

Housing, Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2025-2030



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‘Housing is one of our top priorities. We want to see the right homes built in the right places and to provide a range of opportunities to meet the housing needs of all of our residents.’



Our vision

Foreword by Oona Hickson, Cabinet Member for Housing, Revenues and Benefits

This strategy sets out our vision and priorities for housing over the next five years, along with the actions that will be taken to improve the provision of housing across the district.

It seeks to build on the success of previous strategies, ensuring that we continue to meet the needs of our residents. Providing homes for all is a key corporate objective of the council.

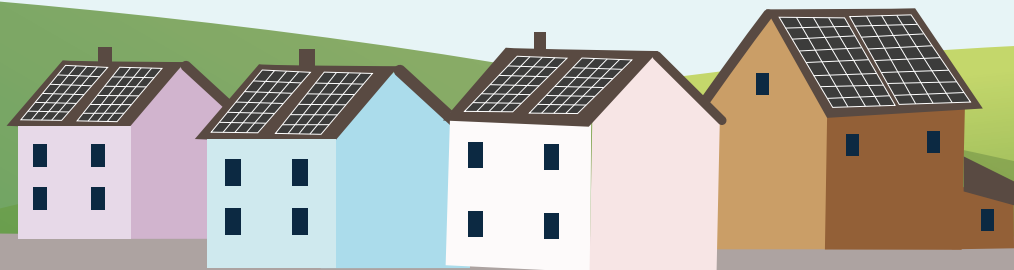
It is important to us that we provide a range of solutions to meet the housing needs of our residents. We are committed to retaining affordable homes in our rural parishes, continuing to monitor the performance of housing providers, and ensuring our residents voices are heard and that their homes remain fit for purpose.

Working in partnership is key to delivering this strategy, and continuing to build effective relationships that deliver for the benefit of everyone is vital. By continuing to develop relationships between councillors, housing associations, developers, service providers and communities, we know that more will be achieved through a shared vision.

It is important to recognise the backdrop that this strategy is written against. The cost-of-living crisis continues to affect us, and life is hard for so many of our residents. We've seen more households join the housing register as the economic reality of high interest rates and the increased cost of private rent takes hold. These, together with inflation, the increased costs of development and the high cost



'The right homes in the right places'



of housing in our district, compound an already complex housing picture.

The gap between Local Housing Allowances and private rents means that some residents struggle to afford their home and become trapped in unaffordable accommodation.

The situation is further complicated at times by the continued roll out of welfare changes.

The success of the government's 'Everyone In' initiative and our rough sleeping partnership demonstrates what can be achieved when we work together to support our most vulnerable communities.

Recent consultation on potential changes in national planning policy and how housing

numbers are calculated will take some time to come to fruition. However, we will ensure that our action plan is regularly reviewed and updated to reflect external influences and policy changes as required.

Similarly, we welcome the new Government's commitment to building more social and affordable homes. Providing further support to our veterans, young care leavers and domestic abuse victims by removing local connection criteria to access social housing. We also share their commitment to improve standards through a new 'decent homes standard', to tackle issues of damp and mould and extending such protections to the private sector. We

will ensure our action plans reflect these emerging changes.

We will also continue to review how we work to deliver our services to residents, and invest in our Housing Team to make sure that they have the skills and knowledge to continue to provide an effective and supportive housing service.

We would like to thank all our customers and partners who have worked with us in reviewing and contributing to this strategy and the accompanying action plan.

Introduction

By law, local authorities are required to have a Homelessness Strategy, and the council's Homelessness Strategy sits within this broader Housing, Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2025-2030.

This is a crucial document which sets out our priorities, in partnership with our key stakeholders, and how we aim to deliver the best outcomes for residents who are continuing to face cost-of-living pressures.

Partnership working is key to delivering our aims and will remain at the heart of what we do.

This strategy contributes to the council's Corporate Plan which has the following priorities:

- Homes for all.
- Thriving economy.
- Supported communities.
- Financial prudence.
- A cared-for environment.

The strategy not only plays a key role in delivering the priorities set out within the Corporate Plan, but it will also sit alongside other corporate strategies and plans. These include: the emerging Local Plan 2021-2039, the recently adopted Regeneration Strategy, and the Climate Emergency Action Plan.

The current Local Plan includes a requirement for delivering 435 dwellings a year, with a 30% affordable housing contribution on threshold sites. The public examination of the district's draft Local Plan began in May 2024 and the themes highlighted within this strategy link to the aims of the affordable housing policies contained within this plan.

Local context and evidence base

Key elements of our 2020-2025 Housing Strategy remain relevant and continue to feature in this strategy, where we intend to build upon its success and capture emerging themes.

Several changes locally and nationally have taken place since the adoption of the previous strategy, which have fed into our new strategy for 2025-2030. These include:

- The emerging Local Plan 2021 – 2039 which was submitted for public examination in May 2024.
- Climate Emergency Action Plan.
- Affordability and cost of living challenges.
- Increase in people presenting as homeless.
- The introduction of First Homes.
- A greater emphasis on encouraging Custom and Self-Build Homes.

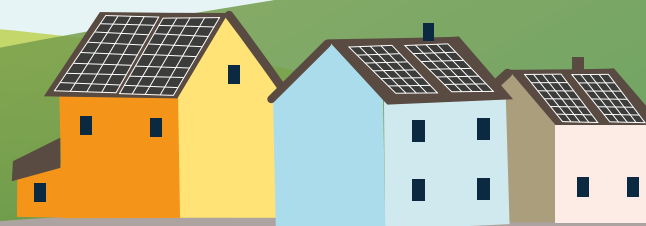
- Housing standards issues: particularly around damp and mould through the Social Housing Regulation Act 2023; the introduction of Awaabs Law; and, the introduction of the Fire Safety (England) Regulations 2022 and Building Safety Act 2022 for high rise flats, which have financial impacts upon our social housing providers.
- International crises and supporting Government directed schemes – such as the Afghanistan and Ukrainian Resettlement Support Scheme and Local Authority Housing Fund.
- Recently announced consultation on proposed changes to the planning system and National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and how new housing numbers may be calculated.

With an ever-changing environment; a new government; plus, pressures on the social housing sector and on the open market,

it's important that this strategy can adapt to external pressures and remain relevant during its lifetime. As a result, the action plan that accompanies this strategy will be subject to ongoing monitoring and review and will necessitate closer working between planning and housing to bring forward appropriate changes.

As part of the development of this strategy, we have consulted with local stakeholders, service providers, registered providers, developers, customers and employers. This was followed by a six-week district-wide consultation with residents. Feedback from these consultations has helped form our priorities, which are set out in the Housing, Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Action Plan.

Local councillors have played a key part in the formation of this strategy through a Task and Finish Group, working alongside officers to identify and shape key priorities.



The district in numbers

60,600
homes

Our district spans
303
square miles

75%
of our district is located
within the South Downs
National Park and The
Chichester Harbour
National Landscape

Population of
124,000



1,235
affordable homes
delivered since 2020

27%
of population
is aged
65+



Median house
prices are now
12 X
the median salary
for those living in
Chichester

Average salary earned by
residents of the district
£33,5K (mean)
£27,5K (median)

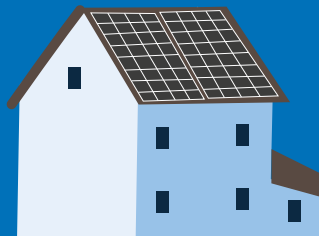


Average house price
£580K (mean)
£435K (median)

An average of
115
homeless households
in temporary
accommodation

Average private rent (2024)
£1,233
Median private rent for a 1 bed
£866

67%
of housing is
owner occupied



Our priorities

1

Prevent homelessness and end rough sleeping

We have a legal responsibility to prevent homelessness. We have a successful programme of support already in place, but we want to do more to reduce the number of people facing homelessness by making sure we have a robust package of measures to support people at the earliest opportunity and enable them to obtain a permanent home.



2

Meeting housing need

We want to remain a vibrant, balanced, and sustainable district, which means meeting the needs of all our residents and ensuring we build the right homes in the right places. We need to meet the needs of an ageing population, while enabling young people and working families to live in the district. This means providing a range of housing options and opportunities to rent and buy, and working closely with our partners to deliver these choices.

3

Improve housing standards

Everyone deserves to live in a safe and secure home. We will continue to work with landlords and tenants to ensure that homes are safe and secure and that they meet housing quality standards, working with Environmental Health where needed. Where homes do not meet standards and remedial action is not taken, we will use robust enforcement action to ensure improvements are delivered.

4

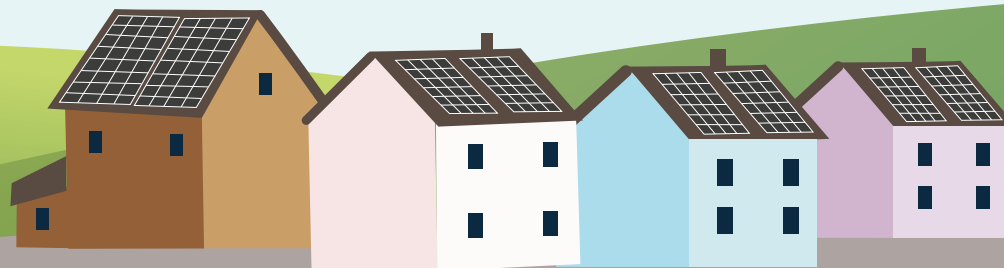
Work to deliver action on climate change

As a council, we are committed to working to tackle climate change. In making a declaration of a climate emergency in July 2019, we announced our commitment to taking urgent action and asking residents, businesses, partner organisations, and the Government, to help and support us. Our second Climate Emergency Action Plan will set out the next set of priorities from 2025. We will ensure that this strategy works to deliver the projects and objectives outlined in the new Climate Action Plan and the Environmental Policies in the new Local Plan.

5

Work in partnership to deliver regeneration and create opportunities for our communities

We want our residents to feel proud about where they live, and this means collaborating with our strategic partners to actively support them in regenerating local areas to create great places for residents of all ages.



What will success look like

The progress and success of this strategy will be regularly monitored, and a review of the performance targets will be reported to the relevant committee on an annual basis. The results will be published on our website. The full targets are clearly set out in the accompanying action plan, the delivery of which will demonstrate the level of success we achieve (see appendix 1), including:

Reducing homelessness and rough sleeping

- To end rough sleeping and where it occurs for it to be irregular and short lived.
- To reduce the number of households presenting as homeless through preventative support measures.
- To review wraparound support to ensure complex needs are met.

Meeting housing need

- Deliver smaller homes to meet the needs of emerging and newly formed households to enable younger people and families to remain in the district.
- To work in partnership with registered providers and community led housing groups to increase the provision of affordable housing.
- To work with West Sussex County Council to deliver specialist, supported accommodation and extra care housing.



Improve housing standards

- Work with landlords and tenants to ensure healthy homes free from serious hazards.
- Reduce the number of long-term empty homes.
- Review schemes to support the delivery of this strategy's aims and objectives.

Work to deliver action on climate change

- Ensure new build homes contribute to carbon reduction by being as energy efficient as possible.
- Encourage registered providers of older social housing stock to invest in their homes to improve energy efficiency.
- Deliver support schemes to assist in the provision of warm and energy efficient homes.

Work in partnership to deliver regeneration and create opportunities for our communities

- Support our partners to deliver regeneration projects in the district.
- When reviewing council owned assets, we will consider the potential for affordable housing.
- Work with partners to deliver the Regeneration Strategy.

To be successful in our core aims we must work across the council to deliver the priorities that have been highlighted.



Challenges and constraints

The district faces several challenges and constraints which need to be considered in delivering this strategy.

Seventy-five percent of the district falls within the South Downs National Park and The Chichester Harbour National Landscape, where opportunities for new housing development are extremely limited. This is complicated by insufficient capacity in the

local wastewater infrastructure; poor public transport; and access to health facilities. This places greater pressure for housing upon the East West Corridor.

House prices across the district have grown strongly in recent years, and are now 60% above the national average, or 12 times the median earnings for those living in the district. Consequently, young people and

families are finding it harder to find homes they can afford, often having to move out of the district to find cheaper housing. The local private rented sector is increasingly becoming unaffordable. The average rent per property paid by tenants in the year to July 2024 was £1,233 per month, up 7.4% compared to the year before.

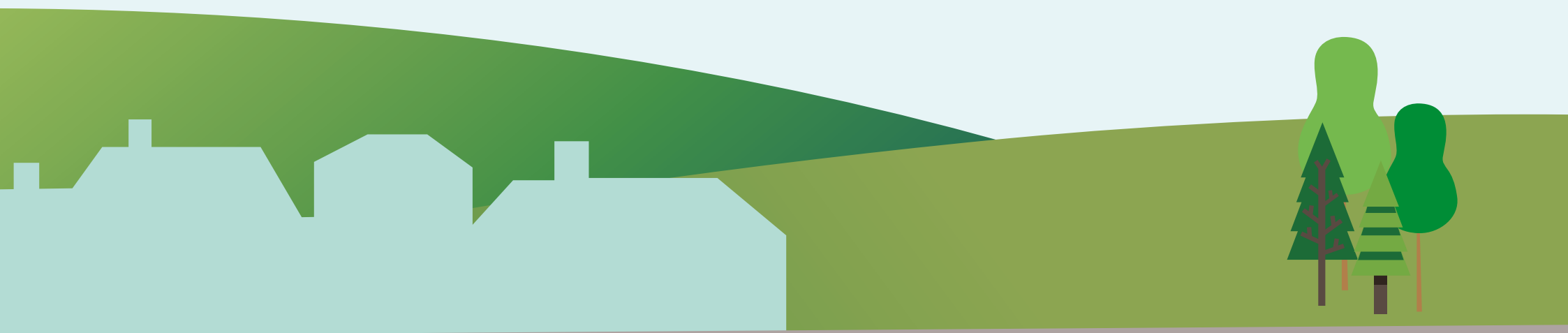


Chichester is often perceived as a reasonably prosperous area, but income and health inequalities do exist and those have only intensified and expanded as the country continues to experience a cost-of-living crisis. We have already introduced temporary support initiatives. However, our communities continue to experience hardship and may require extended support. We have seen an increase in the number of households reaching out for homelessness support and

our housing register continues to grow. Our action plan will target these issues with support for those who most need it.

The national Climate Change Act includes a binding target to reach 'net zero' by 2050. While local government can lead this change, the public has a huge role to play. The council has adopted a Climate Emergency Action Plan, however, many of the district's actions require support of central government

if they are to be achieved. Habitat loss and associated species decline have accelerated in recent years and Chichester Harbour is identified as being in unfavourable and declining condition by Natural England, requiring all development to be nitrate neutral. In the north of the district, new developments must be able to demonstrate water neutrality, all of which have contributed to the slowing of new development.



Delivering the strategy

Working in partnership

We no longer retain any council housing. This was transferred to a community housing company in 2001, now managed by Hyde Housing Association. The Hyde 2050 Strategy is a good example of our partnership working. We rely on our partnerships with registered providers and other charities to deliver much needed affordable homes in the district. We work closely with them and developers to ensure that the right type and size of homes are delivered in the right places.

We are committed to ensuring that a wide range of options are available to meet the varied needs of our communities and will continue to promote community led housing opportunities, custom and self-build, and other forms of affordable home ownership such as shared equity, discount market sale, and shared ownership. We will continue to prioritise social rented homes for those unable to enter the housing market, or the private rented sector, and to ensure that these homes are fit for purpose.

We work across several partnerships to prevent homelessness and rough sleeping; deliver new affordable homes; improve housing standards; and, deliver action on climate change. We work with these partners to provide a holistic homelessness prevention and wraparound support service to enable individuals to access accommodation, support, and employment opportunities, so they can make informed decisions about their choices.



Direct delivery of services

We will continue to work directly and in partnership to prevent homelessness and rough sleeping. We will reduce the reliance on temporary accommodation and nightly paid accommodation by providing support and assistance at the earliest opportunity.

We will work with our strategic partners to deliver additional affordable housing to meet these needs through appropriate funding streams from Homes England and the continued enforcement of housing standards; inspections of Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs); and, the delivery of Disabled Facility Grants (DFG).



Glossary

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

- **Affordable Rent** – homes let at least 20% below local market rents (affordable rental properties) including service charges where applicable.
- **Social Rent** – the rent is set in accordance with the Government’s rent policy for social rent which is around 50% of the market value.
- **Discounted Market Sale** – housing that is sold at a discount of at least 30% below market value. Eligibility is determined with regard to local incomes and local house prices. Provisions should be in place to ensure housing remains at a discount in perpetuity.
- **Shared Ownership** – housing where the purchaser buys a share of the property and the pays on the remaining share to the landlord, a registered provider.

Other routes to affordable home ownerships are homes for sale that provide a route for households who otherwise could not achieve this through the open market. This could include equity loans or rent to buy. Where public grant funding is used there should be provisions for the homes to remain affordable for the future or for the grant to be recycled at a local level.

Corporate Plan: A corporate council plan, updated annually, that sets out the strategic priorities for the council.

Community Land Trust: A non-profit organisation for the ownership and/or management of assets such as housing for the benefit of the local community.

Disabled Facility Grant (DFG): A means tested system of grants to provide residential adaptations for people with disabilities.

Everyone In: A government initiative that took place during the Covid Crisis which saw large numbers of people living on the streets and provided with accommodation and support.

First Homes: A specific kind of discounted market sale housing and should be considered to meet the definition of ‘affordable housing’ for planning purposes. Specifically, ‘First Homes’ are discounted market sales units which: a) must be discounted by a minimum of 30% against the market value; b) are sold to a person or persons meeting the First Homes eligibility criteria; c) on their first sale will have a restriction registered on the title at HM Land Registry to ensure the discount and other restrictions are passed on at each subsequent title transfer and, d) after the discount has been applied, the first sale must be at a price no higher than £250,000.

Homelessness Reduction Act 2017: An Act of Parliament which creates new duties for local authorities to manage and prevent the incidence of homelessness in their areas.

Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMO): A property which is occupied by at least three people who are not from one household but share facilities such as the kitchen and bathroom. A large HMO is one which is rented to five or more people who form more than one household, and some or all tenants share toilet, bathroom, or kitchen facilities.

Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS): A risk-based evaluation tool to help local authorities identify and protect against potential risks and hazards to health and safety from deficiencies identified in dwellings.

Housing Register: A statutorily defined system which local authorities use to define eligibility and priority for the allocation of affordable rented housing. Households who qualify to join the register must meet the requirements of the Housing Allocation Scheme, a statutory document that sets out the rules by which affordable rented housing is allocated.

Local Housing Allowance (LHA): A scheme applicable in the private rented sector, which limits the maximum amount of Housing Benefit or the Housing Cost Element of Universal Credit to an applicable rate, based on household size and Broad Market Rental Area.

Local Plan: A plan that sets out detailed policies and specific proposals for the development and use of land in a local district.

Market Rent: The market rent or market value refers to the cost of housing either for rent or for sale in the private sector. Calculating market costs takes into account the property size, type, and location.

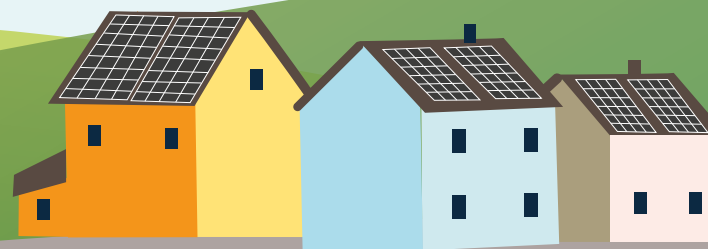
National Landscape: National Landscape is the new name for Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, a legal designation, and is determined by Natural England.

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

Private Sector: Publicly supported initiatives which are designed to address poor housing standards in the privately owned housing.

Registered Provider: A landlord that is registered with the Regulator of Social Housing, this includes private registered providers such as housing associations.

Self and Custom Build: Self-build and custom housebuilding covers a wide spectrum, from projects where individuals are involved in building or managing the construction of their home from beginning to end, to projects where individuals commission their home, making key design and layout decisions, but the home is built ready for occupation by those individuals.



For more information about our housing services, please visit:

www.chichester.gov.uk/housing

Or email us on:

housingdelivery@chichester.gov.uk

