



Sustainable Homes, Sustainable Communities

Stratford-on-Avon District Housing Strategy action plan 2021-2026

Post The Cabinet 7 Oct 2024 incl. new actions & dates, and existing actions as at 31 August 2024
(2023/24 "progress" deleted)

 <p>Council Plan Declaration of Climate Emergency Social Inclusion: Growing Opportunities Plan Local Development Scheme</p>	<p>Safer South Warwickshire Community Safety Partnership Economic Development Strategy for South Warwickshire Health and Wellbeing Strategy Warks Violence against Women & Girls Strat. /Safer Accom. Strat</p>	
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Aim 1

To support communities and build sustainable affordable homes.

- ◆ Delivery of the Housing Strategy
- ◆ Housing research
- ◆ Using evidence to inform other strategies and plans including local development plans.
- ◆ Building the right number and type of affordable homes including specialised housing
- ◆ Enabling communities to meet their own local housing needs
- ◆ Gypsy & Traveller sites
- ◆ Housing related support
- ◆ Tenancy strategy and policy
- ◆ Management of stock

Aim 2

To improve existing housing and help people live independently.

- ◆ Warm homes
- ◆ Fuel poverty
- ◆ Adaptations for people with disabilities
- ◆ Serious disrepair
- ◆ Assistive technology / dementia
- ◆ Housing standards
- ◆ Educating tenants and landlords
- ◆ Enforcement action
- ◆ Houses in Multiple Occupation
- ◆ Proactive inspections
- ◆ Empty homes

Aim 3

To prevent homelessness and reduce the harm caused by it.

- ◆ Housing waiting list
- ◆ Housing benefit and Discretionary Housing Payments
- ◆ Housing options, preventing homelessness, people with complex and multiple needs, accessing private rented accommodation
- ◆ Temporary accommodation including bed and breakfast
- ◆ Single homeless people and people who sleep rough
- ◆ Young people and care leavers

Housing Strategy Action Plan

Notes on reading the Action Plan

- SDC = Stratford-on-Avon District Council.
- **All actions are strategic** i.e. they are not detailed operational plans.
- This action plan does not duplicate actions contained in other Stratford-on-Avon District Council strategic plans and other organisations' plans.
- Stratford-on-Avon District Council and Warwick District Council are preparing a Joint South Warwickshire Local Plan i.e. a development plan for the area covered by the two councils.
- Tackling **climate change** underpins actions across all three aims of the strategy e.g. building sustainable affordable homes or installing energy efficiency measures in existing housing, and as such is not a separate action.
- The resources column has a list of main contributors (not necessarily headed by the 'lead' agency) but also includes key materials and some funding sources. The list relates to the action not the milestones / targets. The progress column will be completed when the action plan is reported and reviewed by The Cabinet.
- **'Report'** means the production of a formal written report or information sheet to be considered by the appropriate committee or meeting or persons.
- **'Agree'** means agreement at the appropriate level (e.g. portfolio holder, committee or group), with a written record of the decision (e.g. minutes of a meeting making a clear reference to the document agreed).
- **'Review'** can mean anything from a focused discussion through to research and consultation leading to a formal report. The scale of the review should be appropriate to the action, but all reviews must have a recorded outcome (what considered, findings, recommendations or decisions, who involved, date) to allow for transparency, auditing and progress monitoring.
- **'Annual' or 'financial year' refers to the period from the beginning of April to the end of March the following year.**

Aim 1 To support communities and build sustainable affordable homes.

Action		Resources	Milestones or targets	Progress
1.	Monitor the impact of the Housing Strategy and update the action plan.	SDC, Stratford-on-Avon District Housing Forum, development partners.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Report (twice yearly) on the progress made against each action in this Strategy including risks to implementation. 2. Review and amend the action plan (at least annually) to take account of changing circumstances. 3. Agree and complete (by annual government deadlines) Local Authority Housing Statistics return to government to help secure resources. 	<p>Green</p> <p>Green</p> <p>Achieved</p>
2.	Maintain an up to date understanding of local housing circumstances to support and inform the delivery of this Housing Strategy and development plans.	SDC, Stratford-on-Avon District Housing Forum, development partners, Homes England. External data, research and information.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Review (by July 2022 and then annually) the research and evidence required to build homes, improve existing homes and provide effective housing services. Use this evidence to inform other strategies, plans and policies. 2. Draft, review and implement land use planning documents (by set timescales) to ensure the level, type, distribution and specification of market and affordable housing meets people's housing needs and achieves balanced housing markets. 	<p>Achieved</p> <p>Achieved but ongoing</p>
3.	Continue to enable the right amount and type of affordable homes and ensure that they are available to all households who cannot afford or access suitable market housing.	SDC / Affordable Housing Working Group, development partners, associations. Community Led Housing Fund.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Review (by June 2022 and then at least annually) the tenure, type and size of affordable homes required, including custom/self-build, to reflect ongoing changes to housing, planning, social and economic policies. 	<p>Achieved</p>

Aim 1 To support communities and build sustainable affordable homes.

	Action	Resources	Milestones or targets	Progress
3.	<p><i>continued</i></p> <p>Continue to build the right amount and type of affordable homes and ensure that they are available to all households who cannot afford or access suitable market housing.</p>	<p>SDC Housing Investment Panel, partner housing associations, Homes England.</p>	<p>2. Report (by November 2021 and then at least annually) on the affordable homes completed in the previous financial year, the future delivery of affordable homes and significant emerging issues.</p> <p>3. Review & agree the affordable housing delivery plan (at least quarterly) with development partners & Homes England.</p> <p>4. Review and report (twice a year) on the use of commuted sums to deliver affordable homes.</p> <p>5. Provide (by July 2022 and then at least every 18 months) training for members about the delivery of affordable homes.</p> <p><i>Most recently Nov. 2023; Rural housing 8 Oct. 2024.</i></p>	<p>Green</p> <p>Green</p> <p>Green</p> <p>Green</p>
4.	<p>Continue to encourage and enable communities to meet their local housing needs.</p>	<p>Planning policies and housing needs surveys.</p> <p>Rural Housing Enabler, SDC, parish councils, local communities.</p> <p>SDC's Affordable Housing Investment Programme, National Affordable Homes Programme and other funding.</p>	<p>1. Facilitate at least 10 community engagement programmes, (local housing needs surveys and or site-canvassing exercises) each year including the promotion of community led housing as defined in the Core Strategy.</p> <p><i>To date 2024-25: 2 housing surveys & 4 site exercises.</i></p> <p>2. Report (by November 2021) and then annually on progress on rural housing enabling.</p> <p>3. Continue to deliver (in line with the Rural Housing Programme Grant Agreement) a rural affordable housing development programme.</p> <p>4. Commission (by March 2026) a Rural Housing Enabler post.</p>	<p>Green</p> <p>Green</p> <p>Green</p> <p>Green³</p>

Aim 1 To support communities and build sustainable affordable homes.

Action		Resources	Milestones or targets	Progress
5.	Promote the development of independent living specialized housing with support and or care in accordance with identified needs.	SDC, Warwickshire County Council, Homes England, specialist development and management partners.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Assess specialised housing and housing related support needs and agree a Supported Housing Strategy [by date and in accordance with forthcoming guidance for The Supported Housing (Regulatory Oversight) Act 2023]. 2. Facilitate (by March 2026) the delivery of purpose built specialised affordable homes in advance of the completion of the Supported Housing Strategy if the need is evidenced to the satisfaction of the District Council. 	<p>Green</p> <p>Green</p>
6.	Meet the needs of Gypsies and Travellers, and travelling show people, through the provision of well-managed appropriate sites.	SDC, Gypsies and Travellers, Warwickshire County Council.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Adopt (in line with the Local Development Scheme timetable) a Gypsy and Traveller and Travelling Showpeople SPD (Supplementary Planning Document). 2. Allocate (in line with the Local Development Scheme timetable) sites through the Local Plan process. 	<p>Achieved</p> <p>Green</p>
7.	Facilitate a reconfigured range of housing related support services.	SDC, District Housing Forum, Local and voluntary community sector. Housing providers. Warwickshire County Council.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Work in partnership to commission and deliver (by December 2025) new support services. 2. New: Review (by December 2026) the impact of the new support services on homelessness. 	Achieved

Aim 1 To support communities and build sustainable affordable homes.

Action		Resources	Milestones or targets	Progress
8.	Make best use of affordable housing including the Council's affordable homes.	SDC, housing providers.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Agree [within 6 months of the tenancy provisions of the Renters' Rights Bill being confirmed], a Tenancy Strategy. 2. Agree (within 6 months of the Tenancy Strategy being agreed) a Tenancy Policy for the Council's affordable homes. 3. Assess (by Dec 2024) the implications of the Social Housing (Regulation) Act 2023 for the Council. 	<p>Green</p> <p>Green</p> <p>Green</p>

Aim 2 To improve existing housing and help people live independently.

	Action	Resources	Milestones or targets	Progress
9.	Support a programme to reduce carbon emissions and to help people save money and live comfortably in their homes.	SDC, Orbit Housing Association, Act on Energy, Warm and Well in Warwickshire Partnership. Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund (SHDF) Demonstrator. Local Authority Delivery (LAD) grant. Home Upgrade Grants (HUGs). Energy Company Obligation and Local Authority Retrofit Scheme. Subsidies and grants to individuals e.g. Green Homes Grants.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Deliver (by March 2024) the Sustainable Warmth project (using Local Authority Delivery Grants and Home Upgrade Grants) in accordance with the development plan. 2. Deliver (by March 2025) the Sustainable Warmth project in accordance with the development plan. 3. Deliver (by July 2024 and then annually), 100 grants and advice to at least 100 households in all tenures to help them keep warm and well and improve the energy efficiency of their homes. 4. Deliver (between April 2024 and March 2026) grants and advice to 200 households across all tenures to help them keep warm and well and improve the energy efficiency of their homes. 	<p>Achieved</p> <p>Green</p> <p>Achieved</p> <p>Green</p>
10.	Participate in effective programmes of assistance to keep people in their own homes	Better Care / Disabled Facilities Grant funding, learning and funding from other sources. SDC, Warwick DC, HEART Partnership, (Home Environment Assessment &	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Review, and if appropriate change, (by June 2022) countywide work that enables independent living. 2. Agree (by December 2023) a new countywide Housing Assistance Policy for grants. 3. Monitor and ensure delivery (by March 2025) of the HEART Delivery Plan 	<p>Achieved</p> <p>Achieved</p> <p>Green</p>

Aim 2 To improve existing housing and help people live as independently as possible.

	Action	Resources	Milestones or targets	Progress
10.	<i>continued</i>	Response Team) Warwickshire CC, NHS, Age UK.	4. Spend (by March 2023 and then annually) at least 90% of the Disabled Facilities Grant budget.	<i>Target amended from 95% to 90%</i>
11.	Work with partners to improve standards of accommodation across the District.	Enforcement powers, Landlord Forum and training, National Landlords Association, Warwickshire County Council.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Review (by November 2021 and then at least twice a year) the Council's Private Sector Housing website to ensure access to services and information. 2. Review (by April 2022 and then annually) the licensable and non-licensable database of houses in multiple occupation. 3. Identify (by April 2022 and then annually) an additional 20 Houses in Multiple Occupation and take appropriate action. 4. Support (by end March 2023, and then annually) migrants from the Ukraine by ensuring that 95% of property inspections are carried out within 4 weeks. 5. Review (by March 2025) the exemptions register for private rented properties and check that properties meet Domestic Minimum Energy Efficiency Standards (MEES) Regulations. 6. New: Inspect (by March 2025) and then annually all temporary accommodation and Next Steps properties twice each year. 7. New: Inspect (by March 2025) and then annually all guest house properties used as temporary accommodation. 	<p>Green</p> <p>Green</p> <p>Green</p> <p>Green</p> <p>Green</p>

Aim 2 To improve existing housing and help people live independently.

	Action	Resources	Milestones or targets	Progress
12.	Deliver a programme of interventions to bring empty homes back into use.	SDC, Empty Dwelling Management Orders. Council Tax.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Bring (by March 2022, and then annually) an additional 25 empty properties back into use. 2. Review (by March 2024) the Council's approach to tackling empty homes. 3. Implement (by March 2025) the Council's approach to tackling empty homes. 	<p>Green</p> <p>Achieved</p> <p>Green</p>

Aim 3: To prevent homelessness and reduce the harm caused by it.

	Action	Resources	Milestones or targets	Progress
13.	Ensure that the housing waiting list for rented accommodation (Home Choice Plus) remains fit for purpose.	<p>SDC, Home Choice Plus Partnership with Bromsgrove and Wyre Forest District Councils, District Housing Forum. Orbit.</p> <p>Voluntary, community and other public sector organisations.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Agree lettings plan(s) (by March 2026 at the latest) for new settlements to enable sustainable communities. 2. Work with Orbit (by December 2024) to agree at least one lettings plan for an existing settlement where many tenants are moving from older homes to new homes to ensure existing communities remain sustainable and prosperous. 3. Review (by March 2025) processes and IT for Home Choice Plus to improve and speed up applications and establish a date for implementation. 4. Work with members and others to review (by July 2025) the housing waiting list (Home Choice Plus) and determine whether to continue with the Home Choice Plus Partnership. 5. Work in partnership (by December 2024) to raise awareness of the housing waiting list amongst people who are socially and or digitally excluded including people who sleep rough, people with special needs, Gypsies and Travellers and eligible migrants. 6. Assess (by July 2025) whether prioritising housing association tenants on Home Choice Plus who want to move could make better use of the existing housing stock including freeing up some one bed homes. 	<p>Achieved</p> <p>Green</p> <p><i>New date</i></p> <p><i>New date</i></p> <p>Achieved</p> <p>Green</p>

Aim 3: To prevent homelessness and reduce the harm caused by it.

	Action	Resources	Milestones or targets	Progress
14.	Maintain good performance for dealing with housing benefit claims and applications for Discretionary Housing Payments.	SDC, housing associations, private landlords.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Meet annual performance targets for time taken to process new claims for housing benefit and changes to claims. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2024-25 target is 17 days. 2. Spend at least 80% of the Discretionary Housing Payment budget each financial year. 	<p align="center">Green</p> <p align="center">Green</p>
15.	Continue to deliver a successful housing options service for all households.	<p>SDC, Stratford-on-Avon District Housing Forum, housing associations, NHS. Warwickshire County Council</p> <p>SDC's funding of Orbit's Tenancy Intervention Officer post. SDC's loan/grant HELP scheme to prevent or relieve homelessness</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Agree (by April 2025) a new Warwickshire Homelessness Strategy action plan. 2. Review (by March 2023) the trauma informed approach for people with multiple and complex needs. 3. Roll out (by December 2023) a trauma informed approach for people with multiple and complex needs to Customer Services. 4. Evaluate (by June 2023) whether rehoused households benefit from continued support. 5. Report (by May 2024 and then annually) on the causes of homelessness and the work of SDC to prevent homelessness. 6. Review (by September 2025) the Tenancy Access Scheme that helps people access private rented accommodation. 	<p align="center">Green</p> <p align="center">Achieved</p> <p align="center">Achieved</p> <p align="center">Achieved</p> <p align="center">Achieved</p> <p align="center"><i>New date</i></p>
16.	Ensure that the temporary accommodation and service for homeless households provides value for money and is suitable and of good quality.	SDC, Coventry Cyrenians and other housing associations and partners.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Procure (by December 2024) a new bed and breakfast package. 2. Recommission (by December 2024) a provider to manage the temporary accommodation. 3. End (by March 2027) the routine use of bed and breakfast for emergency accommodation. 	<p align="center">Green</p> <p align="center"><i>New date</i></p> <p align="center"><i>New date</i></p>

Aim 3: To prevent homelessness and reduce the harm caused by it.

	Action	Resources	Milestones or targets	Progress
17.	Improve accommodation and support options (including emergency access provision) for single homeless people and people who sleep rough.	SDC, Spring Housing, P3 other providers, Stratford-on-Avon District Housing Forum, Warwickshire County Council, Housing First. Government's Rough Sleeper Initiative. Everyone In.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Review (by February 2023) the effectiveness of the Housing First service for people with complex needs. 2. Recommission rough sleeper projects (by August 2023) in line with the Rough Sleeper Delivery Plan. 3. Review (by May 2023) the effectiveness of the outreach service to people sleeping rough. 4. Determine (by June 2023) the Council's approach to the Everyone In initiative to offer emergency accommodation to anyone verified as sleeping rough. 5. Review (by April 2025 and then annually) the Council's Rough Sleeper Delivery Plan. 6. Assess (by September 2023 and then annually) the effectiveness and impact of the Fred Winter Centre on homeless people and the community. 7. Evaluate (by March 2025) services to people who sleep rough locally and if appropriate commission new services. 	<p>Achieved</p> <p>Achieved</p> <p>Achieved</p> <p>Achieved</p> <p><i>New date</i></p> <p>Achieved 2024</p> <p>Green</p>
18.	Improve emergency access accommodation, longer-term accommodation and support for homeless young people including vulnerable 16 or 17 year olds and care leavers aged 16-24 years.	Doorway, Warwickshire County Council People group, Orbit Heart of England Housing Association, potential providers, SDC, Stratford-on-Avon District Housing Forum.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Establish (by September 2022) the housing and support needs of young people and care leavers in the district. 2. Identify and develop (by September 2023) suitable accommodation solutions. 3. Review (by April 2026) the provision of accommodation and support for young people. 	<p>Achieved</p> <p>Achieved</p> <p>Green</p>