

REPORT TITLE: TENANCY STRATEGY AND TENANCY MANAGEMENT STRATEGY

6 JULY 2026

REPORT OF CABINET MEMBER: Cllr Mark Reach, Good Homes For All

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WARD(S): ALL

PURPOSE

This report supports the Council's objective of good homes for all.

The purpose of this report is to seek approval of Winchester City Council's revised Tenancy Strategy 2026–2031 and the new Housing Services Tenancy Management Strategy 2026–2029.

The Tenancy Strategy fulfils the council's statutory duty under Section 150 of the Localism Act 2011 to publish a tenancy strategy setting out the matters to which Registered Providers operating within the district should have regard when formulating tenancy policies. The strategy establishes the council's expectations regarding the types of tenancies that should be granted, the circumstances in which different tenancy types should be used, the length of fixed-term tenancies and the circumstances in which tenancies may be renewed or ended.

The revised strategy provides a clear framework to support the effective use of social housing across Winchester, whilst promoting tenancy stability, preventing homelessness, supporting sustainable communities and ensuring housing stock is managed in a way that responds to local housing need. It reflects significant changes in the housing, legislative and regulatory environment since the council's original Tenancy Strategy was adopted in 2012, including increasing affordability pressures, growing housing demand, rising homelessness pressures and increasing complexity of tenant support needs.

The strategy has been developed in alignment with the Social Housing (Regulation) Act 2023, the Regulator of Social Housing Consumer Standards 2024, the Council Plan 2025–2030, the Housing Strategy 2023–2028 and the Preventing Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2025–2030. It moves beyond a narrow focus on tenancy types and introduces a broader strategic approach centred on

tenancy sustainment, homelessness prevention, early intervention, resident wellbeing, partnership working and the effective use of social housing stock.

The report also presents the new Housing Services Tenancy Management Strategy 2026–2029. This strategy sets out how Winchester City Council, as a landlord, will support tenants to live well in their homes and communities. It explains what tenants can expect from the council as their landlord, how tenancy services will be delivered and how the council will work in partnership with residents to provide services that are fair, consistent, transparent and focused on sustaining successful tenancies.

The Tenancy Management Strategy forms a key part of the council's responsibilities as a social landlord. It supports compliance with the Localism Act 2011, the Social Housing (Regulation) Act 2023 and the Regulator of Social Housing Consumer Standards 2024. The strategy has been developed alongside tenants, ensuring it reflects resident priorities including security, clarity, responsiveness, accountability and trust.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

That Cabinet Committee: Housing:

1. Approve the Tenancy Strategy 2026–2031 attached at Appendix 1.
2. Approve the Housing Services Tenancy Management Strategy 2026–2029 attached at Appendix 3.
3. Delegate authority to the Corporate Head of Housing, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Good Homes for All, to make any minor amendments, typographical corrections, formatting changes, legislative updates or other non-material changes required prior to publication and implementation of the Tenancy Strategy 2026–2031 and the Housing Services Tenancy Management Strategy 2026–2029.

IMPLICATIONS:

1 COUNCIL PLAN OUTCOME

1.1 Greener Faster

1.2 The Tenancy Strategy and Tenancy Management Strategy support the corporate objective of greener faster through maximising use of existing housing stock and supporting sustainable communities whilst ensuring home are let effectively and efficiently.

1.3 Thriving Places

1.4 In consideration of this corporate objective, the two strategies enable the building of stable, balanced and cohesive communities whilst ensuring affordable housing meets local needs and that there is appropriate support to vulnerable households to enable tenancy sustainment.

1.5 Healthy Communities

1.6 The revised overarching Tenancy Strategy and the new Tenancy Management Strategy enable healthy communities through the provision of affordable, safe, secure, suitable housing for vulnerable tenants and those with health needs located in strong and connected communities which promote safe neighbourhoods and positive living environments.

1.7 Good Homes for All

1.8 The importance of good homes for all is evident within both strategies by enabling access to homes matched to housing needs which enable tenants to access and sustain tenancies in affordable, suitable, safe and secure accommodation.

1.9 Efficient and Effective

1.10 The two Tenancy Strategies support the efficient and effective corporate objective by ensuring resources are used wisely, decisions are transparent and timely, and housing is allocated and managed in a way that maximises outcomes while minimising waste and cost

1.11 Listening and Learning

1.12 Overall, the Tenancy Strategies support the corporate objective of listening and learning through embedding consultation and evidence in policy development, creating structured opportunities for tenant feedback (reviews, appeals, engagement), enabling transparency and communication in decision-making through adopting a person-centred approach which reflects and responds to individuals needs whilst using data, monitoring and partnership working to drive continuous improvement.

2 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

2.1 There are no significant additional financial implications arising directly from the adoption of the Tenancy Strategy 2026–2031 or the Housing Services Tenancy Management Strategy 2026–2029.

2.2 The revised Tenancy Strategy updates the council's existing strategic framework for tenancy management across the district, whilst the Housing Services Tenancy Management Strategy formalises existing operational practice and service standards within the Landlord Service.

- 2.3 Delivery of both strategies will be undertaken through existing Housing Revenue Account (HRA) budgets and approved staffing resources. Any future service improvements, policy changes or initiatives arising from the implementation of either strategy that require additional funding will be subject to separate approval through the council's established governance and budget-setting processes.
- 2.4 Effective tenancy management and tenancy sustainment contribute to the efficient use of housing resources by reducing tenancy failure, preventing homelessness, minimising void loss and supporting the effective use of social housing stock.

3 LEGAL AND PROCUREMENT IMPLICATIONS

- 3.1 The Tenancy Strategy fulfils the council's statutory duty under Section 150 of the Localism Act 2011 to publish a tenancy strategy setting out the matters to which Registered Providers operating within the district should have regard when formulating tenancy policies.
- 3.2 Both strategies have been developed having regard to relevant housing legislation and regulatory requirements, including the Localism Act 2011, Housing Act 1996, Homelessness Reduction Act 2017, Domestic Abuse Act 2021, Social Housing (Regulation) Act 2023 and the Regulator of Social Housing Consumer Standards 2024.
- 3.3 The strategies support the council in demonstrating compliance with its statutory and regulatory obligations as a local housing authority and registered provider of social housing.
- 3.4 There are no procurement implications arising directly from the adoption of either strategy.

4 WORKFORCE IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 Implementation of the strategies will be delivered through existing Housing Service and Landlord Service resources.
- 4.2 The strategies provide a clear framework for tenancy management, tenancy sustainment and resident support, supporting consistent decision-making, service delivery and staff accountability across housing services.
- 4.3 Any workforce training or development requirements arising from implementation will be managed through existing service training programmes and workforce development arrangements.

5 PROPERTY AND ASSET IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 The strategies support the effective management and utilisation of the council's housing stock by promoting tenancy sustainment, reducing tenancy failure, supporting housing mobility and ensuring that social housing is used effectively to meet local housing need.
- 5.2 The strategies contribute to the council's wider asset management objectives by supporting the long-term occupation of suitable homes, reducing avoidable tenancy turnover and helping to maximise the social value derived from housing assets.

6 CONSULTATION AND COMMUNICATION

- 6.1 The council has undertaken consultation and engagement activities to inform the development of the revised Tenancy Strategy and the Housing Services Tenancy Management Strategy.
- 6.2 Both strategies have been informed by consultation with residents, Registered Providers, support organisations and partner agencies. Consultation findings highlighted the importance of affordability, tenancy sustainment, mental health support, anti-social behaviour management, effective communication, early intervention and stronger partnership working. These themes have directly informed the final strategies.
- 6.3 The consultation process included residents, tenant representatives, Registered Providers operating within the district, support organisations and local authority partners.
- 6.4 Resident consultation identified a number of recurring themes relating to affordability pressures, cost of living challenges, anti-social behaviour, communication, mental health, tenancy sustainment, housing mobility and access to support services. Residents consistently highlighted the importance of early intervention, clear communication and responsive housing services.
- 6.5 Consultation with Registered Providers and support organisations reinforced these findings and identified additional strategic themes including increasing tenant vulnerability, affordability pressures, housing supply constraints, partnership working, independent mediation services, homelessness prevention and the importance of proactive tenancy sustainment approaches.
- 6.6 Organisations highlighted the growing complexity of tenant support needs and the increasing importance of coordinated multi-agency working.
- 6.7 Feedback received during consultation has directly informed the final strategy, including strengthening commitments relating to affordability, financial inclusion, tenancy sustainment, early intervention, mental health support, partnership working, housing mobility, safeguarding and neighbourhood management.
- 6.8 The Housing Services Tenancy Management Strategy was developed through the Housing Policy, Procedure and Guidance Framework and included co-production activity with tenant representatives, staff consultation and resident scrutiny.
- 6.9 This approach ensured the strategy reflects resident priorities and lived experience whilst supporting compliance with the Regulator of Social Housing Consumer Standards. Consultation findings demonstrated broad support for the strategic direction of both strategies and provided valuable evidence informing their final development.
- 6.10 Resident consultation feedback: See Appendix 5 & Appendix 7
- 6.11 Registered Provider feedback: See appendix 6
- 6.12 As a result of the feedback, we made changes to the strategy, and these are summarised in the appendix Supporting Information.
- 6.13 In consideration of the new Landlord Service Tenancy Management Strategy consultation with both colleagues and customers has happened within the Policy Procedure and Guidance lifecycle framework, starting with a co-production workshop with tenant representatives to define the purpose of the strategy, tenant experience, expectations and

core principles The document then received full scrutiny from tenants and staff to ensure robust and transparent policy adoption.

7 ENVIRONMENTAL CONSIDERATIONS

7.1 The two tenancy strategies embed environmental considerations through efficient resource use, reduced waste, and sustainable community planning, key principles underpinning environmentally responsible housing management.

8 PUBLIC SECTOR EQUALITY DUTY

8.1 Equality Impact Assessments have been completed for both the Tenancy Strategy 2026–2031 and the Housing Services Tenancy Management Strategy 2026–2029.

8.2 The assessments considered the potential impacts of the strategies on residents with protected characteristics and other vulnerable groups.

8.3 The assessments identified several areas requiring particular consideration, including digital exclusion, language barriers, accessibility of services, affordability pressures, mental health needs, domestic abuse, safeguarding concerns and the increasing complexity of tenant support needs.

8.4 The EqIA findings informed the development of both strategies and strengthened commitments relating to accessible communication, reasonable adjustments, early intervention, safeguarding, tenancy sustainment and person-centred service delivery.

8.5 The strategies promote equality of opportunity by supporting fair and transparent decision-making, improving access to support services, strengthening partnership working and ensuring that tenancy management approaches take account of individual circumstances and vulnerabilities.

8.6 The EqIA concluded that the strategies are expected to have an overall positive impact by improving accessibility, inclusion, tenancy stability and housing outcomes for residents.

8.7 The Equality Impact Assessment for Tenancy Strategy is Appendix 2

8.8 The Equality Impact Assessment for Tenancy Management Strategy is Appendix 4

9 DATA PROTECTION IMPACT ASSESSMENT

None

10 RISK MANAGEMENT

Risk	Mitigation	Opportunities
Financial Exposure	There are limited direct financial risks associated with the adoption of the Tenancy Strategy 2026–2031 and Housing Services Tenancy Management Strategy 2026–2029. Delivery of the strategies will be undertaken through existing Housing Revenue Account (HRA) budgets and approved staffing resources.	Effective tenancy management and tenancy sustainment can reduce tenancy failure, minimise void loss, prevent homelessness and support the efficient use of housing resources.

Regulatory Compliance and Challenge	Failure to maintain an up-to-date strategic framework could increase the risk of regulatory challenge from the Regulator of Social Housing (RSH) and findings from the Housing Ombudsman Service. The revised strategies have been developed in line with current legislation, Consumer Standards and sector best practice.	The strategies support the council's ongoing landlord service improvement programme and provide evidence of compliance with regulatory expectations ahead of future RSH inspection activity.
Service Improvement and Innovation	There is a risk that opportunities to improve tenancy services, customer experience and operational efficiency may not be fully realised. Investment in housing management systems, digital solutions and service redesign supports continuous improvement and improved performance monitoring.	Enhanced use of housing management data, digital systems and performance information will support more proactive tenancy management and improved customer outcomes.
Reputational Risk	Failure to demonstrate improvement following the council's self-referral to the Regulator of Social Housing could impact stakeholder confidence and the council's reputation as a landlord. The strategies form part of a wider programme of service improvement and governance oversight.	Adoption of the strategies demonstrates a commitment to transparency, accountability and continuous improvement, supporting the council's ambition to achieve the highest possible regulatory grading.
Achievement of Strategic Outcomes	Without clear strategic frameworks, there is a risk of inconsistent service delivery and reduced effectiveness in supporting tenancy sustainment, homelessness prevention and resident wellbeing. The strategies provide a clear direction for tenancy management across the district and within the Landlord Service.	The strategies support stronger tenancy sustainment outcomes, improved resident experiences and more effective use of social housing stock.
Property and Asset Management	Poor tenancy sustainment can result in increased tenancy turnover, void costs and reduced effectiveness in the management of housing assets. The strategies promote stable tenancies, effective housing management and early intervention approaches.	Improved tenancy sustainment contributes to the long-term management of housing assets and supports the effective use of social housing to meet local housing need.
Resident Engagement and Community Confidence	Failure to effectively engage residents could reduce trust and confidence in housing services. The strategies have been informed by consultation with residents and align with the Tenant Partnership and Influence Plan 2025–2030.	Stronger resident engagement supports service improvement, increased tenant satisfaction and compliance with the Transparency, Influence and Accountability Standard.
Timescales and Regulatory Readiness	The timing of future RSH inspection activity remains unknown. Ongoing service improvement activity, governance oversight and independent assurance	The strategies contribute to the council's regulatory readiness and provide a clear framework for

	work, including mock inspection activity, support organisational preparedness.	demonstrating compliance during future inspection activity.
Capacity and Resources	Delivery of the strategies relies upon continued commitment of existing staff resources and management oversight. Service responsibilities have been aligned through the Landlord Service structure and governance arrangements.	Clear strategic direction supports consistent decision-making, staff accountability and more effective deployment of resources.
Local Government Reorganisation (LGR)	Future Local Government Reorganisation may require strategic alignment across the proposed Mid-Hampshire authority area. The strategies will be kept under review to ensure continued relevance and alignment with future organisational arrangements.	The strategies provide a strong foundation for future harmonisation of tenancy approaches across the emerging Mid-Hampshire authority.
Other Risks	No additional significant risks have been identified at this stage.	Ongoing monitoring, performance reporting and periodic review of the strategies will ensure emerging risks are identified and managed appropriately.

11 SUPPORTING INFORMATION:

- 11.1 The Localism Act 2011 requires local housing authorities to publish a Tenancy Strategy setting out the matters to which Registered Providers should have regard when formulating tenancy policies. Winchester City Council adopted its original Tenancy Strategy in 2012. Since then, the legislative, regulatory and housing landscape has changed significantly.
- 11.2 Housing affordability pressures have continued to increase across Winchester, with demand for affordable housing substantially exceeding available supply. The Hampshire Home Choice register currently contains approximately 1,698 households seeking affordable housing within Winchester, demonstrating continuing demand for social housing. The council has also experienced increasing homelessness pressures, greater complexity of support needs and growing demand for tenancy sustainment interventions.
- 11.3 Since publication of the original strategy, the Social Housing (Regulation) Act 2023 has introduced a strengthened consumer regulation regime. The Regulator of Social Housing now places greater emphasis on tenancy services, neighbourhood management, accountability, tenant engagement and service outcomes through the Consumer Standards introduced in April 2024. The revised strategy has therefore been developed to align with these regulatory expectations.
- 11.4 The revised Tenancy Strategy moves beyond a narrow focus on tenancy types and establishes a broader framework focused on tenancy sustainment, homelessness prevention, resident wellbeing, vulnerability, partnership working and the effective use of social housing stock. The strategy reflects modern housing challenges and supports the council's wider housing and homelessness priorities.
- 11.5 Consultation findings consistently highlighted affordability pressures, tenancy sustainment, mental health, anti-social behaviour, communication, housing mobility and support needs

as key issues affecting residents. Registered Providers and support organisations reinforced the need for earlier intervention, stronger partnership working, tenancy sustainment support, financial inclusion activity and coordinated support pathways. These findings have informed the final strategy and strengthened its focus on prevention and support.

- 11.6 The revised strategy introduces a stronger focus on homelessness prevention, tenancy sustainment, early intervention, support for vulnerable residents, affordability and financial inclusion, safeguarding, partnership working, housing mobility and the effective use of social housing stock. It also establishes clearer expectations regarding tenancy types, tenancy reviews and tenancy management approaches across the district.
- 11.7 The strategy acknowledges emerging national housing reforms, including proposals associated with the Renters' Rights legislation and wider housing reform programmes. The strategy will therefore remain subject to review throughout its lifespan to ensure continued compliance with legislation and alignment with Local Government Reorganisation arrangements.
- 11.8 The Housing Services Tenancy Management Strategy 2026–2029 is a new landlord strategy that sets out how Winchester City Council will manage tenancies, support residents and deliver tenancy services. The strategy establishes a clear framework for tenancy management, tenancy sustainment, resident support, safeguarding, anti-social behaviour management, resident engagement and service standards.
- 11.9 Both strategies support the council's wider landlord service improvement programme and contribute to compliance with the Regulator of Social Housing Consumer Standards. They provide greater clarity, transparency and accountability regarding tenancy services and support the council's ambition to achieve the highest possible regulatory grading through future inspection by the Regulator of Social Housing.
- 11.10 Approval of the revised Tenancy Strategy 2026–2031 and the Housing Services Tenancy Management Strategy 2026–2029 will provide a modern strategic framework for tenancy management across Winchester, supporting homelessness prevention, tenancy sustainment, resident wellbeing and regulatory compliance whilst ensuring social housing continues to be used effectively to meet local housing need.

12 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED

- 12.1 The option of retaining the existing Tenancy Strategy and not adopting the revised Tenancy Strategy 2026–2031 and Housing Services Tenancy Management Strategy 2026–2029 was considered and rejected.
- 12.2 The existing Tenancy Strategy was adopted in 2012 and no longer fully reflects the current legislative, regulatory and operational environment. Significant changes have occurred since its adoption, including the introduction of the Social Housing (Regulation) Act 2023, the Regulator of Social Housing Consumer Standards 2024, increasing housing demand, affordability pressures and the growing complexity of tenant support needs.
- 12.3 Retaining the existing strategy would limit the council's ability to demonstrate alignment with current legislation, regulatory expectations and sector best practice. It would also reduce the effectiveness of the strategic framework supporting tenancy sustainment, homelessness prevention and the effective use of social housing stock across the district.
- 12.4 Not adopting the Housing Services Tenancy Management Strategy would leave the council without a clear strategic framework setting out how tenancy services will be delivered, how tenants will be supported to sustain their tenancies and how the council intends to meet the

expectations of the Consumer Standards in relation to tenancy management, neighbourhood management, resident engagement and service delivery.

- 12.5 Failure to adopt the revised strategies could increase the risk of inconsistent service delivery, reduce opportunities to strengthen tenancy sustainment and homelessness prevention activity and weaken the council's ability to demonstrate compliance with the Regulator of Social Housing's Consumer Standards.
- 12.6 The recommended option is therefore to approve both strategies, providing a modern, resident-focused and regulatory-compliant framework for tenancy management, tenancy sustainment and effective use of social housing across Winchester, whilst supporting the council's wider housing priorities and ongoing landlord service improvement programme.

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS:-

Previous Committee Reports:-

Presentation: Social Housing White paper- the Charter for Social Housing Residents Economy and Housing Policy Committee (formerly Business and Housing Policy Committee) 28th February 2023

Tenancy Strategy for Winchester District (CAB2424 (HSG)) Reported to 10th December 2012 Committee Meeting

Other Background Documents:-

None

APPENDICES:

Appendix	Title
Appendix 1	Tenancy Strategy 2026–2031
Appendix 2	Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) – Tenancy Strategy 2026–2031
Appendix 3	Housing Services Tenancy Management Strategy 2026–2029
Appendix 4	Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) – Housing Services Tenancy Management Strategy 2026–2029
Appendix 5	Housing Policy Co-Creation Group Session Summary – Tenancy Management Strategy
Appendix 6	Registered Providers and Support Organisations Consultation Analysis – Tenancy Strategy
Appendix 7	Tenancy Strategy Consultation Results and Narrative Report
Appendix 8	Tenancy Strategy – Policy on a Page – content only
Appendix 9	Housing Services Tenancy Management Strategy – Policy on a Page – content only



Winchester
City Council

Housing Services Tenancy Strategy 2026-2031

“A safe, secure and sustainable home provides the foundation for stability, wellbeing and opportunity.”
A Strategic Framework for Tenancy Management and Sustainment.

Executive Summary

This strategy sets out Winchester City Council’s strategic approach to tenancy management and tenancy sustainment across the district for the period 2026–2031. It establishes a modern and preventative framework for how social housing services should support residents, communities and wider housing priorities across Winchester.

The strategy has been developed in response to the significant changes that have taken place across the housing and regulatory landscape since the introduction of the **Localism Act 2011** and the council’s original Tenancy Strategy.

Over the past decade, housing pressures have continued to increase both nationally and locally. Winchester has experienced rising affordability challenges, increasing demand for affordable housing, growing homelessness pressures and increasing complexity in tenant support needs. Consultation feedback from residents, Registered Providers and support organisations also highlighted increasing concerns relating to affordability, tenancy sustainment, mental health, anti-social behaviour, housing mobility and the growing complexity of support needs across or within communities.

At the same time, the introduction of the **Social Housing (Regulation) Act 2023** and the **Regulator of Social Housing Consumer Standards 2024** has placed greater emphasis on transparency, accountability, tenant engagement, neighbourhood management and the overall quality of housing services. In response, this updated strategy moves beyond a narrow focus on tenancy types alone and instead adopts a broader, more preventative, partnership-led and tenant-centred approach to tenancy management and housing sustainment. The strategy places particular emphasis on:

- Supporting stable and sustainable tenancies
- Preventing homelessness and tenancy breakdown
- Early intervention and tailored support

- Fairness, transparency and tenant-centred services
- Supporting vulnerable residents and households
- Strong, safe and sustainable communities
- Effective partnership working and coordinated support pathways
- Making best use of available housing stock

The strategy also establishes clear strategic expectations for Registered Providers operating within Winchester and supports a coordinated approach to tenancy management, tenancy sustainment and homelessness prevention across the district.

The strategy recognises the increasing complexity of housing need across Winchester and the importance of coordinated partnership working, proactive support and sustainment-focused approaches in preventing homelessness and supporting long-term housing stability.

Introduction

The Localism Act 2011 introduced a requirement for all local housing authorities in England to prepare and publish a Tenancy Strategy.

This strategy establishes Winchester City Council's strategic expectations for the types of tenancies granted by the council and Registered Providers operating within the district, while supporting housing services that respond effectively to local need, tenancy sustainment and sustainable communities across Winchester.

The strategy reflects the council's wider vision that everyone should have access to a safe, secure and sustainable home. It has been developed in the context of increasing housing pressures, rising demand for affordable housing, growing complexity in support needs, changes in the regulatory landscape and the council's commitment to prevention, partnership working and tenant-centred service delivery.

Housing is about more than bricks and mortar. Stable housing can support health, wellbeing, independence, employment, education, resilience and community connection. This strategy therefore places strong emphasis on tenancy sustainment, early intervention, fairness, resident wellbeing and coordinated partnership working.

The strategy is intended to provide a high-level strategic framework for tenancy management across the district rather than prescribe detailed operational procedures, which remain the responsibility of individual housing providers and organisations.

The council expects tenancy services to be delivered fairly and consistently, with due regard to equality, diversity, inclusion and the differing needs of residents and communities across Winchester.

The strategy supports the council's Housing Strategy 2023–2028, Preventing Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2025–2030, Hampshire Home Choice Allocations Framework and wider corporate priorities.

This strategy has been developed in alignment with relevant housing legislation, regulatory requirements and national guidance, including the:

- Localism Act 2011
- Housing Act 1996
- Homelessness Reduction Act 2017
- Crime and Disorder Act 1998
- Anti-social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014
- Domestic Abuse Act 2021
- Social Housing (Regulation) Act 2023
- Regulator of Social Housing Consumer Standards 2024

The strategy has also been informed through consultation and engagement with residents, Registered Providers, stakeholder organisations and council services across Winchester. Consultation findings consistently reinforced the importance of prevention, communication, tenancy sustainment, fairness, wellbeing and stronger partnership working in supporting positive housing outcomes across the district.

Legislative and Regulatory Context

The purpose of the strategy is to provide a strategic framework setting out the matters that The Council and Registered Providers operating within the district should consider when developing their own tenancy policies. Specifically, the Act requires local authorities to outline:

- The types of tenancies that should be granted
- The circumstances in which different tenancy types should be used
- The length of any fixed-term tenancies
- The circumstances in which a further tenancy should be granted at the end of a fixed term

Since the introduction of the original Tenancy Strategies, the legislative and regulatory landscape for social housing has evolved significantly. There is now a much greater emphasis on transparency, accountability and the overall experience of tenants within social housing.

The **Social Housing (Regulation) Act 2023** strengthened the powers of the Regulator of Social Housing and introduced a proactive consumer regulation regime, supported by the **Consumer Standards** that came into force in April 2024, highlighting 4 key standards:

- Safety and Quality Standard
- Transparency, Influence and Accountability Standard
- Neighbourhood and Community Standard
- Tenancy Standard

As a result, this strategy moves beyond a narrow focus on tenancy types alone and instead establishes a broader strategic framework for how social housing tenancies should support residents, communities and wider housing objectives across Winchester.

Relationship to Other Strategies and Policies

This Tenancy Strategy forms part of Winchester City Council's wider strategic housing framework and should be read alongside the following strategies, policies and plans:

- Preventing Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2025–2030
- Housing Development Strategy 2025–2032
- Hampshire Home Choice Allocations Framework 2026
- Tenancy Management Strategy 2026–2029
- Anti-Social Behaviour Policy 2026–2029
- Domestic Abuse Framework
- Tenant Partnership and Influence Plan 2026–2029
- Safeguarding Policies
- Vulnerability Policy

- Temporary Accommodation Placement Policy 2026-2029

Together, these strategies and policies provide a coordinated and integrated framework for the delivery of housing services across Winchester. They support residents throughout their housing journey, from accessing affordable housing and sustaining successful tenancies, to preventing homelessness and achieving long-term housing stability.

This strategy has a particularly important relationship with the Preventing Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2025–2030. Sustaining existing tenancies is one of the most effective ways of preventing homelessness, reducing housing insecurity and ensuring that homelessness is rare, brief and non-recurring. Through a focus on early intervention, tenancy sustainment, partnership working and tailored support, this strategy directly contributes to the council's homelessness prevention objectives.

Housing providers are encouraged to adopt preventative approaches that identify risks at the earliest opportunity, intervene proactively and work collaboratively with support agencies to prevent tenancy breakdown wherever possible. Where homelessness cannot be prevented, housing services should work alongside homelessness, health and support partners to ensure that residents have timely access to suitable accommodation and appropriate support. The strategy also supports the council's wider Housing Strategy and Housing Development Strategy by promoting the effective use of social housing, supporting housing mobility, encouraging sustainable communities and helping residents remain safely and successfully housed for as long as possible. By aligning these approaches, Winchester City Council aims to deliver housing services that are fair, transparent and tenant-centred, while supporting safe, stable and sustainable homes, preventing homelessness and enabling residents and communities to thrive.

Purpose of the Tenancy Strategy

This strategy sets out Winchester City Council's strategic approach to tenancy management across the district and establishes a shared framework for how social housing tenancies should support residents, communities and wider housing priorities.

The strategy aims to ensure that tenancy approaches across Winchester are consistent and tenant-centred and responsive to local need, while supporting strong communities and positive outcomes for residents. In particular, the strategy seeks to:

- Provide a clear strategic framework for tenancy types and tenancy management across the district
- Support the fair, effective and responsible use of social housing to meet housing need
- Promote tenancy sustainment and support the prevention of homelessness
- Encourage stable, safe and sustainable communities where residents can thrive
- Establish clear strategic expectations for Registered Providers operating within Winchester
- Support consistency, fairness and transparency in tenancy decision-making
- Strengthen partnership working across housing, homelessness and support services
- Ensure tenancy approaches remain aligned with current legislation, regulation and best practice

To achieve this, this strategy applies to:

- Winchester City Council housing services
- Registered Providers operating within the Winchester district
- Affordable housing delivered through nomination agreements

- Social housing allocated through Hampshire Home Choice

Registered Providers are expected to have due regard to this strategy when developing, reviewing or implementing their own tenancy policies and tenancy management approaches.

Housing services play a vital role in supporting wellbeing, independence and community resilience. This strategy therefore places equal emphasis on effective housing management, tenancy sustainment and supporting residents to remain safely and successfully within their homes wherever possible.

Understanding Winchester – Local Context

Winchester is a distinctive and diverse district, comprising a historic city, vibrant market towns and rural communities, each with its own identity, strengths and housing needs. It is a place where people want to live, work and build their future, supported by strong communities that contribute positively to wellbeing, opportunity and quality of life.

The council's vision is to make a real difference to the lives of residents, the strength of the local economy and the quality of the environment. Delivering safe, stable and sustainable homes plays a fundamental role in achieving this vision. Housing provides the foundation for health, wellbeing, independence, employment, education and community resilience, enabling residents and communities to thrive.

The **Council Plan 2025–2030** identifies the provision of Good Homes for All as one of the council's key priorities, recognising the importance of increasing affordable housing supply, preventing homelessness and ensuring residents have access to safe, secure and energy-efficient homes. The plan also highlights wider challenges including the high cost of buying and renting a home, the rising cost of living, inequalities affecting health and wellbeing, and the need to support thriving and sustainable communities across the district.

Despite its many strengths, Winchester continues to experience significant housing pressures. High property values, affordability challenges and increasing demand for affordable housing continue to place pressure on residents, communities and housing services. Consultation feedback from residents, Registered Providers and support organisations also identified growing concerns relating to affordability, tenancy sustainment, housing mobility, homelessness pressures and the increasing complexity of support needs across the district.

These challenges reinforce the importance of a tenancy strategy that not only addresses statutory tenancy requirements, but also supports homelessness prevention, tenancy sustainment, resident wellbeing and the creation of safe, strong and sustainable communities.

Housing Affordability and Housing Need

Housing affordability remains one of the most significant challenges facing Winchester. High house prices, increasing private sector rents and wider cost-of-living pressures continue to make it difficult for many households to access or sustain suitable housing. While Winchester remains an attractive place to live, work and raise a family, the cost of housing creates significant barriers for many residents and contributes to increasing demand for affordable housing and housing support services.

Access to affordable housing is further constrained by Hampshire Home Choice eligibility criteria, which generally require applicants to have a household income below £60,000 and savings below £16,000. However, many households continue to experience affordability challenges despite being in employment, reflecting the increasing gap between local incomes and housing costs across the district.

Consultation feedback from residents, Registered Providers and support organisations identified affordability pressures as one of the most significant factors affecting tenancy sustainment, financial wellbeing and housing stability. Rising household costs, increasing rents, service charges and wider economic

pressures are creating additional risks for residents and increasing demand for tenancy support, homelessness prevention services and financial inclusion interventions.

Housing Demand in Winchester

Demand for affordable housing in Winchester remains high and continues to exceed the supply of available homes.

As of 1 April 2026, there were 1,698 households registered for affordable housing in Winchester through Hampshire Home Choice, representing 17% of all applicants across the Hampshire Home Choice partnership area.

Measure	Winchester
Households on Housing Register	1,698
Share of Hampshire Home Choice Register	17%
Existing Transfer Applicants (across HHC)	1,993
Total Hampshire Home Choice Applicants	9,966

Source: Hampshire Home Choice Annual Report 2026

The level of demand demonstrates the continuing importance of affordable housing within Winchester and highlights the need to make effective use of available housing stock. It also reflects wider affordability pressures across the district and the increasing number of households unable to access suitable housing through the private market.

Profile of Housing Need

Demand is particularly concentrated amongst households requiring smaller homes.

Property Size Required	Percentage of Applicants
1 Bedroom	55%
2 Bedrooms	22%
3 Bedrooms	18%
4+ Bedrooms	5%

Source: Hampshire Home Choice Annual Report 2026

More than half of all applicants require one-bedroom accommodation. This demonstrates the significant demand for smaller homes across the housing system and reinforces the importance of housing mobility, downsizing opportunities and the effective management of under-occupied properties. The continued demand for both smaller accommodation and larger family homes highlight the need for housing providers to support residents whose housing needs change over time.

The data also shows increasing pressure on housing mobility. Across Hampshire Home Choice, 20% of applicants are existing social housing tenants seeking alternative accommodation because their current home no longer meets their needs.

Supply and Lettings

During 2025–2026, a total of 740 affordable housing lettings were completed within Winchester through Hampshire Home Choice. This represented almost one-third of all lettings completed across the Hampshire Home Choice partnership area.

Winchester Lettings 2025–2026

Measure	Number
Affordable Housing Lettings	740
Share of Partnership Lettings	32%

Measure	Number
Refused Offers	172
Refusal Rate	19%

Source: Hampshire Home Choice Annual Report 2026.

Although a significant number of lettings were completed during the year, demand continues to outstrip supply across many property types. This contributes to longer waiting times for applicants and reinforces the need to support tenancy sustainment, reduce tenancy failure and make best use of existing affordable housing stock.

Waiting Times

Waiting time data provides further evidence of the continuing imbalance between supply and demand within the Winchester housing market.

Average Waiting Times in Winchester

Property Type	Band 2	Band 3
1 Bedroom	1 year 4 months	3 years 3 months
2 Bedroom Flat	1 year	1 year 5 months
2 Bedroom House	11 months	2 years
3 Bedroom House	1 year 2 months	1 year 8 months
4+ Bedroom Home	1 year 6 months	3 years 2 months
55+ Housing	10 months	2 years 4 months

Source: Hampshire Home Choice Annual Report 2026.

The waiting time data highlights sustained demand across all property types and demonstrates that affordable housing remains a scarce and valuable resource. Longer waiting times for one-bedroom and larger family accommodation illustrate the particular pressures affecting these parts of the housing market.

Implications for Tenancy Management

The housing pressures affecting Winchester extend beyond access to housing alone. Affordability challenges, changing household circumstances, increasing support needs and wider economic pressures can all affect a resident's ability to sustain a tenancy successfully.

These pressures are likely to continue throughout the lifetime of this strategy. Housing providers must therefore remain focused on tenancy sustainment, homelessness prevention, early intervention and effective use of housing stock. Supporting residents to maintain successful tenancies not only benefits individual households but also helps ensure that affordable housing remains available to meet the needs of current and future residents across Winchester.

Supporting Sustainable Rural Communities

Winchester is a diverse district that includes a significant number of rural settlements, villages and market towns. The council recognises that rural communities face distinct housing challenges, including limited affordable housing supply, higher housing costs, lower property turnover and fewer alternative housing options than are often available within larger urban areas.

Affordable housing plays an important role in maintaining the long-term sustainability of rural communities by enabling local people to remain within their communities, supporting local services and helping maintain balanced and resilient populations.

The council recognises the importance of supporting tenancy sustainment within rural communities and ensuring that affordable housing provided through rural exception sites, community-led housing schemes and local connection arrangements continues to meet local housing needs.

Housing providers should:

- Support sustainable tenancies within rural communities
- Recognise the limited housing alternatives available within many rural settlements
- Consider the importance of local connection arrangements where applicable
- Support community cohesion and long-term village sustainability
- Promote tenancy sustainment approaches that help residents remain connected to their local communities
- Work collaboratively with local partners to support resilient and sustainable rural communities

Wider Pressures Facing Residents and Housing Services

The council's **Preventing Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy** highlights the increasing pressures facing residents and communities across Winchester.

Housing need across Winchester is becoming increasingly complex. Rising housing costs, affordability pressures and wider cost-of-living challenges are affecting more households across the district, alongside growing demand for homelessness prevention services, tenancy support and temporary accommodation. There are increasing pressures relating to temporary accommodation demand, complex support needs and repeat homelessness presentations across the district.

At the same time, many residents are experiencing increasingly complex challenges linked to mental health, wellbeing, domestic abuse, safeguarding concerns, financial hardship and long-term support needs. Demand for supported, accessible and adapted housing also continues to grow, particularly for older residents and households requiring ongoing support.

The council is also seeing continued pressures relating to rough sleeping, repeat homelessness and tenancy sustainment, alongside the changing housing needs of an ageing population. These issues can affect people in different ways and may have significant impacts on individuals, families, neighbourhoods and wider community wellbeing.

Consultation feedback from residents, Registered Providers and support organisations reinforced the importance of earlier intervention, stronger partnership working and more coordinated support pathways in helping residents sustain tenancies and avoid crisis situations wherever possible. Providers also highlighted the increasing operational challenges associated with affordability pressures, vulnerability, anti-social behaviour, mental health needs and housing instability across the district.

These challenges reinforce the importance of housing services that are proactive, preventative and person-centred. They highlight the need for strong partnership working, earlier intervention, coordinated support and flexible service delivery to help residents sustain their tenancies and prevent issues from escalating into crisis wherever possible.

This strategy recognises that housing services must continue to adapt and evolve to meet changing needs, while remaining focused on fairness, stability, wellbeing and supporting safe, strong and sustainable communities across Winchester.

Strategic Tenancy Framework

The council's tenancy framework is designed to respond to the changing housing needs, housing pressures and support challenges affecting residents and communities across Winchester, while remaining rooted in the principles of stability, fairness, prevention, partnership working and community wellbeing.

With almost 10,000 households currently registered on Hampshire Home Choice, rising demand for affordable housing, increasing pressures on homelessness services and growing levels of housing need and vulnerability, social housing remains one of the district's most valuable and limited resources.

Consultation feedback from residents, Registered Providers and support organisations also highlighted increasing pressures relating to affordability, mental health, tenancy sustainment, anti-social behaviour, housing mobility and the growing complexity of support needs across communities. This strategy therefore adopts a balanced, preventative and forward-looking approach to tenancy management, one that supports long-term housing stability wherever appropriate, while also ensuring social housing continues to meet changing local need effectively, fairly and sustainably. Successful tenancies are not achieved solely through tenancy enforcement or tenancy conditions, but through early intervention, clear communication, coordinated support, fair decision-making and strong partnership working. The framework therefore places equal emphasis on tenancy sustainment, homelessness prevention, resident wellbeing and effective housing management. The council’s tenancy framework aims to:

Strategic Outcome	Approach
Stable Tenancies	Supporting residents to establish and sustain successful tenancies wherever possible
Sustainable Communities	Supporting safe, balanced, inclusive and well-managed neighbourhoods
Support for Vulnerable Residents	Responding proactively to vulnerability, wellbeing and changing support needs
Effective Housing Management	Making best and most responsible use of available housing stock
Partnership Working	Working collaboratively across services, organisations and support pathways
Homelessness Prevention	Early identification of tenancy risk, targeted interventions and coordinated support to prevent homelessness and repeat homelessness

This approach reflects the council’s wider commitment to prevention, early intervention and tenant-centred service delivery. It recognises that successful tenancies are built through support, communication, trust, partnership working and responsive housing services that adapt to changing resident needs over time.

The council expects tenancy decisions to be fair, transparent, proportionate and clearly communicated, with individual circumstances, wellbeing, affordability pressures and support needs carefully considered as part of decision-making. Wherever possible, the focus should remain on tenancy sustainment, prevention and supporting positive long-term outcomes for residents and communities.

Tenancy Types Across Winchester

Different tenancy types may be appropriate in different circumstances depending on housing need, household circumstances, vulnerability, support needs and the purpose of the accommodation.

The council’s approach to tenancy types is guided by the principles set out within this strategy. With increasing demand for affordable housing, growing homelessness pressures, affordability challenges and changing support needs across communities, tenancy arrangements must provide both security for residents and flexibility to respond to local housing need appropriately and fairly.

Secure housing plays a vital role in supporting residents, families and sustainable communities. Stable housing can support wellbeing, independence, employment, education, health outcomes and community resilience, while reducing the risk of repeat homelessness and housing instability.

At the same time, social housing remains a limited resource, with significant demand for smaller homes, larger family accommodation, accessible housing and transfer opportunities across the district. Housing providers should therefore balance tenancy stability with the effective and responsible use of social housing stock.

The council expects tenancy types and tenancy management approaches to be clearly explained to tenants and delivered in a way that is fair, transparent, supportive and responsive to individual circumstances.

Introductory Tenancies

Winchester City Council will normally grant introductory tenancies to new tenants for an initial 12-month period.

The introductory tenancy period provides an opportunity to establish a positive and sustainable tenancy from the outset, while ensuring tenants receive the information, guidance and support needed to settle successfully into their home and community.

Early intervention, clear communication and positive tenancy support are important in helping prevent future tenancy breakdown and supporting long-term housing outcomes. Structured tenancy support and review arrangements during the first year should help identify any concerns, vulnerability or support needs early and provide support wherever possible before issues escalate.

Following a successful introductory tenancy period, tenants will normally progress to a secure tenancy.

Secure Tenancies

The council supports the continued use of secure tenancies as the principal tenancy type for general needs council housing.

Secure tenancies provide long-term housing security, helping residents establish roots within their communities, maintain successful housing outcomes and contribute positively to neighbourhood stability and community resilience.

Secure tenancies will normally be granted where:

- An introductory tenancy has been successfully completed
- Existing secure tenants transfer to another property
- Tenants transfer from another Registered Provider with protected tenancy rights
- Lifetime tenancy protections apply under legislation

The important role secure housing plays in supporting sustainable communities, reducing repeat homelessness and preventing unnecessary housing insecurity.

Assured Tenancies

Registered Providers operating within Winchester may grant assured or fixed-term assured tenancies in accordance with their own tenancy policies and governance frameworks.

The council expects Registered Providers to ensure tenancy approaches:

- Reflect local housing need, affordability pressures and tenancy sustainment considerations
- Support positive, sustainable and proportionate housing outcomes
- Are fair, transparent and clearly communicated
- Take account of vulnerability, wellbeing and support needs
- Support stable and sustainable communities
- Align with the principles and objectives of this strategy

The council will continue to work collaboratively with Registered Providers to support consistent and positive tenancy outcomes across the district.

Older Persons and Supported Housing

The council strongly supports the use of long-term or lifetime tenancies within:

- Sheltered housing
- Older persons accommodation
- Extra care housing
- Supported housing where long-term support needs exist

This recognises the importance of security, continuity, stability and appropriate support for older residents and households with ongoing care or support needs.

As Winchester's population and housing needs continue to change, the growing importance of providing housing solutions that support independence, wellbeing and long-term housing outcomes for older and vulnerable residents continues to grow.

This is particularly important given the increasing housing, health and support pressures associated with an ageing population across the district.

Flexible and Fixed-Term Tenancies

The Localism Act 2011 introduced the option for local authorities and Registered Providers to grant flexible or fixed-term tenancies.

Fixed-term tenancies can support the effective management of housing stock and help respond to changing housing need in some circumstances.

However, the council also recognises the importance of secure housing arrangements, particularly for households experiencing vulnerability, affordability pressures or long-term support needs.

Consultation feedback from Registered Providers identified operational concerns regarding the effectiveness of fixed-term tenancies in supporting long-term tenancy sustainment, community stability and positive resident outcomes. Providers are therefore encouraged to carefully consider whether fixed-term tenancy arrangements deliver proportionate and sustainable housing outcomes within local operational contexts.

The council also recognises that wider housing market reforms, including changes arising from the Renters' Rights Act, may influence housing mobility, access to private rented accommodation and homelessness prevention pathways over the lifetime of this strategy. Housing providers should continue to work collaboratively with the council and partners to monitor the impact of legislative changes on tenancy sustainment, housing demand and residents' housing options.

The council therefore supports a balanced and evidence-led approach that places fair, transparent and proportionate decision-making at the centre of tenancy management. Where fixed-term tenancies are used, decisions should take account of individual circumstances, vulnerability, support needs, affordability considerations and the objective of preventing homelessness wherever possible.

Length of Fixed-Term Tenancies

Where fixed-term tenancies are used, the council expects the standard tenancy term to normally be a minimum of five years.

Shorter fixed-term tenancies should only be considered in exceptional circumstances where there is a clear, proportionate and evidenced reason for doing so. Longer tenancy terms should be considered where households would benefit from greater housing security, stability and continuity of support.

This approach reflects the council's commitment to preventing unnecessary housing insecurity, supporting tenancy sustainment and promoting positive long-term housing outcomes.

Circumstances Where Flexible Tenancies May Be Appropriate

Fixed term or flexible tenancies may be appropriate in circumstances including:

- Temporary or transitional need
- Accommodation intended to meet a short-term housing need
- Transitional or pathway accommodation
- Adapted or specialist housing
- Significantly adapted accommodation
- Specialist housing linked to support pathways
- Mobility and stock management considerations

- Under-occupation considerations
- Future mobility requirements
- Changing housing need over time

In all cases, tenancy decisions should take account of individual circumstances, support needs, affordability pressures and wider wellbeing considerations, while focusing on achieving fair, sustainable and appropriate housing outcomes.

Vulnerable Households and Specialist Housing Needs

Alongside growing demand for general needs housing, there is increasing demand for housing that supports independence, wellbeing and long-term stability for residents with additional care, support or housing needs.

Housing providers should recognise that vulnerability can arise from a wide range of circumstances and may be temporary, long-term or change over time. Vulnerability may arise from a combination of factors including disability, mental health needs, domestic abuse, financial hardship, safeguarding concerns, trauma, social isolation, homelessness, caring responsibilities or changing life circumstances.

When determining tenancy arrangements and tenancy management approaches, housing providers should adopt flexible, person-centred and trauma-informed practices that take account of an individual's circumstances, strengths, support networks and long-term housing needs. Longer-term tenancy arrangements should be strongly considered where households include:

- Older residents
- Disabled residents
- Households with long-term care or support needs
- Households requiring adapted accommodation
- Residents experiencing significant vulnerability or complex support needs
- Residents requiring specialist or supported housing arrangements

The council recognises the important role that stable housing plays in supporting independence, health, wellbeing and positive life outcomes. Housing providers should therefore seek to promote tenancy sustainment and long-term housing stability wherever appropriate.

Supporting Older Persons, Specialist and Supported Housing

The Housing Development Strategy identifies the growing need for housing solutions that support older people and residents with specialist housing requirements, including sheltered housing, extra care housing, supported accommodation and accessible housing that enables people to live independently for as long as possible. The council also recognises the significant projected growth in the older population and the increasing need for housing that responds to changing care and support needs throughout later life.

Housing providers should support approaches that enable residents to maintain independence, remain connected to their communities and access appropriate housing and support services as their circumstances change.

The importance of effective housing pathways and tenancy sustainment support for residents who may require additional assistance is fundamental to this Strategy, including recognised support for:

- Older people
- Disabled residents

- Care leavers
- People experiencing homelessness
- Domestic abuse survivors
- Residents with mental health needs
- People with learning disabilities
- People with autism
- Residents living with dementia
- Residents with physical disabilities or mobility impairments
- Households requiring supported or pathway accommodation

Housing providers should work collaboratively with partner agencies to ensure that residents are able to access appropriate housing options, support services and tenancy sustainment interventions that help them remain safe, independent and successfully housed.

Strategic Vision and Principles

“Working together to ensure that social housing across Winchester provides safe, stable and sustainable homes that support wellbeing, prevent homelessness and enable residents and communities to thrive.”

Safe, secure and affordable housing provides the foundation for health, wellbeing, independence, opportunity and strong communities. Stable housing can improve life outcomes, support resilience and help residents remain connected to their families, neighbourhoods and support networks.

This strategy promotes a preventative, resident-centred and partnership-led approach to tenancy management across Winchester. It recognises that successful tenancies are built through:

- Early intervention and proactive support
- Clear communication and meaningful engagement
- Safe, good quality and well-maintained homes
- Accessible, inclusive and responsive services
- Fair, respectful and transparent decision-making
- Strong partnership working and coordinated support
- Safe, sustainable and well-managed communities

The strategy has been informed by consultation with residents, Registered Providers and support organisations across the district. Consultation findings consistently highlighted the importance of:

- Communication and responsiveness
- Earlier support and intervention
- Mental health and wellbeing support
- Affordability and financial pressures

- Neighbourhood safety and anti-social behaviour management
- Accessible and inclusive services
- Stronger partnership working and coordinated support
- Feeling listened to, respected and involved in decisions

The council recognises the significant housing pressures affecting Winchester, including affordability challenges, increasing demand for social housing, rising support needs and wider cost of living pressures. The strategy therefore seeks to balance the importance of long-term housing stability with the need to respond to changing housing needs, demographic pressures and the effective use of social housing across the district.

At its heart, this strategy is about supporting residents to build stable homes, sustain successful tenancies and live safely and independently within communities where they feel respected, supported and able to thrive.

Strategic Principles

This strategy is built around a set of shared strategic principles that reflect Winchester City Council's commitment to delivering housing services that are preventative, supportive, transparent and focused on positive outcomes for residents and communities across the district.

The principles have been informed by consultation with residents, Registered Providers and support organisations operating across Winchester. Although experiences differed across neighbourhoods and communities, consultation responses consistently highlighted the importance of:

- Early intervention and tenancy sustainment
- Affordability and cost of living pressures
- Clear communication and accessible services
- Mental health and wellbeing support
- Safer neighbourhoods and visible housing management
- Partnership working and coordinated support
- Fair, respectful and person-centred services.

Residents repeatedly emphasised the importance of feeling listened to, supported and treated fairly, while Registered Providers and support organisations reinforced the growing complexity of housing need and the importance of preventative and partnership-led approaches to tenancy management.

Together, these principles provide the foundation for tenancy decision-making, partnership working and service delivery across Winchester. They support a balanced approach that recognises the importance of stable housing, resident wellbeing, community resilience and the effective use of social housing within a challenging and changing housing environment.

Early Intervention, Sustainment and Wellbeing

The council is committed to adopting a proactive and preventative approach to tenancy management that supports residents to establish, maintain and sustain successful tenancies wherever possible.

Consultation feedback from both residents and housing organisations consistently identified early intervention as one of the most important factors in preventing tenancy breakdown, homelessness and escalating support needs. Residents frequently highlighted the importance of receiving help earlier, before

problems reached crisis point, while support organisations reinforced that preventative support and earlier referrals achieve better long-term outcomes for tenants and communities.

Secure and stable housing provides the foundation for wellbeing, independence, resilience and opportunity. Housing services should therefore focus not only on tenancy enforcement, but on identifying issues early, maintaining supportive relationships and helping residents remain safely and successfully within their homes and communities.

This approach reflects the council's wider commitment to homelessness prevention, early intervention and person-centred service delivery. It also recognises the increasing complexity of housing need across the district, including the impact of affordability pressures, rising rents, cost-of-living challenges, mental health concerns, vulnerability and wider support needs on tenancy sustainment and housing stability.

Housing providers should recognise the increasing impact of financial pressures on residents and the important role that early financial support can play in preventing tenancy breakdown and homelessness. Providers are encouraged to adopt proactive financial inclusion approaches, including early affordability assessments, income maximisation support, welfare benefit advice, debt support referrals and preventative housing support interventions to help residents manage financial pressures and maintain successful tenancies.

The council expects housing providers to:

- Identify risks, vulnerability and support needs at the earliest opportunity
- Maintain proactive, supportive and person-centred tenancy management approaches
- Provide timely advice, intervention and practical support
- Support residents before issues escalate into crisis wherever possible
- Adopt trauma-informed approaches where appropriate
- Work collaboratively with support agencies and partner organisations
- Promote wellbeing, independence and long-term housing stability

Housing providers should recognise that residents may experience changing circumstances throughout the tenancy journey and that support needs can arise at any stage of a tenancy. Services should therefore remain flexible, accessible and responsive to individual circumstances wherever possible. Housing providers should also establish clear referral and escalation arrangements to ensure concerns relating to tenancy sustainment, affordability, safeguarding, vulnerability or wellbeing are identified and responded to at the earliest possible stage.

There are strong relationships between stable housing, mental health and overall wellbeing. Consultation findings highlighted increasing concerns relating to mental health, vulnerability and social isolation across both resident and organisational responses. Housing services should therefore continue to work collaboratively with support agencies and partners, including mental health and Adult Social Care services where appropriate, to help residents access suitable wellbeing and support pathways.

Tenant-Centred, Accessible and Inclusive Services

The council is committed to ensuring housing services are tenant-centred, accessible, inclusive and responsive to the diverse needs and experiences of residents across Winchester.

Communication and responsiveness were among the strongest and most consistent themes emerging from the resident consultation. Residents repeatedly highlighted the importance of being kept informed, receiving updates and being able to engage with housing services in ways that are accessible, clear and

supportive. Support organisations and Registered Providers also identified the importance of improved communication, partnership coordination and information sharing across services.

Residents may experience housing need, tenancy challenges and barriers to accessing services in different ways. Housing services should therefore be designed and delivered in ways that are fair, respectful and responsive to differing communication, accessibility and support needs.

The council expects tenancy services to be delivered fairly and consistently, with due regard to equality, diversity, inclusion and the differing needs of residents and communities across Winchester.

Clear communication, meaningful engagement and accessible services are essential to building trust, supporting successful tenancies and ensuring residents feel informed, listened to and involved in decisions affecting their homes and communities.

The council and Registered Providers are expected to:

- Provide clear, timely and transparent communication
- Keep tenants informed about repairs, tenancy issues and service requests
- Ensure communication and engagement methods are accessible, flexible and inclusive
- Support a range of engagement opportunities including digital, face-to-face, telephone and community-based approaches
- Make reasonable adjustments wherever appropriate
- Consider barriers relating to disability, language, literacy, digital exclusion and communication needs
- Support residents to access housing services and tenancy support in ways that work for them
- Promote openness, accountability and regular feedback with residents
- Provide opportunities for tenants to influence and help shape service improvements

Residents also emphasised the importance of seeing visible outcomes from consultation and engagement activity. Housing providers should therefore support transparent feedback mechanisms and demonstrate how tenant insight and resident feedback have informed service development and improvement activity.

Housing providers should also use Tenant Satisfaction Measures (TSMs), tenant feedback, complaints learning and service performance information to understand resident experiences, identify areas for improvement and support continuous service development. The council encourages the use of performance data alongside resident insight to ensure housing services remain responsive, accountable and focused on positive outcomes for tenants.

Housing services should continue to evolve in response to tenant feedback, changing needs and emerging challenges across the district, ensuring services remain responsive, inclusive and focused on positive resident outcomes.

Fairness, Respect and Accountability

Residents consistently highlighted the importance of being treated with dignity, empathy and respect throughout their interactions with housing services.

Consultation responses reinforced that residents value housing services that are approachable, supportive and focused on achieving positive outcomes rather than purely enforcement-led responses. Residents also highlighted the importance of feeling listened to, informed and supported throughout tenancy management processes and service interactions.

Trust and confidence in housing services are strengthened when residents understand how decisions are made, what support is available and how concerns, complaints or tenancy issues will be handled fairly, consistently and transparently.

Housing providers should maintain accessible and effective complaints processes that support early resolution, learning and continuous improvement.

Complaints should be handled in accordance with the Housing Ombudsman's Complaint Handling Code and used as an opportunity to improve services, strengthen accountability and enhance the resident experience.

Housing providers should prioritise support-led and person-centred approaches wherever possible. Successful tenancy management is often best achieved through engagement, communication and proactive support rather than enforcement alone.

The council expects housing providers to:

- Make tenancy decisions that are fair, proportionate and evidence-based
- Ensure decisions are clearly communicated and appropriately explained
- Maintain transparent, accessible and consistent processes
- Treat residents with dignity, fairness and respect
- Support opportunities for resident feedback, challenge and scrutiny
- Learn from complaints, feedback and tenant insight
- Promote continuous improvement and accountability within service delivery
- Use Tenant Satisfaction Measures (TSMs), resident feedback and performance information to inform service improvement
- Support fair and accessible complaints handling arrangements
- Learn from complaints and Housing Ombudsman determinations to support service improvement and organisational learning
- Demonstrate openness, transparency and responsiveness in service delivery

The council also recognises the importance of ensuring that resident feedback contributes meaningfully to service improvement and decision-making processes. Housing services should therefore support transparent feedback mechanisms, including “You Said, We Did” approaches, resident engagement feedback and regular service improvement updates where appropriate.

This approach supports the council’s commitment to delivering housing services that are accountable, resident-focused and responsive to the changing needs and expectations of residents across Winchester, while promoting trust, confidence and positive relationships between residents and housing providers.

Strong, Safe and Sustainable Communities

Housing services play an important role in supporting neighbourhoods where people feel safe, respected and connected to their communities.

Residents consistently linked successful tenancies with wider neighbourhood conditions, including community safety, neighbourhood management, estate standards and visible housing officer presence. Anti-social behaviour, neighbourhood disputes and property condition concerns were among the most frequently raised issues throughout the consultation process.

Registered Providers and support organisations also highlighted increasing pressures relating to anti-social behaviour, neighbour disputes and the importance of proactive neighbourhood management, early intervention and mediation-led approaches.

The council recognises the importance of visible neighbourhood management in supporting safe, well-managed and sustainable communities. Housing providers are encouraged to maintain a presence within neighbourhoods through estate inspections, neighbourhood walkabouts, local engagement activity and partnership working with residents and community safety partners.

Supporting New Communities and Neighbourhood Growth

The council is delivering and supporting significant affordable housing growth across Winchester, including within major development areas, regeneration schemes and new mixed-tenure communities. The Housing Development Strategy recognises that successful places require more than the delivery of housing alone; they require the creation of cohesive, connected and sustainable communities where residents feel a sense of belonging and pride in their neighbourhoods.

Housing providers should support community development and integration activities that help residents establish roots within new neighbourhoods, develop positive relationships with their neighbours and contribute to community life from the outset.

Housing providers should:

- Support community integration and neighbourly relationships
- Encourage resident participation and engagement
- Promote community pride and neighbourhood identity
- Support mixed-tenure community cohesion
- Manage emerging neighbourhood issues proactively
- Work with residents and partners to build resilient and sustainable communities

The council expects housing providers to:

- Maintain visible and proactive neighbourhood management approaches
- Support estate inspections, neighbourhood walkabouts and local engagement activity
- Work collaboratively with residents, community safety partners and support agencies
- Promote neighbourhood pride and community wellbeing
- Maintain safe, good quality and well-maintained homes
- Ensure clear communication throughout repairs and maintenance processes
- Respond proactively to damp, mould and property condition concerns
- Promote early resolution, restorative approaches and mediation-led interventions wherever appropriate before formal enforcement action is considered
- Take fair, proportionate and timely action to address anti-social behaviour where appropriate

Sustainable Tenancies and Climate Resilience

The council is committed to supporting the transition to healthier, more sustainable and energy-efficient homes across Winchester. New affordable housing developments are increasingly being designed to achieve higher environmental standards, reduce energy consumption and improve resilience to climate change.

Housing providers have an important role in helping residents understand and maximise the benefits of these homes while supporting affordability and long-term tenancy sustainment.

Housing providers should:

- Support residents to understand how to use energy-efficient homes effectively
- Promote energy affordability and fuel poverty prevention
- Provide information on energy-saving technologies and systems where appropriate
- Support residents to reduce household energy costs
- Encourage sustainable living practices
- Consider climate resilience and resident wellbeing when delivering housing services
- Support residents to adapt to emerging housing technologies and environmental standards

Partnership and Shared Responsibility

Delivering effective housing services requires strong partnership working across housing providers, council services, support agencies, health services and wider community organisations.

Consultation feedback from Registered Providers and support organisations consistently highlighted the importance of coordinated multi-agency working, earlier referrals and stronger partnership arrangements in supporting tenancy sustainment and preventing homelessness. Providers also identified the need for clearer communication pathways, improved operational coordination and stronger collaborative working arrangements between services.

Housing need across Winchester is increasingly complex and often requires coordinated and multi-agency responses to support residents successfully and prevent issues from escalating into crisis, tenancy breakdown or homelessness.

Many residents may require support from multiple services at different stages of the tenancy journey, including housing, safeguarding, mental health, Adult Social Care, domestic abuse and financial inclusion services.

The council expects housing providers and partners to support collaborative and coordinated approaches that help safeguard vulnerable residents, improve access to support services and contribute to stable and sustainable housing outcomes across the district.

The council expects housing providers and partners to:

- Work collaboratively to support residents with complex or changing needs
- Promote coordinated support pathways and integrated service delivery
- Support early intervention and preventative approaches
- Share information appropriately to support effective tenancy management and safeguarding responsibilities
- Work proactively to prevent homelessness and tenancy breakdown
- Support fair, sustainable and stable housing outcomes

Partnership arrangements should include clearly understood operational referral pathways, escalation routes and regular multi-agency liaison arrangements to support coordinated tenancy management, earlier intervention and effective support for residents with complex needs.

Successful tenancy management depends upon strong relationships between residents, housing providers, support services and community partners working together to achieve positive outcomes. Effective partnership working can help identify risks earlier, improve access to support services, strengthen safeguarding responses and reduce the likelihood of tenancy failure or homelessness.

Partnership working should continue to evolve in response to changing housing pressures, emerging support needs and lessons learned through resident feedback, operational experience and service improvement activity. The council will continue to work collaboratively with Registered Providers and partners to strengthen communication, improve referral pathways and support more joined-up and preventative approaches to tenancy sustainment across Winchester.

Supporting Housing Need Through Effective Use of Housing

Social housing is a valuable and limited resource that plays a critical role in meeting housing need across Winchester. Housing providers should balance tenancy security with the responsibility to ensure affordable housing remains available to meet identified housing need both now and in the future.

Housing management approaches should support the efficient and sustainable use of housing stock while maintaining stability, wellbeing and positive outcomes for residents. This includes supporting tenancy sustainment, promoting appropriate housing mobility and ensuring that social housing continues to contribute towards sustainable communities and long-term housing objectives across the district.

Housing Mobility and Responding to Changing Housing Need

Residents' housing needs can change significantly throughout the lifetime of a tenancy as a result of changes in family circumstances, health, disability, employment, financial circumstances, caring responsibilities or ageing.

The council recognises that housing providers have an important role in helping residents access homes that continue to meet their needs while also supporting the effective use of available housing stock across the district.

Housing demand across Winchester continues to exceed supply, with particular pressures relating to one-bedroom accommodation, larger family homes, accessible housing and affordable housing within rural communities. Demand for transfers, downsizing, rightsizing and mobility opportunities also continues to increase.

The council expects housing providers to adopt flexible and supportive approaches that help residents access suitable accommodation while maintaining tenancy stability and positive housing outcomes.

Housing providers should:

- Support residents whose housing needs change over time
- Promote transfer, downsizing and rightsizing opportunities
- Support effective use of accessible and adapted housing
- Facilitate housing mobility where this improves housing outcomes
- Support residents experiencing overcrowding or under-occupation
- Consider wellbeing, safety and vulnerability when supporting housing moves
- Support safe housing pathways for residents experiencing domestic abuse
- Work collaboratively with partners to support sustainable housing outcomes

Supporting residents to access housing that reflects their current and future needs contributes to tenancy sustainment, homelessness prevention, community stability and the effective use of social housing resources across the district.

There are pressures relating to one-bedroom accommodation, where 55% of Hampshire Home Choice applicants require a one-bedroom home, alongside continuing demand for larger family homes, accessible housing and affordable housing within rural communities.

Demand for housing transfers, downsizing and rightsizing opportunities also continues to increase across the district. Housing providers should support mobility initiatives, transfer opportunities and tenancy management approaches that help ensure housing stock remains aligned to changing household circumstances and identified housing need.

Partnership Expectations for Registered Providers

Registered Providers operating within Winchester play a vital role in supporting the council's wider housing, homelessness prevention and community wellbeing objectives across the district.

The council recognises the significant contribution Registered Providers make in delivering safe, secure and sustainable homes, supporting tenancy sustainment and helping residents and communities to thrive. As housing need across Winchester becomes increasingly complex, strong partnership working

and shared responsibility across organisations will continue to play an essential role in achieving positive outcomes for residents. Consultation feedback from residents, Registered Providers and support organisations consistently highlighted the importance of:

- Stronger partnership working and communication
- Earlier intervention and coordinated support
- Accessible, responsive and person-centred services
- Better information sharing and referral pathways
- Stronger neighbourhood management and community safety approaches
- More joined-up and collaborative ways of working

No single organisation can respond effectively to the full range of housing, wellbeing and support challenges affecting residents across the district. Delivering positive and sustainable housing outcomes therefore relies on strong relationships, shared priorities and effective collaboration between housing providers, council services, support agencies, health services, community organisations and residents themselves. By working together, organisations are better able to:

- Identify risks and support needs earlier
- Coordinate interventions and reduce duplication
- Improve access to support and services
- Prevent homelessness and tenancy breakdown
- Respond more effectively to safeguarding and vulnerability concerns
- Support safer, stronger and more resilient communities
- Deliver more consistent and positive resident experiences
- Share knowledge, resources and good practice across organisations
- Respond more effectively to changing local housing and community needs

The council also recognises that the housing and local government landscape will continue to evolve during the lifetime of this strategy, including through Local Government Reorganisation, wider service transformation and changes to partnership and governance arrangements across Hampshire and the wider region. Strong partnership working, flexibility and collaborative planning will therefore remain essential to ensuring housing services continue to respond effectively to changing local needs and organisational structures.

The council therefore encourages Registered Providers to adopt collaborative, preventative and resident-focused approaches that support long-term tenancy sustainment, wellbeing and community resilience across Winchester.

Strategic Expectations

The council is committed to working collaboratively with Registered Providers, tenants, support services and wider partners to deliver shared housing and community objectives across Winchester.

Achieving positive and sustainable outcomes for residents is a shared responsibility. Strong partnerships, open communication and coordinated multi-agency working are essential to responding effectively to the increasing complexity of housing need, affordability pressures and wider support challenges affecting communities across the district.

The council values the important role Registered Providers play in supporting residents and communities and recognises that housing providers are operating within increasingly challenging national and local housing conditions, including affordability pressures, rising demand for affordable housing, increasing support needs and wider financial pressures affecting both residents and services.

The council will therefore continue to work alongside Registered Providers and partners to support collaborative approaches that strengthen tenancy sustainment, service delivery and positive housing outcomes across the district. Together, the council and Registered Providers will seek to:

- Support homelessness prevention, early intervention and tenancy sustainment approaches
- Promote safe, stable and sustainable communities
- Deliver tenant-centred, accessible and responsive housing services
- Support vulnerable households and residents with additional support needs
- Promote wellbeing, independence and long-term housing stability
- Develop coordinated partnership pathways and integrated support arrangements
- Contribute to neighbourhood wellbeing, community resilience and effective community engagement
- Support fair, positive and sustainable housing outcomes across the district
- Promote approaches that make effective and responsible use of social housing stock
- Share learning, good practice and local insight to support continuous improvement
- Work collaboratively to respond to organisational, regulatory and service delivery changes, including Local Government Reorganisation where appropriate

Strong and positive partnerships are built through openness, mutual respect, trust, accountability and shared commitment to supporting residents and communities.

Operational Expectations

The council is committed to maintaining positive, constructive and collaborative working relationships with Registered Providers and recognises the importance of strong partnership working at both a strategic and operational level.

Consultation feedback from Registered Providers and support organisations highlighted the importance of stronger communication arrangements, clearer referral pathways, earlier intervention and improved operational coordination between housing providers, council services and support agencies. Providers also reinforced the importance of responsive, preventative and person-centred tenancy management approaches in supporting tenancy sustainment and positive resident outcomes.

The council encourages Registered Providers to maintain effective, transparent and resident-focused tenancy management arrangements that support both operational effectiveness and positive resident experiences. Working together, housing providers and partners should seek to:

- Publish clear, accessible and up-to-date tenancy policies
- Maintain fair, transparent and proportionate tenancy decision-making processes
- Support proactive tenancy management, tenancy sustainment and early intervention approaches
- Maintain clear, timely and supportive communication with tenants throughout tenancy management, repairs and maintenance processes
- Ensure communication methods are accessible, inclusive and responsive to differing needs
- Support meaningful tenant engagement, feedback and opportunities for resident influence
- Support mobility, transfer opportunities and effective use of housing stock

- Work collaboratively with Housing Options services, support agencies, safeguarding partners and community organisations where appropriate
- Maintain clear operational communication arrangements and named liaison pathways between housing providers, support agencies and council services
- Establish clear tenancy sustainment referral triggers linked to arrears escalation, vulnerability indicators, safeguarding concerns, anti-social behaviour, mental health deterioration and repeated tenancy management concerns
- Support coordinated responses to anti-social behaviour, safeguarding concerns and tenancy sustainment issues
- Align services with the Regulator of Social Housing Consumer Standards
- Use tenant feedback, complaints learning, service data and performance information to support continuous improvement
- Contribute positively to partnership governance, communication and service coordination arrangements where appropriate

The council also encourages Registered Providers and partners to continue strengthening collaborative and multi-agency approaches by:

- Supporting transparent feedback and accountability arrangements
- Demonstrating how resident feedback has informed service improvements
- Promoting trauma-informed, person-centred and support-led approaches to service delivery
- Developing effective partnership referral and support pathways
- Promoting staff awareness, partnership knowledge-sharing and training relating to local support services, referral pathways and tenancy sustainment resources
- Sharing learning, operational insight and good practice across organisations
- Supporting collaborative approaches that improve housing, wellbeing and community outcomes across Winchester
- Working together to respond positively to future organisational, regulatory and service delivery changes

Ongoing collaboration, shared learning and continued resident engagement will help ensure housing services remain responsive, inclusive and focused on safe, sustainable and thriving communities across Winchester.

How this Strategy was Developed

This strategy has been developed through a programme of consultation, engagement, partnership working and service review to help ensure it reflects the experiences, priorities and challenges affecting residents and communities across Winchester.

Effective tenancy strategies should be shaped not only by legislation, regulation and housing policy, but also by the lived experiences of residents, operational insight from housing providers and the expertise of organisations supporting communities across the district.

The development of this strategy has therefore been informed by:

- Resident consultation and engagement activity
- Feedback from Registered Providers operating within the district
- Consultation with support organisations and partner agencies
- Internal engagement across housing and wider council services
- Operational learning, performance information and service insight
- Current legislation, regulatory requirements and national good practice

- Local housing, homelessness and affordability pressures affecting Winchester

The council would like to thank everyone who contributed to the development of this strategy, including residents, tenant representatives, Registered Providers, support organisations, community partners and council officers. The time, insight and experience shared throughout the consultation process has played an important role in shaping the strategy and strengthening its focus on prevention, sustainment, communication, wellbeing and partnership working. Resident consultation highlighted several consistent themes across communities within the district which have been detailed in this strategy. Residents highlighted the importance of visible housing management, neighbourhood engagement and ensuring consultation leads to meaningful and visible service improvements. These themes have directly informed the strategic principles and commitments within this strategy.

The council engaged with Registered Providers and support organisations operating across Winchester to better understand the operational challenges affecting tenancy sustainment and housing management across the district.

The feedback received was detailed, operationally informed and highly valuable. Organisations consistently highlighted:

- Affordability and cost of living pressures
- Increasing mental health and vulnerability needs
- The importance of early intervention and preventative support
- Stronger partnership working and referral pathways
- Anti-social behaviour and neighbourhood management pressures
- Housing mobility and stock utilisation challenge
- The need for more coordinated communication and information sharing

Importantly, many of the themes raised by Registered Providers and support organisations strongly aligned with the resident consultation findings, helping strengthen the overall evidence base informing the strategy and reinforcing the importance of partnership-led and preventative approaches to tenancy management. The consultation process also reinforced the importance of adopting a strategy that is:

- Resident-centred and accessible
- Preventative rather than reactive
- Focused on tenancy sustainment and wellbeing
- Flexible and responsive to changing needs
- Built on collaboration, partnership working and shared responsibility
- Focused on delivering positive and sustainable outcomes for residents and communities

Engagement and collaboration should continue beyond the publication of this strategy. Housing need, resident priorities and local challenges will continue to evolve over time, particularly in the context of wider housing pressures, affordability challenges, service transformation and Local Government Reorganisation across Hampshire.

The council is therefore committed to continuing to work collaboratively with residents, Registered Providers, support organisations and wider partners throughout the lifetime of this strategy. Ongoing engagement, tenant feedback, partnership working and shared learning will remain essential to ensuring housing services continue to improve, evolve and respond effectively to the needs of residents and communities across Winchester.

Future engagement activity will include:

- Resident engagement events and local conversations

- Tenant panels and co-production opportunities
- Partnership workshops and multi-agency forums
- Service reviews and themed engagement activity
- Feedback and performance reporting
- Collaborative improvement and service development initiatives

By continuing to work together, share learning and listen to the experiences of residents and partners, the council and its partners can help deliver housing services that are supportive, responsive, inclusive and focused on creating safe, sustainable and thriving communities across Winchester.

Monitoring, Performance and Continuous Improvement

The council is committed to ensuring that this strategy remains effective, responsive and aligned with changing housing needs, regulatory expectations and local priorities across Winchester.

Successful tenancy management requires continuous learning, ongoing engagement and regular review. The council will work collaboratively with Registered Providers, residents and partner organisations to ensure that tenancy approaches continue to support positive outcomes for residents and communities throughout the lifetime of this strategy.

Monitoring and review arrangements will support the council to:

- Assess the effectiveness of tenancy management and tenancy sustainment approaches
- Monitor emerging housing needs, affordability pressures and tenancy trends
- Evaluate progress against strategic objectives and desired outcomes
- Support compliance with legislative and regulatory requirements
- Identify opportunities for service improvement and innovation
- Ensure housing services remain resident-focused, responsive and accountable

Resident Influence, Accountability and Learning

Transparency, accountability and resident influence are fundamental to effective housing services. The council and Registered Providers should ensure that residents have opportunities to influence service delivery and understand how their feedback contributes to decision-making and service improvement. This includes:

- “You Said, We Did” reporting and feedback mechanisms
- Resident engagement updates and service improvement communications
- Tenant scrutiny, consultation and involvement opportunities
- Complaints learning and service improvement activity
- Use of tenant insight and satisfaction data to inform decision-making
- Ongoing engagement with residents, communities and partner organisations

Resident feedback, operational learning and partnership engagement will continue to play a central role in shaping future service development and strengthening housing outcomes across Winchester.

Performance and Outcomes Framework

The council is committed to monitoring the impact of this strategy through a combination of performance information, partnership engagement, tenant feedback and service review activity.

The following outcomes will be used to assess the effectiveness of tenancy management and tenancy sustainment approaches across the district.

Strategic Outcome	Indicative Measures
Successful Tenancies	Tenancy sustainment rates and tenancy failure trends
Homelessness Prevention	Homelessness prevention outcomes and reduced repeat homelessness
Support for Vulnerable Residents	Support referrals, intervention outcomes and partnership engagement activity
Community Stability	Anti-social behaviour case outcomes and neighbourhood management measures
Effective Use of Housing Stock	Transfer activity, downsizing, rightsizing and housing mobility outcomes
Tenant Satisfaction	Tenant Satisfaction Measures (TSMs) and resident feedback
Resident Influence	Tenant engagement, participation and co-production activity
Partnership Working	Multi-agency case outcomes and partnership performance measures

Performance information should be used to support continuous improvement, identify emerging trends and ensure tenancy services remain effective, proportionate and responsive to changing needs.

Partnership Review and Strategic Oversight

The council will continue to work collaboratively with Registered Providers, residents and partner organisations to review emerging housing pressures, affordability challenges, tenancy sustainment trends and wider service delivery issues affecting residents and communities across Winchester.

Monitoring and review activity should support:

- Continuous improvement in tenancy management and resident experience
- Early identification of emerging housing and support pressures
- Strong partnership working and coordinated responses
- Responsive and tenant-centred service delivery
- Effective homelessness prevention and tenancy sustainment approaches
- Compliance with legislative, regulatory and consumer standard requirements

Review of the Strategy

This strategy will be formally reviewed no later than 2031, or earlier where required in response to:

- Legislative or regulatory change
- Changes to the Regulator of Social Housing Consumer Standards
- Significant housing market or affordability changes
- Local Government Reorganisation
- Changes in local housing need or strategic priorities

- Emerging housing pressures or service delivery challenges
- Significant changes to national housing policy

This approach supports the council's commitment to delivering housing services that are accountable, transparent, preventative and resident-centred, while continuing to support safe, sustainable and thriving communities across Winchester.

Version controls:

Version	Category	Trigger	Next review	Policy Owner	Date
1.0	Regulatory	New		CHOS	01 June 2026

If you require this document in another format or language, please contact the Housing Service by emailing policy@winchester.gov.uk or calling **01962 848 400**.

Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA)

Section 1 - Data Checklist

When undertaking an EqIA for your policy or project, it is important that you take into consideration everything which is associated with the policy or project that is being assessed.

The checklist below is to help you sense check your policy or project before you move to Section 2.

		Yes/No	Please provide details
1	Have there been any complaints data related to the policy or project you are looking to implement?		
2	Have all officers who will be responsible for implementing the policy or project been consulted, and given the opportunity to raise concerns about the way the policy or function has or will be implemented?	Yes	Consultation included Housing Officers, Income Officers, ASB Officers, Tenancy Sustainment Officers, Sheltered and Extra Care staff, Housing Managers, safeguarding leads and wider housing services. Operational learning informed the strategy's emphasis on early intervention, case ownership, partnership working and tenancy sustainment.
3	Have previous consultations highlighted any concerns about the policy or project from an equality impact perspective?	Yes	Consultation identified concerns relating to digital exclusion, accessibility of services, language barriers, mental health support, domestic abuse, affordability pressures, safeguarding, support for vulnerable tenants and the need for respectful and transparent communication.
4	Do you have any concerns regarding the implementation of this policy or project? <i>(i.e. Have you completed a self-assessment and action plan for the implementation of your policy or project?)</i>	Yes	Risks include inconsistent application of tenancy approaches, insufficient recognition of vulnerability, barriers caused by inaccessible communication, disproportionate enforcement action, inconsistent partnership working and insufficient early intervention.

		Yes/No	Please provide details
5	Does any accessible data regarding the area which your work will address identify any areas of concern or potential problems which may impact on your policy or project?	Yes	Local housing data demonstrates rising affordability pressures, increasing homelessness risk, significant housing demand, growing mental health concerns, an ageing population and increasing complexity of support needs. These pressures may disproportionately affect vulnerable households and protected groups.
6	Do you have any past experience delivering similar policies or projects which may inform the implementation of your scheme from an equality impact point of view?	Yes	Existing operational work in tenancy management, ASB, homelessness prevention, safeguarding, tenancy sustainment, domestic abuse and complaints handling demonstrates the importance of accessible communication, proportionality, documented decision-making and early support interventions.
7	Are there any other issues that you think will be relevant?	Yes	The strategy must balance tenancy enforcement, safeguarding, tenancy sustainment, equality duties, homelessness prevention, housing demand management and neighbourhood safety while ensuring fairness and proportionality in decision-making.

Section 2 - Your EqIA form

Directorate: Housing	Your Service Area: Housing Department	Team: All Housing Services	Officer responsible for this assessment: Yvonne Anderson	Date of assessment: June 2026
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	Question	Please provide details
1	What is the name of the policy or project that is being assessed?	Tenancy Strategy 2026–2031
2	Is this a new or existing policy?	New strategic framework replacing and modernising the previous tenancy strategy under the Localism Act 2011 framework.
3	Briefly describe the aim and purpose of this work.	The strategy establishes Winchester City Council's strategic approach to tenancy management and tenancy sustainment across the district. It sets out how the Council and Registered Providers should support safe, stable and

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		sustainable tenancies while ensuring fair, preventative and tenant-centred housing services.
4	What are the associated objectives of this work?	<p>The strategy seeks to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Support tenancy sustainment - Prevent homelessness and tenancy breakdown - Promote fair and transparent tenancy management - Support safe and sustainable communities - Ensure accessibility and inclusion - Strengthen partnership working - Support compliance with the Social Housing (Regulation) Act 2023 and Consumer Standards 2024.
5	Who is intended to benefit from this work and in what way?	<p>The strategy is intended to benefit:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Council tenants - Prospective tenants - Household members - Residents living within council housing neighbourhoods - Vulnerable residents requiring housing-related support - Registered Providers operating within Winchester <p>Benefits include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Greater tenancy stability - Earlier intervention and support - Improved communication - More accessible services - Fairer decision-making - Safer neighbourhoods - Improved accountability and transparency - Better coordination of support services.
6	What are the outcomes sought from this work?	<p>The strategy seeks to achieve:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Sustained and successful tenancies - Reduced homelessness and tenancy failure - Improved tenant satisfaction and trust - Increased accessibility and inclusion - Earlier identification of vulnerability and safeguarding concerns

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Stronger partnership working - Safer neighbourhoods - Better use of social housing stock - Improved regulatory compliance and accountability
7	What factors/forces could contribute or detract from the outcomes?	<p>Positive Factors</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Strong partnership working - Staff training - Clear operational procedures - Accessible communication methods - Effective safeguarding arrangements - Resident engagement - Performance monitoring - Complaints learning - Early intervention approaches <p>Negative Factors</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Increasing housing demand - Financial pressures on tenants - Staff capacity pressures - Complexity of support needs - Mental health demand - Digital exclusion - Language barriers - Limited support services externally - Inconsistent operational application - Data quality limitations
8	Who are the key individuals and organisations responsible for the implementation of this work?	<p>Housing Services Registered Providers Hampshire Home Choice partners Safeguarding teams Adult Social Care Health services Police Domestic abuse services</p>

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		Support providers Community safety partners Tenant engagement teams Neighbourhood services
9	Who implements the policy or project and who or what is responsible for it?	Strategic Housing & Landlord Service

		Please select your answer in bold . Please provide detail here.		
10a	Could the policy or project have the potential to affect individuals or communities on the basis of race differently in a negative way?	Y	N	<p>Whilst the Tenancy Strategy is intended to apply fairly to all residents, there is potential for indirect disadvantage where tenants experience barriers relating to language, literacy, cultural differences or familiarity with housing systems in England. The strategy places significant emphasis on communication, engagement, tenancy rights and responsibilities, access to support services and participation in tenancy management processes. Where information is not understood, tenants may be less able to engage effectively with housing services, understand tenancy conditions, challenge decisions or access support at an early stage.</p> <p>Residents whose first language is not English, newly arrived households, refugees, or those with limited literacy may be disproportionately affected if communication methods are not accessible or appropriately tailored. This could potentially affect understanding of tenancy agreements, anti-social behaviour processes, enforcement action, complaints procedures, succession rights, housing mobility options and wider tenancy support services.</p>
10b	What existing evidence (either presumed or otherwise) do you have for this?	Consultation undertaken during development of the strategy highlighted the importance of clear communication, accessible information and tenant understanding of housing services. Operational experience across tenancy management, homelessness prevention and complaints handling also demonstrates that language and communication barriers can contribute to		

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		misunderstandings, reduced engagement and poorer housing outcomes if not addressed proactively.		
11a	<p>Could the policy or project have the potential to affect individuals or communities on the basis of sex differently in a negative way?</p>	Y	N	<p>The strategy is not intended to disadvantage individuals on the basis of sex. However, housing need and tenancy-related risks can affect men and women differently. Women are statistically more likely to experience issues associated with domestic abuse, caring responsibilities, lone parenthood and economic disadvantage, all of which can influence tenancy sustainment and housing stability. Men may be less likely to engage with support services at an early stage, potentially increasing the risk of tenancy difficulties escalating before intervention is sought.</p> <p>There is therefore a risk that tenancy management decisions could have unintended impacts if individual circumstances, vulnerabilities and support needs are not fully recognised and considered.</p>
11b	<p>What existing evidence (either presumed or otherwise) do you have for this?</p>	<p>The strategy places significant emphasis on safeguarding, early intervention, tenancy sustainment and partnership working. Consultation responses highlighted concerns relating to affordability pressures, wellbeing, vulnerability and personal safety, all of which may have differing impacts across genders. Existing operational experience also demonstrates that domestic abuse, relationship breakdown and financial hardship can have significant housing implications requiring tailored support and intervention.</p>		
12a	<p>Could the policy or project have the potential to affect individuals or communities on the basis of disability differently in a negative way?</p> <p><i>you may wish to consider:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Physical access</i> • <i>Format of information</i> • <i>Time of interview or consultation event</i> 	Y	N	<p>Disability is the protected characteristic most likely to be affected by the implementation of the strategy. Disabled residents may experience barriers in accessing housing services, understanding information, engaging with tenancy processes or sustaining their tenancy if services are not appropriately adapted to meet their needs. This includes residents with physical disabilities, sensory impairments, learning disabilities, neurodivergent conditions, long-term health conditions and mental health needs.</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Personal assistance</i> • <i>Interpreter</i> • <i>Induction loop system</i> • <i>Independent living equipment</i> • <i>Content of interview)</i> 			<p>Potential negative impacts could arise where communication is inaccessible, reasonable adjustments are not identified or implemented, support needs are not recognised at an early stage, or tenancy enforcement activity proceeds without appropriate consideration of an individual's circumstances. There is also a risk that increasing reliance on digital communication could disadvantage some disabled residents if alternative methods of engagement are not maintained.</p>
12b	<p>What existing evidence (either presumed or otherwise) do you have for this?</p>	<p>The strategy recognises vulnerability, accessibility, safeguarding and the need for tailored support throughout the tenancy journey. Local housing services continue to support a growing number of residents with complex physical, mental health and support needs, while consultation feedback highlighted the importance of accessible services, early intervention and personalised support. Existing operational experience demonstrates that tenancy outcomes are significantly improved when support needs are identified and addressed proactively.</p>		
13a	<p>Could the policy or project have the potential to affect individuals or communities on the basis of sexual orientation differently in a negative way?</p>	<p>Y</p>	<p>N</p>	<p>The Tenancy Strategy is intended to support all tenants fairly and equitably regardless of sexual orientation. However, there remains potential for indirect negative impacts where lesbian, gay and bisexual residents experience harassment, discrimination, hate incidents or barriers to accessing support services. Housing services often deal with sensitive issues including anti-social behaviour, neighbour disputes, safeguarding concerns and tenancy sustainment. If these services are not delivered in a manner that is inclusive and responsive to individual circumstances, some residents may feel reluctant to engage with the Council or report concerns.</p> <p>LGBTQ+ residents can be disproportionately affected by harassment, intimidation, hate-related incidents and social isolation. In some cases, individuals may be unwilling to disclose personal circumstances due to concerns about confidentiality, prejudice or previous negative experiences with public services. This can result in housing issues remaining</p>

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				unresolved, reduced access to support and poorer tenancy outcomes.
13b	What existing evidence (either presumed or otherwise) do you have for this?	The strategy places significant emphasis on neighbourhood management, community safety, anti-social behaviour prevention, safeguarding and accessible service delivery. Consultation responses consistently highlighted the importance of feeling safe, being treated with dignity and respect, and having confidence that concerns would be taken seriously. Operational experience across housing services demonstrates that victims of hate-related incidents often require sensitive case management and clear reporting pathways.		
14a	Could the policy or project have the potential to affect individuals on the basis of age differently in a negative way?	Y	N	<p>The strategy has the potential to affect people differently on the basis of age because housing needs, support requirements and methods of engagement often vary significantly throughout life. Older residents may be more likely to experience physical health issues, mobility limitations, social isolation, digital exclusion or a need for ongoing support to maintain independence. Younger residents, particularly those entering a tenancy for the first time, care leavers or households with limited experience of managing a tenancy, may require additional guidance and tenancy sustainment support.</p> <p>There is a risk that some older residents could be disadvantaged if services become overly reliant on digital communication or self-service approaches. Similarly, younger residents may face challenges understanding tenancy responsibilities, managing finances or accessing support services if early intervention is not available.</p>
14b	What existing evidence (either presumed or otherwise) do you have for this?	The strategy acknowledges the changing demographic profile of Winchester, including a growing older population and increasing demand for supported, sheltered and extra care housing. Consultation responses highlighted the importance of accessible communication, visible housing management and early support. Operational experience also demonstrates		

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		that tenancy sustainment support at the start of a tenancy can significantly improve long-term outcomes and reduce the risk of tenancy failure.		
15a	Could the policy or project have the potential to affect individuals or communities on the basis of religious belief differently in a negative way?	Y	N	<p>The strategy is not expected to have a significant adverse impact on individuals because of their religion or belief. However, there is potential for indirect disadvantage where housing services do not adequately recognise religious observance, cultural practices or faith-related needs when arranging appointments, conducting visits or managing tenancy-related matters.</p> <p>Residents from different faith communities may have particular requirements relating to religious observance, prayer times, festivals, family arrangements, bereavement practices or dietary considerations. If these circumstances are not appropriately recognised, individuals may feel excluded or experience difficulties engaging with housing services.</p>
15b	What existing evidence (either presumed or otherwise) do you have for this?	Consultation and engagement undertaken during development of the strategy emphasised the importance of respectful and person-centred service delivery. Existing housing service experience demonstrates that flexibility and understanding of individual circumstances contribute significantly to positive tenant relationships and improved service outcomes.		
16a	Could this policy or project have the potential to affect individuals on the basis of gender reassignment differently in a negative way?	Y	N	<p>Whilst the Tenancy Strategy is intended to support all residents fairly and without discrimination, there is potential for indirect disadvantage where housing services do not adequately recognise the privacy, safety and support needs of transgender residents. Transgender individuals may be disproportionately affected by harassment, hate incidents, neighbour disputes or concerns regarding the disclosure of personal information. Some residents may feel reluctant to report concerns or engage with housing services if they lack confidence that their identity will be respected or that information will be handled sensitively and confidentially.</p>

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				<p>Housing services frequently deal with sensitive matters relating to anti-social behaviour, safeguarding, tenancy sustainment and neighbourhood management. If these services are not delivered in an inclusive and respectful manner, there is a risk that transgender residents may experience barriers to accessing support or achieving positive housing outcomes.</p>
16b	<p>What existing evidence (either presumed or otherwise) do you have for this?</p>	<p>The strategy places significant emphasis on neighbourhood safety, anti-social behaviour management, safeguarding, accessible services and respectful treatment of residents. Consultation feedback highlighted the importance of feeling safe, being treated with dignity and having confidence in housing services. Existing operational experience demonstrates that individuals who experience harassment or discrimination may require additional support and reassurance to engage fully with housing services.</p>		
17a	<p>Could this policy or project have the potential to affect individuals on the basis of marriage and civil partnership differently in a negative way?</p>	<p>Y</p>	<p>N</p>	<p>The strategy is not expected to have a direct adverse impact on individuals because of their marital or civil partnership status. However, tenancy-related decisions can be influenced by changes in household circumstances, including relationship breakdown, succession requests, assignment applications, joint tenancy arrangements and domestic abuse situations. These circumstances may affect married couples, civil partners and joint tenants differently depending on their individual housing and family circumstances.</p> <p>Decisions relating to tenancy succession, assignment, occupation rights and tenancy termination can have significant implications for housing security and tenancy sustainment. There is therefore potential for indirect disadvantage if such decisions are not applied consistently, transparently and with due regard to individual circumstances and vulnerabilities.</p>
17b	<p>What existing evidence (either presumed or otherwise) do you have for this?</p>	<p>The strategy supports fair, transparent and evidence-based tenancy management and recognises the importance of tenancy sustainment and stable housing outcomes. Existing operational experience demonstrates</p>		

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		that changes in household composition and relationship circumstances can create complex housing situations requiring careful consideration of legal rights, safeguarding concerns and support needs.		
18a	Could this policy or project have the potential to affect individuals on the basis of pregnancy and maternity differently in a negative way?	Y	N	Pregnant tenants and households with young children may experience particular housing-related challenges that could affect their ability to sustain a tenancy successfully. These challenges may include overcrowding, affordability pressures, changing household income, health concerns, domestic abuse, property condition issues and increased support needs associated with pregnancy or caring responsibilities. Without appropriate intervention and support, these factors can increase the risk of tenancy instability or reduced wellbeing. Pregnancy and early parenthood can also create additional demands on households, making access to suitable housing, timely support and responsive services particularly important. Housing services therefore need to recognise changing circumstances and respond proactively to emerging risks wherever possible.
18b	What existing evidence (either presumed or otherwise) do you have for this?	The strategy places significant emphasis on tenancy sustainment, early intervention, safeguarding, vulnerability and homelessness prevention. Consultation findings highlighted the importance of accessible support, clear communication and responsive housing services. Operational experience across housing management and homelessness prevention services demonstrates that early intervention and coordinated support can significantly improve outcomes for families experiencing housing difficulties or changes in circumstances.		
19	Could any negative impacts that you identified in questions 10a to 15b create the potential for the policy to discriminate against certain groups on the basis of protected characteristics?	Y	N	Potentially yes, indirectly. Indirect discrimination risks may arise if: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Services are inaccessible - Communication barriers are not addressed - Vulnerability is not recognised - Enforcement is disproportionate

				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Digital-only approaches are adopted - Equality impacts are not considered in tenancy decisions <p>The greatest risks relate to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Disability - Age - Race/language barriers - Sex/domestic abuse - Pregnancy and maternity - Gender reassignment
20	Can this negative impact be justified on the grounds of promoting equality of opportunity for certain groups on the basis of protected characteristics? Please provide your answer opposite against the relevant protected characteristic.	Y	N	<p>Yes.</p> <p>The strategy aims to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Promote equality of opportunity - Support tenancy sustainment - Prevent homelessness - Improve accessibility - Support vulnerable households - Deliver fair and transparent services - Improve neighbourhood safety <p>Any restrictive or enforcement-related actions must be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Proportionate - Lawful - Evidence-based - Necessary to achieve legitimate aims such as safeguarding, tenancy compliance, prevention of harm and effective housing management.
21	How will you mitigate any potential discrimination that may be brought about by your policy or project that you have identified above?	The Tenancy Strategy has been developed around the principles of fairness, accessibility, early intervention, tenancy sustainment and tenant-centred service delivery. Whilst no direct discrimination has been identified, the assessment recognises the potential for indirect disadvantage where housing services do not adequately consider individual circumstances, vulnerabilities, communication needs or protected characteristics.		

To mitigate these risks, the Council will ensure that tenancy services are delivered in a way that is accessible, inclusive and responsive to the diverse needs of residents. Housing officers will be expected to consider equality impacts, vulnerabilities and individual circumstances as part of tenancy-related decision-making and service delivery. This will include making reasonable adjustments where required, providing information in accessible formats, offering interpretation and translation services, and maintaining non-digital routes to access services for residents who may be digitally excluded.

The strategy promotes early intervention and proactive tenancy sustainment approaches, ensuring that potential risks are identified and addressed before they escalate into tenancy failure, homelessness or enforcement action. Housing services will continue to work closely with safeguarding partners, health services, support agencies, domestic abuse services, community safety partners and voluntary sector organisations to ensure residents can access appropriate support tailored to their needs.

Staff will receive ongoing training to support awareness of equality, diversity, inclusion, safeguarding, vulnerability, trauma-informed practice and accessible communication. This will help ensure services are delivered consistently, respectfully and in accordance with the Equality Act 2010 and Public Sector Equality Duty.

The Council will continue to monitor complaints, tenant feedback, service performance and resident outcomes to identify any emerging equality issues. Learning from complaints, engagement activities, service reviews and regulatory requirements will be used to inform continuous improvement and ensure that housing services remain fair, proportionate and responsive to changing resident needs.

Through these measures, the Council will seek to promote equality of opportunity, eliminate discrimination, advance inclusion and ensure that all residents are able to access housing services, sustain their tenancies and

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		live safely within their communities regardless of their protected characteristics or personal circumstances.		
22	Do any negative impacts that you have identified above impact on your service plan?	Y	N	<p>Yes.</p> <p>Implementation will require:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff training • Performance monitoring • Equality monitoring • Improved data quality • Accessible communication resources • Tenancy sustainment capacity • Partnership coordination • Safeguarding oversight • Complaints learning reviews <p>The service plan should include ongoing monitoring of equality impacts and continuous improvement activity.</p>

Signed by completing officer	Paul Salter
Service Manager Sign off	Yvonne Anderson
Signed by Service Lead or Corporate Head of Service	Karen Thorburn



Housing Services Tenancy Management Strategy 2026-2029

“For many tenants, the start of a tenancy represents a significant life moment, often described as providing relief, stability and security. This strategy is designed to ensure that this experience is sustained throughout the tenancy.”

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Purpose and Tenant Promise

This **Tenancy Management Strategy** sets out how **Winchester City Council** will support tenants to live well in their homes and communities. It explains what tenants can expect from us as their landlord, how services will be delivered, and how we will work in partnership with residents to provide a service that is fair, consistent and focused on what matters most.

At its heart, this strategy is about people. It recognises that a home is not just a physical space, but the foundation for stability, wellbeing and independence. Our role is to support that foundation not just at the start of a tenancy, but throughout it.

The **Housing Services Team** supports tenants throughout their tenancy, ensuring they feel secure in their homes, confident in their landlord, and part of a well-managed and supportive community.

Tenants can expect support to remain in their homes, early help if circumstances change, and services that enable independence for as long as possible. You should feel safe in your neighbourhood, know who to contact, and have confidence that issues will be taken seriously and addressed appropriately.

We will achieve this by focusing on early support, listening to tenant needs, and taking responsibility for progressing issues to an appropriate outcome. Services will be delivered in partnership with tenants to build strong, respectful communities.

This strategy forms a key part of the council's responsibilities as a social landlord. It fulfils our duties under the **Localism Act 2011** and aligns with the expectations set out in the **Social Housing (Regulation) Act 2023** and the **Regulator of Social Housing's Consumer Standards 2024**.

Rather than sitting alongside our **Housing Strategy**, this document brings it to life by translating long-term ambitions into the everyday experience of tenants. It has been shaped with tenants alongside the **Tenant Partnership and Influence Plan**, ensuring it reflects real experiences and priorities: security, clarity, responsiveness and trust.

Regulatory Alignment

This strategy demonstrates how Winchester City Council meets the requirements of the Regulator of Social Housing's Consumer Standards.

Consumer Standard	How this strategy supports compliance
Tenancy Standard	Clear tenancy framework, tenancy sustainment focus, fair and transparent decision-making

Consumer Standard	How this strategy supports compliance
Transparency, Influence and Accountability Standard	Tenant co-production, clear communication commitments, accessible information, service standards and performance reporting
Neighbourhood and Community Standard	Anti-social behaviour management, neighbourhood management, local area working and partnership response
Safety and Quality Standard	Links to property services, safety responsibilities, risk management and support for safe homes and neighbourhoods

Compliance will be evidenced through service standards, performance monitoring, policy implementation, complaints learning, tenant feedback, governance arrangements and regular reporting to tenants and senior management.

This strategy does not replace operational policies or procedures. It sets the strategic direction for tenancy management and sits within a wider policy and procedure framework.

Policy Framework

Policy or procedure	Role within tenancy management
Tenancy Policy (under review)	Sets out tenancy types, tenancy conditions, succession and tenancy management principles
Anti-Social Behaviour Policy	Sets out how reports of anti-social behaviour are managed
Tenant Partnership and Influence Plan	Sets out how tenants influence and shape housing services
Scheme of Allocations Framework	Sets out how housing is allocated fairly
Lettings Policy (under review)	Supports fair, consistent and effective lettings
Safeguarding Policies	Set out responsibilities for identifying and responding to safeguarding concerns
Vulnerability Policy (under review)	Supports consistent identification of vulnerability and tailored service responses
Tenancy Sustainment Procedures	Provide operational guidance for supporting tenants to maintain their tenancy
Tenancy Fraud Policy (under review)	Sets out how tenancy fraud is prevented, identified and investigated
Left in Occupation Policy (under review)	Sets out how cases are considered where someone remains in occupation following the end of a tenancy

Together, these ensure services are delivered consistently, fairly and in line with legal and regulatory requirements.

Local Context and Service Implications

Housing Services within Winchester are shaped by the evolving needs of residents and the wider pressures identified in the **Housing Strategy 2023–2028**. Understanding this local context is essential to ensuring that services are responsive, targeted and capable of supporting tenants effectively.

Winchester is a desirable and high-demand housing area, but this brings a range of challenges that directly influence how tenancy services must be delivered.

Local pressure	What this means for tenancy management
A growing population, including a significant increase in residents aged 85 and over	Services must support independence, accessibility, safeguarding awareness and partnership working with health and care services
High house prices and ongoing affordability pressures	Tenancy sustainment, early money advice and prevention of tenancy breakdown are critical
Increasing demand for housing services and homelessness support	The service must focus on prevention, early intervention and effective use of housing stock
Greater complexity in tenant needs, including health, financial and social factors	Support must be personalised, flexible and joined up with other agencies
Rising demand for specialist and supported housing	Housing teams must understand vulnerability, adaptations, support needs and appropriate referral routes
Continued concerns relating to anti-social behaviour and community safety	Strong neighbourhood management, case ownership and partnership response are essential

As a result, the Housing Service must be increasingly proactive, flexible and responsive. Day-to-day practice will focus on helping tenants remain in their homes, identifying risk earlier, tailoring support, improving neighbourhood visibility and working closely with support services and other agencies.

Our Service Model

The Housing Services Team exists to support people to live well in their homes. This means not only ensuring that properties are well managed, but also that tenants feel secure, supported and able to sustain their tenancies over the long term.

The service is designed to be both preventative and responsive. It works to identify potential issues early, such as changes in circumstances, financial pressures or neighbourhood concerns, and to provide support before these develop into more serious problems. At the same time, where issues do arise, they will be addressed clearly, fairly and consistently.

This approach reflects the council's wider priorities, particularly around preventing homelessness, supporting independence, and maintaining strong and sustainable communities. It also recognises the importance of fairness, transparency and accountability in building trust between tenants and their landlord.

How the service works

The Housing Services Team is structured to provide a clear, coordinated and supportive service from first contact through to ongoing tenancy management. Each role works together to ensure tenants receive the right support at the right time, with the Housing Officer acting as the main point of contact and retaining overall responsibility for case coordination.

Team or role	Main responsibilities
Housing Administration	Provides initial advice, supports access to services, logs enquiries and ensures they are directed to the appropriate team
Housing Assistants	Support tenancy start and end processes, including lettings and preparation of new tenancies
Housing Officers	Act as the main point of contact, undertake tenancy sign-ups, provide ongoing tenancy management, support sustainment, manage anti-social behaviour and neighbour nuisance, and coordinate responses to issues
Tenancy Sustainment Officers	Provide targeted support to tenants at risk of tenancy breakdown, including financial issues, access to services and wider support needs, working alongside Housing Officers to deliver early intervention
Income Officers	Support rent account management, prevent arrears and agree repayment arrangements, working with Housing Officers where financial issues impact tenancy sustainment
Sheltered and Extra Care Officers	Provide day-to-day support in sheltered and extra care settings, promoting independence, identifying concerns early and coordinating support for residents with additional needs
ASB Specialist Officers	Provide expert support for complex or high-risk anti-social behaviour cases, advising on enforcement, case management and partnership working
Area Housing Managers	Provide operational leadership, oversee service delivery and performance, and support complex or sensitive case management
Service Manager	Provides strategic oversight, governance and accountability, ensuring compliance, performance management and continuous service improvement

Named Housing Officer and Single Point of Contact model

Tenants will have a named Housing Officer who coordinates support, maintains oversight of their tenancy, and ensures issues are managed through to an appropriate outcome.

We recognise that tenants may contact the service in different ways and speak to different members of the team when reporting a concern or requesting support. You will not be expected to identify the correct service contact or navigate the service yourself.

Whoever you speak to will take responsibility for ensuring your enquiry is logged, understood and passed to your Housing Officer or the most appropriate member of the team.

This means you can contact us in the way that suits you, with confidence that your issue will be owned, understood and progressed appropriately. Your named Housing Officer will remain aware of your case and retain oversight, ensuring continuity, accountability and a consistent experience.

Where needed, tenants can request a review or escalation to ensure concerns are addressed appropriately and fairly.

Local area housing teams

Winchester City Council delivers tenancy services through a local, area-based housing model. Services are organised around neighbourhoods, enabling Housing Officers to develop a strong understanding of the communities they support.

This allows issues to be identified earlier, responses to be quicker, and relationships with tenants to be stronger and more consistent.

Area Housing Teams deliver core tenancy services with a focus on sustainment, prevention and neighbourhood management. This includes supporting tenants to remain in their homes, responding to anti-social behaviour, maintaining estate standards, and working with residents to improve their local area.

Delivering services locally strengthens accountability and trust, supports timely action, and ensures services reflect the needs of each community. It also helps build stronger neighbourhoods where tenants feel supported, informed and connected.

How to contact us

Tenants can access support through:

- **Housing Hub** - for general enquiries, reporting issues and accessing services
- **Housing Services email** - for non-urgent tenancy queries
- **Anti-Social Behaviour contact** - for reporting anti-social behaviour or seeking advice
- **Your named Housing Officer** - for ongoing tenancy support and case management
- **Council website** - for information, guidance and service updates

Contact details will be clearly available and regularly communicated, ensuring tenants know how and where to get support.

Tenant Commitments and Service Standards

What tenants told us

Tenants told us that having a home is about much more than the property itself. It is about:

- Feeling safe and secure
- Having stability and peace of mind
- Being part of a community
- Knowing that support is there when needed
- Having clear and timely action when issues arise
- Being listened to and involved in shaping services
- Living in neighbourhoods that feel safe, clean and well managed

The principle

We recognise that being a landlord is about more than managing buildings. It is about supporting people to live well. A good housing service should provide not only a safe and secure home, but also the confidence and stability that allows individuals and families to thrive.

Our Housing Service is built around the full tenancy journey, recognising that needs and circumstances can change over time. We take a preventative and supportive approach, focused on helping tenants sustain their tenancies, addressing issues early, and maintaining safe and well-managed neighbourhoods.

Our commitment

We are committed to delivering a consistent and high-quality service. This means tenants can expect:

- To be treated with fairness, dignity and respect at all times
- To receive clear information about their tenancy, rights and responsibilities
- To know who to contact for support and advice
- To have issues owned and followed through to an appropriate outcome
- To receive support from the start of the tenancy through to its end
- To be listened to and involved in shaping services
- To receive clear, timely and proportionate action when issues arise
- To live in neighbourhoods that are actively managed to a good standard

Where circumstances change, we will work with tenants to help them remain in their home wherever possible. We will respond to issues such as anti-social behaviour with clear, timely and proportionate action, and we will continue to involve tenants in shaping services so that they reflect what matters most.

What this means in practice

To achieve this, the Housing Service will:

- Prioritise early intervention and prevention, reducing the risk of issues escalating
- Maintain clear accountability, ensuring responsibility for progressing issues is defined
- Deliver consistent services across all neighbourhoods
- Use tenant feedback, complaints learning and performance data to continuously improve service delivery
- Take a proactive approach to neighbourhood management, helping to ensure the places where tenants live are safe, clean and well cared for

Service standards

To ensure clarity and accountability, the Housing Service operates to defined service standards. These standards set out what tenants can expect and how performance will be measured.

Standard	Commitment
Initial response to high-risk anti-social behaviour reports	Within 1 working day

Standard	Commitment
Initial response to medium-risk anti-social behaviour reports	Within 3 working days
Initial response to standard anti-social behaviour reports	Within 5 working days
New tenancy visit	Within 6 weeks
Tenancy visits	Prioritised according to risk, tenancy stage and identified support needs
Stage 1 complaint response	Within 10 working days
Clear case ownership	Named officer assigned to every case

These standards will be monitored through performance reporting, case reviews, complaints learning, tenant feedback and management oversight.

Communication, Information and Accessibility

Clear and effective communication is central to a high-quality tenancy service. It builds trust, supports appropriate outcomes, and ensures tenants feel informed and supported.

Tenant feedback highlighted the importance of communication that is personal, easy to understand and responsive. Tenants told us that while digital services are helpful, they should not replace the ability to speak to someone or be seen in person when needed.

Our approach

Communication should be accessible, inclusive and easy to understand. Technology should enhance the service we provide but not replace the human connection that is essential to building trust and delivering support.

We will provide a range of ways for tenants to access services, including face-to-face appointments, telephone contact and online options. This ensures tenants can choose how they engage with the service, whether they prefer direct contact with their Housing Officer or the flexibility of online services.

Digital services will continue to be developed to improve access and efficiency. However, they will support, not replace, the personal service tenants value. Access to a member of staff will always be available, particularly where issues are complex or sensitive.

How we will communicate

We will provide information that is:

- Clear, accurate and easy to understand
- Accessible in a range of formats
- Delivered at key stages throughout the tenancy
- Tailored, wherever possible, to individual needs and preferences

We will communicate using a range of channels, including:

- Letters for formal communication and important tenancy information
- Email and text messages for timely updates and reminders
- Telephone and face-to-face contact where more direct or personal support is needed

- Council webpages as a central source of up-to-date information and guidance
- Newsletters and campaigns to share wider service updates, advice and opportunities to get involved

Where possible, we will use tenants' preferred method of contact, ensuring communication is accessible, inclusive and responsive.

What tenants can expect

Tenants can expect clear and consistent communication, a named point of contact, and confidence that issues will be managed through to an appropriate outcome.

Where an issue involves multiple services, the Housing Officer will coordinate the response, ensuring the tenant does not need to follow up separately with different teams. Where an outcome takes time, regular updates will be provided.

We are committed to building trust through openness and accountability. This includes demonstrating how tenant feedback leads to service improvements, sharing performance information, and ensuring all interactions are handled with professionalism, respect and confidentiality.

The Tenancy Journey

Your tenancy is not a single moment; it is a journey. From applying for housing, to moving in, living in your home, and eventually moving on, the Housing Service is here to support you at every stage.

Our role is to provide the right support at the right time. This means helping tenants settle in successfully, supporting tenancy sustainment, and working with tenants to explore options and prevent issues escalating.

Stage of tenancy	What tenants can expect	Key service response
Before moving in	Clear information about the property, tenancy and responsibilities	Lettings, tenancy preparation and sign-up arrangements
Start of tenancy	Support to understand the tenancy agreement, rights, responsibilities and available help	Housing Officer sign-up, new tenancy information and settling-in support
Early tenancy	Regular contact and early help to identify and respond to any issues	New tenancy visit within 6 weeks and early intervention where needed
During tenancy	Ongoing advice, tenancy sustainment support and neighbourhood management	Named Housing Officer, case ownership, ASB response and support referrals
Change in circumstances	Help to explore options and remain in the home wherever possible	Tailored support, partnership working and risk assessment
Moving on or ending a tenancy	Clear information, fair process and respectful communication	Practical guidance, tenancy ending support and appropriate advice

Our approach is built on prevention, early intervention and positive outcomes, ensuring tenants feel informed, supported and confident throughout their tenancy.

Tenancy Framework and Decision-Making

We are committed to making tenancy decisions that are fair, transparent and consistent, and that reflect both individual circumstances and the council's responsibilities as a social landlord.

Our approach is designed to ensure tenants understand their tenancy, how decisions are made, and what they can expect from us. It aligns with the requirements of the Social Housing (Regulation) Act 2023 and the Regulator of Social Housing's Consumer Standards, particularly in relation to fairness, accountability and supporting tenants to sustain their tenancies successfully.

Where decisions may result in a change to a tenancy, we will ensure appropriate support options are considered alongside any enforcement action.

Tenancy types

Introductory tenancies

Introductory tenancies are usually granted to all new tenants for an initial 12-month period. This provides a structured and supportive start to the tenancy, allowing both the tenant and the Council to ensure that the tenancy is sustainable.

During this period, we will:

- Provide clear information about tenancy rights and responsibilities
- Offer guidance and early support where needed
- Maintain regular contact to help identify and respond to any issues at an early stage

The focus is on helping tenants successfully transition into a long-term tenancy.

Secure tenancies

Secure tenancies are granted following a successful introductory period, or where tenants transfer from another Winchester City Council tenancy or from another registered housing provider. Secure tenancies provide long-term stability and security, as long as tenancy conditions are met.

This includes tenants transferring from other social housing providers who meet the criteria for a secure tenancy.

This reflects our commitment to providing settled homes and supporting tenants to build long-term stability and independence.

Fixed-term tenancies

Winchester City Council does not generally use fixed-term secure tenancies. Where fixed-term tenancies are used by Registered Providers, the council expects providers to ensure they are granted fairly, transparently and in a way that supports housing need, tenancy sustainment and the prevention of homelessness. Where fixed-term tenancies are used, Registered Providers should clearly set out:

- The length of the tenancy
- The reasons for granting the tenancy
- The circumstances in which a further tenancy may be offered
- The review and appeal arrangements available to tenants

Mutual exchange and transfers

We support tenants who wish to move home where this helps to meet their housing needs or sustain their tenancy.

Tenants may apply for a mutual exchange, allowing them to swap homes with another social housing tenant, subject to legal and policy requirements.

All applications for mutual exchange or transfer will be:

- Assessed fairly and consistently in line with legal and policy criteria
- Considered in relation to property suitability, tenancy conduct and housing need
- Managed in a way that supports tenancy sustainment and effective use of housing stock

Where appropriate, we will provide advice and support to help tenants explore their options and make informed decisions.

Succession - supporting continuity for households

Succession enables certain individuals to take over a tenancy when a tenant dies, in line with legal and policy requirements. We recognise that this can be a difficult and sensitive time.

All succession requests will be managed with empathy, clarity and fairness, in line with legal requirements and the council's Tenancy Policy.

Where succession is not possible, we will:

- Provide clear advice on available options
- Work with those affected to identify suitable alternative housing, including consideration under the Left in Occupation Policy where applicable
- Consider eligibility for rehousing support where individuals meet defined criteria, such as potential succession rights, vulnerability or housing need
- Offer appropriate support throughout the process

Assignments

In some circumstances, the Court may order the assignment of a tenancy between joint tenants. Where this applies, the Council will require a copy of the relevant Court order before any changes are made to the tenancy.

Secure tenants may also have the right to assign their tenancy, with the agreement of the Council, where:

- A succession of the tenancy has not previously taken place
- An assignment of the tenancy, other than through a mutual exchange or Court order, has not previously taken place
- The proposed assignee would be eligible for housing under the Council's Housing Allocations Policy and would be eligible to succeed to the tenancy if the tenant died

An assignment uses the statutory right of succession. A tenancy can only be succeeded to once. A tenant who became a tenant through succession cannot subsequently assign the tenancy under section 113, Part IV of the Housing Act 1985.

All assignment requests will be considered fairly, consistently and in line with legal requirements, the Council's Tenancy Policy and the need to support sustainable tenancies and effective use of housing stock.

Ending a tenancy - a clear, fair and supported process

Tenancies may end for a variety of reasons, including a tenant choosing to move, transferring to another property, or as a result of enforcement action.

We are committed to ensuring all tenancy endings are managed in a clear, fair, consistent and supportive way.

Where a tenancy is at risk, we will:

- Identify concerns at an early stage
- Provide appropriate and timely support
- Work with tenants to prevent tenancy breakdown wherever possible

Where a tenancy does end, we will ensure the process is clearly explained, handled sensitively, and managed with professionalism, respect and clear communication.

Tenancy fraud - protecting homes for those who need them

Tenancy fraud reduces the availability of homes for those in genuine need and undermines fairness within the housing system.

We take a proactive, proportionate and evidence-based approach to preventing and investigating tenancy fraud, in line with the council's Tenancy Fraud Policy. All cases will be:

- Assessed fairly and without assumption
- Investigated based on evidence
- Managed in line with legal, regulatory and council policy requirements

How decisions are made

Decisions about tenancies, including tenancy progression, support arrangements or enforcement action, are made using a clear and consistent framework.

Decision-making factor	How it will be considered
Tenancy conduct and compliance	Whether tenancy conditions are being met and whether any concerns have been addressed fairly
Household circumstances and housing need	The tenant's current circumstances, household composition and housing need
Effective and fair use of housing stock	How decisions support fair access to limited social housing
Vulnerability, risk and support needs	Any vulnerabilities, safeguarding issues, health needs or support requirements
Tenancy sustainment	The overall aim of sustaining the tenancy wherever possible
Evidence and policy requirements	Decisions will be based on evidence and aligned with legal, regulatory and council policy requirements

Prevention, support and proportionality

Our approach to decision-making is rooted in prevention, support and proportionality. We recognise that decisions about tenancies can have a significant impact, and we are committed to ensuring they are fair, transparent and focused on achieving positive outcomes.

This means we will:

Principle	What this means
Prioritise early intervention	Identify issues at the earliest opportunity and work with tenants to explore options before issues escalate
Provide tailored support	Take account of individual circumstances and work with partners where needed to support tenancy sustainment
Communicate clearly and openly	Ensure tenants understand what is happening, why decisions are being made, and what options are available
Act fairly and proportionately	Ensure decisions are evidence-based, consistent and aligned with policy and regulatory expectations
Seek to sustain tenancies wherever possible	Avoid enforcement action, including eviction, unless all reasonable alternatives have been explored

This approach ensures decisions are not only consistent and compliant, but also supportive, person-centred and focused on sustaining tenancies wherever possible.

Rights, Reviews, Appeals and Complaints

We want tenants to feel confident that decisions about their tenancy are made fairly, and that they are fully informed and supported throughout the process.

Tenants have the right to:

- Request a review of tenancy-related decisions if they feel a decision is not right or would like it reconsidered
- Receive clear written explanations so they understand what decision has been made and why
- Access support or advocacy, including help from a friend, family member or support worker, if they need assistance in understanding or challenging a decision
- Make a complaint where they are dissatisfied with the service received

We will always ensure tenants are given the information they need in a way that is clear, accessible and easy to understand.

Reviews and appeals

If we make a decision about a tenancy, for example relating to tenancy progression, support arrangements or enforcement action, we will:

- Write to the tenant to explain the decision
- Clearly set out the reasons for it
- Explain what it means and what will happen next
- Explain how to request a review and the timescales for doing so

If a review is requested, we will ensure that:

- It is carried out by a senior officer who was not involved in the original decision
- All relevant information is considered, including any new information provided
- A clear written outcome is provided, explaining the result of the review

Our aim is to make the process straightforward, fair and easy to access, so tenants feel able to raise concerns and have them properly considered.

Fairness and transparency

All decisions will:

- Be based on evidence and relevant information
- Take account of personal circumstances, including vulnerabilities or support needs
- Be applied consistently in line with policy and legal requirements
- Be clearly explained so tenants understand how the decision has been reached

Where appropriate, we will also work with tenants to identify support or alternative options, particularly where a decision may have a significant impact on their tenancy.

Complaints

Where a tenant is dissatisfied with the service they have received, they can make a complaint through the council's complaints process.

Complaints will be managed in line with the council's complaints policy and the Housing Ombudsman Complaint Handling Code. Learning from complaints will be used to improve services, strengthen accountability and support continuous improvement.

Equality, Accessibility and Vulnerability

We are committed to ensuring housing services are fair, inclusive and accessible to all tenants, regardless of background or circumstance. We recognise that every tenant's situation is different, and our services are designed to respond to those differences in a way that is respectful, consistent and supportive.

We will take account of protected characteristics and ensure compliance with the Public Sector Equality Duty. This means considering how our services impact different groups and taking steps to remove barriers to access and participation.

We will provide reasonable adjustments to ensure services are accessible to all tenants. This includes offering information in alternative formats, adapting communication methods where needed, and providing tailored support to meet individual needs.

We recognise that some tenants may require additional support due to vulnerability, including health, financial or social circumstances. Where this is the case, services will be flexible and responsive, ensuring support is proportionate, appropriate and focused on sustaining the tenancy.

This approach will be supported by the council's Vulnerability Policy, Safeguarding Policies and relevant operational procedures.

Risk, Safeguarding and Partnership Working

We recognise that some tenancy situations involve higher levels of risk and require a coordinated and timely response. This includes circumstances where there are safeguarding concerns, serious anti-social behaviour, domestic abuse or a risk of tenancy breakdown.

We will assess risk at an early stage and take appropriate action to escalate cases where necessary. This ensures that issues are managed proactively, with the right level of oversight and intervention.

Where required, we will work in partnership with other agencies, including social care, health services, police and support providers, to provide a coordinated response. This approach ensures tenants receive the support they need and that risks are managed effectively.

Safeguarding responsibilities are embedded across all tenancy services. Staff are expected to identify, respond to and escalate safeguarding concerns in line with council procedures, ensuring tenants are protected and supported.

Risk and safeguarding oversight will be supported through case management, escalation routes, management review, multi-agency working and clear governance arrangements.

Performance, Accountability and Assurance

We are committed to delivering a Housing Service that is transparent, accountable and continuously improving.

Performance will be measured using a combination of Tenant Satisfaction Measures and locally defined Key Performance Indicators, providing a clear and balanced view of service delivery and tenant outcomes.

Key performance indicators will include:

- Tenancy sustainment rates
- Anti-social behaviour case response and outcome times
- Tenant satisfaction levels
- Complaint handling performance
- New tenancy visit completion rates
- Case ownership and escalation monitoring
- Tenant feedback and engagement outcomes

These measures enable the service to monitor effectiveness, identify areas for improvement, and ensure consistent standards are maintained.

Assurance cycle

Stage	What this means
Measure	Collect performance data, tenant feedback, complaints learning and service standard information
Review	Analyse performance through management oversight, case reviews and governance arrangements
Report	Share performance with senior management and tenants in a clear and accessible format
Improve	Use evidence to strengthen services, update procedures, train staff and respond to tenant priorities

Performance will be reviewed regularly and reported to both senior management and tenants in a clear and accessible format. This supports transparency and ensures tenants can see how the service is performing and where improvements are being made.

Service managers are accountable for performance within their areas, supported by clear reporting, oversight and governance arrangements.

Continuous improvement will be driven by performance data, tenant feedback, complaints, learning from casework and regulatory requirements, ensuring the service remains responsive, effective and focused on delivering positive outcomes for tenants.

A copy of this strategy will be available on the Council’s website and made available on request at the Council Offices for inspection. A paper copy can be provided for a small charge.

If you would like more information on the Tenancy Strategy, please contact Housing Services.

Monitoring & Review

We are aware that many registered providers have already published their own tenancy policies. We ask that they review these in light of the Winchester Tenancy Strategy to ensure, so wherever possible, their policies do not contradict our strategy.

The Council in conjunction with various existing groups such as Hampshire Home Choice, will monitor the Tenancy Strategy and review and update it as required.

We ask that Registered Providers review their tenancy policies in light of the Winchester Tenancy Strategy and, wherever possible, ensure their policies align with the principles set out within it.

Version controls:

Version	Category	Trigger	Next review	Policy Owner	Date
1.0	Regulatory	New	01 March 2029	Housing Services Manager	01 March 2026

If you require this document in another format or language, please contact the Housing Service by emailing policy@winchester.gov.uk or calling **01962 848 400**.



Winchester City Council

Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA)

Section 1 - Data Checklist

When undertaking an EqIA for your policy or project, it is important that you take into consideration everything which is associated with the policy or project that is being assessed.

The checklist below is to help you sense check your policy or project before you move to Section 2.

		Yes/No	Please provide details
1	Have there been any complaints data related to the policy or project you are looking to implement?		Complaints learning, tenant feedback, consultation responses and operational case reviews informed the strategy. Feedback consistently highlighted concerns around communication, anti-social behaviour, accessibility, delays in support, neighbourhood safety, and inconsistent service experiences.
2	Have all officers who will be responsible for implementing the policy or project been consulted, and given the opportunity to raise concerns about the way the policy or function has or will be implemented?	Yes	Consultation included Housing Officers, Income Officers, ASB Officers, Tenancy Sustainment Officers, Sheltered and Extra Care staff, Housing Managers, safeguarding leads and wider housing services. Operational learning informed the strategy's emphasis on early intervention, case ownership, partnership working and tenancy sustainment.
3	Have previous consultations highlighted any concerns about the policy or project from an equality impact perspective?	Yes	Consultation identified concerns relating to digital exclusion, accessibility of services, language barriers, mental health support, domestic abuse, affordability pressures, safeguarding, support for vulnerable tenants and the need for respectful and transparent communication.

		Yes/No	Please provide details
4	Do you have any concerns regarding the implementation of this policy or project? <i>(i.e. Have you completed a self-assessment and action plan for the implementation of your policy or project?)</i>	Yes	Risks include inconsistent application of tenancy approaches, insufficient recognition of vulnerability, barriers caused by inaccessible communication, disproportionate enforcement action, inconsistent partnership working and insufficient early intervention.
5	Does any accessible data regarding the area which your work will address identify any areas of concern or potential problems which may impact on your policy or project?	Yes	Local housing data demonstrates rising affordability pressures, increasing homelessness risk, significant housing demand, growing mental health concerns, an ageing population and increasing complexity of support needs. These pressures may disproportionately affect vulnerable households and protected groups.
6	Do you have any past experience delivering similar policies or projects which may inform the implementation of your scheme from an equality impact point of view?	Yes	Existing operational work in tenancy management, ASB, homelessness prevention, safeguarding, tenancy sustainment, domestic abuse and complaints handling demonstrates the importance of accessible communication, proportionality, documented decision-making and early support interventions.
7	Are there any other issues that you think will be relevant?	Yes	The strategy must balance tenancy enforcement, safeguarding, tenancy sustainment, equality duties, homelessness prevention, housing demand management and neighbourhood safety while ensuring fairness and proportionality in decision-making.

Section 2 - Your EqIA form

Directorate: Housing	Your Service Area: Housing Services	Team: Housing Services (Tenancy, ASB, Sheltered and Extra Care)	Officer responsible for this assessment: Laura Doyle	Date of assessment: January 2026 (finalised May 2026)
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Question	Please provide details
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1	What is the name of the policy or project that is being assessed?	
2	Is this a new or existing policy?	
3	Briefly describe the aim and purpose of this work.	
4	What are the associated objectives of this work?	
5	Who is intended to benefit from this work and in what way?	
6	What are the outcomes sought from this work?	
7	What factors/forces could contribute or detract from the outcomes?	
8	Who are the key individuals and organisations responsible for the implementation of this work?	
9	Who implements the policy or project and who or what is responsible for it?	

		Please select your answer in bold . Please provide detail here.		
10a	Could the policy or project have the potential to affect individuals or communities on the basis of race differently in a negative way?	Y	N	
10b	What existing evidence (either presumed or otherwise) do you have for this?			
11a	Could the policy or project have the potential to affect individuals or communities on the basis of sex differently in a negative way?	Y	N	
11b	What existing evidence (either presumed or otherwise) do you have for this?			
12a	<p>Could the policy or project have the potential to affect individuals or communities on the basis of disability differently in a negative way?</p> <p><i>you may wish to consider:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Physical access</i> • <i>Format of information</i> • <i>Time of interview or consultation event</i> 	Y	N	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Personal assistance</i> • <i>Interpreter</i> • <i>Induction loop system</i> • <i>Independent living equipment</i> • <i>Content of interview)</i> 			
12b	What existing evidence (either presumed or otherwise) do you have for this?			
13a	Could the policy or project have the potential to affect individuals or communities on the basis of sexual orientation differently in a negative way?	Y	N	
13b	What existing evidence (either presumed or otherwise) do you have for this?			
14a	Could the policy or project have the potential to affect individuals on the basis of age differently in a negative way?	Y	N	
14b	What existing evidence (either presumed or otherwise) do you have for this?			
15a	Could the policy or project have the potential to affect individuals or communities on the basis of religious belief differently in a negative way?	Y	N	
15b	What existing evidence (either presumed or otherwise) do you have for this?			
16a	Could this policy or project have the potential to affect individuals on the basis of gender reassignment differently in a negative way?	Y	N	
16b	What existing evidence (either presumed or otherwise) do you have for this?			
17a	Could this policy or project have the potential to affect individuals on the basis of marriage and civil partnership differently in a negative way?	Y	N	
17b	What existing evidence (either presumed or otherwise) do you have for this?			

18a	Could this policy or project have the potential to affect individuals on the basis of pregnancy and maternity differently in a negative way?	Y	N	
18b	What existing evidence (either presumed or otherwise) do you have for this?			

19	Could any negative impacts that you identified in questions 10a to 15b create the potential for the policy to discriminate against certain groups on the basis of protected characteristics?	Y	N	
20	Can this negative impact be justified on the grounds of promoting equality of opportunity for certain groups on the basis of protected characteristics? Please provide your answer opposite against the relevant protected characteristic.	Y	N	
21	How will you mitigate any potential discrimination that may be brought about by your policy or project that you have identified above?			
22	Do any negative impacts that you have identified above impact on your service plan?	Y	N	

Signed by completing officer	Paul Salter
Service Manager Sign off	Laura Doyle

Signed by Service Lead or Corporate Head of Service	Yvonne Anderson
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Appendix 5

Housing Policy Co-Creation Group Session Summary – Tenancy Management Strategy

Policy Co-Creation Group**Tenancy Services Strategy – Session 1**

Date: Thursday 19th March 2026, 6pm-8pm The Boardroom, Winchester City Council Offices

Attendees: Tenant representatives (4), Charlotte Bailey (Tenant Partnership Manager), Stella Thurston (Tenant Partnership Officer)

Purpose: To begin co-producing the Tenancy Services Strategy by defining the purpose of the service, tenant experience, expectations, and core principles.

1. Purpose of the Tenancy Service

Participants were asked:

“Why does the council provide a tenancy service?”

Key themes identified:

- To enable people to live in safe and quality homes
- To prevent crisis
- To sustain tenancies
- To protect and support tenants and their families
- To prevent homelessness
- To provide a fair and transparent service
- To provide a framework to measure and monitor housing performance
- To enhance tenant and community wellbeing and pride
- To protect neighbourhoods and a sense of community
- To support independence

Key insight:

The tenancy service is understood not just as a management function, but as a preventative, supportive and community-focused service.

2. Tenant Experience – “What Should It Feel Like?”

Participants described both emotional and practical expectations.

Core expectations:

- Being treated fairly and with respect
- Clear understanding of responsibilities (both tenant and council)
- A sense of **relief, security and stability**, particularly after a period of uncertainty
- A positive emotional experience at tenancy start (described as “euphoria” when receiving keys)

Communication and Relationships**Strong preference for:**

- A **single point of contact**, with:
 - Flexibility to change/escalate if the relationship breaks down
- A **“first fix” approach**, where:

- The first officer contacted takes ownership of the issue
- Tenants are not passed between officers
- If the officer cannot resolve the issue directly, they take responsibility for finding the answer

Summarised expectation:

Tenants should feel confident that they know who to contact, and that whoever they contact will take ownership and resolve the issue.

Building Trust

Trust is strengthened by:

- Feedback on service performance
- Clear demonstration of how tenant feedback leads to service improvement
- Respect for confidentiality

Communication Channels

- Face-to-face contact remains important and should not be removed
- Telephone contact is acceptable and often sufficient
- Digital services are supported, but:

Technology should enhance the service, not dictate it

- The council should remain responsive to technological change without losing a human-centred approach

3. Living Comfortably in a Tenancy

Participants identified the following as key to sustaining tenancies:

Practical support:

- Adaptations to homes where tenants become disabled
- Inclusive services that respond to changing needs

Community safety:

- Clear and visible action on antisocial behaviour (ASB)
- Rapid response times
- Clear communication and outcomes following reports
- Positive resolution of issues

Inclusion and Accessibility

- Services should adapt to meet the needs of **isolated tenants**, particularly in rural areas
- Home visits should be offered where appropriate, rather than requiring travel to central offices

Understanding Tenant Needs

- The council should demonstrate awareness and responsiveness to individual circumstances
- Support may include:
 - Helping build tolerance and understanding between neighbours
 - Recognising cultural differences

Community Reassurance

- Greater transparency is requested regarding how communities are safeguarded, particularly when housing perpetrators or ex-offenders
- This was identified as important for reassurance and trust

4. Support vs Enforcement

Participants strongly supported a **tiered approach**:

Preferred model:

Support-led → Balanced → Enforcement-led

This approach was well received and considered appropriate.

Application of the Model

Participants emphasised that the approach should depend on the situation:

Examples:

- **Tenancy fraud:**
 - Fact-finding first
 - Followed by swift and clear enforcement
- **Rent arrears:**
 - May indicate vulnerability or change in circumstances
 - Requires a supportive approach initially
 - All support options should be explored before enforcement

Expectations for Enforcement

- Clear and transparent communication about consequences
- Tenants should understand what actions may follow non-compliance
- Once warnings have been issued and not adhered to:
 - Enforcement should be applied **swiftly**

Principles of Good Practice

- Proportionate and consistent application of consequences
- No assumptions should be made
- Officers should avoid jumping to conclusions
- Early, balanced intervention to prevent escalation

5. Emerging Principles for the Strategy

Based on discussions, the following principles were identified:

1. Enable people to live in safe and quality homes
2. Provide a framework to measure and monitor performance
3. Ensure tenants are treated fairly and with respect
4. Maintain clear understanding of responsibilities (tenant and council)

5. Provide a single point of contact, with flexibility to escalate or change
6. Ensure tenants feel confident in who to contact and that issues will be owned and resolved
7. Take visible and timely action on antisocial behaviour, with clear outcomes
8. Operate a support-first approach, moving to balanced and then enforcement-led where necessary

6. Key Takeaways for Strategy Development

This session highlighted that the Tenancy Services Strategy should:

- Be grounded in **tenant experience and outcomes**, not just process
- Clearly articulate a **support-first philosophy**
- Define expectations for **communication, ownership and accountability**
- Balance **human interaction with appropriate use of technology**
- Demonstrate how the service:
 - Prevents crisis
 - Sustains tenancies

Appendix 6 Registered Providers and Support Organisations Consultation Analysis –
Tenancy Strategy

Registered Providers & Support Organisations Consultation Analysis

Consultation Overview

Although the consultation was distributed to all Registered Providers (RPs), Housing Associations and support organisations operating within the Winchester district, only two formal responses were received:

- VIVID
- NFS Mediation

Whilst the response rate was limited, the feedback received was detailed, operationally informed and highly valuable. Both organisations provided strong insight into:

- tenancy sustainment pressures;
- affordability challenges;
- mental health and vulnerability;
- partnership working;
- ASB and neighbour disputes;
- early intervention;
- and gaps within the current draft strategy.

Importantly, both responses broadly reinforced many of the themes emerging from the resident consultation, particularly around:

- affordability;
- mental health;
- support needs;
- prevention and early intervention;
- communication and partnership working; and
- neighbourhood and community safety.

This consistency strengthens the overall evidence base informing the Tenancy Strategy.

Key Themes Emerging from Registered Provider & Support Organisation Responses

Strategic Theme	Key Findings from Organisations	Strategic Implications
Affordability & Cost of Living	Both organisations identified affordability pressures, rising rents, service charges and wider cost-of-living pressures as major tenancy sustainment risks.	The strategy should place greater emphasis on affordability, financial inclusion and preventative support.
Mental Health & Vulnerability	Both organisations highlighted increasing levels of tenant vulnerability and mental health needs.	Stronger references to trauma-informed approaches, mental health pathways and integrated support are required.
Early Intervention	Early intervention was consistently identified as one of the most effective tenancy sustainment approaches.	The strategy should strengthen proactive tenancy support and earlier referral arrangements.
Partnership Working	Both responses highlighted the importance of coordinated multi-agency working.	The strategy should include clearer partnership and referral frameworks.
Independent Support & Mediation	NFS strongly emphasised the value of independent mediation and impartial support services.	The strategy should recognise the role of independent support providers within tenancy sustainment and ASB resolution.
Anti-Social Behaviour & Neighbour Disputes	ASB and low-level disputes remain key tenancy management pressures.	The strategy should strengthen neighbourhood management and mediation pathways.
Housing Supply Pressures	Organisations highlighted lack of larger homes, lack of smaller homes and suitability challenges.	The strategy should better reference mobility, rightsizing and stock utilisation.
Communication & Information Sharing	More coordinated communication and stronger operational links between services were requested.	The strategy should improve partnership communication expectations and governance arrangements.
Fixed-Term Tenancies	VIVID reported that fixed-term tenancies were discontinued due to poor outcomes.	The strategy should carefully consider the operational effectiveness and intended outcomes of tenancy types.
Support Pathways	Organisations highlighted the importance of practical, person-centred support rather than enforcement-led responses.	The strategy should reinforce prevention, sustainment and holistic support models.

Key Organisational Findings

VIVID

Main Themes Raised

- Affordability pressures;
- High rents and service charges;
- Mental health and support needs;
- Domestic abuse;
- Temporary accommodation pressures;
- ASB;
- Housing mobility limitations;
- Lack of larger and smaller homes.

Significant Operational Insight

VIVID advised that fixed-term tenancies had previously been introduced but were discontinued approximately three years ago because they were not delivering the intended outcomes.

This is a significant operational insight and suggests caution regarding reliance on fixed-term tenancy models within the strategy.

Suggested Strategy Improvements

VIVID identified several gaps within the draft strategy, including:

- affordability;
- assured shorthold tenancies;
- mobility and rightsizing;
- and cross-boundary moves relating to domestic abuse.

Partnership Feedback

VIVID reported strong partnership working with Community Safety and Housing but identified opportunities to improve coordination with:

- Adult Social Care; and
- mental health services.

NFS Mediation

Main Themes Raised

- Independent mediation;
- vulnerability;
- neighbour disputes;
- mental health;
- early intervention;
- communication challenges;
- tenancy sustainment;
- and homelessness prevention.

Significant Operational Insight

NFS highlighted that independent mediation services are often more effective because tenants perceive them as impartial and are therefore more willing to:

- engage;
- communicate openly;
- consider difficult options; and
- resolve disputes constructively.

This is particularly relevant for:

- ASB;
- neighbour disputes;
- tenancy breakdown prevention; and
- homelessness prevention activity.

Key Risks Identified

NFS identified that referrals are sometimes made too late, after disputes have escalated significantly.

This strongly reinforces the need for:

- earlier intervention;
- proactive referral pathways; and
- preventative tenancy management.

Suggested Strategy Improvements

NFS requested:

- stronger operational partnership working;
- earlier referrals;
- increased awareness of support services amongst housing teams;
- and more structured collaboration arrangements.

NFS also noted that they had not received the draft strategy document itself, limiting their ability to fully comment on the draft proposals.

Cross-Cutting Strategic Findings

Despite the limited number of responses, several themes were remarkably consistent across both organisational responses and resident consultation feedback:

Shared Theme Across Residents & Organisations Evidence

Affordability pressures are worsening	Both organisations and residents identified cost of living and affordability as major tenancy risks.
Mental health support is increasingly important	Vulnerability and wellbeing concerns featured heavily throughout responses.
Prevention and early intervention are critical	Early support was consistently identified as the most effective approach.
Communication and partnership working need strengthening	Residents and organisations both highlighted coordination and communication challenges.

Tenancy sustainment requires holistic support	Responses consistently reinforced that housing issues are linked to wider wellbeing and support needs.
Neighbourhood management and ASB remain major concerns	Both residents and organisations highlighted ASB, disputes and community safety pressures.

Strategic Implications for the Tenancy Strategy

The Registered Provider and support organisation consultation findings suggest the Tenancy Strategy should:

- Strengthen affordability and financial inclusion commitments;
- Embed prevention and early intervention approaches;
- Improve partnership working and referral pathways;
- Recognise the importance of independent mediation and support services;
- Strengthen mental health and vulnerability support arrangements;
- Expand references to mobility, rightsizing and stock utilisation;
- Improve neighbourhood management and ASB response approaches;
- Introduce clearer partnership governance and communication arrangements; and
- Further develop tenancy sustainment and holistic support pathways.

The findings also support development of:

- a Partnership & Referral Framework;
- a Tenancy Sustainment Model;
- an Early Intervention Protocol;
- a Vulnerable Resident Support Pathway; and
- stronger partnership engagement arrangements with Registered Providers and support agencies.

Key Limitation of the Consultation

The relatively low response rate from Registered Providers and support organisations should be acknowledged within the consultation analysis.

However, the detailed and operational nature of the responses received still provides valuable strategic insight and importantly aligns closely with the wider resident consultation findings, strengthening confidence in the emerging strategic themes.

Future consultation exercises may benefit from:

- earlier engagement with partners;
- targeted workshops or roundtables;
- follow-up interviews;
- and more collaborative consultation approaches with Registered Providers and support organisations.

Source material taken from Registered Provider and support organisation consultation responses.

Appendix 7 Tenancy Strategy Consultation Results and Narrative Report

RESIDENT CONSULTATION ANALYSIS AND NARRATIVE SUMMARY
TENANCY STRATEGY 2026–2031 AND HOUSING SERVICES TENANCY MANAGEMENT
STRATEGY 2026–2029

Introduction

Winchester City Council undertook a resident consultation exercise to inform the development of the Tenancy Strategy 2026–2031 and Housing Services Tenancy Management Strategy 2026–2029.

A total of 200 responses were received from residents across the district. The consultation sought views on housing security, tenancy sustainment, support services, neighbourhood management, communication, community safety and tenant involvement.

The findings provide a strong evidence base for both strategies and demonstrate a clear mandate for a preventative, resident-focused and tenancy sustainment-led approach to housing services.

Key Findings

The consultation identified six recurring strategic themes:

- Housing security and tenancy stability
- Early intervention and tenancy sustainment
- Affordability and financial resilience
- Community safety and anti-social behaviour
- Communication and customer experience
- Resident involvement and co-production

Together these themes support a strategic shift away from a narrow focus on tenancy administration and towards a broader tenancy sustainment model that supports residents to maintain successful tenancies and remain safely housed.

Housing Security and Tenancy Stability

Long-term housing stability emerged as one of the strongest themes throughout the consultation.

70 % of respondents identified stable tenancy arrangements as one of the most important factors in helping people feel secure and supported within their home. Residents consistently highlighted the importance of:

- Long-term housing security
- Stability for families
- Confidence in remaining within their community
- Prevention of unnecessary tenancy disruption
- Support during periods of financial or personal difficulty

The findings reinforce the importance of secure tenancies as the council's preferred tenancy model and support the strategy's focus on tenancy sustainment and homelessness prevention.

Early Intervention and Tenancy Sustainment

Residents repeatedly emphasised the importance of early support when difficulties arise. Open text responses demonstrated strong support for:

- Early identification of tenancy risks
- Timely intervention
- Practical advice and guidance
- Support before problems escalate into crisis
- Coordinated responses between services

Respondents highlighted that many tenancy problems arise gradually and could be prevented through earlier engagement and more proactive support.

These findings directly support the strategy's emphasis on prevention, tenancy sustainment and early intervention.

Affordability and Financial Inclusion

Affordability was one of the most significant issues raised by residents. Key findings included:

- 58% of respondents identified financial or budgeting support as important in helping people maintain their tenancy.
- 46.5% identified welfare and benefits advice as an important support service.
- Residents frequently referenced rising living costs and financial pressures.

The consultation demonstrates that affordability pressures remain a significant tenancy sustainment risk and supports the strategy's commitment to financial inclusion, income maximisation and targeted support for residents experiencing financial hardship.

Support for Vulnerable Residents

The consultation demonstrated strong support for tailored support services. The most frequently selected support needs were:

- Support for older people (65%)
- Financial and budgeting support (58%)
- Anti-social behaviour support (48.5%)
- Welfare and benefits advice (46.5%)
- Mental health support (38%)
- Domestic abuse support (29.5%)

Residents also highlighted the need for housing services to recognise vulnerability, understand individual circumstances and provide person-centred support.

These findings support the strategy's focus on safeguarding, vulnerability, equality and tailored service delivery.

Community Safety and Neighbourhood Management

Community safety emerged as a significant priority. Residents consistently identified the following as essential characteristics of successful neighbourhoods:

- Feeling safe within their local area
- Respectful neighbours
- Prompt action on anti-social behaviour
- Well-maintained neighbourhoods
- Strong community relationships

Almost half of respondents identified support with anti-social behaviour as a key service requirement.

Open-text feedback demonstrated a clear expectation that housing providers should take visible and proportionate action to address neighbourhood issues and anti-social behaviour.

These findings have informed the strategy's stronger emphasis on neighbourhood management, community safety and partnership working.

Communication and Customer Experience

Communication was identified as one of the most important service expectations. The consultation revealed strong demand for:

- Clear communication
- Timely responses
- Consistent information
- Respectful treatment
- Ownership of issues
- Keeping residents informed about progress

Residents frequently linked good communication with trust and confidence in housing services.

Many respondents highlighted the importance of having a named officer, clear points of contact and confidence that issues would be followed through to resolution.

These findings directly informed the service commitments and communication standards contained within the Housing Services Tenancy Management Strategy.

Resident Involvement and Co-Production

The consultation identified strong support for greater resident involvement in shaping housing services. Key findings included:

- 64% of respondents felt tenants should have greater involvement in decision-making.

- Only 4.5% opposed increased tenant involvement.
- 31.5% were unsure but expressed interest in appropriate opportunities to engage.

Residents expressed a preference for a range of engagement methods, including:

- Online surveys and digital engagement
- Estate inspections and walkabouts
- Community meetings
- Focus groups and resident panels
- Informal drop-in sessions
- Direct engagement with officers

The findings demonstrate support for the council's Tenant Partnership and Influence Plan and reinforce the importance of co-production and resident voice within service delivery.

Strategic Implications

The consultation demonstrates that residents want housing services that are:

- Preventative rather than reactive
- Supportive rather than enforcement-led
- Clear, fair and transparent
- Responsive to individual circumstances
- Focused on sustaining successful tenancies
- Delivered in partnership with residents

The findings support the strategic direction of both the Tenancy Strategy 2026–2031 and the Housing Services Tenancy Management Strategy 2026–2029.

Conclusion

The consultation provides a robust evidence base demonstrating that residents place high value on housing stability, tenancy sustainment, affordability support, community safety, effective communication and meaningful involvement in decision-making.

The findings have directly informed the development of both strategies and support Winchester City Council's commitment to delivering fair, transparent, accountable and resident-focused housing services.

The consultation demonstrates a clear resident mandate for a preventative and tenancy sustainment-led approach that supports people to remain safely housed, promotes community wellbeing and contributes to the council's wider housing and homelessness prevention objectives.

Appendix 8 Tenancy Strategy – Policy on a Page

POLICY ON A PAGE

TENANCY STRATEGY 2026–2031

Introduction

Everyone deserves a safe, secure and sustainable home.

This strategy explains how Winchester City Council and housing providers across the district will support residents to establish and maintain successful tenancies.

It sets out our expectations for tenancy management, tenancy sustainment and housing stability, helping people remain safely housed while making the best use of available social housing.

Our Vision

We will work with residents, Registered Providers and partner organisations to support stable homes, prevent homelessness and build strong communities.

We are committed to:

- Supporting successful tenancies
- Preventing homelessness and tenancy breakdown
- Providing fair and transparent services
- Responding to vulnerability and support needs
- Working in partnership to achieve positive outcomes
- Making best use of social housing

What This Strategy Supports

This strategy promotes:

Stable and Sustainable Tenancies

- Long-term housing security
- Early support and intervention
- Positive tenancy management
- Resident wellbeing and independence

Strong Communities

- Safe neighbourhoods
- Good housing management
- Community wellbeing
- Neighbourhood pride and belonging

Fair Housing Services

- Clear communication
- Accessible services
- Tenant-centred decision making
- Equality, diversity and inclusion

Working Together

Residents

You can help by:

- Looking after your home
- Being a good neighbour
- Reporting issues early
- Engaging with support services when needed

We Will

- Treat residents fairly and respectfully
- Listen to concerns and feedback
- Provide support before problems escalate
- Communicate clearly and openly
- Work with partners to achieve positive outcomes

Partner Organisations

Including Registered Providers, support agencies, health services and community organisations:

- Provide specialist support
- Help prevent homelessness
- Support vulnerable residents
- Work together to sustain tenancies

Our Strategic Priorities

Prevent Homelessness

We will:

- Identify risks early
- Provide tenancy sustainment support
- Support residents experiencing financial hardship
- Promote early intervention and prevention

Support Vulnerable Residents

We will:

- Recognise changing support needs
- Take a person-centred approach
- Promote safeguarding and wellbeing
- Work with specialist agencies where required

Deliver Tenant-Centred Services

We will:

- Communicate clearly
- Offer accessible services
- Make reasonable adjustments
- Involve residents in service improvement

Strategic Priority	Outcome
Prevention	Early intervention and tenancy sustainment
Support	Tailored help for vulnerable residents
Partnership	Coordinated multi-agency working
Stability	Safe and secure homes
Communities	Strong, sustainable neighbourhoods
Housing Management	Effective use of social housing stock

Tenancy Types

Different tenancy arrangements may be used depending on housing need and circumstances.

Secure Tenancies

Provide long-term housing stability and remain the council's preferred tenancy type for general needs housing.

Introductory Tenancies

Usually granted to new tenants for an initial 12-month period before progressing to a secure tenancy.

Flexible or Fixed-Term Tenancies

May be used where appropriate and should normally be granted for a minimum of five years.

Older Persons and Supported Housing

Long-term tenancy arrangements are encouraged to support stability, independence and wellbeing.

Making Best Use of Social Housing

Social housing is a valuable and limited resource.

We will:

- Support fair access to housing
- Encourage appropriate housing moves
- Promote downsizing and mobility opportunities
- Respond to changing housing needs
- Balance housing security with local housing demand

How We Measure Success

We will monitor:

- Tenancy sustainment rates
- Homelessness prevention outcomes
- Resident satisfaction and feedback
- Community wellbeing
- Partnership effectiveness
- Housing mobility and stock utilisation

Resident feedback, performance information and partnership learning will help shape future improvements.

Our Commitment

We are committed to delivering housing services that are:

- Fair
- Accessible
- Responsive
- Preventative

- Accountable
- Resident-focused

By working together, we can help ensure that everyone has the opportunity to live in a safe, secure and sustainable home and be part of a strong and thriving community.

POLICY ON A PAGE TENANCY MANAGEMENT STRATEGY 2026–2029

Introduction

A safe, secure and sustainable home provides the foundation for stability, wellbeing and independence. This strategy explains how Winchester City Council will support tenants throughout their tenancy journey, from moving into a home through to sustaining a successful tenancy and, where appropriate, moving on. It sets out what tenants can expect from us, how services will be delivered, and how we will work together to build safe, well-managed and thriving communities.

Our Tenant Promise

We are committed to delivering housing services that are:

- Fair and respectful
- Accessible and responsive
- Consistent and accountable
- Preventative and supportive
- Tenant-focused and transparent

We will help tenants remain in their homes wherever possible, provide support when circumstances change, and ensure issues are managed through to an appropriate outcome.

Our Approach

We will:

Support Successful Tenancies

- Provide early intervention and support
- Help prevent tenancy breakdown
- Promote independence and wellbeing
- Respond to changing circumstances

Build Strong Communities

- Maintain safe neighbourhoods
- Respond to anti-social behaviour
- Support neighbourhood pride
- Work with residents and partners

Deliver Excellent Services

- Provide clear communication
- Ensure clear case ownership
- Listen and respond to feedback
- Continuously improve services

What Tenants Can Expect

We will:

- Treat you with dignity, fairness and respect
- Provide clear information and advice
- Give you a named Housing Officer
- Keep you informed about your case
- Take appropriate action when issues arise
- Support you throughout your tenancy

You should always know who to contact and feel confident that your concerns will be taken seriously.

Priority	Outcome
Support	Early intervention and tenancy sustainment
Accountability	Named Housing Officer and case ownership
Communication	Clear, accessible and responsive services
Neighbourhoods	Safe, well-managed communities
Partnership	Joined-up support and safeguarding
Performance	Transparent reporting and continuous improvement

Working Together

Tenants

You can help by:

- Looking after your home
- Paying rent and meeting tenancy responsibilities
- Being considerate to neighbours
- Reporting concerns early
- Working with us to resolve issues

We Will

- Listen and act on concerns
- Provide support and guidance
- Manage neighbourhood issues
- Coordinate services on your behalf
- Work to achieve positive outcomes

Partners

Including support agencies, health services, police and community organisations:

- Provide specialist support
- Help manage risk and safeguarding concerns
- Support tenancy sustainment
- Work with us to keep communities safe

Your Tenancy Journey

Before You Move In

- Clear information about your tenancy
- Help understanding your rights and responsibilities

Starting Your Tenancy

- Tenancy sign-up with your Housing Officer
- Advice and settling-in support

Living in Your Home

- Ongoing tenancy support
- Neighbourhood management
- Advice and guidance when needed

When Circumstances Change

- Early intervention and tailored support
- Partnership working and referrals
- Help to remain in your home where possible

Moving On

- Clear information and guidance
- Fair and supportive tenancy ending processes

Service Standards

Service

High-risk ASB reports

Medium-risk ASB reports

Standard-risk ASB reports

New tenancy visit

Complaint response (Stage 1)

Case ownership

Performance against these standards will be monitored and reported.

Our Commitment

Within 1 working day

Within 3 working days

Within 5 working days

Within 6 weeks

Within 10 working days

Named officer assigned

How We Make Decisions

Our decisions are based on:

- Evidence and facts
- Fairness and consistency
- Individual circumstances
- Housing need
- Vulnerability and support requirements
- Effective use of housing stock
- Tenancy sustainment wherever possible

We will always seek to explain decisions clearly and provide information about reviews, appeals and complaints.

Prevention, Support and Safeguarding

We believe prevention is better than crisis management.

We will:

- Identify issues early
- Provide tailored support

- Consider vulnerability and wellbeing
- Work with specialist agencies
- Assess and manage risks appropriately
- Prioritise safeguarding

Where possible, we will work with tenants to sustain tenancies and avoid enforcement action.

Communication and Accessibility

We will communicate in ways that are:

- Clear and easy to understand
- Accessible and inclusive
- Responsive to individual needs
- Available through a range of channels

You can contact us:

- Through the Housing Hub
- By email
- Via your Housing Officer
- Through our website
- By telephone or in person

Technology will support our services but will never replace personal contact when it is needed.

Measuring Success

We will monitor:

- Tenancy sustainment rates
- Tenant satisfaction
- ASB response performance
- Complaint handling
- New tenancy visit completion
- Service standards performance
- Tenant feedback and engagement

We will share performance information and use feedback to improve services.

Our Commitment

We are committed to providing a tenancy service that is:

Supportive

Helping tenants sustain successful tenancies.

Responsive

Taking ownership and acting when issues arise.

Fair

Making transparent and evidence-based decisions.

Accountable

Monitoring performance and learning from feedback.

Community Focused

Supporting safe, clean and well-managed neighbourhoods.

By working together, we can help ensure that every tenant feels secure in their home, confident in their landlord and part of a strong and thriving community.