

Subject:	Housing Strategy	Status:	For Publication
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Report of:	Head of Housing and Regeneration	Lead Member:	Housing and Customer Services
Key Decision:	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Forward Plan <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	General Exception <input type="checkbox"/>	Special Urgency <input type="checkbox"/>
Equality Impact Assessment:	Required: No	Attached: No	No
Biodiversity Impact Assessment:	Required: No	Attached: No	No
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1. RECOMMENDATION(S)

1.1 To consider and approve the 2023-2027 Housing Strategy and accompanying Action Plan.

1.2 To delegate authority to the Head of Housing and Regeneration to develop the following pieces of work identified in the Action Plan:

- Homelessness and Rough sleeping strategy
- Housing Need and Demand Survey
- Overhaul of the Disabled Facilities Grant policy
- Tenancy Strategy
- Home improvement agency
- Establish a Partnership forum
- Establish delivery plans for Council owned land to bring forward for housing
- Increase supported accommodation in the Borough
- External funding business cases
- Supported accommodation in Rossendale

1.3 To launch the strategy at a planned event in July 2023.

1.4 To delegate all future minor amendments to the Head of Housing and Regeneration in conjunction with the Lead Member for Housing.

2. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- Both nationally and locally, Housing is a key subject matter. There are not enough appropriate homes to meet demand. This has led to a Housing Crisis.
- Rossendale Council still has to adhere to three public law legal obligations despite it transferring its housing stock.
- A Housing Strategy for Rossendale is a key Strategic Project in order to connect and focus key pieces of work that are in delivery in relation to Housing in Rossendale and the Council's compliance with statutory duties.
- Over the last year, extensive preparatory work has taken place to establish a vision and key actions to improve Rossendale's Housing landscape between 2023-2027, this has included workshops, briefings, questionnaires, case studies as well as a review of all relevant literature.
- This Strategy is the first part of a broader ambition for housing in Rossendale. It allows Rossendale Council to put actions in place in the short-term and gather data and evidence to strategically guide the housing market over the longer term.

- The proposed Housing Strategy 2023-2027 and Action Plan is attached to this report. It is accompanied by case studies, stakeholder surveys, Housing Market Analysis (Appendix A) and the literature review (Appendix B).
- In 2022-2023 Rossendale Council's Temporary Accommodation expenditure was significant and much greater than anything identified in previous years. The accommodation the Council uses is out of the Borough.
- There is no pipeline of affordable housing stock in Rossendale and the private rented sector in the North West has seen a sharp increase of 3.3% between March 21 and March 22 (ONS).
- The Homeless Reduction Act was introduced in 2017. It was noted at the time, that this would have a significant impact on the number of people going into Temporary Accommodation and that Rossendale Council would see an increase in the levels of support to provide. One of the major changes has been that previously a decision could be made on whether a household was intentionally homeless on the same day. The act now places a prevention duty to find temporary accommodation for an individual for 56 days while an investigation into intentionality takes place.
- The below duties are outlined as part of the Act:
 - A duty to prevent homelessness for all eligible applicants threatened with homelessness, regardless of priority need
 - A duty to relieve homelessness for all eligible homeless applicants, regardless of priority need
 - A duty to refer – public services will need to notify a local authority if they come into contact with someone they think may be homeless or at risk of becoming homeless
 - A duty for councils to provide advisory services on homelessness, preventing homelessness and people's rights free of charge
 - A duty to access all applicants' cases and agree a personalised housing plan
- Since the introduction of the Act, 83% of Councils surveyed by LGA have seen an increase in the number of homeless presentations.
- It is anticipated that there will be an increase in homeless presentations due to changes to the Section 21 notice. Changes will make it increasingly difficult for landlords to evict tenants and therefore in the short-term, landlords are taking the opportunity now to evict people.
- There is also a predicted further pressure on the Housing service due to the acceleration of the Afghan resettlement scheme, the closure of bridging hotels for asylum seekers, evictions due to rent arrears in the midst of the cost of living crisis as well as a likely increase in complicated and challenging cases.
- Rossendale Council has c £1.16m to support Disabled Facilities Grants in 2023-2024. This funding enables adaptations to people's homes to meet their needs.

3. BACKGROUND

In 2021 Rossendale Council released the Corporate Plan 2025.

The matters discussed in this report impact directly on the following corporate priorities:

- Healthy and proud communities

“Having good access to a quality home to either rent or buy plays a fundamental part in our residents' quality of life. We want people to live long lives and take pride in their communities.”

The matters in this report also closely connect to the policies outlined in the Council's adopted Local Plan 2021.

4. DETAILS

4.1 Rationale for the Strategy

Despite Rossendale Council transferring its housing stock, it still has to adhere to 3 public law considerations:

1. Provision of housing allocations and a public register
2. Provide homelessness and housing advice
3. Manage and influence private sector housing stock

The creation of a Housing Strategy is a key strategic priority for Rossendale, with a focus on ensuring a number of good quality homes and enabling residents to stay in their homes. It is a necessary tool in order to focus the above on-going pieces of work and ensure they are connected and purposeful. It highlights a number of actions that will be monitored and measured throughout the delivery of the Strategy indicating the performance.

Recent work in Rossendale has established that there are long-term challenges for local residents when it comes to the variety of decent homes. There are opportunities through the strategy to address this whilst ensuring that the housing sector grows in a sustainable and appropriate way.

The Housing Strategy aims to achieve the following objectives:

1. Improve the understanding of the housing market
2. Make the best use of existing housing in Rossendale
3. Increase the variety of housing in Rossendale

The actions identified within this strategy are designed to be delivered in the short-term, over a 4 year period. This gives Rossendale Council the opportunity to develop full knowledge of its current housing sector to build on and evolve the strategy beyond 2027.

4.2 Formulation for the Strategy

Following a procurement exercise, housing specialists Neil Morland consultants were appointed to formulate the strategy. They reported directly to both the Head of Housing in the initial stages as well as the Director of Economic Development. It was latterly the Head of Housing and Regeneration who became overall responsible for the strategy.

The consultants were appointed to complete the following development and preparatory work:

1. Collect data and information to form the baseline evidence
2. Analyse other areas and cross-reference strategies
3. Interview and survey relevant stakeholders through 1-1s and focus groups
4. Generate case studies from local residents using the Council's housing services

The extensive list of engagement, as well as the gathering of data both regionally and nationally is evidenced in Appendix A and B of this report.

Our Stakeholders and various organisations have taken part in several workshops with a focus on identifying a series of actions to develop these objectives. In addition to this, several one to one meetings were held with key partners and other Council colleagues operating within the sector who fed back their ideas and suggestions. This has been a critical exercise to ensure that the housing strategy is cohesive and is in line with the work of other colleagues.

Councillors were invited to complete an online questionnaire with the option to put forward further ideas via email or in a 1-1 session. Members also attended a briefing event in which they could make suggestions towards the content of the housing strategy.

4.3 About the Strategy

This strategy is about 4 years of immediate action to strengthen our public law housing duties, gather evidence and data and rebuild the trust of our residents. It is about us getting the fundamentals right so we can build on those to evolve the strategy and action plan beyond 2027.

The strategy includes the following:

1. A Vision Statement
2. Key objectives
3. Our current service
4. Regional and national data
5. Benchmark data for targets
6. Detailed 4 year Action Plan

Broad highlights of the key objectives include:

Objective 1: Improve the understanding of the housing market in Rossendale

- Complete a housing needs survey
- Consult on housing needs, demands, supply and affordability
- Revise the tenancy strategy
- Develop a Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy
- Bed and Breakfast elimination plan

Objective 2: Make the best use of existing housing in Rossendale

- Review outsourcing of Housing Allocations
- Refresh housing advice via the website, personal housing plans and unlocking training for staff
- Improve Temporary Accommodation harnessing the power of S106 agreements
- Increase the Supported Accommodation offer for singles
- Complete a stock condition survey
- Review the approach to homes at risk of dereliction
- Maximise external funding opportunities to improve homes
- Monitor compliance with the local plan policy HS5

Objective 3: Increase the variety of housing in Rossendale

- Refresh and review affordable housing policies and procedures
- Review standards for new developments
- Explore an RBC owned housing company
- Build on relationships internally and externally with partners and colleagues

4.4 Further Consultation

Following the formulation of the Draft Housing Strategy, a series of consultation activities have taken place to ensure that our stakeholders, partners and residents feel that it is the right strategy for Rossendale at this moment in time.

It is important to note that this strategy is a pre-cursor, allowing us to get the right evidence to strategically co-ordinate the housing market in Rossendale beyond 2027.

The following consultation has taken place since the draft was created:

- Email to relevant stakeholders, for example housing providers and Homes England with opportunity to complete feedback comments.
- One to ones with key officers to share and discuss feedback.
- Discussion with Councillors at a homelessness member briefing with 14 members in attendance.
- Version published for 3 weeks on the Council website with link circulated to Councillors and colleagues with several comments received
- Publicised on the Council's social media and a press release to accompany it
- Discussion with Councillors at a Housing Strategy briefing with 17 members in attendance.

The consultation responses have overall been welcoming of the Housing Strategy and the plan to support steady and sustainable growth in the Housing Sector. The high quality feedback during the formulation of the strategy and following the publication of the draft document has developed the actions further.

Those spoken to felt that the Objectives and the Vision were suitable and fitting to informing the recommendations of the strategy.

There were very few amendments made to the strategy following this consultation exercise.

4.5 Performance Monitoring

The Action Plan closely identifies the key performance indicators that will measure the success of the Housing Strategy.

A Steering Group will be established to guide the delivery of the Housing Strategy. The group will collate information, discuss key topics and actions and make decisions linked to the actions identified in the strategy. Members will include LCC, Planning officers, Developers, Housing Associations, Voluntary organisations and the Lead Member for Housing.

The Housing Strategy will be scrutinized on an annual basis at Overview and Scrutiny.

4.6 Project Costs

The development of this strategy has been largely outsourced to Neil Morland Consultants in conjunction with the relevant personnel at Rossendale Council at a cost of £25,000. They were procured via a tender exercise in 2022.

No other costs have arisen during the development of the Strategy.

Items identified in the Action Plan accompanying the strategy will require independent budgets and where possible will be completed in house. There are actions such as a Housing Needs Survey experts to complete, budgets for these items will be assessed individually, supported by a business case which will detail how they will be funded.

5. RISK

All the issues raised and the recommendation(s) in this report involve risk considerations as set out below:

- The Action Plan does not achieve financial and personnel resource affecting the delivery of identified projects.
Mitigation: The Action Plan has been developed with understanding of the staffing and cost requirements, with many actions presenting little cost. Each item will be assigned funding by seeking external investment to achieve them. Completing the items identified in the Action Plan will be the responsibility of the Head of Housing and Regeneration with annual scrutiny from the Strategy's steering group.
- Stakeholders and partners do not embrace the change are not pro-active with their assigned responsibilities.
Mitigation: Early engagement with Stakeholders with several feedback opportunities has significantly reduced this risk.
- Some projects identified in the Action Plan do not receive statutory permissions concluding their development.
Mitigation: Relevant experts and consultants within their fields will be engaged with to ensure statutory permissions are achieved where appropriate. Partnership working will be at the forefront of any project that's put forward.
- The 4-year vision and objectives are not achieved.
Mitigation: Rossendale Council has clearly defined the roles and responsibilities of those that are assigned actions within the Action Plan. The strategy and KPI's will be reviewed every year. The assigned steering group will have overall responsibility for ensuring the vision and KPI's are achieved.
- There is a change in policy on a national level affecting some actions within the strategy.
Mitigation: The strategy is delivered on a short-term basis so that it can remain fluid and adapt to changes nationally, any key policies that could affect the strategy will take time to embed.

6. FINANCE

- 6.1 The cost of the housing strategy has been funded from within the homelessness prevention budget.
- 6.2 Any projects arising out of the housing strategy will be subject to individual approval in line with the Council's financial procedure rules.

7. LEGAL

This report sets out the council's proposed vision in relation to housing in the borough which at this point has no arising legal implications. As work progresses there will be a need to bring further reports back to Council for consideration. For those funding streams identified and already in train, officers will continue to address Council or Cabinet as necessary and enter into all necessary legal agreements and grant funding arrangements as required by the Constitution

8. POLICY AND EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1 The Housing Strategy supports the delivery of the Council's statutory obligations and the Council Corporate Plan 2021-2025.
- 8.2 Extensive consultation has been completed in the development of the strategy and is noted in the body of the report.
- 8.3 An Equality Impact Assessment has been completed and any equality implications related to the delivery of the strategy will be given consideration in a relevant and proportionate manner.

9. REASON FOR DECISION

This strategy will deliver 4 years of action to understand the housing sector in Rossendale, creating the evidence to significantly improve and increase our impact on the sector.

Background Papers	
Document	Place of Inspection
Housing Strategy	https://www.rossendale.gov.uk/downloads/file/17926/housing_strategy_2023-37
Case Studies	Available to view in the office via appointment
Stakeholder Surveys	Available to view in the office via appointment
Appendix A- Housing Market Analysis	Available to view in the office via appointment
Appendix B – Literature Review	Available to view in the office via appointment

ROSSENDALE HOUSING STRATEGY

2023 – 2027



Rossendale
BOROUGH COUNCIL

ROSSENDALE BOROUGH COUNCIL

Rossendale Borough Council is a non-metropolitan local housing authority situated in the county of Lancashire in the North West of England. The local authority was founded in 1974. Rossendale Borough Council works with Lancashire County Council and Whitworth Parish Council to deliver local government functions for the district. Rossendale Borough Council is responsible for administering public law housing duties, delivering these through a wide range of community and specialist housing services.

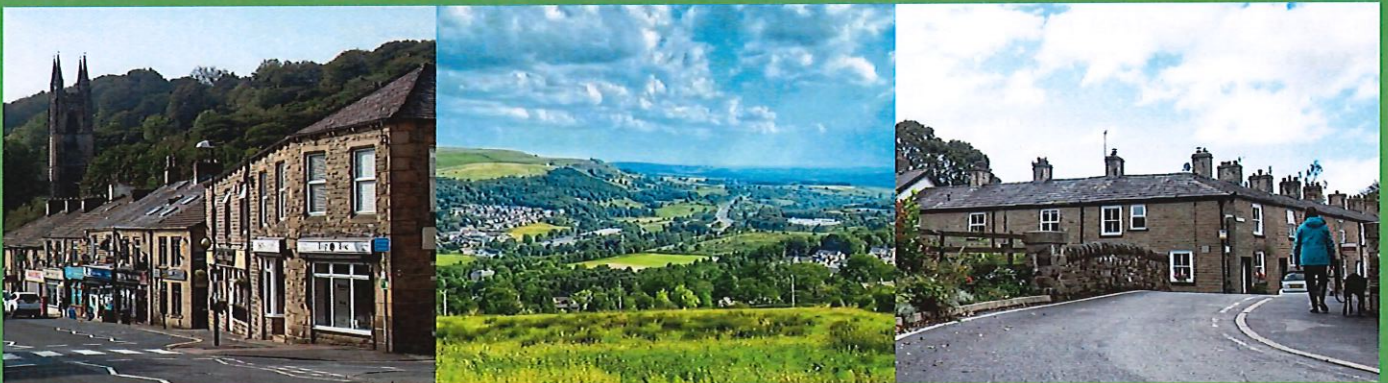


Acknowledgment: Thanks to Neil Morland & Co-Housing Consultants for researching and formulating this housing strategy.

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INTRODUCTION

Rossendale isn't alone in the issues it faces when it comes to housing. There is no doubt that there is a fundamental need to increase the number of good quality homes right across the country. However, the development of this strategy has highlighted the particular challenges that Rossendale faces.

The primary aim of this plan is to strengthen the boroughs housing framework and ensure we get the basics right. The strategy outlines how we get the best out of our resources and build on our existing relationships, both internally and with our partners. This will drive forward improvements in Rossendale's housing market, and ultimately boost the options available to Rossendale residents.

It focuses on transforming current policies and developing incentives for residents and partners and working in creative ways to bring forward some key housing sites. The delivery of our housing strategy should trigger immediate change. Stakeholders, partners and residents have come together to help us understand how we can improve and develop housing in Rossendale, and we intend to act on their feedback.

Over the next four years, action will be taken to increase, improve and understand the housing offer in Rossendale, helping us to make strides towards achieving our longer-term outcomes which will directly benefit Rossendale residents.

The action plan which accompanies this strategy outlines the steps we will take to do this.

This document has been built on the following foundations: case studies (Appendix A) with residents who have varying circumstances; a wealth of housing data; a wide-ranging study of key documents (Appendix B). We've taken into account the recent adoption of the Local Plan which looks at substantially increasing the delivery of new housing development, linking with other key corporate documents such as the Corporate Plan and other strategies, that cover issues such as homelessness and private sector housing. This document describes in more detail what we intend to do to fully address the problems faced in our Borough.

We have also developed the tools we need to deliver the objectives of this Housing Strategy. We have a robust Local Plan with supplementary planning guidance, which enables us to address imbalances in the local housing market. The first two years of this strategy will strengthen our public law housing duties, focusing on policy

and process changes, and rebuilding trust with our residents.

We'll review our performance annually and ensure engagement from our key stakeholders to help continually drive the process forward. A full performance review monitoring and evaluation exercise will be completed in year four. Adopting this Housing Strategy demonstrates that we have a clear strategic approach to tackling the problems that exist within Rossendale's housing market. It means we have got the tools we need to deliver the objectives. It shows that with a robust local plan - and supplementary guidance - we can help address the imbalance in the housing market.

Cllr Alyson Barnes

Leader of the Council & Lead Member for Economic Development Cllr Steve Hughes Lead Member for Housing & Customer Services.

Cllr Steve Hughes

Lead Member for Housing & Customer Services

TARGETS FOR THE ROSSENDALE BOROUGH COUNCIL

1.

Improve the quality of research and understanding of local housing needs and the local imbalance between supply and demand.

2.

Monitor the quantity of repairs, improvements or adaptations of homes, to ensure properties in Rossendale remain useable.

3.

Increase efforts made to keep local people in their homes, by preventing homelessness or encouraging people to move to more suitable housing.

4.

Enhance the effectiveness of available funding streams, partnerships and planning powers to enable more homes in Rossendale.

OUR VISION

In the next 5 years, housing in Rossendale will be accessible, affordable and appropriate

OBJECTIVES OF THIS STRATEGY

1.

Improve the understanding of Rossendale's housing market

2.

Make the best use of existing housing in Rossendale

3.

Increase the variety of housing in Rossendale

OUR APPROACH TO HOUSING

Here we explain the key housing activities we currently carry out and our plan to improve the quality and potential of our services and strategies.

We, Rossendale Borough Council (RBC) no longer build or rent homes but we are responsible for our public law housing duties relating to:

- Allocations (how to get social rented property)
- Homelessness (assistance to preventing homelessness)
- Private rented stock (improvements and enforcement)

Along with partners and Lancashire County Council, we complete activities to renew and regeneration existing neighbourhoods and these form our strategic approach to housing. We have good internal working arrangements and communications and we have come up with some actions to improve these even more, joint working between services such as housing, planning, legal and benefits is crucial.

We fully understand the interrelationship between different housing issues; affordability, social housing allocations, homelessness and private sector housing.

This Housing Strategy will help us to ensure service planning is well integrated and operational resources are deployed towards achieving the vision and objectives of this Strategy.

To ensure the delivery of our housing services and strategies are fit for purpose we shall adopt the following service standards:

1. To make it simpler for people with a housing need to get clear information and advice on their options.
2. To ensure housing provision is strategically planned and delivered appropriately to meet the diverse needs of the local community.
3. Work to balance the housing market to ensure that it represents value for money and is accessible to all who live in Rossendale.



IMPROVE THE UNDERSTANDING OF ROSSENDALE'S HOUSING MARKET

Here we explain our current understanding of Rossendale's housing market and what we intend to do in the future to further improve our understanding.

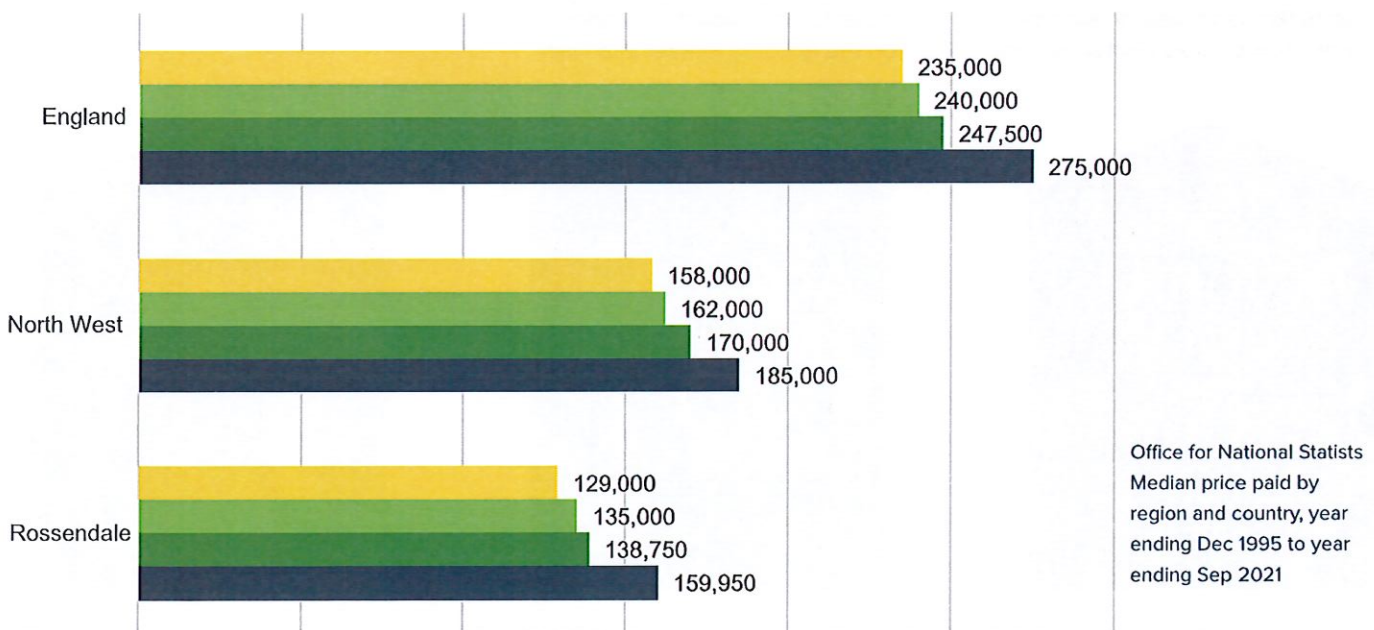
Commissioned by Rossendale Council, Litchfield's Planning & Development Consultancy have undertaken work as part of the evidence base for the local plan including, the strategic housing market assessment (published in 2019), and updated in parts during examination of the Local Plan. Work relating to viability has also been undertaken and is available as part of the Local Plan evidence base.

We recognise aspects of the housing market are out of balance and through the delivery of this Housing Strategy, we intend to gather information to fully understand the scale of the imbalance and the actions necessary to address the problems.

Median house prices (as reported by the Office for National Statistics, for the period 2018 to 2021) for

Rossendale are on average 20% lower compared with the North West and 78% lower compared with England, but this masks differences across the Rossendale borough. There has been an increase in recent years of the ratio of median house prices to median gross annual income in Rossendale, making it higher than in the North West. This has resulted in a greater disparity between house prices and annual income.

Chart 1: Median house prices 2019 to 2021, England, North West, Rossendale





In developing our understanding, we have collated information and through the delivery of this Strategy, intend to use this more effectively to help determine the actions we need to take.

We have:

- Some analysis of housing needs and market research, but intend to make better use of existing data sources like homelessness,

housing advice, housing register trends, house price and rent level data, than we currently do.

- Some contextual information about the market, for example house prices, private renting costs, local ways levels, deprivation and unemployment statistics and we intend to more completely consider the impact of changes on the housing market and wish

to more fully understand what this means for Rosendale in terms of policy options.

- A reasonable understanding of the condition of housing in the area, with more information about compliance with a decent homes standard across all sectors.

Action 1.1

Have the right research base to understand Rosendale's housing market and deliver effective housing services

Action 1.2

Have a clear and robust strategic approach to deal with problems highlighted by research

Action 1.3

Improve how different sections within RBC work together to understand the housing market and develop joined-up and coherent strategies

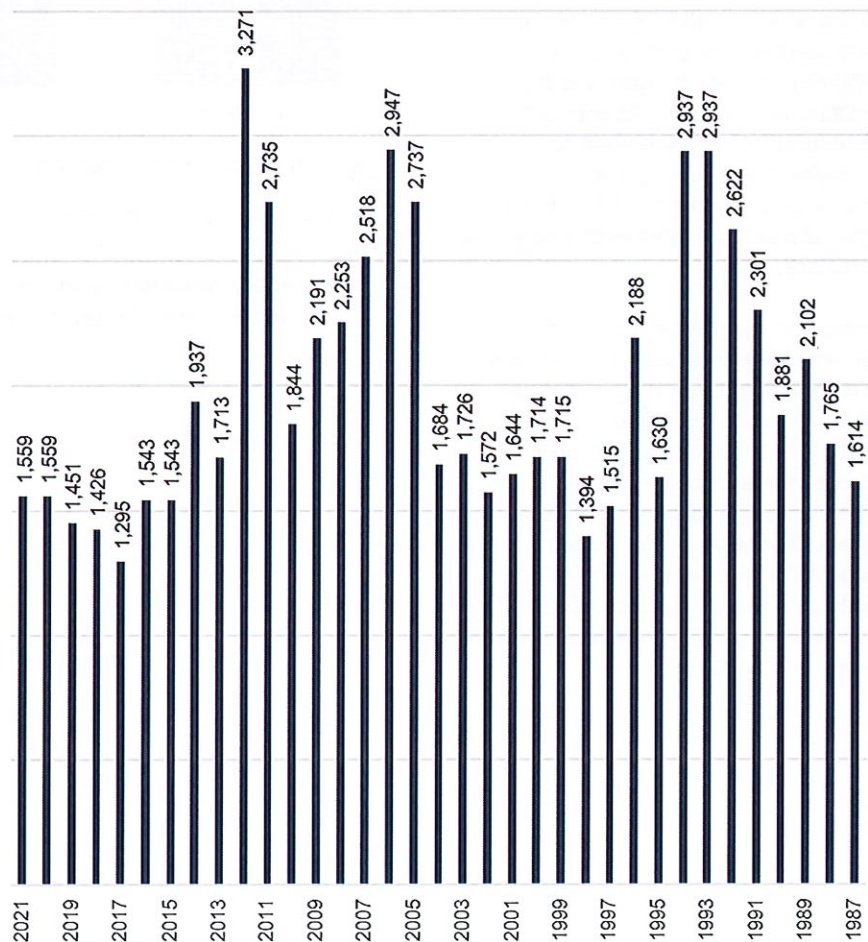
MAKE THE BEST USE OF EXISTING HOUSING IN ROSSENDALE

Here we explain what we are currently doing to make best use of existing housing in Rossendale and what we intend to do in future to make even better use of existing housing in Rossendale.

Chart 2: Number of households on waiting list, Rossendale Borough Council 1987- 2021

We provide an opportunity for people to register for an allocation of social rented housing and express a choice in the properties they may be offered, through our membership of a sub-regional housing allocation scheme, known as B-with-us (alongside four neighbouring local authorities and 12 housing associations). We use nomination agreements with housing associations that ensure a large percentage of social rented homes available to let are offered to people who have a have an urgent need to be re-housed.

The number of people on our housing register reflects regional and national trends, peaking in 2012 and subsequently falling (-60%) to 2017, since which there has been a 20% increase.



Source: Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities last updated 27 January 2022

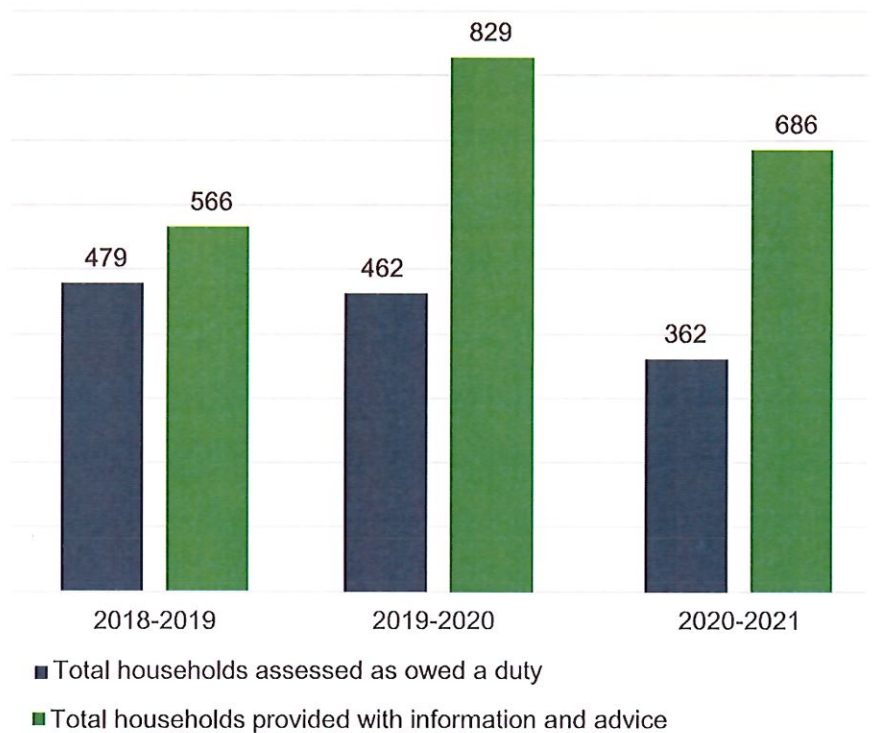
Compared to both national and regional figures, RBC recorded a larger proportion of households registered for social housing between 2015 and 2019, in 2020 and 2021 the proportion of households in England increased to our local levels.

We have a focus on prevention of homelessness and have had some success. There are some initiatives in place, such as rent deposit schemes, but we want to be more innovative and match homelessness prevention action to the key reasons for why people become homeless. Between 2018/19 and 2020/21 there was an increase in the percentage (54%, 64% and 65%) of households presenting at our Housing Options Service requiring information and advice.

We have links with LCC social care services (for both adults and children) and health agencies that facilitate joint working to prevent homelessness, but we want to formalise these arrangements to ensure people do not fall between agencies and unnecessarily end up as homeless.

Compared both regionally and nationally Rossendale has the lowest percentage of unemployed people. However, unlike England and the North West, Rossendale records a large percentage of younger claimants aged 18-24 years. Most recent data shows Rossendale recorded a greater percentage of applicants owed a homelessness duty who are not working due to long-term illness or disability.

Chart 3: Number of households initially assessed as threatened with homelessness or homeless including the number of households with support needs, RBC, 2018/19-2020/21



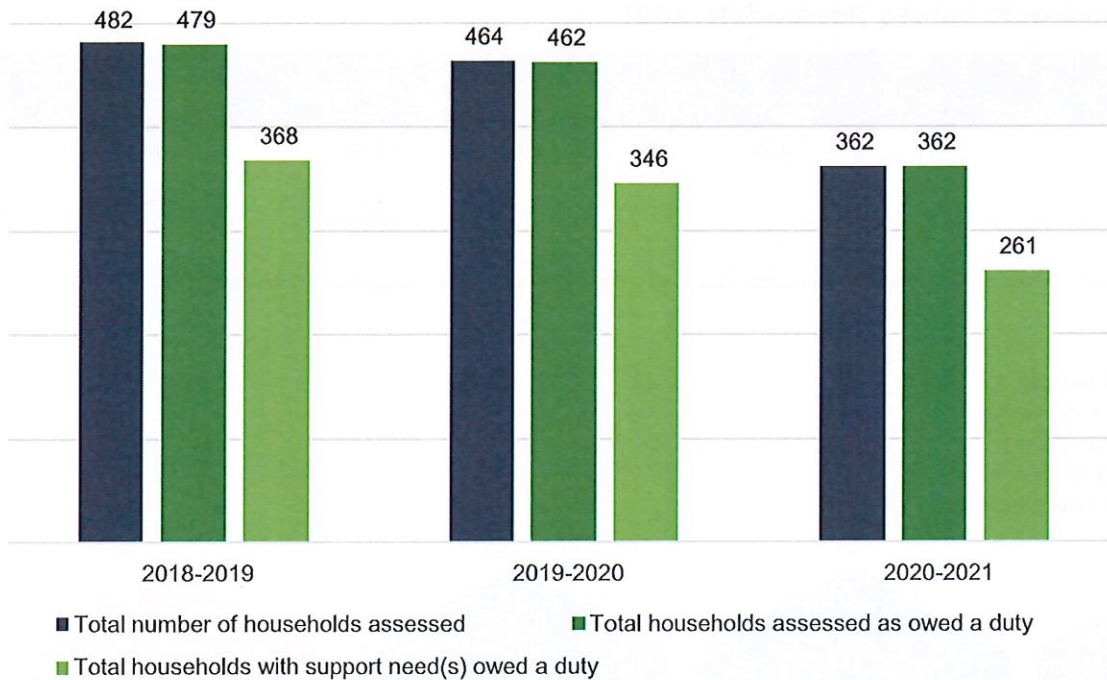
Source: Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities last updated 28 April 2022 and Rossendale Borough Council 20 May 2022

Rossendale records a higher percentage of child poverty compared both nationally and regionally. On average 75% of households we owe a duty of assistance due to being homeless or threatened with homelessness, have support needs notably higher

compared to regional (52%) and national (47%) trends. We intend to adopt an overarching approach to the prevention of homelessness through the publication of a new Homelessness Strategy and we will ensure we refresh this every 5 years.

We want to further develop relationships with key stakeholders, including landlords and letting agents. We have recently agreed to procure new temporary accommodation.

Chart 4: Number of households initially assessed as threatened with homelessness or homeless including the number of households with support needs, RBC, 2018/19-2020/21



Source: Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities last updated 28 April 2022

Table 1: Snapshot of households in temporary accommodation taken 20th May 2022

Temporary accommodation	Number of households accommodated
1 Bed flat (Together Housing)	1
B&B Accommodation Rochdale	6
B&B Accommodation Blackburn	5

Source: Rossendale Borough Council 20 May 2022

Percentage of children in poverty after housing costs 2014/15: England 28.3%; North West 28.9%; Rossendale 30.6% and, 2019/20: England 30.4%;

We want to improve homelessness prevention action, such as payment of rent arrears or addressing welfare benefit problems. Housing advice services exist across Rossendale; notwithstanding this, we want to fill any gaps in provision and improve the quality of advice.

We give advice and take enforcement action to deal with poor private sector

housing conditions. We want to be more proactive and focused in the action we take to address imbalances in the housing market. We intend to fully utilise the powers available to us and explore other options for securing home improvements, for example by making use of clearance and regeneration powers, improving energy efficiency and returning empty properties back into use as homes.

Progress to date has resulted in an 18% reduction in the number of empty homes in Rossendale between 2017 and 2021, unlike the national five year-trend of steadily rising numbers of long-term empty homes in England.

Table 2: Long term empty homes, Rossendale, 2021

	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
Number of empty homes	498	474	497	536	409
Percentage change		-5%	+5%	+8%	-24%

Source: Action on Empty Homes based on Government data published by Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, 10 Nov 2021.

We already act to help people move to a home more suitable for their needs. In future we intend to better utilise the discretionary powers available to us and be more innovative.

Action 2.1

Review the effectiveness of partnerships with housing associations and involvement in the B-with-us common housing allocation scheme

Action 2.2

Improve the quality, effectiveness and appropriateness of housing advice, homelessness prevention and options services.

Action 2.3

Intervene to remove unsustainable private sector housing and remodel an area where there is an oversupply of housing.

Action 2.4

Introduce new policies that enable people to remain in their own homes in suitable and sustainable properties.

INCREASE THE VARIETY OF HOUSING IN ROSSENDALE

Here we explain what we are currently doing to deliver more housing in Rossendale to meet local needs and what we intend to do in the future to increase the availability of even more housing in Rossendale to meet local needs.

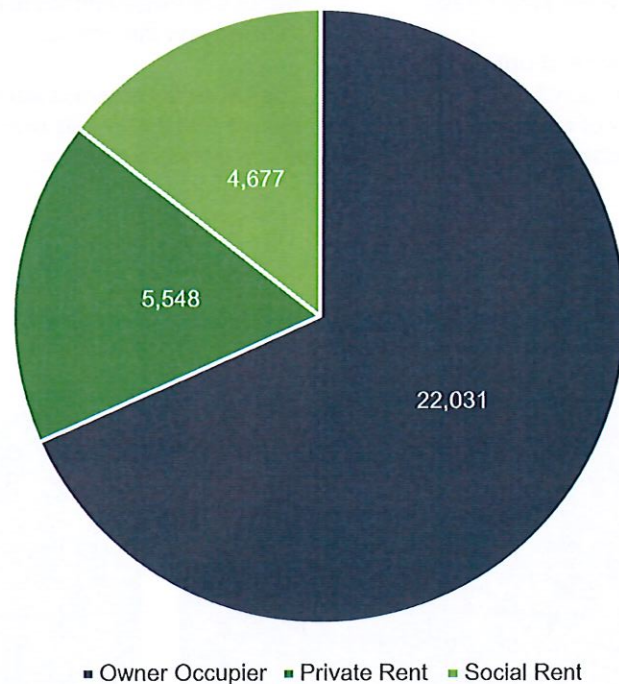
We have a strong idea of the type of housing we wish to see developed.

Compared both nationally and regionally Rossendale has a higher percentage of owner-occupied dwellings and lower percentage of private and social rented dwellings.

Of the estimated 32,256 dwellings in Rossendale, 68% are owner occupied, 17% private rent and 14% social rent.

RBC recently adopted a new Local Plan which allocates sufficient housing sites to meet the Borough's housing requirements up to 2036 and are working on development briefs for some of these. The Strategic Housing Market Area Assessment (SHMAA) acknowledges that it will not be possible to meet Rossendale's affordable housing needs in full but, the Local Plan demonstrates how affordable housing targets will be met (with 30% expected on site delivering 10 or more new dwellings) and ensure the timely release of land for development.

Chart 5: Estimates of dwellings by tenure, Rossendale 2020



Source: Office for National Statistics (ONS) Tenure estimates for dwellings at the local authority district level in England 2012 – 2020.
Release date: 31 January 2022

We are clear that resources to make affordable housing developments will primarily come from private developers in conjunction with Homes England and housing associations and we will create individual delivery plans to bring forward such developments, this could include setting up an RBC owned management company. We are working hard to increase the delivery of new housing and meet targets for the number of homes built and this is having a significant impact on balancing the housing market.

We are working proactively with other organisations to ensure the development of many sites and resources are consistently targeted towards schemes that meet local identified housing needs. We are working effectively to match developers with housing associations to ensure affordable housing is well integrated and that a wide range of housing in terms of tenure and size is delivered to meet local needs.

We have a range of policies and procedures in place to enable the development of affordable housing. On-site affordable housing is secured

through section 106 agreements, with some capital funding for specialist supported housing provision coming from Homes England.

We are ensuring developments of needs and gaps in provision which help balance the housing market overtime.

We are working to ensure new affordable affordable housing is developed to best practice design standards and this is supported by supplementary planning documents.

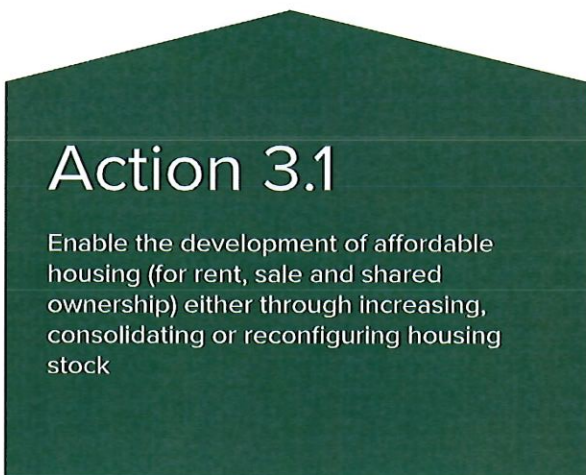
We work in partnership with Homes England, developers and housing associations. These partnerships are effective and have delivered many new affordable homes. We recognise there is an opportunity to improve our work with neighbours, to further our understanding of sub-regional housing needs and the provision of affordable housing across boundaries so have ambitions to proactively keep discussions open-minded, forward thinking and innovative.

The UK Government is keen to ensure that the help is provided for home ownership with a

focus on first time buyers, such as, Discount Market Value homes or through Shared Ownership. Rossendale has need for social rented housing and requirements are reflected in the Local Plan.

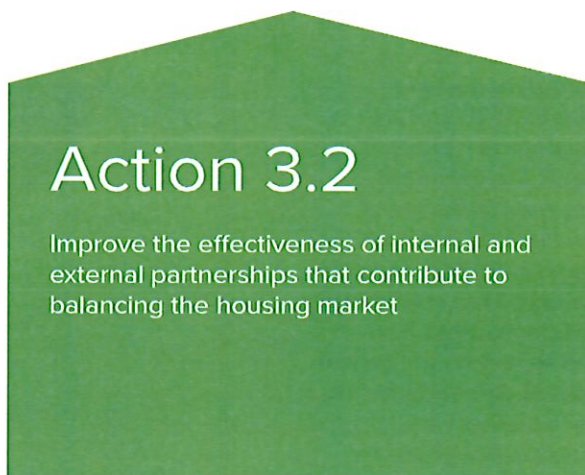
We can evidence a consistent track record of taking difficult decisions in relation to the development of affordable housing, for example housing is always well integrated and commuted sums are taken when on-site provision of affordable housing is not the best option.

Our Planning Service has a good track record in negotiating section 106 agreement and we have made clear our priorities for seeking developer contributions.

A dark green house-shaped graphic with a white horizontal line across the middle. The text is white and positioned below the line.

Action 3.1

Enable the development of affordable housing (for rent, sale and shared ownership) either through increasing, consolidating or reconfiguring housing stock

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Action 3.2

Improve the effectiveness of internal and external partnerships that contribute to balancing the housing market

DELIVERING THIS STRATEGY



DELIVERING THIS STRATEGY

Here we describe the arrangements we will put in place to make sure the actions set out in the strategy are delivered.

The delivery of this housing strategy requires close working between ourselves and a range of stakeholders.

A steering group shall be established to oversee the delivery of this Housing Strategy. The steering group shall meet regularly to cover an agenda that shall include:

- Collation and presentation of information that helps improve the understanding of Rossendale's housing market
- Discussion about progress of delivering actions set out in the strategy, to make best use of existing stock and enable more housing
- Decisions about the allocation of resources to deliver the actions set out in this housing strategy

The steering group shall be responsible for updating the action plan that accompanies this Housing Strategy, to ensure it remains relevant. The steering group shall be chaired by a chief officer of RBC, whose responsibilities include housing.

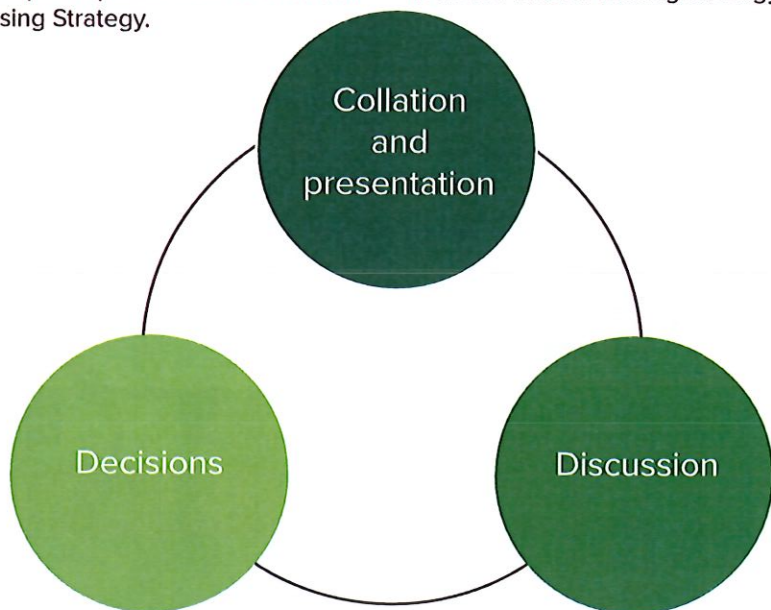
The members of the group shall include chief or principal officers from relevant stakeholders, including, but not limited to

- LCC
- Housing associations
- Voluntary organisations, such as Veterans in Communities, Citizens Advice, Inspire etc.
- Housing developers
- Planning department

Short life (e.g. less than 12 months) task and finish groups shall be created as and when needed, to accomplish specific actions from this Housing Strategy.

Membership of these groups shall vary, depending on the specifics of any given actions. A member of the steering group shall chair any task and finish group, to ensure accountability and deliverability.

A committee of councillors shall meet at a minimum annually to scrutinise the delivery of this housing strategy and any subsequent modifications made to the accompanying action plan. The committee shall also consider performance against the targets and service standards included in this Housing Strategy.



ACTION PLAN

OBJECTIVES

1. Continually improve the understanding of Rossendale housing market
2. Make the best use of existing housing in Rossendale, to meet current needs and reduce the need for more housing
3. Enable more housing in Rossendale, to meet a range of needs

TARGETS

1. Improve the quality of research and understanding of local housing needs and the local imbalance between supply and demand
- 2.A. Monitor quantity of repairs, improvements or adaptations of homes, to ensure properties in Rossendale remain useable.
- 2B. Increase efforts to keep local people in their homes, by preventing homelessness or encouraging people to move to more suitable housing
3. Enhance the effectiveness of available funding streams, partnerships and planning powers to enable more homes in Rossendale

No	Actions	Target for completion				
		2023	2024	2025	2026	2027
1.1	Have the right research base to understand Rossendale's housing market and deliver effective housing services.					
1.2	Have a clear and robust strategic approach to deal with problems highlighted by research.					
1.3	Improve how different sections within RBC work together to understand the housing market and develop joined up and coherent strategies.					
2.1	Review the effectiveness of partnerships with housing associations and involvement in the B-with-us sub-regional housing allocation scheme.					
2.2	Improve the quality, effectiveness and appropriateness of housing advice, homelessness prevention and options services.					
2.3	Intervene to remove unsustainable private sector housing and remodel an area where there is an oversupply of housing.					
2.4	Introduce new policies that enable people to remain in their own homes in suitable and sustainable properties.					
3.1	Enable the development of affordable housing (for rent, sale and shared ownership) either through increasing, consolidating or re-configuring housing stock.					
3.2	Improve the effectiveness of internal and external partnerships that contribute to balancing the housing market.					

OBJECTIVE ONE:

Improve the understanding of Rossendale’s housing market

TARGET: Improve the quality of research and understanding of local housing needs and the local imbalance between supply and demand

No	Action	Tasks	Resources required	Lead Officer & Key Partners	Time-scales
1.1	Have the right research base to understand Rossendale's housing market and deliver effective housing services.	Update housing needs survey to identify: (i) type (ii) tenure (iii) density (iv) affordability	£10k	Head of Housing & Regeneration Head of Planning Public Protection Manager	2023
		Carry out regular consultation with the public and other stakeholders on housing needs/demand, supply and affordability	Room hire	Head of Housing & Regeneration	2023- 2027
		Complete a peer review		Head of Housing & Regeneration	
1.2	Have a clear and robust strategic approach to deal with problems highlighted by research.	Publish a new Tenancy Strategy	In house	Head of Housing & Regeneration	2023
		Publish a new Homelessness & Rough Sleeping Strategy	In house / partner	Head of Housing & Regeneration	2024
		Homelessness Monitoring	In house	Head of Housing & Regeneration	On-going
		Publish a new Private Sector Housing Strategy	In house	Head of Housing & Regeneration	2025
		Scope and produce a domestic abuse strategy		Head of Housing & Regeneration	2026
		Commit to ending the use of bed and breakfast for homeless families by delivering the new B and B elimination plan, including: - Refreshing temporary accommodation allocations and policies		Director of Economic Development	
1.3	Improve how different sections within RBC work together to understand the housing market and develop joined up and coherent strategies.	Complete briefing sessions with colleagues to ensure delivery of this Housing Strategy	In house	Director of Economic Development Director of Communities	2023
		Review and refresh joint working between Housing and: (i) Planning (ii) Legal (iii) Finance (iv) Housing Benefits (v) Environmental Health (vi) Economic development (vii) Communities Using opportunities like CMT and service plans, ensuring key cross over between policies and emerging strategies, such as the affordable housing SPD.	In house	Director of Economic Development Director of Communities Head of Legal Services Chief Finance Officer	2023

OBJECTIVE TWO:

Make the best use of existing housing in Rossendale

TARGET: Monitor quantity of repairs, improvements or adaptations of homes, to ensure properties in Rossendale remain useable.

TARGET: Increase efforts to keep local people in their homes, by preventing homelessness or encouraging people to move to more suitable housing.

No	Action	Tasks	Resources required	Lead Officer & Key Partners	Time-scales
2.1	Review the effectiveness of partnerships with housing associations and involvement in the B-with-us sub-regional housing allocation scheme.	Review arrangements for contracting out housing allocation functions	In house	Head of Housing & Regeneration	2023
		Review involvement in sub-regional choice-based letting scheme "be with us"	In house	Head of Housing & Regeneration	2024
		Review and refresh nomination agreements with housing associations	In house	Head of Housing & Regeneration Head of Legal Housing Associations	2025
2.2	Improve the quality, effectiveness and appropriateness of housing advice, homelessness prevention and options services.	Review and refresh activities for preventing homelessness	In house	Housing Options Team Leader	2023
		Build on joint working with LCC, NHS Trusts, neighbouring councils, landlords and agents	In house	Housing Options Team Leader LCC Children Services LCC Adult Social Care Housing Associations	2024
		Review and refresh the quality and availability of housing advice in the area, including: Website improvements Personal Housing Plans Promote training opportunities for existing staff	In house	Housing Options Team Leader	2025
		Improve the availability of temporary accommodation in the borough for homeless household and ensure s106 opportunities are maximized	In house	Housing Options Team Leader	2026
		Increase the supported housing offer within the borough by identifying properties (both Council owned or privately owned) for single supported accommodation	In house/ partners	Head of Housing & Regeneration LCC Supported Housing Commissioning	2027

OBJECTIVE TWO:

Make the best use of existing housing in Rossendale

TARGET: Monitor quantity of repairs, improvements or adaptations of homes, to ensure properties in Rossendale remain useable.

TARGET: Increase efforts to keep local people in their homes, by preventing homelessness or encouraging people to move to more suitable housing.

No	Action	Tasks	Resources required	Lead Officer & Key Partners	Time-scales
2.3	Intervene to remove unsustainable private sector housing and remodel an area where there is an oversupply of housing.	Commission a private sector stock condition survey	External, circa £20k-£40k	Head of Housing & Regeneration	2023
		Review the Council's approach to properties that are empty and that are at risk of long-term dereliction	In house, requires co-ordinator	Public Protection Manager and Head of Housing & Regeneration	2024
		Maximise external funding opportunities to tackle problems in housing market	In house	Head of Housing & Regeneration	2025
		Work closely with town centre masterplans to reduce the retail core and introduce more housing opportunities			
2.4	Introduce new policies that enable people to remain in their own homes in suitable and sustainable properties.	Improve existing provision of adaptations and energy efficiency improvements by maximising external funding opportunities and reviewing the cosy homes scheme.	In house	Housing Renewal Manager	2026
		Monitor compliance with local plan policy HS5, which seeks to secure a new housing that is compliant with M4 (2) of building regulations, with better accessibility and adaptability	In house	Head of Regeneration & Housing Head of Planning	2027
		Develop incentives for people to move to more suitable homes that better meet their needs	In house	Head of Housing and Regeneration Public Protection Manager	2027

OBJECTIVE THREE:

Increase the variety of housing in Rossendale

TARGET: Enhance the effectiveness of available funding streams, partnerships and planning powers to enable more homes in Rossendale

No	Action	Tasks	Resources required	Lead Officer & Key Partners	Time-scales
3.1	Enable the development of affordable housing (for rent, sale and shared ownership) either through increasing, consolidating or re-configuring housing stock.	Review and refresh policies and procedures to enable affordable housing developments, through: (i) Local Plan allocations (ii) exception sites (iii) windfall sites (iv) use of own resources (v) Homes England (vi) planning obligations on developers	In house	Head of Regeneration & Housing Head of Planning	2023
		Review and refresh standards for new housing developments, to ensure new homes are: (i) well integrated (ii) sustainable (iii) adaptable over time (iv) affordable (v) meet a variety of needs	In house	Head of Regeneration & Housing Head of Planning	2024
		Explore setting up an RBC housing company	In house	Director of Economic Dev Head of Legal Services Chief Finance Officer	2025
		Produce delivery plans for Rossendale council owned land, unlocking it for housing		Head of Housing and Regeneration	2023
		Give due regard to the armed forces community as we strategically plan and deliver housing services to the people of Rossendale		Head of Planning	On-going
3.2	Improve the effectiveness of internal and external partnerships that contribute to balancing the housing market	Review and refresh partnerships with: (i) Homes England (ii) housing associations (iii) neighbouring councils (iv) developers (v) landlords	Room hire and material	Director of Economic Development	2027



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Rossendale
BOROUGH COUNCIL