

Housing Enabling Strategy Delivery Plan 2023 – 2026

6 Month update, Year 1- November 2023

Strategic Objective	Action	Start	Finish	2023/24		Comments
				Q1	Q2	
Goal 1	Maximise affordable housing provision across all development sites where there is a residential use.					
1A	Deliver 1100 affordable homes in the lifetime of this Strategy.	Apr 23	Mar 26			Ongoing- 54 delivered by end of Year 1, Q2
1B	Deliver 500 in Worcester City boundaries	Apr 23	Mar 26			Ongoing- 54 delivered by end of Year 1, Q2
1C	Deliver 600 in the urban extensions	Apr 23	Mar 26			Ongoing- 54 delivered by end of Year 1, Q2
1D	Deliver 360 homes in 2023/24 (including the urban extensions)	Apr 23	Mar 24			54 delivered by end of Q2
1E	Work with the County Council to develop an agreed approach to affordable housing provision on the Shrub Hill development site.	Apr 23	June 24			Discussions ongoing with County.
1F	Engage at an early stage in relation to strategic sites to ensure maximising affordable housing delivery	Apr 23	Mar 26			Engaging with all sites to identify opportunities to maximise AH delivery
Goal 2	Put in place a strategic housing and enabling function that supports the objectives of the Housing Enabling Strategy.					
2A	Review current roles/skill sets and reporting lines within the enabling and housing strategy functions.	Apr 23	May 23			Completed
2B	Define clearly both the housing strategy and the housing enabling functions/roles specifically focusing on the need for early intervention in potential schemes and the unlocking of sites.	Apr 23	Jun 23			Completed
2C	Design the job roles and identify any additional budgetary requirements.	Apr 23	July 23			Completed
2D	Undertake recruitment exercise addressing identified skill gaps.	Jul 23	Sept 23			Completed
2E	Establish a brief for the appointment of a retained specialist external advisor and undertake recruitment exercise.	Apr 23	Jun 23			Focus on Affordable Housing Delivery Manager role. To utilise specialist external advisor on an as needed basis.
Goal 3	Ensure that corporate objectives and planning policy and practice support the delivery of new affordable homes.					
3A	Review the City Plan and other existing and emerging strategies to ensure that there is effective consistency and 'read across' between strategies to optimise affordable housing delivery. Propose amendments.	Apr 23	Mar 24			City Plan not due for renewal- read across included in key strategies as developed i.e. Housing Strategy, SWDP etc.

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				3B	Adopt Worcestershire County Housing Strategy.	
	Review, amend and approve the Asset Disposal Policy and associated processes to ensure that all assets that are declared surplus to requirements go immediately to the options appraisal process. (see Action 3D)	Aug 23	Jan 24			Council assets are considered on a case by case basis & discussed at the Affordable Housing Development group
3D	Design an option appraisal methodology to identify constraints and opportunities (including viability, planning and location) to assess the suitability of council assets, which are surplus to requirements, to support the prioritising of affordable housing delivery.	Oct 23	Dec 23			Council assets are considered on a case by case basis & discussed at the Affordable Housing Development group
3E	Once an asset is approved for use as affordable housing, design a detailed process to ensure that the repurpose/development is progressed in an efficient and timely manner; with suitable gateways and approval milestones in place.	Oct 23	Dec 23			Council assets are considered on a case by case basis & discussed at the Affordable Housing Development group
3F	Review the Asset Disposal Policy with a view to obtaining agreement that the council will consider disposing of assets at less than market value (having taken suitable legal and regulatory advice) where there is the potential to maximise affordable housing delivery.	Jan 24	Feb 24			Not yet progressed
3G	Establish a policy reflecting the council's approach to the use of compulsory purchase orders.	Jan 24	Mar 24			Not yet progressed
3H	Establish a policy reflecting the council's approach to land acquisition.	Jan 24	Mar 24			Not yet progressed
3I	Keep under review affordable housing needs data, including waiting list trends. (checking that housing need is not being masked by processes for assessing and recording applications for the waiting list).	Apr 23	Mar 26			Ongoing- data is maintained and available.
3J	Establish a process for monitoring delivery against identified need requirements.	Apr 24	June 24			Completed- completions data reported to Affordable Housing Development Group

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3K	Draw up and agree terms of reference and delegations, including attendance and decision making powers for the Affordable Housing Development Group Ensure the role of the Affordable Housing Development Group is defined in the process in Action 3D .	Apr 23	June 23			Completed- meeting monthly
3L	Review the contract with the existing planning viability consultant, to assess success in maximising the amount of affordable housing provided where planning applicants are proposing a reduction of affordable on viability grounds.	Apr 23	June 23			We appoint specialist viability consultants on a case by case basis, so there isn't a single contract to review
3M	Depending on the outcome of Action 3L establish a brief and undertake a commissioning process to appoint a suitable consultant.	Apr 23	June 23			As per action 3L
3N	Implement agreed measures based on the developed business case to increase the supply of temporary accommodation.	May 23	Mar 24			Ongoing work- provision increased with additionality due to be delivered during 2023/24
3O	Review with Sanctuary HA the successes and lessons learnt from the development of the Sansome Walk scheme and report to relevant teams.	Jan 24	Mar 24			Not yet progressed- scheme not yet delivered
Goal 4	Build strong relationships with key partners leading to deliverable and quantifiable outcomes.					
4A	Draw up and agree terms of reference, including the definition of an agreed purpose, for the Registered Provider Liaison Group.	Apr 23	June 23			Completed- meeting quarterly
4B	Explore with RP partners their requirements from the Council in order to enable to assist them in speeding up delivery of affordable housing. In addition establish how RP's can support the Council (including through investment and use of their resources) to increase affordable housing supply.	Apr 23	Sept 23			Completed
4C	Engage with the senior leadership at key partner RP partners to build on the liaison outcomes and specific suggestions in the ARK report including exploring regeneration opportunities in Worcester city centre.	Apr 23	Sept 23			Completed

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4D	Meet with Malvern and Wychavon district councils focused on developing a more structured approach to maximising affordable housing delivery in the SWDP including how shared services arrangements for enabling are structured.	Apr 23	Mar 24			Regular meetings are being undertaken- ongoing work
4E	Linked to goal 2, ensure that WCC has the capacity to fully represent WCC's interests and support delivery of affordable housing on the SWDP sites.	Apr 23	Dec 23			Completed- Affordable Housing Delivery Manager post recruited
4F	Establish a working group with SWDP partners/WCC colleagues to put in place a new Affordable Housing Supplementary Planning Document.	Apr 24	Mar 25			Ongoing- forms part of SWDP review which has been submitted for independent review
Goal 5	Maximise resources available from both the public and private sectors to invest in affordable housing.					
5A	Engage with Government agencies (Homes England and DLUHC) at both strategic and operational level through regular meetings/dialogue.	Apr 23	Mar 26			Ongoing regular meetings with both Homes England and DLUHC
5B	Clearly identify the "funding ask" in relation to affordable housing and articulate this to Government agencies.	July 23	Mar 24			Discussions have been held surrounding funding- ongoing work
5C	Develop a better standard of engagement and understanding of the One Public Estate in relation to affordable housing.	Sept 23	Mar 24			Ongoing area of work
5D	Develop a compelling offer focusing on how WCC's enabling role will add value and instil confidence in partners to enable them to invest in Worcester. This could include assisting with pump priming/gap funding where this enables the increased delivery of affordable housing.	Sept 23	Mar 24			Significant progress made but ongoing area of work
Goal 6	Promote and raise awareness of the benefits of affordable housing in the wider social and economic context.					
6A	Work with colleagues in the Corporate Communication Team to formulate a Communication Strategy associated with the Housing Enabling Strategy which identifies target audiences, the most effective means and timeliness of communication.	Apr 24	Mar 25			Not yet progressed

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6B	Develop an effective market intelligence/information hub for stakeholders in the affordable housing delivery sphere (to include strategic priorities, information on housing need, funding support available and on the development of planning frameworks and infrastructure development).	Apr 25	Mar 26			Not yet progressed
6C	Attend relevant meetings to ensure engagement and understanding of the implementation of the City Centre Master Plan. Ensuring that affordable housing has a key role and demonstrate its ability to attract investment and create diverse communities.	Apr 23	Mar 26			Ongoing area of work
6D	Undertake research to establish and promote how affordable housing can be a successful element of city and town centre regeneration.	Nov 23	Mar 24			Not yet progressed
Goal 7	Shape and action the Council's engagement in land promotion activities.					
7A	Undertake a scoping event to establish a view of what a pro-active land promotion role would look like for WCC. This should cover agreeing the scope of a centralised land promotion function, how it could/should connect with linked council functions, who leads it (for example, is it quasi-independent led by the council, what resources can partners input and how might these be shared?)	Oct 24	Dec 24			Not yet progressed
7B	Explore the options with the Registered Provider Liaison Group, establishing which partners are willing to develop ideas and explore the options further.	Jan 25	June 25			Initial discussions held surrounding potential options for land promotion. Ongoing area of work.
7C	Develop a business case and establish the budgetary requirements for the land promotion activity, including which organisations are best placed to invest in this activity.	Jan 25	June 25			Not yet progressed

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				7D	Explore and establish appropriate leadership and governance arrangements, to ensure accountability.	
7E	Consider the resource required to enable the tasks in Actions 7A - to 7D to take place, bringing in third party expertise to drive these activities forward.	Jan 25	June 25			Not yet progressed
Goal 8	Establish the Council's appetite and explore the opportunities for joint venture working.					
8A	Explore opportunities in relation to individual sites where the council owns land or where acquisition of land would aid development and increase the supply of affordable housing.	Apr 23	Mar 26			Ongoing area of work- sites discussed at Affordable Housing Development Group
8B	Put in place a process for assessing, evaluating and approving any joint venture opportunities that are presented by third parties, including examining and determining the council's approach to risk.	July 23	Sept 23			Not yet progressed
8C	Explore the options with the Registered Provider Liaison Group.	July 23	Sept 23			Initial discussions held with RP's collectively & individually surrounding interest in Joint Ventures