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Tuesday, 4 November 2025 at 4.00 pm  
Council Chamber - South Kesteven House, St. Peter's Hill,  
Grantham. NG31 6PZ

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**Committee Members:** Councillor Ashley Baxter, Leader of the Council (Chairman)  
Councillor Paul Stokes, Deputy Leader of the Council (Vice-Chairman)  
Councillor Rhys Baker, Councillor Richard Cleaver, Councillor Phil Dilks, Councillor Philip Knowles and Councillor Virginia Moran

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## Agenda

This meeting can be watched as a live stream, or at a later date, [via the SKDC Public-L Channel](#)

1. **Public Open Forum**  
The Cabinet welcomes engagement from members of the public. To speak at this meeting please register no later than one working day prior to the date of the meeting via [democracy@southkesteven.gov.uk](mailto:democracy@southkesteven.gov.uk)
2. **Apologies for absence**
3. **Disclosure of Interests**
4. **Minutes of the previous meeting** (Pages 3 - 12)  
Minutes of the meeting held on 7 October 2025.  
**Items for recommendation to Council**
5. **Housing Revenue Account Revenue Forecast 2025/26** (Pages 13 - 21)  
To present the Council's forecast 2025/26 financial position as at end of September 2025 for the Housing Revenue Account Revenue and Capital budgets.

### **Items for Cabinet Decision: Key**

- 6. 2025-2030 Housing Strategy** (Pages 23 - 104)  
To seek approval for the adoption of the Housing Strategy which has been presented to the Housing Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 19 June 2025.

### **Items for Cabinet Decision: Non-Key**

- 7. Finance Update Report – April to September 2025** (Pages 105 - 113)  
To present the Council's year end forecast as at the end of September. The report covers the General Fund Revenue Budget, the Housing Revenue Account Budget, and the Capital Programmes for the General Fund and Housing Revenue Account
- 8. Mobility Vehicle Policy** (Pages 115 - 159)  
To seek approval from Cabinet for the adoption of the Mobility Vehicle Policy having been recommended by the Housing Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting held on 17 March 2025.

### **Items for information**

- 9. Cabinet Forward Plan** (Pages 161 - 169)  
This report highlights matters on the Cabinet's Forward Plan.
- 10. Open Questions from Councillors**

# Minutes

## Cabinet

**Tuesday, 7 October 2025**



**SOUTH  
KESTEVEN  
DISTRICT  
COUNCIL**

**Date of publication:** 23 October 2025

**Call in expiry:** 30 October 2025. Decisions can be implemented on 31 October 2025 (if no call-in).

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**The Leader:** **Councillor Ashley Baxter** (Chairman)

**The Deputy Leader:** **Councillor Paul Stokes** (Vice Chairman)

### **Cabinet Members present**

Councillor Rhys Baker, Cabinet Member for Environment and Waste

Councillor Richard Cleaver, Cabinet Member for Property and Public Engagement

Councillor Phil Dilks, Cabinet Member for Planning

Councillor Philip Knowles, Cabinet Member for Corporate Governance and Licensing

Councillor Virginia Moran, Cabinet Member for Housing

### **Non-Cabinet Members present**

Councillor Tim Harrison

Councillor Charmaine Morgan

Councillor Chris Noon

Councillor Elvis Stooke

### **Officers**

Karen Bradford, Chief Executive

Richard Wyles, Deputy Chief Executive and Section 151 Officer

Alison Hall-Wright, Director of Housing and Projects (Deputy Monitoring Officer)

David Scott, Assistant Director of Finance and Deputy Section 151 Officer

Karen Whitfield, Assistant Director – Leisure, Culture and Place

Emma Whittaker, Assistant Director (Planning & Growth)

Kay Boasman, Head of Waste Management and Market Services

Sarah McQueen, Head of Service (Housing Options)

Claire Moses, Head of Service (Revenues, Benefits, Customer Services and Community)

James Welbourn, Democratic Services Manager

Chris Prime, Communications Manager

Patrick Astill, Communications Officer

Joshua Mann, Democratic Services Officer

#### **44. Public Open Forum**

The following announcements were made at the start of the meeting:

- The meeting stood for a minute's silence as a mark of respect for former Councillor Jacky Smith, who had passed away at the weekend. The Leader of the Council paid tribute to her.
- The Cabinet Member for Housing announced that South Kesteven District Council (SKDC) had been awarded the East Midlands Best New Small Social Housing Scheme by the Local Authority Building Control (LABC) for the development at Elizabeth Road in Stamford. The scheme would be a contender for the national final in January 2026.
- The Leader of the Council made reference to the forthcoming 'Thatcherfest'. He expressed gratitude to all community groups involved. There was a range of merchandise to accompany the event, as well as a special exhibition at the Union Street Gallery in Grantham.

There were no questions or statements from members of the public.

#### **45. Apologies for absence**

There were no apologies for absence.

#### **46. Disclosure of Interests**

There were no declarations of interests.

#### **47. Minutes of the previous meeting**

The minutes of the meeting held on 9 September 2025 were agreed as a correct record.

#### **48. Customer Experience Strategy 2025 to 2029**

##### Purpose of report

To commit to supporting the delivery of the customer charter, priorities, and approach to customer experience across all Council services.

##### Decision

**Cabinet approve the Customer Experience Strategy 2025-2029 to complement the Council's priority "Effective Council".**

##### Alternative options considered and rejected

The Council had the option of not refreshing the existing Customer Experience Strategy and continuing to operate without a strategic focus on the needs of customers. However, as one of the organisation's priorities was to be an effective Council, this was not pursued.



### Reasons for the decision

The Strategy was an overarching document for 2025-2029, developed by the Customer Service Management team, with the support of the Customer Experience Steering Group and engagement with customers and local stakeholders. It provided a framework, objectives and standards to further develop a consistent approach across Council services and aligned with the objectives within the Council's Corporate Plan.

The Strategy demonstrated a clear commitment to shared objectives across teams to improving the service and engagement with the Council's customers.

A steering group was established with representatives from across all Council departments to allow for a collaborative approach. The launch of the Strategy would coincide with National Customer Service Week.

Customer service was the responsibility of all staff. The Strategy itself would be scrutinised by the Rural & Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee (OSC) every six months. A consultation on the Strategy had taken place.

Face to face engagement with members of the public had greatly improved, in part due to the new Customer Service Centre in Grantham. A personal service to customers would continue, in parallel with digital alternatives.

## **49. Contract Award for Mixed Vehicle Procurement**

### Purpose of report

The report sought approval to purchase vehicles including road sweepers, caged tippers, pickup vehicles, a hook lift, and panel vans. The procurement of these vehicles had been completed through a compliant process and as the vehicles would be purchased outright there was no contract length to consider. The procurement was for 54 vehicles at a combined cost of £2.6m.

### Decision

**Cabinet approved the award of the following 14 contracts for the direct purchase of vehicles at a combined cost of £2.6m:**

- **Volvo – 1 x 26t Hook Lift**
- **Harris Maxus – 3 x 3.5t Caged Tippers, 6 x 3.5t Caged Tippers with Tail Lifts and 1 x 3.5t Arb Tipper**
- **Motus (Isuzu) – 2 x 3.5t Caged Tippers**
- **Motus (Fiat) – 16 x Medium Panel Vans**
- **Toyota – 7 x Small Panel Vans and 7 x Large Panel Vans**
- **Lookers Ford – 2 x 4x4 Pickups**
- **Thompson – 2 x 7.5t Tippers with Tail Lift and Removable Mesh Infilled Side Panels and 3 x 7.5t Caged Tippers**
- **Aebi Schmidt – 1 x 6t Compact Road Sweeper**

- **Karcher – 1 x 6t electric Compact Road Sweeper**
- **Bucher – 2 x 12t Truck Mounted Road Sweepers 4**

#### Alternative options considered and rejected

Other options considered were:

- Do not procure new vehicles – this would have resulted in an increased risk of service failure, reputational damage and a breach of statutory duties.
- Run current vehicles beyond the recommended usage period – this risked service failure due to maintenance requirements, alongside increased repair costs.

#### Reasons for the decision

The Council required vehicles for the delivery of statutory services. The recommended vehicle purchases would support service delivery and ensure reliability and efficiency.

All 14 contracts had been through a compliant procurement process with a fair and robust tender. All vehicles would be purchased outright.

54 vehicles would be purchased over 3 years, with 27 purchased through the Housing Revenue Account and used for Housing services. £812414 of the total amount was funded from the HRA, with the remaining funds coming from the General Fund (GF).

These purchases increased electric vehicle usage whilst maintaining existing services. The variety of vehicles demonstrated the diversity of the service offering.

The following points were highlighted during debate:

- Old vehicles would be responsibly disposed of, most likely through auction. There were strict rules about age of vehicles. Old vehicles were not routinely retained for parts as there wasn't adequate space to store them. Contingency had been built into the procurement for spare vehicles, for maintenance and emergency use. Spares were sourced through contracted suppliers. All vehicles would be supplied with warranties.
- The design of the new fleet would be uniform. However, there was the potential for having special livery on vehicles as and when desired.
- The procurement process had aimed to ensure the fleet was future proofed as far as possible.

## **50. ICT and Cyber Security Strategies**

### Purpose of report

To consider the updated ICT Strategy and the new Cyber Security Strategy.

## Decision

**Cabinet approve the:**

- 1. Updated ICT Strategy 2025 – 2028.**
- 2. New Cyber Security Strategy 2025 - 2028.**

**Authority was delegated to the Chief Executive in consultation with the relevant Cabinet Member to correct any typographical and grammatical errors.**

## Alternative options considered and rejected

The Council could have chosen not to have an ICT or Cyber Security Strategy, but this would not provide a robust framework within which to manage and develop ICT platforms.

## Reasons for the decision

The refreshed ICT Strategy ensured the Council continued to provide modern services to residents and employees of the authority.

The ICT Strategy enabled the Council to review emerging technologies and adapt systems to ensure they were fit for purpose and future proofed.

The Cyber Security Strategy was a crucial part of the Council's duty to ensure that all systems were secure and that sensitive data held was safe. Councils must adopt proactive measures to ensure the integrity of their systems, for example:

- Two-factor authentication (2FA).
- Antivirus and endpoint protection.
- Staff training on cyber hygiene (Cyber hygiene refers to the regular practices, habits, and precautions individuals and organisations take to protect their digital systems, devices, and data from cyber threats like malware, phishing and theft).
- Regular security audits aligned with the National Cyber Security Centre's Cyber Assessment Framework (CAF)

As Councils increasingly delivered services online, they must ensure digital platforms were secure, accessible, and inclusive. A strong Cyber Security Strategy reassured residents and businesses that their data was protected, fostering trust in digital services.

The Cyber Security Policy responded to the increasing threat of cyber attacks, and robust protection of systems and data. It documented proactive investment in cyber security measures, and alignment with the cyber assessment framework, whilst building risk aware infrastructure.

The following points were highlighted during debate:

- Services requiring servers were increasingly moving to cloud-based solutions as opposed to on site server infrastructure. SKDC had robust off-site backup, with less reliance on physical servers. Most systems were now remote.
- Cyber-attacks were the Council's single biggest risk. SKDC had signed up to the Cyber Prevention Network and systems were frequently tested for resilience. Backups occurred every 15 minutes and offsite backup plans were in place.
- Service recovery times depended on the incident, but recovery times were routinely tested.
- The depot was used as a backup location to give resilience to the authority. Each service area had a Business Continuity Plan.

## **51. Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman Findings Report**

### Purpose of report

To consider the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman (LGO) Findings Report which provided details of a complaint raised about the Council which was upheld and fault and injustice found.

### Decision

**That Cabinet had confidence that officers always dealt with homelessness issues with compassion, care and justice. It had seen no evidence that officers had acted inappropriately in this case or that their judgment was flawed.**

**Having considered the report presented by the Ombudsman and the evidence presented by officers, Cabinet resolved that no further action be taken and they endorsed the considerations with regard to the complaint.**

### Alternative options considered and rejected

There were no other options available as Cabinet was required to discuss the findings and recommendations of the LGO

### Reasons for the decision

Through this homelessness complaint the Ombudsman found fault and injustice on the part of the Council. SKDC did not agree with all findings/ recommendations, which were:

1. Apologise to Mr B for the lack of accommodation and the distress this caused him in early 2024;
2. Pay Mr B £875 to recognise the lack of that accommodation;
3. Pay Mr B a further £300 to recognise the added distress caused by him being avoidably street homeless during that time.
4. Remind its homelessness staff of the correct test and threshold for the interim accommodation duty, in particular that the threshold for this is a low one;

5. Review its standard homelessness letters to ensure these comply with the requirements of the Housing Act 1996, in particular about explanations of review and appeal rights; and
6. Remind its homelessness staff of the requirements for homelessness decisions including when these should be made and what such decisions must contain.

The Council had actioned recommendations 5 and 6. However, it had not taken action on recommendations 1- 4 because it believed the correct test had in fact been applied. The team understood the threshold for interim duty accommodation was low, but a review of the information provided as part of the homelessness application determined the criteria for the provision of temporary accommodation was not met.

As the Council had not accepted all LGO recommendations, the LGO had now issued a report under section 30 of the Local Government Act 1974 which required the Council to:

1. Share the draft report with the Council's Chief Executive or equivalent, and relevant members or officers;
2. Place two public announcements in local newspapers and/or newspaper websites;
3. Make the report available free of charge at one or more of its offices;
4. Discuss the findings and recommendations at a high decision-making level, such as Full Council or Cabinet, after the publication of the report; and
5. Formally report back to the LGO the Council's intended course of action.

The Council had satisfied points 1 – 3. Presenting this report satisfied point 4 as Cabinet were asked to discuss the findings and recommendations of the Ombudsman and to direct officers regarding any actions to be taken.

The financial implications of accepting the findings of the LGO were very small; however, any precedent set would be more important.

The following points were highlighted during debate:

- When Mr B first contacted the Council, he would have been given an extensive vulnerability questionnaire. This contained a multitude of questions, with topics covering management of medical needs and independence, mobility issues, medical treatments, washing and dressing etc. This enabled officers to decide whether there was 'priority need'.
- The Homelessness Code of Guidance required housing authorities to provide temporary accommodation if they had reason to believe the applicant may:
  - a. Be homelessness
  - b. Be eligible for assistance; and,
  - c. Have a priority need.

It was decided Mr B did not satisfy the third criteria. Under the Code an officer had to assess whether the person was significantly more vulnerable than an 'ordinary' person. Mr B had a mild mental health issue, managed by medication. He also had

digestive issue dealt with through diet. As such, these issues did not make him any more vulnerable than other people registering as homeless.

- At that point officers did not feel there was a priority need. Mr B was in full-time employment and could manage his affairs, so it was judged that the impact of medical issues did not equate to priority need.
- There was a responsibility to Mr B to ensure he was treated fairly, but also a public duty to the other 147,000 residents of South Kesteven to make sure their money was used wisely.
- The LGO seemed to have accepted the assertions of the complainant without evidence. At a hospital stay he claimed he was told his health was being affected by sleeping in his car. However, hospital records appeared to indicate he had not been admitted to hospital – there was no mention that the hospital had reported that sleeping in a car had affected his health.
- Mr B's 'hospital stay' was less than 3 hours. During that time he had various tests and left hospital without treatment or medication, and no follow up was required. The hospital record provided to the Council made no mention of ill-health caused by being homeless.
- SKDC had never argued or gone against an LGO report in recent memory. This report did not seem to have taken account of evidence produced and could set a precedent of admitting fault when the Council believed there was none. If SKDC followed all the LGO recommendations, they could end up having to treat everyone as priority need which was not possible.
- Very few housing cases were referred to the LGO, a record of which the Council was proud.
- LGO recommendations could not be enforced. The LGO could issue their report again and SKDC could be asked to put an article relating to the case in a local newspaper.
- Mr B was offered a referral to hostel accommodation in Grantham, which he declined. He was also offered advice and guidance on the Council's rent deposit scheme and was sent details of affordable private rented accommodation in his preferred areas. He declined to consider shared accommodation even though this had been assessed as a suitable and affordable option for him. He was supported to apply to the Housing Register and encouraged to bid on as many suitable properties as he could. He limited requirements to a small, high demand area and a specific type of property.
- When the Severe Weather Emergency Protocol (SWEP) was implemented in January 2024, SKDC offered Mr B 4 nights' accommodation at its night shelter. Night patrols went to the location where he said his car was parked but never found him.
- This wasn't a decision that officers took lightly. It had been reviewed by multiple officers. The Head of Service (Housing) and Homelessness and Rough Sleeper Manager had discussed this with neighbouring authorities who all agreed with the decision taken at the time.
- Officers were not mental health or medical professionals and were not pretending to be. They tried to assess the impact that a person's condition had on their ability to fend for themselves, all the time balancing moral obligations and the public purse against relevant legislation.

- Mr B was no longer homeless and was housed in private rented accommodation.
- Where additional accommodation was available to those persons who were not deemed priority need it would be offered to them.

## **52. Corporate Asset Management Strategy Review**

### Purpose of report

To review and consider adopting the Corporate Asset Management Strategy 2025-2030, whilst ensuring the strategy was in accordance with SKDC current priorities and objectives.

### Decision

**Cabinet approve the adoption of the updated Corporate Asset Management Strategy 2025-2030.**

### Alternative options considered and rejected

Consideration had been given to not updating the existing strategy and relying on the existing outdated Asset Management Strategy 2022-2027. This option was considered inappropriate, as the existing Strategy outlined need for a mid-term review and there had been significant change since the Strategy's initial implementation. This may also have resulted in a missed opportunity to support the delivery of the Council's Corporate Plan.

Manage the portfolio on a purely responsive basis – this was not pursued as this tended to be more costly than a strategic approach to management of the portfolio and could have impacted on the delivery of services.

### Reasons for the decision

This was a medium-term strategy to manage corporate property within the GF set within the context of the Corporate Plan.

There were 11 key actions within the Strategy:

1. Service Planning and Asset Appraisal
2. Asset Information
3. Compliance
4. Maintenance and Investment
5. Current Major Projects
6. Regeneration
7. Equalities
8. Investment Portfolio
9. Working with Partners
10. Energy Efficiency
11. Value for Money

The Strategy had been submitted to Finance and Economic Overview and Scrutiny Committee who had recommended no edits to the Strategy.

Much importance was attached to properly maintaining assets. The Council invested in a new Asset Management System approximately two years ago. The Strategy was clear that the Council was trying to plan rather than reactively spend. This was difficult due to many years of backlog, but it was slowly being turned around.

Condition surveys drove investment plans. Officers were focussing on desirable and long-term repairs Officers looked at reactive repairs in terms of planned maintenance. If repairs were failing at a car park then investigations would take place to find out whether there was any planned maintenance. If the repair was urgent it would be dealt with there and then; the central database was updated alongside this.

A ratio of 70:30 in favour of planned maintenance was aimed for; currently it was the other way around.

There was an asset disposal strategy. Criteria were followed before investing in assets. There was a delegation in place for senior officers in consultation with the Cabinet Members for Property and Public Engagement and Finance to dispose of GF assets up to a value of £2 million.

### **53. Cabinet Forward Plan**

The Forward Plan was noted.

### **54. Open Questions from Councillors**

There were no questions from Councillors.

The meeting closed at 5:20pm.





**SOUTH  
KESTEVEN  
DISTRICT  
COUNCIL**

## Cabinet

Tuesday, 4 November 2025

Report of Councillor Ashley Baxter  
Leader of the Council,  
Cabinet Member for Finance, HR and  
Economic Development

## Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Forecast Update Report 2025/26

### Report Author

Richard Wyles, Deputy Chief Executive and s151 Officer

✉ [Richard.wyles@southkesteven.gov.uk](mailto:Richard.wyles@southkesteven.gov.uk)

### Purpose of Report

To present the Council's forecast 2025/26 financial position as at end of September 2025.

The report covers the following areas:

- Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Revenue Budget
- Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Capital Programme

### Recommendations

**Cabinet is asked to:**

- 1. Review and note the forecast 2025/26 outturn position for the HRA Revenue and Capital budgets as at the end of September 2025.**
- 2. Identify any variances requiring further action or investigation.**
- 3. Recommend to Council that the forecast overspend of £2.781m regarding repairs and maintenance costs is funded from the following HRA Reserves and that the HRA revenue budgets are increased accordingly.**
  - £1.000m from the Reactive Repairs Reserve
  - £1.781m from the HRA Priorities Reserve
- 4. Recommend Council delegates authority to the Deputy Chief Executive and s151 Officer, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Finance, HR and Economic Development to allocate up to £250k additional funding from the HRA Priorities Reserve to meet any additional financial pressures that may arise during this financial year.**

Decision Information	
Is this a Key Decision?	No
Does the report contain any exempt or confidential information not for publication?	No
What are the relevant corporate priorities?	Connecting communities Sustainable South Kesteven Enabling economic opportunities Housing Effective council
Which wards are impacted?	All

## 1. Implications

Taking into consideration implications relating to finance and procurement, legal and governance, risk and mitigation, health and safety, diversity and inclusion, safeguarding, staffing, community safety, mental health and wellbeing and the impact on the Council's declaration of a climate change emergency, the following implications have been identified:

### ***Finance***

- 1.1 The financial implications are included throughout the report. The HRA revenue expenditure is currently higher than the approved Budget Framework and therefore corrective action is necessary. This report sets out the necessary proposed actions. Members are reminded that the HRA is required to maintain a rolling 30-year HRA Financial Business Plan and the current spending levels are putting the Plan under financial strain and are not sustainable. Plans are underway to address this and proposals will be put before Council on 26 February 2026.

Completed by: Richard Wyles Deputy Chief Executive and s151 Officer

### ***Legal and Governance***

- 1.2 As part of good governance, it is important members are kept updated in respect of the financial position of Council expenditure during the year. Budget Framework amendments at this level sit with Full Council and therefore Cabinet are asked to consider recommending budgetary increases to that body.

Completed by: James Welbourn, Democratic Services Manager

## 2 Background to the Report

- 2.1 Cabinet is asked provided with regular finance reports in order to monitor and forecast expenditure and income compared with approved budgets and to understand the reasons for any significant variances.

## 3 Revenue Budget 2025/26 – HRA

- 3.1 The HRA revenue budget set by Council on 27 February 2025 showed a budgeted surplus of **£8.059m**. Budgets have since been updated to reflect approved budget carry forwards from 2024/25 and in-year virements. These changes have resulted in a reduction in the forecast net surplus of **£4.921m**.

- 3.2 Table 1 shows the forecast outturn position as at 30 September 2025.

**Table 1 – HRA Revenue Forecast Outturn Position**

Directorate	Current Budget £'000	YTD Budget £'000	YTD Actuals £'000	YTD Variance £'000	Forecast Outturn £'000	Variance £'000	Variance %
<b>EXPENDITURE</b>							
Repairs and maintenance	10,808	5,404	7,028	1,624	13,589	2,781	25.73
Supervision and Management - General	2,560	1,280	1,336	56	2,586	26	1.02
Supervision and Management - Special	2,261	1,131	732	(399)	2,299	38	1.68
Depreciation and Impairment of Fixed Assets	4,181	0	0	0	4,181	0	0
Accounting Adjustments	3,184	0	0	0	3,184	0	0
<b>Total Exp</b>	<b>22,994</b>	<b>7,815</b>	<b>9,096</b>	<b>1,281</b>	<b>25,839</b>	<b>2,845</b>	<b>12.37</b>
<b>INCOME</b>							
Dwelling Rents	(29,856)	(14,932)	(14,161)	771	(29,787)	69	0.23
Non-Dwelling Rents	(322)	(161)	(117)	44	(271)	51	15.84
Charges for Services and Facilities	(916)	(384)	(478)	(94)	(916)	0	0
Other Income	(18)	(9)	(31)	(22)	(31)	(13)	(72.22)
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>(31,112)</b>	<b>(15,486)</b>	<b>(14,787)</b>	<b>699</b>	<b>(31,005)</b>	<b>107</b>	<b>0.34</b>
<b>Net Cost</b>	<b>(8,118)</b>	<b>(7,671)</b>	<b>(5,691)</b>	<b>1,980</b>	<b>(5,166)</b>	<b>2,952</b>	<b>36.36</b>
Interest Payable	2,043	1,022	1,022	0	2,043	0	0
Investment income	(1,798)	(899)	(899)	(0)	(1,798)	0	0
<b>Net Operating Surplus</b>	<b>(7,873)</b>	<b>(7,549)</b>	<b>(5,569)</b>	<b>1,980</b>	<b>(4,921)</b>	<b>2,952</b>	<b>37%</b>

- 3.3 As highlighted in **Table 1** above there is a significant emerging pressure on the repairs and maintenance budget which sits within the Technical Services areas of the HRA.
- 3.4 This forecast pressure was first highlighted in the budget monitoring report presented to Cabinet on 9th September 2025 but since that report the forecast has increased to a projected overspend of £2.781m. This overspend is a result of a number of specific factors:
- Clearance of maintenance backlog
  - Tackling the void turnaround times and improving performance from 79 days in March 2025 to 54 days in August 2025. The number of void properties has reduced from 103 to 68 in the same period.
  - The poor condition properties are being left in by the outgoing tenant and therefore the scale of the works required before the property can be relet
  - Increasing labour and material costs
  - Emerging legislative responsibilities and new statutory obligations.
- 3.5 A preliminary breakdown of the forecast overspend attributable to these factors reveals the following:
- **£1.700m** addressing backlog voids and meeting new performance targets
  - **£0.350m** inflationary and additional material costs
  - **£0.850m** Regulation changes
- 3.6 In order to meet these unbudgeted costs, the only viable option available is to propose the use of the HRA reserves in the following way:
- **£1.000m** from the Reactive Repairs Reserve
  - **£1.781m** from the HRA Priorities Reserve
- 3.7 **2026/27 Budget**
- 3.7.1 Budget setting is progressing for the 2026/27 financial year and work is underway to ensure the budget for next year is set at an accurate level. It is anticipated that there will be an increase in the amount needed for the repairs and maintenance work at a similar level of circa **£3m**. In order to meet this new level of budget required the following finance options are being considered
- Adopt the Government proposal of charging an additional **£2** per week to those dwellings where rent convergence is required. High level modelling suggests this could generate an additional **£0.500m** per annum.
  - Reduce the annual contribution to the Major Repairs Reserve (MMR) by an amount equivalent to the increase in revenue cost. This would enable the

annual surplus to be maintained at the forecast levels and helps maintain the sustainability of the HRA 30-year business plan.

- 3.7.2 However, the adverse consequence of reducing the annual MRR contribution will mean that there is reduced financing of the HRA capital programme. The programme relies on financing from the MRR to fund the capital investment works so reduced financing will result in a reduced capital investment programme. The details of this proposal are currently being.

## 4 Capital Budget 2025/26 – HRA

- 4.1 The budget set by Council on 27 February 2025 was **£31.771m**. Budgets have been amended in line with approved carry forwards which have increased the 2025/26 budget to **£31.966m**.
- 4.2 **Table 2** shows the forecast outturn position as at 30 September 2025 which is forecasting a potential underspend of **£8.771m** and **Table 3** shows the significant forecast variances with supporting commentary.

**Table 2 – HRA Capital Forecast Outturn Position**

Directorate	Current Budget £'000	YTD Budget £'000	YTD Actuals £'000	YTD Variance £'000	Forecast Outturn £'000	Variance £'000	Variance %
Energy Efficiencies Initiatives	4,653	2,047	3,943	1,896	4,653	0	0
Replacement Vehicles	765	383	0	(383)	765	0	0
New Builds	15,134	7,567	6,594	(973)	7,394	(7,740)	(51.14)
Refurbishment and Improvement	11,414	5,707	4,899	(808)	10,183	(1,231)	(10.79)
<b>Total</b>	<b>31,966</b>	<b>15,704</b>	<b>15,436</b>	<b>(268)</b>	<b>22,995</b>	<b>(8,971)</b>	<b>(28.06)</b>

**Table 3 – HRA Capital – Significant Variances**

<b>Explanation of Significant Variance</b>	<b>£'000</b>
<b>New Builds Programme</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Swinegate development in Grantham completed in September 25 but was due to finish earlier in the year so the cashflow has been extended as a result of the delay.</li> <li>• A purchase order has been raised for Larch Close, Grantham, and construction commenced in September 25. The scheme is now due to complete in December 26 following a significant delays as a result of amendments to the planning permission.</li> <li>• Wellington Way, Market Deeping, contract was awarded for 11 units at £1.926m. It was hoped works would start in November 25 but this has slipped to the New Year due to some pre-commencement planning conditions.</li> </ul> <p>The cashflows for each scheme are shared with finance colleagues and discussed regularly but, due to delays, this has impacted the budget position.</p>	<b>(7,740)</b>
<b>Refurbishment and Improvement</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A potential underspend is anticipated related to the Tunstall Lifeline and alarm system. Work is underway for the procurement of a new contract but the current expectations are that no further investment will be required this financial year.</li> <li>• A review of Electrical planned works is underway which require new contracts.</li> <li>• There are no lift or fence replacements programmed in for this year. Compliance works have been programmed in conjunction with the survey results, the expected works will produce an underspend.</li> </ul>	<b>(1,231)</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>(8,711)</b>

## **5 Collection Rates - Rents**

5.1 **Table 4** details the current rent collection rate against target for 2025/26.

**Table 4 – Rent Collection Rate**

<b>Target Rates</b>	<b>Rents</b>
<b>Target annual collection rate</b>	<b>96.02%</b>
<b>Target collection rate to end of September 2025</b>	<b>48.68%</b>
<b>Actual collection rate to end of September 2025</b>	<b>48.03%</b>
<b>Variance compared to target</b>	<b>(0.65%)</b>

5.2 Collection of **£14.761m** as of 5 October 2025 against an annual debt of **£29.856m**. As shown in the table above, the collection rate was 0.65% below target equating to **£0.167m**.

- 5.3 Several factors affect rent collection. In previous years, there has been a reduction in collection during August and September. Universal Credit migration has reduced direct payments to the rent account because previously Housing Benefit was paid directly to the rent account; however, housing costs are now paid directly to some tenants who have migrated to Universal Credit.

## **6 Other Options Considered**

- 6.1 Cabinet should have oversight of Council budgets; therefore, the option of not producing a monitoring report was discounted.

## **7 Reasons for the Recommendations**

- 7.1 Members should be kept up to date regarding the financial position of the Authority. Effective budget management is critical to ensuring financial resources are targeted towards the Council's priorities. Monitoring enables early identification of variations against the plan and timely corrective action.
- 7.2 Cabinet need to seek Council approval to amend budget frameworks and to increase HRA budgets.

## **8 Consultation**

- 8.1 Budget Monitoring reports are presented throughout the financial year to the Cabinet and also to Finance and Economic Overview and Scrutiny Committee to ensure members are up to date with the projected financial outturn.

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## Appendix A – Finance Risk Register

Risk	Likelihood	Impact	Residual Risk Score	Mitigating Action
1. Capital programmes requiring borrowing in the medium term	4	3	12 Very High	Continue to undertake financial modelling to identify consequences of undertaking borrowing and align this with savings that will need to be approved before borrowing is undertaken in order to ensure ongoing affordability and financial sustainability. The capital programme can currently be financed without borrowing although this is kept under review.
2. Lack of clarity for funding levels from 2026/27 and beyond	4	3	12 Very High	The Government has recently concluded a consultation on a multi-year settlement effective from 2026/27. Initial modelling suggests that there will be a funding reduction over the three year period but it is expected that transitional funding arrangements will be in place. There remains a high degree of uncertainty as the Council will not receive specific funding confirmation until December 2025. The budget process will be undertaken within the context of a reduction in funding levels.
3. Increase in bad debts as a result of economic circumstances	3	2	6 High	The Council has pro-active debt management procedures in place.
4. Increased maintenance costs of council assets	3	2	6 High	The budget proposals for 2025/26 included additional funding to help address backlog asset maintenance issues and capacity is under review to support the delivery of several large scale General Fund property projects. The medium-term outlook is a continuation of high levels of maintenance that will require financing. There are similar pressures for the Housing Revenue Account in respect of the social housing stock – additional investment may be required to meet new government requirements for decent homes standard.
5. Fuel price volatility	1	3	3 Medium	Weekly monitoring of fuel charge and proactive interventions to ensure optimisation of fuel consumption.
6. Inflation increases beyond budgeted levels	2	2	4 Medium	Budget assumptions kept up to date with most recent projections and monthly sensitivity analysis is produced to monitor the impact of inflationary increases.
7. Fee Income volatility	2	2	4 Medium	Early monitoring of deviations and regular reporting to both budget holders and members.

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**SOUTH  
KESTEVEN  
DISTRICT  
COUNCIL**

## **Cabinet**

Tuesday, 4 November 2025

Report of Councillor Virginia Moran  
Cabinet Member for Housing

## **2025 – 2030 Housing Strategy**

### **Report Author**

Celia Bown, Senior Housing and Policy Strategy Officer

✉ c.bown@southkesteven.gov.uk

### **Purpose of Report**

To seek approval for the adoption of the Housing Strategy which has been presented to the Housing Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 19 June 2025.

### **Recommendations**

**Cabinet is recommended to:**

- 1. Approve the draft Housing Strategy**
- 2. Delegate to the Director of Housing and Projects, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Housing to make minor amendments to the Strategy, as required by changes to regulation or legislation.**

### **Decision Information**

Is this a Key Decision?	Yes
Does the report contain any exempt or confidential information not for publication?	No
What are the relevant corporate priorities?	Housing Effective council
Which wards are impacted?	(All Wards);

## **1. Implications**

Taking into consideration implications relating to finance and procurement, legal and governance, risk and mitigation, health and safety, diversity and inclusion, safeguarding, staffing, community safety, mental health and wellbeing and the impact on the Council's declaration of a climate change emergency, the following implications have been identified:

### ***Finance and Procurement***

- 1.1 There are significant financial and resource implications arising from the delivery of the actions set out in the Housing Strategy. The actions will need to be fully costed in the context of ensuring the financial sustainability of the HRA 30 year Financial Business Plan.

*Completed by: Richard Wyles, Deputy Chief Executive and s151 Officer*

### ***Legal and Governance***

- 1.2 There is no current legislation or regulations requiring local authorities to produce a Housing Strategy. However, it is considered best practice to have one in place.

*Completed by: Alison Hall-Wright, Deputy Monitoring Officer*

### ***Equalities, Diversity and Inclusion***

- 1.3 An Equality Impact Assessment has been completed and is attached at Appendix 3.

### ***Climate Change***

- 1.4 The draft Housing Strategy 2025-2030 includes five key priorities. One of these is to Facilitate Housing to be sustainable and includes the ambition to decarbonise both the housing stock owned and maintained by the Council, but also to maximise the take up of government funded Help to Heat grants for private properties in the district.
- 1.5 Through implementing energy efficiency and low-carbon heating upgrades in properties, the Council will reduce the carbon emissions associated with the housing stock of the district whilst addressing fuel poverty for residents, mitigating issues of damp and mould and support the developing low-carbon sector.

*Completed by: Serena Brown, Sustainability and Climate Change Manager*

## **2. Background to the Report**

- 2.1. South Kesteven District Council's current Housing Strategy (2020 – 2024) has reached the end of its approved period so requires updating. Although there is neither a statutory nor regulatory requirement for the Council to have a Housing Strategy, it is recognised as best practice to have one in place.
- 2.2. The Housing Strategy sets the vision for housing across the district and works alongside the Council's existing plans, policies and strategies, providing a framework for the delivery of SKDC's housing priorities.
- 2.3. The Housing Strategy vision for South Kesteven is to have a range of secure, safe, good quality and sustainable housing of all tenures. We will support people to live healthy and independent lives in their homes, which meet changing needs now and, in the future, in sustainable communities.
- 2.4. In developing the draft strategy, a performance review of the current strategy was undertaken. This identified many achievements, which are outlined in the document on page 5.
- 2.5. The Housing Strategy sets out five priorities:
  1. The commitment to deliver new affordable and specialist housing in partnership.
  2. Continual improvement of the quality, standard and safety of homes
  3. Support people to live healthy and independent lives in their homes
  4. Facilitate housing to be sustainable
  5. Support our communities to be sustainable
- 2.6. For each priority, the strategy sets out:
  - The mission
  - Ambitions
  - Why it is a priority
  - The Challenges
  - The outcomes by to be achieved by 2030
  - What we will do and how
- 2.7. In implementing this strategy, the core threads of delivery are:
  - Consult residents and tenants in the formulation of strategies, policies and service delivery
  - Encourage scrutiny by residents; tenants; elected members; auditors and regulators
  - Set out service standards and measure performance
  - Deliver services which offer value for money

- Safeguard residents
- Deliver services which allow for equal opportunities, diversity and inclusion
- Measure customer satisfaction and identify customer experience
- Work in partnership with other statutory and voluntary agencies

2.8. The Housing Strategy document is accompanied by a Monitoring Framework which sets out how actions for each of the strategy priorities actions align with the context of the Council's Corporate Plan, where applicable.

### **3. Key Considerations**

3.1. The Housing Strategy proposes clear priorities, which align with the Council's Corporate Plan priorities and sets the framework for all other housing related policies and strategies.

### **4. Other Options Considered**

4.1 The 2020-2024 Housing Strategy could have been refreshed based on its current priorities and the data updated. However, the priorities were implemented in 2020 and the context for the priorities has changed considerably in the last 5 years with regards to national housing legislation, regulation and policy.

4.2 The Council could choose not to have a Housing Strategy as there is no statutory or legal requirement to have one in place. However, as outlined at 2.1 and 2.2 of this report, it is considered best practice to do so.

### **5. Reasons for the Recommendations**

5.1. A new Housing Strategy is being recommended to provide a clear framework for all housing policy across the district for all tenures as this is considered best practice.

### **6. Consultation**

6.1. Consultation has taken place with various internal and external people, to support the development of the draft Housing Strategy:

- An online survey to identify challenges and provisional priorities to assist with formulating the content of the new strategy, was sent to key partners. This included house builders, planning agents, affordable housing registered providers, Lincolnshire County Council, Ward and Parish Councillors and Homes England.

- An online survey was sent to housing partners, and a more general online survey was sent to partner agencies, such as the fire, police and health services.
  - Details of the outcome of the online survey are in the Consultation Report attached at Appendix 2 of this report.
  - The outcome of the workshop and the response from the surveys was widespread support for the proposed priority themes.
  - Meetings with key relevant officers across the Council have also taken place to discuss the draft strategy document and changes were made to reflect the feedback.
- 6.2. Following the presentation of the Draft Housing Strategy to the Housing Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 19 June 2025, the Council consulted on the draft document. This included an online survey which the following people/services had the opportunity to respond:
- Ward and Parish Councillors; Fire Service, Police, Health Services
  - External stakeholders, for example, developers (open market and affordable); planning agents; Lincolnshire County Council and Homes England
  - Residents
- 6.3. The outcome of the online survey consultation on the draft Housing Strategy was generally positive. The Consultation Report attached at Appendix 3 shows the results of the online survey.
- 6.4. A workshop was held with councillors on 1 September 2025 to discuss the draft Housing Strategy which resulted in a range of queries being raised which have all been responded to. The draft Housing Strategy received positive feedback and general support.

## **7. Background Papers**

- 7.1. [Housing Overview and Scrutiny Committee report \(19<sup>th</sup> June 2025\).](#)

## **8. Appendices**

- 8.1. Appendix 1 - Draft Housing Strategy
- 8.2. Appendix 2 – Consultation Report (December 2023)
- 8.3. Appendix 3 – Consultation Report (August 2025)
- 8.4. Appendix 4 - Equality Impact Assessment

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# Draft Housing Strategy

2025/30



SOUTH  
KESTEVEN  
DISTRICT  
COUNCIL

# Contents

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## Priorities

1. The commitment to deliver new affordable and specialist housing in partnership	6
2. Continual improvement of the quality, standard and safety of homes	11
3. Support people to live healthy and independent lives in their homes	14
4. Facilitate housing to be sustainable	18
5. Support our communities to be sustainable	20

Housing Strategy Monitoring Framework	23
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# Vision

Our vision for housing across South Kesteven is to have a range of secure and safe, good quality sustainable housing of all tenures. We will support people to live healthy and independent lives in their homes, which meet changing needs now and in the future, in sustainable communities.

The housing strategy is an overarching document across all housing policies and strategies. By 2030, the end of the strategy period, we will have met our intended outcomes for each of our key priorities. The housing strategy will be delivered by each service area, along with partnership agencies, via detailed strategies, policies, processes and procedures. The finance to deliver these functions will primarily be the Council's revenue from our housing stock rents and central government grant funding.

In implementing this strategy our core threads of delivery are:

- Consult customers and tenants in the formulation of strategies, policies and service delivery
- Encourage scrutiny by our customers; tenants; elected members; auditors and regulators
- Set out our service standards and measure our performance

- Deliver services which offer value for money
- Safeguard our residents
- Deliver our services which allow for equal opportunities, diversity and inclusion
- Measure customer satisfaction and identify customer experience
- Work in partnership with other statutory and voluntary agencies

We will be responsive to changing legislation and regulations and update our policies and service delivery accordingly. We will align with new legislation and regulations such as the new National Planning Policy Framework and The Regulator of Social Housing Consumer Standards: The Safety and Quality Standard; The Transparency, Influence and Accountability Standard; Neighbourhood and Community Standard and the Tenancy Standard.



## Population

The age profile of the district shows an **aging population**.

**23.57%**

of the population is aged **65+**, higher than the national proportion of 18.69%.

The population is projected to grow, reaching

**149,777**

by 2030.

## Housing Stock



**67,100**

domestic properties in the district registered for Council Tax (March 2024)



Very low of levels of overcrowding at only

**1.39%**

(2021 Census)



**Pattern of underoccupancy**

82% of households have more bedrooms than required, 47% of households have two or more spare bedrooms. This is a level substantially above the national implied underoccupancy rate of 69% (Census 2021).

**19.1% (12,002)**

of dwellings in South Kesteven do not meet the Decent Homes Standard. The figure for England is 15.1% (MHCLG, 2020).



**8,527 properties**

(13.6% of the housing stock) containing HHSRS Category 1 Hazards. The estimated rate for England is 9.2%.

## Homelessness



The homelessness **preventions and reliefs**

trend is the same in comparison to the wider East Midlands and as a nation, although not to the same extent.

The divergence may be the result of households presenting at a later stage that prevention is unviable, or internal variation in processing.

South Kesteven has seen a decline in **homelessness**

preventions and an increase in homelessness reliefs, in comparison with the other Lincolnshire local authorities.



Homeless households in **temporary accommodation**

are at a higher rate compared with other Lincolnshire local authorities, however below regional and national levels.

## Housing Tenure



**43,574**

households in South Kesteven own or partly own their home (owns outright 23,765, mortgage or loan 19,155, shared ownership 654) (2021 Census). This is 69.33% of all households in the district, substantially above the national proportion of 62.3% and slightly above the Lincolnshire rate of 67.15%.

**11,422**

households (18.17%) live in private rented accommodation.

**7,851**

households (12.49%) live in social rented accommodation.



The five year period prices have risen faster in South Kesteven (**27.81% growth**), than the county (**22.87%**), the East Midlands (**27.70%**) and nationally (**24.21%**).

The rise in house prices has impacted affordability.

The median private monthly rental value was **£725** in 2022/23.

This compares with 7.08 for Lincolnshire and 7.36 for East Midlands.



The district's median rent is the **highest in Lincolnshire and above the regional rate**,

although below the national.

## Housing Affordability



Average house sale price in South Kesteven in 2024 was **£270,938**

Average sale price five years ago was **£211,982**



In 2023, the median house sale price in South Kesteven was **7.91 times the median resident annual gross full-time salary**.

The lower quartile rate was **£585**, the upper quartile **£850**.

# Snapshot of Housing in South Kesteven



# Achievements since the previous housing strategy

New Corporate Plan (2024-2027). Sets out the strategic vision and key priorities of the Council. The Plan underpins the delivery of all of the Council's strategic activity and provides the performance framework for managing the delivery of the actions and priorities in the Plan.

Local Plan adopted in 2020 – allows for planned delivery of housing of the right type in the right places and expects 18,000 new homes to be delivered by the end of the Local Plan period in 2036.

Local Plan Review commenced – legally required to review Local Plan within 5 years of adoption.

Climate Action Strategy approved (in November, 2023). Sets out the Council's role in facilitating the transition to net zero carbon for the whole district of South Kesteven. This includes housing – one of the major contributors of CO2 emissions.

Successfully delivered the Housing Improvement Plan after self-referring to the Regulator of Social Housing in February 2021. The Regulatory Notice was lifted in October 2023.

Housing growth – delivery of over 2000 new residential properties

High number of affordable housing developed and increasing – 730 properties

Construction of 44 new Council properties.

Acquired 48 new Council properties.

Acquired 21 properties through the first tranche of the Local Authority Housing Fund (LAHF) money allocated to the Council and acquired a further 8 properties through LAHF 2.

Delivering a £6 million programme of renovation works to 119 properties in the Earlesfield Estate, Grantham.

Completion of the Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund Wave 2 which delivered 252 Solar PV Installations, 92 Air Source Heat Pumps, 106 Ventilation Measures and 122 insulation installations.

Grants awarded via the Local Authority Delivery Schemes (LADS) and Home Energy Upgrade Schemes (HUGS) - 5 million to low income households living in properties with a low EPC rating

Rolling programme of SKDC property condition surveys

Introduced new Council housing management and choice-based letting systems

Successfully set up a new night shelter for homeless people

Over 500 Disabled Facilities Grants awarded





## Priority 1: The commitment to deliver new affordable and specialist housing in partnership

### Mission

Ensure there is a pipeline of new affordable and specialist housing across the district, which meets different housing needs.

### Ambitions

We will:

- Increase the supply of sustainable and high quality Council-provided housing, both through new build development, acquisitions and conversions.
- Work with developers, affordable housing registered providers and private landlords to ensure high quality, sustainable affordable housing is facilitated.
- Work with the county council and specialist housing registered providers and developers to facilitate delivery.
- Ensure the correct planning policies are in place and applied effectively, to enable the delivery of affordable and specialist housing.
- Bring empty homes back into use, including for the delivery of affordable housing.

### Why

There is currently a nationally recognised housing crisis. Housing supply is not matching housing demand, both for market and affordable housing. Due to this, housing is increasingly expensive to buy, which puts additional pressure on the rental market, both private and social rented.

The UK population is increasing and this, together with the housing supply shortage, especially affordable housing, has had an impact on the demand for private rentals, the number of people on Council housing registers, homelessness rates and the number of people in temporary accommodation, which have all increased.

There are currently huge pressures on the National Health Service and social care system, which is compounded further when adequate housing,

particularly for the elderly and vulnerable working age adults, such as supported and specialist housing, is not sufficient.

The Government's Plan for Change is to build 1.5 million new homes, of which there are aims to increase affordable housing, particularly Social Rent. The new Social and Affordable Housing Programme will receive £39 billion to fund this building programme. The Local Authority Housing Fund will receive an additional £50 million.

For South Kesteven, the Strategic Housing Market Assessment 2014 (SHMA) (part updated in 2017) [SHMA Update \(2017\)](#) which informs the Council's Local Plan (2011 – 2036) Affordable Housing Contributions policy, identifies a need for 343 additional affordable homes each year in the district.

The [South Kesteven District 2023 Local Housing Needs Assessment \(LHNA\)](#) updates the 2014 SHMA and is used as the evidence base for the Local Plan update (in progress). It identifies a requirement of 27-57% of the overall housing need figure of 701 to be affordable, resulting in a need of 188 - 402 homes per year (this will be subject to a viability assessment to determine the economically viable amount). The LHNA is being refreshed to reflect the new housing requirements in the [National Planning Policy Framework \(2024\)](#).

The LHNA states how there is a need for both affordable housing for rent (60% of the overall amount) and affordable home ownership (40%) across South Kesteven. Affordable housing for rent includes Social Rent and Affordable Rent and affordable home ownership includes Shared Ownership; Rent to Buy and discounted market sale such as First Homes.

The LHNA report states there is need for between 3,923- 4,053 (157–162 per annum) specialist homes for older people over the local plan period. The need or demand for these homes falls within, rather than additional to, the overall need for housing.

Of the disabled working age population, the largest group of vulnerable people potentially in need of specialist accommodation is people with learning disabilities. The number of people predicted to have a moderate or severe learning disability, possibly requiring supported housing, by 2040 is 435 people.

# Challenges

## Affordable housing

On major housing sites, there is a planning requirement to deliver a percentage of the housing as affordable housing. There is normally a shortfall between the affordable housing need and the delivery possible via planning requirements. This is because of other required planning obligations, such as infrastructure requirements having an impact on the viability of sites and the amount of affordable housing that can be delivered. This means that the Council, as a stock holding local authority, has a role in direct delivery and acquisition of affordable housing.

Council housing accounts for only part of the existing and new social housing lets across the district. This is why it is important for the Council to have strong partnerships with affordable housing registered providers, to continue to nominate households to their properties. Affordable housing registered providers (both non-profit and profit) can either acquire the planning required affordable housing or deliver 100% affordable housing sites; sometimes providing additional affordable housing to the planning required affordable housing, and sometimes the whole site as a design and build project.

It is only where there are no planning requirements on the affordable housing that Homes England grant funding can be used. South Kesteven, in the same way as all areas across the country, are seeing a decline in partner registered providers purchasing the planning required affordable housing (s.106 sites). One of the main reasons is that due to a large increase in build costs in recent years and increased Regulator of Social Housing requirements to improve their existing stock, there is limited resource available to purchase new properties.

The Council is likely to see the delivery of more 100% affordable housing sites. However, this contravenes the national planning policy framework aim of having mixed and balanced communities. The implications of this is that there is an even greater pressure on the Council to deliver affordable housing to meet, as a minimum, its statutory duties to provide housing. The Council, as an affordable housing registered provider, is also required to improve its existing stock and has the same difficulties with the increase of build costs and so the Council's reserves for development and acquisitions are limited.

The Council can use Right to Buy capital receipts from the sales of council housing and any s.106 financial commuted sums it receives, for delivery and acquisition. Councils can now retain 100% of Right to Buy receipts, introduced recently by the new



Government. They can also now be used in combination with any s.106 financial commuted sums, although these will only be received in exceptional circumstances when affordable housing cannot be delivered on site. This has the potential to improve the number and how affordable housing can be purchased. The amount of Right to Buy receipts is likely to reduce in the longer term, due to the Government recently reducing the level of discounts people can receive on the sale prices of properties.

The Council can also apply for Homes England funding. However, this is only for a percentage of the total build cost and the Council has to fund the remaining costs from its own reserves, once it has used all of its Right to Buy capital receipts.

## Specialist housing

South Kesteven is forecast to experience a continual increase in the number of older people across the district. Correlated to this will be an increase in the number of people with mobility and other health problems, such as dementia. Most people's care and support needs will be met in mainstream housing but many will not and the district's housing stock across all tenures needs to change to meet these changing needs. The need for accessible and adaptable housing, including for wheelchair users; the need for extra care or assisted living housing with varying levels of care and support; and the need for dementia specialist care beds is forecast to increase. This is evidenced in the South Kesteven District 2023 Local Housing Needs Assessment (LHNA).

There is a need for both market and affordable specialist housing of all types. It is important that accessible and adaptable housing and housing which offers different levels of care and support as an intermediary between mainstream housing and care homes is delivered at a sufficient scale to prevent people needing to live in care homes. Detailed need information is set out in the LHNA and



incorporated in the Council's Local Plan evidence base and policies.

The population of people with learning disabilities is gradually increasing over time because of medical advances which result in higher survival rates at birth and longer life expectancy. The number of people who need supported housing for learning disabilities is also increasing.

Supported housing (both short-term and long-term (6-24 months)) is needed for people with other various vulnerabilities, such as mental ill health and substance dependency. The challenge with this is funding cuts meaning that provision for the district is limited.

LHNA states that two-bedroom self-contained flats or clusters of houses meet a range of different needs (for specialist acute needs). This type of accommodation can be used flexibly (e.g. to accommodate carers where required) or other households to meet changing needs over time.

Single homeless households requiring a one bedroom property accounts for approximately a third of the households on the Council's housing register each year. The majority of new affordable housing delivery is two and three bedroom properties and new market housing does not include many one

bedroom properties. There is a need for more one bed affordable housing generally and need for more one bedroom supported accommodation for single homeless households with additional needs ie; mental ill health and substance mis-use, with some people having multiple complex needs. The reason for the lack of one bedroom properties both in market and affordable housing is because housebuilders and housing associations generally do not want to develop or acquire these due to various reasons, such as cost and potential management issues. Housing built and acquired is often what is viable rather than what is needed. The Council needs to continue to develop and pursue opportunities to buy one bedroom properties. Increasing the district's affordable housing of the right type and size is as important as increasing the amount.

The Local Housing Allowance (LHA) rate for people under 35 years of age is a shared room rate only. This means that for most younger people reliant on welfare benefits to pay for housing costs, if they are not living with family, the only option is to live in a room in a shared house (sometimes a House of Multiple Occupation) or lodge with someone. Even for younger people who are not reliant on welfare benefits, the cost of housing to buy or rent is expensive and so many people have to continue to live with family during their 20s.

## 2030 Outcomes

- The net supply of all types and sizes of affordable housing has increased, both within our own housing stock and across the district as a whole. ✓
- A 3 year pipeline of new Council housing and a 1 year pipeline of new partner registered provider affordable housing, as a minimum. ✓
- Various types of new specialist housing across the district has increased. ✓
- Council new build affordable ground floor apartments and bungalows will be adapted to suit the needs of our residents, where feasible. ✓
- Policies and procedures are in place both within housing and planning services which enable the delivery of new affordable and specialist housing now and in the future. ✓





# What we will do and how

	What	How	Initiatives/ Groups	Resources/Funding	Who
1.1	Commitment to build new Council housing to match housing needs.	Housing Asset Management Strategy (revision to be developed)  Housing Revenue Account Business Plan (revision to be developed)  Development Strategy (to be developed)		Right to Buy receipts s.106 financial commuted sums  Homes England funding – Affordable Housing Programme and Continuous Market Engagement  Council Housing Revenue Account reserves  Development finance	Corporate Projects Team
1.2	Council acquisition of housing to match housing needs.	HRA Asset Acquisition and Disposal Policy (2023)		Right to Buy receipts s.106 financial commuted sums  Homes England funding – Affordable Housing Programme and Continuous Market Engagement  Council Housing Revenue Account reserves  Development finance	Corporate Projects Team
1.3	Explore Council owned land and any other publicly owned land for development	Development Strategy (to be developed)			Corporate Projects Team
1.4	Use Modern Methods of Construction to reduce both the time and cost of development	Development Strategy (to be developed)			Corporate Projects Team
1.5	Work in partnership with affordable housing registered providers (not-for-profit and profit) in regards to market-led land-led and community-led housing schemes	SKDC Local Plan (2011-2036) Affordable Housing Contributions Policy (H2)  Affordable Housing Supplementary Planning Document (to be developed)	Greater Lincolnshire Affordable Housing Group	Right to Buy receipts s.106 financial commuted sums  Homes England funding – Affordable Housing Programme and Continuous Market Engagement  Gifted land and dwellings	Planning Team  Corporate Projects
1.6	Via planning gain and 100% affordable housing schemes (including Rural Exception Sites where possible) and in accordance with the Council's Local Plan (2011 – 2036)	National Planning Policy Framework (2024)  National Planning Policy Guidance  SKDC Local Plan (2011-2036) Affordable Housing Contributions Policy (H2)  Affordable Housing Supplementary Planning Document (to be developed)	Greater Lincolnshire Affordable Housing Group	Right to Buy receipts s.106 financial commuted sums  Homes England funding – Affordable Housing Programme and Continuous Market Engagement  Gifted land and dwellings	Planning Team



# What we will do and how

	What	How	Initiatives/ Groups	Resources/ Funding	Who
1.7	Ensure planning policy is applied effectively to maximise the delivery of affordable housing via planning gain	Local Plan Affordable Housing Contributions Policy (H2)  Affordable Housing Supplementary Planning Document (to be developed)			Planning Team
1.8	Work in partnership with private rented sector landlords to secure properties let with a rent not exceeding the Local Housing Allowance rate and meet legislative requirements		SKDC Landlord forums  National Landlord Association		Housing Options Team  Public Protection  Private Sector Housing Team
1.9	Maximise the development of Social Rent properties where possible and support a range of affordable housing tenures, such as Shared Ownership and other affordable home ownership options, to meet different households housing needs and income capacities	National Planning Policy Framework (2024)  Local Plan Affordable Housing Contributions Policy (H2)  Development Strategy (to be developed)			Planning Team  Corporate Projects Team
1.1	Support the delivery of affordable supported and specialist housing for working age adults and older persons housing by working with relevant partners	Lincolnshire wide Supported Housing Strategy (as required by the Supported Housing Act 2023) – to be developed	Lincolnshire Health and Wellbeing Board Housing, Health and Ageing Well Delivery Group  Greater Lincolnshire Affordable Housing Group		Housing Team  Planning Team
1.11	Conclude the Council's Sheltered Housing Review				Housing Team
1.12	Support increased community led development	Neighbourhood Plans	Community Land Trusts		Planning Team
1.13	Support the conversion of properties both housing and commercial use (eg. shops and offices) into affordable housing	Local Plan (2011-2036)  Housing Revenue Account Business Plan (revision to be developed)			Planning Team  Corporate Projects Team
1.14	Bring empty homes back into use, including for affordable housing	Empty Homes Strategy	Empty Homes working group		Public Protection  Housing Team
1.15	Maximise nominations to partner affordable housing registered provider properties	Nominations Agreements with partner affordable housing registered provider properties			Housing Team – Allocations  Planning Team – Affordable Housing Enabler



Priority 1: The commitment to deliver new affordable and specialist housing in partnership



## Priority 2: Continual improvement of the quality, standard and safety of homes

### Mission

Ensure housing meets legislative requirements of high quality, standard and safety.

### Ambitions

We will:

- Improve the quality, standard and safety of our Council housing stock to the Decent Homes Standard as a minimum and carry out timely repairs and regular maintenance.
- Listen to our customers and respond to any concerns regarding the quality, standard or safety of their Council home.
- Ensure the private rented housing stock meets legislative requirements and enforce where they do not.
- Ensure, through the planning and building control functions, housing across the district is of a high quality standard and safe.

### Why

The Government has recently introduced several new pieces of legislation to improve the quality, standards and safety of homes. These primarily are:

- [Social Housing Regulation Act \(2023\)](#) – this includes enhanced Consumer Standards and strengthens the Regulator of Social Housing's power to carry out regular inspections of the largest social housing providers. It also incorporates Awaab's Law and the regulator has the power to set strict time limits for social landlords to address hazards such as damp and mould.
- [Building Safety Act \(2022\)](#) – this gives residents and homeowners more rights, powers, and protections, to make homes across the country safer.
- [Supported Housing \(Regulatory Oversight\) Act \(2023\)](#) – this introduces national supported housing standards, local authority oversight and enforcement powers. It requires local authorities to carry out a review of supported exempt accommodation in their area and publish a supported housing strategy.

A further new proposed act is the Future Homes and Building Standard which is likely to be enacted in 2025. This will require new build homes to have low carbon heating systems.

The Housing Act 2004 implemented the [Housing Health and Safety Rating System \(HHSRS\)](#) which is already in place. This is used to assess health and safety risks and hazards in properties. Central Government will also be implementing the Decent Homes Standards for private rented housing (currently applicable to social housing only).





# Challenges

The Regulator of Social Housing 'Safety and Quality' Standard requires affordable housing registered providers, including the Council, to have an accurate, up to date and evidenced understanding of the condition of their homes that meet the Decent Homes Standard and ensure the health and safety of tenants in their homes and associated communal areas. It also requires an effective, efficient and timely repairs, maintenance and planned improvements service for the homes and communal areas for which they are responsible.

The Council has approximately 6000 properties and knowing the condition of all our stock at any one time is challenging. We have put into place a rolling programme of stock condition surveys of all of our stock.

The cost of works to bring properties up to Decent Homes Standard and deliver a planned and reactive repairs and maintenance service has increased significantly. Sourcing building materials and parts can take a long time and the recruitment of contractors/ works team is challenging.

There are competing demands on the Council's budgets to maintain our housing stock to the required standards and building and acquiring new stock to maintain revenue from rents. All of this also needs to be done with regard to meeting carbon emission reduction targets in terms of both development and on-going maintenance.

The Council is legally required to ensure our own housing stock has full safety checks in regards to gas, electric, water, asbestos, fire, damp and mould. This can be challenging due to tenants sometimes not allowing access to our properties to do these checks. Knowledge by residents on combating damp, mould and condensation can be limited.

The Council is also responsible for inspecting private rented housing to check for any hazards using the Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS). The most common hazards are damp and mould and excess cold.

For residents to have adequate space, circulation and storage inside their home, there needs to be sufficient internal space standards. This is important for people to live healthy lives. These standards that can be required through planning when a property is being built or converted.

## 2030 Outcomes

- All Council housing stock meets the Decent Homes Standard as a minimum and we are compliant with all of the required health and safety checks. ✓
- We provide an effective repairs and maintenance service and improve our stock. ✓
- We routinely and actively listen to our customers in regards to any repairs or maintenance issues of Council properties, take timely action and provide feedback regularly. ✓
- Private rented housing is of a good quality and standard and meets legislative requirements. ✓



# What we will do and how

	What	How	Initiatives/ Groups	Resources/ Funding	Who
2.1	Ensure all buildings are built and improved in accordance with building regulations and planning requirements.	Local Plan (2011-2036)			Planning Team  Building Control Team
2.2	Carry out regular safety checks (gas, electric, water, fire risks, damp and mould, lift maintenance) on our own Council properties.	Total Housing Compliance Policy (2023)  Damp and Mould Policy (in progress)			Housing Team  Health and Safety Lead
2.3	Assess private rented properties in accordance with the Housing Act 2004 and the Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS) and relevant associated legislation.	Corporate Enforcement Policy (being updated)			Public Protection Private Sector Housing Team
2.4	Support the decarbonisation of both SKDC properties and across the market sector.	Climate Action Strategy (2023)	SKDC Decarbonisation Project	Home Upgrade Grant  Local Authority Delivery Scheme  Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme	Corporate Team – Sustainability and Climate Change Manager
2.5	Achieve the Decent Homes Standard, as a minimum, on all Council properties.	Voids Policy (2021-2024)  SKDC's Re-let Standard			Housing Team – Housing Services and Technical Services
2.6	Require the minimum Nationally Described Space Standards for all affordable housing.	Local Plan (2011 – 2036) update (in progress)			Planning Team
2.7	Licence Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMO) in accordance with the legislation to increase standards.	Houses of Multiple Occupation Licensing Policy (2024)			Public Protection Private Sector Housing Team
2.8	Review the supported exempt accommodation in South Kesteven.	Supported housing strategy (to be developed)			Housing Services



Priority 2: Continual improvement of the quality, standard and safety of homes



## Priority 3: Support people to live healthy and independent lives in their homes

### Mission

Support people to be independent and healthy, within both private and social housing with timely and effective interventions by the Council.

### Ambitions

We will:

- Work in partnership with other relevant professional agencies to improve residents standard of living and quality of life.
- Proactively ensure the housing needs of our most vulnerable residents are met.
- Provide housing advice to those who require it.
- Prevent homelessness where possible and address the underlying causes so that it becomes rare, brief and non-recurring.
- Enable people to stay in their home and receive care and support, where required, possible and when they wish this.
- Ensure residents homes are free from damp, mould and condensation and that they are not living in fuel poverty.

### Why

There are various pieces of legislation in place which require councils to safeguard and support residents in their communities. These include:

- [Homelessness Reduction Act \(2017\)](#) – introduced to place a statutory duty on local authorities to prevent and relieve homelessness.
- [Anti-social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act \(2014\)](#) – introduced simpler, more effective powers to tackle anti-social behaviour that provide better protection for victims and communities.

- [Domestic Abuse Act \(2021\)](#) – created a statutory definition of domestic abuse, emphasising that domestic abuse is not just physical violence, but can also be emotional, controlling or coercive, and economic abuse.
- [Care Act \(2014\)](#) – requires local authorities to provide or arrange services that help prevent people developing needs for care and support or delay people deteriorating such that they would need ongoing care and support.

In response to this legislation, a countywide response has been taken and the following have been developed:

- [Lincolnshire Homelessness and Rough Sleeper Strategy \(2022-2027\)](#)
- [Safer Lincolnshire Partnership](#)
- [Lincolnshire Preventing Domestic Abuse Strategy \(2025-2028\)](#)
- [Lincolnshire Safeguarding Adults and Children Boards](#)
- [Lincolnshire Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2024](#). The strategy priority relevant to housing is 'Homes for Independence'. The implementation of the strategy is via different delivery groups. The delivery group relevant to this priority is the Housing, Health and Ageing Well Delivery Group.

South Kesteven District Council has implemented district specific responses with the following:

- [SKDC Landlord Services Anti-Social Behaviour \(ASB\) Policy \(2023\)](#)
- [SKDC Domestic Abuse Policy \(2022 – 2025\)](#)
- [South Kesteven District Council Safeguarding Policy \(2024-2027\)](#)
- [South Kesteven Health and Wellbeing Action Plan](#)



# Challenges

Residents across the district are still impacted by the Cost of Living Crisis which effects their direct and associate housing costs such as mortgage, rent, fuel and households bills. To assist with supporting residents most in need, the Council has been allocated by central Government, a Household Support Fund to grant to these residents.

It is important there continues to be a range of house types and sizes across the district, both within market and affordable housing to meet varying levels of income. If properties are built or retrofitted to be energy efficient, this of course reduces the cost of fuel bills as well. A challenge is that to build in or retrofit properties to be fuel efficient, it is expensive to do.

There is an increase in the number and complexity of homeless households across the district, which mirrors the countrywide situation. There are many challenges to this in that an increase in the amount of affordable housing, particularly an increase in the number of one bedroom properties needed, pose viability issues. Many homeless households also need support to sustain their housing.

Homelessness can have a significant impact on someone's health, both physically and mentally.

It is important that housing related support funding is available to prevent residents needing more expensive supported accommodation and to enable people's independence. This can be challenging as the funding is limited.

Anti-social behaviour continues to be a problem for residents living in both social and private housing. The Council, together with the Police and partner agencies tackle this but can be challenging due to resourcing issues.

To assist people with living healthy and independent lives, there needs to be a range of older people housing options across the district; for example, assisted living and extra care. There is a currently a lack of this type of housing. There also needs to be provision of accessible and adaptable housing. To build this type of housing or retrofit either directly or via planning requirements, there are often viability issues. Households need to be supported to stay at home rather than go into a care/nursing home. People prefer to stay in their own home with support and it is more economically viable in the long term.

## 2030 Outcomes

- Vulnerable residents housing needs are met ✓
- Housing advice is provided to all who require it and eligible households in the highest housing need are re-housed, within a reasonable timeframe ✓
- The level of homeless households reduced from the current level ✓
- The range of housing options has increased, enabling the number of residents moving into care homes kept to a minimum, where it is desired to stay in current home with care. ✓
- Anti-social behaviour the Council is responsible for tackling is dealt with effectively. ✓
- Households in cost of living crisis difficulties (including fuel poverty) reduced. ✓



Priority 3: Support people to live healthy and independent lives in their homes

## What we will do and how

	What	How	Initiatives/Groups	Resources/ Funding	Who
3.1	Review SKDC sheltered housing provision and ensure it is fit for purpose	Sheltered Housing Review			Housing Team
3.2	Enable the provision of a wide range of housing options, including specialist housing, across the district	Local Plan housing policies	Lincolnshire Public Health Housing, Health and Ageing Well Delivery Group		Planning Policy Team  Planning Development Management Team  Planning Development Management Team  Housing Options Team
3.3	Provide disability aids and adaptations (directly for Council housing and via grants for private sector housing)	SKDC Aids and Adaptations Process (2022)  Lincolnshire Discretionary Housing Financial Assistance Policy (2024)			Housing Team  Public Protection Private Sector Housing Team
3.4	Provide housing advice and assistance, including for the prevention and assessment of homeless households and provide temporary accommodation, where appropriate.	Homelessness Reduction Act (2017)  Lincolnshire Homelessness and Rough Sleeper Strategy (2022-2027)  SKDC Preventing Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy (to be developed)	Lincolnshire Homelessness Strategy Group  SKDC Homelessness Forum  SKDC Vulnerable Adults Panel  Complex Needs Panel  Multiple Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC)  Rough Sleeper Initiative	Government Homelessness Prevention Grant	Housing Options Team  Rough Sleeper Initiative Team
3.5	Provide secure housing in safe neighbourhoods to have relative low levels of crime and anti-social behaviour	SKDC Tenancy Strategy (2020-2025)  SKDC Landlord Services ASB Policy (2023)  Lincolnshire Domestic Abuse Policy  SKDC Domestic Abuse Policy  Tenancy Management Policy (2023)  Estate Management Policy (2023)	Safer Lincolnshire Partnership (SLP) - a Lincolnshire wide multi-agency approach  Multiple Agency Public Protection Arrangements (MAPPA)  Joint Agency Meetings (JAM)  Antisocial Behaviour Risk Assessment Conference (ASBRAC)	Housing Revenue Account	Housing Team – Tenancy Services





# What we will do and how

	What	How	Initiatives/Groups	Resources/ Funding	Who
3.6	<p>Support people to sustain their housing via:</p> <p>Financial budgeting advice (referrals to partner agencies and grant funding support to Citizens Advice). Cost of Living support.</p> <p>Referrals and signposting to partner agencies for various advice and support.</p>			<p>Government Homelessness Prevention Grant</p> <p>Government Household Support Fund</p>	<p>Housing Team – Tenancy Sustainment</p> <p>Cost of Living Team</p>
3.7	<p>Support people to live free from fuel poverty in both Council properties and private housing through direct work, grants and advice.</p>		SKDC Decarbonisation Project	<p>Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme</p> <p>Home Upgrade Grant</p> <p>Local Authority Delivery Scheme</p>	<p>Technical Services – Decarbonisation Project</p> <p>Cost of Living Team</p> <p>Corporate Team – Sustainability and Climate Change Manager</p>
3.8	<p>Design housing to allow for households changing needs eg. planning for and implementing housing with adaptable doorways.</p>	<p>Local Plan (2011-2036)</p> <p>Design Guide SPD (2021)</p> <p>Design Code (in progress)</p>			<p>Planning Team</p> <p>Housing Team</p>





## Priority 4: Facilitate housing to be sustainable

### Mission

Facilitate the development and retrofitting of both private and social housing to be more sustainable to reduce carbon emissions.

### Ambitions

We will:

- Ensure our own Council housing stock is energy efficient and cost effective to maintain.
- Encourage take up of grants for the installation of decarbonisation measures in market sale and private rented properties.

### Why

#### Sustainable properties

The UK is committed to reaching net zero by 2050 (the total greenhouse gas emissions would be equal to the emissions removed from the atmosphere, with the aim of limiting global warming and resultant

climate change). To tackle this, the Government has developed two strategy publications: the [Net Zero Strategy](#) (2021) and [Powering Up Britain: The Net Zero Growth Plan](#) (2023).

The National Planning Policy Framework supports the development of sustainable housing. This is in terms of the building materials used and how the properties can be heated/cooled and also the right infrastructure in place for the communities to be sustainable.

The Council, like many local authorities, declared in 2019 a Climate Emergency (to reduce the Council's carbon footprint by 2030 and to become net-zero carbon by 2050). As a result, the SKDC Climate Action Strategy (2023) has been put into place.

### Challenges

#### Sustainable properties

Energy efficient housing is more expensive to build.

Retro-fitting of properties is expensive and many occupants do not know how to use it.

## 2030 Outcomes

- The number of homes across the district with EPC rating C or above significantly increased. ✓
- Housing across the district is energy efficient and inexpensive on fuel, including our own Council housing stock. ✓
- Households are living free from damp, mould and condensation. ✓



# What we will do and how

	What	How	Initiatives/ Groups	Resources/ Funding	Who
4.1	Install decarbonisation measures in our own Council properties		SKDC Decarbonisation Project  Greater Lincolnshire Energy Efficiency Network (GLEEN)	Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund (SHDF)	Housing Team – Decarbonisation Team
4.2	Sell SKDC old, energy inefficient, expensive to maintain housing.	Housing Asset Management Strategy (revision to be developed)  Housing Revenue Account Business Plan (revision to be developed)  Decant Policy (in progress)	Stock condition survey – rolling programme in progress		Corporate Project Team
4.3	Reduce carbon emissions through energy efficient housing both in market and social housing - encouraging take up of grants	Climate Action Strategy (2023)  Local Plan (2011-2036)			Corporate Team – Sustainability and Climate Change Manager
4.4	Support people to live free from damp, mould and condensation in Council properties through direct work, grants and advice.	SKDC Landlord Services Damp and Mould Policy (in progress)			Technical Services – Damp and Mould Team
4.5	Support people to live free from damp, mould and condensation in private housing (sale and for rent) through grants and advice.	SKDC Corporate Enforcement Policy (in progress)			Public Protection  Private Sector Housing Team  Corporate Team – Sustainability and Climate Change Manager
4.6	Support people to live free from fuel poverty through grants and advice.				Corporate Team – Sustainability and Climate Change Manager  Cost of Living Team





## Priority 5: Support our communities to be sustainable

### Mission

Ensure the district has the right housing in the right places for both market and affordable housing so that the district's communities are more sustainable.

### Ambitions

We will:

- Plan for, enable, build and acquire housing (market and social housing) of the right type and sizes in sustainable locations
- Sustain and maximise the housing stock to make best use of it.
- Allocate and nominate households to social housing properties effectively and fairly
- Sustain households in their homes.

### Why

The Council has in place a [Local Plan \(2011 - 2036\)](#) which aims to have a mix of housing types and sizes to meet the different needs of all households across the district.

The Council also has a [Housing Allocations Policy \(2023\)](#) which aims to allocate both Council and housing association properties effectively to maximise the sustainability of the social housing stock across the district.

### Challenges

Housing, which does not meet needs or aspirations causes a high turnover of households. This in turn can create unstable communities.

The location of new affordable housing tends to be in towns and the very largest villages. This means that small and medium sized villages become more expensive to live in, resulting in communities no longer being sustainable due to services and public transport being reduced or discontinued as a result.

## 2030 Outcomes

- Housing across the district matches housing needs. ✓
- An up to date Local Plan and Housing Allocations Policy are in place. ✓
- Nominations Agreements are in place with all partner affordable housing registered providers. ✓



# What we will do and how

	What	How	Initiatives/Groups	Resources/ Funding	Who
5.1	<p>Ensure the district has the right housing in the right places for both market and affordable housing:</p> <p>Right housing – plan, develop and acquire market and affordable housing of the right type and sizes, reducing high stock turnover.</p> <p>Right location - plan, develop and acquire housing in locations people need to live and which reduces travel. This is sustainable locations with places of employment, health services, social care services, leisure facilities, amenities such as schools, community centres, shops and pubs, public transport and good transport connectivity.</p>	<p>SKDC Local Plan 2011-2036</p> <p>SKDC Development Strategy (to be developed)</p> <p>SKDC Housing Allocations Policy (2023)</p>	Greater Lincolnshire Affordable Housing Group		<p>Planning Team</p> <p>Housing Team</p>
5.2	<p>Allocate social housing properties effectively – in terms of the type (including adapted properties) and location.</p> <p>Sustain current housing stock where possible – Council housing and Shared Ownership, rather than being sold under the Right to Buy and Right to Acquire by applying the national permitted exemptions.</p>	<p>SKDC's Housing Allocation Policy</p> <p>SKDC's Choice Based Lettings System</p>			<p>Housing Team – Housing Options</p> <p>Planning Team</p> <p>Housing Team</p>
5.4	<p>Maximise the housing stock – adapting and converting properties to make best use of them and bringing empty homes back into use.</p>	<p>Housing Asset Management Strategy (revision to be developed)</p> <p>Housing Revenue Account Business Plan (revision to be developed)</p> <p>Empty Homes Strategy (2024)</p>	<p>SKDC Aids and Adaptations Process (2022)</p> <p>Empty Homes Working Group</p>		<p>Housing Team</p> <p>Public Protection - Private Sector Housing Team</p>



# What we will do and how

	What	How	Initiatives/Groups	Resources/ Funding	Who
5.5	Maximise affordable housing – ensuring planning policies are in place to enable delivery and the Council maximises opportunities for development, acquisition and nomination.	<p>Local Plan (2011-2036)</p> <p>Housing Asset Management Strategy (revision to be developed)</p> <p>Housing Revenue Account Business Plan (revision to be developed)</p> <p>HRA Asset Acquisition and Disposal Policy (2023)</p> <p>Nomination Agreements with partner affordable housing registered providers in place.</p>			<p>Planning Team</p> <p>Housing Team</p>
5.6	Sustain households in their homes – housing advice financial budgeting advice etc	<p>Lincolnshire Homelessness and Rough Sleeper Strategy 2022-2027</p> <p>Tenancy Management Policy (2023)</p>	Rough Sleeper Initiative		<p>Housing Team – Housing Options</p> <p>Rough Sleeper Initiative Team</p> <p>Cost of Living Team</p> <p>Tenancy Services</p>



# Housing Strategy Monitoring Framework

## 1. The commitment to deliver new affordable and specialist housing in partnership

	Action	KPI Corporate Index	Corporate Action	Corporate Target	Service
1.1	Commitment to build new Council housing to match housing needs	HOUS8	Deliver a pipeline of new build housing following a hybrid approach of construction and acquisition when appropriate to maximise funding streams.	*Deliver 80 properties over life of Corporate Plan (2024-27)  * Delivery of Swinegate, Grantham development  * Delivery of Elizabeth Road, Stamford development  *Delivery of Larch Close, Grantham development	Corporate Projects Team
1.2	Council acquisition of housing to match housing needs	HOUS8	Deliver a pipeline of new build housing following a hybrid approach of construction and acquisition when appropriate to maximise funding streams.		Corporate Projects Team Housing Team
1.3	Explore Council owned land and any other publicly owned land for development				Corporate Projects Team
1.4	Use Modern Methods of Construction to reduce both the time and cost of development				Corporate Projects Team
1.5	Work in partnership with affordable housing registered providers (not-for-profit and profit) in regards to market-led land-led and community-led housing schemes				Planning Team Corporate Projects
1.6	Via planning gain and 100% affordable housing schemes (including Rural Exception Sites where possible) and in accordance with the Council's Local Plan (2011 – 2036)	HOUS10	Ensure the Local Plan continues to facilitate sustainable growth across the district and the Local Plan Review is successfully completed in 2026.	*Maintaining a 5-year housing supply  *Adherence to review programme as published in the local development scheme	Planning Team



	Action	KPI Corporate Index	Corporate Action	Corporate Target	Service
1.7	Ensure planning policy is applied effectively to maximise the delivery of affordable housing via planning gain	HOUS11	Ensure the planning process is effective, efficient, high quality and timely.	80% Major Applications Determined in Time	Planning Team
1.8	Work in partnership with private rented sector landlords to secure properties let with a rent not exceeding the Local Housing Allowance rate and meet legislative requirements				Housing Options Team Public Protection Private Sector Housing Team
1.9	Maximise the development of Social Rent properties where possible and support a range of affordable housing tenures, such as Shared Ownership and other affordable home ownership options, to meet different households housing needs and income capacities				Planning Team – Affordable Housing Enabler Housing Team
1.1	Support the delivery of affordable supported and specialist housing for working age adults and older persons housing by working with relevant partners				Housing Team Planning Team
1.11	Conclude the Council's Sheltered Housing Review				Housing Team
1.12	Support increased community led development				Planning Team
1.13	Support the conversion of properties both housing and commercial use (eg. shops and offices) into affordable housing				Planning Team Corporate Projects Team
1.14	Bring empty homes back into use, including for affordable housing	HOUS9	Develop a joint approach to bringing Empty Homes back into use. (Refreshed Empty Homes Strategy was updated and approved in July 2024).	A working group is planned to establish a new approach to Empty Homes. The creation of KPI measures will be an objective of this group.	Public Protection Housing Services Team
1.15	Maximise nominations to partner affordable housing registered provider properties		Nominations Agreements with partner affordable housing registered provider properties		Housing Team – Allocations Planning Team – Affordable Housing Enabler Planning Team – Affordable Housing Enabler



## 2. Continual improvement of the quality, standard and safety of homes

	What	KPI Corporate Index	Corporate Action	Corporate Target	Service
2.1	Ensure all buildings are built and improved in accordance with building regulations and planning requirements.				Planning Team Building Control Team
2.2	Carry out regular safety checks (gas, electric, water, fire risks, damp and mould, lift maintenance) on our own Council properties.	HOUS5	Ensure the Council's housing stock is high quality and suitable for the needs of tenants now and into the future.	*Properties with EICR up to 5 yrs. old * % Dwellings with valid gas safety certificate	Housing Team Health and Safety Lead
2.3	Assess private rented properties in accordance with the Housing Act 2004 and the Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS) an relevant associated legislation.				Public Protection - Private Sector Housing Team
2.4	Support the decarbonisation of homes (using Government decarbonisation funding), both SKDC properties (Decarbonisation Project) and across the market sector (via funding such as Local Authority Delivery Scheme and the Home Upgrade Grant.	HOUS4	Deliver the £3.3 million decarbonisation programme.	* % of programme delivered * Properties upgraded	Housing Team – Decarbonisation Project Corporate Team – Climate Change and Sustainability Officer
2.5	Achieve the Decent Homes Standard, as a minimum, on all Council properties.	COUN14 HOUS1	Develop and deliver Planned Maintenance Strategy and accompanying action plan.  Review the quality of existing properties across all tenures and seek to reduce the impacts of poor housing on residents and communities.	*Develop and adopt the strategy and action plan. *% of total actions in action plan on target/complete. *Ration of planned to reactive repair work. *Percentage of own Properties meeting the Decent Homes Standard	Housing Technical Services
2.6	Require the minimum Nationally Described Space Standards for all affordable housing.				Planning Team
2.7	Licence Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMO), in accordance with the legislation, to increase standards.				Public Protection - Private Sector Housing Team
2.8	Review the supported exempt accommodation in South Kesteven.				Housing Services

### 3. Support people to live healthy and independent lives in their homes

	What	KPI Corporate Index	Corporate Action	Corporate Target	Who
3.1	Review SKDC sheltered housing provision and ensure it is fit for purpose				Housing Team
3.2	Enable the provision of a wide range of housing options, including specialist housing, across the district				Planning Policy Team  Planning Development Management Team
3.3	Provide disability aids and adaptations (directly for Council housing and via grants for private sector housing)	HOUS2	Ensure services to support residents to remain living in their community with as much independence as possible, ideally within their own home, with the right support.	Number of Adaptations Completed	Housing Team  Public Protection - Private Sector Housing Team
3.4	Provide housing advice and assistance, including for the prevention and assessment of homeless households and provide temporary accommodation, where appropriate.	HOUS12	Deliver an effective Housing Options Service	*Number of cases overdue a full homelessness decision  *Number of homelessness approaches (domestic abuse presented separately)  * Number in temporary accommodation and temporary accommodation spend (benchmarked to peers)  *Number of successful homelessness outcomes (for all the duties owed)	Housing Services – Housing Options Team
3.5	Provide secure housing in safe neighbourhoods to have relative low levels of crime and anti-social behaviour				Housing Team – Tenancy Services  Public Protection  Neighbourhoods Team

	What	KPI Corporate Index	Corporate Action	Corporate Target	Who
3.6	<p>Support people to sustain their housing via:</p> <p>Financial budgeting advice (referrals to partner agencies and grant funding support to Citizens Advice). Cost of Living support.</p> <p>Referrals and signposting to partner agencies for various advice and support.</p>	HOUS13	Protect our most vulnerable residents with robust safeguarding processes.	<p>*Number of 3rd party support referrals</p> <p>* Number of safeguarding referrals (by demographic)</p> <p>*% of referrals actioned within defined timescale</p>	<p>Housing Team – Tenancy Sustainment and Housing Options</p> <p>Cost of Living Team</p>
3.7	Support people to live free from fuel poverty in both Council properties and private housing through direct work, grants and advice.				<p>Technical Services – Repairs and Improvements</p> <p>Corporate Team – Climate Change and Sustainability Officer</p>
3.8	Design housing to allow for households changing needs eg. planning for and implementing housing with adaptable doorways.				<p>Planning Team</p> <p>Housing Team</p>

## 4. Facilitate housing to be sustainable

	What	KPI Corporate Index	Corporate Action	Corporate Target	Who
4.1	Install decarbonisation measures in our own Council properties		SKDC Decarbonisation Project  Greater Lincolnshire Energy Efficiency Network (GLEEN)	Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund (SHDF)	Housing Team – Decarbonisation Team
4.2	Sell SKDC old, energy inefficient, expensive to maintain housing.	HOUS5	Seek to dispose of properties which are economically unviable.		Housing Team
4.3	Reduce carbon emissions through energy efficient housing both in market and social housing - encouraging take up of grants	ENVIRO5  ENVIRO15	Review and implement energy efficiency and renewable energy opportunities across the sheltered and social housing properties.  Review and implement energy efficiency and renewable energy opportunities within private properties in the district.	*% of owned properties EPC C or above  *Implementation of energy conservation measures  *Number of properties improved  *Number of energy efficiency measures implemented	Housing Team – Decarbonisation Project  Corporate Team – Climate Change and Sustainability Officer
4.4	Support people to live free from damp, mould and condensation in Council properties through direct work, grants and advice.	HOUS1	Review the quality of existing properties across all tenures and seek to reduce the impacts of poor housing on residents and communities.	*Number / % of properties with category 1 or 2 HHSRS damp & mould hazards (own stock)	Technical Services – Repairs and Improvements
4.5	Support people to live free from damp, mould and condensation in private housing (sale and for rent) through grants and advice.				Public Protection  Private Sector Housing Team  Corporate Team  Sustainability and Climate Change Manager
4.6	Support people to live free from fuel poverty through grants and advice.				Corporate Team  Sustainability and Climate Change Manager  Cost of Living Team

## 5. Support our communities to be sustainable

	What	KPI Corporate Index	Corporate Action	Corporate Target	Who
5.1	Allocate social housing properties effectively – in terms of the type (including adapted properties) and location.				Housing Team – Housing Options
5.2	Sustain current housing stock where possible – Council housing and Shared Ownership, rather than being sold under the Right to Buy and Right to Acquire.				
5.3	Maximise the housing stock including adapting and converting properties to make best use of them and bringing empty homes back into use.	HOUS3  HOUS9	Review and rationalise the Council's assets portfolio to ensure an optimal return for the Council.  Develop a joint approach to bringing Empty Homes back into use.	*Availability of EPC and Stock Condition Data  *Number of lets per month  *Number of mutual exchanges per month  A working group is planned to establish a new approach to Empty Homes. The creation of KPI measures will be an objective of this group.	Housing Team  Public Protection - Private Sector Housing Team
5.4	Maximise affordable housing – ensuring planning policies are in place to enable delivery and the Council maximises opportunities for development, acquisition and nomination.				Planning Team  Housing Team
5.5	Sustain households in their homes – housing advice financial budgeting advice etc				Housing Team – Housing Options  Change4Lincs  Tenancy Services

# Contact Details

**Alternative formats are available on request:  
audio, large print and Braille**

**South Kesteven District Council  
01476 40 60 80**

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**SOUTH  
KESTEVEN  
DISTRICT  
COUNCIL**



## Housing Strategy Consultation Report December 2023



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## **Purpose**

1. The purpose of this report is to update Cllr Phil Dilks -the Cabinet Member for Housing and Planning and the Cabinet on the results of the consultation undertaken to inform the content and direction of South Kesteven District Council's Housing Strategy.

## **Scope**

2. Because the purpose of this consultation was to obtain feedback on the building blocks and guide the direction of travel of SKDC's Housing Strategy, its scope was focused. Specific stakeholders were identified, contacted directly and asked for their views on potential housing strategy themes, objectives and outcomes. No steps were taken to publicise the consultation more widely at this formative stage.
3. Two sets of stakeholders were identified. One consisted of housing specialists including housing professionals, registered providers, and housebuilders and the second was made up of statutory agencies including the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, Lincolnshire County Council, Town and Parish Councils and Neighbourhood Plan Groups.

## **Objectives**

4. The objectives of the consultation were identified as follows. To:
  - Inform the decision that will be taken by the Council in respect of the introduction of a new Housing Strategy
  - Assess the potential impact on other sections within the Council
  - To ascertain support for the proposed themes, objectives and outcomes of the strategy
  - Understand and be aware of the impact the contents of the Housing Strategy may have on specific groups of stakeholders

## **Timescales**

5. Preparatory work was undertaken during the summer. The consultation ran for 4 weeks, from 1 to 31 October – with a 7 day extension following a request from a couple of parish councils. Analysis of results took place during November, with the results being used to inform the drafting of the priorities, objectives and outcomes of the Housing Strategy.

## **Stakeholders**

6. The stakeholders were identified as follows:
  - South Kesteven DC staff – particularly Housing and Planning
  - Ward, Town and Parish Councillors

- Neighbourhood Plan Groups
- Affordable housing registered providers
- Developers/housebuilders
- Planning and land agents
- Lincolnshire County Council
- Homes England
- Department for Levelling Up, Communities and Housing

## Methodology

7. The table below identifies the method(s) that were used to contact each of the stakeholder types:

Stakeholders	Method(s)	Details
SKDC - staff	Face to face workshop attended by 21 members of staff.	Included housing, planning, corporate projects and climate change staff
Ward and parish councillors and neighbourhood plan groups	Parish Clerks emailed with the link to the survey	55 district councillors were contacted. 78 town and parish clerks were contacted. Also sent to 13 Neighbourhood Plan Groups.
Affordable Housing Register Providers	Affordable Housing Register Providers emailed directly with the survey link	15 Affordable Housing Registered Providers were contacted.
Developers/ Housebuilders	Developers, Housebuilders and Planning and Land Agents contacted by email with the survey link	Sent to 33 developers, land agents and housebuilders.
Lincolnshire County Council	Contacted by email with the survey link	5 individuals from different sections within the County Council were contacted.
Homes England	Contacted by email with the survey link	Sent to the Area Manager for Affordable Housing Growth at Homes England
Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities	Contacted by email with the survey link	Sent to 2 individuals working at the DLUHC
Other organisations	Contacted by email with the survey link	5 people from Lincolnshire Police were contacted. 1 person from the NHS and 1 from Lincolnshire Fire & Rescue were emailed. 3 individuals representing charitable organisations were contacted along with 3 people from other organisations.

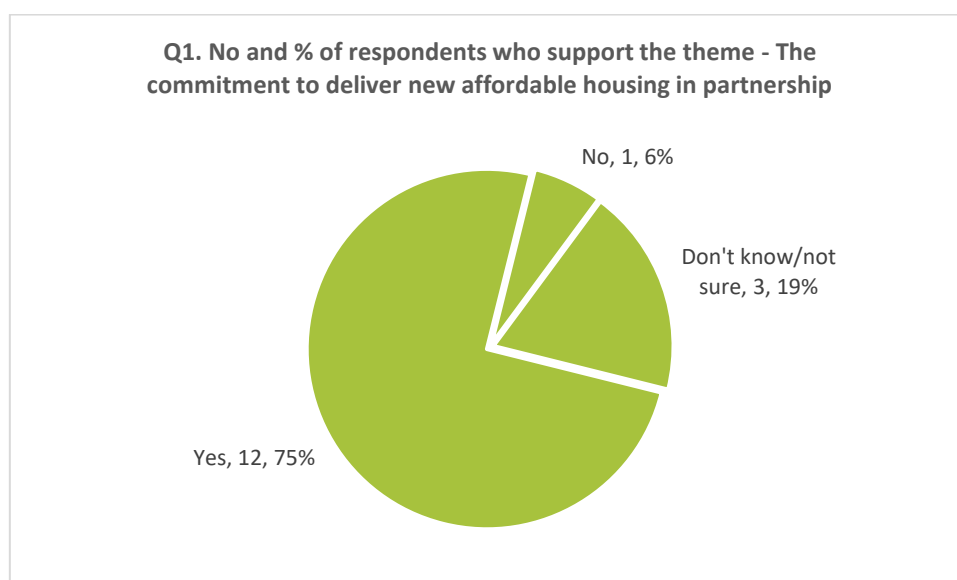
## Details

8. A number of actions were identified. These included:
  - The preparation and approval of content for the surveys - one for housing specialists and one for statutory agencies
  - Setting up the surveys
  - Drafting an email to stakeholders
9. Both surveys followed the same format- although each survey had a slightly different emphasis and content. Both sets of respondents were asked for their opinions on the themes and objectives highlighted in the strategy, and about challenges in their industry and how their organisation was dealing with those challenges.
10. The consultation closed a week later than originally scheduled- following a request received from a couple of the parish councils (as they needed more time) on 2 November 2023. 92 responses were received – an overall response rate of 42.6%. 16 were from housing specialists (30.2%) and 76 were from other statutory agencies (46.6%).

## The results

### Housing – Specialist providers

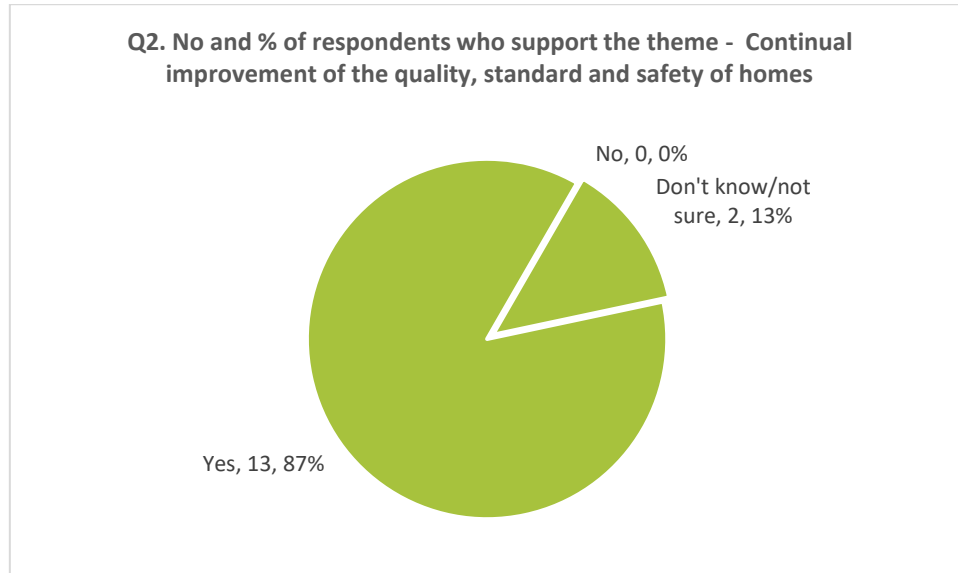
11. The first question asked respondents if they agreed with one of the themes of the Housing Strategy being “The commitment to deliver new affordable housing in partnership”. The majority supported this theme- as shown in the pie chart below:



12. When asked why they had answered in this way, most stressed it was because of the need for affordable housing, as illustrated in a quote from one of the respondents:

**“Affordable housing is essential in any modern community”**

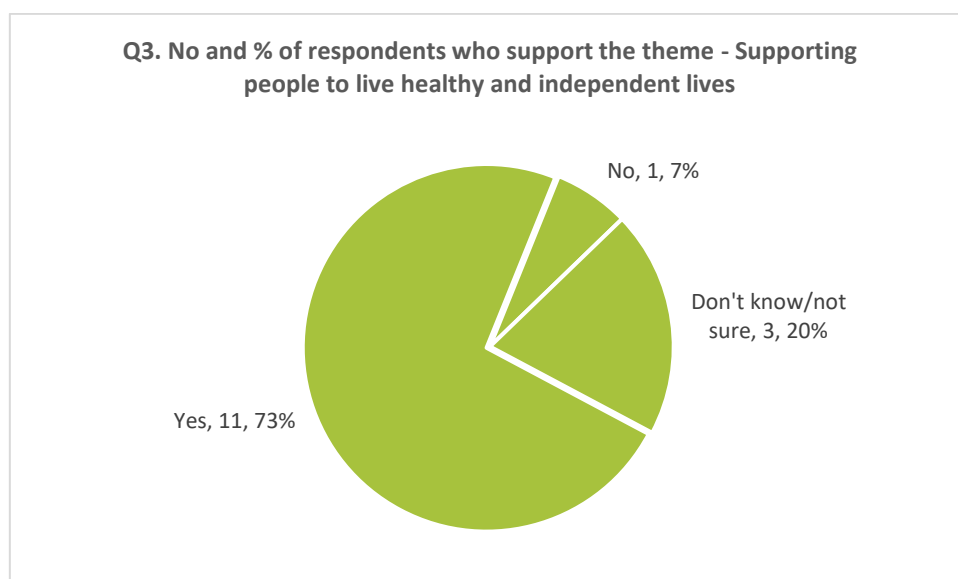
13. There was strong support from respondents for the second theme identified in the draft housing strategy. 13 respondents (86.7%) thought that “Continual improvement of the quality, standard and safety of homes” should be one of the themes of the strategy.



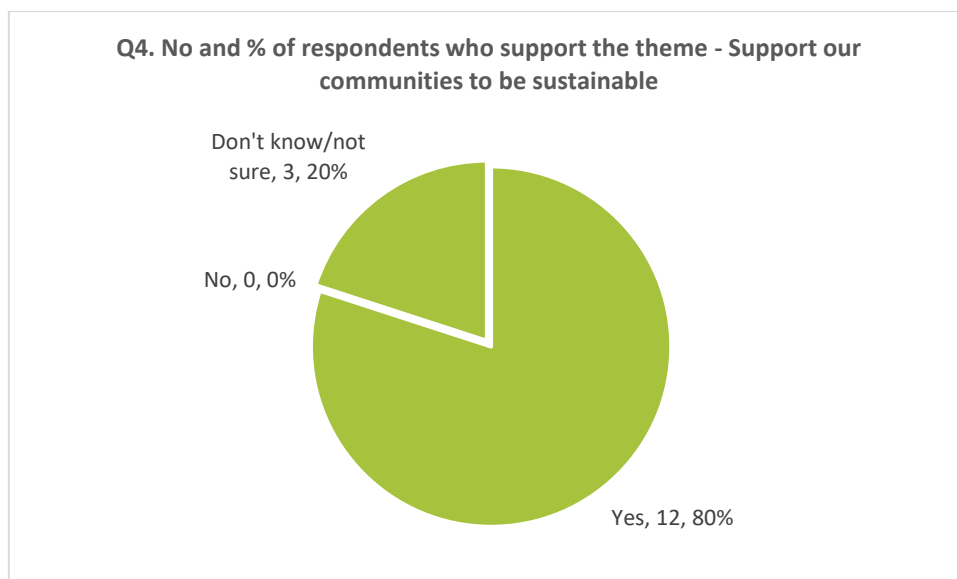
14. A couple of the respondents to this question, whilst supporting the theme, said that there will always be a balance between quality and viability, and this should be recognised. This is illustrated in the quote below:

**“A balance between viability and quality will always need to be made.”**

15. The third theme of the draft housing strategy has been identified as “Supporting people to live healthy and independent lives.” Just under three quarters of those responding (11 or 73.3%) supported this theme, as shown here:



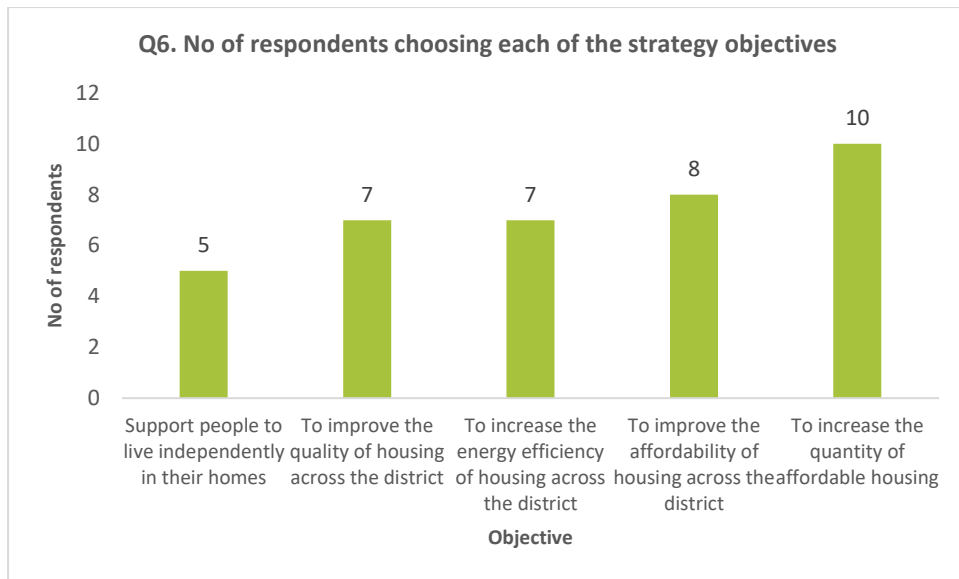
16. “Supporting our communities to be sustainable” proved to be a popular theme. Eight out of ten respondents (12 or 80%) supported this theme, as shown in the chart below:



17. The comments received in relation to this theme varied. They included specific actions being undertaken by respondents to help achieve this goal, as illustrated below:

**“Accent Housing is working on a Local Lettings Plan .... to achieve a blended community that helps to meet the Council's objectives .... and more sustained tenancies for us.”**

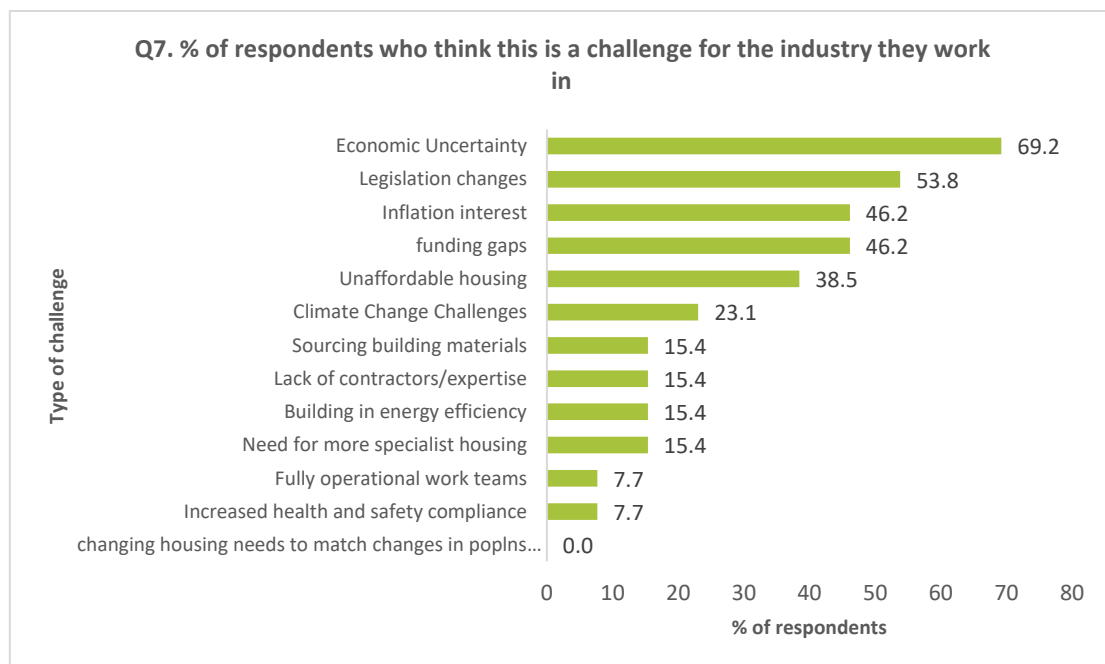
18. When asked to identify if there were any amendments or additions they would like to see to the themes of the strategy, three of the respondents asked specific questions centred around improving the energy efficiency of the existing stock, increasing planning fees to improve timescales for determination and how SK might enable the delivery of more affordable housing. Their questions will be responded to by the working group, as soon as is practicable.
19. Increasing the quantity of affordable housing is viewed by respondents as being the most important objective of the housing strategy. The second most important objective, according to respondents, is to improve the affordability of housing across the district. This is illustrated in the graph below:



20. When asked for additional comments, one respondent suggested that it may be beneficial to treat the objective of generating additional affordable housing stock as a separate and independent workstream, to the objective of improving the energy efficiency and "quality" of existing stock. Most comments were in favour of the provision of additional affordable housing as illustrated here:

**“There is a clear need to improve affordability, providing additional affordable homes, which are actually affordable, is extremely important.”**

21. Economic uncertainty, changes in legislation and funding gaps were all identified as challenges by those working in the housing sector, along with inflation interest and unaffordable housing. The percentage of respondents choosing each of these is detailed in the chart overleaf:



22. Other challenges identified by respondents included planning challenges, a national shortage of Environmental Health Officers and a lack of political motivation (at a national level) to provide sufficient homes.

23. When asked how their organisation was responding to these challenges, partnership working and sharing knowledge and resources were the two most popular choices as shown in the table below:

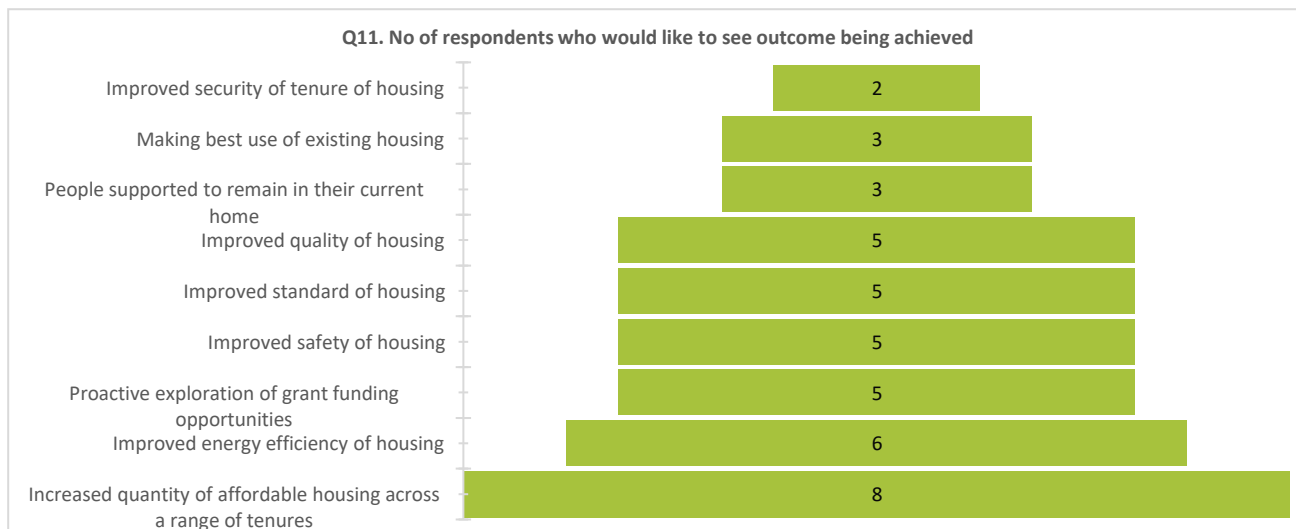
	No	%
Partnership working	8	72.7
Sharing knowledge and resources	4	36.4
Effective consultation	3	27.3
Applying for grant funding	3	27.3
Upskilling and training the existing workforce	3	27.3
Sourcing contractors	2	18.2
In house shadowing and training	2	18.2
Stopping work activity including new development	1	9.1

24. Looking forward, respondents thought uncertainty about legislative changes, meeting affordable housing delivery targets, sourcing contractors and managing customer expectations were the biggest challenges in the next five years. One respondent said that a lack of certainty now will lead to problems in the future:

**“Lack of certainty now is impacting decision making now, which will impact delivery over this time period.”**

25. Respondents thought these challenges could be overcome through improved customer and business insight, partnership working and lobbying central government.

26. The graph below shows the outcomes respondents would like to see the housing strategy achieve, across all tenures of housing. An increase in the quantity of affordable housing across a range of tenures, attracted the most support. The next most popular was a desire to improve the energy efficiency of housing stock.

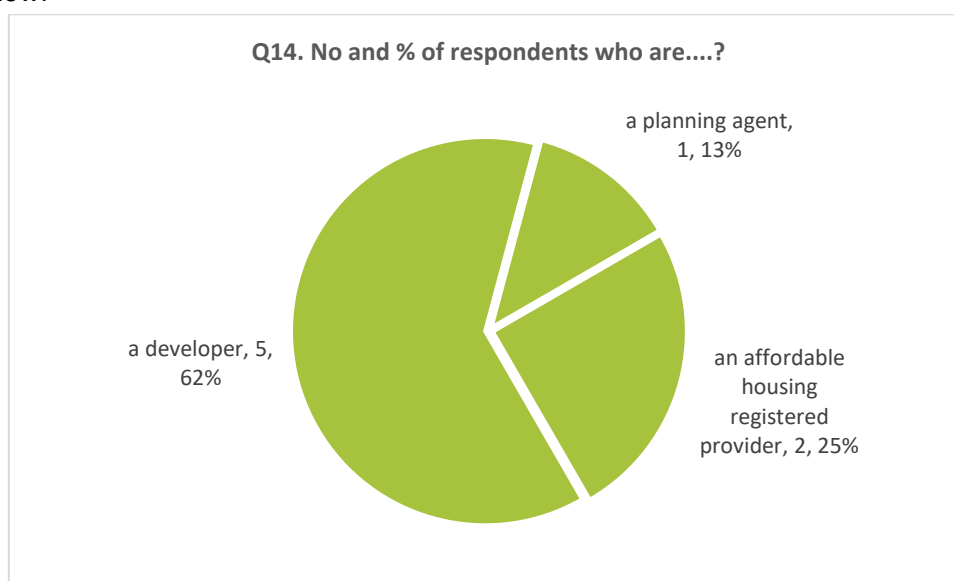


27. When asked to give more detail one housing specialist said:

**“We are supportive of an increased quantity of affordable housing, but this needs to be balanced with viability. Improving quality of housing is positive, but how this is defined and measured opens a door to inefficient policy making and I would suggest building regulations are used as the standard of requirement”.**

28. Respondents were then asked if they would be interested in attending a regular forum with the Council to identify and explore joint grant funding opportunities and /or attending a Council-organised forum for landlords. Around two-thirds said that they would – either online or in person.

29. Of those who specified the organisation they represented; most represented housing developers as illustrated below:

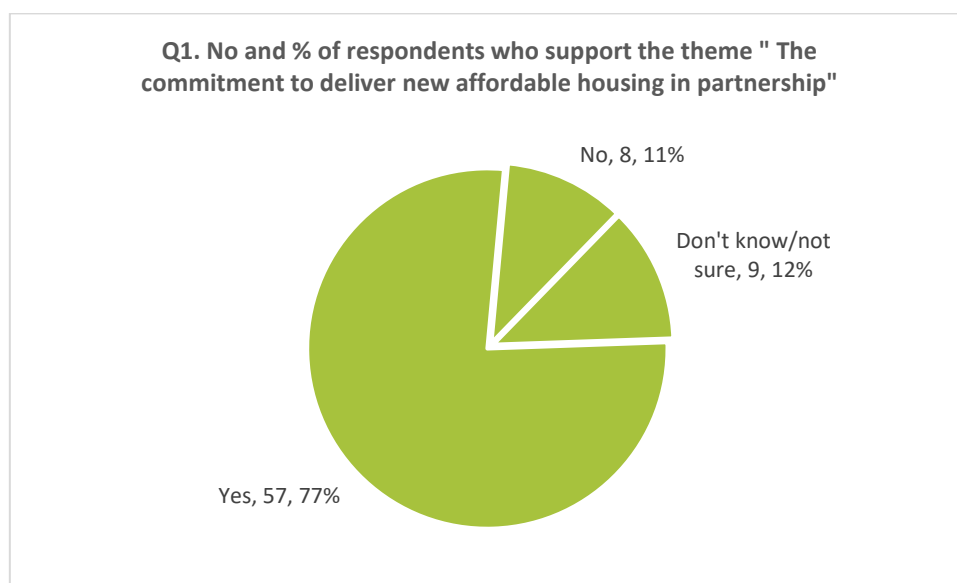




30. Responses were also received from a builder, Framework Housing Association and DASH (an organisation centred on improving housing conditions in the private sector).

### Housing – Statutory Organisations

31. The first question respondents from various organisations were asked was if they supported one of the themes of the draft Housing Strategy which was “The commitment to deliver new affordable housing in partnership”. Over three quarters of those taking part agreed with this theme as illustrated below:



32. When asked why they had chosen to answer in this way, an analysis of the responses revealed it was because how important providing affordable housing is, both at a local and national level.

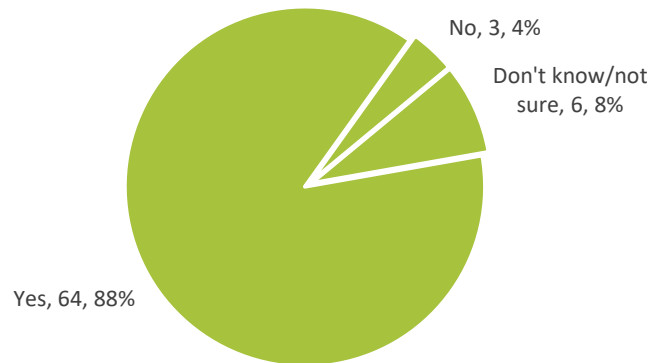
**“To provide affordable housing choices in rural Lincolnshire”**

**“There is a desperate need across the nation for more council and social housing. SK is no exception.”**

33. There was strong support for the second theme identified in the draft Housing Strategy. Nine out of ten respondents thought that “Continual improvement of the quality, standard and safety of homes” was important - recognising the impact poor quality housing can have on other areas of a person’s life as illustrated in this quote

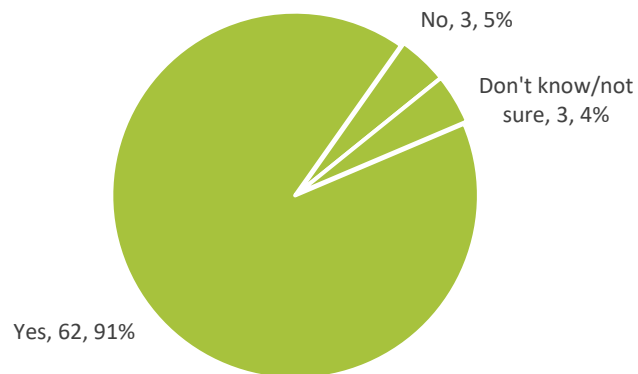
**“Poor quality housing brings multiple social, health and environmental problems which increase costs and reduce the quality of life for all.”**

**Q2. No and % of respondents who support the theme "Continual improvement of the quality, standard and safety of homes"**



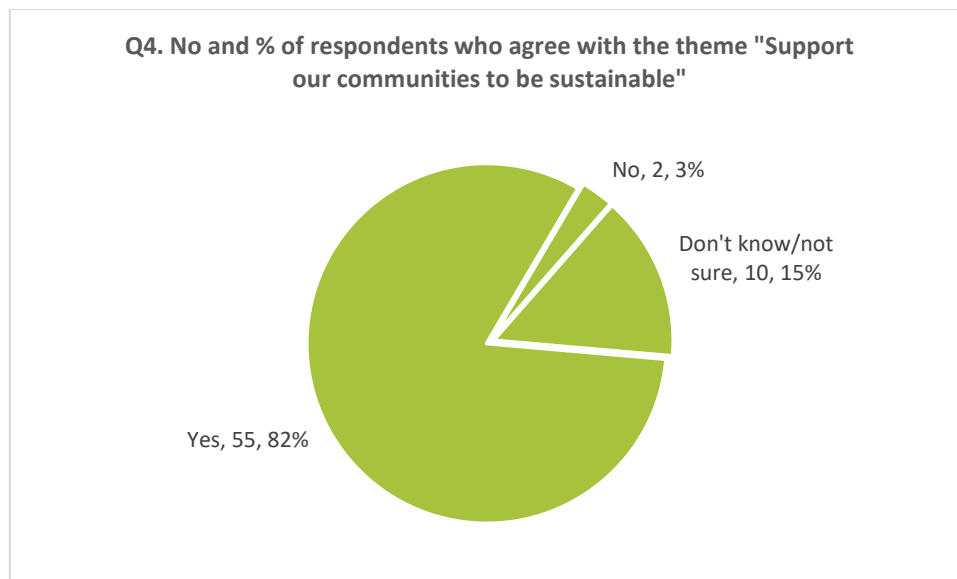
34. The third theme identified in the draft strategy “Supporting people to live healthy and independent lives” was supported by most survey participants. 62 (91.2%) agreed with this area of focus, as shown here:

**Q3. No and % of respondents who support the theme "Supporting people to live healthy and independent lives"**



35. When asked if they thought “Supporting our communities to be sustainable” should be one of the themes of SKDC’s Housing Strategy, four fifths of respondents said that they thought it should. An examination of some of the comments made in relation to this theme tend to suggest, that whilst broadly in favour, some respondents would have welcomed more information on what this means in practical terms. This is illustrated in the quote below:

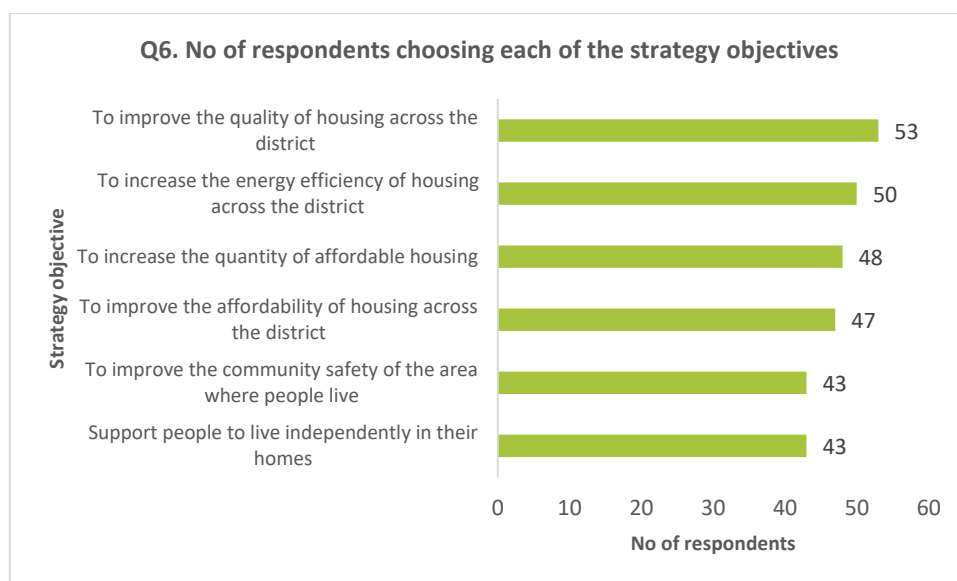
**“Need to understand more of the thinking behind it. .... If it is delivered fairly for all, then probably yes.”**



36. When asked to identify if there were any amendments or additions they would like to see to the themes of the strategy, one respondent suggested an alternative theme centred around local communities decision making powers. Others thought the importance of having the appropriate infrastructure in place, prior to building additional homes, should be reflected in the themes of the strategy. This is illustrated in the quote below:

**“Regarding any housing developments there needs to be sufficient and appropriate infrastructure in place.”**

37. There was broad support for all of the objectives identified in SKDC’s draft strategy, with the percentages of respondents supporting each of them ranging from 68.3% to 84.1%. Improving the quality of housing across the district was thought to be the most important, with increasing the energy efficiency of housing across the district being the second most important. The graph below shows the number of respondents choosing each of the objectives:



38. Whilst most who commented used the opportunity to state which objective they thought was the most important, and why, a handful suggested alternative objectives. These included the importance of infrastructure, as illustrated in the quote below:

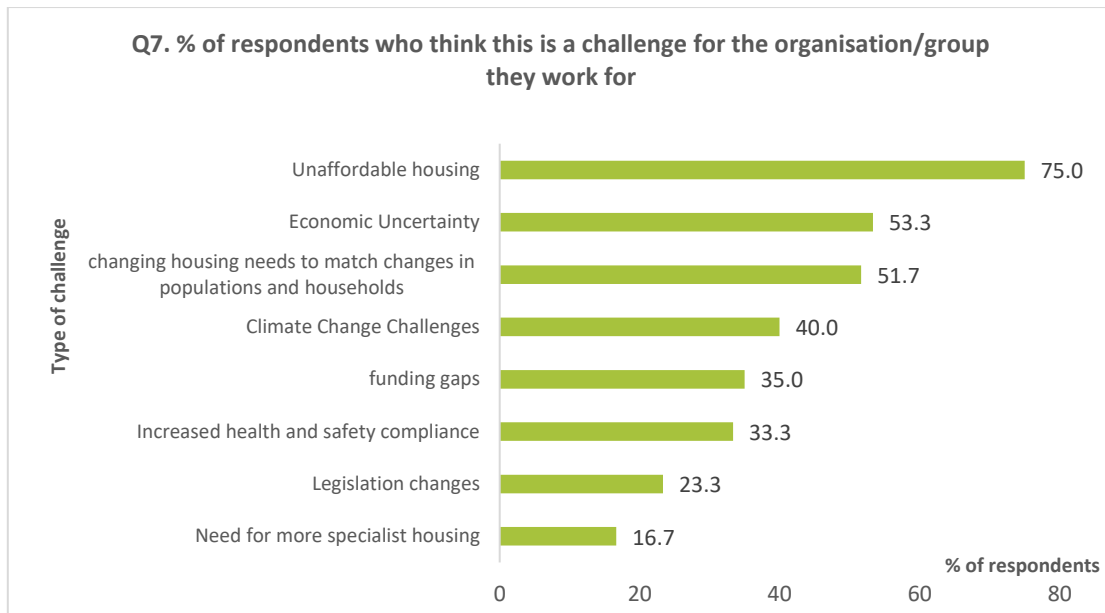
**“To ensure new housing is well provided with appropriate services, including public transport, education, retail, leisure, access to green spaces.”**

39. Unaffordable housing, economic uncertainty and changing housing needs to match changes in populations and households were thought to be the top challenges for the groups and organisations respondents represented. When asked to comment, examples of feedback included:

**“Increase in homelessness and rough sleeping”**

**“We need a moratorium on rents and a renters/landlords conference to look at setting rent bands for properties within the sector.”**

**“Size of families needing 4+ bedrooms”**



40. When asked how their organisation was responding to these challenges, sharing knowledge and resources along with effective consultation were the two most popular choices. Also popular were partnership working and applying for grant funding as shown in the table below:

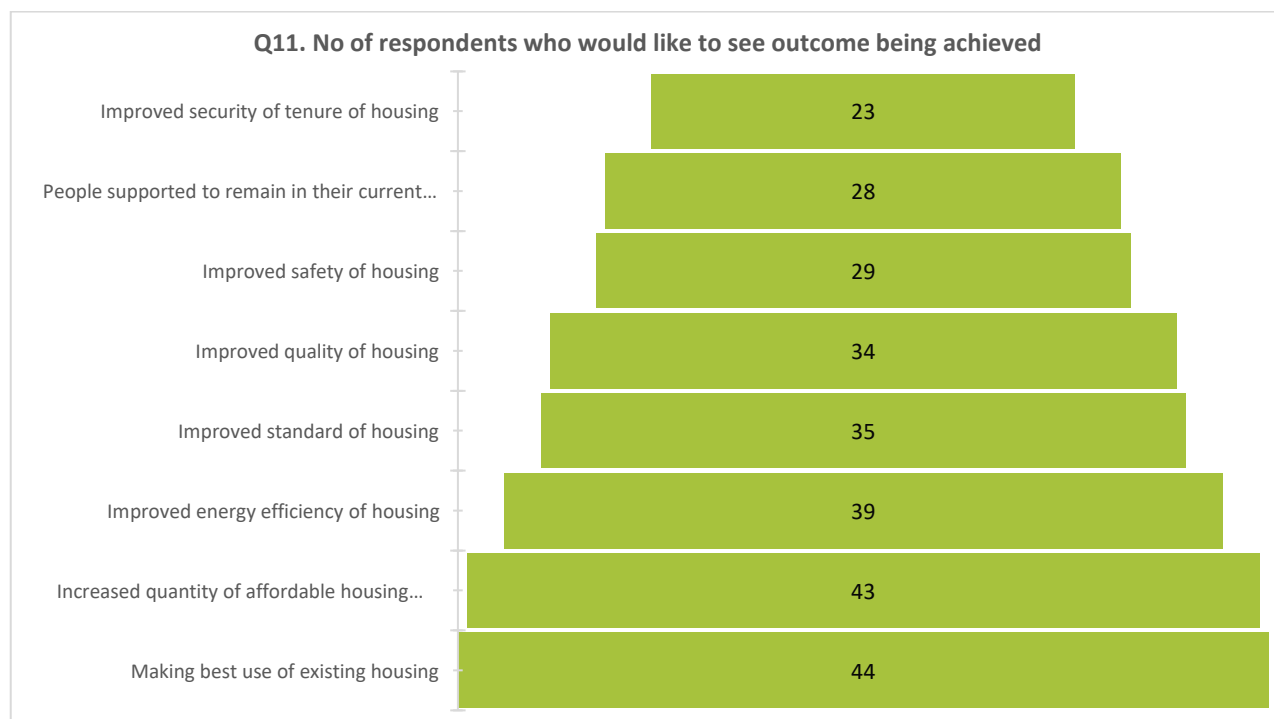
	No	%
Sharing knowledge and resources	20	54.1
Effective consultation	19	51.4
Partnership working	16	43.2
Applying for grant funding	15	40.5
In house shadowing and training	8	21.6
Upskilling and training the existing workforce	7	18.9

41. Looking forward, meeting the needs of the local community, uncertainty about funding and effective consultation were thought to be the biggest challenges for groups or organisations responding to this survey. When asked to comment on this, or provide details of the challenges they expect to face, a wide variety of feedback was received. This included challenges caused by external factors like the high cost of living as referred to below:

**“Increased impact of cost of living creating more debt.”**

42. Respondents thought these challenges could be overcome through partnership working, improved surveying and assessment of housing needs and adopting best practice through effective benchmarking. These were chosen by 60.6%, 48.5% and 30.3% of respondents respectively.

43. The graph below shows the outcomes respondents would like to see the housing strategy achieve, across all tenures of housing. Making best use of existing housing and increasing the quantity of affordable housing across a range of tenures attracted the most support. The next most popular was a desire to improve the energy efficiency of housing stock.



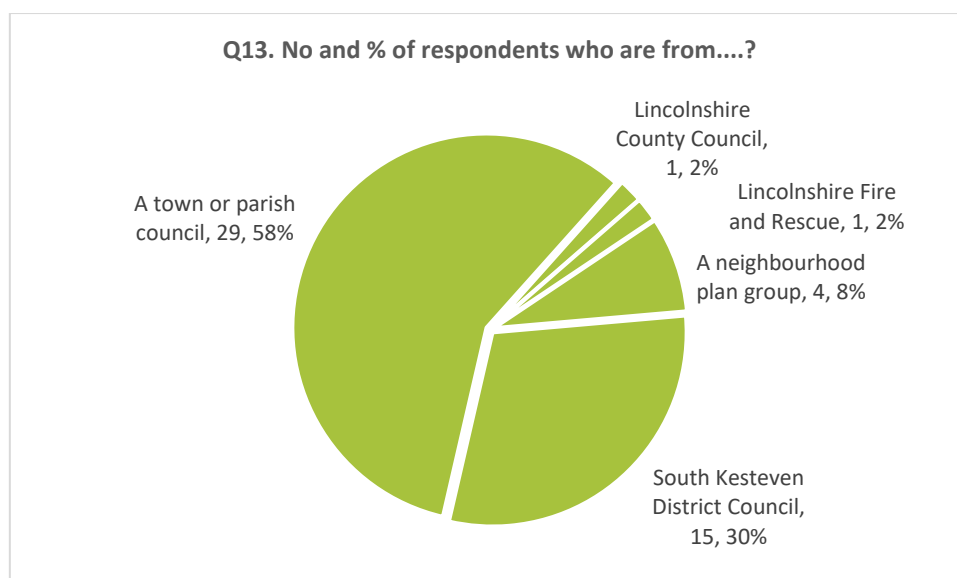
44. When asked to give more detail or identify additional outcomes one respondent mentioned the importance of flexibility – specifically in relation to household size and composition. Another referred to the limitations imposed by budgetary constraints. These are illustrated in the two quotes below:

**“Increased flexibility to meet changing needs of households e.g., managing upsizing and downsizing.”**

**“All these are admirable intentions, but budgetary constraints are bound to limit what realistically can be achieved.”**

45. Twenty-four respondents said that they would be interested in attending a regular forum with the Council to identify and explore joint grant funding opportunities – either online or in person.

46. Responses were received from a number of different organisations including town and parish councils, district council staff and members, Lincolnshire County Council and Lincolnshire Fire and Rescue, and Neighbourhood Plan Groups. The distribution of responses is shown in the chart below:



## Conclusion

47. The Cabinet member for Housing and Planning Cllr Phil Dilks and other members are asked to note the results of this consultation. Just under 100 responses were received from individuals representing organisations across the public and private sector – an overall response rate of 42.6%. Whilst the number of responses received is small it should be noted that the consultation was targeted towards a finite number of people, groups and organisations, as its aim was to gather feedback about the building blocks of the strategy - its themes, objectives and outcomes – from specific stakeholders at a formative stage in its development. The feedback gathered will then be used to inform the content and direction of SKDC's Housing Strategy for the next 5 years.
48. Positive feedback was received for each of the themes identified in the draft strategy. The percentage of respondents supporting each of the themes ranged from 73.3% of those representing housing specialists to 91.2% of those representing statutory organisations who agreed with the theme "Supporting people to live healthy and independent lives".
49. There was broad support for all the objectives that have been identified in SKDC's draft strategy. However, it is interesting that the "top two" were different for each set of stakeholders. Improving the quality of housing across the district and increasing the energy efficiency of housing across the district were chosen more frequently by those representing statutory organisations. Increasing the quantity of affordable housing and improving the affordability of housing across the district were chosen more often by housing specialists.
50. The outcomes identified as being most important by both sets of stakeholders were similar. Both sets of stakeholders thought it was important to improve the energy efficiency of housing stock and increase the

quantity of affordable housing across the district. There was one notable exception though - “Making best use of existing housing”. This was the most popular choice for respondents representing statutory organisations, but was much less popular with those representing specialist housing providers.

51. The feedback from the consultation should now be considered in depth with a view to incorporating suggestions where appropriate and feasible into the first draft of South Kesteven District Council’s Housing Strategy for 2024- 2029.

Prepared by Deb Wyles  
Communications and Consultation  
22 November 2023





## Housing Strategy Consultation August 2025



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## **Purpose**

1. The purpose of this report is to update the Cabinet Member for Housing Cllr Virginia Moran and SKDC's Cabinet on the results of the online consultation undertaken to inform the content and direction of South Kesteven District Council's Housing Strategy.
2. Initially consulted on in October 2023 for a 4-week period to scope out the strategy, identify challenges and provisional priorities to assist with formulating the content of the new strategy, the content of the Council's Housing Strategy has now been drafted. It has five priorities, each with their own ambitions and outcomes. As part of the consultation process, specific stakeholders were contacted and asked to comment on each of these areas.

## **Scope**

3. The purpose of this consultation was to obtain feedback on the principles of SKDC's Housing Strategy. Its scope was focused. Specific stakeholders were identified, contacted directly and asked for their views on a vision for the strategy, five priorities as well as ambitions and outcomes for each of the areas.

## **Objectives**

4. The objectives of the consultation were identified as follows. To:
  - Inform the decision that will be taken by the Council in respect of the introduction of a new Housing Strategy
  - Ascertain support for the priorities, ambitions and outcomes of the strategy

## **Timescales**

5. Preparatory work was undertaken during the summer. The consultation ran for 3 weeks, from 9<sup>TH</sup> July to 31<sup>st</sup> July 2025. Analysis of results took place during August, with the results being used to inform the content of the Housing Strategy.

## **Stakeholders**

6. The stakeholders were identified as follows:
  - South Kesteven DC staff – particularly Housing and Planning
  - Ward, Town and Parish Councillors
  - Neighbourhood Plan Groups
  - Affordable housing registered providers
  - Developers/housebuilders
  - Planning and land agents
  - Lincolnshire County Council
  - Homes England
  - Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government
  - Emergency services

- Health Services

## Methodology

7. The table below identifies the method(s) that were used to contact each of the stakeholder types:

Stakeholders	Method(s)
Ward and parish councillors and neighbourhood plan groups	Emailed directly
Affordable Housing Register Providers	Emailed directly
Developers/ Housebuilders	Emailed directly
Lincolnshire County Council	Emailed directly
Homes England	Emailed directly
Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government	Emailed directly
Other organisations	Emailed directly

## Details

8. A number of actions were identified. These included:

- The preparation and approval of content for the survey
- Setting up the survey
- Drafting an email to stakeholders
- Analysing responses
- Writing the report

9. Respondents were asked for their opinions on the priorities, ambitions and outcomes outlined in the strategy.

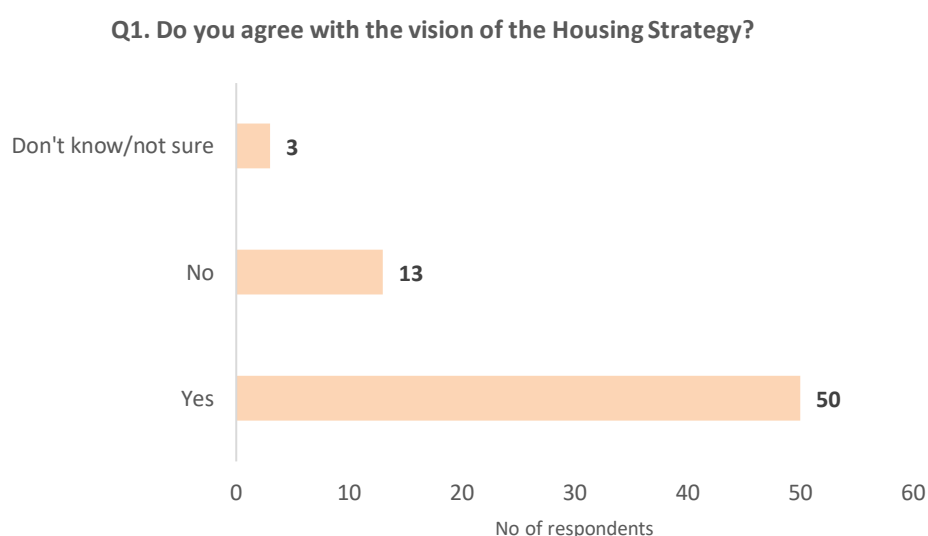
10. 67 responses were received – an overall response rate of 39.4 %. Responses were received from parish and ward councillors, Lincolnshire County Council, the NHS and the Emergency Services.

## The results

11. Respondents were asked if they agreed with the vision of SKDC’s Housing Strategy. The vision for housing across South Kesteven was:

To have a range of secure and safe good quality sustainable housing of all tenures of market; affordable; social and specialist housing. We will support people to live healthy and independent lives in their homes, which meet changing needs now and, in the future, in sustainable communities.

12. Three quarters of those who responded (50 or 75.8%) agreed with the vision outlined in the strategy, as illustrated below:



13. When those who chose to answer either no or don’t know/not sure were then asked what they thought the vision for the strategy should include, their responses could be grouped into the following themes:

**Prioritizing Infrastructure and Essential Services:** Many responses emphasized the need to improve existing infrastructure—such as roads, doctors, dentists, schools, and policing—before adding new housing developments. Concerns expressed included overstretched services, increased traffic, lack of leisure facilities, and inadequate public amenities.

**“It should focus on the infrastructure of all new sites first.”**

**Sustainable and Appropriate Housing Development:** There is a strong desire to focus on redeveloping derelict or underused urban areas rather than expanding villages. Respondents highlighted the negative impact of large housing allocations in small villages and placing new residents in areas with sufficient infrastructure and accessibility.

**“More focus required on redeveloping derelict or under used urban areas to revitalise towns rather than focus on building in villages.”**

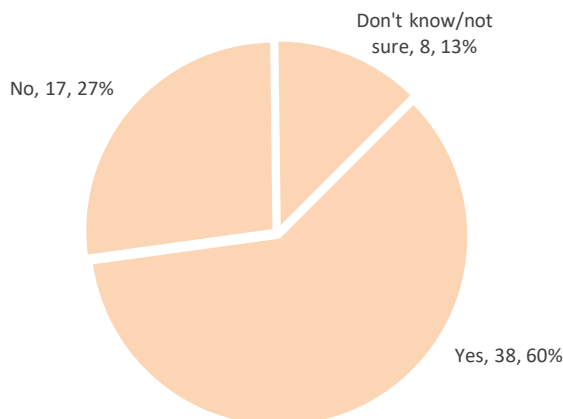
**Community and Environmental Considerations:** Feedback stressed the importance of considering the impact on existing communities and the environment. Suggestions included fostering integration, addressing anti-social behaviour, and encouraging innovative housing models that reflect modern lifestyles and diverse needs.

**“Please do not dump problem tenants in villages that cannot handle their ASB - with virtually no Police or SK support...”**

#### **Priority One - To deliver new affordable and specialist housing in partnership**

14. Respondents were then asked for their opinions on each of the priorities in the strategy. The first priority contained in the strategy was the commitment to deliver new affordable and specialist housing in partnership. Those taking part in the consultation were told that there is currently a nationally recognised housing crisis and that housing supply does not match housing demand, for both affordable and specialist housing. The mission of this priority is to “ensure there is a pipeline of new affordable and specialist housing across the district, which meets different housing needs”.
15. When asked for their opinion on this mission, two thirds of respondents (38 or 60.3%) agreed. Just over a quarter disagreed (17 or 27%). This is shown below:

**Q3. Do you agree with the mission of this priority?**



16. The purpose of the fourth question on the survey was to encourage respondents to suggest any alternative aims they would like to see. However, an analysis of their responses revealed that rather than supply alternatives, they used the opportunity to voice their concerns. These could be grouped into three themes:

- **Concerns About Infrastructure and Community Resources:** Many responses highlighted the strain that additional housing places on existing infrastructure, such as schools, healthcare, and public transport. There is a strong sentiment that infrastructure improvements and sustainable community planning should precede or accompany new housing developments.

**“Additional housing, especially in this sector, places increasing and unsustainable demands on other services within the area.”**

- **Criticism of Current Housing Policies and Market Dynamics:** Several comments questioned the effectiveness of current affordable housing schemes, noting issues like inflated prices, limited social housing, and the existence of empty homes that could be refurbished. There appears to be scepticism about whether new builds truly address local needs.

**“There are very many empty houses that could be refurbished to help meet government housing targets.”**

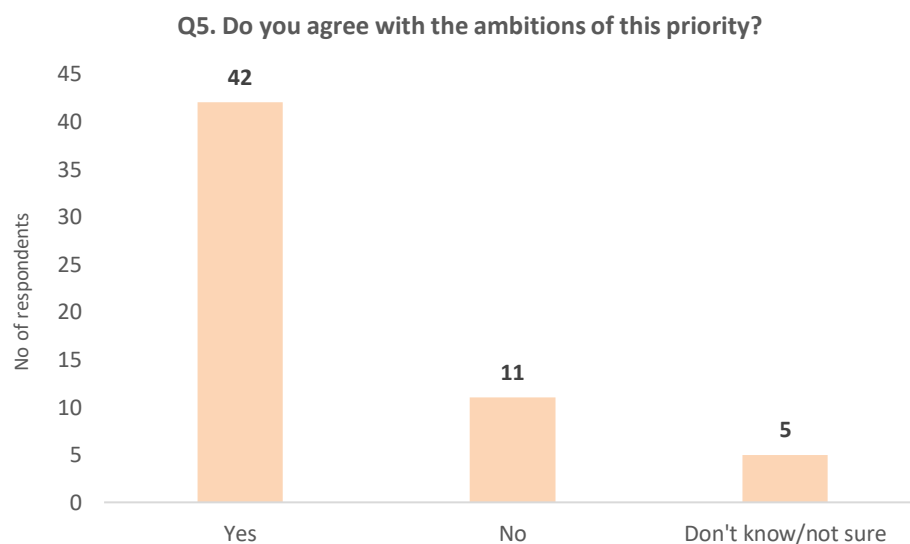
- **Impact on Local Communities and Land Use:** Respondents expressed concerns about the impact of new housing on rural areas, farmland, and property values. There are worries about forced development, the effect on local businesses, and the integration of new residents.

**“Not more housing in villages taking up farmers land”**

17. The ambitions of this priority are to increase supply both directly by the Council, and also by working with partner agencies. They include:

- Increasing the supply of sustainable and high-quality Council-provided housing, both through new build development, acquisitions and conversions.
- Working with developers, affordable housing registered providers and private landlords to ensure high quality, sustainable affordable housing is facilitated.
- Working with the county council and specialist housing registered providers and developers to facilitate delivery.
- Ensuring the correct planning policies are in place and applied effectively, to enable the delivery of affordable and specialist housing.
- Bringing empty homes back into use, including for the delivery of affordable housing.

18. Just over seven out of ten respondents (42 or 72.4%) agreed with the ambitions outlined above. This is illustrated in the graph below:



19. The purpose of question six was to enable respondents to suggest alternative ambitions. Their comments can be grouped into the following themes:

- **Infrastructure and Service Capacity:** Many responses emphasized the need for improved infrastructure and public services, such as schools and healthcare, to support new housing developments. Concerns were raised about existing services being at capacity and the lack of additional facilities when new homes are built.

**“At least add some infrastructure with these allocations. Another 70 houses have been built in my village and all the Services are at capacity....”**

- **Strategic Housing Allocation and Use of Existing Stock:** There is a strong preference for placing affordable and specialist housing in towns with accessible facilities and transport links, rather than in villages. Respondents advocated prioritizing the use of empty or neglected properties in towns and cautioned against selling off existing housing stock at low prices.

**“Mission is secure but affordable and specialist homes should be in towns with accessible facilities and close to transport routes. Not villages.”**

- **Community Engagement and Sustainable Development:** Suggestions included working closely with communities and small businesses, encouraging innovation, and ensuring developments are fit for purpose and sustainable. Concerns were also expressed about the balance between developer profit and council objectives, as well as the social impact of housing allocations.

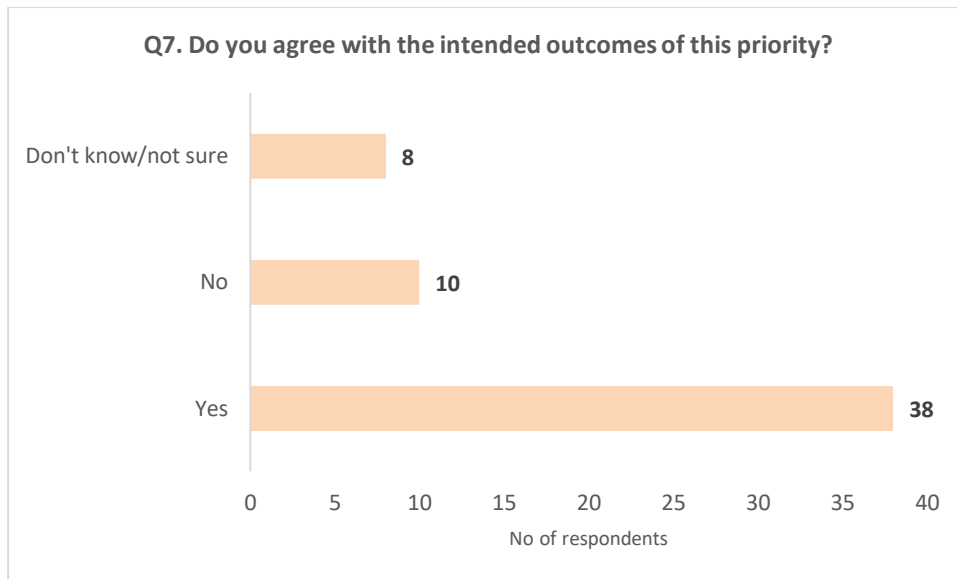
**“Developers need to achieve profit - this is at direct odds with a not-for-profit council - costs will be prohibitive.”**

20. Respondents were then asked if they agreed with the outcomes the Council would like to achieve for this priority by 2030. They included:

- The net supply of all types and sizes of affordable housing has increased, both within our own housing stock and across the district
- A 3-year pipeline of new Council housing and a 1-year pipeline of new partner registered provider affordable housing, as a minimum.
- An increase in various types of new specialist housing across the district.
- New build affordable ground floor apartments and bungalows provided by the Council will be adapted to suit the needs of our residents, where feasible.
- Policies and procedures will be in place both within housing and planning services which enable the delivery of new affordable and specialist housing now and in the future.

21. As illustrated in the chart overleaf, around two thirds of respondents (38 or 67.9%) agreed with these outcomes. Just under one in five (10 or 17.9%) disagreed.





22. The eighth question on the survey asked respondents if they wanted to suggest any alternative outcomes. Their feedback can be summarised into three themes:

- **Infrastructure and Service Provision:** Many responses emphasized the need for adequate infrastructure and essential services to be established before new housing developments proceed. Concerns raised included the lack of health centres, accessibility to local amenities, and the risk of overburdening existing infrastructure.

**“You can't keep building properties, whoever they are for, before getting the basics right in the areas you want to put them.”**

- **Strategic Planning and Location:** There was a strong call for refining policies to ensure housing is built in appropriate locations, with priority given to areas where residents can access necessary facilities. Respondents stressed the importance of not negatively impacting existing communities and avoiding indiscriminate development.

**“Agree in principle but priority for affordable housing needs to be positioned where residents can access facilities and have infrastructure that will not impede or cost them to live”**

- **Measurable Outcomes and Realistic Goals:** Several comments highlighted the absence of clear metrics and realistic timelines in current plans. Respondents requested specific targets, achievable outcomes by 2030, and referenced previous planning documents as potential resources for improvement.

**“There are no metrics in these outcomes. Actual numbers need including...”**

23. Question 9 on the survey provided respondents with the opportunity to mention any other changes, additions or deletions they would like to see to this section of the draft strategy document. 14 respondents commented.

- **Infrastructure and Service Capacity:** Many responses highlighted concerns about the strain additional housing places on local infrastructure and essential services, such as medical facilities, schools,

policing, and roads. There was a strong call for improvements to infrastructure and public services before further housing development, with worries that current systems are already stretched and may collapse under increased demand.

**“If there is no thought towards providing the local services, these additional homes will cause the local GP's, hospitals and other similar services, to collapse under the stress”**

- **Housing Needs and Community Suitability:** Respondents emphasized the importance of aligning new housing with the needs of specific populations, particularly the ageing community. Suggestions included building homes close to towns and amenities, prioritizing vacant housing refurbishment, and ensuring developments do not overtake village character. There were also calls for more measurable targets and data-driven approaches to address diverse accommodation needs.

**“Ageing population need homes close to towns, public transport and shops you can walk to. Not building in villages!”**

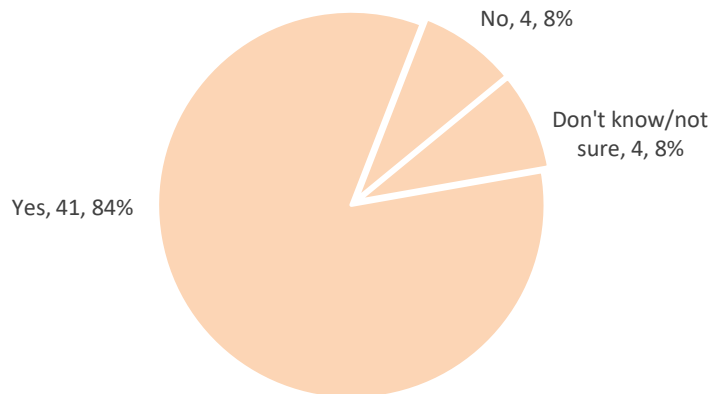
- **Community Impact and Sustainability:** Concerns were raised about the broader impact of housing development on community identity, green spaces, and sustainability. Respondents stressed the need for partnership working, prevention of homelessness, and strategies that support health, wellbeing, and independence. The importance of maintaining village character and preventing overdevelopment was also noted.

**“.... Use of housing data to understand need of the community, not just property type but additional information such as self-contained or shared accommodation, support needs etc....”**

#### **Priority Two - To continually improve the quality, standard and safety of homes**

24. The second priority in SKDC’s Housing Strategy was to continually improve the quality, standard and safety of homes. Those taking part in the consultation were told that South Kesteven District Council is required to meet legal duties on the health, safety and quality of both Council housing stock and all other housing across the district. This includes meeting Building Safety Regulations; the Regulator of Social Housing standards of safety and quality and using the Housing Health and Safety Rating System to check for any hazards, particularly in private rented properties. The mission of this priority is “to ensure housing meets legislative requirements of high quality, standard and safety.”
25. More than eight out of ten respondents (41 or 83.7%) agreed with this statement. Only 4 respondents (8.2%) disagreed. This is illustrated overleaf:

**Q10. Do you agree with the mission of this priority?**



26. The reasons for disagreement varied. One suggested that it should include an emphasis on energy efficiency and renewable energy, another that it was too focused as shown in the quotes below:

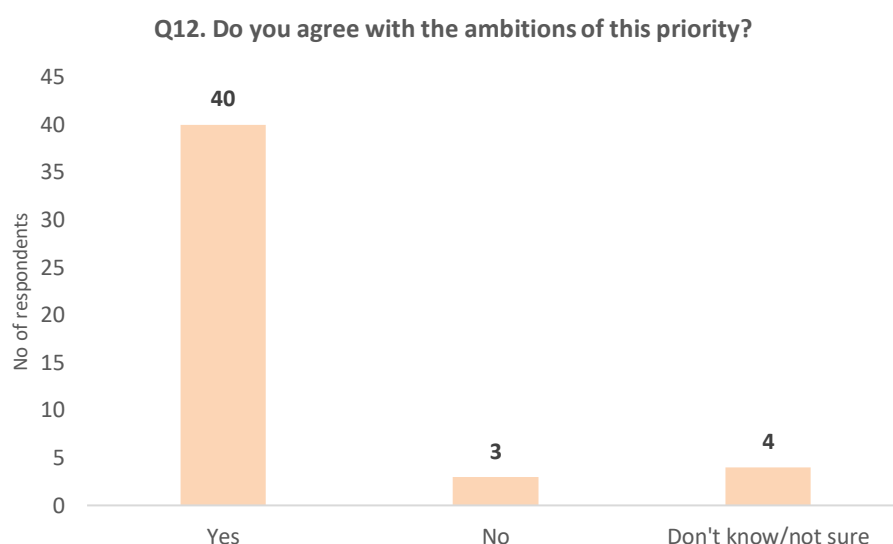
**“Should include energy efficiency and use of renewable energy”**

**“That is too narrow”**

27. The ambitions of this priority are to improve the Council housing stock and ensure that private housing is safe and of good quality. They include:

- Improving the quality, standard and safety of our Council housing stock to the Decent Homes Standard as a minimum and carrying out timely repairs and regular maintenance.
- Listening to our customers and responding to any concerns regarding the quality, standard or safety of their Council home.
- Ensuring the private rented housing stock meets legislative requirements and the use of enforcement where they do not.
- Ensuring that, through the planning and building control functions, housing across the district is of a high-quality standard and safe.

28. Most respondents (40 or 85.1%) agreed with the ambitions associated with this priority, as illustrated in the graph overleaf:



29. When asked to describe why they didn't agree, the reasons were varied. One respondent said that the ambitions needed to reflect the changes that have taken place in wider society, another that there should be a focus on energy efficiency and renewable energy as shown below:

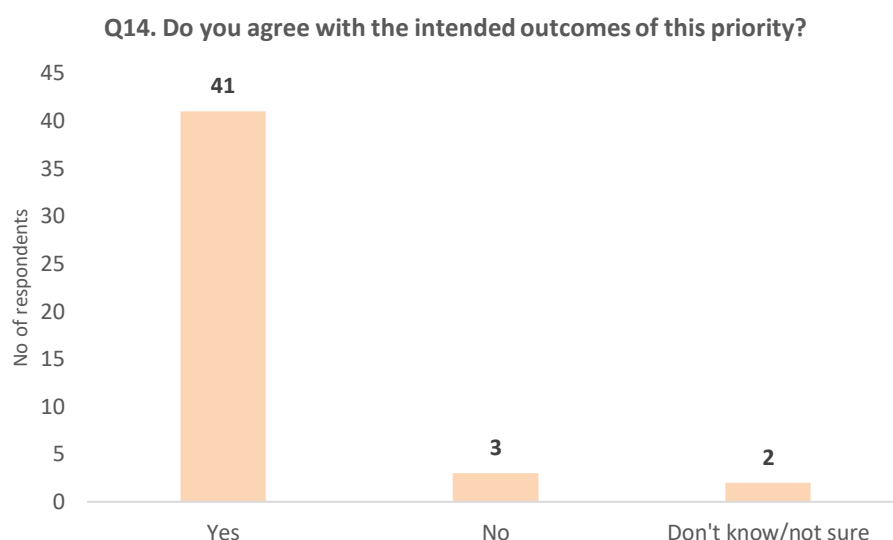
**“Need to be much more ambitious and sensitive to societal changes.”**

**“safe, good quality, energy efficient and use of renewables”**

30. Respondents were then asked if they agreed with the outcomes the Council would like to achieve for this priority by 2030. They included:

- All Council housing stock to meet the Decent Homes Standard as a minimum and we are compliant with all required health and safety checks.
- Provision of an effective repairs and maintenance service and improvements to housing stock.
- We routinely and actively listen to our customers about any repairs or maintenance issues of Council properties, take timely action and provide feedback regularly.
- Private rented housing is of a good quality and standard and meets legislative requirements.

31. Most respondents (41 or 89.1%) agreed with the intended outcomes as illustrated overleaf:



32. When asked to qualify why they didn't agree with the intended outcomes, only one respondent provided an explanation which was that they didn't know.
33. Question 16 on the survey provided respondents with the opportunity to mention any other changes, additions or deletions they would like to see to this section of the draft strategy document. Five respondents commented. One asked the Council to concentrate on vacant properties, another asked about regulation of the private rented sector. Another asked for more information about engagement with tenants. These are illustrated below:

**As previously stated, concentrate on vacant houses"**

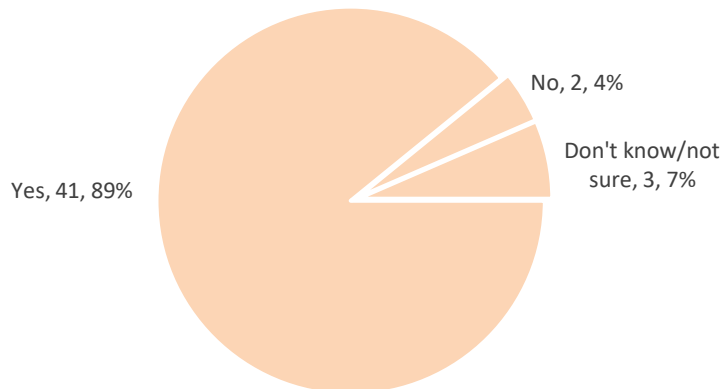
**"Are the council thinking of bringing in regulation of the private rented sector either through a selective or additional licencing scheme?**

**"...there is limited detail on how community input will shape delivery. A more robust engagement framework could improve buy-in...."**

### **Priority Three - To support people to live healthy and independent lives in their homes**

34. The third priority identified in the strategy was to support people to live healthy and independent lives in their homes. Free from damp and mould, easy to heat and keep cool, their home should also be accessible and suitable for their needs, providing somewhere to live free from any harm or abuse. The mission for this priority was "to support people to be independent and healthy, within both private and social housing, with timely and effective interventions by SKDC."
35. When asked for their opinion on this mission, nine out of ten respondents (41 or 89.1%) agreed with it. Two respondents didn't agree and three weren't sure or didn't know. This is illustrated in the pie chart overleaf:

**Q17. Do you agree with the mission of this priority?**



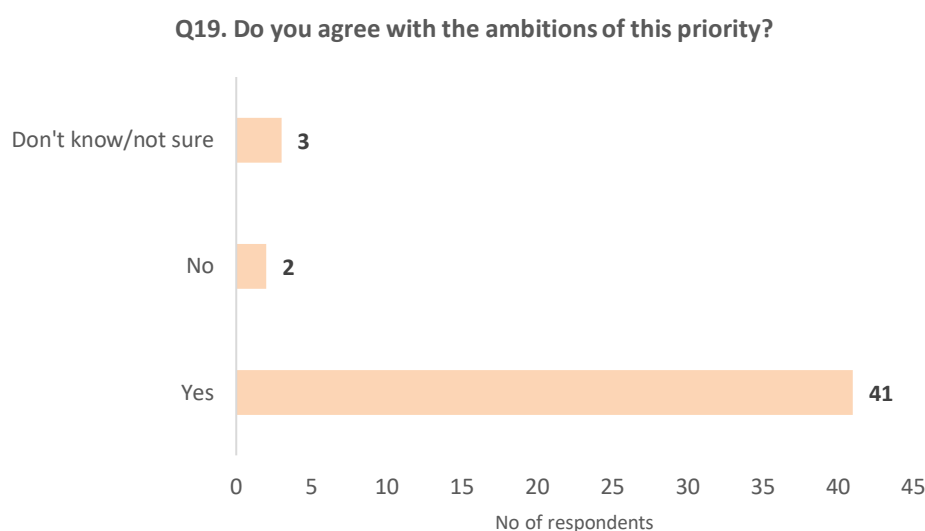
36. The comments received were generally in favour of this ideal, but were concerned about how hard it might be to deliver, and at what cost to the taxpayer as illustrated below:

**“Good aims but at what cost to tax payers?”**

37. The ambitions of this priority are centred around people receiving the support they need to live independently and include:

- Working in partnership with other relevant professional agencies to improve residents standard of living and quality of life.
- Proactively ensuring the housing needs of our most vulnerable residents are met.
- Providing housing advice to those who require it.
- Preventing homelessness where possible and addressing the underlying causes so that it becomes rare, brief and non-recurring.
- Enabling people to stay in their home and receive care and support, where required, possible and when they wish this.
- Ensuring residents' homes are free from damp, mould and condensation and that they are not living in fuel poverty.

38. Question 19 asked those taking part in the survey if they agreed with these ambitions. Most (41 or 89.1%) did. Five respondents chose to answer either no or don't know/not sure as shown on the graph overleaf:



39. One respondent expressed concern about how these ambitions might be achieved, given the current demands on infrastructure as shown below:

**“Not sure how this will be achieved considering lack of social care, doctors”**

40. Respondents were then asked if they agreed with the outcomes the Council would like to achieve for this priority by 2030. They included:

- Meeting the housing needs of vulnerable residents
- Providing housing advice to all who require it. Rehousing eligible households in the highest housing need within a reasonable timeframe
- Reducing the number of homeless households from the current level
- Increasing the range of housing options, to minimise the number of residents moving into care homes, where it is possible for someone to stay in their current home with care.
- Anti-social behaviour the Council is responsible for tackling is dealt with effectively.
- Reducing the number of households in cost-of-living crisis difficulties (including fuel poverty).

41. Most of those participating (38 or 86.4%) agreed with the outcomes stated. Only a handful of respondents disagreed or didn’t know. They answered in this way because they weren’t hopeful that the outcomes were achievable, rather than disagreeing with them per se. This is illustrated in the quote below:

**“...People can’t afford care homes and not enough social caters to cope, good luck achieving this. Great on paper but just words.”**

42. Question 23 on the survey provided respondents with the opportunity to mention any other changes, additions or deletions they would like to see to this section of the draft strategy document. Seven respondents commented. One respondent stressed the need for a quicker response, to enable an earlier discharge from hospital, another asked that the most vulnerable should be nearer amenities, not isolated in rural areas:

**“SKDC needs to respond quicker to requests to adapt homes, so that people are able to be discharged from hospital sooner”**

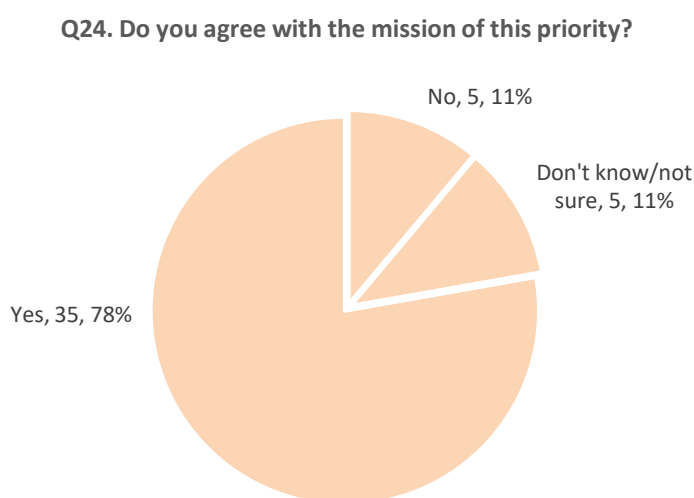


**“Again, the most vulnerable need to be housed in towns near services and amenities, not isolated in rural villages”**

#### **Priority Four - To facilitate sustainable housing**

43. The fourth priority in SKDC’s Housing Strategy is to facilitate sustainable housing. Committed to reducing carbon emissions and becoming net zero by 2050, the mission of this priority is to “facilitate the development and retrofitting of both private and social housing to be more sustainable to reduce carbon emissions”.

Just over three quarters of respondents (35 or 77.8%) agreed with this mission, with the remaining ten respondents choosing to answer either no or don’t know/not sure, as illustrated below:



44. No alternative suggestions were made. One respondent had concerns about how much it would cost, and a couple of others did not think net zero was achievable, as shown in the quotes below:

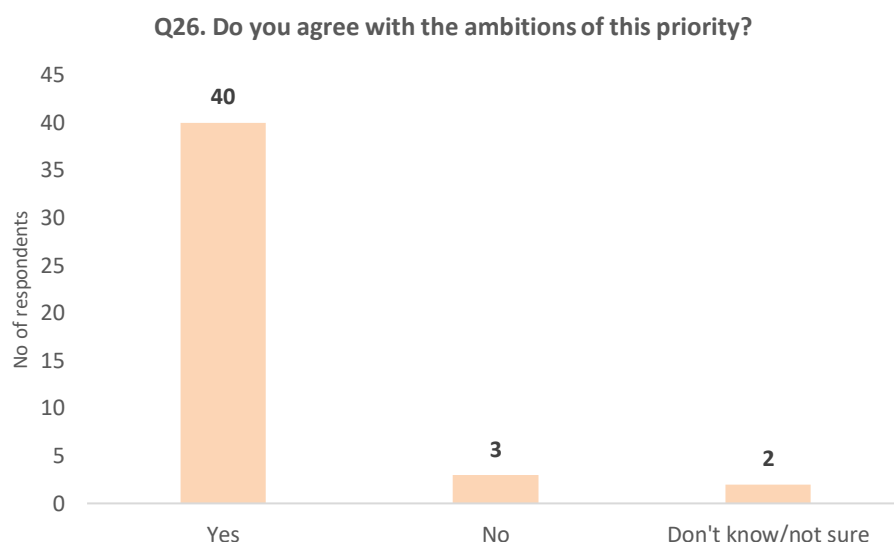
**“I don't think net zero is achievable.”**

**“Too much focus on this at additional costs to build, implement and maintain....”**

45. Respondents were then asked for their opinion on the ambitions for this priority. They included:
- Ensuring our own Council housing stock is energy efficient and cost effective to maintain.
  - Encouraging the take up of grants for the installation of decarbonisation measures in market sale and private rented properties.
46. Most supported the ambitions. Nearly nine out of ten respondents (40 or 88.9%) agreed with them. An analysis of those responses from respondents who didn’t agree, revealed concerns about how much it might cost as shown here:

**“At what cost to the tax payer? Net zero will bankrupt this country.”**

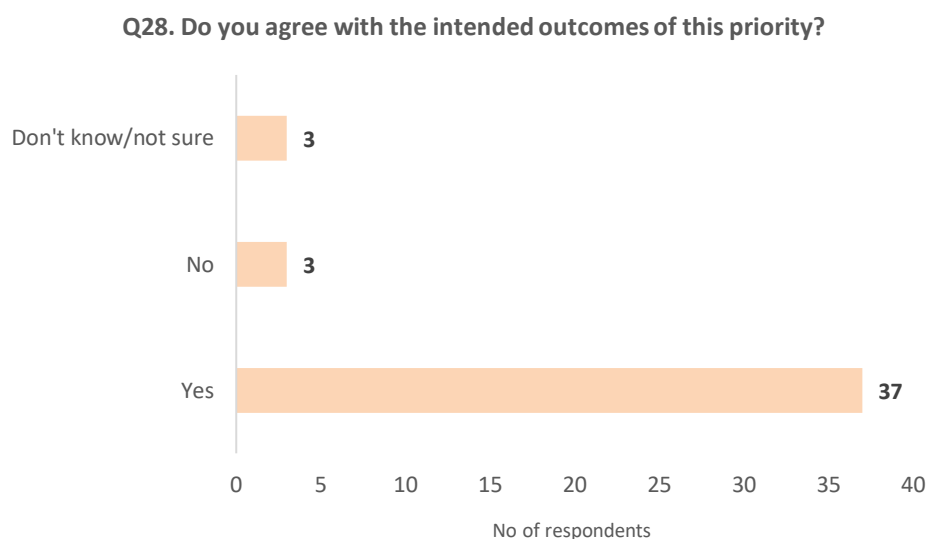
47. The number of respondents choosing each of the options is shown overleaf:



48. Respondents were then asked if they agreed with the outcomes the Council would like to achieve for this priority by 2030. They included:

- The number of homes across the district with EPC rating C or above significantly increased.
- Housing across the district is energy efficient and inexpensive on fuel, including our own Council housing stock.
- Households are living free from damp, mould and condensation.

49. Most consultees (37 or 86%) agreed with the intended outcomes as illustrated below:



50. Three respondents raised concerns - one about the challenging timescale, one about the ability of landlords to pay for these outcomes. The third was about the lack of a target to measure progress.

**“What does significantly increased mean? Should be a figure/target”**

51. Question 30 on the survey provided respondents with the opportunity to mention any other changes, additions or deletions they would like to see to this section of the draft strategy document. Five

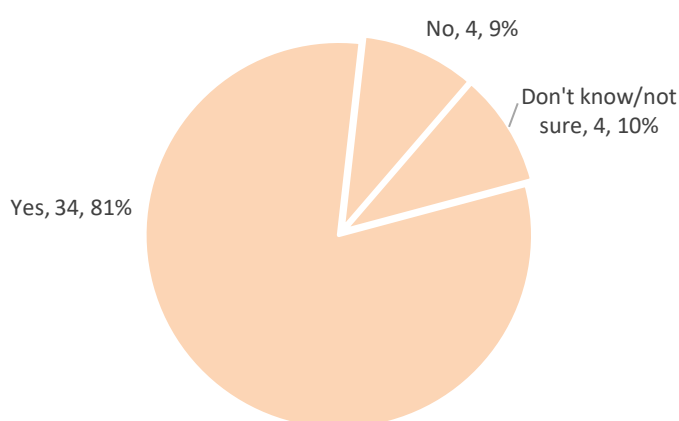
respondents commented. A lack of targets in the document was mentioned again, as well as the costs of some of the initiatives. This is illustrated in the quote below:

**“A lot can be achieved without installation of very expensive heating alternative (heat pumps). Insulation, better windows etc.”**

#### **Priority Five – To support communities in South Kesteven to be sustainable**

52. The fifth and final priority included in SKDC’s Housing Strategy was to support communities in South Kesteven to be sustainable. The mission of this priority is to “ensure the district has the right housing in the right places for both market and affordable housing, so that the district’s communities are more sustainable.”
53. When asked if they supported this mission, eight out of ten (34 or 80.9%) agreed with this aim, as shown below:

**Q31. Do you agree with the mission of this priority?**



54. When asked if they would prefer another focus, those who commented were keen to emphasize the importance of infrastructure to support additional housing. This is illustrated in two of the comments received:

**“You need to consult extensively to determine where the right places are - you cannot disrupt established communities without providing additional resources”**

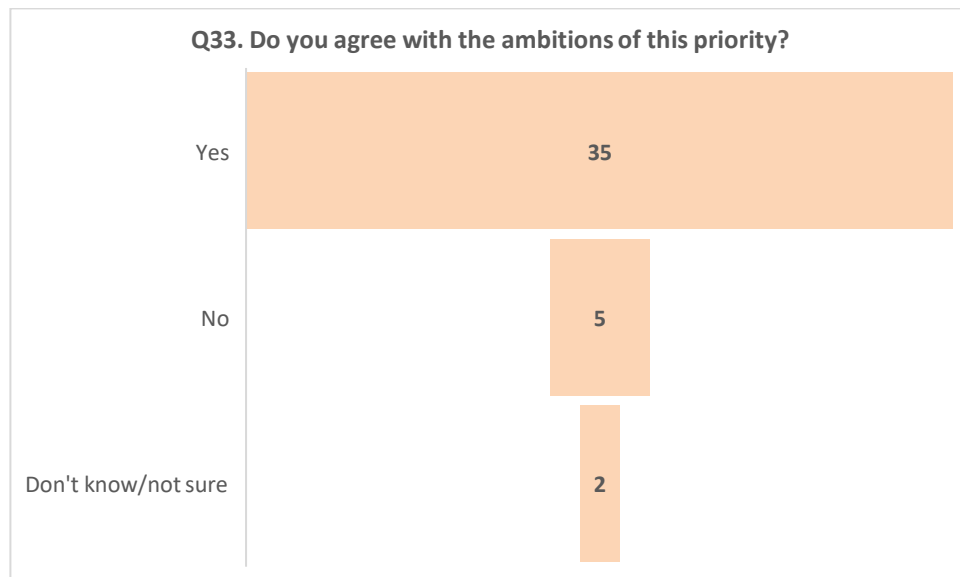
**“The right housing in the right places must take into consideration the infrastructure- roads, access to doctor appointments and schools. All currently under pressure.”**

55. Respondents were then asked for their opinion on the ambitions for this priority. They included:
- Planning for, enabling, building and acquiring housing (market and social housing) of the right type and sizes in sustainable locations
  - Sustaining and maximizing the housing stock to make best use of it.
  - Allocating and nominating households to social housing properties effectively and fairly

- Sustaining households in their homes.

56. Around eight out of ten respondents (35 or 83.3%) agreed with these ambitions, as illustrated below. Those who didn't answer in this way did so because they had concerns about sustainability and how it is assessed, as illustrated here:

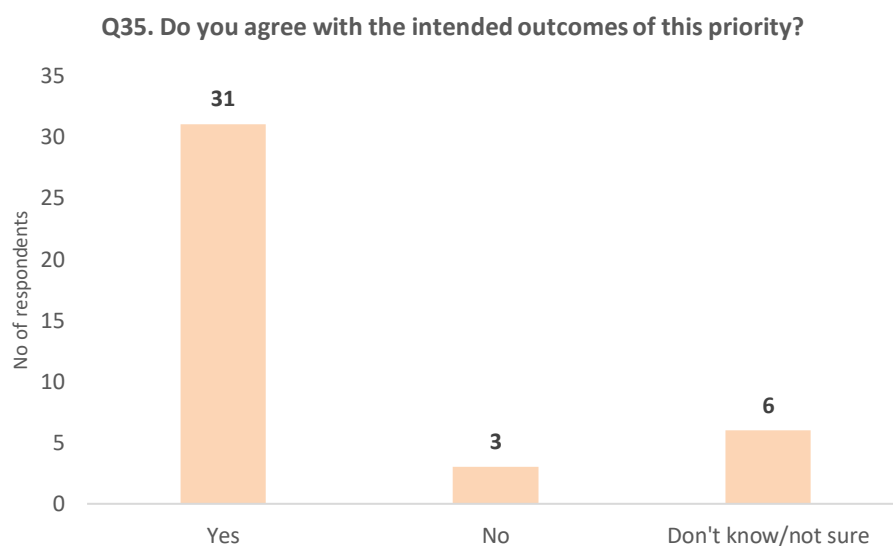
“Nothing said on how *being* sustainable is assessed.”



57. Respondents were then asked if they agreed with the outcomes the Council would like to achieve for this priority by 2030. They included:

- Housing across the district which matches housing needs.
- An up-to-date Local Plan and Housing Allocations Policy in place.
- Nominations Agreements are in place with all affordable housing registered providers that are partners.

58. Just over three quarters of respondents (31 or 77.5%) agreed with the intended outcomes, as illustrated in the graph below:



59. Those who didn't agree, did not suggest alternative outcomes. They used the opportunity to voice concerns about development in rural areas and the lack of infrastructure, as illustrated in the quote below:

**".... villages should remain small; we don't have the infrastructure to accommodate this"**

60. Question 37 on the survey provided respondents with the opportunity to mention any other changes, additions or deletions they would like to see to this section of the draft strategy document. Five respondents commented. One referred to the importance of partnership working to house the most vulnerable, as shown below:

**"Joint risk assessments to be developed with partners to mitigate where risks are identified for individuals and not act as a barrier to accessing accommodation"**

61. The next question on the survey asked respondents if they had any other comments they would like to make on the draft strategy document. Their responses can be summarised into three themes:

- **Infrastructure and Local Services:** Many responses emphasize the need for adequate infrastructure—such as doctors, dentists, schools, roads, and public transport—prior to or alongside new housing developments. Concerns include overburdened services, insufficient planning for health and education, and the importance of integrating these facilities to support both existing and new residents.

**"Infrastructure ie doctors, dentists, police, schools should be built into plans prior to building work taking place"**

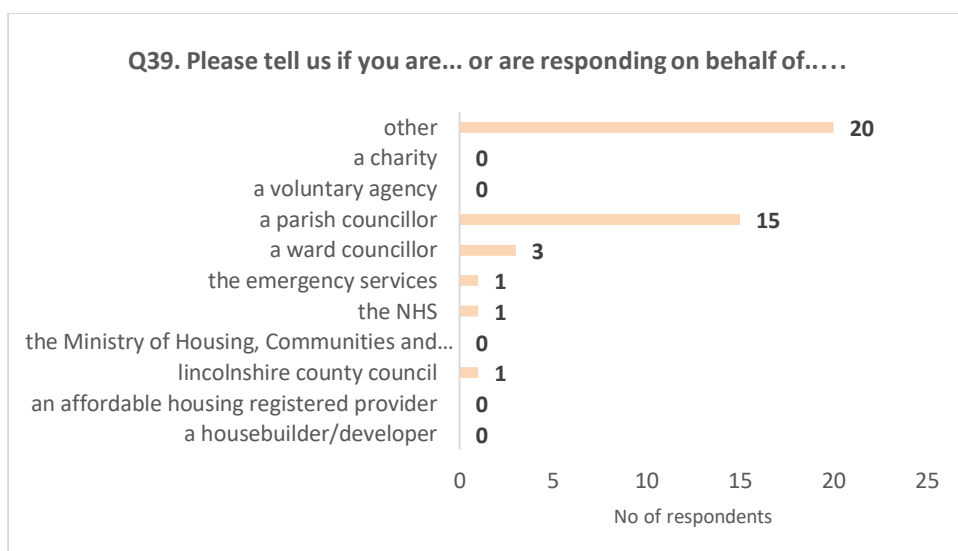
- **Location and Suitability of Housing:** Feedback highlights the importance of building affordable and specialist housing in locations with easy access to essential facilities. There is criticism of large developments in villages that lack the necessary infrastructure, with suggestions to focus new housing near towns and cities where services are more robust.

**"Affordable housing needs to be in locations where there is easy access to facilities e.g. shops, schools, medical services"**

- **Community Impact and Planning Concerns:** Respondents express worries about the social impact of new developments, including potential divides between existing and new communities, the need for better enforcement of planning laws, and the importance of realistic housing allocations. Innovative construction methods and environmental considerations, such as solar panels and flood prevention, are also mentioned.

**"Don't leave local services to the last minute, or indeed to disregard their importance to the existing and new communities as this will create a resentment by existing communities, leading to a divide between the old and new"**

62. Responses were received from several different organisations including town and parish councils, Lincolnshire County Council and the NHS. The distribution of responses is shown in the chart overleaf:



## Conclusion

63. The Cabinet member for Housing Cllr Virginia Moran and other members of the Cabinet are asked to note the results of this consultation. 67 responses were received from individuals representing organisations in both the public and private sector – an overall response rate of 39.4%.
64. The feedback received was generally positive. When respondents chose to disagree with something, it wasn't because they had an alternative but rather that they had concerns about infrastructure or how easy it might be to implement.
65. Whilst the number of responses received is small it should be noted that the consultation was targeted towards a finite number of people, groups and organisations, as its aim was to gather feedback about the component parts of the strategy - its priorities, ambitions and outcomes – from specific stakeholders at a formative stage in its development. The feedback gathered will then be used to inform the content and direction of SKDC's Housing Strategy for the next 5 years.
66. The feedback from the consultation should now be considered in depth with a view to incorporating suggestions where appropriate and feasible into the final draft of South Kesteven District Council's Housing Strategy for 2025- 2030. A final quote from one of the consultees:

**"The draft Housing Strategy is a well-structured, evidence-based, and forward-looking document that addresses the key housing challenges in South Kesteven. It demonstrates a strong commitment to sustainability, inclusivity, and partnership working. However, to ensure successful implementation, the Council should refine its targets, strengthen delivery mechanisms, and prepare for financial and operational uncertainties."**

Prepared by Deb Wyles  
Communications and Consultation  
August 2025

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### Equality Impact Assessment

Question	Response
1. Name of policy/funding activity/event being assessed	Housing Strategy 2026-2031
2. Summary of aims and objectives of the policy/funding activity/event	<p>The Housing Strategy aim is to provide a vision for housing across South Kesteven, in that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• there is a range of secure and safe good quality sustainable housing of all tenures of market; affordable; social and specialist housing.</li><li>• we will support people to live healthy and independent lives in their homes, which meet changing needs now and in the future, in sustainable communities.</li></ul> <p>This vision will be delivered via five priorities:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. The commitment to deliver new affordable and specialist housing in partnership</li><li>2. Continual improvement of the quality, standard and safety of homes</li><li>3. Support people to live healthy and independent lives in their homes</li><li>4. Facilitate housing to be sustainable</li><li>5. Support our communities to be sustainable</li></ol> <p>The Housing Strategy is an overarching document linking together all of the Council's housing policies and strategies. These are set out within the strategy, at the end of each section and also appended to this Equality Impact Assessment.</p>
3. Who is affected by the policy/funding activity/event?	All South Kesteven residents are potentially affected as the Housing Strategy covers housing of all tenures.
4. Has there been any consultation with, or input from, customers/service users or other stakeholders? If so, with whom, how were they consulted and what did they say? If you haven't consulted yet and are intending to do so, please complete the consultation table below.	<p>Initial consultation took place with internal Council stakeholders and external partner stakeholders in 2023.</p> <p>The internal Council stakeholder consultation has consisted of working group meetings commencing in May 2023, with key officers mainly from housing, planning and public protection services. A wider consultation of key relevant officers took place during a staff workshop in October 2023.</p> <p>The external partner stakeholder consultation took place via an online survey during the whole of October 2023.</p> <p>Two sets of stakeholders were identified: one consisted of housing specialists including housing professionals, affordable housing</p>





	<p>registered providers, and housebuilders and the second was made up of statutory agencies including the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, Lincolnshire County Council, Town and Parish Councils and Neighbourhood Plan Groups.</p> <p>Full details are in the Housing Strategy consultation report, dated December 2023. One of the objectives of the consultation with internal and external stakeholders was to ascertain support for the proposed themes, objectives and outcomes of the strategy. These gained widespread support.</p> <p>Further consultation focusing on the draft housing strategy has taken place with internal and external stakeholders and also with residents. This has been via an online survey sent directly to partner agency stakeholders and was also placed on the Council's website, both on the 'current consultations' page and on the 'housing policies' page, which allowed for any residents to respond to the consultation. Full details are in the Housing Strategy consultation report, dated August 2025.</p>
5. What are the arrangements for monitoring and reviewing the actual impact of the policy/funding activity/event?	<p>The impact of the Housing Strategy will be monitored through the accompanying Monitoring Framework. This is in line with the Corporate Plan Key Performance Indicators (KPIs). The Housing Strategy will be delivered via service specific policies and strategies. Service wide Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) and will be reported to Housing Overview and Scrutiny Committee on a quarterly basis. The Monitoring Framework is set out in the strategy and appended to this Equality Impact Assessment).</p>

<b>Protected Characteristic</b>	<b>Is there a potential for positive or negative impact?</b>	<b>Please explain and give examples of any evidence/data used</b>	<b>Action to address negative impact e.g. adjustment to the policy</b> <i>(The Action Log below should be completed to provide further detail)</i>
Age	Positive	<p>The first strategy priority is 'the commitment to deliver new affordable and specialist housing (in partnership)'.</p> <p>Affordable housing is primarily needed by younger and older people,</p>	



		<p>as they tend to be on a lower income.</p> <p>The Housing Strategy recognises that we have a need for more affordable housing: the Council's Local Plan (2011 – 2036) Affordable Housing Contributions policy, identifies a need for additional affordable homes each year in the district.</p> <p>The strategy also recognises that we have an aging population. The South Kesteven District 2023 Local Housing Needs Assessment report states there is need for specialist homes for older people over the Local Plan period.</p> <p>Another priority of the strategy is to 'support people to live healthy and independent lives in their homes'. This is a positive for older people as one of the aims is to 'enable people to stay in their home and receive care and support, where required, possible and when they wish this'. Although people of any age may require care and support within their home, it tends to be older people who need this.</p>	
Disability	Positive	<p>The strategy theme committing to the delivery of new specialist housing supports people with a disability who need specialist housing.</p> <p>The South Kesteven District 2023 Local Housing Needs Assessment report states that the largest group of vulnerable people potentially in need of specialist accommodation is people with learning disabilities.</p>	



		Another priority of the strategy is to 'support people to live healthy and independent lives in their homes' and one of the aims of this is to 'proactively ensure the housing needs of our most vulnerable residents are met'. This includes people with disabilities.	
Gender Reassignment	No	This protected characteristic is not relevant to the implementation of this policy.	
Marriage and Civil Partnership	No	This protected characteristic is not relevant to the implementation of this policy.	
Pregnancy and Maternity	No	This protected characteristic is not relevant to the implementation of this policy.	
Race	No	This protected characteristic is not relevant to the implementation of this policy.	
Religion or Belief	No	This protected characteristic is not relevant to the implementation of this policy.	
Sex	No	This protected characteristic is not relevant to the implementation of this policy.	
Sexual Orientation	No	This protected characteristic is not relevant to the implementation of this policy.	
<b>Other Factors requiring consideration</b>			
Socio-Economic Impacts	Positive	The strategy recognises that we have a need for more affordable housing and one of the priorities is the commitment to deliver new affordable housing eg. social and affordable rent and affordable home ownership options.	
Carers (those who provide unpaid care to a family member, friend or partner)	Positive	Carers who provide unpaid care to a partner, family or friends sometimes have to work reduced paid hours or	



		not be in paid work at all. This can affect the amount people can pay in housing costs and can be reliant upon welfare benefits and affordable housing. The strategy recognises that we have a need for more affordable housing and one of the priorities is the commitment to deliver new affordable housing.	
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## Consultation

Negative impacts identified will require the responsible officer to consult with the affected group/s to determine all practicable and proportionate mitigations. Add more rows as required.

Group/Organisation	Date	Response
Consultation at the strategy scoping stage took place with both Council teams and external partner agencies.	2023	The consultation received support for the proposed priorities and no negative impacts were identified.  Full details are in the Housing Strategy consultation report, dated December 2023.
Consultation on the draft strategy took place with Council teams and external partner agencies. Residents also had the opportunity to respond to the consultation.	2025	The consultation received support for the proposed draft strategy and no negative impacts were identified.  Full details are in the Housing Strategy consultation report, dated August 2025.

## Proposed Mitigation: Action Log

To be completed when barriers, negative impact or discrimination are found as part of this process – to show actions taken to remove or mitigate. Any mitigations identified throughout the EIA process should be meaningful and timely. Add more rows as required.

Negative Impact	Action	Timeline	Outcome	Status
N/A – no barriers, negative impact or discrimination found.				

## Evaluation Decision

Once consultation and practicable and proportionate mitigation has been put in place, the responsible officer should evaluate whether any negative impact remains and, if so, provide justification for any decision to proceed.

Question	Explanation / justification
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Is it possible the proposed policy or activity or change in policy or activity could discriminate or unfairly disadvantage people?	No indicators of discrimination or disadvantage have been identified regarding the proposed Housing Strategy.	
<b>Final Decision</b>	<b>Tick</b>	<b>Include any explanation/justification required</b>
1. <b>No barriers</b> identified, therefore activity will <b>proceed</b>	✓	No barriers identified.
2. <b>Stop</b> the policy or practice because the data shows bias towards one or more groups		
3. <b>Adapt or change</b> the policy in a way that will eliminate the bias		
4. <b>Barriers and impact identified</b> , however having considered all available options carefully, there appear to be no other proportionate ways to achieve the aim of the policy or practice (e.g. in extreme cases or where positive action is taken). Therefore you are going to <b>proceed with caution</b> with this policy or practice knowing that it may favour some people less than others, providing justification for this decision		

Did you consult with an Equality Ally prior to carrying out this assessment? Yes - meeting with Carol Drury on 31<sup>st</sup> March 2025.

### Sign off

<b>Name and job title of person completing this EIA</b>	Celia Bown, Senior Housing Policy and Strategy Officer
<b>Officer Responsible for implementing the policy/function etc</b>	Alison Hall-Wright
<b>Date Completed</b>	28 <sup>th</sup> March 2025 and revised 1 <sup>st</sup> October 2025.
<b>Line Manager</b>	Emma-Jayne Abbott
<b>Date Agreed</b> (by line manager)	1 <sup>st</sup> October 2025.
<b>Date of Review</b> (if required)	

Completed EIAs should be included as an appendix to the relevant report going to a Cabinet, Committee or Council meeting and a copy sent to [equalities@southkesteven.gov.uk](mailto:equalities@southkesteven.gov.uk).

Completed EIAs will be published along with the relevant report through Modern.Gov before any decision is made and also on the Council's website.



**SOUTH  
KESTEVEN  
DISTRICT  
COUNCIL**

## Cabinet

Tuesday, 4 November 2025

Report of Councillor Ashley Baxter  
Leader of the Council, Cabinet Member  
for Finance, HR and Economic  
Development

## General Fund Finance Update Report: April to September 2025

### Report Author

Richard Wyles, Deputy Chief Executive and s151 Officer

 [Richard.wyles@southkesteven.gov.uk](mailto:Richard.wyles@southkesteven.gov.uk)

### Purpose of Report

To present the Council's forecast 2025/26 financial position as at end of September 2025 with specific regard to:

- General Fund Revenue Budget
- General Fund Capital Programme

### Recommendations

#### Cabinet is asked to:

1. Review and note the forecast 2025/26 outturn position for the General Fund Revenue and Capital budgets as at the end of September 2025.
2. Identify any variances that might require action or investigation.

### Decision Information

Is this a Key Decision?	No
Does the report contain any exempt or confidential information not for publication?	No
What are the relevant corporate priorities?	Connecting communities Sustainable South Kesteven Enabling economic opportunities Housing Effective council
Which wards are impacted?	All

## **1. Implications**

Taking into consideration implications relating to finance and procurement, legal and governance, risk and mitigation, health and safety, diversity and inclusion, safeguarding, staffing, community safety, mental health and wellbeing and the impact on the Council's declaration of a climate change emergency, the following implications have been identified:

### ***Finance***

- 1.1 The financial implications are included throughout the report.

Completed by: Richard Wyles Deputy Chief Executive and s151 Officer

### ***Legal and Governance***

- 1.2 As part of good governance, it is important members are kept updated in respect of the financial position of Council expenditure during the year.

Completed by: James Welbourn, Democratic Services Manager

### ***Risk and Mitigation***

- 1.3 A Risk Register is at Appendix A and shows that all known current financial risks are recognised and associated mitigating actions are in place.

Completed by: Tracey Elliott, Governance and Risk Officer

## **2 Background to the Report**

- 2.1 Cabinet is provided with regular finance reports. These monitor and forecast expenditure and income compared with budgets approved by Council. They provide explanations for any significant variances.

## **3 Revenue Budget 2025/26 – General Fund**

- 3.1 The net cost of service budget set by Council on 27 February 2025 was **£24.008m**. In order to show variances against all controllable budgets, investment income received from treasury management activity has also been included in the report.
- 3.2 This Budget Monitoring Report will be presented to the Finance and Economic Overview and Scrutiny Committee (FEOSC) on 18 November 2025 to enable members of the Committee to review and provide comments on the forecast

position.

- 3.3 Budgets have been updated to reflect approved budget carry-forwards and in-year virements; these increase the controllable budget to £27.618m.

Table 1 shows the forecast outturn position as at 30 September 2025 and Table 2 shows the significant forecast variances.

**Table 1 – General Fund Revenue – Forecast Outturn**

Directorate	Current Budget 2025/26 £'000	Forecast Outturn 2025/26 £'000	Variance £'000	Variance %
Corporate Governance & Public Protection	4,356	4,414	58	1.3%
Finance Property & Waste Services	12,885	13,012	126	1.0%
Growth & Culture	9,125	8,808	(317)	(3.5%)
Housing & Projects	2,033	1,843	(190)	(9.3%)
<b>Net Cost of Service</b>	<b>28,399</b>	<b>28,077</b>	<b>(323)</b>	<b>(1.1%)</b>
Investment Income	(781)	(957)	(176)	(22.5%)
<b>(Surplus) / Deficit</b>	<b>27,618</b>	<b>27,120</b>	<b>(499)</b>	<b>(1.8%)</b>

**Table 2 – General Fund Revenue – Significant Variances**

Explanation of Significant Variance	£'000
<b>Fuel</b> Reduced inflation has resulted in a forecast underspend of (£180k) based on modelling at 0.3% increase per week for the remainder of 2025/26. The budget was set using a price of 141p but actual prices have been approximately 28% lower.	(180)
<b>Utilities</b> The council continues to financially benefit from energy prices secured via the ESPO utility procurement framework which are currently being purchased at a unit rate lower than the budgeted rate. This cost continues to be volatile and will be kept under review for the remainder of the financial year.	(250)
<b>Cattlemarket Car Park Stamford Income</b> The recent extension of the Cattle Market car park at Stamford has increased capacity by 146 spaces (a 53% increase). Based on projected growth in ticket sales this is expected to generate an additional (£80k) income. This projection followed the introduction of the charging which came into effect from 29 <sup>th</sup> August 2025.	(80)
<b>Green Waste Income</b> Additional income of (£100k) has been received with higher than budgeted take-up of the scheme. As at September over 30,900 customers subscribe to the green waste service.	(100)



<b>Planning Fee Income</b> Planning Fee Income has risen above budgeted levels during Quarters 1 and 2. This is partially due to the Council receiving an application for a solar farm with combined application fees of (£162k). In addition, the Government increased planning application fees in April 2025 for certain application categories, e.g. the fee for householder applications has doubled. These increases were not known at the time budgets were approved. An increase in the number of applications received in the quarter has also generated additional income.	(250)
<b>Council Tax Administration Subsidy Grant</b> The Local Council Tax Support Administration Subsidy Grant is no longer received separately as part of the net cost of service. This has now been rolled into Revenue Support Grant so there is no overall adverse financial impact on the Council.	195
<b>Housing Services – Emergency Accommodation</b> There has been a focus on reducing the spend on emergency accommodation and placing less reliance on Bed & Breakfast establishments. Using other accommodations options including SKDC facilities (winter night shelter will be used again later this year) has resulted in a forecast underspend.	(100)
<b>Salaries</b> A pay award in line with the national award for 2025/26 of 3.2% was endorsed by the Employment Committee and backdated to April 2025. This award was in excess of the 2% budgeted and the resulting overspend of up to £244k will be funded from the Local Priorities Reserve. Salary budgets are prepared with a 3% vacancy factor (£572k) to reflect staff turnover. As at Quarter 2 the vacancy factor is anticipated to be achieved by March 2026 but will continue to be reviewed.	527
<b>Investment Income</b> Higher average interest has been achieved on investments which are currently averaging 4.30% return compared to budgeted level of 3.25% budget as well as higher than anticipated investment balances.	(176)

## 4 Capital Budget 2025/26 – General Fund

- 4.1 The budget set by Council on 27 February 2025 was £15.179m. Budgets have been amended in line with the approved budget carry forwards and further budget approvals, increasing the 2025/26 budget to £18.065m.
- 4.2 Table 3 shows the forecast outturn position as at 30 September 2025 and Table 4 shows the significant forecast variances.

**Table 3 – General Fund Capital Forecast Outturn Position**

Directorate	Current Budget £'000	Forecast Outturn £'000	Variance £'000	Variance %
<b>Corporate Governance &amp; Public Protection</b>	1,370	1,380	10	0.73
<b>Finance, Property and Waste Services</b>	12,131	12,289	158	1.31
<b>Growth and Culture</b>	1,740	1,740	0	0
<b>Housing and Property</b>	2,824	2,884	60	2.11
<b>Total</b>	<b>18,065</b>	<b>18,293</b>	<b>228</b>	<b>1.26</b>

**Table 4 – General Fund Capital Significant Variances**

Explanation of Significant Variance	£'000
<b>Vehicle Replacement Programme</b> Overspend anticipated due to savings of £45K available on early purchase of freighter as opposed to delaying into 2026/27. Procurement of vehicles are staged in order to ensure the fleet turnover is manageable.	<b>104</b>
<b>Financial System Upgrade</b> There were some additional project support costs required to ensure the finance system Go Live date was achieved in August 2025. However, this project is now completed and no further spend is required.	<b>54</b>
<b>Decarbonisation Scheme</b> Project commenced on site in July 2025 and due to complete by March 2026. Removal of Combined Heat and Power units and provision of temporary generators together with increased contract cost of £24K has resulted in an overspend of £60K. This is to be financed from property maintenance reserve.	<b>60</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>218</b>

## 5 Collection Rates – Council Tax and Business Rates

5.1 Table 5 details the current collection rates against target for 2025/26.

**Table 5 - Collection Rates**

<b>Target Rates</b>	<b>Council Tax</b>	<b>Business Rates</b>
<b>Target annual collection rate</b>	<b>98.33%</b>	<b>98.68%</b>
<b>Target collection rate to end of September 2025</b>	<b>55.52%</b>	<b>55.93%</b>
<b>Actual collection rate to end of September 2025</b>	<b>55.35%</b>	<b>55.44%</b>
<b>Variance compared to Target</b>	<b>(0.17%)</b>	<b>(0.49%)</b>

5.2 Council Tax:

- At the 30 September 2025 the collection target is £61.308m against an annual debt of £110.773m. As shown in the table above, the collection rate is below target by 0.17% or £183,314 (SKDC share being £16,948).
- All 7 Districts in Lincolnshire share their collection rates monthly with 6 of the Districts also below collection.
- South Kesteven have the highest net collectable debt in the County (£110.773m), with the next Councils debt being £109.394m.

5.3 Business Rates:

- At the 30 September 2025 the collection target is £25.815m against an annual debt of £46.567m. As shown in the table above, the collection rate was 0.49% or £228,179 below above target.
- All 7 District Councils in Lincolnshire share their collection rates monthly with just 2 of the Districts above their target collection.
- South Kesteven have the second highest net collectable debt in the County (£46.567m), with the highest Councils debt being £447.263m.
- South Kesteven District Council have undertaken a review of Small Business Rates Relief. Letters were issued to 1,999 properties where relief was awarded. The review resulted in 413 reliefs being removed, reducing the amount of relief awarded by £1,177,886, which now becomes payable by the ratepayer

## **6 Other Options Considered**

- 6.1 Cabinet in their role should have oversight of the Councils budgets and therefore, the option of not producing a monitoring report was discounted.

## **7 Reasons for the Recommendations**

- 7.1 Members should be kept updated on the financial position of the Authority, because effective budget management is critical to ensuring financial resources are targeted towards the Council's priorities. Monitoring enables early identification of variations against the plan and timely corrective action.

## **8 Consultation**

- 8.1 Budget Monitoring reports are presented throughout the financial year to the Cabinet and FEOSC to keep members up to date regarding the projected financial outturn position.

## **9 Appendices**

Appendix A – 2025/26 – Finance Risk Register.

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## Appendix A – Finance Risk Register

Risk	Likelihood	Impact	Residual Risk Score	Mitigating Action
1. Capital programmes requiring borrowing in the medium term	4	3	12 Very High	Continue to undertake financial modelling to identify consequences of undertaking borrowing and align this with savings that will need to be approved before borrowing is undertaken in order to ensure ongoing affordability and financial sustainability. The capital programme can currently be financed without borrowing although this is kept under review.
2. Lack of clarity for funding levels from 2026/27 and beyond	4	3	12 Very High	The Government has recently concluded a consultation on a multi-year settlement effective from 2026/27. Initial modelling suggests that there will be a funding reduction over the three year period but it is expected that transitional funding arrangements will be in place. There remains a high degree of uncertainty as the Council will not receive specific funding confirmation until December 2025. The budget process will be undertaken within the context of a reduction in funding levels.
3. Increase in bad debts as a result of economic circumstances	3	2	6 High	The Council has pro-active debt management procedures in place.
4. Increased maintenance costs of council assets	3	2	6 High	The budget proposals for 2025/26 included additional funding to help address backlog asset maintenance issues and capacity is under review to support the delivery of several large scale General Fund property projects. The medium-term outlook is a continuation of high levels of maintenance that will require financing. There are similar pressures for the Housing Revenue Account in respect of the social housing stock – additional investment may be required to meet new government requirements for decent homes standard.
5. Fuel price volatility	1	3	3 Medium	Weekly monitoring of fuel charge and proactive interventions to ensure optimisation of fuel consumption.
6. Inflation increases beyond budgeted levels	2	2	4 Medium	Budget assumptions kept up to date with most recent projections and monthly sensitivity analysis is produced to monitor the impact of inflationary increases.
7. Fee Income volatility	2	2	4 Medium	Early monitoring of deviations and regular reporting to both budget holders and members.

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**SOUTH  
KESTEVEN  
DISTRICT  
COUNCIL**

## Cabinet

Tuesday, 4 November 2025

Report of Councillor Virginia Moran  
Cabinet Member for Housing

## Mobility Vehicle Policy

### Report Author

Celia Bown, Senior Housing and Policy Strategy Officer

✉ celia.bown@southkesteven.gov.uk

### Purpose of Report

To seek approval from Cabinet for the adoption of the Mobility Vehicle Policy having been recommended by the Housing Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting held on 17 March 2025.

### Recommendations

**The Committee is recommended to:**

- 1. Approve the draft Mobility Vehicle Policy.**
- 2. Delegate to the Director of Housing and Projects, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Housing authority to make minor amendments to the policy, as required by changes to regulation or legislation.**

### Decision Information

Is this a Key Decision?	No
Does the report contain any exempt or confidential information not for publication?	No
What are the relevant corporate priorities?	Housing
Which wards are impacted?	(All Wards);



## **1. Implications**

Taking into consideration implications relating to finance and procurement, legal and governance, risk and mitigation, health and safety, diversity and inclusion, safeguarding, staffing, community safety, mental health and wellbeing and the impact on the Council's declaration of a climate change emergency, the following implications have been identified:

### ***Finance and Procurement***

- 1.1 Implementation of the Mobility Vehicle Registration Scheme will be resourced from existing budgets. The implementation of the storage and charging hubs and pods will incur additional costs. At the appropriate time a separate budget request will be made for these and a procurement exercise undertaken.

*Completed by: David Scott – Assistant Director of Finance and Deputy s151 Officer.*

### ***Legal and Governance***

- 1.2 Any legal or governance concerns are already reflected within other comments on the report (in particular the Health and Safety comments).
- 1.3 The report was recommended to Cabinet by the Housing Overview and Scrutiny meeting held in March 2025.

*Completed by: James Welbourn, Democratic Services Manager*

### ***Risk and Mitigation***

- 1.4 The Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 requires that fire risks in communal areas are assessed, and actions taken to reduce these risks. Fire Risk Assessments of the communal areas of our sheltered housing schemes have identified fire risks from mobility vehicles stored and charged in these areas. The implementation of this policy and associated registration scheme will assist in mitigating these risks. It is also essential that the owner of the mobility vehicle has the appropriate insurance as referred to within the Mobility Vehicle Policy 2025.

*Completed by: Tracey Elliott, Governance & Risk Officer*

### ***Health and Safety***

- 1.5 The Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 requires that fire risks in communal areas are assessed and actions taken to reduce these risks. Fire Risk Assessments of the communal areas of our sheltered housing schemes have identified fire risks from mobility vehicles stored and charged in these areas. The

implementation of this policy and associated registration scheme will assist in mitigating these risks.

*Completed by: Phil Swinton, Head of Health, Safety, Compliance and Emergency Planning*

### ***Equalities, Diversity and Inclusion***

- 1.6 There are equality implications related to the introduction and implementation of this policy. It is acknowledged that in some settings there is insufficient space to safely store charge mobility scooters but these vehicles are a lifeline to many people. All reasonable adjustments must therefore be made to accommodate the needs of our tenants.

*Completed by: Carol Drury, Community Engagement Manager*

### ***Safeguarding***

- 1.7 South Kesteven District Council is committed to safeguarding the welfare of children and/or young people and adults with care and support needs within the Mobility Vehicle Policy 2025. This policy references our safeguarding duties and highlights that our role and responsibilities are clearly defined in our Safeguarding Policy (2024 – 2027).

*Completed by: Sarah McQueen, Head of Housing and Safeguarding Lead for SKDC*

## **2. Background to the Report**

- 2.1. The Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 requires that fire risks in communal areas are assessed, and actions taken to reduce these risks. In residential buildings, mobility scooters and other battery-operated vehicles, pose a fire risk when stored in communal areas and fire escape routes, to residents, Council employees, contractors, visitors and firefighters.
- 2.2. A review of the mobility scooter storage facilities at the Council sheltered housing schemes across the district has established that many scooters are being stored and charged inside schemes or externally and adjacent to buildings, potentially causing unacceptable fire and health and safety risks. The residents are using the Council's electricity supply (which is being consumed at no additional charge to the owner of the scooter). In addition, mobility vehicles are also being stored in locations which are obstructing fire escape routes. Finally, officers report that some mobility scooters are being charged outside via an extension lead through the window of resident accommodation, which is also a recognised fire risk.
- 2.3. The policy (Appendix 1) clearly sets out to both Council tenants and leaseholders of both sheltered and general needs housing, the responsibilities they have as

owners of the mobility vehicles. This is in regard to the storage and charging of these mobility vehicles within Council premises, and the requirement for written permission to be granted (by way of a new Mobility Vehicle Registration Scheme) by the Council for both existing owners of vehicles and those intending to acquire one.

- 2.4. The Mobility Vehicle Registration Scheme will ensure that owners of the vehicles have somewhere to safely store and charge the vehicle; that adequate insurance is in place; the owner commits to the terms and conditions of the policy and that the vehicles have regular servicing and Portable Appliance Tests (PATs) to ensure they are safe. An assessment of the property will be undertaken before permission is granted. The number of vehicles on any one site will be managed, so as not to compromise the safety of residents or anyone else visiting the site.
- 2.5. The introduction of the Mobility Vehicle Registration Scheme will be a phased approach which will start with residents of the sheltered housing 'corridor schemes' as mobility vehicles pose the highest fire risk to the residents and buildings at these schemes.
- 2.6. A review of the number of mobility scooters at the Council's Sheltered Housing Schemes was undertaken during October 2024 and it is projected that the number of mobility scooters and other battery-operated vehicles such as electric wheelchairs, bikes and scooters will increase due to the increasing popularity of them.
- 2.7. To meet this demand, the use of storage 'pods' will be investigated as a solution. The installation of pods and a 'hub' to accommodate the pods would be introduced on a phased approach and initially be where there are currently the highest number of mobility vehicles in use at sheltered housing schemes.

### **3. Key Considerations**

- 3.1. Implement this policy, assign and implement designated storage and charging facilities at the sheltered housing schemes (initially at the identified schemes set out at 2.14 of this report) and commence a Mobility Vehicle Registration Scheme (initially requiring only the sheltered housing corridor scheme residents to do this).
- 3.2. The policy will be reviewed in 6 -12 months' time from the date of approval. The timescale will be dependent upon the progress of the implementation and if any changes are needed to the policy.

### **4. Other Options Considered**

- 4.1 Option 1 – do nothing. The Council could choose to not implement this policy and Mobility Vehicle Registration Scheme. The implication of this is continued fire, safeguarding and health and safety risks.

- 4.2 Option 2 – implement this policy but not implement the outside designated storage and charging facilities at the sheltered housing schemes. The implication of this would be reliance upon indoor designated storage and charging facilities at the sheltered housing schemes, which are insufficient for the number of mobility scooters at some schemes.

## **5. Reasons for the Recommendations**

- 5.1. To ensure the Council complies with legislation regarding fire, health and safety risks and provides a clear policy framework for tenants and leaseholders.

## **6. Consultation**

- 6.1. A Mobility Scooter Policy was first developed in 2021 and a widespread consultation took place. The policy has been revised since then and now encompasses other battery-operated mobility vehicles and is now the Mobility Vehicle Policy. The policy was presented to the Housing OSC in March 2025 and consultation took place on this during August/September 2025.
- 6.2. All tenants in the sheltered housing corridor schemes and a sample of other sheltered housing and general needs housing residents were asked for their views. The consultation report outlines further details on those consulted, how and the results.
- 6.3. The main concern from the feedback received is that if they were refused permission to have or keep their mobility scooter, they would lose their independence and become housebound.
- 6.4. It is proposed that indoor designated storage and charging facilities are assigned at the sheltered housing schemes and, at some of the schemes, outdoor storage and charging facilities will be implemented. Where adequate facilities do not exist at a general needs Council property, a tenant/leaseholder may seek permission to make alterations to the property, and the Council will not unreasonably withhold permission for alterations.
- 6.5. Where storage facilities do not exist and alterations cannot be made either at our sheltered housing schemes or at any other South Kesteven District Council property, the household will be considered for a transfer to a more suitable property. This will be in exceptional circumstances and Council officers will work with residents to ensure all other options are explored prior to consideration for a transfer.
- 6.6. The Council would like to ensure that, as a minimum, residents are arranging for their mobility vehicles to be regularly serviced and maintained and are minimising

fire risks in how they are storing and charging their vehicles. This policy and the associated registration scheme will allow the Council to do this.

## **7. Background Papers**

- 7.1. Housing Overview and Scrutiny Committee Report (24<sup>th</sup> March 2025)

[http://moderngovsvr/documents/s46075/Draft%20Mobility%20Vehicle%20Policy.pdf?\\$LO\\$=1](http://moderngovsvr/documents/s46075/Draft%20Mobility%20Vehicle%20Policy.pdf?$LO$=1)

## **8. Appendices**

- 8.1. Appendix 1 – Draft Mobility Vehicle Policy
- 8.2. Appendix 2 – Consultation Report (October 2025)
- 8.3. Appendix 3 - Equality Impact Assessment



# Mobility Vehicle Policy 2025





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# 1. Introduction

- 1.1 South Kesteven District Council (the Council) is committed to supporting the quality of life of its residents. In accordance with the Equality Act 2010, residents are permitted to make use of the most appropriate equipment available to enable them to live independently. This includes the leasing or buying of mobility scooters and battery powered wheelchairs. This policy also applies to electric bikes and electric scooters.
- 1.2 The Council has a duty to ensure mobility scooters and other battery powered vehicles used by our residents are being used legally and safely, with full responsibility being taken by the owner/user.
- 1.3 The Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 requires that fire risks in common areas are assessed, and actions taken to reduce these risks. In residential buildings, mobility scooter and other battery powered vehicle fires can pose a life safety risk to tenants, leaseholders, employees, firefighters, and others, when stored in communal areas and/or fire escape routes.
- 1.4 The Council has identified the maximum capacity for the storage of mobility vehicles at our sheltered housing corridor schemes, which is limited. The Council will advise the residents of Sheltered

Housing as to the number of storage spaces available and whether these are external or internal arrangements for each scheme.

- 1.5 This policy introduces a Mobility Vehicle Registration Scheme; sets out how the Council will consider requests from tenants/leaseholders to store mobility vehicles; and the factors it will consider when granting or refusing storage permission. If permission is granted, this will be in writing. Permission is given only to the tenant/leaseholder and not to any visitors. Instead, visitors would have to park any mobility vehicle outside.
- 1.6 The policy will be fully reviewed every two years but will be updated as required subject to statutory, regulatory or operational needs.
- 1.7 Failure to comply with the terms of the permission will result in the mobility vehicle being removed immediately from the accommodation.

## 2. Definition of mobility scooter

- 2.1 A mobility scooter is defined for the purpose of this policy as an electric or petrol scooter or 'invalid carriage' under the use of Invalid Carriages on Highways





Regulations 1988. The regulations divide these machines into three classes:

- Class 1 covers manual wheelchairs
- Class 2 applies to machines designed for use on the pavement. They may also be used on the road to cross from one pavement to another or where no pavement is available
- Class 3 applies to machines (either electric or petrol) that can be used both on the pavement and on the road. Class 3 vehicles are required by law to be registered with DVLA for road use. These vehicles will be licensed in the disabled taxation class and display a nil duty tax disc.

## 3. Purpose of the policy

3.1 The purpose of the policy is to:

- Ensure the Council meets its statutory obligations
- Ensure that mobility scooters and other battery powered vehicles do not cause an obstruction or fire risk
- Ensure tenants/leaseholders seek written permission for a mobility vehicle – either before obtaining a new one or for any vehicle already owned
- Ensure the Council takes a consistent approach to granting permission to tenants/leaseholders to keep and store a vehicle
- Accommodate requests for permission to keep and store mobility vehicles where practicable and not to refuse permission unreasonably
- Carry out a full assessment prior to a decision on whether or not to grant permission
- Ensure that the tenant/leaseholder has adequate insurance; understands it and commits to the terms and conditions of it
- Ensure that the tenant/leaseholder has adequate confirmation of servicing and maintaining the mobility vehicle
- Provide clear information on the terms and conditions permission is granted on
- Provide a clear, written explanation of the reasons for refusing permission

- Manage the number of mobility vehicles on any one site, so as not to compromise the safety of residents or anyone else on the site
- Ensure that tenants/leaseholders are aware of their responsibilities to others

## 4. Residents affected by this policy

4.1 This policy affects anyone with a mobility scooter and other battery powered vehicles, especially people living in sheltered housing schemes and in flats with communal areas.

## 5. Fire safety

5.1 The Council has a duty to comply with the law relating to fire safety. The Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 applies and covers general fire precautions and fire safety duties which are required to protect people in case of a fire in and around premises.

5.2 The Order requires that where necessary, fire precautions should be put in place to an extent that is reasonable and practicable.

5.3 One of the requirements under the Order is that fire risk assessments, focusing on the safety of occupants and visitors to the building, need to be carried out. Risk assessments have identified mobility scooters and other battery powered vehicles as a possible fire hazard when stored within communal areas, particularly near to escape routes.

## 6. Safeguarding

6.1 South Kesteven District Council is committed to safeguarding the welfare of children and/or young people and adults with care and support needs within the

activities we undertake. Safeguarding encompasses a range of legal duties and responsibilities designed to protect people's health, wellbeing and human rights. Safeguarding exists so we can support people and help prevent problems from escalating, enabling them to live free from harm, abuse and neglect. Our role and responsibilities are clearly defined in our Safeguarding Policy (2024 – 2027).

## 7. Ownership of mobility vehicles

- 7.1 If a resident is considering obtaining a mobility vehicle, they must seek permission in writing from the Council first, to agree storage of the vehicle.
- 7.2 Whilst permission will not be unreasonably withheld, the Council's responsibility for the health and safety of all residents within a scheme or a block of accommodation must be paramount.
- 7.3 Permission will only be granted if the tenant/leaseholder is able to store the mobility vehicle in suitable storage facilities, if they are available where they live, or within their home if they live in general needs housing. This will be assessed and deemed suitable or not by the Council.
- 7.4 In accordance with this policy, the Council will issue residents with clear guidelines on the ownership of mobility vehicles if permission is given.
- 7.5 The Council will maintain a register of all mobility vehicle ownership and this will be reviewed on an annual basis.

## 8. Requesting permission

- 8.1 Whether you are considering moving into

a Council rented or leased property, or you are an existing tenant/leaseholder and already have a mobility vehicle, you must seek permission from the Council to keep and store a mobility vehicle.

- 8.2 To request permission, tenants/leaseholders must apply in writing, using the appropriate form, see appendix 1. The decision will be made after an assessment of the property has been undertaken. This can be carried out prior to the tenant/leaseholder obtaining a mobility vehicle provided the tenant/leaseholder can provide the details of the model they are planning to get.
- 8.3 Tenants/leaseholders who apply for permission will be expected to produce their insurance certificate for inspection and ensure the mobility vehicle is properly maintained, in accordance with the manufacturer's requirements, including an annual portable appliance (PAT) test and annual servicing. Failure to do this will result in permission being refused or permission granted being withdrawn and the tenant/leaseholder will be responsible for the removal of the mobility vehicle.
- 8.4 In considering whether permission should be granted, account will be taken of the potential impact on other people and permission will only be granted where the needs and wellbeing of other tenants/leaseholders and other users of the building are not put at risk.
- 8.5 Permission will be refused where:
  - There is no safe storage in the tenant/leaseholder's home and no alternative safe storage and charging space can be provided
  - A major physical alteration to the premises is required, which the Council believes to be unreasonable in terms of cost and or disruption to other service users
  - A tenant/leaseholder fails to take out the necessary insurance cover and fails to adequately maintain the vehicle, including ensuring it has an annual portable

- appliance test (PAT) and annual servicing
- The vehicle is deemed unsuitable by the Council following an inspection and assessment of the property and type and model of vehicle proposed
- The tenant/leaseholder wishes to keep more than one vehicle

Examples of safe storage and charging spaces may include:

- A designated room within the property
- A designated external space

8.6 Where permission is given, this is on the basis that the terms and conditions (set out in section 11) are adhered to.

## 9. Allocation of spaces

9.1 Where there are designated storage facilities for mobility vehicles, allocation of spaces will be made in line with individual needs. Storage spaces will be allocated as and when they become available and applications will be considered in date order of request.

## 10. Right to review a decision

10.1 Where permission is refused, the council will explain the reasons and give details

of the review process. The applicant has the right to review within 21 days of when the decision is made. A senior officer, not involved in the original decision, will make the decision.

## 11. Terms and conditions of the permission

11.1 Permission may be withdrawn if the terms and conditions of the permission are not adhered to; if the tenant/leaseholder purchases an additional or larger vehicle; or if the policy is updated to meet new regulatory requirements.

11.2 Storage and charging

11.2.1 Mobility scooters and other battery powered vehicles must not be stored or charged in a communal hallway, communal room or stairwell (unless designated storage and charging facilities have been provided and you have been given permission to use them) at any time; because they could increase the risk of fire or obstruct a fire escape route.

11.2.2 If a mobility vehicle is stored within a tenant/leaseholder's property, they must ensure that there is enough space within the home to store the vehicle safely. An inspection may be arranged to assess for additional fire safety requirements. Mobility vehicles are not permitted



above ground floor level in sheltered accommodation or in lifts.

11.2.3 Tenants/leaseholders will need to gain permission for any alterations, for example the provision of storage facilities, ramp, access path or hardstanding. The Council will not unreasonably withhold permission for alterations. However, there may be instances where it is not feasible to grant permission or to provide adequate facilities due to the layout of the property or insufficient budget for alterations. All mobility vehicles and e-vehicles stored outside must be at least 6 metres away from your Council home to reduce the risk of fire spreading.

11.2.4 Mobility vehicle owners must only charge their mobility vehicle (whether it is stored in a property or in a mobility vehicle store) between 8am and 8pm to reduce the potential risk of fire overnight. Charging cables must not cause a trip hazard or fire risk.

### **11.3 Portable Appliance Test (PAT)**

11.3.1 Tenants/leaseholders are responsible for ensuring their vehicle is serviced and maintained regularly and for having an annual Portable Appliance Test (PAT). This must be carried out by a competent person. If any charging equipment fails the PAT, it is the tenant/leaseholder's responsibility to arrange the repair of it or replace it before using it.

11.3.2 A certificate to confirm that the mobility vehicle has passed the Portable Appliance Test (PAT) needs to be provided to the Tenancy Services Team each year.

### **11.4 Servicing/maintenance**

11.4.1 It is important that the vehicle is properly maintained and serviced regularly to the manufacturers requirements. This will prolong its life and reduce the risk of fire and mechanical breakdown. The manufacturer's handbook will detail how often the vehicle should be serviced.

### **11.5 Health and safety to others**

11.5.1 Where designated internal areas have been provided and permission granted to store within a communal area, residents must comply with any fire safety and health and safety procedures that have been put in place.

11.5.2 If a mobility vehicle is driven within communal areas, this must be at a slow pace and not damage Council property. Any damage must be reported immediately to the Council and any costs to repair the damage may be recharged. Vehicle use above ground floor and in lifts is not permitted.

### **11.6 Lifts**

11.6.1 The use of mobility vehicles in lifts is not permitted.

### **11.7 Insurance**

11.7.1 Tenants and leaseholders must ensure they have appropriate public liability insurance cover against accidents or other injury to third parties or themselves, as well as any damage to the internal or external parts of the building.

11.7.2 A copy of the current insurance certificate must be provided and subsequently a yearly renewal certificate.

## **12. Purchasing a mobility scooter**

12.1 Before purchasing a new mobility scooter, it is worth considering other options such as hiring one with an up to date service and portable appliance test (PAT) already done.

12.2 If you decide to purchase a mobility scooter, before choosing one, it is important that the tenant/leaseholder considers their needs and is confident



that they are able to use one, especially if they will be using it on the road and/or pavements, amongst many other people and vehicles.

12.3 Before buying a mobility scooter it is important that the tenant/leaseholder takes time to consider their options as this may save time, effort and resources later. There are many different types of mobility scooter and tenants/leaseholders need to find one that is suitable for their needs taking in to account, for example, size, height, weight and restricted movement. Tenants/leaseholders should consider:

- Setting their budget, including the cost of the scooter, insurance and breakdown cover, maintenance, servicing and repairs and any adaptations required. Use of existing benefits and funding from charities may be available - some benefits and charity funding allow for the benefit or funding to be put towards the cost of leasing or buying a scooter
- Choosing a dealer experienced in assessing customer needs and avoid buying from an untrained salesperson. Some vehicle suppliers are members of the British Healthcare Trades Association (BHTA)
- Checking whether the dealer can offer appropriate training
- Asking if scooters/vehicles can be hired to gain experience before making the purchase
- Their budget limit and whether they wish to buy new or second-hand
- Making sure they are familiar with all the controls on the scooter/vehicle before buying and taking it home
- Checking whether there are instructions as second-hand scooters may not have them
- Asking if there is a warranty, what it

covers and how long it lasts

12.4 This policy recommends that all new mobility scooters purchased have been manufactured in accordance with BS EN 12184:2022. Residents are advised to discuss this with their commercial retailer, prior to purchase to ensure that this is the case.

12.5 Tenants/leaseholders who purchase a second-hand mobility scooter through local newspaper or social media advertising do not have this safeguard so must be wary. The mechanical state of the scooter and the state of the batteries, which are expensive to replace, will require checking.

12.6 For details of the British Healthcare Trades Association visit: **[www.BHTA.net](http://www.BHTA.net)**  
For information on mobility schemes visit: **[www.motability.co.uk](http://www.motability.co.uk)**  
For details of charities that may assist with funding visit: **[www.charitychoice.co.uk](http://www.charitychoice.co.uk)**

## 13. Safe driving – training/ instruction and speed limits

13.1 Mobility scooter owners should ensure any manufacturer guidelines or instructions on the safe use of their mobility scooter are followed.

13.2 Mobility scooters must be set at their lowest speed whilst being used in communal areas to avoid injury to the tenant/leaseholder, other tenants or leaseholders, Council staff, visitors, and contractors.

13.3 No more than one person at any one time is allowed on a mobility scooter in communal areas. This must be the

mobility scooter owner(s).

- 13.4 The Council advises all mobility scooter owners to attend a certified mobility scooter training course to ensure they can ride safely, confidently and competently.

- 13.5 Mobility scooter owners should be able to read a car's registration number from 12.3 metres (40 feet) and must take responsibility for ensuring that this can be achieved. Mobility scooter owners may have to pay compensation if they have an accident, and poor eyesight was part of the cause.

## 14. Charges for mobility vehicle charging and storage

- 14.1 Residents who use a mobility vehicle store or designated indoor charging and storage facilities, or whose household member uses a store, may be required to pay an annual charge.

The annual charge includes, but is not limited to, covering the costs of electricity, use of the mobility vehicle store, administration, ongoing maintenance and future improvements.

- 14.2 The Council, as the landlord, may alter the annual charge at any time by giving four weeks' notice in writing. The notice will give the date that the change will come into force.

## 15. Monitoring

- 15.1 The Council will keep up to date records for all registered mobility vehicle users and this will include:

- A copy of the resident's mobility vehicle insurance policy
- A copy of the electrical test certificate for the mobility vehicle
- A completed risk assessment
- Storage location
- The make and model of the vehicle

- 15.2 The register will be monitored on a regular basis and an annual review will be carried out with the registered mobility vehicle users.

## 16. Enforcement

- 16.1 Mobility vehicle owners cannot store mobility vehicles anywhere in Council property or on Council land without written consent from the Council, and as per this policy.
- 16.2 The Council reserves the right to withdraw permission to store a mobility vehicle at any time if any tenant does not adhere to this policy. The resident will be asked to remove the mobility vehicle immediately, and potentially, permanently.
- 16.3 Failure to comply with this policy is also a breach of tenancy and enforcement action will be taken to remove the mobility vehicle.

## 17. Communal storage facilities

- 17.1 The Council is under no obligation to provide storage facilities where no existing provision exists.
- 17.2 The Council can refuse a tenant/ leaseholder the right to store a mobility vehicle if no suitable storage facilities can reasonably be provided.

## 18. Reasonable adjustments


- 18.1 The Council recognises that promoting equality is a fundamental part of enhancing life chances and is aware of the obligation under the Equality Act 2010 to make reasonable adjustments where a disabled person or older person is placed at a substantial disadvantage in the enjoyment of their homes.
- 18.2 With regards to the storage and use of mobility vehicles, the Council will consider adjustments where the tenant/leaseholder requests them, and this may include providing designated vehicle storage and charging facilities within external communal areas.
- 18.3 In certain exceptional circumstances where the tenant/leaseholder has severe mobility issues, is registered disabled and wholly dependent on the mobility vehicle to go about their daily activities, the Council will consider the following:
- A foldaway ramp to allow access in and out of the tenants/leaseholder's home
  - Rehousing the tenant/leaseholder into a more suitable property

## 19. Equality and Diversity

- 19.1 The very nature of this policy will impact on people with disabilities or older people. It is important that all requests to own a mobility vehicle are considered on an individual basis and the tenant/leaseholder is supported as much as possible. These requests will be considered alongside the overall health and safety principles of all residents.

## 20. Breach of Mobility Vehicle Policy

- 20.1 The Council understands the positive differences to quality of life a vehicle can make. However, where there is a breach of this policy, the Council will take the appropriate action.
- 20.2 Where a vehicle is stored or charged on Council premises without permission or outside the terms of permission granted, the Council reserves the right to remove the vehicle to ensure health and safety is adhered to and may recharge the tenant/leaseholder for any removal costs.

A background image of a man in a light-colored shirt and shorts riding a red and black lawnmower on a green lawn. In the background, there are large, leafy trees.

If you require this information in large print or in another format please contact us on:

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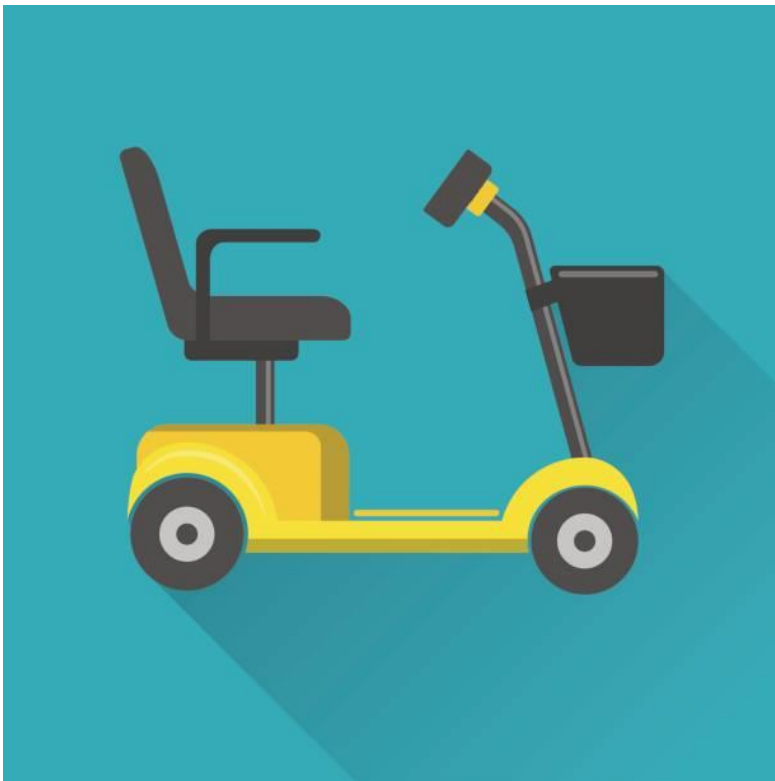


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SOUTH  
KESTEVEN  
DISTRICT  
COUNCIL

## Mobility Vehicle Policy Consultation August 2025



Deborah Wyles – Consultation Officer  
South Kesteven District Council  
October 2025

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## Executive Summary

1. Tenants living in sheltered housing schemes (both corridor and non-corridor schemes) and those living in general needs housing blocks of flats were asked for their views on a proposal to introduce a policy governing all aspects of mobility and electric vehicle ownership/ leasing in council properties during a two-week consultation which took place towards the end of August/beginning of September 2025.
2. Opening on 29 August 2025, the survey ran for two weeks, closing on 11<sup>th</sup> September 2025. 72 responses (43.1%) were received from tenants in SKDC's sheltered housing schemes and 95 (56.9%) from those in general needs housing.
3. The surveys were completed by those who owned/leased mobility vehicles and e-scooters/electric bikes as well as those who didn't. A third of respondents (26 or 35.1%) stated that they currently use a mobility scooter. Two thirds (48 or 64.9%) said that they didn't.
4. The proportion of responses received from those using e scooters and/or e bikes was very low. Only 2 responses were received from tenants who used these types of electric vehicles.
5. When asked if they supported a proposal to introduce a requirement for tenants to register their scooter with the Council, just under three quarters of respondents (136 or 72.7%) were in favour.
6. Seven out of ten (124 or 70.1%) agreed with the proposal that mobility scooters should only be charged during the day – between the hours of 8am and 8pm.
7. Respondents were asked to comment on each of the proposals contained in the Council's Mobility Scooter Policy. Their feedback could be categorised into several themes. These included disability, accessibility, affordability and independence. Safety and security were also important. Illustrative quotes have been included in this report.

## Purpose of report



8. The purpose of this report is to update South Kesteven District Council (SKDC), Cabinet and Housing Overview and Scrutiny Committee with the results of the consultation that took place with various stakeholders during August and September 2025.

## Background

9. The Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005<sup>1</sup> requires the Council to assess the risk created by the use of mobility scooters and other electric vehicles when used in their residential properties, particularly in relation to how they are stored and charged. The Mobility Vehicle Policy has been re-drafted to address these issues, doing this by placing conditions on the use of scooters and other electric vehicles in council properties. Adopting the Mobility Scooter Policy would allow the Council to introduce a registration scheme where residents must ask for permission to have a mobility vehicle. Tenants would also be required to insure and maintain their vehicle.

## Purpose

10. The purpose of this consultation is to inform a decision SKDC will be asked to make regarding the approval of an updated Mobility Vehicle Policy – expanded to include other types of electric vehicles which require charging, such as e-scooters and electric bikes. Covering the use, storage and charging of electric vehicles within the Council’s housing stock- both general needs and sheltered housing, the policy would, if adopted, also require tenants who own or lease a mobility scooter to register it with the Council, and to fulfil certain conditions. This would meet the statutory requirement, as set out in the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005, which requires SKDC to take reasonable steps to reduce the risk from fire in any premises they have responsibility for.

## Scope

11. The scope of this consultation was focused on ensuring that the views of those who will be affected by the proposed changes were reflected in the responses. This included the following stakeholders:
  - Tenants living in sheltered housing “corridor” schemes

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<sup>1</sup> The Regulatory Reform Fire Safety order requires any person who has some level of control in respect of premises, must take reasonable steps to reduce the risk from **fire** in those premises and make sure people can safely escape from those premises if there is a **fire**.

- Tenants living in sheltered housing “non- corridor” schemes
- Tenants and leaseholders living in general needs housing (flats)
- Tenants who have informed the Council that they have a mobility-related disability and/or are eligible for the assisted garden maintenance scheme and /or the assisted refuse and recycling collection scheme.
- Key stakeholders who work with/ support those who may be affected by the introduction of the policy e.g. carers

## Objectives

12. The principle objectives of this consultation were to:

- Ensure that various stakeholders were consulted on the proposal to manage the use and storage of mobility vehicles and other electric bikes/scooters in sheltered housing and general needs housing properties across the district.
- Ensure that various stakeholders were consulted on the proposal which will require those owning or leasing a mobility scooter, e bike or e scooter to register the appliance with SKDC.
- Fulfil the statutory requirement for the Council, as set out in the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005, which is to take reasonable steps to reduce the risk from fire in any premises they own.

The secondary objectives of this consultation were to:

- Explain the approach to the management, storage and charging of mobility scooters, and why it is necessary.
- Explain why tenants would be required to register their mobility scooter and what the conditions of registration would be.
- Measure the degree of support or otherwise for the proposals.
- Give tenants the opportunity to ask questions and raise concerns
- Understand and be aware of the impact this may have on specific groups of stakeholders.

## Methodology

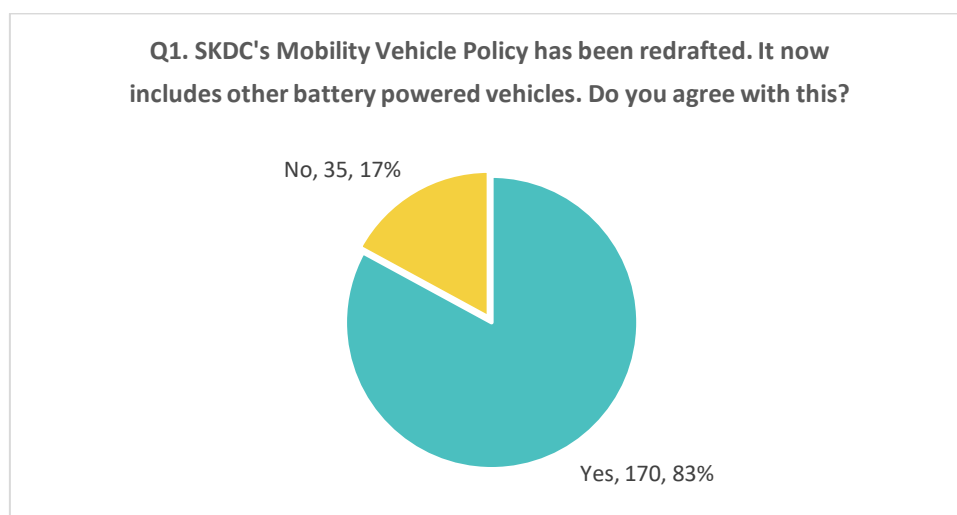
13. The responses to these consultations were collected over a two-week period (29 August through to 11 September 2025). 210 responses were received in total. Just under half of these were from tenants in sheltered housing (72 or 43.1%) with just over half coming from tenants in general needs housing (95 or 56.9%). The data was gathered via a web link to an on-line survey. Tenants in the Council’s sheltered housing complexes were given printed copies of the surveys, and asked to complete them. Thirty printed copies of the survey were received.

14. The surveys were designed to communicate the reasons for the Council's Mobility Vehicle Policy, and to ascertain support (or not) for the proposals it contains, particularly in respect of registration, storage and charging. It included sections on:

- Expanding the parameters of the policy to include e scooters and electric bikes
- Requiring tenants to register their mobility vehicle
- The use of designated storage areas
- When charging of mobility vehicles is permitted
- Using a mobility vehicle whilst in a lift
- How designated spaces should be allocated
- Visitors use of mobility vehicles
- Charging tenants to store and charge their mobility vehicle
- If they own/lease a mobility scooter or other electric vehicle
- If they do, where they store and charge it currently
- An option for them to ask questions or make further observations about the proposals

### The results

15. Tenants were told that the Council has re-drafted its Mobility Vehicle Policy. To manage the safety of residents and protect buildings, the parameters of the policy have been expanded to include other battery powered vehicles, including e bikes and e scooters. The first question asks tenants if they agree that the policy should be expanded to include e scooters and electric bikes as well as mobility scooters. Eight out of ten tenants (170 or 82.9%) agreed with the expansion of the policy as illustrated in the pie chart below:



16. When invited to provide more context about their answer, respondents used the opportunity to comment on the policy more generally. Their feedback could be grouped into the following themes:

**Fire safety and charging concerns.** Respondents were worried about the risks associated with charging mobility vehicles, especially regarding fire hazards and battery safety. Concerns included a lack of charging infrastructure, restrictions on charging times, and the volatility of lithium batteries, as illustrated in the quote below:

**“In view of the growth in the use of mobility scooters and other electronic vehicles and indications that lithium batteries can be a fire hazard, a policy is needed.”**

**Disability and Accessibility.** A number of responses highlighted the importance of mobility vehicles for independence and daily living. There were strong feelings about potential discrimination and barriers to access, with some expressing that policy changes could severely impact their ability to live independently. This is shown in the quote below:

**“For those that require the use of their mobility scooters just to do even the basic tasks, if it can’t be stored in their home or directly outside their home; then you will effectively be trapping them in their home. ....”**

**Policy and Regulation.** Some respondents question the rationale behind including certain vehicles in the policy, and view it as over regulatory.

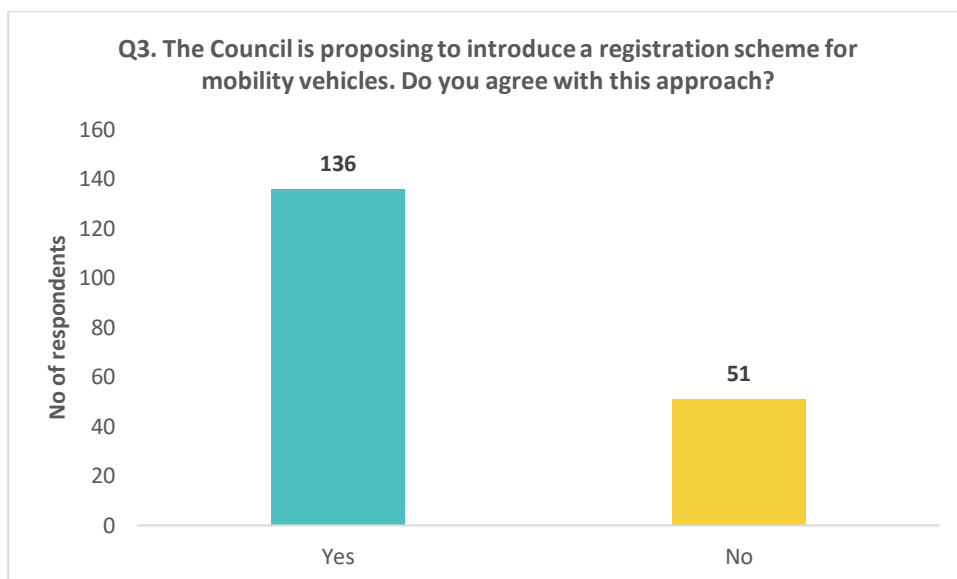
**No.....any scheme by you would be over reaching.”**

17. Respondents were then asked for their views of one of the main constructs of the Council’s Mobility Scooter Policy – the proposal to introduce a registration scheme for mobility scooters. Registration would require:

- anyone who currently rents or leases a property from the Council and has a mobility vehicle, to ask permission to keep/continue to keep it.
- SKDC to be made aware of who has vehicles; where they are stored and where they are charged
- the tenant to provide documents each year to show the vehicle is maintained; serviced; electrically tested (portable appliance testing) and insured
- the tenant to display a badge on each vehicle to show it is registered

18. Seven out of ten respondents (136 or 72.7%) agreed with this proposal. Just over a quarter (51 or 27.3%) were against this proposal as illustrated in the graph overleaf:





19. When asked why they had chosen to answer in this way respondents comments could be grouped into the following themes:

**Accessibility and independence.** Consultees were concerned about how policy changes may impact residents' independence and access – particularly if they were disabled.

*“There’s enough paperwork now than disabled people have to fill out. This is far too stressful for people that are already struggling day to day with living as a disabled person, without the added stress....”*

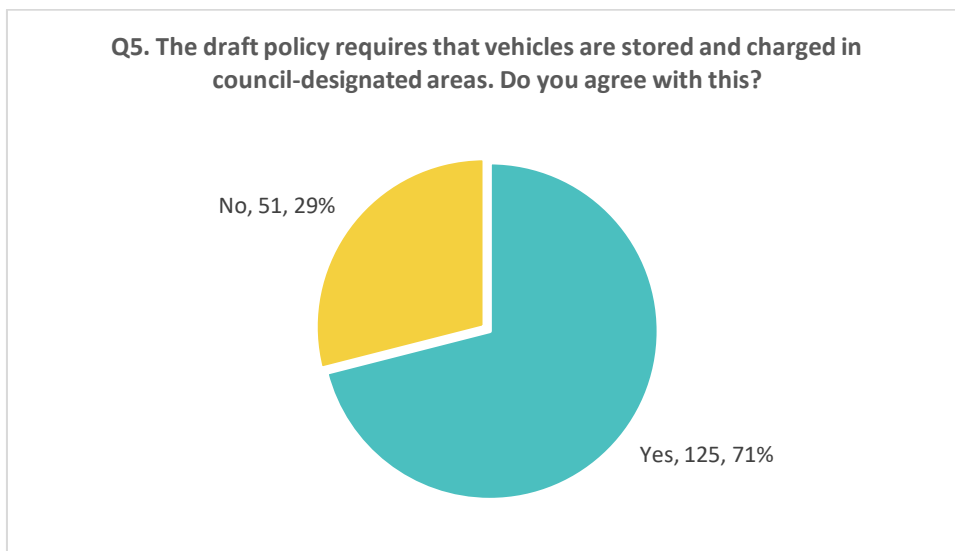
**Safety and maintenance.** Other comments related to safety concerns, especially around charging, PAT testing, insurance, and regular servicing. Respondents mentioned the costs and practicalities of maintaining mobility vehicles safely.

*“You are singling out one type of product that is electric/ battery powered. The costs for those on pensions and benefits to comply will add more financial burden in these hard times. People who can't afford these measures could end up isolated in their homes.”*

**Policy and Regulation.** Other comments were critical of the proposed policy. They included questions about the council's remit, the scope of regulation, and the practicality of enforcing new rules. This is illustrated below:

*“Totally agree, but how will it be policed/enforced? If not enforced then it’s just another waste of money.”*

20. Consultees were then asked for their opinion on only being able to store and charge mobility vehicles in specific areas designated by the Council, as stipulated in the draft policy. Respondents were informed that this will normally be outside in a designated store. Where this is not possible, there will be indoor designated areas. Seven out of ten respondents (125 or 71.0%) agreed with this, as shown in the graph below:



21. When asked about this proposal, respondents comments could be grouped into the following themes:

**Accessibility and Proximity.** A number of responses emphasized the need for mobility scooters and storage to be very close to where people live, due to limited walking ability. Concerns expressed included how far individuals will have to walk to reach designated storage or charging areas, and the impact on independence.

**"It is vital that storage should be within very close access. The reason people have mobility scooters is because of their ability to walk only very short distances."**

**Designated Storage and Charging.** Some respondents asked questions about how the designated storage areas will be provided, maintained, and accessed safely and securely. Respondents asked for clarity on council responsibilities and practical arrangements.

**"Will the council be providing safe outside storage for mobility scooters, plus outside sockets for charging?"**

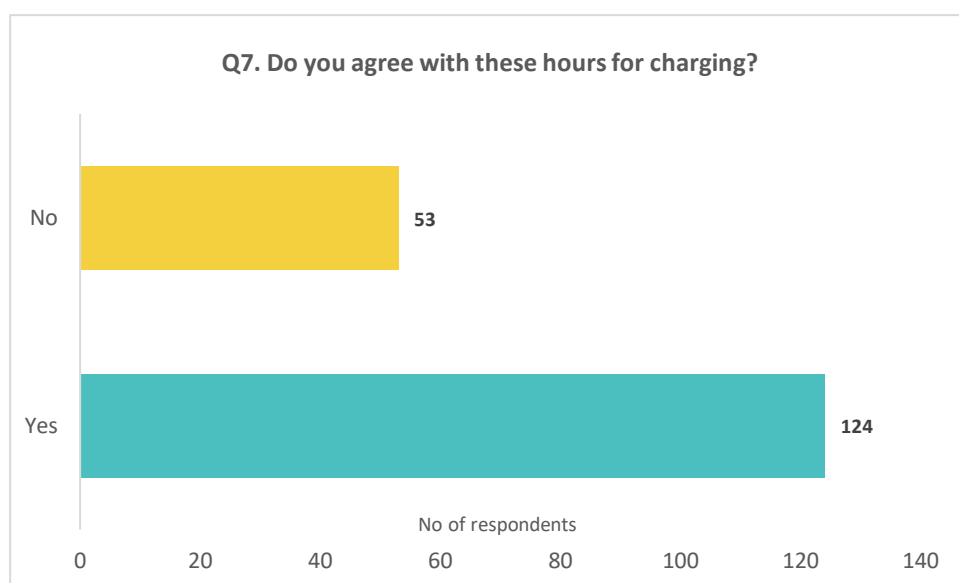
**Policy restrictions and individual rights.** Some respondents felt that the proposed policy restrictions are too rigid or intrusive, raising issues about personal choice, discrimination, and legal rights as illustrated below:

"No, this also means you have a say on where and how we do things in our own homes, this isn't something you can do..."

**Safety, Security and Risks.** Some residents expressed safety and security concerns. These include fire risks from charging, security of stored vehicles, and the vulnerability of disabled residents.

"How do people with mobility problems get to & from these charging areas? Will the security of the items be guaranteed?"

22. The next question on the survey asked respondents about potential restrictions on charging mobility vehicles. The policy proposes that charging of mobility vehicles will only be allowed during the day i.e. between the hours of 8am and 8pm. This is because residents are more likely to be aware if a fire starts if they are awake and so will be safer. Seven out of ten respondents (124 or 70.1%) agreed that vehicles should only be charged during the day (from 8am to 8pm). This is illustrated on the graph below:



23. When asked to comment, residents feedback could be grouped into four themes. These were:

**Safety and charging concerns.** Respondents were concerned about charging times, battery safety and fire risks. They also mentioned the practicality of charging schedules and the technical limitations of mobility vehicles, as illustrated here:

“The hours provided will mean that there will be more competition to charge scooters. Whilst I fully support the reason for the provision of limited hours, I believe by extending the time to 10pm it will reduce competition. Some models require a significant period of time to charge. This provides more flexibility for those users.”

**Cost and Support Needs.** Some mentioned the financial impact of charging a scooter during the day, as shown in the quote below:

“Most use is during the day with charging at/overnight, and most energy companies advertise cheaper electricity overnight or recharging during the lower demand hours, daytime charging goes against this.”

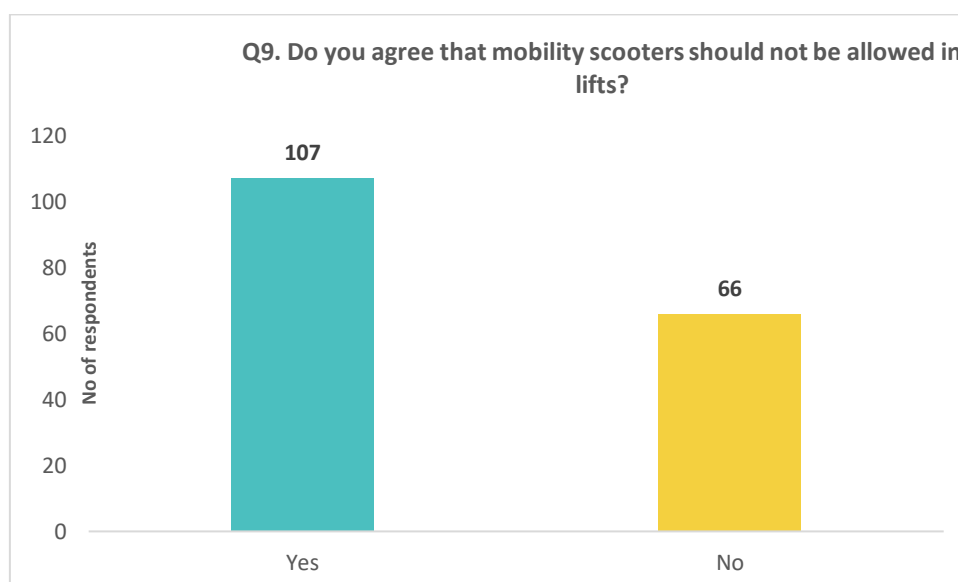
**Accessibility and Independence.** Highlighting concerns about independence, discrimination, and the impact having to charge their mobility vehicle during the day would have on their daily life, respondents expressed frustration about barriers to mobility and the risk of exclusion.

“So only at the most expensive times, in stores where nobody will be, and not able to get to quickly because they lack mobility, which is why they have a scooter in the first place....”

**Policy and Regulation.** A few were critical of the proposal, and wondered how it could be enforced. They also thought it could be viewed as over-regulatory.

“If vehicles are PAT tested and serviced regularly - this should not be a concern. I feel we are straying into Govt and Council over-regulation.”

24. Tenants were then informed about a proposal in the policy to prevent people on mobility vehicles using a lift in any of SKDC's housing. This is because mobility vehicles are classed as a fire risk, and their weight can cause damage to the lift. Six out of ten respondents (107 or 61.8%) agreed with this proposal. Four out of ten respondents didn't. This is shown below:



25. When asked to comment, consultees feedback could be grouped into the following themes:

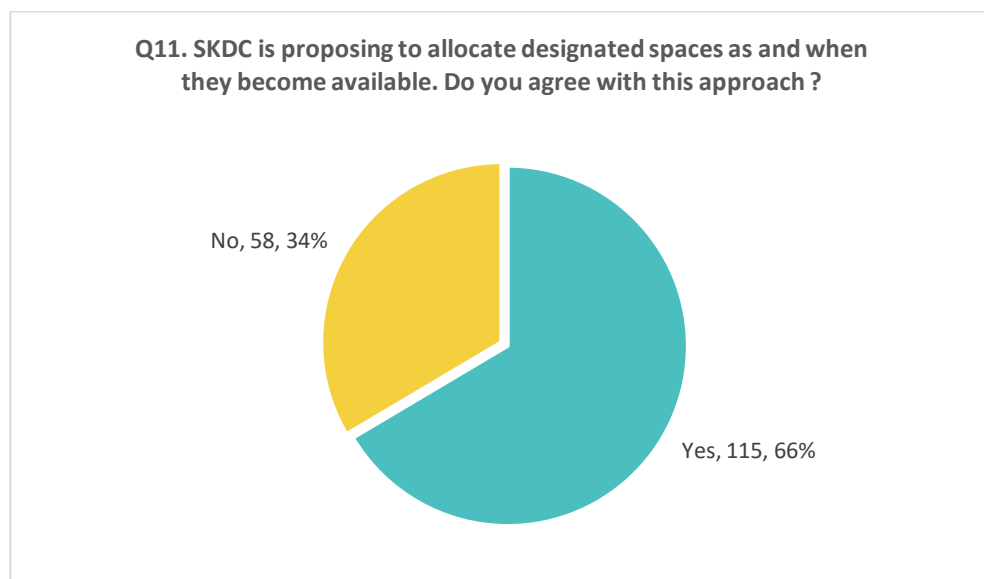
**Safety and Charging Concerns.** Respondents discussed the practicality and safety of using lifts, especially in the event of fires.

**“If it caught fire there would be no escape, and the weight should be a cause for concern.”**

**Accessibility and Independence.** This theme highlighted concerns about independence, access, and the impact a proposal like this would have on daily life. Respondents mentioned the barriers to mobility and the risk of exclusion that would result.

**“.... this policy is however likely to discriminate against some residents purely because of where they live. Especially those who have the most severe mobility issues....”**

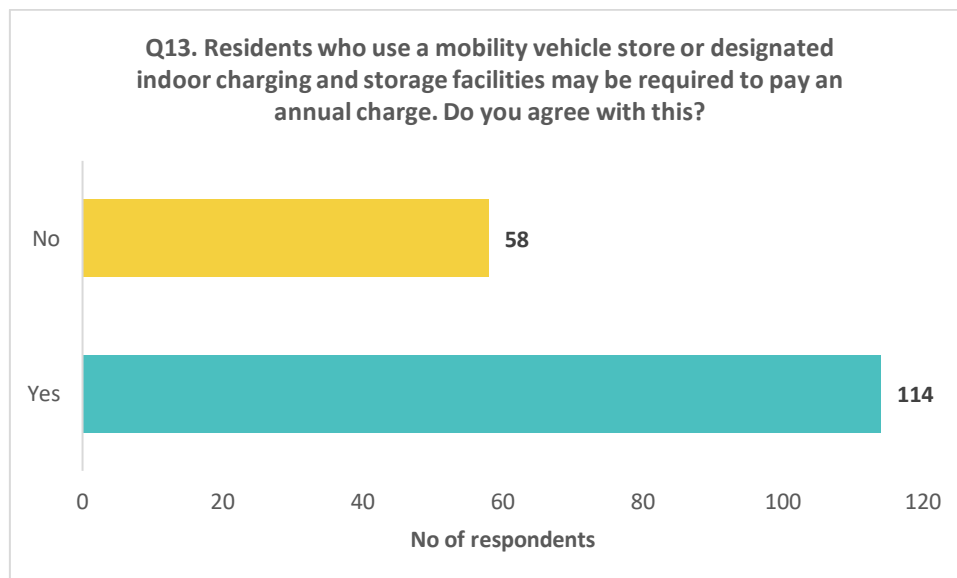
26. Respondents were then informed about how the Council intends to allocate any available designated mobility vehicle storage spaces. The Council is proposing to allocate any available spaces, as and when they become available, in date order of request. Two thirds of those asked (115 or 66%) agreed with this approach, as illustrated here:



27. When asked about this approach, the feedback from respondents was similar to that already received for other proposals in the policy. Concerns about maintaining independence and access were expressed, as were alternative scenarios for allocating designated spaces. These included allocating on need, not length of time someone has been waiting, as shown below:

**“I do not agree with this approach at all. Those residents with the highest dependency on their mobility scooter should be prioritised. This policy will enable those who opt to have a scooter as a lifestyle choice to have priority over those most in need.”**

28. Respondents were then asked about the possibility of having to pay. Residents who use a mobility vehicle outside store or designated indoor charging and storage facilities, may be required to pay an annual charge. Two thirds of respondents (114 or 66.3%) were in favour of this proposal. A third were not, as illustrated overleaf:

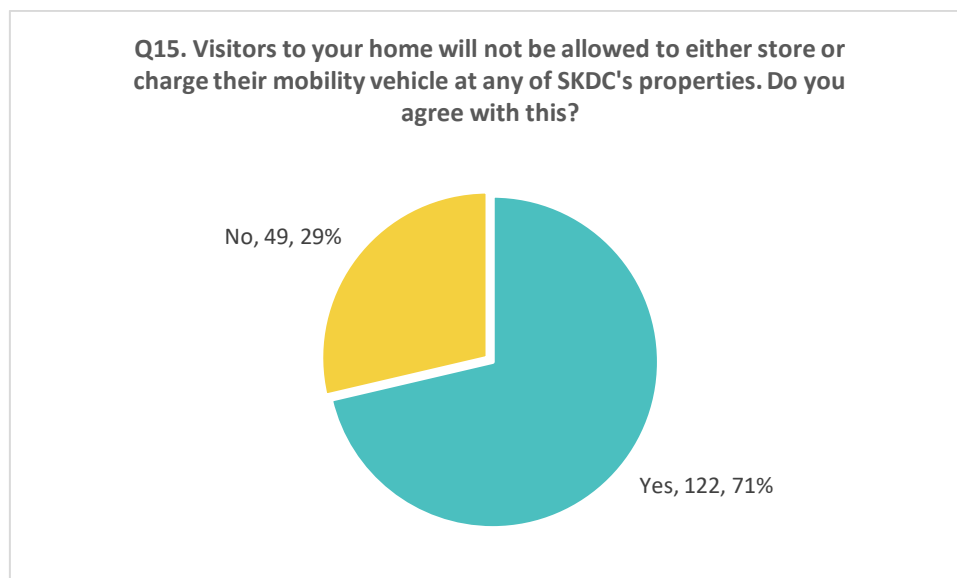


29. The comments received in relation to this proposal fell into one of two categories. Some respondents expressed concerns about how charging policies and costs could affect disabled residents, their independence, and their ability to use mobility vehicles. Others did not want to pay for a service they were not benefiting from. These are illustrated in the two quotes below:

**“Disabled people are some of our poorer community members and should not be penalised any further because they are disabled.”**

**“The cost should be borne by those that use the facility, not everyone.”**

30. The next question on the survey asked respondents for their opinion on a proposal to prohibit visitors from either storing or charging their mobility vehicle in any council property. When asked if they agreed with this proposal, seven out of ten respondents (122 or 71.3%) said that they did, as illustrated in the pie chart overleaf:



31. When asked to comment on this proposal, the feedback from respondents was focused on the rights of tenants to have visitors, and maintain an independent life:

**“People with mobility problems have lives, they visit friends and friends visit them, this would be a further restriction to them.”**

32. The next couple of questions asked respondents if they thought the draft policy was easy to read and understand. Two thirds of respondents (113 or 66.1%) thought the draft policy was easy to understand. When asked what changes they would like to see to the policy document, one respondent requested that the policy contain specific clauses for those in sheltered housing and those in general needs housing (flats) as their needs are different.

**“The policy should be split up for people who live in places with communal areas and people who have other types of properties.”**

33. Three quarters of respondents (123 or 73.2%) thought the draft policy was easy to read.

34. Question 21 on the survey asked respondents if they had any other comments they would like to make. The importance of mobility vehicles for independence, and concerns about proposals that may restrict access or create barriers for those with disabilities was a key theme. They also expressed concerns about the financial impact of new policies, including the costs of



registration and charging. Improvements to infrastructure were also mentioned e.g. charging points.

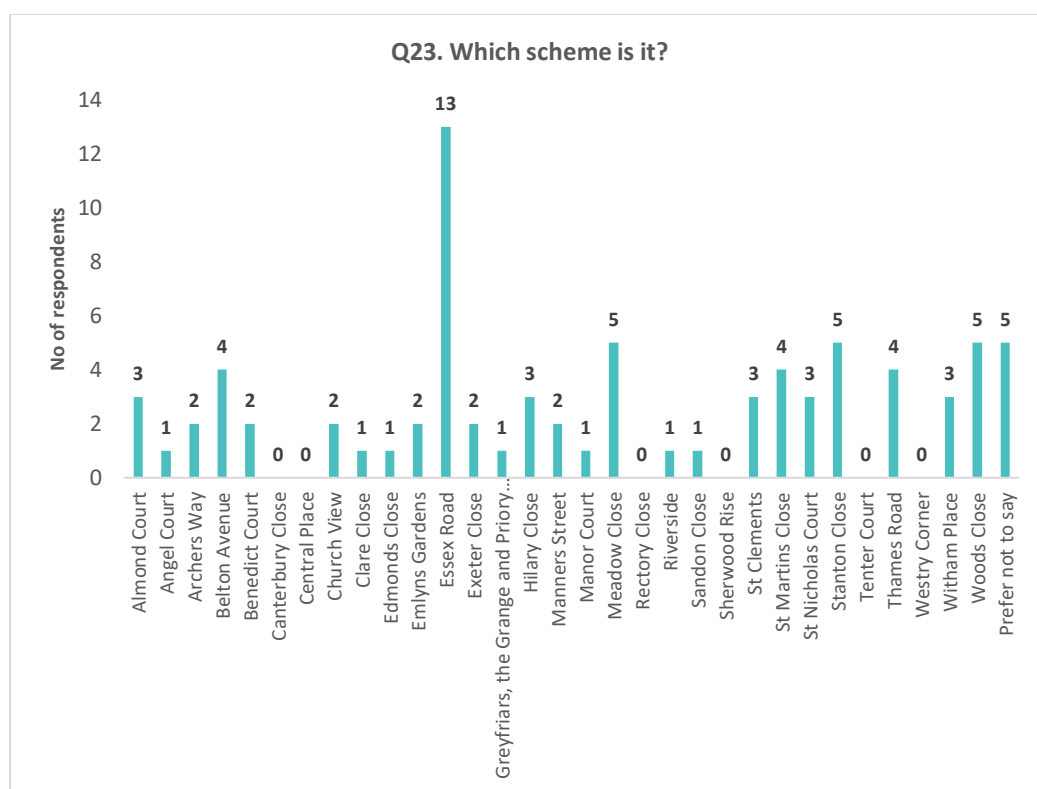
**“It’s an absolutely disgraceful idea. We have to struggle enough now it’s basically taking away our rights as a disabled person.”**

**“I think you're just taking advantage of disabled people with mobility problems like me; life is hard enough without having to worry about all this both of my scooters have insurance and that should be sufficient and that's an extra expense as it is.”**

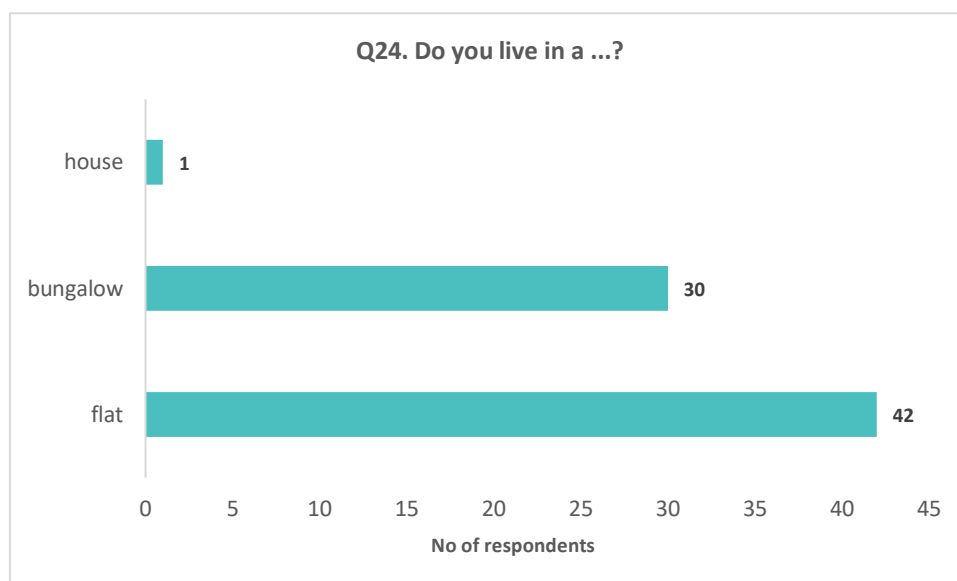
**“If you were putting charging points that would help.”**

35. Just under half (72 or 43.1%) were received from tenants in SKDC’s sheltered housing schemes and 95 (56.9%) from those in general needs housing.

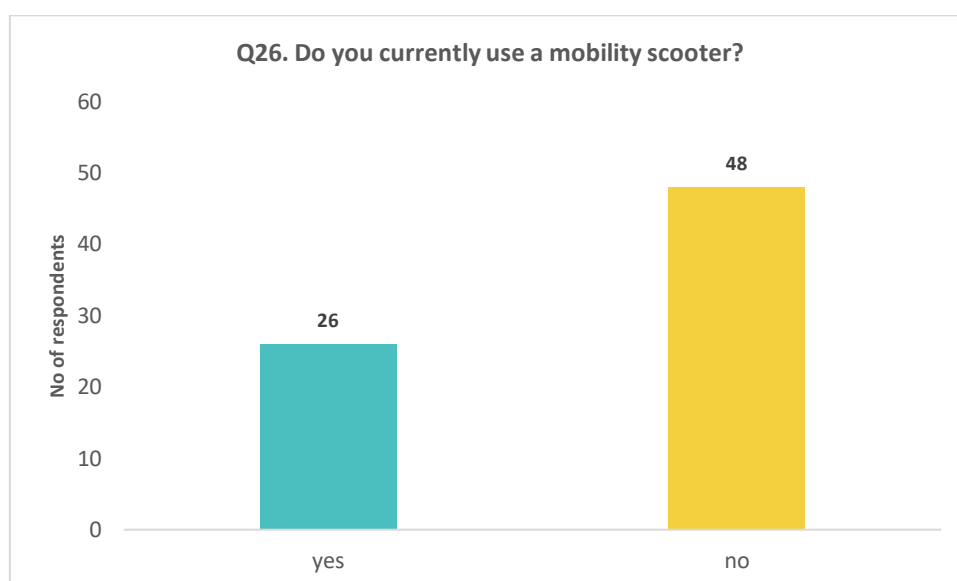
36. Responses were received from most sheltered housing schemes – as illustrated below:



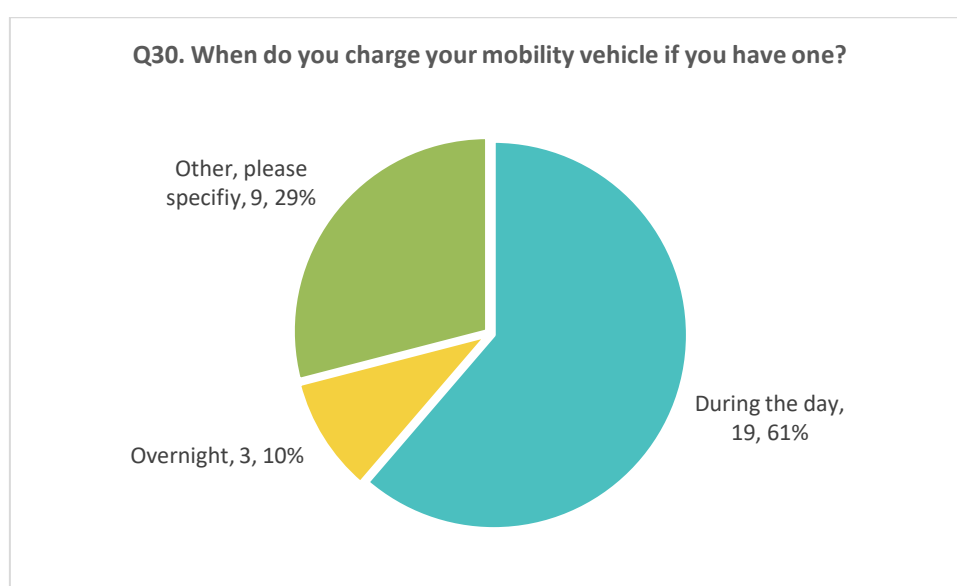
37. Responses were received from those living in bungalows as well as flats as illustrated below:



38. Just over a third of those answering (26 or 35.1%) said that they currently use a mobility scooter. Just under two thirds (48 or 64.9%) didn't.



39. Only two respondents said that they currently use an e bike or an e scooter.
40. When asked where they store and charge their mobility vehicle, most use a dedicated area. Dependent on the type of accommodation, it could be a spare bedroom, a shed, a designated space or a communal room in a sheltered housing complex.
41. The final question on the survey asked respondents when they tended to charge their mobility vehicle. Three fifths of respondents (19 or 61.3%) said that they charged their mobility vehicle during the day. Those choosing to answer other, please specify, did so because they charged their vehicle as and when it was required.



## Conclusion

42. Undertaking this consultation has been very useful. It has provided lots of feedback on the proposals outlined in the Council's Mobility Vehicle Policy. In particular it has provided tenants with opportunities to communicate the important role mobility scooters play in maintaining their mobility and independence.

43. It should be noted that responses were received from tenants who currently own or lease a mobility scooter as well as those who don't use one. The difference in the distribution of responses between those who are "users" and "non users" should be borne in mind, as it is likely to have significantly affected how people have responded to the proposals. It would probably be worth undertaking some further analysis at some point to establish how much rates of support differ between these two groups of stakeholders.
44. The proposal to introduce designated areas on sheltered housing schemes where mobility scooters can be stored and charged could cause issues for those tenants with very limited mobility as they might not be able to get to/from the designated areas very easily. This was a real concern for some, and it might be beneficial to consider what mitigations could be put in place, if this proposal was to be implemented.
45. The challenge of balancing the needs of disabled tenants who rely on mobility vehicles to maintain access and independence whilst at the same time ensuring that all tenants are safe remains. Summarised by the following quotes from respondents:

**"I understand the problems you are facing with fire potential but I think any policy should not penalise our vulnerable residents. I do not have a mobility vehicle but am quite happy to split charging cost equally between residents and happy for visitors to attend with mobility vehicles.**

**Disabled residents need to access their community and to have contact with friends and I do not support any moves to deny them this vital contact"**

**"I agree that the council needs the details of residents who own and use the scooters, and I also agree that certain rules are implemented so that the use and storage of the scooters do not impact on other residents and are kept safely. However, excessive regulations will make it difficult and costly for many residents to obtain the required 'proof'. Please keep it simple and straight forward"**

46. Members are asked to note the contents of this report.

**Prepared by Deb Wyles**

**Communication and Consultation**

**October 2025**







### Equality Impact Assessment

Question	Response
1. Name of policy/funding activity/event being assessed	Mobility Vehicle Policy
2. Summary of aims and objectives of the policy/funding activity/event	<p>The draft policy includes information on the health and safety implications of mobility vehicles (mobility scooters; e-bikes and e-scooters), the safe storage and charging of them and introduces a Mobility Vehicle Registration Scheme, which requires tenants and leaseholders (both new and existing) to request permission to keep a mobility vehicle at a council-owned property.</p> <p>The implementation of the policy and the Registration Scheme will be undertaken in a phased approach. The Mobility Vehicle Registration Scheme will be introduced with sheltered housing corridor scheme residents first. In regard to the provision of new storage and charging outdoor facilities, this will be explored first for Witham Place, Grantham; Hilary Close, Stamford; Stanton Close, Bourne.</p>
3. Who is affected by the policy/funding activity/event?	South Kesteven District Council tenants and leaseholders.
4. Has there been any consultation with, or input from, customers/service users or other stakeholders? If so, with whom, how were they consulted and what did they say? If you haven't consulted yet and are intending to do so, please complete the consultation table below.	<p>Yes -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All tenants living in sheltered housing "corridor" schemes flats.</li> <li>A sample of tenants living in sheltered housing "non- corridor" schemes.</li> <li>A sample of tenants and leaseholders living in general needs housing. Specifically, those tenants who have informed the Council they have a mobility-related disability and/or are eligible for the assisted garden maintenance scheme and /or the assisted refuse and recycling collection scheme.</li> </ul>
5. What are the arrangements for monitoring and reviewing the actual impact of the policy/funding activity/event?	The policy will be reviewed in 6 -12 months time from the date of approval. The timescale will be dependent upon the progress of the implementation and if any changes are needed to the policy. The policy review will be led by the Housing Strategy team with input from relevant officers.

Protected Characteristic	Is there a potential for positive or negative impact?	Please explain and give examples of any evidence/data used	Action to address negative impact e.g. adjustment to the policy <i>(The Action Log below should be completed to provide further detail)</i>
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Age	Yes	<p>The implications of the policy potentially could impact negatively on an older person because an older person is more likely to need a mobility scooter.</p> <p>If there are not safe storage and charging provisions for a mobility scooter where they live.</p>	<p>Additional scooter storage is being provided at some of the sheltered housing schemes and where this is not available or all spaces have been allocated, consideration for a move to an alternative property will be given, where appropriate, if all other options have been considered.</p> <p>For general needs housing (all housing that is not sheltered housing), the Council will not unreasonably withhold permission for alterations to a property to allow the provision of storage facilities, ramp, access path or hard standing to facilitate a mobility scooter.</p>
Disability	Yes	<p>The implications of the policy potentially could impact negatively on someone with a disability.</p> <p>If there are not safe storage and charging provisions for a mobility scooter where they live.</p>	<p>Additional scooter storage is being provided at some of the sheltered housing schemes and where this is not available or all spaces have been allocated, consideration for a move to an alternative property will be given, where appropriate, if all other options have been considered.</p> <p>For general needs housing, the Council will not unreasonably withhold permission for alterations to a property to allow the provision of storage facilities, ramp, access path or hard standing to facilitate a mobility scooter.</p>
Gender Reassignment	No	This protected characteristic is not relevant to the implementation of this policy.	
Marriage and Civil Partnership	No	This protected characteristic is not relevant to the implementation of this policy.	
Pregnancy and Maternity	No	This protected characteristic is not relevant to the implementation of this policy.	
Race	No	This protected characteristic is not relevant to the implementation of this policy.	
Religion or Belief	No	This protected characteristic is not relevant to the	



		implementation of this policy.	
Sex	No	This protected characteristic is not relevant to the implementation of this policy.	
Sexual Orientation	No	This protected characteristic is not relevant to the implementation of this policy.	
<b>Other Factors requiring consideration</b>			
Socio-Economic Impacts	Yes	The implications of the policy potentially could impact negatively on a person if the tenant is in general needs housing and on a lower income. This could be if they need provision of storage facilities, ramp, access path or hard standing to facilitate a mobility scooter.	For general needs housing, the Council will not unreasonably withhold permission for alterations to a property to allow the provision of storage facilities, ramp, access path or hard standing to facilitate a mobility scooter. The tenant may be eligible for a Disabled Facilities Grant to assist with any alterations.  The Council will consider rehousing into a different property, where possible and if the tenant wishes to.
Carers (those who provide unpaid care to a family member, friend or partner)	Yes	The implications of the policy potentially could impact negatively on someone who is carer.  This is because they may need to spend more time caring for someone if the person who relies on their mobility scooter cannot use it and are less independent to do things for themselves.	The Council will facilitate someone having a mobility scooter, where possible or rehousing into a different property, where possible and if the tenant wishes to.

## Consultation

Negative impacts identified will require the responsible officer to consult with the affected group/s to determine all practicable and proportionate mitigations. Add more rows as required.		
Group/Organisation	Date	Response
A full consultation was undertaken with tenants and leaseholders most likely affected by this policy – see consultation report attached.	Consultation report – Autumn 2021	The people who will be most affected by the policy are tenants living in our sheltered housing corridor schemes. It is within these schemes where the fire risk is most prevalent. The majority were supportive of the principles of the policy.





Further consultation took place with all sheltered housing scheme tenants and leaseholders and a sample of other tenants and leaseholders during August/September 2025.		The consultation survey has received a mix response of positive support and some negative feedback. In-person consultation meetings also took place at three of the sheltered housing schemes (Witham Place, Grantham; Hilary Close, Stamford and Stanton Close, Bourne), where mobility vehicles are most used. The response from these was also mixed and residents were encouraged to complete the survey (both paper survey and online survey options were available).
Housing Overview and Scrutiny Committee	24 <sup>th</sup> March 2025 meeting	The Housing Overview and Scrutiny Committee noted the contents of the report and discussed the draft Mobility Vehicle Policy. The draft Mobility Vehicle Policy was unanimously recommended to Cabinet.

### **Proposed Mitigation: Action Log**

To be completed when barriers, negative impact or discrimination are found as part of this process – to show actions taken to remove or mitigate. Any mitigations identified throughout the EIA process should be meaningful and timely. Add more rows as required.				
<b>Negative Impact</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Timeline</b>	<b>Outcome</b>	<b>Status</b>
<p>The implications of the policy potentially could impact negatively on an older person because an older person is more likely to need a mobility scooter.</p> <p>If there are not safe storage and charging provisions for a mobility scooter where they live.</p>	<p>Additional scooter storage is being provided at some of the sheltered housing schemes and where this is not available or all spaces have been allocated, consideration for a move to an alternative property will be given, where appropriate, if all other options have been considered.</p> <p>For general needs housing (all housing that's not sheltered housing), the Council will not unreasonably withhold permission for alterations to a property to allow the provision of storage facilities, ramp, access path or hard</p>	<p>The implications of the policy will be reviewed in 6 -12 months time from the date of approval.</p>		



	standing to facilitate a mobility scooter.			
<p>The implications of the policy potentially could impact negatively on someone with a disability.</p> <p>If there are not safe storage and charging provisions for a mobility scooter where they live.</p>	<p>Additional scooter storage is being provided at some of the sheltered housing schemes and where this is not available or all spaces have been allocated, consideration for a move to an alternative property will be given, where appropriate, if all other options have been considered.</p> <p>For general needs housing, the Council will not unreasonably withhold permission for alterations to a property to allow the provision of storage facilities, ramp, access path or hard standing to facilitate a mobility scooter.</p>	<p>The implications of the policy will be reviewed in 6 – 12 months time from the date of approval.</p>		
<p>The implications of the policy potentially could impact negatively on a person if the tenant is in general needs housing and on a lower income. This could be if they need provision of storage facilities, ramp, access path or hard standing to facilitate a mobility scooter.</p>	<p>For general needs housing, the Council will not unreasonably withhold permission for alterations to a property to allow the provision of storage facilities, ramp, access path or hard standing to facilitate a mobility scooter.</p> <p>The Council will consider rehousing into a different property, where possible and if the tenant wishes to.</p>	<p>The implications of the policy will be reviewed in 6 – 12 months time from the date of approval.</p>		
<p>The implications of the policy potentially could impact negatively on someone who is carer.</p>	<p>The Council will facilitate someone having a mobility scooter, where possible or rehousing into a</p>	<p>The implications of the policy will be reviewed in 6- 12</p>		



This is because they may need to spend more time caring for someone if the person who relies on their mobility scooter cannot use it and are less independent to do things for themselves.	different property, where possible and if the tenant wishes to.	months time from the date of approval.		
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## Evaluation Decision

Once consultation and practicable and proportionate mitigation has been put in place, the responsible officer should evaluate whether any negative impact remains and, if so, provide justification for any decision to proceed.		
Question	Explanation / justification	
Is it possible the proposed policy or activity or change in policy or activity could discriminate or unfairly disadvantage people?	<p>Yes there is a possibility but mitigations are being put into place and each person's situation will be considered on a case by case basis.</p> <p>The implications of the policy will be reviewed in 6 – 12 months time from the date of approval.</p>	
Final Decision	Tick	Include any explanation/justification required
1. <b>No barriers</b> identified, therefore activity will <b>proceed</b>		
2. <b>Stop</b> the policy or practice because the data shows bias towards one or more groups		
3. <b>Adapt or change</b> the policy in a way that will eliminate the bias		
4. <b>Barriers and impact identified</b> , however having considered all available options carefully, there appear to be no other proportionate ways to achieve the aim of the policy or practice (e.g. in extreme cases or where positive action is taken). Therefore you are going to <b>proceed with caution</b> with this policy or practice knowing that it may favour some people less than others, providing justification for this decision	✓	On the balance of the fire risk to residents and the equality impact, it is proposed that the policy is implemented with a planned review of the policy in 6 -12 months time to evaluate.



Did you consult with an Equality Ally prior to carrying out this assessment?

Yes – met with Carol Drury – 16<sup>th</sup> December 2024

### Sign off

<b>Name and job title of person completing this EIA</b>	Celia Bown – Senior Housing Policy and Strategy Officer
<b>Officer Responsible for implementing the policy/function etc</b>	Alison Hall-Wright – Director of Housing
<b>Date Completed</b>	20/01/2025
<b>Line Manager</b>	Emma-Jayne Abbott
<b>Date Agreed</b> <i>(by line manager)</i>	01/10/2025
<b>Date of Review</b> <i>(if required)</i>	6 – 12 months after policy Cabinet approval

Completed EIAs should be included as an appendix to the relevant report going to a Cabinet, Committee or Council meeting and a copy sent to [equalities@southkesteven.gov.uk](mailto:equalities@southkesteven.gov.uk).

Completed EIAs will be published along with the relevant report through Modern.Gov before any decision is made and also on the Council's website.

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**SOUTH  
KESTEVEN  
DISTRICT  
COUNCIL**

## Cabinet

4 November 2025

Report of the Chief Executive

## Cabinet Forward Plan

### Report Author

Lucy Bonshor, Democratic Officer



[l.bonshor@southkesteven.gov.uk](mailto:l.bonshor@southkesteven.gov.uk)

### Purpose of Report

This report highlights matters on the Cabinet's Forward Plan.

### Recommendations

**That Cabinet notes the content of this report.**

### Decision Information

Is this a Key Decision?	No
Does the report contain any exempt or confidential information not for publication?	No
Which wards are impacted?	All

## **1. Cabinet's Forward Plan**

- 1.1** The Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012 set out the minimum requirements for publicity in connection with Key Decisions. The Council meets these legislative requirements through the monthly publication of its Forward Plan.
- 1.2** Cabinet may also receive reports on which it is asked to make recommendations to Council or review the contents and take necessary action. These items are also listed on the Forward Plan.
- 1.3** Non-Key Decisions made by Cabinet are also included within the Forward Plan.

## **2. Appendices**

- 2.1** Appendix A – Cabinet's Forward Plan



SOUTH  
KESTEVEN  
DISTRICT  
COUNCIL

## **CABINET FORWARD PLAN**

### **Notice of decisions to be made by Cabinet**

### **27 October 2025 to 26 October 2026**

At its meetings, the Cabinet may make Key Decisions and Non-Key Decisions. It may also make recommendations to Council on matters relating to the Council's budget or its policy framework.

A Key Decision is a Cabinet decision that is likely:

1. To result in the District Council incurring expenditure which is, or the making of savings which are, significant having regard to the District Council's budget for the service or function to which the decision relates (for these purposes, South Kesteven District Council has agreed £200,000 as the threshold at which a decision will be considered significant); or
2. To be significant in terms of its effects on communities that live or work in an area comprising two or more wards.

### **The Forward Plan**

The Cabinet Forward Plan is a rolling, 12-month plan that will be updated on a regular basis. It includes those Key Decisions and Non-Key Decisions that are scheduled to be considered by Cabinet during the plan period.



Notice of future Cabinet decisions and recommendations to Council

Summary	Date	Action	Contact
<b>Housing Revenue Account Revenue Forecast 2025/26 – Non-Key Decision</b>			
To present the Council's forecast 2025/26 financial position as at end of September 2025 for the Housing Revenue Account Revenue and Capital budgets.	4 Nov 2025	To consider the forecast for 2025/2026.	<p>Leader of the Council, Cabinet Member for Finance, HR and Economic Development (Councillor Ashley Baxter)</p> <p>David Scott, Assistant Director of Finance and Deputy Section 151 Officer  <b>E-mail:</b> <a href="mailto:david.scott@southkesteven.gov.uk">david.scott@southkesteven.gov.uk</a></p>
<b>Housing Strategy - Key Decision</b>			
<p>1. Notes the content of the report, the proposed Housing Strategy, consultation responses and Equality Impact Assessment.</p> <p>2. To seek approval for the Housing Strategy from Cabinet.</p> <p>3. Cabinet delegates to the Director of Housing and Property authority to make minor amendments to the Housing Strategy, as needed by changes to regulation or legislation.</p>	4 Nov 2025	To consider approving the Strategy.	<p>Cabinet Member for Housing (Councillor Virginia Moran)</p> <p>Celia Bown, Senior Housing and Policy Strategy Officer  <b>E-mail:</b> <a href="mailto:c.bown@southkesteven.gov.uk">c.bown@southkesteven.gov.uk</a></p>

Summary	Date	Action	Contact
<b>Finance Update Report – April to September 2025 - Non-Key Decision</b>			
To present the Council's year end forecast for the financial year 2024/25 as at the end of September. The report covers the General Fund Revenue Budget, the Housing Revenue Account Budget, and the Capital Programmes for the General Fund and Housing Revenue Account	4 Nov 2025	Cabinet would be asked to note the update.	<p>Leader of the Council, Cabinet Member for Finance, HR and Economic Development (Councillor Ashley Baxter)</p> <p>David Scott, Assistant Director of Finance and Deputy Section 151 Officer  <b>E-mail:</b> david.scott@southkesteven.gov.uk</p>
<b>Mobility Vehicle Policy - Non-Key Decision</b>			
To present the Mobility Vehicle Policy to Cabinet having been recommended by the Housing Overview and Scrutiny Meeting held on 17 March 2025.	4 Nov 2025	To consider agreeing the Policy.	<p>Cabinet Member for Housing (Councillor Virginia Moran)</p> <p>Alison Hall-Wright, Director of Housing and Projects (Deputy Monitoring Officer)  <b>E-mail:</b> A.Hall-Wright@southkesteven.gov.uk</p>
<b>Local Government Reorganisation - Key Decision</b>			
To consider the final LGR proposal for submission to government.	24 Nov 2025	To approve the LGR proposal, as appended to this report, for submission to government by 28 November 2025.	<p>Leader of the Council, Cabinet Member for Finance, HR and Economic Development (Councillor Ashley Baxter)</p> <p>Charles James, Policy Officer  <b>E-mail:</b> charles.james@southkesteven.gov.uk</p>
<b>Facilities Management Contract - Key Decision</b>			
To obtain authority to enter in to the recently tendered Facilities Management Contract for SKDC's Corporate Assets.	2 Dec 2025	To provide authority to enter into the recently tendered Facilities Management Contract for SKDC's Corporate Assets.	<p>Cabinet Member for Property and Public Engagement (Councillor Richard Cleaver)</p> <p>Gyles Teasdale, Head of Property and ICT  <b>E-mail:</b> <a href="mailto:g.teasdale@southkesteven.gov.uk">g.teasdale@southkesteven.gov.uk</a></p>

Summary	Date	Action	Contact
<b>Discretionary Council Tax Payment Policy 2026/27 - Non-Key Decision</b>			
To provide an update on Discretionary Council Tax Payment (DCTP) expenditure and requests Cabinet approves the policy for 2026/27.	2 Dec 2025	To consider approving the Policy.	<p>Leader of the Council, Cabinet Member for Finance, HR and Economic Development (Councillor Ashley Baxter)</p> <p>Claire Moses, Head of Service (Revenues, Benefits, Customer Services and Community)  <b>E-mail:</b> <a href="mailto:claire.moses@southkesteven.gov.uk">claire.moses@southkesteven.gov.uk</a></p>
<b>3G Pitch Funding Contribution - Key Decision</b>			
To agree a contribution as match funding to support a bid to the Football Foundation to provide a 3G football pitch in the Deepings	2 Dec 2025	Approval to commit match funding contribution	<p>Deputy Leader of the Council, Cabinet Member for Leisure and Culture (Councillor Paul Stokes)</p> <p>Karen Whitfield, Assistant Director – Leisure, Culture and Place  <b>E-mail:</b> <a href="mailto:karen.whitfield@southkesteven.gov.uk">karen.whitfield@southkesteven.gov.uk</a></p>
<b>Discretionary Housing Payment Policy 2026/27 - Non-Key Decision</b>			
To provide an update on Discretionary Housing Payment (DHP) expenditure and requests Cabinet to approve the policy for 2026/27.	2 Dec 2025	To consider approving the Policy.	<p>Leader of the Council, Cabinet Member for Finance, HR and Economic Development (Councillor Ashley Baxter)</p> <p>Claire Moses, Head of Service (Revenues, Benefits, Customer Services and Community)  <b>E-mail:</b> <a href="mailto:claire.moses@southkesteven.gov.uk">claire.moses@southkesteven.gov.uk</a></p>

Summary	Date	Action	Contact
<b>Council Tax Base 2026/27 - Key Decision</b>			
To explain the Council Tax Base for 2025/26 in accordance with relevant statutory requirements	2 Dec 2025	To consider recommending to Council	<p>Leader of the Council, Cabinet Member for Finance, HR and Economic Development (Councillor Ashley Baxter)</p> <p>Claire Moses, Head of Service (Revenues, Benefits, Customer Services and Community)  <b>E-mail:</b> claire.moses@southkesteven.gov.uk</p>
<b>Lease to Grantham Town Football Club - Non-Key Decision</b>			
The granting of a lease and delegation of authority to the Deputy Chief Executive in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Culture and Leisure to enter into it	2 Dec 2025	To consider entering into a lease.	<p>Deputy Leader of the Council, Cabinet Member for Leisure and Culture (Councillor Paul Stokes)</p> <p>Karen Whitfield, Assistant Director – Leisure, Culture and Place  <b>E-mail:</b> karen.whitfield@southkesteven.gov.uk</p>
<b>Budget Report for 2026/2027 including Indicative Budgets for 2027/2028 and 2028/2029 - Key Decision</b>			
To present the Budget report.	15 Jan 2026  10 Feb 2026	To present the Budget report at a number of committees in the lead up to the Budget Council in February 2026.	<p>Leader of the Council, Cabinet Member for Finance, HR and Economic Development (Councillor Ashley Baxter)</p> <p>Richard Wyles, Deputy Chief Executive and Section 151 Officer  <b>E-mail:</b> r.wyles@southkesteven.gov.uk</p>
<b>Contract Award for New Build Housing Scheme at Toller Court, Horbling - Key Decision</b>			
To consider awarding a contract for the Toller Court scheme	15 Jan 2026	To consider awarding the contract.	<p>Cabinet Member for Housing (Councillor Virginia Moran)</p> <p>Megan White, Project Support Officer  <b>E-mail:</b> megan.white@southkesteven.gov.uk</p>

Summary	Date	Action	Contact
<b>Repairs and Voids Materials Contract - Key Decision</b>			
To seek approval to enter into a new contract with a supplier of materials for our internal works teams.	15 Jan 2026	To seek approval to enter into a new contract with a supplier of materials for our internal works teams.	Cabinet Member for Housing (Councillor Virginia Moran)  Mark Rogers, Head of Service (Technical Services) <b>E-mail:</b> <a href="mailto:mark.rogers@southkesteven.gov.uk">mark.rogers@southkesteven.gov.uk</a>
<b>Localised Council Tax Support Scheme 2026/27 - Key Decision</b>			
This report reviews the responses to the public consultation of the Council's Local Council Tax Support Scheme 2026/27, along with the recommendations from the meeting of the Finance and Economic Overview and Scrutiny Committee which took place on 18 November 2025.	15 Jan 2026	To consider recommending to Council.	Leader of the Council, Cabinet Member for Finance, HR and Economic Development (Councillor Ashley Baxter)  Claire Moses, Head of Service (Revenues, Benefits, Customer Services and Community) <b>E-mail:</b> <a href="mailto:claire.moses@southkesteven.gov.uk">claire.moses@southkesteven.gov.uk</a>
<b>Fees and Charges Proposals 2026/27 - Key Decision</b>			
To set out the Fees and Charges to be introduced for the financial year 2026/27	15 Jan 2026	Cabinet is asked to Recommend to Council the Fees and Charges for 2026/27	Leader of the Council, Cabinet Member for Finance, HR and Economic Development (Councillor Ashley Baxter)  David Scott, Assistant Director of Finance and Deputy Section 151 Officer <b>E-mail:</b> <a href="mailto:david.scott@southkesteven.gov.uk">david.scott@southkesteven.gov.uk</a>

Summary	Date	Action	Contact
<b>Finance Update Report – April to December 2025 - Non-Key Decision</b>			
To present the Council's year end forecast for the financial year 2025/26 as at the end of December. The report covers the General Fund Revenue Budget, the Housing Revenue Account Budget, and the Capital Programmes for the General Fund and Housing Revenue Account	10 Feb 2026	To review and note the report.	<p>Leader of the Council, Cabinet Member for Finance, HR and Economic Development (Councillor Ashley Baxter)</p> <p>David Scott, Assistant Director of Finance and Deputy Section 151 Officer  <b>E-mail:</b> david.scott@southkesteven.gov.uk</p>

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