

Housing Strategy 2024-2026

TO BE FORMATTED

Summary

Housing and Homes is a priority area with the Council's Corporate Plan 2023-27. This Strategy sets out how we will meet our corporate objective of ensuring the population of Ashfield are living in, or can access, homes that are affordable, warm and within a safe community that promotes the health and wellbeing of residents.

The Housing Strategy focuses on the following 4 key areas:

1. Delivery of new affordable housing by the Council, housing associations and private developers
2. Improving housing standards in the private sector
3. Preventing homelessness and rough sleeping
4. Maintaining and improving council homes

The Housing Strategy is an overarching strategy that is supported by 4 sub-strategies, one for each of the above focus areas:

1. The Affordable Housing Delivery Strategy
2. The Private Sector Renewal Strategy
3. The Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Prevention Strategy
4. The Domestic Asset Capital Investment Strategy

See Appendix 1 for further information on each of these, as well as a summary of the achievements made under the previous versions of strategies 1-3.

This Strategy sets out our statutory responsibilities to produce strategies relating to housing (section 2). It also provides a high-level summary of the Ashfield housing market context (Section 3) and the demographics of Ashfield residents (section 4), as well as the national (section 5.1), regional (section 5.2) and local policy (section 1.1) environment. Alongside this, it summarises the actions the Council will take to achieve the corporate objective highlighted above, in view of this housing market and policy context (Section 1).

Achievement of this Strategy is monitored through a combination of Corporate Scorecard Indicators, Service Plan progress reports and strategy action plan progress reports.

This Strategy builds on the achievements of our previous strategy, which include:

Private Sector Renewal Strategy 2021-23

- Renewed the Selective Licensing Scheme until 2027
- Raised awareness of the new electrical safety regulations – no enforcement action has been required
- developed a standard template for pre-HMO licensing inspections
- Hosted a landlord forum twice a year in partnership with Mansfield District Council and Newark & Sherwood District Council

- Provided group training and 1:1 advice and support to landlords
- Updated policies and procedures to reflect changes to the Mobile Homes Act 2013
- Brought 21 empty properties back into use
- Improved the Aids and Adaptations Policy and Procedure
- Updated information on the website detailing the support available to residents to stay well at home

Affordable Housing Delivery Strategy 2021-23

- 108 new affordable homes completed or on site
- 30 homes acquired from the market
- Delivered 7 adapted homes
- Sold 4 unviable garage sites to release capital for investment
- Regenerated 2 community centres to provide 4 bungalows
- Maximised use of commuted sums and Right to Buy receipts
- Exceed minimum standards for carbon emissions
- 47 social or Affordable Rent homes delivered by the market

Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Prevention Strategy 2019-2024

Annual reviews of progress delivering this strategy are available on the website by searching:

- 2019-20 review
- 2020-21 review
- 2021-22 review
- 2022-23 review

1. 2023-2025 priorities

Each Strategy has an action plan setting out the workplan for the next 12 – 24 months. The priorities for 2023-25 include:

Affordable housing delivery	Private Sector Renewal
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Maximise delivery of additional affordable homes - Maximise the delivery of adapted homes - Increase the supply of Extra Care housing - Deliver homes that achieve high standards of energy efficiency - Explore opportunities resulting from the East Midlands Mayoral Authority 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Implement changes required following the Government’s review of the Housing Health and Safety Rating System - Complete a midway review of the Selective Licensing Scheme - Commission a profile of private sector stock condition in Ashfield - Implement a banning order policy - Publish a private sector enforcement policy - Proactively inspect all properties belonging to a landlord with at least one property in disrepair.
Homeless and Rough Sleeping Prevention	

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Prevent as many residents as possible from becoming homeless, with a particular focus on those becoming homeless from a private rented sector tenancy or as a result of domestic abuse - End rough sleeping - Help as many residents as possible to move from one home to another without the need for emergency and temporary accommodation. Where it is needed, make sure it is good quality. - Provide a high-quality service that customers are satisfied with, and provide opportunities for customers to influence the design and delivery of services - Encourage and support leaders of other organisations to do more to prevent homelessness - Be a trauma-informed service, by looking after the wellbeing of our customers and staff 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Proactively identify and review all HMO properties. - Introduce any required changes as a result of the Supported Housing (Oversight) Act 2023 - Complete the damp and mould action plan submitted to DLUHC - Introduce any changes required by the Renters' Reform Bill. - Bring as many empty properties back into use as possible - Complete the review of the eligibility criteria for Discretionary DFGs and update the relevant policy to utilise this funding. - Identify the implications of the Futures Homes Standard and associated regulation and develop an action plan to mitigate these. - Maximise the external funding that residents can access to improve the energy efficiency of their homes, using green solutions wherever possible.
<p>Domestic Asset Capital Investment</p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Carry out a 5 yearly stock condition survey at every ADC property by 2025 - Revise the capital investment programme to meet the requirements of the revised Decent Homes Standard when announced - Increase the number of properties assessed as EPC Band C - Develop a strategic approach for the replacement of fossil fuel heating systems with low carbon heating systems - Develop opportunities for tenants to influence the development and delivery of the capital programme 	

1.1 There are a number of other policies and action plans that also support the delivery of the Housing Strategy:

- The Strategic Tenancy Strategy
- The Social Housing Regulation Action Plan
- The Allocations Policy
- The Housing Complaints Policy
- The Anti-Social Behaviour Policy
- The Domestic Abuse Policy
- The Emerging Local Plan
- The Private Sector Renewal Policy
- The Aids and Adaptations Policy
- Selective Licensing Scheme Guide
- Ashfield Health and Wellbeing Strategy

2. Housing Strategy - Statutory Requirements

There are several strategies and plans that local housing authorities are required to produce by statute, these are:

1. A Homelessness Strategy¹
2. A Housing Assistance Policy²
3. A Tenancy Strategy³
4. An Allocations Scheme⁴
5. A Private Sector renewal strategy⁵

In areas with two tiers of local government such as Nottinghamshire, the upper tier authority is responsible for producing a strategy to provide accommodation-based support to victims of domestic abuse⁶. Lower tier authorities are required to cooperate with any reasonable requests from upper tier authorities under this strategy.

The recently created Supported Housing (Regulatory Oversight) Act 2023 will introduce a requirement for local housing authorities to produce a supported housing strategy.

Local planning authorities are required to produce a development plan identifying the strategic priorities for the development and use of land in the area⁷. This includes assessing the accommodation needs of Gypsies, Travellers, Showpeople and boatdwellers.

3. Ashfield demographics

The ONS provide a summary of key Census 2021 data regarding the demography of Ashfield residents⁸:

- The population has reached nearly 130,000
- The population is forecast to increase to 150,000 by 2043.
- The median age is 42
- 7% of the population describe their health as bad or very bad
- Ashfield has the third highest proportion of residents providing unpaid care in the East Midlands
- 50% of residents described themselves as having no religion
- 93% of residents are born in England and around 1% were born in Poland and Scotland.
- 95% of residents described their ethnic group within the "White" category
- Around 30% of households include dependent children

¹ S.1 Homelessness Act 2002

² Article 4, Regulatory Reform (Housing Assistance) (England and Wales) Order 2002

³ The Localism Act 2011

⁴ S.166A, Part 6, The Housing Act 1996

⁵ Section 3, Housing Act 2004

⁶ Part 4, Domestic Abuse Act 2021

⁷ S.19 Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004

⁸ <https://www.ons.gov.uk/visualisations/censusareachanges/E07000170/>

- 13% of households are single people aged 66 years or over
- 36% of residents have never been married or in a civil partnership
- Almost 56% of residents are employed
- 22% of residents identified as being disabled

4. Ashfield housing market

The Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Prevention Strategy⁹ provides a detailed overview of the Ashfield housing market, in summary:

- There are two growing tenure types (outright ownership and private renting) and two shrinking tenures (ownership with a mortgage and social renting).
- 67.8% of residents own their home, 17.3% rent from a PRS landlord, 14.9% rent from a social landlord
- The supported housing sector accounts for less than 1% of the housing market
- At any one time, around 1% of all dwellings in Ashfield have been empty for 6 months or more
- There are around 150 Houses of Multiple Occupation in Ashfield
- The median house price affordability ratio is worsening – residents need around 6 times their income
- The median rental price affordability is more than 3 times residents' income
- It would take around 7.5 years for someone in Ashfield to save a 20% deposit
- The gap between private rented sector rents and Local Housing Allowance rates ranges from £51pcm to £892pcm
- 15% of Ashfield residents are income deprived – Ashfield is ranked the 73rd most income-deprived area in England and 18 neighbourhoods are in the 20% most income-deprived areas in England.
- 15% of residents live in fuel poverty¹⁰
- Each year 237 new affordable homes are required.
- Between 2018-2023, 242 new affordable homes have been developed on large sites, this is 23% of all homes delivered.
- Around 5-7% of homes owned by the Council are relet each year
- There are over 4,000 households on our waiting list for council housing and demand for our homes has increased 76% in the last 5 years .
- Nationally the turnover of PRS properties has reduced by 38% and demand has increase by 46%
- Around 14% of all homes in Ashfield do not meet the Decent Homes Standard and almost 10% have a Category 1 hazard under the Housing Health and Safety Rating System .
- The majority (70%) of homes owned by the Council have an EPC rating of A – C.
- 28% of PRS properties have an EPC rating of A - C

⁹ <https://www.ashfield.gov.uk/your-council/strategies-plans-policies/housing-strategy-research/homelessness-strategy/>

¹⁰ <https://www.nea.org.uk/constituencies/ashfield/>

5. Policy context

5.1 *National*

This section sets out the key aspects of the current national policy context for each housing sub-strategy.

5.1.1. The Affordable Housing Delivery Strategy

- a. The National Planning Policy Framework (paras 61-65) and associated Planning Practice Guidance documents set out how local affordable housing need should be assessed
- b. Local authorities can retain 100% of all Right to Buy receipts for sales in 2022-24. The cap on the percentage of acquisitions allowed within the RTB replacement programme is also frozen at 50% until 2025.
- c. A Public Works Loan Board Housing Revenue Account rate was introduced from June 2023, providing a 40 basis point discount for one year.
- d. From June 2023, the Affordable Housing Programme 2021-2026 provided by Homes England can be used to fund replacement homes as part of estate regeneration.
- e. The Levelling up and Regeneration Bill currently progressing through Parliament includes provision to replace Section 106 planning obligations and the Community Infrastructure Levy with the Infrastructure Levy.

5.1.2 The Private Sector Renewal Strategy

Private Rented Sector

There are at least 29 separate legal statutes that relate to the operation of the private rented sector (PRS)¹¹.

The Housing Act 2004 sets out the enforcement and licensing powers available to local housing authorities to improve property standards, as well as the charges that can be issued.

The Housing and Planning Act 2016 amended the Housing Act 2004, giving local housing authorities the power to issue a Civil Penalty Notice for certain offences up to the value of £30,000 as an alternative to prosecution. Income from Civil Penalty Notices is retained by the local housing authority and invested in private sector renewal activities.

The Housing and Planning Act 2016 also introduced Rent Repayment Orders (RRO) and Banning Orders. An RRO can require the repayment of up to 12 month's rent

¹¹ The Journeys in the Shadow Private Rented Sector report from Safer Renting highlights the key statutes, p19-28 <https://static1.squarespace.com/static/5dd53ca5b73f98154b9db657/t/5f4f698b65ce7f08a28efdc4/1599039887282/%27Journeys+in+the+Shadow+Private+Rented+Sector%27+-+Full+Report+August+2020.pdf>

where a landlord or agent has committed a relevant offence. Banning orders prohibit landlords and agents who have committed relevant offences from letting or managing residential properties.

The Energy Efficiency (Private Rented Property) (England and Wales) Regulations 2015 set out a minimum standard for energy efficiency. Since 1st April 2020, all PRS properties must have an Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) rating of E or higher.

The Smoke and Carbon Monoxide Alarm (Amendment) Regulations 2022 details the requirements for smoke and carbon monoxide alarms in PRS properties.

The Electrical Safety Standards in the Private Rented Sector (Regulations) 2020 introduced requirements for PRS landlords to inspect and test electrical installations in their properties.

The Renter's Reform Bill was introduced into Parliament in May 2023, the Bill proposes to:

- Abolish section 21 'no fault' evictions and thereby move to all assured tenancies being periodic
- Revise the possession grounds available to landlords to repossess their property
- Ensure tenants can appeal excessive rent increases that are designed to force them out
- Introduce a new Private Rented Sector Ombudsman
- Create a Privately Rented Property Portal
- Give tenants the right to request a pet in the property, which the landlord cannot unreasonably refuse

Alongside the Renter's Reform Bill, the government has committed to:

- introducing an updated Decent Homes Standard to the PRS
- making it illegal for landlords and agents to have blanket bans on renting to tenants in receipt of benefits or with children
- strengthening local authority enforcement powers and introduce a new requirement for councils to report on enforcement activity

Empty homes

The National Planning Policy Framework (July 2021) includes a focus on effective use of land and in paragraph 120 encourages the development of under-utilised land and buildings, including bringing back into use empty homes, using compulsory purchase powers where appropriate.

The Rating (Property in Common Occupation) and Council Tax (Empty Dwellings) Act 2018 allows local authorities to charge a higher rate of council tax for long-term empty properties. From 1st April 2021, the maximum increase allowed is:

- 100% for properties which have been empty for up to five years
- 200% for properties which have been empty for between five and 10 years
- 300% for properties which have been empty for at least 10 years.

Local authorities have a number of legal powers to bring empty properties back into use including: compulsory purchase, council tax premiums, enforced sale, Empty Dwelling Management Orders, and enforcement powers to improve the condition of properties.

Healthy homes

The Better Care Fund (BCF) aims to enable people to stay well, safe and independent for longer. Joint plans to deliver this aim are agreed locally by Integrated Care Boards and local authorities, and are owned by the Health and Wellbeing Board. Whilst expenditure of the BCF must be agreed jointly, it includes the ringfenced Disabled Facilities Grant which must be spent in line with statutory duties.

The latest Energy Company Obligation scheme (ECO4) launched in 2022 and is open until March 2026. The scheme requires energy companies to provide energy saving measures to low income households, or those with a qualifying health condition. Local authorities can expand the scheme to additional households by participating in the Local Authority FLEX scheme.

The £500 million Green Homes Grant Local Authority Delivery scheme (LAD) was launched in 2020 by the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS). It aims to upgrade up to 50,000 privately owned homes with energy efficiency and low carbon heating measures. It targets low income households in on-gas properties.

In 2021, the £630 million Home Upgrade Grant scheme (HUG) was launched by the Department for Energy Security and Net Zero (DESNEZ, formerly BEIS). This scheme also aims to upgrade privately owned homes with energy efficiency and low carbon heating measures. It targets low income households in off-gas properties.

5.1.3 The Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Prevention Strategy

This strategy includes a detailed overview of the national policy position regarding both the duties of a local housing authority to prevent homelessness and rough sleeping, as well as the responsibilities of the wider system. There are 3 main policy areas affecting homelessness and rough sleeping prevention:

- a. Homelessness reduction policies
 - i. Homelessness Reduction Act 2017

- ii. Ending Rough Sleeping for Good Strategy 2022
- b. Housing market challenges
 - i. Affordable housing supply
 - ii. PRS reform
 - iii. Supported housing oversight
 - iv. Help with housing costs
 - c. Specialist support
 - i. Domestic abuse
 - ii. Asylum dispersal
 - iii. Refugee resettlement
 - iv. EU settlement scheme
 - v. Prison leavers
 - vi. Care leavers
 - vii. Armed forces veterans
 - viii. Health and social care
 - ix. Substance misuse treatment

5.1.4 The Domestic Asset Capital Investment Strategy

This strategy includes a detailed summary of the national policy context. The policy context relating to the safety and quality of social housing has developed significantly in recent years, particularly following the fire at Grenfell Tower in 2017 and most recently following the death of a young child due to prolonged exposure to damp and mould. There is also a substantial focus on the energy efficiency of homes and low carbon heating systems.

The key regulations are listed below:

- The Regulator of Social Housing's Home Standard
- Clean Growth Strategy 2017
- Future Homes Standard
- Future Building Standard
- Building Safety Act 2022
- Net Zero Strategy: Build Back Greener
- Heat and buildings strategy 2021
- UK Hydrogen Strategy 2021
- The Housing Ombudsman's case work, spotlight and insight reports
- Fire Safety Act 2021
- Social Housing (Regulation) Act 2023
- Commonhold and Leasehold Reform Act 2002

5.2 Regional

This section sets out the key regional policy makers and their housing-related priorities.

5.2.1 Nottinghamshire County Council

Nottinghamshire County Council is a key regional policy maker; their Public Health Team, Adult Social Care Team and Children's Social Care Team each have a number of statutory duties relating to the objectives and priorities set out in this Housing Strategy.

The following needs assessments and strategies set out NCC's priorities in these areas:

[Draft Housing Strategy 2023-2028](#)

[Annual Delivery Plan 2023/24](#)

[Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2022-26](#)

[The Health and Wellbeing Board Framework for Action on Homelessness](#)

[JSNA Health and Homelessness 2019](#)

[JSNA Substance Misuse: Young People and Adults 2022](#)

[Domestic Abuse Strategy 2021-24](#)

[Strategy for Looked After Children and Care Leavers 2022-25](#)

[Nottinghamshire Care Leaver Local Offer](#)

[Adult Social Care Strategy 2017](#)

[Nottinghamshire Combatting Substance Misuse Partnership Strategy and Delivery Plan 2023-25](#)

The Homeless Prevention and Rough Sleeping Strategy identifies the areas of focus relating to the prevention of homelessness that are included in the above documents.

5.2.2 NHS Nottingham and Nottinghamshire Integrated Care System

The Nottingham and Nottinghamshire [Integrated Care Strategy 2023-27](#) sets out a vision that every person will enjoy their best possible health and wellbeing. The strategy has 4 aims:

- a. Improve outcomes in population health and healthcare
- b. Tackle inequalities in outcomes, experiences and access
- c. Enhance productivity and value for money
- d. Support broader social and economic development

Actions the ICS will take to achieve these aims include:

- supporting frail older people with underlying conditions to maintain their independence and health
- supporting those in the most deprived areas, or experiencing severe, multiple disadvantage. The strategy prioritises populations with severe mental illness, homelessness, domestic abuse, severe multiple disadvantage, financial vulnerability and care leavers.

- Review the Better Care Programme
- embedding a trauma informed approach across the system.

5.2.3 Mid Nottinghamshire Place Based Partnership

This partnership brings together health and social care services across Mid Nottinghamshire, their vision is to work together to create happier, healthier communities and reduce the gap in healthy life expectancy. The [PBP Place Plan 2023/24](#) sets out 4 ambitions:

- a. Give every child the best chance of maximising their potential
- b. Create healthy and sustainable places
- c. Everyone can access the right support and improve their health
- d. Keep our communities safe and healthy.

The PBP had 4 programmes to deliver these ambitions:

- a. Best Start
- b. Living Well
- c. Ageing Well
- d. Health inequalities

5.2.4 [East Midlands Mayoral Authority \(launching May 2024\)](#)

The proposed East Midlands Devolution Deal includes the following actions that are relevant to the prevention of homelessness and rough sleeping:

- New powers to drive the regeneration of the area and to build more affordable homes including compulsory purchase powers and the ability to establish Mayoral Development Corporations.
- Over £17 million for the building of new homes on brownfield land in 2024/25, subject to sufficient eligible projects for funding being identified.
- £18 million capital funding in this Spending Review period to support the delivery of housing priorities and drive Net Zero ambitions in the East Midlands area.

The proposed Deal also identifies other areas of focus to bring into the remit of the new authority in the coming months and years:

- Deliver transformative regeneration and new high-quality housing.
- Tackle local housing challenges including homelessness and rough sleeping.
- Tackle domestic abuse through an improved and system wide holistic approach.
- Develop strong links between the MCCA and PCCs to help join up public service delivery and strategies in relation to community safety.
- Develop an ambitious, long term mayoral social mobility strategy, supporting young people through their journey to adulthood.

5.2.5 Nottingham and Nottinghamshire Violence Reduction Partnership

The partnership has published a [Serious Violence Response Strategy 2022-25](#), which sets out a vision for Nottinghamshire communities to feel safe from violence and the fear of violence. One of the strategic objectives is to implement a domestic violence perpetrator programme.

5.2.6 Nottinghamshire Police and Crime Commissioner

The Commissioner has published a draft [Violence Against Women and Girls Strategy](#) which has as its vision to reduce the prevalence of violence against women and girls, and to bring more perpetrators to justice and increase support for all survivors.

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Appendix 1

ADC strategic housing framework

Affordable Housing Delivery Strategy 2023-25	<i>Enables and delivers the supply of affordable housing to meet demand</i>
<p>Aims:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Maximise delivery of affordable homes by the Council - Maximise the delivery of affordable homes by housing associations and private developers in the district 	
Private Sector Renewal Strategy 2023-25	<i>Improves standards in the private sector</i>
<p>Aims:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To reduce the number of non decent homes with category 1 hazards or chronic disrepair in the private sector - To reduce the number of non-decent homes with high risk category 2 hazards - To minimise the number of long-term empty properties - To improve health and wellbeing outcomes through improving housing standards - To ensure the health, safety and welfare of licensed caravan sites and their residents - To target resources effectively to improve the health and wellbeing of all residents, in particular those within the privately rented sector 	
Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Prevention Strategy 2024-29	<i>Ensures the housing and support needs of homeless households are met</i>
<p>Aims:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Prevent as many residents as possible from becoming homeless, with a particular focus on those becoming homeless from a private rented sector tenancy or as a result of domestic abuse - End rough sleeping - Help as many residents as possible to move from one home to another without the need for emergency and temporary accommodation. Where it is needed, make sure it is good quality. - Provide a high-quality service that customers are satisfied with, and provide opportunities for customers to influence the design and delivery of services - Encourage and support leaders of other organisations to do more to prevent homelessness - Be a trauma-informed service, by looking after the wellbeing of our customers and staff 	
The Domestic Asset Capital Investment Strategy 2023-25	<i>Ensures ADC homes are decent, safe and net zero ready</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To ensure high levels of tenant satisfaction with the safety and quality of their home 	

- To ensure our homes meet the diverse needs of our tenants and enable independent living
- To ensure tenants are able to influence the development and delivery of the capital programme
- To ensure our homes meet all applicable legislative and regulatory standards and ensure there is a forward plan to comply with forthcoming standards
- To ensure there is a robust 30 year investment programme, supported by a 5 year medium-term financial plan, which are based on detailed and up to date records of the condition of homes, and viability assessments
- To provide high quality homes that require minimal repairs
- To maximise the use of external funding opportunities to deliver an enhanced investment programme

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