

Rotherham's Housing Strategy 2019-22

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Foreword by Councillor Dominic Beck, Cabinet Member for Housing

Housing has a crucial impact on every aspect of people's lives, including their health and wellbeing, education, access to employment and much more.

Rotherham is a child-friendly borough and good housing will support our children to have the best start in life. A home is also a place where people should age well too. Having a safe, warm and affordable home is a fundamental right that everyone should enjoy and the Housing Strategy sets out the Council's plan for making this a reality.

It is widely acknowledged that there is a national housing crisis and local evidence tells us that Rotherham needs to build 900 new homes per year to meet rising local housing need. However it is not just about headline numbers; this means developing a good mix of homes that meets the needs of local people, in the right places and at the right price, across both the social and private sectors. Private developers will continue to deliver the majority of new homes in Rotherham, but the Council is playing an increasingly significant role – both by directly building new homes but also in terms of stimulating and facilitating the private sector to build.

Huge steps have been taken to ensure the infrastructure and support is in place to welcome investment and development in Rotherham. Our annual Developer Summit has been very successful in engaging with larger developers as well as supporting smaller enterprises to get more involved; the Council's Planning Department has received national recognition for its positive planning approach, and Rotherham is one of the first councils in the region to have a Local Plan in place which incorporates a 15 year land allocation.

There are 576 new council homes already in the pipeline, and the Council will continue to maximise the resources of the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) to develop more of the homes needed and invest in our people, our communities, and our economy. By designing homes that meet specific housing needs the Council can also help people to remain in their homes and retain independence for as long as possible. In turn, this means that the Council's limited social care and health budgets can focus on preventative measures as well as on people with more complex care needs.

Achieving the vision will not be easy, with council services and partner organisations seeing reductions in resources and rapid changes in Government housing policy, but it is important that the Council continues to build new homes whilst investing in our existing homes and neighbourhoods. The Council cannot do this alone and partnerships remain increasingly important as the Council looks to work with neighbouring authorities, local housing organisations and our communities to find

innovative solutions and new ways of delivery to bring forward more new homes, faster.

I would like to thank all those that have been involved in shaping the new Housing Strategy; including tenants and residents, officers, partners and stakeholders.

Introduction

The vision for housing

Rotherham's 30 year Housing Strategy was published in December 2012 and set out our long term vision for housing in the borough until 2043:

- People living in high quality homes
- Rotherham Council being the best housing provider in the country
- Reducing the gap between the most and least deprived neighbourhoods, so that everyone can live in safe, healthy and vibrant communities
- Households living in energy efficient homes
- A revitalised town centre with a new urban community

The Housing Strategy is refreshed every three years, to ensure it remains up to date and addresses the most recent challenges and opportunities, and references the latest statistical evidence. The overall aims of the 30 year plan remain the same, but over the next three years there will be an increased emphasis on housing growth and regeneration of the town centre, as well as good health and independence.

The new Strategy

The 2019-22 Housing Strategy sets out a clear direction for the next three years; aiming to increase the overall number of homes through the creation of new housing, as well as continued investment to making the best of existing homes and communities. This will help local communities to thrive and look towards a prosperous and healthy future.

Housing is not just bricks and mortar; everyone's home is a space which is central to every aspect of their lives so it is right that the Housing Strategy's priorities and themes recognise the contribution housing has towards health, wellbeing, education, the local economy and access to developing skills and securing employment.

The new Strategy addresses all types and tenures of housing in the borough – owner occupied, private rented, social rented, affordable home ownership, and homes purpose-built to meet care and support needs.

The Strategy sets out a whole Council approach to local housing issues but these cannot be delivered by the Council alone. The Strategy's success is reliant on partners and stakeholders coming together to share resources, develop innovative ways of working and deliver solutions to local, regional and national housing challenges.

The Strategy forms the basis for which the Council, its partners and stakeholders can deliver the right homes, in the right places.

Consultation

The Strategy has been developed in consultation with residents and tenants, officers, key partners and stakeholders. Consultation on the Strategy began in July 2018 at the annual Tenant's Conference, and has been a regular topic of discussion for Rotherham Strategic Housing Forum members. Presentations and discussions have taken place with a wide range of organisations, community groups and through the Rotherham Together Partnership.

Some of the key themes arising from consultation feedback include:

- Increasing the supply of council homes particularly for those with care and support needs
- Supporting people to access good quality, affordable housing across all types of tenure
- Helping first-time buyers
- Improving the private rented sector and making use of empty homes
- Improving the town centre residential offer
- Investing in communities and neighbourhoods

Extensive consultation with residents has also been carried out as part of the Strategic Housing Market Assessment. The full consultation summary report will be published alongside the Strategy on the Council's website.

Council priorities and plans

It is essential that the Housing Strategy is aligned closely with the following strategies and plans to ensure that the Council is not just building homes, but is supporting the resilience and sustainability of local communities.



Economic Growth Plan: The Housing Strategy will support the Housing Theme of the Economic Growth Plan, through direct delivery of new homes, by acting as an enabler to encourage development across all tenures to meet local housing need, and creating an environment where the private sector has the confidence to invest. The increase in housing supply will support economic vitality and sustainability in our communities. This is particularly important in the town centre and areas experiencing large scale employment growth, such as Waverley. Finally, residential development generates income to the Council through council tax and New Homes Bonus.

Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2018 – 2025: The Housing Strategy will directly support Aim 4 of the Health and Wellbeing Strategy: *All Rotherham people live in healthy, safe and resilient communities*. The Housing Strategy will also provide direction on wider health issues such as Homelessness, Financial Inclusion and building resilient neighbourhoods.

Homelessness Prevention and Rough Sleeper Strategy 2019: Delivery of the Housing Strategy will support the Homelessness Prevention and Rough Sleeper Strategy, as the needs of homeless people and people at risk of homelessness will be considered as part of all key Council-led housing developments. The main areas of focus for the Homelessness Prevention and Rough Sleeper Strategy are:

- To support people with complex needs
- To prevent homelessness and offer rapid housing solutions to get people in urgent need rehoused quicker
- To increase support for young people to prevent homelessness
- To end rough sleeping and begging
- To improve access to tenancy support, employment and health support services.
- To ensure there is sufficient decent emergency accommodation.

Care and Support Accommodation Plan 2019: The Care and Support Accommodation plan is under development and will set out how specific care and support needs are met through housing. This will include how the Council makes best use of its assets, as well as planning for new homes which are care and support ready in order to address demographic change.

Rotherham Neighbourhood Strategy ‘Thriving Neighbourhoods’ 2018 – 2025: The Neighbourhood Strategy will assist the delivery of the Housing Strategy by ensuring it remains focussed on putting people at the heart of everything the Council does. A key aim of the Housing Strategy is to be the best housing provider in the country and the best way to achieve this is to understand the people who live in our houses and communities. This is also supported by the Council’s Tenant Involvement Strategy. The Council also wants to work with all communities to understand what future housing need will look like so it can plan effectively and provide the types of homes that help people have a good quality of life.

2016-19 Key Achievements

Rotherham has a lot to be proud of since the previous Housing Strategy was published. A summary of the main outcomes is included in Appendix 3, and the 10 most notable achievements are as follows:

- Invested £57m into housing growth, with 576 new Council homes started or in the pipeline
- Entered into an innovative Site Clusters partnership with Wates to develop seven council-owned sites and deliver 217 new homes to meet a range of needs, including the first new Council homes for sale
- Identified a partner to deliver the Forge Island masterplan project, which includes 140 new apartments, as part of the wider Town Centre Masterplan
- Achieved 100% gas safety compliance and maintained decency in all council homes
- Developed a new private sector empty property plan and web-based information for empty property owners
- Lead on the development of the Sheffield City Region Affordable Housing Compact, a partnership between local authorities, ALMO's and housing providers to increase affordable housing through joint initiatives
- Launched Rother Living to support the marketing of all new Council homes
- Developed the first Council homes for Shared Ownership
- Delivered 35 new accessible bungalows to meet local housing needs
- Achieved 'accredited landlord' status and recognition regionally from Tpas (Tenant Engagement Experts) for resident involvement excellence

Context

Rotherham has achieved a lot in the past three years but there is more work to do. Many challenges come from national policy and legislation but many are also associated with our local economy and housing market.

National

Welfare Reform changes, especially Universal Credit, continue to place many of our most vulnerable residents under hardship. It is therefore important to ensure an adequate supply of affordable homes, and that the Council provides excellent financial advice and support.

The 2018 Green Paper, 'A New Deal for Social Housing', proposed a more consistent approach to social housing regulation, speeding up the complaints process and, in light of the Hackitt Review, reviewing the decent homes standard. It also signalled an end to the 'borrowing cap' on local authority Housing Revenue Accounts, which could enable councils to build more homes where the cost of servicing the debt is not prohibitive.

In light of the Grenfell disaster there has been, quite rightly, a shift in Government thinking around social housing. Recognising that no-one should be put at risk or disadvantaged because of where they live, and being clear that landlords have a responsibility to keep people safe in their own home. This has prompted increased focus on the Council's fire and safety compliance in relation to social housing stock. Rotherham Council is in a fortunate position in that performance on fire and safety compliance is considered very high. The Council also works closely with other local housing providers to ensure that everyone is working to the very highest of standards locally. The review of social housing aims to strengthen the landlord - tenant relationship by ensuring the tenant voice is a central focus and that landlords are accountable.

Regional

In May 2018, Dan Jarvis MP was elected Mayor of the Sheffield City Region (SCR); he works with the nine member local authorities to deliver economic, regeneration and transport priorities. The Mayor's plans include securing additional funding to enable the delivery of more new homes.

Collaboration with all SCR authorities and partners is important and the Council continues to play a key role in projects such as One Public Estate, and the SCR Social and Affordable Housing Compact, in order to work efficiently on land, asset and housing projects.

Specific projects are developing between the Council and Sheffield City Council in recognition of growth around the Advanced Manufacturing Park corridor and its strategic location between Rotherham and Sheffield.

The Council is working with colleagues in Sheffield City Council to deliver a joint Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA). This will provide a picture of the housing market and future need across both local authority areas.

Local

Rotherham has the fastest growing economy in Yorkshire and the Humber. Large scale employment growth has been supported by a number of larger business parks developing in the borough, such as Manvers and the Advanced Manufacturing Park at Waverley, which bring huge employment and training opportunities for Rotherham residents.

The local housing market has been slowly but steadily improving over the past few years, with average house prices around £150,000, but still lags behind regional and national levels. Local earnings remain low at an average of £23,000 which compounds affordability issues and difficulty accessing affordable housing.

The Council continues to hold a large stock of social housing, owning around 20,000 units, although this number reduces by approximately 200 annually through Right to Buy purchases. There are over 20 other housing organisations operating in Rotherham to provide a further 5,000 additional homes for social rent. These homes provide an affordable housing option for many but are always in high demand. With so many unable to access social housing, the private rented sector in Rotherham has seen significant growth.

Although the numbers are positive, in terms of overall housing delivery performance the private and social housing sectors have not been able to keep up with demand. The Council is committed to playing a key role in driving the local housing market forward, being proactive about development in order to meet local housing need and support the growing economy.

In June 2018, the Council's Local Plan was formally adopted, replacing the Unitary Development Plan. The Rotherham Sites and Policies Local Plan (2018) sets out policies and identifies specific uses for potential development sites across the borough. The Council's Planning Service has just won the Royal Town Planning Institute's award for local authority planning team of the year.

The progress made allows developers to understand what the opportunities are over the next 15 years, as well as demonstrating the Council's ability to work with businesses and communities to plan ahead to meet changing needs, and will bring us closer to delivering the 900 new homes per year needed.

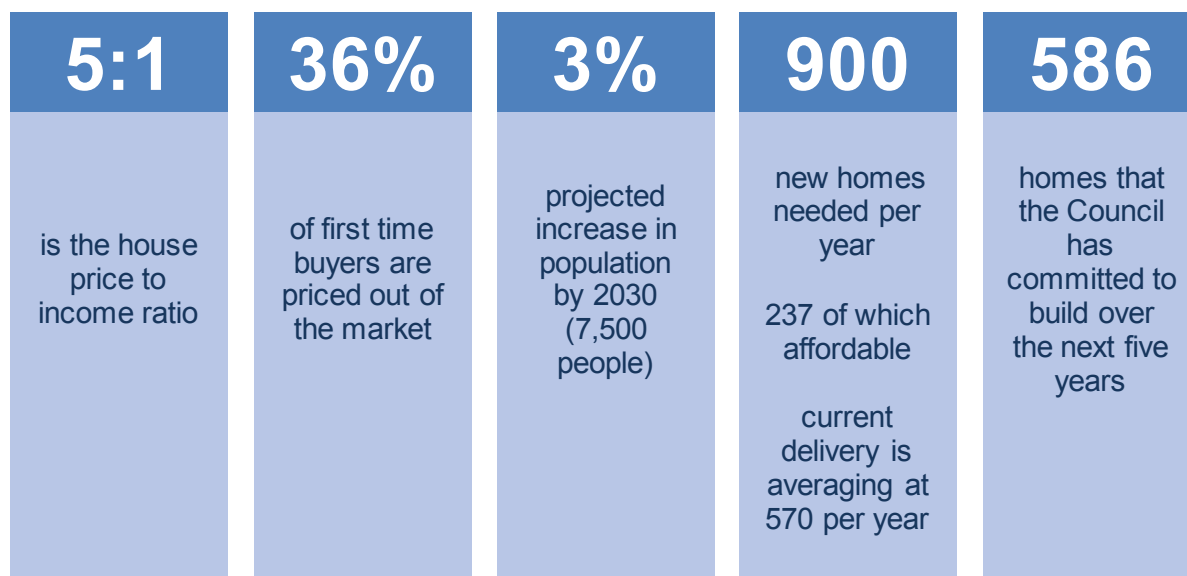
Key themes

Following extensive consultation with partners and stakeholders, four strategic priorities have emerged and will form the key areas of focus in the Housing Strategy.

Each of the four themes has equal priority and is interdependent.

1.Creating homes	Providing new homes to meet Rotherham's housing need
2.Strengthening places	Investing in Rotherham's existing housing and communities
3.Improving health	Improving people's health, wellbeing and independence through housing
4.Working together	Working in partnership to deliver the housing vision and to increase opportunities for all

Theme 1: Creating homes



The 2015 Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) told us that Rotherham needs 900 new homes per year to keep up with growing demand. Over the past five years the average number of new homes built per year has been 570, with 92% of these delivered by the private sector. The SHMA figure, and the backlog of new homes not provided, has fed into the Local Plan housing target of 958 new homes a year.

The supply of new homes both nationally and locally are not keeping up with demand, this has had a far reaching impact on the housing market in relation to house prices and access to the right types of housing. In response to this, the Government has introduced a new Housing Delivery Test against which the delivery performance of local councils will be measured. This will set an absolute minimum target for delivery and it is understood that this is likely to be lower than the existing SHMA figure of 900 new homes a year. But it in no way precludes local authorities from aspiring to deliver new homes over and above the Government's minimum figure where evidence supports this. The targets set in the Housing Strategy are realistic and reflect current market conditions, whilst aiming to meet that aspiration in the medium to long term.

There are around 6,500 applicants on the Council's housing waiting list. There are around 1,500 properties advertised annually with an average of 24 households bidding for each property; and this is increasing every year. In the meantime Council-owned stock continues to decrease, with over 200 homes sold through Right to Buy in 2017/18.

Last year the Council approved the use of Council land and resources to increase the number of new homes delivered, beginning an ambitious £57m housing development programme. Although the number of new homes built will not reach the

900 needed in the short term, it is hoped that with intervention from the Council and the new land allocation via the Local Plan, new housing numbers will increase year on year.

Since the local plan was adopted, the Council has granted planning permission for over 600 new homes, with a further 400 in the planning pipeline. The Council recognises the need to do more and the Housing Service is working with partners to promote housing delivery and in particular strengthen its enabling role through initiatives such as the Developer Summit and providing dedicated resources to unlocking stalled sites. This, alongside the land release and proactive planning, will all support an increase in delivery to move closer towards the target.

The Council is committed to the development of three new large communities; Waverley is developing at speed, Bassingthorpe Farm will provide a key suburban development in the centre of the borough and a new residential offer in the town centre will play a big part in its regeneration and future success.

The Council's ambitious development programme also opens up the potential to influence the local construction industry; by piloting new ways of working, exploring modern methods of construction and setting higher expectations around quality in its own programme, the Council can set the standard for others to follow.

The housing needs of individuals and their families regularly change; the population is ageing, individual circumstances change and many people, particularly younger people, are struggling to access homes they can afford. It is important that any Council-led development is focussed on meeting these specific needs and essential that it continues to understand local need as it evolves.

Key areas of focus

- Accelerated delivery of new homes towards the 958 annual target
- Build the right homes in the right places at affordable prices
- Replace affordable homes lost through Right to Buy
- Support other housing developers and providers to increase the number of new homes built and to meet local need
- Create of an attractive and vibrant town centre residential offer
- Clearly understanding local housing need
- Diversify the local housing offer to meet a range of identified housing needs

Over the next three years we will:

- Deliver our current housing development programme
- Create a pipeline of projects to increase the housing development programme and work with Homes England to unlock the necessary financial investment
- Work with Planning, developers and partners to unlock stalled sites
- Explore and secure alternative funding/investment

- Support the development of new communities such as Bassingthorpe
- Introduce a strategic acquisitions framework to allow the Council to respond to small scale acquisition opportunities quickly and efficiently
- Increase the numbers of social and affordable homes
- Continue to develop the Rother Living brand and develop a range of products that meet local need
- Encourage high levels of energy efficiency and sustainability in housing developments and lead by example on Council developed schemes
- Pilot modern methods of construction and other innovative delivery methods to influence and shape the construction industry
- Maintain an up to date private sector stock condition database and understand the findings of the SHMA, alongside local area housing profiles

Delivery

Council led new homes will be delivered via the HRA Business Plan and existing Council resources. The development of innovative ways of working and new partnerships will open up opportunities to build more, diversify the local housing market and meet the needs of more people. The Council will also continue to work closely with Homes England and the Sheffield City Region to secure grant funding to support housing development.

Performance

Indicator	2017/18 (actual)	2018/19 (projected)	2019/20 (target)	2020/21 (target)	2021/22 (target)
Net new homes ✓	472	400	550	600	700
Number of new homes delivered through Council intervention ✓	New target	110	175	200	225
New Council homes delivered via MMC	0	0	22	Dependant on the outcome of the pilot	

(✓ Council Plan target)

Case study:

A new home for Poppy

Having a brand new home is a dream for many people, but for eight-year-old Poppy Sheppard it is a necessity.

Despite being born with Dravet Syndrome, a severe form of epilepsy, Poppy was attending mainstream school and living at home with mum Amy, 29, and her mum's partner Sam, 26. But in 2015, a massive seizure left Poppy with an acquired brain

injury, unable to walk or talk.

Amy says: “We rented a private house in Thurgroft and it was absolutely fine up until Poppy’s brain injury. When she left hospital, she was given a specialist bed which we had to keep in the living room, so we all lived out of that one room for about five months. We had a hoist but the room was so narrow, especially with the bed in there, that there was no room to turn it around, and we couldn’t get through doors very well because they weren’t disabled access doors. We couldn’t bath Poppy, so we had to take her to Bluebell Wood Children’s Hospice once a week to use their facilities. We ended up sleeping on the floor because we didn’t want to be upstairs whilst Poppy was downstairs.”

Staff at Sheffield Children’s Hospital helped Amy and Sam apply for a specialist home to help meet Poppy’s needs. Fortunately Rotherham Council was in the process of building two bungalows for people with disabilities. The ‘Brayshaw Bungalows’ were named after former housing repairs manager, John Brayshaw who came up with the innovative way to fund the project through efficiency savings on housing repair projects.

Amy said: “We applied for one of them. When we were offered it, we snatched their hand off!

“Helen from Rotherham Council dealt with all of the disability element; she liaised with everyone in getting the tracking for the hoist in place and making sure everything was right, like the bath, rather than a shower to help with Poppy’s movement disorder.

“We couldn’t wait for the house; we used to drive up each week while it was being built to see how much further it had come along!”

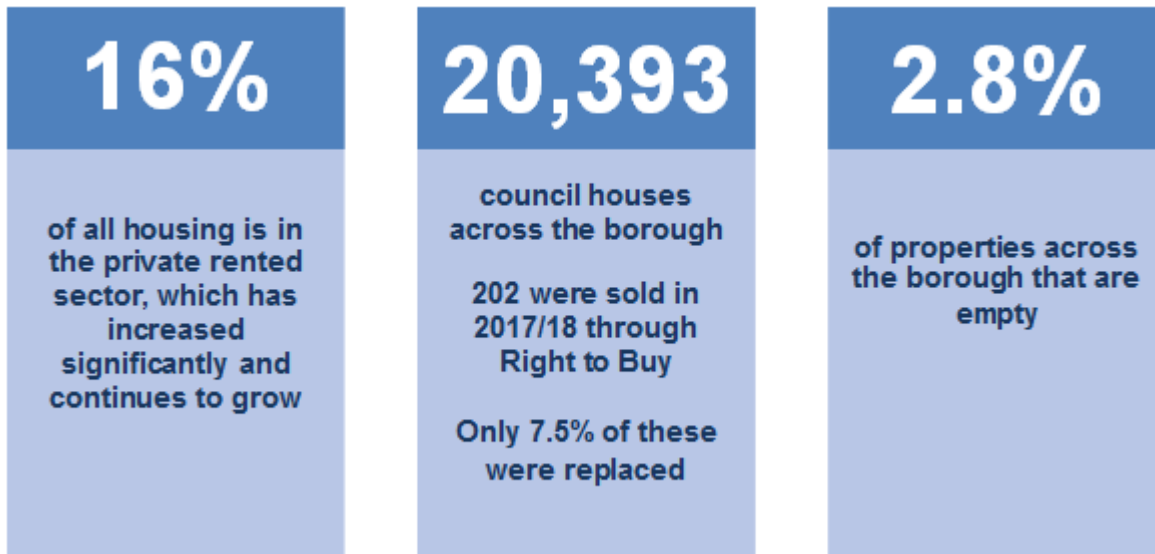
The family moved in June 2017 and Amy says Poppy has completely settled in.

“Poppy has her own bedroom now, with the tracking hoists. We’ve got a massive back garden with a summer house and Lay-z-spa.

“It’s nice being open plan so we can do everything together, like make dinner and Poppy can be involved. If this house had not been available, I really would not like to think what we would have done. We couldn’t have wished for anything better than this.”

Housing has an impact on everyone’s life and through the Council’s ambitious housing development programme; more homes like this can be built.

Theme 2: Strengthening places



Whilst there is a need to increase the number of homes to meet population and demographic demands, there is also a need to address challenges within the borough's existing stock; to improve the growing private rented sector, support home owners, tackle empty homes and regenerate some of our neighbourhoods that are experiencing housing market problems.

Access to safe, clean thriving communities is fundamental to a well-functioning local housing market where people can exercise choice in the type of housing they need.

The Council recognises that the borough's overall stock continues to age and requires ongoing investment: this is easier to manage with Council owned property but 78% of the borough's homes are in private ownership. Existing housing stock requires investment and maintenance, and is not always easy to adapt as households needs change.

The development of new homes can bring visual improvements to an area as well as a wider choice of homes to meet changing needs. New homes can be built with materials which offer lower maintenance, higher thermal efficiency and can be designed to meet a specific housing need and allow for further adaptations as occupant's age. By introducing new or adapted properties in existing communities; local people will have the opportunity to continue to live locally as their housing needs change.

Poorly maintained or empty private housing needs to be managed as it can negatively impact on the surrounding community. The Council can work with existing home owners to access initiatives which improve the safety, quality and efficiency of existing housing, as well as providing advice and enforcement.

Landlords, both private and social, have a responsibility to offer good quality homes. With many newly forming households unable to afford to buy a property on the open market, the private rented sector (PRS) is playing an increasingly important role, with an estimated 30% rise in private rented households since 2015. Measures such as Selective Licensing have been introduced to improve the standards of privately rented housing in specific areas across the borough, but there is still more that can be done to ensure that the sector plays a positive role in providing good quality, well managed, flexible and affordable housing options for local residents.

Council owned stock is also ageing and it is essential that investment continues so the Council is able to continue to provide good quality, safe and affordable homes in sustainable neighbourhoods that meet the needs of local people. As people's needs evolve, the Council will seek opportunities to make better use of its stock and consider conversions and adaptations to provide more suitable homes where appropriate.

The Council has over 20,500 homes for rent, and is one of the largest stock-holding local authorities outside of London, with ambitions to increase this number. The Council has significant investment and influence within local communities and therefore has the ability to make a real difference. With this comes a responsibility to recognise the importance of the resident and tenant voice. The Council will work with local people to ensure that the Council supports sustainable and thriving communities, where people continue to want to live.

Key areas of focus

- Support thriving neighbourhoods through locality working
- Intervene in areas of housing decline
- Raise standards in the private housing sector by seeking opportunities to improve energy efficiency and reduce fuel poverty
- Reduce the number of empty homes
- Continue investment and compliance in social housing stock
- Make the best use of council land and assets to meet local needs
- Manage estates effectively

Over the next three years we will:

- Contribute towards creating healthier, safer and more resilient communities through our environmental, capital and new build programmes
- Seek opportunities through the Council's land and review assets to remodel, diversify tenure and develop more new homes that will positively impact on local communities
- Use statistical evidence to plan for new homes and respond where there is an over/under supply of one particular tenure

- Be clear about the expectations of tenants, landlords and home owners, and where they fall short, carry out enforcement or implement additional licensing schemes
- Encourage investment in the private sector by improving the information and advice available, particularly in relation to energy efficiency
- Develop a plan for using private sector properties to increase the number of affordable homes needed, in particular addressing homelessness
- Reduce the number of homes which have been empty for more than two years or that create problems in our neighbourhoods
- Appoint partners as part of a new repairs and maintenance contract to ensure continued investment, efficiency, compliance and value for money

Delivery

Continued investment in Council homes will be enabled by the HRA business plan and existing Council resources. The Council will work in partnership and put in place new contracts to ensure it continues to achieve best value from contract arrangements and can continue to provide safe, efficient and affordable homes in well managed communities.

Existing homes are made up of different tenures so the Council will continue to work with owners, landlords, other housing providers and communities to target investment into the right areas and ensure that the wider communities also benefit from the new homes built.

By working with Social Care and Health professionals, the Housing Service can develop a better understanding of the types of homes needed now and in the future.

Housing management and enforcement teams will be critical in addressing issues on the ground, but it is through better investment in new and existing homes that meet peoples' needs the Council can begin to build stronger and more settled communities.

The Council's Neighbourhood Strategy will build on the strengths of existing communities and ensure residents have a say in how their neighbourhoods develop.

Performance

Indicator	2017/18 (actual)	2018/19 (projected)	2019/20 (target)	2020/21 (target)	2021/22 (target)
% of privately rented properties compliant with selective licensing conditions within designated areas ✓	97%	98%	95%	95%	95%
Long term empties to remain below regional	0.99%	2017 regional average was 1.03% to be reviewed annually			

average					
Council homes: average re-let times	21 Days	21 days	21 days	21 days	21 days

(✓ Council Plan target)

Case study:

Community spirit shines through

Residents of Rawmarsh and Parkgate are making the most of a local beauty spot after a community event shone a light on the hidden gem.

The Rawmarsh and Parkgate Friends of Green Spaces group does regular litter picks in the area, including at Green Hill, also known as 'Banana Tip' or 'Banana Plantation'. When they heard of plans to explore the site for construction materials the group launched a campaign to get more people visiting the area.

Event organiser John said: "We wanted to raise awareness that the space was there for people to visit, and we thought a lantern parade would be a good way to get everyone to come together and get involved."

Working with support charity Rotherham Federation of Communities, the group held craft workshops for families to make lanterns, while other group members organised a photo exhibition showing the vast array of wildlife inhabiting the area. Rotherfed receives funding from the Council to help strengthen the community voice and to encourage people to work together to create local solutions to local issues.

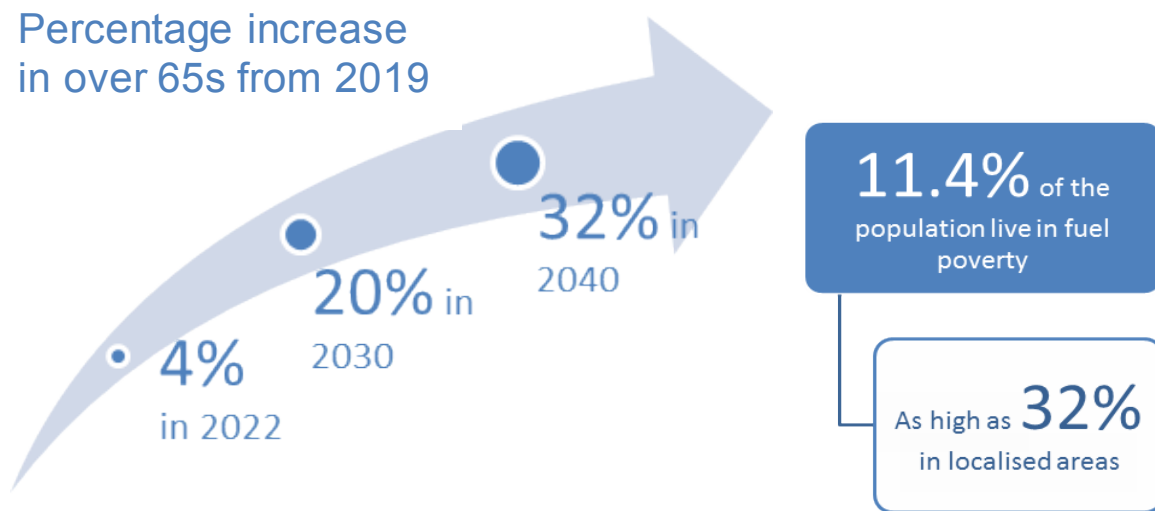
The event was a huge success with 85 people joining in the walk and many others helping out, from serving hot chocolates to decorating the woods.

One of the volunteers, Xylia said: "It was very magical. The children didn't want to take the lanterns down at the end!"

Another group member, Dave added: "People get in touch and tell us they're disappointed they missed out on the parade so we're planning to do another within the next year, as well as an Easter treasure hunt and other events.

"We hope that the events help local people, kids and families appreciate the space, and in turn treat it with respect. Anyone can get involved; it's about the community owning the project and helping to set up the events and activities, so that everyone can make the most of Green Hill."

Theme 3: Improving health



Living in the right home is essential to maintaining good health and wellbeing throughout a person's life time, as well as playing a role in helping people recover when they do become ill. Not only does poor quality housing impact on health; wider housing issues such as welfare reform, debt, homelessness and accessing the right type of housing also have a significant effect on people's ability to live well.

Poor housing impacts disproportionately on older people, young people and people who have additional care and support needs. Bringing housing and health closer together is fundamental if the Council are to improve health outcomes in our towns and villages. People should be able to enjoy the best possible physical and mental health, and their homes should support that.

The population is ageing and care and support needs are increasing. It is estimated that poor housing costs the NHS at least £2.5bn annually treating people with illnesses linked to their housing situation.

It is estimated that a large proportion of owner occupiers live in non-decent properties, and are unable to invest or adapt their home to better meet their needs, or don't have the equity to move to a more suitable home. Remaining in a home that no longer meets an individual's needs contributes to poorer health, increased fuel poverty and feelings of loneliness.

Supporting people to live at home for longer has benefits for the individual's health as well as a positive impact on health and social care budgets. Instead of providing everyone with the same service regardless of need, housing support or adaptations are tailored to the individual and used to empower people to make choices for themselves.

Key areas of focus

- Support people who are facing financial difficulties by providing advice and support, and affordable, decent homes
- Support people to remain in their homes or find suitable housing that better meets their needs
- Improve the housing offer for people with disabilities
- Reduce the numbers of people presenting as, or at risk of, being homeless
- Support tenants to get involved and make their voice heard

Over the next three years the Council will:

- Increase the number of care and support ready homes and future proof new homes
- Improve the housing offer for people with support needs by working closer with Social Care and Health professionals
- Roll out joint initiatives that promote healthy homes, independence and healthier lifestyles
- Provide housing that supports and encourages independence
- Review existing care and support services, including piloting the use of assistive technology solutions in reducing adult care costs
- Develop housing services which help reduce the number of people presenting as, or at risk of, being homeless
- Build on successes and lessons learned from the Housing First pilot
- Be clear about how local providers can support us to provide the right type of accommodation for our vulnerable residents
- Publish the Homelessness Prevention and Rough Sleeper Strategy
- Strengthen the tenant voice and empower people so they are able to deal with life changes

Delivery

Even when people have access to the very best housing, they can still suffer from social isolation, addiction and mental health issues. Housing Services will continue to work closely with Health and Social Care to ensure these issues continue to be addressed and residents receive the support they need.

Working with Commissioning, as well as Health and Social Care professionals, will help us plan housing that meets local need and work with tenants and residents to support them to live a healthy, independent life.

The HRA and social care budgets will support the development of adaptations and technologies to provide care and support ready housing.

By working with other housing providers and neighbouring authorities as part of the SCR the Council can look at potential solutions for people in housing crisis.

Performance

Indicator	2017/18 (actual)	2018/19 (projected)	2019/20 (target)	2020/21 (target)	2021/22 (target)
% of people living in fuel poverty	11.4% (2016)	11%	11%	11%	11%
Number of people prevented from becoming homeless	622	700	720	740	760
Percentage of Council housing stock that is;					
- Decent ✓	99.5%	99.5%	99.5%	99.5%	99.5%
- Gas Safety Compliant	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

Case study:

Wellbeing begins at home

You don't have to go far in Rotherham to find families who have lived in the same street - some in the same house - for most of their lives. And for newer residents many will find themselves living alongside good neighbours within strong communities.

Managing 20,500 homes, Rotherham Council knows the importance of having a place to call home. But for a small percentage of people life is much more complex and stability is something hard to keep a hold of. Homelessness, or the risk of being homeless, is real for some people.

We provide services for homeless people and rough sleepers and we remain committed to developing services to ensure we help those most in need. As well as tackling the symptoms of homelessness our services provide advice and support, and promote the importance of health and wellbeing. We will address this in the Homelessness Prevention and Rough Sleeper Strategy 2019-2023.

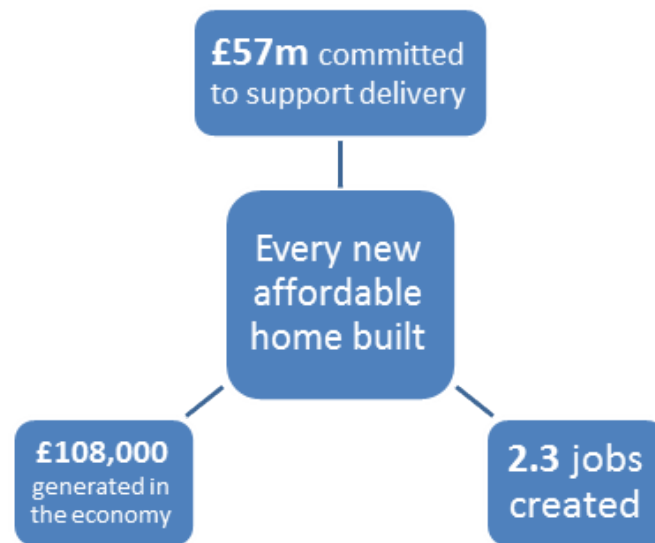
Over the winter our homelessness team worked closely with community volunteers to help rough sleepers into safe and warm accommodation, both temporary and permanent.

One successful initiative was the partnership between South Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Service, Rotherham Council, Independent Contractor Security Ltd (ICS) and Framework that saw a Rotherham fire station being used as a sinter night shelter.

Rotherham's Cabinet Member for Housing, Councillor Dominic Beck said: "The council works closely with Shiloh, the police and voluntary organisations to ensure there is no need for anyone to be sleeping rough in Rotherham. Advice sessions

take place in various locations, including three times a week at Shiloh, to engage with people in a place they feel comfortable, and offer help and support to prevent them from sleeping rough. We would encourage anyone who is at risk of sleeping rough to contact our team for assistance.”

Theme 4: Working together



Continuing austerity and pressure on public services mean that the Council has to continue to think and work differently, and the three earlier themes of the strategy highlight the importance of working with other organisations. All businesses and organisations are facing the same challenges – to do more for less. So it makes sense to develop partnerships, and to share skills and resources where practical.

Relationships with Homes England and across the Sheffield City Region will provide opportunities to attract investment and create the right environment to foster shared strategies to address common issues.

The development sector also faces additional challenges. Capacity is limited and there is a skills shortage. Maximising the local supply chain and upskilling the local workforce can help support a healthy housing market.

Innovation and new ways of working also need to play a role. The Council needs to be bold and seek out opportunities to do things differently to not only increase the numbers of new homes but to also speed up the process and make the quality and efficiency of new homes better.

The Council and partners are investing heavily in new development in Rotherham. This provides the opportunity to influence how it does business; the use of local businesses, influencing local supply chains or ensuring that, through contract arrangements, organisations demonstrate a social conscience so that greater benefits can be gained.

Every resident should have the opportunity to share in the benefits of economic growth and to feel the benefit of the Council's successful housing growth programme regardless of whether they live in one of the new homes or not. This may be in the

visual regeneration of communities, increased employment opportunities or the ability to live healthier lives as a result of a better home environment.

Key areas of focus

- Look beyond boundaries and seek out common problems and share solutions
- Draw on the expertise of others and develop strong partnerships to maximise investment
- Attract external funding and investment into Rotherham
- Contribute to construction industry/employment targets through housing growth
- Demonstrate and promote socially responsible investment

Over the next three years we will:

- Champion a whole Council approach to housing by demonstrating the wider benefits of new homes
- Ensure that housing and wider issues such as health, education and economic wealth are intrinsically linked through the Council's policies and procedures
- Develop new and build on existing relationships to draw on the expertise of others, engaging with the wider sector through regular forums and events
- Seek out opportunities to access a range of external funding and investment to deliver more new homes in partnership with Homes England
- Seek funding opportunities and consider how joint bids and partnerships can enhance submissions
- Contribute to construction industry employment targets through the housing growth programme
- Continue the successful annual Housing Developer Summit and introduce a new mid-year 'Small Sites' Summit
- Develop closer working relationships with small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) to help bring more sites forward for development
- Embed social value commitment throughout housing development contracts
- Ensure procurement exercises get the most out of our contracts with regards social value, training opportunities and local supply chains

Delivery

The Council is investing substantial amounts of money to increase investment in housing. It is essential that in return for this, communities receive more than just bricks and mortar. Partnering and contract arrangements will need to demonstrate good social value. All projects will be challenged to ensure they positively contribute to the local economy, provide jobs and training opportunities and maximise the use of local supply chains.

The Council will work with neighbouring authorities, local housing providers and developers to ensure this happens. There should also be a focus on working together to find shared solutions to common problems and seeking funding through partnerships such as the Sheffield City Region.

The Housing Strategy requires a whole Council approach in order to achieve increase in new homes required. Housing growth also has an impact on wider council agendas such regeneration, town centre investment and increased employment opportunities for local people. Therefore it is essential that all directorates recognise the importance of housing and that teams work together to ensure delivery of the strategy.

Performance

The Council is developing a performance management framework to measure the social value outcomes directly attributable to the delivery of new homes and repairs and maintenance services. This will be completed during 2019/20 and performance reported against this in future years.

Case study:

Achieving community growth together

“For Wates Residential North, working in partnership is a huge part of what we do. We create new homes, places for people to live and thrive. Working collaboratively is key to understanding and delivering on the needs of local people. Working in partnership with our clients brings a great many benefits to our work but above all things it ensures that these new homes ultimately improve people’s lives.

“Wates is currently working in partnership with Rotherham Council to bring over 200 new homes to the borough, with new developments in Maltby, Canklow, East Herringthorpe and Dinnington. We began building work in 2017 and with completion due in 2020, we are half through our work in the borough.

“For me the most important thing about working in partnership is that it creates open and honest conversation; everyone understands each other’s’ priorities and you are all on the same page. As a team, we work together. One of the best things about our partnership is that we have pooled our expertise and experience to deliver homes that will make a genuine difference to the people of Rotherham.

“Rotherham Council has an ambitious and admirable housing strategy and is really embracing innovation to deliver this. Through our partnership, the council is essentially able to unlock further investment in new housing across the borough through the sale of the new homes delivered by Wates. We are creating momentum and this would not be possible without adopting a partnership approach.

“Working in partnership has also meant that we have worked together to support the community. Every single one of our developments comes with a commitment to create opportunities for local employment and training, but we are able to fulfil this

commitment in a much more powerful way when we have the insight and support of our partners. In 2018 we carried out our Building Futures programme in Rotherham, a two-week training course that gives local job-seekers the foundations for future careers in construction. This was a hugely successful initiative and a great example of what we can achieve when we work together.”

Natalie Flint, Residential Investment Director, Wates Residential North.

Governance

The Strategy is a framework for setting the direction for every Council service, partner and stakeholder involved in delivering housing services so that they meet the needs of local people now and in the future, including tenants and residents, ward members, housing and support providers, landlords, developers, investors, charities, voluntary groups, government bodies, and the Council.

Rotherham's Strategic Housing Forum meets quarterly and members include representation from Council services, housing associations, developers, health services, police, voluntary and community organisations. The group will be responsible for overseeing progress against the Housing Strategy.

An annual report will be produced in April each year and additional updates will be regularly provided to the Cabinet Member for Housing and sub-boards of the Rotherham Together Partnership as required. The action plan (appendix 3) will also be reviewed and updated on an annual basis with any amendments reported to the Strategic Housing Forum.

Appendix 1: 2019-22 Housing Strategy Action Plan

The action plan will be managed as a live document which is regularly reviewed as part of the governance arrangements set out on page 28.

Chapter	Key Actions	Lead team(s)	Expected delivery
Creating Homes	Deliver the current £57m housing development programme	Strategic Housing and Development	March 2021
	Develop pipeline of small sites to deliver more new homes	Strategic Housing and Development	Autumn 2019
	Work with Homes England and across the SCR to secure additional funds to accelerate and increase delivery	Strategic Housing and Development	Ongoing
	Develop the Rother Living brand through a marketing plan for new products	Strategic Housing and Development	2019/20
	Increase the number of new homes in the Town Centre	Strategic Housing and Development, Corporate Asset Management Unit	Starting on site by the end of 2019
	Completion of MMC pilot and assess potential to deliver at scale	Strategic Housing and Development	Winter 2019
Strengthening Communities	Review the potential to increase the number of areas of Selective Licensing	Community Protection Unit	2019
	Develop a suite of tools to enable empty homes to be brought back into use	Strategic Housing and Development, Community Protection Unit	March 2020
	Appoint partners as part of the new repairs and maintenance contract	Contracts, Investment and Compliance	September 2019
Improving Health	Increase the overall number of care and support ready housing available for council rent	Strategic Housing and Development, Commissioning	Ongoing
	Publication of the Homelessness Prevention and Rough Sleeper Strategy	Housing Options Service	May 2019

	Develop a clear programme of care and support ready homes to help address pressures on social care budgets	Strategic Housing and Development and Business Improvement Unit	Winter 2019
Working Together	Development of a model to monitor the economic, social and environmental value of new homes	Strategic Housing and Development	Summer 2019
	Work with local housing providers and seek partnerships in the private sector to help address key issues such as homelessness and specific care and support needs	Strategic Housing and Development, Housing Options Service	Ongoing
	Hold the annual developer summit and build on relationships with SMEs	Strategic Housing and Development	Nov 2019 (annual)

Appendix 2: Summary of the main outcomes against each of the original 2016-19 action plan objectives

Action	Outcome
Housing Growth	
Release Council-owned sites and assets for residential development as per housing growth plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More than £57m of HRA investment approved for new housing growth • 576 new Council homes started or in the pipeline • Secured £6.8m Homes England grant funding to directly deliver 227 new homes • Entered into an innovative Site Clusters partnership with Wates to develop seven council-owned sites and delivery 217 new homes to meet a range of needs • Completed the review of HRA land which has identified around 200 potential small sites for new housing
Explore possibility of setting up a Local Housing Company to help accelerate the rate of build and diversify tenure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The establishment of a Council-owned development company is still under consideration, but many of the original drivers for this objective have been addressed via other means, for example the Council is now developing shared ownership homes and homes for sale • The Council is using modern methods of construction to deliver affordable homes which will help to accelerate building rates. • The Council has also continued to purchase homes via the Strategic Acquisitions programme which is a speedier process for increasing Council stock, compared to building new.
Develop and launch a prospectus to attract developers into the town centre	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A brief to procure a construction partner was published in January 2018 and a preferred bidder has been appointed to carry out further design work to deliver the first 180 homes on Council-owned town centre sites. Cabinet approval will be sought for the scheme in the summer. • A partner has been identified to deliver the Forge Island masterplan project.
Social Housing	
Continue to strengthen Rotherham's council housing in light of national	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 100% gas safety compliance and maintained decency in all council homes • Implementation of pre-tenancy workshops and increased tenancy support services

Action	Outcome
policy changes	<p>to help tenants through welfare reform changes and prevent tenancy failure</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Achieved ‘accredited landlord’ status from Tpas (tenant engagement experts) in resident involvement excellence • Won the ‘Excellence in Tenant Engagement Award’ at the Tpas North Regional Finals and were finalists in the National awards
Adapt our 30 year HRA Business Plan to reflect reduced income and future capital priorities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete – reported to Cabinet in January 2019.
Develop a new strategic tenancy policy and procedures to accompany the new Tenancy Agreement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategic tenancy policy complete Feb 2017 • New tenancy agreement complete April 2018
Work in partnership with housing associations to help shape their locally determined Right to Buy schemes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developed a Sheffield City Region Social and Affordable Housing Compact between local authorities, arm’s length management organisations (ALMOs) and housing associations, to discuss shared solutions and new policy changes. • (The extension of Right to Buy for housing association partners is still to be determined following a pilot in the Midlands).
Remodel some of the Council’s social housing stock to reflect the need for more one bedroomed and specialist homes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Completed a project to convert three bedroomed flats into smaller apartments • A programme of community centre conversions is complete, which has increased the number of homes that are accessible to people with disabilities
Private Rented Housing	
The Council will work with the owners of long term empty properties to bring them back into use as private rented homes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developed a new private sector empty property plan and web-based support information for empty property owners • Engagement with private landlords through dedicated forum and web pages • Secured Estate Regeneration funding to address empty properties and unlock estate regeneration potential
Work with landlords to provide a better private rented offer for older people	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Council continues to work with landlords to understand how they can assist in supporting older people as well as other groups • The Rent in Advance scheme utilises recycled funding to support vulnerable clients to find accommodation in the private rented sector

Action	Outcome
Evaluate the success of our current Selective Licensing schemes and consider extending to other areas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Selective licensing is in place for four areas of the borough. • 97% of licensed properties meet the minimum housing health and safety standard • Two further selective licensing areas are under consultation
Affordable Housing	
Improve marketing and communication of affordable home ownership opportunities in Rotherham	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Rother Living brand has been developed to assist in marketing and communicating the high quality Council residential development. • Marketed the first new homes for sale on Braithwell Road, Maltby, in Oct 18, with 13 sold off plan in the first three months
Work in partnership with an investor/developer to deliver Rent to Buy housing in Rotherham	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Council is working with a partner to deliver shared ownership and will continue to monitor the housing needs of local people, introducing additional products where appropriate
Seek to become a 'vanguard authority' for the Starter Homes programme	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rotherham will no longer become a vanguard authority due to government changes to the programme, but has worked with a local developer to negotiate delivery of the first Starter Homes in Rotherham
Specialist Housing	
Deliver all actions within the Older People Housing Delivery Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The number of bungalows for disabled people and one/two bedroom homes for smaller households built and acquired has increased • A Care and Support Accommodation Plan has been commissioned to ensure the Council plans for the future needs of people with specific housing needs
Ensure delivery of accommodation for children and young people identified in the Sufficiency Strategy for Looked After Children	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A Care and Support Accommodation Plan has been commissioned to ensure the Council plans for the future needs of people with specific housing needs and to support the transforming care agenda • Specialist accommodation for foster carers and for young people leaving care has been included in the Site Clusters programme
Develop a clear programme of specialist housing for other groups and ensure alignment with the Housing Growth Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development of four apartments in Maltby to support individuals with autism • Relocation of Shiloh to enable enhanced service provision to homeless people

Appendix 3: Glossary

Affordable Housing

Housing provided to meet the needs of people on low income. As defined in the National Planning Policy Framework, the term includes homes for social rent, affordable rent, shared ownership and starter homes.

Affordable Rent

Homes available to rent from a registered provider at a cost below 80% of the average, local market rent for a given area.

Care and support-ready housing

Housing which has been built or adapted to take into account a household's care and support needs, this can include bungalows for older people, larger homes to support foster care or adapted for people with a disability.

Child-friendly

Ensuring that children are the centre of what the Council does

Clusters

A term given to a number of development sites which have been clustered together for the purpose of delivery in order to improve outcomes

Compliance

Conforming to a rule such as a policy, standard or law e.g. fire safety

Decency/Decent Homes

A standard set by Government, which Council and Housing Association homes should meet as a minimum

Diversifying tenure

The idea of introducing a new or alternative tenure where an oversupply of a particular tenure may be causing local issues such as limited choice or affordability

Fuel poverty

Being unable to keep a home adequately warm at a reasonable cost

Homes England

The national housing and regeneration agency for England, sponsored by the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government

Housing Delivery Test

An annual measurement of housing delivery in each local authority region

Housing First

An evidence based approach to helping homeless people with high level and/or complex needs to maintain their own tenancies

Housing Need Groups (sometimes referred to as 'vulnerable' people or groups)

This term is used to describe a wide range of people who are considered disadvantaged in terms of access to suitable housing. This can include older people, young people, larger families, veterans, care leavers, people with a recognised disability, autism, domestic abuse victims.

Housing Revenue Account (HRA)

The funding from which local authorities in England manage their housing stock related income and expenditure

HRA Business Plan

A document that sets out how the local authority will manage the financial aspects of Council Housing from the income raised locally

Local Housing Company

A joint venture between a local authority and a private sector company which can be used as a vehicle to manage, accelerate and increase the supply of housing

Local Plan

A plan which sets out local planning policy and assists in planning decisions, including the type and scale of housing needed and future land use

Localism Act 2011

Legislation which sets out freedoms and flexibilities in local decision making for local authorities and communities

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

The document sets out government planning policy for England

Modern Methods of Construction (MMC)

Building using non-traditional methods of construction such as bricks and mortar - includes timber frames, pre-fabricated, off-site construction, or pod type structures

Private Sector Housing

Housing which is either owned by the person occupying it or rented privately to a tenant for an agreed fee

Procure/Procurement

The process of acquiring goods, services or works from an external source

Registered Provider

A provider of affordable housing such as a Local Authority or Housing Association

Rent in Advance scheme

A scheme in which the local authority can help private tenants pay their landlord one month's rent before moving into the property

Right to Buy

The scheme by which eligible council tenants can apply to buy their council home with a discount

Rotherham Together Partnership

A group of representatives from a variety of organisations who work together towards shared priorities.

Rother Living

A brand which will be used to market all new housing built by the Council

Selective Licensing

A discretionary scheme that allows local authorities to license private rented properties in a designated area to improve the quality of housing on offer

Shared Ownership

An affordable housing product which assists people into home ownership; it works by allowing them to buy a share in the property, with a view to increasing the share over time. The proportion of the property not owned by the occupier is managed via a registered provider to whom a subsidised rent is paid .

Sheffield City Region (SCR)

The combined authority for South Yorkshire and surrounding areas which covers 9 local authorities and has devolved powers over a number of areas including transport, economic development and regeneration

Strategic acquisitions

The purchase of a property by the Local Authority which meets an identified need

Strategic Tenancy Policy

Under the Localism Act 2011 all local housing authorities in England have a statutory obligation to publish one. It sets out how the local authority will use the flexibilities set out in the Act with regards to the tenancies they grant. This can be linked to the length of time or circumstances.

Tenancy agreement

A legally binding contract between a tenant and a landlord

Tenure

The conditions under which buildings and land are held or occupied

Tpas

A not for profit organisation specialising in tenant engagement excellence

Vanguard

A project or group of people leading the way in new developments or ideas