

Date: 20 January 2021

Dear Councillor,

### **Housing and Community Services Committee**

A Meeting of the **Housing and Community Services Committee** will be a **Virtual Committee**, held via Microsoft Teams on **Thursday, 28 January 2021 at 18:00**. You are requested to attend.

Yours faithfully,



Chief Executive

To:- **Labour Group**

Councillor Rhind (Chairman), Councillor Mulgrew (Vice-Chairman) and Councillors Mrs. Heath, Pegg, Richards and Shepherd.

**Conservative Group**

Councillors Atkin, Churchill, Corbin and Mrs. Haines.

**Independent Group**

Councillors Dawson and Roberts

## **AGENDA**

### **Open to Public and Press**

- 1** Apologies and to note any Substitutes appointed for the Meeting.
- 2** To receive the Open Minutes of the following Meetings:  
  
20th August 2020 **4 - 8**  
  
1st October 2020 **9 - 11**  
  
19th November 2020 **12 - 17**
- 3** To note any declarations of interest arising from any items on the Agenda
- 4** To receive any questions by members of the public pursuant to Council Procedure Rule No.10.
- 5** To receive any questions by Members of the Council pursuant to Council procedure Rule No. 11.
- 6** GREEN HOMES GRANT – LOCAL AUTHORITY DELIVERY PHASE 1B **18 - 27**
- 7** DERBYSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY **28 - 46**  
CONTRACT OPTIONS
- 8** SOCIAL HOUSING WHITE PAPER **47 - 129**
- 9** HOMELESSNESS AND ROUGH SLEEPING STRATEGY **130 - 201**
- 10** HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT BUDGET, FINANCIAL PLAN and **202 - 220**  
PROPOSED RENT 2021-22
- 11** COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME **221 - 226**

### **Exclusion of the Public and Press:**

- 12** The Chairman may therefore move:-
- That in accordance with Section 100 (A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended) the press and public be excluded from the remainder of the Meeting as it is likely, in view of the nature of the business to be transacted or the nature of the proceedings, that there would be disclosed exempt information as defined in the paragraph of Part I of the Schedule 12A of the Act indicated in the header to each report on the Agenda.
- 13** To receive the Exempt Minutes of the following Meetings:
- 20th August 2020
- 1st October 2020
- 19th November 2020
- 14** To receive any Exempt questions by Members of the Council pursuant to Council procedure Rule No. 11.

HOUSING AND COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE

20<sup>th</sup> August 2020

**PRESENT:-**

**Conservative Group**

Councillor Pegg (Vice-Chairman) and Councillors Atkin, Corbin, Churchill, Mrs Haines, Mrs Patten, Dr Perry and Mrs Wheelton

**Labour Group**

Councillors Mrs Heath, Mulgrew, Rhind, Richards, and Shepherd

HCS/14 **APOLOGIES**

The Committee was informed that no apologies had been received.

HCS/15 **MINUTES**

That the open minutes of the Committees held 30<sup>th</sup> January 2020 and 12<sup>th</sup> March 2020 were noted and approved as a true record:

**RESOLVED:-**

*That the open minutes of the following Committees were approved as a true record:*

<b><u>Committee</u></b>	<b><u>Date</u></b>	<b><u>Minutes No's</u></b>
Housing and Community Services Committee	30.01.20	HCS/70 – HCS/82
Housing and Community Services Committee	12.03.20	HCS/86 – HCS/93

HCS/16 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Councillor Shepherd declared an interest in HCS/23 Community and Environment Partnership Scheme by virtue of being a trustee of the Citizen's Advice Bureau and would abstain from voting.

HCS/17 **QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC PURSUANT TO COUNCIL PROCEDURE RULE NO 10**

The Committee was informed that no questions from members of the public had been received.

HCS/18 **QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF COUNCIL PURSUANT TO COUNCIL PROCEDURE RULE NO 11**

The Committee was informed that no questions from Members of the Council had been received.

**MATTERS DELEGATED TO COMMITTEE****HCS/19 HOUSING ASSET MANAGEMENT STRATEGY**

The Head of Housing presented report to the Committee highlighting the recommendations and asked Members to note the Asset Management Action Plan updates.

The Committee raised questions regarding repair calls, service slippage due to Covid-19, an update on consultancy and information for residents regarding damp problems. The Head of Housing clarified that 14,000 individual calls had been received in relation to 9,000 repair incidents. The Head of Housing informed Members during the Covid-19 pandemic emergency and urgent repair services continued to be delivered and advised that an appraisal framework was to be developed to in relation to consultancy requirements.

The Head of Housing explained that the content and distribution of the video on the Council's website would be reviewed regarding the advice for the prevention of damp problems and added that staff would receive refresher training through the Personal Development Review (PDR) process. The Strategic Director (Service Delivery) added that public engagement would be a future agenda item for the Committee to consider.

**RESOLVED:-**

- 1.1 *The Committee noted the updated Asset Management Strategy Action Plan.***
- 1.2 *The Committee agreed that a comprehensive review of the Asset Management Strategy be completed before the end of 2022 in conjunction with a review of the overarching Housing Strategy.***
- 1.3 *The Committee approved the procurement of an external consultancy to carry out a comprehensive options appraisal of an existing site (Smallthorn Place Woodville) and to identify possible delivery options for refurbishment, redevelopment, or disposal of the site.***
- 1.4 *The Committee agreed for a report to be brought to the Committee outlining future delivery options for new homes in the District, including the possibility of providing further "in house" development.***

**HCS/20 CONTRIBUTION TO ACTIVE DERBYSHIRE**

The Head of Cultural and Community Services presented the report highlighting the latest projects and the requested a contribution of £12,500 from the Council towards funding.

Members questioned how Active Derbyshire would be applied in the virtual world and what other forms of information were available to residents. The

Head of Cultural and Community Services clarified that work with schools would continue with exercise programmes being developed along with new programmes for higher risk residents due to Covid-19 and that the Team was actively looking at other venues, such as schools, that could provide meeting places for smaller groups and that work was underway with Active Derbyshire to provide alternatives to internet-based information.

**RESOLVED:-**

- 1.1 The Committee approved a financial contribution to Active Derbyshire for 2020/21 of £12,191 for the delivery of outcomes set out in a Service Level Agreement with the Council in Appendix 1 of the report.**
- 1.2 The Committee agreed that delegated authority be given to the Strategic Director, Service Delivery, in consultation with the Chairman of the Committee to sign any separate agreements necessary to ensure the delivery of the projects set out in the Service Level Agreement.**

HCS/21 **NATIONAL FOREST SERVICE LEVEL AGREEMENTS**

The Head of Cultural and Community Services presented the report and outlined the key deliverables for 2020-21 headlining the contributions of £11,000 for Get Active in the Forest and £8,600 for the Environment Education Service.

The Committee welcomed the report and thanked the National Forest and Rolls-Royce in their support of this scheme.

Members raised questions about the promotion of the National Forest scheme and whether the National Forest boundaries could be extended further into South Derbyshire. The Head of Cultural and Community Services informed the Committee of the online National Forest promotion and newsletters issued locally to community groups and Parish Councils and explained that boundaries could possibly be reviewed with the support from the National Forest.

**RESOLVED:-**

***The Committee agreed to the Council entering into the Service Level Agreements with the National Forest Company for the Get Active in the Forest Service as per Appendix 1 and the Environmental Education Project Service, as per Appendix 2 of the report, up to the 31<sup>st</sup> March 2021.***

HCS/22 **ENGLAND TREE STRATEGY CONSULTATION**

The Head of Cultural and Community Services presented the report advising the Committee of the Strategy's key aims of protecting, restoring and expanding tree coverage in England.

Members showed support for the report and raised queries regarding the felling of trees in the District and strengthening the consultation responses. The Head of Cultural and Community Services advised the Committee that replacement trees were not always of the same species but would be selected based on suitability of the location and ongoing management. The Head of Cultural and Community Services confirmed that the consultation responses would be updated to address the greater priority and economic benefits to existing communities.

**RESOLVED:-**

***The Committee approved the amendment to the wording of 3.12 of the Report, which would strengthen the report and give greater parity both economically and ecologically.***

***The Committee:***

- 1.1 Noted the content of the consultation on the England Tree Strategy.***
- 1.2 Approved the response outlined in this report and authorised its submission to DEFRA.***

HCS/23 **COMMUNITY AND ENVIRONMENTAL PARTNERSHIP SCHEME**

The Community Partnership Officer presented the report and advised the Committee that six applications had been received, five of which had been recommended for approval.

**RESOLVED:-**

***The Committee accepted the recommendations of the Community and Environmental Partnership Scheme Assessment Panel, to award grants as detailed in section 4.13 of the report.***

HCS/24 **COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME**

The Strategic Director (Service Delivery) presented the Committee Work Programme advising Members that the draft Allocations Policy would be brought back to a future Committee for ratification.

**RESOLVED:-**

***That the Committee considered and approved the updated work programme.***

HCS/25 **LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972 (AS AMENDED BY THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT [ACCESS TO INFORMATION] ACT 1985)**

**RESOLVED:-**

*That, in accordance with Section 100(A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended), the press and public be excluded from the remainder of the Meeting as it is likely, in view of the nature of the business to be transacted or the nature of the proceedings, that there would be disclosed exempt information as defined in the paragraphs of Part 1 of the Schedule 12A of the Act indicated in brackets after each item.*

**TO RECEIVE THE EXEMPT MINUTES**

**RESOLVED:-**

*That the exempt minutes of the following Committees were approved as a true record:*

*Housing and Community Services Committee 30<sup>th</sup> January 2020.*

**TO RECEIVE QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL PURSUANT TO COUNCIL PROCEDURE RULE NO. 11**

*The Committee was informed that no questions had been received.*

**ACQUISITION OF NEW COUNCIL HOUSING AT ACRESFORD ROAD, OVERSEAL**

*The Committee approved the recommendation in the report.*

**REVIEW OF HOUSING SERVICE**

*The Committee approved the recommendation in the report.*

The Meeting terminated at 8:40 pm.

COUNCILLOR D PEGG

CHAIRMAN

HOUSING AND COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE

1<sup>st</sup> October 2020

**PRESENT:-**

**Conservative Group**

Councillor Corbin (Vice Chairman) and Councillors Atkin, Churchill, Ford (substitute for Cllr Pegg) Mrs Haines, Mrs Patten, and Mrs Wheelton (substituting for Councillor Dawson).

**Labour Group**

Councillors Mulgrew, Rhind, Richards, Shepherd and Tilley (substituting for Cllr Mrs Heath).

HCS/30 **APOLOGIES**

The Committee was informed that apologies had been received from Councillors Pegg (Chairman), Dawson and Mrs Heath

HCS/31 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

The Committee was informed that no Declarations of Interest had been received from Members.

HCS/32 **QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC PURSUANT TO COUNCIL PROCEDURE RULE NO 10**

The Committee was informed that no questions from members of the public had been received.

HCS/33 **QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF COUNCIL PURSUANT TO COUNCIL PROCEDURE RULE NO 11**

The Committee was informed that no questions from Members of the Council had been received.

**MATTERS DELEGATED TO COMMITTEE**

HCS/34 **CORPORATE PLAN 2020-24 PERFORMANCE REPORT QUARTER 1 – 1 APRIL TO 30 JUNE**

The Head of Organisational Development and Performance presented the report to the Committee, providing an overview of the seven key performance indicators and noted that there had been no changes to the Risk Register and that all actions had been updated.

**RESOLVED:-**

***The Committee considered progress against performance targets set out in the Corporate Plan 2020 – 2024.***

HCS/35 **HOMEFINDER, HOUSING ALLOCATIONS POLICY**

The Head of Housing presented the report to the Committee informing Members that the report had been thoroughly checked by the legal team.

Councillor Richards raised a query regarding the Introductory Tenancy and length of time regarding notices served seeking possession. The Housing Services Manager clarified that tenants must be served a valid notice, for a 12 month period and confirmed it was a lengthy process stipulated by law.

**RESOLVED:-**

***The Committee approved the revised Homefinder Housing Allocations Policy for implementation with effect from 1<sup>st</sup> December 2020.***

HCS/36 **HOUSING CUSTOMER ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY**

The Head of Housing presented the report to the Committee informing Members that the 2017-20 strategy had been reviewed and that the key area of focus was to improve communication and dialogue with tenants.

Members questioned regarding access to the internet for tenants who were advised the by the Head of Housing that funding may be available to improve communications in some areas otherwise written notices would be issued.

**RESOLVED:-**

- 1.1** ***The Committee approved the Housing Customer Engagement Strategy Action Plan for further consultation with Housing Customers.***
- 1.2** ***The Committee noted the progress against the Community Engagement Strategy 2017-2020.***

HCS/37 **ROUNABOUT SPONSORSHIP**

The Head of Cultural and Community Services presented the report to the Committee informing Members that 23 roundabouts in the District had been identified as being suitable for sponsorship and that the key benefits would be visual improvement providing bio-diversity through use of a wildflower theme and the promotion of local businesses.

Members asked if parks could be included in the scheme and if the report would be shared with Parish Councils. The Head of Cultural Community Services informed the Committee that parks could possibly be considered for

a second phase of the scheme and that ensuring the scheme would be communicated to all Parishes and community groups including unparished urban areas.

**RESOLVED:-**

***The Committee approved that a Sponsorship Scheme be implemented across the District for highway roundabouts and associated features.***

HCS/38 **COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME**

The Committee Work Programme was presented to Members.

**RESOLVED:-**

***That the Committee considered and approved the updated work programme.***

HCS/39 **LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972 (AS AMENDED BY THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT [ACCESS TO INFORMATION] ACT 1985)**

**RESOLVED:-**

***That, in accordance with Section 100(A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended), the press and public be excluded from the remainder of the Meeting as it is likely, in view of the nature of the business to be transacted or the nature of the proceedings, that there would be disclosed exempt information as defined in the paragraphs of Part 1 of the Schedule 12A of the Act indicated in brackets after each item.***

**TO RECEIVE QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL PURSUANT TO COUNCIL PROCEDURE RULE NO. 11**

*The Committee was informed that no questions had been received.*

**REVIEW OF HOUSING SERVICE**

***The Committee approved the recommendation in the report***

The Meeting terminated at 6:50 pm.

COUNCILLOR D CORBIN

VICE-CHAIRMAN

HOUSING AND COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE

19<sup>th</sup> November 2020

**PRESENT:-**

**Conservative Group**

Councillor Pegg (Chairman) and Councillor Corbin (Vice-Chairman).  
Councillors Atkin, Fitzpatrick (substituting for Cllr Dawson) Mrs Haines, Dr Perry and Mrs Wheelton (substituting Cllr Churchill).

**Labour Group**

Councillors Mrs Heath, Mulgrew, Rhind, Richards, and Shepherd.

**In Attendance**

Councillor Roberts

HCS/42 **APOLOGIES**

The Committee was informed that apologies had been received from Councillors Churchill and Dawson.

HCS/43 **MINUTES**

The Open Minutes of the Meeting held on 7<sup>th</sup> July 2020 were noted and approved as a true record and signed by the Chairman.

HCS/44 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

It was noted that Councillor Atkin declared that Items HCS/50, HCS/52 and HCS/58 to be of personal interest by virtue of being a County Councillor.

HCS/45 **QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC PURSUANT TO COUNCIL PROCEDURE RULE NO 10**

The Committee was informed that no questions from members of the public had been received.

HCS/46 **QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF COUNCIL PURSUANT TO COUNCIL PROCEDURE RULE NO 11**

The Committee was informed that no questions from Members of the Council had been received.

**MATTERS DELEGATED TO COMMITTEE****HCS/47 CORPORATE PLAN 2020-24 PERFORMANCE REPORT (2020-21 QUARTER 2)**

The Head of Organisational Development and Performance presented the report to the Committee highlighting the key areas on track and provided Members with an overview of the Risk Register and requested that Members noted that the Anti-Social Behaviour figures included breaches of COVID-19 restrictions.

Members raised questions about the selection of parks for Green Flag status, how was the Council gauging support from the community and the loss of revenue in the Voids Rent Register. The Head of Cultural and Community Services advised members that four parks were close to Green Flag status and that a report about this would be brought to Committee for consideration. The Head of Housing advised Members that the maintenance contract had been delayed by three months due to the COVID-19 restrictions, but work had restarted in July and that plans were in place to address the preparation of properties for rent.

**RESOLVED:-**

- 1.1 *The Committee considered progress against performance targets set out in the Corporate Plan 2020 - 2024.***
- 1.2 *The Committee reviewed the Risk Register for the Committee's services.***

**HCS/48 REVISED COMMUNITY TRIGGER PRACTITIONER GUIDANCE**

The Communities Manager presented the report to the Committee summarising the benefits and key points of the process.

**RESOLVED:-**

***The Committee considered and approved the revised Derbyshire Community Trigger Practitioner Guidance document as per Appendix 1 of the report.***

**HCS/49 MODERN SLAVERY STATEMENT 2019-20**

The Communities Manager presented the report to the Committee informing Members of the refreshed statement for 2019-20 prepared in conjunction with Derbyshire County Council.

**RESOLVED:-**

- 1.1 The Committee considered and approved the revised Council Modern Slavery Statement as per Appendix 1 of the report.**
- 1.2 The Committee gave the Strategic Director – Service Delivery delegated authority, in consultation with the Chairman of the Committee, to agree the annual Statement, subject to there being no significant changes made. This will be in line with Derbyshire County Council’s Statement which will be approved annually by its Director of Community Services.**
- 1.3 The Committee considered and approved the revised Modern Slavery Referral Procedure and Guidance for Council Employees as per Appendix 2 of the Report.**

**HCS/50 BETTER CARE FUNDING ALLOCATION – FINANCIAL POSITION**

The Strategic Housing Manager presented the report to the Committee setting out the financial position and action plan until the financial year end. It was proposed to ring-fence £50,000 for an officer to address fuel poverty across the District and noted that the report would be presented to the Finance and Management Committee to ratify the finance and staffing.

The Committee queried the underspend noted in the report and asked if there were provisions for helping residents with technology and support for those living in properties without cavity insulation. The Strategic Housing Manager reassured Members that there were plans to apply funds to projects in the District and there was confidence that funds would not be returned to Derbyshire County Council. The Strategic Housing Officer informed the Committee that Digital Inclusion was an important part of the provision of capital grants along with the Disabled Facilities Grant which allowed for residents to maintain independence. It was noted that where two schemes within Better Care Funding where assistance was available to assist homes with thermal improvements and the Strategic Director (Service Delivery) confirmed that Local Authorities would also apply for the Green Homes Grant to assist with these improvements.

**RESOLVED:-**

- 1.1 The Committee noted the progress of schemes that have been supported through the allocation of Better Care Funding (BCF) and welcomed the wider impact they are having on reducing pressure on front-line Council Services**
- 1.2 The Committee approved the proposed BCF Action Plan, timescales and revised allocations contained within Appendix 1 of the report.**
- 1.3 The Committee approved the use of £50k from the BCF allocation to be ringfenced for a new project and associated staffing costs to**

***enable better targeting of resources based on recent stock condition data.***

**1.4 *The Committee approved changes highlighted within the Private Sector Housing Assistance Policy as per Appendix 2 of the report.***

**1.5 *The Committee granted delegated authority to the Strategic Director (Service Delivery) in conjunction with the Chairman of the Committee to make any minor amendments to the Policy necessary to ensure its effective delivery. Any major changes would be brought to Committee for approval.***

**1.6 *The Committee referred staffing and financial elements of the report to a future meeting of the Finance and Management Committee for consideration and approval.***

#### HCS/51 **HOUSING INCOME MANAGEMENT POLICY**

The Head of Housing presented the report to the Committee informing Members that the aim of the Policy was to address rent arrears through external partnerships and internally by enabling Customer Services to support residents with their rent accounts.

Councillor Mrs. Wheelton on behalf of Councillor Churchill requested clarity regarding under occupancy benefit and the underpayment of rent. The Head of Housing explained that under occupation of a property could attract a reduced payment of benefit meaning the benefit does not cover the full amount of the rent leading to the accrual of rent arrears and the Council reserved the right to enforce the tenancy agreement if the rent arrears are not met by the tenant.

#### **RESOLVED:-**

**1.1 *The Committee agreed that the Housing Income Management Policy, as per Appendix A of the report, be issued for consultation with the public and stakeholders.***

**1.2 *The Committee agreed that the final version of the Policy be reported to the Committee in early 2021 for implementation with effect from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2021.***

#### HCS/52 **HOMELESS OUT-OF-HOURS SERVICES**

The Head of Housing presented the report to the Committee informing Members that the service offered since 2011 had been reviewed and Covid-19 had highlighted a number of arrears to be looked at.

Councillor Mrs. Wheelton, queried the level of out-of-hours service that Careline provided to the District. The Head of Housing confirmed that the out-of-hours services signposted all enquires that were not related to homeless out hours business. The Strategic Director (Service Delivery) confirmed to Members that the resilience of the Careline service had been considered and

that a piece of work was underway looking at what the out-of-hours offer would look like across the Council.

**RESOLVED:-**

- 1.1 The Committee approved the Council serving the required six-months' notice on the other Districts in Derbyshire and Staffordshire to terminate the agreement for the provision of out-of-hours homelessness services by this Council on their behalf.**
- 1.2 The Committee agreed that the Council's own processes and procedures for dealing with out-of-hours homeless applicants be reviewed and enhanced by improving risk assessment and data sharing arrangements.**

HCS/53 **HOUSING SAFETY POLICIES**

The Head of Housing delivered the report to the Committee summarising the new suite of safety policy documents and highlighted a number of key policies that included the Asbestos, Electrical and Gas Safety Policies

Councillor Wheelton raised a query regarding the expertise used in compiling the safety policies. The Head of Housing confirmed that the safety policies continued to be updated regularly following new guidance and legislation and that external asbestos contractors gave guidance and assistance in writing the Asbestos Policy and external expertise was also sought for other policies such as the Gas and Electric.

**RESOLVED:-**

***That the Committee approved the following Housing Safety policies and procedures:***

- Draft Electrical Safety Policy, as per Appendix A of the report***
- Draft Fire Safety Policy, as per Appendix B of the report***
- Draft Gas Safety Policy, as per Appendix C of the report***
- Draft Legionella Policy, as per Appendix D of the report***
- Draft Lift Safety Policy, as per Appendix E of the report***
- Asbestos Policy and procedures, as per Appendix F of the report.***

HCS/54 **COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME**

The Committee Work Programme was presented to Members by the Strategic Director (Service Delivery) which had been updated to include indicative dates.

**RESOLVED:-**

***That the Committee considered and approved the updated work programme.***

HCS/55 **LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972 (AS AMENDED BY THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT [ACCESS TO INFORMATION] ACT 1985)**

**RESOLVED:-**

***That, in accordance with Section 100(A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended), the press and public be excluded from the remainder of the Meeting as it is likely, in view of the nature of the business to be transacted or the nature of the proceedings, that there would be disclosed exempt information as defined in the paragraphs of Part 1 of the Schedule 12A of the Act indicated in brackets after each item.***

**TO RECEIVE QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL PURSUANT TO COUNCIL PROCEDURE RULE NO. 11**

***The Committee was informed that no questions had been received.***

**TO RECEIVE THE EXEMPT MINUTES**

**RESOLVED:**

***That the exempt minutes of the following Committees were approved as a true record:***

***Housing and Community Services Committee 7<sup>th</sup> July 2020.***

**CARELINE AND INDEPENDENT LIVING SERVICES**

***The Committee approved the recommendation in the report***

The Meeting terminated at 7.20 pm.

COUNCILLOR D PEGG

CHAIRMAN

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<b>REPORT TO:</b>	<b>HOUSING AND COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE</b>	<b>AGENDA ITEM: 6</b>
<b>DATE OF MEETING:</b>	<b>28<sup>th</sup> JANUARY 2021</b>	<b>CATEGORY: RECOMMENDED</b>
<b>REPORT FROM:</b>	<b>STRATEGIC DIRECTOR - SERVICE DELIVERY</b>	<b>NO: Not Exempt</b>
<b>MEMBERS' CONTACT POINT:</b>	<b>MATT HOLFORD – HEAD OF ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES</b>	<b>DOC:</b>
<b>SUBJECT:</b>	<b>GREEN HOMES GRANT – LOCAL AUTHORITY DELIVERY PHASE 1B</b>	<b>REF:</b>
<b>WARD(S) AFFECTED:</b>	<b>All</b>	<b>TERMS OF REFERENCE: HCS02</b>

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## **1. Recommendations**

- 1.1 That the Committee approves the proposed Allocation Policy for the Green Homes Grant – Local Authority Delivery Scheme Phase 1b.

## **2. Purpose of Report**

- 2.1 To advise the Committee of the content of a bid made to the Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy (BEIS) to invest in the housing stock in South Derbyshire under the Green Homes Grant – Local Authority Delivery Scheme Phase 1b (GHG – LAD Phase 1b).
- 2.2 To seek Committee approval for an Allocation Policy to prioritise the allocation of any GHG – LAD funding if it is approved by BEIS and in the event of demand exceeding the funding.

## **3. Background**

- 3.1 The GHG – LAD Scheme was launched in September 2020 to save households money, cut carbon and create green jobs. GHG – LAD Phase 1 allocated £200million to local authorities to co-ordinate improvements to all housing tenures. A further bidding round with a total fund allocation of £300million will be initiated in early 2021.
- 3.2 In October 2020, South Derbyshire District Council, in collaboration with Derbyshire County Council, Chesterfield District Council, Derby University and Low Carbon Homes, ran an on-line event to promote low carbon retrofit in the residential sector in order to promote local green economic recovery. The Council has shown a clear desire to support this workstream.
- 3.3 The Council did not submit a Phase 1 bid. The reasons for this were as follows:
- There was a relative paucity of information about the local housing stock to enable the development of a good evidence base to support a bid;

- It needed to be submitted within three weeks, which did not give enough time for the development of a coherent bid;
- All of the works in the Phase 1 project needed to be completed by 31st March 2021 and there was a minimum bid of £500,000. Anecdotal information from the limited number of contractors who are qualified to carry out the work strongly suggested that there was insufficient capacity in the market to carry out this scale of work in this timescale.
- It was not clear whether any of the local contractors who met the qualifying criteria to carry out retrofit works were available to to the Council under the Council's procurement arrangements.

3.4 At the close of the Phase 1 bids, £76million had been allocated. Due to the low take-up of the scheme BEIS launched a Phase 1b scheme with a reduced minimum bid (£250,000) and a longer delivery timescale (end September 2021).

3.5 Following approval by the Council's Senior Leadership Team, the Council submitted a bid for £586,500 for GHG – LAD to Phase 1b funding to meet the government's deadline of 4 December.

#### **4. GHG – LAD Phase 1b Scheme Details**

4.1 Homes that qualify for funding assistance under the Scheme must meet the following criteria;

- They must have an Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) rating of D to G, although the scheme will favour those rated E to G.
- Qualifying households must have a combined household less than £30,000.
- The scheme favours interventions in properties which are 'off-gas' (i.e. not on the gas network).

4.2 The Scheme offers the following funding;

- The eligible measures are any energy efficiency and / or heating measures compatible with the government's Standard Assessment Procedure (SAP) for energy performance. This includes but is not limited to wall, loft and floor insulation, low carbon technologies such as air and ground source heat pumps and solar photovoltaics. Fossil fuel heating systems are not permitted.
- The work must bring the property up to an EPC of C.
- The funding will provide up to £10,000 per owner occupied property (taken as an average of all interventions). For private rented or social rented properties, the funding is up to £5,000 per property with the expectation that the landlord contributes a third of the cost.

#### **5. South Derbyshire GHG – LAD Phase 1b bid**

5.1 South Derbyshire District Council completed a comprehensive, desktop housing stock condition survey in 2019 which obtained property level data of all 44,210 properties on the District.

- 5.2 This dataset identified that 23,723 properties in South Derbyshire (53.7%) have a current EPC rating. A total of 4,288 (18.1%) of current EPC ratings are in the range E to G of which 67.6% are owner occupied (2,900), 26.1% are rented (1,119), 6.3% are social housing (269).
- 5.3 Of the 4,019 owner-occupied and rented properties with an EPC rating of E to G, 877 owner-occupied and 444 private rented are in locations which are categorised as falling within an IMD deprivation decile 1 to 5. 125 of these properties are assessed as being 'likely' to 'extremely likely' to contain a category 1 hazard for excess cold under the Housing Health and Safety Rating Scheme.
- 5.4 The highest numbers of properties with an EPC rating of E to G and in deprivation decile 1 to 5 are in the following postcode areas:
- DE11 0SQ – Parliament Street, Newhall
  - DE11 7DX – Station Road, Woodville
  - DE11 8DQ – Moira Rd, Woodville
  - DE11 9EG – Swadlincote Lane, Church Gresley
  - DE11 9NB – Oxford Street, Church Gresley
  - DE12 6RF – Coton Park, Linton
- 5.5 22.5% of the housing stock in South Derbyshire is defined as 'off-gas' including high numbers in the four wards within which the six postcode areas above are located.
- 5.6 The District also contains a relatively high number of park homes, many of which are occupied by low income households in off-gas locations. The Council does not have metrics of the existing EPC ratings or probable Category 1 excess cold hazards in this cohort or properties, but officers' experience of this group suggests a probable high level of fuel poverty.
- 5.7 The biggest limitation to the bid submission appeared to be the capacity of local energy efficiency companies which met both the standards required by BEIS and the Council's own procurement rules, to deliver the work within the very tight timeframes required. All of the work funded under GHG – LAD Phase 1b must be complete by 30<sup>th</sup> September 2021.
- 5.8 Based on initial scoping discussions with local providers, it is understood that the market has the capacity to deliver the following improvements within the timescale of the project:
- 30 External Wall Insulation installations
  - 80 Cavity Wall Insulation installations
  - 100 Loft Insulation installations.
- 5.9 The total bid submitted was for funding of £586,500. As well as funding the work described in paragraph 5.8 this was also to fund administrative and ancillary costs, including the appointment of a temporary Project Co-ordinator.
- 5.10 No bids for social housing (including Council housing stock) were included in the Phase 1b bid. Any GHG – LAD bids for improvements to Council housing stock will be based on more contemporary energy rating inspections than those in the stock condition survey. These energy rating inspections were still in the process of being carried out when the bid was being prepared. Only four Council-owned properties had been identified as being less than EPC C at the time of the bid submission.

5.11 It is the aspiration of officers to submit a further GHG – LAD Phase 2 bid based on the experiences of the Phase 1b bid round, on the extent of the expressions of interest received and on the latest EPC data for the Council housing stock. Any such bid will be the topic of a further report.

## **Targeting and Delivery**

5.12 Potentially eligible households in the six postcode areas plus park homes have already been targeted by a programme of letters and leaflet drops during December 2020 and January 2021 to obtain expressions of interest. Ad hoc expressions of interest from other locations are also being registered.

5.13 An Allocations Policy has been produced to create a points-based system to prioritise the properties in highest need and those which most fit with the bid criteria. The Allocations Policy is attached as Appendix 1 to this report.

5.14 The bid is entirely focused on the provision of external and internal insulation which will elevate existing EPC E to G rated properties to a minimum of EPC C. Priority will be given to off-gas properties.

5.15 An important aspect of the bid is that the South Derbyshire GHG – LAD Phase 1b scheme will be supported by two existing fuel poverty schemes – one run by Derbyshire County Council (the Healthy Homes Programme) and one run by South Derbyshire District Council (the Healthy Homes Assistance Fund). Jointly these two schemes offer a total of £280,000 of complementary funding to provide housing improvements for qualifying households where the occupier has an underlying health condition.

5.16 The predicted energy, carbon and bills savings expected to be achieved as a result of installed measures are:

As a result of solid wall insulation:

- The annual carbon savings are projected to be 22.5 tonnes per annum.
- The annual bills savings are projected to be £5,380.

As a result of cavity wall insulation

- The annual carbon savings are projected to be 58.8 tonnes per annum
- The annual bills savings are projected to be £14,300.

As a result of loft insulation

- The annual carbon savings are projected to be 78.5 tonnes per annum
- The annual bills savings are projected to be £19,200.

## **6. Financial Implications**

6.1 Major beneficial. If successful, the bid will bring £586,500 of investment into South Derbyshire. This will represent a short-term investment in the local energy retrofit market, thus boosting the green economy. It will also deliver a long-term investment in the local housing stock with the associated financial and carbon savings described earlier in the report.

## **7. Corporate Implications**

7.1 Employment – None

7.2 Legal. The bid, if successful, will be the subject of a Memorandum of Understanding between BEIS and the Council. The MOU will set out a reporting framework which will

need to be completed by the Project Coordinator in order to enable the capital to be reclaimed from BEIS.

7.3 Corporate Plan implications – The proposals align with the key Corporate Plan theme of ‘Our Environment’ as well as the two key aims of “Strive to make South Derbyshire District Council carbon neutral by 2030” and “Work with residents, businesses and partners to reduce their carbon footprint”.

7.4 Risk impact - None

## **8. Community Implications**

8.1 Beneficial.

## **9. Conclusion**

9.1 The reports seeks Committee approval to adopt an Allocations Policy to ensure that the allocation of funding under the GHG – LAD Phase 1b Scheme is equitable and in general accordance with the principles of the funding guidance.

## **10. References**

10.1 GHG – LAD Phase 1b Allocation Policy December 2020.

# South Derbyshire District Council Green Homes Grant LAD Phase 1b - Allocation Policy

**Date: December 2020**



## Version Control

Version	Reason for review (review date/legislation/process changes)	Effective Date	Review date
1.0	First version following bid submission	4/12/2020	31/01/2021

## Approvals

Approved by (Committee/Leadership Team)	Date
Senior Leadership Team	9 <sup>th</sup> December 2020
Housing and Community Safety Committee	28 <sup>th</sup> January 2021

## 1.0 Introduction

South Derbyshire District Council (SDDC) submitted a bid for a Green Homes Grant – Local Authority Delivery (GHG – LAD) Phase 1b scheme in December 2020.

The purpose of this Allocations Policy is to assist officers to determine which applications will be allocated grant in the event that the bid is approved and where the number of applications for the GHG – LAD Phase 1b funding exceeds the capital funding available.

## 2.0 GHG - LAD Phase 1b Scope & Purpose

The GHG – LAD Phase 1b funding is explicitly intended to provide funding to the following:

- To improve housing with an existing EPC rating of D to G to achieve an EPC rating of C, although the scheme will favour those rated E to G.
- Qualifying households must have a combined household less than £30,000.
- The scheme favours interventions in properties which are 'off-gas' (i.e. not on the gas network).
- The eligible measures are any energy efficiency and / or heating measures compatible with the governments Standard Assessment Procedure (SAP) for energy performance. This includes but is not limited to wall, loft and floor insulation, low carbon technologies such as air and ground source heat pumps and solar photovoltaics. Fossil fuel heating systems are not permitted.
- The funding will provide up to £10,000 per owner occupied property (taken as an average of all interventions). For private rented or social rented properties, the funding is up to £5,000 per property with the expectation that the landlord contributes a third of the cost.

Beyond these criteria, the bid from SDDC applied the following priorities:



Stock Condition survey data indicates that the highest numbers of properties meeting the criteria set out above are in the following postcode areas:

DE11 0SQ – Parliament Street, Newhall  
 DE11 7DX – Station Road, Woodville  
 DE11 8DQ – Moira Rd, Woodville  
 DE11 9EG – Swadlincote Lane, Church Gresley  
 DE11 9NB – Oxford Street, Church Gresley  
 DE12 6RF – Coton Park, Linton

Park homes are known to be generally of a poor thermal efficiency and the occupiers suffer disproportionate levels of fuel poverty as well as being more likely to be off-gas. Therefore, park homes, as well as properties in and near the priority postcodes will be favoured by this Scheme.

Note. It is a legal duty for all private landlords to ensure that their properties achieve an EPC rating of E or better. Therefore, no grant will be given to landlords where the EPC rating of their property is F or G.

### 3.0 Essential Qualifying Criteria

In order to be considered for the GHG – LAD Phase 1b grant, the property which is being applied for must meet the following criteria:

- The property must have an existing EPC rating of D to G. SDDC will provide an EPC assessment where homes are considered likely to be in the priority groups but have no EPC.
- The total household income (irrespective of tenure) must be less than £30,000

### 4.0 Assessment Parameters

All applications will be scored to determine how closely they meet the GHG – LAD phase 1b bid parameters. The scoring system is as follows;

Criteria	Detail	Score
Current EPC rating	The property has an existing EPC rating of F or G	10
	The property has an existing EPC rating of E	5
	The property has an existing EPC rating of D	2
Location	The property is in one of the six priority postcode areas	10
	The property is a park home	10
	The property is in the same five digits area of one of the six priority postcode locations	5
Gas	The property has no mains gas supply	5
Occupancy	The property is owner occupied	5
	The property is privately rented	2



**Scoring Examples;**

A property in Etwell with an EPC rating of F is privately owned by an elderly owner occupier on low income.

Score: EPC Rating – 10, Location – 0, Gas – 0, Occupancy – 5, **TOTAL – 15**

A property on Moira Road, Woodville has an EPC of G and is owned by a family with net household income of £45,000.

*This property does not qualify for the grant as the household income exceeds the £30,000 threshold*

A park home in Hatton has an EPC rating of G, is off gas, and is owned by a working couple with a total income of £28,000.

Score: EPC Rating – 10, Location – 0, Gas – 5, Occupancy – 5, **TOTAL - 20**

A private rented property near Parliament Street (postcode DE11 0SJ) has an EPC of D and is occupied by a family who earn £22,000 with young children.

Score: EPC Rating – 2, Location – 5, Gas – 0, Occupancy – 2, **TOTAL - 9**

A private property at Coton Park has an EPC of F, is off gas, and is occupied by an elderly couple who earn £18,500.

Score: EPC Rating – 10, Location – 10, Gas – 5, Occupancy – 5, **TOTAL - 30**

All applications for the GHG – LAD Phase 1b funding will be assessed and scored. Assessments will include a process for verifying the accuracy of the application content, such as income checks, EPC certificate checks, etc.

Initial offers will be based on the properties which score the highest from the assessment parameters.

Where grant offers are declined or refused then offers will be made to the next highest scored properties.

The GHG – LAD Phase 1b scheme has a very short implementation timescale and a limited budget. Circumstances may develop where it is more cost effective, and where the project can be delivered more quickly, if the properties qualifying for the grant are in a similar location or are of a similar construction type. Where opportunities such as these become apparent, then in order to maximise the impact of the grant, officers may need to change the order of prioritisation produced by the scoring system.

**5.0 Appeals**

No applications will be 'refused' provided that they meet the criteria in section 3.0. However, it is very possible that the demand for the grants exceeds the available funding and therefore applications may not be successful due to funding constraints.



Information relating to these bids will be retained and used to inform potential future funding bids or other interventions by the local authority.

The GHG – LAD Phase 1b bid included reference to existing alternative funding sources for housing improvements such as the existing Healthy Homes Project (run by Derbyshire County Council) and the Healthy Homes Assistance Fund (run through SDDC). Where any applicant meets the criteria to qualify for these support funds then a referral will be made to the relevant officers.



<b>REPORT TO:</b>	<b>HOUSING AND COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE</b>	<b>AGENDA ITEM:7</b>
<b>DATE OF MEETING:</b>	<b>28<sup>th</sup> JANUARY 2021</b>	<b>CATEGORY: (See Notes) DELEGATED or RECOMMENDED</b>
<b>REPORT FROM:</b>	<b>STRATEGIC DIRECTOR (SERVICE DELIVERY)</b>	<b>OPEN</b>
<b>MEMBERS' CONTACT POINT:</b>	<b>PAUL WHITTINGHAM. <a href="mailto:Paul.whittingham@southderbys.gov.uk">Paul.whittingham@southderbys.gov.uk</a></b>	<b>DOC:</b>
<b>SUBJECT:</b>	<b>DERBYSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY CONTRACT OPTIONS</b>	
<b>WARD(S) AFFECTED:</b>	<b>ALL</b>	<b>TERMS OF REFERENCE: (See Notes)</b>

## **1.0 Recommendations**

- 1.1 That the Committee agrees to the Council continuing to provide Assistive Technology (Careline) and Independent Living (Warden) services under the extended contract with Derbyshire County Council (DCC) until 31 March 2022.
- 1.2 That the Committee approves the proposed response to DCC on its proposals for future services at paragraph 4.4 of this report.
- 1.3 That the Committee agrees to continue to work with DCC and other providers to develop appropriate new services for implementation at the end of the current contract period the outcome of which will be reported to a future Committee.

## **2.0 Purpose of the Report**

- 2.1 This report confirms the extension of the contracts with Derbyshire County Council for the provision of Assistive Technology (Careline) and Independent Living (Warden) services until 31<sup>st</sup> March 2022.
- 2.2 The report informs the Committee of the service options being proposed by DCC for the provision of Careline services after March 2022 and outlines the initial proposed response to those proposals. A response is required by DCC by the end of January 2021.
- 2.3 The Committee should also note that DCC have not as yet offered any proposals for the provision of Independent Living (Careline) services after April 2022.

### 3.0 Executive Summary

- 3.1 At its meeting on 19 November 2020 The Housing and Community Services Committee agreed to accept any proposed extension of contract from DCC for the Assistive Technology (Careline) and Independent Living contracts. A one-year extension of the Careline and Independent Living contracts has now been offered on the same terms.
- 3.2 The Committee also agreed that further research into the provision of these services by public and private sector providers would be undertaken. DCC has now provided four options for the possible delivery of Careline services and asked providers, including the Council, for their response by the end of January 2021.
- 3.3 The Proposals are attached at Appendix A and a proposed outline response to these proposals is provided at paragraph 4.4.

### 4.0 Detail

- 4.1 Assistive Technology (Careline) and Independent Living (Wardens) services are provided across the County by a variety of providers under contract to DCC. The Council along with Bolsover, High Peak and Chesterfield Councils still operate their own Contact Centres to handle Careline and Telecare Calls. The current position regarding the Council's Careline service after an external review was included within the report to the Housing and Community Services Committee on 19 November 2020. Details of the current provision across the County are set out in the table below.

<b>Area</b>	<b>Provider</b>
Amber Valley	Futures Housing Group
Bolsover	Bolsover District Council
Chesterfield	Chesterfield Borough Council
Erewash	Derbyshire County Council (Revival / Tunstall)
Derbyshire Dales	Derbyshire County Council (Revival / Tunstall)
High Peak	High Peak Borough Council
North East Derbyshire	Derbyshire County Council (CBC / Tunstall)
South Derbyshire	South Derbyshire District Council

- 4.2 The four options suggested by DCC are:
- **Option 1: Existing Service Delivery Model**
    - i. Services provided within districts by a patchwork of providers as above.
  - **Option 2: Sole Provider Delivery Model**

i. Services for the installation and monitoring of Assistive Technology delivered by one provider across the County

• **Option 3: Lead Provider with Consortium Delivery Model**

i. Monitoring services provided by a sole provider with a local provider delivering installation services

• **Option 4: Lead Provider with Consortium of Local Providers Delivery Model**

i. One provider delivering Assistive Technology services with local providers delivering unfunded community alarm services.

4.3 A proposed response to these proposals is outlined below.

4.4 The Council welcomes the fact that DCC is continuing to work with South Derbyshire District Council to develop services for the provision of Assistive Technology to support vulnerable people when many County Council's ceased supporting this type of service some time ago.

4.5 Whilst the proposals are welcome, they do not provide sufficient detail about the implications for providers in terms of:

- Contractual arrangements between providers and DCC
- Contractual payments
- Ownership and responsibility for equipment and infrastructure
- Any potential staffing costs including TUPE and possible redundancy costs.

4.6 The Council understands that the proposals focus on the provision of funded services for residents that meet the threshold of the Care Act 2014.

4.7 This approach does not reflect or support the valuable work carried out by providers to prevent residents reaching this threshold by maintaining their independence and successfully remaining in their own home.

4.8 The proposals do not appear to be "joined up" with other services being discussed by DCC, District Councils in Derbyshire and other providers as part of the "Better Lives" and practical housing support initiatives across the County. Neither do the proposals attempt to join up existing services including Falls Recovery and the Independent Living Service. This is despite previous and ongoing discussions about the creation of a new more holistic service for residents in all housing tenures that join up Assistive Technology and independent living services. A presentation which outlines the DCC Better Lives Approach is attached at Appendix B.

4.9 Consequently, at this stage the Council is not able to agree to any of the four proposals provided by DCC and will require further discussion and more detailed information in order to consider this further.

4.10 As part of these discussions the Council would welcome the opportunity to discuss the creation and delivery of an entirely new service that meets the needs of residents and the collective aims of County and District Councils.

## **5.0 Financial Implications**

- 5.1 The financial implications included in the report of 19 November 2020 are included again in the table below. The Careline service is a cost to the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) of approximately £530k per annum. This is split into two parts: (Independent Living (Wardens) and Assistive Technology (Monitoring.)
- 5.2 Below is a summary of projected income and expenditure for the two areas for 2020/201.

	Warden £	Monitoring £	Total £
Private Income	0	-179,478	-179,478
Derbyshire County Council Contribution	-130,000	-54,038	-184,038
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>-130,000</b>	<b>-233,516</b>	<b>-363,516</b>
Total Expenditure	312,928	581,116	894,045
<b>NET COST TO HRA</b>	<b>182,928</b>	<b>347,600</b>	<b>530,529</b>

- 5.3 The income from DCC is at risk and any reductions to this income stream will prove negative to the HRA and may put financial pressure on future day-to-day services for Council tenants, for example day-to-day repair works and capital works on dwellings. This is a particular area of concern given the likely additional costs of retrofitting properties with low carbon heating, insulation and other elements to achieve the Council's climate change ambitions.
- 5.4 there is a risk to the HRA if the funding is removed or reduced. The cost base is built into the HRA alongside a budget of £130k income so to lose this would require either removal of the service all together or a significant reduction in the repairs and maintenance offered to tenants to ensure the HRA is sustainable.

## 6.0 Corporate Implications

### Employment Implications

- 6.1 Whilst there are no direct employment implications within this report such implications are a possibility if funding is removed and alternative methods of delivery are necessary.

### Legal Implications

- 6.2 There are no direct legal implications within this report although such implications are a possibility if the terms and conditions of current contracts are changed and/or alternative methods of service delivery are agreed.

### Corporate Plan Implications

- 6.3 The services referred to in this report contribute directly to the Council's corporate aims to: Support and safeguard the most vulnerable
- With partners encourage independent living and keep residents healthy and happy in their homes.
  - Promote health and wellbeing across the District.

- c. Improve the condition of housing stock and public buildings.

### **Risk Impact**

- 6.4 This report has a direct link to the risks identified in the Service Delivery Risk Register:
  - a. SD1 - Loss of income to the Housing Revenue Account

## **7.0 Community Impact**

### **Consultation**

- 7.1 DCC consulted service users with regard to the changes in contracted services implemented in 2019.

### **Equality and Diversity Impact**

- 7.2 There are no direct Equality and Diversity impacts identified within this report.

### **Social Value Impact**

- 7.3 The services discussed in this report contribute directly to achieving the aims outlined in the Council's Sustainable Communities Strategy to support Healthier Communities.

### **Environmental Sustainability**

- 7.4 There are no direct environmental sustainability impacts identified in this report.

## **8.0 Conclusions**

- 8.1 The Council requires further discussion with DCC and other providers of these services within the County to establish an accurate understanding of the implications of the options that have been provided.
- 8.2 At the same time, other alternative options in the public and private sector should also be investigated further.

# **DCC Assistive Technology Proposed Service Models**

**Olu Ogunbuyide**

**Service Manager – Assistive Technology**

**December 2020**

# Option 1: Existing Service Delivery Model - overview

**Draft**



Lead responsibility Purple = DCC Adult Care and Blue = provider organisation

<p><b>Mosaic form – community alarm and telecare referral completed</b></p> <p><b>Or sign post to provider by Call Derbyshire, First Contact</b></p>	<p><b>Basic client information</b>  <b>Contact details for response recorded on electronic system for monitoring purposes</b></p>	<p><b>Put the equipment into a persons home</b></p>	<p><b>Monitoring centre responds when alerts come through from pendant being activated or equipment triggered</b></p>	<p><b>Annual service</b>  <b>Ad hoc repairs for faulty equipment</b>  <b>Additional equipment</b></p>	<p><b>What happens when alarm is triggered in terms of support</b></p>	<p><b>Annual review by assessment teams at DCC consider whether clients continue to need same level of support by telecare and community alarms</b></p> <p><b>Review of self-funders with eligible needs</b></p>	<p><b>Collection and de-commissioning of equipment when no longer required</b></p>
<p>DCC Prevention and Personalisation Team</p>	<p>Multiple providers            (DCC staff for “in house” areas, Metropolitan Housing for other areas)</p>	<p>Handyvan service –telecare (installation only)            Community alarms -provider</p>	<p>Multiple providers (directly contracted and sub contracted)</p>	<p>Handyvan service (or provider for self-funded clients)</p>	<p>Falls Response service, ILS, Supported Housing, Family and neighbours Emergency services</p>	<p>DCC Prevention and Personalisation Team</p>	<p>Handyvan service (or provider for self-funded clients)</p>

## Current Community Alarm and Telecare Providers

<b>Area</b>	<b>Provider</b>
<b>Amber Valley</b>	<b>Futures Housing Group</b>
<b>Bolsover</b>	<b>Bolsover District Council</b>
<b>Chesterfield</b>	<b>Chesterfield Borough Council</b>
<b>Erewash</b>	<b>Derbyshire County Council (Revival / Tunstall)</b>
<b>Derbyshire Dales</b>	<b>Derbyshire County Council (Revival / Tunstall)</b>
<b>High Peak</b>	<b>High Peak Borough Council</b>
<b>North East Derbyshire</b>	<b>Derbyshire County Council (CBC / Tunstall)</b>
<b>South Derbyshire</b>	<b>South Derbyshire District Council</b>

# Option 2: Sole Provider Delivery Model

Draft

Lead responsibility Purple = DCC Adult Care and Blue = provider organisation



DCC P&P	DCC AT Team: Comm Mgr, Cont Mgr, 2 ATOs, BSA	DCC or Sole Provider	Sole Provider			DCC P&P	Sole Provider	DCC AT Team	DCC AT Team / Sole Provider
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Strength based assessment</li> <li>Identify suitable equipment</li> <li>Mosaic form community alarm and telecare referral completed</li> <li>Sign post to provider by ACAT, Call Derbyshire, First Contact</li> <li>Signpost to Sole Provider website</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Manage AT DCC website</li> <li>Quality assurance</li> <li>Support DCC staff to identify suitable equipment</li> <li>Information &amp; advice to DCC staff &amp; Public</li> <li>Triage referral to provider</li> <li>Equipment advice to staff &amp; Public</li> <li>Deal with queries &amp; signpost to other service providers</li> <li>Implement new digital pilots</li> <li>Develop and monitor processes &amp; pathways</li> <li>Contract Mgt</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Purchase a wide range of suitable equipment (including digital to meet the needs of the people)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Deliver and install equipment into a persons home</li> <li>Install additional equipment</li> <li>Same day delivery and installation for hospital discharge</li> <li>2 working days for standard delivery and installation</li> <li>Installation of equipment in extra care facilities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Monitoring centre responds when alarm or alerts come through from pendant being activated or equipment triggered</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Annual servicing of equipment</li> <li>Ad hoc repairs for faulty equipment</li> <li>Installation of additional equipment</li> <li>Maintenance</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Annual review assessment by DCC P&amp;P to consider current level, increase or decrease of support</li> <li>Review of self-funders with eligible needs</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Collection and de-commissioning of equipment when no longer required</li> <li>Recycling and reusing decommissioned equipment</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Tracking and realisation of financial and non-financial benefits</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continuous innovation and service development</li> <li>Source for efficient ways of working</li> <li>Digital switch over readiness</li> <li>Research into new digital technology</li> </ul>

# Option 3: Lead Provider with Consortium Delivery Model

Draft

Lead responsibility Purple = DCC Adult Care and Blue = provider organisation



DCC P&P	DCC AT Team: Comm Mgr, Cont Mgr, 2 ATOs, BSA	DCC or Lead Provider	Lead Provider and consortium of providers e.g. Local providers			DCC P&P & Install Provider	Lead Provider & Consortium	DCC AT Team	DCC AT Team / Lead Provider & Consortium
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Strength based assessment</li> <li>Identify suitable equipment</li> <li>Mosaic form community alarm and telecare referral completed</li> <li>Sign post to provider by ACAT, Call Derbyshire, First Contact</li> <li>Signpost to Sole Provider website</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Manage AT DCC website</li> <li>Quality assurance</li> <li>Support DCC staff to identify suitable equipment</li> <li>Information &amp; advice to DCC staff &amp; Public</li> <li>Triage referral to provider</li> <li>Equipment advice to staff &amp; Public</li> <li>Deal with queries &amp; signpost to other services providers</li> <li>Identify &amp; implement new digital pilots</li> <li>Develop, oversee monitor &amp; processes &amp; pathways</li> <li>Contract Mgt</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Purchase a wide range of suitable equipment (including digital to meet the needs of the people)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Deliver and install equipment into a persons home</li> <li>Install additional equipment</li> <li>Same day delivery and installation for hospital discharge</li> <li>2 working days for standard delivery and installation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Monitoring centre responds when alarm or alerts come through from pendant being activated or equipment triggered</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Annual servicing of equipment</li> <li>Ad hoc repairs for faulty equipment</li> <li>Installation of additional equipment</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Annual review assessment by DCC P&amp;P to consider current level, increase or decrease of support</li> <li>Review of self-funders with eligible needs</li> <li>Installation provider to review the equipment e.g. bed sensor with life span of 1 year</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Collection and de-commissioning of equipment when no longer required</li> <li>Recycling and reusing decommissioned equipment</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Tracking and realisation of financial and non-financial benefits</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continuous innovation and service development</li> <li>Source for efficient ways of working</li> <li>Digital switch over readiness</li> <li>Research into new digital technology</li> </ul>

# Option 4: Lead Provider with Consortium of Local Providers Delivery Model Draft

Lead responsibility Purple = DCC Adult Care and Blue = provider organisation



DCC P&P	DCC AT Team: Comm Mgr, Cont Mgr, 2 ATOs, BSA	DCC or Sole Provider	Sole Provider – provision of Telecare, new digital tech, bespoke packages etc Local Providers – provision of comm alarm only			DCC P&P	Sole Provider	DCC AT Team	DCC AT Team / Sole Provider
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Strength based assessment</li> <li>Identify suitable equipment</li> <li>Mosaic form community alarm and telecare referral completed</li> <li>Sign post to provider by ACAT, Call Derbyshire, First Contact</li> <li>Signpost to Sole Provider website</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Manage AT DCC website</li> <li>Quality assurance</li> <li>Support DCC staff to identify suitable equipment</li> <li>Information &amp; advice to DCC staff &amp; Public</li> <li>Triage referral to provider</li> <li>Equipment advice to staff &amp; Public</li> <li>Deal with queries &amp; signpost to other services providers</li> <li>Identify &amp; implement new digital pilots</li> <li>Develop, oversee monitor &amp; processes &amp; pathways</li> <li>Contract Mgt</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Purchase a wide range of suitable equipment (including digital to meet the needs of the people)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Deliver and install equipment into a persons home</li> <li>Install additional equipment</li> <li>Same day delivery and installation for hospital discharge</li> <li>2 working days for standard delivery and installation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Monitoring centre responds when alarm or alerts come through from pendant being activated or equipment triggered</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Annual servicing of equipment</li> <li>Ad hoc repairs for faulty equipment</li> <li>Installation of additional equipment</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Annual review assessment by DCC P&amp;P to consider current level, increase or decrease of support</li> <li>Review of self-funders with eligible needs</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Collection and de-commissioning of equipment when no longer required</li> <li>Recycling and reusing de-commissioned equipment</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Tracking and realisation of financial and non-financial benefits</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continuous innovation and service development</li> <li>Source for efficient ways of working</li> <li>Digital switch over readiness</li> <li>Research into new digital technology</li> </ul>

# Key Points to note

- Service Provision in NED, ERE and DD: Current providers could provide the service in any of the areas
- Partnership working / Joint venture with other current providers
- Consortium : subcontracted by lead provider to provide some elements of the service e.g. monitoring, installation and maintenance

## **Option 4:**

- Community alarm provision only by local providers
- Sole provider commissioned to provide telecare, new digital tech and bespoke
- Memorandum of understanding with local providers to add on telecare to community alarm
- Community alarm equipment in 4 (SD, CH, HP, BOL) areas are owned by the districts and boroughs whilst in AV, ER, NED, DD are owned by DCC

## Feedback

Providers to think about the various options and provide their feedback on the following:

- Each of the options
- What option(s) the providers can provide i.e. end – to – end service?
- If the provider cannot provide end – to – end service, what elements of the end – to – end service can be provided?

## Next Steps

- Submit your feedback via email to [olu.ogunbuyide@derbyshire.gov.uk](mailto:olu.ogunbuyide@derbyshire.gov.uk) by 15<sup>th</sup> January 2021
- Meeting with all community alarm and telecare providers to discuss the various options collectively end of Jan/beginning of Feb 2021

# Better Lives



# ASC approach



# ASC narrative – Our Vision

The heart of Derbyshire is its people. Every one of us, and every community, is strong, proud and independent: we have the Derbyshire Spirit at our core and we work together to achieve the best quality of life possible for everyone.

That Derbyshire Spirit exists regardless of age, disability or ill health. We all want to be independent, to live our lives in our way, to have thriving local communities to call on and to have control of our lives. Our new approach to social care for those of us who are older or have disabilities, called Better Lives in Derbyshire, matches those desires.

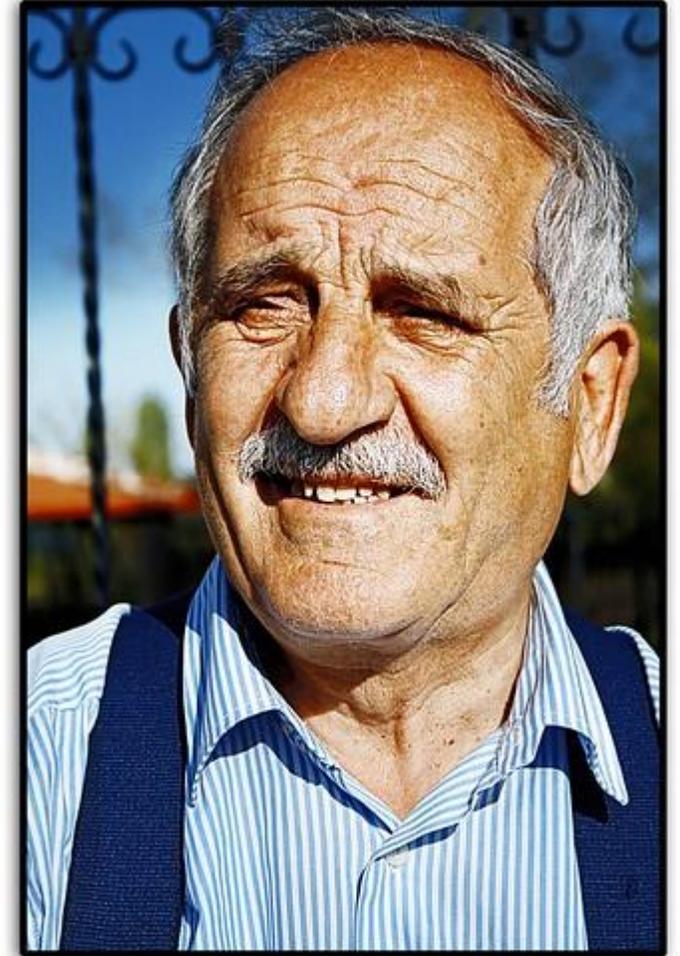
We already have nationally recognised best practice in many areas of our work but to deliver what the people of Derbyshire need we need to adapt more quickly, embrace change and ensure that the right networks of support – often not the council – are available.

The Better Lives in Derbyshire approach isn't driven by the need to save money despite the challenges on council budgets. It's about putting people at the heart of everything we do, challenging old ways of thinking and making sure the right solutions are available in the right place at the right time. It's about maximising and regaining independence, and preventing the need for intervention. It's about being an enterprising council and doing the right thing for our people, our place and our communities every day.

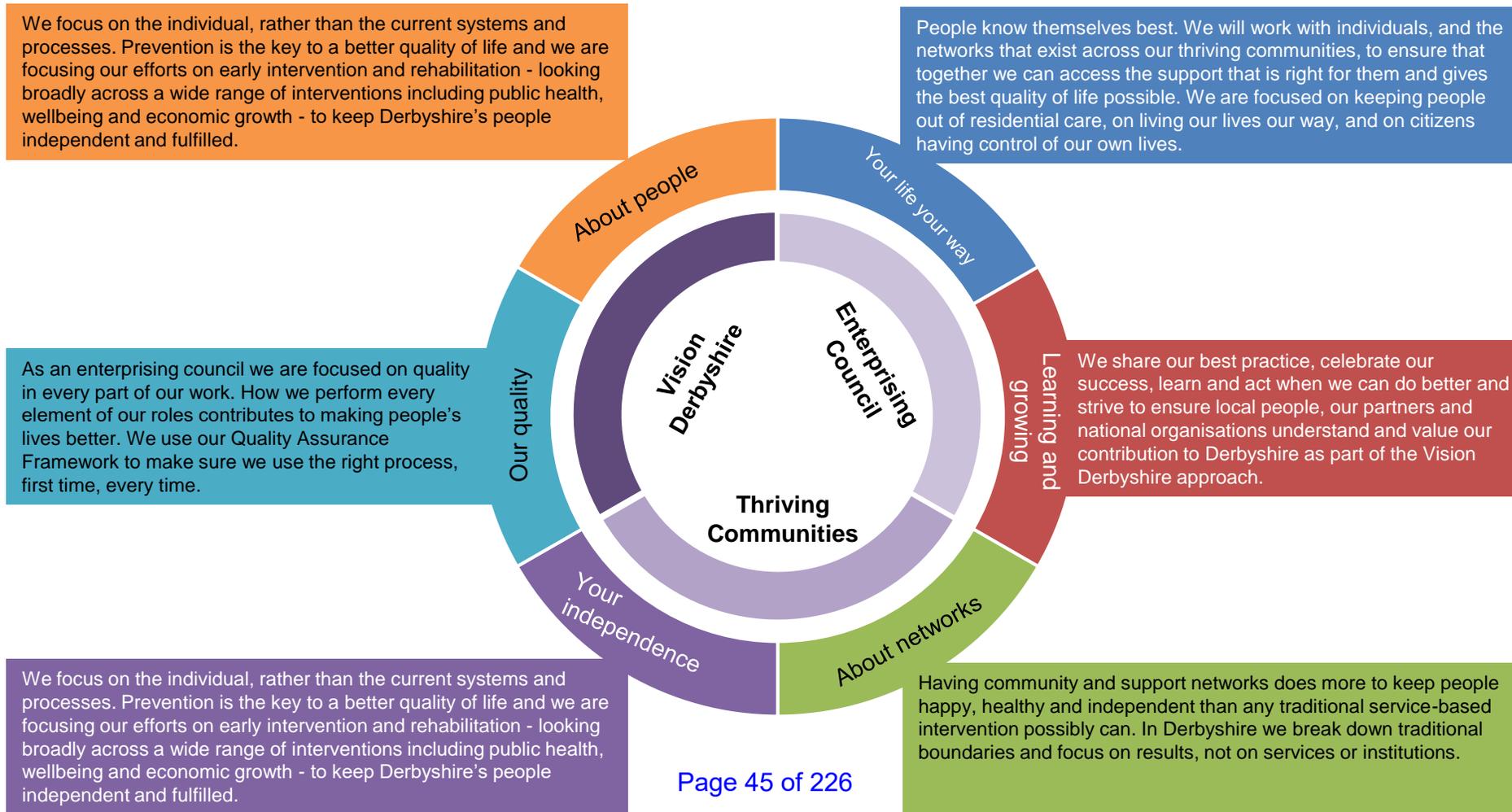
We are focused on quality in every part of our work. How we perform every element of our roles contributes to making people's lives better. We share our best practice, celebrate success, learn and act when we can do better and strive to ensure local people, our partners and national organisations understand and value our contribution to Derbyshire.

# ASC narrative – Our Principles

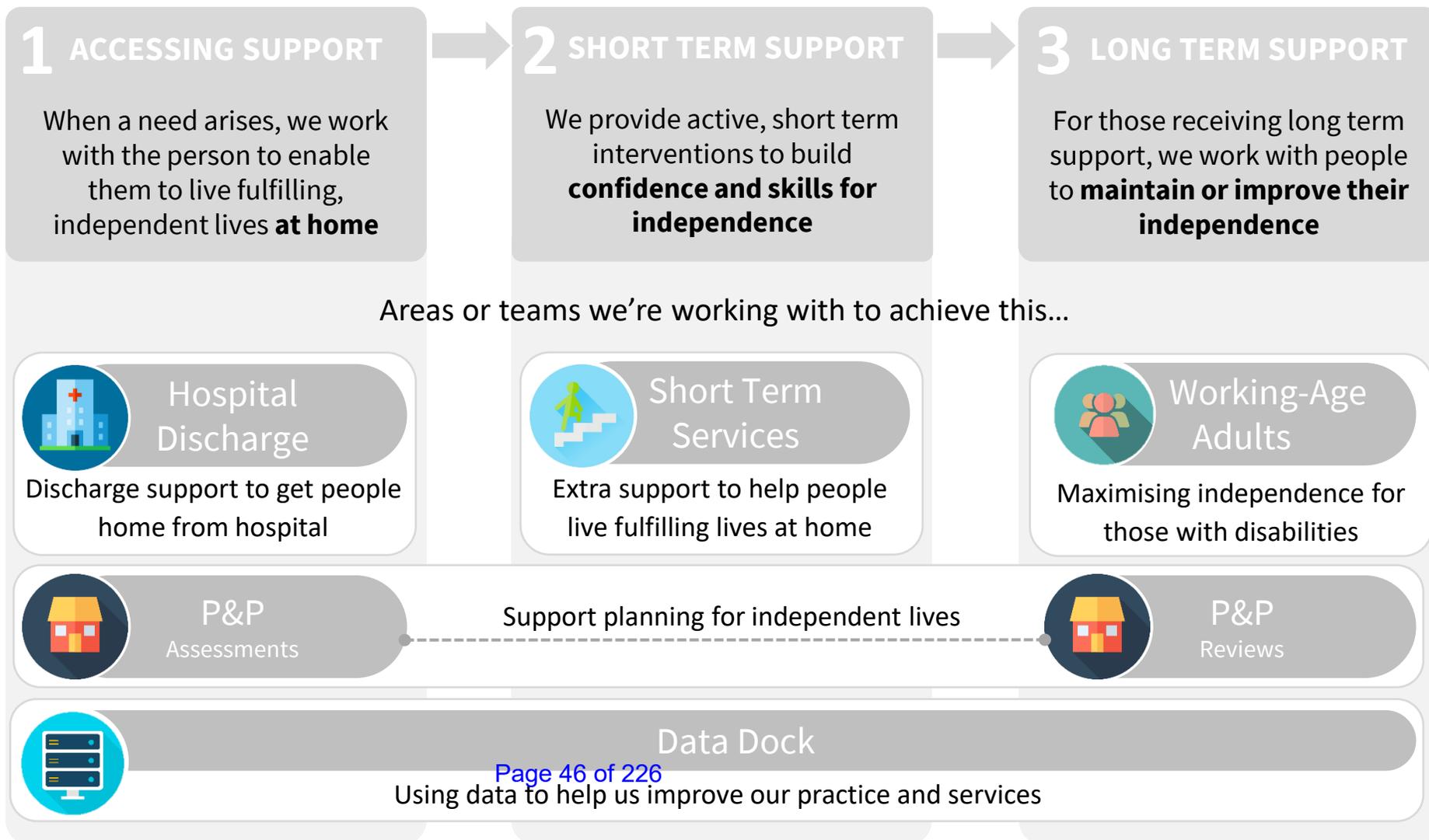
- We focus on people and ensure our systems support that focus.
- We always promote independence, knowing that independent lives are happier, healthier and more fulfilled.
- As part our Thriving Communities work, we recognise that people are the experts in their own lives and work together, and wider community networks, to achieve the best quality of life possible.
- We are a bold and enterprising council, looking for the best solution and recognising that supporting people through change will often achieve the best outcome.
- In line with the Vision Derbyshire approach, we look outward and forward in our approach to embracing the social care of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, not inward and backward.
- We strive for the highest quality standards in everything we do.
- We share best practice, celebrate success and learn and act when we can do better.



# ASC narrative – Our Focus



## Where are we focusing?



<b>REPORT TO:</b>	<b>HOUSING AND COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE</b>	<b>AGENDA ITEM: 8</b>
<b>DATE OF MEETING:</b>	<b>28<sup>th</sup> JANUARY 2021</b>	<b>CATEGORY: (See Notes) DELEGATED or RECOMMENDED</b>
<b>REPORT FROM:</b>	<b>STRATEGIC DIRECTOR - SERVICE DELIVERY</b>	<b>OPEN</b>
<b>MEMBERS' CONTACT POINT:</b>	<b>PAUL WHITTINGHAM <a href="mailto:paul.whittingham@southderbyshire.gov.uk">paul.whittingham@southderbyshire.gov.uk</a></b>	<b>DOC:</b>
<b>SUBJECT:</b>	<b>SOCIAL HOUSING WHITE PAPER</b>	
<b>WARD(S) AFFECTED:</b>	<b>ALL</b>	<b>TERMS OF REFERENCE: (See Notes)</b>

## **1.0 Recommendations**

- 1.1 That the Committee notes the implications for the Council's Housing Service of proposals contained in the Government's recently published Social Housing White Paper
- 1.2 That the Committee agrees to consider the financial and legal implications of the proposals at a future meeting.

## **2.0 Purpose of the Report**

- 2.1 The report outlines the content of the Government's recently published Social Housing White paper. The White Paper itself is attached at Appendix A.
- 2.2 It also highlights some potential financial, legal, and regulatory implications for the Council

## **3.0 Executive Summary**

- 3.1 The Social Housing White Paper was published by the Ministry of Housing, communities and Local Government (MHCLG) on 17 November 2020. It is the follow up to the Social Housing Green Paper that was published in August 2018, both of which are part of the Government's response to the Grenfell Tower tragedy and the Hackitt Review of building safety and fire safety.
- 3.2 The White Paper sets out seven core commitments that social housing residents should be able to expect from their landlord:
  - To be safe in your home
  - To know how your landlord is performing
  - To have complaints dealt with promptly and fairly

- To be treated with respect – backed by improved consumer standards and regulation
- To have your voice heard by your landlord
- To have a good quality home and neighbourhood to live in
- To be supported to take your first step to home ownership

3.3 A number of the measures in the White Paper have been anticipated for some time, including the proactive regulatory regime. The Council has already taken action to pre-empt the White Paper in recent reviews of Housing Safety Policies and the creation of new Housing Safety and Asset Management roles agreed in the recent review of the Housing Service. The Regulator for Social Housing (“the Regulator”) has made it clear that the paper is “non consultative” and throughout 2020 has stated that social landlords should not wait for the White Paper or for legislation and should be taking all the necessary steps now to comply with the existing regulation and prepare for the new regime.

#### 4.0 Detail

4.1 A detailed description of the proposed changes for Housing Services resulting from the Government’s recently published Social Housing White Paper and the possible implications for the Council are provided in the table below:

<b>Safety</b>	Social landlords will be legally required to identify a nominated senior person responsible for complying with statutory health and safety requirements. This person should be visible and accessible to tenants. They will have specific responsibility for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Driving a strong culture for prioritising and delivering health and safety requirements</li> <li>- Ensuring robust health and safety systems are in place</li> <li>- Providing assurance that health and safety risks are being managed effectively</li> </ul>
	Note: the draft Building Safety Bill also includes the requirement for an Accountable Person for higher-risk building safety and fire safety.
	Safety will be added to the Regulator’s Consumer Standard
	Smoke and carbon monoxide alarms will be mandatory in social housing
	Electrical safety standards in social housing will be consulted on to bring the sector in line with private rented sector standards
<b>Implications for SDDC</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The newly created Asset and Improvements Manager role will be required to sign off on the Council’s compliance with all applicable health and safety legislation within the Housing stock, i.e. fire, legionella, electrical, gas, asbestos and lift safety. This role must provide appropriate levels of assurance to the Regulator as well as being accountable (and directly accessible) to tenants.</li> <li>• Regular consultation and engagement with tenants on all health and safety matters will be required</li> <li>• The newly created Asset and Compliance Officer role will be responsible for reviewing and revising the current approach to assessing, reporting and scrutinising health and safety risks within the Council’s housing stock.</li> </ul>
<b>Landlord performance</b>	Social landlords will be required to identify a nominated senior person responsible for complying with the Regulator’s Consumer Standards.
	The regulator will introduce a national set of tenant satisfaction measures–

	social landlords will be required to regularly publish these
	Social landlords will be required to publish a breakdown of the how their income is being spent, including management costs and executive remuneration
<b>Implications for SDDC</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Given the breadth of issues covered by the Regulatory Standards the Head of Housing would be the nominated responsible officer. The standards will not only require compliance with all facets of the housing function but will also require that robust assurance is provided on performance data, anti-social behaviour (ASB), customer service and health and safety.</li> <li>The requirement to regularly collect, scrutinise and publish a new set of prescribed performance indicators and tenant satisfaction measures suggests a dedicated performance officer is required, along with the development of an appropriate technology solution for 'real time' reporting and publication.</li> <li>The requirement to regularly publish a detailed breakdown of management costs (and associated salaries) will place this information in the public domain</li> </ul>
<b>Complaint handling</b>	The 'democratic filter' will be removed by the Building Safety Bill, meaning that residents no longer have to wait eight weeks or go to a designated person to access the Housing Ombudsman
	Social landlords must widely publish their complaints policy
	To ensure complaints are resolved as quickly as possible, the Housing Ombudsman will have new powers to take action where landlords are acting unreasonably slowly, as well as increased resources to provide mediation and support to landlords
	From March 2021, the Housing Ombudsman will publish details of the individual cases it has determined, as well data on individual landlord's complaints volumes, categories and outcomes.
	The Housing Ombudsman will report cases of non-compliance with any of their orders to the Regulator
	MHCLG will run an awareness campaign for social housing residents on their rights to redress and routes to complain
	The Housing Ombudsman will engage directly with social housing residents through regular virtual events and a new Resident Panel
<b>Implications for SDDC</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Failure to comply with the new Housing Ombudsman Complaint Handling Code would result in investigation and enforcement by the Housing Ombudsman and a referral to the Regulator who may do the same.</li> <li>The Council must be in a position to accept and identify Housing complaints made via social media channels.</li> <li>The requirement to report annually to tenants remains mandatory and additional information must now be included in this. An annual report to members is also required.</li> <li>The new definition of complaints may lead to increased number of complaints, which the Council needs to be prepared for</li> </ul>
<b>Consumer regulation</b>	A system of routine inspections will be introduced by the Regulator – all social landlords with over 1,000 homes will be inspected at least every four years
	The Regulator will also conduct specific, reactive investigations and inspection where a potential compliance breach is identified
	Findings from inspection, investigations and details of enforcement action taken will be published <sup>4</sup> .

	<p>An annual desktop review of a range of information sources is expected</p> <p>Local authorities will be required to self-refer breaches of consumer standards to the Regulator.</p> <p>The Regulator will seek assurance that councillors have sufficient oversight of regulatory compliance</p> <p>The Regulator will have new powers, including unlimited fines and the ability to issue Performance Improvement Plans</p> <p>A new consumer regulation function within the Regulator will be created to deliver the new proactive consumer regulatory regime</p>
<b>Implications for SDDC</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Compliance with the Regulatory Standards will require the delivery of a good service and the service must be able to evidence and ensure its compliance.</li> <li>• Significant preparation for inspections will be required, which will be detailed and time consuming and could be at short notice.</li> <li>• An annual programme of compliance will need to be established to comply with the annual desktop review</li> <li>• A system to identify potential and actual breaches in a timely manner is required, and a process to report these to the Regulator.</li> <li>• Compliance monitoring and scrutiny will need to be built into the Housing and community Services Committee work Programme</li> <li>• The Housing Service may require additional support to ensure all requirements are met, documented and recorded,</li> </ul>
<b>Tenant voice</b>	<p>Social landlords will have to demonstrate to the Regulator how they have sought out and considered ways to improve tenant engagement The Council is well placed in this regard having only recently reviewed its tenant engagement strategy. The Strategy and Action Plan were presented to the Housing and Community Services Committee on 1/10/2019</p> <p>Ministers will continue to listen to residents directly</p> <p>MHCLG will deliver an opportunities and empowerment programme, providing a range of learning and support activities to provide residents with tools to better influence and hold landlords to account</p> <p>MHCLG will review the professional qualifications and standards required for social housing staff in different roles, including senior staff. The review will include customer service, mental health support, courtesy, respect, empathy and professional competence.</p>
<b>Implications for SDDC</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A new approach to engaging with tenants has already been incorporated within the Housing Customer Engagement strategy</li> <li>• All staff that interact with social housing tenants will need to achieve the appropriate level of professional competence and/or qualification, which may be nationally prescribed. This should include matters of health and safety, customer service and mental health. Councillors may also require training on these matters to fulfil their obligations with the Regulator.</li> <li>• There will be cost implications to ensuring staff are trained and qualified</li> </ul>
<b>Quality home and neighbourhood</b>	<p>MHCLG will review the Decent Homes Standard to consider how it can better support decarbonisation and energy efficiency, neighbourhood and home safety, and improved communal and green spaces. The first part of the review will be completed by Autumn 2021.</p> <p>MHCLG will clarify the roles of agencies involved in tackling ASB</p> <p>The new national tenant satisfaction measures will include measures on responsible neighbourhood management, including tackling ASB</p> <p>MHCLG will soon publish the findings of a review of local authority allocation schemes</p> <p>The regulatory standards will be updated to require social landlords have a policy setting out how they will tackle domestic abuse</p>

<b>Implications for SDDDC</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Council will need to consider the cost of achieving EPC level 3 by 2030 and net zero by 2050 . Work is already underway with Nottingham City council to assess the level and nature of works required.</li> <li>• A Housing Domestic Abuse Policy will be presented to Housing and Community Services Committee in March 2021</li> </ul>
<b>Home ownership</b>	<p>This chapter reiterates previous Government announcements around affordable home ownership:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The introduction of a new shared ownership model</li> <li>- A commitment that 50% of new homes funded by Homes England will be for affordable home ownership <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The introduction of a new Right to Shared Ownership for grant funded Housing Association Homes</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<b>Implications for SDDC</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The new requirements will have a negative impact on viability of sites as Registered Providers will need to sell a lower percentage and undertake maintenance / compliance for the first 10 years</li> <li>• Some sites won't be viable, and this will reduce overall numbers of affordable homes delivered</li> <li>• The 1% staircasing is complex and difficult to administer</li> <li>• Many sites within the District are in Designated Protection Areas (DPA's) and will need restrictions lifted to enable the delivery of shared ownership homes (as they wont stay affordable in perpetuity) – this will require increased officer time to administer</li> </ul> <hr/> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Possibility of mandatory inclusion of shared Ownership within funded development schemes.</li> <li>• The need for greater transparency and equity within Service Charges for leaseholders and tenants.</li> </ul>

4.2 A new suite of national Housing Performance Indicators is proposed in the White Paper. Some of these are new indicators the collection and reporting of which will need to be supported by the Corporate Performance Management approach. The proposed indicators are:

- Decent Homes Standard compliance
- Responsive repairs completed right first time
- Tenant satisfaction with repairs and maintenance service
- Compliance with health and safety obligations (gas, electric, fire, asbestos, water, lifts)
- Tenant satisfaction with the health and safety of their home
- Number of complaints received
- % of complaints resolved within agreed timescale
- Tenant satisfaction with landlord's complaint handling
- Number of complaints relating to fairness and/or respect
- Tenant satisfaction that their landlord listens to their views and takes notice of them
- Tenant satisfaction with landlord's engagement of tenants
- % of communal areas meeting the required standard
- Number of complaints relating to communal areas

- Tenant satisfaction with landlord actions to keep communal areas clean and safe
- Tenant satisfaction with landlord contribution to the neighbourhood associated with their home
- Number of complaints relating to ASB
- Tenant satisfaction with landlord handling of ASB
- Tenant overall satisfaction with the service their landlord provides

## **5.0 Financial Implications**

- 5.1 There are direct financial implications within the White Paper regarding the provision of enhanced levels of safety in all Council dwellings. This is apparent in the provision of Carbon Monoxide monitoring in all dwellings and a higher level of electrical safety.
- 5.2 The delivery of improvements that reduce the carbon footprint of the Council's Housing stock will also have financial implications although these may be offset by additional grant funding being made available to the council.
- 5.3 The requirement to provide more transparency with regard to service charges for leaseholders may require further review of current service costs for leaseholders and tenants
- 5.4 Separate reports providing more detail in these areas will be presented to the Housing and Community Services Committee in due course.

## **6.0 Corporate Implications**

### **Employment Implications**

- 6.1 There are no direct employment implications within this report.

### **Legal Implications**

- 6.2 The White Paper does have some legal implications for the Council in terms of its compliance with a new inspection and regulatory regime. This includes new processes for handling and reporting complaints and a new relationship with the Housing Ombudsman.

### **Corporate Plan Implications**

- 6.3 The proposals in the White Paper are aligned to the Council's Corporate Aims to:
- Tackle climate change: Strive to make South Derbyshire District Council carbon neutral by 2030. Work with residents, businesses and partners to reduce their carbon footprint.
  - Deliver excellent services: Ensure consistency in the way the Council deals with its service users. Have in place methods of communication that enable customers to provide and receive information. Ensure technology enables us to effectively connect with our communities
  - Support and safeguard the most vulnerable With partners encourage independent living and keep residents healthy and happy in their homes. Promote health and wellbeing across the District. Improve the condition of housing stock and public buildings.

### **Risk Impact**

- 6.4 The importance of housing safety has already been acknowledged by the Council in the Service Delivery Risk Register.

## **7.0 Community Impact**

### **Consultation**

- 7.1 The proposals within the White Paper will be discussed with tenants as part of the delivery of the Housing Customer Engagement Action plan.

### **Equality and Diversity Impact**

- 7.2 The proposals and suggested performance indicators within the White Paper will enhance the levels of reporting of performance regarding fairness and respect, vulnerable groups and also wider awareness and understanding of issues facing these groups especially people suffering from mental ill health

### **Social Value Impact**

- 7.3 The proposed performance indicators include a range of measures that will assist in measuring the Social Value Impact of the Housing Service from the tenant and resident perspective.

### **Environmental Sustainability**

- 7.4 The White Paper provides a clear outline of the important role that Social Housing providers have in reducing the carbon footprint and increasing the energy efficiency within the Housing stock.

## **8.0 Conclusions**

- 8.1 The White Paper provides a welcome focus on the importance of the provision of good quality, safe affordable homes
- 8.2 It also does create some potentially significant financial implications for the Council and other landlords
- 8.3 A new regulatory framework will also create some additional financial and legal challenges for the Council.

## **9.0 Background Papers**

- 9.1 None



Ministry of Housing,  
Communities &  
Local Government

# The Charter for Social Housing Residents

## Social Housing White Paper





## Credits

Page 9 - Marlake Crescent,  
Bell Phillips, photo credit Kilian O'Sullivan

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## Foreword from the Prime Minister

As a cub reporter in the 1980s, I was once despatched to a Wolverhampton council estate to call on a young family who had written in about the damp in their flat.

And what struck me most when I arrived wasn't the condensation streaming down the windows like a waterfall or the black spores of mould metastasising across the walls or even the rasping cough of the small baby, which seemed to get worse even in the short time I was there.

It was the miserable despair of the father, a man utterly bereft of hope at the problem ever being sorted out. He'd complained to the housing office, he'd complained to his local councillor, he'd complained to anyone who would listen and many who wouldn't, but nobody seemed to care, nobody seemed willing or able to do anything about it.

And while that scene unfolded more than 30 years ago, the culture and attitude that allowed it to happen – the idea that social tenants are less worthy of respect or can be ignored when their views are inconvenient – remains all too prevalent today.

Although the exhaustive independent inquiry into the causes of the Grenfell tragedy will not report its final findings for some time yet, it is already clear that the people who called Grenfell Tower home were, like that Wolverhampton father, no strangers to their voices going unheard.

If there were only a handful of social tenants in this country it would be a matter of grave concern.

In a nation where many millions rely on their local council or a housing association to help keep a roof over their head – and in the UK the social rented sector makes up a greater share of housing stock than in most other major economies – it is nothing short of a scandal. And it's one this government is going to deal with.

The proposals in this White Paper will make clear the standards that every social tenant in England is entitled to expect from their landlords.

They will ensure that people feel safe and secure in their homes, can get problems fixed before they spiral out of control, and see exactly how good their landlord is at dealing with complaints.

Above all, it will give social housing tenants a voice, and ensure that it is listened to.

We're levelling up this country, making it fairer for everyone – and that includes making sure social housing tenants are treated with the respect they deserve, so that nobody should ever again feel as hopeless as the man I met all those years ago.

**The Rt. Hon. Boris Johnson MP**

**Prime Minister**

“We're levelling up this country, making it fairer for everyone – and that includes making sure social housing tenants are treated with the respect they deserve.”



## Foreword from the Secretary of State

One of the privileges of my time as Secretary of State has been meeting with the bereaved and survivors of the Grenfell Tower tragedy. Their courage and grace shone through on each encounter, however harrowing and heart breaking the stories they told.

Time and again, former residents would return to two themes: firstly, that they didn't feel listened to when they raised concerns and complaints and could only wonder what might have been avoided if their voices had been heard. And secondly, a broader sense that they had not been treated with the dignity and respect they deserved. Indeed, the same dignity and respect they themselves have exhibited, in unimaginable grief and distress since the night of 14 June 2017.

These conversations with me and my predecessors were the genesis of this White Paper. Those most affected by the events at Grenfell Tower understandably seek answers and justice and that is what an independent public inquiry aims to provide. But, it is clear to me they also seek positive action and change for the benefit of others. I do not presume to assert that this White Paper alone answers that desire, but it is in that spirit that we publish it and will ensure its aims and ambitions are realised.

This Charter for Social Housing Residents sets out to raise the standard of social housing and meet the aspirations of residents throughout the country, today and in the future. It speaks to safety, to quality, to family, to life free from the blight of crime and anti-social behaviour, to the opportunity to move from rent to ownership, where this is possible.

I want housing associations and local councils to ensure that those who live in social housing are treated with dignity and respect. The interests and perspective of residents must be given greater prominence in service delivery. And when things go wrong, as they inevitably sometimes do, tenants should be able to seek redress and know that they will be heard. No one should accept poor service, nor show deference to those that provide it. Landlords should welcome the views of their tenants as a route to better management.

I want tenants to feel protected and empowered by a regulatory regime and a culture of transparency, accountability, decency and service befitting of the best intentions and traditions of social housing in this country.

I hope the ideas and regulatory changes we set out in this White Paper will make a measurable difference to the experiences of those living in England's four million social homes in the years ahead.

**The Rt. Hon. Robert Jenrick**

**Secretary of State for Ministry of Housing,  
Communities and Local Government**

“This Charter for Social Housing Residents sets out to raise the standard of social housing and meet the aspirations of residents throughout the country, today and in the future.”

# Executive Summary

## A home should always be more than just four walls and a roof.

A home should provide safety, security and dignity. An opportunity to put down roots and contribute to our community so we can enjoy social and civic lives. Regardless of who you rent from, your landlord should treat you fairly and with respect. And if things go wrong there should be a swift and effective means of redress.

We all have these expectations, but for some social housing residents they have not always been met. This White Paper seeks to change that, establishing a new Charter for social housing residents.

This country has a long tradition of providing homes for those most in need, going back many centuries. The first recorded almshouse was founded in York by King Athelstan. The oldest still in existence is the Hospital of St Cross in Winchester, dating to about 1132. During the nineteenth century and early twentieth century, great philanthropists and social reformers changed the face of housing. They recognised that good quality homes with open space and amenities were essential to overcoming the chronic public health challenges of the time. Model villages such as George Cadbury's Bournville in Birmingham, Joseph Rowntree's New Earswick in York, and George Peabody's and Octavia Hill's developments in inner city London were born. Octavia Hill said her aim was to 'make lives noble, homes happy and family life good'.

From the 1890s, some local councils started to build social housing. This was given a huge boost by the Addison Act of 1919, which provided central government funding to local authorities to build "homes fit for heroes" as troops returned from World War 1. Ever since, local councils have played a significant role in providing good homes to working people and creating strong communities, particularly rebuilding the country after the devastation of World War 2 when the country lost over a million homes and 4 million more were damaged.

As of 2018, local councils provided homes to over 1.6 million households<sup>1</sup>. This Government has been clear that we want to see councils build more homes and has made this possible through removing restrictions on their borrowing so they can invest.

Since the 1970s we have also seen the tremendous growth of housing associations, which has transformed how social housing is delivered now. Many housing associations began in that decade from community roots, often from local churches or communities coming together in response to homelessness. Several of those small charities have become the large housing associations we know today. Housing associations own approximately 60% of our social housing. The 1974 Housing Act enabled the charitable housing association sector to access funding to build new homes. In the 1980s, housing associations were given freedom to access private borrowing, seeking to blend charitable aims with commercial acumen to build more homes and take on homes from local authorities. We want housing associations to build yet more homes and to deliver their mission of charitable purpose combined with the best customer service of the private sector.

From the 1980s, social housing became not only a crucial safety net for those in need, but also, for many, a vital step on the ladder towards home ownership. The introduction of the Right to Buy and shared ownership enabled millions of social tenants to buy a home of their own. We want to support even more social housing residents to own a home. This is why we are introducing a simpler and fairer shared ownership offer, allowing people to get on the first rung by buying only 10% of their home – and why we have introduced the Right to Shared Ownership, which will enable people living in rental homes built under the new Affordable Homes Programme to purchase their own home through shared ownership.

Today, the sector provides homes to 4 million households. Many landlords provide a good service to their residents. They provide a decent and safe home. They support thriving neighbourhoods and communities. They are open with their residents, listen to them and treat them with respect.

<sup>1</sup> 'Live Table 104' <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistical-data-sets/live-tables-on-dwelling-stock-including-vacants>

But this is not true of all landlords.

The tragedy at Grenfell Tower in June 2017 raised critical questions for everyone involved in social housing, including residents, landlords, developers, and local and national government. We are committed to learning the lessons of the Grenfell tragedy and have already taken significant action. We have supported the bereaved and survivors, established an independent public inquiry and started implementing the recommendations of its Phase 1 findings. And through the Building Safety Bill we are undertaking the biggest change in building safety for a generation.

We have also been listening intensely to social housing residents across the country about the change that they want to see. The social housing Green Paper in 2018 sought views on a wide range of potential changes, and alongside it we launched a Call for Evidence about how social housing is regulated. We received over 1,000 responses to the social housing Green Paper and over 100 to the Call for Evidence. Many residents reported positive experiences, but others did not. We heard concerns about safety and quality; of complaints being handled slowly or poorly; and about residents feeling they were not listened to, or not treated with respect.

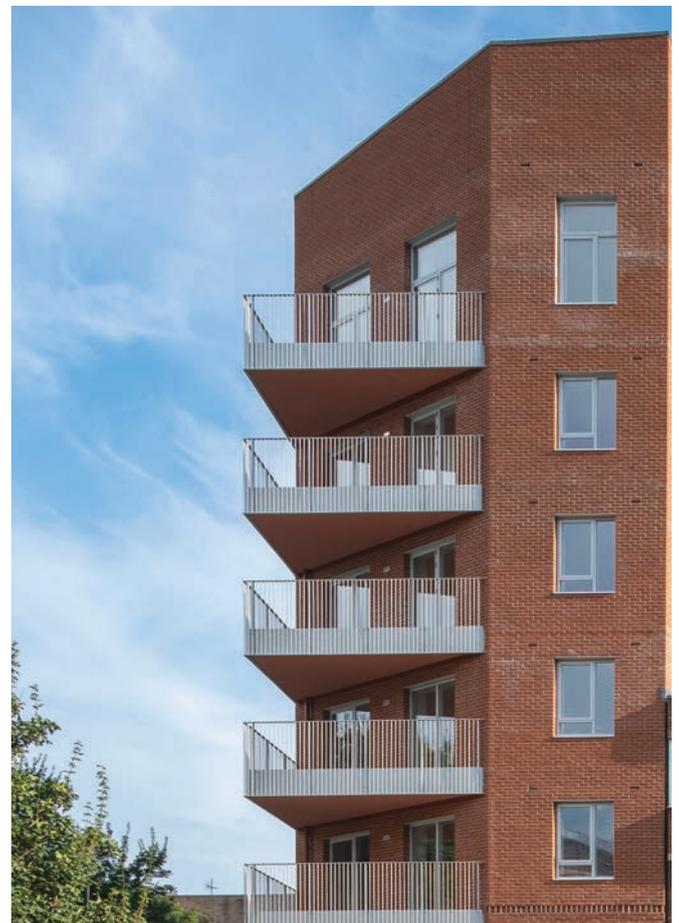
The COVID-19 pandemic has reinforced the importance of people's homes, communities and neighbourhoods – including access to green spaces. Good landlords have ensured that their vulnerable residents have not been left alone, and have gone the extra mile to support them. It remains important for people to have access to open green spaces and playgrounds to promote exercise and mental wellbeing. And it is critical that those in social housing, as elsewhere, can live free from the blight of crime, drugs and anti-social behaviour, in developments well designed to protect them and with law enforcement there to take decisive action where necessary.

Alongside the challenges posed by COVID-19, social landlords are seeking to increase energy efficiency, and are working to improve the safety of their buildings. We recognise that these pose very significant challenges and are assisting through targeted grants and support.

Many landlords have made positive changes since the publication of the social housing Green Paper. And there have been welcome initiatives to support sector-wide culture change, such as the National Housing Federation's Together with Tenants<sup>2</sup> programme and the resident-led guide on how to engage with residents by See the Person and the Chartered Institute of Housing.<sup>3</sup>

But there is more to do to ensure that all social housing residents have the experience we expect for them. This White Paper sets out how we will achieve this, through our new Charter for social housing residents.

Building on the commitments we have already made on building safety, to the highest single funding commitment to affordable housing in a decade, and to establishing more routes for tenants to own their own home, this White Paper will deliver transformational change for social housing residents.



<sup>2</sup> <https://www.housing.org.uk/our-work/together-with-tenants/>

<sup>3</sup> *It's Not Okay: a guide to tackling stigma in social housing* <https://www.cih.org/publications/its-not-okay-a-guide-to-tackling-stigma-in-social-housing>



“A home should provide safety, security and dignity. An opportunity to put down roots and contribute to our community so we can enjoy social and civic lives. Regardless of who you rent from, your landlord should treat you fairly and with respect. And if things go wrong there should be a swift and effective means of redress.”

# A new Charter for social housing residents

Our new Charter sets out what every social housing resident should be able to expect:

- 1. To be safe in your home.** We will work with industry and landlords to ensure every home is safe and secure.
- 2. To know how your landlord is performing,** including on repairs, complaints and safety, and how it spends its money, so you can hold it to account.
- 3. To have your complaints dealt with promptly and fairly,** with access to a strong Ombudsman who will give you swift and fair redress when needed.
- 4. To be treated with respect,** backed by a strong consumer regulator and improved consumer standards for tenants.
- 5. To have your voice heard by your landlord,** for example through regular meetings, scrutiny panels or being on its Board. The Government will provide help, if you want it, to give you the tools to ensure your landlord listens.
- 6. To have a good quality home and neighbourhood to live in,** with your landlord keeping your home in good repair.
- 7. To be supported to take your first step to ownership,** so it is a ladder to other opportunities, should your circumstances allow.

## How we will ensure this Charter is met

This White Paper sets out what we will do to ensure landlords live up to this new Charter. Our package of measures is summarised below. The most important step we will take is to work with the Regulator of Social Housing (“the regulator”) to create a strong, proactive consumer regulatory regime, strengthening the formal standards against which landlords are regulated and requiring them to:

- be transparent about their performance and decision-making – so that tenants and the regulator can hold them to account;
- put things right when they go wrong; and
- listen to tenants through effective engagement.

# Summary of the policy measures in this White Paper

## To be safe in your home

Building and fire safety is a paramount concern for residents. We are committed to ensuring that all homes are safe to live in, and have identified ways both to raise safety standards and to help residents feel safer in their homes. Chapter 1 sets out that we will:

- Legislate to strengthen the Regulator of Social Housing’s consumer regulation objectives to explicitly include safety.
- Legislate to require social landlords to identify a nominated person responsible for complying with their health and safety requirements.
- Expect the Regulator of Social Housing to prepare a Memorandum of Understanding with the Health and Safety Executive to ensure effective sharing of information with the Building Safety Regulator.
- Launch a consultation on requiring smoke alarms in social housing and introducing new expectations for carbon monoxide alarms.
- Consult on measures to ensure that social housing residents are protected from harm caused by poor electrical safety.
- Continue to work with the Social Sector (Building Safety) Engagement Best Practice Group and the Building Safety Regulator to ensure resident voices are heard.

## To know how your landlord is performing

If tenants are to be able to hold their landlord to account, they need to know how it is performing and what decisions it is making. This will allow them to challenge their landlord when things are not working as they should, and to compare its performance with that of other social landlords. Chapter 2 sets out how we will:

- Create a set of tenant satisfaction measures for landlords on things that matter to tenants.
- Introduce a new access to information scheme for social housing tenants of housing associations and other private registered providers of social housing, so that information relating to landlords is easily available.
- Ensure landlords provide a clear breakdown of how their income is being spent.
- Require landlords to identify a senior person in their organisation who is responsible for ensuring they comply with the consumer standards set by the Regulator of Social Housing.

## **To have your complaints dealt with promptly and fairly**

Residents should get swift and effective resolution of complaints. But we heard from some residents that making a complaint can be difficult and take too long – and that it can sometimes take months for the complaint to be resolved, or for the resident to be able to access the Housing Ombudsman. Chapter 3 sets out how we have recently:

- Acted to speed up access to the Housing Ombudsman by removing (through the Building Safety Bill) the need for residents to either go to a ‘designated person’ or wait eight weeks before approaching the Ombudsman directly.
- Expanded the Housing Ombudsman service, and increased its powers, so it will make decisions more quickly and can take stronger action against landlords where needed.

Chapter 3 also sets out how we will do more to:

- Provide residents with consistency across landlord complaint handling by ensuring landlords self-assess against the Housing Ombudsman’s Complaint Handling Code by 31 December 2020.
- Ensure tenants know how to raise complaints and have confidence in the system by launching a communications campaign. We will expect landlords, the Housing Ombudsman and the Building Safety Regulator to ensure residents have clear and up to date information on how to complain.
- Legislate to ensure clear co-operation between the Housing Ombudsman and the Regulator of Social Housing to hold landlords to account more effectively when things go wrong.
- Make landlords more accountable for their actions by publicising the details of cases determined and published by the Housing Ombudsman.

## **To be treated fairly and with respect, backed by a strong consumer regulator for tenants**

Transformation of consumer regulation is needed to further drive the right behaviours and hold landlords to account when they fail. This will complement the robust economic regulation already in place, which will be maintained. Chapter 4 sets out our commitment to:

- Transform the consumer regulation role of the Regulator of Social Housing (“the regulator”) so it proactively monitors and drives landlords’ compliance with improved consumer standards.

- Remove the ‘serious detriment test’ and introduce routine inspections for the largest landlords (those with over 1,000 homes) every four years.
- Change the regulator’s objectives to explicitly cover safety and transparency, and work with it to review its consumer standards to ensure they are up to date and deliver its revised objectives.
- Give the regulator the power to publish a Code of Practice on the consumer standards to be clear what landlords are required to deliver.
- Strengthen the regulator’s enforcement powers to tackle failing landlords and to respond to new challenges facing the sector.
- Hold local authorities to account as landlords, including how they manage Arms Length Management Organisations and Tenant Management Organisations, to make sure they deliver a good service to tenants.
- Require the regulator to set up an Advisory Committee to provide independent and unbiased advice on discharging its functions.

## **To have your voice heard by your landlord**

Stronger resident engagement by landlords will give residents a clearer voice so that they can hold landlords to account. In Chapter 5 we set out how we will:

- Expect the regulator to require landlords to seek out best practice and consider how they can continually improve the way they engage with social housing tenants.
- Deliver a new opportunities and empowerment programme for social housing residents, to support more effective engagement between landlords and residents, and to give residents tools to influence their landlords and hold them to account.
- Review professional training and development to ensure residents receive a high standard of customer service.

## **To have a good quality home and neighbourhood to live in**

We heard that tenants are proud of their communities and want greater investment in them. We want to ensure social tenants have good quality, decent homes and neighbourhoods, including access to green space and support for wellbeing. Chapter 6 sets out that we will:

- Review the Decent Homes Standard, including access to and the quality of green spaces.

- Tackle anti-social behaviour by enabling tenants to know who is responsible for action and who can support and assist them if they are faced with anti-social behaviour.
- Consider the results of the allocations evidence collection exercise findings to ensure that housing is allocated in the fairest way possible and achieves the best outcomes for local places and communities.
- Introducing a new Affordable Homes Guarantee Scheme.
- Encouraging local authorities to take advantage of our removal of the borrowing cap to build more council homes.

The measures in this White Paper apply to social housing landlords and residents in England. Separate arrangements apply in the devolved administrations of Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland.

### To be supported to take your first step to ownership

We are continuing to increase the supply of good quality social homes, and working to give as many residents as possible the right to purchase their own home. Chapter 7 explains how we are:

- Investing £11.5 billion to build up to 180,000 affordable homes – the highest single funding commitment to affordable housing in a decade. Around half of these new homes will be for affordable home ownership.
- Implementing a new, fairer and more accessible model for Shared Ownership.
- Implementing a new Right to Shared Ownership for tenants of housing associations and other private registered providers who live in new grant funded homes for rent.
- Emphasising through our new National Design Guide the importance of building beautiful and well-designed social homes.

#### Key terms used in this White Paper:

**Residents** – This White Paper considers the issues facing all residents of social housing, including those who rent, leaseholders and shared owners. We have referred throughout to “residents” to include all those living in social housing, except where an issue is only relevant to those who are renting from a social housing landlord, in which case we refer to “tenants”.

**Landlords** – Generally throughout this White Paper we use the term “landlord” to cover anyone who rents social homes to people. It also covers social landlords of leaseholders and shared owners.

Changes to the Regulator of Social Housing and its powers will apply to tenants.<sup>4</sup>

There is a full glossary of terms used at the end of this White Paper.



<sup>4</sup> Some of the regulator’s Standards do not apply to shared owners as set out at: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/regulatory-standards>

# Chapter 1:

## To be safe in your home



## Ensuring good health through good quality, safe and decent homes has been at the cornerstone of developing social housing over the past century, led by the vision shown by the pioneering work of Octavia Hill, George Peabody and others.

The tragedy at Grenfell Tower shook public trust in building safety and revealed significant failings. Our renewed drive in this White Paper puts residents back at the heart of building safety and goes further in delivering changes to ensure that every social housing resident is safe in their home.

### We have already:

- Made up to £400 million available to social sector landlords to fund the removal and replacement of unsafe cladding of aluminium composite materials on residential social housing buildings over 18 metres, and announced a further £1 billion of grant funding to cover the costs of remediating unsafe non-aluminium composite materials on residential buildings over 18 metres.
- Published a Building Safety Bill, which sets out an enhanced regulatory regime for all buildings, including a more stringent fire and structural safety regime for higher-risk buildings, with residents having a strong voice in the system.
- Published a Fire Safety Consultation on Government proposals to implement the recommendations in the Grenfell Tower Inquiry's Phase 1 report that require changes to the law.

- Supported a Social Sector (Building Safety) Engagement Best Practice Group, bringing together social landlords and residents from across the country to test approaches to engagement on building safety.
- Published a Fire Safety Bill which will clarify the scope of the Fire Safety Order in its application to the structure, external walls and flat entrance doors in multi-occupied residential buildings.

### We will:

- Legislate to strengthen the Regulator of Social Housing's consumer regulation objectives to explicitly include safety.
- Legislate to require social landlords to identify a nominated person responsible for complying with their health and safety requirements.
- Expect the Regulator of Social Housing to prepare a Memorandum of Understanding with the Health and Safety Executive to ensure effective sharing of information with the Building Safety Regulator.
- Launch a consultation on mandating smoke and carbon monoxide alarms in social housing.
- Consult on measures to ensure that social housing residents are protected from harm caused by poor electrical safety.
- Build on the work of the Social Sector (Building Safety) Engagement Best Practice Group, supporting the development of statutory and good practice guidance on engaging residents in all tenures on safety issues.



## Ensuring buildings are safe

1. Building safety is a top priority for the Government. We have already made up to £400 million available to social sector landlords to fund the removal and replacement of unsafe cladding of aluminium composite materials (ACM) on residential social housing buildings over 18 metres. At Budget 2020 we went further, announcing an additional £1 billion to accelerate the remediation of unsafe non-ACM on residential buildings over 18 metres. At the end of October 2020, 151 (97%) of the 155 social sector buildings identified with ACM cladding systems unlikely to meet Building Regulations had either completed or started remediation, with 90 (58%) having now completed remediation and 74% in total having de-risked the building by removing the ACM cladding. Plans are in place to remediate the remaining four buildings.<sup>5</sup>
2. In July 2020, we published our Building Safety Bill, which brings forward measures to put in place an enhanced regulatory regime for all buildings, including a more stringent regime for the design, construction, day-to-day management and maintenance of higher-risk buildings, with residents having a strong voice in the system. The new regimes will deliver stronger enforcement and sanctions to ensure homes are safe. These will ensure the right people are held to account and will drive a culture change to put safety first. Local enforcement agencies and national regulators, including a new Building Safety Regulator, will work together to ensure that the safety of buildings across all tenures is improved. The Building Safety Regulator will be responsible for all regulatory decisions under the new regime during the design, construction, occupation and refurbishment of higher-risk buildings.
3. The proposals in the Building Safety Bill aim to bring about a culture change so that organisations who manage buildings across all tenures, including higher-risk buildings, prioritise residents and their safety. It is important that the social housing regime supports fire safety, and that the building safety and social housing regimes work effectively together. **To do this we will:**
  - **Legislate to strengthen the Regulator of Social Housing’s consumer regulation objective so that it explicitly includes safety (paragraph 59).**
  - **Legislate to require social landlords to identify a nominated person responsible for complying with their health and safety requirements (paragraph 61).**
  - **Expect the Regulator of Social Housing to prepare a Memorandum of Understanding with the Health and Safety Executive, once the national Building Safety Regulator is created, to ensure effective sharing of information (paragraph 62).**
4. Alongside the Building Safety Bill, we published the Fire Safety Consultation as part of government’s package of reform to improve building and fire safety in all regulated premises where people live, stay or work. The Fire Safety Consultation seeks views and asks questions on our proposals to implement the recommendations in the Grenfell Tower Inquiry’s Phase 1 report that require changes to the law. These proposals seek to provide residents with greater assurance and fire safety improvements in their buildings. We are seeking to implement the recommendations in the most practical, proportionate and effective manner. In many cases, our proposals go beyond the Grenfell Tower Inquiry’s recommendations, whilst in others we have proposed an approach which prioritises residents’ safety in a way that is proportionate to the risks the Grenfell Tower Inquiry identified.
5. We published a Fire Safety Bill which clarifies that under the Fire Safety Order 2005 a responsible person or duty-holder for multi-occupied residential buildings must assess the fire safety risks for the structure, external walls and flat entrance doors as part of the fire risk assessment process. Where appropriate, the responsible person or duty-holder must put in place general fire precautions to mitigate any risks in relation to these parts of the building.

## Engagement on safety

6. Putting residents at the heart of building safety continues to be a core priority for us. The Independent Review of Building Regulations and Fire Safety, commissioned following the Grenfell tragedy, called for government action to develop a national culture of engagement on fire and structural safety for residents of all tenures. We also heard in response to the *Building a Safer Future* consultation that residents want more effective, tailored, regular communication around fire and structural safety issues, and a range of ways to engage. Residents told us that more effective engagement with landlords would help to support them to feel safer in their homes.
7. Social landlords have a key role to play in supporting their residents to feel safe in their homes. For residents, knowing you live in a safe, secure building is of paramount importance, for your physical safety and for your mental health. Trust in your landlord is crucial to this, and ensuring there is two-way engagement on how safety is managed is a central part of gaining that trust. To support this change in culture, we want to make sure that residents know how to communicate with their landlord or building manager on fire and structural safety issues, and that they feel confident their voices are heard. We also want to create a culture where landlords and building safety managers communicate effectively with their residents on safety issues.
8. To deliver this, through the Building Safety Bill we are introducing a requirement for the 'Accountable Person' for each higher-risk building to produce and implement a resident engagement strategy to promote the participation of tenants and leaseholders in decisions that are made about building safety risks in their building. This will ensure that:
  - residents automatically receive information about the fire and structural protections in place to manage risks within their building, and are able to access the building Safety Case Report (a report that the Accountable Person will have to write in which they make an explicit claim that they are managing major accident risks within the building and evidence exactly how they are going about it) and more detailed safety information about the building where appropriate, if they wish to do so;
- residents have access to a quick and effective route to raise complaints about fire and structural safety; and that
- residents have information to enable them to understand and fulfil their safety responsibilities.
9. We have learned a great deal from listening to residents and understanding what changes they want to see. We consulted a mixed-tenure Residents Reference Panel, whose members helped us to ensure that our reforms are informed by the experience of people living in higher-risk buildings.
10. Since March 2019 we have also been running a Social Sector (Building Safety) Engagement Best Practice Group<sup>6</sup> bringing together social landlords and residents from across the country to test approaches to engagement on building safety and foster stronger partnerships between residents and landlords. This has taken forward work in three areas:
  - information and understanding;
  - landlord and resident responsibilities; and
  - action to take in the event of a fire.
11. The pilots run by the group have explored ways to support residents and landlords to communicate effectively on fire safety issues. This work has helped inform our approach to the provision of resident information and the setting of responsibilities in the Building Safety Bill published in July 2020 for pre-legislative scrutiny. We have really valued the voluntary effort that residents have made in this group to identifying practical ways to improve communication on building safety, and for the support and time that landlords have contributed to taking this forward. The group's final report and recommendations will be published shortly.
12. We are working with the shadow Building Safety Regulator (based in the Health and Safety Executive) to ensure that resident voice continues to shape the new regulatory regime as it evolves, building on the propositions in our Building Safety Bill that the regulator will establish a resident panel to assist it in determining its priorities and in informing any guidance that it publishes on resident engagement.

<sup>6</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/groups/social-sector-building-safety-engagement-best-practice-group>



“Social landlords have a key role to play in supporting their residents to feel safe in their homes. For residents, knowing you live in a safe, secure building is of paramount importance, for your physical safety and for your mental health.”

## Setting standards on smoke and carbon monoxide alarms and electrical safety

13. Safety measures in the social sector should be in line with the legal protections afforded to private sector tenants. Responses to the social housing Green Paper showed overwhelming support for consistency in safety measures across social and private rented housing. Although many social landlords have already taken steps to keep tenants safe, it is unacceptable that around 200,000 social households are without a working smoke alarm and over 2.3 million are without a working carbon monoxide alarm.<sup>7</sup>

14. We want to bring safety requirements for smoke alarms and carbon monoxide alarms in line with private rented sector requirements. That is why, **alongside this White Paper, we have launched a consultation on extending requirements for smoke and carbon monoxide alarms, including introducing new requirements in social housing. We will also consult separately on ways to ensure that social housing tenants are protected from harm caused by poor electrical safety.**



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<sup>7</sup> 'English Housing Survey, Headline Report 2018-19'

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/860076/2018-19\\_EHS\\_Headline\\_Report.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/860076/2018-19_EHS_Headline_Report.pdf)

## Chapter 2:

# To know how your landlord is performing

If tenants are to be able to hold their landlords to account, they need information on how their landlord is performing, what decisions it is making and who is responsible.



As housing associations began to expand from the mid-1970s, they were generally closely connected to the communities they were building homes for, but this has become strained with the more substantial growth in the scale of their operations from the mid-2000's. Some housing associations have been criticised for excessive administration costs and executive pay, with reported average Chief Executive pay of £181,000 in 2019/20 – more than the Prime Minister – and some, in excess of £400,000 per year<sup>8</sup>. This White Paper seeks to redress that balance and recreate strong connections between landlords and tenants to ensure transparency and accountability and ensure all landlords consider their purpose and their tenants, at all times. We have heard clearly from tenants how important this is to them.

### We will:

- Expect the Regulator of Social Housing to bring in a set of tenant satisfaction measures for all landlords on things that matter to tenants.
- Introduce a new access to information scheme for social housing tenants of housing associations and other private registered providers of social housing, so that information relating to landlords is easily accessible by tenants.
- Ensure landlords provide a clear breakdown of how their income is being spent, including levels of executive remuneration, to be published alongside their tenant satisfaction measures.
- Require landlords to identify a senior person in their organisation who is responsible for ensuring they comply with the consumer standards set by the Regulator of Social Housing.
- Expect landlords to report to every tenant on such matters at least once a year, if not continuously, using technology.

## Tenant Satisfaction Measures

15. Although landlords are already required to give tenants timely and relevant performance information, including the publication of an annual report, the format and content of this information can vary significantly. Private registered providers and local authority landlords should be giving tenants access to a set of clear, comparable tenant satisfaction measures on the things they care about to ensure they can understand their landlord's performance. This information is also important in informing the

Regulator of Social Housing's ("the regulator's") approach to regulating landlords.

16. **The Regulator of Social Housing will develop a process for collecting and publishing a core set of tenant satisfaction measures for all social landlords.** These should follow the themes set out in the social housing Green Paper, widely supported by tenants, around properties being in good repair, building safety, engagement and neighbourhood management, including measures on anti-social behaviour. They should include both objective quantitative measures and tenant perception measures.
17. These measures will provide tenants with greater transparency about their landlord's performance. They will also inform the regulator about how the landlord is complying with the consumer standards under a proactive consumer regulation regime. The regulator should consider the best way of publishing measures so that they are clear and accessible for all tenants, and how to ensure landlords publicise them, but we would expect an annual statement to be provided to every tenant as a minimum and, unless there are special reasons, for technology to be used (such as an app) to provide this more directly and accessibly.
18. We have worked with groups across the sector including tenant representatives, landlords, trade bodies and the regulator to develop the draft set of tenant satisfaction measures set out in **Box A**. We expect the regulator to do further work, engaging with tenants and landlords, to finalise these and embed them within the regulatory system. The importance of careful design of the tenant satisfaction measures was highlighted in responses to the Call for Evidence about the regulatory regime for social housing. Many respondents expressed concern about the comparability of different landlords and the regulator will need to consider this. The regulator will also work with the Building Safety Regulator as it develops performance standards and reporting requirements as part of the new building safety regime for higher-risk buildings.



“We want to ensure a culture change whereby landlords are more open with residents, beyond the information provided through tenant satisfaction measures.”

Box A: Draft Tenant Satisfaction Measures	
Theme	Draft tenant satisfaction measures
Keeping properties in good repair	Decent Homes Standard compliance
	Responsive repairs completed right first time
	Tenant satisfaction with landlord's repairs and maintenance service
Maintaining building safety	Compliance with health and safety obligations: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gas safety</li> <li>• Electrical safety</li> <li>• Fire safety</li> <li>• Asbestos</li> <li>• Water safety</li> <li>• Lift safety</li> </ul>
	Tenant satisfaction with the health and safety of their home
Effective handling of complaints	Number of complaints relative to the size of the landlord
	% of complaints resolved within agreed timescale
	Tenant satisfaction with landlord's complaints handling
Respectful and helpful engagement	Number of complaints relating to fairness and/or respect, relative to the size of the landlord
	Tenant satisfaction that their landlord listens to their views and takes notice of them
	Tenant satisfaction with landlord's engagement with tenants
Responsible neighbourhood management	% of communal areas meeting the required standard
	Number of complaints relating to communal areas, relative to the size of the landlord
	Tenant satisfaction with landlord actions to keep communal areas clean and safe
	Tenant satisfaction with landlord contribution to the neighbourhood associated with their home
	Number of complaints relating to anti-social behaviour, relative to the size of the landlord
	Tenant satisfaction with landlord's handling of anti-social behaviour
Overall	Tenant overall satisfaction with the service their landlord provides

19. In addition, **we will expect landlords to publish three financial measures alongside these tenant satisfaction measures, providing clear and accessible information on how much landlords are spending on administrative costs and executive remuneration (see Box B).** These will not inform the regulator's consumer regulation activity but will be made available for tenants' information. The regulator separately considers the effectiveness and efficiency of private registered providers through its Value for Money standard, as part of its economic regulation regime.

Box B: Draft Financial Measures	
Theme	Draft financial measures
Executive remuneration	Chief Executive or equivalent salary, relative to the size of the landlord
	Executive remuneration, relative to the size of the landlord
Efficiency and effectiveness	Management costs, relative to the size of the landlord

## New access to information scheme

20. We want to ensure a culture change whereby landlords are more open with tenants, beyond the information provided through tenant satisfaction measures. Local authority tenants can already access information from their landlord through a request made under the Freedom of Information Act 2000, but this is not available to tenants of housing associations and other private registered providers. Good landlords would want to share the information with tenants when asked, but there is a risk that others might choose to withhold information that they should share. To address this, **we will introduce a new access to information scheme for social housing tenants of housing associations and other private registered providers through the social housing regulatory regime.** This will ensure that all social housing tenants can access information from their landlord or be supported by others to do so such as councillors, MPs, solicitors, advocates or local journalists to support them in holding landlords to account.

21. This new access to information scheme will allow tenants or their representatives to access information related to the management of social housing held by their landlord, and also relevant information that may be held by sub-contractors. The scheme will include time limits for providing the information. It will also set out the circumstances in which a landlord may refuse to disclose information. This will be broadly aligned with the exemptions from disclosure under the Freedom of Information Act 2000.
22. It is important that if a tenant feels their landlord has unreasonably withheld information then they can challenge that decision. The first stage of this should be an internal review carried out by the landlord. We propose that the Housing Ombudsman will be engaged to decide on cases that have not been resolved at this first internal review stage. The Housing Ombudsman would also be able to refer suspected systemic breaches of the scheme to the regulator as it does on other matters. We will work with the Housing Ombudsman to develop this new role and agree its responsibilities.

## More information on use of funds

23. To ensure openness and transparency we also want social landlords to provide clear information to show how they are making the best use of their resources. Housing associations and other private registered providers of social housing have a total annual turnover of more than £20 billion, so it is important that tenants know how this income is being used and that they are able to see whether they are getting value for money. Social landlords should welcome scrutiny of whether they are using resources in the most efficient and effective way, including in their approach to executive remuneration and employment costs.
24. **We will work with the Regulator of Social Housing to ensure all social landlords provide a clear breakdown of how their income is being spent.** This needs to be in an accessible format so tenants can see how funds are being spent and can challenge whether money is being spent on the things that matter to them. We will work with the sector to explore best practice on the use of apps to make this information more accessible to tenants.



## Clear leadership in landlords to deliver a quality service

25. We want it to be clear to tenants who, in the leadership of their landlord, is responsible for ensuring good quality customer service. **We therefore expect the Regulator of Social Housing to require that all landlords identify a 'responsible person' who will ensure that the organisation is complying with consumer standards** (see paragraph 65). This person will be key to ensuring landlords deliver good quality customer service and drive culture change where it is needed. The regulator will introduce this measure as part of a broader requirement for landlords to provide greater clarity on the roles and responsibilities of senior level staff. We will expect the regulator to implement these requirements through changes to its consumer standards.
26. There should be such a 'responsible person' identified in every landlord, regardless of size or type. Given the diverse nature of the sector, it should be for landlords to decide who is best placed to fulfil this function. What is essential is that responsibility must rest with an individual person at a suitably senior level within the landlord's organisation to drive change and unite the organisation behind delivering good customer service; and that this person must be clearly identified to tenants, the regulator and the Housing Ombudsman. For example, this might be a senior executive within a local authority or large housing association, or the Chief Executive of a small housing association.

## Chapter 3:

# To have your complaints dealt with promptly and fairly

Since it was created in 1996, the Housing Ombudsman has been delivering a vital service to ensure disputes are resolved and residents receive redress where appropriate. We are clear that residents should be able to raise concerns without fear and get swift and effective resolution when they do. We heard from some residents that making a complaint can be difficult and take too long – and that it can sometimes take months for the complaint to be resolved, or for the resident to be able to access the Housing Ombudsman. This chapter sets out how we will fix that.

### We have already:

- Set out in the Building Safety Bill how we will speed up access to the Housing Ombudsman by removing the need for residents to go to a designated person or wait eight weeks before approaching them – removing the ‘democratic filter’.
- Expanded the Housing Ombudsman service which is aiming to halve its decision times by March 2022.
- Increased the Housing Ombudsman’s powers to take action against landlords where needed. The Housing Ombudsman has published a new Complaint Handling Code and guidance on new orders that will be implemented from 1 January 2021.

### We will:

- Support improved complaint handling by landlords and hold them to account through stronger action by the Housing Ombudsman.
- Keep the Housing Ombudsman’s powers, and compliance with them, under review and consider ways to strengthen them, including the option of legislation to put the Complaint Handling Code on a statutory footing.
- Run an awareness campaign so social housing residents know their rights, are confident in navigating their routes to complain, and are aware of how to escalate to get redress where needed.
- Ensure lessons are learned and maintain residents’ confidence in the Housing Ombudsman Service through the appointment by the Ombudsman of an independent reviewer by March 2021 to examine any complaints made about the service that the Housing Ombudsman provides.
- Formalise and strengthen the relationship between the Regulator of Social Housing and the Housing Ombudsman by introducing a statutory requirement for both bodies to co-operate with each other in undertaking their responsibilities in holding landlords to account.
- Make the Housing Ombudsman a statutory consultee for any proposal concerning changes to the Regulator of Social Housing’s economic and consumer standards.
- Make the Regulator of Social Housing a statutory consultee for any changes to the Housing Ombudsman Scheme.

- From March 2021, publish on the Housing Ombudsman’s website, reports on the complaints the Housing Ombudsman has handled for individual landlords, as well as the determinations on individual cases.

## Standards that ensure residents get effective resolution and redress

27. Landlords have a key role to play in ensuring their residents know how to make complaints and can do so confidently. They must do this as one of the conditions of membership of the Housing Ombudsman Scheme. The Scheme sets out how residents’ complaints about landlords are investigated by the Housing Ombudsman.
28. To ensure that complaints handling is taken as seriously as it should be, the Housing Ombudsman has published a new Complaint Handling Code. This promotes consistency across landlords’ complaints procedures and learning from complaints to drive service improvements. The new Code sets out what residents can expect from their landlord when they complain, how to make a complaint and how to progress it through the landlord’s complaints procedure. The Code emphasises the importance of resident involvement in complaint handling through the formation of resident panels. Landlords have been asked to self-assess against the Code by 31 December 2020 and publish the results. Non-compliance with the Code could result in the Housing Ombudsman issuing complaint handling failure orders which will outline the details of any failure, be notified to the landlord’s governance body, the responsible person or the Regulator of Social Housing (“the regulator”) and be published on the Ombudsman’s website. The Housing Ombudsman has published guidance<sup>9</sup> on these new orders that will be implemented from 1 January 2021.
29. To support this change, we have approved new powers for the Housing Ombudsman to identify best practice, outlined in the new Code, with which landlords will be expected to comply (see **Box C: The Housing Ombudsman**). In addition, the strengthened Housing Ombudsman Scheme includes new requirements on landlords to publish their complaints procedures on their websites and in correspondence to residents,

and to deal with complaints in accordance with published procedures or within a reasonable timeframe.

### Box C: The Housing Ombudsman

*The Housing Ombudsman plays a key role in helping social housing residents access effective redress when things go wrong. The Housing Ombudsman resolves disputes involving residents and leaseholders with social landlords.<sup>10</sup> It supports residents and landlords to resolve issues within landlords’ own complaints processes. The service is free for residents and is independent and impartial.*

*Social housing residents can seek early resolution, advice and support from the Housing Ombudsman Service at any time to help resolve an issue or complaint with their landlord. They can also formally refer to the Housing Ombudsman an unresolved complaint that has already been through a landlord’s complaints process.*

## Resolving complaints more quickly

### Accelerating resolution of complaints by landlords

30. We want to see landlords putting things right for residents as quickly as possible before the Housing Ombudsman has to be involved. Residents told us that some complaints took weeks, and even months, for landlords to resolve. We also heard the experiences of residents who had been delayed in accessing the Housing Ombudsman Service as landlords’ complaints processes were slow and ineffective. To tackle this, **landlords will be required to comply with the Housing Ombudsman’s Complaint Handling Code, ensuring that they have good processes in place to respond swiftly and effectively to complaints.**
31. Resolving complaints within a landlord’s own process can provide quicker outcomes for residents than a formal investigation by the Housing Ombudsman and can improve relationships between residents and landlords. The Housing Ombudsman can help to support the resolution of disputes before they reach the formal investigation stage. In 2019/20, 80% of complaints and enquiries were closed at this early stage by the Housing Ombudsman

<sup>9</sup> <https://www.housing-ombudsman.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/12/2020-21-on-complaint-handling-failure-orders.pdf>

<sup>10</sup> The Housing Ombudsman’s role is set out in the legislation (Housing Act 1996) and the Housing Ombudsman Scheme. As at 31 March 2020, 2,303 landlords were members of the Scheme.



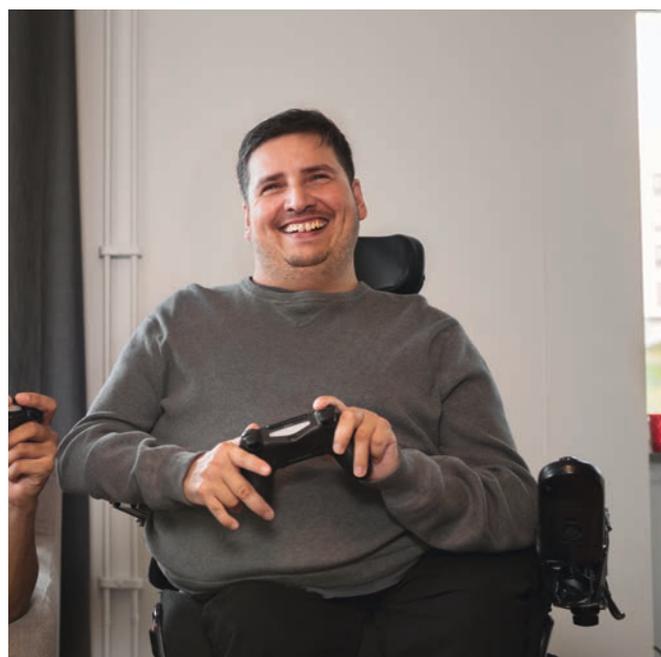
without needing to go onto further, formal investigation.<sup>11</sup> We want the **Housing Ombudsman to use its increased resources to support improved complaint handling by landlords and to resolve a greater proportion of formal complaints quickly using mediation.** The Housing Ombudsman's new Complaint Handling Code will help support this culture change and will set clearer expectations for landlords on their complaints handling process.

**32.** New powers are also in place for the Housing Ombudsman to intervene when landlords are unreasonably slow in resolving complaints. Where landlords do not act, in addition to the Housing Ombudsman issuing complaint handling failure orders, the regulator will be able to take firm action where necessary where there is evidence of systemic failings and a breach of the consumer standards. The Housing Ombudsman will be able to investigate potential systemic failings and refer the outcome to the landlord's board or elected members, to the 'responsible person' or to the regulator. The Housing Ombudsman will also identify and recommend best practice to landlords, helping to improve services and prevent residents experiencing similar issues. We will keep the Housing Ombudsman's powers, and compliance with them, under review and consider ways to strengthen them, including the option of legislation putting the Complaint Handling Code on a statutory footing.

## Accelerating redress through the Housing Ombudsman

**33.** We also want to see the **Housing Ombudsman deciding cases more quickly to ensure residents are not waiting months for resolution.** The Housing Ombudsman aims to halve the average determination time for complaints formally referred over the next two years: first to 4-5 months by March 2021, then to 3-4 months by March 2022. We have agreed increased resourcing through the 2020/21 Business Plan which will result in a more efficient dispute resolution service.<sup>12</sup> To make this work, it is critical that the Housing Ombudsman has prompt access to the evidence it needs to make fair and timely decisions. Delays in landlords providing the necessary information can slow residents' access to redress.

**34.** That is why we have ensured that a strengthened Housing Ombudsman Scheme and a new Code on complaint handling gives the Housing Ombudsman stronger powers to require landlords to provide the information it needs within a reasonable timeframe. This will deliver quicker decisions and reduce determination times. From 2021 the Housing Ombudsman will use new powers to issue a complaint handling failure order to take appropriate action to progress a complaint if a landlord fails to provide the information as expected.



<sup>11</sup> See Page 7, KPI Table

<https://www.housing-ombudsman.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/Housing-Ombudsman-Business-Plan-2019-20.pdf>

<sup>12</sup> The Housing Ombudsman Business Plan 2020/21

<https://www.housing-ombudsman.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/Housing-Ombudsman-business-plan-2020-21.pdf>



“We want people living in social housing to be able to access swift and effective resolution and not face unnecessary barriers.”

35. There is high compliance with the orders made by the Housing Ombudsman, with the majority requiring landlords to comply with inside three months.<sup>13</sup> Where there is non-compliance, the Housing Ombudsman has the power to refer this to the regulator. From 2021, the Housing Ombudsman will also be able to issue complaint handling failure orders where handling failures by landlords are identified. These will be published on a quarterly basis, highlighting the names of the landlords and reasons for the orders. This information will also be shared with the regulator, will form part of the Housing Ombudsman's annual landlord performance reports and will be available on the Housing Ombudsman's website.
36. To ensure residents' confidence in the Housing Ombudsman Service is maintained, the Housing Ombudsman will appoint an independent reviewer by March 2021, to examine a sample of complaints made about the service the Housing Ombudsman provides. The Housing Ombudsman Service will publish the independent reviewer's findings, including where the Housing Ombudsman needs to improve performance and learn from outcomes.

## Awareness campaign

37. These changes will speed up complaints handling for residents and ensure action when needed. But in too many cases we have heard that landlords' complaints processes are complex and that it is not always clear how to make a complaint. Many residents do not know how to approach the Housing Ombudsman Service and are unfamiliar with the role played by the regulator.
38. We want to make sure residents are aware of all routes open to them to raise concerns and feel confident using them. **We will run an awareness campaign so social housing residents know their rights, are confident in navigating their routes to complain, and are aware of how to escalate to get redress where needed.** We will work with residents, landlords, the Housing Ombudsman Service, and other organisations to ensure that the campaign is as far reaching as possible. We also expect the Housing Ombudsman Service and the regulator

to do more to ensure people living in social housing know about the services they provide.

39. The Housing Ombudsman's new Complaint Handling Code states that landlord's complaints policy should be widely publicised through as many routes as possible - for example through social media channels, in leaflets, newsletters, online and as part of regular correspondence with residents. This will be extended in future updates of the Code to require social landlords to prominently display other information including posters, for residents in their offices or shared residential areas.

## Removing barriers to accessing redress for social housing

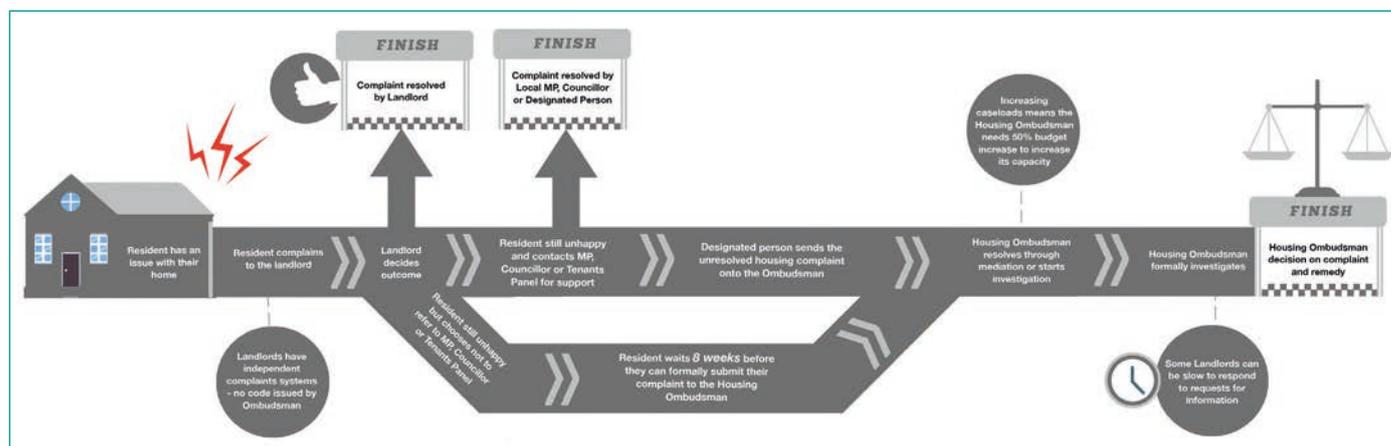
40. Currently, social housing residents who want to formally escalate unresolved complaints to the Housing Ombudsman face additional hurdles compared to consumers accessing other redress schemes. Residents have to raise their issue with a Member of Parliament, a local councillor or a designated tenant panel who will, if appropriate, refer it to the Housing Ombudsman (a step known as the 'democratic filter'), or wait eight weeks from the landlord's complaint process ending.
41. It is clear that the 'democratic filter' delays formal resolution of complaints and may put people off seeking redress altogether – particularly those who are vulnerable or feel less confident in navigating the process. We heard about the problems this creates for people living in social housing. During 2019/20, only 6.9% of the cases entering the Housing Ombudsman's formal remit were referred to them by a designated person.<sup>14</sup> We want people living in social housing to be able to access swift and effective resolution and not face unnecessary barriers. We have set out in the Building Safety Bill our proposal to remove the requirement for complaints to pass through the 'democratic filter'.

<sup>13</sup> See Page 7, KPI Table

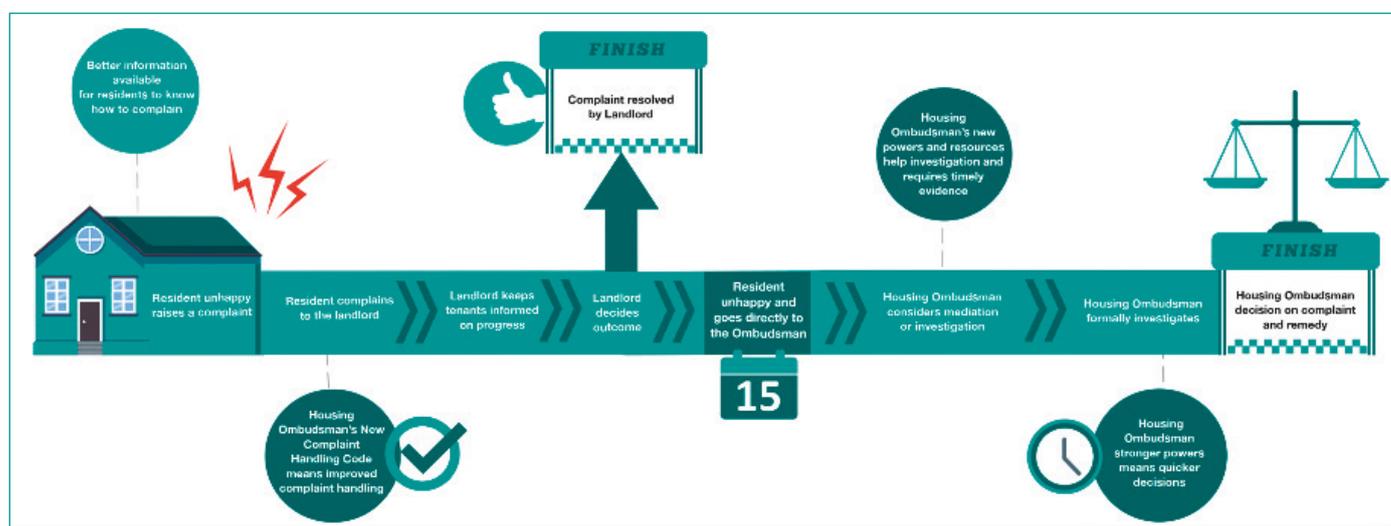
<https://www.housing-ombudsman.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/09/Housing-Ombudsman-ARA-2018-19-Web-Accessible.pdf>

<sup>14</sup> See page 30 [https://www.housing-ombudsman.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/09/CCS207\\_CCS0320285036-001\\_The-Housing-Ombudsman-ARA-2019-20\\_Accessible.pdf](https://www.housing-ombudsman.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/09/CCS207_CCS0320285036-001_The-Housing-Ombudsman-ARA-2019-20_Accessible.pdf)

## The previous social housing complaints process



## The new social housing complaints process



## Co-operation and transparency will ensure landlords are accountable for their performance on resolving complaints

42. The Housing Ombudsman has set higher standards for landlord effectiveness and speed to improve complaints handling for residents by raising the conditions of membership of its scheme. All social landlords must by law be a member of the Housing Ombudsman Scheme. The Scheme sets the standards that landlords must meet in terms of publishing complaints procedures, managing complaints in accordance with procedure or within a reasonable timescale, and providing copies of any information requested by the Housing Ombudsman which it believes is relevant to the complaint.
43. **From March 2021 the Housing Ombudsman will publish the details of cases it has determined on its website**, and data on individual landlords' complaint volumes, categories and outcomes. This will support the

new tenant satisfaction measures the regulator is developing on complaints handling. It will ensure social housing residents can better hold their landlords to account on the way they handle complaints. This information will be used, alongside other data provided by the Housing Ombudsman, to help inform the regulator's assurance of landlords' compliance with its consumer standards, and any actions that may result from a failure to meet these.

44. Effective co-operation and joint working between the Housing Ombudsman and the regulator is vital to hold landlords to account for their performance on resolving complaints. In September 2020 the Memorandum of Understanding<sup>15</sup> between the two organisations was broadened, setting out how this co-operation and joint working takes place.

<sup>15</sup> <https://www.housing-ombudsman.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/09/MOU-Ombudsman-and-Regulator-20200901.pdf>

45. **We will formalise and further strengthen the relationship between the Regulator of Social Housing and the Housing Ombudsman by introducing a statutory requirement for both bodies to co-operate with each other in undertaking their responsibilities.** This will complement proposals

to ensure effective co-operation between the regulator and the Building Safety Regulator on matters of building safety. **We will also bring forward legislation to require the Regulator of Social Housing and Housing Ombudsman to prepare and regularly review their Memorandum of Understanding.**

## Stronger co-operation between the regulator and Housing Ombudsman.



46. To make best use of the experience and expertise of the Housing Ombudsman and the regulator **we will make the Housing Ombudsman a statutory consultee for any proposal concerning changes to the Regulator of Social Housing’s economic and consumer standards.** This will ensure the Housing Ombudsman has the opportunity to understand and shape future regulatory changes to support joint working. Likewise, **we will make the Regulator of Social Housing a statutory consultee for any changes to the Housing Ombudsman Scheme.**

## The Housing Ombudsman will engage with residents directly

47. The Building Safety Bill sets out that both the regulator and the Housing Ombudsman will have a power for reciprocal information sharing and a reciprocal duty of cooperation with the Building Safety Regulator covering higher-risk residential buildings. This will enable both of these organisations to work together with the Building Safety Regulator on areas of common interest to support each other in the delivery of their relevant functions or in issuing joint guidance to help explain their different but linked roles and responsibilities.

48. It is important that residents can be confident in using the Housing Ombudsman Service when they need to, including those who might be isolated or vulnerable. We welcome the Housing Ombudsman Service’s engagement activity, which includes a feedback group for residents to share their experiences of the Service face to face with the Housing Ombudsman. The Housing Ombudsman Service hosted weekly webinars open to residents and landlords over the summer of 2020 on the new Housing Ombudsman Scheme and Complaint Handling Code. It will organise virtual ‘Meet the Ombudsman’ events to coincide with the publication of quarterly insight reports, providing information on complaints data, learning points and case studies. A new Resident Panel to seek views and obtain feedback is planned from February 2021.

## Chapter 4:

To be treated with respect, backed by a strong consumer regulator for tenants



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Regulation has supported the expansion of housing associations since the 1970s, ensuring that they are financially robust. It has been key to the success story of housing associations becoming the main deliverers of new social homes, with the sector currently able to access £100 billion in private finance to support new affordable homes<sup>16</sup>. But it is clear that, unlike the successful economic regulation regime, the current regime of consumer regulation is not strong enough to ensure that social landlords (both local authorities and private registered providers) deliver to the expectations set out in our new Charter. This chapter sets out how we will establish a new consumer regulation function, within the Regulator of Social Housing, that is proactive and holds all landlords to account for the services they deliver. Alongside this, we will maintain the current robust approach to economic regulation that is so important to maintaining a strong and sustainable sector.

#### **We have already:**

- Created a new standalone regulator, separate from the Homes and Communities Agency (now Homes England), with its own Board and Chief Executive.

Through this White Paper and working with the Regulator of Social Housing (“the regulator”), we will introduce a proactive, proportionate, outcome-focused and risk-based approach to consumer regulation.

#### **We will:**

- Transform the Regulator of Social Housing so it proactively monitors and drives landlords’ compliance with its consumer standards.
- Remove the ‘serious detriment test’ and introduce routine inspections for the largest landlords (with over 1,000 homes) every four years.

- Change the Regulator of Social Housing’s objectives to explicitly cover safety and transparency, and work with it to review its consumer standards to ensure they are up to date and deliver its revised objectives.
- Give the Regulator of Social Housing the power to publish a Code of Practice on the consumer standards to be clearer on what landlords are required to deliver.
- Strengthen the Regulator of Social Housing’s enforcement powers to tackle failing landlords and to respond to new challenges facing the sector, by removing the cap on the level of fines it can issue, introducing Performance Improvement Plans for landlords failing to comply, reducing the notice period for surveys on the condition of properties, and introducing a new power to arrange emergency repairs if needed where a survey uncovers evidence of systemic landlord failures.
- Make it explicit that provisions in contracts between local authorities and Arms Length Management Organisations or Tenant Management Organisations would be deemed void if they hindered the Regulator of Social Housing in its exercise of its powers.
- Review the statutory Right to Manage guidance.
- Set out an expectation for all landlords to self-refer breaches with the regulatory standards.
- Strengthen the Regulator of Social Housing’s powers to provide robust economic regulation of private registered providers.
- Require the Regulator of Social Housing to set up an Advisory Committee to provide independent and unbiased advice on discharging its functions.

**49.** These changes will ensure that the needs of tenants are embedded in the culture of all landlords. These reforms are informed by the review of social housing regulation and the Call for Evidence that we published alongside the social housing Green Paper. The findings of the review are set out in **Annex A: Key findings and measures for changing the regulatory regime for social housing**.

**50.** It is vital to ensure that the new consumer regulation regime is carefully designed, to make sure that it can help deliver the culture change set out in this White Paper. Some of the measures set out in this chapter will require primary legislation before they can be implemented, and we will legislate as soon

<sup>16</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/quarterly-survey-for-q1-april-to-june-2020-to-2021>

as parliamentary time allows. We know that delivering the scale of reform set out in this White Paper will involve extensive engagement with the sector to make sure we are getting this right, and we will expect the regulator to consult with landlords and tenants as they design the reformed consumer regime to make sure it delivers the outcomes set out in this chapter.

## Retaining co-regulation

51. The existing regulatory regime works on the basis of co-regulation. This means that it is the responsibility of the boards of housing associations and other private providers of social housing, or of councillors in local authority landlords, to be assured that they comply with the outcome focused standards set by the the regulator. The regulator will seek assurance that boards and councillors have sufficient oversight of compliance with those standards, and any regulatory intervention must be justified and proportionate. Economic regulation is working well, and our review has shown that landlords and investors share that view. **We recommend that the Regulator of Social Housing retains the principle of co-regulation, as it ensures that the focus is on driving good outcomes for existing and future tenants and that the fundamental responsibility for effective service delivery lies with local authorities, housing associations and other private registered providers.**

## There will be a new regime for regulating social housing

52. An earlier review of regulation, in 2010, led to the adoption of a reactive approach to consumer regulation for housing associations, local authorities and other private registered providers.<sup>17</sup> This means that currently the regulator does not proactively scrutinise landlord compliance or routinely monitor performance – it only acts when issues are brought to its attention. This risks serious systemic failures against consumer standards being uncovered at a late stage.

53. At present the regulator can only use its powers to tackle a breach of a consumer standard when it has reasonable grounds to suspect that:

- the failure has resulted in a serious detriment to the landlord’s tenants (or potential tenants);

- there is a significant risk that, if no action is taken by the regulator, the failure will result in a serious detriment to the landlord’s tenants (or potential tenants);
- if a failure occurs, the failure will result in a serious detriment to the landlord’s tenants (or potential tenants); or
- if a failure occurs, there will be a significant risk that, if no action is taken by the regulator, the failure will result in a serious detriment to the landlord’s tenants (or potential tenants).
- This is referred to as the ‘serious detriment test’.<sup>18</sup> The regulator interprets serious detriment as being where there is a risk of, or actual, serious harm to tenants.

54. In contrast, for economic regulation the regulator takes a proactive, proportionate and risk-based approach to regulating its economic standards. It actively monitors all landlords by regularly collecting financial data and it carries out periodic in-depth assessments based on the relative risk profile of landlords.

55. Through consultation following the social housing Green Paper and the Call for Evidence we heard strong support for a more proactive approach to consumer regulation to achieve parity with economic regulation. We agree that the social housing sector would benefit from a more balanced approach which ensures that there is a similar level of regulatory oversight of both the consumer and economic standards. Introducing routine inspections of landlords can and will play an important role in delivering this more balanced approach. This will give tenants confidence that their landlord is being properly scrutinised, and will ensure that tenants know that protecting their interests is at the heart of the regulatory system.

56. **We will work with the Regulator of Social Housing to introduce a proactive, proportionate, outcome focused and risk-based approach to consumer regulation.** To achieve this, we will:

- **Legislate to remove the ‘serious detriment test’** as soon as parliamentary time allows, to eliminate barriers to the Regulator of Social Housing adopting a proactive approach to monitoring and oversight of landlord performance on consumer issues.

<sup>17</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/review-of-social-housing-regulation--2>

<sup>18</sup> Sections 198A (2) and (5) of the Housing and Regeneration Act 2008 <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2008/17/section/198A>

- **Work with the Regulator of Social Housing to strengthen its oversight by introducing a system of routine inspections to obtain assurance from landlords that they are complying with the consumer standards.** This will be based on a risk profile to ensure that those landlords at greatest risk of failing, or where failure might have the greatest impact on tenants, are subject to greater oversight. As part of this **we expect the Regulator of Social Housing, subject to meeting any wider priorities, to aim to inspect those landlords with over 1,000 homes every 4 years.** It may carry out inspections at more frequent intervals where a routine inspection finds a breach or significant risk of a breach of its standards.
- **Expect the Regulator of Social Housing to undertake specific, reactive investigations and/or inspections where appropriate.** This could be when a serious potential compliance breach has been brought to its attention by tenants (such as systemic failure to act on fire risk assessment recommendations); by the Housing Ombudsman through its new powers to investigate potential systemic issues; or if the regulator wants to carry out bespoke inspections.
- **Expect the Regulator of Social Housing to be transparent where a landlord is found non-compliant with its standards, by publishing its findings** from its inspections and investigations and the details of any enforcement action it will take. We will also expect the regulator to be clear where, following routine inspections, it is assured that a landlord is compliant with the standards.

57. It is for the regulator to decide the most appropriate approach to delivering these requirements, but we will expect it to engage with tenants and landlords in designing the new approach as well as:

- Being clear on how it will determine which landlords to inspect, and how it will meet the aim to routinely inspect those with over 1,000 homes every 4 years.
- Setting out the different approaches to inspections and likely notice periods involved.

#### Box D: Proactive and reactive inspections

Inspections will be an important source of assurance that social landlords (local authorities and private registered providers) are complying with the consumer standards. Subject to consultation with tenants, landlords and other stakeholders, these are likely to involve three key stages:

1. **A desk-top review** to analyse information that the regulator obtains from a number of sources to identify landlords that are at risk of potential systemic non-compliance with the consumer standards. The review will be carried out once a year for all registered landlords. Information may come from a number of sources, including tenant satisfaction measures (about which further detail is set out above in Chapter 2), evidence of systemic issues raised by tenants or others, and information from other regulators and the Housing Ombudsman.

2. **A new risk-based programme of routine inspections.** This will prioritise those providers that the desk top review has identified as high risk and will seek assurance about those landlords' compliance with the consumer standards. The regulator may inspect landlords at any time and could take account of a number of factors in deciding which landlord it will investigate. This might include:

- Concerns highlighted in the desk-top study, or other information which comes to the regulator's attention.
- Any concerns about potential non-compliance with consumer standards arising from the regulator's economic regulation of providers.
- The size of the organisation (given the scale of impacts in the largest providers).
- Providers that house the most vulnerable tenants e.g. registered providers of specialised supported housing.

We expect the regulator to aim to routinely inspect those landlords with over 1,000 homes every four years and make it clear when it is reassured of a landlord's compliance with its standards.

3. **Reactive investigations and/or inspections.**

Such activities could take two forms:

- Where specific issues arise that need to be dealt with at a faster pace and outside the planned programme of inspections.
- Focused inspections to examine assurance of one or more landlord's compliance in delivering a specific service to tenants.

Where there is a clear case of non-compliance following a routine or reactive inspection, the regulator will publish the outcome of its inspection and take appropriate enforcement action. In the case of breaches by housing associations and other private registered providers, the regulator may go further and seek assurance about the adequacy of the governance arrangements.



“Through consultation following the social housing Green Paper and the Call for Evidence we heard strong support for a more proactive approach to consumer regulation to achieve parity with economic regulation.”

58. We also heard from both tenants and landlords that they would like the regulator to be clearer in its expectations of landlords. To deliver this, **we will legislate to give the Regulator of Social Housing a power to publish a Code of Practice on the consumer standards** alongside its existing ability to prepare Codes of Practice for economic standards. **The Regulator of Social Housing will review all its consumer standards to ensure they remain up-to-date and deliver its statutory objectives.** As part of its review we will expect the Regulator of Social Housing to make it clear that landlords should have a policy setting out how they should tackle issues surrounding domestic abuse, working with other agencies as appropriate; and to require landlords to show how they have sought out and considered ways to improve tenant engagement.

## Putting safety at the heart of social housing regulation

59. As we have made clear throughout this White Paper, the safety of tenants is paramount and should be the primary concern of all landlords. Specialist health and safety bodies, such as the Fire and Rescue Services and the Health and Safety Executive, are the main bodies in dealing with any incident and enforcement of an incident caused by a breach of safety legislation. In addition, local authorities have a duty under the Housing Act 2004 to take action if they identify a serious 'category 1' hazard in homes owned by housing associations and other private registered providers. However, the regulator also plays a role in holding landlords to account for meeting health and safety legislation through compliance with its regulatory standards. **We will reinforce this role by strengthening the Regulator of Social Housing's consumer regulation objective to explicitly include safety.**

60. Driving and embedding culture change throughout organisations is the collective responsibility of Boards and, in the case of local authorities, councillors. However, these arrangements are not always visible to tenants. It can be difficult to find out who in a large organisation tenants can hold to account for the safety of their homes. Experience in other sectors demonstrates that regulation is important in building a culture of transparency and accountability within organisations.

For example, in financial services, the introduction of a Senior Managers & Certification Regime has driven a culture change in risk management across the sector.

61. We will require all landlords to have a person within the organisation responsible for compliance with their statutory health and safety responsibilities. This person should be visible and accessible to tenants. **As such, we will legislate to require landlords to identify and make public a nominated person responsible for compliance with their health and safety requirements.** The health and safety responsible person should be sufficiently senior to drive a culture of safety throughout the landlord organisation, and would have specific responsibility for issues such as:

- driving a strong culture across the organisation for prioritising and delivering health and safety requirements;
- ensuring robust health and safety systems are in place; and
- providing assurance that health and safety risks are being managed effectively.

62. These reforms will drive a whole culture change and system transformation, strengthening the relationship between the regulator and the Housing Ombudsman and ensuring effective working between them and the Building Safety Regulator. Through the Building Safety Bill, we are introducing a legal requirement for the regulator and Building Safety Regulator to co-operate with each other on matters of fire and building safety, to help embed a culture of working together. **We will go further by expecting the Regulator of Social Housing to prepare a Memorandum of Understanding with the Health and Safety Executive,** once the Building Safety Regulator is created, to underpin provisions in the Building Safety Bill as necessary to ensure that they can share information effectively.

## Making social landlords more transparent and accountable

63. We have been clear how greater transparency is essential so that tenants are able to hold their landlord to account. The regulatory regime plays a key role in making this happen.

64. Landlords are already required to provide their tenants with certain information. We want to see a culture change that ensures landlords are more open with their tenants. This will enable tenants to hold their landlords to account, and also to monitor and compare their landlord's performance. The failure of some landlords to share information in a clear, consistent way not only deprives tenants of the ability to assess how their landlord is performing. It can also undermine the tenant's trust in what their landlord is saying.

65. **To deliver this outcome, we will make a number of changes through the regulatory regime:**

- **We will legislate to add transparency to the Regulator of Social Housing's consumer regulation objective.**
- **Landlords will be required to report on a number of tenant satisfaction measures on things that matter to tenants** (see paragraphs 15-18 above, and **Box A: Draft Tenant Satisfaction Measures**). We will expect the regulator to develop a process for collecting and publishing these tenant satisfaction measures in a consistent way that is comparable across landlords. The tenant satisfaction measures will give people living in social housing information about how their landlord is performing and support the regulator's monitoring of landlords' performance.
- **We expect the Regulator of Social Housing to require all landlords to identify a 'responsible person' who will ensure that the organisation is complying with consumer standards** so that tenants know who is responsible for ensuring compliance with the regulator's consumer standards (see paragraphs 25).

- **We will ensure the new access to information scheme for social housing tenants of housing associations and other private registered providers is placed on a regulatory footing** (see paragraphs 20-22). This will ensure that tenants can access key information on issues that matter to them in a timely manner, unless there is good reason for this information not to be provided.

## Strengthening the regulator's powers to enforce

66. The regulator currently has a range of powers on enforcement and has published guidance on how it will regulate to ensure landlords comply with its regulatory standards. To date the regulator has used its formal enforcement powers infrequently for breaches of the consumer standards. Often the threat of taking action is sufficient to drive change without needing to take formal action.

67. Removal of the 'serious detriment test', combined with a more proactive approach to consumer regulation, will remove barriers to the regulator making full use of its monitoring, investigation and enforcement powers. **We will go further and also legislate to:**

- **Enable the Regulator of Social Housing to require a Performance Improvement Plan for landlords who fail to comply with a consumer standard.** This approach will enable tenants to be aware of what action their landlords will carry out and when, and challenge the landlord if it fails to meet these requirements.
- **Reduce the notice period that the Regulator of Social Housing must give a landlord to survey the condition of properties from 28 days to 2 days.** The regulator is most likely to use this power in emergency situations when investigating whether tenants are living in unacceptable or unsafe conditions. Reducing the period of notice aligns with the emphasis on protecting tenants, and will enable the regulator to assess properties more quickly and take decisive action if required.

- **Enable the Regulator of Social Housing, following completion of a survey, to arrange repairs of dwellings in an emergency where there is clear systemic failure by the landlord.** We will also legislate so the regulator can recoup the costs from the landlord. This will allow swift action, where other regulatory interventions have not addressed the problem, in the unacceptable situation where tenants are forced to live with the consequences of significant and unwarranted delays to emergency repairs.
- **Remove the requirement for the Regulator of Social Housing to seek approval from the Secretary of State before employing its own staff to carry out inspections for breaches of the consumer standards.** This is unnecessarily bureaucratic and should be removed in light of changes to consumer regulation set out in this White Paper.
- **Remove the cap on the level of fines the Regulator of Social Housing is able to issue.** This will give greater flexibility to determine the appropriate sanction depending on the circumstances, and bring the regulator's power more into line with other regulatory bodies (such as those in the finance or environment sectors).<sup>19</sup>

“We want to see a transformed consumer regulatory regime which holds landlords to account in maintaining good quality homes and services, prioritising safety, treating tenants respectfully and being transparent with information.”

<sup>19</sup> For example, please see under the Regulatory and Enforcement Sanctions Act 2008, the Environment Agency and Financial Conduct Authority have powers to issue a variable penalty fine <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/environment-agency-enforcement-and-sanctions-policy/environment-agency-enforcement-and-sanctions-policy>

## Local Authorities, Arms Length Management Organisations and Tenant Management Organisations will also be held to account

68. Social tenants should receive the same level of service, regardless of who their landlord is. The regulator currently has limited interaction with local authorities as they are not subject to the governance and viability standard or the value for money standard. The changes set out to deliver proactive oversight of consumer standards will provide the regulator with greater oversight of the performance of local authorities' landlord function.
69. Local authorities sometimes contract out the management of some or all of their homes to Arms Length Management Organisations. Council tenants can also create Tenant Management Organisations to manage the housing themselves. Local authorities remain the landlord for housing managed by such organisations and are responsible for ensuring these homes meet the regulator's consumer standards.
70. Contractual arrangements between local authority landlords and Arms Length Management Organisations should not create barriers to the regulator using its powers. Local authorities that contract out management services to Arms Length Management Organisations should ensure their agreements with arm's length bodies do not prevent the regulator from acting in the event of non-compliance with the consumer standards. **We will legislate to make it explicit that provisions in contracts between local authorities and Arms Length Management Organisations or Tenant Management Organisations would be deemed void if they hindered the Regulator of Social Housing in its exercise of its powers.** Ahead of this, **we will ask all local authorities that contract out social housing management services to review their contracts to ensure they do not hinder the Regulator of Social Housing in its exercise of its powers.**
71. Tenant Management Organisations are formed when council tenants exercise their Right to Manage. The Right to Manage Regulations set the statutory framework to establish a Tenant Management Organisation. The regulations are supported by statutory guidance including

the Modular Management Agreement which sets out the arrangements governing the relationship between local authorities and Tenant Management Organisations.

72. We heard of good work that some Tenant Management Organisations do in delivering services and additional benefits to their communities. We also heard that the guidance could be clearer on the responsibilities of Tenant Management Organisations and local authorities. In order to ensure good management across the whole sector and to ensure oversight of Tenant Management Organisations is effective and transparent, **we will review the statutory Right to Manage guidance.** We will work with an expert steering group of those with knowledge of the sector to support this work.
73. There is a requirement in the regulator's governance standard for housing associations and other private providers of social housing to self-refer non-compliance with all the regulatory standards. This does not currently apply to local authorities as they are not subject to the regulator's governance standard. **We will work with the Regulator of Social Housing to set out an expectation for local authorities to self-refer breaches of the consumer standards to ensure that issues of concern to tenants are dealt with as quickly as possible.**

## The regulator will have the right leadership for its new role

74. We have heard that many tenants' trust in the regulatory regime has been shaken, particularly following the tragedy at Grenfell Tower. The way the regulator was set up meant that it is currently not empowered to proactively monitor compliance with consumer standards, and therefore it has not been easily visible to tenants.
75. We want to see a transformed consumer regulatory regime which holds landlords to account in maintaining good quality homes and services, prioritising safety, treating tenants respectfully and being transparent with information. It will build the links between economic and consumer regulation – giving the regulator a full, rather than partial view of the landlord.
76. We believe that creating a new consumer regulation function within the existing regulator is the best approach to deliver this change for tenants. Creating a separate regulator would

not be as effective, preventing failures on the consumer standards feeding into wider governance standards and creating a more complex system. This complexity could mean that tenants would not know where to raise evidence of organisational failure and breaches of the consumer standards, and would increase the risk that issues would fall through the cracks between regulators.

77. In order to deliver transformative change in consumer regulation the regulator not only has to have the right powers, but also needs people with the right skills to deliver it, while retaining wider capability to deliver across all its activities. A strong team will still be needed to deliver the economic regulation regime. **We will enable an entirely new function within the Regulator of Social Housing to be set up, with senior leadership and staff with the right expertise in consumer regulation, customer service and tenant engagement** to effectively deliver the new proactive consumer regulation regime.
78. Rebuilding trust will take time and we have already taken steps. On 1 October 2018 the Government created a new standalone regulator, separate from the Homes and Communities Agency (now Homes England) with its own Board and Chief Executive. The regulator now presents its own annual report to Parliament. The regulator's Chief Executive, as the accounting officer, is required, when called, to give evidence before the Parliamentary Public Accounts Committee and the relevant Select Committee. As a standalone regulator it has greater transparency and clearer accountability.
79. The changes being proposed will transform the way in which consumer regulation is conducted and **we will expect the Regulator of Social Housing to develop a strategy for appropriate and ongoing publicity** to make tenants aware of what it does and how to get in touch. We will also expect the regulator to be more transparent in how it works and to have greater engagement with tenants.

80. It is important that the regulator has the right level of oversight to embed the enhanced consumer regulation role in its organisation. It is also important that the people providing this oversight bring a diversity of thought, background and experience, to better reflect the diverse needs and views of social tenants. To facilitate this, we will:

- **Broaden the skills mix and diversity of Board Members**, ensuring that more Board Members have consumer regulation experience.
- **Work with the Regulator of Social Housing to make sure it is resourced and able to recruit the right new staff** with diverse backgrounds and skills, including at senior levels.
- **Legislate to require the Regulator of Social Housing to set up an Advisory Committee to provide independent and unbiased advice to the regulator on discharging its functions.** This committee will not be a decision-making body, but the regulator will be expected to seek its views on specific regulatory matters – such as on any changes to its consumer or economic standards or making the regulator a more transparent organisation. These changes will support the transformative change needed and build trust with tenants and social landlords across England.

## Robust economic regulation will be maintained

81. With an increasing consumer regulatory focus, it is important that we retain the current robust focus on economic regulation. Economic regulation ensures landlords are well-run and financially sound, to be sure that tenants' homes are secure for the long term and that landlords can fund repairs and deliver effective services. Robust economic regulation has also reassured investors and given them confidence to invest considerable sums to help build new homes.
82. Through the Call for Evidence we heard that the economic regulatory framework is working effectively. Some respondents (particularly landlords) expressed concern about how changes to consumer regulation could dilute the strong economic focus. They were concerned that the skills and resources of the regulator would be stretched to deliver an expanded regulatory remit, weakening the economic regime and

undermining the new consumer regime. By ensuring the resources the regulator needs to deliver proactive consumer regulation are additional and that the people doing it have the appropriate skills, we will ensure that robust economic regulation is maintained.

## Adapting to new challenges

**83.** The Call for Evidence specifically asked about areas of economic regulation that might not be working or may face future challenges. Most respondents did not specify areas in which regulation should change. Rather, they identified potential risks to its effectiveness. These aligned with the regulator's own assessment of sector risk and where the greatest challenges were likely to be going forward. These are:

- Sector diversity and development risk;
- New business models (for example lease-based providers of supported housing);
- The impact of for-profit providers on the sector and tenants;
- The potential impact on economic regulation of changes to consumer regulation.

**84.** The social housing sector has changed significantly over recent years. The regulator has adapted its approach to keep ahead of these changes. Its annual Sector Risk Profile<sup>20</sup> which sets out the range of strategic and financial challenges facing the social housing sector is valued by providers.

**85.** In terms of sector diversity and development risk, the regulator actively highlights areas where it believes risks are increasing. The regulator is using its oversight and regulatory powers to assess the risks associated with lease-based models. It has set out the challenges commonly associated with this business model in its addendum to its *Sector Risk Profile* and signalled clearly that it will continue to do all it can to protect tenants' homes and, where possible, keep them in the social rented sector.<sup>21</sup>

**86.** For-profit providers have existed in the social housing sector for some time, and their presence has increased significantly in the last two years. There are clearly opportunities brought by new and increased sources of investment to fund social housing. These providers can bring with them new ideas and ways of working that could present opportunities for specialisation, operating

or financial efficiencies, and improved quality for tenants. In response to the Call for Evidence we heard some concerns that profit maximisation could result in a poor service to tenants. As the for-profit sector continues to grow, we will continue work to ensure we understand its impact properly. However, the reforms to consumer regulation set out above will address the risk of poor service delivery for all providers, with new tenant satisfaction measures and a new inspection regime driving landlords to deliver high quality services to tenants.

**87.** We have concluded it is not necessary to make significant changes to the economic regulation regime at this time. However, we will continue to consider whether there are any further refinements to the existing regulatory framework that are necessary to retain robust economic regulation.

**88. There are some changes that can be made to the legislation to improve the ability of the Regulator of Social Housing to monitor all housing associations and other private registered providers. We will:**

- **Tighten the definition of 'non-profit'** in relation to the registration of private registered providers to ensure landlords are properly classified and treated – for example, to ensure that the regulator properly designates providers, and that bodies really operating for profit do not attract the more favourable housing benefit status for supported housing.
- **Require landlords to notify the Regulator of Social Housing when there is a change in control of a housing association.**
- **Introduce a 'look-through' power** that would enable the regulator to follow money paid to bodies outside of the regulated sector and who are therefore not directly regulated. The power would, for example, enable the regulator to investigate potential fraud by examining the financial accounts of organisations thought to be financially benefiting from a registered provider. We will consider further the checks and safeguards needed so that there is no misuse of the power on organisations or individuals that are not part of the regulated sector.

<sup>20</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/sector-risk-profiles>

<sup>21</sup> Lease-based providers of specialised supported housing – Addendum to the Social Risk Profile 2018, April 2019



## Chapter 5:

# To have your voice heard by your landlord



The best landlords engage well with their residents and listen to them with respect. We have recently seen many examples of effective engagement with residents on how their homes are managed and run. This includes the Right to Manage initiative and important work done by tenant led organisations such as the Tenant Participation Advisory Service and the See the Person campaign. It also includes work many landlords did during COVID-19. But performance across the sector is not consistent. We heard from residents how important it was their landlords really listened to them. And we heard examples of residents feeling patronised, ignored or treated with disrespect. We want to change this. This chapter explains how we will ensure residents are heard.

**We will:**

- Expect the Regulator of Social Housing to require landlords to seek out best practice and consider how they can continually improve the way they engage with social housing tenants.
- Deliver a new opportunities and empowerment programme for social housing residents, to support more effective engagement between landlords and residents, and to give residents tools to influence their landlords and hold them to account.
- Review professional training and development to ensure residents receive a high standard of customer service.

## Improving landlord engagement

89. Engagement can take many forms, but the crucial factor is that it is tailored appropriately. There will be tenants who want to proactively engage with the policies of their landlord, and others who simply want to know that their landlord is thinking of them in the way it implements change and is keeping them informed. We expect all landlords to tailor their engagement in the future.

90. We want to see landlords inform and engage tenants in an effective way. Many landlords do this well already, but this is not the case for all landlords. Engagement opportunities can range from involvement in surveys, focus groups and local events to membership of the organisation's Board or scrutiny panel. Important sector-led initiatives, such as the National Housing Federation's 'Together with Tenants' campaign, are also playing a key role in making organisations more transparent and accessible. We want to build on this and embed a culture of continuous improvement in landlords' approach to tenant engagement. We want to ensure that they do more to draw on and learn from best practice on engagement, including from other sectors. **We will expect the Regulator of Social Housing to require landlords to show how they have sought out and considered ways to improve tenant engagement.**

## Resident Empowerment

91. The conversations we have had with residents in creating this White Paper have been fundamental to our understanding of what is important to people living in social housing. **We will commit to ongoing ministerial engagement to continue to listen to residents and enable them to have their voices heard.** This will ensure residents are kept at the heart of future policymaking and can continue to shape social housing.
92. **To support residents to engage effectively, we will deliver a new opportunities and empowerment programme open to all social housing residents, to support their effective engagement with landlords.** The programme will deliver a range of learning and support activities, as well as providing information for residents on ways to get involved, including their opportunities and rights to do this. Through this work, residents will be given the tools to better influence and hold landlords to account and drive delivery of higher quality services that are focused on their needs. We will work with tenant led national bodies to set out a plan for how best we can support residents to take part in scrutiny activities which are so important in holding their landlord to account.



## Tackling Loneliness

93. Engagement is more than just resident involvement with landlords. It is also about engaging with your neighbours and community. Tackling loneliness and supporting people to have meaningful social relationships is crucial to people's physical and mental health. Social housing residents have a similar age profile to all households but are more likely to be living alone, or to be lone parents, than those in other tenures. They may face more challenges in combating loneliness.<sup>22</sup>
94. In response to COVID-19, the Government launched a major effort to ensure that no one feels lonely. This included the latest #LetsTalkLoneliness public campaign, including new public guidance offering useful tips and advice, and a £5 million fund for national loneliness organisations. A 'Tackling Loneliness Network' of over 65 high-profile private, public and voluntary sector organisations was formed to bring together expertise and develop innovative actions.
95. Many landlords also responded quickly to COVID-19 by setting up teams focused on communicating with and supporting their most vulnerable residents. Although the impact of COVID-19 has paused some services as landlords have focused on the immediate challenges of the pandemic, many landlords have found ways to continue engagement through a mix of virtual meetings and telephone calls. Residents too have played an important role by being open to new ways of communication to enable them to engage with their landlord and other residents. We have seen resident led initiatives spring up, offering support to other residents and helping to tackle the loneliness that some were feeling as a result of COVID-19.

## Strengthening professional development

96. Alongside giving residents the right tools and opportunities, landlords themselves will need to have the right skills and approach for engagement to really work. For most people living in social housing, their experience of dealing with landlords is with frontline staff – whether through a phone call to a customer service centre, visiting their local housing office, or engaging with contractors making repairs. When residents interact with landlords they should expect and receive a professional service from competent and empathetic staff.
97. We have heard positive experiences of landlord staff who treated residents with care and respect. But we also heard that this is not always the case, and there were incidences where people felt talked down to or ignored by staff and contractors. We want all landlord staff to act professionally, listen to their residents and, at all times, treat them with courtesy and respect.
98. To support this, **we will establish a review of professional training and development to consider the appropriate qualifications and standards for social housing staff in different roles, including senior staff.** Senior leaders must be able to manage their organisations effectively and drive forward cultural changes to ensure that all residents are treated with courtesy and respect. The review will be informed by a Working Group made up of residents, landlords, professional bodies and academics, which will explore the relevance and value of professional qualifications. As well as assessing professional requirements more broadly, including any specific customer service focused requirements, the review will consider best practice for delivering support on mental health<sup>23</sup> to ensure staff maintain their skills and knowledge and, if required, set out proposals for new qualifications.

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<sup>22</sup> English Housing Survey, social rented sector 2017-18 <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/english-housing-survey-2017-to-2018-social-rented-sector> **Page 102 of 226**

<sup>23</sup> See CIPD website for more information <https://www.cipd.co.uk/learn/cpd/about>



“The conversations we have had with residents in creating this White Paper have been fundamental to our understanding of what is important to people living in social housing.”



## Chapter 6:

To have a good quality home and neighbourhood to live in



Creating well designed, decent homes and good neighbourhoods has been at the heart of developing social housing from the outset. Early local authority home building prioritised space and facilities, and today landlords are expected to provide decent, well-maintained homes and do their bit in keeping neighbourhoods safe and clean. We heard from our discussions with residents and the responses to the social housing Green Paper how important it was that the areas where they lived were decent and well maintained. People talked to us of their pride in their community, but how sometimes this was let down by poor neighbourhood management, upkeep of buildings and the quality of shared spaces. Some of these issues have been magnified by COVID-19; some residents have struggled to find green spaces to exercise and others have experienced isolation, loneliness and the challenge of dealing with anti-social behaviour. We want to change this and ensure that all social housing residents can enjoy good neighbourhoods and access to green space. This chapter sets out how we will ensure good quality, decent homes and neighbourhoods, including access to green space and support for wellbeing.

**We have already:**

- Announced the Green Homes Grant for 2020/21, which social landlords are eligible to bid for, which will fund up to two thirds of the cost of hiring tradespeople to upgrade the energy performance of homes.
- Announced a £50 million demonstrator project to support the decarbonisation of social housing over 2020/21.

- Published our 25 Year Environment Plan committing to connect people with the environment to improve health and wellbeing.
- Encouraged developments that promote health and wellbeing through the National Planning Policy Framework and National Design Guide.
- Announced a consultation through the Planning for the Future White Paper on proposals to enable more and better green space in development.
- Committed to expanding access to mental health services through the NHS Long Term Plan. Our investment of a further £2.3 billion a year by 2023/24 will ensure that the NHS provides high quality, evidence-based mental health services to an additional 2 million people.
- Acted to tackle segregation and stigmatisation through the planning system.

**We will:**

- Review the Decent Homes Standard to consider if it should be updated, including how it can better support the decarbonisation and energy efficiency of social homes, and improve communal and green spaces.
- Continue to engage with the latest evidence on the impact of housing conditions on health, including COVID-19 transmission, and actively consider options to mitigate these impacts.
- Review professionalisation to consider how well housing staff are equipped to work with people with mental health needs and encourage best practice for landlords working with those with mental health needs.
- Clarify the roles of agencies involved in tackling anti-social behaviour and signpost tenants to those agencies who can give them the most appropriate support and assistance when faced with anti-social behaviour.
- Consider the results of the allocations evidence collection exercise findings to ensure that housing is allocated in the fairest way possible and achieves the best outcomes for local places and communities.

# The Decent Homes Standard

99. Since 2001 the Decent Homes Standard<sup>24</sup> has played a key role in setting the minimum quality that social homes should be. The Decent Homes Standard sets out four criteria for evaluating decency – it requires that homes are free of serious hazards, are in a reasonable state of repair, have reasonably modern facilities and services such as kitchens and bathrooms, and have efficient heating and effective insulation.

100. In line with those areas directed by Government, the Regulator of Social Housing (“the regulator”) requires that social rented homes are maintained by landlords to at least the quality set out by the Government’s Decent Homes Standard. Good progress has been made on ensuring homes meet the Standard. The number of social homes classified as non-decent reduced from 20% in 2010 to 12% in 2018.<sup>25</sup> The social sector has a lower proportion of homes that do not meet the Standard than the private rented and owner-occupied sectors.

101. During our consultation events, we heard that the Decent Homes Standard is no longer fully effective and does not reflect present day concerns, including on energy efficiency or safety. Some respondents told us they would like to see more investment in the locality and green spaces surrounding their home, including measures to combat crime and anti-social behaviour. The design of buildings and their surroundings can help provide safe places to live and work. We are mindful that the design of a neighbourhood or estate, and the homes within them, can also be a factor in local levels of crime and anti-social behaviour.

102. Landlords are expected to keep homes secure and protected from entry by intruders. But we recognise that we can go further. Physical measures such as CCTV, alley-gating and good quality lighting can all be effective in keeping neighbourhoods safe and secure. We want to explore how we can go further in using the Decent Homes Standard to keep residents secure and help tackle anti-social behaviour.

103. **We will review the Decent Homes Standard and consider whether it needs to be updated to ensure it is delivering what is needed for safety and decency now.**

As a first step the review will consider the case for change. We aim to complete this part of the Review by Autumn 2021. If the evidence demonstrates that we need to revise the Standard, we will consider the strategic, economic and management case for new criteria as a second stage of the review. It is important that any changes to the Standard are affordable and deliverable. We will convene a sounding board of residents, experts, landlords and sector representatives that will review the evidence and support this work.

## Box E: Review of the Decent Homes Standard

The aim of the first stage of the Decent Homes Review is to understand whether the current Decent Homes Standard is the right ask of the social housing sector today.

The review will:

- Consider the fit with wider government objectives such as ensuring buildings and neighbourhoods are safe; and responding and being resilient to climate change.
- Consider whether the Standard reflects present-day expectations and concerns.
- Assess how far aspects of the Standard have overall had a positive impact.
- Identify any unintended and undesirable consequences precipitated by the Standard.
- Consider whether the Standard is practical for the sector to deliver.

## Energy efficiency

104. We are committed to decarbonising our homes. Climate change is a critical global issue, and homes contribute 14% of all UK greenhouse emissions<sup>26</sup>. Working to address the impact of social homes will contribute to the United Kingdom’s commitment to net-zero carbon emissions by 2050 and help to reduce residents’ energy bills. It will also contribute to our legally binding fuel poverty target and the Energy Performance Certificate Band C aspiration set out in the Clean Growth Strategy.

<sup>24</sup> [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/7812/138355.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/7812/138355.pdf)

<sup>25</sup> English Housing Survey Headline Report 2018-19, Table 2.2 [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/860076/2018-19\\_EHS\\_Headline\\_Report.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/860076/2018-19_EHS_Headline_Report.pdf)

<sup>26</sup> <https://www.theccc.org.uk/2019/02/21/uk-homes-unfit-for-the-challenges-of-climate-change-ccc-says/>

**105.** We will ensure that the Decent Homes review considers how it can work to support better energy efficiency and the decarbonisation of social homes. We recently announced the Green Homes Grant for 2020/21<sup>27</sup> which social landlords are eligible to bid for, which will fund up to two thirds of the cost of hiring tradespeople to upgrade the energy performance of homes – up to a maximum contribution of £5,000. At the Chancellor’s summer economic update, the Government announced a £50m demonstrator project<sup>28</sup> to start the decarbonisation of social housing over 2020/21. This will encourage innovation and help inform the design of the future Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund.

## Provision of green spaces

**106.** In addition to the responses to the social housing Green Paper’s question on decent homes, COVID-19 is also showing the importance of access to safe, open and green spaces for people’s wellbeing. The importance of access to green spaces for exercise and mental wellbeing is especially important for those without private gardens. In our manifesto, we set an ambition for all new streets to be lined with trees. Street trees can bring a wide range of benefits that can lead to long-term improvements in people’s health, including environmental improvements related to biodiversity and climate change, and social benefits, such as encouraging increased levels of walking, improved mental health and decreased incidences of crime.

**107.** The Government’s 25 Year Environment Plan, published in January 2018, makes commitments to connect people with the environment to improve health and wellbeing. It includes a commitment to develop a National Framework of Green Infrastructure Standards, recognising the vital role that good green infrastructure can play in health and wellbeing, as well as wider benefits such as helping in nature’s recovery, supporting local economies and adapting to climate change. We are bringing forward a new Framework of Green Infrastructure Standards to show what good green infrastructure looks like and to help local authorities, developers and communities to improve green infrastructure, including greenspace provision in their area.

This includes providing adequate access to high quality green space for their local communities.

**108.** The 25 Year Environment Plan also sets out that spending time in the natural environment can improve our mental health and feelings of wellbeing. It can reduce stress, fatigue, anxiety and depression. In support of these commitments, we will begin a project to explore how to scale up green social prescribing services in England in order to improve mental health outcomes, reduce health inequalities and reduce demand on the health and social care system.

**109.** We will invest over £4 million<sup>29</sup> to bring together multiple partners to co-design and co-deliver this work, including the Department of Health and Social Care, the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, Natural England, NHS England, Public Health England and the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government. We will develop four local pilots across England, which will establish what is required to scale up green social prescribing at a local level and take steps to increase patient referrals to nature-based activities. We will conduct experimental work at the national level to understand where and why there is potential for rapid growth and what interventions can support and enable scaling up.

**110.** The Decent Homes Standard review will also consider how improvements to communal space around social homes could make places more liveable, safe and comfortable. This will build on the regulator’s existing Neighbourhood and Community consumer standard requiring landlords, working with other agencies, to keep the neighbourhood and communal areas associated with the homes they own clean and safe, and to promote social and environmental wellbeing.

**111.** It is crucial for all communities, including those in social housing, and for all age groups to have access to a range of open and green spaces for leisure, recreation and play. These spaces should be well defined, easily accessible and safe with high quality landscaping including trees where appropriate, to support the physical health and wellbeing for all.

<sup>27</sup> <https://greenhomesgrant.campaign.gov.uk/>

<sup>28</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/social-housing-decarbonisation-fund-demonstrator-programme-overview>

<sup>29</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/george-eustice-speech-on-environmental-recovery-20-july-2020>



## Supporting positive mental and physical health

- 112.** The importance of including open space in development is clear from our planning policy and guidance. The National Planning Policy Framework encourages housing developments that promote health and wellbeing, with a high standard of amenity for existing and future users. It states that planning policies should assess the need for different types of open space in each area, and then seek to accommodate it. In their report the Building Better, Building Beautiful Commission made nature one of their priority themes and noted that green spaces should be integral to the urban fabric. We welcome their recommendations and look forward to responding to their report in due course.
- 113.** The supporting National Design Guide shows how access to high quality and attractive green infrastructure, including open spaces, can be integral to new development, to encourage physical activity and to promote health, wellbeing and social inclusion. We are working to reflect the principles of the forthcoming Framework of Green Infrastructure Standards in national planning guidance, and the Government's forthcoming guidance on producing local design codes will set out more detailed parameters for development in different types of location including the arrangement and proportions of streets and urban blocks, positioning and hierarchy of public and green spaces, placement of street trees, private amenity space such as gardens and balconies, and high quality cycling and walking provision. This guidance will apply to new development, including social housing. Guidance on producing local design codes will form part of the Government's planning practice guidance on design quality to support the National Planning Policy Framework and can be used to guide decisions for planning applications.
- 114.** The *Planning for the Future* White Paper also includes a proposal by Government to enable more and better green space in development. The consultation closed on 29 October. Following consideration of the consultation responses, the Government will publish a response in due course.
- 115.** We know that around 24% of working age disabled people live in social housing<sup>30</sup>. It is therefore vital that these people get the support they need. In 2020/21 we have provided a total of £505 million for the Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG)<sup>31</sup>. This capital grant, administered by local authorities in England, can contribute to the cost of adapting an eligible disabled person's home. Eligible applicants can include older people, mentally or physically disabled people, as well as those with autism and learning difficulties. The DFG supports the installation of adaptations such as stair-lifts, level access showers and ramps; all things which can help enable people to live safely and independently at home. People of all ages can apply to their local authority for a DFG. In 2016/17 over 33% of recipients of the funding were housing association tenants, which equates to over 15,000 homes being improved. Local authorities are under a statutory duty<sup>32</sup> to provide home adaptations to those who qualify for the grant, which the individual local authority funds.
- 116.** Approximately one in four people report living with a mental health issue.<sup>33</sup> This is why, in addition to boosting green spaces, we are committed to expanding provision on mental health. This Government is committed to expanding access to mental health services through the NHS Long Term Plan. Investment of at least a further £2.3 billion a year by 2023/24 will ensure that the NHS provides high quality, evidence-based mental health services to an additional 2 million people. Alongside this expansion, we also want to make sure that wider public services support people to stay mentally well, recover from mental ill-health and live well with mental illness. Secure, safe and decent housing can support positive mental health.

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<sup>30</sup> <https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/healthandsocialcare/disability/bulletins/disabilityandhousinguk/2019>

<sup>31</sup> [https://www.housinglin.org.uk/assets/Resources/Housing/Policy\\_documents/505-million-for-Disabled-Facilities-Grants-in-2020-21.pdf](https://www.housinglin.org.uk/assets/Resources/Housing/Policy_documents/505-million-for-Disabled-Facilities-Grants-in-2020-21.pdf)

<sup>32</sup> <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1996/53/contents> **Page 110 of 226**

<sup>33</sup> NHS Digital (2015) *Health Survey for England 2014*. The *2014 Adult Psychiatric Morbidity Survey* further shows that 1 in 6 adults had a common mental disorder.



“We recognise that domestic pets also bring joy, happiness and comfort to people’s lives, helping their owners through difficult times and improving their mental and physical wellbeing.”

- 117.** We recognise that domestic pets also bring joy, happiness and comfort to people's lives, helping their owners through difficult times and improving their mental and physical wellbeing. We know many social landlords normally give permission for tenants to keep pets depending on the location, provided they are well looked after and do not adversely affect the lives of neighbours and those living nearby. We encourage all social landlords to adopt similar policies.
- 118.** We have heard how, in social housing, people's experience, including stigma, can be shaped by their interactions with frontline staff. Going forward, we want to ensure that frontline social housing staff have the right knowledge and skills to work sensitively with people who have or are at risk of developing mental health problems, building on examples of good practice in the sector. **Our review of professionalisation will consider how well housing staff are equipped to work with people with mental health needs and we will encourage best practice for landlords working with those with mental health needs.**
- 119.** We are aware of emerging evidence about the relationship between housing and health, including about housing's role in the transmission of COVID-19. We will continue to engage with the latest evidence on the impact of housing conditions on health, including COVID-19 transmission, and are actively considering options to mitigate these impacts.

## Supporting tenants facing anti-social behaviour and crime

- 120.** Tenants in social housing are more likely to be victims of crime and experience anti-social behaviour (ASB). These are corrosive behaviours, and this Government has been clear that they are unacceptable in all forms. Tenants have a right to feel safe in their homes, without the stress, fear and tensions that anti-social behaviour and crime can cause. The Government is committed to keeping our streets safe and cutting crime, including through ensuring that homes and communities are secure. We passed the Anti-social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act in 2014 to give landlords a wide range of tools to tackle ASB. We also published statutory guidance in 2019 to support local areas to make effective use of these powers, which sets out the importance of focusing on

the impact of anti-social behaviour on victims and on their needs. The guidance gives police, local authorities and others greater clarity on how best to use the powers appropriately and proportionately. However, we heard that in some cases social housing tenants feel their landlord is not taking their concerns seriously or seeking to tackle the issues they face. **Our new social housing tenant satisfaction measures** (see **Box A: Draft Tenant Satisfaction Measures**) **will include measures on responsible neighbourhood management, including tackling anti-social behaviour**, so landlords will have to be transparent and report on how they are performing in this area. Tenants and the regulator will then be able to use this information to hold landlords to account and drive better performance. **We will work with the Home Office and other partners to develop our understanding on how crime, and tenants' perception of crime, can be measured and reported on, and what scope there may be to include them in tenant satisfaction measures.**

- 121.** We also heard that it is not always clear to tenants who is responsible for responding to anti-social behaviour when they raise concerns. People do not know who to turn to, and what help and support to expect when they do. This has led to tenants feeling frustrated and voicing understandable concerns that some landlords fail to help or simply try to 'pass the buck'. To help tenants and landlords **we will clarify the different responsibilities that police, local authorities and their landlords have** in tackling anti-social behaviour. We will make it clear to tenants who can give them the most appropriate support and assistance. This will include information on the Community Trigger arrangements (also known as the ASB Case Review). This gives victims of persistent anti-social behaviour reported to any of the main responsible agencies (such as local authorities, police or a landlord) the right to request a multi-agency case review of their case where a local threshold is met. Information about this process is published on GOV.UK. **We will work with the National Housing Federation and Local Government Association to encourage social landlords to inform residents of their right to make a community trigger application, and where appropriate, that they act as an advocate in supporting tenants to take an application forward with the relevant authority.**



- 122.** We recognise from discussions with agencies involved in tackling anti-social behaviour and from recent research studies that, in some cases, the perpetrators of anti-social suffer from mental health problems or have issues involving alcohol and drug use. In those cases, providing the right support and interventions can have a positive outcome in terms of preventing further offending behaviour. **We will bring together a working group to shape our approaches to tackling this issue.** For social landlords, linked to our proposals to review professional development, we will be looking at the training given to housing staff to increase their awareness and understanding of mental health issues.
- 123.** We also know we need to do more to prevent acquisitive crime in social housing, such as burglary and theft. The £25m Safer Streets Fund<sup>34</sup> aims to prevent such crimes from happening in the first place. The fund is investing in crime prevention plans in 52 communities across England and Wales many of which include social housing, and also include activity to tackle anti-social behaviour.
- 124.** In addition, our National Design Guide, published in 2019, refers to the importance of designing out crime when developing new homes, and Government's forthcoming guidance on producing local design codes will set out how homes and neighbourhoods must be designed with safety and security in mind by applying the principles of Secured by Design<sup>35</sup>. This includes using passive design measures, such as 'eyes on the street' and appropriate layouts for homes.
- 125.** Finally, we know there are other serious issues affecting some vulnerable tenants and we want to stamp these out. One such example is "county lines" which, in some areas, has resulted in gangs using young people and vulnerable adults to spread drugs across the country. Gangs will use a vulnerable person's home to sell the drugs from. This "cuckooing" is a key part of the gangs' strategy. We want to see all housing associations and local authority landlords using their knowledge of vulnerable tenants to monitor and support those tenants who may be at risk. We know that there have been examples where landlord intervention with other agencies has resulted in preventing vulnerable people from being exploited by these gangs. It is vital

that they work together with bodies, such as the police, to maximise this impact.

- 126.** We will continue to identify opportunities to reduce crime and anti-social behaviour including encouraging landlords to develop practical solutions to tackle crime and anti-social behaviour in their areas.

## Integrating social housing in communities

- 127.** Social homes are a vital part of diverse communities across the country. Yet residents told us they often felt stigmatised, and that a shift was needed in the way residents are perceived and treated. Some said that they were made to feel like 'second class citizens'. We heard examples of social housing residents being denied access to certain shared facilities or spaces, leading to segregation from their neighbours and wider communities.
- 128.** It is vital that social housing is treated as an integral and valued part of our housing system, rather than being separated or segregated from other forms of housing. That aspiration is reflected in the National Planning Policy Framework which states that planning policies and decisions should aim to achieve healthy, inclusive and safe places. It also emphasises the need for planning policies and decisions to promote social interaction and provide shared spaces and facilities. It is supported by our planning practice guidance on Design: Process and Tools, published in October 2019, which includes guidance on the effective engagement of communities in shaping the design of their neighbourhoods.

<sup>34</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/safer-streets-fund-to-tackle-burglary-and-theft>

<sup>35</sup> <https://www.securedbydesign.com/>

**129.** One significant way in which the planning system supports the creation of mixed communities is through developer contributions (via planning obligations – also known as Section 106 agreements). Developer contributions currently deliver around half of all new affordable housing, most of which is delivered on-site. This has played an important role in securing affordable housing as part of mixed-tenure development.

**130.** Under the Government's proposals to reform the planning system, set out in the *Planning for the Future White Paper*, the current system of developer contributions would be replaced with a new Infrastructure Levy which would be charged as a fixed proportion of the development value. These reforms aim to provide greater certainty and transparency. The White Paper includes a clear commitment to ensure that, under the Infrastructure Levy, affordable housing provision supported through developer contributions is kept at least at current levels – and that it is still delivered on-site to ensure that new development continues to support mixed communities. We will continue to work with the social housing sector to ensure that our planning reforms achieve these objectives.

**131.** It is unacceptable that social tenants should be denied access to shared spaces and facilities and we want to see housing designed in a way that prevents this. We have published the National Design Guide which promotes social interaction through encouraging well-integrated housing and other facilities that are designed to be tenure neutral and socially inclusive, with spaces that can be shared by all residents. Local planning authorities will be expected to develop their own design codes or guides, taking into consideration the Government's forthcoming guidance on producing local design codes. These will set out clear parameters for what good quality design looks like in their area, following appropriate local consultation.

**132.** In 2018, we published an Integrated Communities Strategy Action Plan setting out cross-government measures to build integrated communities and challenge segregation. Integration Areas were announced in the Integrated Communities Strategy Green Paper with the aim that government would work with local authorities and other partners to co-design integration strategies to take tailored actions to address the challenges specific to their place. We have worked with three of our five existing integration areas to consider

how to maximise the use of levers in housing and planning policy locally to tackle social and residential segregation. We would aim to build on the results of their work to embed innovative approaches to housing.

## Considering how to ensure social housing is allocated fairly

**133.** Local authorities' allocation schemes are the primary system through which people access social housing. These schemes must be set in line with legislation, regulations and statutory guidance. In the social housing Green Paper, we announced an evidence collection exercise to help us understand how the system is playing out in local areas.

**134.** The exercise has brought together evidence from a survey of a number of local housing authorities, case studies, interviews and focus groups with representatives from across the sector. **The results will be published shortly and we will consider the findings to ensure that housing is allocated in the fairest way possible and achieves the best outcomes for local places and communities.** This will include considering:

- how to improve joint working between local authorities and housing associations to ensure that social housing is being allocated efficiently;
- how to remove barriers to access to social housing for homeless households; and
- how to ensure vulnerable households are able to navigate local authorities' allocation systems.

**135.** While the allocation legislation ensures that people with disabilities are prioritised for social housing, we heard that that allocation systems sometimes fail to match adapted (or adaptable) homes to the people who need them, often because of a lack of data about the accessible social housing stock in the area. **Accordingly, we will also look at how we can improve access to suitable homes for disabled people.**

## Supporting tenants facing domestic abuse

- 136.** Landlords have a role to play in supporting the victims of domestic abuse. They are well-placed to identify early signs of abuse and through allocations policies can offer an escape to safe housing. Many are already committed to taking action in support of this through sector-led initiatives such as the ‘Making a Stand’ pledge<sup>36</sup>.
- 137.** The Domestic Abuse Bill will place a statutory duty on county and unitary councils in England (excluding London Boroughs), as well as the Greater London Authority and the Isles of Scilly Council, to work with other bodies to develop a strategy for, and commission services to provide support for victims of domestic abuse and their children within safe accommodation. Landlords must work with local authorities to deliver this requirement, and it is important that this expectation is reflected in the regulatory standards. **We will expect the Regulator of Social Housing to review and amend its regulatory standards to make it clear that landlords should have a policy setting out how they should tackle issues surrounding domestic abuse,** working with other agencies as appropriate.
- 140.** In June this year, delivering on a commitment in the Government’s response to the Veterans Strategy consultation, we published statutory guidance for local authorities to improve access to social housing for members of the Armed Forces, veterans, and their families. The guidance will ensure that service personnel and veterans suffering from mental health are prioritised for social housing; that those who separate from their partners in the Armed Forces are exempted from any local connection test; and that local authorities can identify applications from members of the Armed Forces community to ensure they are considered appropriately.

## Supporting the Armed Forces community

- 138.** We are committed to ensuring that those who have put their life on the line for their country, and those who give up so much to support them to do so, get the priority for social housing they deserve.
- 139.** Delivering on the Armed Forces Covenant the Government changed the law in 2012 so that seriously injured, ill or disabled Service personnel, and former members of the Armed Forces, with urgent housing needs are always given high priority for social housing. We also introduced regulations to ensure that serving personnel and those who are recently discharged do not lose their qualification rights because of the necessity to move from base to base. Both of these changes apply also to bereaved spouses or civil partners who have to leave Ministry of Defence provided accommodation, and to serving and former members of the Reserve Armed Forces who have been seriously injured or disabled in service.

<sup>36</sup> <https://www.cih.org/policy/make-a-stand>

## Chapter 7:

To be supported to take your first step to ownership



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**We are determined to increase the supply of new and beautiful social homes – and to ensure that as many social tenants as possible have the opportunity to buy a home of their own.**

**To increase the supply of social homes, we have:**

- Built over 486,600 new affordable homes since 2010, including 142,400 for social rent.
- Announced our new £11.5 billion Affordable Homes Programme – the largest single investment in social housing for a decade – that will deliver up to 180,000 new homes.
- Announced a new £3 billion Affordable Homes Guarantee Scheme which aims to provide long-term, low cost and fixed rate debt finance to registered providers.
- Removed the cap on local authority borrowing to fund housebuilding.
- Consulted on whether greater flexibilities can be offered around how local authorities can use receipts from Right to Buy sales.
- Supported community-led housebuilding through the community housing fund.
- Announced we will consult on further guidance to provide clarity on rural exception sites policy, to ensure they are used to their full potential.

**To ensure that more social tenants have the opportunity to buy a home, we have:**

- Introduced a new shared ownership model that will be fairer, more consumer-friendly and more accessible.
- Announced that around half of the homes delivered by the new Affordable Homes Programme will be for affordable home ownership.
- Announced a new Right to Shared Ownership, meaning that most new grant-funded housing association homes for rent will give residents the opportunity to purchase a 10% (or more) stake in their home and to purchase further shares in future.

- Launched a pilot of Voluntary Right to Buy in the Midlands, giving thousands of housing association residents the opportunity to own their home.

We are firmly committed to ensuring that new social housing supply is well-designed and beautiful. Local councils and housing associations have long delivered some beautiful and innovative affordable homes, epitomised by the award of the country's top architecture and design award - the Stirling Prize – to the Goldsmith Street development by Norwich Council last year<sup>37</sup>. We heard from residents of the importance of building more affordable homes, and the importance of good design in preventing poor perceptions and stigma. So we want to encourage more Goldsmith Street developments and support better design everywhere, building on the long tradition created by the Victorian housing philanthropists that have given us model designs such as the Rowntree village at New Earswick, which is now pioneering new energy efficient homes. We have:

- Amended the National Planning Policy Framework and published a new national design guide to emphasise the importance of beauty and good design.
- Emphasised through our new National Design Guide the importance of building beautiful and well-designed social homes.

## **Building more affordable homes**

**141.** Since 2010, over 486,600 new affordable homes have been built, including 346,100 for rent, of which 142,400 have been for social rent.<sup>38</sup> But we know that we must do more. In September 2020 we announced the details of our new £11.5bn Affordable Homes Programme<sup>39</sup>, which represents the highest single funding commitment to affordable housing in a decade. The new Affordable Homes Programme will deliver up to 180,000 homes, with half the homes available for Social and Affordable Rent, and the remainder for affordable home ownership through our new shared ownership model. To support our ambition to level up the country, affordable housing providers will be able to develop homes for Social Rent anywhere in England.

<sup>37</sup> <https://www.architecture.com/awards-and-competitions-landing-page/awards/riba-stirling-prize>

<sup>38</sup> Live Table 1000 and Live Table 1012 – covers period from 2010-11 to 2019-20 from Live Table 1012 <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistical-data-sets/live-tables-on-affordable-housing-supply>

<sup>39</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/jenrick-unveils-huge-12-billion-boost-for-affordable-homes>

- 142.** The social housing Green Paper explored what difference providing long-term certainty on funding for new affordable housing would make to the ambitions of housing associations and other private registered providers. The new Affordable Homes Programme includes £2bn for long-term partnerships delivering homes up to 2028/29, giving housing associations the long-term certainty they have asked for in order to build more homes. This new investment builds on the existing £9bn Affordable Homes Programme which will deliver around 250,000 new affordable homes by 2023.
- 143.** The social housing Green Paper also trailed the role of guarantees in supporting housing associations to build more homes. At Spring Statement 2019 a new £3bn Affordable Homes Guarantee Scheme was announced, building on the success of the previous £3.24bn scheme. This aims to provide long-term, low cost and fixed rate debt finance to registered providers to increase the supply of additional new build affordable homes. We estimate that the new scheme will support the delivery of around 17,000 affordable homes and that the scheme will be open for business by the end of the year.
- 144.** Around half of all new affordable homes are delivered through developer contributions, which are negotiated as part of the planning system (in the form of Section 106 planning obligations). Under our proposals to reform the planning system, set out in the *Planning for the Future* White Paper, the current system of developer contributions would be replaced with a new Infrastructure Levy, which would be charged as a fixed proportion of the development value. These reforms aim to provide greater certainty and transparency. We would ensure that, under the Infrastructure Levy, affordable housing provision supported through developer contributions is kept at least at current levels, and that it is still delivered on-site to ensure that new development continues to support mixed communities.
- 145.** Rural Exception Sites are small rural sites not normally used for housing but allowed to be used for Affordable Housing to accommodate households who are either current residents in the local area or have an existing family or employment connection. We also recognise that Rural Exception Sites are important for the delivery of Affordable Homes in rural areas and will consult on further guidance to provide clarity on this policy, with the aim of ensuring that they are used to their full potential.

## Building more council homes

- 146.** Between April 2010 and March 2019, local authorities built over 26,100 new affordable homes<sup>40</sup> but have the potential to build many more. We want to see a step change in local authority delivery. In October 2018 the cap on local authority borrowing to fund housebuilding was removed<sup>41</sup>.
- 147.** We want to see local authorities make the most of borrowing flexibilities and innovate to deliver homes for the future. We are keen for local authorities to take advantage of funding available through the Affordable Homes Programme. We want to see local authorities share experiences and good practice in housebuilding so they are well placed to build the next generation of council homes.
- 148.** To further support local authority house building, we are looking at whether greater flexibilities can be offered around how local authorities can use receipts from Right to Buy sales. A consultation exploring the possibility of this was published alongside the social housing Green Paper and we are considering the policy response.

<sup>40</sup> Affordable Housing Supply open data: <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistical-data-sets/live-tables-on-affordable-housing-supply#open-data>

<sup>41</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/housing-revenue-account>

## Community Led Housing

**149.** Housing built by community-led groups, including community land trusts and housing co-operatives, can deliver high quality affordable housing that cannot be delivered by the mainstream market. Particularly in urban areas, community-led housing can be delivered through the conversion and refurbishment of existing buildings. Because the management bodies of community-led housing are typically drawn from the local and residential community, they are uniquely well placed to respond to the needs and aspirations of residents.

**150.** An important feature of community-led housing developments is the strong sense of pride and belonging that they engender among their residents, and the associated benefits in terms of health and wellbeing. We have supported community-led housebuilding through the Community Housing Fund<sup>42</sup> and we will consider how best to maintain that support going forward.

<sup>42</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/community-housing-fund>

## Building beautiful

- 151.** We are committed to developing more beautiful homes and communities. It should be an aspiration for all new developments. It helps to create a sense of place and foster a sense of community. The 'Building Better, Building Beautiful' Commission was established in November 2018, to advise the Government on how to promote high quality design for new build homes and neighbourhoods, making them more likely to be welcomed by existing communities. The recommendations apply to all new homes, regardless of tenure. The final report of the 'Building Better, Building Beautiful' Commission was published on 30 January 2020. We welcome the report and will provide a formal response in due course.
- 152.** In the meantime, in 2019, we amended the National Planning Policy Framework and published a new National Design Guide to emphasise the importance of beauty and good design.

## Helping people into home ownership

- 153.** We are committed to supporting people that want to own a home to do so. We are delivering more new homes of all types, delivering 241,000 in the last year alone, the highest in over 30 years; and we have committed to delivering at least a million more over this parliament. Approximately 50% of the homes delivered through the new Affordable Homes Programme will be for affordable home ownership, supporting aspiring homeowners to take their first step on to the housing ladder. Over 649,000 households<sup>43</sup> have been helped to purchase a home since spring 2010 through Government backed schemes including 'Help to Buy' and 'Right to Buy', and we have cut stamp-duty for the majority of first-time buyers, helping over 540,000 people.<sup>44</sup> These schemes are working and in 2018/19 the number of first-time buyers reached a 12-year annual high, and increased by over 87% since 2010/11<sup>45</sup>. However, we need to do more to support people to realise their dreams of home ownership.

## A new shared ownership model

- 154.** Shared Ownership has a vital role to play in offering a route into homeownership to those who would otherwise struggle to buy a home. We know that there is more we can do to make Shared Ownership work better for those who need it most. This is why in September 2020 we introduced a new Shared Ownership model that will be more consumer-friendly and more accessible. The new Shared Ownership model will reduce the minimum initial ownership stake from 25% to 10% and will enable purchasers to then buy further shares in smaller instalments of as little as 1%.
- 155.** Shared owners, like other homeowners, are currently responsible for the full cost of any repairs from day one. This means that those starting off with a small stake can be left with large bills. This is why we have also introduced a 10-year "repair-free" period during which the landlord will cover the costs of major repairs for new homes. For most people entering into Shared Ownership, the scheme serves as a first step on their journey as homeowners. The new repairs model will help make the transition from renting to homeownership almost frictionless. The changes will prevent new shared owners being hit with repairs and maintenance bills and better support them to put money aside towards buying more of their home.
- 156.** Together these measures will ensure Shared Ownership supports those who need it most by making it easier for hard working people and families to access and progress to full ownership. We are committed to continued investment in the delivery of Shared Ownership homes and will fund the new model through the new Affordable Homes Programme.

<sup>43</sup> MHCLG Calculation of Help to Buy and Right to Buy (24 September 2020) The figure of 649,996 households comprises of 96,420 Right to Buy local authority sales, 29,826 Right to Buy PRP sales, 272,852 Help to Buy: Equity Loan sales, 104,763 Help to Buy: Mortgage Guarantee sales (the Help to Buy: Mortgage Guarantee scheme operates across the UK, whereas all others in this note only operate in England), 5,694 Help to Buy: New Buy sales and 140,411 Affordable home ownership sales

<sup>44</sup> Quarterly Stamp Duty Land Tax Statistics [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/904092/Quarterly SDLT 2020Q2\\_Main.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/904092/Quarterly SDLT 2020Q2_Main.pdf)

<sup>45</sup> UK Finance (previously Council of Mortgage Lenders), First-time buyers: new mortgages and affordability (18 February 2020)



“We are committed to developing more beautiful homes and communities. It should be an aspiration for all new developments. It helps to create a sense of place and foster a sense of community.”



“We are reinvigorating the home ownership offer for housing association tenants by introducing a new Right to Shared Ownership.”

## Supporting residents' Right to Buy

- 157.** Over 60% of social tenants have said they would prefer to be owner-occupiers if they had a free choice,<sup>46</sup> yet only a quarter currently believe they will ever be able to do so.<sup>47</sup> This gap between ambition and expectation is not right.
- 158.** We remain committed to the Right to Buy, which has helped nearly two million residents to become homeowners since 1980<sup>48</sup>. In August 2018 a pilot of the Voluntary Right to Buy was launched in the Midlands. This pilot has given thousands of housing association residents in the East and West Midlands the opportunity to own their own home.
- 159.** The pilot is assessing how the Voluntary Right to Buy works in practice for residents and for housing associations. It is also testing that housing associations are able to replace the homes sold under the pilot and the portable discount, which enables a resident to use their discount to buy another housing association property where their home is not for sale. We will publish the full evaluation of the Midlands pilot.

## Right to Shared Ownership

- 160. We are reinvigorating the home ownership offer for housing association tenants by introducing a new Right to Shared Ownership.** The Right to Shared Ownership will be attached to the vast majority of new grant funded homes for rent grant funded through the new £11.5bn Affordable Homes Programme. It will give many housing association residents the opportunity to purchase a stake in their home of 10% or more and to purchase further shares in future when they can afford to do so. Tenants taking up this offer will benefit from the new Shared Ownership model that is more consumer-friendly and makes it more manageable for shared owners to increase the stake in their homes.

## Supporting leaseholders in social housing

- 161.** The Government is committed to promoting fairness and transparency for all leaseholders, both in the social and private sectors, and ensuring that consumers are protected from abuse and poor service. That is why we are reforming the leasehold market by restricting ground rents on future leases to zero, banning new leasehold houses, strengthening redress, making it easier, quicker and cheaper to extend a lease or buy a freehold and reinvigorating commonhold and Right to Manage. Our White Paper reforms will also benefit leaseholders with social landlords, for example by increasing transparency on overall spend and performance by landlords, a stronger focus on managing neighbourhoods and communal spaces, and better engagement so that the concerns of leaseholders can be heard. Many leaseholders have told us that service charges can often be unclear, and it is hard to tell whether costs are reasonable. We are clear that service charges should be transparent and communicated effectively, and that there should be a route to challenge or redress if things go wrong. An independent working group, chaired by Lord Best, examined how to raise standards across the housing sector, which considered how fees such as service charges should be presented to consumers. The group also considered issues such as the consultation process for major works, how to mitigate the risk of large and unexpected bills, as well as the reasonableness of other fees and charges faced by leaseholders. The working group has published its final report to Government; we are considering the report's recommendations and will announce next steps through our leasehold reform programme.

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<sup>46</sup> Public attitudes to house building, October 2019 [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/841815/BSA\\_House\\_building\\_report.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/841815/BSA_House_building_report.pdf)

<sup>47</sup> English Housing Survey, Headline Report 2018- 19 <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/english-housing-survey-2018-to-2019-headline-report>

<sup>48</sup> Live tables on Social Housing Sales – table 678 <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistical-data-sets/live-tables-on-social-housing-sales>

# Glossary

**Affordable housing:** housing for sale or rent, including social housing, for those whose needs are not met by the market.

**Affordable Rent:** social housing provided as part of an agreement with Homes England, the Greater London Authority or the Secretary of State where the rent is set up to 80% of market rent.

**Aluminium Composite Materials:** Aluminium composite material (ACM) is a flat panel made from two thin aluminium sheets bonded to a non-aluminium core, between three and seven mm thick. ACM becomes 'unsafe ACM' when it has a polyethylene (PE) filler, which is highly combustible.

**Anti-social behaviour:** conduct that has caused, or is likely to cause, harassment, alarm or distress to a person, or conduct capable of causing housing-related nuisance or annoyance to any person.

**Arms Length Management Organisation:** an organisation that provides and/or manages housing on behalf of a local authority on a not-for-profit basis.

**Borrowing Cap:** the limit set by Government that local authorities can borrow up to.

**Decent Homes Standard:** the Government's definition of what is a decent home and is set out in the publication *A Decent Home: Definition and Guidance for Implementation*. It sets out that a decent home meets four criteria (a) it meets the current statutory minimum standard for housing (b) it is in a reasonable state of repair (c) it has reasonably modern facilities and services and (d) it provides a reasonable degree of thermal comfort.

**English Housing Survey:** a continuous national survey commissioned by the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG). It collects information about people's housing circumstances and the condition and energy efficiency of housing in England.

**Green Paper:** a consultation document produced by the government. The aim of this document is to allow people both inside and outside Parliament to give the department feedback on its policy or legislative proposals.

**Homes England:** the national housing delivery agency.

**Housing association:** a non-profit organisation set up to provide affordable homes for those in need.

**Housing Revenue Account:** a local authority account in which all income and spending arising from its social housing stock is managed.

**Leasehold:** Leasehold is a form of ownership normally used for flats (but occasionally for houses) that is a long tenancy, providing the right to occupation and use of the property for a long period – the 'term' of the lease. The lease can be assigned during this term by the owner of the long lease.

**Leaseholder:** A person who buys a leasehold property on a long lease.

**Memorandum of Understanding:** a framework that sets out how two parties will work together on a particular issue.

**National Planning Policy Framework:** a framework that sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied.

**Private Registered Provider:** a registered provider of social housing that is not a local authority. Most are housing associations.

**Private Rented Sector:** homes for rent that are owned and managed by private landlords.

**Registered provider of social housing:** a social housing landlord that is registered with the Regulator of Social Housing. This includes local authority landlords and private registered providers (such as housing associations and housing co-operatives).

**Right to Buy:** this scheme allows tenants of local authorities and some housing associations, with a secure tenancy, to purchase their home, with a discount.

**Right to Buy Receipts:** money arising from the sale of local authority homes sold either under the Right to Buy legislation or sold voluntarily to secure tenants at less than market value.

**Right to Shared Ownership:** is a new right introduced in 2020, which will give the vast majority of social tenants, living in new rented homes delivered by the Affordable Homes Programme 2021/26, the opportunity to purchase a stake in their home and then purchase further shares when they can afford to do so.

**Shared ownership:** an affordable home ownership scheme that allows residents to purchase 25%-75% of a home and then pay a subsidised rent on the remaining share. Residents are able to buy further shares in their homes in minimum 10% instalments, and in most circumstances, up to full ownership.

**Social Housing:** housing to rent below the market rent or to buy through shared ownership or equity percentage arrangements, that is made available to people whose needs are not adequately served by the housing market.

**Social Rent:** low cost rent set in accordance with a government formula.

**Social Rented Sector:** homes for rent that are owned and managed by local authorities and private registered providers.

**Tenant Management Organisation:** local authority tenant led (by volunteers) groups who take responsibility for managing the homes they live in.

**Tenant Satisfaction Measures:** a measurable value that demonstrates how effectively main objectives are achieved

**The Housing Ombudsman:** Appointed by the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government in accordance with the Code of Practice published by the Commissioner for Public Appointments. The Housing Ombudsman Service is an executive non-departmental public body, sponsored by the Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government.

**The Housing Ombudsman Scheme:** Approved by the Secretary of State under Section 51 of, and Schedule 2 to, the Housing Act 1996. Membership of the Scheme is compulsory for social landlords (other than local housing authorities). A number of managing agents and private landlords are voluntary members.

**The Regulator of Social Housing (“the regulator”):** an independent regulator which regulates providers of social housing (including local authorities, housing associations and other registered providers). Its principal role is to promote a viable, efficient and well-governed social housing sector able to deliver homes that meet a range of needs.

**Voluntary Right to Buy:** In October 2015, the National Housing Federation, on behalf of the housing association sector, made an agreement with Government to extend Right to Buy level discounts to eligible housing association tenants through a voluntary rather than statutory approach. An initial pilot ran during 2016/17 with five housing associations, and a larger scale Midlands pilot of the scheme was launched in summer 2018.

**White Paper:** policy document produced by the government that sets out proposals for future legislation.

# Annex A:

## Key measures for changing the regulatory regime for social housing

### Changes to the regulatory regime

The White Paper sets out wide-ranging proposals to transform and strengthen the regulatory regime to ensure it holds all landlords to account for the services they deliver, drives good service for tenants and protects economic regulation. A list of all the changes to the regulatory regime we intend to make is set out below. Many of these changes will require legislation. Government will:

- Work with the regulator to establish a proactive consumer regulation regime with active oversight of landlord performance, whilst maintaining the principle of co-regulation. This will include:
  - Introducing routine inspections for the largest landlords (with over 1,000 homes) with the aim of doing so every four years, to obtain assurance from landlords that they are complying with the consumer standards;
  - Specific, reactive inspections and/or investigations where systemic issues of concern are brought to the regulator by tenants or their representatives, the Housing Ombudsman or others;
  - Published findings from these investigations and inspections where a landlord is found non-compliant with the regulator's standards.
- Legislate to remove the 'serious detriment test' as soon as Parliamentary time allows, to eliminate barriers to the regulator adopting a proactive approach to monitoring and oversight of landlord performance on consumer issues.
- Change the regulator's objectives to explicitly cover safety and transparency, and expect the regulator to review its consumer standards to ensure they are up to date and deliver its revised objectives.
- Legislate to give the regulator a power to publish a code of practice on the consumer standards to be clearer on what landlords are required to deliver.
- Expect the regulator to bring in a set of tenant satisfaction measures for all landlords on the things that matter to tenants, and expect landlords to report to every tenant on such matters at least once a year, if not continuously using technology.
- Legislate to place an obligation on landlords to identify and publicise a senior named person in their organisation who is responsible for ensuring compliance with their health and safety obligations.
- Expect the regulator to require landlords to identify a 'responsible person' for consumer standards compliance, as part of a wider requirement to provide greater clarity on the roles and responsibilities of senior staff.
- Introduce a new access to information scheme for social housing tenants of housing associations and other private registered providers of social housing so that information relating to landlords is easily accessible to tenants.

- Expect the regulator to require landlords to evidence how they have sought out and considered ways to improve engagement with tenants.
  - Legislate to strengthen the regulator's enforcement powers to tackle failing landlords and to respond to new challenges, including:
    - Giving the regulator the power to require a Performance Improvement Plan;
    - Reducing the notice period to survey homes;
    - Giving the regulator the power to arrange emergency repair work and recoup costs from the landlord where, following a survey, there is evidence of systemic landlord failure and other regulatory measures have not worked;
    - Removing the requirement to ask the Secretary of State's approval to use its own staff to carry out inspections; and
    - Removing the cap on the level of fines the regulator may charge.
  - Ensure that local authorities are held to account for the performance of service provided by an Arms Length Management Organisation or Tenant Management Organisation, by:
    - Asking stockholding local authorities that contract out management services to Arms Length Management Organisations to review their contracts to ensure they do not prevent the regulator from taking action in the event of non-compliance with its standards;
    - Making it explicit that provisions in contracts between ALMOs or TMOs would be deemed void if they hindered the regulation in its exercise of its powers; and
    - Working with the regulator to set out an expectation for local authorities to self-refer to ensure that issues of concern to tenants are dealt with as quickly as possible.
  - Expect the regulator to review and amend its regulatory standards to make it clear that landlords should have a policy setting out how they should tackle issues surrounding domestic abuse, working with other agencies as appropriate.
  - Legislate to strengthen the relationship between the Housing Ombudsman and the regulator, building on the current Memorandum of Understanding to ensure that they can exchange information quickly and effectively to provide better protection for tenants.
  - Maintain the robust economic regulation regime that is already working well and make sure the whole system is cohesive and balanced. This will include ensuring that changes to consumer regulation do not undermine economic regulation.
  - Refine the regulator's powers to ensure it has the right tools to deliver its economic regulation function effectively with an evolving sector. This includes:
    - Requiring landlords to notify the regulator of any change in control and refining the definition of 'non-profit' providers; and
    - Introducing a 'look-through' power so the regulator can follow money paid outside of the regulated sector to ensure probity.
- Delivering these changes is essential to ensuring that the needs of tenants are embedded in the culture of all landlords, and will require significant change to the structure and expertise of the regulator, from senior leadership level downwards. To ensure that the regulator is equipped to deliver a proactive regulatory regime effectively, we will:
- Enable the regulator to set up an entirely new function, and make sure it is resourced and able to recruit the right new staff, including at senior leadership level, that have the right expertise in consumer regulation, customer service and tenant engagement to effectively deliver the new consumer regulation regime.
  - Expect the regulator to develop a strategy for appropriate and ongoing publicity to make tenants aware of what it does and how to get in touch – both so they can understand and help shape consumer regulation.
  - Broaden the skills mix and diversity of Board Members and increase the number of Members with consumer regulation experience.
  - Work with the regulator to make sure that the regulator is resourced and able to recruit the right new staff with diverse background and skills, including at senior levels.
  - Require the regulator to set up a statutory Advisory Committee to provide independent and unbiased advice on discharging its functions. This will not be a decision-making body.



<b>REPORT TO:</b>	<b>HOUSING AND COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE</b>	<b>AGENDA ITEM:9</b>
<b>DATE OF MEETING:</b>	<b>28<sup>th</sup> JANUARY 2021</b>	<b>CATEGORY: (See Notes) DELEGATED or RECOMMENDED</b>
<b>REPORT FROM:</b>	<b>STRATEGIC DIRECTOR SERVICE DELIVERY</b>	<b>OPEN</b>
<b>MEMBERS' CONTACT POINT:</b>	<b>PAUL WHITTINGHAM <a href="mailto:Paul.whittingham@southderbys.gov.uk">Paul.whittingham@southderbys.gov.uk</a></b>	<b>DOC:</b>
<b>SUBJECT:</b>	<b>HOMELESSNESS AND ROUGH SLEEPING STRATEGY</b>	
<b>WARD(S) AFFECTED:</b>	<b>All</b>	<b>TERMS OF REFERENCE: (HCS01)</b>

## **1.0 Recommendations**

- 1.1 That the Committee approves the draft Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy and Action Plan for public consultation.
- 1.2 That the final version of the Strategy is presented to the Committee for ratification after the public consultation period.

## **2.0 Purpose of the Report**

- 2.1 The report informs the Committee of the completion of the strategic review of Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Services which was commissioned by the Council and approved at the Housing and Community Services Committee meeting on 30 January 2020.
- 2.2 The report proposes the commencement of public consultation on the draft Strategy and Action Plan.

## **3.0 Executive Summary**

- 3.1 The Council is required to publish a Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy. A Strategy Statement was approved by the Committee on 30 January 2020 and a comprehensive strategic review was commissioned with the Homeless Link consultancy.
- 3.2 The review has been completed and has identified several key themes that have been carried into the draft Strategy and Action Plan which are attached at Appendices A and B to the report.

3.3 The draft Strategy and Action Plan are now ready for public consultation which it is proposed runs for a period of six weeks from the date of this meeting. The consultation will be carried out via the Council's website with the opportunity for individual telephone consultation where required.

#### 4.0 **Detail**

4.1 A comprehensive strategic review of the Council's Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy was commissioned after the expiry of the previous Strategy. Homeless Link was appointed to complete this work.

4.2 **Methodology:** The homelessness review included:

- An analysis of the past, current and future levels of homelessness
- An audit of the services aimed at preventing, accommodating, and supporting people who are or may become homeless
- A review of the resources available within the District
- A review of data from a wide range of sources, including homelessness statistics local, regional, and national data,
- Consultation with stakeholders, other providers, customers and staff.

4.3 **Executive Summary.** The review document is comprehensive and detailed. An Executive Summary of the review findings is attached at Appendix C. This contains an overview of;

- Demand
- Profile of Homelessness
- Reasons for Homelessness
- The Prevention and relief of Homelessness
- Main Homelessness Duty Decisions
- Temporary Accommodation
- Rough Sleeping
- Council Services
- Other Agency Services
- COVID-19
- Settled and Supported Accommodation
- Social Housing
- The Private Rented Sector
- The needs of specific client groups
- Stakeholder and Customer views
- Resources
- Future Levels of Homelessness.

#### 4.4 **Key Findings**

4.5 There are several key statistical findings from the review which are outlined in the executive summary.

- a. 638 approaches to the Housing Solutions Service in 2019/20
- b. 318 homeless assessments in 2019/20
- c. Domestic Abuse was the main cause of homelessness
- d. 64% of people had a support need
- e. Mental health is the most prevalent support need
- f. 56% of homeless households are families with children

- g. 64% of people had their homelessness successfully prevented
- h. 64% of people had their homelessness successfully relieved
- i. Most clients were helped by accessing social housing
- j. 152% increase in annual temporary accommodation placements over the last three years
- k. 816 households on the Housing Register
- l. 44% of people on the Housing Register need one-bedroom accommodation

4.6 These statistics lead to a series of further outcomes which are carried forward into the draft Strategy and Action plan documents. These include:

- More effectively managing demand and a focus on cases where there is a threat of homelessness.
- The need to raise awareness with customers and partner agencies to encourage clients to access the service earlier for homeless prevention to be maximised.
- The need to provide a range of prevention tools targeted at the main causes of homelessness.
- The need for an increased focus on helping people to maintain their existing accommodation.
- The need to make better use of the private rented sector for preventing and relieving homelessness.
- A more detailed operational review of the Housing Solutions Service to understand what resources are needed to manage demand and how improved customer outcomes can be achieved.
- Work is needed to ensure that homelessness is not seen as the route to access social housing
- Learn from how services have been delivered through the pandemic to inform how services can better meet demand using technology and telephone assessments
- Place a greater focus on prevention and early intervention including those that enable clients to keep their existing accommodation, targeted at these main causes:
  - **Domestic Abuse** - Timely access to a range of options, including emergency provision and support, floating support, planned moves, acting as a landlord against perpetrators and target hardening
  - **Loss of Private Rented Accommodation** - ensure that there is a much more targeted approach to preventing people losing their home in the private rented sector.
  - **Family/Friends Evicting** - provide a more targeted and proactive response for households who are being asked to leave by family or friends.

- **Non-violent Relationship Breakdown** - Provide access to mediation and relationship counselling services
- Update the website to increase the amount of “self-help” information and advice available to customers
- Provide sufficient resources in place to manage any increase in demand.
- Provide adequate prevention funding in place to cover private rent arrears linked to lost earnings due to Covid-19
- Increase the availability of specialist income and money advice teams
- Put in place a local publicity campaign to ensure that tenants, landlords and homeowners are aware of the assistance available
- Develop supported housing provision for clients with multiple and complex needs, Housing First could be part of this solution.
- Given the very high demand for one-bedroom accommodation on the Housing Register the number of new one-bedroom properties being developed needs to increase if demand is to be met, or existing stock needs to be redesignated.
- Develop a greater range of options and provision for single people specifically for people under the age of 35.

## **5.0 Financial Implications**

- 5.1 There are no direct financial implications within this report. Homelessness services are funded through the General Fund with support from central government Homeless Prevention Funding. This has recently been increased by around £40,000 to £206,311. The Housing and Community Services Committee meeting on 1 October agreed to increase the budget for permanent dedicated resource for managing homelessness within the Housing Team as part of the Housing Service Review.
- 5.2 Any further project proposals that require funding, identified through the implementation of the Strategy will be reported to the Housing and Community Services Committee at a future date.

## **6.0 Corporate Implications**

### **Employment Implications**

- 6.1 There are no direct employment implications within this report.

### **Legal Implications**

- 6.2 There are no direct legal implications contained within this report.

### **Corporate Plan Implications**

- 6.3 This report will make a direct contribution to the Council's Corporate Plan objective for Supporting and safeguarding the most vulnerable, through:
- a. With partners encourage independent living and keep residents healthy and happy in their homes.
  - b. Promote health and wellbeing across the District.

### **Risk Impact**

- 6.4 This report contributes directly to mitigating the risk identified in the Service Delivery Risk Register: SD7 - Insufficient supply of affordable homes to meet Council needs relating to allocations and homelessness.

## **7.0 Community Impact**

### **Consultation**

- 7.1 Consultation with stakeholder groups has already been carried out through the South Derbyshire Homelessness Conference, the Derbyshire Homeless Officer Group, other housing providers and the Housing staff team. Further public consultation will follow after which the final version of the Strategy and Action Plan will be reported to the Committee.

### **Equality and Diversity Impact**

- 7.2 The review has considered all aspects of homelessness including homelessness amongst excluded and or protected groups.

### **Social Value Impact**

- 7.3 Identifying causes and actions to resolve homelessness and rough sleeping will positively impact on the social value of Council Services for the people of South Derbyshire.

### **Environmental Sustainability**

- 7.4 There are no direct issues regarding environmental sustainability within this report.

## **8.0 Conclusions**

- 8.1 The review of Homelessness and Rough Sleeping in South Derbyshire has provided a clear evidence-based picture of housing needs in the District.
- 8.2 The draft Strategy and Action Plan provide the Council with a clear pathway towards improving services to meet current and future challenges.

## **9.0 Background Papers**





## South Derbyshire Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2020 -2025

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South Derbyshire  
District Council

**November 2020**

Laura Paterson,  
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# 1. Foreword

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## 2. Introduction

### 2.1 Purpose of the Strategy

This homelessness and rough sleeping strategy sets out our long term ambitions for homelessness services across South Derbyshire. It details how we will work in partnership with a wide range of partners and stakeholders to tackle homelessness in the District, and to ensure that appropriate support and accommodation can be accessed.

Homelessness is the symptom of a complex interaction between a person's specific situation and a range of structural and social factors that are often beyond their control.

If we are to successfully tackle homelessness we need to find new ways of addressing the root causes of homelessness. This needs to be combined with an increased focus on prevention that will involve working more closely with service users to understand their strengths and support them holistically to achieve their goals.

The implementation of the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 signalled both a legislative and cultural shift in response to homelessness, with an increased focus on homeless prevention and early intervention. Through this Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy South Derbyshire District Council seeks to intervene early and prevent homelessness wherever possible with a focus on delivering individually tailored solutions with customers. Where homelessness cannot be prevented the Council will work to rapidly support individuals into appropriate and sustainable accommodation.

This is the Council's first Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy following the implementation of the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017. This strategy for 2020-25 will build on the successes achieved to date by the Council and its partners and seeks to further develop and enhance existing services and initiatives.

### 2.2 Legislative Background

The Homelessness Act 2002 requires every Local Authority to carry out a review of homelessness in their area and to develop and publish a homelessness strategy based on the review findings.

Under the Act, the Homelessness Strategy must seek to achieve the following objectives in the local housing authority's area:

- a) The prevention of homelessness
- b) That suitable accommodation is and will be available for people who are or may become homeless
- c) That satisfactory support is available for people who are or may become homeless.

This strategy has been developed in response to the findings of the Homelessness Review 2020, which provides a comprehensive understanding of homelessness across South Derbyshire. The Homelessness Review has identified issues and gaps in service provision, which this strategy will seek to address.

## 2.3 An Integrated Approach to Responding to Homelessness

It is recognised that homelessness is usually the consequence of the cumulative impact of a number of factors rather than a single cause. Whilst these factors include those that are personal to the individual, they also include those that are 'structural' in nature and those that are the consequence of 'systems failures.'

Individual factors apply to the personal history of a homeless household and could include life crisis and traumatic events and mental health and/or addiction challenges.

Structural factors are economic and societal issues that affect opportunities and social environments for individuals. In the longer term, therefore, a truly effective response to homelessness requires an investment that promotes improved access to educational opportunities, economic wellbeing and affordable housing as well as supportive communities and social inclusion.

Systems failures occur when other structures such as those around care and support fail, requiring vulnerable people to access homelessness services, when other mainstream services could have prevented this.

This strategy recognises that homelessness, in its causes and consequences, is a cross-cutting issue, which cannot be tackled by one agency alone. In order to achieve the aims of this strategy it is essential that all partner agencies work together in an integrated way. This Strategy aims to further strengthen our existing partnership relationships and to develop new ones.

Many people have multiple needs that extend beyond the basic need for a home. It is not possible for the Council to meet those needs in isolation, but rather a successful strategic approach to preventing homelessness is dependent upon a coordinated multi-agency response.

This strategy should be seen as a multi agency document. The council has worked closely with its partners through the Homelessness Forum to produce this strategy. It is intended that the strategy be inclusive in its approach and partner agencies continue to work closely with the council to assist in its delivery.

### 3. Our Vision

Our vision for homelessness across South Derbyshire is:

#### Ending Homelessness Together

**Working together we will intervene early to prevent homelessness and rough sleeping. We will provide tailored solutions and support based upon the individual client's needs. We will empower our clients to achieve their future goals.**

This vision was developed in partnership with key partners through the Homelessness Forum.

This strategy has been based around the following objectives

#### Our objectives are to:

- Effectively prevent homelessness by intervening early and offering advice and support together with practical help and individually tailored solutions.
- Work in partnership to understand and tackle the root causes of homelessness at a local level.
- Where people do become homeless, help them to find and sustain suitable homes as soon as possible.
- Improve how we work together so services are easier to use and make the best use of available resources.
- Ensure our response to homelessness promotes customer choice, equality of opportunity, reduces social exclusion and contributes to community cohesion.

#### Over the lifetime of this Strategy we aim to:

- Ensure that where anyone does sleep rough that there is a rapid response to get them into accommodation and support.
- Deliver an excellent Housing Solutions Service which focuses on early intervention and prevention
- Reduce crisis presentations
- Ensure that homelessness is prevented wherever possible through the delivery of bespoke personal housing plans and access to affordable and sustainable accommodation
- Seek to end the use of bed and breakfast accommodation for all homeless households.
- Ensure that for individuals whose homelessness is hidden or for those living in rural communities, that they can access the help and support they need.
- Increase the range of affordable housing options available across the district.
- Ensure that housing related support services are able to meet the diverse and complex needs of our homeless population
- Prevent repeat homelessness from occurring by ensuring that solutions are tailored to meeting the complex needs of clients.

Working in partnership is absolutely fundamental to achieving this vision and our objectives.

## 4. Building on Success

While we recognise that there is a lot to do to meet this new vision, this Homelessness Strategy is built upon a successful approach to homeless prevention and positive partnership initiatives. These successes have been achieved through successful partnership approaches and include:

- Bi monthly multi agency Homeless Forum
- Annual multi agency Homeless Conference
- Introduction of new staffing structure following the introduction of the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017
- Implementation of the new Locata system to manage new Homeless cases
- Homeless Reduction Act training for the Housing Solutions team
- Introduction of Personal Housing Plans
- Prevention and relief of homeless using the private rented sector
- Prevention and relief of homelessness using spend to save budget
- Implementation of new procedures following Homelessness Reduction Act
- Presentations to key partner agencies regarding the introduction of the Homelessness Reduction Act
- Support to internal careline services during SWEP
- Effective and joint working with all other Districts and Boroughs in Derbyshire
- Build up transparent and pro active relationships with agencies offering supported accommodation
- Multi agency approach to rough sleeping in the district
- Presentation and inclusion of other agencies to support with annual Rough Sleeper Count
- Active membership to Derbyshire Homeless Officer Group - DHOG
- Introduction and subsequent expansion of homeless Prevention Coaching Service specialising in Mental Health support
- Contribution to county wide service delivery
- Participation in the Derbyshire Positive Pathway for 16-24 year olds
- Positive relationships with landlords in the PRS
- Introduction of a new service to assist households that are experiencing DA, offering support and supported accommodation

These successes have been achieved through the high priority placed on homelessness prevention and the continuing work in delivering practical homelessness solutions. As a consequence, a strong network of partnerships and services has been developed to support those who are either threatened with or experiencing homelessness.

## 5. Key Findings from the Homelessness Review

Include info graphics here from review

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## 6. How we will work to end homelessness across South Derbyshire.

### 2.2 A New Approach

The magnitude and complexity of the issues that face the Council and its partners over the lifetime of this strategy must not be underestimated, these include national increases in homelessness and rough sleeping, pressures on budgets, the impact of Universal Credit, set against an increasingly unaffordable and inaccessible housing market. These challenges are compounded by the backdrop of a global pandemic, in which it is evident that it is those in the most acute housing need that are amongst the most vulnerable to infection

South Derbyshire will continue to work closely with its partners to develop a culture of responding to homelessness that focuses on upstream prevention and early intervention, while providing rapid housing responses to those that need them.

Our Homelessness Strategy focuses on preventing people from becoming homeless in the first place and helping people who are homeless build a more positive future.

In order to be able to make our vision for homelessness a reality and to meet our objectives we need to adopt a different approach and redesign services accordingly.

Our approach to this is outlined by the following principles

#### Strategic direction and collaborative partnerships

We recognise that a partnership approach is the only way in which we can successfully tackle homelessness. This Strategy has been developed with partners to tackle the underlying causes of homelessness and create effective pathways out of homelessness.

We will provide strategic leadership and work with partners to deliver our vision and objectives for tackling homelessness across South Derbyshire. We will co-ordinate and support a strategic response to homelessness that delivers joined up and improved customer outcomes.

#### Making prevention everyone's responsibility

All agencies have a role to play and a responsibility to prevent homelessness. Alongside tackling the underlying causes of homelessness we will work with partners and local communities to ensure that the trigger points for homelessness can be understood and identified. By embedding this approach across South Derbyshire we aim to significantly reduce crisis and ensure effective homelessness prevention approaches are in place.

#### Adopting a person centred approach

Our approach recognises the strengths and assets that individuals have, and seeks to build on these strengths, empowering individuals to build resilience.

### 2.2 Strategic Priorities

## Homeless Link

This Strategy seeks to further strengthen the partnership approach to tackling homelessness across South Derbyshire and embed our new approach to tackling homelessness. This will be achieved through the adoption of the following priorities:

**Deliver an effective Housing Solutions Service designed to meet the needs of our customers**

**Develop a joined up approach to homeless prevention and early intervention**

**Ensure an adequate supply of Temporary Accommodation to meet the needs of customers and reduce the use of B&B**

**Meet the complex needs of customers to prevent rough sleeping and repeat homelessness**

**Develop and improve access to a wide range of settled and supported accommodation solutions**

The following chapters set out how these strategic priorities will be delivered.

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## 7. Deliver an effective Housing Solutions Service designed to meet the needs of our customers

In line with our corporate plan we aim to deliver excellent services consistently across the Council, and this of course extends to the Housing Solutions Service.

Evidence from the Homelessness Review indicates that around half of the customers approaching the service are not homeless or threatened with homelessness but rather are seeking advice. We will work with the Council's Customer Services Team to better manage demand ensuring streamlined access to advice, while at the same time enabling the Housing Solutions Team to focus their resources on clients who are at risk of homelessness.

We recognise that early intervention and prevention is the key to successfully tackling homelessness, alongside addressing its underlying causes. Our Housing Solutions service will have prevention at its heart.

Integral to this approach is the delivery of a customer-focused service that works with customers to develop bespoke personal housing plans that build upon their strengths and respond to their individual needs. Through this approach we seek to empower individuals, by working collaboratively to identify their strengths and help them to build resilience to prevent homelessness re-occurring.

The provision of good quality timely housing advice and effective interventions are critical to being able to effectively prevent homelessness. Evidence from the Homelessness Review identified a large proportion of customers approaching the service at the point of crisis, with missed opportunities for homelessness prevention work.

To enhance opportunities for effective homeless prevention it is essential that customers contact the Housing Options service as soon as they begin to experience housing problems. We will therefore invest in an awareness raising campaign to raise the profile of the service internally within the Council, with partners and the wider public.

We also recognise the need to work with customers to change their expectations in relation to housing, the Review identified a common perception that homelessness is the route to access social housing. We will work with partner agencies to help better manage customer expectation and ensure that the Housing Register is the recognised route by which to access social housing.

In addition to this we will develop resources, including web based advice and factsheets to empower individuals to resolve their own housing issues, in line with our corporate plan we will ensure that technology enables us to effectively connect with our communities.

We need to ensure that when people approach the Housing Solutions service for help we have the ability to effectively and promptly respond to these requests for help, either by enabling them to remain where they are or by facilitating a move into more appropriate accommodation. We will ensure that we have the right resources in the right places to meet this need, with effective systems and processes to support service delivery, with a strong focus on improved customer outcomes. It is now timely to review how the service operates, our systems and processes, alongside how resources are focused - to ensure that we are maximising

## Homeless Link

opportunities for prevention, while effectively managing demand. We will also embed a performance management culture across the service.

As this strategy emphasises, tackling homelessness requires a partnership approach. We will work with partner organisations to ensure that customers receive quality housing advice, 'Duty to Refer' referrals to the Housing Solutions team are at the appropriate time and services work together to provide a holistic package of advice and assistance. We will develop protocols further with key internal and external partners, complete joint training and ensure effective referral arrangements are in place to assist with the delivery of personal housing plans.

Customer consultation was an essential component of the Homelessness Review and the Strategy, will build on this by ensuring that the customer sits at the heart of service delivery, and that services are developed in response to their needs.

### **What we will do to deliver an effective Housing Solutions Service designed to meet the needs of our customers**

1. Develop a high quality, accessible and customer focused Housing Solutions Service
2. Have the right resources in the right places to effectively managed demand and achieve improved customer outcomes
3. Increase the range of information available to clients via technology in order that the can self serve where they have the skills to do so.
4. In partnership develop an integrated and holistic approach to tackling the underlying causes of homelessness, through joined up service delivery, joint protocols and effective referral arrangements
5. Ensure all staff have access to appropriate training and development opportunities
6. Undertake an awareness raising campaign in relation to homeless prevention, and specifically the Housing Solutions Service
7. Ensure that customer's expectations are realistic and attainable

## 8. Develop a joined up approach to homeless prevention and early intervention

Following the introduction of the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017, the Housing Solutions service has achieved considerable success in preventing and relieving homelessness, although we recognise that we can and need to do more in response to the ever-increasing demand.

In order to strengthen our approach to tackling homelessness we will gain support from the whole council seeking a corporate commitment to the prevention of homelessness. We will seek commitment from both Members and Senior Managers across all service areas to work together to deliver a joined up and holistic approach to preventing and ending homelessness.

We will work across the Council to develop a coordinated approach to homelessness prevention across a range of services and programmes. We will also provide strategic leadership bringing all of the key partners together to deliver our vision of 'Ending Homelessness Together.'

All agencies operating across South Derbyshire have opportunities to reduce housing crisis amongst their core client groups. This can be achieved by working in a more joined up way to identify those households at high risk of homelessness. This includes being able to identify the triggers for homelessness and ensuring that agencies can recognise the indicators of housing stress and be able to act appropriately to prevent homelessness. Preventing homelessness is everyone's responsibility and we will work with agencies to ensure they have the knowledge, tools and skills to achieve this. We will seek a commitment from partners to collaborate to prevent homelessness.

We will continue to work with our partners to develop and deliver effective, targeted homelessness prevention services targeted at the main causes of homelessness. These services will be effectively focused, accessible and able to respond to the diverse needs of all customers, providing innovative and flexible solutions.

Following the introduction of the Homelessness Reduction Act the Housing Solutions has achieved success in preventing homelessness, in particular, in assisting households to access social housing, however more work needs to be done to enable customer to remain in their existing accommodation.

We will work with households to enable them to remain in their current home or assist with planned and timely moves into suitable and sustainable accommodation. We will do this through the delivery of housing options advice, personal housing plans and appropriate referrals to support organisations.

We will embed the prevention culture throughout the service, ensuring that we have the resources in place to respond to clients who approach. We will develop a pro-active prevention service, where responding to homeless crisis cases becomes the exception rather than the norm.

Learning from the National Early Intervention Trailblazers' work, we will intervene earlier to prevent homelessness. To be able to do this, we will identify the specific triggers, risk factors

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and causes of homelessness, and use these to develop a range of interventions specifically targeted at responding to these. Our Housing Options service will work with clients before the 56-day threat of homelessness.

The pressure on homelessness services is expected to increase due to the impact of the global pandemic. While the scale of homelessness linked to the pandemic is not yet known, we do know that at the time of writing the Strategy many people are struggling to meet their housing costs due to lost earnings and redundancies. We will work closely with a wide range of partners to ensure that we can mitigate this risk wherever possible through a range of measures, with a particular focus on ensuring that tenants, landlords and homeowners are aware of the help that is available, and that homes can be saved wherever possible. We will also ensure that there is adequate provision in place for those experiencing domestic abuse.

Our corporate plan supports social mobility to ensure people have the opportunity to access skilled jobs, higher and further education. Our response to homelessness will also provide access to other services promoting education, training and employment opportunities, health services, life-skills, debt and financial advice and benefits advice. These will strengthen people's chances of resolving their housing problems, and preventing repeat homelessness. Access to these wider services will be more important than ever due to the impact of Covid on the economy and job market.

### **What we will do to deliver a joined up approach to homeless prevention and early intervention**

1. Ensure that we have a strong corporate commitment to a joined up approach to ending homelessness across all services.
2. Seek commitment from partners to collaborate to prevent homelessness
3. Ensure homelessness is prevented through an effective homelessness prevention toolkit targeted at the main causes.
4. Identify the key triggers for homelessness and work with partners to ensure that they are equipped to prevent homelessness and/or make seamless referrals where necessary
5. Ensure that an upstream approach to homeless prevention is embedded within the Housing Solutions Service
6. Work with partners to put in place measures to prevent homelessness linked to Covid
7. Ensure adequate access to services to improve customers financial capability, including access to education, training and employment.

## 9. Ensure an adequate supply of Temporary Accommodation to meet the needs of customers and reduce the use of B&B

Where homelessness cannot be prevented, temporary accommodation is an essential part of a household's rehousing journey. A move at any time can be stressful, but at this point of crisis in people's lives, it is vital that the accommodation they are provided with is somewhere where they can feel safe and supported.

Following the implementation of the Homelessness Reduction Act the use of temporary accommodation and Bed & Breakfast has increased significantly in South Derbyshire.

Through our increased focus on early intervention and prevention work we will work to stem the flow of new placements into temporary accommodation. However, we do need to ensure that we have an adequate supply of temporary accommodation to reduce the reliance on bed & breakfast.

Despite our new increased focus on prevention the impact of the global pandemic is likely to result in increases in the number of households who do become homeless. We therefore need to ensure that we have a sufficient supply of temporary accommodation, of the right type and in the right place. This will be essential to avoid the high use of B&B.

Where people are accommodated in temporary accommodation this should be for as brief a period as possible and be a positive experience where clients can access all of the support that they need, including building their own financial capability, to ensure that when they are rehoused they have the necessary skills to sustain their tenancy.

Given this anticipated increase we will undertake a review of our approach to temporary accommodation to ensure that it meets the current needs, ends the use of Bed & Breakfast accommodation. This review will respond to the immediate need, but will also take a longer term approach to ensuring a model that is flexible and responsive to the changing demand, it will also include an options appraisal for future delivery and management arrangements. The review will result in a more effective strategic approach to temporary accommodation provision and its management.

We will work to reduce the number of households placed in temporary accommodation and to minimise their length of stay. We will actively work with households in temporary accommodation to continue to review their housing options and plan their move into settled accommodation through individual move on plans.

We intend to use Bed & Breakfast for emergencies only, but for no longer than is absolutely necessary and will minimise moves between different accommodation. In the longer term we will aim to end the use of Bed & Breakfast accommodation. We recognise that there will always be situations in which we need prompt access to emergency accommodation, to this end we will explore other options for the provision of emergency nightly paid accommodation to end the use of B&B.

**What we will do to ensure an adequate supply of temporary accommodation to meet the needs of customers while reducing the use of Bed & Breakfast**

1. Carry out a review of the use of temporary accommodation, identifying future need and an options appraisal for future delivery arrangements
2. Minimise, and in the longer term end, the use of unsuitable B&B accommodation by exploring alternative options for the provision of emergency nightly paid accommodation
3. Develop move on plans for all households in temporary accommodation
4. Ensure an adequate range of monitoring arrangements, processes and performance management measures are in place to monitor and manage the use of temporary accommodation.

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## 10. Meet the complex needs of customers to prevent rough sleeping and repeat homelessness

As a rural district rough sleeping, and homelessness more generally, is often hidden. People who are homeless or in housing difficulty are more likely to try and make temporary arrangements with family and friends, compared with more urban areas with greater provision available. We will ensure that our rural communities are aware of the help and support that is available to people who are at risk of homelessness.

Rough Sleeping levels are low across South Derbyshire, but where an individual does end up sleeping rough we will work with partners to provide a rapid response to get them into accommodation, and ensure the necessary support is in place.

We recognise that many homeless people can have multiple and complex needs. Many have a transient lifestyle, and the complexity of their needs can prevent or exclude them from being able to access or engage with mainstream accommodation and services.

For many people homelessness is not just a housing issue, it is closely linked with complex and chaotic life experiences. Mental health problems, drug and alcohol dependencies adverse childhood experiences and experiences in prison or within the care system are often closely linked to more entrenched experiences of homelessness. These issues are complex and mutually reinforcing, often having their roots in entrenched disadvantage, and leaving people socially and economically excluded.

We cannot successfully tackle homelessness and rough sleeping without addressing the multiple needs of clients, to do this we must work in partnership. Addressing one support need in isolation from others is unlikely to lead to successful outcomes for people who face complex issues. We therefore need to develop holistic approaches to recovery, supporting clients to address all of their issues simultaneously. We will develop a complex needs group to ensure a multi-disciplinary approach to meet client's needs.

The Homelessness Review identified that there is a small but significant number of clients with complex needs who are stuck in a repeat cycle of homelessness. For these clients existing housing and support models have not been able to meet their multiple needs, there is therefore a need to pilot a different approach. We will develop a Housing First model based upon national best practice to meet the needs of these clients.

The Homelessness Review identified a high prevalence of mental health support needs amongst customers. We have worked with partners to develop services in response to this need including the Mental Health Homeless Prevention Service, however we need to ensure that clients with poor mental health are able to access the help and support they need before ending up in crisis. We want to build upon existing provision by working collaboratively with mental health services to ensure a joined up approach to prevention. We need to ensure a response from mental health specialists to prevent deterioration in mental health, and thus avoid crisis and prevent homelessness.

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The Homelessness Review identified that young people are over-represented in the homeless population in South Derbyshire. Young people are increasingly disadvantaged by the combined impact of unemployment, low incomes, welfare reform, and limited housing options. This will be further compounded by the impact of the pandemic. Emerging evidence on the economic and social impact of the coronavirus pandemic shows that young people aged 12-34 years are on the of the worst affected groups, particularly in terms of the labour market and mental health outcomes. Within South Derbyshire there is an increase in young people being asked to leave the family home.

We are committed to ensuring that young people in South Derbyshire have the best start in life, and are able to develop well so that they can fulfil their potential and meet their aspirations.

To effectively prevent homelessness we will intervene as early as possible to prevent housing instability and homelessness from occurring or persisting. Prevention will focus on supporting young people to remain at home with their family, or in wider family networks, where appropriate and safe to do so. Where young people do become homeless, we will work with partner agencies to ensure that emergency and longer term accommodation and support that can effectively address the young person's housing and support needs is available.

Our response to the pandemic has forged strong links between housing and health, through this Strategy we will build upon these links to improve the health and wellbeing of homeless people. In line with the Council's Corporate Plan we will promote health and wellbeing with our clients. Without good housing we know health and wellbeing are affected: poor conditions and precarious housing impact on people's physical and mental health. Ill health also puts some households at a greater risk of housing need and can be a trigger of homelessness.

There is significant evidence to suggest that homelessness, especially rough sleeping, has significant and adverse consequences for an individual's health. It is widely recognised that there are strong correlations between homelessness and severe physical and mental health conditions, alongside significantly reduced life expectancy. We will work to improve access to health services for homeless people to address both immediate and longer term needs.

<b>What we will do meet the housing and support needs of clients with multiple and complex support needs</b>
1. Develop a better understanding of rural homelessness, and raise awareness within rural communities of how to access help
2. Ensure a rapid response is in place to respond to any reports of rough sleeping with prompt access to accommodation and support
3. Develop Housing First provision that meets the needs of people with multiple and complex needs
4. Develop an integrated approach to working with complex individuals to ensure homelessness and repeat homelessness is prevented
5. Improve housing outcomes for clients with poor mental health
6. Improve health and well being outcomes for homeless clients
7. Prevent youth homelessness through education, peer mentoring, mediation and emergency respite accommodation

## 11. Develop and improve access to a wide range of settled and supported accommodation solutions

In order to both prevent and relieve homelessness appropriate, affordable housing is key to ensuring a long-term solution to a household's housing situation. A range of accommodation options is needed across the social, affordable and private sector to cater for a wider range of housing needs.

We are committed to delivering more homes to meet local needs and demand. We recognise the unmet need for single person accommodation and will work with our housing partners to deliver more one bed units of social housing.

We will continue to make the most effective use of our own housing stock in meeting the needs of our communities, including those that are at risk of becoming homeless. We will review our Allocations Policy to ensure that it is working for those in the greatest housing need, and supporting the prevention of homelessness through planned moves. We will work to ensure that our communities and partners understand that the Housing Register is the route to access social housing, rather than homelessness.

We will also work with our Housing Association partners to increase access to all forms of social housing for clients who are homeless or threatened with homelessness.

Alongside our strategic commitment to the development of affordable housing, the Council recognises the increasingly important role that the private rented sector plays in meeting the housing needs of our community, including those who are homeless or threatened with homelessness. We are committed to increasing access to the private rented sector through the development of an attractive landlord offer, built upon national good practice models. We recognise that support to both landlords and tenants will be a critical element in order to guarantee the success of this model.

This increased access to affordable private rented accommodation will be used to both prevent and relieve homelessness and to also discharge the main homeless duty.

The Homelessness Review identified an increase in the number of single people seeking help from the Housing Solutions Service. We are committed to addressing the housing and support needs of single people across South Derbyshire, through both supported and permanent housing solutions. We will work with Housing Management and Housing Association partners, to develop house share pilots to meet the needs of young single people within the district. We will promote lodging schemes to home owners, and will work to identify opportunities for under-occupying tenants to rent out spare rooms.

We will also consider how we can use our own housing stock to meet the high demand for single person's accommodation, including the possible reconfiguration of two and three bed units to create one bedroom provision or the re-designation of under-utilised sheltered stock.

The role that supported housing plays in preventing homelessness is critical. The Council is committed to working with partners to deliver and develop a supported housing model that acts as a place of change, not only meeting the housing needs of homeless people; but supporting people to tackle the underlying causes of homelessness, raising their aspirations,

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empowering change and assisting them to access training, education and employment. We will work with providers to ensure that we have supported housing in place that responds to our local needs, including those with the most complex needs.

<b>What we will do to develop and improve access to a wide range of settled and supported accommodation solutions</b>
1. Maximise opportunities to develop more social and affordable housing.
2. Ensure the best use of social housing stock to prevent and relief homelessness.
3. Ensure the Allocations Policy supports prevention and relief activity through promotion of planned moves.
4. Develop a comprehensive landlord offer to incentivise private sector lettings.
5. Develop appropriate models to take on the management of private sector properties, either directly as a Council or through a provider partner such as a social lettings agency or leasing arrangement.
6. Develop a coordinated approach to increase the provision of, and move on from, supported accommodation to meet identified needs.
7. Develop a range of affordable housing options for single people.

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## 12. Delivering the Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy

In order to meet our commitment to deliver the strategic priorities we need to ensure that together with partners, we have the skills, services, resources and infrastructure for the delivery of the Strategy's objectives.

To achieve the strategic priorities and objectives a detailed action plan has been developed in collaboration with partners.

We will establish a new Homelessness Prevention Steering Group, made up key representatives of the Homelessness Forum, who will be responsible for the delivery and monitoring of this Homelessness Strategy and action plan. The action plan will be monitored quarterly and reviewed annually so that it is responsive to emerging needs, policy and legislative changes and achieves the priorities contained within it.

The Homelessness Prevention Steering Group will feed into the Homelessness Forum, which will ensure both effective governance arrangements, alongside a coordinated and comprehensive approach to the prevention of homelessness.

A joined up partnership approach is critical to delivering the ambitious and innovative plans detailed within this strategy and meeting South Derbyshire's vision for homelessness.

With our partners we are committed to ending homelessness together.

## About Homeless Link

[Homeless Link](#) is the national membership charity for services working directly with people experiencing homelessness and those at risk of homelessness with housing, health, care and support needs.

Representing over 700 organisations across England, we work to improve services through research, guidance and learning, and to promote policy change that will ensure everyone has a place to call home and the support they need to keep it.

We aim to bring about positive policy change as well as providing practical support to individual organisations. Our Innovation and Good Practice (IGP) Team runs a range of special projects including focuses on welfare reform; the future of supported housing rents; the Homelessness Reduction Act; Housing First; Ending Women's Homelessness and Youth Homelessness.

We are a leading training provider delivering both public and in-house courses around the country to local authorities, registered housing providers, third sector and charitable organisations and service user groups across housing, homelessness, support, health & social care and criminal justice services.

We have a strong consultancy service; our staff and bank of associates nationwide support members across the spectrum of their activities from the strategic - strategy development, business planning, service evaluation, commissioning and workforce development - through to the operational, such as policies and procedures and rent setting. Our team brings many years' operational and consultancy experience as well as a strong understanding of the sectors in which we work, and an empathy with the daily challenges that staff face. We have experience of working with large and small providers from local authorities to the smallest charities, and with commissioners and service providers.



## What we do

Homeless Link is the national membership charity for services working directly with people experiencing homelessness and those at risk of homelessness with housing, health, care and support needs. We work to improve services and campaign for policy change that will help end homelessness.

## Let's end homelessness together

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## South Derbyshire Homelessness & Rough Sleeping Strategy Action Plan 2021-2025

**Priority - Deliver an effective Housing Solutions Service designed to meet the needs of our customers**

	Action	Task	Lead	Timescale	How we will measure success	RAG
1.1	<b>Develop a high quality, accessible and customer focused Housing Solutions Service</b>	Develop a range of customer standards in consultation with Customers		Yr 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All customers receive a high quality customer focused and consistent service that meets their individual needs</li> <li>Effective policies and procedures are in place and regularly reviewed</li> <li>All decisions are legally compliant</li> <li>Reduction in complaints</li> <li>High levels of customer satisfaction</li> <li>Improved client engagement, with a reduction in loss of contact and non-co-operation outcomes</li> </ul>	
		Ensure regular contact with customers throughout their journey		Yr 1		
		Develop a suite of policies and procedures to ensure legal compliance, consistent service delivery, improved customer outcomes while reducing duplication and waste		Yr 1		
		Introduce regularly case file monitoring		Yr 1		
		Embed a culture of performance management by analysing and discussing performance regularly at team meetings and one to ones.		Yr 1		
		Introduce a range of local performance indicators to be		Yr 1		

		monitored and reported on a monthly basis to focus on key areas of service delivery				
		Review notification letters, forms and other paperwork		Yr 1/2		
		Ensure a full range of factsheets are in place to provide accessible information for customers		Yr 1		
		Review the Personal Housing Plans regularly to ensure that they are tailored to the individual needs of the customer with a view to co-producing PHPs in the longer term		Yr 2		
		Explore how technology can be used to effectively maintain customer contact with reduced impact upon staff resources		Yr 2		
1.2	<b>Have the right resources in the right places to effectively manage demand and achieve improved customer outcomes</b>	Ensure that effective triage arrangements are in place to ensure timely assessments and decisions, and to manage customer demand through working with the Council's Customers Services		Yr 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Customers receive a high quality consistent service that meets their individual needs</li> <li>• That sufficient resources are in place to focus on early intervention and effective prevention work</li> <li>• Reduction in the number of cases actually becoming homeless</li> <li>• Reduction in the use of B&amp;B and temporary accommodation</li> <li>• Staff have manageable caseloads</li> </ul>	
		Undertake a detailed operational review of the Housing Options Service in light of the impact of the Homelessness Reduction Act to ensure effective processes are in place to ensure homelessness		Yr 1/2		

		can be prevented wherever possible			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reduce the footfall of customers attending the office, and increase in customer contact via the phone or digitally</li> </ul>	
		Ensure that a robust case management process and accompanying procedures are in place		Yr 1		
		Review caseloads, and structure to ensure that caseloads remain at a manageable level and opportunities for effective homeless prevention are maximised		Yr 2/3		
		Review the current systems and processes to ensure a streamlined service that reduces waste and duplication		Yr 1		
		Develop or invest in a fit for purpose ICT system that aligns Housing Options, Housing Register applications and Housing Management		Yr 1/2		
		Undertake a study to understand how technology can be used to effectively manage customer demand and alleviate pressure on staff across the whole service, including implementing learning from Covid		Yr 1/2		
1.3	<b>Increase the range of information available to clients</b>	Develop website information to provide a wide resource for customers to be able to take		Yr 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Demand on the Housing Solutions service is managed more effectively</li> </ul>	

	<b>via technology in order that they can self serve where they have the skills to do so.</b>	initial steps to prevent themselves from becoming homeless and resolve their own housing situation			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• More customers are able to resolve their own housing issue using information made available</li> <li>• Up to date website with a wide range of information available</li> <li>• Social media presence, providing information and updates</li> <li>• Reduce the footfall of customers attending the office, and increase in customer contact via the phone or digitally</li> </ul>
		Develop the use of social media to provide information and updates to followers		Yr 2	
		Increase the use of video and telephone for interviews and assessments		Yr 1/2	
		Explore how webchats and text messages can be used to provide advice and updates to customers		Yr 2	
		Explore how IT solutions can be used to meet customer demand, including the development of a Housing Options Wizard		Yr 3	
1.4	<b>In partnership develop an integrated and holistic approach to tackling the underlying causes of homelessness, through joined up service delivery, joint protocols and effective referral arrangements</b>	Review existing joint protocols to measure effectiveness		Yr 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Joined up approach to homeless prevention resulting in reduced homelessness</li> <li>• Improved customer outcomes</li> <li>• Seamless referral arrangements in place</li> <li>• Reduced levels of repeat homelessness</li> <li>• Closer working with partner agencies providing a comprehensive range of services tackling underlying causes of homelessness</li> <li>• Increase in homelessness prevention</li> <li>• Effective duty to refer systems in place</li> <li>• Closer working with partners at both a strategic and operational level with an enhanced focus on prevention and early intervention (to include Customer Services,</li> </ul>
		Develop a range of comprehensive agreements and joint protocols with key partners		Yr 2	
		Continue to monitor duty to refer and identify opportunities for earlier notification		Yr 1/2	
		In partnership develop an online directory of services available across South Derbyshire		Yr 2	
		Ensure that homeless prevention is everyone's responsibility through the development of a training programme on the work		Yr 2	

		of the Housing Solutions service for key partners to include job shadowing and joint team meetings			Environmental Health, Children's Services, Adult Social Care, Health)	
		Ensure that there is a specific information available for client groups at an increased risk of homelessness (including veterans, care leavers, prison leavers, people leaving hospital, people experiencing domestic abuse, people with poor mental health and rough sleepers)		Yr 2		
		Ensure that all staff are trained to ask the veteran question		Yr 2		
		Ensure better data recording of clients who have a protected characteristic, including LGBTQ+		Yr 2		
		Ensure that clients from different ethnic groups are aware of the help and assistance available.		Yr 2		
1.5	<b>Ensure all staff have access to appropriate training and development opportunities</b>	Ensure all staff have access to appropriate training and opportunities for professional development		Yr 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provision of a high quality service with highly skilled staff</li> <li>• High levels of customer satisfaction</li> <li>• High staff morale</li> <li>• Improved customer outcomes</li> </ul>	
		Ensure staff have access to up-to-date and accurate information on legislation, case law and best practice		Yr 1		

		Explore opportunities for staff to develop specialisms		Yr 2		
		Develop in house skills to allow teams to support customers to improve their financial capability including access to education, training and employment.		Yr 2/3		
1.6	<b>Undertake an awareness raising campaign in relation to homeless prevention, and specifically the Housing Solutions Service</b>	Raise awareness of the Housing Solutions service with partners and customers to ensure that opportunities for prevention can be maximised		Yr 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Housing Solutions are known widely across South Derbyshire and residents can access the services when required resulting in an increase in queries and opportunities for early intervention</li> <li>• Communities are aware of the approach and commitment to preventing homelessness in partnership</li> <li>• Most customers are approaching the service at the prevention stage</li> <li>• Increase in successful homeless prevention outcomes achieved</li> <li>• Increase in the number of households assisted to remain in their existing accommodation</li> <li>• Reduction in the use of temporary accommodation and B&amp;B</li> <li>• A range of clear advice and information available online to enable customers to</li> </ul>	
		Understand in detail the reason why many customers are only approaching South Derbyshire's Housing Solutions service once they are homelessness		Yr 2		
		Develop a range of promotional literature to include posters and flyers,		Yr 2		
		Use social media to update customers and partners on service developments		Yr 2		

					access the correct information at the right time	
		Hold an event to raise awareness of the service and launch the Homelessness Strategy		Yr 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Customers have access to a range of information to enable them to make informed choices</li> </ul>	
1.7	<b>Ensure that customer's expectations are realistic and attainable</b>	Ensure customers are provided with accurate information, particularly in relation to the availability of social and private rented accommodation to help manage expectation		Yr 1/2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increased customer satisfaction</li> <li>Improved client engagement, with a reduction in loss of contact and non-co-operation outcomes</li> <li>Customers attending services with informed expectations of services</li> <li>Customer's recognise that the Housing Register is the route to access social housing.</li> </ul>	
		Provide training for key partners/agencies in relation to the range of housing options available, and availability to enable them to assist in managing customer expectation		Yr 2		
		Provide accurate and up to date information to customers regarding social housing voids by property type and area to help manage expectations		Yr 1		
		Use social media to provide general information regarding Housing Solutions		Yr 2		

## Priority – Developing a joined up approach to homeless prevention and early intervention

	Action	Task	Lead	Timescale	How we will measure success	RAG
2.1	<b>Ensure that we have a strong corporate commitment to a joined up approach to ending homelessness across all services</b>	Seek a corporate commitment to prevent homelessness which managers and elected members across the Council can sign up to		Yr 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Homelessness prevention is a corporate priority for South Derbyshire</li> <li>All service areas within South Derbyshire work together to prevent homelessness</li> <li>Funding opportunities are used to jointly commission homelessness prevention services</li> </ul>	
		Train elected members and senior managers on homelessness		Yr 1/2		
		Train other internal departments on the role of the Housing Solutions team		Yr 1/2		
		Work across departments to jointly commission homelessness prevention services using various funding streams		Yr 2		
		Understand the true cost of delivering the Housing Solutions Service		Yr 1		
2.2	<b>Seek commitment from partners to collaborate to prevent homelessness</b>	Get partner agencies to sign up to a commitment of collaborate		Yr 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Joined up response across all partners to prevent homelessness</li> <li>Agencies work together to identify risks of homelessness and make speedy referrals</li> <li>Homeless prevention is everyone's responsibility</li> </ul>	
		Train partner agencies on the work of Housing Solutions		Yr 2		
		Explore with partners opportunities for the joint location of services to provide a multi-agency response for customers that meets the holistic needs of customers		Yr 3		

2.3	<b>Ensure homelessness is prevented through an effective homelessness prevention toolkit targeted at the main causes.</b>	Develop a checklist for staff to ensure that all prevention options/housing options are considered throughout the assessment process		Yr 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase in homeless prevention and relief outcomes</li> <li>• Increase in the number of households supported to retain their existing accommodation</li> <li>• Decrease in homelessness against the main causes of homelessness</li> <li>• Reduction in the number of households placed in temporary accommodation and B&amp;B</li> </ul>	
		Ensure an effective response to all cases of family/friends evicting, including access to effective mediation and home visits, and supporting planned moves through the Housing Register		Yr 1/2		
		Provide a responsive service to prevent homelessness arising from the private rented sector through a dedicated Private Sector Liaison Officer post providing responsive support to landlords and tenants		Yr 2		
		Ensure a range of options are available to clients fleeing domestic abuse that promote choice		Yr 2		
		Develop pre- eviction protocols with the key social housing providers		Yr 3		
		Develop an agreement with relationship counselling/mediation services with appointments to be funded through the prevention fund in cases of relationship breakdown to enable time for planned moves		Yr 3		

		Ensure fast access to financial inclusion/debt advice is available for clients at risk of homelessness		Yr 1		
		Develop a Hospital discharge protocol		Yr 3		
		Develop a responsive service to home-owners at risk of homelessness		Yr 2		
		Research best practice across England into effective prevention initiatives		Yr 1		
2.4	<b>Identify the key triggers for homelessness and work with partners to ensure that they are equipped to prevent homelessness and/or make seamless referrals where necessary</b>	Undertake customer journey mapping with people with lived experience of homelessness to understand the triggers for homelessness		Yr 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Prevention is everyone's responsibility</li> <li>• Increase in homeless prevention cases</li> <li>• Timely and seamless referral arrangements are in place</li> <li>• Joined up approach to homeless prevention resulting in reduced homelessness</li> <li>• Improved customer outcomes</li> <li>• Reduced levels of repeat homelessness</li> <li>• Closer working with partner agencies providing a comprehensive range of services tackling underlying causes of homelessness</li> </ul>	
		Using the findings of the mapping exercise develop a range of prevention interventions		Yr 2		
		Train partner agencies on how to identify the trigger and risk factors linked to homelessness		Yr 3		
		Identify with partners opportunities for them to undertake prevention work or make timely referrals to other key services		Yr 3		
2.5	<b>Ensure that an upstream approach</b>	Review the national trailblazer schemes to identify what		Yr 2		

	<b>to homeless prevention is embedded within the Housing Solutions Service</b>	approached could be developed in South Derbyshire			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Less households are homeless or threatened with homelessness within 56 days.</li> <li>• Any household at risk of homelessness gets help and support to prevent homelessness arising</li> <li>• Reduction in B&amp;B and temporary accommodation placements</li> </ul>	
		Identify or bid for resources to fund upstream prevention		Yr 2		
		Consider how sub-regional/cross authority responses can ensure the best use of resources and provide a joined up approach to preventing homelessness.		Yr 2		
		Implement local approach.		Yr 3		
2.6	<b>Work with partners to put in place measures to prevent homelessness linked to Covid</b>	Work with Housing Providers to ensure that people facing financial hardship are not left facing homelessness as a result of the impact of Covid 19.		Yr 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increases in homelessness linked to Covid are mitigated</li> <li>• Residents know where to go for advice and assistance</li> <li>• Customers approach the service at the earliest point</li> <li>• Sufficient service and provision are in place for those experiencing domestic abuse.</li> </ul>	
		Ensure that easily accessible information is available on Council websites for both private landlords and tenants detailing all the support and help available in relation to arrears		Yr 1		
		Ensure an adequate prevention fund is in place to cover private rent arrears linked to lost earnings due to Covid-19		Yr 1		

		Ensure that there is an increase in the availability of specialist income and money advice teams		Yr 1		
		Put in place a local publicity campaign to ensure that tenants, landlords and home-owners are aware of the assistance that is available, including the use of social media		Yr 1		
		Ensure that there is sufficient advice and support, including emergency accommodation provision, for those experiencing domestic abuse.		Yr 1		
2.7	<b>Ensure adequate access to services to improve customers financial capability, including access to education, training and employment.</b>	Work with Citizen's Advice to ensure fast track access to money and debt advice		Yr 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clients are able to sustain their accommodation</li> <li>• Reductions in repeat homelessness</li> <li>• Clients are able to access education, training and employment opportunities</li> </ul>	
		Work with internal colleagues to identify support for customers to access employment, training and education		Yr 2		

		Work with internal colleagues, support providers and Housing Associations to develop opportunities for clients to access employment including apprenticeships		Yr 3		
		Continue to work with Housing Management to ensure the pre-tenancy training continues to be available and that Housing Solutions Customers are able to access it.		Ongoing		

**Priority - Ensure an adequate supply of temporary accommodation to meet the needs of customers and reduce the use of Bed & Breakfast**

	Action	Task	Lead	Timescale	How we will measure success	RAG
3.1	<b>Carry out a review of the use of temporary accommodation, identifying future</b>	Undertake a detailed review and options appraisal of temporary accommodation to include recommendations on current and future predicted need		Yr 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Good quality temporary accommodation available across South Derbyshire that meets the identified need, with a range of unit sizes that reflect need</li> </ul>	

	<b>need and an options appraisal for future delivery arrangements</b>	Review to include a range of delivery options and providers for the future to ensure value for money			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Well managed temporary accommodation arrangements</li> <li>• Reduced length of stay in temporary accommodation</li> <li>• Reduced use of emergency accommodation</li> <li>• Reduction in suitability requests</li> </ul>	
		Review the management of temporary accommodation, focusing on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the effectiveness of carrying out repairs and maintenance,</li> <li>• collecting rent and minimising arrears,</li> <li>• enforcement of tenancy conditions</li> <li>• support to help people manage their home.</li> </ul>		Yr 2		
		Ensure that procedures are in place for allocating temporary accommodation in a clear and transparent way		Yr 2		

3.2	<b>Minimise, and in the longer term end, the use of unsuitable B&amp;B accommodation by exploring alternative options for the provision of emergency nightly paid accommodation</b>	Improve throughput in temporary accommodation through effective monitoring, case work and maximising move on options		Yr 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Households are only placed in B&amp;B in emergencies and for no longer than 6 weeks</li> <li>Year on year reduction in B&amp;B placements</li> <li>In the longer term no households are placed in B&amp;B accommodation</li> <li>Other more suitable nightly paid accommodation is procured</li> <li>Households are not moved between different B&amp;B establishments</li> </ul>	
		Ensure that households accommodated have access to appropriate support where needed		Yr 2		
		Source alternative, more appropriate forms of emergency accommodation, including exploring options for procuring nightly paid accommodation, potentially on a sub-regional basis.		Yr 2		
3.3	<b>Develop move on plans for all households in temporary accommodation</b>	Ensure that all households in temporary accommodation have a personalised move on plan		Yr 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reduced length of stay in temporary accommodation</li> <li>Reduction in the use of B&amp;B</li> <li>Customers able to access settled housing solutions speedily</li> <li>Customers have the skills to sustain a tenancy</li> </ul>	

		Ensure households in temporary accommodation have access to support and assistance to address underlying issues, including improving their financial capability		Yr 1		
3.4	<b>Ensure an adequate range of monitoring arrangements, processes and performance management measures are in place to monitor and manage the use of temporary accommodation</b>	Ensure that sufficient resources continue to be in place to effectively manage temporary accommodation and work with clients to move on from temporary accommodation		Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A reduction in the number of households placed in temporary accommodation</li> <li>• A reduction in the length of time households spend in temporary accommodation</li> <li>• In the longer term no households are placed in B&amp;B accommodation</li> </ul>	
		Set up regular temporary accommodation meetings with accountable actions and deadlines		Yr 1		
		Set up case conferences for complex cases to address move on issues on a case by case basis with accountable actions and deadlines		Yr 1		
		Ensure that effective risk assessments and risk management processes are in place		Yr 1		
		Implement local performance indicators to monitor use of temporary accommodation		Yr 1		

**Priority - Meet the housing and support needs of clients with multiple and complex support needs**

	Action	Task	Lead	Timescale	How we will measure success	RAG
4.1	<b>Develop a better understanding of rural homelessness, and raise awareness within rural communities of how to access help</b>	Raise awareness with rural communities of the help and support available		Yr 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Understand the levels of and nature of rural homelessness</li> <li>Raise awareness within rural communities of the risks of homelessness and how they may be helped to prevent it.</li> <li>Ensure effective monitoring arrangements are in place</li> </ul>	
		Undertake research to understand the nature and extent of rough sleeping within the rural areas of the District		Yr 4		
4.2	<b>Ensure a rapid response is in place to respond to any reports of rough sleeping with prompt access to accommodation and support</b>	Working with DHOG, continue to ensure funding for the outreach service		Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Accurate intelligence base into the nature and extent of rough sleeping across South Derbyshire</li> <li>Assertive outreach service in place resulting in a reduction in the number of people sleeping rough</li> <li>More effective reporting of rough sleeping by communities</li> </ul>	
		Ensure that the Street Link service is well publicised and linked into local services.		Yr 1		
		Ensure that emergency accommodation is available for anyone found sleeping rough.		Yr 1		
4.3	<b>Develop Housing First provision that meets the needs of</b>	Research best practice into Housing First Delivery		Yr 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Repeat homelessness is prevented</li> <li>Successful Housing First scheme is in place to meet the needs of clients with complex needs</li> </ul>	

	<b>people with multiple and complex needs</b>	Identify delivery and support partners to develop a pilot project.		Yr 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rough sleeping remains as close to zero as possible</li> <li>• Increased choice for clients</li> <li>• Improved client outcomes</li> </ul>	
		Review pilot and expand based upon learning and identified need.		Yr 3		
4.4	<b>Develop an integrated approach to working with complex individuals to ensure homelessness and repeat homelessness is prevented</b>	Establish a multi-agency complex needs group to support those clients with the highest needs out of homelessness		Yr 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improved outcomes for clients with multiple and complex needs</li> <li>• Reduction in repeat homelessness</li> <li>• Rough sleeping remains as close to zero as possible</li> <li>• Reduction in homelessness and repeat homelessness for families with complex and multiple needs</li> </ul>	
		Review existing provision and identify gaps and issues in meeting the needs of people with multiple and complex needs		Yr 2		
		Ensure that clients with complex needs are able to access social housing		Yr 2		
		Develop an integrated approach to working with complex families to ensure that homelessness is prevented		Yr 3		
		Ensure that corporate customer care staff receive training in relation to Housing Solutions and how to engage with customers with complex needs, or those that may be experiencing trauma		Yr 1		

4.5	<b>Improve housing outcomes for clients with poor mental health</b>	Learn from best practice approaches in meeting the needs of clients with poor mental health		Yr 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reduction in mental health crisis resulting in homelessness</li> <li>• Housing Solutions clients feel they are getting the appropriate support and treatment for their mental health</li> <li>• Customers able to successfully sustain their accommodation as they are receiving treatment/support for their mental health</li> </ul>	
		Continue to fund the Homeless Prevention service for clients with poor mental health		Ongoing		
		Review existing housing related support provision for clients with mental health		Yr 3		
		Provide training for Housing Solutions staff on mental health		Yr 3		
4.6	<b>Improve health and well being outcomes for homeless clients</b>	Undertake Homeless Link's Health Needs audit across South Derbyshire to better understand the health issues faced by the local homeless population		Yr 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improved health and wellbeing outcomes for homeless individuals</li> <li>• Improve choices in relation to health care for homeless individuals</li> </ul>	
		Work with colleagues in health to remove the barriers which some homeless people face in registering with mainstream GP services.		Yr 3		
		Ensure that all accommodation and support providers are		Yr 3		

		knowledgeable about health care services, and can help homeless people access health care services.				
		Promote health and wellbeing with Housing Solutions clients		Yr 3		
4.7	<b>Prevent youth homelessness through education, peer mentoring, mediation and emergency respite accommodation</b>	Deliver targeted Housing advice aimed at young people through social networking sites and school educational programmes		Yr 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reduction in youth homelessness</li> <li>• Reduction in repeat homelessness</li> <li>• Young people are able to make informed housing choices</li> <li>• Joined up services in place to prevent youth homelessness</li> <li>• Suitable provision is in place for young people with complex needs, including care leavers</li> </ul>	
		Deliver training to Housing Solutions staff focusing on young people to ensure that a tailored service is provided to young people		Yr 3		
		Ensure suitable provision of emergency accommodation available for young people		Yr 2		
		Working with Children's Services work to develop supported accommodation provision for young people with complex and multiple needs		Yr 3		
		Ensure that an effective home visiting and mediation service is		Yr 2		

		available, and publicise this to parents and all agencies working with young people				
		Working with Leaving Care ensure that an effective care leaver accommodation and support pathway remains in place		Ongoing		

### Priority - Develop and improve access to a wide range of settled and supported accommodation solutions

	Action	Task	Lead	Timescale	How we will measure success	RAG
5.1	<b>Maximise opportunities to develop more social and affordable housing</b>	Provide evidence to support the need for more affordable and social housing in the Local Development Plan		Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase in the number of affordable homes developed</li> <li>• Increase in the number of social homes developed</li> <li>• Increase in the development of affordable one bedroom accommodation</li> </ul>	
		Ensure the local development plan identifies the need for single person's affordable housing		Ongoing		
		Increase the range of accommodation options for single people under 35 years		Ongoing		
5.2	<b>Ensure the best use of social housing stock to</b>	Review the social housing allocation policy to ensure that it supports prevention and relief activity		Yr 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Households in the greatest housing need are able to access social housing</li> </ul>	

	<b>prevent and relief homelessness.</b>	Ensure that homeless customers and those threatened with homelessness receive adequate priority for social housing through the allocation policy which promotes planned moves		Yr 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Vulnerable clients are able to access social housing</li> <li>• The Allocations policy supports planned moves</li> <li>• Homelessness is not seen as the quickest route to access social housing</li> <li>• Customers and partner agencies have realistic expectations</li> <li>• The Council makes the best use of its housing stock</li> </ul>	
		Ensure that clients with complex needs are able to access social housing		Yr 1		
		Explore opportunities to re-designate low demand units of accommodation to provide accommodation for single people		Yr 2		
5.3	<b>Ensure the Allocations Policy supports prevention and relief activity through promotion of planned moves.</b>	Ensure that customers and partners understand that the main way to access social housing is through the Housing Register and that the allocations policy supports this through awareness raising		Yr 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Allocations policy supports planned moves</li> <li>• Homelessness is not seen as the quickest route to access social housing</li> <li>• Customers and partner agencies have realistic expectations</li> </ul>	
5.4	<b>Develop a comprehensive landlord offer to incentivise private sector lettings.</b>	Review Landlord incentives and develop a competitive landlord offer in consultation with private landlords		Yr 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increased access for Housing Solutions customers into the private rented sector</li> <li>• Increased number of private rented landlords working with South Derbyshire's Housing Solutions</li> </ul>	
		Market landlord incentives with a suite of options to suit individual landlord's requirements		Yr 1		

		Develop a rent a room scheme to encourage households to take in lodgers		Yr 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Housing Solutions becomes the first point of call for any private landlord in South Derbyshire looking to rent their property</li> <li>• Competitive landlord offer in place</li> <li>• Increased provision of accommodation available within the LHA shared room rate</li> <li>• Increase in the number of people renting out a spare room</li> </ul>	
		Develop a shared house scheme to meet the needs of young single people with lower support needs, and learn from best practice		Yr 3/4		
5.5	<b>Develop appropriate models to take on the management of private sector properties, either directly as a Council or through a provider partner such as a social lettings agency or leasing arrangement.</b>	Explore the feasibility of developing a local/ social lettings agency in partnership with a Housing Association or Local Authority		Yr 1/2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increased access for Housing Solutions clients</li> <li>• Longer tenancies available for Housing Solutions clients</li> <li>• Increased provision of accommodation available within the LHA shared room rate</li> </ul>	
		Assess the financial feasibility of the Council leasing properties from private landlords to be used as prevention/relief solutions and final offers		Yr 1/2		
5.6	<b>Develop a coordinated approach to increase the provision of, and move on from, supported</b>	Implement Homeless Link's MOPP		Yr 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improved throughput through supported housing</li> <li>• Improved move on from supported housing</li> <li>• Clients only residing in supported accommodation for as long as support is required</li> </ul>	
		Ensure that tenants in supported accommodation are ready to move on and have the necessary skills		Yr 3		

	<b>accommodation to meet identified needs.</b>	Review the priority given for move on through the Allocations policy		Yr 3		
		Identify the need for pre-tenancy training and how this can be targeted at clients in supported and temporary accommodation		Yr 3		
		Maximise opportunities to move on to private rented accommodation through a coordinated landlord offer		Yr 3		
		Work with partners to explore how supported accommodation provision can be increased in line with identified need		Ongoing		
		Develop Housing First provision to meet the needs of clients with the most complex needs as outlined in 4.3		Yr 2		
5.7	<b>Develop a range of affordable housing options for single people.</b>	Promote a room to rent scheme to increase the provision of households renting out a spare room		Yr 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reduction in homelessness for under 35s</li> <li>• Increased provision of accommodation available within the LHA shared room rate</li> <li>• Increase in the number of people renting out a spare room</li> </ul>	
		Explore with Housing Management and Housing Association partners how under-occupying social tenants may be able to rent our spare rooms		Yr 3		

		Work with housing strategy, private sector colleagues, Housing Associations to explore opportunities to develop a shared house scheme to meet the needs of young single people with lower support needs, and learn from best practice		Yr 3		
		Explore the possibility of reconfiguring some 2 and 3 bed council units into single person accommodation		Yr 3		



## South Derbyshire Homelessness Review 2020 Executive Summary

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Report for  
**South Derbyshire  
District Council**

**November 2020**

Laura Paterson  
Homeless Link Associate



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# 1. Introduction

## 1.1 Background

The Homelessness Act 2002 requires every local authority to carry out a review of homelessness every five years, to develop and publish a Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy based on this review and to consult with other local statutory and voluntary organisations.

Tackling homelessness and rough sleeping is a key priority for South Derbyshire District Council and its partner organisations. The comprehensive Homelessness Review will provide a sound evidence base to inform the Authority's Homelessness Strategy. The homelessness review will provide a basis for a strategic approach to prevent homelessness and provide the services to support and accommodate those in housing need.

This Executive Summary provides an outline of the main findings of the review, an analysis of future trends and identifies key issues for the Strategy to address.

## 1.2 South Derbyshire's Approach

Whilst South Derbyshire District Council as part of its statutory duty has produced this document, it is not simply a review of the services provided by the Council. There are multiple and complex issues that can cause homelessness, therefore in compiling this review, Homeless Link together with the Council has worked closely with a variety of other statutory and voluntary agencies to gain a detailed understanding of homelessness across South Derbyshire.

The review is a multi-agency document, which recognises that partnership working is key to preventing homelessness and developing sustainable housing and support solutions.

## 1.3 Methodology

The homelessness review is required to cover:

- An analysis of the past, current and future levels of homelessness
- An audit of the services aimed at preventing, accommodating and supporting people who are or may become homeless
- A review of the resources available to spend on homelessness within the District

The review process has drawn upon a wide range of sources, including homelessness statistics, H-CLIC data, outreach data, and a series of consultation exercises.

There are many complex issues that can give rise to homelessness, many of which are outside the scope of the Local Authority. Therefore, in compiling this review, the Council has worked closely with a variety of other statutory and voluntary agencies.

## Homeless Link

Consultation with staff, partners and customers was critical to the review process, and will continue to inform the development of the strategy and improvements to existing Council services. We have consulted extensively with service users and stakeholders through a range of methods to ensure that the Review directly reflects the experiences of those who have been homeless and those working in the sector.

## 2. Homelessness in Figures

638 approaches to the Housing Solutions Service in 2019/20	318 homeless assessments in 2019/20	Domestic Abuse was the main cause of homelessness
64% of people had a support need	Mental health is the most prevalent support need	56% of households are families with children
64% of people had their homelessness successfully prevented	64% of people had their homelessness successfully relieved	The majority of clients were helped by accessing social housing
152% increase in annual temporary accommodation placements over the last 3 years	816 households on the Housing Register	44% of people on the Housing Register need 1 bedroom accommodation

Change above to infographics

### 2.1 Demand on the Housing Options Service

- Over the last two years there have been approximately 630 approaches to the service annually.
- The majority (81%) of clients approach the service in person
- Approximately 50% of all approaches are for advice and assistance only; the remaining 50% were homeless or threatened with homelessness within 56 days.

Consideration should be given as to how demand can be more effectively managed, and resources focused on cases where there is a threat of homelessness.

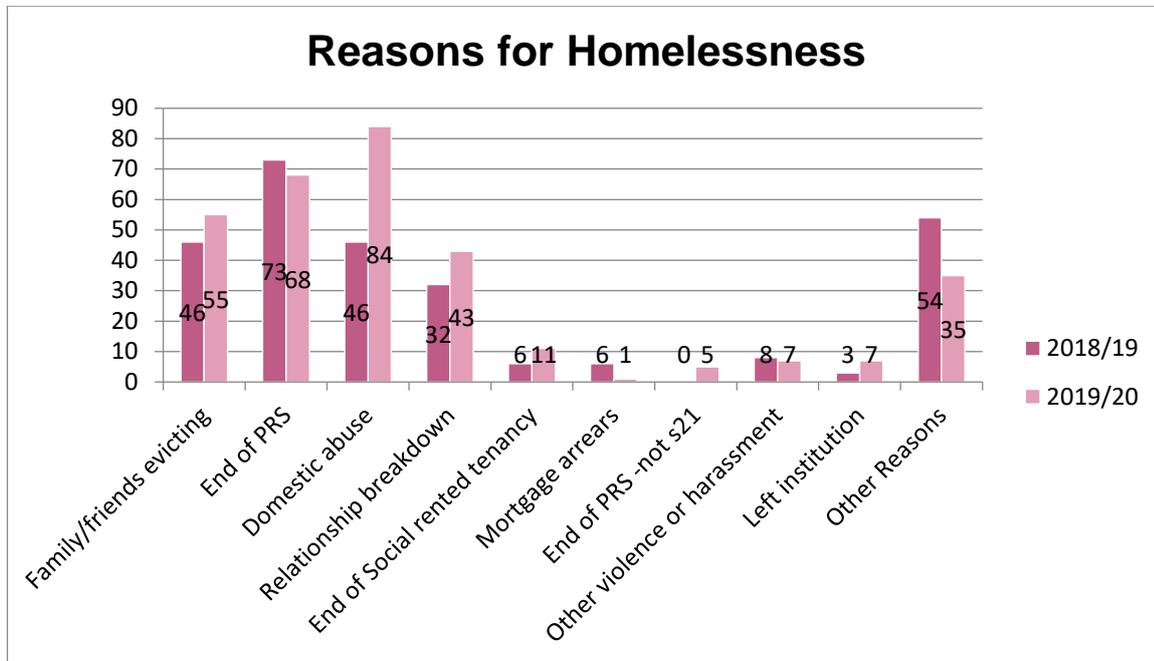
### 2.2 Profile of Homelessness

- Of those owed a duty in 2019/20 a higher percentage of clients were owed a relief duty (55%) than a prevention duty (45%), suggesting that work may need to be done to encourage clients to access the service earlier to enable opportunities for prevention to be maximised.
- In total singles account for 38% of all households owed a prevention or relief duty, and families with children account for 56%.
- 64% of clients had a support need
- The most frequently occurring support need is mental health. Other frequently occurring support needs include physical ill health, and domestic abuse.

## Homeless Link

There is a need to raise awareness of the service with customers and partner agencies to encourage clients to access the service at an earlier point in order for opportunities for early intervention and homeless prevention to be maximised.

### 2.3 Reasons for Homelessness



Source: MHCLG HCLIC data

- The main reason for homelessness in 2019/20 was due to domestic abuse accounting for 26% of all cases, followed by end of private rented accommodation (21%), family/friends no longer willing to accommodate (17%) and non violent relationship breakdown (14%).
- Homelessness due to domestic abuse increased by 45% between 2018/19 and 2019/20.
- There are low levels of evictions from social housing

There is a need to ensure that there is a range of prevention tools in place targeted at the main causes of homelessness.

### 2.4 Prevention and Relief Outcomes

- Homelessness was successfully prevented for 64% of households threatened with homelessness, which is above the national average of 58.5%
- Homelessness was successfully relieved for 64% of households who were homeless, which is above the national average of 43%.
- The service is more successful at helping households to secure alternative accommodation (89%) than enabling them to remain in their existing accommodation (11%).

## Homeless Link

- The majority of prevention and relief outcomes were achieved by accessing social housing. There was some success in accessing private rented accommodation.
- Housing Associations assisted the Council considerably in achieving prevention and relief outcomes.
- There is a heavy reliance of social housing when preventing and relieving homelessness.

There needs to be an increased focus on helping people to maintain their existing accommodation.

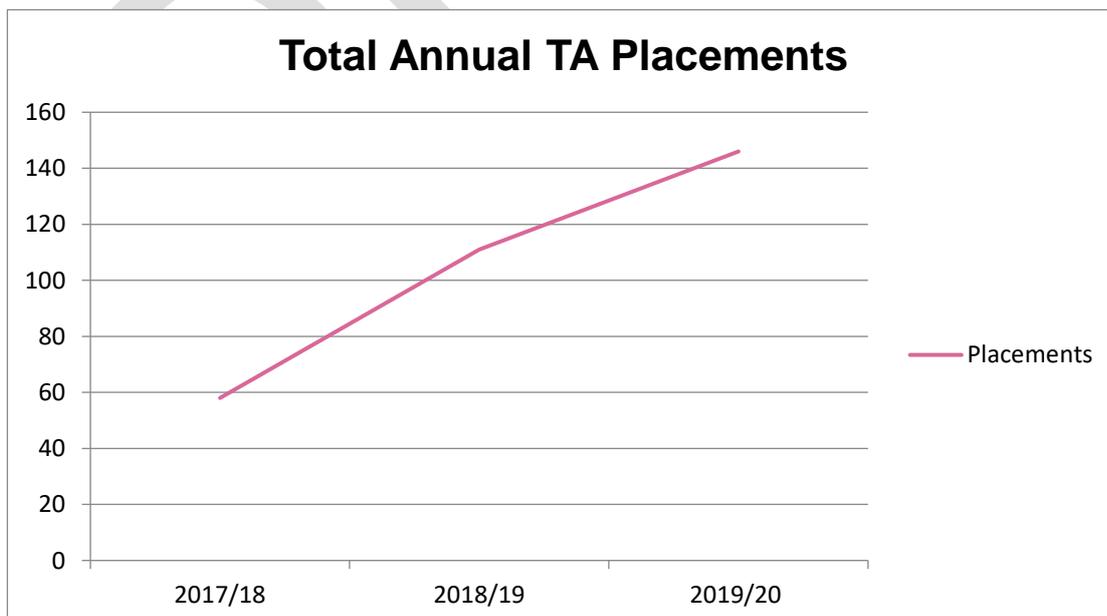
The Council needs to make better use of the private rented sector for preventing and relieving homelessness.

## 2.5 Main Duty Decisions

- In 2019/20 of the original 318 households owed a prevention or relief duty 37 households (12%) went on to have a main duty decision.
- Of the total 318 households 25 households (8%) went on to have the main S193 duty owed. This is a positive and indicates that prevention and relief work is successful.
- For those households owed the main homeless duty, the majority had the duty discharged through an offer of social housing under part 6 of the Housing Act 1996.

There may be an opportunity to increase the use of private rented accommodation to enable the Council to successfully discharge its duty and move households out of temporary accommodation.

## 2.6 Temporary Accommodation



## Homeless Link

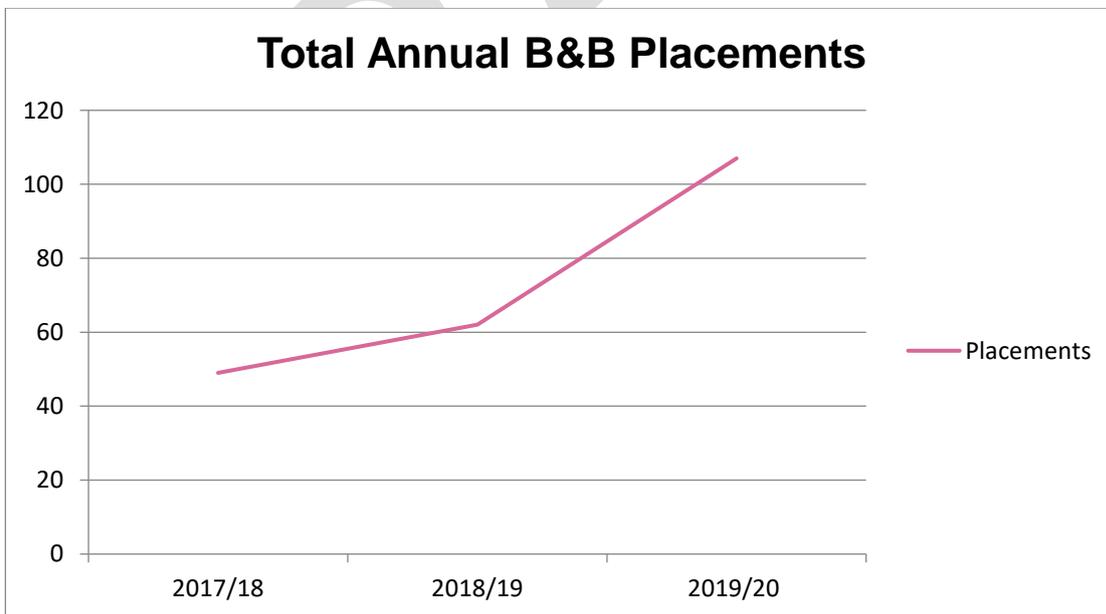
Source: South Derbyshire Housing Options

- There was a 152% increase in the number of annual TA placements over a three year period.
- Between 2018/19 and 2019/20 there was a 32% increase in the total number of annual placements,
- The average length of stay in temporary accommodation increased in 2019/20 to 97 days.
- While an increased focus on homeless prevention should help to stem the flow of new households into temporary accommodation, the impact of the global pandemic is likely to lead to a rise in homelessness and potentially temporary accommodation.

There is a need for an increased focus on move on from temporary accommodation.

There is a need to ensure that there is a sufficient supply of temporary accommodation, of the right type and in the right place. This will be essential to avoid the high use of B&B.

There is a need to fully understand the current and future demand for temporary accommodation through a detailed temporary accommodation review, which will also consider an options appraisal for future delivery and management arrangements



Source: South Derbyshire Housing Options

- The number of annual B&B placements has increased by 118% over the three year period.
- The average length of stay for all households in B&B was just under 3 weeks in 2019/20.

## Homeless Link

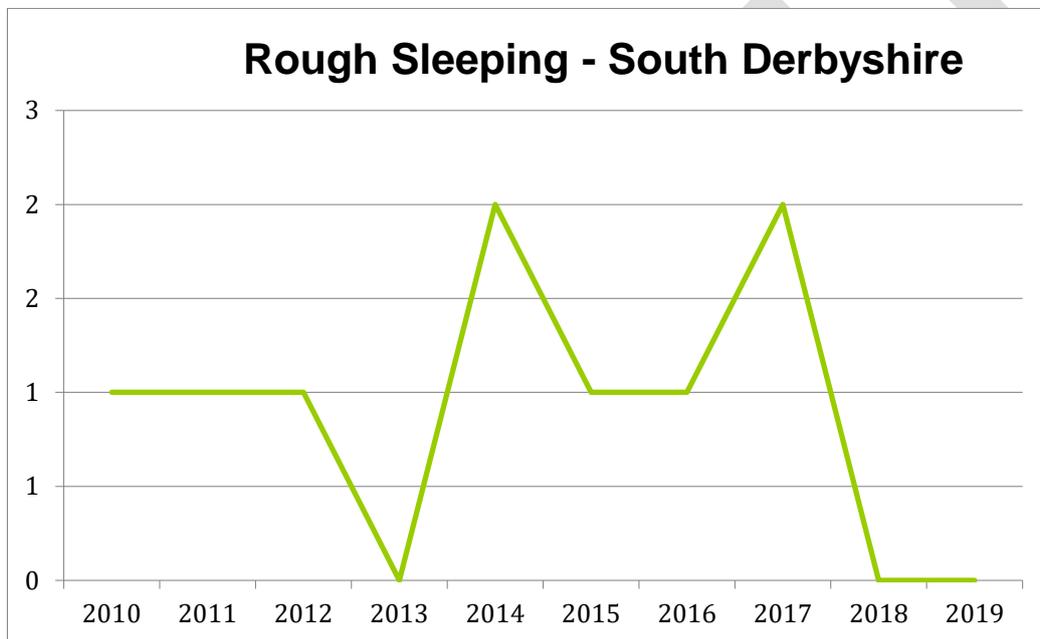
- Homeless households raised concerns in relation to the upheaval that a stay in B&B caused including moves between multiple B&B accommodation premises, lack of cooking facilities and difficulty getting children to school.

There is a need to source alternative emergency accommodation that provides self-contained provision.

## 2.7 Rough Sleeping

Rough sleeping levels are low in South Derbyshire, although it is recognised that homeless and rough sleeping can be more hidden in rural areas.

Each Authority is required to submit an official figure of numbers of rough sleepers found per year or to submit an estimate, on a typical night. The graph below details the number of rough sleepers found/estimated since 2010.



Source: MHCLG Rough Sleeping Data

- While rough sleeping remains low across South Derbyshire the outreach service has seen an increase in outreach contacts during the summer of 2020.

## 2.8 Issues specific to South Derbyshire

- The scale of hidden homelessness across South Derbyshire is unknown but is considered to be a significant issue.
- There is a small, but significant number of clients with very complex needs who repeatedly become homeless. The existing accommodation options do not meet their multiple needs.
- There is a need to explore alternative options for meeting the needs of these clients, including Housing First.

### 3. Homelessness Prevention and Support Services

#### 3.1 Housing Solutions Service

- While the service is very focused on achieving sustainable and person-centred customer solutions, the demand on the services, operational practice and available resources has meant that the service has become largely reactive, with limited opportunities for early intervention and prevention.
- A number of posts within the service are grant funded; lack of long term funding security presents challenges in terms of recruitment and staff retention.
- An increasing number of customers contact the service when they are already homeless or homelessness is imminent. Where customers do present when threatened with homelessness limited capacity within the team means that prevention and early intervention work can be limited
- The service is seeing an increased complexity of need amongst customers.

A more detailed operational review of the Housing Solutions Service would help to understand what resources are needed to manage demand and how improved customer outcomes can be achieved.

Work is needed to ensure that homelessness is not seen as the route to access social housing this would involve managing customer expectation and ensuring the allocations policy promotes planned moves

Learning from how services have been delivered through the pandemic can inform how services can evolve to better meet demand including through the increased use of technology and telephone assessments

- The rural nature of the district presents challenges in both service delivery, and also being able to find sustainable and affordable housing options in areas that clients have a connection with.

Moving forward the services needs to have a greater focus on prevention and early intervention including those that enable clients to keep their existing accommodation.

There is a need to develop a joint protocol with Housing Management and other social landlords with the opportunity to learn from good practice.

There is a need to ensure that prevention tools are targeted at these main causes.

- Domestic Abuse

Timely access to a range of options, including emergency provision and support, floating support, planned moves, taking action as a landlord against perpetrators and target hardening may assist in helping to prevent and resolve homelessness.

- Loss of Private Rented Accommodation

There is a need to ensure that there is a much more targeted approach to preventing people losing their home in the private rented sector. Both landlords and tenants need to be able to access immediate support and advice as soon as difficulties arise in the tenancy. Landlord and tenant liaison/mediation alongside a dedicated resource to resolve any difficulties at the outset will provide an important prevention tool.

- Family/Friends Evicting

There is also a need to ensure a much more targeted and pro-active response for households who are being asked to leave by family or friends. Effective and timely mediation, together with home visits or virtual online meetings using Zoom/Teams, and planned moves into alternative accommodation should be introduced. Ensuring that the Allocations Policy supports planned moves can assist in reducing homelessness due to family eviction.

- Non-violent Relationship Breakdown

Access to mediation and relationship counselling services may assist in preventing homelessness, and buying time to enable planned moves into alternative accommodation.

There is a need to develop a competitive landlord offer to increase access to the private rented sector for Housing Solution's clients.

There is a need to update the website to increase the amount of information and advice available to customers increasing the amount of self help information available and potentially reducing the demand from advice only cases.

The Housing Management service is very focused on homeless prevention and achieving sustainable tenancies.

### 3.2 Other Services

- There is a wide range of services across South Derbyshire that provides an array of advice and support services.
- South Derbyshire District Council effectively responds to gaps in provision by commissioning new services using innovative funding approaches.
- The P3 Homeless Prevention Service is an essential service in meeting the increasing need for support with mental health for clients who are threatened with homelessness.
- Predicated increases in homelessness linked to Covid are likely to place increased pressure on many of these services.

### 3.3 Covid

In anticipation of the impact of the pandemic on homelessness levels there is a need to:

- Ensure that there are sufficient resources in place to manage any increase in demand.
- Ensure that easily accessible information is available on the Council’s website for both private landlords, tenants and home-owners detailing all of the support and help available in relation to arrears
- Ensure an adequate prevention fund in place to cover private rent arrears linked to lost earnings due to Covid-19
- Ensure that there is an increase in the availability of specialist income and money advice teams
- Put in place a local publicity campaign to ensure that tenants, landlords and home-owners are aware of the assistance available, including through social media.

## 4. Settled & Supported Accommodation

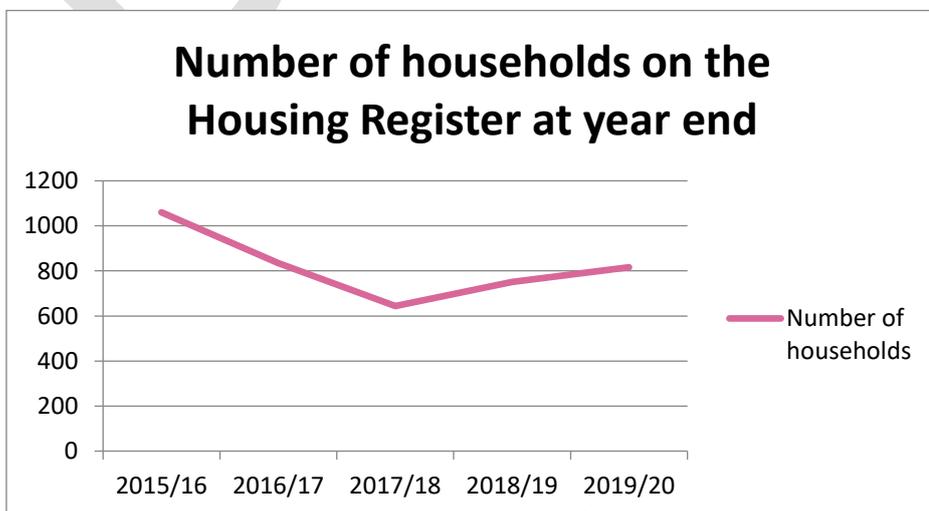
### 4.1 Supported Accommodation

- The hostel managed by P3 is an important resource in meeting the needs of single homeless people, however the way in which it is funded means that there is no funded support to meet the needs of clients with the highest support needs.
- There is a gap in provision for meeting the accommodation and support needs of the most complex clients with multiple needs.
- Housing First is a potential solution to meeting this gap, but will require a commitment from a range of key partners to ensure it’s success.

There is a need to develop supported housing provision for clients with multiple and complex needs, Housing First could be part of this solution.

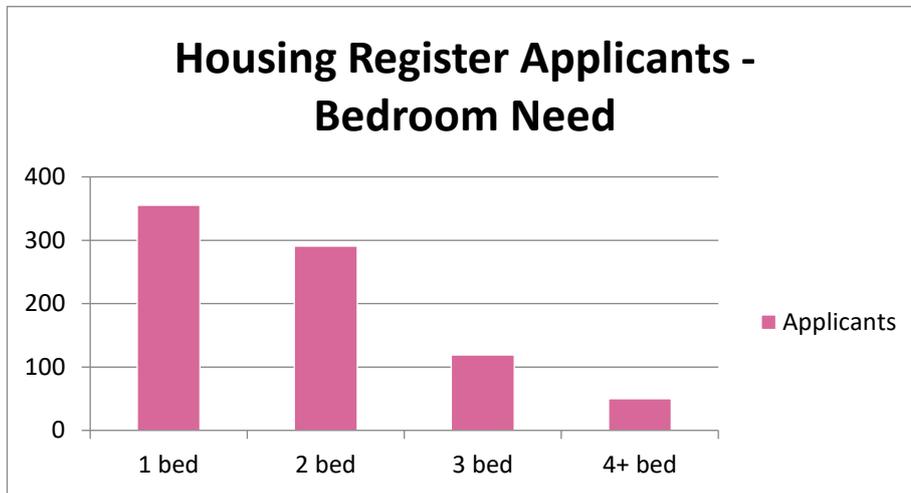
### 4.2 Social Housing

- There demand for social housing is high, and has increased over the last three years.



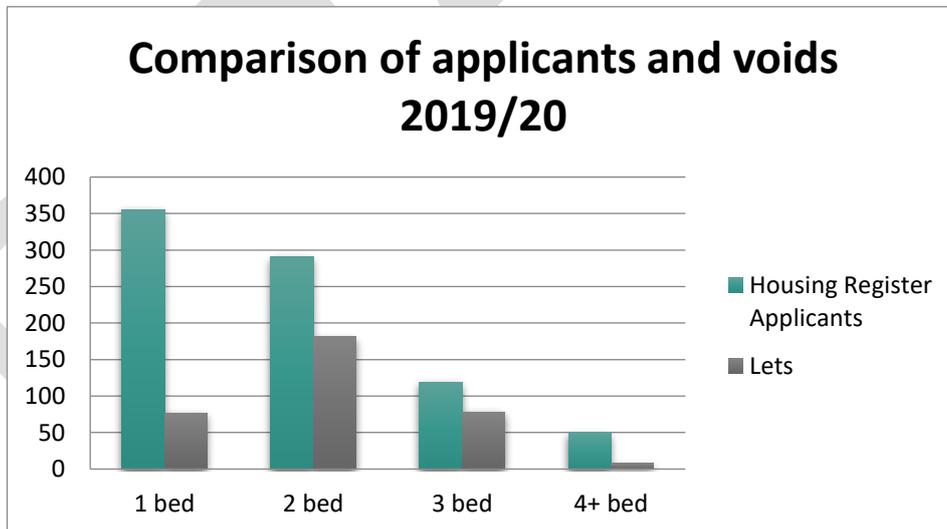
## Homeless Link

- The greatest demand is for one bedroom accommodation, accounting for 44% of all applicants, followed by two bedroom accommodation (36%) and three bedroom accommodation (15%).



South Derbyshire District Council

- The annual number of lets decreased annually until 2019/20, where there was a notable increase, this was linked to new build schemes creating an increase in lets.



Source : South Derbyshire District Council

- The graph above compares households on the Housing Register with annual lets by bedroom size. Demand exceeds supply for all property types, however the greatest unmet need is in relation to one bedroom accommodation.
- The majority of applicants who receive an offer of social housing have been waiting for less than 6 months, with 49% being allocated in less than 6 months and 24% within 7-12

## Homeless Link

months of joining the Register. The vast majority of these general needs applicants will be in urgent or high housing need.

Given the very high demand for one bedroom accommodation on the Housing Register the number of new one bedroom properties being developed needs to increase or the re-designation of existing stock if demand is to be met.

### 4.3 Private Rented Sector

- The private rented sector is largely unaffordable with market rents in most areas being higher than Local Housing Allowance.
- There is a need for the Council to make better use of the private rented sector to meet the needs of Housing Solutions Clients.

A comprehensive landlord offer needs to be developed to increase access, and as part of this the Council may wish to explore leasing schemes and the development of social lettings agency, this could be explored on a sub-regional basis.

There is a need to develop a greater range of options and provision for single people specifically for people under the age of 35.

## 5. The Needs of Specific Client Groups

- Of all Housing Solutions Customers who had a self-identified support need, 50% of these had a support need in relation to their mental health. The Homelessness Prevention Service for people with poor mental health is seen as a crucial service.
- Stakeholders identified mental health as a re-occurring issue, with a lack of supported housing provision for clients with very high and complex needs including dual diagnosis. There was a view amongst partners that many people were not getting access to mental health services and support at the point at which they need them.
- A third of Housing Solutions customers with a support need had a support need in relation to their physical health.
- There has been a slight increase in the number of clients seen by the Housing Solutions team who have a support need in relation to a learning disability.
- Young people are over-represented in the homeless population in South Derbyshire when compared with the population data.
- There is a gap in the provision of supported accommodation for young people with the most complex support needs, including young people leaving care who's needs are too high for Step Up provision, but do not meet the threshold for accessing adult services.
- Domestic abuse was the main cause of homelessness in South Derbyshire in 2019/20, and increased significantly from the previous year. There will be a need to ensure that there is a range of options available to meet this increasing need.

## Homeless Link

- Homelessness amongst single people is an increasing issue, with limited affordable housing options available in the District.
- There is an increase in the complexity of issues that homeless households, both singles and families are presenting with, and challenges in finding appropriate and sustainable solutions for these households.
- There is a need to ask the 'Veteran Question' to ensure that veterans can be identified in order to be able to signpost them to the wide range of help and support available to veterans and their families.
- There is no data captured to identify clients from the LGBTQ community by the Housing Solutions service.
- It is important that residents from different ethnic groups are aware of the help and assistance that is available through the Housing Solutions team and other services.
- Homeless Approaches from rural areas accounted for 13% of all approaches. The rural nature of the district presents challenges in being able to find affordable housing options in rural areas where people have connections. Homelessness is often hidden within rural communities.
- Homelessness amongst home owners has the potential to increase due to the pandemic.

## 6. The Views of Staff, Stakeholders and Customers

Consultation was a central component of the review and a summary of the views of Staff, Stakeholders and Customers is detailed below.

### 6.1 Views of Staff

- Consultation identified that there was a need for a more joined up approach across the Local Authority, with a commitment from all departments to work together to prevent homelessness.
- The pandemic has resulted in an increased demand on the service, alongside impacting upon Council tenant's ability to manage financially.
- An increase in the support needs of Council tenants has been identified, particularly in relation to mental health. Challenges in being able to access support for these clients was identified.
- There is very good working between the Housing Solutions service and partner agencies, with partner agencies viewing the service positively.

### 6.2 Views of Stakeholders

- Partner agencies identified the need to raise awareness of the help that is available including updating the website.
- Partner agencies identified the need to focus more on prevention and early intervention, with the need for a more pro-active approach.
- The need for increased access to money advice and assistance with budgeting was identified.
- The issue of the lack of appropriate accommodation and support for the most complex customers was a re-occurring theme throughout consultation.

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- The pandemic has negatively impacted upon client's mental health, with an increase in self harm and suicide attempts, however statutory services are even more difficult to access, including face to face support.
- Covid has resulted in stronger partnership working between health and housing.
- Issues were identified in relation to B&B placements, which are usually out of area, and away from amenities and support.
- There has been an increase in clients with alcohol related care and support needs, including alcohol related cognitive impairment.
- The need for an online directory of services across South Derbyshire was identified.
- An action focused complex case group is needed to find solutions for the most complex cases.
- Person centred solutions need to be developed, including Housing First.
- Repeat homelessness is a significant issue in South Derbyshire.

### 6.3 Views of Customers

- Customer consultation identified high levels of satisfaction with the Housing Solutions service, with the majority rating the service as good or very good.
- Where lower levels of customer satisfaction were identified, customers raised the need for an empathetic and compassionate response, with the need for regular updates on cases.
- Some customers identified the need for the Housing Solutions service to keep them updated more frequently.
- Customers identified the need to raise awareness of the service, so that people know where to go to access help.
- Feedback from customers was very positive in relation to the quality of temporary accommodation, and in particular in respect of the Temporary Accommodation Officer.
- There is a strong expectation amongst customers that they will be provided with social housing, work needs to be done to address this ensuring that customers have realistic expectations.

## 7. Resources

- The homelessness budget has remained fairly static and has therefore not increased with higher demand on services and homelessness levels.
- The true cost of delivering homelessness and prevention services across the Authority is not fully understood.
- Expenditure on temporary accommodation and B&B has increased significantly.
- Financial support from Government through the Homelessness Prevention Grant has an uncertain future and the potential for further pressure on Council budgets should this funding be reduced or cease.
- There is reliance on enhanced housing benefit to fund intensive housing management to provide supported accommodation. Any potential changes to this would impact upon provider's ability to continue to provide supported accommodation.

## Homeless Link

- The impact of Covid is likely to lead to increased homelessness levels at a time when future public funding seems precarious. Investment in homeless prevention is essential if the impact of the virus on homelessness levels is to be mitigated.

## 8. Future Levels of Homelessness

- While the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 is likely to lead to increased homeless prevention and relief activity and improved positive outcomes for clients, the broader pressures within the wider housing market, anticipated changes to private rented sector tenancies and data from Wales following the implementation of their new legislation suggests that demand for homelessness services will continue to rise for the foreseeable future.
- The Planning White Paper published in August 2020 proposes the removal of the use of Section 106 Agreements (which the Councils uses to collect contributions from developers and require the provision of affordable housing) and replaced with the new Infrastructure Levy. There is risk that the new Levy could negatively impact upon the delivery of affordable housing in the District, compared to existing provision, which if imposed could unfortunately have a knock-on effect on homelessness
- The impact of the pandemic is likely to lead to very significant increases in homelessness and targeted early prevention needs to be in place to mitigate this as much as possible.

## 9. Homelessness Strategy Development

Following this review the Council will produce and publish a Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy. This will ensure a strategic approach to tackling homelessness and rough sleeping across South Derbyshire, ensuring that local solutions can be developed to meet the needs of its community.

South Derbyshire's Homelessness Forum will be fundamental to the development of this strategy, and the implementation and monitoring of the targets agreed within the action plan.

The Strategy must reflect the joint approach by agencies to tackle and prevent homelessness in the Borough and therefore it is appropriate that a multi-agency approach is taken to: -

- Agreeing priorities.
- Identifying key actions.
- Agreeing an action plan.
- Jointly delivering the action plan.

The Council is committed to working with its partners to preventing homelessness and ending rough sleeping across South Derbyshire.

## About Homeless Link

[Homeless Link](#) is the national membership charity for services working directly with people experiencing homelessness and those at risk of homelessness with housing, health, care and support needs.

Representing over 700 organisations across England, we work to improve services through research, guidance and learning, and to promote policy change that will ensure everyone has a place to call home and the support they need to keep it.

We aim to bring about positive policy change as well as providing practical support to individual organisations. Our Innovation and Good Practice (IGP) Team runs a range of special projects including focuses on welfare reform; the future of supported housing rents; the Homelessness Reduction Act; Housing First; Ending Women's Homelessness and Youth Homelessness.

We are a leading training provider delivering both public and in-house courses around the country to local authorities, registered housing providers, third sector and charitable organisations and service user groups across housing, homelessness, support, health & social care and criminal justice services.

We have a strong consultancy service; our staff and bank of associates nationwide support members across the spectrum of their activities from the strategic - strategy development, business planning, service evaluation, commissioning and workforce development - through to the operational, such as policies and procedures and rent setting. Our team brings many years' operational and consultancy experience as well as a strong understanding of the sectors in which we work, and an empathy with the daily challenges that staff face. We have experience of working with large and small providers from local authorities to the smallest charities, and with commissioners and service providers.



## What we do

Homeless Link is the national membership charity for services working directly with people experiencing homelessness and those at risk of homelessness with housing, health, care and support needs. We work to improve services and campaign for policy change that will help end homelessness.

## Let's end homelessness together

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<b>REPORT TO:</b>	<b>HOUSING AND COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE</b>	<b>AGENDA ITEM:10</b>
<b>DATE OF MEETING:</b>	<b>28<sup>th</sup> JANUARY 2021</b>	<b>CATEGORY: RECOMMENDED</b>
<b>REPORT FROM:</b>	<b>STRATEGIC DIRECTOR (CORPORATE RESOURCES)</b>	<b>OPEN</b>
<b>MEMBERS' CONTACT POINT:</b>	<b>VICKI SUMMERFIELD (01283 595939)</b> <a href="mailto:victoria.summerfield@southderbyshire.gov.uk">victoria.summerfield@southderbyshire.gov.uk</a>	<b>DOC:</b> s/finance/committee/2020-21/Jan/budget
<b>SUBJECT:</b>	<b>HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT BUDGET, FINANCIAL PLAN and PROPOSED RENT 2021-22</b>	<b>REF:</b>
<b>WARD(S) AFFECTED:</b>	<b>ALL</b>	<b>TERMS OF REFERENCE: HC 01</b>

## **1.0 Recommendations**

- 1.1 That Council House Rents are increased by CPI plus 1% for Tenants with effect from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2021 in accordance with the Welfare Reform and Work Act 2016 and after conclusion of the Rents for Social Housing from 2020 consultation.
- 1.2 That the proposed revenue income and expenditure for 2021/22, together with the 10-year Financial Plan for the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) as detailed in **Appendix 1**, are considered and referred to the Finance and Management Committee for approval.
- 1.3 That the HRA is kept under review and measures identified to mitigate the financial risks detailed in the report and to maintain a sustainable financial position.

## **2.0 Purpose of the Report**

- 2.1 As part of the annual financial cycle, the report details the Housing Revenue Account's (HRA) base budget for 2021/22, with a comparison to the current year, 2020/21. In addition, the report details the updated 10-year financial projection for the HRA following a review during the annual budget round.
- 2.2 The report also sets out details of the proposed rent level for 2021/22 in accordance with directions within the conclusion of the Rents for Social Housing from 2020 consultation.

### 3.0 Detail

#### **The Position Entering the 2021/22 Budget Round**

- 3.1 During the current financial year, the financial position of the HRA has been reviewed and updated to reflect changes to the structure plus the budget out-turn position for 2019/20.
- 3.2 The latest position reported in November 2020, estimated a large deficit on the HRA in 2021/22 of £1.3m, decreasing the HRA's General Reserve to approximately £7.1m.

#### **Formulating the 2021/22 Base Budget**

- 3.3 Budgets are generally calculated on a "no increase basis," i.e. they are maintained at the same level as the previous year adjusted only for known changes, price increases and variations due to contractual conditions, etc.
- 3.4 In addition, budgets are also subject to a base line review which is used to justify proposed spending. This process places responsibility on budget holders to justify their spending budgets by specifying their needs in a more constructed manner. This is supported by the Financial Services Unit, who analyse recent trends across services compared to current budgets.

#### **On-going Service Provision**

- 3.5 The budgets are based substantively on a continuation of existing service provision (in respect of staffing levels, frequency, quality of service, etc.).
- 3.6 The full year effects of previous year's restructures and budget savings have been included, with any non-recurring items removed.

#### **Base Budget 2021/22**

- 3.8 The HRA's Base Budget and longer-term financial projection up to 2030/31 is detailed in **Appendix 1**. A projection of this length is required for the HRA to ensure that future debt repayments and capital expenditure are affordable for the longer-term sustainability of the Council's housing stock.
- 3.9 The following table provides an overall summary of the HRA's Net Operating Income position with a comparison to the approved 2020/21 budget.

## HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT - BUDGET 2021/22

	Proposed Budget 2021/22 £'000	Approved Budget 2020/21 £'000	Variance £'000
Rental Income	-12,446	-12,168	-278
Non-Dwelling Income	-127	-143	16
Supporting People Grant	-130	-130	0
Other Income	-177	-177	0
General Management	1,848	1,834	14
Supporting People	951	866	85
Responsive	1,406	1,369	37
Planned Maintenance	1,975	1,921	54
Bad Debt Provision	125	100	25
Interest Payable & Receivable	1,738	1,713	25
Depreciation	4,127	3,700	427
<b>NET OPERATING INCOME</b>	<b>-710</b>	<b>-1,115</b>	<b>405</b>
Reversal of Depreciation	-4,127	-3,700	-427
Capital Expenditure	1,683	1,935	-252
Disabled Adaptations	300	300	0
Asbestos and Health & Safety Surveys	100	100	0
Debt Repayment	1,444	765	679
Major Repairs Reserve	600	600	0
New Build Contribution	0	0	0
Drawdown of MRR to fund Capital	0	0	0
Asset Replacement Earmarked Reserve	45	45	0
Additional Debt Repayment Transfer	2,150	771	1,379
Capital works non-traditional properties	100	100	0
General Fund Recharges	0	-77	77
ICT Upgrades	0	105	-105
<b>HRA (SURPLUS) / DEFICIT</b>	<b>1,585</b>	<b>-171</b>	<b>1,756</b>

3.10 The above table shows that the HRA's deficit is budgeted to increase from the £1.3m reported in November by £215k and the position on the Fund changes from a surplus to deficit position between 2020/21 and 2021/22. Additional expenditure was included in the MTFP in November but updates to the CPI, Right to Buy and void losses forecasts has resulted in an impact to rental income which is detailed later in the report.

3.11 The main variances are summarised in the following table.

	<b>£'000</b>
Capital expenditure and debt repayment	1,701
Salaries	101
Forecasted General Fund recharge reduction	77
General Fund recharges – 2021/22	36
Bad Debt provision	25
Investment income	25
Insurance	13
Computer maintenance agreements	11
Equipment repairs	10
Utilities for void dwellings	10
Council Tax for void dwellings	9
Rental income	-262
<b>Budget increase</b>	<b><u>1,756</u></b>

### **Council House and Garage Rents**

- 3.12 The overall change between 2020/21 and 2021/22 is an estimated increase of £262k. This is due mainly to the application of the CPI plus 1% increase to rents as updated in the Direction on the Rent Standard 2019.
- 3.13 The MTFP includes an increase of 1.5% for rental income in 2021/22 in line with Government guidance. Further detail and options regarding an increase have been included within the following paragraphs of the report due to sensitivities around an increase being raised at the Committee earlier in January.
- 3.14 During the summer of 2015, the Government announced changes in accordance with the Welfare Reform and Work Bill 2015/16 to reduce rents in the housing sector by 1% per annum from 2016/17 to 2019/20. The impact of the reduction was approximately £19m over an eight-year period and was reported to the Committee.
- 3.15 Average rent per week in 2015/16, prior to the reduction was £79.35. This had fallen to £77.67 per week by 2019/20. CPI plus 1% was reinstated for rent increases from 2020/21 onwards.
- 3.16 Earlier on the Agenda, reports have been presented regarding the future pressures on the HRA due to the Housing White Paper and Careline. Carbon reduction targets within the Corporate Plan will also produce extra financial pressure in future years and an update to the Housing Asset Strategy to incorporate all of these areas is to be presented to the Committee in 2022.
- 3.17 An increase to the rent of CPI plus 1% (1.5%) equates to an increase per week of between £0.87 and £1.52, an average of £1.20. The average rent per week is £80.98. This excludes temporary accommodation and new build/acquisition as these rents are higher and also not comparable with prior years due to timing on the introduction of the rent.

3.18 The increase to new build/acquisition and temporary accommodation is between £1.13 to £1.90, an average of £1.43 per week.

3.19 If the Committee decided to not increase the rent in 2021/22, the implications across the ten-year plan is shown in the following table.

	2021.22 £'000	2022.23 £'000	2023.24 £'000	2024.25 £'000	2025.26 £'000	2026.27 £'000	2027.28 £'000	2028.29 £'000	2029.30 £'000	2030.31 £'000	Total £'000
MTFP Rent at 1.5% Increase	-12,446	-12,639	-12,902	-13,206	-13,516	-13,834	-14,158	-14,490	-14,828	-15,174	-137,193
Rent at 0.0% increase	-12,262	-12,453	-12,712	-13,011	-13,317	-13,630	-13,950	-14,276	-14,610	-14,951	-135,172
<b>Total Impact</b>	<b>184</b>	<b>186</b>	<b>190</b>	<b>195</b>	<b>199</b>	<b>204</b>	<b>208</b>	<b>214</b>	<b>218</b>	<b>223</b>	<b>2,021</b>

General Reserve Balance      -6,662      -4,478      -2,630      -1,632      -1,115      -685      -1,026      -1,738      -2,661      -2,579

3.20 There is a requirement that the statutory balance on the HRA must be at least £1m in any one year and where there appears to be a risk to that balance, measures have to be taken to ensure that the Council reviews costs and income to ensure the HRA is sustainable.

3.21 Due to the approved agreement under self-financing to repay debt of £30m from 2022 to 2027, the HRA has significant pressure over the next five years to generate enough in reserve to afford the repayments. The debt repayment contribution is included over the life of the MTFP.

3.22 If no increase on the rent is approved, the HRA will fall below the statutory balance in 2026/27 and is very close to the minimum balance in 2027/28 as noted in the table above. The impact of this will mean a reduction in expenditure will be required across the HRA which will undoubtedly affect individual tenants.

3.23 The following table shows the impact to the MTFP of an increase of 1%.

	2021.22 £'000	2022.23 £'000	2023.24 £'000	2024.25 £'000	2025.26 £'000	2026.27 £'000	2027.28 £'000	2028.29 £'000	2029.30 £'000	2030.31 £'000	Total £'000
MTFP Rent at 1.5% Increase	-12,446	-12,639	-12,902	-13,206	-13,516	-13,834	-14,158	-14,490	-14,828	-15,174	-137,193
Rent at 1.0% increase	-12,385	-12,577	-12,838	-13,141	-13,450	-13,766	-14,089	-14,419	-14,756	-15,100	-136,521
<b>Total Impact</b>	<b>61</b>	<b>62</b>	<b>64</b>	<b>65</b>	<b>66</b>	<b>68</b>	<b>69</b>	<b>71</b>	<b>72</b>	<b>74</b>	<b>672</b>

General Reserve Balance      -6,785      -4,724      -3,001      -2,132      -1,747      -1,452      -1,931      -2,784      -3,852      -3,917

3.24 The General Reserve stays above the minimum level but still results in a loss across the plan of approximately £672k.

3.25 The following table shows the impact of an increase of 0.5%.

	2021.22 £'000	2022.23 £'000	2023.24 £'000	2024.25 £'000	2025.26 £'000	2026.27 £'000	2027.28 £'000	2028.29 £'000	2029.30 £'000	2030.31 £'000	Total £'000
MTFP Rent at 1.5% Increase	-12,446	-12,639	-12,902	-13,206	-13,516	-13,834	-14,158	-14,490	-14,828	-15,174	-137,193
Rent at 0.5% increase	-12,324	-12,515	-12,775	-13,076	-13,384	-13,698	-14,019	-14,347	-14,683	-15,025	-135,846
<b>Total Impact</b>	<b>122</b>	<b>124</b>	<b>127</b>	<b>130</b>	<b>132</b>	<b>136</b>	<b>139</b>	<b>143</b>	<b>145</b>	<b>149</b>	<b>1,347</b>

General Reserve Balance            -6,724    -4,601    -2,816    -1,883    -1,433    -1,070    -1,479    -2,261    -3,257    -3,248

3.26 The HRA still remains above the statutory minimum level but comes very close in 2026/27 to the minimum balance which leaves no room for any one-off issues that may occur. The loss in income to the HRA would be approximately £1.3m over the life of the plan.

3.27 Rental income over the life of the MTFP has been amended to include a higher level of Right to Buy than previously forecast, a slight increase in void turnaround and revised CPI figures. The following table shows the impact over the next 10 years.

	2021/22 £'000	2022 to 2031 £'000	Total £'000
Forecast MTFP November 2020	-12,502	-127,258	-139,760
Void losses increase by 0.15%	19	190	209
Right to Buy losses increased	4	1,135	1,139
CPI Forecast	0	1,186	1,186
<b>MTFP Forecast January 2021</b>	<b>-12,479</b>	<b>-124,747</b>	<b>-137,226</b>
<b>Movement on Forecast</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>2,511</b>	<b>2,534</b>

3.28 The impact of the changes has resulted in a forecast reduction in income over the 10-year plan of £2.5m.

3.29 Right to Buy (RTB) was previously forecast to reduce over the life of the plan in line with Government expectations set under self-financing. The forecast assumed that RTB would reduce dwelling numbers by 18 from 2021/22, 15 by 2023/24, 12 by 2026/27 finally reducing to 10 by 2029/30 for the remaining life of the Plan.

3.30 The updated losses are now assuming that 20 RTB will be sold in 2021/22 and 2022/23 and will then reduce to 18 for the remaining life of the Plan.

3.31 It is likely that this assumption is too low, but the forecast is not considering any future properties purchased or built by the Council over the Plan as there is not a programme of scheduled new build or acquisition after 2020/21. This is currently being reviewed by Officers with a view to updating Members once all options have been considered. This forecast of income losses is a worst-case scenario but will be kept under review.

3.32 The following table shows the movement in the HRA housing stock over the past three years. To-date in 2020/21, 7 houses have been sold through Right to Buy and 9 new properties have been acquired in Aston and Repton. The average

number of sales over the last three years is 20. The pandemic has slowed the uptake of RTB in 2020/21

	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20
Dwellings B/fwd	3,015	2,993	2,971
Right to Buy	-22	-22	-16
New Build Acquisition	0	0	13
Council Dwellings Buy Backs	0	0	2
<b>Closing number of Dwellings</b>	<b>2,993</b>	<b>2,971</b>	<b>2,970</b>

3.33 The CPI forecast has been altered for the following two years due to the Office of Budget Responsibility assumptions that CPI will not reach 2% until the end of 2024. CPI is now set at 1% for 2022/23 and 1.5% for 2023/24 rising to 2% by 2024/25. The movement in CPI and CPI forecasts will be kept under close review and therefore further changes may be required.

3.34 Void losses have been forecast at 0.85% per annum since the start of self-financing in 2012 and this has now been increased to 1%. Although the back log in void properties is expected to be on track by the end of this financial year, there are currently long-term properties being held as void whilst review on future opportunities is undertaken. The forecast on void losses will be monitored closely and updated as the year progresses.

3.35 Rental income for HRA garages has been proposed in the fees and charges to increase at the same level as Dwellings, CPI plus 1%. This, however, is budgeted to be lower than previously forecast due to a high number of voids and a limited take up of the void units.

### **Capital Expenditure and Debt Repayment**

3.36 Proposed capital expenditure is based on stock condition survey data and the fluctuation in required expenditure year-on-year and is included within the MTFP.

3.37 The contribution to the Debt Repayment Reserve is profiled in line with capital expenditure to not only ensure that the HRA General Reserve does not fall below the statutory £1m but to also have available funds to repay debts as they become due. The contribution and repayment of debt is included within the MTFP.

3.38 A one-off expense for an upgrade to the Housing Management software is included within the MTFP for 2020/21 and although this upgrade has not yet taken place, the sum of £105k will be earmarked for use in 2021/22.

### **Increased Staffing Costs**

3.39 A pay award is not included within the Base Budget at this stage as no official notification has been submitted to the Council although it is expected that no award will be made in 2021/22 in accordance with the Government's national pay freeze.

- 3.40 The MTFP includes a provision for a potential pay award increase of 2.5% per year for all employees from 2022/23.
- 3.41 Incremental salary increases are included within the MTFP each year and are expected ahead of the Budget round.
- 3.42 Base salary costs have increased between years due to the Housing restructure which was approved at this Committee in October 2020. This was included in the update to the MTFP in November 2020.

### General Fund Recharges

- 3.43 A full review was undertaken for recharges from the General Fund to the HRA and reported in February 2020. It was expected based on the 2020/21 budget that there would be a reduction to these charges, and this was built into the MTFP.
- 3.44 The £77k saving reported for 2020/21 is still expected to be seen but further to the budget round, General Fund services that are recharged to the HRA for 2021/22 have moved significantly due to differing factors.
- 3.45 The total impact of the increase in HRA recharges is £36k and after a full review of all charges, the following table details the movement by General Fund service area.

	<b>Movement £'000</b>
Head of Finance	53
Head of Organisational Development and Performance	36
Head of Customer Services	16
Head of Business Change and ICT	2
Strategic Director (Corporate Resources)	-12
Head of Corporate Property	-23
Head of Legal and Democratic	-36
<b>Total HRA Recharge Movement</b>	<b>36</b>

- 3.46 Corporate and Democratic costs plus Civic Offices overheads were reduced as part of the HRA review and Customer Services was increased due to call volumes now being diverted from HRA staff as approved by this Committee. The main increases are from direct support through Organisational Development and Finance which are based on transactional volumes, head count and cash responsibility.

### Bad Debt Provision

- 3.47 It is proposed to increase the budgeted provision due to increases in the debt levels for dwellings plus the likely impact of recovery due to the pandemic.

## **Investment Income**

- 3.48 The reduction expected on investment income is in line with the MTFP as reported in November and is due to interest rates falling and likely lower levels of cash.

## **Insurance**

- 3.25 The overall proposed insurance budget has increased the cost to the Council by £31k but this is split over a number of individual policies. The increased cost to the HRA is £13k which is due mainly to public liability (£5k) and material damage to housing properties (£4k). Public Liability insurance is based on salary levels by the insurer and with increases to the HRA staff numbers this has increased in line. The material damage is based on the value of the assets which have increased between the years.

## **Computer Maintenance Agreements**

- 3.27 Increases to licence and maintenance fees were expected and increased in the MTFP by £4k, or 2%. The proposed budget is an increase of 7%, the majority of which is a contractual agreement for support with the monitoring service for Careline. An overspend is expected in 2020/21 due to an underbudget in previous years.

## **Equipment**

- 3.28 Management of the Careline service includes repairs and renewal of equipment to support customers. As equipment is aging and the expenditure in the current year is likely to be higher than budgeted, it is proposed to increase this budget in 2021/22.

## **Void Dwellings**

- 3.29 The impact of void properties not only effects the income losses as noted earlier in the report, but also costs the HRA. Council Tax levels are significantly higher than budget in 2020/21 due to the high levels of voids but there is also a cost of utilities to not only keep the properties in reasonable condition whilst empty but also for the workforce when refurbishing.

## **Other Factors**

- 3.30 The following detail is for information on the HRA position and are not variances between budgeted years.

## **Debt Interest**

- 3.35 Part of the existing debt portfolio includes £10m at a variable rate of interest. The budgets for 2020/21 and 2021/22 estimate an interest on this debt of 3%.
- 3.36 It is considered unlikely that rates will increase up to 3% by March 2022. Therefore, the cost of servicing debt is likely to be lower than budgeted, although this will be kept under review. A 1% variance in the rate equates to

approximately £100,000 per year. The current rate payable of the variable debt element is 0.48%.

### **Depreciation**

- 3.37 The increase is due to the revaluation of all Council dwellings in March 2020 which will be depreciated in accordance with accounting practice.
- 3.38 Depreciation is calculated on the existing use value and age of each property in the HRA. This is designed to ensure that the Council sets-aside sufficient resources to maintain and replace properties in future years.
- 3.39 The Council has an on-going capital programme and properties generally have a substantial useful life if maintained properly. Although the depreciation charge is included as a cost charged in the net operating income of the HRA, it is reversed out when calculating the overall surplus or deficit on the HRA.
- 3.40 However, under accounting regulations, the annual amount of capital expenditure, plus sums set-aside to repay debt, need to be equal to or greater than the depreciation charge for the year. This is effectively testing that the Council is properly maintaining and financing the liabilities associated with its housing stock.
- 3.41 Where the depreciation charge is lower than actual capital expenditure/debt repayment, the HRA would be charged with the difference in that particular year. For 2021/22, expenditure is in excess of depreciation.

### **The Longer-term Financial Projection**

- 3.42 Following the introduction of the self-financing framework for the HRA in 2012, this generated a surplus for the HRA as the Council was no longer required to pay a proportion (approximately 40%) of its rental income to the Government in accordance with a national redistribution framework.
- 3.43 This released resources, which in the early years of the Housing Business Plan, were available for capital investment in the existing stock, together with resources for New Build. Surpluses in later years are to be used to repay the debt that the Council inherited in return for becoming “self-financing” and to continue a programme of capital maintenance in future years.
- 3.44 The HRA budget and projection is based on the principles that the HRA will carry a minimum unallocated contingency of at least £1m as a working balance and that sufficient resources are set-aside in an earmarked reserve to repay debt as instalments become due.

### **HRA Reserves**

- 3.45 The HRA has 5 separate reserves as detailed in the following table.

<b>General Reserve</b>	Held as a contingency with a minimum balance of at least £1m.
<b>New Build Reserve (Capital Receipts Reserve)</b>	Accumulated Capital Receipts pending expenditure on building new properties/acquisition of properties. The financial model assumes that these are drawn down each year to finance new build or acquisition ahead of any further borrowing. The carrying balance from year to year remains low.
<b>Debt Repayment Reserve</b>	Sums set-aside to repay debt; contributions to the Reserve started from 2016/17 in accordance with the debt repayment profile.
<b>Major Repairs Reserve</b>	A Capital Reserve with sums set-aside each year for future programmed major repairs on the housing stock.
<b>Earmarked Reserve</b>	Sums set-aside for future replacement of vehicles for the Direct Labour Organisation.

### **The Updated Financial Position**

- 3.46 Following the base budget review, the 10-year Financial Plan for the HRA has been reviewed and updated. This is detailed in **Appendix 1**. The overall position has declined compared to the previous forecast due to the detail explained previously on income.
- 3.47 The General Reserve remains above the statutory £1m for the duration of the 10-year projection.
- 3.48 After review of the capital programme, sums are being set-aside in the Major Repairs Reserve to ensure that future capital improvements can be funded. A revised stock condition survey has been completed and an update regarding profiling of the works over the next 30 years was reported during 2019/20.
- 3.49 There are a number of sites approved for acquisition, but the Capital Receipts Reserve is set to increase each year due to receipts from the sale of houses under the Right to Buy Scheme. The reserve has increased in line with the expected losses noted earlier in the report.

### **Debt Repayments and Borrowing**

- 3.50 The Council took on the management of debt valued at £58m in 2012. No additional borrowing has been required.
- 3.51 The following debt repayments are due over the life of the current financial plan:

- 2021/22 - £10m
- 2023/24 - £10m
- 2026/27 - £10m

3.52 The financial projection to 2030/31. shows that these repayments can be met. The next repayments are not then due until beyond 2031.

### **Key Variables and Assumptions**

3.53 The Financial Plan is based on certain assumptions in future years regarding what are considered to be the key variables. These are summarised in the following table.

<b>Cost inflation</b>	2.5% per year. This is lower than the current level of inflation and economic forecasts predict that a level of 2% will not be seen until 2024, this increase has not been updated in line. A provision of 2.5% in the short-term is considered prudent to reflect that prices for materials in the building industry tend to rise quicker than average inflation.
<b>Annual rent increases</b>	CPI + 1% giving a 1.5% increase in 2021/22, 2% in 2022/23, 2.5% in 2023/24 and 3% per year thereafter.
<b>Council house sales – “Right to Buys”</b>	20 in 2021/22 and 22/23 reducing to 18 in 2021/22 and going forwards. Targets set by the Government in calculating the self-financing settlement expect sales of 10 per annum.
<b>Interest Rates</b>	Predominantly fixed; £10m variable debt at 3% until maturity in 2021/22.

### **Financial Risks**

3.54 The main risks to the HRA are considered to be those as detailed in the following sections.

#### **Future Rent Levels**

3.55 The biggest risk in the Financial Plan is considered to be future rent levels. The rent level has been confirmed as CPI plus 1% which will increase rent levels by 1.5% in 2021/22.

3.56 The HRA is dependent on rental income (currently £12m per year) for its resources. Even small variations in rent changes can have significant implications in monetary terms for the Financial Plan over the longer-term.

#### **Right to Buys**

3.57 A decrease in current properties from sales continues to be built into the Budget and Financial Plan and this reflects the current level of sales. Therefore, the HRA will continue to generate resources for further new build and acquisition in the future, although on-going rental income is lost.

3.58 The main risk relates to a sudden surge in sales which has been apparent in recent years; although this generates capital, the loss in on-going rental income could have a much more adverse impact on the HRA which has now been built into the MTFP at a higher level.

## **Supporting People Grant**

- 3.59 It has been assumed that this continues over the Financial Plan although this will be subject to policy decisions and directions from Derbyshire County Council.
- 3.60 Floating Support and Alarm and Telecare Monitoring contributions will impact the financial position of the Council although the full impact is currently unknown. A review is currently being undertaken by the County Council with discussions being held with the Council's Head of Housing. As updates are known they will be reported to both Housing and Community Services and Finance and Management Committee.

## **Impairment**

- 3.61 Impairment is an accounting adjustment that reflects a sudden reduction in the value of an asset. An asset becomes impaired where a one-off event (e.g. fire, vandalism, etc.) causes significant damage or there is a significant change in market conditions, which reduces the value of the asset.
- 3.62 In accordance with accounting regulations, provision has to be made in an organisation's accounts for the loss in an asset's value through impairment. However, as with depreciation, this is purely an accounting exercise for local authorities. Impairment charges are reversed out of revenue accounts to ensure that it does not affect the "bottom line" and Rent (in the HRA's case) payable by Council Tenants.
- 3.63 The Government has been reviewing this accounting treatment to bring local authorities into line with other organisations in accordance with International Reporting Standards. This has been challenged by the relevant professional bodies.
- 3.64 Large impairment adjustments are rare. In addition, impairment needs to affect the wider asset base. For example, damage to one property would not affect the overall value of the Council's stock, which is currently valued at £125m in total.
- 3.65 If there was a wider event affecting many properties however, this would lead to an impairment charge. It is considered that the most likely scenario is a sudden fall in property values as this would affect the overall valuation of the stock. The potential for impairment charges could have serious implications for all housing authorities and this is why it has been challenged.

## **Changes in Central Government Policy**

- 3.66 Although the HRA continues to operate under a self-financing framework, Central Government retain the power to change policy in many areas which can impact upon the Financial Projection.

## Changes to Welfare Reform and Universal Credit (UC)

3.67 Universal Credit has been implemented in South Derbyshire for all working age new claimants during 2018 and there is concern amongst housing professionals that changes will see a reduction in payment of rent and an increase in arrears.

3.68 Currently, Housing Benefit is paid directly to a tenant's Rent Account where this is due. In a system of Universal Credit, the benefit element is effectively paid direct to the Tenant. The Pilot Schemes and evidence locally suggests that this gives the potential for tenants to default on their rent payments.

3.69 The rebate directly received from Housing Benefit by the HRA has noticeably reduced during 2020/21 compared to 2019/20 and the debt position at this stage is higher than in last financial year. This is being kept under review.

### Rent Levels

3.70 There is a mixture of rent levels that exist in the "self-financing" system which apply to existing and new tenants, together with those that apply to properties built or acquired as part of the New Build programme. These are detailed below:

- **The Base (Current) Rent:** This is the actual rent that applied in July 2015. For many tenants, this rent is lower than the "Formula Rent" that existed in the previous Rent Restructuring System. This rent will remain unless a property becomes void.
- **Formula Rent:** This was a rent level (target) set nationally as part of Central Government's Rent Restructuring Policy. Approximately 2/3rds of the Council's properties were below this target and were being phased-in towards the target over a 10-year period.

This phasing ended in 2014/15, although a Formula Rent for each property remains. Councils have the option to relet void properties to new tenants at the Formula Rent and this is part of the Council's Rent Policy. The Formula Rent is generally lower than Social Rents.

- **Social Rent:** This is determined by the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG). Generally, it reflects rents charged by Registered Social Landlords in the area. New Build properties have to be let at Social Rent levels, unless they have been partly funded by grant from Homes England. In that case, properties need to be let at an "Affordable Rent." Void properties, when relet to new tenants, can also be let at Social Rent levels.
- **Affordable Rent:** This is 80% of the Market Rent and tends to be higher than Social Rents
- **Market Rent:** This is determined by the District Valuer and reflects rent levels in the private rented sector in the area.

## **Proposed Rent Levels 2021/22**

3.71 In accordance with the statutory provisions, current rents will be increased by CPI of 0.5% as at September 2020 plus 1%.

### **Effect on Individual Tenants**

3.72 Having calculated rents for individual tenants, the average rent level for existing council tenants will increase from £79.64 per week in 2020/21 to £81.24 in 2021/22, an average increase of £1.60 per week.

### **Limit Rent**

3.73 From 1<sup>st</sup> April 2020, the Government has removed the former Rent Rebate Subsidy Limit, which was effectively a cap that the Council's average rent needs to stay below to avoid a financial penalty through loss of benefit subsidy for rent rebates.

3.74 A new Rent Standard has been introduced which allows authorities to increase rent by CPI +1% with no penalty imposed. Where the rent chargeable is determined to be non-compliant with the Rent Standard by either the Council or the Regulator of Social Housing, the Housing Benefit assessment will need to be recalculated and classified as a 'technical overpayment' on the Subsidy claim.

## **4.0 Financial Implications**

4.1 As detailed in the report.

## **5.0 Corporate Implications**

### **Employment Implications**

5.1 None.

### **Legal Implications**

5.2 None.

### **Corporate Plan Implications**

5.3 The proposed budgets and spending included in the HRA provides the financial resources to enable on-going services and Council priorities.

### **Risk Impact**

5.4 The Financial Risk Register is detailed in the Medium-Term Financial Plan and financial risks specific to this Committee are detailed in Section 3.

## **6.0 Community Impact**

### **Consultation**

- 6.1 The proposed Budget will be disseminated through Local Area Forums and also through tenant representative groups.

### **Equality and Diversity Impact**

- 6.2 None.

### **Social Value Impact**

- 6.3 None.

### **Environmental Sustainability**

- 6.4 None.

## **7.0 Conclusions**

- 7.1 That the proposed base budgets are scrutinised and approved to provide the financial resources for continuation of service delivery.

## **8.0 Background Papers**

- 8.1 None.

## HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT FINANCIAL PROJECTION - JANUARY 2021

	2020.21 Approved Budget £'000	2021.22 Proposed Budget £'000	2022.23 Forecast £'000	2023.24 Forecast £'000	2024.25 Forecast £'000	2025.26 Forecast £'000	2026.27 Forecast £'000	2027.28 Forecast £'000	2028.29 Forecast £'000	2029.3 Forecast £'000	2030.31 Forecast £'000
<b>INCOME</b>											
Rental Income	-12,168	-12,446	-12,639	-12,902	-13,206	-13,516	-13,834	-14,158	-14,490	-14,828	-15,174
Non-Dwelling Income	-143	-127	-130	-133	-136	-140	-143	-147	-151	-155	-159
Supporting People Grant	-130	-130	-130	-130	-130	-130	-130	-130	-130	-130	-130
Other Income	-177	-177	-177	-177	-177	-177	-177	-177	-177	-177	-177
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>-12,618</b>	<b>-12,880</b>	<b>-13,076</b>	<b>-13,342</b>	<b>-13,649</b>	<b>-13,963</b>	<b>-14,284</b>	<b>-14,612</b>	<b>-14,948</b>	<b>-15,290</b>	<b>-15,640</b>
<b>EXPENDITURE</b>											
General Management	1,834	1,848	1,889	1,932	1,975	2,020	2,065	2,112	2,160	2,209	2,259
Supporting People	866	951	976	1,001	1,028	1,056	1,084	1,114	1,145	1,178	1,212
Responsive	1,369	1,406	1,439	1,473	1,509	1,545	1,582	1,620	1,658	1,698	1,739
Planned Maintenance	1,921	1,975	2,024	2,072	2,123	2,174	2,227	2,281	2,336	2,393	2,452
Bad Debt Provision	100	125	126	129	132	135	138	141	144	148	151
Interest Payable & Receivable	1,713	1,738	1,738	1,738	1,738	1,738	1,738	1,738	1,738	1,739	2,672
Depreciation	3,700	4,127	4,064	4,044	4,023	4,003	3,983	3,963	3,943	3,924	3,904
<b>Net Operating Income</b>	<b>-1,115</b>	<b>-710</b>	<b>-820</b>	<b>-953</b>	<b>-1,121</b>	<b>-1,292</b>	<b>-1,467</b>	<b>-1,642</b>	<b>-1,823</b>	<b>-2,001</b>	<b>-1,251</b>
<b>Known variations:</b>											
Reversal of Depreciation	-3,700	-4,127	-4,064	-4,044	-4,023	-4,003	-3,983	-3,963	-3,943	-3,924	-3,904
Capital Expenditure	1,935	1,683	1,470	1,433	1,477	1,516	1,547	1,182	1,261	1,489	2,103
Disabled Adaptations	300	300	300	300	300	300	300	300	300	300	300
Asbestos and Health & Safety Surveys	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
Debt Repayment - Balance of Depreciation	765	1,444	1,594	1,962	1,546	1,487	1,519	1,815	1,719	1,435	801
Major Repairs Reserve	600	600	600	300	600	600	600	600	600	600	600
Asset Replacement Earmarked Reserve	45	45	45	45	45	45	45	45	45	45	45

## HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT FINANCIAL PROJECTION - JANUARY 2021

	2020.21	2021.22	2022.23	2023.24	2024.25	2025.26	2026.27	2027.28	2028.29	2029.30	2030.31
	Approved Budget	Proposed Budget	Forecast								
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Additional Debt Repayment Transfer	771	2,150	2,651	2,468	1,815	1,500	1,500	750	750	750	1,000
Investment Income	0	0	18	43	60	60	60	60	60	60	60
Capital works non-traditional properties	100	100	100	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
General Fund Recharges	-77	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
ICT Upgrades	105	0	0	0	0	0	0	200	0	0	0
Incremental Salary Increases	0	0	6	6	6	6	7	7	7	7	7
<b>HRA Surplus (-) / Deficit</b>	<b>-171</b>	<b>1,585</b>	<b>2,000</b>	<b>1,660</b>	<b>805</b>	<b>320</b>	<b>228</b>	<b>-547</b>	<b>-924</b>	<b>-1,139</b>	<b>-139</b>
<b>HRA General Reserve</b>											
HRA Reserve B/fwd	-8,260	-8,431	-6,846	-4,846	-3,186	-2,381	-2,061	-1,833	-2,380	-3,304	-4,443
(Surplus) / Deficit for year	-171	1,585	2,000	1,660	805	320	228	-547	-924	-1,139	-139
<b>HRA Reserve C/fwd</b>	<b>-8,431</b>	<b>-6,846</b>	<b>-4,846</b>	<b>-3,186</b>	<b>-2,381</b>	<b>-2,061</b>	<b>-1,833</b>	<b>-2,380</b>	<b>-3,304</b>	<b>-4,443</b>	<b>-4,582</b>
<b>RESERVES</b>											
<b>Debt Repayment Reserve</b>											
Balance B/fwd	-8,260	-9,802	-3,274	-7,438	-1,790	-5,078	-8,495	-1,790	-4,299	-6,719	-8,864
Depreciation balance	-765	-1,322	-1,513	-1,884	-1,473	-1,417	-1,456	-1,759	-1,670	-1,395	-771
Transfers to reserve	-777	-2,150	-2,651	-2,468	-1,815	-2,000	-1,839	-750	-750	-750	-1,000
Repayment of loan	0	10,000	0	10,000	0	0	10,000	0	0	0	0
<b>Reserve C/fwd</b>	<b>-9,802</b>	<b>-3,274</b>	<b>-7,438</b>	<b>-1,790</b>	<b>-5,078</b>	<b>-8,495</b>	<b>-1,790</b>	<b>-4,299</b>	<b>-6,719</b>	<b>-8,864</b>	<b>-10,635</b>
<b>Earmarked Reserve</b>											
Balance B/fwd	-251	-296	-341	-386	-431	-206	-251	-296	-341	-386	-431
Transfers to reserve	-45	-45	-45	-45	-45	-45	-45	-45	-45	-45	-45
Asset Replacement	0	0	0	0	270	0	0	0	0	0	280
<b>Reserve C/fwd</b>	<b>-296</b>	<b>-341</b>	<b>-386</b>	<b>-431</b>	<b>-206</b>	<b>-251</b>	<b>-296</b>	<b>-341</b>	<b>-386</b>	<b>-431</b>	<b>-196</b>

## HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT FINANCIAL PROJECTION - JANUARY 2021

	2020.21	2021.22	2022.23	2023.24	2024.25	2025.26	2026.27	2027.28	2028.29	2029.30	2030.31
	Approved	Proposed	Forecast	Forecast							
	Budget	Budget	Forecast	Forecast							
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
<b>Major Repairs Reserve</b>											
Balance B/fwd	-4,190	-4,890	-5,590	-6,290	-6,590	-7,190	-7,790	-8,390	-8,990	-9,590	-10,190
Transfers to reserve	-600	-600	-600	-300	-600	-600	-600	-600	-600	-600	-600
Earmarked non-traditional properties	-100	-100	-100	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Reserve Drawdown	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Reserve C/fwd</b>	<b>-4,890</b>	<b>-5,590</b>	<b>-6,290</b>	<b>-6,590</b>	<b>-7,190</b>	<b>-7,790</b>	<b>-8,390</b>	<b>-8,990</b>	<b>-9,590</b>	<b>-10,190</b>	<b>-10,790</b>
<b>New Build Reserve</b>											
Capital Receipts B/fwd	-2,213	-1,322	-1,943	-2,561	-3,021	-3,478	-3,935	-4,237	-4,539	-4,842	-5,041
Acquisitions in year	2,108	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
S106 Drawdown	-490	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
RTB Receipts in year	-727	-621	-618	-460	-457	-457	-302	-302	-302	-199	-199
Borrowing in year	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Balance c/fwd</b>	<b>-1,322</b>	<b>-1,943</b>	<b>-2,561</b>	<b>-3,021</b>	<b>-3,478</b>	<b>-3,935</b>	<b>-4,237</b>	<b>-4,539</b>	<b>-4,842</b>	<b>-5,041</b>	<b>-5,240</b>

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<b>REPORT TO:</b>	<b>HOUSING AND COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE</b>	<b>AGENDA ITEM: 11</b>
<b>DATE OF MEETING:</b>	<b>28<sup>th</sup> JANUARY 2021</b>	<b>CATEGORY: DELEGATED</b>
<b>REPORT FROM:</b>	<b>STRATEGIC DIRECTOR (SERVICE DELIVERY)</b>	<b>OPEN</b>
<b>MEMBERS' CONTACT POINT:</b>	<b>DEMOCRATIC SERVICES 01283 59 5848/5722 <a href="mailto:democraticservices@south-derbys.gov.uk">democraticservices@south-derbys.gov.uk</a></b>	<b>DOC:</b>
<b>SUBJECT:</b>	<b>COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME</b>	<b>REF:</b>
<b>WARD(S) AFFECTED:</b>	<b>ALL</b>	<b>TERMS OF REFERENCE: G</b>

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## **1.0 Recommendations**

1.1 That the Committee considers and approves the updated work programme.

## **2.0 Purpose of Report**

2.1 The Committee is asked to consider the updated work programme.

## **3.0 Detail**

3.1 Attached at Annexe 'A' is an updated work programme document. The Committee is asked to consider and review the content of this document.

## **4.0 Financial Implications**

4.1 None arising directly from this report.

## **5.0 Background Papers**

5.1 Work Programme.

## Housing and Community Services Committee – 28<sup>th</sup> January 2021 Work Programme

Work Programme Area	Date of Committee meetings	Contact Officer (Contact details)
<b>Reports Previously Considered By Last 5 Committees</b>		
Approval of A Public Space Protection Order -Maurice Lea Park and Market Street	12 <sup>th</sup> March 2020	Claire Rawlins Anti-Social Behaviour Officer Communities Team
Submission of Consultation Response – 1 <sup>st</sup> Homes	12 <sup>th</sup> March 2020	Eileen Jackson Strategic Housing Manager (01283) 595763
Community and Environment Partnership Scheme Grant	7 <sup>th</sup> July 2020	Chris Smith / Ian Hey
Review of the South Derbyshire District Council Surveillance Policy	7 <sup>th</sup> July 2020	Chris Smith / Ian Hey
Homelessness and Rough Sleeping	7 <sup>th</sup> July 2020	Paul Whittingham Housing Services Manager (01283) 595984
Corporate Plan 2020-24: Performance Report (2019-2020 Quarter 4 – 1 January to 31 March)	7 <sup>th</sup> July 2020	Fiona Pittman Head of Organisational Development & Performance 01283 595735
Disabled Facilities Grants	7 <sup>th</sup> July 2020	Paul Whittingham Housing Services Manager (01283) 595984

Housing Asset Management Strategy	20 <sup>th</sup> August 2020	Paul Whittingham Housing Services Manager (01283) 595984
National Forest Service Level Agreements	20 <sup>th</sup> August 2020	Hannah Peate Active Communities & Health Partnership Manager 01283 595973
England Tree Strategy Consultation	20 <sup>th</sup> August 2020	Mary Bagley Head of Culture and Community Services
Contribution to Active Derbyshire	20 <sup>th</sup> August 2020	Hannah Peate Active Communities & Health Partnership Manager 01283 595973
Community and Environmental Partnership Scheme	20 <sup>th</sup> August 2020	Ian Hey Community Partnership Officer (01283) 228741
Corporate Plan 2020-24: Performance Report Q1	1 <sup>st</sup> October 2020	Clare Booth Corporate Performance & Policy Officer (01283) 595788
Homefinder, Housing Allocations Policy	1 <sup>st</sup> October 2020	Paul Whittingham Housing Services Manager (01283) 595984
Housing Customer Engagement Strategy	1 <sup>st</sup> October 2020	Paul Whittingham  (01283) 595984
Roundabout Sponsorship	1 <sup>st</sup> October 2020	Mary Bagley Head of Culture and Community Services
Corporate Plan 2020-24: Performance Report Q2	19 <sup>th</sup> November 2020	Clare Booth Corporate Performance & Policy Officer (01283) 595788

ASB Community Trigger	19 <sup>th</sup> November 2020	Mary Bagley Head of Cultural & Community Services <a href="mailto:Mary.bagley@southderbyshire.gov.uk">Mary.bagley@southderbyshire.gov.uk</a>
Modern Slavery Statement 2019-20	19 <sup>th</sup> November 2020	Mary Bagley Head of Cultural & Community Services <a href="mailto:Mary.bagley@southderbyshire.gov.uk">Mary.bagley@southderbyshire.gov.uk</a>
Homeless Out of Hours Services	19 <sup>th</sup> November 2020	Paul Whittingham Head of Housing (01283) 595984
Housing Income Management Policy	19 <sup>th</sup> November 2020	Paul Whittingham Head of Housing (01283) 595984
Homeless out of Hours Services	19 <sup>th</sup> November 2020	Paul Whittingham Head of Housing (01283) 595984
Better Care Funding Allocation - Financial Position	19 <sup>th</sup> November 2020	Eileen Jackson Strategic Housing Manager (01213) 595763
Service Based Budgets	5 <sup>th</sup> January 2021	Vicki Summerfield Head of Finance <a href="mailto:Victoria.summerfield@southderbyshire.gov.uk">Victoria.summerfield@southderbyshire.gov.uk</a>
HRA Budget 20/21 and Financial Plan 2030	5 <sup>th</sup> January 2021	Vicki Summerfield Head of Finance <a href="mailto:Victoria.summerfield@southderbyshire.gov.uk">Victoria.summerfield@southderbyshire.gov.uk</a>
<b>Provisional Programme of Reports To Be Considered by Committee</b>		
HRA Budget 20/21 and Financial Plan 2030	28 <sup>th</sup> January 2021	Vicki Summerfield Head of Finance <a href="mailto:Victoria.summerfield@southderbyshire.gov.uk">Victoria.summerfield@southderbyshire.gov.uk</a>
Draft Homeless Strategy (Including Temporary Accommodation)	28 <sup>th</sup> January 2021	Paul Whittingham Housing Services Manager (01283) 595984

Derbyshire County Council Assistive Technology Contract Options	28 <sup>th</sup> January 2021	Paul Whittingham Housing Services Manager (01283) 595984
Social Housing White Paper	28 <sup>th</sup> January 2021	Paul Whittingham Housing Services Manager (01283) 595984
Green Homes Grant – Local Authority Delivery Phase 1B	28 <sup>th</sup> January 2021	Matt Holford, Head of Environmental Services (01283) 595856
Corporate Plan 2020-24: Performance Report Q3	11 <sup>th</sup> March 2021	Clare Booth Corporate Performance & Policy Officer (01283) 5957880
Housing Review Update	11 <sup>th</sup> March 2021	Paul Whittingham Housing Services Manager (01283) 595984
Swadlincote Woodlands Management Plan	11 <sup>th</sup> March 2021	Malcolm Roseburgh Cultural Services Manager (01283) 5955774
Health and Housing Strategy 2021-23	11 <sup>th</sup> March 2021	Eileen Jackson Strategic Housing Manager (01213) 595763
Housing Customer Engagement Strategy	11 <sup>th</sup> March 2021	Paul Whittingham Housing Services Manager (01283) 595984
Housing Repair Policy	11 <sup>th</sup> March 2021	Paul Whittingham Housing Services Manager (01283) 595984
Housing Domestic Abuse Policy	11 <sup>th</sup> March 2021	Paul Whittingham Housing Services Manager (01283) 595984
Housing Income Management Policy	11 <sup>th</sup> March 2021	Paul Whittingham Housing Services Manager (01283) 595984

Improvements to Midway Community Centre	TBC	Malcolm Roseburgh Cultural Services Manager (01283) 5955774
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