



# **SCRUTINY COMMITTEE - COMMUNITIES**

**Wednesday, 14 February 2024**

**10.00 am**

**John Meikle Room, The Deane House, Belvedere  
Road, Taunton TA1 1HE**

## **SUPPLEMENT TO THE AGENDA**

To: The members of the Scrutiny Committee - Communities

We are now able to enclose the following information which was unavailable when the agenda was published:

Agenda Item 7      Growth/New Housing (Pages 3 - 36)

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# 2024 Housing Growth

## Housing Briefing – Community Scrutiny

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**Somerset**  
Council

Agenda Item 7

# Housing Crisis and Demand for Affordable Homes

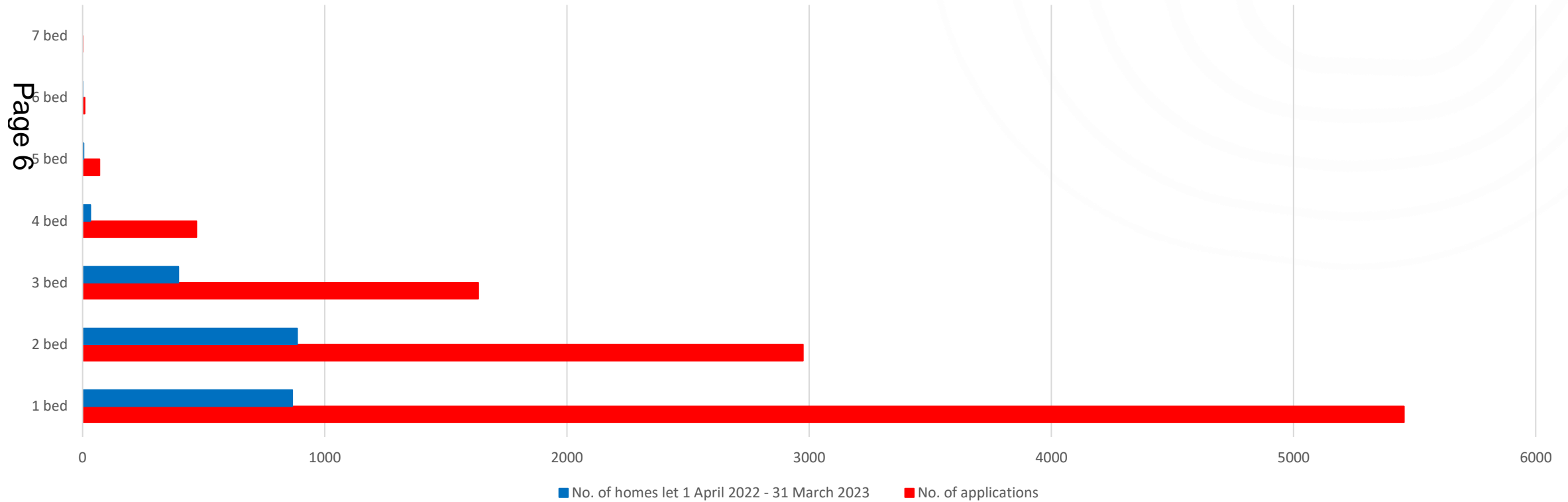
- 11,000 households seeking affordable housing through Homefinder (10,300 01/02/24)
- Over demand in the Private Rented Sector
- 243 in Temporary Accommodation or B&B 27/11/2023
- 57 households sleeping rough
- Annual reduction of social housing through the Right to Buy (50-60pa)
- Challenges with building new homes and challenges in ability for the council and partners to build homes at pace
- Shortage of homes which reflect the size and needs of Somerset households

# Profile of households registered on Homefinder Somerset

(29 November 2023)

		Number of bedrooms needed							
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Total
Page 11 of 14	Emergency	12	1	2	3				18
	Gold	429	219	135	85	41	6	1	916
	Silver	1,822	1,244	1,014	322	17	3		4,422
	Bronze	3,343	1,508	488	50	4			5,393
	<b>Total</b>	<b>5,606</b>	<b>2,972</b>	<b>1,639</b>	<b>460</b>	<b>62</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>10,749</b>

# Comparison between demand & supply



# What are the Councils Opportunities?

## The Role of Planning, Enabling and Housing Landlord Services

- Enable new homes to be built through the planning system
- Use planning policy to maximise the number, size and type of affordable homes (subject to scheme viability)
- Work in partnership with Registered Providers to build more affordable homes to the size and type required by Somerset Customers'
- Build new council homes through the Housing Revenue Account
- Acquire more homes for social rent through the Housing Revenue Account
  - ✓ **S106**
  - ✓ **Market Purchases**
  - ✓ **LAHF**
  - ✓ **RSAP**
  - ✓ **Other**

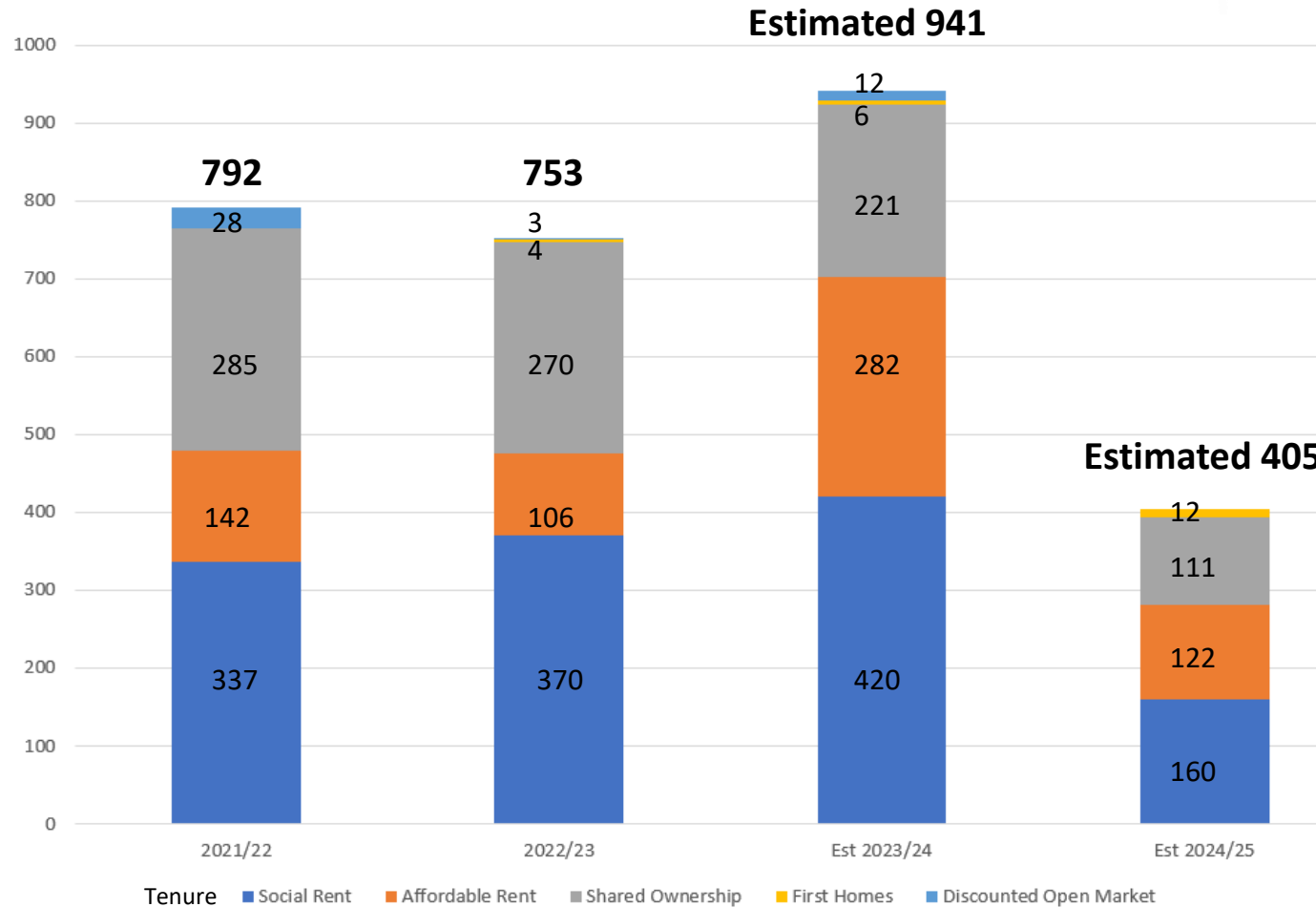
# Housing Enabling

- Housing Enabling Team of 8 FTEs
- Part of the Housing Growth Service
- Previously a District Responsibility and yet to restructure following LGR
- Expertise across the local authority area and continue to work closely with Planning colleagues and the Somerset's five Local Plans and Committees along with Exmoor National Park
- Some income from Partnership works and grants to support the team costs – seeking to create a larger partnership within 18 months



# Affordable Housing Delivery

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Number of New Affordable Homes



- Nutrient Neutrality
- Pandemic
- Increased Development Costs
- Development Program Capacity
- Competing Development Requirements

# Successful Affordable Housing Delivery

Over 750 new affordable homes were completed in 2022/23 across Somerset  
Circa 900 more are currently on site with anticipated delivery in 2023/2024

**Enabling opportunities to become a reality**  
**4 social rent flats and community space - Falcon**



**Realising funding opportunities**  
**Circa £1 million RSAP and LA funding to develop and operate 18 rough sleeper flats - YMCA**



**Outstanding relationships with partners and developers**  
**146 additional affordable homes secured through Vistry and LiveWest**



**Working with our communities providing a broad choice of housing options**  
**Including developing fully disabled-adapted homes and bungalows**



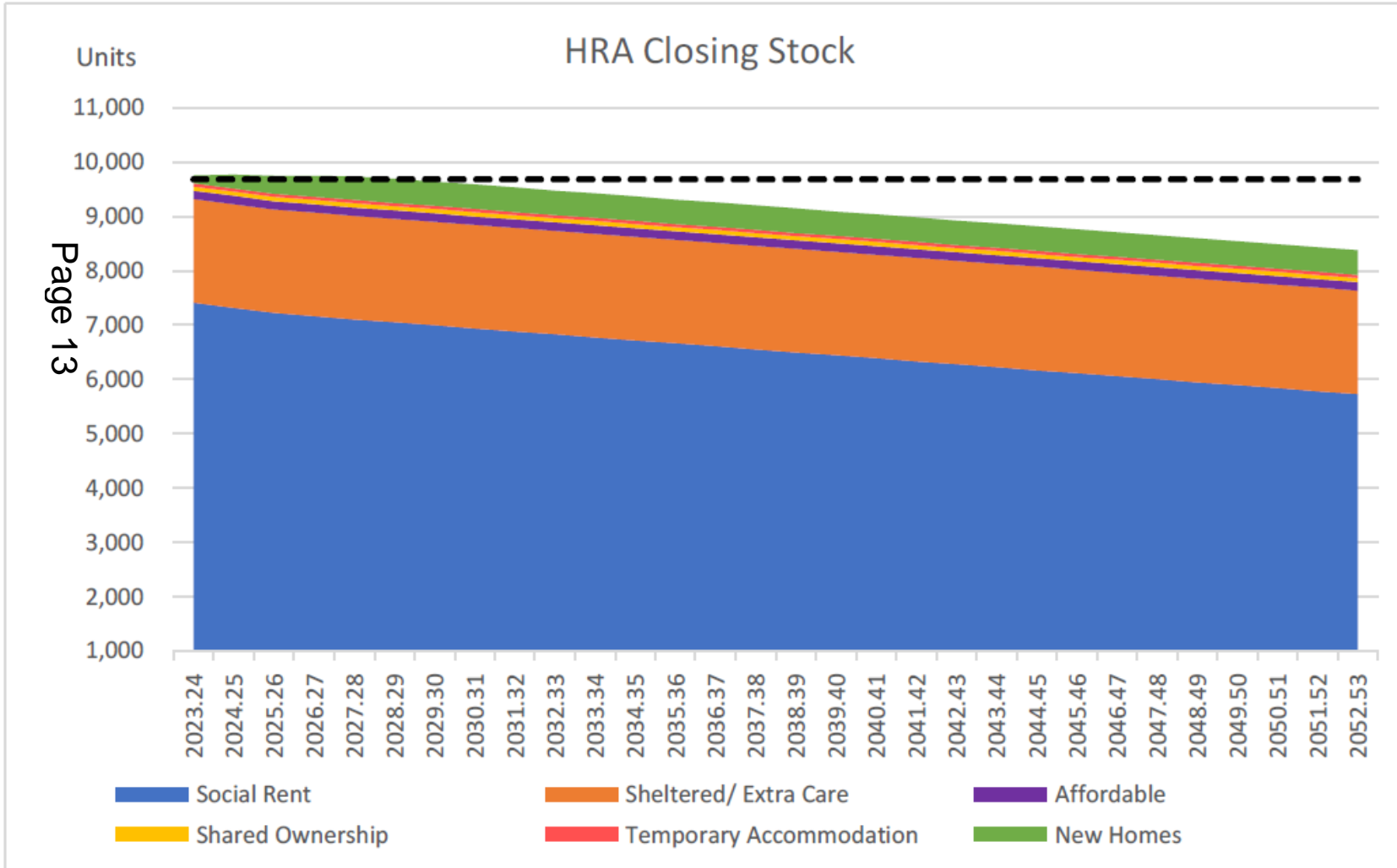
# Housing Revenue Account and Council Landlord Opportunities for Growth

- 448 affordable homes in the HRA business plan (built or acquired 2023-2027)
- A pipeline of sites able to be brought forward as the Business Plan can support
- Homes in Sedgemoor and In-House Service have small development teams to purchase or build
- Capacity to benefit from grant announcements
- Access to subsidy
  - 1:4:1 agreement allow the use of some RtB receipts, strategic investment partner with Homes England
  - Grants rates 25%-100%
  - Build purchase costs £100k-£300k+
- The service is supporting the general fund by:
  - Using its landlord function to acquire and manage homes for vulnerable adults
  - Projects include affordable homes for Homeless, Displaced Persons and Children leaving care

# HRA Growth Programme - One HRA Programme

Housing Growth	Status
<p>The HRA has agreed schemes to be progressed 2024/2027. The annual business plan review will consider adding pipeline schemes to the programme. 300 homes will be delivered 2023/2026. The HRA is also developing and hosting properties to support Displaced Persons, Homelessness, Children and Adults services</p>	
LAHF & RSAP	31 LAHF & 5 RSAP purchases. These properties are purchased by the council and sit in the Housing Revenue account using 100% grant funding. 4 let, Purchases progressing. Purchased 14. more in conveyancing. Remainder of required numbers in pipeline, Budget may have sufficient to purchase an additional 4.
Mortgage appropriation of properties	4 properties from SC/SSDC Progressing and in Business plan
Acquisitions	Small amount of funding for opportunistic purchases
HRA Seaward Way	On Track, Consultation event January, first lets anticipated March 2024 (11)
HRA North Taunton	RtB subsidy and additional £5m Homes England Contract Signed, Phase A 34 units let, 13 units to be handed over January. Phase B, Ci demolition March, Main contract procurement commenced.
HRA C Oxford Inn/Rochester Road	In HRA business plan. Full council to consider 16 units inc 8 MMC Feb 2024
Move on/Step Down MMC	In HRA business plan. Full council to consider 16 units MMC Feb 2024
Sydenham garage site housing development	Practical completion funds reserved for defect period
Penlea House phase one, Bridgwater, Homes England	Development progressing
Bigwood & Staple, Bridgwater, Homes England	Development progressing
Bespoke homes (2 homes plus extensions) Homes England	Contract approved
Carrotts Farm, (3 homes) N Petherton, s106	Purchases Progressing
Cricketers, Nether Stowey (16 homes)	Purchases Progressing
Langport	Initial support s106 not completing until 2027
Taunton Road	In HRA business plan. Full council to consider Feb 2024

# HRA Business Plan – stock movement

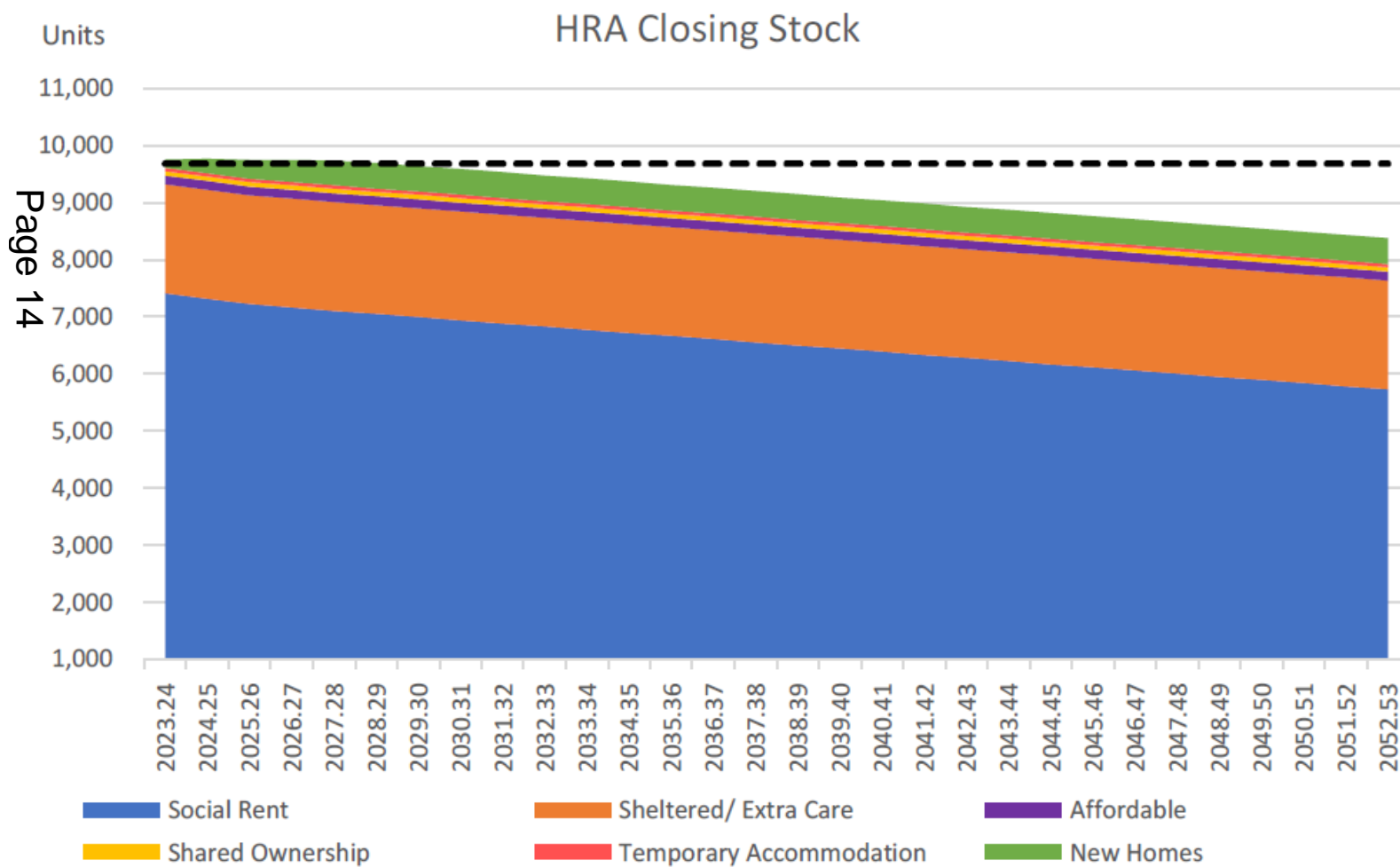


## Movement in stock numbers

Peak of 9,774 homes in 2024/25, declining to 8,381 by the end of the plan.

Note: assumes RTB sales of 55 pa

# HRA Business Plan – stock movement



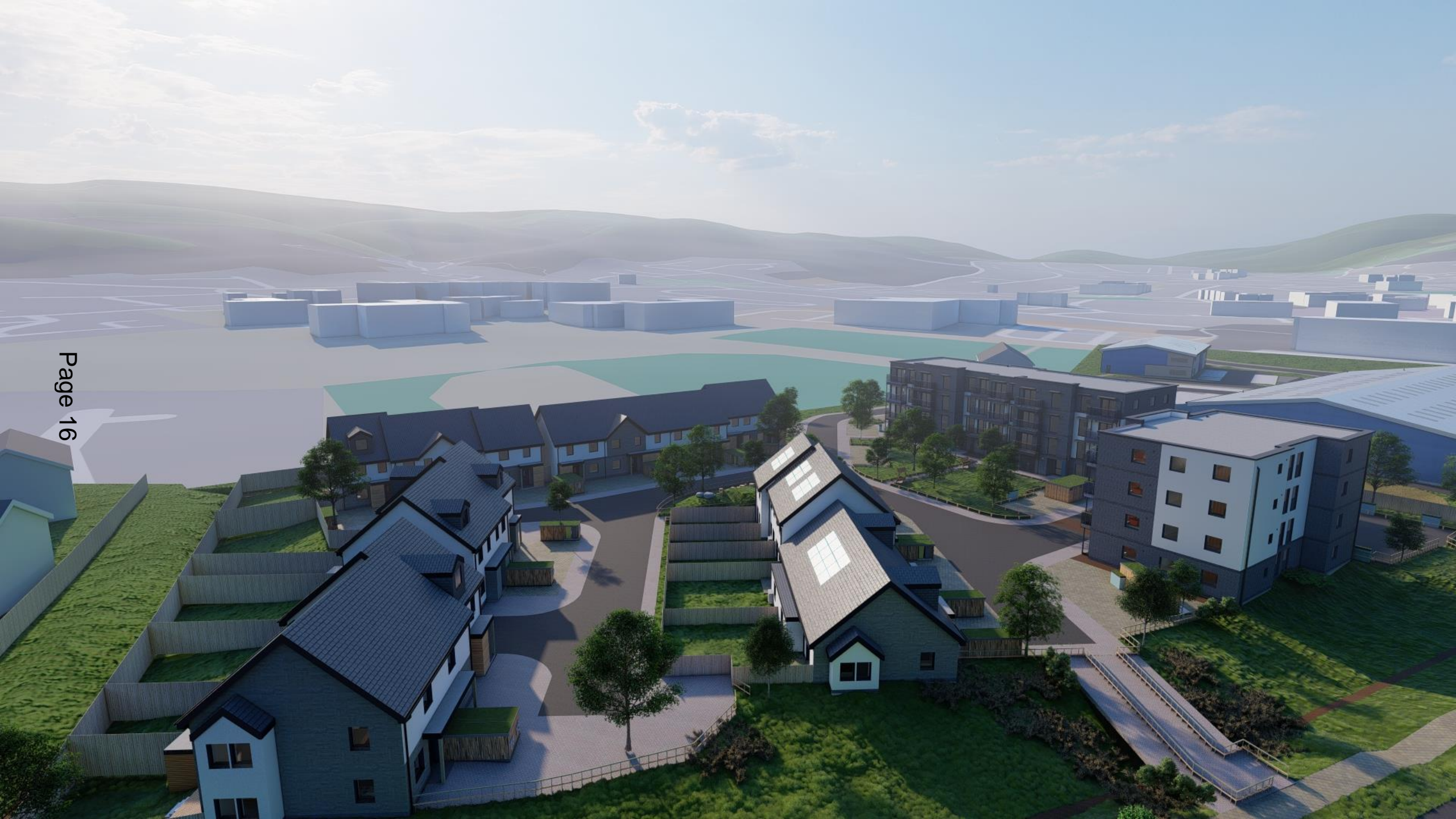
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Peak of 9,774 homes in 2024/25, declining to 8,381 by the end of the plan.

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# Strong business plan but their are challenges

- Compliance and Regulation priority for a landlord
- Subject to the same planning policy as all other developers
- HRA able to borrow but loans must be supported by income (rent & rent caps)
- Very few easily developable sites in the ownership of the Housing Revenue Account
- HRA stock primarily in the West and North of the authority area (some new acquisitions in the Martock, Yeovil and opportunity in Langport. Minehead new build)
- Phosphates, Ecological Emergency
- Net Zero, Climate Emergency
- Market Conditions, Supply Chain, Managing Risk













# North Taunton Woolaway Project



# Phasing Plans

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CGI showing Phases B, C & D in the setting of Phase A, E and existing properties.

# Phase A

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# Phase A

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# Increasing Support for Vulnerable Adults

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- 24 units of 1 bed accommodation for low complex need customers
  - Modern method of Construction
  - Move on / step down accommodation
  - Children leaving Care, Low complex need homeless
  - Other vulnerable adults
- Bespoke Homes
  - Blended projects converting existing homes and building new
  - Bespoke specialist provision
- Local Authority Housing Fund
  - 31 Homes acquired for displaced people
- RSAP funding
  - Acquired and repairs 5 properties for Housing First (people who were sleeping rough, complex needs)
  - 5 HRA properties redesignated for Housing First







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# Opportunities

- HRA is strong but needs to outperform to build at greater scale
- Largest programme of Council houses completed over the current and next two year
- Wider County Wider Registered Providers Partnership to gain greater alignment with Council Strategic objectives
- Continue to use the HRA to develop properties for general and specialist affordable housing provision
- Explore big picture solutions – Housing and Care



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