

Housing Overview and Scrutiny Committee



SOUTH
KESTEVEN
DISTRICT
COUNCIL

Thursday, 19 June 2025 at 2.00 pm
Council Chamber, South Kesteven House,
St Peter's Hill, Grantham NG31 6PY

Committee Members: Councillor Lee Steptoe (Chairman)
Councillor Zoe Lane (Vice-Chairman)

Councillor Emma Baker, Councillor Gloria Johnson, Councillor Anna Kelly,
Councillor Bridget Ley, Councillor Nikki Manterfield and Councillor Rhea Rayside +
one Vacancy

Agenda

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

- 1. Public Speaking**
The Council welcomes engagement from members of the public. To speak at this meeting please register no later than 24 hours prior to the date of the meeting via democracy@southkesteven.gov.uk
- 2. Apologies for absence**
- 3. Disclosure of Interest**
Members are asked to disclose any interests in matters for consideration at the meeting.
- 4. Minutes of the meeting held on 17 March 2025** (Pages 3 - 17)
- 5. Announcements or updates from the Leader of the Council, Cabinet Members or the Head of Paid Service**

6. **Earlesfield Project Completion** (Pages 19 - 22)
To provide the Committee with the final report for the Earlesfield Project.

7. **New Build and Acquisition Update** (Pages 23 - 30)
To provide the Committee with an update on the new build and acquisition pipeline.

8. **Homelessness and Rough Sleeper update** (Pages 31 - 37)
To update the committee on the status and recent activity in our Homelessness and Rough Sleeper services

9. **Housing Revenue Account Capital Works Programme update June 2025** (Pages 39 - 46)
To update the Housing Overview and Scrutiny Committee on our Capital Improvement programmes.

10. **South Kesteven District Council Draft Housing Strategy (2025-2030)** (Pages 47 - 110)
To present the draft Housing Strategy to the Housing Overview and Scrutiny Committee for review and comments.

11. **Corporate Plan 2024-27: Key Performance Indicators Report - End-Year (Q4) 2024/25** (Pages 111 - 119)
To present the Council's performance against the Corporate Plan 2024-27 Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) for quarter 4 2024/25.

12. **Housing Service Performance**
Committee to receive a presentation.

13. **Garage Sites and their Development update**
Committee to receive a verbal update.

14. **Choice Based Lettings Update** (Pages 121 - 124)
The purpose of this report is to give an update on the progress of the Choice Based Lettings allocations system.

15. **Work Programme 2025/26** (Pages 125 - 126)

16. **Any other business which the Chairman, by reason of special circumstances, decides is urgent**

Meeting of the Housing Committee

Monday, 17 March 2025, 2.00 pm



SOUTH
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Committee Members present

Councillor Lee Steptoe (Chairman)
Councillor Zoe Lane (Vice-Chairman)
Councillor Emma Baker
Councillor Anna Kelly
Councillor Penny Milnes
Councillor Habibur Rahman
Councillor Tim Harrison
Councillor Gloria Johnson

Other Members present

Councillor Ian Selby

Cabinet Members

Councillor Virginia Moran, Cabinet Member Housing

Officers

Alison Hall-Wright, Director of Housing & Projects
Sarah McQueen, Head of Service (Housing)
Mark Rogers, Head of Service (Technical)
Phil Swinton, Health, Safety and Compliance Manager
Celia Bown, Senior Housing Policy and Strategy Officer
James Welbourn, Democratic Service Manager and Deputy Monitoring Officer
Lucy Bonshor, Democratic Officer

69. Public Speaking

There were no public speakers.

70. Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Paul Wood, Councillor Matt Bailey who was substituted by Councillor Gloria Johnson and Councillor Bridget Ley who was substituted by Councillor Tim Harrison.

71. Disclosure of Interest

None disclosed.

72. Minutes of the meeting held on 20 January 2025

The minutes of the meeting held on 20 January 2025 were proposed, seconded and **AGREED**.

73. Announcements or updates from the Leader of the Council, Cabinet Members or the Head of Paid Service

There were no announcements made.

74. Housing Compliance Figures

The Cabinet Member for Housing presented the regular housing compliance report which gave the status of the compliance figures in relation to the Council's landlord function. Legionella, asbestos, fire risk assessment and lift inspections remained at 100%.

Damp and mould inspections had increased to 60.53% and electric inspections had increased to 94.62%. Gas safety inspections were at 99.22% however, there had been an increase in the access refusal rate to properties in February with contractors unable to access properties to replace central heating boilers in some cases. It was proposed to place an article in Skyline highlighting the need to access properties to enable gas and electric safety certification to be carried out.

It had been 18 months since the Council had been released from being under the Regulator for Social Housing. Figures for all the areas were now standardised and monthly meetings continued to be held between the Leader, the Cabinet Member for Housing, the Chief Executive and the Director of Housing and Projects. The Cabinet Member for Housing asked if the Committee would be happy to receive six monthly reports going forward.

Members discussed the suggestion and it was proposed that as long as each area didn't fall below 3%, Members were happy to receive six monthly updates. Further discussion followed with reference being made to damp and mould reporting. The Director of Housing and Projects stated the Committee had agreed to receive regular KPI data for the whole service which could include damp and mould figures.

One Member referred to vulnerable tenants and access to properties and possible disruption which could be a reason to deny access to properties. It was stated that Officers, wherever possible, took into consideration those tenants with vulnerabilities and complex mental health issues and tried to work with tenants to support them so that they were aware of any impacts.

One Member gave an example where contractors had turned up at the wrong house on the wrong date and therefore were unable to access a property and felt that checks should be made to ensure the correct house/date are known.

The Health, Safety and Compliance Manager stated that safeguard controls were always in place and in respect of gas inspections tenants could choose the date and time but tenants still failed to make the appointments.

Further discussion followed in respect of disruption due to works being carried out particularly in respect of air heat pumps and also whether Ward Members could help when there were issues raised.

One Member asked about the tenancy agreement and access to a property and maybe the Council needed to be more assertive. Officers stated that in respect of gas inspections, tenants had the chance to make three appointments and they also had tenancy support. It was confirmed that access to properties was part of a tenancy agreement and failure to allow officers access was a breach of that agreement.

The Chairman clarified the proposal before Members which was for the Committee to receive an update on housing compliance figures every six months subject to no particular area failing by 3% compliance. It was noted that for some areas such as lift inspections which involved 13 lifts, a lift inspection failure would make the percentage 68% which was more than the 3% proposed. It was suggested that in these cases an email was sent to the Chairman with an explanation and he would forward it on to the Committee.

The proposal to receive an update every six months subject to no particular area failing by 3% compliance was proposed, seconded and **AGREED**.

➤ **Action**

The Committee to receive an update on the Housing Compliance Figures every six months going forward subject to no area failing by an increase of 3%.

Members noted the report.

75. Earlesfield Project

The Cabinet Member for Housing updated the Committee with progress in respect of the Earlesfield Project. To date 57 properties had been completed and returned to tenants, there were 10 properties that had work in progress with two further properties ready for sign off, although it was stated that these may have been completed since the report had been written.

The Committee were aware that concerns had been raised with the contractor United Living in respect of poor progress with the project. However, meetings had taken place and an action plan put in place for the requirements of the project to be fulfilled and the contract delivered. The Cabinet Member for Housing informed the Committee that there would be a delay in the finish date of the project. The

completion date had originally been 31 March 2025 but due to various factors this had been moved to 31 May 2025.

The Chairman of the Committee who was also one of the Ward Councillors for the area stated that the delay of 60 days was not ideal, however it was not a disaster and the overall impact on the estate of the work undertaken was fantastic. The Director of Housing and Projects reiterated that the contract would be completed on the 31 May 2025. If there was still any works outstanding at this date they would be completed under a separate scheme.

A Member asked if access to properties had been an issue with the project. The Director of Housing and Projects replied that those properties that presented challenges with decanting to other properties whilst work was completed had been left until the end of the programme.

The Chairman once again placed his thanks on record for the excellent work undertaken on the Earlesfield Estate.

Members noted the report.

76. New Build and Acquisitions update

The Director of Housing and Projects updated the Committee on the progress in respect of new builds and acquisitions.

The 20 units at Swinegate, Grantham were due to be completed by July 2025.

The planning application for the development of 11 units at Wellington Way, Market Deeping had been submitted and was waiting to be approved following which a tender process would be undertaken to appoint a contractor.

The small six unit development at Gorse Rise was due to be formally submitted to Planning by the end of the month following pre-planning advice. Again once approved a tender process would be undertaken to appoint a contractor.

The remaining properties which the Council bought via the Local Authority Housing Fund for the Ukrainian and Afghan refugees were completed on 24 January 2025. The properties were located in Bourne and were in the process of being occupied and offered to tenants.

The Council had been offered two properties to purchase under the buyback scheme one was a two bedroom apartment in Stamford, the other a six bedroom property.

It was stated that a full report, rather than a verbal update would be given to the next Committee meeting.

➤ **Action**

A written report on New Build and Acquisitions to the next meeting of the Committee.

One Member stated that at the last meeting it was mentioned that certain types of housing was being looked for, was that still the case. The Director of Housing and Projects stated that there was a complex needs list which was regularly reviewed with the requirements of people on the list. The Council would then identify whether properties could be purchased on the open market to meet the needs on the list, bungalows were an example given and whether they could be adapted. Currently there were 20 people on the list and it was continually monitored.

A question was asked about the buyback scheme and it was stated that if a tenant bought a council house it was written into the documentation that the Council would be offered it first, if it was within ten years of it being sold.

Further comments were made in respect of Serco to which the Head of Service (Housing) replied.

The report was noted.

77. Homelessness and Rough Sleeper update

The Cabinet Member for Housing presented the Committee with an update on the status and activity in respect of homelessness and rough sleeping.

The Cabinet Member for Housing confirmed the funding received for the Rough Sleeper Initiative of £646,000 for the 2025/26 year. Currently there were three people in temporary accommodation and there were 18 active support cases. There was currently an underspend on the Rough Sleeper Initiative Funding which would be ringfenced for future years. Members were referred to page 35 of the report which detailed the cases between the four Districts within the C4L group.

It was noted that active homelessness cases had increased significantly in January 2025 from December 2024. There were around 300 active cases, 214 of those were new approaches. It was noted that the number of people in temporary accommodation did not reflect the 20% increase which had been forecast. It was confirmed that a HMO had been secured in the centre of Grantham with a partner agency for temporary accommodation.

The Cabinet Member for Housing then spoke about the success of the night shelter. The shelter had operated for 71 nights and had provided 402 bed spaces and had saved the Council £16,000 in nightly paid accommodation fees in hotel. The service had ended on 28 February 2025 but a year round provision was being sought and would be opened again if the temperature fell again.

Reference was then made to resettlement pressures particularly in respect of the Urban Hotel and the mix messages that had been circulated from various sources including the East Midlands Migration Partnership. However, following conversations, it had been confirmed that the Urban Hotel had been removed from the resettlement list although the Home Office were supposed to contact the Council with information before anything happened which they had failed to do.

One Member stated that she had two homelessness cases within her ward and it was due to landlords selling the properties. Another Member asked if a strongly worded email had been sent to the Home Office in respect of issue at the Urban Hotel to which the Head of Service (Housing) confirmed this had been done.

Further discussion followed in respect of the success of the night shelter and work to provide the provision year round which the Committee would be notified of any future plans.

Members noted the hard work done by Officers particularly due to other pressures that were happening such as Local Government Reorganisation.

The report was noted.

78. Draft Mobility Vehicle Policy

The Cabinet Member for Housing presented the report which concerned a draft Mobility Vehicle Policy.

The Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 required that fire risks in communal areas were 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.

A review of the mobility scooter storage facilities at the Council's Sheltered Housing Schemes had established that:

- Scooters are being stored and charged inside schemes or externally and adjacent to buildings, potentially causing unacceptable fire and health and safety risks.
- Residents are using the Council's electricity supply, which is being consumed at no additional cost to the owner of the scooter.
- Scooters are being stored in locations which are obstructing fire escape routes.
- Scooters are being charged outside via an extension lead through the window of resident's accommodation, which is also a fire risk

A draft Mobility Vehicle Policy had been drawn up and was appended to the report which clearly sets out what Council tenants and Leaseholders of both Sheltered and General Needs Housing needed to follow.

- The process to seek permission for a scooter
- Storage and charging of scooters within Council premises
- The use of scooters within Council premises
- The ongoing responsibilities of scooter owners
- Scenarios where permission for a scooter will be refused
- The impact of failing to comply with the policy

Due to the constraints in respect of space and charging points there was a maximum capacity for storage of scooters at Sheltered Housing Schemes. The Council had a Mobility Scooter Group which was attended by Council Officers including the Fire Compliance Officer and had reviewed the National Fire Chief Council guidelines and had concluded that, based on 30 minute fire doors a maximum of three mobility scooters should be allowed in a sheltered housing scheme at any one time. The mobility vehicle can only be stored and charged in designated facilities and on the ground floor only.

Although a consultation had taken place in 2021 the data could not be used as it was too old, therefore a consultation would be repeated to get the views of current tenants and these would be taken into consideration.

The Committee were asked to recommend the draft policy to Cabinet for adoption.

Members considered the draft policy and the following points were raised:

- Did users of the mobility vehicles have to have the necessary insurance and training – there was no legal requirement for insurance or training
- That overnight charging should be avoided as it was a serious fire risk
- That all chargers should be PA tested to make sure they are electrically sound.
- Safeguards and training would be built in and created by the working group and provided to tenants

It was noted that the draft policy was just the start of what is a complex issue and there were lots of angles to consider and the document would evolve.

Comments were asked about the policing of the number of mobility scooters in the sheltered accommodation which it was stated would fall to the Housing Officers within the locations and also the Fire Officers when they visit. Tenants would be issued with some form of identification in respect of the mobility vehicle.

It was acknowledged by the Committee that the issue was not a straightforward one and reference was made to the PA testing and engaging with tenants to find out where the vehicles were to start with and the costs associated with having a mobility scooter and paying for the charging it.

Cases would be looked at on a case by case basis and the location of tenants within a scheme. It was stated that there would be significant costs involved but the draft policy was a start and would be built on once more information was compiled, further discussion followed which included having outside pods for storage and charging and the use of lifts which were being damaged due to the mobility scooters. It was proposed, seconded and unanimously AGREED to recommend the draft policy to Cabinet.

Recommendation

The Housing Overview and Scrutiny Committee notes the contents of the report and the draft Mobility Vehicle Policy and recommends the Mobility Vehicle Policy to Cabinet.

79. Stock Condition Surveys

The Cabinet Member for Housing presented the report which updated the Committee on the progress being made in respect of the stock condition programme since it last came before the Committee in August 2024.

A target of 1,759 stock condition surveys had been set for 2024/25, at the end of February 2025, 1,617 surveys had been completed. Of those properties surveyed a total of 67 had failed the Housing, Health and Safety Rating System risk assessment of which 33 were category 1. All those needing remedial works had been booked in with the repairs team.

The stock condition data had been uploaded on to the Council's Asset Management System, APEX and would be used to plan where future investment was required to maintain and improve the Council's housing stock. During 2025/26 a further 850 surveys would be carried out. Following the stock condition surveys carried out the Cabinet Member for Housing confirmed that 97.9% of the Council's housing stock met the decent homes standard. The stock condition surveys were carried out on a five year rolling basis.

A question was asked whether the 97.9% figure included voids to which the Head of Service (Technical) replied that the database included all properties, including voids. This figure was commended by the Member and this was echoed by the Chairman.

Further questions were asked about whether there was any commonality in respect of those who had Category 1 failures and whether the same contractor carried out the EPC surveys for consistency to which the Head of Service (Technical) responded. A comment was made about including voids in the 97.9% figure why were they voids and not let to which the Head of Service (Technical) stated that it could be that they were being brought up to the decent homes standard and required the relevant checks to be carried out and were not strictly part of the stock condition survey but were undertaken as two separate pieces of work.

The Director of Housing and Projects stated that currently there were 66 major voids which accounted for 1% of the Council's housing stock which were included in the data shown.

A non-Committee Member asked whether subsidence was included within the surveys carried out especially within the ward that he looked after, Harrowby. The Head of Service (Technical) stated that he did not have the information to hand but if the Member had a specific address he would look into it outside of the meeting.

Members noted the report.

(An adjournment took place between 15:18 – 15:33)

80. Update on the Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund Wave 2.1

The Director of Housing and Projects introduced the report which updated the Committee on the Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund project to upgrade South Kesteven District Council housing stock with energy efficiency measures.

The average Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) for the Council's housing stock was EPC D. By 2030 there was a requirement for the Council to achieve an average of at least an EPC C across the 6,000 properties to mitigate fuel poverty for the Council's tenants and contribute to the wider decarbonisation of the district. If the rating went above a C the properties were not eligible for the grant funding therefore care had to be taken when implementing the measures within the individual properties.

The scheme had focused on installing solar PV panels, air source heat pumps and external wall insulation in properties. Change requests had been submitted to Government as the scheme had progressed where some people had been reluctant to have air source heat pumps installed and where there was a time constraint on accessing the funding, the Council had looked at where the funding could be allocated to a different measure such as increasing the number of solar PV panels installed on properties.

Work was being undertaken to complete work at 367 properties, 247 solar PV panels, 100 air source heat pumps and external wall insulation on 75 properties. Reference was made to the project that had taken place at Turnor Crescent in Grantham where external wall insulation had been done at some properties and the Council had taken a whole street approach and had finished off the remainder of the properties.

The scheme was due to finish by the end of March 2025 and then the Council had two months to complete all inspections and issue the certificates. The Director of Housing and Projects informed the Committee that the project was on target to be completed by the end of the month.

The Director of Housing and Projects referred to Wave 3 of the scheme which had not been included within the report due to a Government embargo. Since the report had been published the Council had been notified that it had been allocated £4m of funding. Wave 3 had been oversubscribed which had necessitated a review of the allocations. The Council's original funding request had been £6m. The £4m allocated would be match funded by the Council and work was being undertaken with a contractor to establish what would be carried out at properties and to begin work as soon as possible. As the funding was less than originally requested, the number of properties to have work carried out had been reduced.

The Committee were informed that there would be a team looking after the project which would include a resident liaison officer who would work with the tenants who were having works carried out on their property, this was similar to what had been in place for the Earlesfield Project which had worked well.

A question was asked about the air source heat pumps and whether or not tenants were being contacted to see if their bills had reduced or increased. The Director of Housing and Projects stated that was not happening currently due to how the air source heat pumps were set up to work as efficiently as possible, but it was something that could be looked into. Air source heat pumps were being installed primarily where there was no connection to gas and were an alternative to the electric storage heaters currently being used. Work had been undertaken in respect of costs between the two systems to see which was more cost effective.

Further questions were asked in respect of whether heat loss surveys were carried out before systems were installed, the effect of air source heat pumps and installation in old properties to which the Head of Service (Technical) replied. The Cabinet Member for Housing informed the Committee of her experience in respect of having an air source heat pump.

The Chairman thanked the Officers for the report which was noted by the Committee.

81. Empty Property Report

The Cabinet Member for Housing presented the report on the Council's void property management and the progress to reduce relet times. Reducing the time that a property was void was one of the key priorities for the Council. A backlog of voids had built up over several years caused by a combination of tenant neglect and the lack of planned maintenance investment over the years. The issue had been heightened by staff shortages and changes in management and the limited use of external contractors.

The Committee were referred to paragraph 3.1 of the report which showed the number of voids received by the Void Repair Team and the number handed back to Housing Management for reletting. Section 3.3 showed the number of voids which had work in progress and it was hoped that the new Voids Inspector who had been

appointed in February 2025 would significantly bring down the number of properties waiting for inspection.

Section 4 of the report covered the relet times in respect of temporary accommodation voids, major voids and standard void properties. Chart 5 showed the relet time for All Voids and the Council's target relet time for 2024/25 as set in the Council's Corporate Plan is 100 days. This target was achieved in December 2024 and January 2025 had a target of 96 days.

Section 5 of the report covered the average rent loss per property for all void properties based on a typical rent of £110 per property. A reduction in rent loss from over £2,000 per property in April 2024 had dropped to around £1,500 in January 2025.

Considerable work had been completed by the Voids Team during 2024/25 to improve performance and this was listed at 6.1 in the report.

The Chairman congratulated the Head of Service (Technical Services) and his Team for the progress that had been made in respect of voids. A question was asked about the void period and properties being advertised to which the Director of Housing and Projects replied. It was also stated that Housemark who were industry experts who collated data for the housing sector were reviewing the entire void process to reduce the length.

Further comments were made about the void backlog and the work undertaken to reduce the backlog including the inclusion of two new void contractors who had helped to reduce the backlog.

The Chairman thanked the Cabinet Member for Housing and the Housing Team for the tremendous hard work that had been undertaken in respect of reducing the void backlog.

82. Tenancy Services Update

The Director of Housing and Projects presented the report which provided an overview of the current workings of South Kesteven District Council's Tenancy Services Team who played a crucial role in ensuring compliance with tenancy agreements and housing policies whilst ensuring that tenants received the necessary support to sustain their tenancies. The Tenancy Team's work included direct tenant engagement, enforcement of tenancy conditions and collaboration with internal and external partners to provide a holistic approach to housing management.

The Team consisted of a Tenancy Services Manager, a Tenancy Services Team Leader, six Housing Officers and three Housing Assistants. The Council also had two Tenancy Support Officers who provided additional one to one support to tenants who were identified as requiring this level of service. In addition to this team, the Council also had a Sheltered Housing Team which consisted of a

Sheltered Housing Manager, the Sheltered Housing Team Leader, Two Sheltered Housing Officers and Three Caretakers.

The Council's housing stock was just below 6,000, with each Housing Officer looking after 1,000 properties each. The Tenancy Team were responsible for conducting tenancy sign-ups for applicants, succession requests, mutual exchange requests and tenancy fraud investigations. Table 1 of the report listed the work undertaken and the numbers involved for the period November 2024 to January 2025. Anti-social behaviour took up a significant amount of time and the Team worked closely with the Police and Lincolnshire Legal Services on often complex anti-social behaviour cases. Table 2 of the report listed the ABS cases for November 2024 to January 2025.

The Tenancy Team were also responsible for investigating and acting in respect of tenancy breaches which included unauthorised alterations, property misuse and overcrowding. Table 3 in the report listed the number of legal cases for the period November 2024 to January 2025 which covered Notices to Quit, Community Protection Notice Warnings, Community Protection Notices and Notice of Seeking Possession.

The two Tenancy Support Officers main responsibility was to provide help and support to tenants to sustain their tenancies to enable tenants to remain in their homes. There were often a range of complex reasons why a tenant maybe struggling with their tenancy and the Officers worked closely with third party agencies including the cost of living team.

Currently the Team had 33 active support cases and there continued to be a significant demand for the service which was why a budget bid for an additional Tenancy Support Officer was submitted and approved at the budget Council meeting in February 2025.

The Sheltered Housing Team were responsible for providing support to the tenants in the 30 sheltered housing schemes across the district which included the completion of Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan forms for all tenants as many in the sheltered scheme may struggle to evacuate themselves in an emergency. The Team also maintained the communal rooms in the schemes ensuring that tenants had access to events in the rooms or access to the space to use it. The Team was responsible for conducting regular fire alarm tests and they also visited weekly to ensure tenants were safe and supported with regular tenant meetings being held to give residents the opportunity to raise any concerns they had.

A question was raised about the Right to Buy (RTB) numbers and it was stated that following the Government's announcement in November 2024 regarding the RTB discount there had been an increase in the number of applications, 62 had been received rather than the usual 40.

Members acknowledged the work being done in the "background" and noted the report.

83. Tenant Satisfaction Measures Survey

The Director of Housing and Projects presented the report which updated the Committee on the results from the annual Tenant Satisfaction Measures Survey. The survey was a mandatory requirement placed on Social Landlords by the Regulator of Social Housing to comply with Transparency, Influence and Accountability Standard of the Social Housing Regulation Act 2022. The results of the survey were submitted to the Regulator who published an annual report which analysed the results for social landlords with 1,000 or more homes.

The survey allowed tenants to scrutinise the Council's performance, provided information on where services could be improved and provided information to the Regulator regarding how far the Council was meeting the outcomes of the consumer standards.

The survey had been undertaken by Acuity on behalf of the Council and contained 12 mandatory questions which ensured that the Regulator had consistent data from all landlords to enable benchmarking to be undertaken.

The online survey commenced on 28 October 2024 for two weeks and the telephone survey commenced on 11 November 2024 for three weeks. The results of the survey were outlined at Table 1 at paragraph 2.25 of the report and were compared with the previous year 2024/25. 549 complete responses had been received which was comparable with the previous year.

There had been a 7% increase in the proportion of respondents who reported that they were satisfied that their landlord makes a positive contribution to their neighbourhood and an 8% increase that they were satisfied with their landlords' approach to handling anti-social behaviour. It was confirmed that a lot of work had been carried out by Tenancy Services in respect of anti-social behaviour. There had also been a 14% increase in the proportion of respondents who reported that they were satisfied with their landlords' approach to complaints handling. It was stated that a lot of work had been carried out in respect of complaint handling with significant improvements being made. The Committee were referred to Table 2 of the report and the recommendations and actions highlighted in respect of:

- Review how complaints are dealt with
- Property Maintenance
- Customer Service and Communication

It was confirmed that a Tenant Engagement and Improvement Plan would be coming to a future meeting of the Committee. Appendix A to the report detailed the results of the survey and these had been uploaded to the website.

Members discussed the responses to the survey and it was noted the responses appeared worse than they were due to the number of responses received, those who had issues were more likely to complete the survey.

A question was asked about the sample taken and it was stated that the sample was representative of the tenants on the data base.

The Cabinet Member for Housing referred to the dedicated housing team that was currently in place and the work undertaken. She reiterated that complaints should be made through the correct process but for Members to contact her if there were any issues with a complaint to see if it could be addressed before the Ombudsman was involved as an official complaint took up a considerable amount of officer time and both herself, the Director of Housing and Projects and the Head of Service (Housing) were available to contact if there were issues with a complaint.

A question was asked if there was an incentive to fill in the survey to which it was replied that there were vouchers for various amounts, £250, £100 and £25, winners were randomly picked by computer.

Members noted the report.

84. Work Programme 2024/25

The Chairman stated that the next meeting would take place in either May or June 2025. Possible items on the Work Programme for the next meeting included:

- Repairs Service
- KPI reporting
- Garage sites and their development
- Rent and service charge policy
- Decent Homes
- Sheltered housing allocation review

Further items for inclusion would be those regularly reported to the Committee:

- Earlesfield Project update
- Homelessness and Rough Sleeper update

The Director of Housing and Projects asked for the Housing Service KPI's to be added to the Work Programme as it had been agreed that they would be brought to the Committee on a quarterly basis, also a Choice Based Lettings update.

Before the meeting was closed one Member commented on the tremendous amount of work that had been undertaken in respect of the items included on the agenda for the meeting and she highly commended the Housing Services Team for the work that they undertook.

The Cabinet Member for Housing stated that she was looking into Public Sector awards in respect of the Housing Service due to the amount of work that the Housing Team undertook and she felt that this should be recognised.

The Chairman echoed the comments made about the work undertaken by the Housing Team and although the Committee was there to scrutinise and challenge the work, that did not deter from the fantastic team in place and the work that they did.

85. Any other business which the Chairman, by reason of special circumstances, decides is urgent

None.

86. Close of meeting

The meeting closed at 4:24pm.

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SOUTH
KESTEVEN
DISTRICT
COUNCIL

Housing Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Thursday, 19 June 2025

Councillor Virginia Moran
Cabinet Member for Housing

Earlesfield Project Completion Report

Report Author

Andy Garner, Planned Works Manager - Technical Services

 andy.garner@southkesteven.gov.uk

Purpose of Report

To provide the Committee with the final report for the Earlesfield Project.

Recommendations

That Committee note the contents of the report and the completion of the project on the Earlesfield Estate to resolve long standing issues within our housing stock.

Decision Information

Does the report contain any exempt or confidential information not for publication? No

What are the relevant corporate priorities? Housing

Which wards are impacted? Grantham Earlesfield;

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 no direct financial implications associated with this report but there has been a budget in place to deliver the Earlesfield Estate project and costs have been contained within the allocated funds.

Completed by: David Scott – Assistant Direct of Finance (Deputy s151 Officer)

Legal and Governance

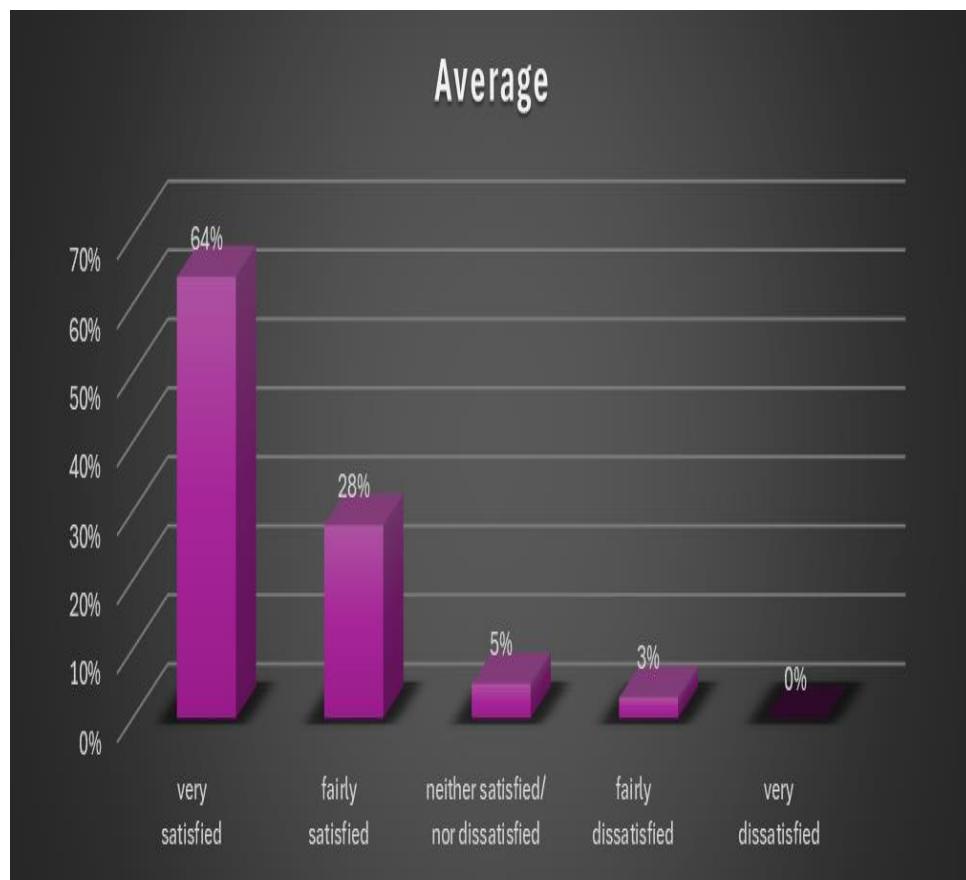
- 1.2 This report aims to ensure committee members are kept informed of the latest situation on the Earlesfield Project and is for noting only.

Completed by: James Welbourn, Democratic Services Manager

2. Background to the Report

- 2.1. The Council has a clear commitment in its Corporate Plan 2024-2027 to ensure that all residents can access housing which is safe, good quality, sustainable and suitable for their needs and future generations and this project which focused on improving houses on the Earlesfield Estate in Grantham, has contributed towards achieving this commitment.
- 2.2. As noted in the reports previously presented to the Committee, 45 properties were completed under Phase 1. Phase 2 of the project is now complete, this included 74 properties which is two less than originally planned due to access issues. Several properties have also had reduced levels of work carried out because either the components were at an age that replacement was not needed or due to tenant circumstances. All properties that have had reduced levels of works had previously had the licensed asbestos removed.
- 2.3. The original project completion date had been set for 31 March 2025. Owing to delays on site along with supporting residents with complex needs, a revised completion date was set for 31 May 2025. These delays were monitored during the latter stages of the project to ensure that the revised target date was achieved.

- 2.4. United Livings Tenant Liaison Officer continued to respond to all tenant issues during handover which ensured all residents were familiar with the new fitments in their homes following the improvement works that have been completed.
- 2.5. Tenant satisfaction surveys were introduced in phase 2 of the project. The response rate for the surveys was 92%, the following graph shows the satisfaction levels for the project. The 3% fairly dissatisfied rating relates to the moving process. The feedback received was used to amend the process to ensure it was as seamless as possible.



- 2.6. Weekly meetings continued to take place to ensure weekly handovers and completions were on time. Monthly progress meetings also took place to monitor the overall progress and issues associated with the project. The last meeting took place on 21 May 2025.
- 2.7. Core Group meetings took place monthly. These monitored the progress at a strategic level.
- 2.8. All works continued to be checked for defects by both SKDC and United Livings site staff prior to handover. Any defects were then completed by the contractor within 2 days of notification.
- 2.9. No further visits by the HSE have taken place on site since the last one on 31 January 2025.

3. Key Considerations

3.1. 119 properties in total have been completed under Phase 1 & 2 of this project.

The following outcomes have been achieved through this project:

- Large quantities of products containing asbestos have been removed.
- Key components have been replaced in many of the properties; kitchen, bathrooms, central heating systems, windows and doors and rewires.
- Future repair and maintenance costs on these dwellings will be minimal for the foreseeable future.
- Residents have a safe and warm home they can live in for many years to come.

4. Reasons for the Recommendations

4.1. Report is for information and noting.

5. Appendices

5.1. None



Housing Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Thursday, 19 June 2025

Report of Councillor Virginia Moran,
Cabinet Member for Housing

New Build and Acquisition Update

Report Author

Debbie Roberts, Head of Corporate Projects, Performance and Climate Change

 Debbie.Roberts@southkesteven.gov.uk

Purpose of Report

To provide the Committee with an update on the new build and acquisitions pipeline.

Recommendations

It is recommended members of the Housing Overview and Scrutiny Committee note the content of this report.

Decision Information

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 The 2025/26 HRA Capital Programme includes a £15.134m budget for Housing Development investment, this budget will also be utilised to fund strategic acquisitions.
- 1.2 It is important that the HRA has a continual housing growth strategy, which is designed to offset the rental loss from properties sold through to Right to Buy. Without new rental streams offsetting those lost, the sustainability of the HRA would be eroded.

Completed by: David Scott – Assistant Director of Finance (deputy s151 officer)

Legal and Governance

- 1.3 Regular reporting on agreed actions and measures is to be welcomed from a governance point of view, as it provides a transparent mechanism for reporting on performance.

Completed by: James Welbourn, Democratic Services Manager

Risk and Mitigation

- 1.4 No significant risks have been identified.

Climate Change

- 1.5 The contents of this report do not have a direct impact on the Council's carbon emissions or the carbon emissions of the wider district. More detailed information on carbon impact of individual projects is outlined within the relevant project documentation.

2. Background to the Report

- 2.1. The purpose of this report is to provide the Committee with an update regarding the new build housing pipeline and purchases using the Local Authority Housing Fund (LAHF 2) and Capital Receipts.
- 2.2. The approved Corporate Plan 2024-2027 clearly sets out how South Kesteven District Council intends to meet the mission “to ensure that all residents can access housing which is safe, good quality, sustainable and suitable for their needs and future generations.”
- 2.3. The Corporate Plan, Priority 4 identifies ‘Housing’ as a key priority with high quality housing essential for all, and the council is committed to working with partners to provide this by:
 - Facilitating a range of appropriate and sustainable housing and community facilities for future generations and the emerging needs of all our communities.
 - Delivering exemplary and high-quality services for housing and homelessness.
 - Increasing the supply of sustainable and high-quality Council-provided housing.
 - Working with developers and private landlords to ensure sustainable, affordable, and high-quality housing is facilitated.
- 2.4. There are many schemes within the district that are at various stages of the pipeline, an update on each one is as follows: -

Swinegate, Grantham

- 2.5.1 The scheme is progressing well although handover of the properties has been delayed from July 2025 to September 2025. This is due to a road closure being required for two days on Swinegate to connect the water. Lincolnshire County Council Highways has approved the road closure but the earliest available date for this is mid-July.
- 2.5.2 Monthly contract meetings are held with Lindums and the wider project team. The focus of these meetings now relates to the completion, snagging and handover of the properties.
- 2.5.3 Progress of the properties is shown in the photos below. The 20 units consists of 18 one-bedroom apartments and 2 two-bedroom apartments.
- 2.5.4 The following photos show the externals of the building.



View of site from Watergate



View of brickwork



Shop front from Swinegate (entrance to apartments)

2.5.5 Kitchens have started to be fitted in the apartments.



2.5.6 The team will begin snagging the properties as soon as they are completed complete which will mean they can be advertised and let in September 2025.

Wellington Way, Market Deeping

2.5.7 The 11-unit scheme is due to be considered by the Planning Committee on the 12 June, a verbal update will be given on the outcome of the meeting but the officer recommendation is to grant permission for the scheme.

2.5.8 The proposed development scheme would provide 11 affordable dwellings, which would provide a range of 1 and 2 bed flats, and 2-bed houses, which would include a mix of terrace, semi-detached houses, as well as 3 apartment blocks. The proposed housing mix would comprise of 5 x 2-bed houses, 4 x 2-bed flats and 2 x 1-bed flats.

2.5.9 Proposed elevations are as follows





2.5.10 The procurement of the 11 units has commenced via the Westworks framework following the receipt of 7 expressions of interest. Tenders are due back in mid-July and a report will be presented to Cabinet at their meeting in September 2025 to award the contract to the successful contractor. Works are expected to commence in November subject to the outcome at Planning Committee and the procurement process.

Larch Close, Grantham

2.5.11 The 21-unit scheme was granted planning permission on 8 November 2023.

2.5.12 On 9 July 2024 Cabinet approved the contract award to Mercer Building Solutions to build 19 units at Larch Close. The original scheme also included 2 x 4 bedroom houses but due to the higher build costs and rental income associated with these properties the decision was made to submit a variation to the application to replace these houses with bungalows to meet the need for adapted properties for applicants on the Council's Housing Register.

2.5.13 A S73 application has been submitted to the local planning authority for this amendment which is being determined currently. The proposed site plan is as follows:-



The bungalows are at the top left of the site, the apartments at the bottom have moved upwards.

2.5.14 Mercer Building Solutions have started discharging some of the conditions and are aiming to commence on site in August 25. The scheme is expected to take 1 year to complete.

2.5.15 Mercer Building Solutions are also reviewing the SAP assessments to see if any of the properties can obtain EPC A ratings. The Committee will be kept updated on the progress of this scheme.

Other Schemes

2.6 There are a number of schemes at various stages of the planning process including Gorse Rise, Toller Court and Kesteven Rd. The committee will be kept informed of their progress.

3. Key Considerations

3.1. To achieve the numbers of houses that the Council has a requirement to deliver each year there will be a hybrid approach to new builds to work closely with developers on planning schemes which need to include a number of affordable units. The Council will discuss purchasing these (similar to a Registered Provider) and also purchasing properties offered back to the Council via the Right to Buy scheme. The first phase of the affordable housing units in Corby Glen were handed over in December 24, discussions are taking place to establish whether

phase two of the scheme can be advanced any sooner than the 2026 target for handover.

- 3.2. Local Authority Housing Fund 2 – the Council has completed the acquisition of the 8 properties on new build schemes in Bourne. These were all offered by the deadline of the funding and are progressing with legal services currently.
- 3.3. The team are seeking opportunities to purchase accommodation that could be converted into temporary accommodation and are currently at the Heads of Terms stage of purchasing a large property to be converted into small units. The Committee will be kept updated on the progress of this purchase.
- 3.4. The Council has acquired a 6-bedroom property in a village in the district which was a former Right To Buy. This property will meet the needs of larger families who are on the Housing Register.
- 3.5. There are currently two houses being considered for acquisition, one in Grantham and one in Stamford which are being valued and inspected. An offer to buy 15 affordable units in Grantham has been submitted and is being considered by the developer.
- 3.6. The acquisitions and new build pipeline is discussed fortnightly with the team and finance officers to ensure that the cashflow is as accurate as possible.

4. Other Options Considered

- 4.1 The Council needs to have a hybrid approach to purchasing and building its affordable housing to meet the needs of our residents.

5. Reasons for the Recommendations

- 5.1 This is a regular report where Members are invited to scrutinise and comment on performance.

6. Consultation

- 6.1. There are discussions with the relevant ward members prior to any new build schemes being submitted for planning and as part of the planning determination process there is consultation with wider public including any town/parish councils alongside statutory consultees.
- 6.2. The Cabinet Member for Housing is kept informed on the progress of the pipeline.



Thursday, 19 June 2025

Report of Councillor Virginia
Moran, Cabinet Member for Housing

Homelessness and Rough Sleeper update

Report Author

Sarah McQueen, Head of Housing Services

 sarah.mcqueen@southkesteven.gov.uk

Purpose of Report

To update the committee on the status and recent activity in our Homelessness and Rough Sleeper services

Recommendations

The Committee is recommended to note the latest position of the Homelessness and Rough Sleeper services

Decision Information

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

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 Costs associated with the delivery of the homelessness function fluctuate during the course of a year due to the ongoing pressure around emergency accommodation. Looking back at 2024-25 in terms of funding the Council received a total of £662k in Flexible Homelessness funding to support service delivery which due to fluctuations in the need for homeless units has resulted in an underspend of £197k.
- 1.2 Similar regarding the rough sleeper initially which was funded from a carry forward of £109k from 2023/24, only £22k has been required so the remainder will go back into reserves for use within 2025/26.
- 1.3 For 2025/26 the Council will receive £754k in Flexible Homelessness funding and further £646k for Rough Sleeper Prevention and Recovery Grant which funds the change for lincs team.

Completed by: David Scott – Assistant Director of Finance (Deputy s151 officer)

Legal and Governance

- 1.4 This is an update report for noting, there are no known governance implications.

Completed by: James Welbourn, Democratic Services Manager

2. Background to the Report

- 2.1 It was agreed by the Housing Overview and Scrutiny Committee that there will be a standing agenda item updating the committee on Homelessness and Rough Sleeper services. This report will give an overview of the recent work and status of both teams as well as some key updates in specific areas of interest.

3. Key Considerations

Rough Sleeper Initiative

- 3.1. As previously reported, SKDC's Rough Sleeper initiative is delivered via the Change 4 Lincs (C4L) team which covers four local authority areas: South Kesteven District Council, North Kesteven District Council, West Lindsey District Council and South Holland District Council
- 3.2. The team is hosted by South Kesteven District Council and was created by each district council contributing their Rough Sleeper Initiative funding.
- 3.3. The team consists of seven team members who provide an outreach service, support service and access into the private rented sector. The team is managed by the Council's Homelessness and Rough Sleeper Manager and managers from the other three districts also provide support to help shape the service.
- 3.4. As the funding model has remained the same for 2025/26, it has been decided that all existing staff will be retained by SKDC but tasked to work in other local authority areas where appropriate. This will allow each district to have a dedicated team in place to complement their existing Housing Options service.
- 3.5. In addition, following confirmation regarding the funding for 2025/26, the Council has commenced recruitment for another outreach worker post. At time of writing this report, this role is being advertised.
- 3.6. Table 4 details the C4L case numbers as of 4th June 2025

Table 1 – C4L Case Numbers

District	Number In Temporary Accommodation	Number of Open Cases
South Kesteven	4	27
North Kesteven	0	4
West Lindsey	2	14
South Holland	2	12

- 3.7. The number of people in accommodation is low compared to the number of people being supported. This could be because the people being supported are already in accommodation and require support to maintain it, or they have refused the offer of temporary accommodation.
- 3.8. Those who are placed in temporary accommodation must engage with the intensive support that is available to them, or their placement will come to an end.

Rough sleeping in Grantham

- 3.9. In recent weeks, there has been an increase in the visibility of rough sleepers across parks and green spaces in Grantham, with a number of individuals setting

up tents in these areas. All individuals currently rough sleeping are known to the Housing Options service, and ongoing efforts are being made to engage with them to offer support.

- 3.10. However, rough sleeping is often complex and entrenched, with many individuals facing multiple and overlapping challenges such as mental health issues, substance dependency, and a history of trauma.
- 3.11. All those currently sleeping rough have exhausted the housing options available to them through the Council. For some, this includes being asked to leave the night shelter when this provision was open in February 2025. Despite this, the team continues to make regular contact, offering support and working closely with partner agencies to help these individuals move away from the streets.
- 3.12. While the good intentions of organisations that distribute tents to individuals identifying as rough sleepers are recognised, this practice often results in tents being pitched in areas where camping is not permitted. The Council does not provide tents to individuals sleeping rough
- 3.13. The homeless team are working closely with our colleagues in Public Protection and the police on this matter so it will be closely monitored over the coming months.

Homelessness update

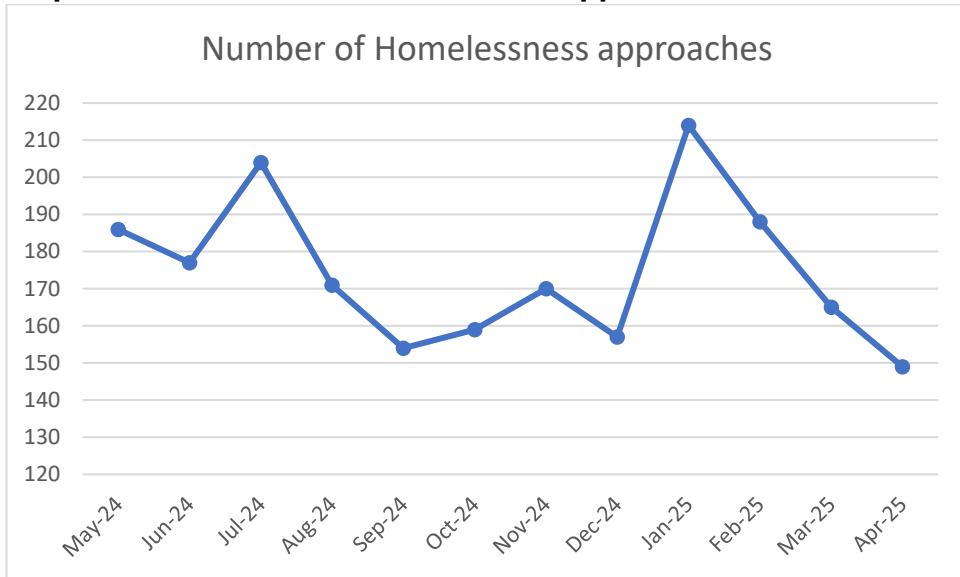
- 3.14. The Housing Options team provide the Council's statutory homeless function. The team consists of four Housing Options Assistants, six Housing Options officers, a Senior Housing Options Officer and a Homelessness and Rough Sleeper Manager.
- 3.15. Table 2 provides details of the homelessness case figures for the last three months:

Table 2 – Homelessness Case Figures

	Feb 25	March 25	April 25
Number of active Homelessness cases	282	294	304
Number of new approaches	188	165	149
Number in temporary accommodation	66	73	59
Of which – nightly paid	11	15	17
Of which – our stock	55	58	42

3.16. Graph 1 shows the number of homelessness approaches since May 2024 to the present date

Graph 1 – Number of Homelessness Approaches



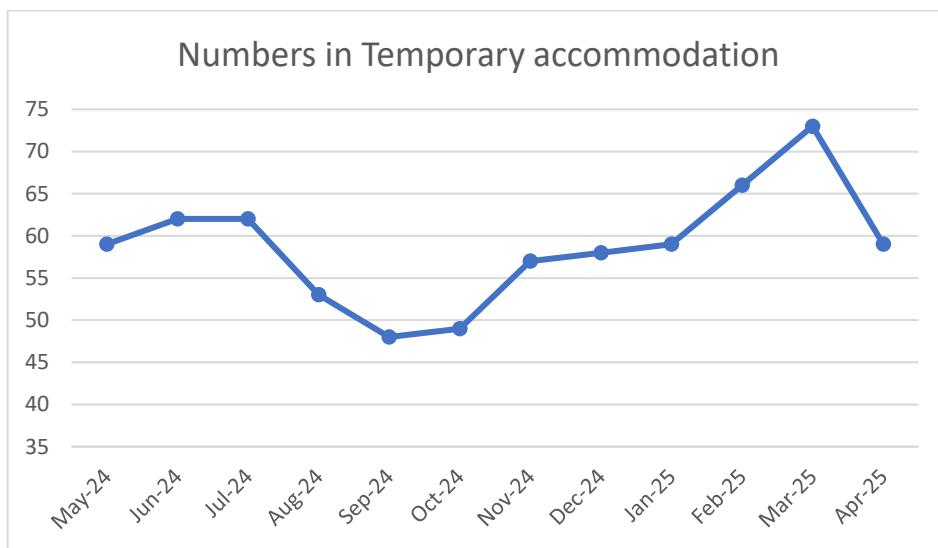
3.17. As this graph shows, there were significant increases in the number of approaches at two key points in the year: July 2024 and January 2025.

3.18. These trends are broadly in line with expectations. During the summer months such as the current period an increase in approaches is typically observed. Various factors may contribute to this seasonal rise, including improved weather conditions, which can make rough sleeping more visible or more likely.

3.19. Similarly, a spike in approaches is often observed in January. This is commonly linked to post-holiday household tensions, with families asking individuals to leave, or landlords choosing to sell properties or end tenancies in the new year.

3.20. Graph 2 shows the number of households in temporary accommodation since May 2024. Interestingly, these figures appear to show little correlation with the number of approaches, although there has been a clear upward trend in recent months, with a sharp decline in April 2025.

Graph 2 – Number of Households in Temporary Accommodation



- 3.21. It is important to note that not every homelessness case results in a need for temporary accommodation. The Housing Options team works closely with households at risk of homelessness to prevent it wherever possible, helping reduce the demand for temporary placements.
- 3.22. As indicated in the data above, while Table 2 shows the number of active homelessness cases has been rising steadily, Graph 1 shows the number of new homelessness approaches has been gradually falling. This trend is expected heading into the summer months, when fewer people typically present as homeless. However, the number of individuals in nightly paid accommodation has seen a slight increase over the same period.
- 3.23. To support the reduction of nightly paid placements, the Council has secured access to a House in Multiple Occupation (HMO) in Grantham through a partner agency. This accommodation is now being fully utilised and has proven effective in helping meet temporary housing needs for individuals for whom other options are unsuitable.

Night shelter

- 3.24. As previously reported to the committee on 17th March 2025, the night shelter in Grantham closed on 28th February 2025.
- 3.25. Since the closure, discussions have continued with partner organisations to explore the option of operating the shelter on a year-round basis.

- 3.26. At the time of closure, demand for the shelter was low. However, with the recent increase in visible rough sleeping, there is a renewed sense that reinstating this provision may now be necessary.
- 3.27. That said, as noted earlier in this report, many of those currently rough sleeping have either previously accessed the night shelter and been asked to leave due to their behaviours or declined the night shelter, raising uncertainty about whether reopening the facility would provide an effective solution to the current challenges.

Resettlement pressures

- 3.28. Officers have been working in close collaboration with partners from the Strategic Migration Partnership and East Midlands Councils to fulfil our obligations under the National Resettlement Scheme. This scheme is a pathway for refugees in vulnerable situations from around the world.
- 3.29. Across SKDC, Serco manages 31 properties for resettlement purposes. This includes 2 self-contained properties and 29 Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs), collectively providing 128 bedspaces, 85 of which are currently occupied.
- 3.30. The council is now receiving funding to help address resettlement pressures. Various options are currently being explored to determine the most effective use of these resources.

4. Other Options Considered

- 4.1 This report is for noting

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SOUTH
KESTEVEN
DISTRICT
COUNCIL

Housing Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Thursday, 19 June 2025

Councillor Virginia Moran
Cabinet Member for Housing

Housing Revenue Account Capital Works Programme update June 2025

Report Author

Andy Garner, Planned Works Manager - Technical Services

andy.garner@southkesteven.gov.uk

Purpose of Report

To update the Housing Overview and Scrutiny Committee on the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Capital Improvement Programme.

Recommendations

That Committee note the contents of the report and the progress being made to deliver the Capital Works Improvement Programme and improvements in performance in order to enhance the Council's social housing stock.

Decision Information

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 Council approved the 2025/26 Budget Framework on 27th February 2025 and the Housing Revenue Account Capital Programme was amended by Council on 22nd May 2025.

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

Procurement

- 1.2 The improvements team have worked very hard over the past 18 months, getting longer term, compliant contracts in place and continue to do so. This will enable their capital work improvement programmes to be completed.

Completed by: Helen Baldwin Procurement Lead

Legal and Governance

- 1.3 This is an update report for noting, and therefore there are no additional governance comments.

Completed by: James Welbourn, Democratic Services Manager

2. Background to the Report

2024/25 Financial year

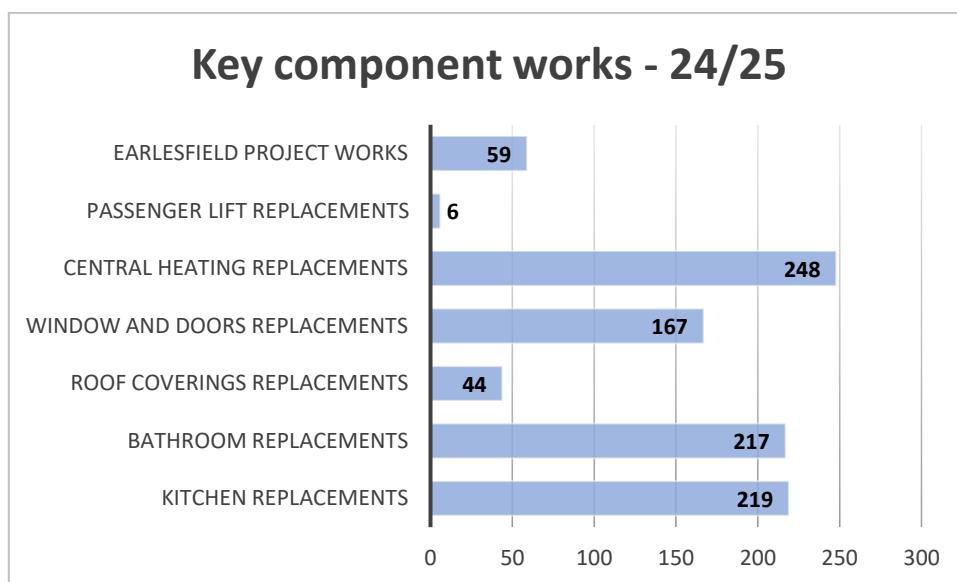
- 2.1 The Council has a clear commitment in its Corporate Plan 2024-2027 to ensure that all residents can access housing which is safe, good quality, sustainable and suitable for their needs and future generations. The Council's Capital improvement programme is committed to ensuring this.
- 2.2 The 2024/25 financial year posed many challenges for the delivery of the Council's Capital improvement programme. These challenges included the expiry of contracts through to changes in the staffing of the team.
- 2.3 To address these issues the contract requirements were scrutinised, and procurement exercises were undertaken. During 2024 the Improvements team has successfully procured the following contracts:
 - Kitchen & bathrooms
 - Roof covering replacements, flat & pitched

- Passenger Lift Replacements
- Disabled adaptations
- Stairlift installation & maintenance
- Stock Condition surveys

2.4. The Council now has compliant contracts in place to enable delivery of the capital works improvement programme.

2.5. Despite the late start of some of the planned Capital improvement programmes during 2024/25 ambitious targets were set to achieve the maximum amount of component completions within the allocated budgets.

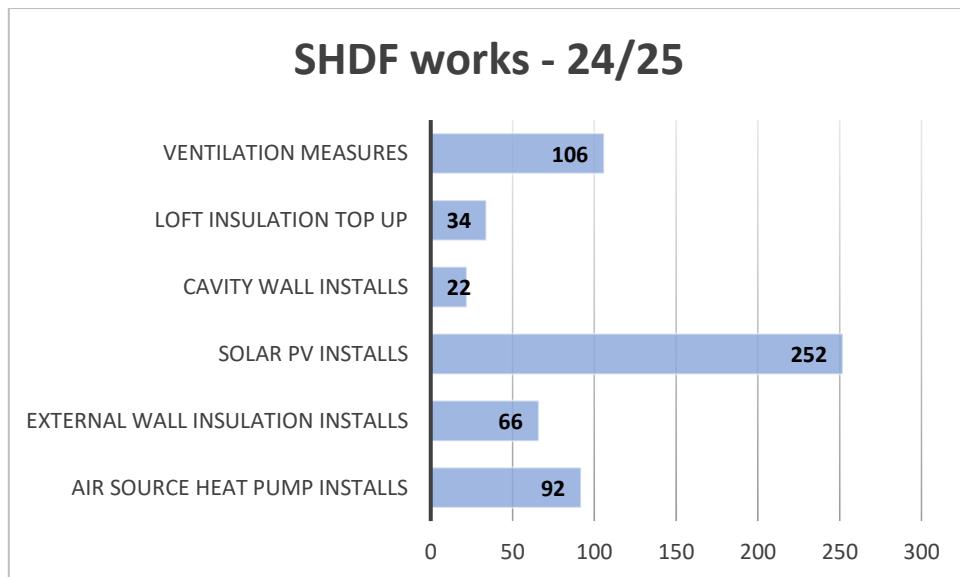
By year end the following “key” component replacements were achieved:



2.6. Overall final inspections of works completed across the above programmes is 92%, slightly below the target of 95%, the shortfall was due to property access issues and tenant availability.

Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund (SHDF) Works 2024/25

2.7. 2024/25 saw the continuation of the final year of Wave 2.1 of the SHDF works and the completion of the following measures:



2.8. The overall spend on the capital works improvements programme including the SHDF works for 2024/25 ended the year at circa £15million.

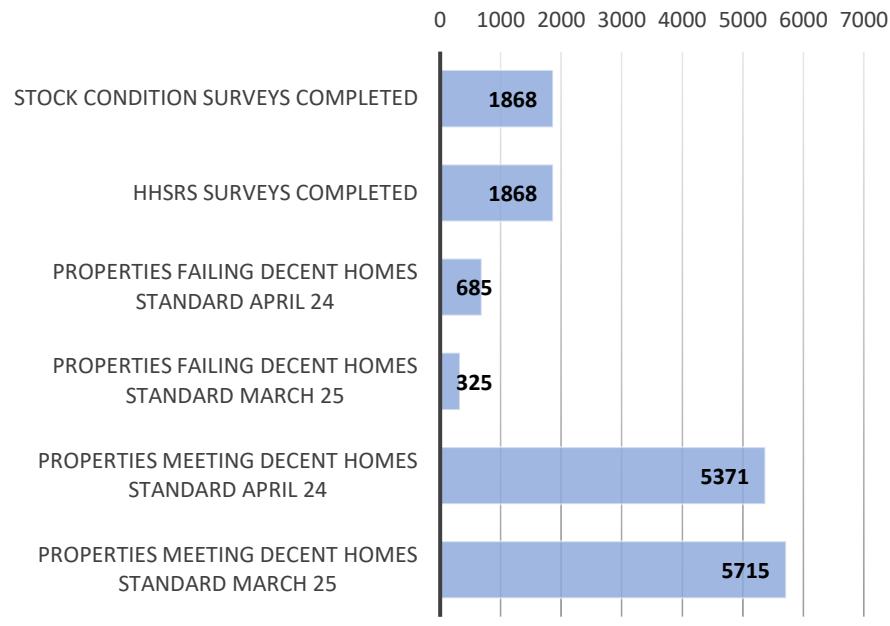
Asset Data 2024/25

2.9. Stock management plays a pivotal role in the delivery of the capital works improvement programme. During early 2024 a new stock surveying contractor was procured. Their primary focus was to carry out stock condition surveys along with Housing Health & Safety Rating (HHSRS) surveys and where required a new Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) was also completed.

2.10. Over the period from April 2024 to March 2025, the housing stock Decent Homes percentage rose from 88.67% to 94.62% following the completion of the capital improvement programme. Capital works will be prioritised in 2025/26 to address properties which do not meet the Decent Homes Standard.
Please note that the stock figures include leasehold properties.

Key year-end figures are:

Asset Data - 24/25



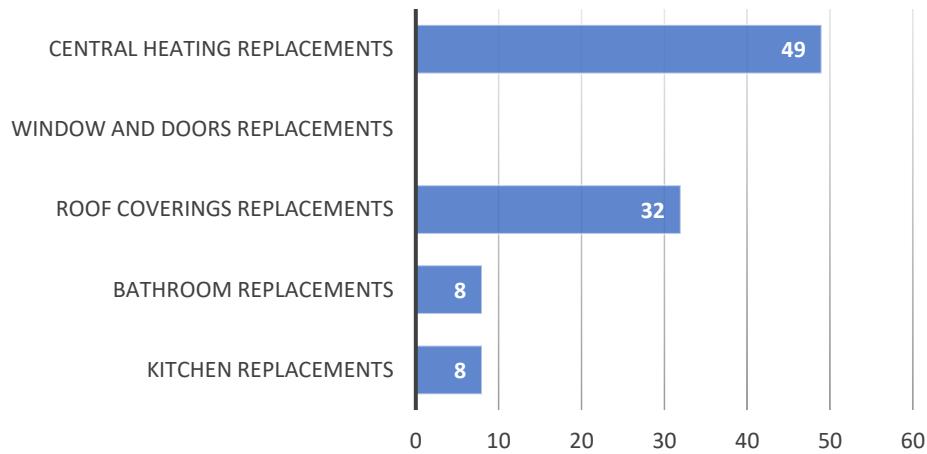
2025/26 Financial year

2.11. With respect to the 2025/26 financial year, progress on the capital works improvement programme is well underway.

To date, the following works have been completed in the first two months of the 2025/26 financial year:

**Note that no completions are showing for windows & doors as they are currently in the manufacturing phase.*

Works completed so far April/May 25

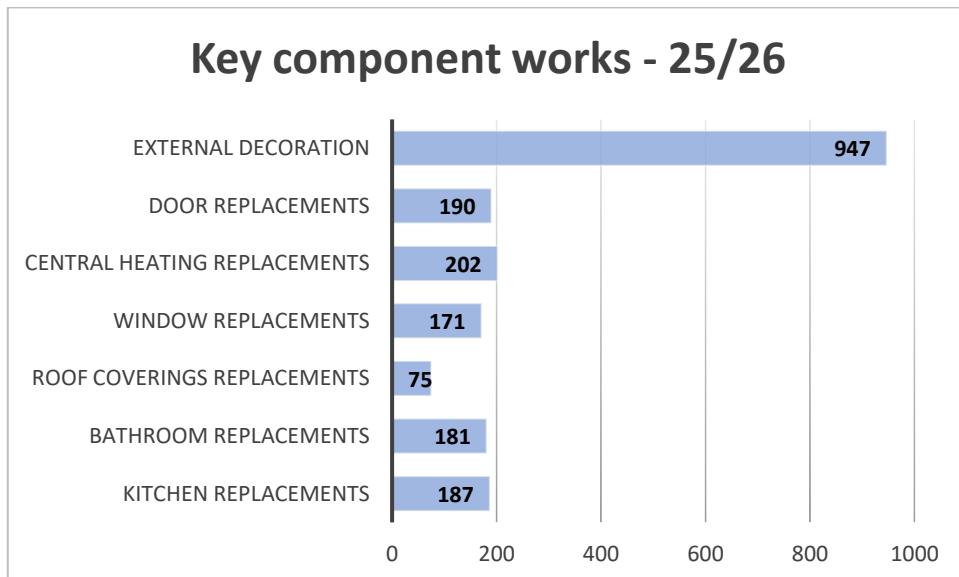


An additional contract has been procured for External Decoration, this is anticipated to commence works in quarter 2 of the current financial year.

Other capital work improvement projects to which budget allocation has been secured for include:

- External Wall finishes
- Compliance works including fire doors and fire prevention
- Structural refurbishment work
- Door entry Systems
- Disabled adaptations
- Tunstall upgrade work
- Smoke Alarm, CO detector upgrades
- Electrical Rewires

Proposed key component replacement/upgrade works for 25/26 are:



Warm Homes - Social Housing Fund (WH – SHF) Works 2025/26

2.12. In late 2024 the Council applied for funding under the new Wave 3 WH-SHF Government scheme.

In March 2024 the Council was informed that they had been successful in securing grant funding of £4.2million. This is match funded and will allow the Council to carry out works to a value of circa £8.4million.

Since being granted the funding and in conjunction with our delivery partners, Equans, the Council has applied to complete the works in two years instead, this will potentially allow for further funding to be applied for. Confirmation was received in May 2025 that this change request has been granted.

Contracts are being prepared, and it is anticipated that the mobilisation phase and commencement of the works will start at the beginning of July 2025.

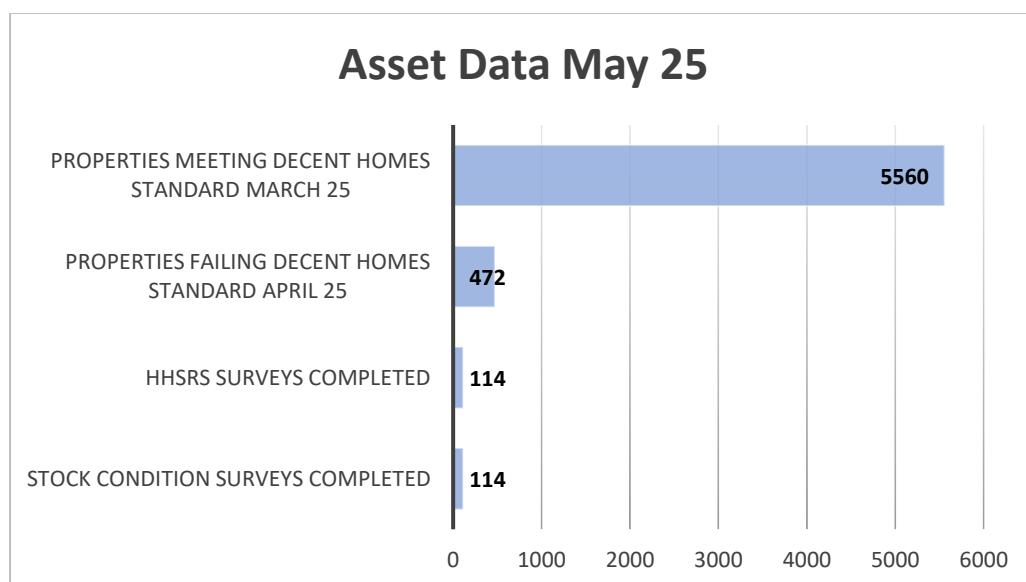
The works under Wave 3 will deliver warm and energy efficient homes, reduce carbon emissions along with fuel bills and help in tackling fuel poverty.

These works will include installation of air source heat pumps, solar efficiency measures, window and door replacements along with various insulation solutions.

- 2.13. The capital works improvement programme for the 2025/26 financial year has a budget of circa £16 million, this includes the WH-SHF work. This is an increase on the previous year's budget.

Asset Data 2025/26

- 2.14. Building on the success of last year's stock condition & HHSRS surveys, further surveys have already been completed during April and May. Capital works will be prioritised in 2025/26 to address properties which do not meet the Decent Homes Standard.



3. Key Considerations

- 3.1. This report is provided for information, and Members are asked to note the progress in 2024/25 and plans for the current 2025/26 year for the Council's capital improvements programme.
- 3.2. Following the extensive list of contracts that have been procured over the past year the capital work programmes are in a strong place to be delivered.
- 3.3. All the planned capital works improvement programmes as noted previously in this report will provide much needed improvements works to the Council's housing stock and in turn will provide all residents with a good, safe home that is suitable for their needs.
- 3.4. The capital works programme is delivered in line with the Technical Services Service Plan 2025/2026 and the Council's Corporate Plan 2024-27

4. Reasons for the Recommendations

4.1. Report is for information and noting.



SOUTH
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Housing Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Thursday, 19 June 2025

Report of Councillor Virginia Moran
Cabinet Member for Housing

South Kesteven District Council Draft Housing Strategy (2025-2030)

Report Author

Celia Bown, Senior Housing Policy and Strategy Officer

Celia.Bown@southkesteven.gov.uk

Purpose of Report

To present the draft Housing Strategy to the Housing Overview and Scrutiny Committee for review and comments.

Recommendations

The Committee is recommended to:

1. Review and comment on the draft Housing Strategy which is subject to further consultation.

Decision Information

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 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 The financial and resource implications of developing and adopting the strategy will be met from existing budgets.
- 1.2 Over the five year strategy delivery period where actions can't be maintained within existing budgets a report will be submitted to request additional funding as required.

Completed by: David Scott – Assistant Director of Resources (deputy s151 officer)

Legal and Governance

- 1.3 Once the draft Strategy has been out for consultation and received comments it will need ratifying by the correct decision making body, after having returned to Housing OSC.

Completed by: James Welbourn, Democratic Services Manager

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 needs to be updated. 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 2030 - the end of the strategy
 - What we will do and how
- 2.7. 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

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

3. Key Considerations

3.1. The strategy proposes clear priorities, which align with the Council's Corporate Plan priorities. The draft Housing Strategy 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:

- A working group was set up, meeting every 4 weeks with the first meeting being held in May 2023 and the final working group meeting in November 2023 (a total of 6 meetings). It consisted primarily of key housing, planning, projects and private sector housing staff. The purpose of the working group was to review the current housing strategy; scope the new draft strategy; discuss challenges and set provisional priorities.

- A staff workshop was held in October 2023 with a wider number of officers from relevant service areas. This was to discuss challenges and set provisional priorities.
- 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.
- One online survey was sent to housing partners and a more general survey to partner agencies such as the fire, police and health services.
- The outcome of the workshop and the response from the surveys was widespread support for the proposed priority themes.
- More recent 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. Further details are in the Consultation Report attached at Appendix 2 of this report.
- 6.3. Following presentation of the Draft Housing Strategy to the Housing Overview and Scrutiny Committee, the Council will commence the consultation process for the draft document. This will include consulting with:
 - 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
 - Tenants through Housing Roadshows, Tenant Engagement Panel and Focus Group
- 6.4. A final draft of the Housing Strategy will be presented to the Committee at a future meeting.

7. Appendices

- 7.1. Appendix 1 – Draft Housing Strategy
- 7.2. Appendix 2 – Consultation Report
- 7.3. Appendix 3 – Equalities Impact Assessment

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**SOUTH KESTEVEN
DISTRICT COUNCIL DRAFT
HOUSING STRATEGY
2025-2030**

Foreword

Wording will be inserted and Cllr Virginia Moran to approve

DRAFT

Vision

Our vision for housing across South Kesteven is 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.

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.

Snapshot of Housing in South Kesteven

Population

- The population is projected to grow, reaching 149,777 by 2030.
- 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%.

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 Hazards1. The estimated rate for England is 9.2%.

Housing Tenure

- South Kesteven, 43,574 households 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.

Housing Affordability

- Average house sale price in South Kesteven in 2024 was £270,938.
- Average sale price five years ago was £211,982.
- 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.

- In 2023, the median house sale price in South Kesteven was 7.91 times the median resident annual gross full-time salary.
- This compares with 7.08 for Lincolnshire and 7.36 for East Midlands.
- The median private monthly rental value was £725 in 2022/23.
- The lower quartile rate was £585, the upper quartile £850.
- The district's median rent is the highest in Lincolnshire and above the regional rate, although below the national.

Homelessness

- South Kesteven has seen a decline in homelessness preventions and an increase in homelessness reliefs, in comparison with the other Lincolnshire local authorities.
- 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.
- Homeless households in temporary accommodation are at a higher rate compared with other Lincolnshire local authorities, however below regional and national levels.

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 been lifted in October 2023.
Housing growth – delivery of over 2000 new residential properties
High number of affordable housing developed and increasing – 458 properties
Construction of 20 properties at Swinegate, Grantham. This is part of a pipeline of the Council building and acquiring 65 affordable 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 £3.2 million programme of renovation works to 143 properties in the Earlesfield Estate, Grantham.
SKDC housing stock decarbonisation programme upgrades
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

Priorities

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. The Affordable Housing Programme will receive an additional £300 million. This follows a £500 million extra announced in

October 2024, which is expected to provide 5000 more affordable homes across the country. 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 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.

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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
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		SKDC Landlord forums		Housing Options Team

	to secure properties let with a rent not exceeding the Local Housing Allowance rate and meet legislative requirements		National Landlord Association		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
1.10	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	Local Plan (2011-2036) Housing Revenue Account Business Plan (revision to be developed)			Planning Team

	and offices) into affordable housing				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

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 and the new Government is currently considering 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.

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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 Housing Team – Decarbonisation Project
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

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 (2021-2024) [insert hyperlink](#)
- 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 [insert hyperlink](#)
- South Kesteven Health and Wellbeing Action Plan [insert hyperlink](#)

Challenges

Residents across the district are still experiencing the Cost of Living Crisis which has an effect on 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 be a range of older people housing options across the district; for example, assisted living and extra care. There is 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.

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 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)	Lincolnshire Homelessness Strategy Group SKDC Homelessness Forum	Government Homelessness Prevention Grant	Housing Options Team Rough Sleeper Initiative Team

		SKDC Preventing Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy (to be developed)	SKDC Vulnerable Adults Panel Complex Needs Panel Multiple Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC) Rough Sleeper Initiative		
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

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

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.

DRAFT

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

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		Planning Team Housing Team
5.2	Allocate social housing properties effectively – in terms of the type (including adapted properties) and location.	<p>SKDC's Housing Allocation Policy</p> <p>SKDC's Choice Based Lettings System</p>			Housing Team – Housing Options
5.3	Sustain current housing stock where possible – Council				Planning Team

	housing and Shared Ownership, rather than being sold under the Right to Buy and Right to Acquire by applying the national permitted exemptions.				Housing Team
5.4	Maximise the housing stock – adapting and converting properties to make best use of them and bringing empty homes back into use.	Housing Asset Management Strategy (revision to be developed) Housing Revenue Account Business Plan (revision to be developed) Empty Homes Strategy (2024)	SKDC Aids and Adaptations Process (2022) Empty Homes Working Group		Housing Team Public Protection - Private Sector Housing Team
5.5	Maximise affordable housing – ensuring planning policies are in place to enable delivery and the Council maximises opportunities for development, acquisition and nomination.	Local Plan (2011-2036) Housing Asset Management Strategy (revision to be developed) Housing Revenue Account Business Plan (revision to be developed)			Planning Team Housing Team

		<p>HRA Asset Acquisition and Disposal Policy (2023)</p> <p>Nomination Agreements with partner affordable housing registered providers in place.</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>	<p>Rough Sleeper Initiative</p>	<p>Housing Team – Housing Options</p> <p>Rough Sleeper Initiative Team</p> <p>Cost of Living Team</p> <p>Tenancy Services</p>



Housing Strategy Consultation Report December 2023



Table of Contents

	Page
Purpose, Scope and Objectives	2
Methodology	3
Details	4
Results – Housing Specialist providers	4 -10
Results – Statutory Organisations	10 - 16
Conclusion	16

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

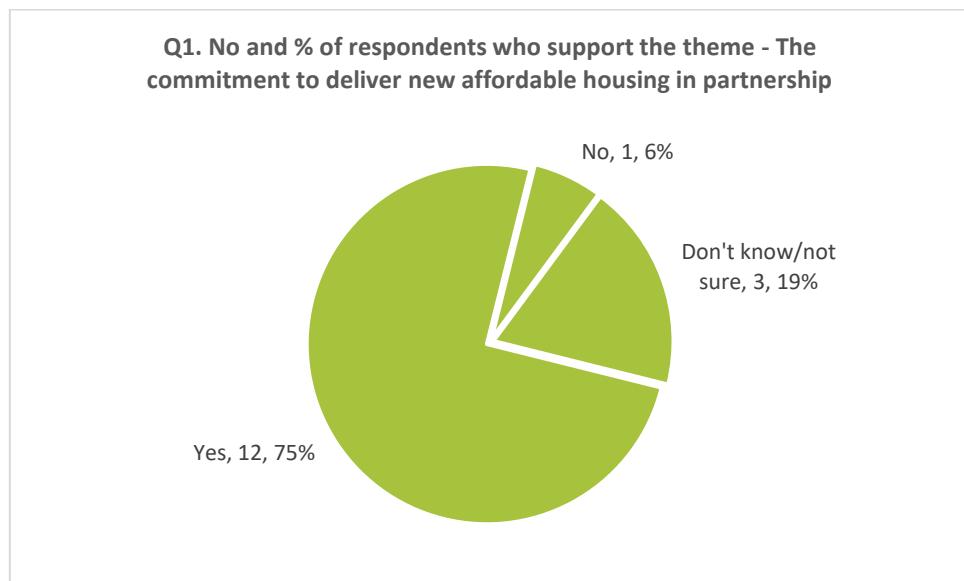
9. Both surveys followed the same format- although each survey had a slightly different emphasis and content. Both sets of respondents were asked for their opinions on the themes and objectives highlighted in the strategy, and about challenges in their industry and how their organisation was dealing 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

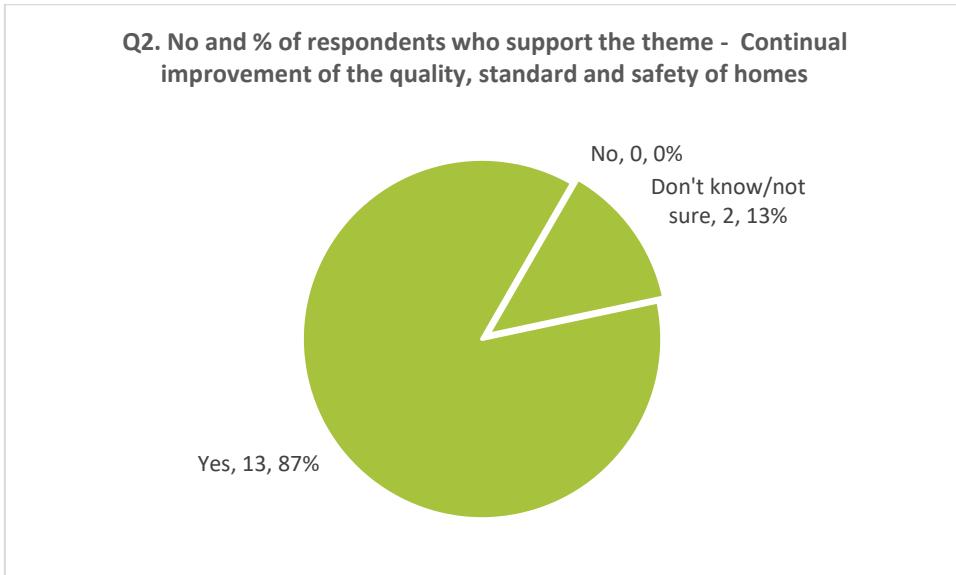
11. The first question asked respondents if they agreed with one of the themes of the Housing Strategy being “The commitment to deliver new affordable housing in partnership”. The majority supported this theme- as shown in the pie chart below:



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”

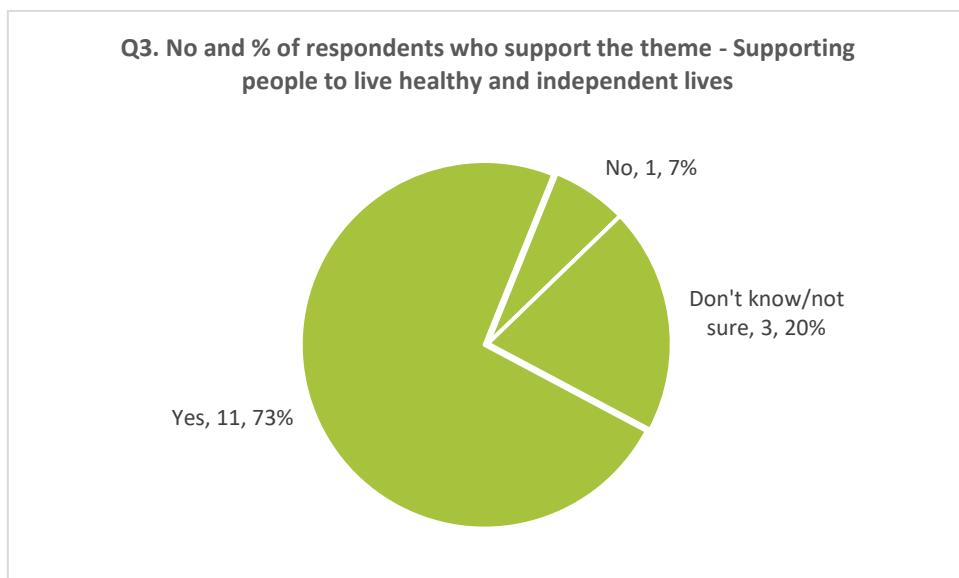
13. There was strong support from respondents for the second theme identified in the draft housing strategy. 13 respondents (86.7%) thought that “Continual improvement of the quality, standard and safety of homes” should be one of the themes of the strategy.



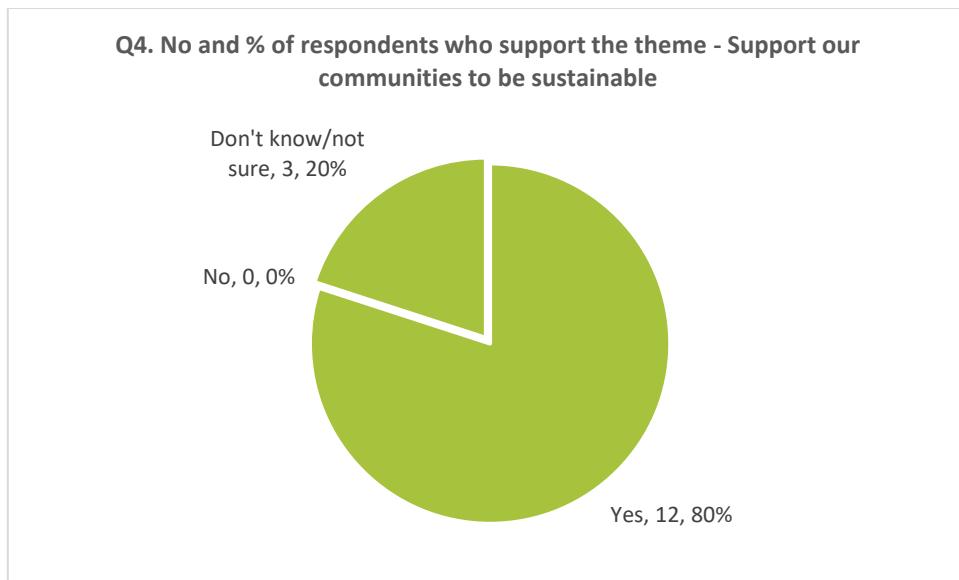
14. A couple of the respondents to this question, whilst supporting the theme, said that there will always be a balance between quality and viability, and this should be recognised. This is illustrated in the quote below:

“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:

Q6. No of respondents choosing each of the strategy objectives

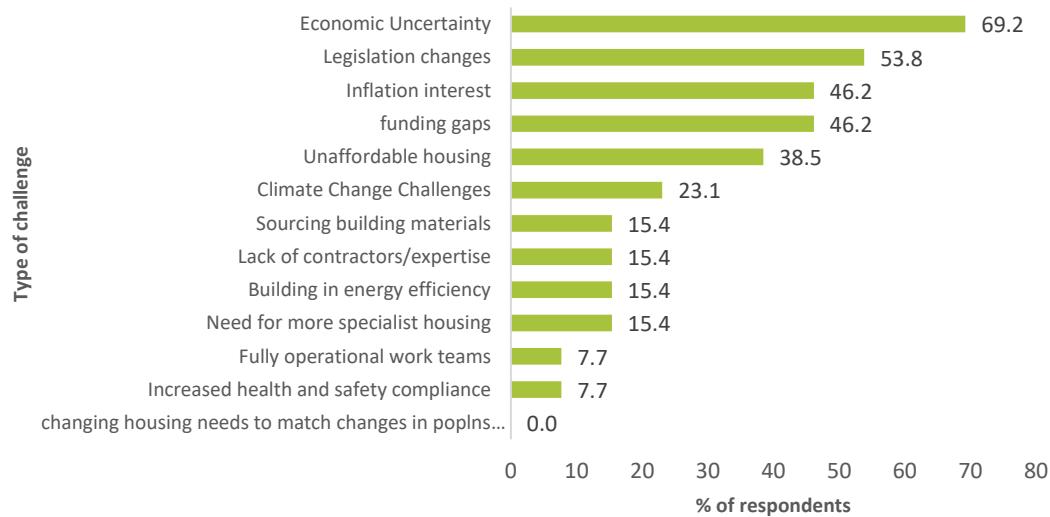


20. When asked for additional comments, one respondent suggested that it may be beneficial to treat the objective of generating additional affordable housing stock as a separate and independent workstream, to the objective of improving the energy efficiency and "quality" of existing stock. Most comments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

Q7. % of respondents who think this is a challenge for the industry they work in



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:

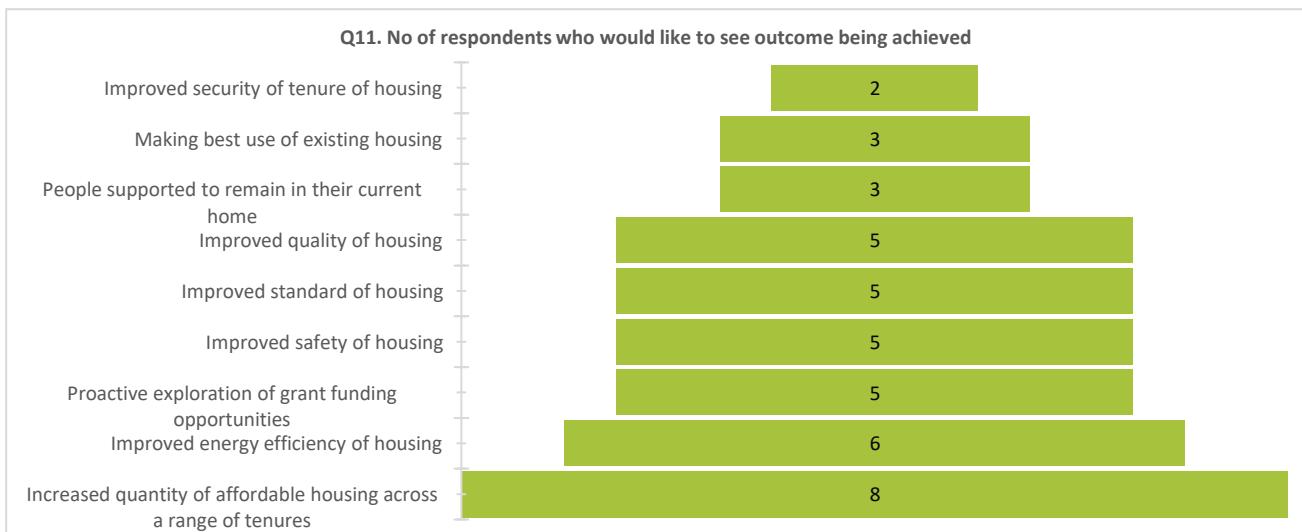
	No	%
Partnership working	8	72.7
Sharing knowledge and resources	4	36.4
Effective consultation	3	27.3
Applying for grant funding	3	27.3
Upskilling and training the existing workforce	3	27.3
Sourcing contractors	2	18.2
In house shadowing and training	2	18.2
Stopping work activity including new development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

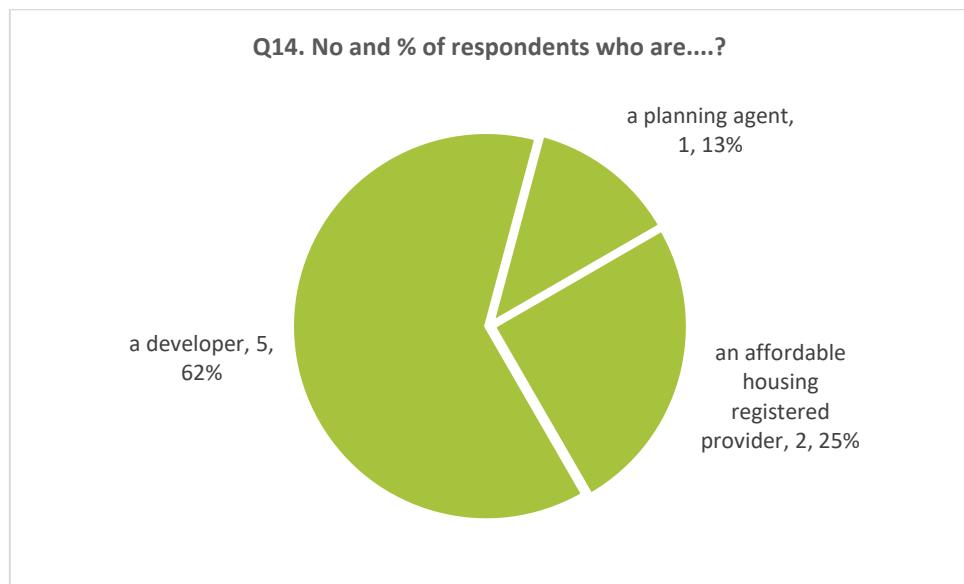


27. When asked to give more detail one housing specialist said:

"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.

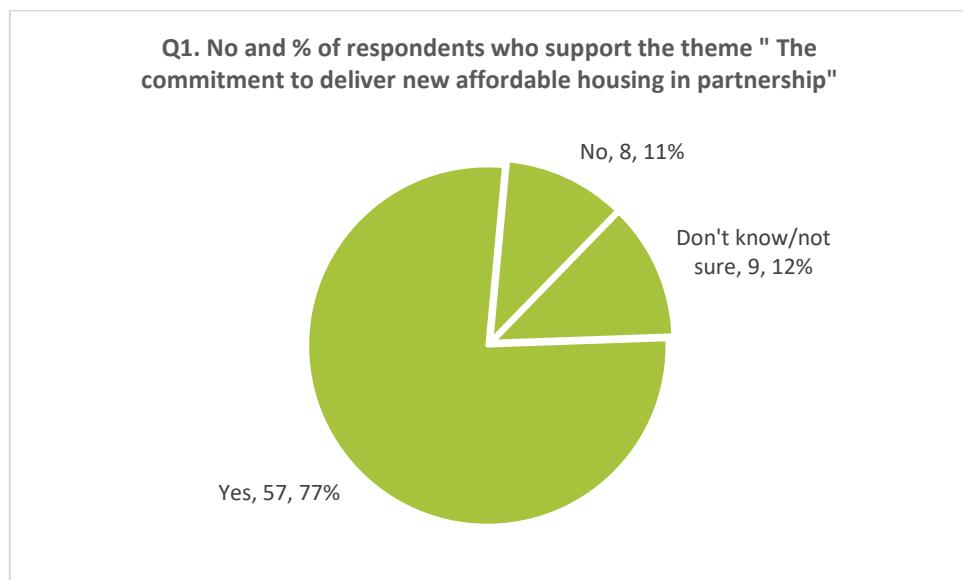
29. Of those who specified the organisation they represented; most represented housing developers as illustrated below:



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.

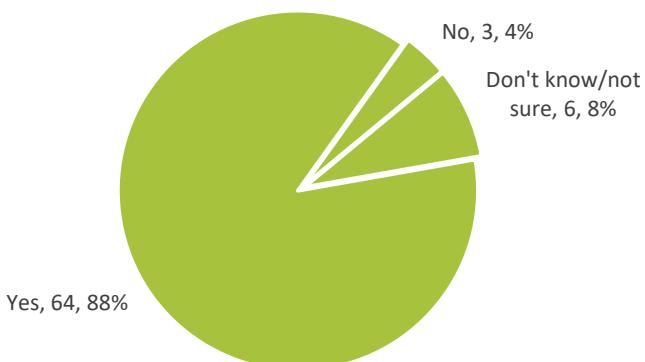
“To provide affordable housing choices in rural Lincolnshire”

“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

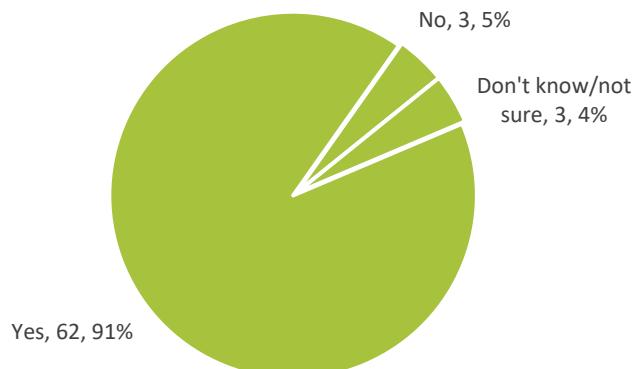
“Poor quality housing brings multiple social, health and environmental problems which increase costs and reduce the quality of life for all.”

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:

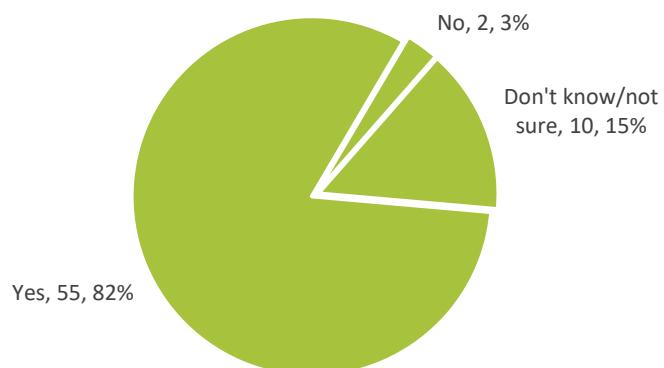
Q3. No and % of respondents who support the theme "Supporting people to live healthy and independent lives"



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."

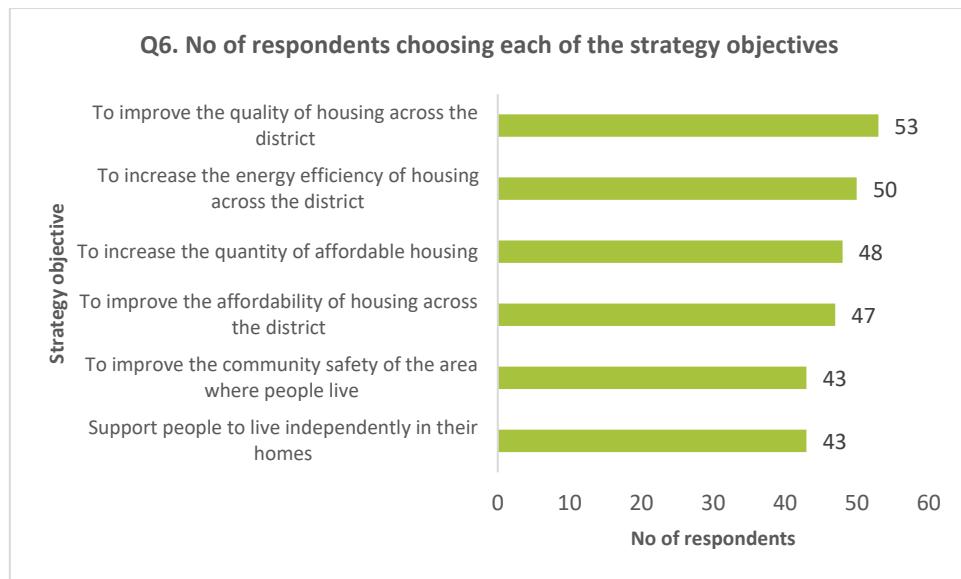
Q4. No and % of respondents who agree with the theme "Support our communities to be sustainable"



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:

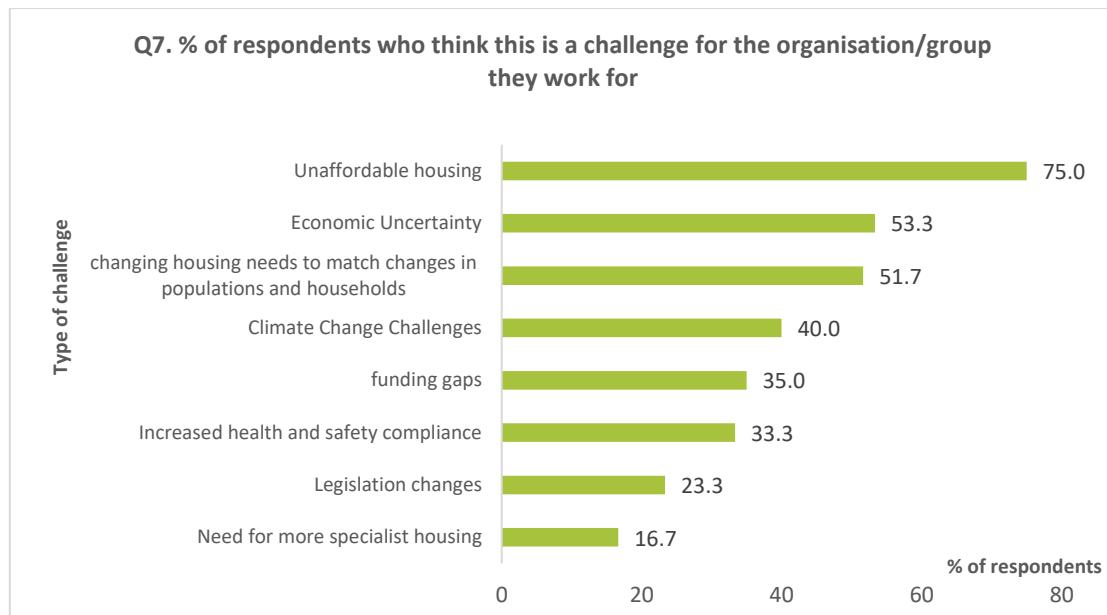
“To ensure new housing is well provided with appropriate services, including public transport, education, retail, leisure, access to green spaces.”

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:

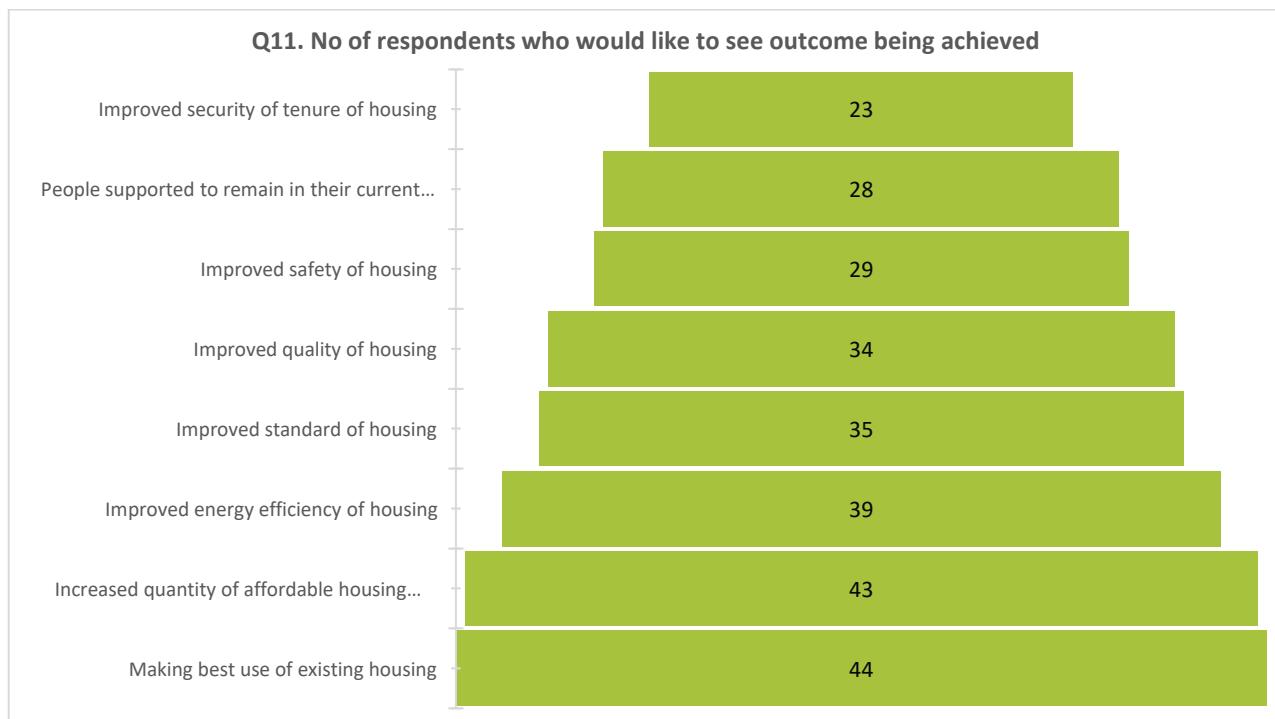
	No	%
Sharing knowledge and resources	20	54.1
Effective consultation	19	51.4
Partnership working	16	43.2
Applying for grant funding	15	40.5
In house shadowing and training	8	21.6
Upskilling and training the existing workforce	7	18.9

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 though 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.



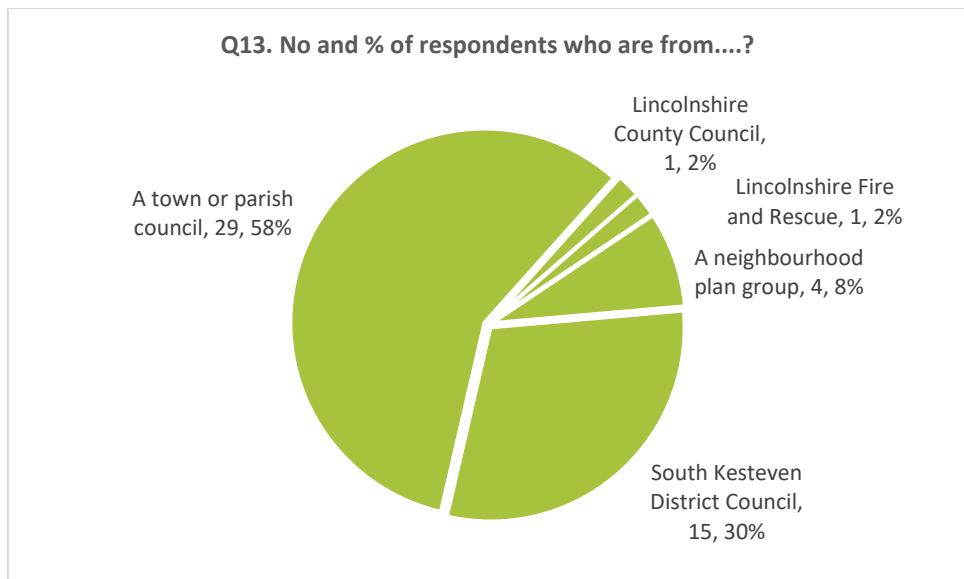
44. When asked to give more detail or identify additional outcomes one respondent mentioned the importance of flexibility – specifically in relation to household size and composition. Another referred to the limitations imposed by budgetary constraints. These are illustrated in the two quotes below:

“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



Equality Impact Assessment

Question	Response
1. Name of policy/funding activity/event being assessed	Housing Strategy 2025-2030
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">there is 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. <p>This vision will be delivered via five priorities:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. The commitment to deliver new affordable and specialist housing in partnership2. Continual improvement of the quality, standard and safety of homes3. Support people to live healthy and independent lives in their homes4. Facilitate housing to be sustainable5. Support our communities to be sustainable <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 has taken place with internal Council stakeholders and external partner stakeholders.</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 will take place with internal and external stakeholders and also with residents.</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 in line with the Corporate Plan Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) and each service wide KPIs. The Housing Strategy will be delivered via service specific policies and strategies (set out in the strategy and appended to this Equality Impact Assessment), which will be monitored and reviewed within each service area and will be heard at Housing Overview and Scrutiny Committee on a quarterly basis.</p>

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 <small>(The Action Log below should be completed to provide further detail)</small>
Age	Positive	<p>Affordable housing is primarily needed by younger and older people, 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>One of the strategy priorities is 'the commitment to deliver new affordable and specialist housing (in partnership)'.</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> <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</p>	



		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.	
Other Factors requiring consideration			
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
No initial negative impacts identified.		
Further consultation may identify negative impacts, which will be addressed, prior to being heard by members for the final decision of the strategy document.		

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 at the current time.				

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?	This will be completed after the next consultation.	
Final Decision	Tick	Include any explanation/justification required
1. No barriers identified, therefore activity will proceed		
2. Stop the policy or practice because the data shows bias towards one or more groups		
3. Adapt or change the policy in a way that will eliminate the bias		



4. Barriers and impact identified , 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 proceed with caution with this policy or practice knowing that it may favour some people less than others, providing justification for this decision		
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Did you consult with an Equality Ally prior to carrying out this assessment? Yes

Sign off

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

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

Housing Overview & Scrutiny Committee

Thursday, 19 June 2025

Report of Councillor Philip Knowles,
Cabinet Member for Corporate
Governance and Licensing

Corporate Plan 2024-27: Key Performance Indicators Report - End-Year (Q4) 2024/25

Report Author

Charles James, Policy Officer

 Charles.James@southkesteven.gov.uk

Purpose of Report

To present the Council's performance against the Corporate Plan 2024-27 Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) within the purview of this Committee for Quarter Four 2024/25.

Recommendations

That the Committee:

1. Notes and scrutinises the performance against the Corporate Plan Key Performance Indicators in relation to the delivery of the Corporate Plan 2024-27.

Decision Information	
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

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 no significant financial implications arising from this report, which is for noting.

Completed by: David Scott, Assistant Director of Finance (Deputy s151 officer)

Legal and Governance

1.2 Regular monitoring of service area performance is to be welcomed and represents good governance. This report is for noting and there are no significant legal or governance implications arising from the report.

Completed by: James Welbourn, Democratic Services Manager

2. Background to the Report

2.1 The Corporate Plan 2024-2027 was adopted by Council on 25 January 2024. It was proposed actions, key performance indicators (KPIs) and targets would be developed by the relevant Member led Committees, who would retain oversight of the performance management arrangements at a strategic level.

2.2 The actions within the purview of this Committee with accompanying measures were presented to and agreed by the Committee on 21 March 2024.

3. Key Considerations

- 3.1 This report is the second of the new reporting cycle and covers the period January to March 2025 (Quarter 4 2024/25).
- 3.2 Appendix A presents the overall performance against the nine actions being presented in this session. Commentary by the responsible officer is provided for each action. Performance is summarised using a RAG system as follows:
- 3.3 Seven of the actions are rated Green. These are actions which are on or above target as planned.
- 3.4 Two actions are rated as Amber, these are those off target by less than 10% or where milestone achievement is delayed but with resolution in place to be achieved within a reasonable timeframe.
- 3.5 Zero actions are rated as Red. These are actions that are significantly below target.
- 3.6 Zero actions are rated as N/A. These are actions for which work has not yet meaningfully commenced e.g. being sequenced on the completion of other items, or where data is unavailable.
- 3.7 The KPIs have been developed in close consultation with the relevant Officers for each service. It is expected that the KPI suite will experience a degree of evolution over the next four years. This improvement will be prompted by the needs of decision makers and the Committees, and further consideration of how to best meet those needs by Officers.

4. Other Options Considered

- 4.1 As Council has agreed the Committees will lead monitoring performance, there are no viable alternatives. An absence of performance arrangements would mean the delivery of the Corporate Plan is unmonitored and prevent continuous improvement. A purely internal KPI suite would prevent effective and transparent scrutiny and accountability.

5. Reasons for the Recommendations

- 5.1 This is a regular report where Members are invited to scrutinise and comment on performance.

6. Appendices

6.2 Appendix A – Corporate Plan 2024-27 KPI Report: Housing Overview & Scrutiny Committee End-Year (Q4) 2024/25

Corporate Plan 2024-27: KPI Summary Report 2024/25 – Housing Overview & Scrutiny Committee							
Index	Priority	Action	Owner	2024/25 Quarterly Overall Status			
				Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
ENVIRO5 & HOUS4	Sustainable South Kesteven & Housing	Review and implement energy efficiency and renewable energy opportunities across the sheltered and social housing properties. Deliver the £3.3m decarbonisation programme.	Head of Service: Housing Technical Services	On Target	Below Target	Below Target	On Target
HOUS1	Housing	Review the quality of existing properties across all tenures and seek to reduce the impacts of poor housing on residents and communities.	Head of Service: Housing Technical Services	N/A	Below Target	Below Target	Below Target
HOUS5	Housing	Ensure the Council's housing stock is high quality and suitable for the needs of tenants now and into the future. Seek to dispose of properties which are economically unviable.	Head of Service: Housing Technical Services	On Target	On Target	On Target	On Target
HOUS6	Housing	Continue to improve the turnaround period and standard of properties.	Head of Service: Housing Technical Services	Below Target	Below Target	Below Target	On Target
HOUS7	Housing	Deliver a high quality, planned and responsive repairs service.	Head of Service: Housing Technical Services	On Target	On Target	On Target	On Target
HOUS8	Housing	Deliver a pipeline of new build housing following a hybrid approach of construction and acquisition when appropriate to maximise funding streams.	Head of Corporate Projects, Performance, New Build & Climate Change	On Target	On Target	On Target	On Target
HOUS9	Housing	Develop a joint approach to bringing Empty Homes back into use.	Head of Public Protection	Below Target	On Target	On Target	On Target
HOUS12	Housing	Deliver an effective Housing Options Service	Head of Service: Housing	Below Target	Below Target	Below Target	Below Target
HOUS13	Housing	Protect our most vulnerable residents with robust safeguarding processes.	Head of Service: Housing	On Target	On Target	On Target	On Target

Corporate Plan 2024-27: KPI Summary Report Q4 2024/25 – Housing Overview & Scrutiny Committee							
Index	Priority	Action	Owner	Target/s	Q4 Value	Q4 Status	Manager Commentary
ENVIRO5 & HOUS4	Sustainable South Kesteven & Housing	Review and implement energy efficiency and renewable energy opportunities across the sheltered and social housing properties.	Head of Service: Housing Technical Services	% of owned properties EPC C or above (100% EPC C by 2030)	57.88% of owned properties EPC C or above	On Target	272 out of 371 properties on the Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund programme have been completed and handed over with trustmark certificates required for grant funding, there are further completed installs awaiting the handover trustmark certificates. The project has been extended to the end of April 2025, when all properties are due to be completed on site. The Council expects to receive the final completions certificates by the end of May 2025. Resources will then move to mobilising the new Warm Homes Social Housing Fund (Wave 3) project.
		Deliver the £3.3m decarbonisation programme.		Implementation of energy conservation measures (All properties on programme completed by year end)	272/371 properties completed on Wave 2 SHDF (Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund) programme		
HOUS1	Housing	Review the quality of existing properties across all tenures and seek to reduce the impacts of poor housing on residents and communities.	Head of Service: Housing Technical Services	Number of properties with category 1 or 2 HHSRS(Housing, Health & Safety Rating System) damp & mould hazards (own stock)	26 HHSRS fails (2 category 1)	Below Target	The Council has a rolling programme of stock condition surveys which identify Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS) actions which are passed to the Housing Repairs team to complete. As of Q4 2024/25 1,868 stock condition surveys had been completed, above the rolling target of 1700. 94.62% of Council owned properties met the Decent Standard up from 88.66% in Q1. Therefore 325 properties did not meet the Decent Homes Standard. There were 26 HHSRS fails in Q4 of which 2 were Category 1. A programme of improvement is ongoing using information from the asset database, which has been informed by a robust stock condition survey programme. Properties which are failing to meet the decent homes standard are validated and subject to confirmation will be included in the 2025/26 improvement programme.
				% of own Properties meeting the Decent Homes Standard (100%)	94.62%		

Index	Priority	Action	Owner	Target/s	Q4 Value	Q4 Status	Manager Commentary
HOUS5	Housing	Ensure the Council's housing stock is high quality and suitable for the needs of tenants now and into the future. Seek to dispose of properties which are economically unviable.	Head of Service: Housing Technical Services	Properties with EICR (Electrical Installation Condition Reports) up to 5 yrs. old	94.61%	On Target	EICR (Electrical Installation Condition Reports) compliance data has been maintained at 92%+ throughout 2024/25, the compliance and housing teams are reviewing the options available to support improving this position. Gas compliance has improved with 99%+ being maintained throughout the year. As of the end of April 2025 (latest position) 38 properties did not have a valid gas safety certificate so the Council will seek warrants from the Court to gain access. 266 properties did not have a compliant EICR due to access issues, as this is a breach of tenancy the Council will be reviewing the options available to gain access.
				% Dwellings with valid gas safety certificate	99.25%		
HOUS6	Housing	Continue to improve the turnaround period and standard of properties.	Head of Service: Housing Technical Services	Average void times (days) *100 days year 1 *80 days year 2 *60 days year 3	91 days (quarterly average)	Above Target	Void relet time has been significantly improved over the course of 2024/25. In Q4 2024/25 the average void period was 91 days. Ahead of the 100 days end of year target. A turnaround time of 79 days was achieved for the month of March 2025. At the start of 2024/25 the average turnaround was 159 days. This reflects the increased monitoring of void performance including weekly and monthly reporting and the procurement of new contractors to carry out work quicker in empty properties. A target of 80 days is set for 2025/26.
HOUS7	Housing	Deliver a high quality, planned and responsive repairs service.	Head of Service: Housing Technical Services	Emergency repairs completed on time target 75%	85%	Above Target	Significant work has taken place during 2024/25 to improve the quality of repairs data to provide more accurate reporting. This work is still ongoing and includes removing duplications and ensuring that jobs which are completed are updated on the system. An improvement plan is in place which sets out a series of tasks to ensure sustained progress. As of Q4 2024/25, 85% of emergency repairs were completed on time (target 75%), 68% of non-emergency repairs were completed on time (target 70%), satisfaction with the repairs service was 85% (target 75%).
				Non-emergency repairs completed on time target 70%	68%	Below Target	
				Overall satisfaction with repairs service target 75%	85%	Above Target	

Index	Priority	Action	Owner	Target/s	Q4 Value	Q4 Status	Manager Commentary
HOUS8	Housing	Deliver a pipeline of new build housing following a hybrid approach of construction and acquisition when appropriate to maximise funding streams.	Head of Corporate Projects, Performance , New Build & Climate Change	Deliver 80 properties over life of Corporate Plan (2024-27) (20 per annum)	33	On Target	The Swinegate scheme of 20 units will be complete in September 25 due to delays connecting the utilities. Commencement of works at Larch Close, Grantham development (21 properties) has been delayed due to an amendment to the scheme to replace two four bedroomed houses with two adapted bungalows to meet resident needs. 33 properties were delivered over 2024/25: 8 LAHF 2 properties, 4 (Corby Glen New Build), 4 (Elizabeth Road New Build), 5 (Right to Buy buy backs) and 12 (St Peters House, Grantham).
				Delivery of Swinegate, Grantham development (20 properties)	Works are behind schedule with completion due in September 2025.	Below Target	
				Delivery of Larch Close, Grantham development (21 properties)	Works delayed to amend	Below Target	
HOUS9	Housing	Develop a joint approach to bringing Empty Homes back into use.	Head of Public Protection	A working group is planned to establish a new approach to Empty Homes. The creation of KPI measures will be an objective of said group.	See Commentary	On Target	The Empty Homes (Officer) Working Group has been established and proposed the following KPI: Number of Private Sector Homes brought back into use. Target 2025/26: 5 Houses. Target 2026/2027: 10 Houses.

Index	Priority	Action	Owner	Target/s	Q4 Value	Q4 Status	Manager Commentary
HOUS12	Housing	Deliver an effective Housing Options Service	Head of Service: Housing	Number of cases overdue a full homelessness decision (target 0)	8 (126 decisions made)	Below Target	In 2024/25 the team dealt with 2,093 homelessness approaches which resulted in 241 full homelessness decisions being made in 2024/25, this means the Council has accepted a main homeless duty and therefore must provide accommodation to discharge this duty.
				Number of homelessness approaches (domestic abuse presented separately) For Information only	575 18 Domestic Abuse cases		The domestic abuse officer role was approved as a during budget setting which means the team can continue to provide support for victims of domestic abuse.
				Number in temporary accommodation and temporary accommodation spend. For Information only	73 £296k spend on Temporary Accommodation year to date		A new Tenancy Support Officer role was approved as part of budget setting which will provide designated support to vulnerable clients in temporary accommodation with the aim of assisting them into more settled accommodation.
				Number of successful homelessness outcomes (for all the duties owed) For Information only	81		The team also signed up 364 new tenancy agreements, served 81 notices for breach of tenancy agreements and responded to 147 reports of Anti-social behaviour
HOUS13	Housing	Protect our most vulnerable residents with robust safeguarding processes.	Head of Service: Housing	Number of safeguarding referrals (for information only)	10	On Target	The Council has a strong safeguarding team in place, who continue to promote awareness of safeguarding across the organisation. Some safeguarding concerns do not result in a referral to Lincolnshire County Council, but are signposted to other support services who are better equipped to provide support and assistance

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SOUTH
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COUNCIL

Housing Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Thursday, 19 June 2025

Report of Councillor Virginia Moran
Cabinet Member for Housing

Choice Based Lettings Update

Report Author

Sarah McQueen, Head of Service (Housing Options)

 sarah.mcqueen@southkesteven.gov.uk

Purpose of Report

The purpose of this report is to give an update on the progress of the Choice Based Lettings allocations system.

Recommendations

The Committee is recommended to note the update on the Choice Based Lettings allocations System

Decision Information

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

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 no financial implications associated with this report.

Completed by: David Scott – Assistant Director of Finance (Deputy s151 officer)

Legal and Governance

1.2 This is a progress update and therefore for noting.

Completed by: James Welbourn, Democratic Services Manager

2. Background to the Report

- 2.1. As the Committee is aware, Choice Based Lettings (CBL) was launched in October 2023 following a full registration process.
- 2.2. The system ensures that social housing is allocated fairly and transparently. Applicants on the housing register can express interest ('bid') on available properties via an online platform. Allocations are made in line with the Council's Housing Allocation Policy, which is designed to ensure priority is given based on the assessed housing need. The system is now fully implemented and has provided a successful way of managing our housing register and allocations.

3. Key Considerations

- 3.1. Please see below the latest statistics as of 3rd June 2025 to demonstrate the volume of applications received and assessed

3.2.

	March 2025	April 2025	May 2025
Applications received	331	400	354
Applicants who have applied and do not qualify/closed applications	54	81	59
Applications incomplete (waiting further info)	106	129	139
Applications pending assessment	131	133	178
Active applications	1166	1138	1115
Of these: Band 1:	193	178	175
Band 2	348	352	332
Band 3:	505	491	493
Band 4:	120	117	115
Housed:	39	73	47
Of these: Band 1	29	44	27
Band 2	8	17	15
Band 3:	2	8	4
Band 4:	0	4	1

- 3.3. There were a high number of lets in April 2025 as several new build properties from Housing Associations were advertised on the system.
- 3.4. A key priority since implementing this system is to ensure the Council are assessing applications in a timely manner. The oldest application pending assessment is 20th March 2025. So, the Council is currently working on a 10-week lead time for housing register assessments.
- 3.5. Overall, general feedback from customers through phone calls into the service remains positive and applicants have a good understanding of how to use the system. The team receive queries from customers regarding their position in the shortlist for properties as it is assumed it will improve for each property. This is not necessarily the case as positioning can be impacted by the number of applicants bidding for a property, the band the applicants are in and how long they have been on the Housing Register. This can therefore result in positioning varying from one property to another.
- 3.6. The Choice Based Lettings (CBL) system has been live for 18 months, so a comprehensive review of the Housing Allocations Policy will be undertaken to ensure it aligns with current priorities, meets local housing needs, and reflects the functionality of the updated system. A revised policy will be brought to the Committee for consideration later this year.

4. Other Options Considered

4.1 This report is for noting

5. Reasons for the Recommendations

5.1. This report is for noting

Housing Overview and Scrutiny Committee: Updated Work Programme 2025/26

No	Item	Meeting Date	Lead Officer	Requirements	Notes (including reporting timeframes)
Items – Thursday 19 June 2025					
1.	Earlesfield Project Completion report	19 Jun 25	Alison Hall-Wright	Regular update	Regular update at each meeting
2.	Build and Acquisitions update	19 Jun 25	Debbie Roberts/Suniel Pillai	Regular update	Committee to receive a written report
3.	Homelessness and Rough Sleeper update	19 Jun 25	Sarah McQueen	Regular update	Regular update at each meeting
4.	Capital Programme Performance update (Decent Homes)	19 Jun 25	Mark Rogers	Regular update	To be a regular update report to Committee going forward from March 2025
5.	Housing Strategy (TBC)	19 Jun 25	Celia Bown	Report	Report to September Cabinet following consultation
6.	Repairs Service	19 Jun 25	Mark Rogers	Report	Report to October Housing OSC
7.	Corporate Plan 2024-27 - Key Performance Indicators 2024/25 End-Year (Q4) Report	19 Jun 25	Charles James	Report	End of 2024/25 KPI report
8.	Housing Service Performance Report	19 Jun 25	Alison Hall-Wright	Report	Reported to Committee Quarterly – report to contain information on Repairs, Voids, Capital Programme, Choice Based Lettings, Fire Risk Assessments
9.	Garage Sites and their Development update	19 Jun 25	Suniel Pillai	Report	Verbal update
10.	Choice Based Lettings update TBC	19 Jun 25	Sarah McQueen	Report	

Future Items					
	Following items for each agenda: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New Build and Acquisitions update • Homelessness and Rough Sleeper update • Capital Programme Performance update 	<i>2 October (am) 4 December 3 February 2026 26 March 2026</i> <i>From April 2025</i>	Mark Rogers		To be a regular update report going forward from April 2025
	Corporate Plan 2024-27 – Key Performance Indicators (Q2) Report (Q3) Report (Q4) Report	<i>2 October 3 February 2026 June 2026</i>	Charles James	Quarterly Corporate Plan KPI report	
	Housing Service Performance reporting	<i>2 October 3 February</i>	Alison Hall-Wright		Quarterly reporting of Housing KPI's
	Housing Compliance Monitoring update	<i>23 October 2025 March/April 2026</i>	Phil Swinton	Updates to Committee every six months	Committee agreed to receive 6 monthly updates at meeting 17 March 2025
	Repairs Service	<i>2 October 3 February 26 June 2026</i>		Update	Committee to receive a report on the Repairs Service every three months
	Rent and Service Charge Policy	TBC		Policy document outlining how the Council will calculate and charge rent and service charges for the housing stock	
	Sheltered Housing Allocations Review	TBC			