



Report sponsors: Service Director City Development & Growth (Derby City Council) and Director of Housing Services, Derby Homes

Report authors: Head of Housing Options (Derby Homes) and Housing Strategy and Initiatives Manager (Derby City Council)

ITEM 07

Challenges across housing and homelessness and their impact as wider determinants of health

Purpose

- 1.1 This report provides the Health and Wellbeing Board (HWB) with an overview of the strategic challenges across housing and homelessness currently faced in the city.
- 1.2 The report also seeks commitment from the HWB to promote and enable collaboration across housing, health, and care to improve population outcomes impacted by poor or unsuitable housing and homelessness.

Recommendation(s)

- 2.1 To recognise that the widening health inequalities gap between areas within our city is impacted by the wider determinants of Housing and Homelessness
- 2.2 To support tackling such wider determinants of health inequalities through better, stronger integration of health, housing, community, and social care agendas across the city.
- 2.3 To approve the establishment of a Housing, Homelessness and Health sub-group of the HWB to provide strong strategic leadership in relation to recommendation 2.2 above.

Reason(s)

- 3.1 Ensuring that the health inequalities gap is reduced, and that people receive the best and most appropriate care and support begins with where they live, and the people they live with.
- 3.2 For those living with long term health conditions, with a physical disability, a learning disability, autistic people, those with mental health conditions or substance misuse needs or those experiencing homelessness, for example, a suitable home and appropriate support enables them to best maintain their health, build and sustain their independence, connect with their community, and achieve their ambitions.
- 3.3 For younger children, a safe, secure, warm, dry home offers them the best start in life and positively impacts their health, education, and lifetime development opportunities.

- 3.4 For older people, having a home that sustains safe, independent living can help prevent ill-health, reduce the amount of care and support needed, and delay or avoid altogether the need for residential care.
- 3.5 At present, there are far too many vulnerable people in Derby in poor or unsuitable living conditions, with inevitable impacts on their health, opportunities, and quality of life. Many of those with care and support needs are living in homes that do not enable them to live well or safely. And the all too frequent links between mental health, substance misuse and homelessness are now becoming better understood.
- 3.6 Many homes are unsuitable for accommodating changing care and support needs or older age, and there are some people who do not have a home to call their own. People who are thinking about the future for themselves – or for their loved ones – often do not feel like they have options. A lack of suitable housing options, support or advice results in too many people staying in hospital unnecessarily or moving to residential care prematurely, even if that is not what they want, instead of recovering at their own home.¹

Supporting information

- 4.1 Poor quality housing, particularly damp and cold homes directly harm physical and mental health; and poor or unsuitable housing conditions continue to harm health and widen the health inequalities gap.
- 4.2 Unaffordable housing also damages health. There is a national affordable housing crisis. Everyone needs access to secure, decent housing. In the UK the supply of housing has not been keeping up with demand. Getting access to housing of any type is becoming increasingly difficult for low-income families. Waiting lists for social housing continue to grow. In Derby on the 1st November 2021 there were over 8,000 applicants and their families on the City's Homefinder register with an identified housing need, with an average of 500 new applications being registered each month. Since January 2021 a total of 612 homes owned by the council have been available for re-let.
- 4.3 Housing costs continue to increase across England and the impacts are most acutely felt by lower income families. Many in the private rented sector fall into poverty because of their housing-related costs.
- 4.4 According to the MHCLG, [English Housing Survey - Household Resilience Study April 2021](#), private renters have been one of the hardest hit groups by the pandemic. The proportion of renters in arrears tripled from 3% in 2019/20 to 9% in November/December 2020. In stark contrast, as the Government notes, "mortgage arrears have returned to pre-pandemic level", whilst the proportion of social rents in arrears has not changed during the course of the pandemic.
- 4.5 As housing and home energy costs rise, there is less to spend on essentials such as food, heating and clothing. The stress of trying to pay housing-related costs frequently significantly worsens the health of low-income families.

¹ [People at the Heart of Care: adult social care reform white paper – DHSC – 12/21](#)

- 4.6 Housing conditions tend to be worst in the private rented sector although the recent media spotlight on social housing providers has raised the profile of real concerns within the social housing sector too. In 2017/18 around 1.9 million private renters reported an issue with condensation, damp or mould in their home. With 'no fault' evictions still commonplace in the private sector, many tenants choose not to raise repairs concerns, choosing to remain silent for fear of eviction if they complain.
- 4.7 The Private Sector Housing Condition and Health Report – 2019 found that in the private sector in Derby:
- 1 in 5 families live in non-decent homes.
 - More than 1 in 7 households have a serious (Category 1 HHSRS) Hazard to health in their home.
 - Over 30% have poor energy performance ratings. There are clear relationships between cold damp homes and higher emergency admission rates for respiratory disease and emergency admission for childhood asthma.
 - Over 10% households live in fuel poverty and home energy prices continue to rise. There are correlations between households living in fuel poverty and those with higher hospital admissions for asthma.
- 4.8 According to the [Marmot Review 10 Years on](#), published in 2020, 21 percent of adults in England said a housing issue had negatively impacted their mental health, even when they had no previous mental health issues and housing affordability was most frequently stated as the reason. The stress levels of falling into arrears with housing payments are comparable to unemployment.
- 4.9 According to the government's latest statistics, nationally 268,560 households were at risk of, or experienced homelessness during 2020-21. Within those statistics some groups were disproportionately affected such as single households, young people, and people of colour. In Derby, 2,248 households approached the City Council as Homeless or at risk of Homelessness in 2020-21 which was 11% lower than the previous year but with numbers in 2021 now returning to pre-pandemic levels.
- 4.10 Local authorities have a legal duty to provide temporary housing for those 'presenting as homeless' in certain circumstances. In Derby access to temporary accommodation is already challenging and it is highly likely bed and breakfast type units will need to be sourced in larger numbers. Clearly this sort of temporary housing is highly unsuitable for families and the impact of its use can have serious impacts on the health, wellbeing, emotional and social development of children living in families including safeguarding, increased Domestic Abuse and other associated impacts.
- 4.11 According to the government's latest statistics, nationally there were 2,688 estimated to be rough sleeping on a single night in the autumn of 2020. In Derby the number was 6. The number of people identified on the target priority list in Derby where they are at high risk of rough sleeping or returning to rough sleeping is however 34, with an average of 22 individuals sleeping rough at least once every month.
- 4.12 Derby's Public Health-led Private Sector Housing Condition and Health Report of 2019 indicated greater understanding of Private Rented sector conditions in Derby was required, as was further analysis of the impacts of poor or unsuitable housing on population health.

- 4.13 As a result, colleagues in Derby City's Public Health Directorate are now nearing completion of a desktop analysis of Derby's Private Rented housing which will provide detailed mapping of conditions, linked with socio-economic, deprivation, crime data and more. That desktop analysis will be further localised and informed by a recently completed physical survey of a random sample of private rented housing conditions in areas of the city with the highest number of private rented properties.
- 4.14 To further inform those findings, Private Tenant and Landlord surveys are in development and due to commence early 2022.
- 4.15 Alongside this work, we are also nearing completion of a detailed Health Impact Assessment to help better evidence and map health and housing inequalities and their inter-relationships across the city.
- 4.16 On completion early in 2022, of all these pieces of work, it is proposed that the findings be reported to HWB, Derby Place Board and Joined Up Care Derbyshire Board to help the city best integrate housing into its local health and care strategies and planning.
- 4.17 As the 'People at the Heart of Care: adult social care reform White Paper (2021)' states: "Long term funding is required" [as is] "Strong leadership and partnerships: no organisation can deliver this change alone...Underpinning them all is the need for strategic leadership that sees the local provision of health, care and housing services not as separate systems, but as a coherent system that seeks to deliver the best outcomes for people, using all the tools available in a joined-up way to deliver the best possible outcomes for their communities."
- 4.18 Work to improve population health outcomes must include a focus on improving those in the poorest health; those living in insecure, poor quality, unaffordable housing, and those without access to suitable accommodation. Appropriate support and resource must be prioritised for collaborative working across the health, care and housing agendas.

Public/stakeholder engagement

- 5.1 Not applicable to the recommendations of this report, however Private Tenant and Landlord surveys are in development and due to commence early 2022.

Other options

- 6.1 'Do nothing' is not a viable option if the city wishes to improve population health and tackle health inequalities and genuinely work toward 'levelling up' the health inequalities gap. As the Social Care White Paper makes clear, "Strong leadership and partnerships [are required]: no organisation can deliver this change alone...Underpinning them all is the need for strategic leadership that sees the local provision of health, care and housing services not as separate systems, but as a coherent system that seeks to deliver the best outcomes for people, using all the tools available in a joined-up way to deliver the best possible outcomes for their communities." There is no better place for such strategic leadership within Derby than the city's HWB.

Financial and value for money issues

- 7.1 There are no direct financial implications arising from this report. It should be noted, however, that poor or unsuitable housing impacts population health and therefore that poor housing and associated health impacts carry significant costs for the health and care sectors are well documented and evidenced both nationally and locally.

Legal implications

- 8.1 There are no direct legal implications arising from this report; however, under the NHS Act 2006:
- each local authority has a duty to take such steps as it considers appropriate to improve the health of the people in its area; and
 - duties are placed upon CCGs and NHS England to reduce health inequalities.

Climate implications

- 9.1 There are no direct climate implications arising from this report, however making homes more energy efficient does reduce energy waste and thereby contribute to the climate change and zero carbon agendas. Increases in home energy efficiency also of course reduce the costs of heating a home.

Other significant implications

- 10.1 Avoidable health inequalities are, by definition, unfair and socially unjust. A person's chance of enjoying good health and a longer life is significantly determined by the social and economic conditions in which they are born, grow, work, live and age. These conditions also affect the way in which people are able to look after their own health and use services throughout their life. Addressing such avoidable inequalities and moving towards a fairer distribution of good health requires a life course approach and action to be taken across the whole of society.²

This report has been approved by the following people:

Role	Name	Date of sign-off
Legal	Ian Fullagar	21/12/2021
Finance	Amanda Fletcher	21/12/2021
Service Director(s)	Clare Mehrbani	07/12/2021
	David Fletcher	22/12/2021
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	Director of Housing Services, Derby Homes	07/12/2021
Other(s)	Ian Fullagar, HoS	21/12/2021
	Alison Wynn, Assistant Director of Public Health	20/12/2021

Background papers:	People at the Heart of Care: adult social care reform White Paper (2021) ; Private Sector Housing Condition and Health Report – 2019 – Derby City Director Public Health Marmot Review 10 Years on – 2020. English Housing Survey - Household Resilience Study April 2021 - MHCLG
List of appendices:	

² [Guidance for NHS commissioners on equality and health inequalities legal duties](#) – NHS 2015