



Private Sector Renewal Strategy 2019-21 review

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This review provides an update on the outcomes achieved through the implementation of the actions set out in this strategy. It also sets out the priorities for 2021-23. These priorities will be refreshed in March 2022.

A full refresh of this strategy will be completed once an updated stock modelling exercise has been completed to identify the condition of properties in the private sector in Ashfield. This was last carried out in 2016.

As a reminder, the aims of the strategy are:

- To reduce the number of non-decent homes with category 1 hazards or chronic disrepair in the private sector
- To reduce the number of non-decent homes with high risk category 2 hazards
- To minimise the number of long-term empty properties
- To improve health and wellbeing outcomes through improving housing standards (including living independently for longer)
- To ensure the health, safety and welfare of licensed caravan sites and their residents
- To target resources effectively to improve the health and wellbeing of all residents, in particular those within the privately rented sector.



Private Rented Sector

Action	Update	Status
By September 2019, review the effectiveness of the information provided to low risk HHSRS cases and the outcome of the case.	A different approach is now in place to provide additional guidance and advice to both landlords and tenants at the earliest opportunity. Feedback from both parties indicates this has resulted in issues being addressed before the case becomes high risk.	Complete
Regularly monitor the time taken to successfully close a HHSRS case and identify opportunities to improve the service.	New working practice such as the above, as well as virtual inspections, have been introduced that have reduced repeat inspections and resolved cases more quickly.	Complete
Regularly monitor the use of new enforcement powers including civil penalties and prosecution and identify opportunities to improve their usage.	Civil penalties are now regularly issued and the enforced sale procedure has been utilised. All enforcement options are considered in each case.	Complete
Identify a digital solution to manage licence applications by September 2020 subject to resources.	An online application process for licences was launched in April 2020.	Complete
Work with MDC and N&SDC to provide a landlord's forum twice a year, providing key information on their responsibilities.	The most recent landlord forum was held virtually in partnership with DASH and North Nottinghamshire local authorities.	Complete
Develop a training offer on PRS property standards for landlords and partner agencies by September 2019.	Guidance documents have been provided to over 850 landlords in 2020/21, as well as two training sessions for letting agents and their contractors.	Complete
By August 2019, review and update information available online and on request to raise awareness with tenants of their rights and where to get advice and assistance.	This was completed as part of the launch of the new ADC website and online licence application process in 2020.	Complete
Proactively inspect all properties belonging to a landlord with a property in disrepair, regularly monitor the number of repeat offenders following service of a Housing Act 2004 notice and following investigations into their entire Ashfield portfolio.	There were insufficient resources available to carry out this action – this will now start in 2021/22.	Not commenced
Regularly monitor the support referrals that are made in HHSRS cases.	Additional support providers have been identified and referrals have increased to ensure that residents receive the support they require from the most appropriate service.	Complete

In 2021-23, the following actions will be carried out:

- Respond to Government consultations relating to the review of the Health & Housing Safety Rating System as appropriate.
- Introduce any required changes to policies and procedures as a result of the Government review of the Health & Housing Safety Rating System
- Review the Selective Licence Scheme that is due to expire 31st January 2022 (if appropriate, commence consultation to extend by 1st August 2021)
- Work with Nottinghamshire authorities to profile Ashfield's private sector stock using a range of data sources
- Implement a Banning Order Policy
- Develop service standards for Private Sector Enforcement setting out the service tenants and landlords can expect from the team
- Raise awareness of the new electrical safety regulations and take enforcement action as necessary
- Develop a standard template for pre-HMO licencing inspections
- Continue to work with DASH, MDC and N&SDC to provide a landlord's forum twice a year
- Further develop the training offer on PRS property standards for landlords
- Proactively inspect all properties belonging to a landlord with at least one property in disrepair

Empty Homes

Action	Update	Status
Endeavour to use the enforced sales power to deal with problematic long term empty properties.	The enforced sale procedure has been utilised.	Complete
From April 2019, complete a quarterly review of the long-term empty properties to target for purchase by the council for use as affordable housing.	A process is in place to regularly identify suitable properties for purchase by the council.	Complete
By July 2019, complete a review of all properties empty for 10 years or more to consider suitability for works in default and enforced sale.	Contact has been made with the owners of all properties empty for 10 years or more. As a result, 11 properties have been auctioned with PSE assistance, 1 enforced sale has been completed and 23 owners have been introduced to auctioneers. 39 cases remain open at the end of 2020/21.	Complete
By July 2019, work with Revenues and Benefits team to investigate all homes subject to a second homes exemption to confirm their eligibility for this exemption.	There were insufficient resources to complete this action and it has been removed from this action plan.	Not commenced
By September 2019, work with Legal Services to complete a cost/benefit analysis of using the Empty Dwelling Management Order power and make recommendations regarding its use.	It was not considered suitable to use EDMOs – other enforcement powers are considered to be more cost effective.	Complete
By April 2020, make direct contact (telephone or in person) with every owner of a property empty for 10 years or more.	Contact has been made with the owners of all properties empty for 10 years or more. As a result, 11 properties have been auctioned with PSE assistance, 1 enforced sale has been completed and 23 owners have been introduced to auctioneers. 39 cases remain open at the end of 2020/21.	Complete
Each year, bring 42 empty properties back into use.	Each year, bring 42 empty properties back into use 31 properties were brought back into use in 2020/21.	Partially complete

In 2021-23, the PSE Team will continue to use all available powers to bring as many empty properties back into use as possible. The Team will work in partnership with others teams such as Revenues and Benefits as required to achieve this.

Caravan residents

Action	Update	Status
By May 2019, implement the revised Gypsy and Traveller protocol and complete a 12 month review to ensure the rights of occupants are protected and that unauthorised encampments are moved on at the earliest opportunity.	This protocol was implemented and reviewed after 12 months with a small number of amendments made as a result.	Complete
By May 2019, introduce a mechanism to record the costs of responding to unauthorised encampments.	A mechanism was introduced from from April 2020.	Complete
By August 2019, make recommendations on the need for pre-emptive injunctions on council owned land to protect sites that are vulnerable to unauthorised encampments.	There are no council owned sites that require a pre-emptive injunction currently.	Complete
From April 2019, levy a mobile home licence fee.	This licence fee has been introduced.	Complete

In 2021-23, the following actions will be carried out:

- Update enforcement policies and procedures as required following Government changes regarding trespass on private land
- Updates policies and procedures as required following changes to the Mobile Homes Act 2013 regarding compliance notices

A summary of progress made and outcomes achieved against the actions set out in this section of the strategy is set out in the table below:

Action	Update	Status
By October 2020, review the Aids and Adaptations Policy and associated procedures.	This action will now be completed by September 2021. This is due to delays to an overarching, Nottinghamshire-wide policy being completed.	Not commenced
By March 2020, identify opportunities to improve the value for money of DFG and discretionary works installations.	Procurement of works is now carried out through an online portal managed by Nottinghamshire County Council which has increased the pool of contractors tendering for works and therefore ensures tender prices are competitive.	Complete
From April 2019, record the outcomes of DFG installations (such as reduced running costs, increased SAP/EPC rating, reduced GP visits, reduced number/risk of fall).	There were insufficient resources available to thoroughly record and analyse this information.	Not commenced
From April 2020, complete an annual review of the DFG installation outcomes information to evaluate the contribution to tackling the most prevalent hazards, recommend initiatives to improve this contribution.	This action will now be completed by March 2022 and it will focus on Discretionary DFG installations, as ADC is able to influence the allocation of this funding.	Not commenced
By June 2020, research the key factors that contribute to the most prevalent hazards (fuel poverty, falls, excess cold, damp) and recommend initiatives to mitigate these within existing resources.	A research project to better understand the drivers of fuel poverty was completed in 2019. Additional information has been added to ADC's website here to help residents stay warm and well in cold weather. ADC also works closely with Citizens Advice Ashfield and the Nottinghamshire Warm Homes Hub to provide residents with advice on switching energy provider and to upgrade their heating systems and energy efficiency of their home. In 2021 we will review the information we provide to residents on the support available to them to stay well at home and ensure we are working in partnership with all the relevant agencies to make every contact count.	Partially complete
By April 2020, complete a 12 month review of the Healthy Home MOT monitoring information to identify the most frequent issues identified and referrals completed, recommend initiatives to address these issues within existing resources.	A trial of the Healthy Home MOT was completed in 2019, however, there were insufficient resources available to thoroughly record and analyse this information. As above, in 2021 we will review the information we provide to residents on the support available to them to stay well at home and ensure we are working in partnership with all the relevant agencies to make every contact count.	Partially complete
By October 2020, research the household groups that are at greatest risk of the most prevalent hazards and who are not eligible for BCF support, recommend initiatives to support these households.	This action will now be completed in 2021 by making additional information available on our website on the support available to them to stay well at home.	Not commenced

In 2021-23, the following actions will be carried out:

- Update the Aids and Adaptations Policy and associated procedures
- Review the eligibility criteria for Discretionary DFGs
- Review the information provided to residents in person and online on the support available to them to stay well at home
- Ensure we are working in partnership with all relevant agencies
- Be an active member of the Nottinghamshire Consistency Group to ensure we are operating in line with other Nottinghamshire authorities and adopting best practices
- Work with Nottinghamshire County Council to achieve Social Care Trusted Assessor status for the DFG Team
- Introduce a case management software system and other digital solutions to minimise the use of paper-based and inefficient ways of working.