



Market Position Statement for Adult Social Care Provision in Buckinghamshire

Introduction

Buckinghamshire Council is committed to delivering high-quality, sustainable adult social care services that meet the diverse needs of its residents in line with its [Better Lives Strategy \(2022-2025\)](#). This Market Position Statement (MPS) outlines the current landscape, future demand, and our principles for ensuring futureproofed adult social care provision in Buckinghamshire, drawing on good practice from other local authorities, public health data, and benchmarking data at local, regional, and national levels. This is a live MPS and will be updated on a cyclical basis to ensure it continues to drive our operating model and commissioning intentions.

Current Landscape

Geography

There are 533,100 people living in Buckinghamshire, an increase of 9.5% since 2011. It is a large county, over 60 miles end to end (Appendix 1). The northern part of the county (north of Aylesbury) has a number of small, dispersed villages with access and digital connectivity challenges. 12% of the Buckinghamshire population are classified as rural residents, higher than the England Average of 10% and South East Average (9%). The largest population can be found in the former district area of Aylesbury Vale (38%), followed by Wycombe (32%), Chiltern (18%) and finally South Bucks (13%). The county is overall affluent but has pockets of deprivation across the county in Aylesbury, High Wycombe, Chesham, Denham, Burnham, Westcott and Buckingham.

The county is facing significant housing growth in the coming period though there is still a need for affordable, accessible and specialist homes. There is a 10% projected population growth in Aylesbury Vale from 2020 to 2030 compared to 3% in Buckinghamshire, and no growth or a decrease in the other three former districts. 32% of the county is covered by the Metropolitan Green Belt which can limit opportunities for sustainable and appropriate growth locations. The county is also currently impacted by significant development projects such as HS2 and East West Rail.

Demographics

Buckinghamshire's adult social care services cater to a range of client groups, including older people, adults with mental health needs, adults with learning disabilities and/or autism, and people with physical disabilities. The county's demographic trends indicate a higher than average life expectancy (81.5 years for men and 85.1 years for women) with a growing and ageing population. Significant increases are projected in the 65+ and 75+ age groups by 2042. A summary of some key client cohorts can be found below.

1. Older People

- Buckinghamshire is projected to experience a 32.5% growth in the 65+ population and 44.8% growth in the 75+ population by 2042. Although significant, in both cases, this is below the rate of Buckinghamshire's CIPFA authorities and the all-England average.
- Buckinghamshire ranks 4th least deprived out of its 15 CIPFA comparators for the Income Deprivation Affecting Older People Index. Its score is 7.7% compared to the England average of 14.2%.
- There is an estimated annual growth in dementia prevalence in over 65s of 2.20% with a total of 6,247 people estimated to be living with dementia to 2042. This is approximately in line with the South East and England averages.

2. Adults with Learning Disabilities/Autism:

- The estimated total local population of people with learning disabilities is 7,665 adults.
- The estimated projected change for the overall population with learning disabilities in Buckinghamshire is 0.69% per year. This assumes a growing older population of adults with learning disabilities as well as young people aged 14-18 transitioning into adult social care services. The trend of young people and children with learning disabilities and autism 'transitioning' to eligibility for adult social care has been increasing over recent years and the complexity of need has been increasing. This is reflected in assumptions about the growth in the population of people with learning disability/autistic people to 2042.
- There are approximately 4,200 people in Buckinghamshire aged 18 plus with autism, 1040 of these are over the age of 65. The Council has identified 409 people with Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD).
- Between April 2021 and March 2022, there were 1,043 adults aged 18-64 with learning disabilities eligible for local authority services. This is projected to increase to 1,185 adults by 2042.

3. Adults with Mental Health Needs:

- As of 2019/20 there were 2,300 Individuals with significant mental health related need under the Care Programme Approach (CPA) in Buckinghamshire.
- There is an estimated average annual growth rate of 0.03% per year.
- 14% of people with mental health related need are estimated to be living in supported housing. 83% live in mainstream housing which is consistent with other local authorities.

4. People with Physical Disabilities

- The growth rate for the number of people with a serious physical disability is projected to grow by approximately 0.52% per year.
- There is estimated to be approximately 1,575 wheelchair user households in Buckinghamshire that have an unmet need for accessible housing.
- It is estimated that c.600 households require fully wheelchair adapted dwellings and 975 households required accessible and adaptable dwellings
- 60% of wheelchair users are estimated to be 65+.

5. Carers

- There are an estimated 55,000 people providing unpaid care in Buckinghamshire, approximately 10% of the Buckinghamshire population, with 41,000 identified carers.
- 6,249 registered carers in Buckinghamshire are aged 18-64, with 2,619 carers balancing their caring role with paid employment, including parent carers.
- 75% of adult carers are female.
- 56% of young carers are female; 44% male.
- Over 10,000 carers are providing more than 50 hours of unpaid care a week, with 292 of those being young carers under the age of 24.

6. Transitions

- It is estimated that the Buckinghamshire 18-24 population will increase from approximately 32,800 in 2023 to 37,400 people in 2030, an increase of 14% at approximately 660 people per year over the 7 years.
- The Council's Transitions (or 18-25) team has assessed approximately 0.13% of the 18-24 population.

Further information on Buckinghamshire's demographic makeup can be found in the Buckinghamshire Joint Strategic Needs Assessment: [Joint Strategic Needs Assessments \(JSNA\)](#) | [Buckinghamshire Council](#).

Current and Future Demand for care and support

In 2022 Buckinghamshire Council commissioned the Housing Learning and Improvement Network to undertake an Adult Social Care Accommodation Market Analysis, i.e. an assessment of the housing and supported accommodation needs of different client cohorts. The key findings from their report form part of the Council's future demand projections and are detailed below and in Table 1. Other data is taken from a range of internal and external sources. See also Appendix 2 for long term trends across different care and support services.

Residential

Residential and nursing care

- As of February 2025, there were 1,946 residential care beds and 2,760 nursing care beds across 130 care homes (46 with nursing; 84 without).
- The use of residential and nursing care for local authority funded care has been declining since 2019/20 (although this includes the Covid-19 pandemic which significantly affected the volume of care home placements). In 2018/19 there were 760 and 540 residential and nursing admissions respectively, compared to 403 and 351 in 2021/22. A large proportion of care home placements for older people in Buckinghamshire are for self-funders.
- Based on the Council's client number projections there will be an 18% increase in both residential and nursing care client numbers from April 2021 to April 2030.
- 67% of people accessing residential care are aged over 65, whilst this is 89% for nursing care (January 2025).
- The net requirement for residential care is minimal, with an estimated need for 30 bedspaces by 2042. However, there is a significant need for nursing care, with an estimated 470 bedspaces required by 2042.
- There are particular challenges with sourcing residential services for those with complex behaviours such as early onset dementia and Individuals with more complex disabilities.
- 12% of nursing home placements are for Individuals with Mental Health Needs (January 2025). 10% of nursing home placements are for Individuals who need support with memory and cognition; this is 11% for residential placements (January 2025).
- There is a higher than average prevalence of adults with learning disabilities living in residential care (20.5%) compared to the South East (17.4%) and England (16.6%) averages. This is anticipated to drop to 11% by 2042 and offset by an increase in Supported housing/living from 29% to 40% and Shared lives (from 2% to 6%).

Housing with Care (Extra-Care Housing)

- As of 2019 there were 724 Extra-Care units.
- There are 5 locations providing Extra-Care.
- The Council has block contract arrangements for 66 Extra-Care beds (36 Older People; 30 Mental Health).
- As of January 2025, 73% of people accessing Extra-Care housing through the Council were aged over 65. 57% of people accessing Extra Care have a primary support need of physical support, followed by 36% with mental health needs.
- The net need for Extra-Care housing is projected to be 1,255 units by 2042, with 500 units for social/affordable rent and 755 units for sale. This includes accommodation for self-funders.
- The Council has identified Extra-Care as an area of strategic growth as forecast demand significantly exceeds the capacity available.

Overnight Respite

- In 2022/23 and 2023/24 over 65s accessed more respite services than those under 65 (average 115 Individuals per year versus 60). The total number of nights respite accessed was approximately 3,500 nights per year.

- The average length of time accessing respite for over 65s is lower than under 65s (67 days versus 306 days).
- 94% of respite spend for adults aged 18-64 has been for clients with a learning disability.
- More specialist respite provision is needed in Buckinghamshire to meet needs. During 2024/25, 13 external organisations provided overnight respite for adults aged 18-64 from 17 sites on behalf of Buckinghamshire Council.
- Market engagement with Providers suggests an appetite to increase overnight respite in Buckinghamshire, to support all age groups and support needs. What this looks like is currently being explored. Interested providers should approach the Council.

Community Care

Housing for Older People (Retirement Housing for sale or rent)

- As of 2019 there were 5,483 housing for older people units.
- There is an estimated net need for c.2,480 units of housing for older people by 2042, with 740 units for social/affordable rent and 1,740 units for sale. Up to 50% of this may be met through the provision of mainstream housing that is accessible and care ready but not technically designated for 'older people.'

Supported Living (including Shared Lives)

- The Council currently commissions supported living through a combination of block contracts, a Dynamic Purchasing Vehicle (DPV) and spot.
- 54% of Individuals accessing Supported Living through the Council require learning disability support; 35% require mental health support. 91% are under 65 (January 2025).
- Based on the Council's client number projections there will be a 59% increase in supported living client numbers from April 2021 to April 2030 across all age groups and client cohorts.
- There is a projected net need for 320 units of supported accommodation by 2042, including 50 units for Shared Lives accommodation and 270 units for supported housing.
- The net need for supported housing for adults with mental health needs is estimated to be 50 units by 2042.
- 83% of people accessing Shared Lives have a learning disability as their primary support need (January 2025). Shared Lives is predominantly accessed by younger adults, with 46% being aged between 18 and 34.
- There is a shortage of supported living providers able to support more complex clients and new capacity to support discharges from inpatient care.
- There is also a lack of suitable move-on accommodation for people who could move into more independent housing options with support.

Accessible Housing

- By 2042, it is estimated that 665 households will require fully wheelchair-adapted dwellings, and 1,085 households will require accessible and adaptable dwellings.
- This is equivalent to a need for c.33 fully wheelchair adapted dwellings and c.54 accessible and adaptable dwellings needed per year to 2042.
- Available adapted or adaptable properties are in short supply for people with physical and/or sensory needs.

- C.1,280 units are required amongst homeowners and c.470 for the social and private rented sectors.

Home Care

- Since 2021/22 there has been a net increase in the number of commissioned home care clients (115 = 2021/22; 203 = 2022/23; 120 = 2023/24). This follows a dip during the Covid-19 pandemic but remains considerably higher than pre-pandemic levels.
- As of January 2025, there were 1,932 adults accessing commissioned home care. In March 2022, this figure was 1,322, an increase of 46%. 79% were aged over 65. Of these, 60% were aged between 75 and 94, representing the greatest demand for care.
- Since May 2019, there has been a 104% increase in the number of weekly hours commissioned (13,884 in 2019 to 28,386 in 2025) and a 143% increase in total weekly cost.
- Buckinghamshire Council commissions relatively little Live in Care. Only twelve Adult Social Care Live-in packages have been commissioned between April 2024 and January 2025, five of which were short term.
- 4% of home care clients require learning disability support; 8% mental health support and 2% support with memory and cognition.
- Based on the Council's client number projections there will be a 106% increase in client numbers from April 2021 to April 2030.
- Based on data from the last two years, it is estimated that there will be a 9% increase in the number of home care clients aged 65+ and 13% for clients aged under 65 over the next two years.
- For commissioned home care hours, this is estimated to be a 16% increase for over 65s and 18% increase for under 65s demonstrating the continued trend of people staying at home for longer with more complex packages of care being commissioned.
- The average weekly cost is expected to increase by 11% for over 65s and 17% for under 65s showing the potential increase in more complex packages being commissioned for younger adults.
- There is currently a good supply of home care in the county.

Day Opportunities

- Day opportunities encompasses a range of activities aiming to maximise independence and support Individuals with assessed care needs to lead fulfilling lives. They can include supporting individuals to access the community, taking part in hobbies and interests, learning new skills, developing friendships and support networks, accessing supported employment or volunteering opportunities and more.
- Day opportunities are run by a variety of providers and can take place in both buildings-based services and within the community.
- Within Buckinghamshire, day opportunities services are run by both the Council and external providers. The Council-run service is operated from seven centres.
- The Council supports Individuals to access day opportunities in a variety of ways. As of 2024, there were 457 adults (396 aged 18-64; 61 ages 65+) with a commissioned day opportunities package; 24% of these were for the Council-run service. In addition, it is estimated that in excess of 250 Individuals are accessing day opportunities through a direct payment.

- We are proposing to work with our external market to increase our day opportunities provision to ensure assessed care and support needs can be met whilst reviewing our council-run provision to ensure it meets need and demand.

Carers

- We have worked hard to deliver improvements for our carers, supporting 15,490 carers through the Council or one of our partners in 2023/24.
- In 2024 we co-produced a carers strategy with adult and young carer representatives ([Buckinghamshire All-Age Carers Strategy 2025 - 2030](#)). This strategy and action plan will help us make further improvements and strengthen the support offer currently available and more towards a whole system approach to support.

Transitions

- The number of assessments completed by the Council's 18-25 or Transitions Teams has remained consistent over the past three calendar years, at 43, 44, and 42 assessments respectively. This represents approximately 0.13% of the 18-24 population.
- 85% of Transitions assessments are for Individuals with a learning disability.
- Based on a small population increase of 18-24 year olds in Buckinghamshire and estimated increase in the learning disability population within this age range, it is estimated that there will be an additional 5-10 assessments for Transitions aged Individuals by 2030, to approximately 50 assessments per year.
- We are looking to ensure sustainability of provision for transitions aged Individuals as they enter Adult Social Care services, should they be needed. This includes engaging with these Individuals from an earlier stage, whilst still supported by Children's Services to develop our approach. We want to ensure a smooth transition with fit for purpose support, that may extend beyond the traditional scope of service provision.

Table 1. Summary of Estimated specialist and accessible housing need for Buckinghamshire.

	Cohort of people and housing and accommodation type	Estimated additional need (units) by 2042
A	Older people	
1	Housing for older people <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • for social rent/affordable rent (units) • for sale/shared equity (units) Total	740 1,740 2,480
2	Housing with care (extra-care): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • for social rent/affordable rent (units) • for sale/shared equity (units) Total	500 755 1,255
3	Residential care (beds)	30
4	Nursing care (beds)	470
B	People with learning disabilities/autism <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shared Lives 	50

	Cohort of people and housing and accommodation type	Estimated additional need (units) by 2042
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Supported housing Total	270 320
C	People with mental health related needs: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Supported housing 	50
D	People with physical disabilities (households) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fully wheelchair adapted housing Accessible housing Total	665 1,085 1,750

Principles

1. Promote Independence and Wellbeing:

- Emphasise preventative approaches and support people to remain living independently for as long as possible in their own homes through adaptations, technology, and community-based support.
- Improve access to information and advice and support decision making to be with individual choice and control.
- Enhance and improve processes to enable access to adaptations and technology.
- Support upskilling of the care workforce to enable the roll out of least restrictive care models, which promote choice and independence.

2. Develop a Range of Housing Options:

- Increase the availability and range of specialist and accessible housing, including extra care housing, supported living (including dementia-secure and self-contained accommodation for people with complex Mental Health Needs), and mainstream housing designed to be adaptable and accessible for Individuals of all support cohorts. Housing needs to be affordable, with good access to public transport, amenities and green space.

3. Enhance Community Inclusion:

- Ensure that all housing and supported accommodation options facilitate inclusion in community life including employment, promoting inter-generational living and multi-functional housing solutions. Housing options will consider the primary support needs of the Individuals.

4. Collaborate with Partners:

- Work closely with housing providers, health services, and community organisations to develop and deliver integrated care and support services and community support networks.
- Drive the development of Integrated Neighbourhood Teams driving more targeted responses to population need and care closer to home.

5. Respond to Demographic Changes:

- Plan for the projected growth in the older population and the increasing prevalence of complex health and care needs, particularly dementia-related needs and younger people with learning disabilities transitioning into adult social care.

6. Support for Carers:

- Provide robust support for informal carers, recognising their critical role in the care system and ensuring they have access to the resources and respite they need. Support our pledge to carers outlined in our carers strategy and delivering through the Buckinghamshire Carers Partnership Board.

Our principles are aligned to Buckinghamshire's [Better Lives Strategy \(2022-2025\)](#) and [Joint Local Health and Wellbeing Strategy \(2022-2025\)](#).

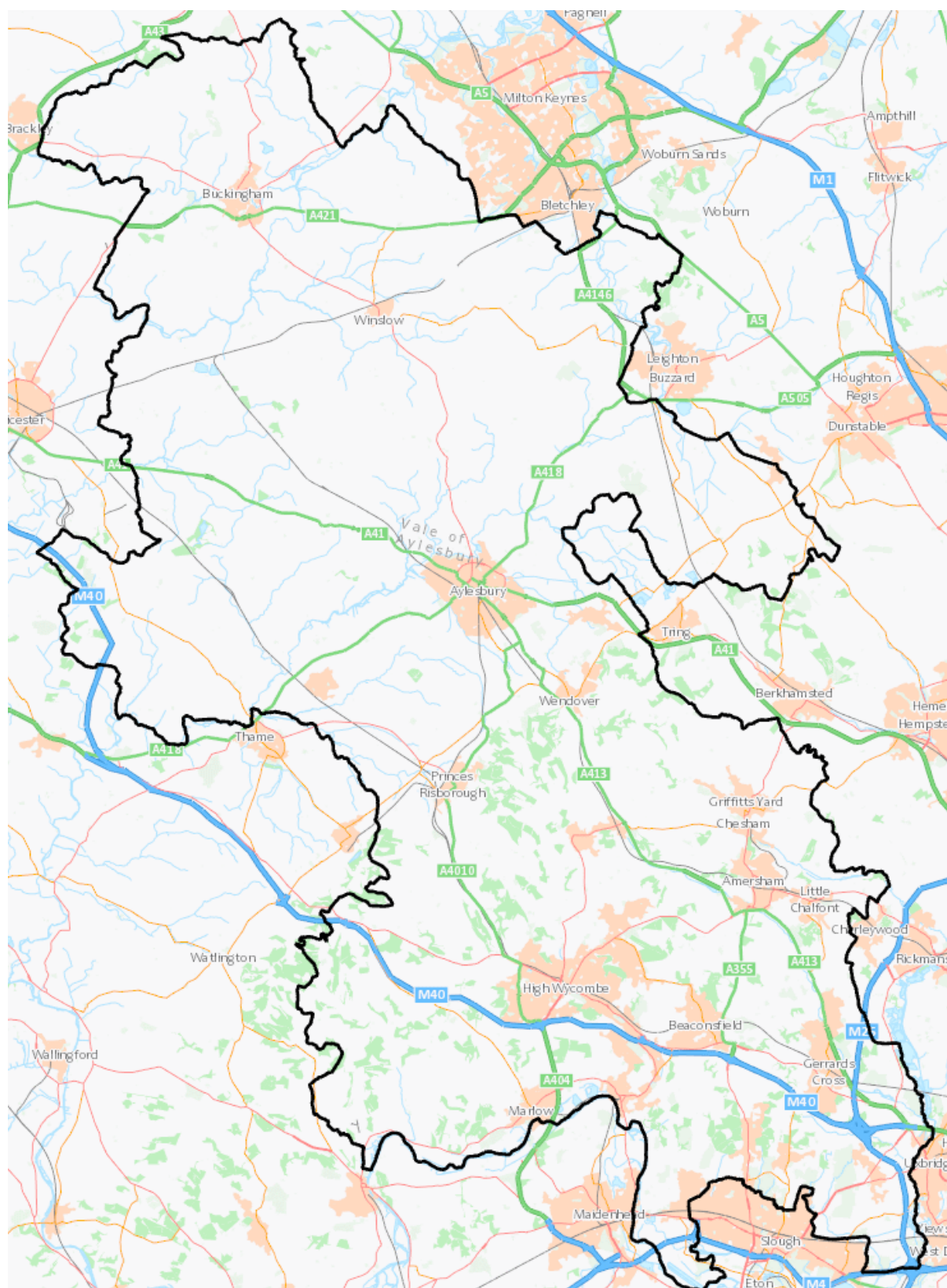
Good Practice Examples

- **Preventative Approaches:** Adopt strategies from other local authorities that have successfully implemented preventative measures, such as falls prevention programmes and proactive health and wellbeing checks.
- **Integrated Care Models:** Learn from regions that have developed integrated care models, bringing together health, social care, and housing services to provide seamless support.
- **Technology-Enabled Care:** Utilise technology to enhance care delivery, such as telecare and telehealth services, which have been effectively used in other areas to support independent living.

Conclusion

Buckinghamshire Council is dedicated to evolving its adult social care provision to meet future demands and improve outcomes for residents. By focusing on independence, community inclusion, and collaborative working, the council aims to create a sustainable and responsive care system that enhances the quality of life for all adults in Buckinghamshire.

Appendix 1. Map of Buckinghamshire showing the main urban areas.



Appendix 2. Long term trends in client numbers

