Bridgend County Borough Council Housing Prospectus

One Council working to together to improve lives

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Glossary of terms

Term	Meaning
Common Housing Register (CHR)	A common register used by four main RSL's operating in Bridgend to allocation social housing. The register is administered by BCBC.
Housing Support Grant (HSG)	The main revenue grant from Welsh Government to fund housing related support services.
Local Development Plan (LDP)	A document which sets out the local planning authorities proposals for future developments of land.
Local Housing Market Assessment (LHMA)	A document which provides an assessment of the local housing market, providing evidence to inform strategic decisions (such as the LDP and Housing Prospectus)
Private Rented Sector Housing	The provision of accommodation by private landlords e.g. an individual or a company
Programme Development Plan (PDP)	A Welsh Government monitoring tool providing information on timescales for the delivery of projects funded by the Social Housing Grant
Registered Social Landlord (RSL)	A not for profit organisation which provides affordable housing for those in need
Social Housing Grant (SHG)	The main capital grant from Welsh Government to fund affordable housing
Supported Housing	Accommodation is provided alongside support to help people live as independently as possible in the community e.g. supported accommodation for those with a Learning Disability
Temporary Accommodation	Accommodation provided by the Local Authority, to homeless households in line with duties set out in the Housing (Wales) Act 2014

1. Introduction

1.1 This Prospectus summarises local housing need, supply and demand in the County Borough of Bridgend. It is intended to provide our housing partners with the information they need to develop affordable housing schemes to meet the needs of Bridgend and ensure that Social Housing Grant (SHG) expenditure supports the delivery of accommodation that meets those needs. This is a snapshot in time and will be updated regularly to reflect any changes in housing need information. It is not meant to replace discussion and should be read together with the Homelessness Strategy, Housing Needs Statement and the Rapid Rehousing Transitional Plan.

1.2 Schemes submitted for SHG approval may be for social rent, intermediate rent or in some instances tenure neutral to meet diverse requirements, including; general needs, older persons, young persons, wheelchair adapted, supported housing and extra care homes. Low cost home ownership schemes will also be considered where appropriate. Plans can be for new build, regeneration or acquisition of properties and a variety of procurement routes ranging from conventional tender, design and build and package deals to off the shelf projects which include modern methods of construction and modular build.

1.3 Schemes will consider the needs of future generations and support the sense of place within communities by offering a balance of property sizes and opportunities with good design and support agendas such as energy efficiency, reducing emissions, low-carbon affordable homes.

1.4 This Prospectus will be used by Welsh Government to ensure that that the Programme Development Plan (PDP) for the use of Social Housing Grant are meeting the needs of Bridgend.

Background

1.5 Bridgend (*Pen-y-Bont ar Ogwr*) County Borough in the south-east of Wales, stretches from the mining valleys of Llynfi, Garw and Ogmore in the north to an extensive coastline in the south. The largest town is Bridgend, followed by Maesteg and the seaside town of Porthcawl. The population has risen rapidly over the last twenty years. The 2021 census shows an increase of 4.5%, from around 139,200 in 2011 to 145,500 in 2021. This is much higher than the overall increase for Wales (1.4%), where the population grew by 44,000 to 3,107,500.

1.6 Across local authorities in Wales Bridgend is the third highest for population growth in Wales and 8th for total population out of 22 local authority areas in Wales, moving up one place in a decade.

1.7 The population has continued to age. Across Wales, more than one in five people (21.3%) were aged 65 years or over on census day in 2021. That is a higher percentage than ever before. This is set to increase to over 1 million by 2030. The population of over 75's in Wales is expected to increase by over 54% by 2035. The Welsh Government's commitments in the Programme for Government, set out in Taking Wales Forward (2016) which sets out the high-level objectives of the government, and Prosperity for All (2017) which sets out specific commitments in relation to the government's objectives, include commitments in relation to older people through both housing and social care themes.

1.8 In Bridgend, there has been an increase of 21.5% in people aged 65 years and over. Since 2020 there have been 697 applications for housing from those aged 65 and over.

2. Strategic housing priorities

2.1 Following intensive stakeholder engagement the following strategic priorities have been developed to support the wider Homelessness Strategy and are supported by the findings of the Statement of Need as well as national and local legislation and Council policy, such as the Replacement Local Development Plan 2018 – 2033 which sets out the Council's priorities of seeking to deliver net zero carbon homes, earmarking valley settlements for sustainable regeneration and ensuring good design and sustainable placemaking to deliver active, healthy and sustainable communities.

2.2 This Prospectus is also cognisant of other strategic objectives such as the Older Persons Strategy 2022 – 27, Empty Property Strategy, Town Centre Masterplan. Bridgend's priorities are to -:

- Increase the supply of suitable accommodation to meet the housing needs of applicants and supports the implementation of a transitional rapid rehousing protocol

- Provide accommodation specifically developed for those with complex needs and which support housing projects funded through Housing Support Grant with bespoke options to respond to the needs of rough sleepers such as Housing First

- Respond to the social housing need of people under the age of 35 to ensure accommodation is affordable to this cohort

- Respond to the social housing needs of an aging population by providing a diverse range of accommodation such as bungalows, level access flats, wheelchair accessible homes etc to allow individuals to remain in their community for as long as possible

- Address the needs of local communities within Valley areas by supporting small pockets of developments to support sustainable regeneration

- Support the sense of place within communities by offering a balance of property sizes and opportunities and good design

3. Housing needs, demands and gaps in provision

3.1 This Section highlights the housing needs and demands evidenced through the common housing register and information in relation to temporary accommodation which is currently utilised to provide accommodation for people who apply for housing assistance as homeless or threatened with homelessness.

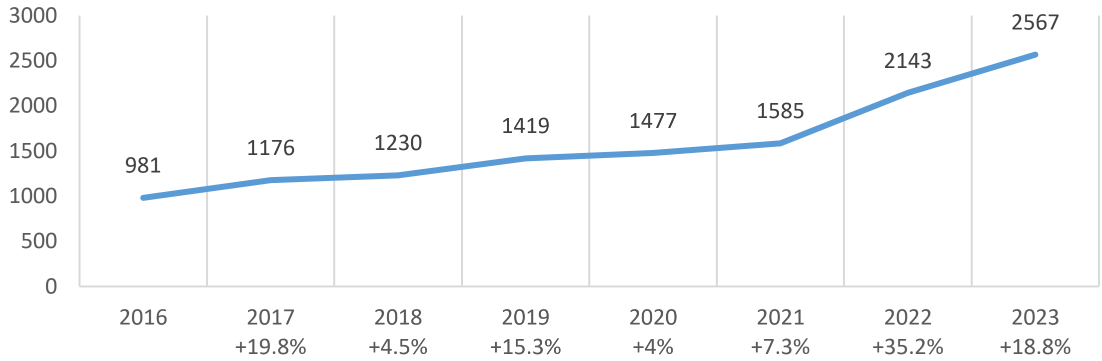
3.2 Also included is information about the supply of private rented sector housing, the change in supply and the external factors that have impacted on supply which is expected to have a direct impact on the current demand for social housing in the future.

3.3 It also highlights gaps in provision and comments on the pipeline demand for social housing by people currently accommodated in temporary accommodation and needing permanent homes.

Bridgend Common Housing Register

3.4 As of July 2023, there are 2,629 households on the Bridgend Common Housing Register. By the end of the year, it is estimated there will be close to 3,000 households on the waiting list for housing. That represents an increase of nearly 40% on last year and 205% since 2016.

Table 1: Evidenced and projected housing demand

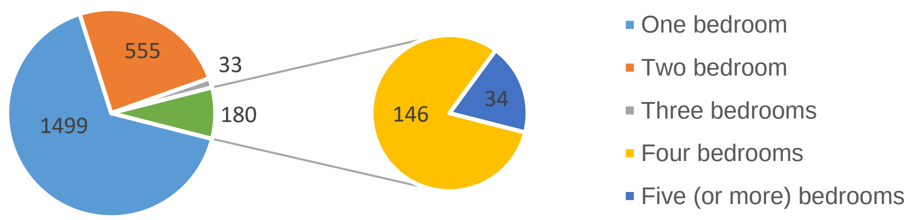


3.5 The majority of identified need is for one-bedroom accommodation. There are increasingly higher instances of single person households and couples with no children. There is a limited supply of sustainable one-bedroom provision in high need areas.

3.6 Single person households account for over half of all applications for housing at 50% in 2020 rising to 58% in 2023. However, there is also a persistent shortfall of larger family homes, caused by the relatively low rate at which these properties turn over.

3.7 There is a corresponding number of families within our temporary accommodation which require family size accommodation represented in the table below. This indicates considerable demand for family type accommodation in addition to 1 bed units.

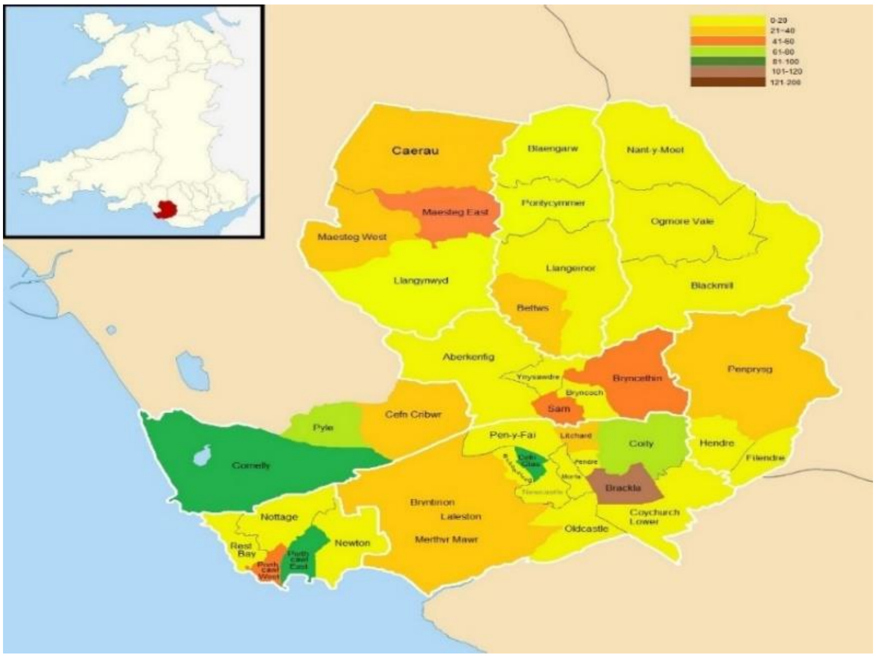
Table 2: Demand for housing by bedroom size



3.8 Within the demand for housing, there is a clear and overwhelming need for smaller accommodation and demand is expected to increase.

4. Local Housing Market Assessment

Diagram 1 : LHMA areas



4.1 The greatest need for social rented accommodation is in the south of the County Borough, where property prices are the highest, demand is greatest and affordability issues are most acute. There are also areas in the south of the County Borough with relatively low levels of existing affordable housing. Whilst the expressed need for additional social housing is lower in scale within the Valleys Housing Market Areas, there is a clear need to diversify the type of accommodation available. The LHMA evidences the need to instil sustainable clusters of smaller one-bedroom properties to counter-balance the mostly larger social rented stock already existing. This is further supported by the aims of the LDP which references earmarking valley settlements for sustainable regeneration

4.2 The LHMA has calculated a total need for 5,134 affordable housing units from 2018-2033, comprising 2,839 social rented dwellings and 2,295 intermediate dwellings.

<u>Table 3: Total housing need by tenure</u>

Housing Market Area	Social Rent need	Intermediate need	Total need
Bridgend and surrounding	947	966	1913
Garw Valley	97	11	108
Llynfi Valley	200	75	275
Ogmore Valley	112	13	125
Pencoed and Heol y Cyw	226	215	441
Porthcawl	747	506	1253
Pyle, Kenfig and Cornelly	357	349	706
Valleys Gateway	151	161	312
Total	2,837	2,296	5,133

Table 4: Demand for general needs housing, by LHMA and bedroom size (where a choice has been expressed)

	1 bedroom	2 bedrooms	3 bedrooms	4 bedrooms	5+ bedrooms	Total
Bridgend	387	211	92	63	20	773
Garw Valley	75	18	16	4	0	113
Llynfi Valley	162	53	23	9	3	250
Ogmore Valley	52	14	0	6	1	73
Pencoed & Heol Y Cyw	47	23	19	7	0	96
Porthcawl	227	66	34	13	4	344
Pyle, Kenfig & Cornelly	107	60	51	10	2	230
Valleys Gateway	92	31	32	9	1	165

Table 5: Demand for accessible housing, by LHMA and bedroom size (where a choice has been expressed)

	1 bedroom	2 bedrooms	3 bedrooms	4 bedrooms	5+ bedrooms	Total
Bridgend	124	72	46	27	13	282
Garw Valley	35	16	9	6	4	70
Llynfi Valley	23	6	6	3	2	40
Ogmore Valley	25	10	1	5	3	44
Pencoed & Heol Y Cyw	29	17	2	6	3	57
Porthcawl	58	42	22	10	5	137
Pyle, Kenfig & Cornelly	45	27	14	9	3	98
Valleys Gateway	46	29	19	11	5	110

5. Temporary accommodation

5.1 At the start of the Covid-19 Pandemic, Welsh Government (WG) introduced an 'All In' approach to homelessness and, as of 24th October 2022, an 11th category of priority need came into force, specifically for a person who is street homeless, because they have no accommodation they are entitled to occupy.

5.2 The pandemic significantly increased demand for and use of temporary accommodation in Bridgend County. The majority were single person households. In 2021 such households made up 62.7 of the overall occupancy. This is an increase of 54.6% since 2016/17. The proportion of households in temporary accommodation has increased by over 10% year-on-year.

Table 6: the number of households in temporary accommodation at the end of the year.

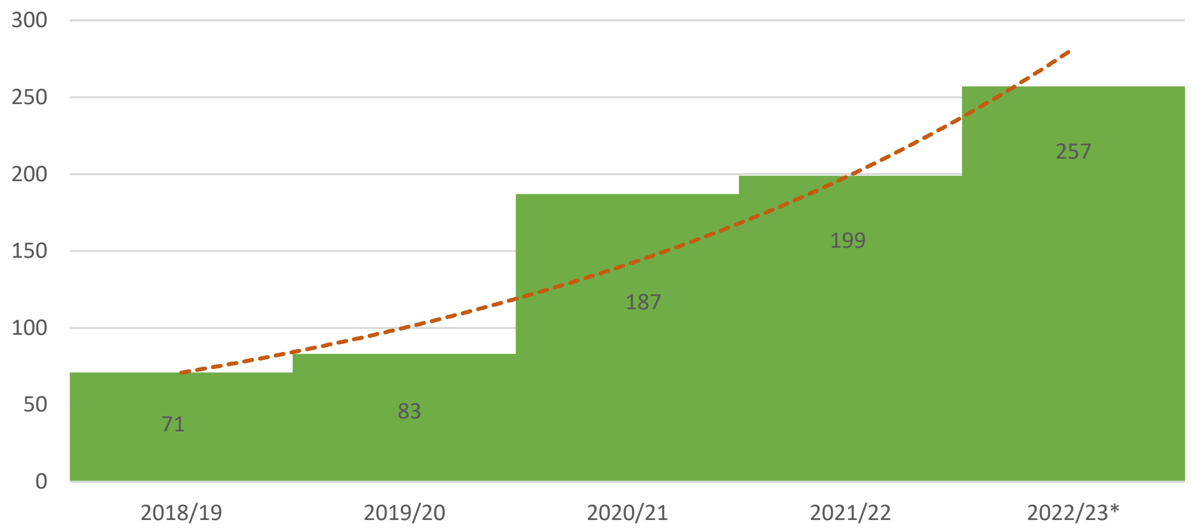
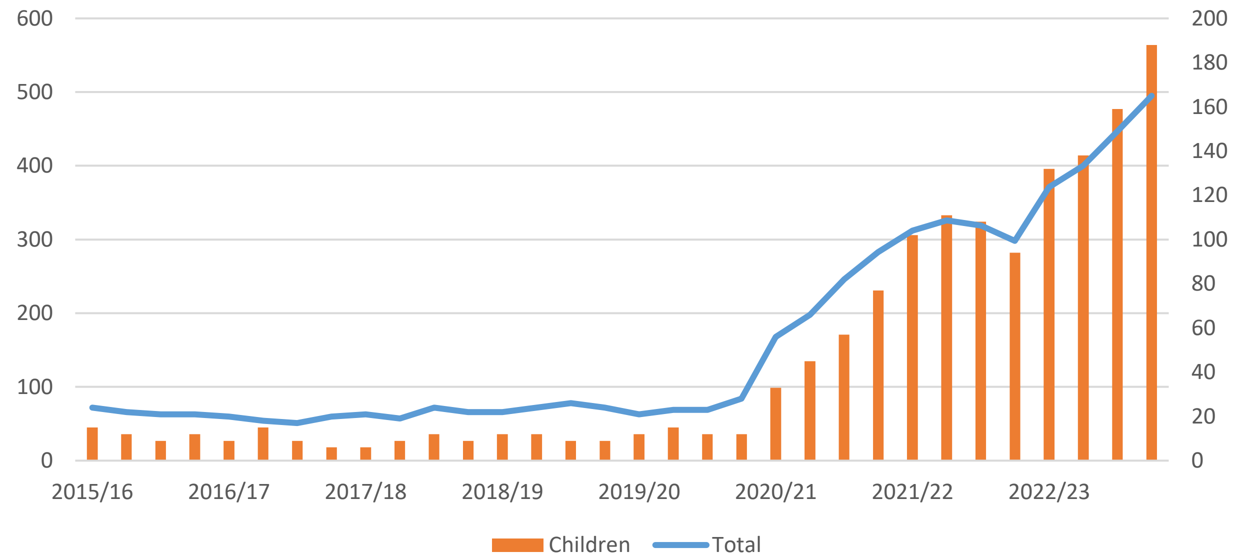


Table 7: The total number of people in temporary accommodation at the end of each quarter. (The axis to the left shows the total number of people; the axis to the right shows the total number of children)



5.3 Within these households, there is a sharp increase in the number of families with children seeking accommodation, from 63 households with 12 children at the end of 2015/16 to 326 households with 111 children by 2021. That is an increase of 417% and 825%, respectively.

5.4 A further surge in demand for social housing during 2020/21 saw an increase from 298 to 495. That represents an increase of 66% in 12 months. As indicated above, the number of families with children also increased.. The current economic circumstances suggest that more families will require social housing support.

5.5 Temporary accommodation includes hotels, B&B, self-contained accommodation, and supported housing and increasingly the use of tourism type of accommodation (e.g., Air BnB) which is costly to provide and unsustainable.

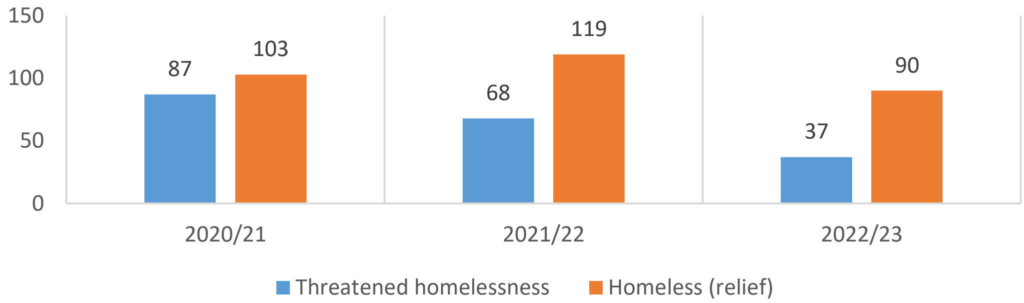
Table 8 The temporary accommodation stock profile as of February 2023.

Type of accommodation	No. units
ABBA (alternative to B&B)	29
Hostels (inc. pods & emergency beds)	45
Leased or other RSL	21
B&B	15
Holidays lets or direct with landlord	95
Hotels (currently in use)	19
Total	**224**

6. Private rented sector

6.1 Since the beginning of 2020, a total of 470 households have been accommodated in the private rented accommodation. The private sector has played a key role in the prevention of homelessness.

Table 9: Private Sector Outcomes



6.2 The contrast between demand and supply remains the most striking theme in the latest residential market survey. This is very clearly reflected in the forward-looking metrics, with both price and rent expectations putting greater pressure on affordability at a time when many households are experiencing economic crisis.

6.3 According to the latest Census,15.3% of Bridgend households rented privately in 2021, up from 12.3% in 2011. The percentage of Bridgend households that owned their home (outright or with a mortgage or loan) decreased from 72.4% to 70.5%.

Table 10 The local housing allowance rates, by bedrooms, for all property types. (Rent averages have been taken from a desktop search of properties available to rent on Zoopla on 04th July 2023 2023)

No. of bedrooms	Average rent	LHA rate	Difference	No. properties
Shared room rate	£487.50	£254.28	-£233.22	2
1 bedroom	£625.00	£388.92	-£236.08	9
2 bedrooms	£728.94	£473.72	-£255.22	20
3 bedrooms	£952.92	£498.64	-£454.28	24
4 bedrooms	£1366.67	£673.14	-£693.53	3
5 bedrooms	None found	£673.14		0

6.4 The search could find no properties available at the Local Housing Allowance rate for any property size. This highlights the significant lack of private properties available at an affordable rate, which increases demand for social housing.

6.5 The disparity in the average rent and Local Housing Allowance rates in the table above is stark. It gives an insight into the challenges low-income households have when trying to find affordable accommodation. These challenges are particularly acute for larger properties with the average rent for both 3 and 4 bedroom properties more than double the Local Housing Allowance rate.

6.6 Based on the monthly standard Universal Credit allowance, a single person aged under 25 would need to top up their rent with nearly ¾ of their eligible amount (74.7%). That would leave individuals £16.73 a week to meet the ordinary necessities of everyday living, such as paying for food and utilities. Similarly, median gross weekly earnings for full-time adults working in Bridgend is £608.00 (April 2021). A single person would need to spend 74% of their earnings on rent.

7. Supported housing and specialist provision

7.1 Supported housing provides crucial help to some of the most vulnerable people in Bridgend. There can be no 'one size fits all' approach, and future provision is expected to respond to individual needs. The table below shows identified support needs (self-identified).

Table 11: Housing Support Needs (self identified)

	2020	2021	2022*
Education, training, or employment	19	17	4
Alcohol dependency	52	54	21
Harassment	4	12	8
Domestic abuse	82	131	63
Sexual abuse or exploitation	7	8	7
Care leaver aged 18 – 20	12	19	18
Care leaver aged 21 or over	8	18	15
Drug dependency	65	73	41
Former asylum seeker		1	
Mental health	187	325	167
History of repeat homelessness	53	51	10
History of rough sleeping	6	20	6
Learning disability	28	18	28
Criminal offending	78	107	56
Old age	11	13	7
Physical ill health or disability	80	146	106
Former HM Forces	4	8	1
Young parent	10	11	10
Aged 16 or 17	20	22	26
Aged 18 – 25 with support needs	61	80	50

7.2 Additionally, 103 applicants have indicated they wish to live in sheltered accommodation. The age of people seeking to live in sheltered accommodation ranged from 53 to 92 with the median age being 75. Health rather than age, is the driving factor for people seeking a move into sheltered accommodation. An additional 86 people aged 60 or over were seeking rehousing but not solely in a sheltered scheme. None require a larger property.

7.3 Move-on accommodation for people currently receiving specialist support is a key priority.

7.4 HSG provides the necessary funding for schemes that provide accommodation schemes such as "Alternatives to Bed and Breakfast" (ABBA), Housing First, Start (Prisoner support). Alongside the provision of housing schemes, HSG supports regional working e.g., a joint scheme funded with Health for Mental and Substance Misuse Support. A regional project for an additional refuge type property with an RSL has also attracted additional funding.

8. Current housing stock

8.1 There are eight housing associations operating in the County Borough: Coastal Housing, First Choice, Hafod, Linc Cymru, POBL, United Welsh, V2C, and Wales & West. The County Borough has an allocations partnership with four of those - Wales & West, Hafod, Linc-Cymru and V2C - to maintain a common housing allocations policy.

8.2 As of 31 March 2020, there were an estimated 64,789 dwellings in the County Borough. Approximately 63% of these were owner occupied, 12.6% privately rented and 13.7% owned by a housing association. The private rented sector has decreased by 1.4% from 8,300 to 8,179. There are 9,385 social housing properties in the County Borough. This includes 1,497 one-bedroom flats.

Table 10: Current social housing stock

	1 bed	2 bed	3 bed	4 bed	5+ bed	Total
General needs	1,498	3,399	3,246	134	6	8,283
Supported housing (inc. sheltered)	212	197	143	9		561
Other supported housing	100	136	55			291
Extra care	49	31	4			84
Intermediate rent	48	139				187
Shared ownership	4	15				19
Market rent		1				1
Total	1,911	3,918	3,448	143	6	9,426

Table 11: current social housing stock, by landlord.

Provider	Total
Coastal	38
Hafan Cymru	5
First Choice Housing Association	50
Hafod Housing Association	1,323
Linc Cymru	562
Newydd Housing Association	1
United Welsh Housing Association	96
Valleys to Coast Housing	5,952
Wales and West Housing	1,397
POBL group	1
Total	**9,425**

8.3 In 2020/21 a total of 268 additional housing units were delivered. The majority (59.3%) were larger properties. Only 17 (6.3%) were one-bedroom properties.

	One bedroom	Two bedrooms	Three bedrooms	Four+ bedrooms
Houses	4	40	126	22
Flats	13	52	11	0

8.4 There are 84 units of extra care housing and assisted living at Llys Ton in Kenfig Hill, Ty Llwynderw in Maesteg and Ty Ynysawdre in Tondu.

8.5 Since 2015, the County Borough has procured three specialist supported living services for people with learning disabilities, based in Clos Penglyn, Condors Rest and Viesther.

8.6 In addition to the three specialist services, the County Borough has procured several more generic supported living schemes across the borough for individuals with a learning disability.

9. Programme development grant schemes

9.1 Schemes are developed in partnership between the Council and developing RSLs. Early conversations are encouraged with the housing team and Welsh Government and the developing RSL. This allows all parties to determine housing need information within the location alongside any specific or bespoke requirements for accessible or larger houses to be discussed.

9.2 RSLs are further encouraged to have discussions with the Council regarding available land opportunities and follow up pre application enquiries with the planning department. Schemes are expected to demonstrate a suitable mix of type, tenures and rent levels for the area. To achieve mixed communities, or to address an urgent, or unforeseen need for specific or specialist accommodation, a flexible approach will be taken to development proposals.

9.3 RSLs are encouraged to identify at an early stage 'potential' schemes which may be some way from the stage that they can secure the required approvals or permissions but are pipeline schemes that may be brought into the main programme and ensure a range of options for the future.

9.4 Registered Social Landlord developers are encouraged to speak with the Council at an early stage, to discuss any proposed developments for inclusion in the Programme Development Plan.

9.5 Schemes are prioritised by means of an informal assessment across the following criteria –

a) Waiting list demand/needs;
b) Deliverability;
c) Planning position;
d) Council/WG strategies and priorities e.g., regeneration;
e) Consideration of accessibility to transport/schools;
f) Timescale ; and
g) Community fit

9.6 Ad hoc requests for specific and specialist accommodation are discussed with the RSLs and any opportunities will be included in the PDP as potential until such time they can be brought into the main programme.

9.7 Needs for specialist provision has been highlighted and will be supported through the Homelessness Strategy. Other ad hoc opportunities are discussed on a case-by-case basis.

10. Monitoring and governance

10.1 The PDP will be monitored during quarterly meetings with all developing RSLs and Welsh Government, in addition to the individual meetings that take place separately with each RSL.

10.2 The Bridgend Housing Strategic Partnership discusses key regeneration plans and opportunities. All the RSLs who are party to the common housing register have access to Bridgend's on-line housing needs case management system, to enable them to interrogate housing area waiting lists when planning schemes.

For those not part of the register, information is provided on a scheme by scheme basis.

10.3 For large schemes specific meetings will be held with key Council departments to share information. A specific Project Board will be established to oversee its development.

10.4 Internal discussions take place with Corporate Landlord and Planning supported by the Local development Plan (LDP), Local housing market assessment (LHMA), Gypsy and Traveller assessment and Social Services in relation to specialist provision. Discussions take place with RSLs on the Town Centre Masterplan and individual discussions undertaken with RSLs on particular key potential schemes.

10.5 A new internal Performance Indicator has been established to determine the number of new units of accommodation that become available to the Council during each financial year for nomination rights.

10.6 Quarterly Bridgend Housing Partnership Strategic meeting with membership comprising CEX and officers of all developing RSLs, Cabinet Member, Chief Officers from Regeneration and Social Services and officers from planning and Corporate Landlord.

10.7 A regional perspective is expected to be enhanced by the recently established Health and Housing Working Together Group.