



Borough of Telford and Wrekin

Cabinet

Thursday 17 July 2025

Draft Housing Strategy 2025 - 2030

Cabinet Member:	Cllr Richard Overton, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Housing, Highways & Enforcement
Lead Director:	Katherine Kynaston, Director Housing, Commercial & Customer Services
Service Area:	Housing, Commercial & Customer Services
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Wards Affected:	All Wards
Key Decision:	Not Key Decision
Forward Plan:	Not Applicable
Report considered by:	SMT – 17 June 2025 Business Briefing – 26 June 2025 Cabinet – 17 July 2025

1. Recommendations:

It is recommended that Cabinet:

- 1.1 Approve the launch for consultation of the Council's draft Housing Strategy 2025 – 2030, included as Appendix 1.

2. Purpose of Report

- 2.1 To report on progress with the delivery of the Council's current Housing Strategy, outline work undertaken to date including stakeholder engagement to develop the new Strategy 2025-2030 and the proposed next steps following Cabinet approval and public consultation.

3. Background

- 3.1 Housing runs at the heart of everything we do. A decent place to live, sets the foundation from which health, education and work can flourish. Housing is the building block of thriving communities and neighbourhoods.

Why do we need a housing strategy?

- 3.2 As a Council committed to **Protect, Care, and Invest**, we are continually evolving our policies and services in response to the changing needs of local residents. This strategy provides a framework for identifying those needs and sets out our approach to meeting them over the next five years. This will include a focus on:
- Ageing housing stock – We will work with partners and regulatory services to ensure the safety, quality and thermal efficiency of our existing housing stock for our residents in all tenures and prioritise attracting more investment to support further regeneration.
 - Affordable and Social housing supply - In line with our needs assessment, we will work with developers, social housing providers, landlords and directly deliver new homes, including affordable and specialist properties, to meet the growing and diverse needs of local people.
 - Supporting our vulnerable residents – We will provide targeted support and resources to those most in need, including our elderly residents, those with disabilities, low-income families, our care leavers and veterans.
 - Developing communities – We will focus on building safer, stronger and sustainable communities for our residents.
 - Supporting our local economy – We will encourage economic regeneration by leveraging housing development to support local businesses and create job, training and apprenticeship opportunities.
- 3.3 Telford and Wrekin Council adopted its existing housing strategy in 2020. This set three objectives:
- To create sustainable, accessible, affordable and integrated communities
 - To make the BEST use of our existing homes
 - To provide homes to support and empower the Borough's most vulnerable people
- 3.4 Working with a range of partners much has been achieved since 2020:

Delivering 312 long term empty properties back into use	Delivering 800 new homes for private rent and affordable rent through Nuplace <small>to over 1,500 residents with a 95% tenant satisfaction rate</small>	Refurbishing 56 properties through Telford & Wrekin Homes <small>providing accommodation for some of our most vulnerable</small>	Preventing or relieving the homelessness of over 4,000 people including 239 who were rough sleeping	Providing advice and support to over 7,000 fuel poor residents <small>and grant funding 400 households to improve energy efficiency of their homes. Estimated CO2 savings 596 tonnes</small>	Supporting 1,933 residents living in private rented properties, <small>by engaging with landlords and eliminating over 1,200 hazards such as excess cold, damp & mould and electrical hazards</small>
<small>Improving the quality of</small> 766 private rented properties <small>through our building safer stronger communities programme</small>	Delivering over 1,200 new and affordable homes each year	Supporting the delivery of over 600 homes for older people	Providing over 2,000 grants per annum <small>to make adaptations to enable residents to live, independently at home</small>	Secured an average of 30% affordable housing across all housing development	Conducting 30+ prosecutions and civil penalties for breaches of housing legislation

4. Summary of Main Proposals

- 4.1 Our new Housing Strategy 2025-2030 continues to be concerned with all types of housing, tenure and housing needs. It sets out the Council's long-term vision for housing and the actions that it will take to address the housing needs of the borough, seeking to ensure that every local resident has access to safe, affordable, and quality housing. The strategy outlines the Council's commitment to improving the availability and standard of housing, while also focusing on sustainability, community empowerment and regeneration.

5. Local Context

- 5.1 Since the adoption of the Council's last strategy, and in line with national trends, the Council has seen changes in the borough's population:

13.5% population increase between 2013 and 2023 to 192,000

Between 2013 and 2023 the borough's population aged 65 and above grew by 28.5%

21.2% (16,197) privately rented (Census 2021), increase of 6.2% from 2011 & greater than England (20.5%)

18.0% (13,784) in social rented accommodation in 2021, smaller proportion than 2011 (19.7%) greater than England (17.1%).

12,900 or 16.3% households living in fuel poverty (2022) - higher than England rate of 13.1%

15.6% residents (29,400) live in areas ranked 10% most deprived in England. 24.3% in 20% most deprived.

2021 Census, 1 in 5 of the borough's population (age standardised) reported a disability, greater than the proportion for England (17.7%)

5.2 We have also seen some new challenges affecting the Borough's residents, including the cost-of-living crisis and energy price hikes. These are disproportionately affecting the Borough's lowest earning households.

5.3 The Council has seen a significant increase in people presenting as homeless to whom the Council owes a housing duty. The main reasons given for the loss of previous accommodation include loss of private rented tenancy, breakdown of relationships, and domestic abuse.

5.4 We are also seeing landlords leaving the housing market due to financial pressures and impending policy reforms.

6. National Context

6.1 Nationally the delivery of new homes, particularly social and affordable housing options is a real focus with a new Affordable Homes Programme launched by Government.

6.2 New policies are emerging to shape housing design, quality, physical accessibility, environmental performance, and safety.

6.3 The new National Planning Policy Framework is focussed on increasing the quality and quantity of supported specialist and affordable housing provision through up-to-date Local Development Plans.

6.4 Through the introduction of the Supported Housing (Regulatory Oversight) Act 2023, we are set to see a new framework for regulating supported exempt accommodation in England and Wales.

6.5 Additional regulation of the rented sector is proposed through the Renters' Rights Bill, with the abolition of Section 21 'no fault' evictions and tenancies moving from fixed term to periodic.

6.6 The Government also plans to introduce new rules for housing conditions and disrepair by extending the Decent Homes Standard and Awaab's Law to the private rented sector.

7. Housing Strategy 2025 – 2030

7.1 Following review and initial stakeholder engagement the Council is proposing to retain the three objectives from the previous strategy, with an increased emphasis on its commitment to deliver safe and connected communities.

7.2 The proposed objectives are:

- To make the BEST use of our existing homes
- To support safe, clean, green, healthy, connected communities
- To provide homes to support and empower the Borough's most vulnerable people

8. Objective 1 – To make the BEST use of our existing homes

8.1 Through the Council's Better Homes for All programme, we will:

- Ensure all properties we inspect are safe and free from hazards, with a particular emphasis on damp and mould, excess cold and overcrowding. Ensuring compliance with national energy efficiency standards.
- Take a strategic approach to Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs) using our mandatory licensing power effectively and exploring further measures including Article 4 and additional licensing, where HMOs are having a negative impact on neighbourhoods.
- Working closely with partners providing welfare and homelessness services Citizens Advice Bureau and Marches Energy Agency to help private tenants struggling with the cost-of-living crisis, putting them at risk of homelessness.
- Taking a multi-agency approach grow our proactive survey programme of blocks of flats in the Borough to ensure fire safety.
- Continue to refurbish homes through Nuplace's Telford & Wrekin Homes Programme setting a standard for other providers
- Respond to the changing regulatory landscape by implementing the Renters' Rights Bill, decent homes standard and Awaab's Law. Work with the Council's social landlords to support their compliance with the social housing regulator.
- Continue to implement our Affordable Warmth Strategy launching a new Warm Homes: Local Grant alongside existing Warm and Well Telford, On and Off gas property support and loan funding for Owner occupied and Private rented properties
- Empty Property Strategy - Continue to bring long term empty homes back into use.
- Working with Registered Social landlords to maximise the number of vulnerable and homeless individuals and families successfully rehoused through nominations - maximising access for the most vulnerable.

9. Objective 2 - To support safe, clean, green, healthy, connected communities

9.1 To achieve this objective, the Council will:

- Adoption of the new local plan that will deliver 20,000 new homes by 2040.
- Work to maintain housing supply of c1,000 new homes pa - aligning with planning reforms
- Work with partners and the police to focus on safe, clean, well-maintained neighbourhoods continuing to drive the Council's safer, stronger communities programme
- Shape how development delivers through implementation of new policies including -:
 - Homes for All Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) - delivering adapted, accessible accommodation and all age friendly estate design
 - Climate Change SPD with a focus on fabric, design - and sustainability measures including footpaths, enhanced green spaces and transport links
 - Tackling stalled sites causing blight in our communities through a proactive focus on derelict, vacant sites
 - Continuing to lobby for Government investment into estate regeneration

10. Objective 3 – To provide homes to support and empower the Borough's most vulnerable people

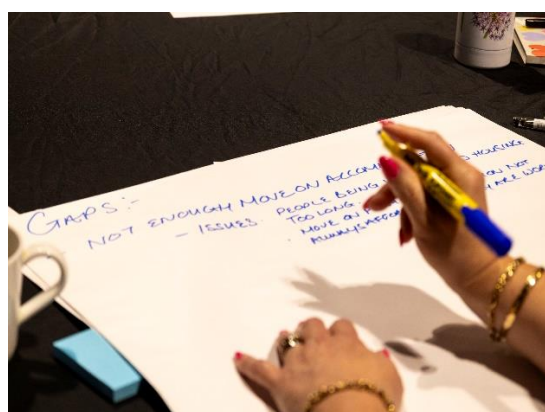
10.1 To achieve this objective, the Council will:

- Continue to prevent and relieve homelessness and support the most vulnerable clients to become tenant ready
- Continually review its temporary accommodation usage to ensure there is sufficient supply to minimise the use of emergency accommodation and B&B.
- Ensure the Council's Supported Accommodation offers good quality support and accommodation and work with partners to continually monitor and review effectiveness.
- Ensure that there is a place of safety available through emergency accommodation for all people experiencing domestic abuse, in accordance with its status as a White Ribbon Town.
- Work with Veterans and Care Leavers to explore models such as Housing First and Shared Lives as additional accommodation options.
- Work with the Council's local Registered Social Landlords using the joint nominations agreements to ensure continued Local Authority priority to refer into affordable and social rented accommodation for those most in need.
- Co-ordinate access into the Council's Specialist & Supported accommodation to ensure access for those most in need.

- Provide support to foster carers to overcome accommodation barriers that may prevent them from continuing to foster or from accepting additional placements.
- Work with partners to influence the future supply of affordable and social housing that targets areas of unmet need including increasing 1 bed and 4+bed homes
- Work with partners to influence the future supply of adapted affordable and social housing that can meet the needs of the Borough's ageing population and those with physical disabilities including those adults and children living with families and requiring larger properties.

11. Consultation

- 11.1 The Council has engaged with a number of internal and external partners to help shape the draft strategy. This included a very successful event in May 2025, with over 70 organisations in attendance.



- 11.3 Key themes that have come through consultation so far are:

Affordable / Appropriate Supply

- More 1 bed accommodation and move on accommodation with some having to stay too long in supported accommodation

- Lack of suitable funding for on-going long term, preventative support for clients with more complex needs.
- Affordable is not affordable for all
- A need for more accessible accommodation
- With an ageing population increasing numbers of elderly are remaining in inappropriate accommodation including too large and hard to maintain.

Infrastructure

- New housing needs to be supported by appropriate social infrastructure e.g. social groups and activities for older people moving away from their established network and community

Data

- Sharing of data on hidden groups e.g. those not known to adult social care or homelessness teams, e.g. learning difficulties living at home
- More partnership working particularly with health to join up data/intelligence on housing need, e.g. data from GP surgeries.

Age of Stock

- Housing stock coming to the end of its build life (New Town Estates).

Private Rented Sector

- Cost of living / additional regulation means private landlords are leaving the market or increasing rents.

11.2 The Council is continuing to explore these issues and others working with a range of key groups including:

Health & Wellbeing Board	Mental Health Partnership
Ageing Well Partnership Board	Making it Real Board
CYP commissioning	Expert by Experience Groups
Carers Partnership	Armed Forces Covenant
Learning Disability Partnership	Care leavers group
Autism Partnership	Foster Carers group
Town and Parish Council Clerks meeting	Registered Social Landlord Partners
Developers	Wrekin Landlords Association

12. Public Consultation and Communications Plan

- 12.1 Subject to Cabinet approval, it is proposed that public consultation commences on 21st July 2025 for a period of 6 weeks. A communications plan will be in place to promote the consultation.
- 12.2 This phase will include engaging with key lived experience groups such as care leavers, older people etc. as well as wider public consultation.
- 12.2 Public consultation will be in the form of an online survey available on a dedicated webpage at www.telford.gov.uk/housingstrategy

13. Next Steps

- 13.1 It is proposed that the final strategy is brought back to October Cabinet for final approval and adoption.

14. Alternative Options

- 14.1 Whilst it is not a statutory requirement in itself for the Council to have a Housing Strategy, Cabinet could decide not to proceed. To do so would however mean that the Council would adversely affect all the excellent work being done in the Borough to help meet the needs of its residents.

15. Key Risks

- 15.1 In carrying out the consultation, there is a risk that consultation will not reach enough people and, therefore, feedback is not representative of all residents living in the borough. To mitigate this risk, across Telford and Wrekin, Voluntary Organisations such as Age UK, Marches Energy Agency and housing charities such as Maninplace will be supporting the delivery of the consultation to ensure widespread awareness of the opportunity to comment on the draft strategy and engage with the consultation exercise.

16. Key Council Priorities

- 16.1 This strategy will build on existing initiatives and links closely to the themes of Telford & Wrekin Council's plan to protect, care and invest to create a better borough with the priorities:
- All neighbourhoods are a great place to live
 - A community-focussed, innovative Council providing efficient, effective and quality services
 - Everyone benefits from a thriving economy
 - Our natural environment is protected, and the Council has a leading role in addressing the climate emergency
 - Every child, young person and adult lives well in their community
- 16.2 The strategy also links closely with the priorities identified in the Health and Wellbeing Board vision – happier, healthier fulfilled lives.

17. Financial Implications

- 17.1 The approved Capital Programme includes funding which will support the objectives identified in the report.

18. Legal and HR Implications

- 18.1 There is no legal requirement for the Council to have a Housing Strategy, the previous duty being removed by the Deregulation Act 2015.

However, preparation of such a strategy is deemed good practice serving as a useful policy document setting out the Council's aims, objectives and intended outcomes in respect of all housing matters.

There are no other legal implications arising from this report.

The proposals contained in this report can be delivered using existing resources

19. Ward Implications

- 19.1 All wards will be impacted upon by these proposals.

20. Health, Social and Economic Implications

- 20.1 It is intended that this programme of work will contribute to improve health and wellbeing outcomes within the borough.

21. Equality and Diversity Implications

- 21.1 This strategy is about how the Council can work to deliver housing for all. In setting out its proposals the Council has paid due regard to the Public Sector Equality Duty, ensuring that equality considerations have been embedded throughout the process. The Council has actively considered how its decisions and actions will affect people with different protected characteristics, and has sought to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity, and foster good relations within the communities it serves, particularly in relation to access to safe, affordable, and suitable housing in line with our statutory responsibilities under s149 Equality Act 2010.

22. Climate Change and Environmental Implications

- 22.1 This strategy delivers on a number of actions under the Telford and Wrekin Council Corporate Climate Change Action Plan, such as Affordable Warmth, including work with the Telford Energy Advice line and direct delivery of retrofit programmes to the most carbon inefficient properties in the borough. Biodiversity & Carbon Sequestration, such as work with the review of the local plan to consider opportunities to enhance tree and woodland protection and Planning Policy by using the review of the Local Plan to develop robust policy that supports and promotes a move to carbon neutrality. This includes consideration of how development will need to adapt to the impacts of climate change and promotes opportunities to maximise carbon sequestration in the future.

23. Background Papers

- 1 Housing Strategy 2020 – 2025

24. Appendices

25. Report Sign Off

Signed off by	Date sent	Date signed off	Initials
DR	03/06/2025	03/06/2025	DR
AH	03/06/2025	11/06/2025	AH
SH	03/06/2025	13/06/2025	SH