

Housing strategy 2022 to 2027 action plan review

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Contents

Contents.....	1
1. Purpose of review.....	2
2. Executive Summary	2
3. Local context	2
4. Changes since 2022.....	3
5. Successes	4
6. Challenges	5
7. Action plan	5
8. Conclusion	17

1. Purpose of review

The purpose of this review is to provide an update on the action plan that was produced as part of the Housing Strategy 2022 to 2027.

2. Executive Summary

Our Housing Strategy was updated in 2022 and set out how we planned to ensure that the local people benefitted from good quality, affordable and appropriate housing and services.

Aligned to the Luton 2040 vision, by 2027 we aimed to ensure:

- good and improving housing services
- an active and increasing role for our residents and tenants
- at least 425 new homes and 85 new affordable homes each year
- a bold intervention in the local rental market to make homes available at lower cost
- more of the homes we most need, especially family homes
- significant reductions in the use of temporary accommodation, to under 500 households
- no rough sleeping in Luton
- improved conditions in the private rented sector through extension of licensing
- reduction of fuel poverty through additional energy efficiency measures to homes of all tenures
- full compliance with emerging building safety and fire safety requirements
- clear plans for the delivery of specialist housing to meet social care needs

At the half-way point, the surrounding operational environment has continued to be challenging, but some significant achievements have been delivered, such as improved tenant engagement and preparation for housing regulation, along with new housing development projects.

Our priorities for the remaining period of the strategy include accelerated affordable housing delivery, reductions in homelessness, the rollout of private sector licensing and delivery plans for specialist accommodation.

Local context

In 2022 when the Housing Strategy was produced, the headline figures for Luton were:

- 223,800 residents in the town
- the median house price in Luton was £258,000
- the median house price was 8.5 times the median gross annual earnings for residents
- 29% of homes were rented privately, twice the amount of social housing in the town
- domestic buildings accounted for 29% of carbon emissions in Luton
- 8% of households experienced low income/high cost fuel poverty, rising to 12% of private tenants
- more than 1 in 4 workers earned below the Real Living Wage
- 23,000 employees were on zero-hour and agency contracts
- claimant count was 8.4% - up from 3.4% in March 2020 – the sharpest rise in the country
- 33.4% of households were living below the Luton Minimum Income Standard for a decent standard of living, with 12.2% unable to afford basic needs
- 39.4% of children were growing up in relative poverty in 2019/20

3. Changes since 2022

Headline figures

In 2024:

- the population is now (mid-year 2023) according to the ONS estimated to be 231,028
- house prices and rental costs have been rising, putting pressure on household budgets and average house price is more than 9 times the average income
- Luton has a higher than average proportion of residents privately renting
- Luton's current percentage of households living in fuel poverty is slightly below the national figure, 13% compared with 13.1%.
- there are high levels of overcrowding in the town
- the percentage of children in Luton living in households in poverty after housing costs is 39.4%.
- 50.1% of households fall below the Minimum Income Standard ([insert hyperlink?](#)).
- 8.9% of Luton households live in destitution and their outgoings outweigh their income.
- Luton's current claimant count is higher than the national and regional figures, but similar to that of CIPFA nearest neighbours. The rate in Luton increased slightly in 2024, but is below the peak of 2021. Luton's claimant count rate is above the national figure, 6% compared with 3.9%
- Luton has high levels of homelessness and has seen an increase in rough sleeping numbers.
- during 2023-24, 309 individuals were verified rough sleeping. The national increase showed an increase of 27% from 2022-23, but in Luton the increase is significantly higher at 67%.
- Luton (0.2%) has proportionately the lowest number of new dwellings completed when compared to the England, Eastern and CIPFA average.

Corporate Peer Review

The Local Government Association (LGA) carried out a Corporate Peer Challenge review on Luton Council in March 2024.

The review highlighted what we already knew - that housing and temporary accommodation is a significant issue for the council and if not improved will impact the delivery of all 5 key 2040 priorities as they are all dependent on the provision of housing.

It highlighted that other councils also view Luton as an attractive and less expensive option to house their homeless customers. In recent years the Home Office has also housed almost a fifth of their asylum seekers in the Eastern region in Luton which has exacerbated the housing pressures.

Securing affordable temporary accommodation has driven up local costs and has resulted in a significant cost pressure.

The Peer Review recommended a corporately led strategic approach to the delivery of affordable housing and to maximise this opportunity during the refresh of the Local Plan.

A New Government

Labour came into power in July 2024 and their key pledges are:

- 1.5 million target for new homes over five years through new town, local authority development, and mandatory housing targets including affordable and social housing
- reform planning rules with cross-boundary strategic planning and £35 million funding for local planning officers by increasing stamp duty for non-UK residents
- fast tracking brownfield development, use of grey belt and compulsory purchase orders
- change the Affordable Housing Programme to allow for more homes from existing funding
- “Freedom to Buy” help for first time buyers aimed at helping young people onto the housing ladder by making the current mortgage scheme permanent
- review Right to Buy discounts and increase protections on newly built social housing
- banning section 21 evictions, leasehold reform and implement Law Commission proposals on enfranchisement, right to manage and commonhold- as part of the Renters Reform Bill
- review how better to protect leaseholders from costs and take steps to accelerate pace of remediation as part of the Building Safety Act
- an extra £6.6 billion decarbonisation funding for homes as part of the “Warm Homes Plan”
- “Ending Homelessness Unit” for cross-departmental strategies
- employing more staff to clear back log of asylum seekers to end the use of hotels
- create a National Care Service to support social care and older persons
- 10-year infrastructure strategy for rail, road and homes and more regional devolution

Further detail about implementation is expected at the Budget and spending review in October 2024.

4. Successes

Key successes since the publication of the strategy in 2022 are:

- new Developer Forum established to build better relationships with housebuilding industry locally
- adopted Shared Ownership policy to support low-cost home ownership delivery
- agreed delivery of additional council homes as part of The Stage project
- supported partners to secure funding for specialist housing for vulnerable and homeless clients
- increased tenant engagement opportunities and number of tenant & resident associations
- tenant scrutiny panel and Tenant Board now engaged with the council’s transformation project around customer services
- housing integrated into Marmot Town activities to support health equity. For example, Public Health funding is supporting initiatives in sheltered housing to combat loneliness such as cinema clubs and gardening. Funding has also supported additional proactive work on private sector rented homes, leading to civil penalties and improvements to homes

5. Challenges

Despite successfully reducing temporary accommodation from 2022 to 2023, Luton has seen a significant rise in the use of temporary accommodation since the beginning of 2023 which has resulted in an overspend of £4.8 million. In the past 18 months, the number of homeless approaches has doubled to over 500 per month.

Post pandemic, construction costs and borrowing costs have risen which has resulted in significant number of stalled sites. This means fewer homes have been built than expected. Many of the sites that have been granted planning permission are not offering any affordable housing on-site due to financial viability.

Residential house sales and rental prices have increased faster than income and cost of living crisis pushing families from the lower income bands into poverty and risk of eviction.

Extended legal challenges have prevented the introduction of private sector selective licensing and additional licensing.

Recent government announcements regarding the Right to Buy have resulted in a large increase in the number of Right to Buy applications during 2024/25.

6. Action plan

The Housing Strategy has four themes together with targets and priority actions for each theme. The table below shows progress against the targets, according to the following code:

Complete	Partial – on target	Partial – below target	Not started
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4.1 Right Homes, More Homes

	Target	Rating	Current position
1	A minimum of 425 net new homes a year in Luton as set out in the Luton Local Plan with a minimum of 20% affordable (85 per year).	Partial Below Target	<p>The Council's Authority Monitoring Report captures total additional dwellings. In 2022/2023, there were 1146 additional homes. 2023/24 data is not confirmed at this point. Therefore, total dwelling completions are above target.</p> <p>There were 43 affordable homes completed in 2022/2023 and 80 affordable homes completed in 2023/2024. Predicted completions in 2024/2025 are 70.</p> <p>The lower numbers of affordable homes are due to a combination of sites not starting when expected, delays on sites and loss of affordable homes in the planning system.</p>
2	A minimum of 900 council-led homes over the 2022-27 period,	Partial Below Target	The council is developing homes directly at The Stage; within the Housing Revenue Account; and through its wholly owned company, Foxhall Homes.

	including at least 350 affordable homes.		<p>Capacity building in terms of funding and staffing has led to a growing programme.</p> <p>Since 2022 we have completed a total of 57 council led homes - consisting of 36 open market Foxhall Homes, 15 affordable Foxhall Homes, 6 HRA homes. We also acquired 14 further newbuild homes for the HRA.</p> <p>Our collective programme for completions of council-led homes by 2027 is 486 including 175 affordable homes. This will represent 54% of the target for homes overall, and 50% of the target for affordable homes.</p>
3	Publish a Housing Supply Plan which sets out how we will maximise our capacity to deliver more homes and work with partners to build homes to meet Luton's housing needs, encouraging local labour and skills.	Partial Below Target	<p>Following our Corporate Peer Review, the council has revised its approach to affordable housing supply. The draft supply plan will be updated to reflect these changes in 2025.</p> <p>We use our Luton Developer Forum and contract approach to support wider economic benefits such as training and local labour.</p>
4	We will establish a company to acquire homes to offer at below market rents, increasing the council's ability to shape the rental offer in Luton	Not Started	This is no longer going ahead as not supported by financial appraisal.
5	An aspiration to achieve 350 new affordable homes a year by the end of the strategy period, driven by council-led delivery, resulting in at least 700 lettings per year to affordable homes by 2027.	Partial Below Target	<p>Very limited progress - supply levels remain low due to viability challenges on private sites which are mainly driven by increased borrowing costs and construction costs.</p> <p>In addition, new building safety requirements have delayed schemes of apartments, and added costs through design changes.</p>
6	60% of all new homes and 80%	Partial	At August 2023, 19% of homes on sites with planning permission were 2B4P or above. HRA

	of council-led homes to be family sized (2 bedroom 4 person minimum) between 2022 and 2027.	Below Target	<p>figures for homes on site at Sep 23 is 52 on site of which over 80% are 2B4P or above.</p> <p>At February 2024 20% of homes granted permission were 2b4p and over.</p> <p>Of the 486 council led homes projected by 2027, 304 (63%) are 2b4p and above.</p>
7	A minimum 10% of new affordable homes to be wheelchair accessible.	Partial Below Target	<p>As at February 2024 only 2% of new homes granted permission were wheelchair accessible.</p> <p>We are close to completion on two wheelchair standard affordable homes at Buckle Close. This represents 4% of homes on site.</p> <p>We are exploring other sites for potential wheelchair-standard homes.</p>
8	We will review our Article 4 protections around permitted development to respond to government changes, giving more oversight to homes created through building conversions and protecting employment locations.	Complete	<p>Successfully implemented Article 4 directive around Butterfield Green and Capability Green.</p> <p>Town Centre and surrounds Article 4 directive was implemented.</p>
9	We will create opportunities for delivery of a range of options for households seeking housing, who are unlikely to receive an offer from our housing register, including improved pathways for tenants and applicants to access intermediate and low cost home ownership, keeping under	Complete	<p>New Shared Ownership policy approved by Executive and now published on the website. Implementation discussions during 2024, ahead of new shared ownership homes.</p> <p>First Homes yet to be built in Luton and first major site to include First Homes has been revised to switch to other forms of affordable housing.</p>

	review the role of First Homes.		
10	We will support self-build and meet statutory requirements to provide serviced plots.	Partial On Target	Interest in the self-build register has fallen. Anticipating a new self-build policy in the emerging Local Plan.
11	Improve partnerships and communication with housing developers and affordable housing providers including potential community build projects, driving the progress of any stalled sites.	Partial On Target	Quarterly housing association liaison group continues to thrive. A new Luton Developer Forum was established in 2023 and has met three times per year with each meeting fully booked. Developers are starting to approach the council to work in partnership. Private developer approaches are increasing. Our annual Luton Housing Conference has attracted a wide range of stakeholders for three years.
12	We will keep under review the needs of people in Luton especially in relation to the large cohort of younger people in the town.	Partial On Target	Feedback from young people shows that homelessness and housing options are important issues to them. Town Centre Partnership work also focused on perceptions around rough sleeping and street activity.

4.2 Reducing homelessness

	Target		Current position
1	Number in temporary accommodation to reduce to under 700 by 2024 and under 500 by 2027.	Partial Below Target	At April 2022, 1078 households were in temporary accommodation, this rose to 1084 by November 2022 then fell steadily to 1007 in September 2023. However, since then, the number has risen to 1107 in July 2024. In addition, the proportion of households in nightly paid accommodation (including hotels) grew from 13% of all TA in April 2022 to 43% in July 2024. A deficit recovery plan is in place to mitigate the impacts of this trend.
2	Accommodation will be safe secure and suitable for children in	Partial On Target	All building safety compliance in place. Accommodation regularly reviewed.

	temporary accommodation.		
3	We will encourage and support families to move into rented homes within 2 years of entering temporary accommodation.	Partial Below Target	Additional 3 Officers for 6 months being recruited to help move households out of TA. Figures since 2018 Average length of stay in TA - 754 days. How many households stay over 2 years - 1516. Percentage of people who stay in TA for over 2 years $1516/4510 = 34\%$.
4	All temporary accommodation to continue to meet building safety and compliance requirements.	Partial On Target	All building safety compliance in place. Accommodation regularly reviewed.
5	Rough sleeping to reduce to zero by 2027.	Partial Below Target	Despite significant investment, wider housing and economic pressures have exacerbated rough sleeping. In April 2022 there were 8 people rough sleeping, and this rose to 23 by July 2024. The monthly average in 2022/23 was 11. In 2023/24 the average was 15 and in 2024/25 the average for the first four months is 21. This work is currently at risk due to the ending of national government funding.
6	Increase income to and expand Luton Lets Squared to support more successful private sector discharges.	Not Started	The Luton Lets joint venture has ceased. We are working on a new model which will enable discharge of homelessness duties into private sector tenancies.
7	Retain and strengthen partnerships including Luton Homeless Partnerships.	Partial On Target	Luton Council continues to be an active partner with Luton Homeless Partnership. Rough Sleeping Initiative funding confirmed to 2025, and partnership commissioned to deliver in partnership. Town Centre Partnership is also developing active investment in project to support good outcomes.
8	Complete and implement system change approach to improve outcomes for vulnerable people at risk of rough sleeping.	Partial On Target	Monthly Multi Agency RS meetings chaired by Head of Housing Needs that look at the top RS clients and develop a plan to stop Rs for these vulnerable clients Prevention culture developed, Housing solutions represented and homelessness prevention a key element with a single referral form.
9	Delivery of complex needs accommodation/ specialist	Partial On Target	Schemes on site delivered with Homes England funding for Keystage Housing.

	supported housing for women, directly or with partners		
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4.3 Quality homes and neighbourhoods

	Target		Current position
1	Council homes to meet EPC Band C by 2025.	Partial On Target	<p>100% EPC rating of all stock is planned as we anticipate that some homes currently D rated are actually C rated.</p> <p>Working on data cleansing and further improvement works.</p> <p>Investment in new Energy Management System to assist in identifying properties and allow for a targeted approach to improve properties to C and above. Implementation of the new system anticipated to be by March 2025.</p> <p>Completion of target may slip to 2026.</p>
2	A minimum of 400 private homes per year to receive efficiency/decarbonisation improvements via external funding schemes.	Partial Below Target	<p>This target is dependent on national funding schemes. We promote grant programmes to eligible households.</p> <p>149 households supported in 2022/23, 508 in 2023/24, and 47 so far in 2024/25. These figures are only those of households notified to us by approved installers, many more homes have been improved but not reported. Slowdown of ECO4 funding is affecting delivery.</p> <p>We continue to liaise with installers and inform residents how to select a good installer.</p> <p>The Private Sector Minimum Energy Efficiency Standards project led to 61 homes being improved, and 22 civil penalties served.</p>
3	No temporary accommodation will be used if it has an EPC rating of D or below.	Partial Below Target	<p>New properties being used for temporary accommodation are required to be a D rating or above. Properties in our existing portfolio are being phased out if below a D rating, although the high demand for temporary accommodation makes it more difficult.</p>
4	HMO licensing to cover all appropriate properties by 2025.	Partial Below Target	<p>The Additional Licensing scheme has been delayed by an application to the High Court for a Judicial Review. This was found in favour of the council but a further appeal was lodged.</p>

5	Selective licensing to cover all appropriate properties by 2025.	Partial Below Target	Executive approved introduction of Additional and Selective Licensing Schemes. Unable to implement as an appeal has been lodged following the High Court finding in favour of the council in relation to an application for Judicial Review.
6	Evaluate current licensing arrangements and Government White Paper proposals to inform an extension of licensing across the borough	Not Started	Not yet started as licensing schemes have not yet been implemented.
7	Bring 40 empty homes a year into use through council intervention.	Partial Below Target	34 homes in 2022/23. 39 in 2023/24. 14 in quarter 1 of 2024/25.
8	Review the options to limit the prevalence of HMOs in specific areas.	Not Started	Still an identified workstream but depends on sufficient staff time.
9	At least 300 Statutory Notices resolved per year.	Partial Below Target	190 in 2022/23. 132 in 2023/24. 23 in Q1 of 2-24/25. 32 in Q2 of 24/25 (58 total) Monitored monthly. Currently behind due to lack of resources. See comment below re growing the team
10	Annual increase in homes which are licensed and inspected.	Not Started	HMO risk rating was drafted to determine frequency of inspection, but not progressed due to lack of resources. Inspections of Selective Licensing and Additional Licensing properties to begin when new schemes are in force However, we are currently considering proposals to increase HMO licence fees and civil penalties to grow resources in the team.
11	New homes developed by the Council or Foxhall Homes to be minimum EPC band B by 2025.	Complete	New council homes are being designed to net-zero design brief from 2023. We are about to publish our design brief and net zero guide. Foxhall Homes properties being designed to Building Control standards with expected minimum EPC B.

12	EV charging points to be incorporated in all new housing developments and provision in council estates to be improved.	Partial On Target	Locations identified. Working alongside corporate approach to EV charging.
13	The council will take an active role in ensuring that sufficient training and skilled labour is available locally to support retrofit activities.	Partial Below Target	Established relationship with further education providers, to promote appropriate NVQs. Promoting to installers as this becomes available.
14	Refresh our asset management plan to include our selected options for the replacement of gas boilers across the council housing stock by 2026.	Partial On Target	Exploratory meetings and training taking place to review current options - working towards making a decision on asset options. Currently no viable cost effective option for replacing gas boilers. That is still the case. Asset management plan has been updated to retain the installation of gas boilers for the next 5 years at least, with an option of potentially including cost for the Air Source Heat Pumps as an alternative. However, this alternative is a very expensive option for retrofits.
15	As a landlord we will observe all new building safety compliance requirements.	Partial On Target	Damp and Mould action plan in progress, including regulatory expectations. A Task force has been established and working with Housing Management, and residents. A process will be produced to work out response times to cases of mould and damp from reporting to immediate action, to finding the source of problems and rectifying the issue. Support and information to be provided to residents. Capital bid submitted for a programme of HHSRS surveys which will help capture properties with damp problems (as well as other health and safety issues) within individual properties proactively.
16	We will grow our tenant engagement and meet all expectations of the Social Housing Regulator on	Partial On Target	New tenant board and scrutiny board members recruited in 2023/24. 2 new residents associations. Tenant training programme established and progressing. Scrutiny panel have commenced their fourth review

	consumer regulation.		
17	We will continue to involve tenants from all across the town and respond to the findings of the regular STAR survey.	Partial On Target	<p>2 Key Customer events held in 2024 with tenants, with more potential reps coming forward as a result of the latest Tenant Satisfaction Measures (TSM) survey.</p> <p>Tenants have been involved in design of TSM surveys. 2024 survey designed agreed and completed, awaiting full results.</p>
18	We will encourage council tenants to organise and promote the option of tenant management organisations, including co-operatives, under the Right to Manage.	Partial On Target	Regular adverts in tenant newsletter and support in place for tenants who want to manage their homes.
19	An active programme of tenancy audits will ensure contact with 1800 tenants each year.	Partial Below Target	<p>Tenancy audits reported every month in performance scorecard. Resourcing does not allow this level of tenant audits.</p> <p>808 audits in 2022/23 and 571 in 2023/24.</p>
20	Rollout of Healthy Estates Strategy to improve external environments on council estates.	Partial On Target	<p>Regular meetings held with Public Health and action plan in place that is regularly monitored and updated.</p> <p>Healthy Estates connected to Housing and Health working group.</p>
21	Housing services to be linked to our Child Friendly Town activities.	Partial On Target	<p>Engaging with Child Friendly Town team to ensure we are reporting on how housing teams are responding to the issues raised as important to young people, such as street homelessness.</p> <p>Engaged with the Play Streets initiative, supporting tenants to set up Play Streets.</p> <p>Monitoring number of children in Temporary Accommodation.</p>

4.4 Supporting wellbeing

	Target		Current position
1	We will publish action plans setting out how we will identify appropriate sites near to facilities and deliver specialist accommodation to meet specialist needs, including people with Learning disabilities and autism, young people transitioning from Children's Services, people with mental health and complex needs, and older people.	Partial Below Target	<p>Work on supply and demand in specialist accommodation has started. This will inform action plans, based on social care and other data already available. Awaiting new data for the Market Position Statement.</p> <p>New supported housing licensing will be implemented in after government guidance which is anticipated for the Supported Housing Bill.</p>
2	We will collaborate with partners on tenancy information and sustainment projects for young people leaving care.	Partial On Target	Incorporated in our joint working with Children's Services.
3	We will support Children's Services in the provision of specialist accommodation.	Complete	Property purchased as training house now let to Children's services. Reviewing needs of Children Services as part of specialist accommodation needs activity.
4	We will complete the programme of refurbishment of our sheltered housing schemes.	Partial On Target	Ongoing and on schedule. A revised programme has been established. This is progressing, and on schedule so far.
5	We will consult with tenants in sheltered housing as part of a review of staffing and	Complete	<p>New structure approved in 2023/24.</p> <p>Recruitment is nearly completed, with one post remaining to recruit to.</p>

	services with options around more active on-site staffing with a broader role. These options will also be considered in light of HRA resources and the impact on costs to tenants.		
6	We will increase partnership working with health services to target support in line with the frailty framework.	Not Started	Not progressed at this time.
7	Satisfaction with adaptations at 95% or above.	Complete	Satisfaction in 2022/23 98.6% based on 148 adaptations. In 2023/24 satisfaction was 99.5% based on 215 adaptations. So far in 2024/25 satisfaction is 100% based on 63 adaptations. Above 95% satisfaction achieved in all years.
8	We will work with partners including. Adult Social Care to improve advice and information for older people about housing options, and explore all opportunities to develop specialist senior living accommodation, including extra care where required.	Partial On Target	Collaborating with S117 Mental Health planning via BLMK. Convened internal group for Supported Housing Licensing - this work ongoing and waiting for government guidance to be published. Engaging with BLMK Mental Health Accommodation Pathway work. Specialist accommodation needs group actively compiling data and will be drafting priorities in 2025.
9	Delivery of specialist accommodation for mental health and complex needs.	Partial On Target	Schemes now have planning permission and are starting on site - works ongoing. Delivered via Keystage Housing with Homes England funding support.

10	ATS to be active in developing assistive technology options for people.	Partial On Target	ATS are currently working to move customers away from analogue to digital telecare equipment. A project called Mii care has provided additional support to vulnerable residents across the BLMK area. The Mii care equipment and apps allow remote monitoring of vulnerable individuals and provide prompts and reminders for customers to rehydrate, add in some steps, take their medication etc.
11	Achieve Domestic Abuse Housing Alliance (DAHA) accreditation by 2023.	Partial Below Target	Some delay experienced but portfolio being finalised now and first baseline assessment complete. Anticipate full accreditation in 2025.
12	We will collaborate with partners in the criminal justice system to support housing solutions to help reduce reoffending.	Partial Below Target	Funding secured for support within the rough sleepers' team for people leaving prison.
13	We will grow and commit to established and new partnerships which support the physical and mental wellbeing of residents.	Partial On Target	<p>Marmot Town work incorporates health and wellbeing projects. Population Health Management project on mental health incorporates Housing information. New Housing and Health Marmot group, chaired by Jo Nelson involves housing colleagues</p> <p>In 2022 the Private Sector Housing team received Government funding for a project to enforce the Minimum Energy Efficiency Standard (MEES) Regulations, which introduced measures to improve the energy efficiency of certain private rented property in England and Wales.</p> <p>It has been possible to build on the success of that project, through further funding in 2023 from Public Health (Core20plus5 – Warm Healthy Homes).</p> <p>Successes to date:</p> <p>Number of property records checked - 2899 Number of properties found to be non-compliant (no EPC, expired EPC, or F & G rating) - 286 Number of properties made compliant through work carried out - 61 Number of civil penalties served - 22</p>

7. Conclusion

Most of the action points in the housing strategy are underway or delivered. However, a significant number are currently tracking below the stretching targets which were set in 2022.

The proportion of delivery has been below target for a number of the action points above mainly due to funding, lack of available resources, a high number of homeless approaches (due to cost of living crisis), high rents and increase in the number of evictions, lack of affordable homes through S106 due to financial viability clause, and judicial review of the selective licensing scheme.

In the period since the strategy was adopted, the housing situation has worsened for many people in Luton, with increased evictions, worsening affordability and limited affordable housing delivery. The council is facing increased demand for services across housing, alongside greater scrutiny and expectations from the regulator and ombudsman.

Rising to these challenges, whilst limiting financial impacts from homelessness, remains a key focus for our work across housing.

Crucial priorities for our housing ambitions include:

1. Reducing homelessness through greater prevention and reducing budget overspends in this area .
2. Implementing private sector licensing schemes.
3. Accelerating and increasing the delivery of affordable homes.
4. Improved understanding of specialist housing needs and a plan to deliver.
5. Continued engagement with our tenants and residents and preparation for regulatory inspection.
6. Close working with planning colleagues for our new Local Plan and in relation to adjacent areas.