Housing Strategy
2017-2022
Document Control

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**Summary**

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**Review of Strategy – Housing Statement (Annual)**

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**Document Approvals**

This document requires the following approvals.

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1.0 Introduction

1.1 Our Place – Our Plan

This plan for the Borough sets out our vision for the next five years and confirms what we intend to achieve through partnership working over the next two years. It confirms our agreed strategic priorities, which underpin everything we do and the high-level outcomes or impacts that we intend to deliver which will help space our place and improve the lives and condition for the people who live, visit and invest here.

The plan is owned, by the Borough’s Partnership Board and is delivered through a range of plans and strategies, which are managed and monitored through a number of partners.

Three priorities keep us focused on delivering our vision. Each has a set of objectives and outcomes that describe success. Details on how we will achieve these outcomes are contained in our five key partnership plans.

Each priority will be delivered within the context of the emerging plans for devolution, the Northern Powerhouse, the Greater Manchester Strategy, the GM Growth and Reform Plan and Taking Charge of our Health and Social Care in Greater Manchester.

**PEOPLE**
We will safeguard and protect our vulnerable people and support people of all ages to be healthier, confident, and resilient, in control and successfully managing their lives. We will enable communities to thrive and develop.

**PLACE**
We will create safe, resilient, flourishing and high quality places where people choose to live, work and invest.

**PROSPERITY**
We will encourage business growth and enterprise; increase our skills levels and create the conditions for the creation of good quality jobs.

Our Housing Strategy embraces the three priorities detailed within the Corporate Plan and links them to our key housing priorities:

- **People** – Safeguard and protect our most vulnerable residents, ensuring equal access to housing within the Borough.
- **Place** - Increase the numbers of high quality and aspirational homes, ensuring the right types of housing are available in the right areas. Make better use of the existing homes and ensure sustainability in terms of flood resilience and energy efficiency.
- **Prosperity** – Build new homes and regenerate areas that increase prosperity and empower communities.

This Housing Strategy sets out our ambitions for the next five years and forms the basis of the housing sector’s contribution to achieving the aims of the Place Plan.
To secure economic growth for the Borough that benefits its residents, it is essential that we continue to attract and retain working households. We must deliver more housing in places that are best-connected to future employment opportunities. A diversity of housing that is close to areas of expected employment growth and linked by available transport capacity will offer growth that can be sustained.

We will continue to build and invest in the Borough by working with our partners to drive forward growth. Over the next five years we will work in partnership with our housing providers to continue to regenerate key neighbourhoods and expand housing and employment. Major change will be well underway in areas such as Kirkholt, Langley, College Bank, Lower Failinge and Rochdale Riverside Town Centre.

1.2 The Role of Housing

Creating more homes to meet the needs of a growing population and economy is our highest priority.

A good-quality home that supports access to work, health, care, family and community underpins all the objectives within ‘Our Plan – Our Place’.

The role of housing within Local Government has changed significantly over the past 5 years, from a Statutory Provider of housing to a Delivery Enabler. We have a primary responsibility to assess and meet the housing needs of the local population and drive housing activity and delivery in these areas and for our residents.

It is crucial in our new role that we work with our partners to ensure growth and delivery of new housing in the Borough.

We need to work with businesses and other partners to identify opportunities to work together. Actively we need to use their assets to create and unlock housing opportunities.

1.3 Our Housing Vision

Rochdale is the birthplace of co-operation, and the Council is committed to retaining this distinction by working with partners, local people and communities to improve the lives of our residents.

Our vision for housing is…

“We want a mix of property types and tenures that meet the housing requirements of current and future generations and support economic growth, regeneration and health and wellbeing across the Borough”
2. **Strategic Outcomes**

1. **New homes**
   
   Increase the supply of new homes to meet need and aspirations of our residents across the Borough.

2. **Making best use of all our homes**
   
   Make better use of the existing homes in the Borough including bringing empty properties back into use and addressing climate change issues.

3. **Develop a range of housing options and pathways to home ownership**
   
   Ensuring a range of housing options is available across the Borough including pathways to affordable home ownership.

4. **Protect those households most at risk**
   
   Safeguard and protect our most vulnerable residents to prevent homelessness and increase tenancy sustainability.

5. **Contribute to health and wellbeing through the provision of housing and support**
   
   Ensure alternative housing provision and support is available through effective partnership working with health and social care providers for those residents with specific requirements.
3. The Story So Far...

Rochdale Borough is located within the North West of England covering 62 square miles and with a population of 213,000 (2014 ONS mid-year estimate). Rochdale is ethnically diverse with 21% of the total population being from a black and ethnic minority background.

There has been an increase in over 75’s and over 80’s between 2001 and 2014 and our older population is growing and is expected to increase by 25% between 2012 and 2024.

Rochdale Borough has a relatively youthful population, with 52% of residents aged under 40. However, over the period 2012 to 2028 the number of residents under the age of 40 and between 40 and 64 is expected to reduce.

Deprivation is becoming more widespread in the Borough with an increasing proportion of the population living in the most deprived 10% of the country.

We are living longer, but compared with the rest of England and Wales we live shorter and less healthy lives and a ten year difference exists for some people in some of our most deprived areas. Men in Rochdale live to be 77.2 years compared with those in England and Wales who reach 79.5 years. Women live to be 80.8 years compared with 83.2 years.

The Borough includes the main towns of Rochdale, Heywood and Middleton; and a network of smaller towns and villages particularly in the Pennine area of the Borough.

The variety of locations and the proximity to good public transport links and attractive countryside provides opportunities for high quality housing development. There are currently a number of attractive and popular residential locations particularly in the north of the borough and in the south of Heywood and Middleton.

The Census 2011 reported 87,552 households in the Borough, 61% owner occupiers, 23% social rented tenants and 13% in private rented accommodation. The highest concentrations of social rented properties are based within Middleton and Rochdale Townships.

The majority of house sales in Rochdale during the last year (2016) were terraced properties, selling for an average price of £97,462. Semi-detached properties sold for an average of £133,530, with detached properties selling for £239,801.

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1 http://www.rightmove.co.uk/house-prices/Rochdale.html
Rochdale Borough has an overall average price in March 2017 of £120,196 which is an increase of 2.6% from the previous year\(^2\). In Heywood the average house price is £126,563, Middleton is £128,151 and Pennies is £148,972 (April 2016 – March 2017, Land Registry Data\(^3\)).

Rochdale Borough when compared to the other nine Greater Manchester Authorities average house prices, gross income of full-time workers and a ratio of lower quartile incomes to house prices. Rochdale and Bolton are the same in terms of Income to House Price Ratio (4.9).

Compared to other housing markets in the North West and Greater Manchester, Rochdale and North East Manchester housing markets are generally less attractive. The housing on offer in the Borough has stark differences in terms of quality and price and it fails to address the needs of existing or future residents. An oversupply of older terraced housing and a lack of high value housing across the Borough means that it is failing to attract and retain residents with higher incomes.

An ambitious target of providing 460 additional homes per year is considered necessary to meet demand and to help regenerate the Borough. The latest Housing Land Availability Assessment indicates that there is considerable scope to meet its housing target using previously developed sites, especially in the south, and with limited use of Greenfield sites.

Housing provision on its own will not create successful communities that retain and attract residents. We need to focus the right type of housing in the right areas, maintain the regeneration of older areas of housing and social housing estates and ensure that the community infrastructure, necessary to support areas of housing growth are provided.

In 2015, Rochdale Council commissioned a Strategic Housing Market Assessment\(^4\) (SHMA) of the Borough. The assessment indicated an annual imbalance of 204 affordable dwellings across Rochdale.

At the time of publication of the SHMA there were 90,015 dwellings in the Borough, of these:

- 77% of occupied properties are houses, 14% are flats/maisonettes, 8% are bungalows and 1% is other property types (e.g. caravans).

- 17% of occupied properties were built pre 1919, 18% between 1919 and 1944, 23% between 1945 and 1964, 25% between 1965 and 1984 and 17% since 1985.

- 62% of properties are owner-occupied, 24% are affordable (social/affordable rent and intermediate tenure) and 15% are privately rented. This compares with regional figures of 65% for owner occupation, 19% affordable tenures and 17% private renting.

The findings from the SHMA indicated a requirement for affordable housing in all townships, to address shortfalls across a range of property sizes, including older person’s accommodation. The figures confirmed there is a great need for new affordable housing provision in the Pennine Township.


\(^3\) [http://landregistry.data.gov.uk/app/ppd](http://landregistry.data.gov.uk/app/ppd)

The shortage of development opportunities within this Township means that meeting this need will be difficult to achieve and is likely to mean delivering homes on sites elsewhere across the Borough, or through bringing empty properties back into use and making better use of our existing stock.
4. Achievements

Key achievements from the previous Housing Strategy 2012-2016

- Since 2012/13, 1,952 Empty Properties have been brought back into use following interventions.
- Since 2012, we have built 343 high value homes (Council Tax E and above).
- 388 new affordable homes have been built through the Affordable Homes Programme since 2012.
- Since 2012, we have built 343 high value homes (Council Tax E and above).
- 94 properties have benefited from £5k Flood Reliance Funding in 2015/2016.
- Since 2012, 1,915 New Build properties built since 2012.
- 452 properties in the Private Rented Sector have been improved by Council intervention since 2012.
- £17.4m of New Homes Bonus received by the Council and Invested into Rochdale Borough since 2012.
- 3,825 energy efficiency measures provided by the Council since 2012.
- Since 2010/11 a total of 6,988 households have been prevented from becoming homeless.
- 731 adaptations installed through Disabled facilities Grants (DFGs) since 2012.
- Number of households living in temporary accommodation has decreased by 20 since 2012.
- 7,035 of people re-homed in since 2012 via Rochdale’s Home Choice Scheme.
5. Challenges & Opportunities

5.1 Challenges

Reduction in Local Government Funding
Since 2010, Central Government Grant support to local authorities has been subjected to significant cuts as part of national austerity measures intended to help address budget deficit.

Rochdale Council has faced a reduction of £103m in the amount of Government funding received since 2010. The Council is required to make further £51m of savings over the next two years.

These significant savings mean that the Council has to be more creative about how services are delivered and funded. This involves undertaking regular service reviews and continuing to strengthen our approach to deliver strategic priorities and to minimise the impact on the Borough’s vulnerable residents.

Welfare Reform
The impact of Welfare Reform has presented significant challenges to housing providers with the effect that the under occupancy charge and Universal Credit have had on tenants’ capacity to pay their rent.

A number of changes have already been implemented, details of these are below:

- **The Benefit Cap** - From December 2016 a reduction in the Benefit Cap was introduced for existing capped claimants and anyone new to the Benefit Cap. In Rochdale Borough, as of February 2017, 287 households were affected with the majority residing in the Rochdale Township.

- **Universal Credit** - from April 2016 the amount of Universal Credit received will gradually reduce when the claimant earns more money, but unlike Job Seekers Allowance the payment will not just stop.

- **Under Occupancy Charge** is a change to Housing Benefit Entitlement that means claimants receive less in housing benefit if they live in a registered provider property that is deemed to have one or more spare bedrooms. This change has had a huge impact on the Borough. In April 2013 the DWP predicted 3,285 households in the Borough would be affected by the under-occupancy rate, by December 2014 this had reduced to 2,212 households.

We will continue to work closely with registered providers and other agencies to monitor and better understand the impact of welfare reforms so that we can work together to mitigate negative consequences. Registered providers in the Borough have introduced financial assessments and rent in advance since the introduction of the reforms in 2013.

5.2 Opportunities

**Greater Manchester Spatial Framework**
Greater Manchester Combined Authority (GMCA) has produced a draft joint plan ‘The Greater Manchester Spatial Framework (GMSF)’ to manage the supply of land for jobs and new homes across Greater Manchester. The purpose of the GMSF will ensure that the right land is in the right places, to deliver the

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3 [https://www.greatermanchester-ca.gov.uk/info/20018/greater_manchester.spatial.framework](https://www.greatermanchester-ca.gov.uk/info/20018/greater_manchester.spatial.framework)
homes and jobs Greater Manchester need up to 2035, along with identifying the new infrastructure (such as roads, rail, Metrolink and utility networks) required to achieve this.

This GMSF is a draft overarching development plan within which Greater Manchester’s ten local planning authorities can identify more detailed sites for jobs and homes in their own area. As such, the draft GMSF will not cover everything that a local plan would cover and individual districts will continue to produce their own local plans.

The draft GMSF states a total housing requirement of 15,500 over the next 18 years up to 2035, with average annual requirement of 775 (90% houses and 10% apartments). 7% of all new housing developments in Greater Manchester will be in Rochdale.

Rochdale has been included within the Northern Gateway section of the draft GMSF along with neighboring Authorities Bury and Oldham. A number of large development sites have been identified in this area, primarily on Greenbelt land, which has caused a great deal of contention with the local community. Strategic Housing and Planning will be working closely together to ensure the targets identified within the final version of the GMSF are achieved.

The annual requirement in GM is 11,360 new homes, with 775 being in Rochdale. This is an increase of 315 units per year from the Core Strategy requirement.

**Greater Manchester Housing Investment Fund**

This Greater Manchester Housing Fund is designed to accelerate and unlock housing schemes. It will help build the new homes we need to support our growth ambitions across Greater Manchester.

The £300million Greater Manchester Housing Fund will be used primarily as development finance, to support housing growth across Greater Manchester and increase the number of new homes being built. Funding will be made available to accelerate or unlock fundamentally viable housing schemes. Access to the fund is on a recoverable capital investment basis and for private sector-led schemes.

Development finance will usually be in the form of a loan offered with an appropriate state aid compliant interest rate applied. Final offer rates will depend on the specifics of the project, the creditworthiness of the borrower, the nature of the proposed investment, and the security offered.

The amount of funding available for each scheme will be based on an assessment of the minimum level of finance needed to unlock the project’s delivery.

**Greater Manchester Land Commission**

GMCA has created the Greater Manchester Land Commission. The Commission has an overview of all publicly-owned land in the sub region, including that owned by Government and other public sector bodies. Its role is to look at and co-ordinate how that land can be used to support Greater Manchester’s wider ambitions - including the need for 10,000 new homes a year to support its growing economy and communities - and address any barriers to such land being developed. The Commission is jointly chaired by the Mayor and Housing Minister and will include Ministers from other key landowning departments.

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6 http://www.manchester.gov.uk/downloads/download/6252/greater_manchester_housing_fund_prospectus
**Greater Manchester Memorandum of Understanding**

This MoU is an agreement between GMCA and Greater Manchester Housing Providers (GMHP) to establish a single strategic partnership at GM level. The MoU provides clarity around how partnership arrangements between GMHP and the GMCA will be structured to limit the duplication of effort and simplify communication. GMCA approved the MOU with the Greater Manchester Housing Providers Group in 2016, and work on the action plan is currently ongoing.

The Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) recognises the GM housing providers’ track record of delivering positive change, will enable them to play a pivotal role along with the ten local authorities in further developing new approaches to growth, public service reform and the management of place as the Combined Authority’s strategy is rolled out.

**Greater Manchester Joint Venture**

The Greater Manchester Combined Authority (GMCA) and the GM Housing Providers (GMHP) are proposing a Joint Venture, which will be a 50:50 partnership arrangement combining Local Authority land with GMHP financial resources, to fund a JVCO to build out a programme of sites.

The Joint Venture will provide above and beyond the HCA Affordable Homes Programme, with an estimated 4,000 new affordable homes over the next 10 years across GM.

The Council will be able to sell the land or invest as equity depending on the objectives of the development.

It is crucial that Rochdale Council is part of this arrangement to accelerate growth and increase affordable residential development.

**Homes and Communities Agency (HCA) Funding Programmes**

The Homes and Communities Agency (HCA) supports the Greater Manchester Combined Authority (GMCA) in the delivery of its Housing Investment Fund. The HCA works with Housing Associations to deliver affordable housing including a new target of 400,000 new homes in England by 2021. The HCA also manages the Government’s Help to Buy scheme.

Help to Buy (equity loan) is available to eligible purchasers and is paid directly to registered house builders.

The Government announced an extra £1.4 billion for the Affordable Homes Programme in October 2016, taking total investment in this programme to over £7 billion to build around 225,000 affordable homes. This investment will help families to find a decent home that is right for them. The 2016 to 2021 Shared Ownership Affordable Homes Programme was originally designed to focus on delivering affordable homes for sale i.e. shared ownership and Rent to Buy. Now the Government has opened up the programme, relaxing restrictions on funding, so providers can now build affordable homes for both rent and sale.

Since 2012, there have been 388 new affordable homes built through the Affordable Homes Programme (AHP) in the Rochdale Borough.

**New Homes Bonus**

The New Homes Bonus (NHB) was introduced by the Coalition Government with the aim of encouraging local authorities to grant planning permission for the building of new houses in return for additional revenue. It is a scheme to incentivise house building.
Since 2012, Rochdale Council has benefited from £17,366,071 from the NHB and this opportunity for additional revenue will continue over the next 5 years. We need to ensure that new build properties continue to be developed in Rochdale to enable additional funding through the NHB to continue.

We need to ensure we take advantage of these opportunities to accelerate growth, assist with the development of new affordable homes and provide additional revenue for the Council.
6. Wider Strategic Context

The Greater Manchester Strategy

This strategy establishes the priorities for Growth and Reform for the city region. It prioritises the growth of the economy and underlines the importance of helping local people access the opportunities from this growth. It recognises that our homes, neighbourhoods, transport links and services all work together to attract and keep the workforce we need to achieve greater prosperity.

6.1 Greater Manchester Combined Authority (GMCA)

Greater Manchester is one of the country's most successful city-regions. It is made up of the ten Greater Manchester councils. An elected Mayor will work with other local services, businesses, communities and other partners to improve the city-region.

The ten councils (Bolton, Bury, Manchester, Oldham, Rochdale, Salford, Stockport, Tameside, Trafford and Wigan) work together on issues that affect everyone in the region, such as transport, regeneration, housing and attracting investment.

6.2 Devolution

Greater Manchester is the first city-region to be given substantial devolved powers, gaining control over much of the health, transport, planning, adult social care and housing budgets, previously controlled centrally by the Government.

The region's new powers include:
- more control of local transport, with a long-term Government budget to help plan a more modern, better-connected network;
- new planning powers to encourage regeneration and development;
- a new £300m fund for housing: enough for an extra 15,000 private new homes over ten years;
- extra funding to get up to 50,000 people back into work;
- incentives to employers to develop more local work-related training;
- extra budget to support and develop local businesses;
- the role of the Police and Crime Commissioner merged with the elected Mayor; and
- greater control over health and social care to enable Greater Manchester to have a bigger impact, more quickly on the health, wealth and wellbeing of people in the sub region.

7. Delivery through our partnerships

Partnership working is at the heart of the development and delivery of this housing strategy, so ‘we’ means all of us who work together, so that our homes and neighbourhoods can benefit the city and its residents:

- The residents of the Borough of Rochdale

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7 https://www.greatermanchester-ca.gov.uk/info/20067/greater_manchester_strategy
8 https://www.greatermanchester-ca.gov.uk/
Housing Strategy
2017-2022

- Rochdale Borough Council
- The Greater Manchester Combined Authority
- Rochdale’s Development Agency
- Homes and Communities Agency
- Registered Providers
- Private Landlords
- Health Services
- Developers and House Builders
- Investors
- Education Providers
- Local Businesses
  and many more…

Our Housing Provider partners can:

- Make sure there are the right homes in the right places
- Ensure access to housing for the most vulnerable and tackling homelessness
- Provide advice and information about housing opportunities to support health outcomes
- Provide opportunities for home ownership to create sustainable communities
- Manage homes and neighbourhoods to provide safe and secure environments
- Support independent living through specialist accommodation and equipment and adaptations
- Use their experience of engaging with communities to promote healthy lifestyles
- Work with residents to foster behavioural change
- Provide volunteering opportunities to encourage community involvement and support neighbourhood
- Bring knowledge of residents and neighbourhoods to inform evidence to support planning of services
- Engage with health and care services at a local level

Through the day-to-day contact with tenants and residents in our neighbourhoods, our housing providers are uniquely placed, to make a significant contribution to achieving the following:

- Reducing dependency
- Tackling worklessness
- Supporting improved health outcomes
- Promoting financial inclusion
- Fostering aspiration
- Encouraging community cohesion
- Organising youth interventions
- Providing effective neighbourhood management
- Tackling antisocial behaviour
- Maintaining good environment management
- Offering opportunities for resident engagement and contribution

We will continue to work in partnership with our providers to ensure that this close working continues with our residents across the Borough.
The delivery and success of our strategy will be taken forward through our partnership structures including Rochdale’s Strategic Housing Partnership (RSHP).

The RSHP will retain an overview of the different elements of the delivery and maintain a suite of indicators that capture the high-level outcomes.

Linked to the RSHP will be task and finish groups that work at an operational level to tackle some of the individual tasks required to achieve the overall priority.

Our Registered Provider partners in the Borough include:
Priority 1: New homes

Increase the supply of new homes to meet the needs and aspirations of our residents across the Borough.

Our goals for 2022

1. Have 2,300 more new build homes across the Borough.

2. Provide good-quality homes that attract people to live in the Borough.

3. Support the housing aspirations of the new and existing residents to ensure there is a wide choice of homes in a range of different tenures.

4. Increase the number of high value homes (Council Tax E and above).

5. Maximise the development of new build homes on Brownfield land.

Where are we now?

- The Councils Core Strategy identifies a target to bring forward 80% of its housing requirement up to 2028, i.e. 7,360 additional new homes from Brownfield sites. The Council is working with landowners, housebuilders and the Homes and Communities Agency through Government initiatives and funding streams to accelerate the delivery of homes from sites within the urban area.

- Since 2012, they have been 1,915 new build properties built in the Borough, which is an average of 383 units per annum, 77 units less than the target figure contained within the Core Strategy.

- At present we do not have enough high value housing in the borough, with only 7% of homes in Council Tax Bands E and above, compared to the national average of 19%. The provision of high value housing could increase the wealth profile of the Borough by retaining existing, and attracting new, higher income earning households and skilled workers to underpin the local economy.

- The regeneration of the Boroughs town centres is a key priority for the Council. Housing has a key role to play in this regeneration, by encouraging people to move into the town centres. The Council is currently developing Masterplans for Rochdale, Heywood and Middleton Town Centres and these masterplans will include a commitment to improve the housing offer in these town centres, by bringing underutilised properties and sites back into use, assisting in the conversion of commercial properties into residential uses and building new accommodation to increase choice.

- Rochdale Council has a self-build register in place that records the demand across the Borough, currently (April 2017), there are 6 people on the register who have expressed an interest. The Council is looking at potential sites for self-build initiatives to meet this need.
What do we need to do next?

- Increase housing supply to meet demand by exceeding the Core Strategy target of 460 units per annum.
- Work pro-actively with developers and registered providers in the Borough, to ensure new developments meet the demand requirements and Core Strategy target.
- Develop a Residential Growth Strategy for Rochdale in partnership with planning linked to the Greater Manchester Spatial Framework to publicise land and accelerate growth.
- Work closely with the Homes and Communities Agency and private developers to bring forward sites for development.
- Explore potential opportunities for new and innovative investment, to support new housing delivery across the Borough.
- Support the development of new homes, as part of Rochdale Borough’s Town Centre regeneration initiatives.
- Explore opportunities to develop co-operative and community led housing initiatives in the Borough.
- Support Self-Build initiatives in the Borough by identifying sites for development.
- Ensure partnership working with Health, Education, Planning, Estates and Highways exists with all new housing developments to provide a holistic approach.
- Continue to review and update Housing Market data, to ensure Rochdale Council has up to date information relating to need, demand, affordability and future requirements to inform decisions.
Priority 2: Making best use of all our homes

Make better use of our existing homes in the Borough including bringing empty properties back into use and addressing climate change issues.

Our goals for 2022

1. Bring long term empty properties back into use and prevent occupied properties from becoming empty.
2. Purchase derelict buildings and sites back into the Council’s ownership to accelerate new development or renovation.
3. Reduce fuel poverty and ensure new and existing properties are more energy efficient.
4. Reduce Carbon Emissions from domestic properties across the Borough.
5. Alleviate water damage to properties in flood risk areas.

Where are we now?

- Since 2012 the Council have assisted owners of 2,119 empty properties to bring them back into use. We need to continue this work to ensure the number of empties remains at a minimum.

- The Council has highlighted several vacant properties and sites in prominent locations where the owners have either refused to engage or have rejected all offers of assistance, including offers to buy the asset from them at a reasonable market value. The Council will develop a programme of compulsory purchases orders. It is intended that once acquired, these assets will be transferred to owners that will bring them back into use.

- Residents within Rochdale have been faced by two main issues due to climate change; the older housing stock within the Borough preforms very poorly in terms of energy efficiency and in addition several residential areas within the Borough are within flood zones 2 and 3. In partnership with Greater Manchester, we have been working with EON to provide boiler replacements to eligible residents living in the private sector. 20 residents have benefited from this scheme.

- The issue regarding residential properties within flood zones 2 and 3 remains a concern for the Council and plans are underway to mitigate the impact of future extreme weather situations with some strategic work completed and future measures in the pipeline.

What do we need to do next?

- Continue to bring empty properties back into use, by utilising enforcement mechanisms including Empty Dwelling Management Orders, Enforced Sales, Section 215 notices or Compulsory Purchase Orders.
Undertake a programme of Compulsory Purchase Orders to bring back into use privately owned properties and sites where the owners have refused to engage or rejected all offers of assistance.

Work with developers to raise energy efficiency and installation standards in new build properties to reduce the number of retrofits required in the future.

Work with GM partners to reduce carbon emissions within the Borough of Rochdale.

Explore new energy supplies such as heat pumps to reduce the reliance on gas within new build properties.

Ensure new build properties have a certain standard of installation and energy efficiency measures that go above and beyond the standard planning requirements.

Continue to seek partner-funders to address the large remaining number of uninsulated, solid-wall private sector properties within the borough.

Identify properties at risk of flooding and work with the Environment Agency and other agencies to implement schemes to lessen the risk.

Figure 4: Empty Property in Rochdale – Before & After
Priority 3: A range of housing options and pathways to home ownership

Ensuring a range of affordable housing options are available, including pathways to affordable homeownership

Our goals for 2022

1. Improve standards in the private rented sector.

2. Increase the number of good quality new built private rented properties in the Borough.

3. Increase the number of affordable new build dwellings including shared ownership. Rent to Buy and Affordable Rent products.

4. Promote existing Home Ownership Schemes including Shared Ownership, Rent to Buy, ‘Help to Buy Products’ and ‘Starter Homes’ throughout the Borough.

Where are we now?

- The private rented sector is an important housing choice in Rochdale to meet needs. Census 2011 reported 11,556 private rented properties in the Borough of Rochdale. Since 2012, there have been 200 new build private rented properties built in the Borough. The rapid growth of the private rented sector brings with it a broad range of issues relating to standards of both property condition and management. Ensuring standards within this sector is an important priority for the council and we are currently resolving 100% of the emergency ‘Category One Hazard’ property issues within one week and have issued 13 Improvement Notices to landlords who were not willing undertake property works.

- Rochdale Borough is becoming the area of choice for investment in the development of new homes for private rent. The Council has in recent times been approached by several developers and investors regarding opportunities for new private rent developments in the Borough. The provision of new homes for private rent will help widen housing choice in the Borough which is priority for the Council.

- The Government is committed to building more affordable homes to boost house-building and support households who are locked out of the market. An extra £1.4 billion for the Affordable Homes Programme was announced in October 2016, taking total investment in this programme to over £7 billion to build around 225,000 affordable homes. Since 2012, there have been 388 new affordable homes built through the Affordable Homes Programme (AHP) in the Rochdale and we want this to continue and grow as demand becomes more apparent.

- The Government is supporting homeownership through Help to Buy initiatives with a significant number of developers across the Borough offering these products as a way to assisting first time
buyers to acquire new homes. From 1st April 2013 to 30th September 2016, 6329 Rochdale Borough’s first time buyers were assisted by an Equity Loan through the Help to Buy Scheme. In addition, 4910 received help through the Mortgage Guarantee Scheme.

What do we need to do next?

- Encourage private developers and investors to build new private rented accommodation in the Borough.
- Work with the Homes and Communities Agency (HCA) to identify potential sites for development of starter homes in the Borough.
- Work with the HCA and Registered Providers, developers and investors to deliver additional affordable homes in the Borough.
- Work with Registered Providers and developers in the Borough, to promote the various schemes and initiatives that are currently available to support people into affordable home ownership.
- Explore the opportunities for bringing forward alternative products and funding to facilitate the delivery of new affordable housing in the Borough.

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Priority 4: Protect those households most at risk

Safeguard and protect our most vulnerable residents and to prevent homelessness and increase tenancy sustainability.

Our goals for 2022

1. No child subjected to sexual exploitation.
2. No rough sleepers across the Borough.
3. Reduction in homelessness through effective preventative working.
4. Reduction in the number of households accessing temporary accommodation.
5. Increased provision of Gypsy & Traveller sites to eradicate the use of unauthorised encampments.

Where are we now?

- Child Sexual Exploitation is a major child protection issue across the UK and in particular within the borough. The Sunrise Team\(^\text{11}\) was established to reach out to young people at risk in the community. We work closely with our Registered Providers and accredited private landlords to ensure that are aware of the Sunrise Team and the process in which to report any safeguarding issues that arise within their properties.

- The number of people recorded as sleeping rough increased significantly in 2014 when 17 were reported. The Council undertook a further Rough Sleeper headcount across the Borough in 2015 where 2 individuals were reported, which is the lowest figure since 2003. We need to ensure that the number of rough sleepers is reduced to zero.

- Rochdale Council operates an inclusive Housing Options service. The Council recognises that homelessness can be prevented by assisting people to address issues that have placed them at risk of homelessness. Since the last review in 2012, demand for assistance has increased the numbers of people contacting the service has risen from 5,000 in 2013/14 to nearly 16,000 in 2015/16.

- Domestic abuse continues to be one of the main reasons for households being assessed as statutorily homeless. Preventing domestic abuse and supporting victims of abuse is a primary priority for the Council. The Council is part of a partnership of agencies across the whole of the Borough including, Police and Victim Support.

- There is continued demand for supported and temporary accommodation across the Borough. Move on accommodation for households have become more difficult and the average period of time in

\(^{11}\) http://www.thesunriseteam.co.uk/
temporary accommodation has increased from 12.5 weeks in 2014 to 14.5 weeks in 2016. We need to reduce this time to ensure temporary accommodation is accessed only for a short period.

- The use of B&B type accommodation to meet short term provision has increased over the last 2 years. The trend continues to increase, which is a result of delays in finding secure move on properties, to free up temporary accommodation.

- The Council manages a number of schemes and projects which enable people to resettle or remain in their homes including the Discretionary Crisis Fund (DCF) and the Innovation Fund. The DCF provides essential white goods and household furniture to those resettling from temporary accommodation. Since 2013, 6,302 residents have received assistance from the DCF. The innovation fund contributes towards food banks, and small community projects that assist people with financial and debt advice to help them remain in the home and prevent homelessness.

- The development of housing options in the Private Rented Sector has been a key and essential factor in enabling households to find secure and affordable options, particularly in areas where access to social housing is limited. The Council works in partnership with the Bond Board, to provide financial support to underwrite rent deposits to enable vulnerable people to access accommodation in this sector.

- The Council has formed a multi-agency team to tackle instances where unscrupulous landlords have created sub-standard living accommodation, both above and within commercial and retail premises. The team’s activities, named as Operation Maverick, have been particularly effective in uncovering and dealing with a range of criminal, social and housing issues and offences.

- Rochdale Council has a statutory duty to ensure that all care leavers are offered suitable accommodation when leaving care. Rochdale has 151 cared for young people that are due to move to more independent living in 2017/18 and the council has developed a range of options to meet the needs.

- The Council provides a permanent site for Gypsies and Travellers providing 27 pitches. In the last 18 months the number of unauthorised encampments has seen a significant increase. In order to meet this increased demand, the Council has piloted the use of short term temporary sites that can be used for authorised temporary stopping. A more permanent solution is required for the growing need.

**What do we need to do next?**

- Continue to liaise with our Registered Providers and accredited private landlords regarding the Sunrise Team and the reporting of child sexual exploitation.

- Continue to support the voluntary sector to help us reduce the numbers of homelessness households and rough sleeping in the Borough.
✓ Engage with all partners to identify resolutions to the challenge created by the withdrawal of housing benefit for 18-21 year olds.

✓ Support households at risk of homelessness as a result of Domestic Abuse through an integrated approach.

✓ Work more proactively with partners to provide secure accommodation more quickly, to free up temporary accommodation and eradicate the use of B&B.

✓ Continue to support vulnerable households that cannot be prevented from becoming homeless and provide short term and emergency housing from our Registered Provider partners for those affected.

✓ Continue to work closely with the Bond Board to enable vulnerable people to access accommodation in the Private Rented Sector.

✓ Continue to provide suitable accommodation for those children leaving care.

✓ Work with partners to find innovative ways to provide accommodation for vulnerable households through the development of a Housing First model.

✓ Continue to administer the Discretionary Crisis Fund to assist vulnerable people to sustain their tenancies and prevent homelessness.

✓ Continue to fund community projects from the Innovation Fund to help our most vulnerable residents from becoming homeless.

✓ Review the provision of Gypsy & Traveller sites within the Borough and address the shortfall of 32 pitches to stop unauthorised encampments.

✓ Identify potential sites for the needs of the Gypsy & Traveller community in the Borough.

✓ Continue to play an active role in ‘Operation Maverick’.

Priority 5: Contribute to health and wellbeing through the provision of housing with support

Ensure alternative housing provision with support is available through effective partnership working with health and social care providers, for those residents with specific requirements.

Our goals for 2022

1. Increase accommodation options for older people including Extra Care.

2. Increase the provision of accommodation options for those with a disability.
3. Ensure people have the choice to live independently within their own home.

4. Provide effective housing support to reduce permanent admissions to residential care and facilitate timely hospital discharge.

5. Provide innovative housing solutions to those people with a specific need.

6. Support the development of the Locality Plan to ensure a strong housing input.

7. Reduce the health effects of poor housing conditions.

Where are we now?

- A major strategic challenge for the Council is to ensure a range of appropriate housing, adaptations and support is made available for Rochdale’s growing older population. The number of people aged 65 and over is projected to increase from 32,200 in 2012 to 43,900 by 2028.

- The 2015 SHMA identified that the majority of older people (64.1%) want to stay in their own home with help and support when needed, with the majority of these being owner occupiers.

- In March 2017 there were 373 applicants on the Council’s Housing Register, who had applied to move home and had chosen sheltered or older people’s accommodation as their housing preference. Throughout 2016/2017 there were 202 property lets made to sheltered or older person’s accommodation via the Housing Register; so demand for social rented accommodation is apparent.

- Rochdale Borough currently has one Extra Care scheme based in Littleborough, providing 41 one and two bed properties. There are plans for a further scheme in Langley, Middleton providing 98 units of one & two bed properties.

- The Council completed 731 Disabled Facilities Grant (DFGs) adaptations since 2012. DFGs are provided to assist people with a physical or sensory disability who require an aid of adaptions to assist with staying in their own home and living independently.

- Resources for aids and adaptations remain tight, particularly for households in the private sector. Alternative sources of funding, such as equity loans, need to be considered to finance remedial measures required by older person households.
10% of the population in Rochdale Borough have a disability that limits their day to day activities ‘a lot’\textsuperscript{12}. People with a physical or sensory disability require adaptions to their home to enable independent living.

134 people with a physical disability were registered for rehousing on Rochdale Council’s Housing Register in September 2017. Discussions with our Registered Provider and health agency partners need to take place regularly, to ensure innovative housing options are available for this client group.

The Borough currently has 263 service users with a learning disability living in 109 supported living group homes at a total cost of £11.8m per annum. The average weekly cost of supported living in the Borough is currently £872 per person, per week. Different options and models of accommodation and care need to be explored.

Currently, 37% of the people with a learning disability who live in Supported Living (98 individuals) are aged 55 years or over and may require more age specific services in the next 1 to 5 years.

Having somewhere safe and warm to live is fundamental to people’s mental health and wellbeing. Housing should not only provide shelter, but also a secure and positive environment, that supports people as their lives progress. Rochdale Borough has a number of accommodation based schemes to support those people with mental health illness, 127 units of supported accommodation and floating support is provided to 220 properties across the Borough.

Rochdale Council is in the process of developing and finalising a locality plan for Rochdale Borough. This plan will set out a vision and actions to improve health and social outcomes across the Borough of Rochdale. This plan will link to the overarching Greater Manchester Locality Plan and aid the CSR discussion within Central Government. The plan will identify how Rochdale Borough and Greater Manchester will address the financial gap and ensure financial and clinical sustainability by 2020.

Rochdale Council are in the process of finalising the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment that will provide a wealth of data and information relating to health and an element of this will be housing and the products available and required for the future.

Rochdale Council is a member of ‘Healthy Rochdale Homes’ which is a partnership between the Registered Providers, the Council and the Clinical Commissioning Group. The aim of the group is to use the homes, workforce and strategic powers to help people live longer, happier, healthier lives, with fulfilling relationships and optimism for the future

What do we need to do next?

- Develop an Older Person’s Housing Strategy to identify where the provision of accommodation including extra care is required.
Continue to operate the Home Improvement Agency to assist older people or those with a disability.

Explore options with owner occupiers regarding the release of equity to fund the adaptation of their homes to enable independent living.

Explore options to keep older people in their own accommodation for longer and thus reducing the number of people in residential care homes.

Work with Register Provider partners to review and in some cases re-purpose their sheltered accommodation that is no longer fit for purpose.

Explore opportunities to increase the supply of homes for those residents with a disability.

Continue to provide supported accommodation for these people with a mental health issue.

Continue to monitor the demand for accommodation and support for people with a mental health issue.

Work with housing providers to develop alternative and appropriate accommodation offers within the Borough for those people currently in Supported Living.

Work closely with Adult Care Services to identify opportunities to deliver supported accommodation in line with the Council’s strategic priorities.

Work with neighbouring authorities to address specific disability requirements that are apparent within the Boroughs in Greater Manchester.

Explore housing options for those people living out of the Borough, to eradicate costly out of Borough placements.

Continue to operate Healthy Rochdale Homes.

Continue to work with health agencies and adult social care to ensure that housing is a key element in all future health and wellbeing strategies and polices.

Work with health agencies, adult social care and registered providers to reduce the health effects of poor housing.

Develop closer working relationships with hospitals in the Borough to prevent delays in transfer of care.

Work with Health partners to ensure housing is a key element to the developing new locality plan for Rochdale Borough.
Figure 7: Hare Hill Extra Care Scheme, Littleborough (Rochdale Boroughwide Housing)

Our new five year Housing Strategy is supported by our directorate, service and team plans. The actions and priorities are overseen and monitored by Rochdale’s Housing Strategic Partnership.

The delivery of objectives detailed in our Strategy is supported by other local housing-related strategies and the action plans.

9. Strategy Governance

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10. Strategy Review Date

October 2019

11. References

Further information on the documentation that supports our Housing Strategy, can be found through the following links:
Rochdale’s Place Plan
http://www.rochdale.gov.uk/placeplan

Rochdale’s Corporate Plan:

Rochdale’s Homelessness Strategy:

Greater Manchester Housing Strategy

Greater Manchester Strategy
https://www.greatermanchester-ca.gov.uk/info/20067/greater_manchester_strategy

12. Appendices

12.1 Equality Impact Assessment