



ADUR & WORTHING
COUNCILS

Housing Strategy 2020 - 2023

**Enabling Communities
to Thrive in their own Homes**

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Chapter 1 : Introduction - Our Ambition

Our ambition for this strategy fundamentally builds upon the vision and strategic foundations outlined in our last strategy - that is, for everyone to have a place they can call home, whether it is owned, shared or rented.

Having a secure and safe home, not just a place to sleep, is one of the most important factors in enabling our communities to thrive.

We have learnt over the last three years that bricks and mortar matter. But so does understanding people as individuals and families, who have connections and are our communities. Those we work with have told us that they want us, and our partners, to be more joined up and to support our residents holistically, recognising they bring assets and strengths, as well as needs, to the discussions that we have.

As part of our strategic vision for our places, the Councils of Adur and Worthing want to build platforms from which people, communities, businesses and ideas can develop and thrive.

This strategy, therefore, is deliberately not just about buildings but is about people and communities. How we can support, enable and sometimes enforce the right conditions for people to both have a home and to thrive in their community.

Our Ambition

Our ambition remains a Housing Strategy that:

- delivers secure and appropriate housing for the people of Adur and Worthing
- supports aspiration, individual and community resilience, and economic growth
- enables all sectors within our communities to live healthy, secure and purposeful lives
- is delivered in partnership with businesses, people, and statutory and voluntary sector agencies.

Chapter 2: A Connected Strategy

In 2016, Adur & Worthing Councils published Platforms for Our Places and in 2019 this was revised and updated. Fundamentally, the Councils see their roles as enablers, conveners and, in the case of those in significant need, providers.

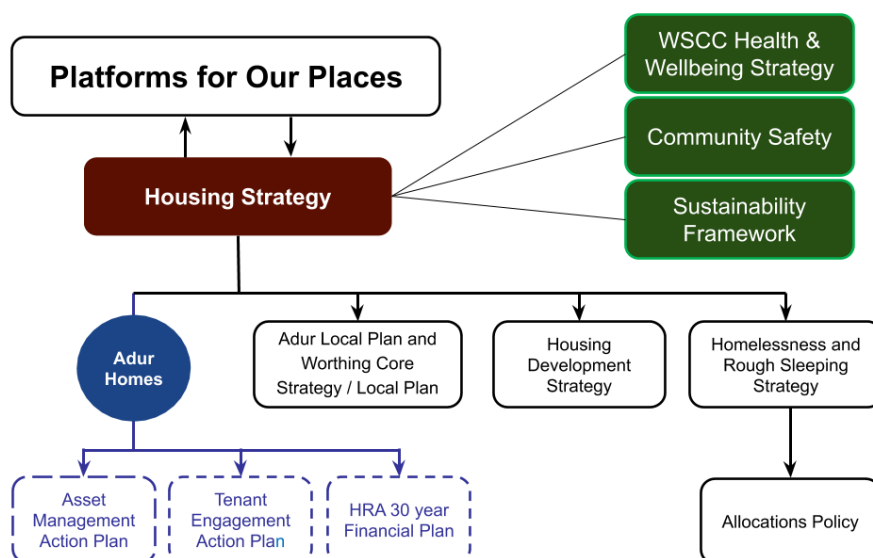
Our housing strategy is a core part of delivering upon the ambitions set out within Platforms for Our Places: Going Further and supports our strategic priorities of:

- Prosperous Places
- Thriving People and Communities
- Tackling Climate Change and Supporting our Natural Environment
- Delivering Good Services and New Solutions
- Leadership in our Places

It also supports the United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, through our commitments to help those in poverty and prevent homelessness, to promote health and wellbeing and to ensure our developments are sustainable by design.

Our housing strategy will not detail everything that is relevant to enabling our residents to thrive in their own home, instead it forms part of a connected set of plans and strategies as outlined below. However, our ambition will be that all that we do, is connected to the ambitions for our places.

A Connected Housing Strategy:



Working in Systems

As well as being connected to other strategies and plans that the Councils seek to deliver, we recognise that our work is only a small part of a much wider system that will affect our ability to succeed, and has immense impact upon our communities. Therefore we cannot deliver any strategy in isolation from our key partners, stakeholders and most importantly, our residents.

Our strategy is informed by two specific pieces of work that involved research with those who have used our services:

- 'Making Homelessness Everyone's Business' the project that transformed our approach to preventing homelessness in Adur and Worthing; and
- Work commissioned from 'WeareSnook'¹ by the West Sussex Supported Housing Task and Finish group. This latter assisted in the creation of a set of guiding principles for future commissioning and guides our collective ambition to enable the most vulnerable in our communities across West Sussex, to access appropriate housing related support.

In developing this strategy we have specifically engaged with a wide group of local partners including:

- The A&W Homelessness Forum
- The Local Community Networks (health system partners)
- Strategic housing partners including registered providers and third sector providers
- Our private sector landlords
- Groups of people who have used our services

Our ambition, as system leaders, is to focus our energy at different levels. We must, of course, always ensure that the services we provide are determined by the strengths and needs of the individual or family with whom we are working and are delivered with regard to the legal and policy framework that governs much of this work. However, unless we also work at a place and at a systemic level, we will struggle to create the conditions for our communities to thrive in the longer term.

Person Centred Design

Over the last three years we have been developing the ways in which we design our services and solutions that involve, include and provide good services to our

¹ WeareSnook is a design studio that works with organisations to tackle complex challenges in service design.

residents. Our aim is that our services are designed, commissioned and developed in collaboration with our residents so our services meet genuine needs.

In 2019 Adur & Worthing Councils along with every West Sussex district and boroughs, West Sussex County Council and a range of providers of supported and other housing services, came together to work on a project to map, understand and describe the complex system in which we work. In undertaking this project a variety of workshops and in depth research interviews were conducted, with both the users of services, the providers of services and the commissioners of services. One of the key outputs is a set of shared design principles, which we have committed to adopting when designing or commissioning services going forward.

Build on strengths - We will help people see their strengths and will focus our services on supporting them to achieve their goals, treating our customers with empathy and dignity.

Whole system approach - We will strive to work in a way that is seamless across organisations so that no-one falls through the gaps and the customer experience is of one service, no matter how many providers are involved.

Design, develop and deliver together - We will create services that genuinely meet the needs of customers by gathering customer insight and combining it with other evidence and tested models of delivery.

Focused, efficient and valued - We will ensure that services are delivered by the right people, at the right time and in the most cost-effective way, avoiding duplication and waste.

Outcome based - We will identify the outcomes that our customers want, measure our progress and hold ourselves to account.

Dynamic and Resilient - We will ensure that our services are flexible enough to meet the different needs of customers and are able to adapt to change.

Coherent, simple and accessible - We will ensure that customers know what to expect and the options they have and that they can access what they need when they need it.

Chapter 3: Strategic Context

National Landscape²

Nationally there is a shortage of land available for development, particularly in the least affordable areas. This is one of the key reasons for the undersupply of homes. A combination of fragmented land ownership, planning uncertainty, remediation and servicing costs, and a lack of strategic infrastructure mean that land is still a barrier to increasing home building.

Since the global financial crisis many developers have reported difficulties accessing capital. In particular, there has been little commercial lending to smaller house builders and, where it does take place, it is often on highly restrictive terms.

Productivity and innovation growth in the construction industry has been low for the past 25 years and continues to lag behind the UK economy as a whole. Based on current entrant levels, the construction sector could see a 20 to 25% decline in the workforce by 2026, with skills shortages particularly acute in traditional areas of construction such as brick-laying and plastering.

The increase in housing completions in recent years has magnified this problem, with a shortage of construction and professional skills alongside supply limits on traditional building materials. At the same time, while there is increased interest in modern methods of construction (MMC), take up is being held back. This is due to a number of challenges, including limited production and skills capacity.

A study by the Home Builders Federation found that in 1988 more than 12,000 SMEs were responsible for nearly 40% of all new homes. In 2017, there were only around 2,500 SMEs active in the sector, responsible for just 12% of new homes. The financial crisis exacerbated this trend, meaning England is now increasingly dependent on a small number of big house builders. There are a number of barriers preventing smaller builders from delivering a greater number of homes including:

- a lack of development finance
- a land market weighted in favour of larger builders
- a complex planning system

Demand for housing (driven up by an increasing population, decreasing household size and improved credit availability) has outpaced housing supply. As a result, England has seen some of the highest house price inflation in recent years and has some of the least affordable areas in the OECD, with an average home now costing

² Source: Homes England strategic plan 2018 to 2023

almost eight times more than average earnings. This is most notable in the South East, where the ratio of average house price to average income has reached 10.3.

This means millions of younger families and first-time buyers are unable to purchase a home. As a result, owner occupation has gradually declined from a peak of 71% in 2003 to around 63% in 2014, where it has since remained.

Changing Legislative Context

The Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 came into force on 3 April 2018. It places new legal duties on housing authorities, with a focus on preventing homelessness. The most significant change is that anyone who is homeless or at risk of homelessness is able to access support, regardless of their priority need status.

On 29 October 2018, the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) borrowing cap was abolished. As a result, local authorities with an HRA are no longer constrained by government controls over borrowing for house building and are able to borrow against their expected rental income, in line with the CIPFA Prudential Code.

On 20 March 2019 the Homes (Fitness for Human Habitation) Act 2018 came into force. It sets out that landlords must ensure their properties are safe, healthy and free from things that could cause serious harm. If rented houses and flats are not 'fit for human habitation', tenants can now take their landlords to court. The court can make the landlord carry out repairs or put right health and safety problems. The court can also make the landlord pay compensation to the tenant.

On 1 October 2018 "The Licensing of House in Multiple Occupation (England) Order 2018" came into force. It changed the definition of an HMO under the Housing Act 2004. Under the 2018 Order, the three storey element of the licencing criteria was removed meaning that any HMO occupied by five or more individuals (who are not in a single household) will require a mandatory HMO Licence.

Local Landscape

Demographic changes

People aged over 65 represent 22.8% of the local population across Adur and Worthing and numbers are expected to grow significantly. Numbers of people aged over 65 are projected to increase by 4,315 (28.6%) in Adur and 10,528 (41.9%) in Worthing between 2016-36.

Linked to a growing older population, the number of people with health problems and/or disabilities is also projected to increase significantly. In Adur, the number of people with mobility problems is projected to rise by 965 between 2016 and 2036. In Worthing, the number of people with mobility problems is projected to rise by 2,395 over the same period.

The number of family households in Adur District is projected to grow by 7.4% between 2019 and 2036, while a fall of 9.4% is projected in Worthing Borough over the same period.

Demographic projections show that the number of younger households is expected to fall by 1% in Adur District, representing a decline of 73 households, and 16% in Worthing Borough, equal to decline of 1,842 households, over the period 2019-36.

Local Housing need³

House prices have continued to rise, with median house prices reaching £305,000 in Adur and £295,000 in Worthing. Notably, entry-level house prices are now 13.41 times the average earnings of younger households in Adur and 12.04 times in Worthing, pointing to significant barriers to younger households in being able to buy a home.

The growth in rental values across all property sizes has been strong for both authority areas when set against the South East and England – particularly for three and four bedroom homes. Median rental values in Adur are close to the South East average at £875 PCM whilst values are lower in Worthing at £775 PCM.

Based on demographic projections, there is a need for 653 additional affordable housing units per annum across Adur and Worthing for those who cannot afford to rent. There is also a need for an additional 146 affordable homes per annum to buy across both areas.

It is important to note that the demographic projections of the number of families and younger people across Adur and Worthing are affected by the lack of suitable and affordable homes. That is, rather than reflecting the number of households who would want to live in Adur and Worthing if they could afford it, it indicates that many families have to look for affordable homes outside of the area.

The implication of this is that the delivery of (and access to) affordable housing is very important in ensuring that a balanced population profile is maintained in the authority areas. If housing accessibility for younger households and families continues to be constrained, thus inhibiting their ability to move to or stay within the local area; this could harm the economy (through affecting the ability of employers to recruit) and may lead to unsustainable longer-distance commuting patterns.

While affordability issues may be less for older people, the increasing number of older persons and people with disabilities also drives a need for new homes which meet particular needs:

- 188 wheelchair-user homes in Adur and 299 in Worthing.
- 488 properties in Adur with support, such as sheltered housing or retirement living, and 898 in Worthing.

³ Source: Strategic Housing Market Assessment

- 430 homes with care units, with a need for both market and affordable provision, in Adur and Worthing.

Homelessness⁴

In the first three quarters of 2019/20, there were 143 homeless applications in Adur and 399 in Worthing. In addition there were 63 cases where advice only was sought in Adur and 168 in Worthing.

Of these, interventions led by the Homelessness Teams resulted in 81 households in Adur and 186 in Worthing being prevented from becoming homeless.

Adur District 2019/20	Q1	Q2	Q3
Homeless Applications	53	49	41
Advice only cases	14	27	22

Households assisted to remain in existing home	13	7	5
Households assisted to obtain alternative accommodation	10	14	8
Households where cases successfully relieved	5	11	8

Worthing Borough 2019/20	Q1	Q2	Q3
Homeless Applications	134	145	120
Advice only cases	48	68	52

Households assisted to remain in existing home	19	12	6
Households assisted to obtain alternative accommodation	25	16	25
Households where cases successfully relieved	19	29	35

Affordable Housing supply⁵

At the point of the 2011 Census, the proportion of home ownership in Adur and Worthing was relatively high, at 75% and 70% of all households respectively, when compared with the South East and England. Conversely, the proportion of private renters was notably low in Adur, at 12%, and markedly high, at 20%, in Worthing.

Tenure Profile by Households, 2011

⁴ Source: Housing Needs data

⁵ Source: Strategic Housing Market Assessment and 2011 Census

Area	Owned	Social Rented	Private Rented
Adur	75%	13%	12%
Worthing	70%	10%	20%
South East	69%	14%	17%
England	65%	18%	17%

Source: Census 2011

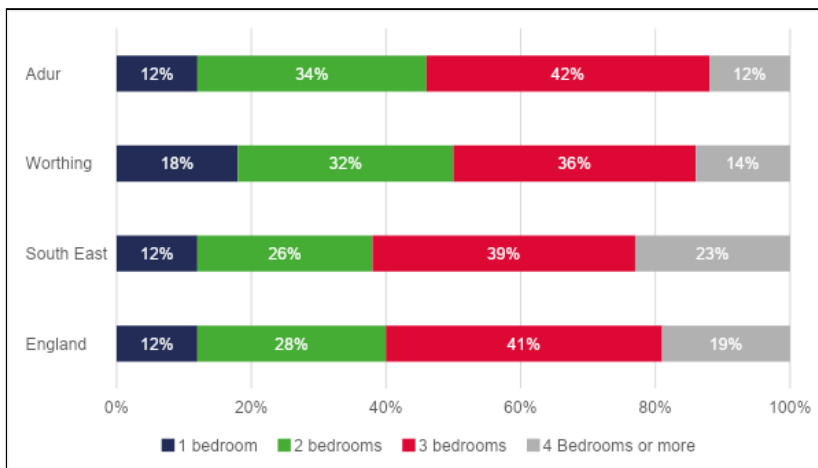
The Profile of Existing Affordable Homes in Adur and Worthing, 2019

	Adur	Worthing
General Needs, Self-Contained	946	4,047
General Needs Non Self-Contained	0	33
General Needs	946	4,080
Supported Housing	76	235
Housing for Older People	51	490
Low Cost Home Ownership	155	155

Source: Regulator of Social Housing, 2019

The Adur housing market is principally characterised by semi-detached properties with this type accounting for 38% of all households, while there is a predominance of flats in Worthing, with this type accounting for 34% of all households. There is a low proportion of detached properties in both areas, particularly in comparison to the South East. As a consequence, Adur and Worthing have a lower proportion of larger family sized housing, including 4 or more bedroom properties, than that seen regionally and nationally.

Households by Size, 2011



In respect of delivery, in Adur completions have fluctuated for the majority of the last decade. Since 2015/16, delivery of housing has increased year-on-year although it has not yet returned to the high number of completions achieved between 2011 and 2013 (193 per annum). In 2015/16, only 31 homes were delivered.

The adoption of the Adur Local Plan 2017 will result in an increase in number, as two large strategic greenfield development sites have been allocated (West

Sompting and New Monks Farm) as well as a broad location for approximately 1,000 dwellings at Shoreham Harbour. It should be noted, however, that in view of the lack of land and environmental constraints the Local Plan was found sound by a Government appointed Inspector despite a 3,500 shortfall on the District's objectively assessed (housing) needs (OAN).

In Worthing, housing completions fluctuated between 2007 and 2013 but have increased year-on-year since then. Over the previous three years, Worthing saw housing completions that were more than double their annual housing target set in the adopted Core Strategy (200 dwellings p.a.), albeit this was anticipated in the housing trajectory as the urban extension at West Durrington was planned to be delivered early in the Plan. However, the Core Strategy was based on the housing requirements set out in the South East Plan and this did not reflect the Boroughs future housing needs.

Following the withdrawal of the SE Plan, the Localism Act 2011 and the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) Worthing Council is reviewing its Local Plan. The Objectively Assessed (Housing) Need and the more recent standard methodology for calculating future housing needs⁶ has identified a housing need for Worthing Borough of approximately 900 dwellings per annum. As with Adur District the lack of land significantly constrains the ability to meet the Council's future housing needs and even releasing a number of greenfield sites will result in a significant housing shortfall (approximately 6 - 7,000 dwellings).

The constrained nature of both Adur and Worthing and the inability to deliver their future housing needs, accentuates the affordable housing need and clearly demands a more proactive approach to meet the needs of those in greatest housing need.

Private Sector Housing

The private rented sector has grown significantly over the last 15 years and now accounts for twenty percent of households in the UK. Locally the proportion varies depending on the mix of housing type - 26% of the private housing stock in Worthing is rented, but only 10% in Adur.

The private rented sector is also accommodating a more diverse range of households, including many more families with children. More of those living in the sector expect to do so for long periods and average tenancy lengths are increasing. The supply of private sector housing for rent has also changed, with the proportion of private landlords who own and manage only one or a few properties increasing substantially.

The legal definition of licensable Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs) was extended in Oct 2017, which tripled the number of such properties across Adur and

⁶ Source - <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/housing-and-economic-development-needs-assessments>

Worthing. Currently there is a growing need for affordable single person accommodation and HMOs generally provide the cheapest form of private sector housing. Welfare Reform has led to single people under 35 being restricted to claiming benefit for a single room. At the same time there is growth in demand from working people priced out of the self-contained private rented sector because of rising rents.

HMOs are also popular with landlords as offering a good return on their investment, compared to single-family lets, and there is a noticeable move towards providing high-quality developments to attract young professionals. This represents a move away from the traditional image of HMOs as only providing housing for the lower end of the market, although examples of the latter still exist.

Certain HMOs (five or more tenants not forming a single household) have to be licenced due to the greater risks to the health and safety of tenants presented by this type of accommodation. There are currently 134 licenced HMOs (122 in Worthing and 12 in Adur) in the area with a further 34 HMO applications being processed (29 in Worthing and 5 in Adur). The Councils have used local intelligence to develop a database of other properties that may need licensing as an HMO and so require investigation.

There is an unknown number of HMOs (three or more tenants not forming a single household) that, while not requiring a license, are subject to legislation that puts additional management duties on their owners. These are only likely to come to the attention of the Councils as a result of complaints about housing conditions.

Staying at home for longer

In December 2017, the Councils introduced a range of new Discretionary Grants via the Interim Private Sector Housing Assistance Policy. These supplemented the longstanding Mandatory Disabled Facility Grant Scheme allowing more flexibility to assist people with timely interventions that would have societal benefits and overall cost savings. New Discretionary Grants include:

- Safe and Warm Grant (for home repairs),
- Technology Grant (for emerging smart solutions),
- Hospital Discharge Grant (to facilitate safe and speedy return home) and
- Discretionary top up DFG (to allow up to £30,000) additional funding to large adaptation schemes.

Records for 2018 /19 show that of the £1.85m of grants awarded, 89% of these were for a traditional Mandatory DFG at an average cost approved of £8500. The other

11% were Discretionary Grants with an average cost approved of £3300. The demand for both types is increasing.

The Council also offers a Community Alarm service throughout Adur and Worthing (and into parts of Mid-Sussex). The service enables older, disabled and vulnerable people to get emergency help 24 hours a day, 365 days a year, at the touch of an alarm button, which is worn as a pendant or on the wrist. Further sensors, such as smoke detectors, carbon monoxide detectors and fall detectors, can be added which will also sound an alarm at the call centre.

Customers report that the service provides the peace of mind and security to continue living independently in their own homes, as well as reassuring their family or friends that they will be contacted in the case of an emergency.

Adur Homes

Adur Homes is the generic term used to describe the Adur District Council teams that provide landlord services to tenants in homes owned by the Council and to leaseholders who have purchased a council property. Adur District Council owns and manages 3,071 properties (2,545 rented and 526 leasehold). This represents over 50% of social housing in the district. It also has a portfolio of over 1,000 garages.

In terms of tenure, 73% of properties are rented as general needs, 10% are rented as sheltered housing and 17% are leasehold properties.

The majority of Adur Homes properties were constructed between 1940 and 1990 and are of traditional low rise construction. The tallest buildings across the district are Grange Court and Sea House which are two, six storey blocks, located in Southwick.

Based on data from the Council's most recent stock condition survey records, coupled with local knowledge, an ongoing programme of capital funded repairs are being undertaken or planned to Adur Homes properties across the district. This programme is intended to maintain and improve the properties for the benefit of our residents and currently includes fire safety improvements, internal and external repairs, new kitchens and bathrooms and new heating systems.

As part of the recent stock condition survey programme, an energy assessment was undertaken and it was found that Adur Homes properties have an average EPC rating of Band D, which is higher than the national average.

However, opportunities to improve the EPC rating of Adur Homes properties and introduce more energy efficient services and systems are being considered as part of the planned capital works and other local carbon reduction initiatives, with the view of reducing energy consumption and fuel costs to our residents.

The 1% rent reduction from April 2016 for a four year period has imposed constraints on the HRA business plan leading to the use of reserves and creating a deficit position in the HRA in recent years. The return of rent increases will, over a period of time, help address the deficit.

Chapter 4: Our Priorities

Priority 1: Housing Related Wellbeing and Support

Preventing Homelessness

The Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 (the Act), which came into force on 3 April 2018, has enabled local authorities to develop a more flexible and sustainable approach to the prevention of homelessness by:

- Increasing the length of time where a person is defined as “threatened with homelessness” from 28 to 56 days. This allows more opportunity to work with clients in housing need to find solutions which will prevent homelessness from occurring and also to consider what support needs have to be addressed to help them sustain their accommodation longer term.
- Placing homelessness prevention and relief work at the heart of the legislation. This enables us to prioritise supporting people and develop personalised housing plans which set out the steps an individual and the housing authority must take for the individual to remain in or find suitable accommodation. The personalised housing plan is agreed following an assessment of the applicant’s circumstances and the support needs of all household members with the aim of developing a realistic pathway into a range of housing options, dependent on the household’s needs.
- The reasonable steps agreed in the personalised housing plan can include a wide range of actions that can lead to positive outcomes for a household that is at risk of homelessness or already homeless. These can be steps such as the following: mediation with family and friends to prevent eviction while alternative accommodation options are explored, accessing Discretionary Housing Payments (DHPs) to cover temporary shortfalls in rent due to change of circumstances or to cover rent in advance and deposits to secure privately rented accommodation, providing support and advice to access affordable private rented accommodation, referrals to supported housing for single people dependent on their age and support needs, developing creative housing pathways for people who have a history of long term rough sleeping and who historically can be hard to engage with.
- The steps agreed in the personalised housing plan can also include signposting and referrals to other agencies and services that can support a household or individual where it has been identified that a support need may have a negative impact on their ability to sustain or find accommodation.

Support needs may include: financial and/or budgeting difficulties that can impact the affordability of accommodation, access to work and training, support with benefits, alcohol and substance issues, domestic abuse, mental or physical ill health, complex needs, gambling addiction, IT and literacy support.

- Changing the way all councils now work with single homeless people is one of the most important changes that the Act has enabled. Prior to the implementation of the Act many single people would be offered only advice regarding their housing options, with no ongoing duty to support an applicant with their housing issues. The Act introduced a statutory duty to work with single homeless applicants, regardless of whether they are considered to be in priority need for housing, for a minimum of 56 days under the prevention duty (threatened with homelessness) and for a further 56 days under the relief duty (when they become homeless). The Councils *'Preventing Homelessness Project - making homelessness everyone's business'*, launched in 2017 before the Act was implemented, was developed in order to support the Councils, our local system of housing and other agencies, and our customers to prepare for these new duties. As a consequence, the Councils now work with our single homeless clients in a more intensive, targeted and multi-agency way. This has resulted in an increase in positive outcomes for this customer group which include better access to privately rented accommodation or placement in supported housing, as well as referrals to relevant agencies to address support needs.
- Placing a duty on certain public authorities to refer service users who they think may be homeless or threatened with homelessness to a housing authority. This means we can provide advice and support at the earliest possible stage. Some of the public authorities that are now have a statutory duty to refer clients they believe may be at risk of homelessness include probation and prisons, hospitals, youth offending teams and social services.

During the life of the last housing strategy, Adur & Worthing Councils restructured the teams working with those at risk of homelessness so that we now have dedicated support for families and single people, including rough sleepers. Those teams have also been working with partner organisations such as JobCentrePlus, Integrated Prevention and Early Help (WSCC Children's Services), Worthing Homes, Turning Tides, Adult Social Care, Probation, Supported Housing providers, Worthing Medical Group, colleagues in other West Sussex District and Boroughs and County Council Commissioning and Young People and Care Leaver Services. This joint working also includes Housing Needs officers being co-located several days a week at the Early Help (Children's Services) and JobCentrePlus where they can take direct early referrals and offer housing advice to those services.

A Housing Needs officer, co-located at Early Help (Children's Services), received a referral for a family with two young children. There were concerns about the risk of eviction from their private rented accommodation.

The Housing Officer accompanied the Early Help worker on a home visit to meet the family and discuss their housing situation. They discovered that the family had been offered a further 12 month assured shorthold tenancy by their landlord, but were refusing to sign the new agreement as they believed that they would be re-housed soon into social housing via the housing register and would not accept what the Early Help team were telling them about this being unrealistic.

The Housing Officer was able to have an honest conversation about what would happen if they did not sign the new tenancy agreement, explaining that the landlord could instigate eviction proceedings and that they were at serious risk of homelessness. Unless they could make their own arrangements for accommodation, they were advised that they would have to accept a temporary accommodation placement and that this could be away from their support network. Importantly, there was a discussion about the housing register and the high demand for social housing in this area, which means that households can be waiting an average of five years to be re-housed.

This early and joined up intervention prevented a young and vulnerable family from becoming homeless and being placed in temporary accommodation, which would have exacerbated any existing support needs.

This case highlights the importance of the Making Homelessness Everyone's Business project as before the partnership with Children's Services Early Help it is likely that the Homelessness Service would not have known about the family's situation until they showed up on the day homeless.

We will now:

- Build upon our prevention agenda to engage a wider set of partners, such as GPs, health visitors, psychiatric and general hospital staff, including discharge teams, probation and prisons to identify those at risk of homelessness earlier.
- With our partners, agree pathways into our services and to enable joint working with the aim of preventing homelessness and, where this is not possible, to agree realistic pathways into sustainable accommodation.

- Develop further joint working with partners to help residents in all types of housing (private rented, social housing, supported housing, temporary accommodation, living with family) to sustain and manage their accommodation.
- Support cross sector work to prevent homelessness and build assets to improve:
 - Financial health, benefit and debt support
 - Access to work and employment
 - Access to digital skills, capabilities and tools
 - Wider physical and mental health and wellbeing outcomes as part of the Councils 'Thriving People and Communities' agenda.

Reducing Rough Sleeping

In March 2018, the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) announced funding to tackle Rough Sleeping in response to the numbers of Rough Sleepers rising nationally by 165% since 2010. MHCLG has set a target to halve rough sleeping by 2022 and end it completely by 2027. Locally the numbers in Worthing were increasing, whilst those in Adur remained static. Worthing Borough Council received MHCLG funding to help tackle rough sleeping with the caveat that Adur residents would also benefit from the services and interventions developed.

Rough Sleeping Figures: Official Annual Count

	Worthing Estimate	Worthing Count	Adur Estimate	Adur Count
2019/20	13	7	2	0
2018/19	23	11	1	0
2017/18	34	19	2	0
2016/17	26	11	2	0

MHCLG has released a number of funding streams and we are currently in receipt of funding from the following streams:

- Rough Sleeper Initiative (RSI)
- Cold Weather Fund (CWF)
- Rapid Rehousing Pathway (RRP) in partnership with West Sussex County Council (WSCC) and West Sussex District and Borough Councils
- Public Health England (PHE) Rough Sleeping Initiative, in partnership with WSCC, Worthing Hospital Accident & Emergency department, CGL, Turning

Tides, Stonepillow, Crawley Open House and Emerging Futures that is currently being mobilised

RSI and RRP funding ends in March 2020 and at time of writing we are waiting for the outcome of the next one year funding stream. Should future funding bids be successful, we will continue the work we have undertaken with our partners to find flexible and meaningful housing solutions for people who have a history of rough sleeping.

“Lucy” is a young woman in her early 20’s who was found by outreach sleeping in a tent in the Adur District with her dog. *“Lucy”* had fled domestic violence and there was an injunction against her partner. The outreach team was able to support her with daily living needs and connect with Adur & Worthing Councils’ Housing Needs Team. That team established *“Lucy”* had an open case with the Brighton Housing Needs Team, but she had abandoned the accommodation provided.

Outreach spent time with *“Lucy”* to get a sense of her wishes and needs, taking account of the need to keep her safe as her partner was breaching the Domestic Violence Protection Order and Lucy was expressing a wish to maintain her relationship with him. Outreach spent time talking through the issues and the impacts on her life from this relationship as she had never needed support of services or been homeless before. Outreach then liaised with *“Lucy”* and Brighton services for a planned and supported reconnection into accommodation.

The work that we have begun this year, using the RRP funding, has been instrumental in supporting extremely vulnerable people. The recruitment of supported lettings officers, provides a means for early identification of those at risk of rough sleeping and specialist support to sustain a range of housing tenancies. The same funding has enabled the Councils to also recruit a navigator, who provides intensive outreach support to clients who sleep rough and have very complex needs.

The cold weather fund has enabled interventions that house and/or reconnect individuals to their support networks. It has also assisted with breaking up a network of organised begging.

Success in future funding applications will allow us to incorporate these roles into our RSI work which also provides interventions, outreach services, mental health support and, critically, access to accommodation which create an access route into housing for those with the most complex and greatest support needs.

“*John*” was an ‘entrenched rough sleeper’ with a dog and in a relationship with a female rough sleeper, both of which created barriers to “*John*” accessing supported housing due to the lack of provision for couples. This is a national issue due to the risks associated with couples with complex needs.

“*John*” has been known to local services for more than five years and has been evicted from multiple supported accommodation settings. “*John*” also has support needs around his mental health and substance misuse, two factors which, when combined, make it very difficult for people to access the right kind of support.

Mental Health services can be reluctant to provide treatment to those actively misusing substances which can lead to the a cycle of increasingly poor mental health and high level of substance misuse as individuals self-medicate to address the symptoms of their mental ill health. This results in complex health and support needs and the intervention from a range of services during episodes of crises. “*John*” had previously engaged well with support and became substance free, enabling him to engage meaningfully, return to work and move into the private rented sector (PRS), however, he struggled to maintain the accommodation long term and was evicted.

Unfortunately “*John*” has had a series of unsuccessful placements in supported housing and temporary accommodation, resulting in a damaging cycle of him resuming sleeping on our streets. When “*John*” is sleeping rough his support needs around his mental health and substance misuse become very acute and he becomes very vulnerable.

Following “*John*”’s most recent eviction, he slept on our streets for approximately four months, which had a significant impact on his mental health and ability to cope, and our outreach services reported their concerns about him and his challenging behaviours. Unfortunately due to this, his poor housing history, his partner and her dog, who were also sleeping rough, there were significant barriers to relieving “*John*”’s homelessness, causing him further distress and anxiety.

In order to increase his life chances “*John*” was provided with a Rough Sleeper Initiative funded bed space in local temporary accommodation and he has settled well, with no reported incidents. “*John*” is engaging with support and as his frustration about a lack of a housing plan has reduced, enabling him to interact and engage with support services which hopefully will be more meaningful and useful.

In order to provide meaningful activity for “*John*”, boxing lessons were provided for a month using the RSI personalisation budget. “*John*”’s continued engagement with support workers will facilitate a move-on into settled accommodation once more. His partner was also offered her own housing pathway which meets her particular support needs and which also accommodates the couple’s dog.

We will now:

- Through commissioning, pathway development and inward funding, focus on
 - reducing the need for people to sleep rough; and
 - improving health outcomes for those who have slept rough.
- Through the Homelessness Forum, PHE Hospital Admission Reduction Pathway (HARP), Mental Health and Housing Group, and Winter Pressure pilots, develop pathways and provision for
 - hospital discharges and prison releases to prevent rough sleeping.
- With the new RSI funding stream, work to
 - embed Psychologically Informed Environments into our approach; and
 - tackle the issue of complex need clients being repeatedly evicted and returning to rough sleeping.
- Develop 'Housing First', a proven model to tackle entrenched and complex need rough sleeping, throughout our provision and through supporting our third sector providers in bidding for funds for this work.
- Continue to develop joint contract management and supported housing panels.
- Develop the single person's pathway to introduce 'Step Up' and 'Step Down' options and temporary exclusions rather than evictions to further address the issue of repeat evictions and long term exclusion and develop move on options that meet the varying needs of single homeless people.

Supporting vulnerable adults and those with complex needs

The increase of vulnerable adults with complex needs is both a local, regional and national issue. Authorities across our area are working with an increasing number of single adults in temporary accommodation who are unable to maintain and manage accommodation and who have no viable move on options. In Adur and Worthing, the split between families and single people in temporary accommodation is 50/50 which is sustained using a variety of support from our Housing and RSI/RRP staff.

A number of accommodation based contracts have been recommissioned directly by WSCC, with agreement that there will be joint oversight and closer contract management with the relevant district authority.

WSSC and all the Districts and Boroughs are also working together to co-commission a floating support contract to support all adults, in any type of tenancy, using these principles. The focus of the service will be to prevent homelessness and promote tenancy sustainment for adults who are vulnerable and have complex needs.

There are a number of other initiatives, with which Adur & Worthing Councils are actively involved or are taking a lead, that also support our work with the most complex and vulnerable people in our system:

- HARP Systems Leadership Group: focussed on the health and housing needs of rough sleepers, where dual diagnosis is a theme that is to receive focus.
- We have supported WSSC with a Winter Pressure funding pilot trialling mental health step down beds within existing provision and providing mental health social work support to evidence the need and inform provision needs.
- The A&W Housing and Communities Thrive project is moving into delivery 'sprints' - a process of testing ideas with themes around housing, thriving communities, finance, debt, employment and skills and young people.
- The A&W Mental Health and Housing Group recently established to look at mental health and housing needs.
- A&W Systems Leadership: 'No Discharge to the Streets' group is focussed on improving outcomes from those discharged from prisons, hospitals, supported accommodation and other housing
- The A&W Homelessness Forum has agreed to re-establish a Single Homeless Sub Group to be tasked with progressing the work of Housing Panels and pathways for single homeless

The Rough Sleeping Initiative (RSI) funds a variety of interventions and this work will continue and be developed for a further year :

- Additional resources to support those in temporary accommodation and supported accommodation with an SLA to join this work with Brighton and Hove
- Complex Need Workers - this will incorporate the RRP and RSI work for the coming year
- Mental Health Support Worker
- Employment and Skills Worker

- Support and Community Inclusion Workers to support those in temporary and supported accommodation sustain and move on
- Temporary Accommodation units
- SWEP provision for high risk, multiply excluded, customers
- Develop psychologically informed environments and approach to sustainable increase housing options and reduce evictions
- Adopt co-production with service users to include clients' voices in the work and provision that is developed.

There are also number of multi-agency groups that adopt a multidisciplinary approach to case management of vulnerable groups:

- MEAM MARAC (Making Every Adult Matter, Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference), which is a forum for cross agency case management of those with the most complex needs.
- The A&W Rough Sleepers Team is a multi-agency group that meets weekly with themes rotated: Support, Health and Wellbeing, Enforcement and Housing Options/ Homeless Prevention. Adult Social Care and Health are part of this group

“Barry” was evicted from an abstinence based supported housing project due to continued substance misuse. *“Barry”* appeared to have underlying mental health support needs and had experienced episodes of homelessness before. However, after this eviction he began rough sleeping for the first time.

“Barry” presented to a homeless drop-in where referrals to alternative accommodation were completed. *“Barry”* was supported by frontline workers who reported that his mental health continued to decline. Accident & Emergency (A&E) were alerted and agreed to complete a mental health assessment to understand his vulnerabilities. Following assessment, *“Barry”* was placed in Temporary Accommodation to reduce the risk of harm.

Once accommodated, *“Barry”* was supported to attend two supported housing assessments by street outreach and was accepted onto a mental health supported housing project. He has moved into an HMO and has floating support to address his offending history, substance misuse and mental health. *“Barry”* continues to reside in this property and appears to be in more settled mental health.

“Jack” is an entrenched rough sleeper who has experienced repeated rough sleeping for around 20 years. He has support needs with his mental and physical health and alcohol use. Despite attempts to support *“Jack”* to attend assessments with an abstinence based environment, he did not turn up, resulting in prolonged rough sleeping.

“Jack” was then provided with a Rough Sleeper Initiative funded bed space in local temporary accommodation for around three weeks. During this time he was supported to stop drinking and maintain his abstinence. He attended Accident and Emergency (A&E) due to his poor physical health and, following a service level agreement with A&E, urgent referrals were made in order to address his health issues. *“Jack”* was also able to be assessed at last due to his continued abstinence. As a result, *“Jack”* was brought to the top of the housing waiting list and accommodated in the next available property that became available. *“Jack”* continues to be abstinent and continues to reside in this accommodation.

We will now:

- Provide support for those in need of targeted interventions to live well, retain their tenancies and remain independent, including:
 - Employing support workers to support vulnerable adults with complex needs, including work by our outreach teams using their ‘Street to Home’ ethos to reduce breakdowns in support and engagement
 - Developing effective pathways for young people, including those leaving local authority care
 - Jointly commissioning services to provide:
 - Targeted and floating support for people of all ages
 - Supported Housing

Priority 2: Better Homes; Stronger Communities

People live in houses and flats, but they also live in communities. Our ambition in this strategy is not only to provide access to the homes people need, but to ensure they are safe, warm, secure and meet their needs. We are also committed to doing what we can to support our communities to thrive by enabling communities to build their connections, resilience and capability. We also want to support our communities to influence the decisions that affect the places in which they live.

Acceptable Living Conditions and Regulation

Poor housing is recognised as one of the major determinants of poor health but some landlords have capitalised on the shortage of dwellings in the private rented sector by renting out substandard or even dangerous properties. More than a quarter of dwellings in the private rented sector are likely to have category 1 hazards, compared to only 1 in 6 owner-occupied properties.

Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs) have long been recognised as requiring more intensive regulation, largely due to the greater risks to the health and safety of occupants, especially in respect of fire. The definition of HMOs in the Housing Act 2004 was amended in 2018 for licensing purposes to include all properties with 5 or more occupants not forming a single household. There is also legislation covering the management of HMOs and types of HMOs which need to be licensed.

There is increasing pressure from central government to take positive and proactive action in respect of poor housing conditions and a very clear expectation that the powers available to the Councils should be used to tackle rogue landlords.

Driving up standards in the private rented sector also improves tenants' experiences within this tenure and complements the activities of the Housing Needs team in sustaining tenancies and reducing homelessness.

As a Council we take our responsibilities in regulating this sector seriously. Following changes in the definition of licensable HMOs in 2018, more than 150 additional properties have submitted applications for licenses and we have developed a database of more properties requiring investigation. We also use our powers to ensure landlords tackle issues of disrepair, dealing with over 380 complaints a year about the condition of privately rented properties. We inspect and take appropriate enforcement action in each case with over 70 formal notices served during 2018/19. Where landlords do not comply, we always take legal action and over the last twelve months successfully prosecuted three cases and issued seven Financial Penalty Notices for a total of over £60,000.

The Councils work very closely with West Sussex Fire and Rescue Service (WSFRS) to support our communities and their safety. Following a referral from WSFRS we were asked to inspect a property, a four-storey house which they believed had been poorly converted into seven self-contained flats, with no operational fire detection system in place. WSFRS had planned to serve a prohibition order due to the imminent risk - meaning the seven families in residence would immediately become homeless and would need to be placed in temporary accommodation by the Council.

The Private Sector Housing team were able to respond rapidly and using our emergency powers under the Housing Act 2004, instructed a contractor to fit a compliant fire detection system which removed the need to immediately vacate the building, thus preventing these families from becoming homeless and all of the trauma that entails. Formal notices were served upon the landlord to secure improvements to the flats and common parts, who was subsequently prosecuted for offences under the management of HMO regulations.

We will now:

- Continue to identify homes in multiple occupation and ensure they are licensed.
- Ensure enforcement and regulatory activity is sustained so that the better homes standards are maintained.

Staying safely at home for longer

For those with disabilities, mobility problems or poor health, remaining in their own home can become difficult, yet we know that when people are required to leave their homes, their overall health and wellbeing can worsen. The Councils provide a range of grants which can help those who need it to adapt or repair their homes so they can stay living at home, safely.

The Community Alarm and Telecare Service is a well-established and valued service enabling older, disabled and vulnerable people to get emergency help at their home 24/7. The low-cost basic service provides an alarm button, which is worn as a pendant or on the wrist, linked to a base station which connects to a call centre.

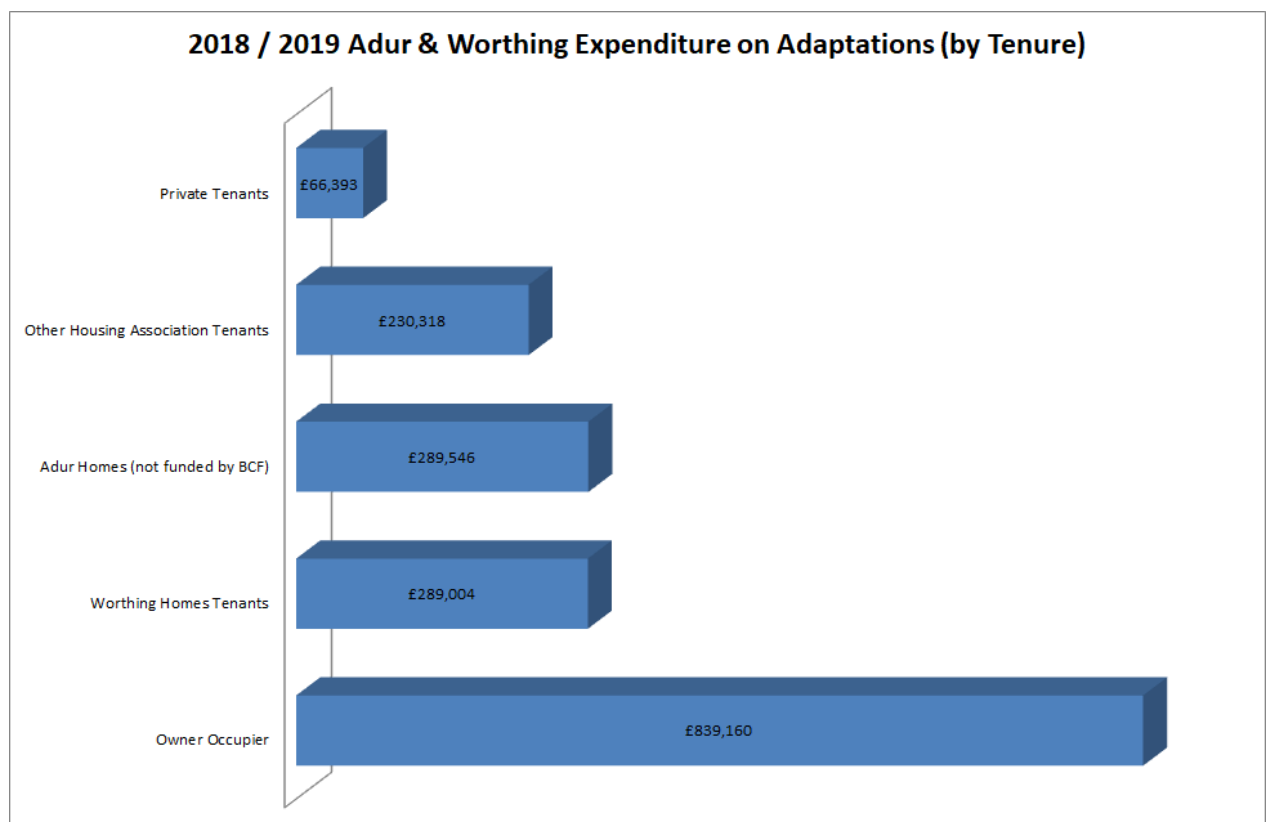
We work closely with West Sussex County Council's Adult Social Care teams as this service helps keep people at home who otherwise might need to move into a more supported environment. Community (or Social) Alarms give customers the

confidence to remain living independently, which for many is preferable to, and more economic, than residential care.

The service can be supplemented by additional services, such as falls detectors, flood detectors, smoke detectors, carbon monoxide detectors, at an additional weekly cost depending on the need of the customer.

We provide support to about 1100 private customers across the area as well as community alarm support to nearly 300 sheltered housing tenants.

Mandatory Disabled Facilities Grants are available for a range of works needed to help people on a low income who have a disability to live more independently in their home. Working closely with West Sussex County Council's Occupational Therapy service, we have assisted several households across several tenures to remain in their accommodation or make it more accessible. Grants are means tested and available to occupants whether they rent or own their property, with the exception of Adur District Council's tenants (where there are separate arrangements). The table below shows how grants have been allocated in the last full year.



Even where a person is not on a means tested benefit, awards can still be made, using a statutory means test which determines how much an individual can afford to pay towards the cost of the works. The remainder of the eligible costs are paid by the Council up to the maximum of £30,000.

The Councils' Home Improvement Agency service offers professional help to support customers to plan the work that needs doing. They liaise with Occupational Therapy colleagues and help with the application process, accessing grant funding and supporting the customer to identify builders and other professionals.

In January 2018, the Councils also introduced a range of Discretionary Grants, which extend our abilities to enable people on a low income to Thrive by enabling them to get assistance to live well and more safely at home.

The Councils also provide funding for homeowners who are in receipt of qualifying means tested benefits to apply for Repair Grant Assistance. The type of work that we fund is restricted to small-scale essential works of repair, where the defects are giving rise to a serious risk to the health of the occupant.

Over the life of the last housing strategy, we helped around 650 households with grants, spending a total of approximately £5 million to enable people to stay safely in their own homes.

Where serious hazards have been found in a vulnerable persons home as the result of disrepair and we can see that the household is not in a position to rectify the matters, the Councils can provide targeted assistance using Safe, Suitable and Warm Grant Funding.

In 2018, the Council helped improve the wellbeing of an elderly resident, referred by WSFRS. Neighbours had asked the fire service to visit and install smoke detectors but instead they found a resident who was at risk from excess hoarded possessions, with no source of heating and whose mobility was so poor that she could not access her first floor bathroom.

Our Home Improvement Agency (HIA) visited and sensitively began a dialogue with the resident to understand her situation and what she wanted to achieve. We began by prioritising heating and safety, by awarding a Safe and Warm Grant. A Repair Grant Assistance was also awarded to replace some dangerous and ineffective windows. West Sussex County Council's Occupational Therapy Team were also involved and recommended a stairlift and a level access bathroom.

The HIA facilitated the grant applications and arranged the installation of the stairlift and conversion of the bathroom. The local community also provided support by helping their neighbour to declutter her home. The changes brought about have enabled the customer to enjoy a new lease on life.

We will now:

- Work closely with West Sussex County Council to enable effective use of the Mandatory Grant system.
- Continue to use Discretionary Grants to enable vulnerable members of our community to thrive and to aim to provide people with the right assistance and support to remain healthy and comfortable in their homes for as long as possible.

Our role as Landlord (Adur District)

Adur Homes is the generic name for Adur District Council's local authority council housing service. Adur District Council owns and manages 3,047 properties (2,545 rented and 526 leasehold). This represents over 50% of social housing in the District. It also has a portfolio of over 1,000 garages.

In terms of tenure, 73% of properties are rented as general needs, 10% are rented as sheltered housing and 17% are leasehold properties.

The key strategic priorities for the next three years centre around:

- *Resident Engagement*

A review of the tenant and leaseholder engagement strategy is being undertaken by a joint working group of tenants and officers facilitated by an independent organisation to develop and modernise our approach. The Strategy will be launched by April 2020 and will show the overall approach to resident engagement to be adopted by Adur Homes, including addressing issues highlighted by the Housing Green Paper of 2018. These will include:

- Effective resolution of complaints
- Empowering and enabling residents to make their views known
- Evaluating our performance through Key Performance Indicators

We will also be engaging with tenants and leaseholders over the next three years to better understand their needs and work with them to co-design better services. This builds on the work undertaken in the first phase of the THRIVE project which saw the Councils' Housing and Wellbeing Teams engaging with the public around issues such as homelessness, nutrition and community asset building.

- *Tackling Anti-Social Behaviour*

We use a “risk of harm” centred approach to tackling anti-social behaviour (ASB) which is sadly sometimes experienced on our estates. The Crime and Policing Act 2014 gave some powers to social landlords, and some additional powers to councils, to manage tenancies where there is ASB.

When we receive a report of ASB, we carry out a risk assessment to establish the severity and urgency of the case. High risk cases are registered on the Empowering Communities Inclusion & Neighbourhood Management System (ECINS), which is a shared system with Sussex Police. Then these, along with medium risk cases, are referred to the ASB Risk Assessment Conference to be managed using a multi agency approach.

There are a number of methods that we use to tackle anti-social behaviour. For example, we refer cases such as neighbour disputes to the West Sussex mediation service. Where the alleged ASB involves a report of significant noise nuisance, the councils’ Environmental Health officers can provide recording equipment to enable us to gather evidence. Where the risk of harm is identified as high, we carry out “safe at home” assessments to identify security solutions and, in severe cases, we can use our joint Management Transfer Policy granting priority home moves for residents who are assessed as not being safe at home.

While we try to deal with anti-social behaviour as quickly as possible, these cases can be very complex and can take several months to resolve as we work with all the parties involved. In November 2019, we had 20 cases under 6 months old, which is in line with our target.

- *Asset Management and Capital Programme*

The Adur Homes Capital Improvement programme, which started in 2016, has completed a wide range of individual projects, including internal investment to properties (e.g. ‘kitchens and bathrooms, central heating installations, fire safety remedial works) and external works to blocks of flats to ensure that buildings are compliant with health and safety requirements.

The costs associated with responsive repairs and capital spend in both tenanted and void properties are rising and the HRA Business Plan, over the next three years, needs to balance short term investment needs with longer term estate and neighborhood renewal. We are developing our planned and

cyclical maintenance programmes and the Council remains committed to high levels of investment into maintaining and improving the condition of our housing stock, following best practices in investment and management.

In developing our Asset Management strategy, we will be taking into account a range of priorities for additional expenditure and reinvestment, alongside core health and safety works. These priorities include our kitchen and bathroom programmes, updating Sheltered Housing schemes, carbon management and energy efficiency measures and disabled adaptations and property extensions.

With the lifting of the HRA borrowing cap, the potential to access additional funding to accelerate these programmes and support the delivery of additional affordable homes is being explored. The receipts from sales will also be used to fund development schemes.

The Council's vision for regeneration includes new and improved housing, with our new and existing homes contributing to our carbon reduction plans, improved energy efficiency and reduction of costs for our residents.

We will now:

- Publish our Resident Engagement Strategy, promoting involvement and feedback to Adur District Council as landlord (Adur Homes)
- Develop an approach to ASB, as part of the wider Councils ASB Policy, to ensure that, as a landlord, we can identify and support those who are vulnerable as part of a joint prevention and enforcement approach
- Support the long term financial health of the business by:
 - Reducing the average costs of reactive maintenance
 - Maximising collection of rent and reducing arrears
 - Reducing the time taken to enable void properties to be re-let
 - Undertaking a review of service charges for both routine service delivery (e.g. cleaning, grounds maintenance etc) and sheltered housing support provision.
 - Reviewing charges for garages.
- Support the long term investment into our stock by delivering a fully revised and prioritised capital programme and a full asset management programme by Winter 2020

- Support the Councils stated ambition to be Carbon Neutral by 2030 by working closely with colleagues delivering the West Sussex 'Smart Hubs' programme of work to increase energy efficiency of our stock
- Ensuring the Health and Safety of our residents by sustaining 100% compliance on Fire Risk Assessments.

Co-creating communities and spaces that support our communities to Thrive

Communities thrive when they are connected, engaged and support one another. As Councils we can support this by designing the built environment of places so that it encourages these behaviours, whether that is by creating community spaces and places, using lighting to promote safety and green spaces to promote activity. However we also want to work in partnership with our communities to promote the collective use and ownership of open spaces.

We believe that engaging and involving communities in the design and use of place is key to promoting health, wellbeing and community cohesion. We will work with communities to design ideas for community assets and to influence the outcome of planning applications on what community benefits are desirable, rather than making assumptions that, for example, a new community centre is needed.

We will continue to work with trusted partners and others to provide support for communities to co-design and co-create the open spaces within their communities as has been part of the 'Growing Communities' project delivered by The Conservation Volunteers in both Adur and Worthing.

Open spaces are assets for our neighbourhoods. We will work together with stakeholders, friends-of groups, residents and wildlife groups to ensure that open spaces are engaging, safe, and biodiverse. Our commitments in this time of climate emergency means that our communities must be intertwined with nature. Green space is precious in our neighbourhoods and we endeavour to maximise its potential for every living thing that uses it. The productivity of our open spaces must be optimised whether that is in terms of play offer, food production, habitat or wellbeing.

We also want to ensure that those built facilities that are there for the benefit of our local communities, e.g community centres, are accessible and available as well as being well managed.

We will now:

- Take steps to identify areas with potential to become community spaces
- Enable participation by and engagement with our communities to promote involvement in the the physical development of our community spaces and how our places are used, including creating a new post of Homes and Communities Enabling Officer.
- Work with trusted partners to support our communities to engage in the development and use of open spaces (e.g the Conservation Volunteers) and built community facilities (e.g Southdown's Leisure as the provider of services at the West Durrington Community Centre).
- Take steps to identify areas with potential to become community spaces
- Enable participation by and engagement with our communities to promote involvement in the the physical development of our community spaces and how our places are used, including creating a new post of Homes and Communities Enabling Officer.
- Work with trusted partners to support our communities to engage in the development and use of open spaces (e.g the Conservation Volunteers) and built community facilities (e.g Southdown's Leisure as the provider of services at the West Durrington Community Centre).

Priority 3: Improving the levels of affordable housing supply

We recognise that access to affordable⁷ and suitable housing is very important in ensuring that a balanced population profile is maintained across Adur and Worthing. However, it is not just about affordability; we want to promote development which provides for community interaction and which is sustainable by design.

Our Development Strategy

In recognition of the increasing need for affordable homes and the issues faced in their delivery, the Councils are creating a Development Strategy which details how it intends to increase the number of affordable homes across Adur and Worthing through self-delivery and by working closely with developers.

The Development Strategy will outline 5 objectives:

- Deliver 1,000 affordable homes by 2025, of which 250 homes will be delivered directly by Adur & Worthing Councils
- Create sustainable homes for people to live and thrive in
- Utilise the Council's land and housing stock for self-delivery
- Purchase sites for development where appropriate
- Work with strategic partners to unlock and maximise affordable housing delivery across the Councils

The strategy provides an overview of how the Councils will look to meet demand through self delivery, partnership working and by enhancing their housing enabling offer to help progress the delivery of affordable housing.

The Council will review ways in which different tenures could be offered to help compliment affordable homes delivery and meet the needs of people throughout the housing market. These tenures could include discounted market sale, intermediate rent or Shared Ownership. As part of this review the Council will consider the need to set up a housing delivery company and/or joint ventures with development partners.

As part of our approach to development, we will focus on sustainable development approaches, in line with the Council's stated objectives to be carbon neutral by 2030. These principles will be built into our approaches to partnering and procuring services and will include recognition that the concept of sustainability extends to developing sustainable communities in line with the Thriving Communities agenda.

⁷ "Affordable Housing" is specifically defined in the National Planning Policy Framework 2019. See Appendix 1.

We will now:

- Publish our Development Strategy for Adur and Worthing and deliver the affordable new homes agenda which it sets out.

Local Plans and Development Management

We will ensure that policies in the respective Local Plans for Adur and Worthing seek to deliver the affordable housing that best meets the needs of our communities.

The adopted Adur Local Plan requires 30% affordable for all developments over 10 dwellings and emphasises the need for the majority (75%) of the affordable housing provided to be delivered as rented accommodation reflecting local need. The Local Plan review will commence in 2021 and will assess the latest housing need figures and guidance to ensure that relevant Local Plan policies reflect latest government guidance and the local housing needs.

The emerging Worthing Local Plan will include a range of affordable housing policies to deliver affordable housing of the most appropriate tenure and mix to meet local needs. These emerging policies highlight the need for affordable rent and we will explore the opportunity to deliver rent levels at less than 80% of market rent to meet the needs on the housing waiting list.

The Development Management team will continue to take a proactive approach towards supporting high density development where it can demonstrate high quality sustainable design and meet the required level of affordable housing. Where necessary the Council will work in partnership with developers to secure public funding to help deliver sites where viability is an issue.

Our Development Programme

Adur & Worthing Councils have recently embarked on a development programme to help enable them to meet the acute demand for affordable and temporary housing within Adur and Worthing.

Since starting the programme, two sites have been purchased and planning permission gained to deliver 42 homes for temporary accommodation. Three further sites have been granted to provide 49 homes within the HRA for general needs rent (affordable and social rent). A further 10 sites have been identified as part of the Small Sites programme with design having commenced in Feb 2020.

Of the above, 103 homes are due to be delivered by 2021/22.

Maximising the potential of the Council's own land will be a key theme for the coming years. The Council is currently reviewing its stock in line with its long term planned investment strategy, this will help guide where there is a need for development.

Demand for Emergency and Temporary accommodation remains high, particularly in Worthing. To address this the Councils has focussed on preventing homelessness and increasing access to the private sector; identified and sourced more cost effective, suitable leased accommodation as well as acquiring and developing our own accommodation for these purposes. Going forward, the Councils will need to continue to keep under review the number and nature of the types of accommodation available to them for these purposes as the nature of demand changes.

We will now:

- Review and update our Temporary Accommodation Strategy

Exploring and Developing Innovative Partnerships

The Government's 2017 White Paper "Fixing our Broken Housing Market" identified a series of interventions aimed at addressing issues in the UK's housing system. The white paper makes apparent that the existing system of interests and actors needs to change, innovate and develop new approaches. As a central player in the housing system, Councils, as both developer, landowner and planning authority have a critical role in supporting, designing and delivering new and innovative approaches. The Councils are committed to working with developers, investors, and community groups to develop these new approaches within Adur and Worthing.

Similarly, there are acute pressures for certain specialist types of housing. The Councils are committed to working with partners to investigate opportunities to deliver housing solutions for vulnerable groups such as those who are homeless, prison leavers, those requiring supported living, those with physical disabilities and older residents, as well as other groups such as veterans and care leavers.

Local communities also have a role to play in achieving their aspirations of home ownership and increasing the supply of affordable homes locally. The Councils are currently funding the Sussex Community Housing Hub which supports groups locally to deliver community-led affordable housing.

We will now:

- Explore new and innovative partnerships and vehicles to create opportunity to increase the supply of affordable homes

Extending access to the Private Rented Sector

The increasing disparity between market rents and the local housing allowance (LHA) means private rented accommodation is often unaffordable for people in receipt of benefits, or people may face other barriers in the form of strict referencing criteria set by letting agents. This can preclude people in receipt of benefits unless they have a suitable guarantor that is either a homeowner or someone who earns 35 times the monthly rent as an annual salary. Most people approaching the Council with housing need are unable to meet these criteria.

In response to this, the councils have created 'Opening Doors' – an innovative new lettings scheme that provides an attractive service for landlords with a range of benefits, including rent collection with guaranteed rent for two years, all tenancy paperwork completed, a matching process between tenant and landlord and access to a landlord support team – all for free. In exchange landlords are providing properties at affordable rents, creating a new supply of suitable and affordable private rented accommodation.

Since the launch of the pilot in July 2018, the scheme has attracted 24 properties - from studio flats to five bedroom houses - and has played a crucial part in helping the Councils meet their statutory obligations under the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017. Providing suitable long term accommodation supports the Councils in reducing the financial burden of providing emergency accommodation. Another eight tenancies are expected to complete by the end of February 2020.

The scheme will be monitored on a monthly basis to ensure it continues to attract landlords by remaining a competitive product in the private lettings market while delivering ongoing savings and value for money to the council.

2018/19 (9 months)	13	13
2019/20	18	31
2020/21	22	53
2021/22	25	78

“Sally”, a single mother with three children, had lost the family’s home and possessions to a tragic fire in Worthing. Within four days of becoming homeless, the Opening Doors scheme enabled them to move to a new private sector rented property.

“Jenny”, a profoundly deaf single mother with three children was also enabled to successfully move into a three bedroom privately rented house after spending months living in cramped conditions with relatives.

We will now:

- Extend and build upon the Opening Doors social landlord scheme with the aim of achieving 106 cumulative lets by 2023.

Chapter 5: Delivering and Monitoring Our Strategy

We have made a number of commitments in this strategy which we will deliver to ensure we make progress with our priorities. We will develop an action plan which will set measurable targets and milestones so that we can monitor our progress regularly. We will report on outcomes to elected members twice a year. These reports will be publicly available on the Councils' website.

Related Documents and Data

There are a number of related documents that support the delivery of this housing strategy. These are:

- [Platforms for Our Places - Going Further](#)
- ['Housing Matters' - A&W Housing Strategy 2017-2020](#)
- [JOSC 19 Sep 19, Item 8: Delivering our Housing Strategy - Review of Progress 2019/20](#)
- [West Sussex Supported Housing Project report, Aug 19 \(WeareSnook\)](#)
- [Adur Local Plan](#)
- [Worthing Local Plan \(Draft\)](#)
- [HRA 30 year business plan](#)
- [Strategic Market Housing Assessment](#)
- [Adur & Worthing Sustainability Framework](#)
- [Adur & Worthing Carbon Reduction Plan](#)
- [United Nations - Sustainability 2030](#)
- [National Planning Policy Framework 2019](#)

Appendix 1: Definition of Affordable Housing

This is the definition of Affordable Housing from the National Planning policy Framework 2019:

Affordable housing: housing for sale or rent, for those whose needs are not met by the market (including housing that provides a subsidised route to home ownership and/or is for essential local workers); and which complies with one or more of the following definitions:

a) Affordable housing for rent: meets all of the following conditions: (a) the rent is set in accordance with the Government's rent policy for Social Rent or Affordable Rent, or is at least 20% below local market rents (including service charges where applicable);

(b) the landlord is a registered provider, except where it is included as part of a Build to Rent scheme (in which case the landlord need not be a registered provider); and

(c) it includes provisions to remain at an affordable price for future eligible households, or for the subsidy to be recycled for alternative affordable housing provision. For Build to Rent schemes affordable housing for rent is expected to be the normal form of affordable housing provision (and, in this context, is known as Affordable Private Rent). b) Starter homes: is as specified in Sections 2 and 3 of the Housing and Planning Act 2016 and any secondary legislation made under these sections. The definition of a starter home should reflect the meaning set out in statute and any such secondary legislation at the time of plan-preparation or decision-making. Where secondary legislation has the effect of limiting a household's eligibility to purchase a starter home to those with a particular maximum level of household income, those restrictions should be used. c) Discounted market sales housing: is that sold at a discount of at least 20% below local market value. Eligibility is determined with regard to local incomes and local house prices. Provisions should be in place to ensure housing remains at a discount for future eligible households.

d) Other affordable routes to home ownership: is housing provided for sale that provides a route to ownership for those who could not achieve home ownership through the market. It includes shared ownership, relevant equity loans, other low cost homes for sale (at a price equivalent to at least 20% below local market value) and rent to buy (which includes a period of intermediate rent). Where public grant funding is provided, there should be provisions for the homes to remain at an affordable price for future eligible households, or for any receipts to be recycled for alternative affordable housing provision, or refunded to Government or the relevant authority specified in the funding agreement.