

Delivering a difference to disabled residents

Disabled facilities grants year one review

1 April 2023 – 31 March 2024



Lichfield
District Council

LWMTS
Lichfield West Midlands Traded Services Limited
stronger together

What is a disabled facilities grant (DFG)?

A grant for people with a permanent disability of any sort including physical, sensory, and mental illnesses.

The funding comes from the Better Care Fund via Staffordshire County Council and is a 'ring-fenced' capital allocation.

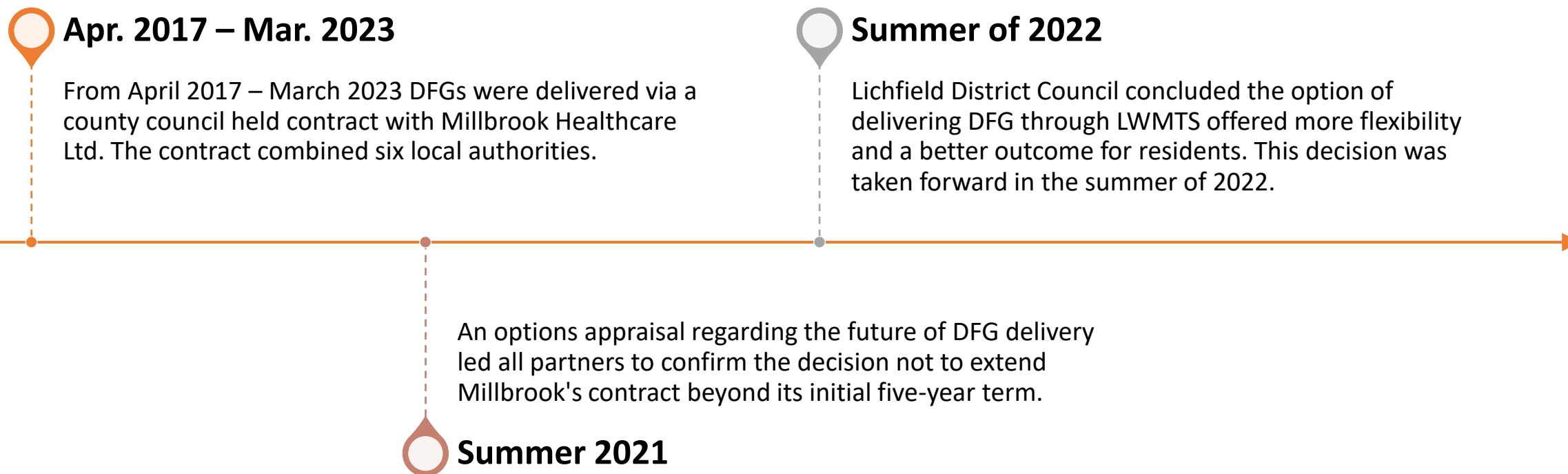
DFGs enable adaptations to be completed in the home that helps residents to live more independently or to enhance the care they receive from others.

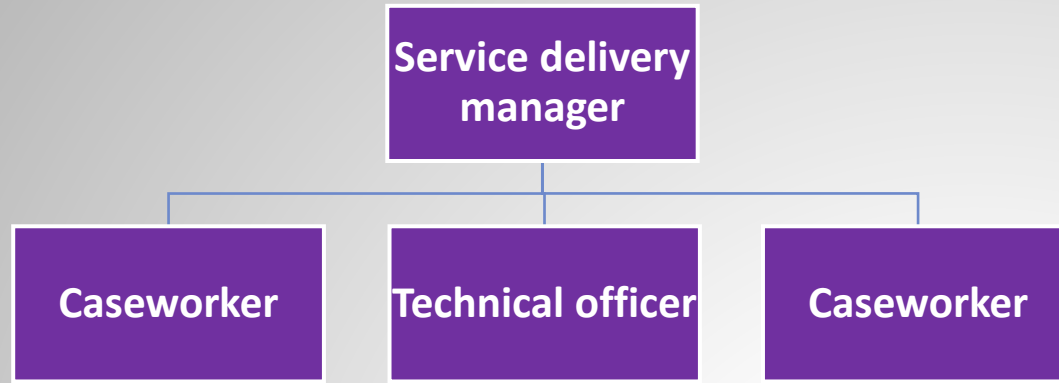
Common types of adaptations include: level access shower (wet room), stairlifts, hoists, ramps, reconfigurations and even as far as full extensions.

The funding available is per applicant is up to £30,000.

DFGs are means tested (for adults) and available to owner occupiers and tenants.

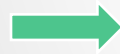
Background to delivery across the district





Within six weeks the following was in place:

- operational and fully configured IT set up.
- framework (held by SBC) for OT needs assessments
- framework for all 'equipment' adaptations such as hoists and all forms of lifts
- compliant procurement route for all building works
- contracts for residents to use for all building works.
- landlord application process with Bromford which aligns with the best practice guidance.

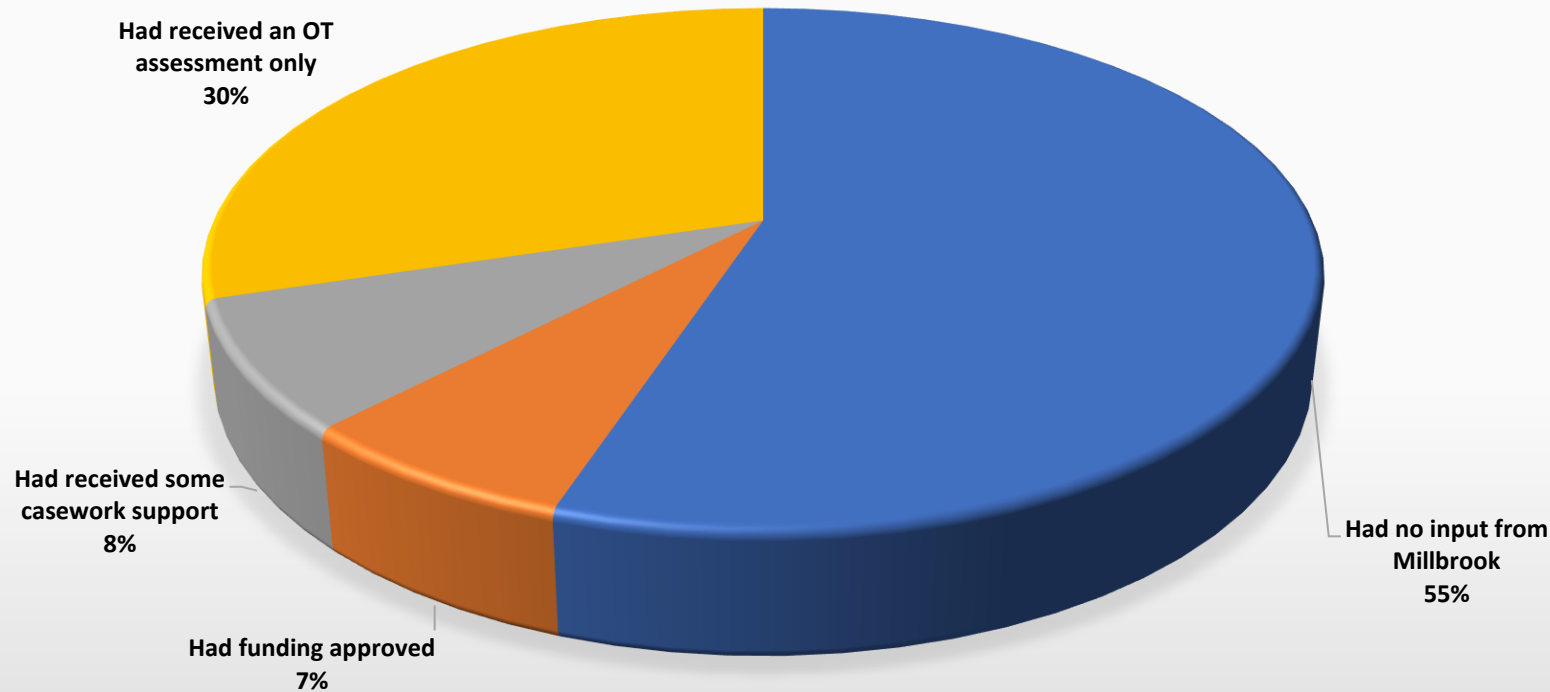


Whilst the foundations of the set up were being laid there was also the need to introduce the service to those clients transferred, this was done by:

- Contacting all residents – completed within eight weeks of service transfer
- An analysis of each case.
- Prioritisation of all cases in line with the new policy (where appropriate)
- Communicated the new process to all Bromford clients.

Service set-up

225 cases were transferred at an approximate value of £2m

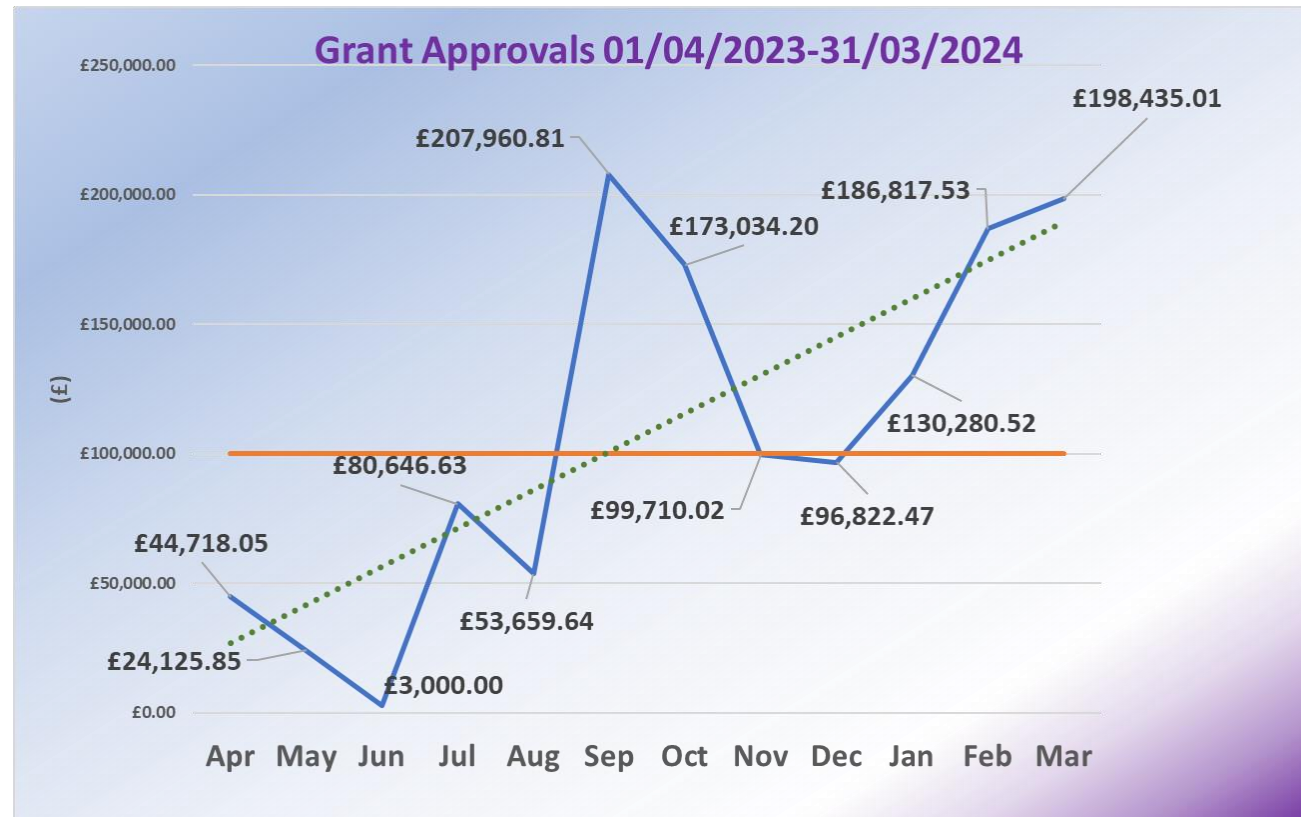


Caseload at service transfer

- Very few cases were ready for works to be completed.
- All cases required significant up front work before DFG funding could be spent.
- As such, LWMTS performance will not demonstrate spend delivery in year one, as the success has been in approving works and progressing cases through to grant application and approval.

Service delivery grant approvals

Year one was focussed on case progression, rather than completion.
The best measure to display is through the value and number of cases progressed to the **grant approved status**.



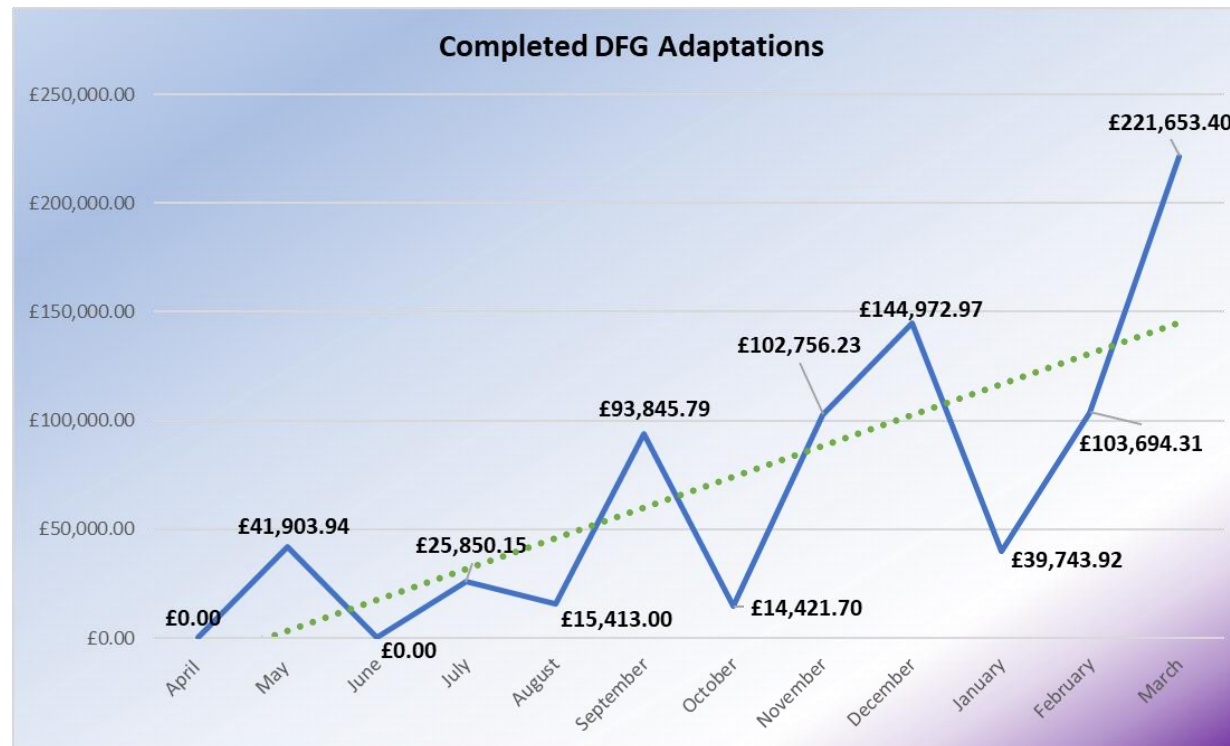
Total grant approvals
since transfer

£1,299,210.73

**148 property
adaptations**

Service delivery adaptation completions

Completions are now our focus, now the service is established.

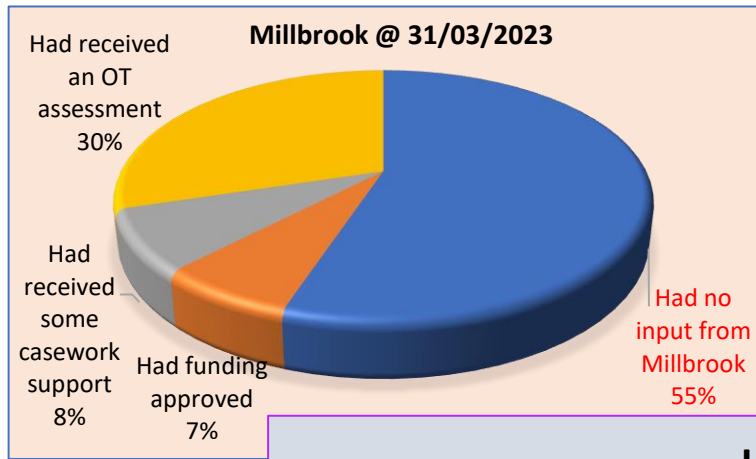


Total adaptations completed

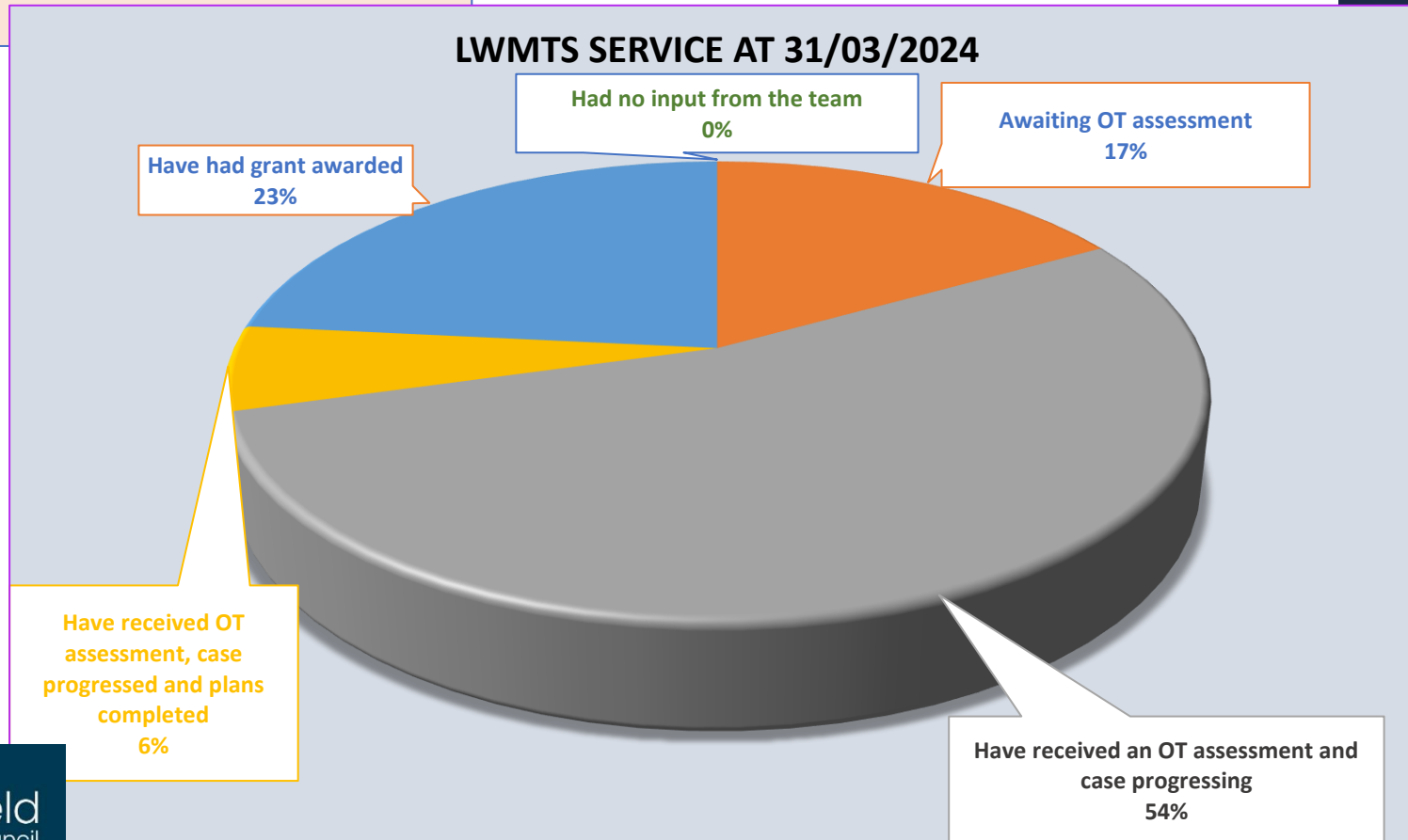
£804,255.41

105 property adaptations

Moving forwards we are aiming to achieve between £100 - £150k completions per month.



Customer service has been at the forefront of this project, as clients are referred in we can now say they're actioned immediately with updates to confirm what to expect next and timescales where possible. The comparison shows not only this service but also how evenly spread our caseload is which aims to avoid bottlenecks seen in previous years.



Service comparison

Due to the nature of the work we do and the impact on health without these adaptations, its also important to look at timescales and how this compares to the previous service.

The comparison is based on Millbrook’s best performing year vs. referrals received into LWMTS from April 2023 and therefore cases which have been in our direct control.

Referral to Grant Approval			
	Millbrook 2021-2022	LWMTS 2023-2024	Improvement %
Working Days	184.5	112.6	↑63.9%
Weeks	26.4	16.1	

Referral to Completion			
	Millbrook 2021-2022	LWMTS 2023-2024	Improvement %
Working Days	237.9	160.6	↑48.1%
Weeks	34.0	22.9	

Service timescales

Our approach

A more 'person centred' approach

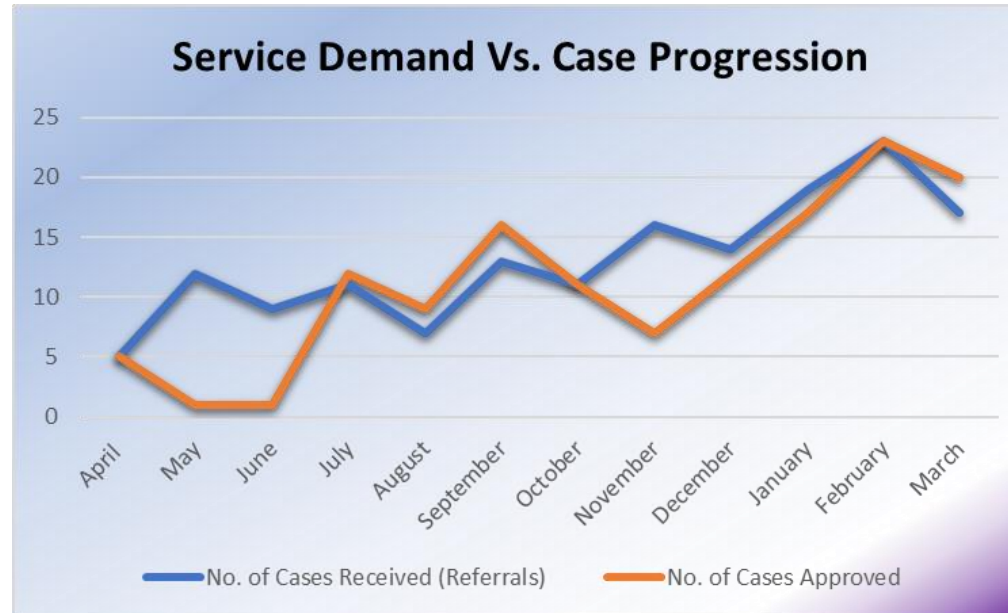
Listening to the individual needs to residents whilst remaining within the limits of what DFG can fund

A quicker and more responsive approach to case management

The team taking responsibility for cases and 'managing' them with clear and effective communication throughout

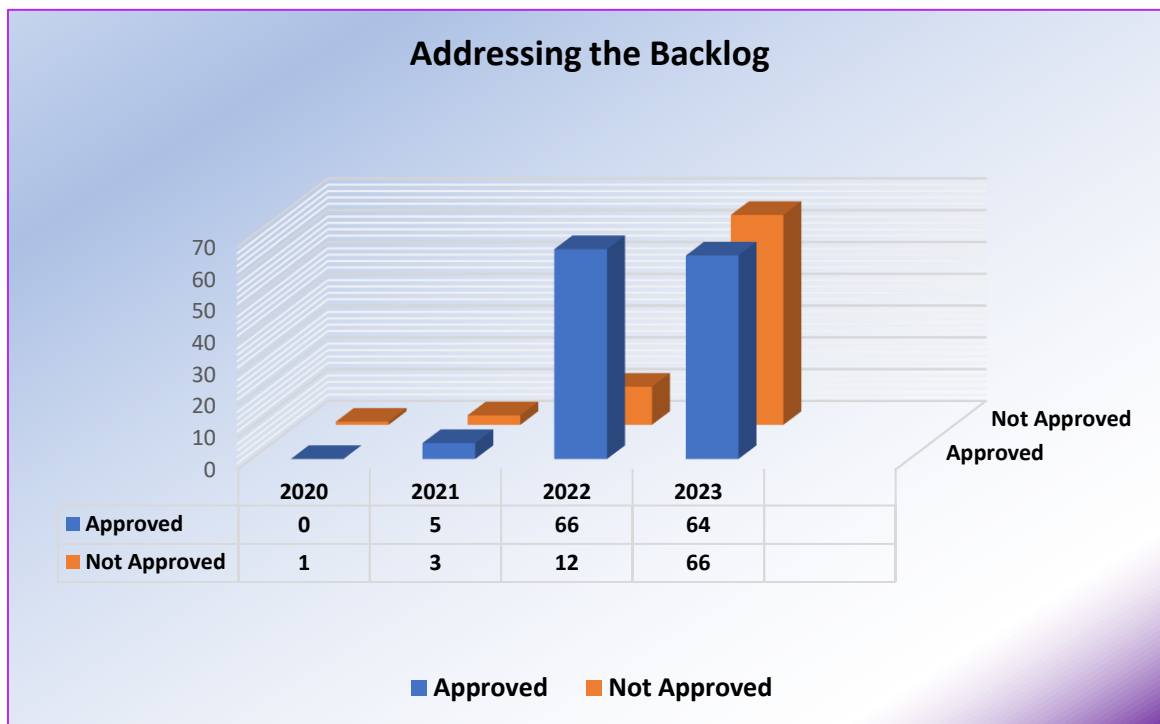
Partnership working with Bromford to deliver effective adaptations for tenants, whilst also looking at 'best use of stock' considerations

Service demands

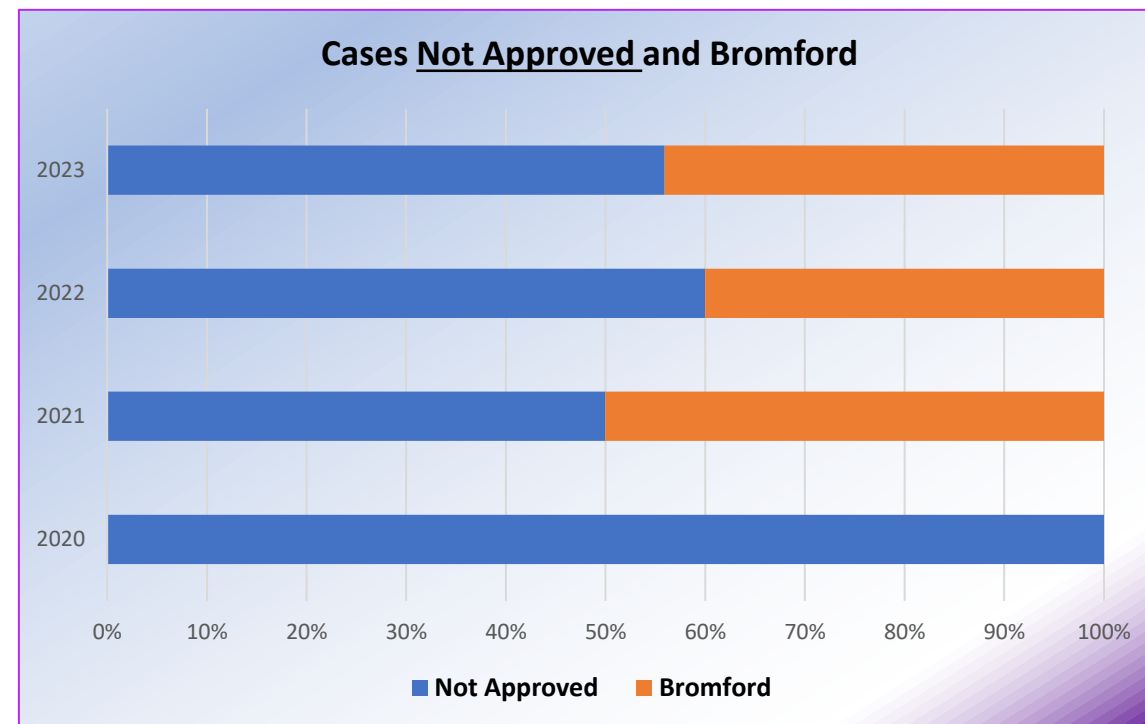


The referrals are coming in at a rate of approximately 11.5 per month and in February and March this year, the team matched demand to ensure a back log is not created moving forwards. The team will aim to continue to maintain this.

Addressing the backlog



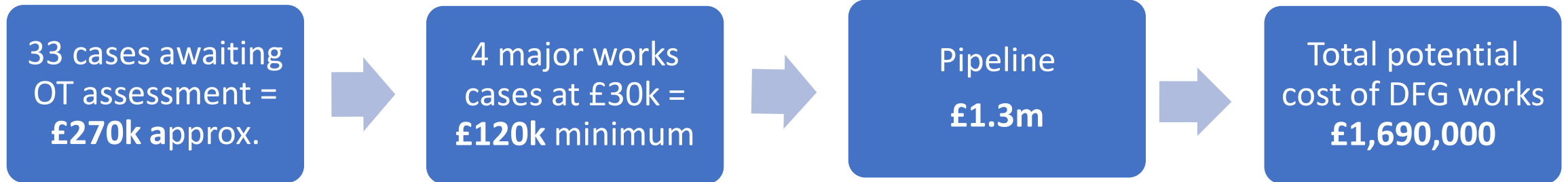
The above confirms we're targeting cases within the backlog and in date order. Our oldest cases (2021) are all nearing completion and delivery has taken longer due to the complexity of the adaptations.



Some cases are managed by Bromford. With the gains made last year we're now more focussed on supporting Bromford and are actively taking back some cases to have a greater impact on their backlog.

Budget implications

DFG adaptations budget **£1,353,793.00**



We will see an uplift in approval and completion values in 2024/2025 and the total funding will be committed, however may not be fully spent due to the nature of the DFG process. It is anticipated that approvals and completions will continue to increase into 2025/2026 as the service becomes more established and demand levels are maintained.

What's gone well and not so well



- Swift service set up.
- Positive shift into service delivery.
- Realised the vision of taking the service in house.
- Full compliment of staff focussed on delivery.
- Can evidence we've almost fully addressed the backlog and now seek to support Bromford to do the same.
- We've developed our own DFG framework to offer other councils assistance.



- Recruitment for the final caseworker role was challenging which impacted progression, but is now resolved.
- The departure of our technical officer slowed momentum, but has been addressed.
- Our essential use of the searchlight system was put at risk by a member of staff who as a result is no longer with us.
- The DPS system for procuring contractors has led to some delays and frustrations.
- An acute customer complaint has arisen relating to the way a contractor commissioned to do the works operated/behaved. The complaint has been resolved and new measures are now in place to prevent it happening again.

Looking ahead and opportunities

- With a full compliment of staff the team are in a position to at least achieve £100,000 worth of grant approvals and matched by a further £100,000 of case completions.
- The new framework due to be rolled out in early 2024/2025 will further improve timescales and relations with contractors. The framework will also set an example of how smooth this element of the process can be completed which will encourage other LA's to use the service essentially generating additional revenue for the LWM and ultimately LDC.
- We have started to look at further funding opportunities such as charities in readiness for year three, when we anticipate the DFG budget could be fully spent.
- With much of the reactive work completed from the service transfer we can further focus on our clients and take a more holistic approach to their needs and start to work with other services for other support needs.
- Bromford are keen for us to support them and we will do this in 2024/2025 & 2025/2026 as an additional service.

Any questions?

