

A.4 APPENDIX A

Housing Strategy 2026 - 2030

Changes post consultation are shown in red font (with the exception of minor typographical amendments)

Introductory Summary

Tendring is a place of contrasts. It has a stunning coastline, but the communities that live alongside this beauty experience amongst the highest levels of deprivation in the UK. Jaywick is the most deprived ward in England. Most people own their own homes in the district. A significant 62% of the population are over 65 and require increasing support to live independently, or specialist supported housing now and in the future.

This strategy is being written against a backdrop of change for Tendring District Council. Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) means that the possibility of joining with neighbouring authorities to form a new unitary authority is on the horizon. Essex is part of the Government priority programme for LGR and proposals will have been submitted to Government prior to this strategy being launched for consultation. A decision is likely in March 2026. This housing strategy has therefore been written within a timeframe where it is reasonable to assume that the scope of the Council's housing responsibilities will remain constant and continue but with an overlap beyond 2028 when new unitary councils are expected to be formed across Essex.

Greater Essex Devolution will bring strategic housing powers to the proposed new Mayoral Combined County Authority for the local government areas in Essex, Southend-on-Sea and Thurrock. The combined authority is likely to have more strategic control over planning and housing along with a stronger voice for Essex with UK government.

The majority of the social housing in the district is owned and managed by Tendring District Council which has retained its own council housing. Housing associations also have significant numbers of homes in the area. Both play an important role in the district by providing affordable housing. Affordable housing is insufficient in Tendring where 70% of housing is owner occupied, and just under 20% is privately rented. **Our first housing priority is therefore to ensure that our own housing stock is well maintained** and that we continue to improve the quality of our housing. A national focus on the safety and quality of homes, and on tenant satisfaction measures, has led to the Housing Regulator setting clear standards for all providers of social housing which the Council is determined to achieve within available resources. We measure our performance against these standards and publish [the results](#) annually.

The numbers of homeless households has been increasing sharply across Britain. Nationally this is exacerbated by both the high cost of renting in the private rented sector and the lack of affordable rented housing. Tendring is no exception, experiencing a steep rise in homelessness, and an associated significant rise in the cost to the Council in providing temporary accommodation and other support to those experiencing homelessness. **Preventing and reducing homelessness is our second housing priority.**

Tendring has a good track record of delivering the overall numbers of new build homes required in the Local Plan and was predicted to continue to meet or exceed the target of 550 homes a year for at least the next five years. New planning rules mean that the

numbers of homes we will be required to meet for the future has more than doubled. This will be a challenge, and it will be important to continue to require 30% of all new housing to be affordable. We are currently reviewing the Local Plan. **Delivering, with partners, high quality homes is our third housing priority.**

The Council's housing team has an important role to play in supporting people in their homes and communities, whether they are Council tenants, live in homes that they own, or rent from private landlords. **Supporting people in their homes and communities is our fourth housing priority.** This includes the support we provide as a landlord. For Council tenants our most recent Tenant survey showed that satisfaction with our housing services overall has continued to rise. We have listened to the feedback from tenants and will be targeting the areas that they have told us need to improve. Many of our tenants are struggling with the rising cost of living and the steep increases in the cost of energy and food. Our services have been expanded to better support those who are struggling with their finances or other aspects of their tenancy.

Support needs tend to increase with age for residents in all types of housing. We are therefore planning, with our partners, for the long-term support needs of our aging population

Our strategic housing priorities for the next five years are therefore:

- 1. Maintain and improve our existing stock.**
- 2. Preventing and reducing homelessness.**
- 3. Delivering, with partners, high quality homes.**
- 4. Supporting people in their homes and communities.**

National and Local Considerations

National

There are several developments in national policy that will impact on housing in Tendring over the forthcoming years. National Government have recently announced £39 billion funding for building affordable homes over the ten years from 2026, to be delivered through Homes England. This supports an ambition to build 1.5 million homes over the lifetime of this parliament. Changes in the National Planning Policy Framework, updated in December 2024, include a revision of the formula for calculating housing need, greater emphasis on small community led development of sites, strengthening the support for older people's housing, and reinforcing the importance of energy efficiency in adapting existing buildings. These changes will impact on future housing and adaptation to existing homes in Tendring. The Planning and Infrastructure Bill introduced in March 2025 will make further changes to support accelerated housing delivery and alter the planning system.

In recent years there has been a seismic shift in national housing management policy towards legislation and regulation that addresses safety in the home in the social housing sector, and improved engagement with tenants and leaseholders. This led to the Social Housing (Regulation) Act 2023 which sets out a range of standards that all social housing landlords will be measured against on an annual basis. These cover the decency and safety of homes, tenant and leaseholder engagement, responsible neighbourhood management, handling of repairs, and tenant satisfaction measures. The performance for Tendring can be found on the Council's website [here](#).

Housing has been estimated to produce upwards of 20% of the country's carbon emissions. Tendring has set out a realistic plan to achieve the national target of net zero emissions by 2050 (not producing more carbon than is saved), in its [Climate Change Action Plan](#). Housing's contribution to this ambition is integrated into the [Council Housing Asset Management Plan](#) which commits to upgrading Council owned homes to improve energy efficiency and tackle fuel poverty. Alongside the focus on improving its own stock the Council will provide advice on energy savings to tenants and other residents. New build properties in the district will also have to meet strengthened energy efficiency standards.

Additional flexibilities around the use of Right to Buy receipts were announced by Government in July 2025, adding to flexibilities that were announced in July 2024. The flexibilities are intended to support local authorities to accelerate and increase the delivery of new social and affordable housing. The Council will seek to make effective use of these flexibilities to support housing acquisition and development where it is appropriate to do so. Blending the use of s106 planning receipts along with those from sales through the Right to Buy.

Standards in both safety and energy efficiency in the private rented sector (PRS) are in the process of being strengthened by proposed new legislation and regulations. Currently the standards for PRS tenants are enforced through the Housing Health and Safety Rating System Rating (HHSRS) and Minimum Energy Efficiency Standards (MEES). The Government is planning to extend the decent homes standard to PRS tenants in the Renters' Rights Act 2025, and is consulting on raising the requirements for MEES target to a higher level of energy efficiency. These will impact on the Council's role in maintaining standards in the PRS.

Finally, the Supported Housing (Regulatory Standards) Act 2023 will provide a regulatory framework for supported housing provision that has so far been unregulated. Regulation will sit with Essex County Council **and local housing authorities who will need to adopt supported housing strategies and lead the licensing of supported housing providers**. This will impact on our partnership work with organisations that provide specialist housing in the district.

Local

Tendring's Corporate Plan 'Our Vision' 2024-2028 outlines the Council's vision for the district, its residents and businesses. This housing strategy aligns with the overall vision for Tendring, in particular the key priorities of:

- Pride in our area and services to residents: This includes improving the quality of services and ensuring that residents feel a sense of belonging and pride in their district.
- Working with partners to improve quality of life: This highlights the importance of collaboration with other organisations and communities to achieve shared goals.
- Raising aspirations and creating opportunities: This focuses on supporting residents to achieve their goals and creating pathways to better opportunities.
- Financial stability and openness: This focuses on responsible financial management and transparency in Council operations.

There are a number of local Council policies that impact on this housing strategy. The most significant of these in terms of building new homes is [The Local Plan](#). This includes the Council's statutory policies for the Council's requirements for affordable housing over the duration of the plan, and more broadly delivering homes to meet the needs of local people. A review of the current Local Plan is being undertaken with an expectation that a draft plan will be agreed towards the end of 2025 and a revised plan submitted for examination in 2026. The draft plan takes account of the National Planning Policy Framework revision of the way housing targets are calculated, which in Tendring will result in a significant increase in required housing numbers. The revised plan will introduce greater flexibility in the use of the commuted sums paid by developers to meet their affordable housing obligations.

The Council have a suite of **housing related strategies and policies** that reflect our responsibilities as a landlord of Council housing, and our broader housing responsibilities as a District Council. They can be found [here](#). Those that have the greatest impact on this strategy include:

The **Housing Allocations Policy**. High demand means that those applying for Council Housing cannot be guaranteed an offer. The allocations policy facilitates assessment of need and gives priority to those with a local connection, typically for at least three years.

The **Homelessness Reduction and Rough Sleepers Strategy**. This strategy sets out how the Council plans to reduce homelessness and tackle rough sleeping. Since it was written the district has faced an unprecedented rise in homelessness. The strategy is being reviewed and updated to reflect the increase in demand, and to incorporate a best practice approach.

The **Corporate and Housing Complaints Policy** This provides a fair and consistent approach to dealing with complaints and ensure that they are dealt with appropriately and professionally in line with the Complaint Handling Codes of both Housing Ombudsman and the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman services.

The **Tenant Involvement Policy**. This sets out how the Council will build trust and engage with tenants in a meaningful way that enables them to influence decisions and feel well informed. Central to this policy is communicating on the housing service

performance against the standards set by the Regulator of Social Housing and improving tenant satisfaction measures.

The **Anti-Social Behaviour Policy**. This sets out the Council's commitment to tackle anti-social behaviour because of the detrimental impact it can have on our residents, communities and visitors to the district. It defines what constitutes unacceptable behaviour and sets out the steps that can be taken to address this.

The Council has, since April 2024, applied a premium of 100 per cent (on top of what would normally be paid) on council tax for properties that have been empty and unfurnished for 12 months. This premium increases through 200% for those empty for 5 – 10 years and to 300% for those empty over 10 years. The aim of this premium is to encourage a reduction in the number of empty homes in the district.

The Council's own housing stock of just over 3,000 homes is managed through the Council's Housing Revenue Account with a 30 year business plan. It is important the Council carefully manages the HRA and balances the financial sustainability of the HRA against the ongoing maintenance needs of the housing stock and any emerging requirements.

About Tendring

Tendring district has an area of approximately 130 square miles with a coastline of just over 37 miles. The district is in North East Essex and borders Suffolk to the North as well as being approximately 70 miles from London. The district consists of a number of coastal and riverside towns and a largely rural heartland.

The largest urban area is Clacton-on-Sea. Tendring is also home to the international port of Harwich and the coastal towns of Frinton-on-Sea and Walton-on-the-Naze. The district contains the historic port of Brightlingsea and also Manningtree which borders Suffolk on the Stour Estuary. The rural heartland contains many distinctive villages and hamlets of varying size.

The last census in 2021 gives the population of Tendring as 148,287. The recently commissioned Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) for the district [Tendring SHMA - March 2025.pdf](#) shows a growing older population with a high percentage of disabled people. A relatively large proportion of people are over 65 (62%) compared with other Essex districts. The proportion who are 75 or older at 14.5% is significantly higher than the national average of 8.6%. Not surprisingly given this profile 24.1% of the population are disabled under the Equality Act definition, compared to a national average of 17.3%. This will impact on housing needs now and in the future.

Although there are areas of affluence in Tendring, the district consistently scores as an area with a high number of wards in the bottom quintile in the index of multiple deprivation, with Jaywick being one of the most deprived wards in the country. Nevertheless, around two thirds of the population are working or looking for work and unemployment levels were around the national average of 4.4% in August 2024. However, wages are low. For those in

employment the average wage was 16% below the Essex average. Income and wage levels are linked to the affordability of home ownership and the rental market.

Housing in Tendring

Tendring is unusual in that the majority of homes, 71.9%, are owner occupied, increasingly without a mortgage. Just under a fifth, 19.9%, are privately rented. The proportion of accommodation available for social rent is relatively small at under one in ten properties, 8.2%, in the district. Owner occupation and the private rented sector have both grown significantly, in comparison to the more affordable socially rented accommodation.

Rents in the Private Rented Sector have grown faster than the rest of the country. Average rents have risen by 27.1% over the last 5 years albeit local housing allowance rates paid through welfare benefits has not kept pace with this rise. At the same time there has been a massive expansion of privately rented accommodation which in Tendring has more than doubled in number, unlike the rest of England where the numbers of lettings of privately rented accommodation has fallen. Private market rents are on average at least 10% higher than the Local Housing Allowance, meaning that households on low incomes, including those that receive Housing Benefit, who can be working, will still need to top up housing costs. The Council needs to enable the development of more affordable housing in order to ease these pressures.

For those seeking larger sized housing the options are limited by income, and availability. Owner occupied homes are larger with a majority of three or four bedrooms, socially rented housing tends to be smaller with a majority of one or two bedroom properties, and privately rented homes typically have two or three bedrooms. Larger market homes become increasingly unaffordable to rent or buy compared to socially rented properties. The gap increases the larger the property. In 2024 for a three bedroom home typically a social rent would require an income of around £21,000, and to buy would require an income of around £74,000 . [Tendring SHMA - March 2025.pdf](#)

Working with our partners

Working with our partners with shared housing objectives enables us to deliver more than we could achieve on our own. We acknowledge and value the contribution other organisations make. This includes Housing Associations (Registered Providers) with homes in the area, and charities and other voluntary organisations who support people to meet their housing needs in a variety of ways. Tendring already works collaboratively with Essex County Council and neighbouring Districts where we have shared housing responsibilities. The future local government reorganisation will benefit from building on these existing partnership networks.

Our Strategic Housing Priorities

Set out below are our proposed strategic housing priorities for the period that this strategy covers. **Set out within each priority area is a set of ambitions. These are intentionally**

described as ambitions rather than targets and do not have timescales associated with them.

It is important to acknowledge what we have achieved over the last five years as this provides the foundation on which we plan to build over the coming three years of this strategy. The achievements noted are those set as actions in the 2020-25 housing strategy or additional ones.

1. To maintain and improve our existing council housing stock.

Why is this a priority?

Tendring Council own and manage 3,078 homes of which 274 are specialist sheltered housing for older people. Since 2020 the Council have sold 67 homes through Right to Buy. We are proud of the work that has gone into creating new Council homes for temporary and permanent use, totalling 138 properties over the last 5 years, with 30 more in the pipeline.

Delivering high quality services and maintaining and improving our homes is central to our values as a social housing landlord. Each year we survey tenant satisfaction with housing services, and we report on the quality and safety of our homes. We are seeing a steady increase in overall satisfaction levels, and a marked increase in our turnaround times and resolution of complaints. In the areas where we have a lower score, notably repairs and how well we are perceived as listening to tenants, we are determined to improve. Our [Tenant Involvement Policy](#) sets out how we will work with tenants to influence decisions about their homes and communities .

Most of our surveyed homes reach Decent Homes Standards and have good energy efficiency standards, measured against achieving Energy Performance Certificate C. All the necessary safety checks are carried out to our properties each year. In order to maintain the quality of our housing stock we have a Housing Improvement Programme (HIP) which in 2024/25 spent £3.2 million.

The cost of living increases, particularly on food and fuel as well as general living costs, has meant more of our tenants are struggling to make ends meet. We work successfully with our tenants to retain their tenancies. Despite financial pressures we have low arrears and collect 99.3% of rent due. But we recognise the pressures people are under and services have expanded to provide more support to tenants who need financial and other advice.

Achievements

- Carried out an external review of our housing services against the new regulatory requirements and adopted an improvement plan to meet all the new standards.
- Adopted an asset management strategy to guide our priorities for maintaining and improving our stock.
- HIP investment over the last 5 years £14.3m, £3.2m in 2024/25 with a budget of £4.6m in 2025/26.

- Began a rolling programme of surveys to establish the condition of all our homes, enabling us to target those which need improvement.
- Invested in new lifts, fire safety works, and health and safety standards to keep tenants safe.
- Targeted illegal occupation of council homes, increasing the numbers of homes we can offer to people on the housing register.
- Introduced an under-occupation incentive scheme for Council tenants to free up larger properties.

Ambitions

- To improve the collection, collation and analysis of data in respect of both our homes and our tenants and to use that data to intelligently inform our activities.
- To support the efficient and effective asset management that the Council, tenants and the Regulator of Social Housing aspire to the Council will:
 - Increase its focus on contract management and contractor performance.
 - Embed the efficient delivery of planned and responsive works.
 - Swiftly and effectively resolve complaints.
 - Make intelligent experience and draw upon best practice.
- Complete the stock condition survey for all Council homes, continuing these surveys on a rolling basis.
- **Seek to dispose of homes that no longer meet requirements.**
- Improve the performance of the repairs service, reduce complaints, and improve tenant satisfaction with repairs.
- Provide an energy performance certificate for all our Council homes by 2030
- Improve the energy efficiency and lower the carbon emissions of our homes to address fuel poverty and climate change.
- Access the Warm Homes Social Housing Fund for improving energy efficiency and decarbonising homes

2. Preventing and Reducing Homelessness.

Why is this a priority?

Getting to grips with the level of homelessness in the district is a major challenge. Nationally homelessness and the cost of temporary accommodation has increased exponentially and Tendring is no exception to this trend. The district is experiencing high numbers of homelessness cases. The Council is committed to ensuring accessible high-quality customer services, but the levels of demand mean that, in some instances, it is increasingly challenging to meet the minimum levels of statutory housing duties.

The Council has seen an 87% increase in homelessness enquiries between 2018/2019 and 2023/24 and a 26% increase in homelessness applications during the same period. The top

five causes of homelessness have remained static during this time and include the loss of an Assured Shorthold Tenancy in the private rented sector, relationship breakdown, eviction by family, domestic abuse and eviction by friends.

The numbers of households in temporary accommodation is having an impact on the Council's budget, and we are taking steps to bring this expenditure down. There has been a massive 77% increase in the number of households being placed in temporary accommodation between 2018/19 and 2023/24, in part due to changes in legislation and in part due to the lack of available affordable housing in the district. Expenditure by the Council on temporary accommodation in 2024/25 was £3.092 million and in the first six months of 2025/26 is £1.572 million, with further spending on rent deposits and advanced rent payments to assist households into settled accommodation. Some of this was offset by a Government Grants of just under £1.5 million, but the cost of homelessness remains a major pressure on the Council budget.

The Housing Register, used to allocate Council and other registered provider accommodation, gives an indication of the gap between demand and supply of affordable rent in the district. In March 2025 there were 1,857 households on the Housing Register. In 2025 only 232 households have moved on to rent Council homes, and 136 went on to rent homes in the private rented sector, and 175 went on to Housing Association homes.

Whilst it is still possible for many to afford renting privately in the district there is a shortage of affordable housing and the local housing allowance rate nationally has not kept pace with rising rents.

Achievements

- A deep dive review of our homelessness and housing advice services leading to:
 - Agreement to increased advice and management capacity in the service,
 - Review and reduction of costs additional to direct accommodation charges,
 - Reduction of expensive nightly paid accommodation,
 - Greater focus on early intervention measures to prevent homelessness.
- Repurposed a former redundant sheltered housing scheme to provide 31 flats for homeless households, providing better quality accommodation and saving for the Council.
- Reduced the use of expensive nightly paid bed and breakfast and short let temporary accommodation.
- Participated in an Essex wide Government Cabinet Office funded Test and Learn pilot to test the impact of innovative ways prevent homelessness and reduce rough sleeping.
- Focussed attention on increasing successful prevention measures, reducing costs, and ensuring temporary accommodation meets quality standards.

Ambitions

- To focus on:

- Reducing expenditure on homelessness and ensuring that those using that accommodation contribute to the cost of providing it
 - Reducing use of temporary accommodation through early prevention measures,
 - Ensuring the quality of temporary accommodation offered,
 - Opportunities to increase the amount of temporary accommodation that is owned by the Council, including re-purposing existing council housing,
 - Increasing the availability of accommodation in the private rented sector.
- Review the homelessness reduction and rough sleeping service, (called Housing Solutions) and bring the 2021-2024 Homelessness Prevention and Rough Sleeping Strategy up to date.
 - Enhance the Housing Solutions service by increasing management capacity and capacity for prevention work.
 - Build on the Essex wide Test and Learn project and adopt those interventions that are shown to increase prevention and reduce costs to the service.
 - Explore the options to work with neighbouring local authorities in anticipation of collaborative arrangements under Local Government Reorganisation.

3. Delivering, with partners, high quality homes

Why is this a priority?

We are committed to working with other organisations to improve the delivery of affordable housing, and the quality of existing housing.

Tendring has been consistently delivering over the 550 homes a year required in the Local Plan. For larger sites, over 10 homes, 30% of all homes are required to be affordable. The majority of new affordable homes will come from larger sites. The planned Tendring and Colchester Borders Garden Community will deliver 7,500 much needed new homes for the area with a target for 30% to be affordable, allowing for the overall build costs of the development. A development of this size has a lot of elements in addition to housing, and takes time, but the overall Masterplan has now been agreed, and a master developer has been appointed to take this forward. A further large development is planned at Hartley Gardens which is expected to deliver 1,700 new homes.

The requirement for affordable decent homes, within overall housing delivery, is supported by the challenge for many households to afford a home of their own. Although housing costs in Tendring are almost a quarter lower than the national average this does not make them affordable because wages are low. Market house prices have risen at the same rate as in the region generally. For a two bedroom property in 2024 a household would need an income of just over £33,000 to rent and £51,500 to buy, well below the average wage level in Tendring. The affordability ratio in Tendring, which is the multiple of the average wage times the cost of average house prices, is 8.49. An affordable price is considered to be 4 times the average wage. It is important that the Council seeks the provision of the full 30%

affordable housing on developments rather than alternative arrangements such as commuted sums or gifted housing that ultimately deliver fewer affordable homes.

We are also planning for the future and the demographics of our population. Our Local Plan includes the provision for a proportion of new builds to be accessible for people with disabilities, giving people the option to moving into more suitable accommodation should they wish to. In partnership with other housing providers and our colleagues across the County of Essex we are working together to plan for the support needs of those who need specialist accommodation. A recent Essex wide review of the need for specialist housing has flagged up the lack of specialist housing and the need to plan long-term with a range of providers, particularly for the growing older population in Tendring.

Achievements

- Adopted a Local Plan from 2021 to 2033, to be reviewed every 5 years.
- Exceeded our target of 550 new homes a year for the last eight years.
- Required 30% of affordable housing on sites over 10 dwellings.
- Required 10% of new market and social housing to be built to standards that are accessible and adaptable for people with disabilities, and an additional 5% of social housing to be built to the standard required for wheelchair users.
- Agreed to build the new Tendring and Colchester Borders Garden Community which will provide 7,500 new homes and other community facilities.
- Granted development permission for 47 service plots for self-build and custom build developments.
- Acquired 107 permanent new Council homes since 2020 through a combination of gifted homes from developments, buy back of former council homes, and investing in new build. Including:
 - 10 new Council homes in Jaywick Sands
 - 13 new bungalows in Honeycoft
- Supported community led housing through the kick start Community Led Housing Fund
- Commissioned a review of specialist housing, to assist us in planning for our growing older population and other specialist needs.

Ambitions

- Complete the review to update the Local Plan to deliver an increased target of 1,063 dwellings per year.
- Strengthen the requirement to deliver 30% affordable homes.
- Increase the flexibility for achieving the 30% affordable target through payments in lieu (commuted sums) or gifted homes.
- Maintain and strengthen our requirement for adapted homes.
- Promote the kick start Community Led Housing Fund.
- Continue to work through the stages of development to make the Tendring and Colchester Borders Garden Community a successful reality.

- Support the development of a new neighbourhood at Hartley Gardens which is expected to deliver 1,700 new homes.
- Acquire new Council homes of a good standard to add to our stock including:
 - 30 new Council homes in the pipeline for 2025
 - At least 11 new flats in Carnarvon Road civic centre.
 - 8 new flats in Victoria Street
- Use the needs assessment of supported and specialist housing to plan for the future provision of housing in the district, particularly for older people.
- Improve engagement with Registered Providers and other housing providers who have homes in the area to agree shared objectives to increase availability of affordable and specialist housing.

4. Supporting people in their homes and communities

Why is this a priority?

Unsurprisingly given this picture of housing costs in the district the demand for affordable housing far outstrips supply. Tendring Council gives priority to housing people with an assessed need and a local connection. The Council's Housing Allocations Policy generally requires that a person resides in the district for at least three years before applying for housing. There are some exceptions to this rule prescribed by statute.

Tendring District Council aims to be a good landlord for all our tenants. In recent years we have expanded the services we offer to support tenants who may be struggling with debt or who need support in other ways. We have updated our approach to tenant involvement to strengthen our engagement with our tenants and to benefit from their input into how we can improve services. We see complaints as an opportunity to reflect on how we might do things differently.

Our aim is to support all our residents to live in their own homes for as long as possible. Through the use of the Disabled Facilities Grant we can keep more people living independently in their own homes for longer. The Council has a large DFG programme and is exploring more innovative ways in which to spend its annual Better Care Fund allocation

The quality of homes is a major determinant of people's health. We are pleased to be leading on the delivery of an initiative, funded by the North East Essex Health and Wellbeing Alliance, The Jaywick Sands Healthy Homes initiative, a project focused on improving the quality of housing and the overall environment.

The Council has responsibilities towards private sector tenants as well its own tenants. We register and inspect an increasing number of houses in multiple occupation (HMO) and can inspect any private tenancy where we suspect that health and safety standards are not being met. The Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS) is the risk-based assessment tool used to evaluate potential hazards in residential properties in England and Wales. Most landlords want to make the required improvements to their properties. For

those that don't comply we issue enforcement notices. The Renters' Rights Act 2025, together with Awaab's Law will raise the threshold of what is considered to be acceptable in the Private Rented Sector. This new legislation will bring with it resource implications that the Council needs to be prepared for.

Achievements

- Provided £7 million in Disabled Facilities Grant to adapt 863 properties to support mainly people living in their own homes, but also in properties rented privately or by Housing Associations.
- Delivered phase one of the Jaywick Sands Healthy Homes Initiative working with NHS partners to improve housing and health.
- Achieved high levels of tenant satisfaction from our tenants with the service overall, and highlighted areas for improvement.
- Strengthened our support to our vulnerable tenants through our intensive housing management services, to aid them to live well and maintain their tenancies.
- Agreed a [Tenant Involvement Policy](#) to give our tenants a stronger voice and improve our engagement and communication with them.
- Published our first annual [Housing Complaints](#) report which showed a marked improvement in turnaround times and resolution of complaints.
- Reviewed the Allocations Policy to continue to give priority to supporting those with a strong local connection.
- Established a Housing Board to monitor progress against our ambitions.
- Building on our tenant involvement plan we have:
 - established Tenant Panels tasked with scrutiny and oversight of areas for improvement starting with the complaints, repairs service and communal areas on estates,
 - developed a programme of estate inspections and walkabouts,
 - set up housing surgeries in local centres.
- Extended the Jaywick Sands Healthy Homes initiative for an additional three years as part of a broader programme for the area funded through the Government's regeneration initiative.

Ambitions

- Improve our communication with tenants through clearer information on our website, and the introduction of tenants' and sheltered housing handbooks.
- Continue offering financial advice to support those struggling with debt and the cost of living, to maximise income, improve financial resilience, manage debts and arrears, and sustain tenancies.
- Visit all Council homes at least every two to three years to undertake a tenancy check, including those that have not contacted us for a repair or any other matter

that might initiate a visit, to gain a better understanding of all our tenants and their homes.

- Make best use of the Disabled Facilities Grant and consider wider uses of the Better Care Fund allocation to help keep residents in the private sector in their own homes.
- **Continue to review and revise our housing policies** to ensure that **they** meet new regulatory requirements and give clear guidance on the mutual rights and obligations for tenants and for the Council as landlord.
- Work with private sector landlords to ensure they understand and comply with the new requirements in the Renters' Rights **Act 2025**, and the standards set out in Awaab's Law.
- **Continue to promote energy efficiency improvement schemes such as ECO4 Flex and the Great British Insulation Scheme, to help low-income and vulnerable residents**