

# Guildford Borough Council Delivery Plan Progress Report

Q1 and Q2 – 2025/26



GUILDFORD  
BOROUGH



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## Foreword

In 2024, we set out a bold corporate strategy to create a Greener, Fairer, Thriving Guildford. Our 2025 Delivery Plan turned those ambitions into clear actions and outcomes- commitments we made to residents, businesses, and our environment. This progress report is about being open and transparent. It shows how we are delivering on the promises we made, and it provides measurable outcomes so that residents and businesses can hold us to account. Across our five key priorities, we have made considerable progress, with almost 50% of actions completed, and a further 43% in progress. Our key achievements include:

- **A more sustainable borough:** Over 1,000 football pitches of land managed for restoration and conservation.
- **A more prosperous borough:** Work continued with partners to deliver major regeneration projects and improve the town centre environment through clean-up and street art programmes.
- **A more inclusive borough:** 15,646 meals delivered through our community meals service.
- **Decent and Affordable homes:** Over 4,500 housing repairs completed.
- **A resilient and well-managed council:** Partnered with Waverley Borough Council and others to host information sessions and webinars, ensuring residents and businesses could influence the future of local government.

Looking ahead, we are on track to complete even more actions. Our commitment is clear:



we will keep our promises to residents and businesses. As we work with partners across Surrey on Local Government Reorganisation, Guildford Borough Council will stay focused on creating a Greener, Fairer, Thriving Guildford. By delivering on our priorities, we will leave a legacy our residents and businesses can be proud of.

**Cllr Julia McShane**  
**Leader of Guildford Borough Council**



## Summary

In 2025, Guildford Borough Council published its 2025–26 Delivery Plan, setting out a series of actions and initiatives that would be delivered to support the strategic priorities outlined in the corporate strategy—creating a more sustainable, prosperous, and inclusive borough; ensuring access to Decent and Affordable homes; and maintaining a resilient, well-managed council.

The Delivery Plan committed the council to completing **54** actions by the end of the 2025/26 financial year. This report provides an update on **30** of these actions. **12** of these actions were due by the end of quarter 2 and **18** actions were not yet due but have progressed and an update can be provided.

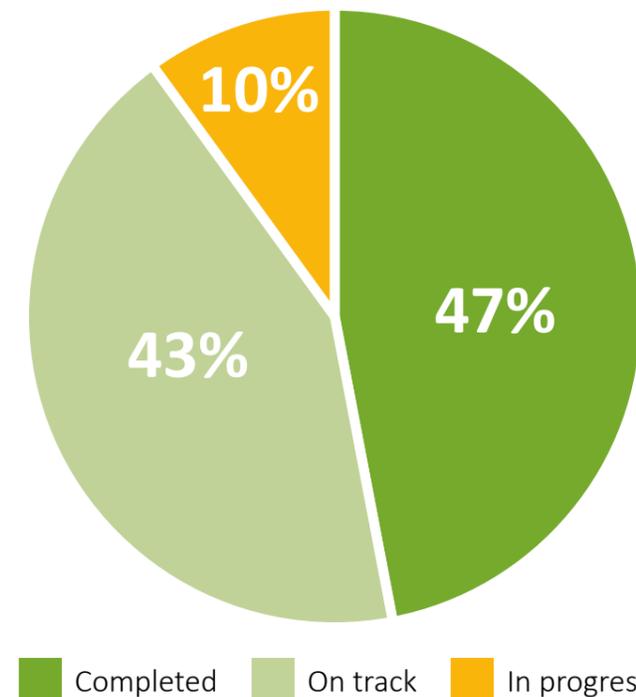
### The actions have been given a status of:

<b>Completed</b>	The action has been completed.	
<b>On track</b>	The action has not yet been completed however the deadline has not yet been reached.	
<b>In progress</b>	The action is being worked on, however has missed its intended deadline.	

Out of the **30** actions included within this report **14** actions have been completed, **13** are on track and **3** are in progress. Out of the **12** actions that are due by the end of quarter 2, **9** are complete and **3** are in progress.



### Summary of actions



## What we've done so far



Number of meals delivered as part of our Community Meals service:  
**15,646**



Number of visitors to leisure centres:  
**963,039**



Number of adaptations completed:  
**99**



Number of community pantry bags given out:  
**932**



Households supported via homeless duties:  
**151**



Number of visitors that have used the activities hub at The Hive:  
**3,899**



Bins collected:  
**4 million**



Number of housing repairs completed:  
**1,172 emergency repairs completed (96% within the target timeline), 3,381 non-emergency repairs completed (78% within the target timeline).**



Number of calls answered:  
**42,548**



Funding provided to voluntary and community groups:  
**Over £375,000**



Amount of land managed for restoration and conservation:  
**751 ha equivalent to the size of over 1,000 football pitches.**



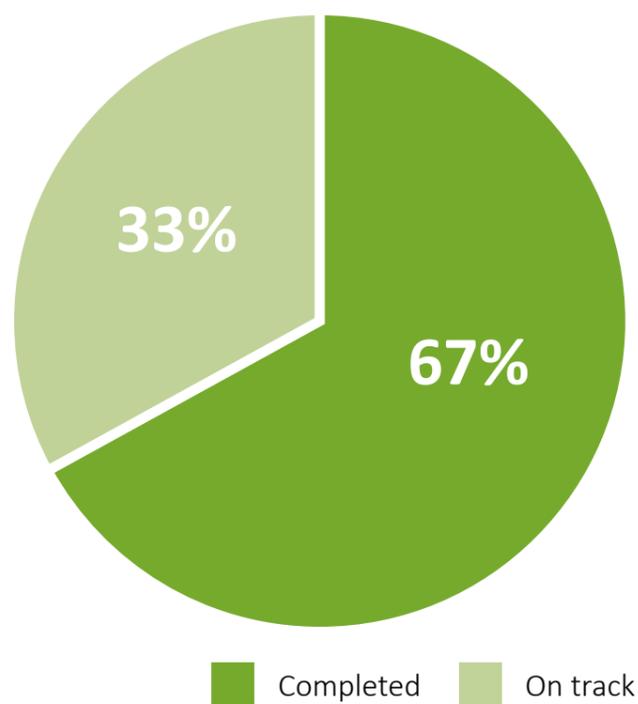
Number of food hygiene premises inspections:  
**295 (including 100% of higher risk food businesses)**



## A more sustainable borough

We're proud that Guildford was recently ranked the eighth-most eco-friendly town in England. Building on that, we're committed to creating a cleaner, greener borough, underpinned by our pledge to be carbon neutral by 2030. Every day, we deliver: waste collections with a 99.9% success rate and a recycling rate of 61.9%, the highest in West Surrey. We're reducing food waste and improving biodiversity through habitat mapping and new woodland management plans at sites like Riverside Nature Reserve. Air quality remains a priority and we monitor nitrogen dioxide levels across the borough on a regular basis. We also act fast on environmental crime with 241 fly-tipping incidents cleared in under a day on average, well within our two-day target.

To support our priority of being a more sustainable borough we committed to delivering **13** actions in 2025/26. Of these, **2** were scheduled to be completed by the end of quarter 2. Both of these actions have now been completed. In addition, **1** action not yet due has been completed ahead of schedule. This report also includes an update on another action that is not yet due, but where progress has been made, allowing us to provide an update.



## Case study: Restoring Nature at Tyting Farm

A key priority in our corporate strategy is making Guildford a more sustainable borough. This means not only cutting carbon emissions to reach carbon neutrality by 2030, but also enhancing biodiversity and protecting our natural environment.



As the custodian of green spaces and nature reserves, we've worked with partners like Surrey Wildlife Trust, the Hedgerow Heritage Project, Surrey Bat Group, Butterfly Conservation, Buglife, and Naturemetrics to restore habitats and boost biodiversity.

Over 4 miles of hedgerows at Tyting Farm are being restored and enhanced by replanting, traditionally laying, and cyclical cutting; with further planting planned this year. Hedgerows provide vital connectivity for local wildlife, as well as opportunities to forage and shelter. At this site we've also worked with partners to undertake a number of bespoke measures to protect other locally notable species including:

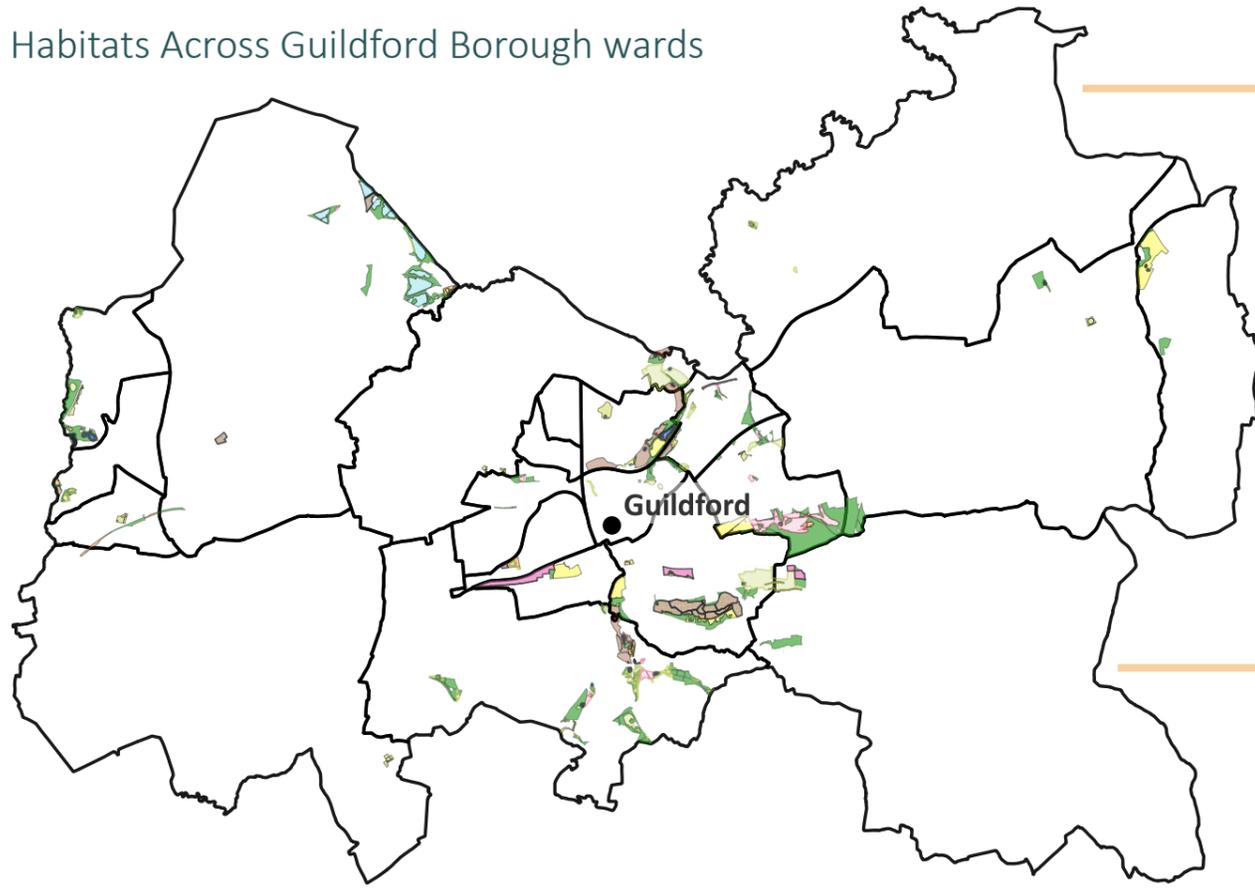
- Creating safe homes for endangered bats by converting a derelict farm for summer roosting and creating an underground bat bunker for winter roosting.
- Bird boxes for barn owls and other woodland birds.
- Log piles for invertebrates and reptiles.
- Planting wildflowers to help rare butterflies thrive.

Through these improvements, we're not only supporting nature recovery, but also ensuring our green spaces remain welcoming and accessible, helping more people benefit from time spent in the natural environment.

### What we've done:

Action	Due Date	Status	Update and Impact
<b>Outcome: Improve biodiversity and preserve the natural environment</b>			
Continue working with the Surrey Hills Board and other constituent authorities to update and adopt the Surrey Hills Management Plan 2025.	September 2025	Complete	We have worked in collaboration with the Surrey Hills Board, and other constituent councils across Surrey, to refresh the Surrey Hills Management Plan. This was adopted by the Executive in October 2025.  The main change is the development of a 75-year vision and strategic priorities for the themes of <i>Climate, Nature and Engagement in the Natural Environment</i> .  The new Management Plan will help guide and inform our new legal duty to actively "seek to further the purpose" of conserving and enhancing the natural beauty of National Landscapes.

## Habitats Across Guildford Borough wards



### Habitat Type:

- Good semi improved grassland
- Rough grassland
- Amenity grassland
- Deciduous woodland
- Other woodland
- Fens
- Chalk grassland
- Heathland
- Meadows
- Water body
- Additional habitat present



Action	Due Date	Status	Update and Impact
Confirm the priority habitat baseline to establish a biodiversity reporting system. This will enable us to track delivery in biodiversity on council land.	Confirm baseline: July 2025	Complete	The baseline for priority habitats has now been finalised. We manage 754 hectares of land, the location of all of this can be seen in the map above. This enables us to begin reporting on progress relating to habitat restoration, maintenance and new habitat creation.
	Reporting: December 2025	Complete	Reporting using the priority habitat baseline was used in the performance report for the first quarter of this year.
<b>Outcome: We are a carbon neutral council by 2030 and the wider borough is net zero by 2050</b>			
Reduce our carbon emissions and improve energy efficiency across our facilities through: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop a costed decarbonisation programme for Guildford Spectrum.</li> <li>• Install a new pool cover for the Lido to reduce heat loss.</li> <li>• Install new pool covers at Spectrum.</li> </ul>	December 2025 January 2026	On track	The pool covers at Spectrum have now been installed. At the Lido, preparatory work for the new covers is complete. We are currently finalising procurement details, after which manufacturing will begin — this stage carries a lead time of approximately sixteen weeks. Once installed, the covers will support energy efficiency, particularly now that the Lido operates year-round.

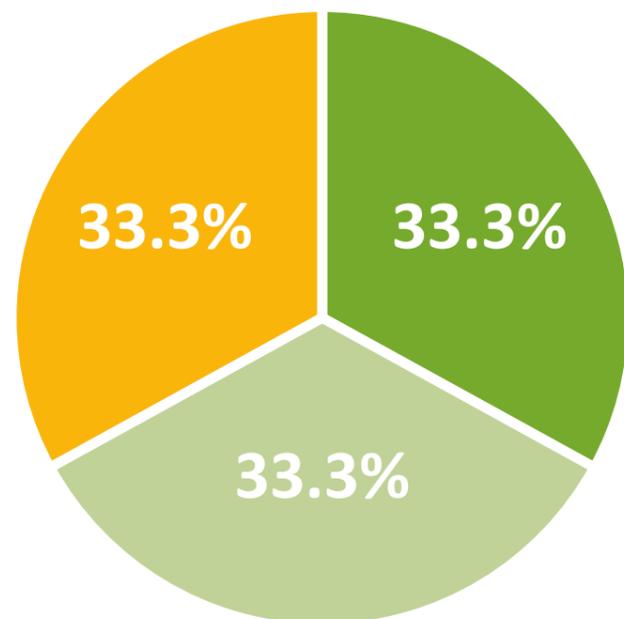




## A more prosperous borough

Our priority for a more prosperous borough goes beyond attracting investment and creating jobs, it's about ensuring the benefits reach everyone. Guildford was recently recognised as the best place outside London to start a new business, and we're working hard to keep our local economy thriving. Both business and employment economic activity remains strong, with Guildford ranking first among its nearest neighbours and town centre footfall up 15% compared to last year and Guildford's employment rate also rose by 3.5% in the past year, from 84.9% to 88.4%, which is well above the national average of 78.8%. We're supporting this through events like Guildford Green Day and Heritage Open Days, which bring thousands into the town centre. We're also making development easier. In Q2, 100% of major planning applications were decided on time, alongside 94% of minor and 88% of other applications, well above national targets. These actions help businesses grow and support Guildford borough to be a thriving place to live, work and do business.

To support the council's priority of becoming a more prosperous borough, we committed to delivering **7** actions in 2025/26. Of these, **2** were scheduled for completion by the end of quarter 2. **1** of these actions has been completed. Whilst the other is progressing, it has experienced a delay. We are also able to provide an update on another action that remains on track for completion by its target date.



■ Completed
 ■ On track
 ■ In progress

## Case Study: Street Art and Riverside Mural

Supporting the council's priority of a more prosperous borough, this financial year has seen the makeover to the Old Orleans building and a riverside mural.

The makeover to the Old Orleans building is the next phase of the Street Art project, which aims to breathe new life into public spaces, using art to create a greater sense of place and pride in our town. A group of talented artists undertook the makeover during September, painting eye-catching murals on the wooden boards surrounding the building. It took place in a live street art demonstration that was open to the public in conjunction with Guildford Festival of the Arts. Each of the street artists brought their own styles and techniques to this project. It's helped to reinvigorate the building and the surrounding area.

In addition to this, a riverside mural has been commissioned under Walnut bridge. Designed and painted by professional street artists Roo and Skyhigh, who specialise in the creation of large-scale freehand art murals. The mural spans three walls and aims to breathe new life into the area. This street art project is a key part of our ongoing commitment to revitalising the town centre and creating an inclusive and prosperous borough.



### What we've done:

Action	Due Date	Status	Update and Impact
Outcome: A vibrant and thriving town centre			
To help make parking more affordable for workers in the night time economy, we will work with Experience Guildford to trial a heavily reduced car parking permit scheme (4pm – 10pm) for people working in the hospitality sector.	September 2025	Complete	<p>The permit scheme, which is primarily managed and promoted by Experience Guildford for the benefit of its members, was introduced on 1 June 2025.</p> <p>Take up has been lower than anticipated at the present time, with only a dozen or so permits having been issued, out of the 100 made available to Experience Guildford members.</p> <p>We will continue to liaise with Experience Guildford throughout the pilot, regarding the promotion, management, and uptake of the scheme.</p> <p>We'll be exploring opportunities to better understand uptake and identify ways to enhance the appeal of the offer.</p>

Action	Due Date	Status	Update and Impact
<p>Work with key partners such as Experience Guildford to support the town centre. Encourage footfall through delivering events on the high street such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• VE Day Commemorations (May 2025).</li> <li>• Guildford Green Day (June 2025).</li> <li>• Heritage Open Days (September 2025).</li> <li>• Cleaner Air Day (September 2025).</li> <li>• Festive Family Fun Day (November 2025).</li> </ul>	April 2026	On track	<p>We continue to work proactively to support Guildford to have a vibrant and thriving town centre, working with development partners to support the regeneration of various key sites.</p> <p>The planning application for Guildford Park Road was submitted by our development partner, Wates, to the Local Planning Authority in November 2025, whilst in North Street, we worked to relocate the taxi ranks and market to minimise the disruption to businesses and residents whilst Berkeley St Edward commence the first phases of construction on their scheme. Alongside other developers active in the town, we attended the Town Centre Forum in September to share our plans for key projects such as these in Guildford.</p> <p>Working in partnership with Experience Guildford, we have launched a campaign to clean up the appearance of hot-spots across the town centre, as well as kick starting a programme of street art to breathe life into public spaces. This is in addition to our successful application for grant funding to Keep Britain Tidy's Chewing Gum Task Force, which will allow us to enhance our efforts to tackle gum litter across Guildford.</p> <p>Guildford town centre has hosted a variety of community events this year, including VE Day commemorations with a flag-raising and beacon lighting, the second annual Green Day promoting sustainability with local partners, the Heritage Open Days celebrating Guildford's history and culture, and Cleaner Air Day, which transformed the High Street into a pedestrian zone to raise awareness of air quality and sustainable travel.</p>



Action	Due Date	Status	Update and Impact
<p>Introduction of new technology within council car parks making our car parks easier for residents to use and encouraging people to stay for longer</p>	July 2025	In progress	<p>The delivery of this action has been delayed. We're pleased that the contract for the Barrier Pay on Foot equipment has now been awarded. While internal process changes during procurement extended the timeline, they've helped strengthen our approach moving forward.</p> <p>Preliminary engineering works are already underway, and we're actively exploring options to either accelerate implementation or schedule it after the Christmas period to minimise seasonal disruption. Either way, we're committed to delivering a smooth and efficient rollout.</p> <p>The Pay and Display equipment project was re-tendered following procurement challenges, and a separate card processing issue has been resolved. We're ready to award the contract, with implementation planned for early in the New Year. The Waverley element of this joint procurement is also entering its implementation phase.</p> <p>Despite slight delays, both of the above projects will be completed by April 2026.</p>

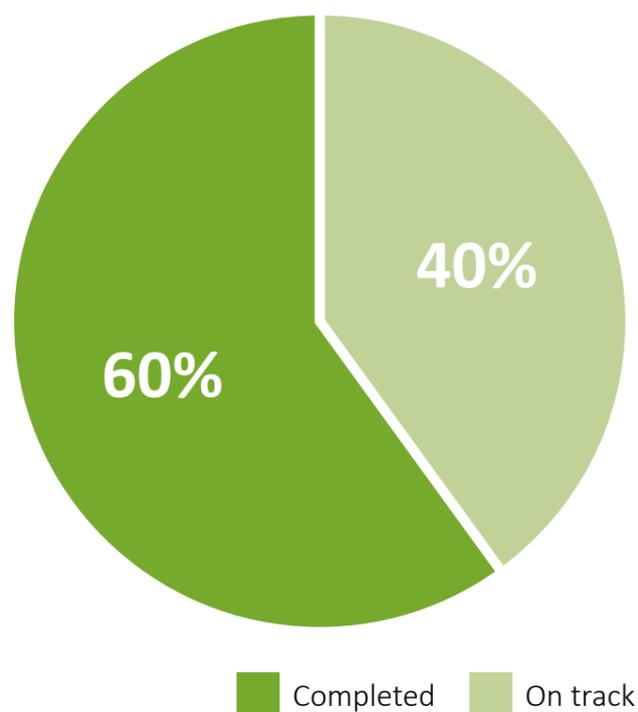




## A more inclusive borough

Making Guildford a thriving place to live, work and do business means ensuring every resident has the opportunity to thrive. We're working with partners to celebrate diversity and encourage everyone to lead healthy, active lives. Our services make a real difference. Attendance at our leisure facilities, including Spectrum and the Lido, rose to almost one million visits in the first half of the year, while G Live welcomed over 80,000 people. With new contracts in place to maximise social value and expand outreach, these venues are helping to improve health and wellbeing and foster pride and belonging. This is complemented by the vital work of our Community Services team, who provided more than 15,000 meals, 8,000 community transport journeys, and over 1,000 handyperson jobs- supporting residents across the borough and helping people stay connected, safe and independent.

To support the council's priority of becoming a more inclusive borough, we committed to delivering **14** actions in 2025/26. Of these, **2** were scheduled for completion by the end of quarter 2. Both have now been completed. We are also able to provide updates on **7** actions that are not yet due but have made considerable progress. **2** of these have already been completed ahead of schedule and **6** remain on track for completion by their target dates.



## Case Study: Year round Lido opening

Supporting our priority of being a more inclusive borough, Guildford Lido has transformed from a seasonal attraction into a year-round destination. For the first time, residents can enjoy swimming throughout the winter as well as summer, without any additional cost to the council or taxpayers. This long-requested change creates more opportunities for people to stay active, connect with others, and experience Guildford's leisure heritage in a fresh way.



### What we've done:

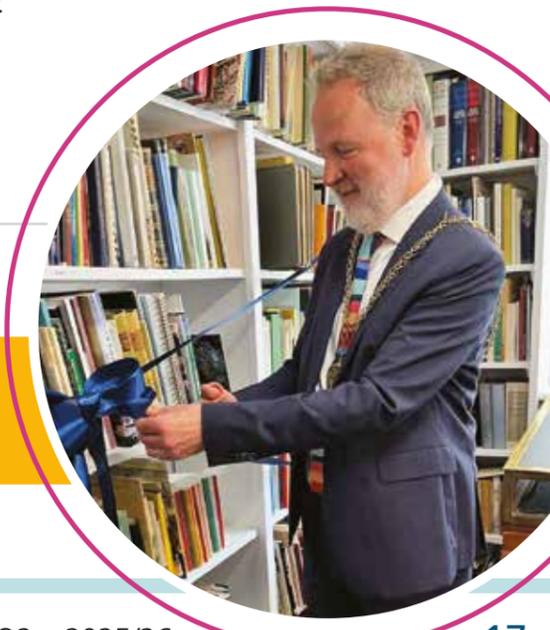
Action	Due Date	Status	Update and Impact
Outcome: Everyone in the borough is inspired and encouraged to lead a healthy and active life			
Reprocure our leisure services contract, with a focus on social value to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Drive increased outreach work from our leisure centres focused on health &amp; wellbeing.</li> <li>• Run focused sessions within our leisure centres to reduce health inequality in our borough.</li> <li>• Use of cultural partnerships to reach out to communities and offer opportunities to improve health &amp; wellbeing of residents.</li> </ul>	Re-procurement complete by November 2025. New contract in place for January 2026	Complete	Following review by Overview and Scrutiny, in July 2025, Full Council approved the new contract to manage the Spectrum, Lido and Ash Manor Sports Centre from 1 November 2025. The new contract achieves all of the objectives stated within this action, and means better facilities, greater community outreach & social value, and almost £10m investment across the leisure sites (including around £2.5m for sustainability initiatives). The new contract will also result in a significant financial improvement for the Council through the transfer of utilities and an increased averaged management fee. The Lido will also be open all year round and the Operator's commitment to lower the carbon footprint of the three leisure sites which will help us to achieve its net zero goal by 2030.
To support the health and wellbeing of our residents, we will continue to offer services visits to the Older People's Service at The Hive, the Community Fridge & Pantry, Thrive @ The Hive as well as outreach services such as Playrangers	April 2026	On track	The total number of face-to-face contacts from April to October was over 8,500. This is an increase of around 2.5% compared to the same period last year. Generally there has been an increase in visitors at The Hive, especially within our older people's services and transport services.



Action	Due Date	Status	Update and Impact
<b>Outcome: Our borough is safe and clean</b>			
Re-establish the Safer Guildford Partnership Executive meetings, bring partners together to work together to respond to the most serious crimes and support schemes that work to reduce this.	April 2026	Complete	<p>The Safer Guildford Partnership Executive Meetings have been re-established, with meetings being held in March, July and September. Chaired by Guildford Borough Council, they were attended by statutory partners, Surrey Police, Surrey County Council, Surrey Fire and Rescue Service, National Probation Service, Surrey Heartlands Integrated Care System and Frimley Health and Care Integrated Care System and other key stakeholders such as Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner, Southwest Surrey Domestic Abuse Outreach Service, and Experience Guildford.</p> <p>The partnership ensures that protocols and systems for sharing information are used and adhered to, that we have a co-ordinated response to the prevention of crime, disorder, and antisocial behaviour at Borough level that is monitored. Other specific duties that are the responsibility of the partnership are Domestic Abuse Related Death Reviews (DARDRs) and Antisocial Behaviour Reviews.</p> <p>They approved the Safer Guildford Partnership Plan 2025-2028 in July 2025 and Safer Guildford Action Plan in September 2025.</p> <p>Between April and October, there were 14 referrals to the Community Harm and Risk Management Meetings.</p>
<b>Outcome: Everyone in Guildford has the opportunity to thrive</b>			
To do all we can to support those arriving into the UK under Home Office refugee programmes, we will increase our number of Afghan refugee families from 3 to 10	May 2025	Complete	<p>This commitment has been achieved. The council has now welcomed and is supporting ten families, up from three.</p> <p>The number of individuals has increased from sixteen to forty-seven spread across the ten families</p>



Action	Due Date	Status	Update and Impact
In partnership with the Friends of Guildford Museum and Guildford Town Guides, open a Discovery Room at Guildford Museum. This will encourage engagement with the Heritage Service and help improve visitor numbers, allowing those attending to find out more about our borough's history	June 2025	Complete	<p>The Longworth Discovery Lounge has been opened. It opens once a month to Museum visitors (on the second Friday of the month from 12pm until 4pm).</p> <p>The room was launched on Friday 13 June with an event for invited guests, including the Mayor, Cllr Howard Smith, who formally opened the room. All guests were welcomed to look around the room, and chat to our volunteers and staff. For the launch and following four open days (between 13 June and 12 September), there has been 94 visitors to the room.</p>
To support elderly, disabled and vulnerable residents, we will carry out at least 400 Occupational Therapy assessments to support and advise residents on the most appropriate adaptations and equipment for their homes to help them remain independent.	April 2026	On track	<p>We have carried out 170 occupational therapy assessments – just under half of the target halfway through the year.</p>



*The Mayor of Guildford, Cllr Howard Smith, opening the new Discovery Room at the Guildford Museum*

Action	Due Date	Status	Update and Impact
To support elderly, disabled and vulnerable residents, we will carry out at least 120 bathing assessments to support and advise residents on the most appropriate adaptations and equipment for their homes to help them bathe safely and independently.	April 2026	On track	We have carried out 73 bathing assessments halfway through the financial year, which is over half of the overall target.
Raise awareness of the services available for residents at the Hive	Ongoing	On track	The services available at the Hive are continually promoted through social media, events, information boards and leaflet dropping. The promotion of services has proven effective, reflected in an increase in visitor numbers of around 2.5% when compared to the same period last year. Notably, the Activities Hub has seen the most significant growth, with a 3% rise in service users.



Action	Due Date	Status	Update and Impact
<b>Outcomes: Everyone in Guildford has the opportunity to thrive; Everyone in Guildford borough has a safe place to live</b>			
To support elderly, disabled and vulnerable residents to remain independent in their homes for longer, we will:	April 2026	On track	We are on track to achieve each of these objectives. Between April and October, we have: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Completed 1,084 Handyperson service jobs (77% of our objective for the year).</li> <li>• Undertaken 99 adaptations for council tenants (52% of our objective for the year).</li> <li>• Funded 72 Disabled Facilities Grants adaptations (60% of our objective for the year).</li> <li>• Supported 52 residents, two home improvement grants have been provided and 50 individuals signposted to more appropriate funding streams (173% of our objective for the year).</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Undertake at least 1,400 jobs through our Handyperson service.</li> <li>• Undertake at least 190 adaptations for council tenants</li> <li>• Fund at least a further 120 adaptations for other residents through Disabled Facilities Grants.</li> <li>• Support at least 30 residents by providing Home Improvement Grants to enable essential repairs, or signpost them to other funding streams where appropriate.</li> </ul>			

<b>Outcomes: Our borough is safe and clean; A vibrant and thriving town centre</b>			
Implement the new Public Spaces Protection Order for Guildford town centre. Working with partners to monitor and act where breaches occur.	Anticipated adoption of the new ASB policy by the Executive in June 2026.	On track	Having adopted the new Public Spaces Protection Order (PSPO) for Guildford town centre in March 2025, we have begun to work to enforce this and make sure that Guildford town centre is a safe and clean destination for visitors. Information regarding new boundaries and regulations of the PSPO has been published online and on signage, with weekday patrols to monitor antisocial behaviour taking place. To support this work, we have reinstated liaison meetings with colleagues from Surrey Police.
Develop a new Antisocial Behaviour Policy for the council, reducing the impact of antisocial behaviour across the borough.			

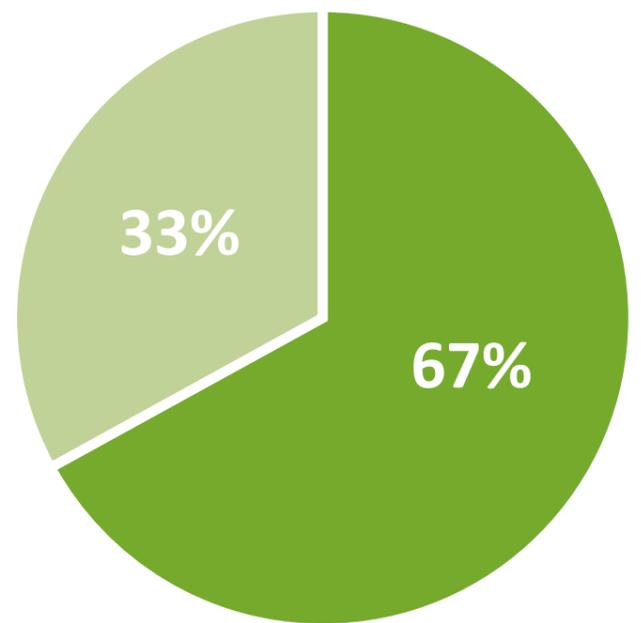




## Decent and Affordable homes

A safe, secure home is one of life's essentials, and we're committed to making this a reality for everyone in Guildford borough. As the largest social housing provider, we're proud to provide homes for nearly one in ten residents and work hard to keep them safe, well-maintained and energy efficient.

In the first half of this year, we completed over 4,500 housing repairs, with 96% of emergency repairs finished on time. Since adopting our Housing Improvement Plan, performance on timely repairs has improved considerably. We're also addressing housing need. So far, 151 households have been supported through homelessness prevention or relief duties, and plans for Guildford Park Road will deliver 248 new homes (40% Affordable) alongside other schemes prioritising sustainability.



■ Completed ■ On track

To support the council's priority of delivering Decent and Affordable homes, we committed to delivering **12** actions in 2025/26. Of these, **4** were to be completed by the end of quarter 2, all of which have been delivered.

A further **2** actions remain on track for completion by their target dates.

## Case study: Keeping in Touch Days

As part of our commitment to Decent and Affordable Homes, we've introduced a new visit programme to help us be a more responsive and visible landlord. So far, we've made over 300 visits to tenants, with the aim of reaching every household at least once every two years. These visits are about listening, understanding what matters most, and making sure tenants feel supported.

Alongside this, in August the Housing Service hosted a series of Keeping in Touch Days- informal events held on estates across the borough. These gave us the chance to speak directly with over 120 residents and their families, listen to their feedback, and hear what matters most to them.

Together, the visit programme and Keeping in Touch Days are part of how we stay connected with tenants and make sure they know we're present, approachable, and ready to respond.



### What we've done:

Action	Due Date	Status	Update and Impact
Outcome: Guildford borough's tenants live in high quality homes and neighbourhood			
Implement Tenancy visit programme to know and understand residents of council homes and their needs.	October 2025	Complete	Since we commenced this initiative, we have completed 342 visits to our tenants. We have one dedicated officer conducting tenancy visits full-time, while the remaining six Housing Officers each complete a set number of visits per week.
Work with tenants to develop a co-design methodology to review services together to ensure they meet needs and expectations.	October 2025	Complete	This initiative began in July with a series of consultations aimed at gathering residents' views on what 'good' looks like. We received valuable feedback from tenants regarding estate standards, which will help shape the new Cleaning Contract. We will continue to engage with residents as we review and introduce new services

Action	Due Date	Status	Update and Impact
Deliver 2025/26 milestones of the Housing Improvement Plan	April 2026	On track	We are continuing to deliver our Housing Improvement Plan, with regular reporting to the Programme Board, the Independent Assurance Panel, the Housing Regulator, Housing Operations Board, and Council. The plan is a live evolving document and has been refreshed and refocused around core areas of work.

**Outcome: Everyone in Guildford borough has a safe place to live**

Revise our homelessness strategy to provide clearer direction on how we are supporting our residents.	April 2026	Complete	The Executive adopted a new Homelessness Strategy for the council in April 2025. This strategy sets out the four key priorities we will focus on to tackle homelessness in Guildford borough. We are working hard to deliver this strategy and support those in Guildford borough who are at risk of, or experiencing, homelessness. How effectively we do this continues to be reported as part of the corporate performance report. In Q1 and Q2 of this year, we supported a total of 151 households successfully through either our prevention or relief duty. User satisfaction with the Number 5 Project continues to be high, with an overall satisfaction rate of 88.9%.
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Action	Due Date	Status	Update and Impact
To support residents experiencing homelessness, we will reconfigure and refurbish the Number 5 Project at York Road, providing an increased number of rooms and better quality of facility for those seeking short-term temporary accommodation. This year we will appoint a design team and develop a planning application, aiming to start work by the end of the year.	Commence construction by March 2026	On track	Following a competitive tender process, we have now appointed WRAP Architects to undertake this work. The project team are working with them to finalise the costings of this project and bring forward the planning application.

**Outcomes: Guildford borough's tenants live in high quality homes; Neighbourhood development across the borough is sustainable and affordable.**

Work with our partner Wates to deliver up to 248 new, high quality and sustainable homes at Guildford Park Road, of which 40% will be owned and managed by the council. This year we will submit a planning application for the scheme.	September 2025	Complete (Delayed)	Having carried out public engagement to help support the development of their proposals, Wates submitted this planning application in November. We anticipate a decision will be made on this application by the end of March 2026.
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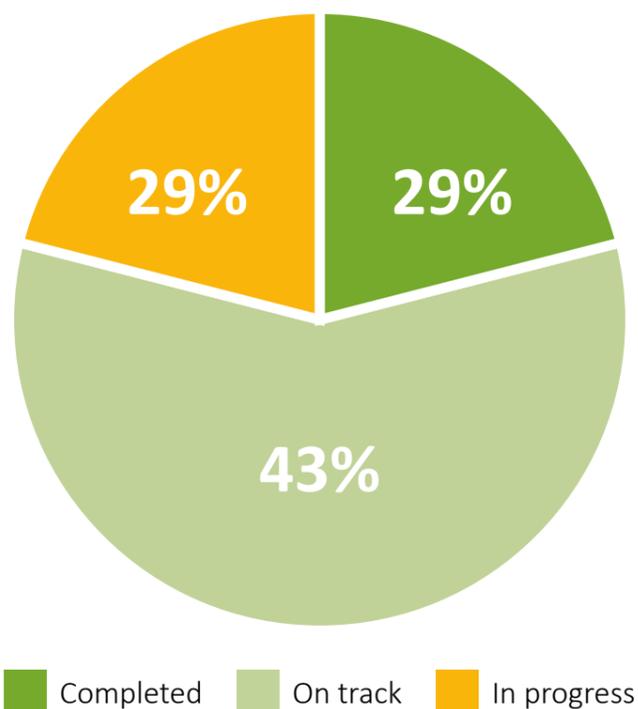


## A resilient and well-managed council

We are committed to strong governance, transparency and being a council that delivers for residents. Over the past year, we've made significant progress on our Corporate Improvement Plan, strengthening controls, improving procurement and embedding better decision-making. This work is monitored by an Independent Assurance Panel to ensure we meet our statutory duty to deliver Best Value.

Looking ahead, we're preparing for the most significant change to local government in Surrey for 50 years. Through Local Government Reorganisation, we've worked with partners to ensure residents' voices shaped proposals, and we'll continue to collaborate to deliver a smooth transition while maintaining high-quality services.

To support the council's priority of being a more resilient and well-managed council, we committed to delivering **8** actions in 2025/26. Of these, **7** actions were to be completed by the end of quarter 2. **2** actions have been completed, **3** are on track to being completed by the due date and **2** are in progress, being delivered but slightly behind the projected deadline.



## Case study: local government reorganisation engagement

Over the summer, the government carried out its statutory consultation on two proposals for local government reorganisation in Surrey. We wanted to ensure that as many residents, businesses, and community groups as possible were aware of the consultation and felt equipped to take part, as this was their only chance to have a say on the most significant changes to local government in Surrey in fifty years.

To support this, we hosted two in-person information sessions - one at the Guildhall and another in Ash- alongside a series of drop-in events across the borough. We also worked closely with Waverley Borough Council to deliver joint webinars for residents, businesses, community groups, and parish councils. At every event, our aim was to make the process as clear and accessible as possible: explaining what was happening, outlining both options under consultation, and giving people the opportunity to ask questions about what is, by nature, a technical subject.

The response was overwhelmingly positive, with strong attendance at events and nearly 6,000 consultation submissions, the highest ever for a government consultation of this kind.



Action	Due Date	Status	Update and Impact
Outcomes: The council makes the right decisions in the right way; Residents feel informed, heard and able to influence what the council does			
Support the development of proposals for Local Government Reorganisation in Surrey and ensure that these proposals best reflect the views of our residents and needs of our communities.	May 2025 - proposal submission	Complete	Working with eight other districts and boroughs, we undertook a robust analysis of the options and opportunities for reorganisation in Surrey. On this basis, we submitted a proposal for three unitary authorities, reflective of Surrey's long recognised three distinct areas. Our decision was informed by the views of residents, who overwhelmingly supported the creation of three new councils over the alternative two-unitary option. In addition, our engagement showed that the public's top priorities for local government were firmly rooted in localism. In addition to this, we actively promoted and publicised the government's LGR consultation, hosting a number of in-person and online events to encourage our residents, businesses and partners to participate and have their say. We also submitted our own response to this consultation. The Secretary of State has now decided to implement the two-unitary proposal for Surrey. These new councils will be vested in April 2027. We will continue to work collaboratively with all councils in Surrey to prepare for this transition.

Action	Due Date	Status	Update and Impact
<b>Outcome: The council makes the right decisions in the right way</b>			
Strengthen our controls and approach to procurement and working with suppliers through a new procurement strategy.	September 2025	Complete	<p>The Corporate Procurement Strategy was adopted by the Executive in April 2025. Its implementation is supported through weekly reporting to senior officers, monthly updates to the Executive, and bi-monthly reporting to the Audit and Risk Committee.</p> <p>To monitor spend against contracts, finance reviews all requisitions over £25k against the contract register and spend data, ensuring they align with Council services and are supported by compliant contracts.</p> <p>Where spend does not match a contract, reporting highlights this to the procurement team for review and, where needed, a procurement exercise is initiated.</p> <p>We have also implemented funds checker which approves budget is available before a requisition is raised of any value.</p>
<b>Outcome: The council has delivered its Corporate Improvement Plan and is consistently and effectively meeting its statutory duty to deliver Best Value</b>			
Work with the Independent Assurance Panel to deliver the Year 2 Actions on Guildford's Improvement Plan.	April 2026	On track	<p>Between April and June, as part of Year 1 of Guildford's Improvement Plan, we met with the Independent Assurance Panel monthly so they could monitor, challenge and advise us on our efforts. The Panel presented their second independent view to Full Council on the our progress on 29 July 2025 where the view was</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Our Corporate Improvement Plan continues to be fit for purpose, and we have good progress with the delivery of the Plan. This is enabling us to plan and deliver improvement more effectively and efficiently.</li> <li>• The risk that we could fail to meet our statutory duty to deliver Best Value has diminished significantly.</li> <li>• We are still facing a range of risks: local government reorganisaton impacts, Weyside Urban Village, and scale of our Housing Improvement.</li> </ul> <p>For Year 2 of the Improvement Plan (July 2025 onwards), we will now formally meet with the Panel quarterly with informal check-ins with Panel members between meetings.</p>
<b>Outcome: The council has achieved financial sustainability and is delivering for those who live, work and do business in Guildford borough</b>			
Continue improving and sustaining our net income contribution from our investment portfolio.	April 2026	On track	<p>To the end of Q2, we have generated an income of just under £11m from our commercial property portfolio, generating income to help support the delivery of our services.</p>

Action	Due Date	Status	Update and Impact
Continue reviewing our portfolio identifying suitable assets in accordance with the objectives of the Assets Disposal Strategy for recommendation to Executive for disposal. By April 2027, we will have generated £30m that will help provide capital receipts and lessen pressure on our budget.	April 2027	On track	<p>In Q1 and Q2 of this year, we have raised £7.98m from capital receipts.</p> <p>To support the delivery of Weyside Urban Village, in July 2025 Full Council agreed that it is possible to revise this target to £20m for 2025/26.</p>
<b>Outcome: The council recruits, rewards, develops, and retains a diverse, skilled and motivated workforce</b>			
Improve our recruitment and retention practices by developing and adopting a new People Strategy.	July 2025	In progress	<p>The People Strategy is currently being developed. However, we have undertaken a range of other actions to improve our recruitment and retention practices.</p> <p>We have developed an Integrated Performance Report. This brings together key HR indicators on topics like recruitment, retention, employee relations cases, and compliance with appraisals and training. This is being reported regularly to senior officers and is being rolled out to support service level managers.</p> <p>We are currently reviewing our end-to-end recruitment practices, and once we have appointed to the Attraction &amp; Resourcing Manager role, we will engage further with the Service Areas and start embedding efficiencies and best practice to our processes across the organisation.</p> <p>In addition, the council will be launching another staff survey to gather feedback from all colleagues in November. By using identical questions to last year, the results will allow for meaningful comparisons, both with other councils and with our own progress as an organisation. We will be using People Insight again to assist us with this and we will be able to benchmark against last year.</p>
<b>Outcome: Guildford borough benefits from its collaboration with Waverley Borough Council</b>			
In readiness for Local Government Reorganisation, we will harmonise services and policies where we it will mean that we can deliver better outcomes for our residents. This year we will harmonise around 60 with Waverley Borough Council to build consistency in advice, guidance and support across both councils.	September 2025	In progress	<p>As LGR approaches, we have continued to prepare for this by deepening our collaboration with Waverley Borough Council. This has seen us create a number of shared services (such as Legal and Information Governance, Governance, People and OD, and Executive Support). Where supported by a business case, further shared services will be created over the coming months.</p> <p>To support this, we launched ten new harmonised HR policies, focusing on those that generate the greatest workload. This includes disciplinary, grievance, and family-friendly policies, which together account for over half of the People and OD team's caseload.</p>

## Guildford Borough Council

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