



Doncaster  
Council



# Tenancy Strategy 2018 – 2021



## Glossary

<b>Affordability</b>	A term used to assess the cost of living and housing expenses compared to someone's income, to determine whether an individual can afford to meet the rent payments and other essential living expenses. Affordability assessments should be carried out on tenancies prior to the tenant being offered a new tenancy.
<b>Housing and Planning Act 2016</b>	Legislation setting out changes to rent levels, planning regulations, sale of high cost empty properties. Detailed regulations on certain parts of this Act are to follow.
<b>Housing Strategy</b>	The document outlining how Doncaster will meet housing need across the borough.
<b>Housing Needs Assessment</b>	An assessment showing the housing unit requirement in Doncaster now and in the future.
<b>Local Housing Allowance</b>	Local Housing Allowance is the maximum amount that can be paid in housing benefit for different types of properties up to a maximum of four bedrooms.
<b>Localism Act 2011</b>	Legislation which introduced the use of secure 'fixed term' tenancies as an alternative to secure 'lifetime' tenancies along with other changes and policies.
<b>Social Rents</b>	Rent levels for social housing.
<b>St Leger Homes of Doncaster</b>	The Arm's Length Management Organisation set up by the Council in 2005 to manage the Council's housing stock across the borough.
<b>Sustainability</b>	A term used to demonstrate the ability to maintain to a certain level – sustainability of tenancy means to ensure tenants do not lose their tenancies and community sustainability means keeping communities stable and together
<b>Tenure</b>	The conditions under which land or buildings are held or occupied – private tenure, Council tenure – these refer to different types of tenancies.
<b>Tenancy Strategy</b>	The Localism Act 2011 placed a duty on all local authorities to publish a tenancy strategy setting out which types of tenancy will be granted, under what circumstances different types of tenancy will be granted, the length of 'fixed term' tenancies and the circumstances where tenancies will be renewed
<b>Tenancy Policy</b>	The policy of each housing provider in respect of how they will deliver and administer the tenancy strategy.
<b>Welfare Reform Act 2012</b>	Legislation which started a series of reforms to the welfare state including Universal Credit, Social Size Criteria deductions, benefit cap, Personal Independence payments and other reforms.
<b>Welfare and Work Act 2016</b>	Legislation to drive forward further changes to the welfare state including a 1% reduction to Social Rents, further lowering of the benefit cap, child tax credit reductions and more.
<b>Homeless Reduction Act 2017</b>	New duties on Local Authorities to prevent homelessness. Comes into force in 2018.

## Foreword

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A secure home is an essential cornerstone to a person's life chances. Having a stable home and environment has a positive impact on our ability to secure employment, on our children's educational attainment, and on our overall health and wellbeing.

The impact of failed tenancies to both tenants and their housing providers is huge; as is the cost to the public purse when families become homeless or take up insecure tenures.

The introduction of significant welfare reforms has also made an affordable, secure home an even greater priority for those people where renting is the only option available to them.

With this in mind, this strategy aims to take advantage of the flexibilities introduced in the Localism Act 2011, whilst also taking into account the legislative requirements set out in the Housing and Planning Act 2016.

### The main objectives of this strategy are to:

- enable the best use of housing stock;
- enable access to suitable accommodation for all;
- help maintain stable and vibrant communities;
- ensure that the fundamental principle of having a secure home in a balanced and stable community is at the heart of all housing providers' tenancy policies across Doncaster and
- inform residents what they might expect when they move into or between social housing properties (tenancy type and period).

The Council recognises that it has no regulatory powers to direct housing providers in their decisions about the tenancy terms they may offer.

However, the Council expects that housing providers will have regard to this Tenancy Strategy in their decisions, both at the point a property is let and when the tenancy is reviewed to align with Doncaster's overall priorities.

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The Tenancy Strategy is split into two main sections:

**Theme 1 – Tenancies** – the type of tenancies available, successions, and the general principles for fixed term tenancies. (page 5)

**Theme 2 – Affordability & Sustainment** – how rent levels should be set and tenancies managed in order to minimise tenancy failure, homelessness and the hardship on vulnerable people (page 9)

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## Executive Summary

The **Localism Act 2011** introduced the option to provide 'fixed term' secure tenancies as an alternative to 'lifetime' tenancies and the **Housing & Planning Act 2016** introduced mandatory 'fixed term' secure tenancies

Mandatory fixed-term tenancies will become policy once the Government Regulations are published.

**Until such time, Doncaster Council expects housing providers to provide the most secure 'lifetime' tenancies they can, following an initial introductory period, unless it does not represent the best use of their housing stock.**

The strategy will set out the principles which the Council expects housing providers to consider when issuing fixed term tenancies.

# National & Local Context

Tenancy sustainability has become an increasingly pressing issue due to the scale of welfare and housing reforms in recent years. The Government has introduced a programme of reforms which fundamentally change the way social housing is provided and managed to support tenants to sustain their tenancies:

## Localism Act 2011

- This Act made changes to the way people access social housing;
- made changes to the way homeless duty is discharged;
- gave powers to local authorities to provide 'fixed term' tenancies; and
- Imposed restrictions to tenancy succession rules

The broad aim of these changes was to provide housing providers with the ability to respond to local needs in order to increase mobility, ensure social housing is used for those in need, target social housing to the needs of the community and promote localism

## Homeless Reduction Act 2017

New duties on Local Authorities to prevent homelessness, likely to come into force in 2018. The Act places a higher duty on Authorities to prevent homelessness for all single people and families regardless of priority need, who are eligible for assistance and threatened with homelessness.

The Act provides greater emphasis on homeless prevention and increases the period in respect of which an Authority should treat someone as threatened with homeless from 28 to 56 days.

## Welfare Reform Act 2012

Wide-ranging set of reforms to the welfare system including:

- introduction of Universal Credit, bringing together a range of benefits to a single monthly payment with housing costs paid direct to the tenant;
- reduction of Local Housing Allowance rates; although recent Government announcement for social housing not to be capped at LHA rates is a positive change for social housing rent levels;
- Personal Independence Payments to replace Disability Living Allowance; and
- Housing Benefit reductions for working age tenants under occupying their home.

## Welfare Reform and Work Act 2016

Further reforms including;

- 1% rent reduction for social housing per annum for four years;
- a further lowering of the Benefit cap;
- a four year freeze on the main working age benefits;
- Child Tax Credits and the Universal Credit equivalent restricted to 2 children;
- a reduction in the level of payments for the first child; and
- a greater responsibility for claimants with young children to fulfil their work related activities or face the possibility of sanctions.

## Doncaster Housing Strategy 2015-25

A 10-year strategy was agreed by partners and published in Summer 2015. The key objectives are to Meet Housing Need, Raise Standards, and Support Independent Living. The evidence base for the Council's housing strategy was the Housing Need Assessment 2015. The overall housing need was identified to be 920 new homes per year, of which 149 need to be affordable homes.

## Housing and Planning Act 2016

Further changes to actively promote homeownership, including:

- duty on Local Planning Authorities to increase the supply of starter homes;
- the end of secure lifetime tenancies in local authority housing\*;
- further changes to succession rules that restrict the right to succeed the tenancy to spouses and partners only, irrespective of the original tenancy date; and
- a duty on Local Authorities to consider selling their higher value empty properties in order to meet a levy payable to the Government to fund the proposed extension of the Right to Buy to Housing Association tenants.

\*This aspect of the Act will only be implemented once Regulations are published. It is expected that any new tenancy will be fixed-term tenancies for 2-10 years.

# Key Doncaster Facts

<p><b>Demographics</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Population: 306,000</li> <li>• Households: 130,000</li> <li>• Tenure Breakdown:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ 65% owner occupation (85,000)</li> <li>○ 18% social housing (23,000)</li> <li>○ 15% private rented (20,000)</li> <li>○ 1.7% living rent free (2,000)</li> <li>○ 0.3% shared ownership (200)</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Home ownership Breakdown:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ 16% Local Authority</li> <li>○ 2% Registered Provider</li> <li>○ 82% Private (owner occupier and private rented)</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<p><b>Housing Need</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Housing Need: 920 per year 2015-2032.</li> <li>• Affordable Housing Need: 149 per year 2015-2025 (over and above the Council House and RP scheduled programme as at 2015).</li> <li>• Council House Waiting List: 10050 households; grouped in the following priority bands:</li> </ul> <table border="1" data-bbox="734 671 1267 815"> <tr> <td>Platinum</td> <td>Gold</td> <td>Silver</td> <td>Bronze</td> </tr> <tr> <td>1%</td> <td>4%</td> <td>11%</td> <td>64%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Transfer</td> <td>General</td> <td colspan="2">Open Market</td> </tr> <tr> <td>14%</td> <td>1%</td> <td colspan="2">5%</td> </tr> </table>	Platinum	Gold	Silver	Bronze	1%	4%	11%	64%	Transfer	General	Open Market		14%	1%	5%		<p><b>Housing Supply</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Total Housing units: 131,000</li> <li>• Housing available for sale in all areas of the borough, across all price ranges, types, and tenures.</li> <li>• Total empty homes: 3,500</li> <li>• Long term empty homes (6mnths+): 1,400 (40%)</li> <li>• Registered Provider properties with nomination right via the Housing Waiting List: 3,230.</li> </ul> <p><b>Local Authority Stock</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Total Council empty homes @ 1 December and being relet: 165</li> <li>• Planned demolitions: 2017 – 44, 2018/19 – 4</li> <li>• Council stock Right to Buy sales: 88 in 2015/16, 120 in 2016/17.</li> <li>• Social Housing units: 20,220 council as at 1<sup>st</sup> Dec 17</li> <li>• Council house tenancy terminations: 1,600p.a. (8%)</li> </ul>
Platinum	Gold	Silver	Bronze															
1%	4%	11%	64%															
Transfer	General	Open Market																
14%	1%	5%																
<p><b>Households affected by welfare reforms @ 1<sup>st</sup> December 2017</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Social Sector Size Criteria (under-occupancy) – 3,339 –social housing tenants, of which 2,754 are living in Local Authority housing</li> </ul>	<p><b>Homelessness</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increasing homeless presentations – 60% increase between 15/16 and 16/17, rough sleepers – 44% increase (nationally, the increases are 25% and 50% respectively).</li> <li>• Higher levels of support requirements, many with complex needs.</li> </ul>																	

## Key Doncaster Facts

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Benefit Cap – 345 households</li> <li>• Universal Credit – around 17,000 households will migrate on to Universal Credit – around 7,500 of these are in Local Authority tenancies</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 276 full duty decision in 2016/17 – 56.6% increase from previous year and set for 98% increase in 17/18</li> <li>• Majority are under 44 years of age.</li> <li>• Top two reasons for homelessness: end of assured short-hold tenancy and relationship breakdown, including domestic abuse.</li> <li>• Latest rough sleep count (Oct 2016): 13, an increase on our last count.</li> <li>• Circa 90 ‘complex lives’ cases being managed through Complex Lives Alliance at any one time</li> </ul>
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### Types of Tenancy

Below are the types of tenancies available across Doncaster. More detail is shown in Appendix A detailing what the Council expects housing providers to grant and under what circumstances.

- Secure ‘lifetime’ tenancy
- Introductory followed by secure ‘lifetime’ tenancy (joint or sole)
- Secure ‘fixed term’ tenancy
- Assured Shorthold Tenancy (AST)
- Assured Tenancy
- Licenses

This Tenancy Strategy sets out the general principles that the Council will follow for issuing and managing ‘fixed term’ tenancies and expects housing providers to take these into account when they are granting fixed term tenancies.

The general principles include the minimum tenancy terms expected and the circumstances where tenancies are renewed or brought to

### Considerations taken in developing this Tenancy Strategy

- The impact that fixed term tenancies can have – i.e. tenants may be less inclined to invest in their homes, may be more likely to end their tenancy, or less likely to manage their tenancy responsibly. This could have an adverse impact on maintenance costs and the level of empty properties;
- Households may be less likely to invest time in their local communities;
- The impact that frequent turnover of tenancies could have on an area or community, particularly in areas that already suffer from high turnover and low demand;
- Making best use of specifically adapted properties which have benefitted from major investment;

### Joint Tenancies

The Council expects housing providers to encourage new tenants to take up joint tenancies where appropriate. This would include:

- married couples;
- applicants living together as a couple;
- two or more people having originally joined the housing register together, if both or all applicants are moving into the property;
- age designated accommodation where one party is not eligible; spouses and registered civil partners will be considered;
- a person on the register who wants a joint tenancy with someone who has

an end.

- Ensuring that under-occupation is avoided in the future, particularly where affordability is an issue.
- also made an application.

### Succession to Tenancies

When a tenant dies, the property will usually be returned to the landlord. However, it will be possible for a family member to inherit or 'succeed' the tenancy. Current legislation allows for a single succession upon the death of a tenant to their spouse or partner if they have lived with the tenant for the 12 months immediately prior to the tenants death. Whilst recognising the need to make best use of the housing stock, Doncaster Council also recognises the impact that losing a family home can have when people have lived there for many years. It therefore feels that those eligible to succeed to a tenancy should be extended to immediate family (brothers, sisters, adult children and adult grandchildren).

### Guideline Principles for Fixed Term Tenancies

To promote sustainable communities and to provide tenants with a home they can make plans for and invest in, **the Council would expect housing providers always to use the most secure type of tenancy** appropriate to the area, community, type of accommodation and ensuring the best use of housing stock.

Existing tenants with a secure 'lifetime' tenancy who have no choice but to transfer should be protected and these tenants should retain their secure 'lifetime' tenancy - for example where a property is to be demolished.

Housing providers should regularly review the use of fixed term tenancies and the impact this is having on the neighbourhood or community. For example, it would not be desirable to allow a high proportion of short-term fixed-term

Fixed term tenancies should not be used where the intention is to provide a vulnerable tenant with a stable and long-term home or where circumstances are unlikely to change, for example for pension age, disabled or vulnerable tenants with lifelong support needs.

It may be appropriate to use fixed term tenancies in instances where there is a clear case for making best use of available housing stock; for example where specific housing stock is in extremely short supply such as 4, 5 or 6 bedroom accommodation.

The use of fixed term tenancies should not be permitted to cause an increasing number of homeless households.

Where the use of fixed term tenancies is necessary, these should be for a minimum term of **five years**

- regeneration areas where property demolition or disposal is expected to take place within five years; and
- where properties have been built using Government funding for Rent to Buy.

Whilst it is expected that the 'norm' for fixed term tenancies will be five years, there are circumstances where terms longer than five years should be available for example:

- households who have dependent school-aged children attending school or temporarily living away from home, the length of the fixed term should take into account the age of the youngest child and provide fixed terms until the child reaches 19 years of age;

tenancies in any area if this risks creating excessive turnover of properties and instability.

Housing providers must not use fixed term tenancies as a shortcut to tenancy enforcement or addressing tenancy breaches such as rent arrears or engaging in anti-social behaviour. Housing providers already have a range of well-established measures to address issues such as these.

with shorter periods only permissible in extreme and exceptional circumstances such as:

- the property is part of a leasing arrangement and is not in the ownership of the housing provider and will revert into private ownership;
- supported housing schemes where the tenant will move on to settled accommodation within a period of less than five years;
- allocations carried out for management reasons. E.g. tenants moving into properties to allow emergency works on their home;

- those living in adapted properties and with a support need that is long-term but not necessarily lifelong.

Each case should be assessed according to the individual circumstances such as ages of children, nature of vulnerability and housing providers should tailor the length of tenancy to the circumstances of the tenant.

## Review of Fixed Term Tenancies

Housing providers should review tenancies 6-9 months before the end of the term of tenancy. Housing providers should seek to renew the tenancy unless there are specific grounds not to do so, these grounds must be clearly set out and published in Tenancy Policies and/or Allocations Policies and must include details of the process for appeals against decisions.

Where a fixed term tenancy is not to be renewed, housing providers are expected to provide a robust programme of support, advice and assistance to enable the tenant to find alternative accommodation. This aspect may have a cost implication and housing providers should give due regard to the cost of issuing fixed term tenancies.

When reviewing a fixed term tenancy housing providers should take into account the following considerations when making the decision whether to renew or not:

- the household make up, particularly where the household includes dependents of pre-school age or in full-time education. It should be recognised that children stay with their parents well beyond school age for valid reasons and these should be considered on an individual basis and should include dependants circumstances who are temporarily living away from home such as university;
- the circumstances in which the tenancy was originally offered, including considering relevant vulnerabilities (e.g. fleeing harassment or domestic violence, is under a witness protection programme, being a person leaving Local Authority care or having mental health problems) and whether the household is still classed as being vulnerable;
- whether the property has been adapted to meet the needs of a disabled person and that person still resides in the property and needs the adaptations;
- the support needs of the household and what is currently in place and whether this would be jeopardised by a decision to end the tenancy;
- the occupancy levels of the household and whether they still require the size of property. Consideration should also be given in this regard to whether the

property was under occupied at the time of granting the tenancy and whether those circumstances have changed, whether the tenant can afford the rent with any benefit deductions and also the demand and stability of the area;

- the health needs of household members, in particular where a household member is seriously or terminally ill;
- any caring responsibilities of the tenant to a member of the household and/or relatives/neighbours within close proximity;
- the conduct of the tenancy, in particular whether the tenant is engaged in anti-social activities and is in breach of the tenancy conditions or there is property neglect or rent arrears;
- whether the main tenants circumstances still qualify for the property based on the Council's current allocations policy; and
- affordability, this should not be considered as the primary reason to end a tenancy and should be considered alongside other factors. An appropriate affordability assessment should be carried out with clear support measures for individuals. If affordability is a factor in the decision to end a tenancy alternative, affordable and suitable accommodation must be readily available.

## Specialist / Adapted Housing

The Council and other Registered Providers provide specialist or adapted housing to help meet the additional/specific needs of their tenants. These types of homes are in short supply, and demand is significant.

Where a tenant / household are granted a fixed term tenancy and the dwelling has had significant adaptations carried out, and their circumstances change resulting in the adaptations no longer being required by the household members (e.g. a member of the household for whom the adaptations were made moves out of the household), then this should be considered as part of the review of the tenancy.

## Theme 2: Affordability & Sustainment

Ensuring that tenancies are affordable for prospective tenants will be a key consideration in assessing applications. The use of discretionary financial support will only be for the most exceptional of circumstances. Tenants will be expected to meet their rent payments throughout their tenancy, and so the Council and other Registered Providers will work with applicants to ensure the tenancies offered are affordable.

### Doncaster Rent Levels

**Social Rents** - Up until 2016, rent policy has been at the discretion of the Local Authority with guidance from central Government – the most recent guidance being ‘Guidance in rents for social housing’ published by the DCLG in May 2014. In April 2016 the Welfare and Work Act 2016 introduced a compulsory 1% rent reduction on current rent levels per annum for four years. Recent Government announcement is that following this four year period Social Rent levels will revert back to CPI + 1% increases each year.

Doncaster Local Authority Social Rent levels have been historically low in comparison to other local areas. Council rents in 2016/17 were the lowest within South Yorkshire with an average rent of **£70.92** per week. The average rent for 2017/18 reduced to **£70.21**. Despite the reduced rents, the Council continues to provide quality social housing maintained to the Doncaster Decency Standard. However, the low level of Social Rents significantly reduces the opportunities for much needed new properties to be built to provide additional accommodation for those in need.

**Affordable Rents** - Affordable rent is defined as 80% of the open market rent. A number of properties which are now in the HRA have either been built or acquired with the assistance of some grant funding from the Homes and Communities Agency (HCA). One of the grant conditions for these properties is that they are let at affordable rents (or at the target rent level if that is higher). The average rent for these tenancies is **£88.49** per week (2017/18).

**Local Housing Allowance** is the maximum amount that can be paid in housing benefit for different types of properties up to maximum of four bedrooms.

This amount is set every year on 1 April. For 2017/18, there are no changes to any of the rates from 1 April 2016 for Doncaster which is set at the following levels:

- shared accommodation - £55.12 (for those aged under 35);
- 1 bed - £78.08;
- 2 bed - £93.23;
- 3 bed - £103.56;
- 4 bed - £143.84;

A recent Government announcement that social housing will not be capped to LHA rates as per the Housing and Planning Act 2016 is welcomed and will support the provision of supported housing.

**Private Sector Rent levels** – Private Landlords are encouraged to set their rents at Local Housing Allowance, in particular for properties benefiting from housing grants and managed by St Leger Homes of Doncaster Social Lettings Agency – agency set up to manage private sector housing.

### Housing Register and Allocations

Allocations should be made to eligible applicants as per the housing provider’s tenancy and allocation policy. Affordability assessments should be made pre allocation and new tenants should be risk assessed as per the result of this affordability assessment and the appropriate level of support provided to assist the tenant sustain their tenancy.

## Tenancy Support

Tenancy support is an integral part of this Tenancy Strategy and the ability for people to successfully sustain their tenancies. Support is available in a variety of formats and from various organisations, and support packages should be sourced according to the needs of individuals.

The Council expects social housing providers to provide, as part of their core housing management service, basic tenancy support to enable a tenant to sustain their home.

The Council has in place financial support funds to assist with the impact of welfare reform and vulnerability and financial hardship via the Discretionary Housing Payments, administered by the Council's Benefits section and in addition the Sustainable Tenancies Fund, administered by St Leger Homes of Doncaster for Council tenants. All eligible tenants are able to apply for financial assistance from these funds and applications will be assessed according to circumstances against set criteria.

St Leger Homes of Doncaster provides a Housing Options Service which can assist tenants with a wide range of advice to help them resolve the issues arising out of the termination or potential termination of their tenancies. They also provide a floating tenancy support service which provides intensive support for any tenant at risk of losing their home or at a high risk of failing to sustain their tenancy – 40 tenants at any one time can be supported through this service.

Other housing and tenancy support providers also operate within the borough and can be accessed via the on line support directory.

## Under Occupation

The makeup and availability of stock means there is the potential that housing providers may at times allocate properties to households who will be under occupying. This should be avoided wherever possible to ensure best use of stock and an appropriate pre allocation affordability assessment should be

undertaken, with advice and assistance provided according to the circumstances of the tenant.

When a fixed term is coming to an end and a household under occupies by two or more bedrooms then this will be a material factor in considering not renewing a fixed term tenancy as the household would be deemed to be in a property too large for their needs. This would free up property for families in overcrowded or unsuitable conditions who require a larger property. This also helps to improve the supply of family homes for which turnover and allocation rates are traditionally low.



## Welfare Reforms

As is highlighted in the National Context section of this Strategy, there are a number of housing policy and welfare reforms that will have a direct impact on the affordability of rented housing in Doncaster. This can be demonstrated by the numbers anticipated to be affected by recent reforms.

Doncaster Council is committed to sustaining tenancies and helping people cope with the effects of welfare reform to reduce poverty and increase life skills, employment and create communities where people want to live and stay. Landlords should ensure measures in place to promote tenancy sustainability

and help individuals where they need it financially and with employment and skills.

## Consultation, Monitoring & Review

Each housing provider should monitor the effects of their policies and individual reviews on their tenants, the impact of decisions made on individual households and on the availability of their stock.

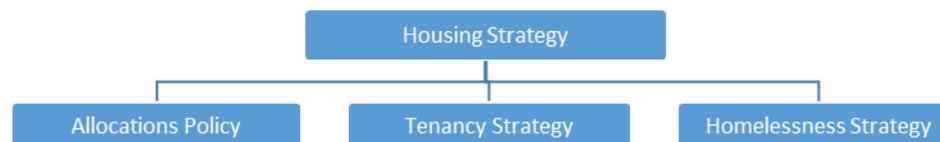
The Council will review this strategy one year after its adoption and publication and thereafter it will be reviewed alongside reviews of the Housing Allocations Policy and the Homelessness Strategy. As part of these reviews, the Council will also monitor how fixed term tenancies and tenancy reviews impact on homelessness enquiries and presentations and the effectiveness of this Tenancy Strategy on the reduction and prevention of homelessness. Evidence to assess this will include:

- the demand and bidding for different terms of fixed term tenancies;
- outcome of tenancy reviews assessed by vulnerability and protected characteristics;
- number of tenancies renewed and not renewed following review and reasons;
- number of homeless applications arising as a result of termination of fixed term tenancy;
- outcome of homeless applications;
- number of void properties as a result of termination of fixed term tenancies;
- housing management issues and tenancy breaches from fixed term tenants;
- number of appeals and reviews against adverse decisions;
- impact of welfare reform; and
- tenancy policies from housing providers.

An Equality Due Regard statement has been produced alongside consultation of this strategy covering all protected characteristics. We expect that all housing providers will undertake similar equality impact assessments on their tenancy policies and monitor the take up of tenancies and the outcome of tenancy reviews against the Equality Act 2010.

Consultation has taken place with Council tenants, Registered Providers, support providers, the Doncaster Financial Inclusion Group, the Doncaster Homelessness and Support Partnership and the relevant boards and committees in formulating this strategy.

## Links to Other Strategies



The Housing Allocations Policy, Tenancy Strategy, and Homelessness Strategy sit below the overall Housing Strategy.

In basic terms, the **Allocations Policy** sets out a landlords criteria for eligibility for their social housing, and the approach to allocating properties to ensure reasonable preference is given to those in housing need. Properties should be allocated using a lettings system and policy that provides a fair and transparent access to social housing for those people in housing need with a local connection to Doncaster.

This **Tenancy Strategy** sets out the types of tenancies that should be offered for those deemed eligible, and the circumstances under which each type of tenancy should be offered. It links specifically to the following part of the Borough Strategy Vision:

“All residents will be able to achieve their full potential in employment, education, care and life chances.”

The **Homelessness Strategy** shows a commitment to early intervention and prevention via partnership working, and includes reactive and preventative measures for responding to reducing the risk of homelessness.

## Appendix A – Types of Tenancy

Housing Provider	Type of Tenancy	Tenants' Rights	Circumstances under which this will be granted
Doncaster Council (St Leger Homes)	<b>Secure 'lifetime' tenancy</b>	Right to succeed, Right to buy, Right to Improve, Right to assign the tenancy, Can only be ended by a Court Order.	Transfers from existing secure 'lifetime' tenancies and/or other registered providers.
	<b>Introductory followed by secure 'lifetime' tenancy (joint or sole)</b>	A probationary tenancy lasting for a period of 12 months. Limited rights compared to secure tenancies; Becomes a secure lifetime tenancy unless legal enforcement action taken to end.	All new tenancies with the exception of circumstances below.
	<b>Secure 'fixed term' tenancy</b>	Same rights as secure tenant but on a fixed term of between 2-10 years with 5 the norm*. Tenancy is reviewed 6-9 months prior to the end of the term; Tenancy can be renewed for further terms.	Properties in short supply and high demand such as 4, 5 and 6 bed properties. Occasionally for new lets which are under occupying by 2 or more bedrooms, subject to individual circumstances. Properties with significant adaptations and allocated via the Accessible Housing Register
	<b>Licences</b>	Insecure tenancy with a guarantor.	The Council would expect Licences only to be issued in particular circumstances. Local Authority tenancies to 16/17 year olds will be granted on a licence with a guarantor. The joint protocol for care leavers with the Doncaster Children's Services Trust enables care leavers to be granted a licence with the trust acting as guarantor.
Registered Providers Private Landlords	<b>Assured Shorthold Tenancy (AST)</b> Tenancies last for a fixed period of time.	Landlord is entitled to possession of the property when term expires without a legal reason. Right to succeed. Right to assign (by agreement). Right to acquire.	This type of tenancy is the most common form used in the private sector and by some Housing Associations. Housing Associations usually use ASTs in certain circumstances e.g. provision of temporary accommodation or introductory tenancies, as set out above. Within the context of this Tenancy Strategy it is anticipated that this tenure will be used for fixed-term tenancies issued by RP's.
Registered Providers	<b>Assured Tenancy</b>	Similar legal rights to AST's, however, the tenancy is not time limited. No automatic right for the landlord to repossess the property at the end of the tenancy. Can only be ended by a Court Order.	Registered Providers may continue to offer assured tenancies to transferring tenants. Tenants converting from an introductory tenancy (or new tenants where there is no introductory scheme in place) regardless of whether the property is let at social or affordable rent.
	<b>Licenses</b>	Insecure tenancy with a guarantor.	Some Registered Providers provide temporary accommodation such as hostels and in such instances it may be appropriate to issue a Licence. Licences may be appropriate when for people who may not be able to enter into a legally binding tenancy agreement (i.e. people aged under 18, such as care leavers )



## Contact

If there is any aspect of this strategy that you would like to comment on, we would welcome your comments at any time, you can contact us on

**Telephone:** 01302 862862 Email [info@stlegerhomes.co.uk](mailto:info@stlegerhomes.co.uk)

**Online:** [www.stlegerhomes.co.uk](http://www.stlegerhomes.co.uk)

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