

**APPENDIX 1**

# **Independent Living and Specialist Accommodation Strategy**

**2023-28**

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## Foreword

Welcome to Shropshire Council's Independent Living and Specialist Accommodation Strategy 2023-2028. This Strategy sets out how the council will ensure that people have appropriate homes within their communities that meet their needs.

We are committed to promoting independence, empowering individuals with the freedom to make choices, and maintaining control over their living environments.

The Council will continue to work closely together with local housing associations, developers and other organisations, all in a key position to address these challenges, whether this is through development of specific policies, providing funding or pulling human resources together to ensure that there are good quality homes available for all people.



Dean Carroll, Portfolio Holder for Growth, Regeneration and Housing

## 1 Introduction

- 1.1 The Independent Living and Specialist Accommodation Strategy is an overarching document, providing a broad framework which aligns strategically with the adopted [Local Plan](https://www.shropshire.gov.uk/media/8503/samdev-adopted-plan.pdf) <https://www.shropshire.gov.uk/media/8503/samdev-adopted-plan.pdf> and emerging [Shropshire Local Plan](#), the [Adult Social Care Strategy](#) and the emerging People Plan (People Directorate strategic plan 2023-2025). The Council's commissioning priorities sit alongside a suite of strategies designed to set out the council's housing intentions and will feed into this strategy to support people to remain independent at home, complemented by the provision of more adaptable and accessible housing and forms of specialist housing, which provides genuine choice for those who wish to move, whilst maintaining their independence.
- 1.2 The key principle for the Council and its partners for meeting the care and support needs of older people and those with disabilities and special needs is to seek to support them to remain independent within their own homes (generally their existing home unless the individuals preference is either new adaptable and accessible housing or specialist housing including that which supports independent living, for such reasons as moving closer to their wider family or moving to more accessible locations with better provision of services and facilities). However, the strategy equally recognises that unfortunately this is not always possible, leaving a role for care homes that provide high-level care.
- 1.3 The Council provides and commissions a range of services to assist vulnerable people and to avoid more costly interventions by statutory bodies including the Council itself, the National Health Service and the Criminal Justice System. Such services include supported housing; floating support; aids and adaptations; assistive technology; energy efficiency advice and assistance; and money advice services.

## 2 Promoting independent and healthy lives

- 2.1 The Independent Living and Specialist Accommodation Strategy is specifically designed to enable older adults and people with disabilities or special needs to live independently. Delivery is underpinned by the [adopted Local Plan](#) and in the future the emerging Shropshire Local Plan<sup>1</sup>This approach is a commitment to whenever possible supporting people to remain within their familiar homes and established support networks, emphasising the significance of individual choice and delivering intergenerational communities.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.shropshire.gov.uk/media/21100/sd002-draft-shropshire-local-plan.pdf>

2.2 The vision of the [Shropshire Plan 2022-25](#) is living the best life; the Plan has four priorities:

- Healthy People
- Healthy Economy
- Healthy Environment
- Healthy Organisation

2.3 All four of these priorities link to housing: from tackling inequality, promoting independent living, and preventing homelessness; to ensuring the right mix of housing, reducing carbon emissions, and promoting affordable warmth; to making the best use of the Council's resources. Of key importance to this Strategy is an objective of the Healthy People priority:

*We will tackle inequalities, including rural inequalities, and poverty in all its forms; providing early support and interventions that reduce risk and enable children, young people, adults, and families to achieve their full potential and enjoy life.*

2.4 The vision of the [Housing Strategy 2020-25](#) is:

*All homes are well designed decent homes of high quality, which will protect Shropshire's unique urban and rural environments and ensure it is a great place to live. That all Shropshire residents have access to the 'right home in the right place' to support and promote their health and wellbeing throughout their lives.*

2.5 To strengthen the council's commitment to ensuring fair access to appropriate housing, the housing strategy has six key objectives. Among these, the first four focus specifically on providing specialist and supported accommodation, aligning with the broader goal of creating inclusive and supportive communities:

- To meet the overall current and future housing needs of Shropshire's growing population by addressing the housing needs of particular groups within communities.
- To ensure people whose housing needs are not met through the local open market housing can access housing that meets their needs.
- Preventing households from becoming homeless and where this is not possible ensuring they have safe, secure and appropriate accommodation until they are able to resettlement.
- To ensure people can access a mix of housing options within Shropshire's urban and rural landscape, that best meets their needs in terms of tenure, safety, size, type, design, and location of housing.
- To minimise the environmental impact of existing housing stock and future housing development in the interest of climate change. Maximise resource efficiencies and to ensure optimum use of sustainable construction techniques.
- Ensuring that there is enough housing supply to enable businesses to attract and retain the local workforce that they need.

- 2.6 The priorities for action within this strategy form an Action Plan at Appendix 2 which will allow monitoring and review of the Strategy. It is proposed that the Strategy is reviewed annually, to provide the opportunity to reflect changes in Government policy and funding streams.

### 3 Supporting people to live well independently.

- 3.1 The first objective of this strategy is to support people to remain independent, assisting them to remain in their existing home within the community they live and provide necessary support and adaptations, wherever feasible.
- 3.2 The Council offers a range of advice and information that supports wellbeing facilitating self-help. [Shropshire Choices](#) is an online information portal of care and support available to all residents to assist them to make informed choices about how to meet their care and support needs; this will also meet the needs of those who are able to fund their own support but need advice and assistance to identify what is available. The [First Point of Contact](#) team provide telephone advice supported by trained customer service staff.
- 3.3 Information is also available directly from the Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise (VCSE) sector, which is widely accessible both on-line, via telephone and within the local community. Information can therefore be more responsive, up to date and tailored to individual requirements. In providing information on a wide range of organisations and support options, we can support people inside and outside of statutory services to find their own solutions.
- 3.4 In addition, the First Point of Contact Team can arrange countywide [“Let’s Talk Sessions”](#) for individuals and family carers seeking further specialist advice and information to find their own solutions, offering personalised care and support when needed and to include healthy conversations and social prescribing, signposting to [Shropshire carer support team](#) and voluntary organisations for example Age UK to access care assessments, low-level equipment and assistive technology.
- 3.5 Social prescribing<sup>2</sup> can play a significant role in improving lives by creating connections between residents and communities to tackle the health inequalities they may be experiencing. The collaborative work between the Council, registered providers (housing associations), and social prescribers allows key housing issues and decreasing mental health and wellbeing to be identified and decisions made in how to overcome them. Thereby supporting re-connection into the community.
- 3.6 Support provided specific to an individual is proportionate to their needs and maximises choice and control. The approach involves a shared responsibility between Adult Social Care, Children’s Services and partner organisations, including the VCSE sector, communities, families, carers and the individual themselves.
- 3.7 The delivery of individual personal care and support, with a focus on maximising independence will aim to include the use of equipment, adaptations, assistive

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<sup>2</sup> [Find local support in Shropshire - Shropshire's Local Directory \(shropshire-directory.co.uk\)](#)

technology and reablement care and support, including measures to prevent hospital admittance, promote avoidance and support early discharge from hospital when necessary. Allocating resources into the preventative services that enable people to remain in their homes for longer, to reduce, delay or prevent an individual from needing a social care package or admission to residential care is essential to fulfil the Council's statutory responsibilities in safeguarding vulnerable adults from harm.

- 3.8 This will be complemented by the Council's aspirations to commission alternatives to residential care, further enabling people to maintain their independence in the community. These options include Independent Supported Living schemes for working age adults, intergenerational schemes, or older persons sheltered or extra care housing.
- 3.9 This will be achieved by ensuring that more of the new housing provided is accessible and more easily adaptable and through the provision of appropriately located market specialist housing. The adopted and emerging Local Plans provide the policy framework to deliver these objectives.

#### Priority of action

- Explore the feasibility of an online self -assessment and guidance tool with the view of the customer to answer a series of questions to generate a personalised report including local signposting to allow people to browse a range of products and service to suit their needs and help them to live independently for longer and assist in decision making.
- Work with Shropshire Towns and Rural Housing, developers, and Private Registered Providers so that more of the new housing provided is accessible and more easily adaptable and through the provision of appropriately located market specialist housing.

## 4 Home Improvement and Assistance

- 4.1 Adapting the home can increase the useability of the home environment and enable the majority of people to maintain their independence whilst living in their own home. The Council provides financial assistance to help people maintain independence whilst living in their own home. This includes minor or major aids and adaptations, a handyperson service and falls prevention advice which can enable people to stay safe in their homes for a longer time. The services provided contribute to the prevention agenda as they reduce reliance on statutory services such as the NHS and Social Care.
- 4.2 The Handyperson service in addition to installing grab rails, stair bannisters, outdoor rails, and half steps, also complete other works such as home security adaptations. Adaptations can include key safes, sensory smoke alarms, loop wires, window locks and custom stair safety gates and provision of emergency radiators can be provided should residents have issues with their heating. The service receives referrals from a wide range of teams such as: Occupational Therapy, Independent Living Support, Integrated Community Services Team (ICS), Sensory Impairment, Domestic Abuse, Warmer Homes, and other external providers such as Age UK. Currently, the service is trialling new equipment.

- 4.3 The Better Care Fund (BCF) is a Department of Health initiative that requires the pooling of budgets between local authorities and the Integrated Care Boards (ICB) to increase joint working and furthering integration of health and social care. An element of this funding is provided to local authorities to finance the various types of aids and adaptations. Representatives from Shropshire Council, as part of the Integrated Care Boards (ICB) play a role in ensuring these resources are effectively utilised to benefit the community.
- 4.4 The Housing Grants, Construction and Regeneration Act 1996, with amendments from the Disabled Facilities Grant (Maximum Amounts and Additional Purposes) (England) Order 2008<sup>3</sup>, makes it a local authority's legal duty to fund adaptations in the homes of people with disabilities. In addition, a council also has discretionary powers to provide housing assistance via the Regulatory Reform (Housing Assistance) (England and Wales) Order 2002 (RRO)<sup>4</sup>. This allows a local authority to use alternative, and potentially more suitable, funding methods to provide adaptations to people beyond the mandatory [Disabled Facilities Grant](#) requirements.
- 4.5 Currently the Council is piloting a new grant process to provide funding for adaptations. On its successful completion, the Council will draft a new housing renewal assistance and adaptations policy which will set out the details and eligibility criteria for the types of assistance available to provide adaptations in the home or to facilitate relocation to a more suitable property for people with disabilities. Grants are available to anyone who has a disability and is a homeowner, private tenant or a housing association tenant.
- 4.6 The Council's housing stock is managed by its Arms-Length Management Organisation (ALMO) Shropshire Towns and Rural (STAR) Housing. Council tenants who require major adaptations will be assessed in terms of whether the dwelling can be adapted, the cost of the adaptation and the availability of alternative accommodation.

#### Priorities of Action

- Monitor the trialling of new equipment to evaluate its cost-effectiveness
- Consider the feasibility of a private handyperson scheme
- Assess the success, effectiveness and outcome of the new grant process for funding adaptations.
- Draft a Housing Renewal Assistance and Adaptations Policy

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<sup>3</sup> The Disabled Facilities Grant (Maximum Amounts and Additional Purposes) (England) Order 2008, <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2008/1189/made>

<sup>4</sup> The Regulatory Reform (Housing Assistance) (England and Wales) Order 2002, <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2002/1860/contents/made>



## 5 Affordable Warmth and Tackling Fuel Poverty

- 5.1 The Council's [Sustainable Affordable Warmth Strategy 2023-2030](#) sets out the support offered to households to tackle fuel poverty, which is closely linked to affordable warmth and suitable accommodation. Excessive heating expenses, puts a strain on households' budgets and impacts health. Addressing this involves boosting income, lowering bills and improved energy efficiency. Efficient heating systems and good insulation can help alleviate fuel poverty by retaining heat, reducing the need for excessive heating needs and lowering energy bills. Ensuring homes are energy-efficient and affordably warm, the cycle of fuel poverty can be broken, improving the overall quality of life for individuals and families.
- 5.2 According to the research briefing entitled "Health inequalities: Cold or damp homes", each year, the NHS spends an estimated £1.4 billion annually on treating illnesses associated with living in cold or damp housing<sup>5</sup> and contributes to the UK's high number of excess winter deaths, reaching an estimated 13,400 between December 2021 to March 2022. It also affects childhood development, with impacts that can last into adulthood<sup>6</sup>. Estimates suggest that some ten per cent of excess winter deaths are directly attributable to fuel poverty and 21.5% are attributable to cold homes.
- 5.3 The Council is committed to ensuring residents can access affordable warmth and in doing so have invested in increasing the staffing resource and capacity of the Affordable Warmth and Energy Efficiency Team. The team continues to deliver essential work to ensure that the Council can continue to bid for and secure funding. Grant funded energy efficiency improvements are currently delivered through the [Sustainable Warmth Shropshire](#) scheme. The Council also commissions the Keep Shropshire Warm energy advice and referral service, which is available to all residents and seeks to deliver key objectives of the Healthy People and Healthy Environment priorities of the Shropshire Plan.
- 5.4 The current Government definition of fuel poverty in England is 'Low Income Low Energy Efficiency' (LILEE). A household is fuel poor if:
- they are living in a property with an energy efficiency rating of band D, E, F or G, as shown by an Energy Performance Certificate (EPC<sup>7</sup>); and
  - their disposable income (income after housing costs and energy needs) would be below the poverty line.
- 5.5 The Council is working to ensure that all such properties attain a minimum Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) rating of E. This approach is in line with legal requirements that deem it illegal to rent out properties with an EPC rating of F or G. Its primary focus is on promoting energy-efficient and sustainable living conditions for

<sup>5</sup> [CBP-9696.pdf \(parliament.uk\)](#)

<sup>6</sup> Chartered Institute of Housing, "Homes at the Heart: A Strategy for Housing" (September 2023).

<sup>7</sup> An EPC is a rating of how energy efficient a property is. The certificates are graded on a scale of A (most efficient) to G (least efficient). An EPC is a legal requirement when a property is bought, sold or rented. It should be noted the EPC methodology is skewed towards the cost of fuel, therefore, is not necessary the optimum measure of energy efficiency.

all residents in our community, creating healthier, safer and more environmentally responsible housing options aligning with the core objectives of this strategy.

- 5.6 In the latest year for which statistics are available (2022) an estimated 3.26 million households in England were in fuel poverty under the LILEE definition. This was 13.4% of households. In Shropshire 23,045 households were estimated to be in fuel poverty, this being 16.5% of households.

#### Priorities for Action

- Revise the Private Housing Assistance Policy
- Deliver and Monitor the Sustainable Affordable Warmth Strategy
- Raise awareness of the importance of tackling fuel poverty and improving energy efficiency
- Establish a pathway to zero-carbon housing
- Attract funding to deliver affordable warmth and improve energy efficiency.

## 6 Supporting People to live in accessible and adaptable general needs housing

- 6.1 The housing needs of older people and those with disabilities and special needs will be met in a way that provides choice and more importantly compliments and facilitates the People Plan (People Directorate strategic plan 2023-2025) in Shropshire. The People Plan underpins the Shropshire Plan on the principles of how it will support people to live their best lives. A fundamental principle of the strategic plan is supporting people to remain independent within their own homes and within their existing communities and support networks for as long as possible. The People Plan will be facilitated and complemented through the provision of accessible and adaptable housing and appropriate forms of specialist housing.
- 6.2 Recognising the principles of this strategy, the housing needs and aspirations of older people and those with disabilities and special needs will likely include:
- a. The provision of appropriate home adaptations to their homes *[Adaptations](#) range from simple handrails, [Technology Enabled Care](#) to major structural alterations.*
  - b. Moving to new accessible and adaptable general needs housing
  - c. Moving to an appropriate form of specialist housing
- 6.3 Provision of adaptations to existing homes has been covered in section 3 and 4 of this document. In terms of delivering new accessible and adaptable housing as part of inclusive communities, local planning policy and decision making is a crucial way to shape places and deliver what is needed. The mechanisms within the adopted Local Plan supports the need to future proof housing supply. There are also numerous wider mechanisms and the Shropshire Council initiatives that can positively influence and facilitate accessible and adaptable housing delivery across Shropshire.

- 6.4 Within both the adopted and emerging Local Plans, residential development is expected to provide a mix of dwelling sizes, types and tenures in order to meet the identified needs of local communities, including families with children, older people, people wishing to build their own homes and people with disabilities and special needs.
- 6.5 Analysis within the [Strategic Housing Market Assessment](#) indicates that a significant proportion of the new dwellings required during the Local Plan period will be 1, 2 and 3 bedrooms in size. Specifically, the SHMA indicates that around 32.7% of the dwellings needed will be 1 or 2 bedrooms in size and a further 43.5% will be 3 bedrooms in size.
- 6.6 This demand for 1-, 2- and 3-bedroom dwellings also reflects the view often expressed by local communities when discussing their local housing needs. As such it is considered appropriate to require at least 25% of open market dwellings with 2 bedroom or less and a further 25% to be three bedroom or less, on sites of 5 or more dwellings. The remainder of the open market dwellings will include a suitable mix and variety of dwelling sizes.
- 6.7 With specific regard to accessible and adaptable housing, the adopted Local Plan includes the requirement that “all housing developments are designed to be capable of adaptation to accommodate lifestyle changes, including the needs of the elderly and people with disabilities, and to achieve the Lifetime Homes Standard”.
- 6.8 [The emerging Shropshire Local Plan](#) is proposing a greater focus on accessible and adaptable housing, in recognition of the importance of these forms of houses in meeting local needs. Draft policies are proposing that:
- a. All housing specifically designed for older people or those with disabilities and special needs will be built to the M4(3) (wheelchair user dwellings) standard within Building Regulations.
  - b. On sites of 5 or more dwellings, at least 5% of the dwellings will be built to the M4(3) (wheelchair user dwellings) standard within Building Regulations and a further 70% of the dwellings will be built to the M4(2) (accessible and adaptable dwellings) or higher standard within Building Regulations, unless site-specific factors indicate that step-free access cannot be achieved.
  - c. All dwellings on sites of less than 5 dwellings and the remaining dwellings on sites of 5 or more dwellings that are not subject to the requirements of Paragraph 3 of this Policy are strongly encouraged to achieve the M4(2) (accessible and adaptable dwellings) standard within Building Regulations or higher.
  - d. All housing designed to M4(3) (wheelchair user dwellings) standard within Building Regulations must also be designed to be ‘friendly’ to those with dementia and to those with disabilities and special needs.
  - e. All housing designed to M4(2) (accessible and adaptable dwellings) within Building Regulations is strongly encouraged to be designed to be ‘friendly’ to those with dementia and to those with disabilities and special needs.

- 6.9 Draft policies within the emerging Shropshire Local Plan are also seeking to influence the size of dwellings to ensure that they are better able to meet the needs of our communities. Draft policies are proposing that on sites of 5 or more dwellings:
- In locations where in the last 5 years a Local Housing Need Survey has been undertaken through the 'Right Home Right Place' initiative or an equivalent survey endorsed by Shropshire Council, at least 50% of open market dwellings will reflect the profile of housing need established within the survey. The remainder of the open market dwellings will include a suitable mix and variety of dwelling sizes; or
  - At least 25% of open market dwellings will be dwellings with 2 bedrooms or less. At least a further 25% of open market housing will be dwellings with 3 bedrooms or less. The remainder of the open market dwellings will include a suitable mix and variety of dwelling sizes.
- 6.10 The emerging Shropshire Local plan also proposes further policy requirements to ensure that affordable housing provided best meets local need. These requirements include: Recognition of the significant need for affordable rent products, with the expected tenure split of affordable housing provision proposed to be 70% social or affordable rent and 30% intermediate or other affordable housing (unless evidence of local needs indicates otherwise). Collaborative working and coproduction with the Council and registered providers will be the key in the delivery of developments.
- 6.11 A Council initiative is the House2Home scheme, a multi-agency, multi-option process for households requiring specialist accommodation, that is not likely to be readily available within the current housing stock in Shropshire and is an effective way of matching accessible homes with people needing "accessible" housing. This initiative demonstrates an integrated approach across services, Housing Options, Occupational Therapist Team, Private Sector Housing and the Housing Enablement Team.
- 6.12 The Council recognises that many people have specific needs that make it difficult for them to live comfortably in their current property, and they require a wheelchair accessible home that is more suited to their individual needs. If specialist accommodation (accommodation that may not be often available via Shropshire HomePoint<sup>8</sup>) is required, then this may be referred into the House2Home Team through either service:
- An occupational therapist has assessed the property as not being suitable for the household's needs, where the current property is not able to be adapted; or
  - the Housing Options Team have identified that a homeless applicant requires specialist accommodation due to type (e.g., wheelchair accessible) or size of property (e.g., 5 bedrooms).
- 6.13 The Council's Housing Enablement Team proactively works with social services and wider housing services in order to identify households with specialist housing needs in Shropshire. This informs subsequent direct engagement with Registered Social Landlord's that are bringing forward schemes in appropriate locations thereby

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<sup>8</sup> [Home - Shropshire Homepoint](#)

providing a tailored response to meet the specialist housing needs of Shropshire residents.

6.14 The Council recognises that there is a need to plan strategically to ensure that supply aligns with the current and future supported housing needs of vulnerable people in Shropshire. To plan effectively and assess the current and future needs to all client groups, the Council will ensure joined up working between teams, for example housing, public health commissioners and adult social care, local integrated care board (ICB) commissioners and other local partners.

6.15 The Council will continue to take a proactive role in identifying suitable sites that can make the development process for supported housing easier for housing providers. In some circumstances this needs to include nil or low-cost sites but also recognises that an enhanced strategic forecasting approach of specialist housing needs will facilitate the commissioning of new schemes from Registered Providers and Shropshire Towns and Rural Housing.

Priorities for Action:

- Explore the viability of implementing a training programme to equip staff as trusted assessors. Trusted assessors would assess people and their home environment for home adaptations in simple cases and appropriately identify cases to refer to an occupational therapist for further assessment.
- Adopt the emerging Shropshire Local Plan

## 7 Specialist Accommodation

7.1 Supported and Specialist housing has a vital role in supporting people who are vulnerable, including those affected by age, ill health, disability, or challenging circumstances, because it provides them with tailored assistance and a suitable environment that enables independent living.

7.2 Reflecting the People Plan (People Directorate Strategic Plan), and the principle of supporting people to remain independent within their own homes and within their existing communities and support networks for as long as possible, new specialist housing provision for older people or those with disabilities and special needs will consist of:

- a. The forms of specialist housing which support independent living, including age restricted housing; retirement/sheltered housing; or extra care housing; or
- b. Nursing homes providing high-level care for those with dementia and/or complex needs; or
- c. A combination of the above.

7.3 The following table provides further information on the various forms of specialist housing:

<b>Age restricted general market housing</b>	This type of housing is generally for people aged 55 and over and older active people. It may include some shared amenities such as communal gardens but does include support or care services (Typically C3 planning designation).
<b>Retirement living or sheltered housing</b>	This usually consists of purpose-built flats or bungalows with limited communal facilities such as a lounge, laundry room and guest room. It does not generally provide care services but provides some support to enable residents to live independently. This can include 24-hour on-site assistance (alarm) and a warden or house manager. (Typically, C2 or C3 or sui generis planning designation, determined on an individual basis having regard to the specifics of a scheme, including individual properties/units are used).
<b>Extra care housing or housing-with-care</b>	This usually consists of purpose built or adapted flats or bungalows with a medium to high level of care available if required, through an onsite care agency registered through the Care Quality Commission (CQC). Residents are able to live independently with 24-hour access to support services and staff and meals are also available. There are often extensive communal areas, such as space to socialise or a wellbeing centre. In some cases, these developments are known as retirement communities or villages - the intention is for residents to benefit from varying levels of care as time progresses. (Typically, C2 or C3 or sui generis planning designation, determined on an individual basis having regard to the specifics of the scheme, including how individual properties/units are used. Typically applies minimum care packages on entry and a deferred management charge).
<b>Age inclusive market housing</b>	Purpose built, age friendly homes with no on-site facilities and no 24-hour staffing but accessible or adaptable dwellings to accommodate individual's changing or future occupiers needs. Residents may be eligible for personal care or self-fund their care separately. (Typically, C3 planning designation).
<b>Collaborative forms of housing</b>	Shared lives accommodation, supported living collaborative self-help housing and care models, cohousing and community-led accommodation. Residents may be eligible for personal care or self-fund their care separately. (Typically, C3 planning designation).

7.4 In terms of delivering new specialist housing as part of inclusive communities, local planning policy and decision making is a crucial way to shape places and deliver what is needed. The mechanisms within the adopted Local Plan and emerging Shropshire Local Plan support the provision of various forms of specialist housing in appropriate locations.

7.5 Within the adopted Local Plan, policies support “the provision of housing for vulnerable people and specialist housing provision, including nursing homes, residential and extra care facilities, in appropriate locations and where there is an identified need.”

7.6 A vulnerable person, as defined within the Independent Living and Specialist Accommodation Strategy, refers to an individual identified as having complex needs and/or requiring additional support to enable them to access services and support.



- 7.7 The emerging Shropshire Local Plan is proposing an even greater focus on the delivery of various forms of specialist housing within appropriate locations that will support the achievement of inclusive and multi-generational communities. Specifically, the emerging Shropshire Local Plan includes draft policies which:
- a. Prioritise the delivery of forms of specialist housing that support independent living, aligned with the priorities in the People Plan (People Directorate Strategic Plan).
  - b. Require specialist housing to be integrated into communities with good access to services and facilities.
  - c. Seek to 'protect' existing specialist housing provision.
  - d. Identify expectations for specialist housing provision within larger development schemes, specifically:
    - i. On developments of 250 or more dwellings, at least 20% of houses must constitute a form of specialist housing for older people and/or those with disabilities and special needs.
    - ii. On developments of 150-249 dwellings, at least 15% of houses must constitute a form of specialist housing for older people and/or those with disabilities and special needs.
    - iii. On developments of 50-149 dwellings, at least 10% of houses must constitute a form of specialist housing for older people and/or those with disabilities and special needs.
  - e. Identify other opportunities for specialist housing provision, including:
    - i. On appropriate sites within the identified settlement development boundaries.
    - ii. Adjoining settlement development boundaries where the specialist housing is meeting an identified local need and constitutes 100% local needs affordable specialist housing.
    - iii. Where the specialist housing represents Use Class C2 as a secondary use on employment sites, where such provision complements the existing and planned wider employment uses of the site; is served by appropriate infrastructure; and facilitates the delivery of the wider employment site, including through the provision of accesses, servicing and other infrastructure.

Priority of Action:

- The Council will continue to bid and secure funding to support specialist accommodation.

## 8 Private renting

- 8.1 The Council is committed to improving standards in private sector housing, ensuring accommodation is well-managed, properly maintained, safe and habitable. This strategy, in alignment with its objectives is the Council's [Private Rented Sector Housing Enforcement Policy](#), forms a robust framework for overseeing and upholding standards, promoting compliance, and providing essential safeguards and support for

vulnerable individuals covered and enhancing the strategy by addressing housing concerns.

- 8.2 It is estimated that only 17.5% of housing stock in Shropshire is for private rent as compared to the England average of 20.5% (2021 Census). Much of which is not affordable to residents on low incomes, especially as rents are often above the Local Housing Allowance levels. Despite this statistic, the private rented sector plays an important role in the county's housing market.

## 9 Allocations and nominations to affordable and supported housing

- 9.1 There are over 33 private registered providers operating in the Shropshire Council area, these being housing associations and for-profit housing providers who are registered with the Regulator of Social Housing that manage housing stock for rent and low-cost home ownership in Shropshire. As a stock holding authority, whose housing stock is managed by Shropshire Towns and Rural Housing (STAR), the Council is a local authority registered providers and owns just over 4,000 dwellings. Housing associations registered with the Regulator of Social Housing hold just over 16,000 dwellings in Shropshire (Figure 1).

**Figure 1: Social Housing Stock in Shropshire**

Type and tenure of affordable housing	Number
General needs rented dwellings	16,480
Supported housing rented units	473
Older persons' rented dwellings	2099
Low-Cost Home Ownership dwellings	1088
<b>Total</b>	<b>20,140</b>

**Source: Registered Providers of social housing with stock in Shropshire (2023).**

- 9.2 Affordable housing in Shropshire comprises just over 20,000 dwellings. Circa 19,000 of these are for social or affordable rent; this equates to approximately 13% of the Shropshire's dwelling stock, below the England average of 16%<sup>9</sup>.
- 9.3 The Council has recently revised its [Allocations Policy and Scheme](#) (*Shropshire HomePoint*), incorporating a new banding system (*band 1-7*), implemented on 25<sup>th</sup> July 2023. This transition to this revised policy reflects the Council's commitment to ensuring a fair and updated allocation process to better meet the housing needs of our communities. As of January 2024, the Council's Housing register listed 6,843 applicants on the choice-based lettings scheme<sup>10</sup> waiting list (*an increase of 161 applicants registered on 1<sup>st</sup> December 2023 and an increase of 1,063 applicants registered from 1<sup>st</sup> November 2023*).

<sup>9</sup> [Live tables on dwelling stock \(including vacants\) - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

<sup>10</sup> <https://www.shropshirehomepoint.co.uk/NovaWeb/Infrastructure/ViewLibraryDocument.aspx?ObjectID=604>



- 9.4 A financial assessment will consider the applicant's resources alongside the availability and cost of suitable alternative accommodation. Applicants demonstrating unmet needs not fulfilled in the open market will be evaluated based on their unique circumstances. Examples include:
- an applicant who is eligible for a Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG) to fund major adaptations to their existing home, where it is more cost-effective for the authority to re-house the applicant in accommodation appropriate to their housing need;
  - an older person is committed to paying for care or support costs in order to remain living independently; and
  - an applicant who requires specific accommodation to meet their housing needs, for example, the needs of disabled dependent children, but this accommodation is not available in the private sector, other than that provided by STAR Housing or a housing association.
- 9.5 The housing allocation policy and scheme seeks to ensure that those in the greatest housing need are able to access general needs, supported and low-cost home ownership housing; and supports the prevention of homelessness and admissions to residential care and meet the following aims:
- Ensure people in the greatest housing need have the greatest opportunity to access suitable housing that best meets their needs;
  - To prevent and relieve homelessness;
  - To make the best use of the Council's and housing associations stock;
  - To help the Council meet statutory and strategic aims;
  - To help contribute to the development of sustainable communities; and
  - To allow for the greatest degree of choice possible in the allocation of affordable housing.
- 9.6 It applies to the allocation of Council housing (managed by STAR Housing) and to nominations to Private Registered Providers of social housing (housing associations or for-profit housing companies registered with the Regulator of Social Housing) for affordable and supported housing. Nomination agreements are for 100% of new housing association lets and at least 75% of subsequent re-lets.
- 9.7 The Regulator of Social Housing's Tenancy Standard applies to Registered Providers of social housing. The Tenancy Standard states, "*Registered providers shall co-operate with local authorities' strategic housing function, and their duties to meet identified local housing needs. This includes assistance with local authorities' homelessness duties, and through meeting obligations in nominations agreements*".
- 9.8 As required under the Localism Act 2011<sup>11</sup>, The Council's [Tenancy Strategy](#) seeks to support the [Housing Strategy](#) to ensure sustainable communities and that affordable housing is genuinely affordable to local people in housing need.
- 9.9 During 2022-23, the largest landlords in the authority, who together own just under 19,000 dwellings for social or affordable rent, built or acquired 324 dwellings and

<sup>11</sup> Localism Act 2011 <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2011/20/contents/enacted>

allocated 1050 new and existing dwellings through the Council's common housing register.

- 9.10 By tracking the implementation of the priorities of action, the Council can help to meet the needs of specialist accommodation, proactively addressing gaps and adapting strategies to ensure that the needs of residents, especially those requiring specialist accommodation are met in a comprehensive and inclusive manner.

Priorities for Action:

- Monitor the Housing Allocations Policy and Scheme and Nomination Agreements
- Monitor the Tenancy Strategy and Tenancy Policy

## 10 Homelessness

- 10.1 Broadly speaking, the law defines someone as being homeless if they do not have a legal right to occupy accommodation, or if their accommodation is unsuitable to live in. The Housing Act 1996<sup>12</sup>, as amended by the Homelessness Act 2002<sup>13</sup> and the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017<sup>14</sup>, sets out the duties that the Council has towards individuals who are homeless or at risk of homelessness.

- 10.2 Part 7 of the Housing Act 1996 provides the statutory under-pinning for action to prevent homelessness and provide assistance to people threatened with or actually homeless.

- 10.3 In 2002, central government amended the homelessness legislation through the Homelessness Act 2002 and the Homelessness (Priority Need for Accommodation) (England) Order 2002 to:

- ensure a more strategic approach to tackling and preventing homelessness, in particular by requiring a homelessness strategy for every housing authority district; and
- strengthen the assistance available to people who are homeless or threatened with homelessness by extending the priority need categories to homeless 16 and 17 year olds; care leavers aged 18, 19 and 20; people who are vulnerable as a result of time spent in care, the armed forces, prison or custody, and people who are vulnerable because they have fled their home because of violence.

- 10.4 The Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 significantly reformed England's homelessness legislation by placing duties on local authorities to intervene at earlier stages to prevent homelessness in their areas. It also requires housing authorities to provide homelessness services to all those affected, not just those who have 'priority need.' These include:

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<sup>12</sup> Housing Act 1996, <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1996/52/contents>

<sup>13</sup> Homelessness Act 2002, <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2002/7/contents>

<sup>14</sup> Homelessness Reduction Act 2017, <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2017/13/contents/enacted>

- an enhanced prevention duty extending the period a household is threatened with homelessness from 28 days to 56 days, meaning that housing authorities are required to work with people to prevent homelessness at an earlier stage; and
- a new duty for those who are already homeless so that housing authorities will support households for 56 days to relieve their homelessness by helping them to secure accommodation.

- 10.5 [The Domestic Abuse Act 2021](#) amended Part 7 of the 1996 Act to strengthen the support available to victims of domestic abuse. The Act extends priority need to all eligible victims of domestic abuse who are homeless as a result of being a victim of domestic abuse.
- 10.6 Under the Homelessness Act 2002, all housing authorities must have in place a homelessness strategy based on a review of all forms of homelessness in their area. The strategy must be renewed at least every five years. The strategy must set out the authority's plans for the prevention of homelessness and ensuring the availability of adequate accommodation and support for individuals at risk of homelessness or already experiencing it.
- 10.7 The National Housing Federation commissioned research<sup>15</sup> which identified were it not for supported housing, there would be an increase in core homelessness of around 41,000 people, with a further 30,000 people at significant risk of future homelessness (the cost to the public purse of long-term homelessness has been estimated at over £40,000 per person per year). It also highlighted that short term transitional supported housing is playing a key role in reducing and/or preventing higher risks of homelessness, such as rough sleeping.
- 10.8 Transitional Supported Housing<sup>16</sup> (TSH) provides supported accommodation to many of society's vulnerable populations (older people with support needs, people with learning and physical disabilities, people experiencing multiple vulnerabilities simultaneously – referred to as complex needs). It improves their life skills and social integration and has generally higher resident satisfaction than hospitalised care (Fakhoury et al., 2020). Transitional supported housing (TSH) accounts for 29 per cent of the overall supported housing sector outside provision for older people.
- 10.9 Complex needs may be described as difficult personal circumstances and/or life events that affect individuals. The following list of circumstances and events is intended to be illustrative rather than exhaustive: alcohol and/or drug dependency; bereavements; adopted from care or leaving care; indebtedness; divorcing or terminating a civil partnership; experiencing redundancy, retirement or unemployment; experiencing homelessness; leaving the armed forces; leaving hospital; people who are victims of crime including domestic violence; people with one or more of the nine national Protected Characteristics defined in the Equality Act 2010.

<sup>15</sup> [imogen-blood-research-into-the-supported-housing-sectors-impact-on-homelessness-prevention-health-and-wellbeing.pdf](#)

<sup>16</sup>Institute for Public Policy Research. (2020). *At a crossroads: The future of transitional supported housing*. [Online]. IPPR The Progressive Think Tank. Last Updated: October 2020. Available at: [At a crossroads: The future of transitional supported housing | IPPR](#).

- 10.10 The Homeless Review will identify gaps in service provision, for example, the need for additional supported housing schemes for people with mental ill health, people with drug and alcohol dependency and young people transitioning from care. The overarching goal is to prevent homelessness by providing the necessary supported accommodations through approaches like repurposing, redesigning, or constructing new facilities.
- 10.11 The Council is currently reviewing its Homelessness Strategy, with the key objective on preventing homelessness. The initial step involves a comprehensive review. Additionally, the revised Allocations Policy aims to give priority to homeless applicants, particularly those in emergency temporary accommodation, with the goal of preventing homelessness.
- 10.12 The Council is to prepare a comprehensive actionable Affordable and Intermediate Housing Options Strategy to address the pressing issue of housing affordability. This strategy will offer diverse housing choices tailored for residents facing affordability challenges, including access to open market housing to meet their needs, low-cost home ownership, social and affordable housing for rent and sub-market private rented accommodation.
- 10.13 The Council's Homelessness Strategy is currently being reviewed; it will have an emphasis on homelessness prevention. Homeless prevention includes increasing both the supply of and access to social and supported housing which is genuinely affordable and has security of tenure.

#### Priorities for Action

- Produce an Affordable and Intermediate Housing Options Strategy
- Produce a revised Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy

## 11 Homeless households with support needs

- 11.1 The term 'homelessness' is often understood as meaning sleeping rough on the streets, but homelessness can take many forms. People who are homeless can be living in emergency or temporary hostels and shelters, in insecure accommodation with friends and family, squatting, sharing with strangers, or living in unsuitable conditions including overcrowding.
- 11.2 There are considered to be four forms of homelessness<sup>17</sup>. A person might experience only one of these forms, but could encounter some or all of them:
- statutory homelessness – persons owed a duty by a local housing authority.
  - single homelessness – persons living in supported housing (including hostels, refuges and also supported lodgings), usually commissioned by a local authority.
  - street homelessness – persons sleeping rough, places not designed for habitation.
  - hidden homelessness – persons accommodated in insecure arrangements often with relatives or friends, but just as often with people not previously known to them.
- 11.3 During 2022-2023, 381 households were initially assessed as threatened with homeless and owed the prevention duty and 959 households were initially assessed as threatened with homeless and owed the relief duty.
- 11.4 As can be seen from Figure 2, of the 477 households accepted as owed the main homeless duty<sup>18</sup> in 2022/2023, 285 (59.57 %) vulnerable, single person households of working age, a percentage increase of approximately 50.79% on the period 2021/2022 (when 189 were vulnerable, single person households of working age). The main reasons for households being accepted as statutorily homeless were because a household had dependent children and single persons of working age being vulnerable due to a physical disability / ill health or mental ill health. This level of need is high compared to other similar local authorities and highlights that there is a need for additional supported accommodation for vulnerable single persons so as to prevent homelessness.

<sup>17</sup> Suzanne Fitzpatrick (2005), 'Explaining homelessness: a critical realistic perspective', *Housing & Society*, 22(1): pp.1-17

<sup>18</sup> Households were accepted as being owed the main homelessness duty of settled accommodation, due to them being found eligible for assistance, not intentionally homeless, in priority need and having a local connection.

**Figure 2: Households accepted as owed the main homelessness duty by priority need 2022/2023.**

Priority need	No.	%
Applicant is/ household includes a pregnant woman	17	4%
Applicant is care leaver and aged 18 to 20 years	7	1%
Drug dependency	1	0%
Former asylum seeker	2	0%
Homeless because of fire, flood or other emergency	2	0%
Household includes dependent children	163	34%
Vulnerable as a care leaver 21+	1	0%
Vulnerable as been in custody or on remand	1	0%
Vulnerable as fled home because of violence/threat of violence (domestic abuse)	60	13%
Vulnerable as fled homes because of violence/threat of violence (not domestic abuse)	10	2%
Vulnerable as a result of learning difficulty	7	1%
Vulnerable as a result of mental health problems	88	18%
Vulnerable as a result of old age	13	3%
Vulnerable as a result of physical disability / ill health	88	18%
Vulnerable for other special reasons	17	4%
<b>Total acceptances</b>	<b>477</b>	

\*Figures for the financial year 2022/2023 have been subject to rounding up

- 11.5 The Council has a duty to provide interim (temporary) accommodation if, at any point during enquiries surrounding a homelessness application, there is a reason to believe that an applicant may be: homeless; eligible for assistance, and in priority need. Where an applicant is owed the main duty, this being an offer of settled accommodation, and is currently accommodated in temporary accommodation the Council has a duty to provide temporary accommodation until such time as the duty is ended, either by an offer of settled accommodation or for another specified reason.
- 11.6 Given that basis for accommodating households under the interim duty is because the Council has reason to believe that the household is eligible for assistance, homeless and in priority need; and where the main duty is owed, the Council has determined that the household is unintentionally homeless, eligible for assistance and in priority need, this means that single and couple households who are required to be accommodated will have been assessed as being vulnerable (the usual

reason for families with children being assessed as priority need is due to the presence of children).

- 11.7 Therefore, the provision of temporary accommodation under the interim duty must consider the needs of households. This means that accommodation provided for single people or couples will usually require some level of support and/or supervision. However, the shortage of such accommodation has resulted in high numbers of persons being accommodated under the Interim Duty in bed and breakfast, which is both inappropriate (unless as an emergency measure) and very costly to the Council.
- 11.8 The Council's Housing Enablement Teams are progressing a project to secure and apply funding to the provision of appropriate temporary accommodation to meet the needs of Shropshire households without housing, as an interim measure. This also supports households in their preparation and transitioning to independent living within appropriate affordable housing.
- 11.9 Since January 2022 the Council, in partnership with its Arm's Length Management Organisation (ALMO) Shropshire Towns and Rural Housing (STAR Housing), has also been progressing a programme to deliver temporary accommodation for single people. The programme comprises two strands: acquisition of dispersed self-contained units whereby the individual receives intensive housing management and floating support; and the acquisition / remodelling of existing accommodation to provide shared and self-contained supported housing schemes with on-site management and support.
- 11.10 Whilst these programmes are being delivered the Council is leasing suitable accommodation from a housing association and a private landlord to provide hostel style temporary accommodation. The Council also utilises a large number of its own dwellings, managed by STAR Housing, for temporary accommodation and is keen for housing associations to offer to provide temporary accommodation, so as to reduce the need to use bed and breakfast accommodation, except in emergencies.
- 11.11 In addition, it may be apparent that even if a household (or individual) is deemed to be owed the main duty (eligible for assistance, homeless, but unintentionally so, in priority need and has a local connection), and hence receive an offer of suitable settled accommodation, they may not be general needs "tenancy ready". In this instance, rather than "setting up someone to fail", it is good practice to re-house the person in supported "move-on" accommodation, still under the interim duty for up to two years. This is a hybrid version of the Housing First model as someone is provided with self-contained accommodation with "their own front door" and an intensive floating support package.
- 11.12 Moreover, it is important that sufficient supported accommodation, be this specific accommodation or general needs with floating support, is provided to vulnerable households to ensure that they do not end up in a cycle of homelessness, due to rent arrears or anti-social behaviour, but instead gain life skills and seek opportunities for training and employment.

- 11.13 As stated in section 10 the Council is currently reviewing its Homelessness Strategy. However, based on the evidence currently available, it is clear that the Council requires additional accommodation for single persons who are vulnerable due to mental or physical ill health and who are either at risk of homelessness or currently homeless.
- 11.14 Analysis of the housing register shows that there is need for such single person accommodation with on-site management and support primarily in Shrewsbury, followed by Oswestry and Bridgnorth. This needs to be for a range of circumstances – short term temporary accommodation, longer-term move-on and in some cases a more permanent offer.
- 11.15 It is recognised good practice for the local authority to follow a pathway approach and complements the Housing-Led Housing First model<sup>19</sup> and supported accommodation by recognising that individuals experiencing homelessness have unique needs. It involves tailoring services and support to individuals' specific circumstances.
- 11.16 The Council faces the challenge of insufficient supportive accommodation hindering the effective implementation of the pathway approach. Limited suitable housing constrains the housing-led housing first model, making the immediate and permanent solutions for homelessness challenging. To succeed, it's vital to address supported accommodation shortages. There is a need for dispersed self-contained units in market towns across Shropshire, providing temporary, move-on and settled accommodation for vulnerable persons, whereby occupants can be provided with floating support, the intensity of which depends on need.

Priorities for Action:

- Deliver supported housing schemes with 24/7 management and support for single vulnerable people, who are homeless or at risk of homelessness or rough sleeping, in Shrewsbury, Oswestry and Bridgnorth.
- Deliver additional dispersed housing-led housing first accommodation for single vulnerable people who are at risk of homelessness or rough sleeping.

## 12 Addressing Diverse Housing Needs and Prioritising Actions

### 12.1 Rough sleeping

- 12.2 Although it is a misconception that all homeless households are rough sleepers, rough sleeping is the most visible form of homelessness. Rough sleeping is defined by people sleeping in the open air or in buildings or place not designed for habitation. The causes of rough sleeping are usually a combination of structural, for example, lack of affordable housing or unemployment; and individual, for example, mental ill health, experience of violence, abuse and neglect, trauma, drug and alcohol problems, relationship breakdown or experience of care or prison.

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<sup>19</sup> [Housing First | Homeless Link](#)



- 12.3 People who experience rough sleeping over a long period, are more likely to die young than the general population. Rough sleepers also experience some of the most severe health inequalities. Often rough sleepers have a co-occurring mental ill health and substance misuse needs, physical health needs and have also experienced trauma.
- 12.4 The Council has a Rough Sleeper team and operates a small hostel for rough sleepers in Shrewsbury. It is important to note that this accommodation does not function as a direct access hostel or a day centre and provides a targeted approach to address the specific needs of rough sleepers and contributes to addressing homelessness in the community. The Rough sleeping snapshot<sup>20</sup>, autumn 2022 estimated 16 rough sleepers, the previous autumn there were estimated to be 21 rough sleepers (The Rough sleeping snapshot in England: autumn 2023 will be provisionally released in February 2024). Although rough sleepers are predominantly found in Shrewsbury, rough sleeping is evidenced in other market towns across the county.
- 12.5 Although most rough sleepers want the opportunity to be given temporary and settled accommodation, it is harder to persuade entrenched rough sleepers to move into a hostel or other supported housing. As highlighted in both section 10 and section 11, by providing a range of housing options for vulnerable single people either homeless or at risk of homelessness or rough sleeping then this will assist in preventing and reducing rough sleeping.

### 13 Older People's Housing Needs

- 13.1 The UK's population is undergoing a massive age shift. There are over 11 million people aged 65 and in ten years' time this will have increased to 13 million people, 22% of the population<sup>21</sup>.
- 13.2 The government introduced the Older People's Housing Taskforce<sup>22</sup> in May 2023 and is dedicated to enhancing housing options for older individuals in the UK. The taskforce will present final recommendations to the Department of Levelling Up Housing and Communities (DLUHC) and the Department of Health and Social Care to respond to this shifting age demographic.
- 13.3 It is estimated that approximately 87,300 older people, defined as individuals aged 65 and over, currently reside in Shropshire, this is projected to rise by approximately 42.75% to 124,600 by 2040 (figure 3). These demographic shifts highlight the critical need for strategic policies that address the evolving requirements of our ageing population, particularly as Shropshire has a larger population of older people compared to national levels.

<sup>20</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/rough-sleeping-snapshot-in-england-autumn-2022/rough-sleeping-snapshot-in-england-autumn-2022#rough-sleeping-snapshot>

<sup>21</sup> Centre for Ageing Better [Centre for Ageing Better | Action today for all our tomorrows \(ageing-better.org.uk\)](https://www.ageing-better.org.uk/)

<sup>22</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/groups/older-peoples-housing-taskforce>

**Figure 3: Population in Shropshire aged 65 and over, projected to 2040**

	<b>2023</b>	<b>2025</b>	<b>2030</b>	<b>2035</b>	<b>2040</b>
People aged 65-69	22,500	23,900	28,900	30,100	27,900
People aged 70-74	21,100	21,200	23,600	28,600	29,800
People aged 75-79	19,700	20,300	19,700	22,000	26,700
People aged 80-84	12,400	13,800	17,300	16,900	19,100
People aged 85-89	7,400	8,000	9,900	12,500	12,400
People aged 90 and over	4,200	4,400	5,300	6,700	8,700
<b>Total population 65 and over</b>	<b>87,300</b>	<b>91,600</b>	<b>104,700</b>	<b>116,800</b>	<b>124,600</b>

Source: Projecting Older People Population Information System (POPPI)<sup>23</sup>

- 13.4 The ageing population will change the demand for housing. It is likely that more adaptable and specialist housing will be needed<sup>24</sup>. Homes have a great potential as places of healthcare and with the use of aids and adaptations, can reduce spending and demand on health and care services. Supporting the adaptations of the existing housing stock is critical and requires homes that support technologies that are safe, accessible and adaptable. The principles that relate to the use of technology should be person- centric, preventative, choice led and compatible.
- 13.5 Based on the data presented in Age UK's September briefing paper titled 'Facts and Figures about digital inclusion and older people'<sup>25</sup> in 2022, it suggests that older people are open to embracing assistive technology, indicated by the significant number of them engaging with the internet:
- 90% of people aged 65 to 74 years and over in the UK had used the internet within the last 3 months and:
  - 66% of people aged 75 and over in the UK had used the internet in the last 3 months.
- 13.6 Building suitable new homes is equally important, so that older people can move to a more appropriately sized home or to alternative accommodation which forms part of the general housing stock designed to be accessible/adaptable or wheelchair friendly, in addition to bungalows. The adopted and emerging Local Plan supports the need to future-proof housing supply and is an essential element in delivering homes that meet a wide range of needs.

<sup>23</sup> Figures are taken from Office for National Statistics (ONS) subnational population projections by persons, males and females, by single year of age. The latest subnational population projections available for England, published 24 March 2020, are full 2018-based and project forward the population from 2018 to 2043. The assumptions used in the subnational population projections are based on past trends. They show what the population will be if recent trends continue.

<sup>24</sup> [future-of-an-ageing-population.pdf \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://www.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/90444/future-of-an-ageing-population.pdf)

<sup>25</sup> [policy-briefing---facts-and-figures-about-digital-inclusion-and-older-people.pdf \(ageuk.org.uk\)](https://ageuk.org.uk/policy-briefing---facts-and-figures-about-digital-inclusion-and-older-people.pdf)

- 13.7 The National Planning Practice Guidance on Housing for Older People recognises that there is a significant amount of variability in the types of specialist accommodation for older people, identifying four main categories which can be summarised as:
- a. Age-restricted general market housing;
  - b. Retirement living or sheltered housing;
  - c. Extra care housing or housing-with-care; and
  - d. Residential care homes and nursing homes”
- 13.8 Building upon the foundation laid by the [Housing Strategy 2020-2025](#), with its six objectives aimed to ensuring people can access a diverse range of housing options tailored to Shropshire’s urban and rural landscape, encompassing factors such as tenure, safety, size, type, design and location and its emphasis on independence and supporting people in their homes; the Independent Living and Specialist Accommodation Strategy acknowledges that there are situations where specialist accommodation becomes a valuable and necessary component in our approach.
- 13.9 This approach ensures that individuals do not transition directly from their homes to more costly residential nursing care. Instead, it offers a considerate alternative, allowing people to incorporate specialist accommodation into their overall care package or life plan. The availability of these options offers individuals a choice, maintaining dignity and quality of life even when home based living becomes challenging. In the broader context of promoting independence, specialist accommodation plays an important role, offering diverse alternatives and comprehensive support. It is essential to note that this approach includes existing homes with adaptations and new general needs homes that can be easily modified.
- 13.10 Moving to specialist retirement housing can improve quality of life, promoting physical health and social well-being. For instance, individuals may opt for properties on a single level or choose sheltered or retirement housing options. This type of housing preserves individual’s independence by providing them with their own front door, bathroom living room and kitchen. This enables them to access their homes and maintain independence within their communities., fostering a sense of security and well-being among residents.
- 13.11 However, it is important that older people can choose whether to move or not. It is equally important that older people who prefer to remain living in mixed-age housing and communities are able to do so (whether in their existing housing or in alternative mainstream housing). Older people contribute to society and want to feel valued members of their local communities; many do not want to move into retirement housing because they do not feel ‘old’ and this applies regardless of people’s actual age. The [Strategic Housing Market Assessment Report: Part 2](#)<sup>26</sup> projects that over the Local Plan period, to maintain existing prevalence rates, this being the ratio of specialist housing to older people, there will be a need for around an additional 3,500 specialist older persons accommodation units and around 2,500 additional units of residential care provision.

<sup>26</sup> <https://www.shropshire.gov.uk/media/16206/shma-part-2-2020-strategic-housing-market-assessment-part-2.pdf>, page 90.

- 13.12 Given these projections and the significant growth in older households in Shropshire projected to occur over the emerging Local Plan period (which runs to 2038), it is considered appropriate to ensure that larger development sites include specialist housing designed to meet the diverse needs of older people, whilst also providing flexibility about types and levels of such accommodation to respond to site specific circumstances.
- 13.13 The Council continues to engage with Registered Social Landlords (Housing associations) to secure the provision of extra-care facilities to meet older people's housing needs. This approach addresses the County's demographic challenges and offers affordable, tailored solutions for older people. Extra Care housing (also known as assistive living) offers more support than sheltered accommodation and emulates as far as possible the conditions of remaining at home. Crucially informal carers can continue to care and spouses can remain together<sup>27</sup>.
- 13.14 There are a number of measures that can be provided to older people in their own homes to enable independent living and prevent / delay the need for domiciliary care packages. These include:
- the provision of aids and adaptations;
  - assistive technology, including community alarms, telecare and telehealth;
  - falls prevention service;
  - handy person schemes;
  - accredited / trusted contractor schemes;
  - energy efficiency measures; and
  - initiatives to reduce loneliness.
- 13.15 Shropshire Council's [Shropshire Choices Support Finder 2023](#) for Adult Care and Support Services, offers a wide range of advice and support to help people make the right choice to help retain their independence and stay well. The directory covers a wide range of topics.
- 13.16 The Council and NHS provide aids and minor and major adaptations, the Council's policy is set out in its Private Housing Assistance Policy and the Council operates a handy person scheme. The Council's Arm's Length Management Organisation (ALMO) Shropshire Towns and Rural Housing provides a community alarm service which is open to all households in Shropshire. Consideration should be given to mainstream housing that is designed to be adaptable to better suit the changing needs of people in later life.
- 13.17 The [Joint Strategic Needs Assessment \(JSNA\)](#) relating to aging well in Shropshire specifically mentions that falls are the largest cause of emergency hospital admissions for older people, and significantly impact on long term outcomes, e.g.,

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<sup>27</sup> [www.ipc.brookes.ac.uk](http://www.ipc.brookes.ac.uk)

being a major precipitant of people moving from their own home to long-term nursing or residential care. The highest risk of falls is in those aged 65 and above and it is estimated that about 30% people (2.5 million) aged 65 and above living at home and about 50% of people aged 80 and above living at home or in residential care will experience an episode of fall at least once a year.

- 13.18 The Council's current commissioning services include a postural stability 20-week community course provided by Energize<sup>28</sup> and links with the hospital inpatient falls team, Shropcom Falls Therapy Team, receive referrals from allied health professionals, self-referrals and social prescribers. The Falls Therapy Service<sup>29</sup> (Shropshire Community Health NHS Trust) is a specialist service aiming to reduce the number of falls and fall-related injuries. It is made up of physiotherapists, an occupational therapist, a nurse and rehabilitation technicians.
- 13.19 According to Jon Rouse, director general at the Department of Health<sup>30</sup>: "The challenge facing health and care organisations is huge. New ways of working are needed and there is no better time for housing professionals to engage with health and care decision makers. Housing professionals can make it easy for local decision makers by identifying the housing and housing services that can deliver the health and care outcomes required.
- 13.20 Wider engagement with housing stakeholders and partners, fostering collaboration, will undoubtedly strengthen our existing fall prevention schemes. By encouraging open dialogue and cooperation among various stakeholders, we can tap into a wealth of knowledge and experience, leading to more effective strategies and initiatives. By pooling resources and ideas, we can enhance services and create a vibrant and interconnected support system that benefits everyone involved. When reconsidering and recommissioning services, housing stakeholders hold a significant position, leveraging their expertise and insights to shape the future of fall prevention efforts. Involvement can lead to innovative solutions and stronger, more secure environment for those at risk of falls, ensuring a safer community for all.

### Older People Shared Ownership (OPSO)

- 13.21 Shared ownership for older people is a very different proposition from traditional shared ownership products. While still based on a part own, part-rent model, it is designed primarily to provide homes for those with existing housing equity (unlike for first time buyers) but who cannot afford to move to a suitable home that meets their particular needs. Unlike conventional shared ownership, part of the shared ownership package for older people often also includes access to extra care and support if required.
- 13.22 Under the OPSO scheme shared owners who buy a 75 percent stake in their home do not have to pay rent on the remaining share. This makes the product affordable to more homeowners who wish to downsize and retain enough income to pay the ongoing service charges and any care costs if applicable.

<sup>28</sup> [Elevate strength and balance classes | Energize Shropshire, Telford & Wrekin \(energizestw.org.uk\)](https://www.energizeshropshire.co.uk/elevate-strength-and-balance-classes)

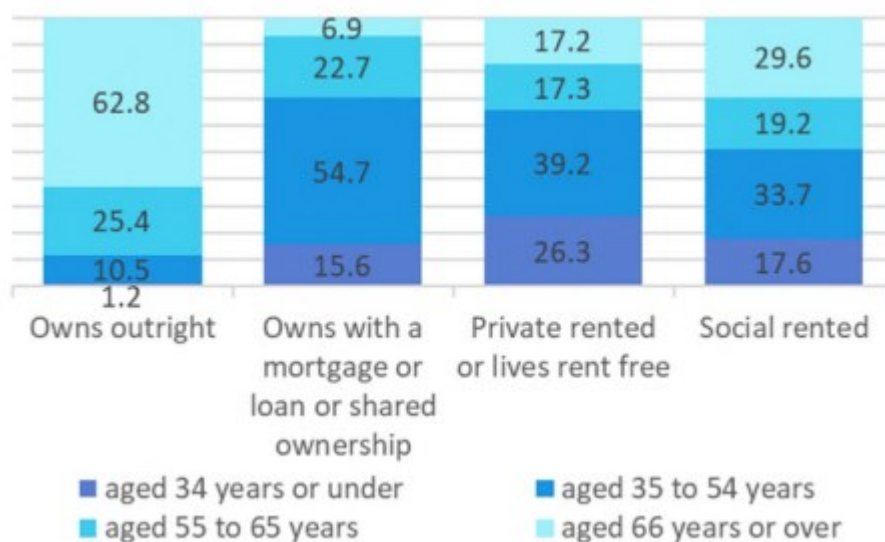
<sup>29</sup> <https://www.shropscommunityhealth.nhs.uk/falls-therapy>

<sup>30</sup> [Housing associations and the NHS: new thinking, new partnerships \(smith-institute.org.uk\)](https://www.smith-institute.org.uk/housing-associations-and-the-nhs-new-thinking-new-partnerships)



- 13.23 For many homeowners in areas where house prices are high there is little prospect of finding rented housing through local authority housing registers or choice-based letting schemes. It is also often a struggle to buy into existing open market schemes for older people, especially in high demand areas. There is a considerable unmet demand for good quality, affordable housing for older people and significant potential for a shared ownership product suitable for “squeezed middle” homeowners.

**Figure 4: Percentage of all households by tenure and age group of household reference person in Shropshire**



Source: [Census 2021 Tenure \(September 2023\)](#)

- 13.24 The Chartered Institute of Housing (CIH) stressed the importance of evidencing the scale of need and demand for older people’s housing, including shared ownership, to demonstrate the opportunities to investors. The CIH also noted the need for the regulatory framework and strategic approach to be clear at a national and local level to give confidence to potential investors.
- 13.25 It is important to consider additional retirement accommodation for rent and older persons’ shared ownership (OPSO) in Shropshire. This can include extra care sheltered housing but could also be a modern sheltered housing offer (sometimes called sheltered plus) with on-site management, an office for a care provider and a lounge, but without revenue costly communal facilities. The identified demand for these housing options is rooted in a comprehensive evaluation of both existing gaps and anticipated requirements, ensuring a strategic approach to address the evolving needs of the community effectively.

### Care homes

- 13.26 Many older people find the decision to move into a residential setting a very difficult one, but sometimes it is without doubt the right place for them to be, particularly if they are living with advanced dementia or other serious health conditions and it has become impossible to continue living in their own home. Shropshire has a significant

sized care market for a rural authority. There are 117 registered Care homes in Shropshire providing 3,485 CQC registered beds<sup>31</sup>.

- 13.27 Shropshire Council's policy to support people to remain in their own homes means that the rate of permanent admissions to residential and nursing care has fallen since 2016 and continues to fall. The Council commissions domiciliary care for around 1,500 people over 65 years of age primarily because of age related conditions or disability<sup>32</sup>.

#### Priority for Action

- Wider engagement with housing stakeholders and partners in the housing sector, working in partnership to integrate commissioning between social care, health and housing surrounding falls prevention.
- Promote the importance of open market house builders meeting the needs of older persons, for example, bungalows or age-restricted flats in intergeneration settings.
- Enable and support housing associations to deliver modern, aspirational, affordable age-restricted and retirement schemes for rent and LCHO which allow for flexibility of care and support provision as people age in place.

## 14 Vulnerable young people, including care leavers and fostered children

- 14.1 The majority of young people aged 16 to 25 live at home, in lodgings, or independently without requiring support. However, circumstances might necessitate mediation services for a return home. If this is unsuccessful or not applicable, suitable accommodation is needed, such as small schemes with on-site management and support services.
- 14.2 Life chances for young people who experience housing instability and homelessness are poor. They are less resilient to managing life changes, and more likely to make poor life choices as compared to young people who benefit from living in stable and supportive home environments. Young offenders are a particularly vulnerable group, often with complex needs including substance misuse and emotional and mental health issues.
- 14.3 It is important that young people leaving care and those who are vulnerable and homeless are not just provided with accommodation, but also with the necessary support in terms of life skills to maintain their tenancy (so as to prevent eviction due to rent arrears or anti-social behaviour). Help will also often be required with accessing education, training and employment.
- 14.4 In Shropshire, the existing provision for young people in need of supported housing remains significantly limited, with only two small schemes located in Oswestry and Ludlow. These schemes feature on-site management and support services,

<sup>31</sup> <https://www.shropshire.gov.uk/media/19245/market-position-statement-update-spring-summer-2021.pdf>

<sup>32</sup> <https://www.shropshire.gov.uk/media/19245/market-position-statement-update-spring-summer-2021.pdf>

collectively offering 26 bed spaces. However, it is crucial to note that our commitment to the Housing-Led Housing First model emphasises the need for a new scheme in Shrewsbury, also designed with on-site management and support. This need for an additional scheme aligns with our vision of providing stable housing to young individuals experiencing homelessness.

- 14.5 With respect to children in foster care, it is important that there are sufficient bedrooms as children become older, this can sometimes be an issue when a connected carer agrees to foster children. Rather than expecting the family to move or instead risk the foster care arrangements ending, another solution would be the offer of a grant or loan facility to fund extensions to existing homes of all tenures.

#### Priorities for Action:

- Deliver a supported housing scheme for care leavers and vulnerable young people in Shrewsbury based on a hub and spoke model<sup>33</sup> of support.
- Explore funding opportunities to facilitate extensions to foster carers' homes.

## 15 People with physical disabilities

- 15.1 The Local Plan recognises that appropriate accommodation is required by people with disabilities and special needs. As such it is also considered appropriate to ensure that larger development sites include specialist housing designed to meet the needs of people with disabilities or special needs, whilst also providing flexibility about types and levels of accommodation to respond to site specific circumstances.
- 15.2 When considering housing need and people with physical disabilities, it is often assumed that these needs relate to mobility problems, however, impaired vision, impaired hearing and other physical disabilities require housing to be accessible and safe, either through design or the provision of aids and adaptations, including assistive technology. There may also be interrelated needs such as around age, or less visible needs such as for those with Crohn's disease who need ready access to toilets.
- 15.3 The National Disability Strategy 2021 <sup>34</sup>states how many people wake up every morning in a home that is not adapted to their needs. The Strategy highlights how local authorities can provide aids and adaptations, social housing providers are able to access capital grant funding (including the Care and Support Specialised Housing Fund) and proposed future changes to improve accessibility in new build homes.
- 15.4 The concept of Lifetime Homes, whereby a dwelling was designed so it could be easily adapted as the occupier's needs changed, for example, installing a through floor lift or a wet room, is now broadly covered by the accessible and adaptable dwellings standard.
- 15.5 The Council's emerging Local Plan proposed to require all dwellings specifically designed for older people or those with disabilities or special needs to be built to the

<sup>33</sup> Hub and Spoke Model [Microsoft Word - A - A Hub and Spoke Model.doc \(housinglin.org.uk\)](https://www.housinglin.org.uk/microsites/hub-and-spoke-model)

<sup>34</sup> [National Disability Strategy \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://www.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/90211/national-disability-strategy-2021.pdf)



wheelchair user dwellings standard. In addition, on sites of five or more dwellings, it requires at least five per cent of the dwellings to be built to the wheelchair user dwellings standard and a further 70% of the dwellings to be built to the accessible and adaptable dwellings or higher standard, unless site-specific factors indicate that step-free access cannot be achieved, given:

- a. Government's aspirations to sustain people at home for as long as possible
- b. The projected growth in older households and the contribution that this growth makes to total household growth in Shropshire
- c. The higher prevalence of long-term health problems or disabilities amongst older people; and
- d. The identified need for standard dwellings to accommodate older households in Shropshire with a long-term health problem or disability that impacts on their housing needs over the Local Plan period.

15.6 Only nine housing associations dwellings are designated for people with physical disabilities. However, there will be a number of social housing dwellings which have been adapted and it is recognised good practice to have a register of adapted social housing dwellings.

**Figure 4: People living in Shropshire aged 18-64 predicted to have impaired mobility, by age, projected to 2040**

	2020	2025	2030	2035	2040
People aged 18-24	201	195	214	219	210
People aged 25-34	347	335	311	317	343
People aged 35-44	1,760	1,945	2,045	1,990	1,870
People aged 45-54	2,290	2,095	2,095	2,285	2,390
People aged 55-64	6,804	7,644	7,504	6,916	6,930
<b>Total population aged 18-64</b>	<b>11,402</b>	<b>12,214</b>	<b>12,169</b>	<b>11,727</b>	<b>11,743</b>

**Source: Projecting Adult Needs and Service Information System (PANSI)<sup>35</sup>**

15.7 "Valuing People", published in 2001 and "Valuing People Now", published in 2008, emphasised how people with learning disabilities are citizens and therefore, should have choices, including choices to live independently with their own front door. Following the Winterbourne Review, the Transforming Care programme<sup>36</sup> published in 2017 highlighted the need for people with learning disabilities and/or autism to be able to move from residential care and hospitals and live in the community and have the same opportunities as everyone else.

<sup>35</sup> <https://www.pansi.org.uk/> Figures are taken from Office for National Statistics (ONS) subnational population projections by persons, males and females, by single year of age. The latest subnational population projections available for England, published 24 March 2020, are full 2018-based and project forward the population from 2018 to 2043.

<sup>36</sup> <https://www.england.nhs.uk/wp-content/uploads/2017/02/model-service-spec-2017.pdf>

15.8 The “Building the Right Support for People with Learning Disability and Autistic People Action Plan”<sup>37</sup>, published in 2022 states that there should be the right housing, care and support available in the community so people with a learning disability and people with neurodiverse conditions such as autism can live the lives they choose. Good community provision supports people to live an independent and ordinary life through having a home building the Right Support for People with a Learning Disability and Autistic People and feeling involved in their local community, including through employment and having a reliable network of support. Furthermore, the Down Syndrome Act 2022<sup>38</sup> aims to make guidance about meeting the needs of persons with Down syndrome under the categories of the NHS, social care, housing and education and youth offending.

**Figure 5: People living in Shropshire aged 18-64 predicted to have a moderate or severe learning disability, and hence likely to be in receipt of services, by age**

	2020	2025	2030	2035	2040
People aged 18-24	127	124	137	141	135
People aged 25-34	186	179	166	170	184
People aged 35-44	218	242	256	250	236
People aged 45-54	241	222	226	249	262
People aged 55-64	240	267	260	240	243
<b>Total population aged 18-64</b>	<b>1,011</b>	<b>1,035</b>	<b>1,045</b>	<b>1,048</b>	<b>1,060</b>

**Source:** Projecting Adult Needs and Service Information System (PANSI)<sup>39</sup>

<sup>37</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/building-the-right-support-for-people-with-a-learning-disability-and-autistic-people>

<sup>38</sup> Down Syndrome Act 2022, <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2022/18/enacted>

<sup>39</sup> <https://www.pansi.org.uk/> These predictions are based on prevalence rates in a report by Eric Emerson and Chris Hatton of the Institute for Health Research, Lancaster University, entitled Estimating Future Need/Demand for Supports for Adults with Learning Disabilities in England, June 2004.

**Figure 6: People living in Shropshire aged 18-64 predicted to have a moderate or severe learning disability and be living with a parent, by age**

	2020	2025	2030	2035	2040
People aged 18-24	84	83	91	94	90
People aged 25-34	95	92	85	87	94
People aged 35-44	85	94	99	97	91
People aged 45-54	54	50	52	57	59
People aged 55-64	22	24	23	21	22
<b>Total population aged 18-64</b>	<b>341</b>	<b>343</b>	<b>350</b>	<b>355</b>	<b>357</b>

**Source:** Projecting Adult Needs and Service Information System (PANSI)<sup>40</sup>

15.9 Registered provider housing associations provide circa 70 self-contained dwellings and bed spaces across ten independent living schemes for people with learning disabilities; there is also a nine-unit scheme which provides accommodation for people with mental ill health and learning disabilities. Currently two additional housing association schemes are in development, with a further scheme being delivered by the Council.

15.10 The Council also supports people with learning disabilities and/or neurodiverse conditions such as autism in around 100 dwellings across Shropshire through nominations to housing associations, use of council housing and leasing arrangements with housing providers.

15.11 However, there remains a high level of housing need, not just for people wishing to be rehoused now, including young people transitioning to adulthood, but also for people living with older parents and carers who currently or may soon be unable to support a family member living at home (see Figures 5 and 6).

15.12 A comprehensive housing needs survey is proposed to include individuals with learning disabilities and /or neurodiverse conditions, beyond those registered with adult social care. To provide an overview of needs it is useful to understand the number of people with a learning disability only, the number with a neurodiverse condition only and the number with both. Until this survey is complete, the current accommodation needs identified represent the minimum requirement, as they are already known to the Council and actively engaging with adult social care services. The primary focus is avoiding an institutional environment, a goal achieved through diverse approaches across different developments.

15.13 There is a need for an independent living scheme in Shrewsbury which provides a mix of high level and medium level support, specifically focusing on providing

<sup>40</sup> <https://www.pansi.org.uk/> This table is based on a set of prevalence rates for adults with a learning disability living with a parent, established as a proportion of those known via learning disability registers (the administrative rate as established by Eric Emerson and Chris Hatton of the Institute for Health Research, Lancaster University, entitled Estimating Future Need/Demand for Supports for Adults with Learning Disabilities in England, June 2004).

supported housing for younger people with either severe or moderate learning disabilities and/or autism.

15.14 Over the next five years, there is a plan to assess the housing needs of individuals with learning disabilities and/or autism. Additionally, efforts will be made to increase awareness about the housing options, such as supported housing, housing with floating support, or home ownership.

15.15 Engagement can be through existing voluntary organisations that enable people to exercise more control over their living arrangements and the care and support they receive. The housing needs survey will be in an easy-to-read format questionnaire and an easy read housing options booklet will be produced.

Priorities for Action:

- Deliver a supported housing scheme for people with moderate and severe learning disabilities in Shrewsbury.
- Undertake a housing needs survey, using an easy read questionnaire, for people for with learning disabilities and/or autism.
- Produce an easy read housing options booklet.

## 16 People with mental ill health

16.1 It is a commonly stated statistic that one in four people will be suffering from mental ill health at any time. Housing and mental health are closely linked: mental ill health can make it more difficult to deal with housing problems; and living in inappropriate housing, facing homelessness or actually being homeless can exacerbate mental ill health.

**Figure 7: People living in Shropshire aged 18-64 predicted to have a mental health problem, by type, projected to 2040**

	2020	2025	2030	2035	2040
People aged 18-64 predicted to have a common mental disorder	34,799	35,591	35,702	35,673	35,929
People aged 18-64 predicted to have a borderline personality disorder	4,420	4,520	4,533	4,530	4,562
People aged 18-64 predicted to have an antisocial personality disorder	6,207	6,318	6,308	6,298	6,348
People aged 18-64 predicted to have psychotic disorder	1,292	1,319	1,321	1,320	1,329
People aged 18-64 predicted to have two or more psychiatric disorders	13,279	13,564	13,589	13,575	13,676

**Source: Projecting Adult Needs and Service Information System (PANSI)<sup>41</sup>**

<sup>41</sup> <https://www.pansi.org.uk/> This table is based on the report Adult Psychiatric Morbidity Survey: Survey of Mental Health and Wellbeing, England, 2014 (2016), NHS Digital.

- 16.2 Registered provider housing associations provide circa 28 self-contained dwellings and bed spaces across six independent living schemes for people with enduring mental health problems; as stated above, there is also a nine-unit scheme which provides accommodation for people with mental ill health and learning disabilities.
- 16.3 The Council also supports people with mental ill health in around seven dwellings across Shropshire through nominations to housing associations, use of council housing and leasing arrangements with housing providers.
- 16.4 As can be seen from figure 2, 18% of those households, this being 88, which were owed the main homelessness duty in 2022/2023 was due to their priority need being vulnerable because of mental health problems. As stated in section 11, there is a need for additional supported housing for vulnerable single people, both schemes with on-site management and support and dispersed accommodation with intensive floating support.

## 17 People with alcohol and substance dependency

- 17.1 Alcohol and substance misuse can result in people losing settled accommodation or not being able to access accommodation. Moreover, there is a strong correlation between homelessness, including rough sleeping, and drug and alcohol use, in particular people using drugs and alcohol to cope with trauma and associated mental ill health. There is also a link between drugs and alcohol and offending which can affect access to housing.

**Figure 8: Population living in Shropshire aged 18-64 predicted to be at higher risk of alcohol-related health problems, projected to 2040**

	2020	2025	2030	2035	2040
People aged 18-24	705	686	748	770	738
People aged 25-34	987	945	875	892	966
People aged 35-44	1,267	1,401	1,469	1,427	1,343
People aged 45-54	2,617	2,392	2,392	2,618	2,729
People aged 55-64	2,844	3,185	3,119	2,871	2,878
<b>Total population aged 18-64</b>	<b>8,420</b>	<b>8,609</b>	<b>8,602</b>	<b>8,577</b>	<b>8,654</b>

Source: Projecting Adult Needs and Service Information System (PANSI)<sup>42</sup>

<sup>42</sup> <https://www.pansi.org.uk>. Figures are taken from the Health Survey for England 2018.

**Figure 9: Population living in Shropshire aged 18-64 predicted to be dependent on drugs, projected to 2040**

	2020	2025	2030	2035	2040
People aged 18-24	1,695	1,653	1,801	1,857	1,780
People aged 25-34	1,766	1,689	1,563	1,593	1,726
People aged 35-44	1,144	1,265	1,326	1,288	1,213
People aged 45-54	749	684	684	749	781
People aged 55-64	510	571	558	514	515
<b>Total population aged 18-64</b>	<b>5,864</b>	<b>5,862</b>	<b>5,932</b>	<b>6,001</b>	<b>6,014</b>

**Source: Projecting Adult Needs and Service Information System (PANSI)<sup>43</sup>**

17.2 Shropshire Council received £1.4 million from the Rough Sleepers Drug and Alcohol Treatment Grant to address homelessness related deaths. The RESET team, formed in early 2023, comprises multiple agencies and focuses on holistic support for rough sleepers with substance misuse issues, including housing related assistance, currently assisting 60 individuals with substance dependency in Shropshire (correct as of 5th January 2024).

17.3 Often people who are found to be in priority need under homeless legislation on the grounds of mental or physical ill health will have alcohol or substance dependency. According to Office for National Statistics data, in 2021 almost two in five deaths (35%) of homeless people in England and Wales were related to drug poisoning, and almost 1 in 10 deaths (10%) of homeless people in England and Wales were alcohol-specific. Historically Rough sleepers may initially accept accommodation but struggle to maintain it. Providing appropriate supported housing, including on-site support or floating support is crucial for addiction recovery.

## 18 Domestic violence and abuse.

18.1 A person who is homeless as a result of being a victim of domestic abuse has a priority need under homelessness legislation (irrespective of vulnerability), therefore, the Council has a duty to provide temporary accommodation under the Interim Duty. In addition, local authority housing allocations policies cannot apply local connection qualification requirements to persons are moving from another local authority to escape domestic abuse.

18.2 The [Domestic Abuse Act 2021](#) requires Local Authority and Private Registered Providers of social housing to ensure that victims of domestic abuse who have a lifetime tenancy and have fled the social home to escape domestic abuse, retain their lifetime security of tenure if the landlord grants them a new tenancy for reasons connected with abuse.

<sup>43</sup> <https://www.pansi.org.uk>. Figures are taken from the Adult Psychiatric Morbidity Survey 2014.



- 18.3 Part 4 of the Domestic Abuse Act 2021 requires local authorities to set out how they will provide safe accommodation-based support. This includes undertaking a domestic abuse needs assessment and producing a domestic abuse safe accommodation strategy. The Council's [Domestic Abuse Safe-Accommodation Strategy Dec22.pdf](#) sets out not only to provide alternative forms of temporary move-on accommodation for victims of domestic abuse but to adopt a comprehensive Whole Housing Approach (Figure 10).

**Figure 10: Whole Housing Approach**



Source: Whole Housing Approach - DAHA - Domestic Abuse Housing Alliance<sup>44</sup>

- 18.4 The [Whole Housing Approach](#) is considered more suitable for individuals experiencing domestic violence because it offers a holistic support system that addresses not only housing but also the unique physical and emotional needs of survivors, ensuring a more comprehensive and tailored response to their circumstances, forms of accommodation include 24/7 supported accommodation and the Housing-Led Housing First model. The model considers not only immediate housing needs but also the availability of affordable housing, housing related support services and prevention efforts. In all areas of development, attention must be paid to all forms of housing. This includes sheltered and supported accommodation, to ensure responses in these settings are appropriate and safe, ensuring victims/survivors with additional, or care and support needs, are able to access appropriate housing.
- 18.5 Presently there is a female-only refuge located in the south of the county, which offers a limited capacity of 10 bed spaces and 7 spaces in units dispersed with intensive support around the county of which only two are designated for men. Additionally, there are five self-contained units situated in the north of the county, addressing specific needs, tailored to support single women with multiple disadvantages. The recognition of the existing resources underlines the necessity

<sup>44</sup> [Whole Housing Approach - daha - Domestic Abuse Housing Alliance \(dahalliance.org.uk\)](#)

for further expansion and enhancement of accommodation with intensive support. The introduction of a sanctuary scheme to safeguard individuals facing domestic abuse, designed to provide enhanced security and support victims who wish to remain in their own homes rather than move to a refuge will allow individuals to maintain their independence and connection to their communities and addresses the growing demands of individuals impacted by domestic abuse.

- 18.6 Strategically, it is crucial to acknowledge the existence of the Sanctuary scheme<sup>45</sup> within the context of the Independent Living and Specialist Accommodation Strategy by providing victims of domestic abuse with a secure haven within their own homes. By enhancing security measures (with a view to providing door braces, window locks etc.), this empowers survivors to maintain independence and stability, aligning seamlessly with the strategy's core objectives. This targeted support ensures a safe living environment and the scheme will focus on home-based security complementing the strategy's goals of self-sufficiency.
- 18.7 A Whole Housing Approach aims to for early identification, thus intervention, by landlords and other organisations across all housing tenures; reduce the number of people who are made homeless as a result of domestic abuse; and increase tenancy sustainment options so that people experiencing domestic abuse can remain safely in their home when it is their choice to do so or do not lose their tenancy status if they relocate.
- 18.8 In Figure 10, the green circles represent the main tenure types: social housing, the private rented sector, privately owned, supported/sheltered accommodation. Refuge Services are included in this as they offer a form of emergency accommodation accompanied support from a dedicated or specialist domestic abuse service. The white circles represent the housing options, initiatives and domestic abuse support offered to victim/survivors across the main tenure types.

#### Priorities for Action:

- Develop a Whole Housing approach to Domestic Abuse
- Deliver additional emergency and self-contained units of dispersed and move-on supported accommodation for victims and perpetrators of domestic abuse
- Achieve Domestic Abuse Housing Alliance (DAHA) accreditation.

## 19 Ex-offenders and those at risk of offending

- 19.1 Whilst it is recognised that settled and suitable housing can be the foundation of rehabilitation, resettlement and managing risk of offenders there are significant barriers for offenders in accessing stable accommodation. This can result in people rough sleeping and potentially re-offending.
- 19.2 Shropshire has a small, supported housing scheme for ex-offenders. However, it is important that additional accommodation options are available to rehouse ex-offenders and those persons at risk of offending. The priority to delivery supported accommodation for homeless single people and people at risk of homelessness will

<sup>45</sup> [Sanctuary schemes for households at risk of domestic violence: guide for agencies - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/674442/sanctuary-schemes-for-households-at-risk-of-domestic-violence-guide-for-agencies.pdf)



assist in meeting some need, however, in the longer-term access to suitable settled accommodation is required. A reducing reoffending protocol between the Council and social landlords linked to the revised allocations policy is currently being developed.

Priority of Action:

- Introduce reducing reoffending housing solutions protocol

## 20 Gypsies, Roma and Travellers

- 20.1 Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities experience, and are held back by some of the worst outcomes of any social group, across a wide range of social factors. Ensuring the provision of adequate accommodation for Gypsies and Travellers complete with effective management of sites and unauthorised encampments is an essential first step towards addressing other problems.
- 20.2 Shropshire Council owns and manages four authorised Gypsy and Traveller sites across the County, totalling 64 pitches. In addition, there are 33 authorised private sites and the Council leases a yard to a Travelling Showpersons family. Council records and a fieldwork survey has identified a total of 176 pitches across the County (figures correct as of January 2024). In addition, as with many other local authority areas, a number of Gypsy and Traveller families reside in bricks and mortar accommodation.
- 20.3 Although there is no overall shortfall in pitches once turnover is considered, the most recent [Gypsy and Traveller and Travelling Showperson Accommodation assessment \(GTAA\)](#) recommends that the Council should consider planning applications for appropriate small sites to address any arising needs of Gypsy and Traveller families should they be forthcoming over the Plan period. Needs may arise for a number of reasons including, for example: the ability of any available site to accommodate a larger family group; pitch vacancies at the particular time; issues of ethnic mix and compatibility; accessibility to school and health facilities. Additionally, the Government is seeking to encourage more private traveller site provision (within the [Planning Policy for Traveller Sites \(2015\)](#) and policy facilitates small exception sites where a local connection is demonstrated.

## 21 Refugees and asylum seekers

- 21.1 For the purpose of this strategy, refugees are those people who have been granted leave to remain in the UK and have the same rights to housing, housing benefit and other forms of support as British citizens.
- 21.2 Appropriate housing is crucial if refugees are to be able to integrate and settle successfully in the UK. Refugees should have access to safe and decent housing and be able to participate fully in housing decisions which affect them and their communities. Accessing secure accommodation is essential for:

- Providing a sense of security following their experience of having to leave their home country;
- Starting to build a new life;
- Children to be able to settle at school;
- Providing a permanent address for job applications and benefit claims; and
- Allowing wider access to services and healthcare.

21.3 The Council works with a range of statutory and voluntary organisations who together support refugees from Syria, Afghanistan and Ukraine and British National (Overseas) status holders from Hong Kong.

## 22 Data Sources

22.1 The development of this strategy has been shaped by a variety of data sources, which include strategies that have been closely aligned to the adopted Local Plan and in the emerging Shropshire Local Plan. These documents collectively form the foundation of the Council's planning approach and provide valuable insights. Utilising this information is important not only for justifying funding and planning priorities but also for the continuous monitoring of our strategy and priorities. To ensure the strategy's relevance and effectiveness, the Council will conduct yearly assessments, closely examining data from sources such as guidance from the production of Supplementary Planning documents (SPD's), the Strategic Housing Market Assessment, Local Plan, Housing Strategy, Housing Needs Survey, Market Position Statement and Commissioning Priorities. This ongoing analysis will guide the Council's decision-making processes and enable us to adapt our approach based on real-time data and evolving needs.

## 23 Delivery of the strategy

23.1 Delivering the strategy's vision will require the Council, and its partners in the public, private, voluntary and community services to develop more innovative and sustainable approaches. We will continue to work with registered providers to find ways to deliver housing that enables additional grant and borrowing capacity to be levered.

23.2 We encourage our stakeholders to collaborate from the early initial stages of new development proposals. Together we can provide innovative solutions tailored to specific geographical needs, develop pro-active initiatives in housing development and initiate approaches such as designing new housing infrastructure to be universally "age-friendly", fostering inclusivity.

23.3 Partners are invited to be involved in early discussions regarding the reconfiguration or disposal of existing housing stock requiring planning related changes. We welcome a collective approach in agreeing upon priority notification and nominations rights for both existing and new supported and specialist housing.

23.4 Together through collaborative Partnerships with various partners and agencies, we can promote intergenerational and diverse community development, contributing significantly to the overall health and well-being of Shropshire residents through supported and specialist housing services.

23.5 Additionally, we urge our partners to acknowledge and align with our overarching strategy objectives concerning climate change and environmental responsibility. We encourage the use of modern construction methods wherever feasible, ensuring a sustainable and innovative approach to our shared initiatives.

DRAFT

## Appendix II: Action Plan

Priority for action	Timescale	Outcome	Responsible service
Explore the feasibility of an online self -assessment and guidance tool with the view of the customer to answer a series of questions to generate a personalised report including local signposting to allow people to browse a range of products and service to suit their needs and help them to live independently for longer and assist in decision making.	2024/2025	Ease of building own 'pathway' for the future with an online self-assessment tool	Housing Services Adult Social Care Partnership Organisations VCSE sector Registered Providers Communities Service users
Work with Shropshire Towns and Rural Housing, developers and Private Registered Providers so that more of the new housing provided is accessible and more easily adaptable and through the provision of appropriately located market specialist housing.	Ongoing	Provide new accessible and adaptable market specialist homes	Housing Services Shropshire Towns and Rural Housing Registered Providers Private Registered Providers
Monitor the trialling of new equipment	Ongoing	To evaluate whether it is cost-effective	Housing, Resettlement and Independent Living Handyperson service

Consider the feasibility of a private handyperson scheme.	<i>Ongoing</i>	Establishing a comprehensive assessment outlining viability, potential benefits, and financial feasibility of implementing a private handy person scheme within the community.	Housing, Resettlement and Independent Living Handyperson service
Assess the success, effectiveness and outcome of the new grant process for funding adaptations.	2024	Effectively allocate resources, improve accessibility.	Private Sector Housing Team
Draft a Housing Renewal Assistance and Adaptations Policy	2024	Completion of the policy draft, obtaining the necessary approvals, successful implementation, and ongoing monitoring to ensure effectiveness and compliance.	Housing Operations Manager Housing, Resettlement and Independent Living Private Sector Housing Team
Revise the Private Housing Assistance Policy	2024/2025	Improved private housing assistance policy with enhanced accessibility and effectiveness	Housing Operations Manager Housing, Resettlement and Independent Living
Deliver and Monitor the Sustainable Affordable Warmth Strategy	<i>Ongoing</i>	Successful implementation and continuous monitoring of the Sustainable Affordable Warmth Strategy, ensuring its effectiveness in	Housing Operations Manager Housing, Resettlement and Independent Living

		providing sustainable and affordable heating solutions whilst actively addressing energy efficiency and related community needs.	
Raise awareness of the importance of tackling fuel poverty and improving energy efficiency	<i>Ongoing</i>	Increased public awareness and understanding regarding the significance of addressing fuel poverty and enhancing energy efficiency measures, leading to widespread community engagement, proactive initiatives, and behavioural changes that contribute to reducing energy consumption and alleviating fuel poverty.	Homes & Communities Housing, Resettlement and Independent Living
Establish a pathway to zero carbon-housing	<i>Ongoing</i>	Continual development and implementation of strategies, technologies and policies leading towards achieving zero carbon housing, accompanied by measurable progress, innovations, and	Homes & Communities Housing, Resettlement and Independent Living

		adaptations in construction, energy efficiency, and sustainable practices within the housing sector	
Attract funding to deliver affordable warmth and improve energy efficiency	<i>Ongoing</i>	Continued successful acquisition of funding from diverse sources, allowing for sustainable implementation and expansion of initiatives focused on delivering affordable warmth, enhancing energy efficiency measures, and positively impacting a larger demographic, ultimately contributing to lasting improvements in energy sustainability and reducing fuel poverty.	Homes & Communities Housing, Resettlement and Independent Living
Explore the viability of implementing a training programme to equip staff as trusted assessors. Trusted assessors would assess people and their home environment for home adaptations in simple cases	<i>Not known</i>	The outcome of providing staff with the necessary trusted assessor training would result in expediting assessments. The aim is to alleviate the	Housing, Resettlement and Independent Living



and appropriately identify cases to refer to an occupational therapist for further assessment.		workload of occupational therapists by delegating routine assessments to trusted assessors, allowing more time for occupational therapists to conduct specialised and in-depth assessments	
Adopt the emerging Shropshire Local Plan	<i>Ongoing</i>	Establishing a comprehensive and updated strategic framework that aligns with current and future development needs, community aspirations, and regulatory requirements. This adoption ensures a well-defined roadmap for sustainable growth, land use planning, infrastructure development, and environmental conservation within the Shropshire region.	All departments
The Council will continue to bid and secure funding to support specialist accommodation.	<i>Ongoing</i>	Successful acquisition of funding to establish and sustain specialised accommodation services meeting the	Homes and Communities Housing, Resettlement and Independent Living

		specific needs of the community, thereby enhancing access to tailored support, fostering inclusion, and ensuring the provision of necessary resources for those requiring specialist accommodation within Shropshire	
Monitor the Housing Allocations Policy and Scheme and Nomination Agreements	<i>Ongoing</i>	Continued oversight and assessment of the housing allocations policy, scheme and nomination agreements, ensuring adherence to established guidelines, evaluating effectiveness and identifying areas for potential improvement. Maintain a robust and adaptive housing allocation system that aligns with community needs, facilitates fair distribution and measures efficient management of housing resources.	Housing Strategy and Development Housing, Resettlement and Independent Living

Monitor the Tenancy Strategy and Tenancy Policy	<i>May be subject to review</i>	Identification of emerging trends or areas requiring adjustment within the tenancy strategy and policy, leading to timely updates or revisions that address evolving community needs and foster stronger tenant-landlord relationships. This continued monitoring aims to ensure adaptability, efficiency, and continued relevance of the tenancy strategy and policy in promoting sustainable tenancies and housing security.	Housing Strategy and Development Housing, Resettlement and Independent Living
Produce an Affordable and Intermediate Housing Options Strategy	2024	Creation of a comprehensive strategy outlining diverse and viable affordable housing options, catering to various income levels and addressing housing needs of different demographic groups. The strategy will aim to offer innovative solutions,	Housing Strategy and Development Housing, Resettlement and Independent Living

		foster inclusivity, and provide a clear roadmap for the development and implementation of affordable housing options.	
Produce a revised homelessness and Rough Sleeper Strategy	2024	Development of a revised homelessness strategy that incorporates improved support and prevention measures to address and reduce homelessness	Housing Strategy and Development Housing, Resettlement and Independent Living
Deliver supported housing schemes with 24/7 management and support for single vulnerable people, who are homeless or at risk or homelessness or rough sleeping.	Ongoing	Establishment and implantation of robust supported housing schemes, providing continuous management and comprehensive support for vulnerable individuals. This outcome aims to ensure a safe, stable environment, promote independence, and facilitate the reintegration of people into sustainable housing solutions, addressing homelessness and	Homes and Communities Housing Strategy and Development Housing, Resettlement and Independent Living Registered Social Landlords

		reducing the risk of rough sleeping.	
Deliver additional dispersed housing-led housing first accommodation for single vulnerable people who are at risk of homelessness or rough sleeping.	<i>Ongoing</i>	Increased availability of dispersed move-on accommodation, providing stable housing solutions and mitigating homelessness and rough sleeping risks.	Housing Services
Wider engagement with housing stakeholders and partners in the housing sector, working in partnership to integrate commissioning between social care, health and housing surrounding falls prevention.	<i>Ongoing</i>	Establishment of a collaborative and integrated approach among diverse agencies and stakeholders, fostering coordinated efforts to address falls prevention comprehensively. This outcome aims to enhance awareness, implement effective preventive measures, and create a unified strategy ensuring the safety and well-being of individuals, while promoting cross-sectoral cooperation to reduce fall-related incidents within the community	All Directorates

<p>Promote the importance of open market house builders meeting the needs of older persons, for example, bungalows or age-restricted flats in intergeneration settings.</p>	<p><i>Ongoing</i></p>	<p>The outcome of promoting the importance of open market house builders meeting the needs of older persons could involve: “Increased awareness and commitment among open market house builders towards constructing age-friendly housing options, such as bungalows or age-restrictive flats in intergenerational settings. This outcome aims to stimulate the development of more inclusive and accessible housing choices that cater to the specific needs of older individuals, promoting diversity in housing options and encouraging the integration of age-friendly designs within the broader housing market</p>	<p>Homes and Communities Housing Strategy and Development Housing, Resettlement and Independent Living</p>
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Commission housing associations to deliver modern, aspirational, affordable age-restricted and retirement schemes for rent and Low Cost Home Ownership which allow for flexibility of care and support provision as people age in place.	<i>Not known</i>	Expanded availability of modern, aspirational and affordable age-restricted housing with flexible care and support options.	Homes and Communities
Deliver a supported housing scheme for care leavers and vulnerable young people based on a hub and spoke model of support.	<i>Ongoing</i>	Tailored supported housing scheme for care leavers and vulnerable young people, emphasising the hub and spoke model to foster independence and well-being.	Homes and Communities Housing, Resettlement and Independent Living
Explore funding opportunities to facilitate extensions to foster carers' homes.	<i>Not known</i>	Access to additional funding resources enabling the extension and enhancement of foster carers' homes, thereby creating expanded and improved living spaces conducive to fostering a nurturing and supportive environment for children in care. This outcome aims to increase the capacity	Homes and Communities All Directorates



		for fostering placements, improve living conditions, and enhance the overall quality of care provided within foster homes.	
Deliver supported housing schemes for people with moderate and severe learning disabilities.	<i>Not known</i>	Specialised supported housing scheme catering to individuals with moderate and severe learning disabilities.	Homes and Communities
Undertake a housing needs survey, using an easy read questionnaire, for people with learning disabilities and/or autism.	<i>Not known</i>	Completion of an inclusive housing needs survey with easy-read questionnaire, resulting in informed housing strategies	Homes and Communities Housing Strategy and Development Housing, Resettlement and Independent Living
Produce an easy read housing options booklet.	<i>Not known</i>	Creation of an easy-to-understand Housing Options booklet, providing clear information and choices for individuals seeking housing	Housing, Resettlement and Independent Living
Develop a Whole Housing approach to domestic abuse	<i>Ongoing</i>	The outcome of developing a whole housing approach to domestic abuse would involve establishing a comprehensive	Housing, Resettlement and Independent Living Domestic Abuse Strategic Lead Homes & Communities Place Directorate

		<p>strategy involving multiple housing agencies to effectively prevent and respond to domestic abuse. This would include tailored interventions and support services, ensuring safe and accessible housing options for survivors while fostering collaboration, training, and coordinated protocols among housing professionals. Ultimately, this approach aims to provide immediate and holistic support, offering secure accommodation and a responsive system for individuals affected by domestic abuse, thereby creating a safer environment and a more supportive housing framework.</p>	
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Deliver additional emergency and self-contained units of dispersed and move-on supported accommodation for victims and perpetrators of domestic abuse.		Expansion of safe and dispersed accommodation	Housing, Resettlement and Independent Living Domestic Abuse Strategic Lead Homes & Communities Place Directorate
Achieve Domestic Abuse Housing Alliance (DAHA) Accreditation	<i>Ongoing</i>	The outcome includes the adoption of standardised protocols, enhanced collaboration among housing professionals, and the provision of safe and secure accommodation options.	Housing, Resettlement and Independent Living Domestic Abuse Strategic Lead Homes & Communities Place Directorate
Introduce reducing reoffending housing solutions protocol	<i>2024</i>	Implement effective protocol for reducing re-offending through housing solutions.	Housing, Resettlement and Independent Living Homes & Communities Place Directorate



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