



ADUR & WORTHING  
COUNCILS

Joint Strategic Committee  
30th March 2021  
Agenda Item 5

Key Decision No

Ward(s) Affected: All

## **Delivering Pathways to Affordable Homes**

### **Report by the Director for Communities**

#### **Executive Summary**

##### **1. Purpose**

- 1.1. This report follows the publication of the Adur and Worthing Housing Strategy for 2020-2023 'Enabling communities to thrive in their own home'.
- 1.2. The aim of this report is to introduce how Adur and Worthing intend to meet the commitments of the Housing Strategy and increase supply of affordable housing in the area. This is described in the attached housing development strategy, titled Developing Pathways to affordable homes.
- 1.3. In this strategy the Councils describe their ambitions to deliver more high quality affordable homes in a post pandemic world.
- 1.4. As a delivery plan it will run for 4 years and will help inform the next iteration of the housing strategy due in 2023/24.
- 1.5. The Councils' ambition reflects the platform's strategy which means this is about more than simply building houses, the delivery of homes should help communities thrive, further work on sustainability and deliver new skills and local jobs as we adopt modern methods of construction.

## **2. Recommendations**

- 2.1.** To consider the 'Developing Pathways to Affordable Homes' report and recommend its adoption to Adur District Council and Worthing Borough Council as part of the Housing Strategy for 2020-2023.
  
- 2.2.** To direct officers to prepare the more detailed delivery plans for each Council as outlined in the Pathways document.

## **3. Context**

- 3.1.** According to a recent report published by the National Housing Federation (NHF), more than 8 million people in England (approximately 1 in 7) are living in unaffordable, insecure or unsuitable homes<sup>1</sup>. It is widely accepted that the current rate of building of new homes is insufficient to meet demand and that affordable housing delivery needs to be increased.
  
- 3.2.** This strategy builds on the foundation of the recently published housing strategy 2020-2023, the central concept of which is for everyone to have a place they can call home, whether it is owned, shared or rented.
  
- 3.3.** Local housing needs are discussed in detail in chapter 3 of the Housing Strategy but the overarching message is that there is pressure to deliver more affordable and sustainable housing.
  
- 3.4.** Chapter 4 of the Housing Strategy provides details of the 3 priorities that Adur and Worthing Councils intend to pursue. Priority 3 'improving levels of affordable housing supply' recognises the fact that access to affordable and suitable housing is important in ensuring that a balanced population profile is maintained across Adur and Worthing.

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<sup>1</sup> The National Housing Federation represents housing associations in England, not-for-profit landlords to more than six million people. The research was carried out by Herriot-Watt University on behalf of the National Housing Federation

- 3.5. The Housing strategy and Platforms for Places: Going Further 2020-2022 make it clear that good affordable homes matter. Giving individuals and families stability while supporting the creation of strong vibrant communities who invest in their local area is an important ambition
- 3.6. In order to meet some of the challenges above the Council's have already started to intervene where necessary. The recent creation of the Major Projects and Investment team, including an in-house development team, has brought real energy and impetus to key projects which had previously stalled. This includes developing some of the first council housing in Adur for more than 30 years. Further innovative ideas are also delivering results with the Councils' Opening Doors project having saved more than £200k in Temporary Accommodation costs through working directly with landlords.
- 3.7. By working with delivery partners the Council's have also looked to deliver new and existing major sites. Sites such as Union Place, Fulbeck Avenue, the Civic Centre and Teville Gate will separately deliver 150+ homes, many of which will be affordable. These sites are all being delivered closely with delivery partners.
- 3.8. The Pathways to Affordable Homes document sets out how this strong foundation can be built on to deliver more much needed homes across Adur and Worthing.

#### **4. Issues for consideration**

- 4.1. The Councils' pathways to affordable housing document outlines a number of key issues faced in Adur and Worthing, namely;
- Access and availability of traditional affordable housing
  - Emergency/Temporary Accommodation costs
  - Affordability of housing
  - Ensuring the long term housing mix is fit for purpose
  - Older persons housing and ensuring it is fit for the future

- 4.2. There is a need to address gaps with respect to social and affordable housing in the context of both rent and purchase and the strategy appended to this report outlines our plans to do this.
- 4.3. Covid has brought new pressures to bear on our housing system and this will need to be addressed as part of the delivery of affordable housing.

## 5. Engagement and Communication

- 5.1. This strategy has been developed through engagement with executive members.
- 5.2. The delivery strategies that will now be developed for each Council will need to support extensive ward member and resident engagement. This will be based around the community mapping work that has been commissioned following the recent JSC report 'Building our data capability'.

## 6. Financial Implications

- 6.1. The Council already has significant budgets within the capital programme to support the delivery of this strategy both directly through the provision of affordable housing in the HRA, improved emergency and temporary accommodation via the General Fund, and through enabling provision by Registered Social Landlords via housing grant.

	Approved budgets					Total
	Spend to 31/3/2020	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	
<b>Adur District Council</b>	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
HRA						0
Cecil Norris House	1,202	2,723				3,925
Albion Street	1,160	3,037	7,994			12,191
Hidden Homes	102	173	2,000	13,395		15,670
Other	0	383	750			1,133
<b>Total HRA programme</b>	<b>2,464</b>	<b>6,316</b>	<b>10,744</b>	<b>13,395</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>32,919</b>

General Fund						
Temporary and Emergency Accommodation						
Albion Street refurbishment		930				930
Other Schemes		1,000	2,240	1,000		4,240
Grants to RSLs		720	2,070			2,790
<b>Total General Fund programme</b>		<b>0</b>	<b>2,650</b>	<b>4,310</b>	<b>1,000</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Total Adur District Council Programme</b>		<b>2,464</b>	<b>8,966</b>	<b>15,054</b>	<b>14,395</b>	<b>0</b>

#### **Worthing Borough Council - General Fund**

Temporary and Emergency Accommodation						
Rowlands Road		1,842	1,969			3,811
Downview		2,812	1,588			4,400
Other Schemes				1,540	2,000	2,000
Grants to RSLs				1,832		1,832
<b>Total Worthing Borough Council programme</b>		<b>4,654</b>	<b>3,557</b>	<b>3,372</b>	<b>2,000</b>	<b>2,000</b>
						<b>15,583</b>

- 6.2. New schemes proposed will be the subject of detailed business cases to ensure that the options recommended both deliver on the strategy and are affordable to the individual Councils.

## **7. Legal Implications**

- 7.1. Under Section 111 of The Local Government Act 1972 the Council has the power to do anything that is calculated to facilitate, or which is conducive or incidental to, the discharge of any of their functions.
- 7.2. Section 1 of The Local Government (Contracts) Act 1997 confers power on the Local Authority to enter into a contract for the provision of making available of assets or services for the purposes of, or in connection with the discharge of the function by the Local Authority.
- 7.3. Section 123 of the Local Government Act 1972 places an obligation on local authorities to dispose of land for best consideration, which is not limited to the monetary purchase price, but may include other elements

in the transaction, provided those have a quantifiable commercial or monetary value.

## **Background Papers**

- Delivering pathways to Affordable Homes: Developing high quality affordable housing in Adur and Worthing in a post pandemic world
- Adur and Worthing Councils Housing Strategy 2020-2023: 'Enabling communities to thrive in their own home'
- Platforms for Places: Going Further 2020-2022

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## **Sustainability & Risk Assessment**

### **1. Economic**

The outcome of this report is intended to have a positive impact on the delivery of homes, jobs and local communities. The Strategy aims to provide more affordable homes across the housing market. A stable place to live enables people to participate economically in the community as they can apply for and hold down regular work.

### **2. Social**

#### **2.1 Social Value**

This Strategy promotes thriving communities where families and individuals are not at risk of homelessness, can settle and be part of the local community.

#### **2.2 Equality Issues**

Together with the Housing Strategy this strategy aims to provide affordable and long-term accommodation for those who need it, irrespective of race, gender, sexuality, age, religion or belief, disability, marital status, pregnancy or maternity.

#### **2.3 Community Safety Issues (Section 17)**

This will be dependent on individual schemes that are proposed but it is envisaged that Improving access to homes and supporting people to be part of their communities will help reduce anti-social behaviour.

#### **2.4 Human Rights Issues**

Matter considered and no issues identified

### **3. Environmental**

The Strategy supports the United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, through our commitments to help those in poverty and prevent homelessness, to promote health and wellbeing and to ensure our developments are sustainable by design where possible.

### **4. Governance**

This strategy mirrors and extends the ambitions set out in the Housing Strategy and Platforms for our Places: Going Further.

The Strategy will be monitored with regular updates to members on progress along with separate delivery strategies for Adur and Worthing





# Delivering pathways to Affordable Homes: Developing high quality affordable housing in Adur and Worthing in a post pandemic world

## Introduction

Building on the foundation of Adur and Worthing Councils Housing Strategy 2020-2023: 'Enabling communities to thrive in their own home', this strategy sets out the ambitions of the Councils to deliver more high quality affordable homes in a post pandemic world. As a delivery plan it will run for 4 years and will help inform the next iteration of the housing strategy due in 2023/24. Our ambition reflects our platform's strategy which means this is about more than simply building houses, the delivery of homes should help our communities thrive, further our work on sustainability and deliver new skills and local jobs as we adopt modern methods of construction.

Adur and Worthing Councils, while working together are distinctly different places and communities. In both areas however there is a clear need for housing as described below:

- Worthing Borough Council's recently published draft local plan reiterates the immediate need for all forms of affordable housing (both private and rented) with the plan citing over 1,200 households on the Housing Register and average house prices over 11 times median earnings, putting home ownership beyond the reach of many households.
- Adur District Council's Local Plan (published in 2017) echoes that of the Worthing with the Housing Need Assessment concluding that the scale of affordable housing need was 'substantial'. There are 756 households currently on the Housing Register.
- One significant similarity between Adur and Worthing is the lack of available land for significant levels of development. The sea to the south, the South Downs National Park to the north and narrow and sensitive gaps between settlements act as a constraint to growth in both authority areas. As a consequence, the identified housing needs (using the Standard Methodology) for both Adur and Worthing will not be met. This has been accepted within the adopted Adur Local Plan. The Worthing Local Plan, which is nearing Submission, whilst taking a very positive approach to development, will only deliver 26% of overall housing needs. As a consequence it is vital that land that is available for development is used efficiently and that any opportunities to help meet affordable housing needs are maximised.

To help meet the need, this strategy intends to deliver a combined total of 1,400 affordable homes by 2025, a minimum of 250 of which will be directly commissioned by the Council.

As a stock owning Council with a need and ambition to regenerate its existing stock, Adur District Council (ADC) will self deliver a minimum of 200 homes and help enable the delivery of 750 affordable homes by others.

Whilst Worthing Borough Council (WBC) is not a traditional stock owning Council, it does have a need to increase its number of temporary accommodation units, as such will look to self deliver a minimum of 50 new homes. A key part of WBC's delivery strategy will be to partner with and enable the delivery of major sites with a view to delivering 400 new affordable homes.

The above will be achieved through direct delivery of council owned sites, continuing to and expanding our support for developers and local housing providers in the provision of new affordable homes and partnering where there is the opportunity to be more ambitious with respect to both scale and the unlocking difficult sites.

Our goal throughout this work is to provide a more diverse affordable tenure type for the local housing market with an emphasis on creating multiple routes to home ownership, from shared ownership through to rent to save schemes. In addition to a focus on home ownership we will also be developing our relationship with the private rental sector through the scaling of our Opening Doors scheme to make it easier for a wider range of people to access secure and affordable rental accommodation.

In acknowledgment of the fact that the pandemic is likely to have fundamentally changed the way we live and work this strategy also sets out an ambition to undertake a more detailed community mapping exercise to better understand our communities future needs in terms of the spaces where they live and work. The outcome of which will inform the design of new homes, amenities and spaces that are fit for the future.

This strategy is the first step in the journey with the more detailed delivery approach for each Council to follow. It is intended to be a basis for discussions with potential partners and help us shape the more detailed delivery plans that will be developed for each Council.

## 1. Our ambition:

Our ambition for this strategy builds on the foundation of the housing strategy 2020-2023<sup>1</sup>, the central concept of which is for everyone to have a place they can call home, whether it is owned, shared or rented.

A home is more than simply secure and well designed accommodation, it's a fundamental human need and something that underpins not only the well being of residents and their families but also the communities that they are part of. Our ambition is to ensure that all residents have access to the homes they need in order to thrive. To do this we need to turn affordable housing targets into an effective delivery pipeline of new homes.

According to a recent report published by the National Housing Federation (NHF), more than 8 million people in England (approximately 1 in 7) are living in unaffordable, insecure or unsuitable homes<sup>2</sup>. It is widely accepted that the current rate of building of new homes is insufficient to meet demand and that affordable housing delivery needs to be increased. Local housing needs are discussed in detail in chapter 3

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<sup>1</sup> Housing Strategy 2020-2023 - Enabling Communities to Thrive in their own homes

<sup>2</sup> The National Housing Federation represents housing associations in England, not-for-profit landlords to more than six million people. The research was carried out by Herriot-Watt University on behalf of the National Housing Federation

of the Housing Strategy but the overarching message is that there is desperate pressure to deliver affordable and sustainable housing.

The availability of affordable housing has, until recent years, been reliant upon affordable housing obligations in planning agreements between Local Planning Authorities and Developers together with delivery by Registered Social Landlords (Housing Associations) and bespoke housing charities. More recently Local Authorities have started their own house building programmes with now over two thirds reportedly self-delivering affordable housing<sup>3</sup>.

Affordability is not as simple to define as it should be. National formulas affecting local finances mean that there is considerable difference between the government definition of affordable and what is truly accessible to the majority of Adur and Worthing residents. This situation will be compounded by the impact of the Covid-19 Pandemic and the economic recovery. This strategy is designed around the idea of creating pathways to bridge the gap between market sale, affordable and social housing in order to provide all households with a route to their own home should they choose or if not to a secure and an affordable rental property in the private or social sector.

Adur and Worthing are not 'land rich' and are constrained by geography. This constraint needs to be turned into an opportunity to build a flexible and adaptive delivery approach which will allow the councils to make the most of the space available. This strategy will therefore provide details of how Adur and Worthing Councils intend to meet the local housing need through a mixed approach to delivery including:

- Direct delivery of new homes by Adur and Worthing Councils
- Facilitating developers and local housing providers in the provision of new affordable homes
- Partnering, which we discuss later in the strategy, to unlock access to affordable options such as shared ownership in order to widen the pool of affordable housing available

The delivery of new homes will be based on the following objectives which were articulated in the housing strategy:

- ☐ Utilise the Council's land and housing stock for self-delivery
- ☐ Purchase sites for development where appropriate
- ☐ Work with strategic partners to unlock and maximise affordable housing delivery across the Councils
- ☐ Create places for people to live and thrive in

There is a need to address gaps with respect to social and affordable housing in the context of both rent and purchase and this strategy outlines our plans to do this.

While the focus of this strategy is about the creation of a greater number of affordable homes we have choices about how we do that. In this strategy we outline how our approach will also support two of our other platforms of sustainability and economy as well as delivering on the objectives we set out in the housing strategy around creating secure and safe homes which are essential to enabling our communities to thrive.

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<sup>3</sup> Housebuilding by Local Authorities (LGA, 2018)

## Strategic Context

This document is being developed against the backdrop of the government's white paper, "Planning for the Future", which proposes major overhaul to the planning system and other government key plans to increase delivery of affordable housing.

The First Homes Scheme, which applies a 30% discount to market sale prices for first-time buyers, will take up a minimum of 25% of all affordable housing units secured through developer contributions under Section 106. Though this has the potential to increase the number of affordable homes available to buy, it will impact on the funds available to deliver affordable rented accommodation that is key to reducing homelessness and supporting disadvantaged households.

It is critical that affordable housing, once promised, is delivered on by developers. To help ensure this the Councils will look to create a new post for a 'Homes and Communities Enabling Officer' (HCEO). The HCEO will look to support the Councils ambitions to build better and more creative relationships with key delivery stakeholders and to ensure feedback from the local community is taken into account.

S106 contributions represent a key source of funding to deliver affordable homes for both stock holding and non-stock holding local authorities. Proposed changes will see both the current regimes of Section 106 and Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) payments removed and replaced with a new 'Infrastructure Levy'. This levy will be charged according to the final development value of the project and paid at the point of occupation. Though the new levy can still be used to fund affordable housing, discounts applied to affordable homes such as First Homes Scheme will be charged against the sum of the levy. There is a risk that these changes may reduce the funds available to deliver affordable rented accommodation and funding required to deliver infrastructures needed to support the developments.

In an attempt to bring small and medium-sized builders into the picture, the government has proposed a five-fold increase in the affordable housing threshold on smaller sites. Supporting these groups could provide needed support to some local developers and provide employment and training opportunities to local people at a time when the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic is predicted to negatively impact on the economy.

Adur and Worthing's ambition to deliver affordable housing cuts across every platform in Platforms for our Places, especially Platform 2 (Thriving People and Communities) and Platform 3 (Tackling Climate Change and Supporting Our Natural Environment). Improving the levels of affordable housing supply is a key part of our Housing Strategy (Priority 3).

It is not just about affordability; we want to promote development which provides for community interaction and which is sustainable by design. Having a secure and safe home, not just a place to sleep, is one of the most important factors in enabling our communities to thrive. We want to deliver affordable homes which enables communities to flourish and prosper and also enables communities to build their connections, resilience and capability. As local authorities bounded by the South Downs in the North and the English Channel in the South, land is limited in Adur and Worthing. This requires that we rethink our land use, planning and development ideas and explore the use of Modern Methods of Construction in delivering affordable homes so that we can achieve the right balance between development and environmental sustainability. Our affordable homes delivery will complement our plans around energy use, water, biodiversity, waste reduction, transport, climate adaptation and resilience, food and land use.

## Not Just Houses

Our aspiration is to knit together our ambition with respect to housing with other major platform commitments around jobs and around our environment. These two areas of focus have the complimentary benefits of creating the conditions for job creation at the same time as growing local application for more sustainable building practices. As a first step we will be looking at locations to place trial schemes so that we can better understand how these new construction methods work in place.

### Creating jobs and economic growth:

Modern Methods of Construction (MMC)<sup>4</sup> is a wide term which embraces a range of offsite manufacturing and onsite techniques that provide alternatives to traditional house building and includes methods such as Modular Housing, Cross Laminated Timber, Structural Insulated Panels (SIPs), and PassivHouse design.

With a growing trend towards Modern Methods of Construction (MMC) and offsite build practices within the construction industry there is an opportunity for Adur and Worthing to step into this sphere either directly through their use in the delivery programme or through encouraging inward investment to the area in terms of job creation for the area.

Either by priming the market through self delivery or encouraging inward investment into the area and attracting MMC providers the intention is to drive job creation and upskilling in this growth market both in terms of local labour working with MMC providers and through the wider supply chain.

### Delivering sustainable homes:

Similarly in terms of sustainability, the Councils are committed to reducing its carbon output across its stock and property holdings, key to achieving this will be ensuring that there is capacity and knowledge in the local supply chain for delivering sustainable solutions for new homes. As such the Councils will look to encourage innovation and delivery of sustainable solutions as part of its delivery programme. This drive towards emerging sustainable solutions, such as air source/ground source heat pumps or high efficiency insulation products, is intended to help upskill the existing supply chain whilst providing the foundation for modern skills required to deliver the United Kingdom's net zero target by 2050.

As part of this work, and the local skillset we will be developing, we will work closely with the sustainability team to maximize what is possible with respect to the retrofitting and sustainability of existing homes.

## 2. Creating the space for our communities to Thrive: Building around place:

The ambition for both Adur and Worthing is to create the space and support for thriving communities. This means our approach from the start needs to have a strong connection to the communities which are already present and active in our places. In a post-pandemic world it's important to recognise what we have learned in this period and make sure that connection to green spaces is designed into our housing

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<sup>4</sup> <https://www.nhbcfoundation.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/11/NF82.pdf>

development work. Houses need to be developed as homes. embedded in communities which have access to green space and the social and civic amenities which help communities thrive.

Creating sustainable communities improves quality of life. Our approach to housing development needs to consider how we can create community and homes that will catalyse better economic, social and health outcomes for households and neighbourhoods already disadvantaged through inequalities and lack of opportunities. A simple example of this is how we might better connect our Parks and open spaces to the design and development of our housing. We know from the Covid-19 pandemic how vital access to green space is to mental and physical health and our approach to development should reflect this and maximize the connections between our parks, green spaces and communities.

Part of this work will be developing the already active civic infrastructure that sits around our parks and green spaces to make sure that everyone feels a connection to an outside space. Other aspects of this work will be developing the community infrastructure that was uncovered during the pandemic and which was referenced in the [‘And Then’](#) document. This work is a major element of the Thrive platform and the ambition to create connected and vibrant communities.

The starting point for a more community led housing approach is the community mapping exercise which is being undertaken by the communities directorate in order to get an up to date understanding of the places which make up Adur and Worthing. This exercise will provide the roadmap for the community conversations needed to understand local ambitions not just for affordable housing but for the facilities which go alongside housing to support a vibrant and thriving community. It will also provide the starting point for a conversation with communities around ownership and the potential for community led housing development via vehicles such as community land trusts which can form an important strategic element of community development.

2020 was the year that we all stayed at home - and in doing so we grew to appreciate what we want and need on our doorstep. We will use the community mapping work to tap into this new knowledge so that we can work with communities to fill in gaps and secure newly valued assets such as green spaces or even just making sure that there is a cafe within walking distance. This is not to pursue a strategy of giving every community the same thing - this is a plan to work with communities and their unique characteristics.

This idea of making sure communities have what they need within walking distances is part of a growing global movement that looks at economic, social and sustainable aspects of neighbourhoods as each being of equal importance. The ability to be close to and part of thriving neighbourhoods is key to continuing to lead a healthy and active life.

Concepts like the ‘15 minute city’<sup>5</sup> or ‘20 minute suburb’ shows an approach to community development that reflects what has been learned during the pandemic and provides a useful starting point as we start to develop a delivery plan. The 15 minute city is based on the premise that quality of life can be improved by creating areas where everything a resident needs can be reached within 15 minutes either by foot or bike. The concept requires minimal travel among housing, offices, restaurants, parks, hospitals and cultural venues providing a ‘hyper local’ approach to place making. This kind of thinking demands close links with

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<sup>5</sup> The 15 Minute City (C.Moreno, 2019)

partners, such as WSCC who are responsible for some of the infrastructure needed to here but also to our own active travel ambitions where we can use walking paths or local cycling routes.

We will create our own take on the 15 minute neighbourhood model which will be a tool to help communities identify what they need locally but also what kind of community they expect to be in the future. This will not be prescriptive but instead a tool to support thoughtful deliberative conversations in communities which will help shape plans going forward.

### 3. Understand our demand

Adur and Worthing Councils commissioned a Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA). The SHMA, which was published in May 2020, provides information on overall housing needs over the period from 2019 to 2039.

The SHMA identifies a substantial need for additional affordable housing across both local authorities; with a total need for 309 dwellings per annum in Adur and 490 in Worthing. Just over 75% of the affordable housing need in Adur is for rented affordable homes, and 85% in Worthing. The analysis suggests that rented affordable housing should be prioritised, and within this provision of homes at social rent levels which are affordable to those on lower incomes (including lower income working households).

The SHMA shows a clear need from households who require support to access home ownership and recommends support for affordable home ownership schemes with shared ownership homes being the most appropriate affordable home ownership product.

The analysis in the SHMA indicated a notable growth in the population of older persons aged 65+ in Adur and Worthing, with many older people continuing to live in mainstream housing with some older households requiring specialist accommodation.

While the SHMA provides a useful high level overview of housing demand across the Councils the next phase of this work is to model this in more detail to understand and forecast our housing need at a more local level over the coming 5-10 years. It also means getting a greater understanding of the profile of renters and homeowners and what their aspirations/needs may be.

The current demand data for the Councils is below:

#### Adur Housing Register

	1 Bedroom	2 Bedrooms	3 Bedrooms	4 Bedrooms	5+ Bedrooms
<b>Band A</b>	66	23	2	1	1
<b>Band B</b>	10	10	6	7	0
<b>Band C</b>	181	154	91	6	1
<b>Band D</b>	58	91	44	4	0

## Worthing Housing Register

	1 Bedroom	2 Bedrooms	3 Bedrooms	4 Bedrooms	5+ Bedrooms
<b>Band A</b>	52	18	6	1	0
<b>Band B</b>	32	19	13	6	0
<b>Band C</b>	420	216	177	22	0
<b>Band D</b>	180	199	72	6	1

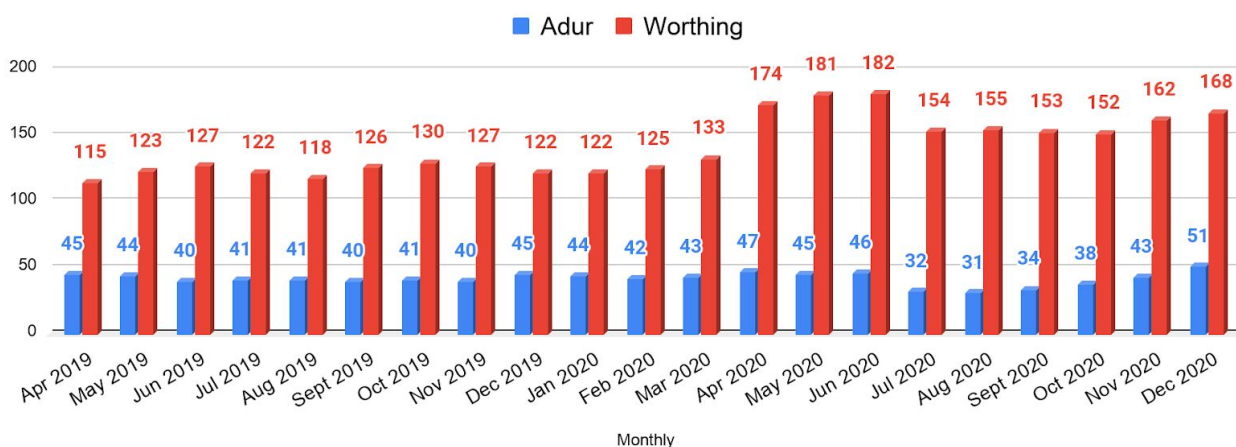
However these figures do not reflect the shift in demand we are starting to see as a result of the economic impact of the Covid-19 pandemic which, based on data that was modelled and presented in the February JSC paper 'Understanding the impact of Covid-19 on vulnerable residents', will mean the councils should expect to see considerable upswing in demand which is already starting to be the case at time of writing.

## Temporary accommodation and homelessness presentations

Providing affordable housing is a critical part of preventing homeless. Homelessness is increasing across the country. Adur and Worthing is no exception. Since 2017, placement in emergency accommodation (EA) and temporary accommodation (TA) has been increasing at a net average of 3 per month. This data does not include COVID-19 placements, which has increased the net placement even higher. Sufficient suitable permanent accommodation is required to prevent homeless households from going into EA in the first place, and also increase the number of households moving out of TA once they are placed.

We have seen a significant shift in the pattern and nature of TA needs as a result of the Everyone In work of the pandemic. The reduction in street homelessness locally has been dramatic and while we are yet to see if this is a change that can be sustained it nevertheless is changing how we think about and design for temporary accommodation needs.

### Number of Households in TA by Month





## Scaling opening doors

The Councils co-designed the Opening Doors Scheme with private sector landlords to ensure more households in emergency and temporary accommodation or households at risk of homeless can have more access to affordable accommodation in the private rented sector. The Councils share the risk of renting to a household they refer with the landlord for a two-year period. At the end of the period, the landlord continues with the tenancy, without any further involvement from the Council, having experienced that the household is a good and reliable tenant (float off).

To date 56 households have benefited from the scheme. 6 households have been successfully floated and 46 households are currently on the scheme. The total arrears since the scheme began is £5,976 across 5 tenancies and the households involved have been supported to clear these arrears.

At the lowest average nightly cost we have achieved (£36 per night per household), the gross cost of accommodating the 41 households in temporary accommodation for 6 months is £389,424 and the net cost is £194,712 assuming no loss in rental income.

There are two main benefits to scaling opening doors, firstly our ability to increase the accessibility of private rental supply for residents who need affordable options but secondly to reduce pressure on TA budgets by ensuring fewer people need to use that service.

The more detailed delivery plans will outline the potential impacts for Adur and Worthing budgets of changes such as:

- Continuing to grow the number of landlords who are participating in the scheme
- Using opening doors as a proactive measure when people come to the councils with concerns about the security of their housing situation

There is potential for Opening Doors to become the brand and vehicle that we use to secure affordable rental properties for both Adur and Worthing. This will be considered as part of the more detailed work to be done on delivery options.

## 4. Delivering pathways to homes

Housing supply also needs to be seen as a system where the flow of people through different types of accommodation is as important as the in the moment supply. In order to do this we need to:

- Have a longer term view of the kinds of properties residents will need at different life stages
- Pay attention to how we help people move between those different property types as they need to

This might include supporting people to get onto the housing ladder, or helping young families move into larger properties as their families grow. To enable this with the fixed amount of capacity in the system we also need to create appealing opportunities, perhaps in town centres, for people to downsize when their families have left home, or create opportunities for schemes such as Shared Lives which help match older people with large properties with younger people who need access to accommodation.

In terms of system capacity, at present there is a delivery focus on 1 and 2 bedroom properties which meet the needs of young professionals and couples. We have to take a longer term view and look at what we expect and want our demographics to look like in 10 or 15 years time and not just build for the population we have now. This means considering social shifts such as the rise of intergenerational living, growing families creating demand for large properties and the need to accommodate a shift to higher levels of home working that has emerged from the pandemic.

The ambition of the Councils is to provide a mix of discounted rent and sale products that will provide housing choices to residents based on a diverse range of needs. The gap between market priced and affordable and social housing is significant. In 2017 average house prices in Worthing were 11.35 times median earnings which is well above the national average, this has put home ownership beyond the reach of many households<sup>6</sup>.

Worthing Borough Council has already looked to intervene in this by delivering a site with Boklok to provide discounted market sale homes based on local affordability. By targeting the delivery of a broad range of tenures within the area the Councils will enable more people to live at affordable levels and either save towards the next step in their journey or reach a point where they are in secure and good quality accommodation that they can sustain.

This will need to include not just focusing on how younger people get onto the housing ladder but also looking at how we help older residents transition into the kinds of housing that will allow them to live independently for longer and stay within their communities. This may include building more intergenerational homes where families can support each other more effectively or developing pathways that make it more attractive for older residents to downsize and make family sized accommodation available.

Supporting these transitions will require us to look at how we support people to save, enter into shared ownership but also how people can best leverage their housing investments in later life. The delivery strategies will define specific transition points for each council and will include:

- Helping people step onto the housing ladder via schemes such as shared ownership or discounted market sales
- Helping to speed up the flow of people from short term temporary housing into long term and sustainable tenancies using schemes such as affordable or discounted market rent
- Supporting young families who need more space but are struggling to afford to stay locally
- Looking at the needs of older residents as they look to 'right size' their homes

We can and must increase the supply of affordable housing but we also need to work to ensure that the housing system as a whole works and that people have access to the kind of home they need at different stages of their life. We will be looking for partners who can help us with these transitions and want to take this whole system view of our housing needs.

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<sup>6</sup> Worthing Draft Local Plan (2020)

## Different ways of living

In building communities and not just homes we need to consider the needs of all of our community. We have spoken earlier about the need for strong connections to green space to support mental and physical health but designing for wellbeing goes beyond this. For example, with an aging population it's important to consider what it means to design dementia friendly communities as well as considering a wider set of accessibility options.

Another area that needs to reflect the changing make of our local communities is with respect to intergenerational living. This could include, for example, schemes where multi-generational families could settle or designing for schemes such as shared lives where older people provide housing to younger people - often key workers - in return for non-personal care and companionship.

Supported housing is also an area for innovation as we look to design communities that can integrate care without having the ghettoise residents. This is an area where we can look to work with partners who bring the necessary expertise and support.

As we develop the pipeline we also need to consider the impact of increasing homeworking and the fact that families need space to work and study.

Finally we will continue a strategy of housing first for our most vulnerable residents and ensure a pipeline of move on accommodation that can ensure that people do not get 'stuck' in TA but instead have options to move into safe and secure housing as they access wider support.

This is an area where we will need to work closely with partners in order to design the right options for Adur and Worthing and we plan to move forward with a number of experiments and pilot schemes.

## 5. Building our pipeline:

The Councils expect to expand on the numerous schemes that have already been commissioned with a view to delivering a number of different programmes of development. These programmes will reflect the diverse needs of the Councils and its communities. Each council will have a development pipeline which reflects its unique characteristics and ambitions and is flexible enough to be responsive to market and policy changes.

Adur is a stock holding authority and as such a significant part of development will be focused on complimenting the needs of the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) and its stock. Programmes of delivery will include programmes for older persons, supported housing, stock regeneration, infill/small sites and Temporary Accommodation (TA).

Tenant moves (or decants) may form part of the solution in helping to ensure Adur's homes are fit for the future. Adur District Council will review its local lettings policy to ensure that should decants be necessary, wherever possible, people will be relocated within the local area.

Whilst Worthing does not hold stock there is still an acute need for a variety of tenure types as well as the Council's statutory obligation to provide Temporary Accommodation (TA). The development team is

currently delivering 37 homes for TA across 2 sites. These new homes will save the Council money on emergency bed and breakfast costs however increasing need as signalled by the Councils research into the impact of the end of Covid benefit measures indicate that the demand will far outstrip this and further sites will be reviewed based on need.

Delivery of new homes for Worthing Borough Council will predominantly centre on enabling new sites to come forward and actively intervening where necessary to partner with organisations to aid or accelerate delivery of new homes.

The Council is already actively progressing sites with delivery partners in Worthing and Adur. Sites such as Union Place and Fulbeck Avenue have recently received planning and will deliver 320 homes, 127 of which are intended to be affordable homes. Adur Civic Centre in Shoreham is expected to deliver 172 affordable homes in conjunction with Hyde Housing Group; while Vivid Housing Group's work on Teville Gate could lead to over 230 homes being delivered of which 130 will be affordable. Further sites have been identified and will be brought to market or delivered with suitable partners.

## 6. Developing a mixed methods delivery approach:

The Councils' primary objective is to provide affordable homes for a range of residents and their needs. Wherever possible, the Councils will seek to create new homes that are suited to those with needs which are not being met by existing housing or new builds. The Councils are also committed to doing what we can to support our communities to thrive by ensuring that developments enable communities to build their connections, resilience and capability. We also want to support our communities to influence the decisions that affect the places in which they live.

In recognition of the differing needs from Adur and Worthing and in order to maximise the Council's ability to deliver on its objectives, a mixed methods approach to delivery is set out below. At this stage the development team does not propose having targets for each type of delivery method but once the pipeline has been defined some kind of quantification will be needed in order to ensure that the team has the correct skills mix across the different methods.

### 6.1 Self-Delivery

Self-delivery describes the sites where the Councils choose to take sites from acquisition (or identification) through to the delivery of new homes. This approach suits strategic sites that can be used as exemplars or enable the Councils to move quickly on opportunities which may otherwise be acquired for commercial or non-affordable development. This approach is labour intensive however and requires a team with access to a wide mix of skills.

Building on the recent approval of a programme of sites for delivery, the development team will look to expand to accommodate the growing pipeline of schemes as described above in order to create a steady flow of delivery. Where necessary new skill sets will be either brought in-house or through a temporary basis to help upskill the existing team.

To meet the objectives of this strategy the development team will look to deliver homes through a variety of methods. The SHMA and Housing Strategy provide evidence of a broad spectrum of needs in terms of housing requirements for both Councils. This ranges from social rented through to shared ownership and outright home ownership. In recognition of this fact and to ensure maximum flexibility in terms of delivery, the Councils will investigate the possibility of broadening their offering in terms of tenure types. This flexibility in delivery will enable the Council to intervene on a wider range of sites where the market has been unable or unwilling to deliver.

Self delivery is an important part of our approach as it allows us to become the 'anchor development' in communities and unlock difficult sites as well as setting a pace for delivery that we can then use to open up opportunities for partners.

## 6.2 Delivery with others

Working in partnership with others may enable a greater number of affordable homes to be developed through the sharing of resources, knowledge and funding. Partnership, starting with shared purpose and values, will allow us to access a wider range of funding sources as well as access skills that are either difficult or expensive for us to provide for ourselves.

A recent example of this is the Council's proposed joining venture with Vivid to deliver at Teville Gate. This approach offers the opportunity to deliver at scale without growing the team exponentially or exposing the Councils to the greater financial risk of bigger developments. Potential partners might include Housing Associations, Charities, Community Land Trusts, Developers, Contractors or Capital Investors (e.g. pension funds).

As part of this process the Councils' will also explore the potential for growth in partnerships with local providers such as Worthing Homes to ensure that our existing relationships are supportive and aligned to our ambitions.

## 6.3 Funding Models and Leveraging Investment

With the Council's funding being heavily impacted through the pandemic and in order to facilitate the above the Councils intend to investigate funding models and investment opportunities which will aid the delivery of sites and enable flexibility in delivery across the two Councils.

Beyond the immediate implications of the pandemic there is the opportunity to work with like minded partners in order to better leverage different forms of investment. This may include the patient capital of institutional investors or working with providers who can access parallel streams of government funding. It may include making different use of our land holdings as well those of our public sector partners.

Our proven ability to buy and develop land, as well as to work effectively with external partners is a capacity that we will develop and grow as we develop this strategy.

## 6.4 Enabling others

Sometimes the most important things we can do as a partner is to support local delivery partners. The Councils will therefore continue to enable housing delivery through its function as Local Planning Authority (LPA) with the LPA playing a key role in setting policy guidance for delivery.

However to help guide the tenure mix based on the needs of the local community the Council will look to create a new post for a 'Homes and Communities Enabling Officer' (HCEO). The HCEO will look to support the Councils ambitions to build better and more creative relationships with key delivery stakeholders and to ensure feedback from the local community is taken into account.

This will include relationships with new and potential providers but will also look to build relationships with Community organisations - such as Community Land trusts - in order to open up opportunities for community owned build schemes.

The HCE Officer will also look to collate feedback from internal teams on current and future needs of specialist housing such as temporary accommodation, extra care, sheltered or wheelchair adaptable.

## 7. Where next

Our work on delivering affordable homes in Adur and Worthing has already started with a diverse portfolio of schemes in the pipeline or on site. This is work which will continue but our next steps will be to develop the more detailed delivery plans for each Council while exploring potential for partnerships in a range of areas.