

# HOUSING AND HOMELESSNESS STRATEGY UPDATE

SEPTEMBER 2022



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## City Plan 2019 - 2030



### A DYNAMIC SMART CITY

**by 2030 we will have:**

- a lower carbon city with greater digital connectivity for all
- more and better jobs
- more local people with better qualifications and skills
- a stronger city centre with more businesses, housing and cultural opportunities
- more and better housing



### A HEALTHY SMART CITY

**by 2030 we will have:**

- reduced health inequalities enabling more people to live healthier longer lives
- access to equitable opportunities and life chances
- people enjoying independent lives
- great transport links with low carbon and active travel opportunities for all
- a cleaner and more attractive city and neighbourhood



### A VIBRANT SMART CITY

**by 2030 we will have:**

- more resilient people
- more people feeling safe in their homes and neighbourhoods
- more residents participating in their communities
- more people visiting Sunderland and more residents informing and participating in cultural events, programmes and activities



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## Progress in Sunderland

- Brand new City Hall
- Riverside development
- Affordable housing delivery in the city exceeds target
- Registered provider of social housing
- Dedicated Housing Service
- Reduction in long term empty homes numbers
- Driving standards in the Private Rented sector



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## Our Strategic Housing Priorities

1. Maximising housing growth and increasing the choice of housing
2. Making the best use of existing homes and improving our neighbourhoods
3. Supporting vulnerable people to access and maintain housing




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The Housing Strategy is a statutory requirement under the Local Government Act 2003

The Housing Strategy is due for a refresh in 2022 and will align with City Plan timescale i.e. until 2030

The Housing Strategy's priorities that will be driven via robust action plans for the whole city:


- 1. Maximising housing growth and increasing the choice of housing**
- 2. Making better use of our existing housing and improving our neighbourhoods**
- 3. Supporting vulnerable people to access and maintain housing**






## A Housing Strategy for Sunderland 2017-2022

Growth, choice, quality




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### Sunderland rough sleeping and homelessness prevention strategy

2019-2021




Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 requires Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategies to be in place.

Sunderland's strategy will be reviewed and updated alongside the Housing Strategy and be developed around the four strategic pillars:

- 1. Prevention of homelessness**
- 2. Intervention when homeless**
- 3. Recovery to reduce repeat homelessness**
- 4. Partnership working across the city**

"Ending Rough Sleeping for good" cross government strategy published 3<sup>rd</sup> September 2022.



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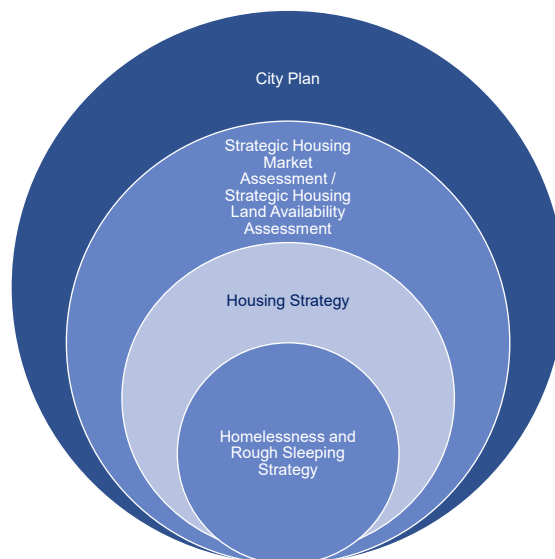
## Key achievements since 2017

- Housing Delivery and Investment Plan
- Council have Registered Provider status managing 80+ tenancies
- Delivery of supported accommodation with Adult Social Care
- Riverside development
- Award-winning Eviction Prevention Support Service
- Funding for rough sleepers
- Dedicated private sector housing teams and schemes
- Housing first project delivery
- Registered Provider Network



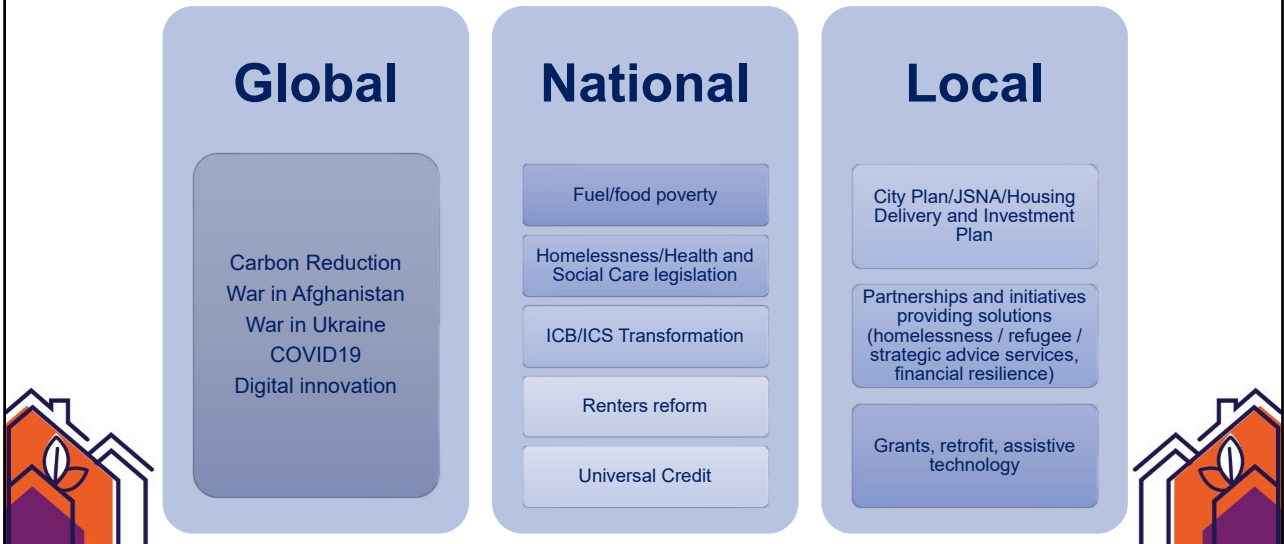
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## Strategic context



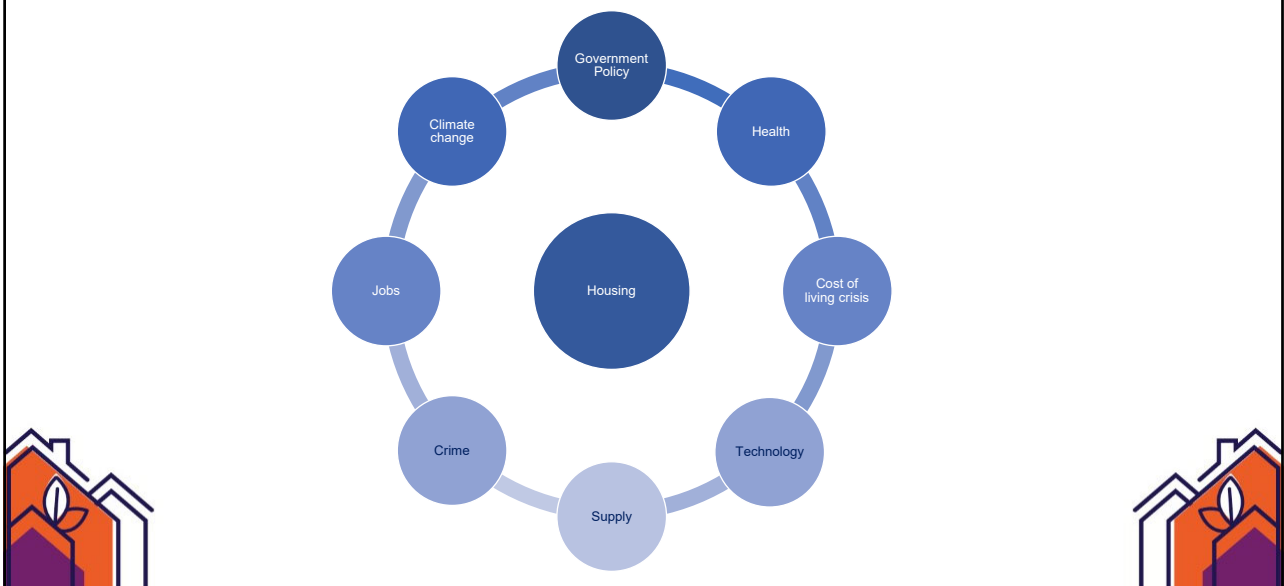
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# Housing strategy What's changed since 2017?



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# What drives us?



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## Housing Strategy: the story so far

- Draft document developed 2022 – 2030
- KPIs from housing service and annual review produced
- Action plans reviewed and updated to reflect progress
- Key achievements to be updated
- Impact assessment and HNA
- Partner events in June and August




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## Housing Strategy: what partners say

- Priorities more relevant than ever
- Transformational strategy
- Partnership working
- Data sharing
- Review
- Vulnerable people are becoming more vulnerable/cost of living driving more vulnerabilities
- Refugees
- Tangible actions and solutions



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<p><b>Priority one: Maximising housing growth and increasing the choice of housing</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Innovation around the supply of housing land</li> <li>• Supply of more housing across all property types and tenure</li> <li>• Supply of housing for vulnerable people</li> </ul> 	<p><b>HEADLINE PRIORITIES</b> Maximising housing growth and increasing the choice in housing</p>	<p><b>KEY PRIORITIES</b> Innovation around the supply of housing land</p>	<p><b>KEY ACTIONS</b> Deliver a greater choice of housing through best use of Council land.</p> <p>Bring empty properties back into use via the Housing Delivery and Investment Plan.</p> <p>Consider surplus to requirement land for housing.</p>
		<p><b>KEY PRIORITIES</b> Supply of more housing</p>	<p>Deliver an increased number of new homes (affordable for rent, to buy and market housing) to meet demand.</p> <p>Influence Registered Providers, developers, Homes England around the strategic housing needs within the City via quarterly development networks, holding them to account where delivery does not meet need.</p> <p>Facilitate the unlocking of stalled and unviable sites so that they can come forward.</p> <p>Continuing practical support and dialogue with all developers, including SMEs and self/custom builders. Explore financial support to accelerate delivery on these sites where possible.</p> <p>Work with partners to explore the use of new technologies, assistive technologies and modern methods of construction – ensuring a focus on PAS2035 and Sunderland’s ambitions to become a Carbon Neutral City.</p> <p>Continue to support the regeneration sites of Groves, Pennywell, Vaux, Sunnyside, Hetton Downs and prepare Council led masterplans to facilitate their delivery.</p> <p>Secure different sources of funding according to housing needs throughout the City, ensuring a key focus on health and building communities.</p>
		<p><b>KEY PRIORITIES</b> Supply of housing for vulnerable people</p>	<p>Prepare a Housing Market Position statement to communicate vulnerable housing need throughout the City with partners.</p> <p>Develop “age friendly neighbourhoods” as part of the Healthy City Plan.</p> <p>Offer an improved Disabled Facilities Grant offer by providing a “top up” to reflect the increase in cost of works</p>

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<p><b>Priority two: Making the best use of existing homes and improving our neighbourhoods</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support and improve the Private Rented Sector</li> </ul> 	<p><b>HEADLINE PRIORITIES</b> Making the best use of existing homes and improving our neighbourhoods</p>	<p><b>KEY PRIORITIES</b> Support and improve Private Rented Sector</p>	<p><b>KEY ACTIONS</b> Proactively engage with Landlords and Tenants via events, newsletters and links with the National Residential Landlord Association.</p> <p>Develop a regional partnership around Private Rented Sector initiatives.</p> <p>Deliver a successful landlord accreditation scheme across the City to drive standards in the sector.</p> <p>Deliver Private Sector Leasing for landlords who wish to hand over the management of their property to the Council.</p> <p>Deliver a tenant passport scheme, providing support and training for landlord and tenant to increase access and tenancy sustainment in the sector.</p> <p>Identify funding opportunities to drive energy efficiency standards in the PRS.</p> <p>Monitor minimum standards for energy efficiency in the PRS.</p>

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<p><b>Priority two: Making the best use of existing homes and improving our neighbourhoods</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tackling empty properties within the City and bringing them back into use</li> <li>• Healthy homes, healthy people</li> </ul> 	<p><b>HEADLINE PRIORITIES</b> Making the best use of existing homes and improving our neighbourhoods</p>	<p><b>KEY PRIORITIES</b> Bring empty homes back into sustainable use across the City</p>	<p><b>KEY ACTIONS</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Intervene at the earliest stage to give accessible, accurate and professional advice to prevent properties becoming empty or to facilitate the property's return to use.</li> <li>Directly invest in empty homes with the aim of bringing these back into use via our HDIP.</li> <li>Influence registered providers of social housing to bring empty homes back into use across the City.</li> <li>Offer improved financial assistance (as set out in the council's reviewed Financial Assistance Policy) for acquiring, refurbishing and bringing empty homes back into use.</li> <li>Engage with landlords to ensure they can afford to bring their properties up to standard and not drive them out of the sector creating an empty homes issue.</li> <li>Host multi agency case management forums around problematic empty homes, to ensure proactive activity around bringing empty properties back into sustainable use.</li> </ul>
	<p>Increased focus on healthy, warm homes and thriving communities to ensure healthy people across the City</p>	<p>Raise housing standards across all tenures to improve health and wellbeing.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Introduce Housing champions across partner organisations especially within health.</li> <li>Engage and educate residents around energy efficiency.</li> <li>Produce an affordable warmth and fuel poverty plan</li> <li>Work with Integrated Commissioning Board to ensure the suitability of housing is considered as well as accessing adaptations to prevent long term hospital stays or discharge into care homes.</li> </ul>	

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<p><b>Priority three: Supporting vulnerable people to access and maintain housing</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Early intervention to prevent homelessness</li> <li>• Partnership solutions to mitigate impact of cost of living crisis</li> </ul> 	<p><b>HEADLINE PRIORITIES</b> Supporting vulnerable to access and maintain housing</p>	<p><b>KEY PRIORITIES</b> Early intervention to prevent homelessness</p>	<p><b>KEY ACTIONS</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop strong multi-agency partnerships as part of the strategic governance structure to deliver Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2022-27.</li> <li>Map support services throughout the City in relation to need and location for those experiencing homelessness and look to fund provision where there are gaps.</li> <li>Work in partnership with public health colleagues around health inequalities that have widened since COVID 19 pandemic, carrying out refreshed health needs assessment in partnership with those experiencing homelessness within the City.</li> <li>Work with VCS partners and regionally to ensure we are preventing homelessness as early as possible throughout the region, acknowledging the transience of some households.</li> <li>Review the "Front door" to housing advice and assistance offered by the council to effectively manage cases and put resource where it is needed most.</li> <li>Identify the opportunities to fund accommodation and support via the Council Housing Service and local homeless support providers</li> <li>Tackle the exploitation of some vulnerable households staying in "exempt accommodation" via multi-agency approach and identify funding to resource a proactive team to target rogue landlords in this capacity</li> </ul>
	<p>Work together to provide solutions for people impacted by the cost of living crisis to mitigate the impact of poverty</p>	<p>Work with residents on schemes such as Eviction Prevention Support Service to intervene where landlords may look to evict due to rent arrears, providing mediation and financial support to prevent this.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Deliver a package of financial support measures to assist our most vulnerable residents; such as Discretionary Housing Payment, Welfare Assistance Scheme and Disabled Facilities Grants.</li> <li>Work with our RP partners to establish the true cost of poverty for both tenants and housing associations and collaborate on solutions to mitigate the effects on them.</li> </ul>	

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Priority three: Supporting vulnerable people to access and maintain housing	HEADLINE PRIORITIES	KEY PRIORITIES	KEY ACTIONS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Safe and appropriate accommodation for survivors of domestic abuse</li> <li>• Adequate housing and support for young people and those leaving care</li> <li>• Asylum seekers and refugees</li> </ul>	Supporting vulnerable to access and maintain housing	Provide safe and suitable housing and support for survivors of domestic abuse.	Work with the Domestic Abuse Violence Against Women and Girls Board to ensure the delivery of appropriate safe accommodation.
			Contribute to a robust needs assessment to establish the need for provision within the City.
			Employ a dedicated housing team to support survivors of Domestic Abuse.
			Establish a clear reporting line between the Domestic Abuse Violence Against Women and Girls and Housing Strategy Review Group and be held accountable to deliver the Safe Accommodation Strategy Strategic Priorities 2021-2024.
		Ensure young people and care leavers have adequate and joined up support to access and maintain housing	Look at solutions to affordability for under 35's receiving Universal Credit by having representation from DWP at strategic subgroup level.
			Work innovatively with funding streams to plug gaps in affordability, deposits or rent arrears.
			Monitor joint protocol arrangements and provide education around tenancy sustainment for young people and care leavers.
		Asylum seekers and refugees	Provide a dedicated team to support refugees into suitable housing.
			Work closely with Mears and the Home Office to proactively identify dispersed and suitable housing for asylum seekers
		Gypsies and travellers	Provide a dedicated team to strengthen relationships between the Community and the Council.

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## Next Steps

- Review and examine all feedback from consultation
- Produce a draft Strategic Needs and Intentions document - outlines actions to deliver outcomes for each priority covering identified gaps
- Phase 1 of the Health Needs Assessment – end of September 2022
- Consult on the draft Strategic Needs and Intentions document via more formal consultations from September 2022 with a range of events
- The drafting of the Housing Strategy and Homeless Reduction Strategy to start November
- Presentation to COG November 2022
- Wider refining and review of Strategies until the end of the year with partners and stakeholders
- Cabinet approval and strategies adopted – March 2023
- Go live – April 2023

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