

## Appendix 2: CDC's Housing Strategy 2019-24, Proposed Action Plan 2020/2021.

### Priority 1: Increase the supply and diversity of affordable housing to ensure the right types of homes available in the right places

| Action   | Target  | Responsibility   | Deadline | Comments  |
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| <b>1.1 Ensure new affordable housing is in line with local needs</b> | Complete research and prepare a report on the affordability of rented housing defined as "affordable".  | Housing Strategy and Development Team                                | Dec-20   | This requires additional dedicated resources to further develop work undertaken in 2019/2020. Work on local affordability will continue in order to inform the development of Cherwell Local Plan Affordable Housing Policies and the updated Tenancy Strategy which is planned for 2021.   |
|  | Complete at least 2 parish level housing needs surveys  | Housing Strategy and Development Team                                | Mar-21   | Two Parish housing needs surveys were undertaken in 2019/2020. There is a continued focus on rural affordable housing provision and work to complete a further two housing need surveys will be undertaken in 2020/2021   |
|  | Work in partnership with Oxfordshire County Council to identify and deliver actions to help inform and deliver Oxfordshire's housing related strategies and improve the provision of housing for adults, young people and families who are vulnerable and have support needs, learning disabilities and/or physical disabilities. | Housing Strategy and Development Team                                | Mar-21   | Work with the County Council to identify housing needs of adults with care and support needs will be ongoing through 2020-2022. Commissioning of services for people with support needs will be considered as part of the review of the Adult Homeless Pathway with commissioning proposals being prepared by October 2020. We will continue working with the County Council to identify accommodation and support needs of people with learning and physical disabilities and use this to inform development planning. |
|  | Contribute towards the review of the Young People's Pathway and Adult Homeless pathway.   | Housing Allocations and Options Team & Strategy and Development Team | Nov-20   | The Adult Homeless Pathway is in the process of being reviewed and Cherwell DC is part of the recommissioning process (Review to complete October 2020). The Young People's Pathway recommissioning is complete and CDC will be contributing funding to those services (as will the other Districts) when they start on 1st October 2020.   |
| <b>1.2 Broaden the range of new affordable housing delivered</b>     | Deliver at least 10 social rented units i.e. through negotiation with developers and registered providers to convert Affordable Rent tenure to Social Rent tenure. Where possible secure additional units on sites as social rent tenure. Enable grant funding to be secured to support delivery.                                 | Housing Strategy and Development Team                                | Mar-21   | Deliver actions in line with the recommendations of the Social Rent Cross-Party Working Group report (agreed April 2020).   |

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|  | Develop a proposal for a "Living Rent" housing product   | Housing Strategy and Development Team   | Nov-20                | Work undertaken in 2019 revealed that a single person/single income household would not be able to afford to rent a property on the private rental market and could only afford social rent tenure. Work to identify a 'living rent' housing product will help to inform discussions with developers on a range of affordable housing to meet different needs. |
| <b>1.3 Work with other Oxfordshire local authorities to deliver housing to meet Oxford's unmet need</b>                                    | Secure more detailed arrangements in relation to the allocation of affordable housing that is developed to meet Oxford's unmet housing need.   | Housing Strategy and Development Team & Housing Allocations and Options Team  | Mar-21                | Consideration will need to be given to a draft local lettings plan and development of legal and/or partnership agreements in relation delivery of housing to meet Oxford's unmet housing need. A partnership steering group of CDC and Oxford City Council officers has been formed.   |
| <b>1.4 Contribute to the development of Local Plan Policies to ensure delivery of future affordable housing in Cherwell</b>                | Work with Planning Policy Team to review and develop effective planning policies that will support the continued delivery of housing to meet identified needs.   | Planning Policy Team, Housing Strategy and Development Team   | Mar-21                | The Cherwell DC Local Plan Partial Review: Oxford's Unmet Housing Need, is well advanced and due for adoption in 2020. Development of the Oxfordshire Plan 2050 and CDC Local Plan Review will involve further contributions from Housing Services in 2020/21.   |
| <b>1.5 Play an active and lead role on the Growth Board and in partnership with Homes England to maximise funding for affordable homes</b> | Deliver Cherwell affordable housing commitments for Year 3 of the Growth Deal and work with the partnership to meet county wide targets, linking with wider Growth Deal delivery (productivity, infrastructure, wider housing and the JSSP/Oxfordshire Plan 2050). | Assistant Director Housing & Social Care Commissioning/ Housing Strategy & Development Team   | Mar-21                | Work is ongoing with developers and partners to establish an increase of units for Year 3 wherever possible.   |
| <b>1.6 Review the Council's Tenancy Strategy 2017</b>  | Review the Tenancy Strategy and produce an updated version to ensure that it remains fit for purpose and aligned with any changes to other internal and national housing policies.   | Housing Strategy and Development Team, Housing Allocations and Options Team   | Mar-21                | Tenancy Strategy 2017 will be updated.   |
| <b>1.7 Increase corporate co-ordination in relation to housing activities across the council</b>   | Establish a cross-departmental working group to meet at least quarterly to identify opportunities to deliver additional affordable housing, identify any delivery obstacles and explore new housing initiatives and share best practice.                           | Assistant Director, Housing & Social Care Commissioning, Housing Strategy & Development Team, Private Sector Housing Team, Build!, relevant Planning teams and Property/Asset Team. | Sept 2020 and ongoing | A cross-departmental working group would provide practical opportunities and a corporate approach to delivering more housing and sustainable communities. Governance of the group would need to be agreed. This group would replace the need to set up a Housing Board which was suggested in the previous Housing Strategy Action Plan.                       |

**Priority 2: Improve the quality and sustainability of our homes and build thriving, healthy communities**

| Action  | Target  | Responsibility              | Deadline | Comments & Update  |
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| <b>2.1 Increase awareness of council services and initiatives in relation to warm homes, energy efficiency and retro-fit technologies</b> | Continue partnership working with other Oxfordshire authorities and work with 'Better Housing, Better Health' to make homes more energy efficient and tackle fuel poverty. Signpost residents to available services and grants, undertake targeted promotions, and facilitate 'flexible eligibility' to access Eco Funding. | Private Sector Housing Team | Ongoing  | Work is ongoing to promote the service available to eligible households. |

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| <b>2.2 Continue to support and meet the demand for adaptations to assist older and disabled people to remain living independently in their own homes</b> | Assists at least 540 households (45 households per month) to remain living independently in their own homes through the provision of disabled adaptations (major adaptations and associated small works grants)  | Private Sector Housing Team   | Mar-21                    | The range and flexibility of the grants available has increased to help achieve this target. Monitoring of the revised grant scheme will need to be undertaken to establish its impact and success.  |
| <b>2.3 Review Private Sector Housing Policies</b>  | Disabled Grants Policy, Grants & Assistance Policy, Civil Penalties Policy to ensure that they continue to be relevant and fit for purpose.  | Private Sector Housing Team   | Mar-21                    | This will ensure that the policies reflect any changes in legislation and remain relevant and fit for purpose.   |
| <b>2.4 Improve access to quality affordable housing that can provide longer term housing solutions for people with disabilities.</b>                     | Arrange appropriate staff training on accessible buildings and ensure this knowledge is used to inform development of housing related strategies, policies and planning application consultation responses. Impact of this can be measured by the number of homes that are to be developed to the required standard are secured through planning agreements and the increased provision of accessible housing. | Housing Strategy and Development Team   | Dec-20                    | Training will enable staff to effectively contribute to consultations and also support the development of policies in the Council's new Local Plan that will secure delivery of accessible housing solutions in the future. Officers currently seek 50% of affordable rented homes to be accessible (Building Regulations Part M4(2)) and 1% wheelchair adaptable homes (Building Regulations Part M4 (3)).  |
| <b>2.5 Provide supported housing as identified through the Oxfordshire County Council's commissioning plans for Adult &amp; Children's Services</b>      | See also 1.1 Support OCC to commission appropriate and suitable accommodation for people with learning disabilities - including shared accommodation.  | Housing Strategy and Development Team   | November 2020 and ongoing | Reviews are expected to complete in October 2020.  |
| <b>2.6 Bring empty property in the Private Sector back into use.</b>   | Bring at least 10 long term empty homes back into use.   | Private Sector Housing Team   | Mar-21                    | Target consistent with 2019/20.  |
| <b>2.7 Take a leadership role to demonstrate that increased standards in new build housing are deliverable</b>   | Work in partnership with other Oxfordshire councils to develop an evidence base on sustainability and deliverability of higher standards for new build properties  | Bicester Team, CDC Planning Policy Team, Housing Strategy & Development Team              | Mar-21                    | Work commenced in 2019/20 will be ongoing. It is anticipated that the Oxfordshire 2050 Plan will develop strategic high level policies regarding sustainability and deliverability of higher standards for new build properties. Government is currently consulting on measures to increase energy efficiency in new dwellings. It is anticipated that there will be other consultations regarding design codes and the future home standard. Work is ongoing. |
| <b>2.8 Identify key partners that require housing representation and influence to deliver healthy communities</b>  | Complete an audit of partnerships and agree representation   | Housing Strategy and Development Team in partnership with other CDC stakeholders and OCC. | Dec-20                    | Officers will continue to ensure that there is housing representation on the main strategic partnership groups and those groups that operate countywide. An audit of partnerships across CDC and OCC will facilitate a shared understanding of how CDC can influence housing impact and the delivery of healthy, sustainable communities.  |
| <b>2.9 Improve conditions in the private sector</b>  | Improve at least 100 premises through formal and informal enforcement interventions and improve 9 premises per month through grant and loan work   | Private Rented Sector Team  | Mar-21                    | This ensures continued improvement of homes through the use of relevant powers and grants as necessary.  |

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|  | Undertake 55 Housing Standards Interventions per month. This includes all enforcement notices issued, proactive investigations and service requests addressed. |   | Mar-21          | This ensures continued improvement of homes through the use of relevant powers as necessary   |
| <b>2.10 Adopt a corporate approach to commissioning services to support sustainable communities</b>  | Re-commission Money Advice Service to support all residents in the District.   | Procurement Team, Housing Strategy and Development Team & OCC | Nov-20          | A review has been undertaken in 2019/20 and work to re-commission and align services with OCC in underway with new contracts starting on 1 November 2020.   |
| <b>Priority 3: Enhance opportunities for people to access suitable homes and have housing choices.</b>   |  |   |                 |   |
| <b>Action</b>  | <b>Target</b>  | <b>Responsibility</b>   | <b>Deadline</b> | <b>Comments &amp; Update</b>  |
| <b>3.1 Increase customer awareness of the range of housing options available</b>   | Improve information available through the website and other media to improve the opportunities for customers to access housing information.                    | Housing Options Team<br>Housing Strategy & Development Team.  | Ongoing         | The Housing Service has designated officers responsible for keeping the housing website information up to date and work will be on-going. Additional works to the current housing system will enhance the operational functions of the system which will in turn, assist CDC officers in processing housing applications. |
|  | Review effectiveness of existing housing options portal and where needed, prepare a business case for further enhancements or changes.                         | Housing Options Team  | Dec-20          | An enhanced housing options model is in place. A review of the effectiveness of this to support the customer experience will assist in identifying any further work needed and support a business case for any additional improvements.   |
| <b>3.2 Increase the provision of private rented sector accommodation through various means including council-led initiatives and establishing a dialogue with investment landlords</b> | Meet with RPs to establish their appetite and capacity to deliver secure high quality private rented accommodation   | Housing Strategy and Development Team                         | Mar-21          | Discussions with RP partners will continue.   |
|  | Look for partners, either private sector landlords or RPs who could deliver affordable shared accommodation for under 35s                                      | Housing Strategy and Development Team                         | Mar-21          | Discussions with RP partners to continue.   |

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| <p><b>3.3 Provide wider opportunities for people to access self-build as a housing option</b></p>   | <p>Work in partnership to deliver appropriate recommendations in the Oxfordshire Growth Deal Community-led housing research project (to be completed in March 2020) and develop links with local community led housing groups to identify the potential for delivery of community led and co-housing schemes in the district. Continue work with Hook Norton Low Carbon Hub to deliver a community-led housing scheme in Hook Norton.</p> | <p>Housing Strategy and Development Team</p>                          | <p>Ongoing</p> | <p>The research project about how community led housing could support the ambitions for housing growth and particularly the delivery of affordable housing in Oxfordshire has been completed. The outputs/ recommendations from this work will be considered and where appropriate, used to inform future Community-led Housing and Co-housing projects in Cherwell and other Oxfordshire Districts. Work on the proposals for a CLH scheme in Hook Norton will continue.</p> |
| <p><b>3.4 Review progress on actions set out in the Council's Homelessness Strategy 2018-20 and deliver a revised strategy in line with current legislation and government policy on reducing homelessness and rough sleeping</b></p> | <p>Complete a review of progress towards the actions outlined in the Homelessness Strategy 2018-20. Develop a new Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy for consultation and approval.</p>   | <p>Housing Options Team, Housing Strategy and Development Team</p>    | <p>Mar-21</p>  | <p>Review in summer 2020 with further work undertaken on delivering a revised strategy for consultation by January 2021. The revision of the strategy will now be heavily informed by the impact of the pandemic on Cherwell communities including the expected rise in family homelessness and the unique opportunity we have to rehouse 40 single homeless people accommodated May- July 2020 as a result of the Government's directive to 'bring everyone in'.</p>         |
| <p><b>3.5 Undertake a health check of the Council's Allocations Scheme and produce an update.</b></p>   | <p>Undertake a health check of the Council's Allocations Scheme and produce an updated Scheme in consultation with Registered Providers.</p>  | <p>Housing Options Team, Housing Strategy &amp; Development Team.</p> | <p>Mar-21</p>  | <p>Allocations scheme review to include discussions with RP so that any new policies are aligned with current requirements and RP processes. The Nominations Agreement will also need some consideration.</p>   |