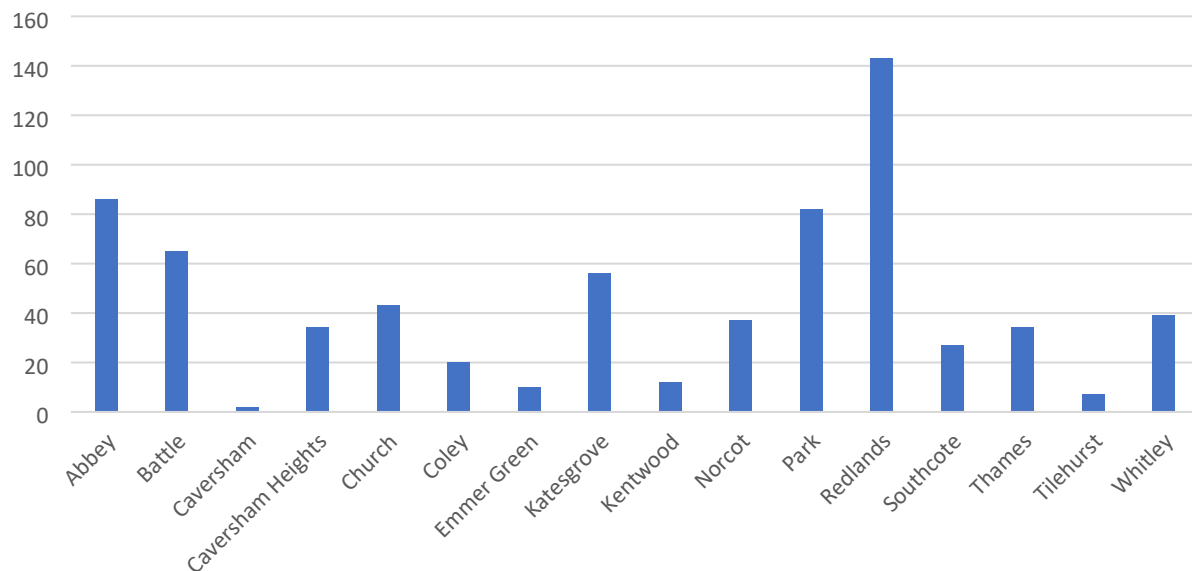
#### 2.3.4 HMO & anti-social behaviour (ASB)

Different types of ASB incidents recorded by the council over a 5-year period (April 2018 – March 2023) have been linked to known and predicted HMO properties and analysed. 697 ASB incidents have been linked to all HMOs in Reading (Figure 31).

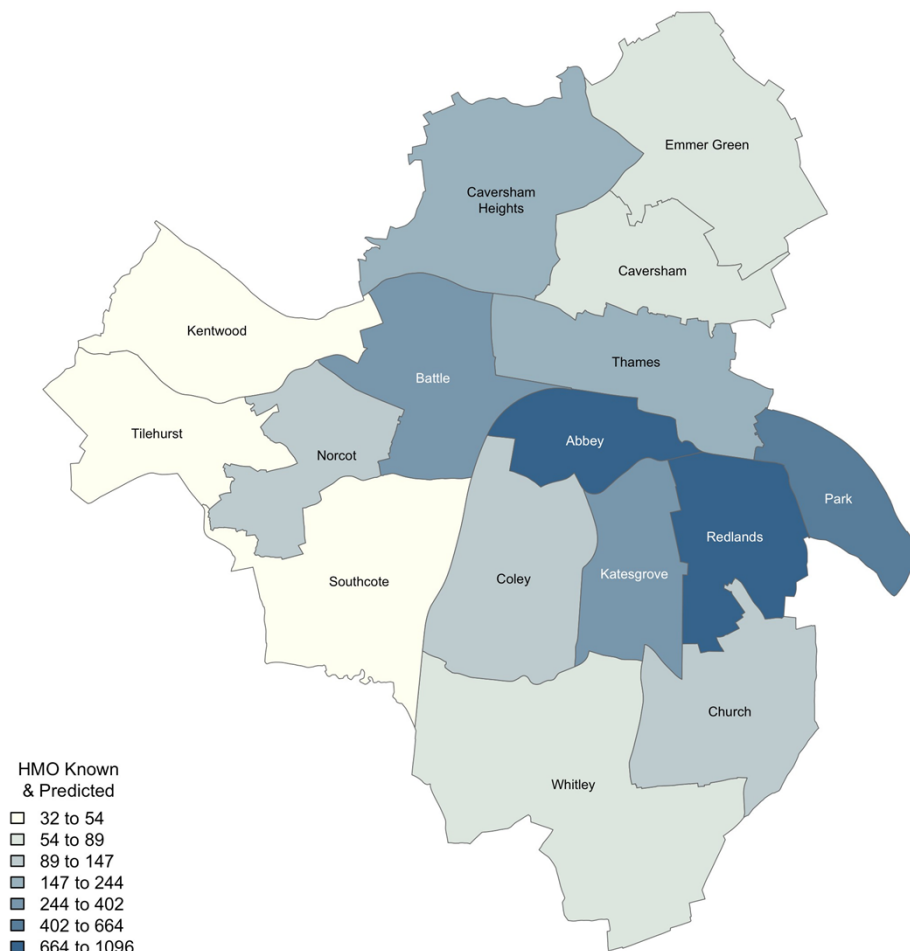
Please note, this study focuses exclusively on ASB associated with residential premises.

Incidents, such as those recorded on a street corner or adjacent to a park, which cannot be linked to a residential property, are excluded from the study. For the purposes of this study, ASB includes noise and other nuisances identified or reported to the council.





**Figure 35. Number of ASB incidents linked to HMOs by ward (Source Ti 2023).**

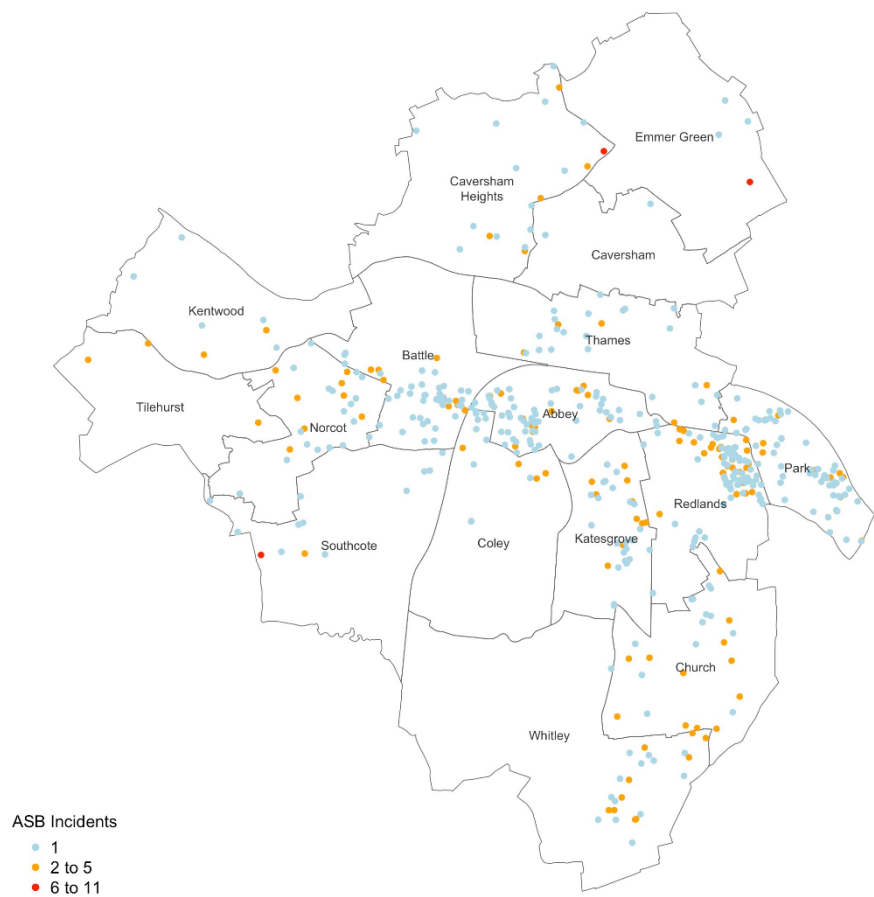


**Map 14: Distribution of ASB linked to HMOs (Source Ti 2023, Map by Metastreet)**

Elevated levels of ASB can be an indicator of poor property management. HMO properties often have higher levels of transience which can result in higher waste production and ASB. <sup>30</sup> ASB

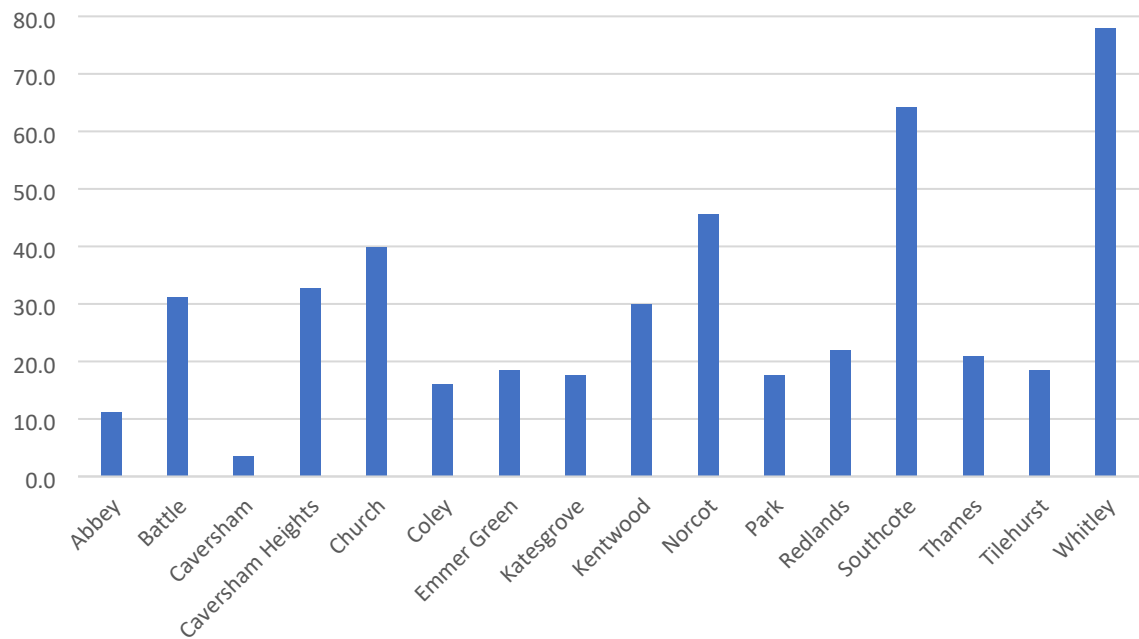
<sup>30</sup> Regulating the Privately Rented Housing Sector, Evidence into Practice, Jill Stewart, Russell Moffatt (2022)

linked to HMOs is distributed across all wards. Redlands (143) and Abbey (86) have the highest recorded ASB incidents linked to known HMOs (Figure 35 and Map 14 & 15).



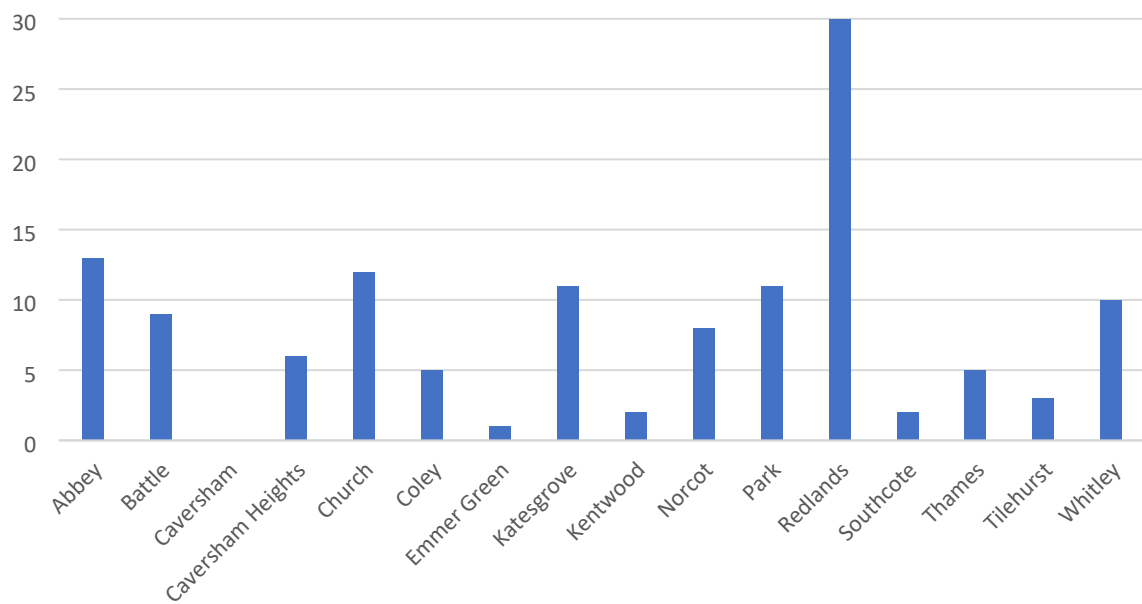
**Map 15: Location of ASB linked to HMOs (Source Ti 2023, Map by Metastreet)**

ASB rates per 100 HMOs reveals a wide range across all wards. Whitley (78 per 100 HMOs) and Southcote (64.3 per 100 HMOs) have the highest ASB rates (Figure 36).



**Figure 36. ASB incidents rate per 100 HMOs by ward (Source Ti 2023).**

Properties subject to repeat ASB incidents (2 or more incidents) demonstrates poor property management. Redlands (30) has the highest number of repeat ASB incidents (Figure 37).



**Figure 37. Two or more ASB incidents linked to HMO by ward (Source Ti 2023).**

### 3 Conclusions

The private rented sector (PRS) in Reading has grown steadily since 2011. Based on tenure modelling (2023), Reading's PRS is now calculated to be 39.9% of all housing stock (Figure 10).

The PRS in Reading is distributed across all 16 wards (Figure 12). The number of PRS dwellings per ward ranges from 5,014 (Abbey) to 627 (Caversham Heights). The percentage of PRS properties in each ward ranges between 69.4% (Abbey) and 16.1% (Caversham Heights) (Figure 13 & Map 3). Therefore, 15 out of 16 Reading wards have an equal or higher percentage PRS than the national average in 2022 (19%).

Reading has a mixture of high and low deprivation wards. 8 of 16 wards have aggregated IMD rankings below the national average (Figure 4).

Reading has a lower proportion in fuel poverty (10.3%) than the national average (13.4%) (Figure 5). Reading has above average rents for England (£1,006) (Figure 9).

Reading has above average rented property possession rate nationally, with 11.5 claims per 10,000 households in 2023 (Figure 6). 1,084 households were owed a prevention or relief duty in the financial year 2022/2023 (Figure 7). 36.6% homelessness prevention or relief duty result from private rented tenancy ending (assured shorthold tenancies) for financial year 2022/2023. This is slightly below the national average (38.6%)

Reading has a high number of residential properties (40.1%) built pre-Second World War (Figure 14). The most common private rented property type in Reading are houses (51%), while bungalow is the least common property type (1%) (Figure 15).

There are 4,297 private rented properties in Reading that are likely to have at least 1 serious housing hazard (Category 1 and high scoring Category 2, HHSRS). PRS properties with serious hazards are distributed across all wards. Redlands (605) and Park (490) have the highest number of properties with at least one Category 1 & 2 hazard (Figure 16 & Map 4).

Reading recorded 3,117 complaints and service requests from private tenants and others linked to PRS properties over a 5-year period (not including ASB) (Figure 18). Redlands (484) and Abbey (405) received most private tenant service requests and complaints by private tenants and others to the Council (Figure 18 & Map 5).

It has been calculated using the matched addresses that 18.1% of PRS properties in Reading have an E, F, and G rating. 3.5% of PRS properties have an F and G rating (Figure 19).

Extrapolated to the entire PRS, 1,084 PRS properties are likely to fail the MEES statutory requirement. Church (16.9) PRS stock has the largest difference between current and potential energy efficiency score (Figure 21).

Over a 5-year period (2018-23) Reading served 273 housing and public health notices. Abbey (63) and Redlands (45) received the highest number of statutory notices for housing and public health related issues (Figure 24 & Map 6). Between 2018 – 2023 Reading Borough Council instigated 34 financial penalty notices, prosecutions, or a simple caution to address poor housing conditions. Park (9) and Redlands (9) received the highest number of serious enforcement interventions (Figure 25).

Across the borough, owner occupiers have the lowest ASB incident rates (1.8 per 100 dwellings). Social housing (10.7 per 100 dwellings) and Private rented housing (6.4 per 100 dwellings) have higher rates. Known and predicted HMOs have by far the highest rates (21.3 per 100 dwellings) (Figure 26). The council has recorded a total of 1,980 incidents related to anti-social behaviour (ASB) and nuisance in the PRS over the past five years. Battle (247) has the highest levels of PRS ASB incidents Emmer Green (33) has the lowest (Figure 24 & Map 7). Redlands (40) has the highest number of repeat ASB incidents (Figure 25).

Reading's HMO population has been estimated to comprise a total of 3,272 properties (Figure 29). Abbey (770) has the highest number of HMOs and Kentwood (40) has the lowest. The known and predicted HMO population is distributed across all wards with concentrations in central and eastern wards (Map 8 & Map 9).

Analysis shows that 1,230 of 3,272 HMOs in Reading are predicted to have at least one serious hazard (Category 1 and 2, HHSRS).

The number of predicted serious hazards is highest in HMOs in Redlands (312) & Park (207) wards (Figure 30 & Map 10). All wards have HMOs with Category 1 & 2 hazards. Reading recorded 1,421 complaints and service requests from tenants and others linked to HMO properties over a 5-year period (Figure 32).

Redlands (306) and Park (237) received most service requests and complaints by HMO tenants and others to the Council (Figure 32). Complaints and service requests were received from all wards (Map 11). During inspections, officers identified 701 Category 1 and 2 hazards (HHSRS). HMOs in Redlands were found to have the highest number of hazards (225) followed by Park (152) (Figure 33). Over a 5-year period (2018-23)

Reading served 150 housing and public health notices (Figure 34 & Map 13). HMOs in Abbey (32) and Redlands (32) received the most housing notices. Notices were served on HMOs in all wards except for Caversham Heights.

697 ASB incidents have been linked to all HMOs in Reading (Figure 35). ASB linked to HMOs is distributed across all wards. Redlands (143) and Abbey (86) have the highest recorded ASB incidents linked to known HMOs. Redlands (30) has the highest number of repeat ASB incidents (Figure 35 and Map 15 & 16).

## Appendix 1 – Ward summaries

Wards	PRS dwellings	% PRS	Category 1 hazards (predicted)
Abbey	5,014	69.4	374
Battle	2,694	53.3	420
Caversham	1,332	28.9	193
Caversham Heights	627	16.1	107
Church	1,280	27.2	245
Coley	1,910	40.0	258
Emmer Green	828	19.9	167
Katesgrove	3,213	54.6	395
Kentwood	968	26.2	173
Norcot	1,614	32.5	297
Park	2,439	58.1	480
Redlands	3,016	54.5	644
Southcote	1,392	28.2	269
Thames	2,279	48.2	305
Tilehurst	955	22.8	168
Whitley	1,421	27.8	367

**Table 3. Ward PRS summary overview (Source Ti 2023)**

Wards	HMO (known & predicted)	Category 1 hazards (Predicted)	ASB & nuisance incidents
Abbey	770	159	86
Battle	208	96	65
Caversham	55	23	2
Caversham Heights	104	22	34
Church	108	54	43
Coley	124	60	20
Emmer Green	54	15	10
Katesgrove	319	119	56
Kentwood	40	18	12
Norcot	81	24	37
Park	463	207	82
Redlands	653	312	143
Southcote	42	24	27
Thames	163	53	34
Tilehurst	38	15	7
Whitley	50	29	39

**Table 4. HMO summary overview (Source Ti 2023).**

## **Appendix 2 - Tenure Intelligence (Ti) – stock modelling methodology**

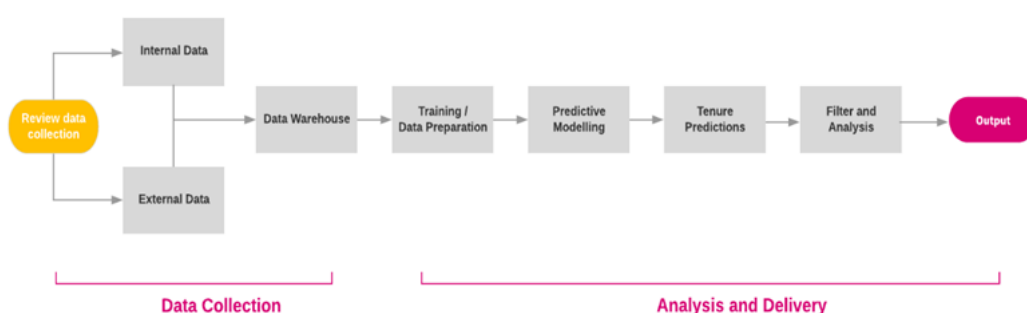
This Appendix explains at a summary level Metastreet's Tenure Intelligence (Ti) methodology (Figure 38).

Ti uses big data and machine learning in combination with expert housing knowledge to accurately predict a defined outcome at the property level.

Council and external data have been assembled as set out in Metastreet's data specification to create a property data warehouse comprising millions of cells of data.

Machine learning is used to make predictions of defined outcomes for each residential property where the outcome is not already known, using known outcome data provided by the council.

Results are analysed by skilled practitioners to produce a summary of housing stock, predictions of levels of property hazards and other property stressors. The results of the analysis can be found in the report findings chapter.



**Figure 38. Summary of Metastreet Tenure Intelligence methodology.**

### **Methodology**

Metastreet has worked with Reading Borough Council to create a residential property data warehouse based on a detailed specification. This has included linking millions of cells of data to 77,643 unique property references, including council and externally sourced data. All longitudinal data requested from council departments is 5 consecutive years, from April 2018 – March 2023

Once the property data warehouse was created, the Ti model was used to predict tenure and stock condition using the methodology outlined below.

Machine learning was utilised to develop predictive models using training data provided by the council. Predictive models were tested against all residential properties to calculate risk scores for each outcome. Scores were integrated back into the property data warehouse for analysis. Many combinations of risk factors were systematically analysed for their predictive power using logistic regression. Risk factors that duplicated other risk factors but were weaker in their predictive effect were eliminated. Risk factors with low data volume or higher error are also eliminated. Risk factors that were not statistically significant are excluded through the same processes of elimination. The top 5 risk factors for each model are utilised to produce the strongest predictive combination of factors.

Four predictive models have been developed as part of this project. Each model is unique to Reading, they include:

- Owner occupiers
- Private rented sector (PRS)

- PRS housing hazards (HHSRS, Category 1 and high scoring Category 2 A-D).
- HMO

Using a D<sup>2</sup> constant calculation it is possible to measure the theoretical quality of the model fit to the training data sample. This calculation has been completed for each model. The D<sup>2</sup> is a measure of “predictive capacity”, with higher values indicating a better model.

Based on the modelling each residential property is allocated a probability score between 0-1. A probability score of 0 indicates a strong likelihood that the property tenure type is *not* present, whilst a score of 1 indicates a strong likelihood the tenure type *is* present.

Predictive scores are used in combination to sort, organise and allocate each property to one of 3 categories described above. Practitioner skill and experience with the data and subject matter is used to achieve the most accurate tenure split possible.

It is important to note that this approach cannot be 100% accurate because mathematical models can include error for a range of reasons. The D<sup>2</sup> value is one measure of model “effectiveness”.

The true test of predictions is field trials by the private housing service. However, error is kept to a minimum through detailed post analysis filtering and checking to keep errors to a minimum.

A continuous process of field testing and model development is the most effective way to develop accurate tenure predictions.

The following tables include detail of each selected risk factors for each model. Results of the null hypothesis test are also presented as shown by the Pr(>Chi) results. Values of <0.05 are generally considered to be statistically significant. All the models show values much smaller, indicating much stronger significance.

#### **Owner occupier model**

The owner occupier model shows each of the 5 model terms to be statistically significant, with the overall model showing a “predictive capacity” of around 91% (Table 5).

**Table 5. Owner occupier predictive factors.**

<b>Risk factors selected</b>	<b><u>Pr (&gt;Chi)*</u></b>
Accounts.over.5.years	2.2e-16
Account.balances.for.all.liabilities	3.503e-08
Bens.Flag	2.2e-16
Council.Tax.band	2.2e-16
Ten.Sum	2.2e-16
Training data, n= 502	
D <sup>2</sup> test = 0.91**	

\* Pr(>Chi) = Probability value/null hypothesis test, \*\* D<sup>2</sup> test = Measure of model fit

#### **PRS predictive model**

The PRS model shows that each of the 5 model terms is statistically significant, with the overall model having a “predictive capacity” of around 90% (Table 6).

**Table 6. PRS predictive factors.**

<b>Risk factors selected</b>	<b>Pr(&gt;Chi)</b>
------------------------------	--------------------



Accounts.over.5.years.	0.003949
Length.of.current.liability.account	2.2e-16
Historical.HB	2.2e-16
TDS	2.2e-16
Total.service.requests	0.0004034
Training data, n= 502	
D <sup>2</sup> test = 0.90	

### **HMO (House in Multiple Occupation) model**

This model predicts the likelihood that a UPRN will be a HMO (**Table 7**). Each of the 5 model terms is statistically significant and the overall model has a “predictive capacity” of around 69%.

**Table 7. HMO predictive factors.**

<b>Risk factors selected</b>	<b>Pr(&gt;Chi)</b>
TOTAL_FLOOR_AREA	2.2e-16
Student.exemption	2.2e-16
ASB.count	0.03926
Total.service.requests	2.2e-16
Private.Housing.complaint.count	2.2e-16
Training data, n= 579	
D <sup>2</sup> test = 0.69	

### **Category 1 (HHSRS) hazards model**

Numerous properties where the local housing authority has recently taken action to address serious hazards were sampled for training data. Specifically, this included Housing Act 2004 Notices served on properties to address Category 1 hazards. It’s important to note that due to the complex risk-based approach to HHSRS scoring model and assessment, predictions are likely to include both properties with Category 1 hazards and properties with high scoring Category 2 hazards. It is reasonable to conclude that properties identified are likely to include hazards that would be scored A-D, using HHSRS scoring matrix and therefore be considered serious. The model results show that each of the model terms is statistically significant, with the overall model having a “predictive capacity” of around 76% (Table 8).

**Table 8. Category 1 (HHSRS) hazard predictive factors.**

<b>Risk factors selected</b>	<b><u>Pr (&gt;Chi)</u></b>
CURRENT_ENERGY_EFFICIENCY	2.2e-16

Accounts.over.5.years.	1.624e-10
ASB.count	0.0005042
Private.Housing.complaint.count	2.2e-16
Account.balances.for.all.liabilities	1.187e-05
Training data, n= 861	
D <sup>2</sup> test = 0.76	

### **Ti 2023 – Census 2021 data comparison**

<b>Reading</b>	Ti April 2015 – March 2022		Census 2021		Diff (Ti vs Census 2021)	
	No. dwellings	%	No. households	%	No. (dwellings - households)	Percentage difference (% Ti - % Census)
Social Housing	10,507	13.5%	10925	16.1%	-418	-2.6%
Owner occupiers	36,143	46.6%	35017	51.7%	1,126	-5.2%
PRS	30,982	39.9%	21740	32.1%	9,242	7.8%
ToT	77,632		67682		9,950	12.8%

***Table 9. Ti dwelling data compared to Census household data.***

Version, Final

Metastreet Ltd  
6-8 Cole Street  
London

SE1 4YH



## **Appendix 2 – Renters Reform Bill Summary of Proposals**

The Government published a White paper and introduced some of their proposals in the Renters Reform Bill. The Renters Reform Bill includes some provisions around the end of fixed term tenancies and also:-

- Rent increases
- Right to keep a pet
- Financial penalties
- Penalties for unlawful eviction
- Landlord redress schemes
- Private rented sector database
- General duties on enforcement authorities
- Apply the Decent Homes Standard to the private rented sector (likely to be similar to the social housing one, possibly without the age of amenities criteria)

There are also quite a few proposals which are not included in the Bill (some of which may get added at a later stage)

- A revised and updated version of the Housing Health and Safety rating System (HHSRS) which has been drafted and consulted on but would need new secondary legislation at least to enact.
- Make it illegal for landlords and agents to have blanket bans on renting to tenants in receipt of benefits.
- A new requirement for councils to report on enforcement activity.

The Bill, if enacted, contains several new powers, including financial penalties in relation to illegal evictions and also into areas where the Council has not previously carried enforcement powers (which might have been considered civil matters before) such as such as tenancy agreements and mis-using ground of possession.

If enacted, the Bill would enable the creation of a landlord database/register. This would be likely to include the following:-

- Details of people who are landlords or who intend to become landlords.
- Details about properties that have been let out.
- Information about banning orders, and convictions/financial penalties that relate to banning order offences.
- Persons convicted of offences or have received a financial penalty or other regulatory action where prescribed by regulation.

There have been proposals to include registration of safety certificates (gas and electric etc) on the register, but it is unclear if this will proceed.

The Bill sets out to create breaches for which a financial penalty could be issued by local authorities in relation to the register.

### Appendix 3 – (Legal implications) Table comparing the licensing scheme scope and criteria

Scheme	Mandatory licensing (existing scheme)	Additional licensing.	Selective licensing
What it covers	HMOs with 5 or more occupants	Smaller HMOs 3-4 occupants	All private rented properties let on single tenancies (excluding hmos licenced under other schemes)
Tests to be met to make a designation	Not applicable – statutory scheme applies to England	<p>The authority must consider that a significant proportion of the HMOs of that description in the area are being managed sufficiently ineffectively as to give rise, or to be likely to give rise, to one or more particular problems either for those occupying the HMOs or for members of the public.</p> <p>The authority must have regard to any information regarding the extent to which any codes of practice approved under section 233 have been complied with by persons managing HMOs in the area in question.</p> <p>The authority must ensure that any exercise of the power is consistent with the authority's overall housing strategy.</p> <p>The authority must also seek to adopt a co-ordinated approach in connection with dealing with homelessness, empty properties and anti-social behaviour affecting the private rented sector (including, combining licensing with other</p>	<p>That the area is, or is likely to become, an area of low housing demand</p> <p>OR</p> <p>That the area is experiencing a significant and persistent problem caused by anti-social behaviour;</p> <p>That some or all of the private sector landlords who have let premises in the area are failing to take action to combat the problem that it would be appropriate for them to take; and</p> <p>That making a designation will, when combined with other measures taken in the area by the local housing authority, or by other persons together with the local housing authority, lead to a reduction in, or the elimination of, the problem.</p> <p>That the area contains a high proportion of properties in the private rented sector, in relation to the total number of properties in the area, which are occupied either under assured tenancies or licences to occupy</p> <p>Conditions in relation to housing conditions</p> <p>That having carried out a review of housing conditions it would be appropriate for a significant number of the properties in the area to be inspected, with a view to determining whether any category 1 or category 2 hazards exist on the premises</p>

courses of action available to them, and with measures taken by other persons.)

The authority must consider whether there are any other courses of action available to them (of whatever nature) that might provide an effective method of dealing with the problem or problems in question, and

- that making the designation will significantly assist them to deal with the problem or problems (whether or not they take any other course of action as well).

That the local housing authority intends to carry out such inspections, with a view to carrying out any necessary enforcement action; and

That making a designation will, when combined with other measures taken in the area by the local housing authority, or by other persons together with the local housing authority, contribute to an improvement in general housing conditions in the area.

Conditions in relation to migration

That the area has recently experienced or is experiencing an influx of migration into it and a significant number of the properties in the area are occupied by those migrants referred to in paragraph

That making a designation will, when combined with other measures taken in the area by the local housing authority, or by other persons together with the local housing authority, contribute to—

(i) the preservation or improvement of the social or economic conditions in the area; and

(ii) ensuring that the properties in the area are properly managed, and in particular, that overcrowding is prevented.

Conditions in relation to deprivation

That the area is suffering from a high level of deprivation, which affects a significant number of the occupiers of properties in the area and

That making a designation will, when combined with other measures taken in the area by the local housing authority, or by other persons together with the local housing authority, contribute to a reduction in the level of deprivation in the area.

Conditions in relation to crime

**Mandatory licensing (existing scheme) and Additional licensing**

That the proposed licence holder is a fit and proper person to be the licence holder, and is the most appropriate person to be the licence holder;

That no banning order is in force against a person who—

- (i) owns an estate or interest in the house or part of it, and
- (ii) is a lessor or licensor of the house or part;

That the proposed manager of the house is either—

- (i) the person having control of the house, or
- (ii) a person who is an agent or employee of the person having control of the house;

That the area suffers from high levels of crime that affects those living in the area, or other households and businesses in the area; and

That making a designation will, when combined with other measures taken in the area by the local housing authority, other persons together with the local housing authority or by the police, contribute to a reduction in the levels of crime in the area, for the benefit of those living in the area.

**Selective licensing**

That the proposed licence holder is a fit and proper person to be the licence holder, and is the most appropriate person to be the licence holder;

That no banning order is in force against a person who—

- (i) owns an estate or interest in the house or part of it, and
- (ii) is a lessor or licensor of the house or part;

That the proposed manager of the house is either—

- (i) the person having control of the house, or
- (ii) a person who is an agent or employee of the person having control of the house;

That the proposed manager of the house is a fit and proper person to be the manager of the house; and

That the proposed management arrangements for the house are otherwise satisfactory.

That the proposed manager of the house is a fit and proper person to be the manager of the house; and

That the proposed management arrangements for the house are otherwise satisfactory.

That the house is reasonably suitable for occupation by not more than the maximum number of households or persons to be specified on the licence, or that it can be made so suitable by the imposition of conditions;

**Mandatory licensing (existing scheme) and  
Additional licensing**

Conditions  
that may be  
included on a  
licence

A licence may include such conditions as the local housing authority consider appropriate for regulating :

- (a) the management, use and occupation of the house concerned, and
- (b) its condition and contents.

Including:

Conditions imposing restrictions or prohibitions on the use or occupation of particular parts of the house by persons occupying it;

Conditions requiring the taking of reasonable and practicable steps to prevent or reduce anti-social behaviour by persons occupying or visiting the house;

**Selective licensing**

A licence may include such conditions as the local housing authority consider appropriate for regulating the management, use or occupation of the house concerned including:

Conditions imposing restrictions or prohibitions on the use or occupation of particular parts of the house by persons occupying it;

Conditions requiring the taking of reasonable and practicable steps to prevent or reduce anti-social behaviour by persons occupying or visiting the house.

Conditions requiring facilities and equipment to be made available in the house

Conditions requiring such facilities and equipment to be kept in repair and proper working order;



Conditions requiring facilities and equipment to be made available in the house;

Conditions may that the works are carried out within timescales specified in the licence.

Conditions requiring such facilities and equipment to be kept in repair and proper working order;

Conditions may that the works are carried out within timescales specified in the licence.

Conditions requiring the licence holder or the manager of the house to attend training courses .

Conditions that must be included on a licence

A licence under Part 2 must include conditions requiring the licence holder to comply with any scheme which is provided by the local housing authority to the licence holder and which relates to the storage and disposal of household waste at the HMO pending collection.

A licence under Part 3 must include conditions requiring the licence holder to demand references from persons who wish to occupy the house.

Conditions that must be included (applies to all licence types)

A licence under Part 2 must include conditions relating to the prescribed minimum room size standards

Conditions requiring the licence holder, to annually produce a gas safety certificate obtained within the last 12 months.

Conditions requiring the licence holder—

(a)to keep electrical appliances and furniture made available by him in the house in a safe condition;

(b)to supply a declaration as to the safety of such appliances and furniture on demand;

Conditions requiring the licence holder—

(i)to ensure that every electrical installation in the house is in proper working order and safe for continued use; and

(ii)to supply the authority, on demand, with a declaration by him as to the safety of such installations;

Conditions requiring the licence holder—

- (i) to ensure that a smoke alarm is installed on each storey of the house on which there is a room used wholly or partly as living accommodation, and
- (ii) to keep each such alarm in proper working order;
- (b) to supply the authority, on demand, with a declaration by him as to the condition and positioning of such alarms.

Conditions requiring the licence holder—

- (a) to ensure that a carbon monoxide alarm is installed in any room in the house which is used wholly or partly as living accommodation and contains a fixed combustion appliance other than a gas cooker;
- (b) to keep any such alarm in proper working order; and
- (c) to supply the authority, on demand, with a declaration by him as to the condition and positioning of any such alarm.

Conditions requiring the licence holder to supply to the occupiers of the house a written statement of the terms on which they occupy it.

## Appendix 4 - Indicative timeline for additional or selective scheme designation

October 2023	•Bring on board Project team and PR
November 2023	•Draft Meta Street report •Analysis of report/data •Scheme design for preferred option •Draft report for LCB w/c 13th November •LCB 23rd November
December 2023	•Work on HNL Committee Report •Final Meta Street Report TBC
January 2024	•Incorporate into Team Service Plan •Statutory Officer Sign off for Committee Report 9th January
February 2024	•HNL Committee 21st February •Pre Consultation 26th February
March 2024	•Pre consultation
April 2024	•Pre Consultation ends 8th April
May 2024	•Findings of pre Consultation May LCB •Full Consultation follows LCB for 10 Weeks
June-July 2024	•Full Consultation
August - October 2024	•Standstill Period 12 weeks
September - October 2024	•Business Case proposal
November 2024	•HNL Committee update on Consultation and next steps
March 2025	•If Scheme does not need SOS approval - implementation could be March 2025
December 2024	•If SOS approval required 3 to 12 months required to seek approval
December 2025	•Followed by statutory Notice Period
March 2026	•HNL Committee Designation of Additional Licensing Scheme

## Appendix 5 - Financial implications – Indicative fees

### Additional HMO licensing

Description	Licence fee
Standard fee	£950.00
A reduced rate is proposed for those applicants who are members of a landlord accreditation scheme, such as accredited members of the National Residential Landlords Association (NRLA) and to landlords who are members of the Reading Rent with Confidence Scheme (RRWC). The property must be accredited at the time the application is made.	£800.00
An increased fee is proposed for late applications, where the property has been licensable for 12 weeks prior to the application being made. This is to offset the costs of chasing applications from non-compliant landlords.	£1,200

### Selective licensing fee

Description	Licence fee
Standard fee	£750.00
A reduced rate is proposed for those applicants who are members of a landlord accreditation scheme, such as accredited members of the National Residential Landlords Association (NRLA) and to landlords who are members of the Reading Rent with Confidence Scheme (RRWC). The property must be accredited at the time the application is made.	£650.00
An increased fee is proposed for late applications, where the property has been licensable for 12 weeks prior to the application being made. This is to offset the costs of chasing applications from non-compliant landlords.	£1,000

**Appendix 6 – Financial implications - Comparison with other local authority property licensing fees**

<b>LHA</b>	<b>Type of scheme</b>	<b>Application fee £</b>
BCP (Bournemouth, Christchurch & Poole)	Mandatory hmo	764
	Additional hmo	NA
	Selective	NA
Birmingham	Mandatory hmo	1125
	Additional hmo	755
	Selective	700
Bristol	Mandatory hmo	1420
	Additional hmo	1300
	Selective	799
Coventry	Mandatory hmo	790-1220
	Additional hmo	As above
	Selective	Proposed 380 did not proceed
Ealing	Mandatory hmo	1550
	Additional hmo	1100
	Selective	750
Guildford	Mandatory hmo	939.40
	Additional hmo	NA
	Selective	NA
Islington	Mandatory hmo	1440 (288/room)
	Additional hmo	As above
	Selective	500
Manchester	Mandatory hmo	1321
	Additional hmo	NA
	Selective	798=936
Nottingham	Mandatory hmo	1330-1720
	Additional hmo	As above
	Selective	887-1233
Oxford	Mandatory hmo	465-2330
	Additional hmo	266-557
	Selective	530
Preston	Mandatory hmo	575
	Additional hmo	NA
	Selective	NA
Richmond	Mandatory hmo	1611
	Additional hmo	NA
	Selective	NA
Slough	Mandatory hmo	750
	Additional hmo	As above
	Selective	500
Southampton	Mandatory hmo	716-1211
	Additional hmo	NA
	Selective	NA
Woking	Mandatory hmo	725
	Additional hmo	NA
	Selective	NA

## Appendix 7 – Financial implications income and expenditure

Additional licensing – whole borough

	2024/25 £000	2025/26 £000	2026/27 £000	2027/28 £000	2028/29 £000	2029/30 £000	All years
Employee costs (see note1)	50	189	333	375	262	182	1,392
Other running costs		12	20	18	10	9	70
Capital financings costs							
<b>Expenditure</b>	50	202	352	392	272	191	1,462
Income from: Fees and charges (see note2)	NIL	584	584	97	97	97	1,460
<b>Total Income</b>	NIL	584	584	97	97	97	1,460
Net Cost(+)/saving (-)	50	-382	-231	295	175	93	-2

Note 1: Year 1 incurs costs in the consultation and designation stage, there is no corresponding income in this period. Year 2 and 3 indicates higher costs relating to the resources required to process the applications and complete inspections for the applications that come in predominantly at the earlier part of the designation. Staffing costs are expected to reduce as fewer applications are expected after year 2. HMO Licensing fees are modelled over the 5 years, which allows a spreading of income to ensure that the scheme is cost neutral. Surpluses are re-invested in the scheme.

Note 2: In relation to the fee income, the figures above assume a predicted 80% application rate, and with 25% of applicants being eligible for a discount due to being an accredited landlord. The figures also assume 80% of applications will be made in the first 2 years with a subsequent reduction in income. A range of potential income must also be considered depending on the actual number of applicants:

		Fee	Number of applications	Over 5 years	Yearly average
2,000 licences	Accredited	£800	500	£400,000	£80,000
100%	Non accredited	£950	1500	£1,425,000	£285,000
			<b>Total</b>	<b>£1,825,000</b>	<b>£365,000</b>
1,600 licences	Accredited	£800	400	£320,000	£64,000
80%	Non accredited	£950	1200	£1,140,000	£228,000
			<b>Total</b>	<b>£1,460,000</b>	<b>£292,000</b>
1,000 licences	Accredited	£800	250	£200,000	£40,000
50%	Non accredited	£950	750	£712,500	£142,500
			<b>Total</b>	<b>£912,500</b>	<b>£182,500</b>

Selective licensing (1 ward, representative example)

	2024/25 £000	2025/26 £000	2026/27 £000	2027/28 £000	2028/29 £000	2029/30 £000	
Employee costs (see note1)	50	202	232	176	176	139	976
Other running costs		17	13	8	8	6	50
Capital financings costs							
<b>Expenditure</b>	50	219	244	184	184	145	1,026
Income from: Fees and charges (see note2)	NIL	410	410	68	68	68	
<b>Total Income</b>	NIL	-410	-410	-68	-68	-68	1,024
Net Cost(+)/saving (-)	50	-191	-165	115	115	76	-2

Note 1: Year 1 incurs costs in the consultation and designation stage, there is no corresponding income in this period. Year 2 and 3 indicates higher costs relating to the resources required to process the applications and complete inspections for the applications that come in predominantly at the earlier part of the designation. Staffing costs are expected to reduce as fewer applications are expected after year 2.

Note 2: In relation to income the fee income, the figures above assume a predicted 80% application rate, and with 25% of applicants being eligible for a discount due to being an accredited landlord. The figures also assume 80% of applications will be made in the first 2 years with a subsequent reduction in income. A range of potential income must also be considered depending on the actual number of applicants:

Number of licences	Fee type	Fee	Number of applications	Over 5 years	Yearly average
950	Accredited	£750	237.5	£178,125	£35,625
50%	Non accredited	£650	712.5	£463,125	£92,625
			Total	£641,250	£128,250
1520	Accredited	£750	380	£285,000	£57,000
80%	Non accredited	£650	1140	£741,000	£148,200
			<b>Total</b>	<b>£1,026,000</b>	<b>£205,200</b>
1900	Accredited	£750	475	£356,250	£71,250
100%	Non accredited	£650	1425	£926,250	£185,250
			Total	£1,282,500	£256,500

Selective licensing (3 wards with phased introduction)

	2024/25 £000	2025/26 £000	2026/27 £000	2027/28 £000	2028/29 £000	2029/30 £000	2030/31	2031/32	2032/22	2033/34	TOTAL
Employee costs	50	248	339	458	488	573	489	414	295	172	3,529
Other running costs		19	13	22	21	23	21	15	8	6	147
Capital financings costs											
<b>Expenditure</b>	50	267	353	480	509	596	510	429	303	179	3,676
Income from: Fees and charges	NIL	534	534	516	516	670	581	156	85	85	3,678
<b>Total Income</b>	NIL	534	534	516	516	670	581	156	85	85	3,678
Net Cost(+)/saving (-)	50	-267	-181	-35	-6	-74	-71	273	218	94	-2

Year 1 incurs costs in the consultation and designation stage, there is no corresponding income in this period.

Following a phased introduction gradually higher costs are incurred relating to the resources required to process the applications that come in predominantly at the earlier part of each designation. As the second and third designations are made work is still taking place to complete inspections for as well as processing a smaller number of applications from the first designation.

Staffing costs are expected to reduce over the final 4 years as the first scheme expires, though if it was renewed then income and expenditure would remain higher.

In relation to income the fee income, the figures above assume a predicted 80% application rate, and with 25% of applicants being eligible for a discount due to being an accredited landlord. The figures also assume 80% of applications will be made in the first 2 years of each designation with a subsequent reduction in income from one scheme offset by the second and third designations. A range of potential income must also be considered depending on the actual number of applicants:



Number of Licences		Proposed Fee	Estimated number	9 years total	9 year average
3420	accredited	£750	855	£641,250	£71,250
50%	Non accredited	£650	2565	£1,667,250	£185,250
			Total	£2,308,500	£256,500
6840	accredited	£750	1710	£1,282,500	£142,500
100%	non accredited	£650	5130	£3,334,500	£370,500
			Total	£4,617,000	£513,000
<b>5450</b>	<b>accredited</b>	<b>£750</b>	<b>1362.5</b>	<b>£1,021,875</b>	<b>£113,542</b>
<b>80%</b>	<b>non accredited</b>	<b>£650</b>	<b>4087.5</b>	<b>£2,656,875</b>	<b>£295,208</b>
			<b>Total</b>	<b>£3,678,750</b>	<b>£408,750</b>

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## READING BOROUGH COUNCIL CLIMATE IMPACT ASSESSMENT TOOL

### What You Need to Do:

The spreadsheet on the next tab has been designed to help you consider the climate impacts of your project/ proposal. **All Committee Reports, Project Business Cases and budget bid proposals require a climate impact assessment.**

When rating the climate change impacts of your project/ proposal, there are two key issues to consider:

#### **1. Impact on carbon emissions** - will the project/ proposal:

- |   |
|---|
| * <b>Reduce</b> the overall amount of energy being used/waste being produced/transported    |
| * <b>Increase</b> the overall amount of energy being used/waste being produced/transported  |
| * <b>Have no effect</b> on the amount of energy being used/waste being produced/transported |

#### **2. Impact on resilience to the effects of climate change** - will the project/ proposal:

- |  |
|--|
| * <b>Increase</b> the ability of Reading, residents and/or RBC to withstand the effects of climate change          |
| * <b>Reduce</b> the ability of Reading, residents and/or RBC to withstand the effects of climate change            |
| * <b>Have no effect</b> on the ability of Reading, residents and/or RBC to withstand the effects of climate change |

The tool requires you to consider these issues with reference to **8 different criteria** e.g. carbon emissions, air quality, flood risk, etc. *Not all of these criteria will necessarily be relevant to your project/ proposal.* Where a criterion is not relevant, you should select 'Not applicable'.

Where you identify either a positive or a negative impact, you are required to assess the severity of the impact. There is some guidance on the next tab to help you distinguish between High, Medium and Low impacts.

### Results:

Once you have applied a rating to each of the 8 assessment criteria, **you decide the overall rating** for your project/ proposal. If your project has negative as well as positive impacts, you decide what the overall rating is, but you must explain how the overall rating given to your project/proposal has been decided. It is also compulsory to highlight any negative environmental impacts your project may have. You may do this in the commentary box below your rating.

### Tips:

1. Concentrate on the most significant issues - there is the potential to consider the impacts of all 8 criteria.
2. Where you have identified a negative impact, think about how you are going to manage it.

If you require assistance in completing the Climate Impact Assessment tab, please contact the Sustainability Strategy (peter.moore@reading.gov.uk x4275) or the Sustainability Team Manager (brian.moore@reading.gov.uk x2232).

Once you have completed the Climate Impact Assessment tab, please email the completed spreadsheet to the Sustainability Strategy (peter.moore@reading.gov.uk).

## DOL

change implications of a new project, proposal or recommendation.  
**ire a climate impact assessment.**

ssues to consider:

missions?
emissions?
t emissions?


:
nate change?
ate change?
ects of climate change?


.g.: Energy Use; Waste Generation; Exposure to Heat Waves; Flooding, etc.  
specific criteria is not relevant to your project/ proposal, assign a 'Nil' rating.

whether this impact will be **High, Medium or Low**.  
n and Low impacts.

**overall rating your project/proposal should have.**

ating should be by weighing the positive and negative impacts,  
erived.

y have, which may have been 'masked' by the overall rating.

opraisal in a very detailed way. This should be avoided at this stage.  
nage or mitigate this impact and explain this in your report.

ontact the Head of Climate  
xen.burfoot@reading.gov.uk

pleted spreadsheet to [climateassessment@reading.gov.uk](mailto:climateassessment@reading.gov.uk).



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