



Denbighshire's Housing & Homelessness Strategy

Action Plan November 2020

Denbighshire's Housing & Homelessness Strategy: Action Plan

Introduction

The Housing & Homelessness Strategy and accompanying Action Plan were adopted by the Council XXXX and are an amalgamation of all of our actions concerned with housing, homelessness and housing related support. As a result, the implementation of the Strategy is being undertaken by several different departments, in many instances working with partner organisations.

The relevant actions have been included in each service business plan as appropriate and are monitored by the relevant Lead Members and Heads of Service through the Housing & Homelessness Strategy Delivery Group, jointly chaired by Lead Member Cllr Tony Thomas and Cllr Bobby Feeley. The Housing & Homelessness Strategy is based around 6 key themes, and the Action Plan is structured around these themes, setting out the key actions required to deliver the desired outcomes for each key theme:

1. More homes to meet local need and demand
2. Creating a supply of affordable homes
3. Ensuring safe and healthy homes
4. Preventing & ending homelessness in Denbighshire
5. Homes and support for vulnerable people
6. Promoting and supporting communities

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Theme Title	Reference	Action	Justification / Context	Update	Completion Date	Lead Member / Head of Service
More homes to meet local need & demand	1.01	Review LDP housing allocations and policies as part of statutory LDP Review	Current LDP covers the period up to 2021, a review of policies and land use for the County is a statutory requirement.	We are working to progress background technical evidence for Denbighshire's Replacement LDP, but the current Covid-19 crisis is impacting decision-making, public engagement and fieldwork, so we will have to revise the timetable for the Replacement LDP set out in our Delivery Agreement.	Dec -23	Mark Young Emlyn Jones
More homes to meet local need & demand	1.02	To develop an Infrastructure Plan for Denbighshire	Identification of infrastructure issues and requirements to inform policies and land allocations to enable housing growth and development.	Infrastructure Plan will be further developed as part of the work on the replacement LDP and site assessments. A continuous review process required for this.	Dec -23	Mark Young Emlyn Jones
More homes to meet local need & demand	1.03	Update Local Housing Market Assessment incorporating housing need and demand data.	Current assessment was completed in 2019. Statutory requirement to provide an updated assessment every 2 years.	Development of new LHMA for 2021 awaiting finalised guidance from WG on how to gather evidence and present document	Dec-21	Tony Thomas Emlyn Jones

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More homes to meet local need & demand	1.04	Undertake a Gypsy & Traveller Accommodation Assessment and take action on its findings.	Housing (Wales) Act 2014 requires an updated Gypsy & Traveller Accommodation Assessment to be carried out every 4 years and for any needs identified to be addressed.	New Gypsy & Traveller Accommodation Assessment will be undertaken as part of the background evidence for the LDP.	Dec-22	Mark Young Emlyn Jones
More homes to meet local need & demand	1.05	Implement the Empty Homes Delivery Plan	Better use of existing housing stock by continuing to target empty homes across the County.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Launch Empty Homes matching service · Promote Houses to Homes loan scheme 	Dec-26	Mark Young Emlyn Jones
Creating a supply of affordable homes	2.01	Review of Local Development Plan policies such as affordable housing in rural areas and commuted sums	To ensure that affordable housing requirements are balanced against viability of site delivery and the amount of affordable housing being delivered by private developers is maximised without impacting overall housing delivery. Requirements for rural affordable housing, and the Council's approach, will also be reconsidered to ensure this supports sustainable rural communities.	Part of Replacement LDP evidence and methodology. Test a range of methods for calculating financial contributions towards affordable housing, with the aim of reducing the number of calculations currently used. Test a range of approaches to calculating the value of affordable properties, to ensure this is set at an appropriate level.	Dec -23	Mark Young Emlyn Jones
Creating a supply of affordable homes	2.02	Review the current approach and thresholds for affordable housing	To ensure that affordable housing requirements are balanced against viability of site delivery and the amount of affordable housing being	Part of Replacement LDP evidence and methodology	Dec -23	Mark Young Emlyn Jones

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		requirements in LDP policies	delivered by private developers is maximised without impacting overall housing delivery. Requirements for rural affordable housing, and the Council's approach, will also be reconsidered to ensure this supports sustainable rural communities.			
Creating a supply of affordable homes	2.03	Promotion of Tai Teg affordable housing register	Tai Teg is the Affordable Housing Register for Denbighshire, ensuring promotion will enable applicants to find suitable accommodation and the list is used in planning application responses as an indication of demand.	Plan a series of strategic Press Releases to actively promote the Tai Teg register to promote all types of schemes available Homebuy, Rent to Own, Intermediate Rental & Shared Equity	Dec-26	Tony Thomas Emlyn Jones
Creating a supply of affordable homes	2.04	Publicise successful affordable housing schemes with relevant partners	Promotion will enable applicants to find suitable accommodation and the list is used in planning application responses as an indication of demand	Strategic promotion of affordable housing schemes both before and after development to maximise applicants and success stories	Dec-26	Tony Thomas Emlyn Jones
Creating a supply of affordable homes	2.05	Develop & adopt a Council Housing Asset Strategy	Develop an Asset Strategy which includes a development & maintenance programme to include the carbon zero aspirations of the Council	Develop an Asset Strategy	Apr-21	Tony Thomas Steve Gadd

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Creating a supply of affordable homes	2.06	Review existing housing portfolio with emphasis on providing suitable accommodation to the future older person demographic of Denbighshire	The purpose of this review is to inform the future type of Council Housing needed in Denbighshire	Review existing DCC stock portfolio including non-housing assets to assess viability for repurposing and suitability to meet the future older person demographic in Denbighshire	Apr-21	Tony Thomas Steve Gadd
Creating a supply of affordable homes	2.07	Practical completion of first new homes through Housing Development Programme	Corporate Priority of 170 homes by April 2022	New homes in Dyserth completed. Contracts awarded for Tan Y Sgubor, Denbigh & Bodnant, Prestatyn. Planning applications submitted for Former library, Prestatyn, Llys Anwyl, Granite & Next, Rhyl	Nov-21	Tony Thomas Steve Gadd
Ensuring safe & healthy homes	3.01	To ensure Council accommodation is maintained to meet the Welsh Housing Quality Standard	Funding has been given to DCC towards achieving these standards which have to be achieved by December 2020 and maintained after this date	WHQS has been achieved in Denbighshire, stock is now being maintained. Programme of works developed to ensure housing stock remains compliant with WHQS including any changes to the standards	Dec-26	Tony Thomas Steve Gadd
Ensuring safe & healthy homes	3.02	Decarbonisation of social housing stock by 2030	Climate & Ecological Change Strategy commitment	Programme of works to tackle decarbonisation to meet WG targets and Corporate target of zero carbon emissions by 2030	Dec-30	Tony Thomas Steve Gadd
Ensuring safe & healthy homes	3.03	Develop and adopt a new Housing Revenue Account borrowing strategy	Changes in how the Housing Revenue Account can be leveraged need to be taken into account in the 30-year business plan	Devise and adopt a new HRA borrowing Strategy to take into account changes in permitted borrowing levels and capping – 30 year business plan	Apr-21	Tony Thomas Steve Gadd

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Ensuring safe & healthy homes	3.04	Support Rent Smart Wales	Set up by Welsh Government to comply with the Housing (Wales) Act 2014 with regards to Landlord licensing	Promote Rent Smart Wales and ensure new and existing landlords have undertaken the training and are licensed through the scheme-increase the number of known landlords registered to XX %	Dec-26	Mark Young Emlyn Jones
Ensuring safe & healthy homes	3.05	Work directly with landlords to Improve standards in the Private Rented Sector	Improve communication & engagement with landlords to improve standards in the Private Rented Sector	EPC & Rent Smart Wales data used to inform best locations for targeted work. Increase awareness of energy schemes such as NEST & Arbed, review the effectiveness of the Landlord Forum by September 2021.	Dec-26	Mark Young Emlyn Jones
Ensuring safe & healthy homes	3.06	Target financial resources to ensure housing will be more energy efficient helping the environment and improving housing quality	To improve energy efficiency in housing and reduce fuel poverty	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Data obtained from Rent Smart Wales & EPC's – updated six monthly to ensure maximum effectiveness of projects. · Apply to available funding sources to enable targeted projects to improve the standard of housing stock in Denbighshire 	Dec-26	Mark Young Emlyn Jones
Ensuring safe & healthy homes	3.07	Implement & enforce Minimum Energy Efficiency Standards (MEES) in the private rented sector	Statutory requirement under Energy Efficiency (Private Rented Sector) England & Wales Act 2015	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Develop a fines policy & procedure · Implement enforcement of applicable fines for serial non-compliance and non-engagement of MEES 	Apr-21	Mark Young Emlyn Jones
Ensuring safe & healthy homes	3.08	Implement Additional Licensing for HMO's scheme now extended to Prestatyn, Denbigh & Llangollen	Raise standards of properties & their management.	Additional Licensing of HMO's scheme in force in Rhyl recently extended to include Prestatyn, Denbigh & Llangollen	Dec-26	Mark Young Emlyn Jones

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Ensuring safe & healthy homes	3.09	Unauthorised residential occupation of holiday caravans will be reduced	Many people are living in caravans which do not have planning permission for permanent residency. Some caravans provide poor housing conditions and this will ensure that people are not living in unsuitable accommodation.	Cross departmental project (Planning & Public Protection) to ensure that unauthorised caravan occupation is monitored and reduced	Dec-26	Mark Young Emlyn Jones
Preventing & ending Homelessness in Denbighshire	4.01	Develop easily accessible information and advice for prevention of homelessness	Easily accessible information enables citizens to make informed choices regarding their housing situation.	Website information has been updated, social media campaign is planned	Apr-21	Bobby Feeley Phil Gilroy
Preventing & ending Homelessness in Denbighshire	4.02	Develop an early intervention and prevention service, involving a wide range of partners to support households at risk of homelessness	Housing Act (Wales) 2014 requires Local Authorities to prevent homelessness and ensure access to services to support households at risk of homelessness	Building on best practice to procure early intervention services that provide robust support to households at risk of homelessness e.g. debt advice, Mediation, support to Landlords, etc.	Dec-22	Bobby Feeley Phil Gilroy
Preventing & ending Homelessness in Denbighshire	4.03	Develop a homelessness hub with access to wrap-around services through multi-disciplinary interventions for those experiencing homelessness	Welsh Government Phase 3 Plan to end homelessness	Recruit a multi-disciplinary team to provide wrap-around services to those households experiencing homelessness. To identify and develop a appropriate hub with emergency accommodation on site in which to deliver the multi-disciplinary support	Dec-22	Bobby Feeley Phil Gilroy

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Preventing & ending Homelessness in Denbighshire	4.04	Establish in-house emergency accommodation facilities for homeless citizens	Welsh Government Phase 3 Plan to end homelessness	Exploring options to secure alternative models of emergency accommodation across the County.	Dec-26	Bobby Feeley Phil Gilroy
Preventing & ending Homelessness in Denbighshire	4.05	Develop a rapid rehousing model for citizens affected by homelessness with appropriate support	Welsh Government Phase 3 Plan to end homelessness	Increase the amount of available accommodation by working with private landlords as well as social landlords to increase housing accommodation options including the Private Rented Sector Leasing Project with Conwy County Council	Dec-26	Bobby Feeley Phil Gilroy
Preventing & ending Homelessness in Denbighshire	4.06	Review services provided internally & externally through Housing Support Grant (HSG) to ensure a range of support is available	Welsh Government Phase 3 Plan to end homelessness	Review support services provided through HSG to ensure that different levels of support are available for a variety of different needs	Jun-22	Bobby Feeley Phil Gilroy
Preventing & ending Homelessness in Denbighshire	4.07	Deliver workshops to secondary school aged children on homelessness and available support	To identify children at risk of homelessness at an early stage and ensure that support and guidance is available.	To deliver accredited & non-accredited workshops to young people within schools, colleges & youth centre .Work on these will commence when Covid-19 restrictions allow	Mar-21	Bobby Feeley Phil Gilroy
Preventing & ending Homelessness in Denbighshire	4.08	Identify young people at risk of homelessness through training professionals working in their environment	To identify children at risk of homelessness at an early stage, through a range of environments, referring them for applicable support	Offer bespoke youth work interventions to young people who are referred to the service through schools, colleges, self or from other professional bodies/organisations (Police etc.)	Mar-21	Bobby Feeley Phil Gilroy

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Preventing & ending Homelessness in Denbighshire	4.09	Extend the Housing First project	Welsh Government Phase 3 Plan to end homelessness	To develop a plan on integrating Housing First into the Homelessness Support Pathway following the withdrawal of Welsh Government Trailblazer funding	Mar-22	Bobby Feeley Phil Gilroy
Preventing & ending Homelessness in Denbighshire	4.10	Development of the Youth Service digital youth work to promote and engage young people in the issue of Youth Homelessness in Denbighshire.	Develop a greater understanding of homelessness, so that young people know when they can access support	To develop and deliver educative programmes and information through virtual reality packages, social media responses/campaigns and online face to face forums to promote and raise awareness of the risk of homelessness and to engage young people in having their voices heard on the issue.	Mar-21	Tony Thomas Liz Grieve
Preventing & ending Homelessness in Denbighshire	4.11	Provide good quality, well managed temporary accommodation solutions during the homelessness assessment process	Homelessness applicants need good quality well-managed accommodation, for their well-being and health.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Private Rented Sector pilot project is being embarked on with Conwy Council, which will provide temporary accommodation solutions. Work with Community Housing and RSLs to increase the number of properties they provide to the Homelessness Prevention Team, across the County. 		Bobby Feeley Phil Gilroy
Preventing & ending Homelessness in Denbighshire	4.12	To provide bespoke youth work support to young people engaging with other DCC departments and partners.	To identify young people at risk of homelessness at an early stage and ensure that support and guidance is available.	To develop and implement a youth work programme of activity for young people, both small groups and individuals who have been identified by other DCC departments such as Homeless Prevention team and Working	Mar-21	Tony Thomas Liz Grieve

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				Denbighshire that are high risk or who present as homeless		
Homes & support for vulnerable people	5.01	Three Extra Care facilities in development or completed by 2022	Corporate Priority for current Corporate Plan	Awel Y Dyffryn, Denbigh – expected handover to GC April 2021. Planning approved for LLys Awelon extension, Ruthin – tender process due to commence (Nov 2020) Options for hub & spoke facility in Corwen being explored	Dec-26	Bobby Feeley Phil Gilroy
Homes & support for vulnerable people	5.02	Investigate more 'own front door' schemes for vulnerable people	Over 100 vulnerable adults in Denbighshire would benefit from the enablement and support which comes from living in these schemes	Working with social landlords to include specialist units on new developments and adapt existing dwellings	Dec-26	Bobby Feeley Phil Gilroy
Promoting & supporting communities	6.01	Implement Tenant Engagement Strategy	It is vital for Denbighshire Housing to work closely with our tenants and households so we understand their needs and aspirations. Feedback and co-production will influence our community investment, service development and plans. This is particularly vital due to the impact of Covid-19 on our communities.	The Bi-annual survey of all Denbighshire Housing households is underway. The feedback will be reviewed and will help inform next steps and input into the development of an engagement plan. The previously successful community roadshow approach has not been delivered in 2020 due to Covid -19 so there is gap in ongoing engagement so alternative approaches are being developed.		Tony Thomas Liz Grieve

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Promoting & supporting communities	6.02	Review SARTH	The regional Allocations Policy has been in operation since 2017 in Denbighshire. It is vital to ensure that the policy remains fit for purpose and the regional partners have agreed to review the policy.	The regional group are monitoring developments since Covid-19 and the potential need for a new approach to the Allocations Policy. An additional review has been commissioned to assess the strength of the council's current approach to providing effective housing options advice and coordination of services to support the prevention of homelessness	Mar-22	Tony Thomas Liz Grieve
Promoting & supporting communities	6.03	Develop a 5 year rent policy	In 2020, Welsh Government introduced a 5 year Rent Policy which gives certainty for the HRA but also adds additional requirements to ensure the Council considers affordability and value for money when applying the annual rent increase for council homes.	Work is underway to include assessments of Value for Money and Affordability as part of the annual Council Housing stock business plan and rent increase process.	Apr-21	Tony Thomas Liz Grieve
Promoting & supporting communities	6.04	Work with police, registered social landlords & other partners on focused neighbourhood management in West Rhyl	Complementing the extensive regeneration work which has been carried out in the area with the removal of poor quality accommodation by supporting the community.	Multi agency/service group being relaunched in Oct 2017, new terms of reference and chaired by Emlyn Jones.	Dec-26	Tony Thomas Emlyn Jones