



SHROPSHIRE HEALTH AND WELLBEING BOARD

Report

Meeting Date	22.01.2026				
Title of report	Housing and Health – Update report				
This report is for (You will have been advised which applies)	Discussion and agreement of recommendations	x	Approval of recommendations (With discussion by exception)		Information only (No recommendations)
Reporting Officer & email	Laura Fisher Laura.fisher@shropshire.gov.uk				
Which Joint Health & Wellbeing Strategy priorities does this report address? Please tick all that apply	Children & Young People	x	Joined up working	x	
	Mental Health	x	Improving Population Health	x	
	Healthy Weight & Physical Activity	x	Working with and building strong and vibrant communities	x	
	Workforce	x	Reduce inequalities (see below)	x	
What inequalities does this report address?	This paper demonstrates the importance and approach to reducing inequalities through housing and good quality housing.				

1. Executive Summary

This update builds on the housing and health strategic initiatives discussed in previous reports submitted to the board. The framework for this work has been shaped by two workshops and several task and finish group meetings, alongside the Local Government Association's October 2022 publication, *Improving Health and Well-being Through Housing: A High Impact Change Model*. This model encourages integrating housing delivery with health and care commissioning and service provision, directly aligning with Shropshire Council's strategic objectives to support population health and independent living.

Due to increased pressure within the Housing service and the need for work to be focussed on key statutory duties, work on this project has not progressed as quickly as we would have liked. Despite the challenges, much of the work has had a beneficial impact on the Housing & Health agenda, resulting in meaningful improvements to the Housing and Health actions.

Increased Regulation:

Councils, such as Shropshire, that are registered as social housing providers in England are now subject to the Regulator of Social Housing's (RSH) consumer standards, which encompass safety, quality, transparency, tenant engagement, and neighbourhood management. These standards, reinforced by the Social Housing (Regulation) Act 2023, require local authorities to embed tenant feedback into strategic decision-making, ensure robust risk oversight with up to date asset and safety data, and demonstrate value for money in managing and maintaining housing stock. Under the new regulatory regime, councils can receive graded judgements—ranging from C1 (meets standards) to C4 (serious failings)—with C3 or C4 verdicts triggering mandatory improvement plans, potential structural changes, and increased scrutiny.

Meeting the Regulator of Social Housing standards ensures safe, well-maintained homes, which directly supports better health outcomes and reduces risks associated with poor housing conditions. An example of the changes can be demonstrated with Awaabs Law which is named after two-year-old Awaab Ishak, who tragically died in December 2020 from a severe respiratory condition caused by prolonged exposure to black mould in his social housing flat in Rochdale. Despite numerous complaints by his family dating back to 2017, the housing provider—merely advised to “paint over” the mould and failed to carry out effective repairs. A coroner's 2022 prevention-of-future-deaths report concluded that Awaab's death was entirely preventable and urged urgent regulatory reform. In response, Parliament enacted Section 42 of the Social Housing (Regulation) Act 2023, giving rise to

Awaab's Law, which came into force on 27 October 2025 via the Hazards in Social Housing (Prescribed Requirements) (England) Regulations 2025. The legislation mandates strict response times that registered provider (which the Council is) must investigate serious damp and mould concerns. It also compels landlords to provide written updates, audit their investigative processes, and offer alternative accommodation if hazards cannot be resolved promptly.

Shropshire Council is leading preparations for our inspection working closely with Shropshire Towns & Rural Housing as our Arm's Length Management Organisation to ensure we are in a robust position to demonstrate compliance with the standards. The Consumer Standards and regulations apply to all Registered Providers, and all will receive inspections including those working across Shropshire such as Homes Plus, Connexus and others.

Renters' Rights Act:

Further to this, the Renters' Rights Act introduces substantial new powers and responsibilities for local councils. From late 2025, councils have gained enhanced investigatory authority—able to enter premises (business and residential), demand key documents, and seize evidence when probing potential landlord non-compliance—which marks a shift from optional to compulsory enforcement duty. It also empowers councils to levy higher penalties on rogue landlords and retain those revenues to reinvest in enforcement efforts. These reforms mean councils must invest in bolstering enforcement capacity—such as training officers, updating data systems, and reallocating budgets—to manage the stepped-up regulatory role and ensure compliance with new standards like the Decent Homes Standard and Awaab's Law applied to the private rented sector. Implementing the Renters' Reform Bill enhances housing security and quality by abolishing 'no-fault' evictions and enforcing rapid repairs, particularly addressing damp and mould under Awaab's Law, which in turn reduces tenant stress, improves respiratory and overall health outcomes, and eases the NHS burden from poor housing. A working group has been established at the Council to ensure compliance with the new regulations with close working between our housing and regulatory services teams.

Improved Temporary Accommodation:

Shropshire Council homeless service has also implemented 4 in house temporary housing schemes equating to over 100 units of accommodation and therefore a reduction in the use of Bed and Breakfast. This work has been completed in house and therefore required significant capacity from staff. Providing safe, warm, and hygienic temporary accommodation reduces exposure to damp, cold, and overcrowding, which lowers risks of respiratory illness, infections, and mental health deterioration. It also offers stability and access to support services, helping individuals recover from crisis and preventing long-term health complications. Examples include:

- **Improved mental health:** Stability and safety alleviate stress, anxiety, and depression associated with homelessness.
- **Better access to healthcare and support:** Secure accommodation enables engagement with health services and recovery programs.
- **Prevention of long-term health complications:** Early intervention through safe housing reduces chronic illness and hospital admissions.

Shropshire Council aims, through its improved offer of temporary accommodation to offer more intensive support as well as improved engagement from partner agencies such as mental health, substance misuse and Adult Social Care. So far, we have already seen individuals' needs more quickly recognised and support put in place when needed. Residents are also reporting that they feel better supported and more able to deal with some of the issues they may have i.e., mental health or substance / alcohol misuse.

Alongside priorities work to meet enhanced regulations we have also reviewed the Housing and Health action plan and combined actions together where relevant to develop a simpler version we can now take forward. We have identified actions that have been progressed as well as key priorities for the next 12 months and the proposed new plan is attached to this update report for Board's review at Appendix A.

2. Recommendations (Not required for 'information only' reports)

- The Board note the actions that have been progressed to date.
- The Board endorse the revised action plan and next steps.

- The Board agree to a future report detailing work on the Housing Lin recommendations as well as key examples of specialist housing being developed within the county.
- The Board receive a progress report on the Housing & Health work in 6 months.

3. Report

The table below illustrates key areas of progress to meeting the objectives of the Housing and Health Plan and should be read in conjunction with the draft revised health and housing action plan attached to this report.

Actions completed / in progress to date:

ACTION	UPDATE
Involve registered housing associations, social care, and specialist voluntary sector organisations to bring their perspectives and those of the people they support to better understand, for example, the housing needs of those with learning disabilities and complex support needs.	The Social Housing Forum has been reformed with a clear emphasis within the agenda on discussion around specialist housing. Initial meetings have already touched on this along with individual discussions with local Housing providers and these will continue in 2026.
Work with housing funders such as Homes England to identify and secure capital funding to develop specialist housing. –including SEND (Special educational needs and disabilities), Domestic Abuse, Mental Health, Substance misuse	Regular discussions with Home England are ongoing. Funding has been secured for single homeless individuals (inc. Domestic Abuse, Mental Health and substance misuse) and care leavers. Ongoing work is in place looking at the Affordable Homes Programme and schemes that can benefit from this funding.
Use data from the local joint strategic needs assessment and demographic data to assess the future housing needs of older people and working age adults with health and care needs which can be referenced in the council's local plan and other forward planning activity.	<p>Shropshire Council commissioned the The Housing LIN (Housing Learning and Improvement Network) to provide robust, evidence-based insights into the current and future need for specialist and supported housing across the county. The aim was to understand the number and types of homes required for people needing care and support—including older adults, people with learning disabilities or autism, those with mental health needs, young care leavers, and key workers—over the next 10 to 20 years. This comprehensive needs assessment is intended to inform the council's strategic planning, including the Market Position Statement, Housing Strategy, and Local Plan, ensuring that future housing provision is responsive, inclusive, and sustainable for Shropshire's diverse communities.</p> <p>Work is ongoing regarding outcomes developed from the Housing LiN report. I would suggest a specific item comes to HWBB regarding this to discuss further.</p>
Work with council planning policy colleagues to ensure that council Local Plan includes explicit reference to evidence housing needs of older people and working age adults with health and care needs.	Work is ongoing regarding outcomes developed from the Housing LiN report. I would suggest a specific item comes to HWBB regarding this to discuss further. The Housing LiN report will be used to help shape the Local Plan.

Work with council planning policy colleagues to develop supplementary planning documents which provide more detail of the types, location, and design of housing required by older people and working age adults with health and care needs.	Collaborative work with council planning policy colleagues is ongoing regarding development of supplementary planning documents that provide greater detail regarding the types, locations, and design specifications for housing required by older people and working age adults with health and care needs. As part of the Local Plan, these documents will inform planning decisions and support the delivery of appropriate housing solutions across the county.
With council housing strategy colleagues identify opportunities for the development of mainstream accessible housing for rent and for sale, and specialist housing, within general mainstream housing programmes and sites.	<p>Work is ongoing regarding outcomes developed from the Housing LiN report. I would suggest a specific item comes to HWBB regarding this to discuss further.</p> <p>Real-time examples from various sites can demonstrate the work done and the benefits for agencies, services, and individuals.</p> <p>Shropshire Council plans to undertake a strategic housing survey in 2026, as part of the development of the Local Plan. This will gather detailed data on current and future housing needs across all age groups and tenures. Explore preferences and need for affordable homes, temporary accommodation and low-cost home ownership, including adaptations, and community integration. Identifying barriers to moving, affordability challenges, and support needs for vulnerable groups. Engaging a wide range of stakeholders to ensure the strategy reflects lived experience and local priorities. The findings from this planned survey will directly inform the ongoing development and delivery of Shropshire's housing strategy, ensuring that investment and policy decisions are grounded in up-to-date, locally relevant evidence. This will support the Council's ambitions to deliver high-quality, sustainable, and inclusive housing, and to secure external funding by demonstrating a clear understanding of local needs.</p>
Pool funding for home improvement and adaptations through the Better Care Fund, or other local joint funding agreements, and develop a local action plan to provide a consistent baseline and enhanced home improvement and adaptations service.	Although the Disabled Facilities Grant funding has always formed part of the Better Care Fund, increased liaison between teams and development of outcome measures as ensured a true reflection of the benefits delivered.
Ensure that the type and range of home adaptations offered are as attractive as possible to avoid any stigma associated with having adaptations at home; draw on examples of home adaptations that are designed to be 'non stigmatising'.	Real-time examples from various sites can demonstrate the work done and the benefits for agencies, services, and individuals.

In summary, Shropshire Council has made significant strides in integrating housing and health priorities, strengthening regulatory compliance, and improving temporary accommodation provision. The revised action plan reflects a more streamlined, evidence-based approach, with ongoing collaboration across council teams, partners, and stakeholders.

To maintain momentum, the next phase will focus on delivering the new action plan, embedding impact and outcome measures, and ensuring robust monitoring of progress.

Key priorities for the coming months include robust monitoring of the revised action plan and detailed feedback on actions to date and continuing work on the Housing LIN recommendations.

The Board will receive a detailed progress report in six months, including headline outcomes, examples of best practice, and an appraisal of impact on population health and housing quality. This ongoing work will ensure Shropshire remains at the forefront of linking housing improvements to better health and wellbeing for all residents.

Risk assessment and opportunities appraisal

(NB This will include the following: Risk Management, Human Rights, Equalities, Community, Environmental consequences and other Consultation)

Inequalities and the most vulnerable should always be prioritised in the consideration of housing and work to support people to access and thrive in good quality housing.

Financial implications

(Any financial implications of note)

There are no financial implications as a direct result of this paper.

Climate Change Appraisal as applicable

Housing policy must comply with appropriate legislation.

Where else has the paper been presented?

System Partnership Boards

ShIPP Accelerator Group

Voluntary Sector

Other

List of Background Papers (This MUST be completed for all reports, but does not include items containing exempt or confidential information)

Cabinet Member (Portfolio Holder) or your organisational lead e.g., Exec lead or Non-Exec/Clinical Lead

Cllr James Owen, Portfolio Holder for Housing & Leisure, Shropshire Council

Appendices

Appendix A. Housing and Health Revised Action Plan January 2026

Appendix B. Housing & Health Case Study