

Appendix B

DRAFT Housing Strategy 2024-2029 Action Plan Items – YET TO BE FINALISED

*(As at 10.1.24 further consultation required with colleagues to help refine this action plan further)
(This may involve removal of some action plan items; their amendment or additional actions being added)*

At this stage, the action plan is summarised, featuring each action alongside its intended outcome description. Before the final publication of the Housing Strategy, the action plan will be updated to incorporate specific details regarding delivery schedules and primary responsibility.



Achieve the right supply of new homes including maximising affordable housing.

	Action	Outcome
1	Implementation of the current West Lancashire Local Plan 2012-2027	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• A sustainable housing offer suitable for the housing and economic needs of the local population• Provide New Homes Bonus for the Borough
2	Develop a replacement Local Plan 2023-2040	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The creation of a new Local Plan that aligns with the most current economic, housing, and population projections for a new planning period, while also meeting the requirements of national legislation and guidance.
3	Achieve development of no less than 500 new affordable homes during the life of this strategy - 2024-2029. <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 2024/25 = 60• 2025/26 = 110• 2026/27 = 110• 2027/28 = 110• 2028/29 = 110	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Increase the supply of affordable housing to help households in affordable housing need.• Provide New Homes Bonus at the higher rate. <p><u>Important note</u></p> <p>The overriding aim is to deliver 500 affordable homes during the life of the strategy. This figure is not a planning related aspiration. The annual figures are indicated to help structure the delivery approach. The new homes shall include a range of dwelling types and bed sizes including 1 bed accommodation where it will meet housing need.</p>

	Action	Outcome
4	Ensure the Council maintains its Investment Partner Status with Homes England	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Council's ongoing capability to seek Homes England grant remains in place, bolstering our efforts to promote the construction of affordable housing in collaboration with our development company, Tawd Valley Developments.
5	Council to continue to bid for Homes England Affordable Housing Grant Investment.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Allows the Council to independently construct affordable housing by securing investment from Homes England's Affordable Housing Grant programme.
6	Work with Registered Providers of Social Housing to increase affordable housing supply, including supporting where appropriate, their applications for grant funding to Homes England.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increase the supply of much needed affordable homes in the right locations and of the right type and tenure
7	Review affordable housing schedule of Section 106 template and upload to website	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To provide developers with example affordable housing heads of terms as the basis of Section 106 drafting.
8	Maximising the provision of affordable housing on market led sites through Section 106 requirements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Obtain the maximum affordable housing contribution able to be supported by the economic viability of each application site.
9	Investigate whether Section 106 obligations can be used to support development of affordable supported housing.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> An understanding of whether Section 106 can be used to support the development of supported accommodation.
10	Deliver the Business Plan of Tawd Valley Developments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Delivery of a range of housing and other projects which have been previously endorsed by Council which support the Councils corporate priorities.
11	Work with Tawd Valley Developments to develop an affordable housing new build specification that sets out the design principles and other matters that need to be considered when developing affordable housing on behalf of Housing Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A specification for each property type that (not a full list): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reflects and contributes to the Councils Climate Change Strategy greenhouse emission targets. Aims to be a trailblazer for reducing energy demand, achieving high standards of energy efficiency and renewable technology where possible. Meets customer expectations in terms of internal and external dimensions and layout. Is set at an affordable rent level, ideally not greater than Local Housing Allowance levels, unless the development is under viability pressure. Looks to the future to enable the Council to transition to low carbon heating systems for existing and new housing. Where viable and practical, uses modern methods of construction. Addresses other related matters.
12	Expand the range of affordable housing options provided by the Council by introducing affordable	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The introduction by the Council of affordable home ownership products as part of its affordable housing tenure offer, which will support households into home ownership.

	Action	Outcome
	homeownership products as part of its tenure offer.	
13	Develop a plan for investing Council Right to Buy receipts to meet our housing need requirements.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provides a framework for the allocation of Right to Buy proceeds to ensure their timely and efficient use to support housing need.
14	Continue to identify sites suitable for use of the Affordable Housing Capital Budget currently linked to Tawd Valley Developments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Leveraging the Affordable Housing Capital budget to generate added value through its strategic allocation.
15	Use Council land assets to support the delivery of affordable housing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Making use of Council land in a suitable manner to increase the affordable housing stock, all while aiming to achieve other benefits, such as the redevelopment of abandoned sites or buildings, which can bring about community benefits.
16	Promote all new affordable housing schemes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> By promoting all upcoming affordable housing schemes to the local community in good time, we facilitate the timely registration of applicants in need of affordable housing, ensuring their consideration in line with the Council Allocation policy.
17	Conduct a review of our custom and self-build register and policy.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Self-Build and Custom Housebuilding Act 2015 places a duty on local councils in England to keep a register of people who are interested in self-build or custom build projects in their area and the review will help determine whether the current approach is fit for purpose.



Drive investment in place-based regeneration for the Borough including continued regeneration of Skelmersdale

	Action	Outcome
1	Complete 5-year £32.15 million capital investment programme.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Upgrades in Council Housing Stock, not limited to but including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ new kitchens ○ new bathrooms ○ New windows, doors, roofs, heating and electrical upgrades, external wall insulation, environmental improvement works to open spaces in various locations • Improvement in tenant comfort and day to day living experience.
2	Explore and if approved, complete a Digmaor revival scheme and continue an estate-based revival programme	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Street scene improvements. • Provision of additional affordable housing. • Demolition of unsustainable stock
3	Develop, as required, an ongoing estate-based revival programme, using Neighbourhood Renewal Methodology where appropriate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improvements to economic and social indicators • A programme for Skelmersdale Housing Estates designed to improve residents' quality of life, foster community well-being, and ensure the estates thrive in the long run. • Improvements to economic and social indicators
4	Seek funding for environmental works on Council estates.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve street scene and community space. • Make neighbourhoods more inclusive and accessible for people of all ages and abilities.
5	Develop Skelmersdale Town Centre Masterplan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The development of a Masterplan which reflects Local Plan policy, that includes mixed-use and mixed-tenure housing, designed to further support the ongoing Skelmersdale town centre regeneration, which already includes a planned new, state-of-the-art Wellbeing and Leisure facility for the local community. • A project aimed at supporting the economic growth of Skelmersdale including the provision of both market and affordable housing.



Make the best use of all existing homes while encouraging well-managed and maintained homes across all tenures.

	Action	Outcome
1	Be honest about whether we can help by ensuring the provision of regularly reviewed and updated information about Council Services.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The provision of accurate information and appropriate advice to our customers, so it enables households to make informed choices about their housing options in relation to their query.
2	Refresh the current Financial Inclusion Strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Empowers residents with financial knowledge and skills. • Helps residents manage debt and avoid financial crises. • Increases housing security and prevents evictions. • Promotes residents' financial independence and well-being.
3	Commission Private Sector Stock Condition Survey and /or a desktop study	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An understanding of the condition of privately owned properties in the Borough, which can contribute to the development of a Private Sector Housing Strategy.
4	Review and renew Private Sector Housing Strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identification of private sector housing delivery priorities and the development of an action plan to address the private sector housing challenges and issues in the borough.
5	Encourage safe and healthy private sector housing, using effective and proportionate enforcement tools where necessary	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appropriate use of enforcement powers where required.
6	Evaluate whether Tawd Valley Developments can assist the Council to bring back into use, private sector empty homes.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An understanding whether Tawd Valley Developments can assist in bringing private sector empty homes back in to use. • If able, in principle, then develop an approach where Tawd Valley Developments can assist on a when a need arises basis.
7	Encourage private sector empty homes back in to use.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brings empty housing back into use. • May attract New Homes Bonus. • Improve street scene.
8	Review all housing association nomination agreements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will enable the nomination process to be understood by our Registered Provider colleagues within the context of West Lancs HomeFinder and any local connection criteria.

	Action	Outcome
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • May assist in maximising the take up of L/A nominations. • Will ensure that the agreements reflect current operational practice following Allocation Policy amendments.
9	Introduce annual Registered Provider Forum	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A formal meeting which provides the opportunity to engage with other Registered Providers who have housing stock in the Borough. • It allows for the examination of common issues, discussions on potential joint initiatives, addressing mutual concerns, sharing best practices, and collaborating to enhance services for social housing tenants in the locality.
10	Examine the practicality of mapping all properties owned by Registered Providers in West Lancashire within the Councils Geographic Information system, and if it proves to be viable, proceed with the mapping process.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will enable the identification of properties owned by registered providers, particularly when examining the possibility of working together on estate regeneration efforts.
11	Review West Lancashire Downsizing Scheme and relaunch / promote as necessary	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Determine whether the downsizing scheme needs to be amended to achieve more people downsizing or if there is a way of better targeting the availability of the scheme to those households currently under occupying their Council homes.
12	Deliver existing work programme to enable the Council to meet and /or exceed the Regulator of Social Housing Consumer Standards.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Achieve Regulator of Social Housing compliance across: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The Safety and Quality Standard will require landlords to provide safe and good-quality homes for their tenants, along with good-quality landlord services. ○ The Transparency, Influence and Accountability Standard will require landlords to be open with tenants and treat them with fairness and respect so they can access services, raise concerns when necessary, influence decision making and hold their landlord to account. ○ The Neighbourhood and Community Standard will require landlords to engage with other relevant parties so that tenants can live in safe and well-maintained neighbourhoods, and feel safe in their homes. ○ The Tenancy Standard sets requirements for the fair allocation and letting of homes, as well as requirements for how tenancies are managed by landlords.
13	Deliver Property Services Restructure Action Plan – (128 point)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Restructuring of the service to align with both current and future service demands, resulting in an improved customer experience and more effective management of Council housing homes.

	Action	Outcome
14	Continue to develop and deliver strategic investment plans based upon Saville's Council Housing Stock Condition survey.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A series of focused actions to improve Council homes, with the goal of extending their lifecycle and making them resilient in a changing climate which our customers take pride in, feel safe, and can thrive in as they live and grow. • Achieve compliance with any required standards. • Best use of Council assets including the development of options where properties are considered uneconomical to maintain/improve -e.g. disposal
15	Aligned to the strategic investment plans mentioned at number 14 above, develop a maintenance and investment strategy to meet minimum energy efficiency requirements.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The introduction of measures to increase the energy performance of council housing to a minimum of Energy Performance Certificate level of grade C. • Contributes to climate change mitigation and resilience including adaptation. • Provides fuel bill benefits for our customers. • Where appropriate, the development and implementation of a retrofit action plan for existing council housing stock • Compliance with legislation.
16	Deliver Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund (SHDF) programme of works following retrofit assessments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improvement of the energy efficiency rating of 250 homes in West Lancashire which are currently rated Energy Performance Certificate level of D or below.
17	Identify long-term vacancies within Council-owned housing stock and develop an action plan for each, outlining the steps to address and use the asset effectively.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identification of long-term voids in Council owned housing stock • A strategic approach for each long-term vacant property, determining whether to bring it back in to use in some way, sell, demolish, ultimately deciding on the best course of action for that asset.
18	Undertake a sheltered housing review.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An assessment of whether the Council's sheltered housing homes are still aligned with customer expectations, determining if investment is needed for specific properties, and considering whether decommissioning or repurposing certain sheltered housing units is necessary.
19	Work with Lancashire County Council to review existing extra care allocation processes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An understanding of whether existing assessment and allocation processes are fit for purpose and enabling the allocation of extra care housing in the Borough to those who need such a facility / accommodation. • Ensure that existing extra provision is being used as intended.
20	Carry out an audit of existing council housing homes and options needed to increase digital connectivity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will aid management of the housing stock and improve the life chances of council tenants.
21	Establish operational process to facilitate the sale of Rent to Buy homes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Operational processes have already been developed to facilitate the allocation of Rent to Buy homes.

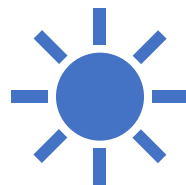
	Action	Outcome
		<ul style="list-style-type: none">• This particular action will create an internal operational process to enable Rent to Buy properties to be sold to the tenancy holder (should the tenant be in a position to purchase) at the end of their five-year occupation period in line with the Rent to Buy Policy.



Attract investment for ending homelessness, addressing older person housing needs and residents with specialist housing requirements, including the provision of housing-related support.

	Action	Outcome
1	Enable the development of a purpose-built women's refuge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The development of a modern refuge facility that provides safe emergency accommodation for women fleeing domestic abuse, often with their children which will not only provide safe shelter but will provide support to enable survivors and their children to rebuild their lives.
2	Enable the development of an Extra Care scheme in Skelmersdale	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An alternative housing offer for those who require self-contained homes with design features and support services available to enable self-care and independent living. The 'extra' in extra care housing may consist of access to care services that can: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Respond quickly to residents changing needs. ○ Provide unplanned care as and when required in addition to planned care. ○ Provide an emergency response. ○ Access to social and recreational activities
3	To work in partnership with Commissioning Leads at Lancashire County Council to bring forward supported living schemes for people with learning and/or physical disabilities/mental ill health - To increase the existing provision by a further [yet to be populated] homes over a five-year period	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An increase in supported housing provision which takes account of Lancashire County Councils Housing with Care & Support Delivery Plan.
4	Undertake a review of supported exempt accommodation in West Lancashire.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An understanding of the extent of exempt supported accommodation supply in the Borough and an evaluation of whether this supply is adequate in both quality and quantity to address present and future requirements.
5	Develop a Local Supported Housing Strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A strategy that lays out a framework for coordinated efforts with various partners to enable the provision of quality supported housing and housing-related support, facilitating independent living for individuals with support needs in West Lancashire.

	Action	Outcome
6	Deliver the Homelessness Strategy 2024-29	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The provision of services, support, and accommodation options with the principal aim of delivering the vision of, "<i>To prevent homelessness in West Lancashire, helping residents to find and keep their home.</i>"
7	Increase temporary accommodation provision	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provision of quality temporary accommodation of a scale suitable to meet temporary accommodation needs. A reduction in the use of hotel and or bed and breakfast establishments
8	Conduct a comprehensive assessment of funding options and, where feasible, expand the delivery of housing-related support, including both floating and resettlement support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Helps identify funding options, if any. If services are introduced, then enhances independent living by offering visiting in-home support, promoting self-sufficiency, and facilitating positive tenancy sustainment outcomes.
9	Increase the supply of one-bedroom accommodation and where possible, in a dispersed setting for people with complex needs/ex-offenders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Will contribute towards community safety, offender management and prevent homelessness.
10	Increase the supply of purpose-built wheelchair properties to M4(3) building regulation standard	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Building purpose-built wheelchair-accessible properties can contribute to creating a more inclusive and accessible community. It can benefit not only individuals with disabilities but also the older population. May result in a reduction of at-home care and delayed or avoided residential care. Assists the occupier to remain independent for longer.
11	Review and update Housing Service policies to align with the provisions of the Armed Forces Act 2021 (Armed Forces Covenant Duty)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Housing related policies that meet the following legal obligation of having have due regard to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) the unique obligations of, and sacrifices made by, the armed forces; b) the principle that it is desirable to remove disadvantages arising for Service people from membership, or former membership, of the armed forces; and, c) the principle that special provision for Service people may be justified by the effects on such people of membership, or former membership, of the armed forces.



Deliver Priority 4, the Residential Sector objectives of the Council's Climate Change Strategy 2020-2030

The action items below have been taken from the Council's Climate Change Strategy 2020-2030

	Action / Theme	Milestone Progress	Outcome
1	Energy efficiency improvements on Council housing stock	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continued delivery of energy efficiency improvements through Programmed Works. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Achieve year-on-year improvements on the average SAP rating for Council housing stock.
2	Communal Housing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Investigate the installation of energy efficiency measures in sheltered housing schemes and communal stairwells. Continued roll-out of LED lighting programmes. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reduced energy consumption in communal areas of housing.
3	Heat Network Decarbonisation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support the phase out of gas heating in communal boilers. Investigate renewable heating options and undertake feasibility investigations. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Decarbonisation of heating on communal heat networks.
4	Renewable Energy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Investigate feasibility of renewable energy opportunities for all suitable housing projects. Pilot Solar PV with battery storage project on communal blocks delivered. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased renewable energy capacity installed on Council housing stock.
5	Council New Build Housing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Delivery of twelve new homes that achieve operational zero carbon status. On-going monitoring to validate performance. Inclusion of electric vehicle charge points. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All new build housing delivered by the Council to aspire to achieve operational zero carbon status and be climate resilient.
6	Tawd Valley Developments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish a communication link with Tawd Valley Developments Ltd 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adoption of zero carbon build targets, in line with those adopted by the Council.
7	Local Planning Policy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Deliver low carbon policy for new build housing developments. Require new residential developments to adopt low carbon and renewable technologies, and energy and resource efficient design 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Future housing developments will be low carbon in build and operation.

	Action / Theme	Milestone Progress	Outcome
8	Cosy Homes in Lancashire (CHiL) scheme.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to participate, contribute and promote the Cosy Homes in Lancashire (CHiL) scheme. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improved energy efficiency of privately owned homes in West Lancashire
9	Energy Tariff Switching	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Investigate delivery of a campaign/ scheme to encourage residents to switch energy providers and consider a renewable energy tariff. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Residents make savings on energy bills and support renewable energy schemes.
10	External Wall Insulation (EWI) Scheme	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Investigate available funding streams to help homeowners invest in external 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Large-scale delivery of EWI project across Skelmersdale.
11	Minimum Energy Efficiency Standards (MEES)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to enforce the Energy Efficiency (Private Rented Property) Regulations 2015 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All privately rented properties meet a minimum standard of EPC Band E or above.