

Housing Strategy Action Plan Years 4 and 5

Priority 1: Making best use of existing homes, improving housing quality and sustainability		
1.1 Ensure efficient use of existing housing stock		
Action	Notes & 2025-27 targets	Lead
Implement Transfer Incentive Policy working with Registered Provider (RP) partners - meet with RPs and establish targeted approach.	Agree with Clarion an approach to their 5 and 6 bed homes.	Housing Strategy and Enabling Manager/Head of Housing and Health
Address and tackle Empty Homes	Additional resource of an Empty Homes Officer in the Housing Improvement team by 1 July 2025	Housing Improvement Manager
Work with KCC to manage gypsy & traveller site .	Agree management model for 2026/27 by 31 October 2025.	Head of Housing & Health
1.2 Improve property conditions to provide safe, healthy homes		
Carry out Housing Stock Condition Survey 2026-27	By 1 October 2026	Housing Improvement Manager
Implementation of Renters Rights Bill on Housing Service	Report to Members Autumn 2025 once Act implemented.	Head of Housing and Health
1.3 Improve energy efficiency of housing stock to alleviate fuel poverty and help address climate change		
Participate in Warm Homes Local Grant Programme 2025-28	Subject to member approval, commencing 1 April 2025	Housing Improvement Manager
1.4 Support residents to have a suitable home that meets their needs and where they can live independently		
Implement specialist hoarding service	Deliver hoarding co-ordinator service in partnership with Town and Country Housing Association from 1 April 2025	Housing Improvement Manager
Work with KCC to review Better Care Fund (BCF) allocations and impact on DFG programme	Meeting with KCC in place by end June 2025.	Head of Housing and Health

Priority 2: Improving housing options and opportunities to prevent homelessness		
2.1 Develop a Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy and action plan		
Action	Notes & 2025-27 targets	Lead
Develop a Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2025-28	Use local intelligence to develop a Strategy and Action Plan  Review Performance Management currently in place and develop  Review legislative framework  Draft evidence base to support strategy - using national, regional and local statistics to evidence need, and determine priorities for the Council  Draft Strategy and associated action plan and develop how to monitor to ensure delivery against priorities  Seek approvals, launch and implement	Housing Solutions Manager
2.2 Provide housing options advice focussing on homeless prevention through a personalised approach		
Strengthening approach to ensure households acknowledge all housing options including private rented sector	Develop a set of advice sheets that can be sent to applicants on on all housing options to send out on Huume  Work with website team to develop website and ensure applicanrs are able to self serve  Tie into PRS offer when launched and promote a suite of options  Develop the offer to applicants to include wider advice, assistance and signposting, such as registering with GPs, Money Advice, Tenancy Sustainment	Housing Solutions Manager
2.3 Work with voluntary and statutory partners to help rough sleepers off the streets into settled accommodation and prevent rough sleeping		
Tender for the contract for Rough Sleeper Initiative funding service delivery	Tender and appoint annually as required	Housing Solutions Manager

Launch Tender, and appoint contractor subject to necessary approvals

Dependent on future funding tender has options to extend the contract or deliver an exit strategy from the project.

#### 2.4 Ensure vulnerable groups and those with complex needs have access to support to maintain their tenancy

Commission support for new Rough Sleeper accommodation provision	Deliver service 2025-26. Review informed by funding as needed Develop a performance monitoring framework including KPIs to monitor the performance of the contract and ensure delivery against aims and objectives Once service provider is commissioned set up quarterly monitoring meetings to monitor performance	Housing Solutions Manager
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#### 2.5 Improve links with landlords in the private rented sector to work together to prevent homelessness and increase housing options

Develop our Private Landlord offer to make it effective in engaging landlords to work with us to prevent homelessness	Continue to develop and improve our Private Landlord offer  Draft paper with offer for approvals taking onto consideration changes in Renters Reform Bill Set up monitoring of the offer before launched Launch the offer and work with Media to ensure that it is promoted	Housing Solutions Manager
Improve and extend engagement with private landlords	Review our work with neighbouring authorities to deliver the West Kent Landlord Forum events and information Develop and trial local engagement options such as networking gatherings or workshops; hold local event/s during 2025-27 and gather feedback to inform future approach.	Housing Strategy and Enabling Manager Head of Housing and Health

#### 2.6 Minimise the use of nightly paid accommodation to manage temporary accommodation costs and seek alternative provision, including property purchase or development

Increase the supply of self-contained homes in council control for use as temporary accommodation	Property Portfolio group work to deliver the TA Delivery Action Plan; including council owned provision (direct delivery or acquisition), leasing and utilising LAHF funding.	Housing Strategy and Enabling Manager
Engage in the Kent Housing Group Temporary Accommodation Offer project to increase control/influence over nightly paid TA provision	Project started early 2025. To receive updates via Kent Housing Group.	Head of Housing and Health

#### Priority 3: Delivering the homes our residents need in the places they are needed

Action	Notes & 2025-27 targets	Lead
<b>3.1 Understand local housing need with up to date information on affordable and specialist housing need for a range of housing (including type, tenure and location) to inform decision making and housing priorities.</b>		
Contribute to Planning Policy Team new Local Plan evidence and Policy work relating to Affordable housing	Affordable housing policy development will be part of the new Local Plan and associated evidence base and policy development timescales	Housing Strategy and Enabling Manager
<b>3.2 Provide housing choice by encouraging housing of different types, size and tenure in suitable locations, at a range of prices to be within reach of different household financial capacities.</b>		
Work with planning colleagues to secure a mix of affordable housing in new developments and agree interim policy approach	Review the Affordable Housing Protocol in light of revised NPPF	Housing Strategy and Enabling Manager
<b>3.3 Ensure a range of specialist and/or accessible housing to meet identified needs of vulnerable groups</b>		
Contribute to formation of new Planning policy relating to specialist and accessible housing delivery	Part of development of new Local Plan	Housing Strategy and Enabling Manager
<b>3.4 Work in partnership with Registered Providers, private developers and Homes England to gain greater influence and control over affordable housing delivery and make best use of financial resources and assets.</b>		
Set up regular engagement with Homes England	First meeting to be first quarter of 2025-26	Housing Strategy and Enabling Manager

<b>3.5 Consider options for the Council to influence and take a pro-active role in housing delivery, including through a Local Housing Company.</b>		
Establish Local Housing Company	Report proposed approach for LHC to members in first quarter of 2025-26	Director of Planning, Housing and Environmental Health

Priority 4: Working in partnership		
Action	Notes & 2025-27 targets	Lead
<b>4.1 Work in partnership with local authorities and partner organisations including active membership and engagement in Kent Housing Group to share best practice, learning and resources</b>		
Engage with colleagues across the region through active participation in the main Kent Housing Group and sub-groups	<p>KHOG (Kent Housing Options Group): prison leavers protocol project</p> <p>Private Sector Group: Renters Rights Bill &amp; Supported Housing</p> <p>Housing Solutions Manager is Chair of Kent Home Choice project board (attends Kent Executive Group) &amp; member of events group. Senior Environmental Health Officer (Housing) is Chair of Private Sector Housing Subgroup.</p> <p>Main KHG and sub-groups: Contribute to delivery of the Kent and Medway Housing Strategy.</p>	All teams within Housing Service
<b>4.2 Engage with Registered Providers and private developers through regular strategic and management/liaison meetings to ensure efficient and effective delivery of services</b>		
Develop an approach for regular engagement and monitoring of Registered Providers to ensure quality service provision and influence housing delivery in the borough	<p>Set up strategic meetings with Registered Providers: bi-annual meetings with Registered Providers with large amounts of stock in the Borough, and annual meetings with Registered Providers with lower amount of stock.</p> <p>First meetings to be in 2025-26.</p>	Housing Strategy and Enabling Manager
<b>4.3 Work with health colleagues and organisations to ensure preventative focussed work and improve wellbeing through links between services</b>		
Work in partnership with health services to provide integrated services	Utilitise funding opportunities to deliver partnership projects. Continue to engage with the West Kent Health and Care partnership and associated partnerships.	Head of Housing and Health
<b>4.4 Maximise our joint working with local commissioned organisations and third sector partners to add value to our housing services</b>		
Work with internal departments to ensure housing related priorities are supported where possible through any funding/ grant initiatives.		Head of Housing and Health