



South Hams & West Devon

Better Homes, Better Lives

Housing Strategy 2021-2026



Action Plan 2022-23



South Hams
District Council



West Devon
Borough Council



Action Plan 2022-23

The Joint *Housing Strategy For South Hams and West Devon; 'Better Homes, Better Lives'* was adopted in 2021. This document highlights the priority's for both councils and our high level plans on how we will deliver them. The document was developed with a recognition of the need to be able to respond flexibly to changing needs across both local authority areas.

Both South Hams and West Devon have experienced multiple local impacts, including higher house prices and increased rents, supply and construction and availability of long term let accommodation. As a result, a Housing Crisis was declared in the South Hams in September 2021 and in West Devon in February 2022. Both Councils are determined, through partnership working, direct action and political lobbying to tackle their respective Housing Crisis' head on.



Each Council has produced and committed to a series of actions, tailored specifically to the issues each area is facing. These actions are additional to and complemented by our *Housing Strategy - Better Homes Better Lives* and are highlighted throughout this year's action plan.

For full details of the actions relating to each local authority please refer to the accompanying Review Document.

Housing for Place



- Promote balanced and sustainable communities
- Ensuring that homes support the health and wellbeing of the area

Housing For People



- Homes that support the Health & wellbeing of our residents
- Make the best use and improve quality of existing housing

Place Priority 1: Promote Balanced and Sustainable communities

Task	Aim	Timescale	Lead Person	Related actions from Housing Strategy and Housing Crisis
As part of the review of the JLP, a higher affordable housing contribution will be considered. To include the proposal that the number of 'First Homes' is not included in the contribution calculation.	To increase the percentage of affordable housing contributions based on a threshold that is sustainable and underpinned in policy.	Lobbying will be ongoing. Review of the JLP is in 2025	JLP and housing enabling	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to drive the JLP affordable homes agenda. Highlighted as a priority for the Housing Crisis in South Hams & West Devon
Actively contribute to 'Team Devon's' housing task force and housing commission to build the case for affordable housing as a key priority.	To achieve a Devon wide commitment to the prioritisation of affordable housing.	ongoing	Elected Members Andy Bates Chris Brook Isabel Blake	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to drive the JLP affordable homes agenda. Highlighted as a priority for the Housing Crisis in South Hams & West Devon
Continue to achieve a minimum of 30% Affordable Housing	Work with the JLP team to maximise the minimum amount of affordable housing delivered on allocated sites.	To align with JLP review	Senior Specialist - Housing Enabling	Through the JLP deliver 7,000 high quality, sustainable and affordable homes during the lifetime of the plan across South Hams and West Devon.
Work with Neighbourhood Planning Groups to ensure partnership approach is achieved from the start	To ensure new and existing groups are supported to ensure their plans are reflective of current needs.	immediate and ongoing	Senior Specialist - Housing Enabling	Work collaboratively with communities in the formation of Neighbourhood Plans to deliver the right development available to meet local needs

Task	Aim	Timescale	Lead Person	Related actions from Housing Strategy and Housing Crisis
Produce clear guides on Affordable Housing which outline types of Affordable Housing and the delivery process in bringing these forward through planning.	To provide key information regarding the affordable housing aims, needs and achievements in the area. This will provide clear guidance to Town and Parish councils and groups on affordable housing	1 year	Senior Specialist – Housing Enabling	Work collaboratively with communities in the formation of Neighbourhood Plans to deliver the right development available to meet local needs
Look at which Neighbourhood Planning sites are not bringing a plan forward; where it has been identified that a housing need exists.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● To offer support and advice in bringing neighbourhood plan sites forward. ● Increased delivery of rural affordable housing. 	start immediately	Senior specialist – Housing Enabling, Neighbourhood Planning and Strategic Planning	Work collaboratively with communities in the formation of Neighbourhood Plans to deliver the right development available to meet local needs
Review existing Neighbourhood Plans in the following areas: North Tawton, Bere Ferrers, Milton Abbot, Bridestowe & Sourton, Tavistock newly emerging plan. Consideration to be given to reviewing Staverton and Dartmouth, Kingswear, Bickleigh, Brixton.	To ensure Neighbourhood Plans are reflective of current need and up to date	2 years	Specialists with support from Neighbourhood planning team	Work collaboratively with communities in the formation of Neighbourhood Plans to deliver the right development available to meet local needs

Task	Aim	Timescale	Lead Person	Related actions from Housing Strategy and Housing Crisis
Develop a method of illustrating where Neighbourhood Plans have been adopted and where they are being developed.	To ensure clarity to both internal and external customers on current status of Neighbourhood Planning.	Already ongoing to be completed by next review	Specialists – Housing Enabling, Neighbourhood Planning and Strategic Planning	Use strategic planning policy to ensure sustainable housing growth.
Investigate the feasibility of appointing a Dedicated Planning Officer to assist with affordable housing projects	To streamline the internal planning and enabling process to ensure timely decisions on planning decisions.	August 2022 to commence trial period	Head of Housing / Head of Development Management	Use strategic planning policy to ensure sustainable housing growth.
Conduct a thorough review of our custom and self build register and policy to ensure we are meeting the statutory requirements. Develop a plot passport for self build plots and consider introducing a tariff for registration.	To encourage and support self build opportunities and housing delivery.	2 years	Senior Specialists	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Encourage opportunities for people interested in custom build / self build development, both within community housing schemes and wider housing delivery. ● Support opportunities for self-build.
Continue to work on the establishment of a Community Benefit Society with Registered Provider status	To enable the development and delivery of affordable housing by SHDC.	Ongoing	Senior Specialist Housing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Build genuinely affordable high quality housing for our communities through a cost efficient standardised model. ● Explore the concepts of the Council as a developer and landlord of new housing.

Task	Aim	Timescale	Lead Person	Related actions from Housing Strategy and Housing Crisis
Conduct an options appraisal of the area to look to identify a Gypsy and Traveller site that best meets needs of the community	A clear understanding of the Gypsy and Traveller and Caravan Dwellers communities.	2 years	Senior Specialist Housing	Promote effective partnership working to meet the needs of Gypsy and Travellers.
Identify a site for Gypsy & Traveller use	To find a suitable site to sit with the JLP review.	within 5 years	Senior Specialist – Housing Enabling	Promote effective partnership working to meet the needs of Gypsy and Travellers.
To develop protocols and policies surrounding the travelling community include mapping system for navigator involvement	To provide a clear illustration of the services and our commitment to this area of work.	1 year	Senior Specialist Housing	Promote effective partnership working to meet the needs of Gypsy and Travellers.
Use Section 106 affordable housing contributions as soon as possible, to help fund developments anywhere in the area where the terms of the Section 106 agreements will allow.	Proactive use of funding, working within legal parameters to support new development that meets housing need.	Ongoing.	Housing Enabling and Assets	Utilise Section 106 Affordable Housing Contributions and other funding available to the Council's in the most effective way Highlighted as a priority for the Housing Crisis in South Hams & West Devon

Task	Aim	Timescale	Lead Person	Related actions from Housing Strategy and Housing Crisis
<p>Seek opportunities to invest in Council owned social housing with highly sustainable specification; to include Modular housing options</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Maximise delivery of affordable housing. ● Support those on low incomes who are unable to afford 'affordable' rented housing 	<p>ongoing</p>	<p>Isabel Blake</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Work creatively with Devon County Council to provide quality specialist adapted housing and housing for people requiring support to live independently, to be managed by SeaMoor Lettings. ● Explore the concepts of the Council as a developer and landlord of new housing. ● Highlighted as a priority for the Housing Crisis in South Hams & West Devon
<p>Undertake a full review of all council owned assets and assess suitability for affordable housing. To include provision of 'Supported Accommodation' options.</p>	<p>To take an interventionist approach to the housing market over the longer- term, where there is demonstrable housing need, leading to improved long term housing outcomes.</p>	<p>Autumn 2022</p>	<p>Laura Wotton Isabel Blake</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Work creatively with Devon County Council to provide quality specialist adapted housing and housing for people requiring support to live independently, to be managed by SeaMoor Lettings. ● Explore the concepts of the Council as a developer and landlord of new housing. ● Highlighted as a priority for the Housing Crisis in South Hams & West Devon

Task	Aim	Timescale	Lead Person	Related actions from Housing Strategy and Housing Crisis
Continue to work on the Springhill development.	Demonstrate our commitment to the wellbeing of homeless people in the Borough by providing quality temporary accommodation (such as is proposed at Springhill Tavistock) and reduce the need for inappropriate forms of temporary accommodation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Planning granted December 2021 ● Scheme to be tendered for development Spring 2022 	Dan Field Sophie Cobbledick	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Redevelop existing homeless provision in West Devon to ensure good quality accommodation for people when they need it the most ● Highlighted as a priority for the Housing Crisis in West Devon
Define the land we have suitable for development within areas where a housing need can be demonstrated. Subject to Member approval. Initiate procurement process to identify a development partner capable of delivering housing in partnership with us.	Create a long term strategic partnership with a high quality Registered Provider/s to see the delivery of affordable-led housing at scale and over the long term in the Borough and District.	Spring 2023	Director for Place & Enterprise & Head of Housing (RP's)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Work creatively with RPs and Homes England and other joint venture partners to draw down investment to deliver more affordable housing including more social rented homes. ● Highlighted as a priority for the Housing Crisis
Investigate the feasibility of incentivising landowners for the provision of land specifically for Local Needs Affordable Housing and seek to lobby MPs and Central Government based on our findings.	Incentivising land owners when providing land for affordable housing where there is an identified need, in order to help release land at a reduced cost to support the small scale provision of affordable housing in our rural communities.	Autumn 22	Housing Enabling Specialist	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Work with parish councils and community groups to develop Neighbourhood Plans to deliver the right type and tenure of housing that meet local needs. ● Highlighted as a priority for the Housing Crisis

Task	Aim	Timescale	Lead Person	Related actions from Housing Strategy and Housing Crisis
Launch of Step on Scheme to promote shared ownership to social housing tenants	Work closely with registered providers to ensure best use of properties and increase the availability of rental units for those on low income.	1st April Launch of Step on Pilot	Housing Team, Revenues and Benefits and Registered Providers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Encourage provision of a wide range of housing options including social housing, managed shared accommodation and managed intermediate assured short hold private rental, part ownership and market sale. ● Highlighted as a priority for the Housing Crisis in South Hams
To lobby Government to allow local councils to be able to charge 200% Council Tax on second / holiday homes.	To ensure contribution to local authority services to is sufficient to sustain local communities	Lobbying activity commenced with a letter to Michael Gove Minister for DHLUC and is ongoing	Isabel Blake	Encourage provision of a wide range of housing options including social housing, managed shared accommodation and managed intermediate assured short hold private rental, part ownership and market sale Highlighted as a priority for the Housing Crisis in South Hams
Lobby government, through MPs and the Local Government Association, to allow a charge on housing plots with planning permission if they have not been built after a specified period.	To encourage developers to build their sites without delay.	Lobbying activity commenced with a letter to Michael Gove Minister for DHLUC and is ongoing	Enabling team and planning dept	Encourage provision of a wide range of housing options including social housing, managed shared accommodation and managed intermediate assured short hold private rental, part ownership and market sale Highlighted as a priority for the Housing Crisis in South Hams

Task	Aim	Timescale	Lead Person	Related actions from Housing Strategy and Housing Crisis
<p>Lobby Government to review all holiday accommodation. This could include an extension of the 90-day short let legislation, a proper planning class for short lets and proper licencing for them. Ensure robust contributions are made to the consultation process proposed on the establishment of a Tourist Accommodation Registration Scheme in England.</p>	<p>To ensure that it is properly regulated, complying with local planning policies and taxes. To prevent loopholes in the taxation system and prevent too many local homes being converted to holiday accommodation</p>	<p>Lobbying activity commenced with a letter to Michael Gove Minister for DHLUC and is ongoing</p>	<p>Isabel Blake</p>	<p>Encourage provision of a wide range of housing options including social housing, managed shared accommodation and managed intermediate assured short hold private rental, part ownership and market sale Highlighted as a priority for the Housing Crisis in South Hams & West Devon</p>

Place Priority 2: Ensure that homes support the health and wellbeing of the area

Task	Aim	Timescale	Lead Person	Related actions from Housing Strategy and Housing Crisis
Complete Housing need surveys to cover key locations in the District and Borough to direct the delivery of affordable housing. Using this data, seek to allocate exception sites and work with plans where sites are stalled.	Ensure community engagement with any emerging plans for housing to reflect local need.	to commence in year 2	Specialists	Plan for future health needs
To encourage affordable housing delivery where there is an identified need through Housing Need Surveys. Target key locations where reviews are due or groups are emerging to ensure that a housing needs survey is undertaken	To ensure information used as part of development of plans is based on current up to date needs assessments. This will assist planning consultation responses.	2 years	Senior Specialist – Housing Enabling	Plan for future health needs
Ensure that the evidence base being built for the JLP review includes data from wider partner agencies to ensure it reflects local need, to include accessibility, learning disability and age related needs.	Ensure that all delivery and need monitoring is holistic and up to date	Ongoing	Plan for future health needs Specialist	Plan for future health needs
Gather information from DCC on current need for Supported/Specialist Housing to inform provision of future specialist / adapted properties	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Build on the strength of the Disabled Adapted Needs Panel to replicate the success for other specialist needs i.e. Learning Disabilities. ● Create an accurate picture of future need to inform future planning and delivery. 	April 2022 onwards	Specialist – Housing Enabling	Plan for future health needs

Task	Aim	Timescale	Lead Person	Related actions from Housing Strategy and Housing Crisis
To work with developers to meet the needs of those requiring Extra Care Housing in West Devon. To include identifying funding opportunities.	To ensure housing is developed to meet local need and enable stock turnover.	Ongoing	Senior Specialist - Housing Enabling	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support an appropriately located planning application for an extra care housing scheme in West Devon Highlighted as a priority for the Housing Crisis in West Devon
Look to identify a site on the Councils own land where an exemplar site of low carbon modular housing could be brought forward.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To encourage the development of an exemplar site of low carbon modular housing, to show that developments can be both stylish and great to live in. Work with RPs to understand and promote modern methods of construction 	April 2023 to identify a potential scheme	Housing Enabling, Assets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encourage the development of energy efficient affordable homes to reduce carbon emissions and heating costs Highlighted as a priority for the Housing Crisis in South Hams & West Devon

People Priority 1: Homes that support the health and wellbeing of our residents

Task	Aim	Timescale	Lead Person	Related actions from Housing Strategy and Housing Crisis
Conduct a review all holiday lets in the area to ensure that the owners are correctly registered and accessing appropriate services.	Identify areas with high second homes and identify waste, planning, licensing and repair issues	Summer 2022	Housing Service Lead	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Monitor and actively promote high standards in the rented sector and take appropriate action where standards are not being met, to tackle disrepair, poor housing conditions and criminal landlords. ● Highlighted as a priority for the Housing Crisis in South Hams
To work in close partnership with Devon County Council to provide suitable accommodation options for vulnerable people (exempt accommodation). Look to deliver directly a scheme for people with learning disabilities on land owned by the Council.	Work in close partnership with Devon County Council to provide alternatives – putting people before profit.	ongoing	Senior Specialist – Assets & Housing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Pro-actively support independent living and also support people with disabilities to remain in their homes through disabled facility grants and make effective use of the better care fund. ● Highlighted as a priority for the Housing Crisis in West Devon

Task	Aim	Timescale	Lead Person	Related actions from Housing Strategy and Housing Crisis
Continue to challenge local providers, insisting on robust evidence of service provision prior to a Housing Benefit claim being paid. Lobby national government to make legislative changes to remove the incentives for unscrupulous providers and to protect the needs of this vulnerable group.	To ensure vulnerable individuals are not subject to unfair charging or poor service delivery.	Commenced and ongoing	Housing Service Lead Senior Specialists – Housing & Housing Benefit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Pro-actively support independent living and also support people with disabilities to remain in their homes through disabled facility grants and make effective use of the better care fund. ● Highlighted as a priority for the Housing Crisis in West Devon
To continue to work with landlords to ensure rental properties meet the required standards. Maintain our webpages and develop a webform so that landlords have clarity over their responsibilities and signposted to help.	To ensure Minimum Energy Efficiency standards in the private rented sector.	Work commenced with Tamar Energy for completion 01/03/2023	Senior Specialist – EH	Monitor and actively promote high standards in the rented sector and take appropriate action where standards are not being met, to tackle disrepair, poor housing conditions and criminal landlords.
Conduct targeted activity to ensure maximum uptake of Green Homes Grant funding.	Complete the phase 1 of Green Home Grant project for low income households	Jul-22	Senior Specialist – EH	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Ensure the Private rented sector meets the requirements of The Domestic Minimum Energy Efficiency Standard (MEES) Regulations. ● Highlighted as a priority for the Housing Crisis in West Devon

Task	Aim	Timescale	Lead Person	Related actions from Housing Strategy and Housing Crisis
Promote available funding opportunities and bid for further funding, for improvements to existing private sector houses to improve stock condition and positively impact on Climate Change.	To contribute to our commitment to address the declared Climate Emergency and in recognition that housing is responsible for 40% of national CO2 emissions.	Ongoing	Senior specialist – EH	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Ensure the Private rented sector meets the requirements of The Domestic Minimum Energy Efficiency Standard (MEES) Regulations. ● Highlighted as a priority for the Housing Crisis in West Devon
Deliver 2022–27 Homeless Strategy Inc. (Action plan for 2022–23)	Strategy and action plan to be adopted by members in April 22	Apr-22	Senior Specialist – Housing	Meet the priorities of our standalone Homeless Strategy and Rough Sleeping Strategy.
Continue to promote the use of Disabled Facilities Grants to promote independent living and continue to utilise the Better Care fund. Review existing agreements and contracts to ensure best value.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Maximise spend and continue to develop further the help available. ● Build on the initial marketing to broaden the message of what help is available. 	Mar-23	Senior Specialist – EH	Pro-actively support independent living and also support people with disabilities to remain in their homes through disabled facilities grants and make effective use of the Better Care Fund.
To expand the activity of the Disabled Adapted Panel to forecast future need before it becomes acute.	To continue partnership working and reduce the wait times in particular for those in need of adapted homes.	May-22	Specialists – Housing Enabling	Pro-actively support independent living and also support people with disabilities to remain in their homes through disabled facility grants and make effective use of the Better Care Fund.

Task	Aim	Timescale	Lead Person	Related actions from Housing Strategy and Housing Crisis
Further consideration given to creation of a Key Worker Housing register: Develop a universal housing register intended to meet the needs of local people on Low to mid range incomes.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● To enable the allocation of intermediate priced housing for those unable to afford full market rents. ● To meet the needs of those who are key to the sustainability of our communities and economy. 	Autumn 22	Specialist - Housing	Develop and promote an intermediate housing register specifically for key workers with supply from the private rented sector through SeaMoor and property developed by the Councils
Scope and offer a HMO property management package to encourage landlords to provide this form of housing	Increase the number of shared accommodation options	Dec-22	Senior Specialist - Housing	Support and encourage new, high quality and well managed, Houses in Multiple Occupation in the local area, including offering a management service ourselves, whilst licensing all HMOs that are subject to mandatory licensing.
Develop support pages for landlords on our website to increase landlord engagement.	Increase provision of affordable private rented housing.	Landlords forum and communication will be organised by Spring 2022	Housing Team, Communications Team	Deliver Private Rented Sector Landlords' & Letting Agents' Forums and other networking opportunities for private landlords; promoting the events widely and using them to consult the Private Rented Sector on the issues that are affecting them.

People Priority 2: Make the best use and improve the quality of existing housing

Task	Aim	Timescale	Lead Person	Related actions from Housing Strategy and Housing Crisis
Ensure that the evidence base being built for the JLP review includes data from wider partner agencies to ensure it reflects local need, to include accessibility, learning disability and age related needs.	Ensure that all delivery and need monitoring is holistic and up to date	Ongoing	Specialists	Interrogate new Census data to predict future housing trends and needs.
Using current Census data and other sources, develop a better understanding of; Property sizes across all tenure, current cost of private rented property and data on the high value areas to contribute to future JLP/policy amendments	Contributing to reviews and collating evidence. Mapping of evidence/information to be produced on interactive map to contribute to understanding the Housing Crisis.	Commenced and ongoing	Specialists	Interrogate new Census data to predict future housing trends and needs.
To hold an annual gypsy, traveller forum aimed at consulting on the needs of the travelling community.	To ensure that we are listening to that community.	Annually	Senior Specialist - Housing	Regularly communicate with residents, agencies, partners and our communities to ensure an up to date, two way, understanding of current needs and services.
To develop guidance and publish on our website, the local authority approach to Gypsy, Traveller and Van dweller issues to ensure clarity on the process and actions which will be taken.	To ensure communities understand what, if any, action has been taken on unauthorised encampments.	Autumn 22	Senior Specialist - Housing	Regularly communicate with residents, agencies, partners and our communities to ensure an up to date, two way, understanding of current needs and services.

Task	Aim	Timescale	Lead Person	Related actions from Housing Strategy and Housing Crisis
Investigate the feasibility of creating a community housing bus for engagement with local people around housing issues	To promote community engagement around SeaMoor Homes, new developments and general housing advice.	1 year	Senior specialist – Housing Enabling	Encourage long-term empty homes back into use.
To encourage Empty Homes back in to use and to investigate Compulsory Purchase Order powers or management orders where applicable	To ensure genuinely ‘Empty Homes’ are brought back into available housing stock.	Mar-23	Senior Specialists – EH	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Highlighted as a priority for the Housing Crisis in South Hams & West Devon
To review and update the policy for the Tenants Incentive Scheme	To provide a clear understanding of the policy and procedures for applying for and processing an application for a TIS payment	May-22	Specialists – Housing Enabling / Housing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote the Tenants Incentive Scheme to encourage and incentivise tenants in social housing to downsize. Highlighted as a priority for the Housing Crisis in South Hams & West Devon
Promote Tenants Incentive Scheme widely to ensure maximum take up. Additional housing revenue funding has been allocated to increase payments made to those tenants downsizing to make the move more attractable and affordable.	Encourage family sized accommodation to be returned to available housing stock to meet the needs of local families.	Ongoing	Specialists	Work with our partners to seek re-development opportunities to enhance the current housing stock and to meet the needs of residents. Highlighted as a priority for the Housing Crisis in South Hams & West Devon

Task	Aim	Timescale	Lead Person	Related actions from Housing Strategy and Housing Crisis
Work alongside the VOA to request a review of the Broad Market Area; to better reflect the costs of rents in the South Hams and West Devon. Collection of further data to show the disparity between private rents and the local housing allowance to support continued lobbying for increased frequency of LHA review	Better align local rents with Housing Allowance allocations.	Lobbying activity commenced with a letter to Michael Gove Minister for DHLUC and is ongoing	Housing Service Lead & Senior Specialist Housing Benefit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Highlighted as a priority for the Housing Crisis
To continue to update and expand the newly launched SeaMoor Homes website	To provide a wide choice of housing options available for people to buy or rent at less than market values and to seek wider opportunities for people to access the home ownership ladder.	1 year	Senior Specialists – Housing and Housing Enabling	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Seek to expand our own in-house private lettings service SeaMoor Lettings. Highlighted as a priority for the Housing Crisis



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