



Housing Strategy

2023 to 2028

Basildon Borough Council

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Responsible Committee:	Cabinet
Date of Committee Approval:	13/07/2023
Service Impact Assessment (SIA)	Insert hyperlink 09/02/2023
Consultee(s)	
Groups and/or individuals consulted during the development of this Strategy:	Senior Leadership Team 5 October 2022 Tenant & Leaseholder Panel 19 October 2022 Place Scrutiny Committee 19 October 2022 & 15 March 2023 Community Diversity Council 23 November 2022 Basildon Council employees 25 November to 7 December 2022 Cabinet 19 January 2023 & 13 July 2023 Stakeholders 31 January 2023 Public consultation 30 January to 26 February 2023
Policy, Performance and Insights Team Sign off	Tina Dodd 03/07/2023
Governance	
The Strategy applies to:	People living in the borough and those wishing to live in the borough. Also, of interest to housing developers wishing to develop homes in the borough.
The Strategy is available in the following locations:	Publications Scheme <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Intranet / SharePoint <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Council website / Service webpage <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Actions contained in this strategy are monitored on Pentana:	All <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Some <input type="checkbox"/> None <input type="checkbox"/>
Progress with implementation of this Strategy is reported:	Annually <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Quarterly <input type="checkbox"/> Other <input type="checkbox"/>
This Strategy has related documents:	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

	Insert links to related documents i.e., parent Policy
The Strategy was disseminated to:	Cabinet 19 January 2023 Stakeholders 31 January 2023 Public consultation 30 January to 26 February 2023
This Strategy is due its next review:	01/04/2028

Document Control			
Date	Version	Action	Amendment(s)

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0. Foreword

We want to ensure Basildon Borough is a place people choose to live because there is a choice of homes, a pleasant environment and solid communities that can support their wellbeing and aspirations. A place that people feel proud to call home. We know Basildon Borough has solid foundations on which to do this. It is already the biggest employment area in Essex. Its road and rail links make it commutable to the City of London, broadening access to diverse types of employment, education, and cultural choices. Stansted, City and Southend Airports, alongside Ebbsfleet International Station mean it is well connected internationally. We are well underway with our ambitious plans to redevelop and improve Basildon town centre into a more vibrant

destination, with the opening of the new cinema, restaurants, and increased town centre living. We have invested in high quality open spaces that offer recreation, access to wildlife and environmental management and can boast top class sporting facilities. Overall, we have the right building blocks in place to make sure Basildon Borough can fulfil its potential.

Councillor Andrew Schrader

1. Introduction

The Housing Strategy sets out how the council, along with its partners, will respond to the housing challenges faced by the borough to provide good quality housing related options and services. It also supports the delivery of a number of council policies. (Chapter 8)

The council's Corporate Plan 2022-2026 sets out the vision for the borough and contains high level promises it will focus on to deliver this vision.

People. We want Basildon to be home to healthy and active local communities able to support themselves and each other.

Place. We want Basildon to offer a high quality of life for all residents through attractive, liveable, accessible, and safe neighbourhoods and towns along with the provision of enduring facilities, green spaces and town centres that meet the needs of the community.

Prosperity. We want Basildon to have a thriving, dynamic and diverse economy where all our communities benefit from increased opportunity and our workforce has the right skills for our local economy and beyond.

To support the delivery of the Corporate Plan and the Housing Strategy we have identified three key priorities.

- Improve access to housing opportunities and choice.
- Make best use of council homes.
- Support residents to create neighbourhoods they wish to live in and be part of

The strategy will impact tenants and leaseholders of the Council although there will be some impact on all residents and people wishing to move into the borough. The strategy will also be of interest to housing developers wishing to develop homes in the borough.

The strategy will be delivered via a delivery plan that will be reviewed quarterly and reported on annually and will reflect changes in emerging local policy and legislation.

2. Vision

We want Basildon Borough to be a place people choose to live because there is a choice of homes, a pleasant environment and strong communities that can support their wellbeing and aspirations.

3. Priorities

We have developed this strategy to ensure we have the right framework in place to shape how we, along with our partners, will achieve our ambitions.

The strategy's key priorities are.

Priority 1: Improve access to housing opportunities and choice

We will develop and acquire properties which will provide social and affordable rented homes that meet the needs of our residents

New homes will be designed to be sustainable

We will maximise opportunities to work with our partners who will provide a range of quality housing products that meets housing need

Support people to take their first step towards home ownership

We will use our powers to improve the Private Rented Sector including HMOs

Residents will have increased employment and training opportunities

We will seek ways to prevent homelessness

Priority 2: Make best use of council homes

We will continue to invest in our homes to provide good quality accommodation, prioritising energy efficiency measures to meet Net Zero targets and contributing to our Climate Change Policy.

We will regularly review our existing assets in line with our Asset Management Plan

Where possible, we will make adaptations to existing homes to support residents with disabilities to remain in their homes and communities

The council will actively detect and pursue cases of tenancy fraud

We will have a housing allocation policy that is effective in meeting the needs of those people we accept as having a need for affordable rented housing and that maximises vacancies

We will promote a range of schemes that facilitate tenants moving to accommodation more appropriate for their current needs (e.g., downsizing and Mutual Exchanges)

Priority 3: Support residents to create neighbourhoods they wish to live in and be part of

We will deliver a range of environmental improvements through our Safe & Sound Programme in full consultation with residents

We will target our services to reflect the needs and profile of our tenants

Through our Tenant and Leaseholder Strategy, we will seek to provide a choice of engagement methods which will result in increased interaction and ensure that all voices are heard.

We will ensure appropriate representation in the governance framework to enable tenants and leaseholders to influence the housing services they receive and have an opportunity to challenge the council on the services provided.

4. Strategy Context

Housing Strategy 2018-2023

The previous Housing Strategy was adopted in November 2017 and set out how the council, along with its partners, agreed to respond to the housing challenges faced by the borough to provide good quality housing options and outcomes for residents between 2018 and 2023. The strategy has been reviewed against its progress annually and reported to the Housing and Estate Renewal Committee.

National Context

Since the adoption of the Housing Strategy in 2017 there has been increased national focus on delivering housing, reducing homelessness, enhancing living standards particularly in relation to managing damp and mould, reasserting the role of residents, and tackling inequalities in the private rented sector. This has resulted in new guidance, regulations and legislation which influences the delivery of the Housing Strategy.

Local Context

Despite the impact of the pandemic, good progress was made against the agreed priorities of the Housing Strategy 2018-2023

- We developed a scheme of thirty-four apartments providing temporary accommodation to homeless families.
- Working with our partners Peabody and the Salvation Army we have delivered 16 self-contained apartments for people on a supported pathway from rough sleeping to settled accommodation.
- Between April 2018 and March 2022 376 affordable homes were delivered
- Installation of a £3 million fire suppression project on the Felmores Estate
- £5.1m has been invested in electrical upgrades making our homes safe to live in.
- £3.2 million on replacement kitchens and bathrooms.
- £6 million on central heating installations and upgrades.
- £3.4 million on external wall insulation, windows and doors, bathroom, and kitchens to 140 homes on Craylands.
- A £5.8 million Estate Improvement Programme on our housing estates.
- £2 million rolling programme of redecoration and maintenance within the council's sheltered schemes.
- The Property Solutions scheme and the Rent Start scheme has enabled hundreds of residents to rent privately by encouraging property owners to rent out their properties.
- over four hundred Disabled Facilities Grants were awarded to support residents with improved accessibility in their own homes.

- Bid submission for funding to support rogue landlord enforcement, identify unlicensed Houses in Multiple Occupation, those experiencing domestic abuse and those sleeping rough were all successful.
- A new Tenant and Leaseholder Engagement Strategy was adopted.
- A Community Hub was established in March 2020 in response to the global pandemic.
- The Council continue to award annual grants to Basildon, Billericay and Wickford Council for Voluntary services and Basildon Citizens' Advice Bureau respectively to help them provide additional support to our residents.
- A series of community safety roadshows across the Borough providing more than seven hundred residents with crime prevention advice and materials relating to burglary, vehicle crime and personal safety.
- An expanded litter and fly tipping enforcement trial resulted in 5060 Fixed Penalty Notices being issued during 2020/21.
- South Essex Domestic Abuse Hub supported 1,225 clients into safe, alternative accommodation, or supported them to remain safely in their own homes.
- The Council's Advice Store opened in 2019 and went on to win an award at the Housing Essex Excellence Awards.
- A joint bid of South Essex authorities resulted in just under £1m funding allocation to boost entrants into the construction industry.
- Supported the delivery of the annual Apprenticeship Fair and the "Your Future 18", event.
- The Private Sector Housing Team within Environmental Health dealt with more than fifty allegations of illegal harassment/eviction during the Covid-19 pandemic.

Evidence Base snapshot (Full evidence base can be found in Enclosure 3)

Our people

- Basildon is the largest borough in Essex with a population of 187,600. The population is predicted to increase to 206,509 by 2043.
- The median household income for a household living in the borough is £35,837.
- The age profile has remained largely unchanged since the last strategy. The largest age group is the 45- to 64-year-olds comprising of 25% of the borough's population.
- 87.5% of the Basildon Borough population identify as White, 2.6% identify as a mixed ethnicity, 4.3% identifies as Asian, 4.8% identify as Black and 0.9% identify as other. *2021 Census*
- 34 % of households are deprived in at least one-dimension *2021 Census¹*

• ¹**Education:** a household is classified as deprived in the education dimension if no one has at least level 2 education and no one aged 16 to 18 years is a full-time student.

Basildon Borough Homes

- There are around 77,500 homes in the Basildon Borough. Owner occupation remains the primary tenure in the borough, however there are signs that it is falling – from 66.9% in 2011 to 64.4% in 2021. The private rental sector on the other hand is growing from 11.1% in 2011 to 14.4% in 2021. The proportion of residents living in social housing has fallen slightly from 22% in 2015 to 21.2% in 2021.
- Forty-two percent of homes in the borough contain three bedrooms. Only 13% contain one bedroom *(VOA 2021)*
- Future gross need for affordable housing is 970 per year.
Councils' monitoring; Edge Analytics; Turley analysis
- Projected demand for sheltered, enhanced sheltered and extra care is sixty-five homes per annum up to 2040.
Edge Analytics; Housing LIN; Turley analysis

Our housing costs

- The mean house price in the borough in 2021 was £376,730 an increase of 56% in the last seven years.
Land Registry
- An entry level house purchase (£268,000) would require an income of £44,000. Fifty-seven percent of households in Basildon are unable to afford this.

Source: ONS; Land Registry; CACI; Turley analysis

Figure 1 provides an indicator of the income required to purchase or rent a home in the borough

Figure 1

Type of tenure	Income required
To purchase a home on the open market	£43,464
Market rent	£29,700
80% market rent (affordable rent)	£23,760
60% market rent (social housing)	£17,820
25% shared ownership	£19,684
50% shared ownership	£18,955

- **Employment:** a household is classified as deprived in the employment dimension if any member, not a full-time student, is either unemployed or disabled.
- **Health:** a household is classified as deprived in the health dimension if any member is disabled.
- **Housing:** a household is classified as deprived in the housing dimension if the household's accommodation is either overcrowded, in a shared dwelling, or has no central heating.

Source: ONS; Land Registry; CACI; Turley analysis

Figure 2 shows the average monthly private rent level 2020/21

1 bed	2 beds	3 beds	4+ beds
£760	£975	£1170	£1616

Source: ONS

Our economy, employment prospects and skills

- Parts of the borough ranked within the country's most deprived 20% of areas, whilst other areas ranked within the least deprived 20% of areas.
- In 2021 20.7% of people aged sixteen and over had no qualifications. In one area this was as high as 40.1%
- In 2021 24.6% of people aged sixteen and over have level 4 qualifications and above. In one area this is as high as 72.1%
- Our largest industry by employees is wholesale and retail trade; repair of motor vehicles and motorcycles at 18.55%

Health and Wellbeing (to be expanded)

- Eight percent of the borough's population say their day-to-day activities are very limited (2011 census)

Council housing

- The council has a social housing stock of 10,737 homes
- Sixty percent of council stock has an energy rating of C
- In 2021/22, 51 of our tenants bought their home through the Right to Buy scheme. A slight increase on 2020/21 but a general downward trend since 2016/17

2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	Total
84	93	60	53	28	43	51	412

- As of April 2022, 1,841 households were on our housing register.

Property size needed	1 bed	1 Bed General Needs only	1 Bed General Needs or Sheltered	1 Bed Sheltered only	2 beds	2 Beds General Needs only	2 Bed General Needs or Sheltered	2 Beds Sheltered only	3 Beds	4 Beds +	Total
Existing tenants	201	28	65	108	179	176	2	1	128	50	558
New tenants	657	417	33	207	461	458	0	3	116	49	1283
Total	858	445	98	315	640	634	2	4	244	99	1841

- There were 549 new social housing lettings in 2020/21
- The greatest demand on the housing register is for one- and two-bedroom properties.

5. How we have developed this strategy

Our housing strategy has not been prepared in isolation. To ensure it can help to address the borough's housing challenges, the strategy has been prepared collaboratively through focused engagement during 2022/23 involving internal and external stakeholders. These included

- Council employees and Members
- External partners and stakeholders
- Tenants and leaseholder representatives,
- Community Diversity Council.

Consultation and Stakeholder Engagement

A four-week public consultation on the draft housing strategy took place from January 2023 to February 2023. Details of the consultation can be found in Enclosure 4.

A Stakeholder Engagement Day was held on 31 January 2023. Outcomes from the event can be found at Enclosure 4. Additional presentations took place at the Community Diversity Council and the Tenant and Leaseholder Panel.

6. Delivering the Housing Strategy

6.1 Performance Management

This strategy is a strategic document that helps guide housing related policy and services in the borough. It sets out the overarching priorities for the next five years rather than specify a series of detailed actions. The main way we will deliver the priorities will be to embed them within our other key policies and plans as set out below. A delivery plan will be developed which will be examined quarterly and updated by the Policy, Performance, and Insights Team annually. This is to ensure it can be responsive to the changes in local issues and the national legislative and policy environment that will occur over the lifetime of the strategy. We recognise that we cannot deliver our ambitions alone and therefore we will maintain, grow, and enter new partnerships that will help us do this.

6.2 Key delivery challenges (to be expanded following consultation)

A number of issues may present challenges over the life of the strategy, including

- Ongoing funding pressures faced by the Council and its partners.
- Impacts of the pandemic and the withdrawal of the UK from the EU
- Proposed reforms to the planning system.
- The Future Homes Standard through building regulations to improve the energy efficiency of new homes.
- The practical challenges and costs to eliminate domestic emissions.
- Meeting housing demand while balancing the views of residents on new developments.
- Adoption of the Basildon Local Plan

6.3 Roles and Responsibilities

The strategy sponsor is the Director of Housing and Property who has overall responsibility for delivery of the Housing Strategy, any amendments, and its review in 2028.

We value our partners collaboration and support in delivering the objectives of the housing strategy and will develop new partnerships and continue to collaborate with our existing partners including

- Parish Councils
- Neighbouring authorities including Essex County Council
- Homes England
- The Regulator of Social Housing
- Other Registered Providers
- Private Sector Landlords and letting agents.
- Housing developers
- Support and service providers including those in the voluntary sector.
- Strategic and statutory groups such as the Mid and South Essex Integrated Care System

6.4 Resources

Where possible, the strategy will be delivered within existing resources, but as individual elements are developed further, and any potential future options identified,

reports will be brought back to Cabinet as and when required outlining any subsequent financial implications.

Housing specific funding comes primarily from the Government and Homes England. As a stock owning authority the Council also has a Housing Revenue Account (HRA) as well as some land assets, with some wider scope to borrow money to develop housing, which could help deliver some of the housing growth needed locally.

We will

- work with partners to ensure potential housing projects are identified and in a strong position to take advantage of any funding opportunities.
- bid directly where appropriate for funding to maximise investment to help meet our housing strategy objectives.
- ensure that our housing advice and information services are well placed to help local people.
- examine how we can best use our financial resources and assets to address the objectives of this strategy, balancing the need to address our wider objectives as set out in our Corporate Plan.
- monitor local housing services to help us to drive improvements, to make more effective investment decisions and make efficient use of our resources.

7. Corporate Plan Ambitions

Corporate Ambitions	Levels of Impact			
	High	Medium	Low	None
We want Basildon to be home to healthy and active local communities able to support themselves and each other.	<u>x</u>			
We want Basildon to offer a high quality of life for all residents through attractive, liveable, accessible, and safe neighbourhoods and towns along with the provision of enduring facilities, green spaces and town centres that meet the needs of the community.	<u>x</u>			
We want Basildon to have a thriving, dynamic and diverse		<u>x</u>		

economy where all our communities benefit from increased opportunity and our workforce has the right skills for our local economy and beyond.				
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8. Links to other Corporate Policies or Partner documents

- Corporate Plan
- Economic Development Policy
- Local Plan
- Community Safety Strategy
- Climate Change Policy
- Asset Management Policy
- Health and Wellbeing Policy
- Private Sector Management Plan
- Housing Allocations Scheme
- ASB policy
- Safer Basildon Partnership Strategy
- Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Prevention Strategy

9. Appendices

Consultation

Housing Strategy Evidence Base 2021-2022

Monday to Friday
10am to 5pm



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