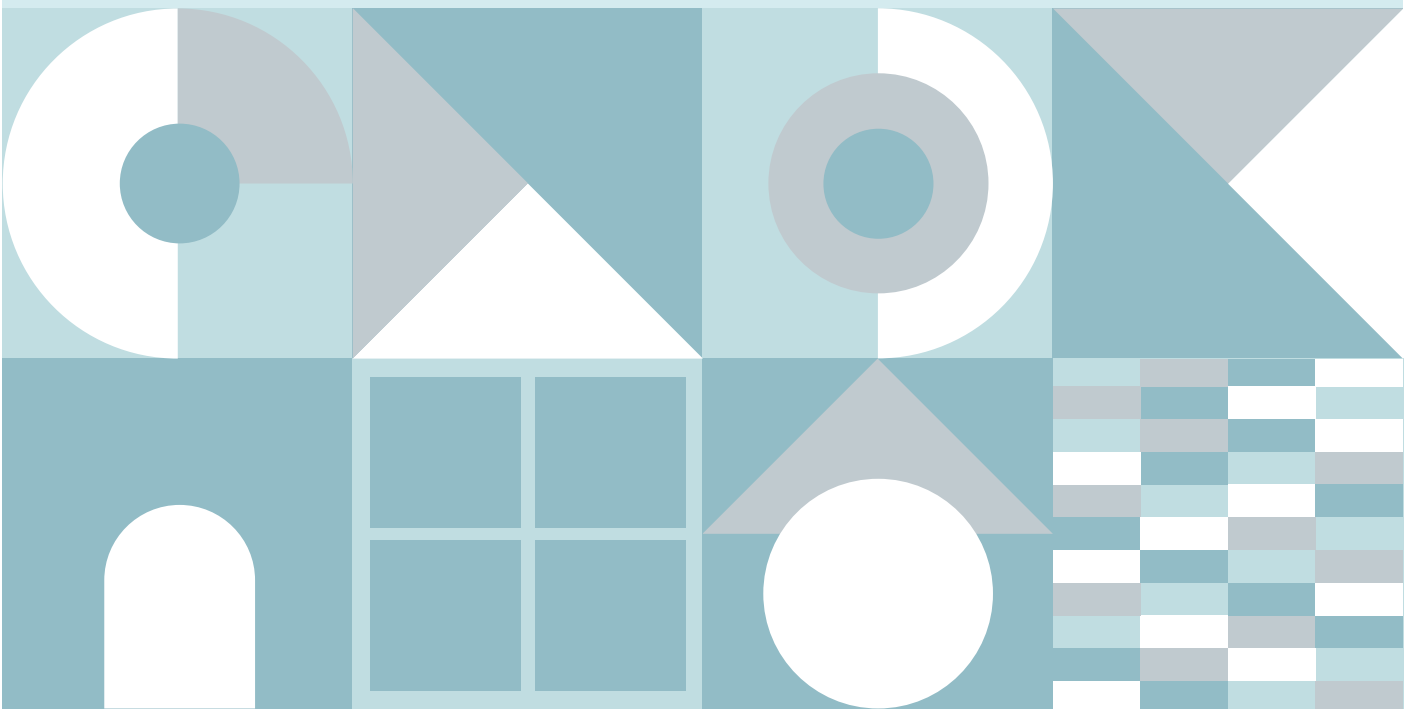


# Solihull Housing Strategy Executive Summary

Making Solihull a great place to live for all



September 2022

## Introduction and Background

1. This Housing Strategy sets out Solihull Council's housing vision and ambitions for the 10-year period to the end of 2032.
2. The Council's proposed vision for housing is that 'Everyone in the Borough is able to access housing at the point of need and has opportunities to create sustainable homes in thriving communities'.
3. The housing market works well for most people but for some this is not the case. Some people may require longer-term help, others at points of crisis or at different stages of the life course.
4. Delivering an effective housing approach requires excellent partnership working. Partnership working is at the heart of the development and delivery of this Housing Strategy.
5. By providing a shared reference point, the Strategy aims to help ensure all stakeholders can deliver excellent services and maximise their contribution to help meet the Council's overall vision 'where everyone has an equal chance to be healthier, happier, safer and more prosperous through growth that creates opportunities for all'.
6. This Strategy will help shape the work of a wide range of housing related strategies and plans that will be developed in 2023 and beyond. The Council is very keen that the final Housing Strategy is informed by a wide range of contributions.

## Solihull's Strategic Context

7. The Housing Strategy is set within an understanding of Solihull's housing intelligence and the local, regional and national context. A Health Equalities Assessment and a Fair Treatment Assessment has informed the strategic approach taken.
8. The Council's strategic housing approach has been determined by a number of plans, strategies and partnerships at a local, regional and national level (Section 2).

Local	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Council Plan 2020 - 2025</li> <li>• Health and Wellbeing Strategy, 2019 - 2023</li> <li>• Tackling Health Inequalities, 2022 – 2025</li> <li>• Net Zero Action Plan</li> <li>• Adult Social Care 5-Year Plan 2022 - 2027</li> <li>• Local Plan</li> <li>• Economic Strategy</li> </ul>
Regional	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• West Midlands Combined Authority</li> <li>• NHS Birmingham and Solihull Integrated Board</li> <li>• Greater Birmingham and Solihull Local Enterprise Partnership</li> </ul>
National	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Social Housing Regulation Bill</li> <li>• Levelling Up White Paper</li> <li>• People at the Heart of Care White Paper</li> <li>• Integration and Innovation White Paper</li> <li>• Net Zero Strategy</li> <li>• A Fairer Private Rented Sector White Paper</li> </ul>

### Challenges, Themes and Ambitions

9. The key challenges identified by the draft Housing Strategy (Section 2, paragraph 2.3) are,

- Delivering excellent housing services
- Making the best use of the Borough’s housing, across all tenures
- Tackling climate change through the retrofit of privately owned and socially rented homes, and building new housing to higher environmental standards
- Enabling good housing and care choices and pathways for older people
- Helping people with additional support needs
- Addressing the affordability of housing to meet the shortage of social rented homes and help younger people and other first-time buyers to access home ownership.

10. It is very important that these challenges are met in a way that effectively contributes to broader objectives. These include improving health outcomes, promoting inclusive growth and building thriving communities.

11. Responding to these challenges, Sections 3 to 8 of the Strategy identify six themes:

- Building stronger communities

- Making best use of existing housing
- Tackling climate change
- Meeting the housing needs of older people
- Helping people with additional support needs
- Meeting local housing needs.

The themes are complementary and inter-related. Making progress in one will have benefits for another.

12. For each theme, the Strategy identifies challenges and opportunities before defining the Council’s ambition.

Strategic Theme	The Council’s Ambition
Building stronger communities  Housing Strategy, Section 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Safe, healthy and connected communities</li> <li>• Maximise the contribution of housing to meeting people’s health, care and support needs (Integrated Care System)</li> <li>• Strengthen Locality Working through partnerships, housing plans, policies and management</li> <li>• Build thriving communities through new development</li> <li>• Ensure that the right housing is in the right place to meet local needs</li> <li>• Enable a strong voluntary and community sector, strengthening housing and care related community involvement and support</li> <li>• Prevent problems at a neighbourhood level - identify and tackle any ‘problem sites’.</li> </ul>
Making best use of existing housing  Housing Strategy, Section 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Enable a good and well-maintained housing stock, suitable for its occupiers</li> <li>• Assist older, vulnerable and poorer homeowners through grant assistance and ‘signposting’</li> <li>• Develop a fairer, more secure, and high quality private rented sector</li> <li>• Take an evidenced based approach to private rented sector improvement (Supported Exempt Accommodation, Selective licensing, Houses in Multiple Occupation)</li> <li>• Identify and act against empty homes</li> <li>• Well managed social housing (asset management; lettings, tenancy management and fraud).</li> </ul>
Tackling climate change	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Implement the Council’s Climate Change Declaration through housing policies, investment decisions and partnerships</li> </ul>



<p>Housing Strategy, Section 5</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Deliver place-based high quality, cost- effective domestic retrofit to low-income households</li> <li>• Support the ‘able to pay’ market by helping people to access good information about retrofit</li> <li>• Develop and support local retrofit supply chain capability and accredited supplier capacity</li> <li>• Raise the energy performance in the private rented sector through regulation and enforcement (Minimum Energy Efficiency Standards)</li> <li>• Raise energy performance levels in social housing (Council and housing associations)</li> <li>• Build and commission housing to more environmentally sustainable standards.</li> </ul>
<p>Meeting the housing needs of older people</p> <p>Housing Strategy, Section 6</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure older people have good housing and support options and can make informed decisions about them</li> <li>• Promote independent living by extending the take-up of grant assistance to help people remain in their own homes</li> <li>• Develop more accessible, adaptable and specialist housing for older people</li> <li>• Ensure that health, care, housing and community support services work effectively together.</li> </ul>
<p>Helping people with additional support needs</p> <p>Housing Strategy, Section 7</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure that people are able to access housing and support services when it is needed</li> <li>• Deliver effective homeless prevention and advice</li> <li>• Ensure disabled people have the same rights to home security and to health and other services</li> <li>• Implement the agreed Veterans Pledges Action Plan</li> <li>• Help people from refugee and migrant communities successfully navigate the UK housing market and sustain their tenancies in the private rented sector.</li> </ul>
<p>Meeting local housing needs</p> <p>Housing Strategy, Section 8</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Deliver more affordable homes to meet housing need and improve the affordability of housing</li> <li>• Enable a better balanced and more diverse housing market in Solihull</li> <li>• Accelerate housing delivery</li> <li>• Promote sustainable development and housing quality</li> <li>• Promote self-build and community led housing approaches.</li> </ul>

Key Things to do – Implementation Plan

13. The draft Implementation Plan for the 3-year period 2023 to 2025 sets out the key things that the Council will move forward. The Implementation Plan is mainly



focussed on new activities and does not seek to restate established on-going housing activities.

14. The Implementation Plan covers the 3-year period 2023 – 2025 and proposes a number of actions (bracketed numbers refer to the Implementation Plan),

- The health and housing relationship is strengthened through a ‘task and finish’ approach and health assessments of housing policies and plans (1,2)
- Good use is made of land in all areas with any local problem sites tackled (3)
- Further work is taken to ensure Solihull has a well-managed private rented sector (4 – 7)
- Social housing management is strengthened by the creation of a senior-level forum of all Registered Providers (8)
- The environmental sustainability of existing homes is improved through housing ‘retrofit’ with particular attention to helping vulnerable households (9)
- Building new Council and Council commissioned housing to net zero (10)
- Promoting independent living for older people (11,12,13)
- Increasing the supply of accessible and adaptable housing (14)
- Review and refresh the Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy, develop specialist homelessness pathways, improve services for young people and rough sleepers and reduce use of temporary accommodation (15, 16, 17, 18)
- Encourage more in-Borough housing provision, partnerships and services for younger adults with disabilities (19, 20)
- Ensure that Solihull’s housing policies provide excellent standards in assisting former and current members of the British Armed Forces (21)
- Increasing the supply of social rented and affordable home ownership (22,23, 24).

15. Progress in implementing the Housing Strategy will be overseen by the Council’s Strategic Housing Board, with reports to the Council’s Cabinet and Scrutiny Board. Updates on progress of the Implementation Plan will be published on the Council’s website.

