

# Private Sector Housing Plan 2024-2028



North  
Tyneside  
Council

## 1.0 Introduction from Councillor John Harrison

Everyone deserves to have a safe, secure, and affordable home and the Our North Tyneside Plan 2021-2025 clearly sets out our ambition to 'Build a better North Tyneside'.

Increasing costs of homeownership, a reduction of social housing stock due to the Right to Buy and increasing demand for social housing, has seen the private rented sector more than double in the last decade accounting for almost one fifth of homes in the UK. Our Private Sector Housing Plan aims to drive up standards of accommodation and create safe, clean, and healthy communities across the borough.

Poor quality private housing and fuel poverty have a detrimental effect on the health and wellbeing of people living in these homes and the general appearance of an area. This plan outlines our approach to regulating and enhancing private sector housing for current and future residents.

The Private Sector Housing Plan supports the delivery of our 2023-28 Housing Strategy and is built around four key themes:

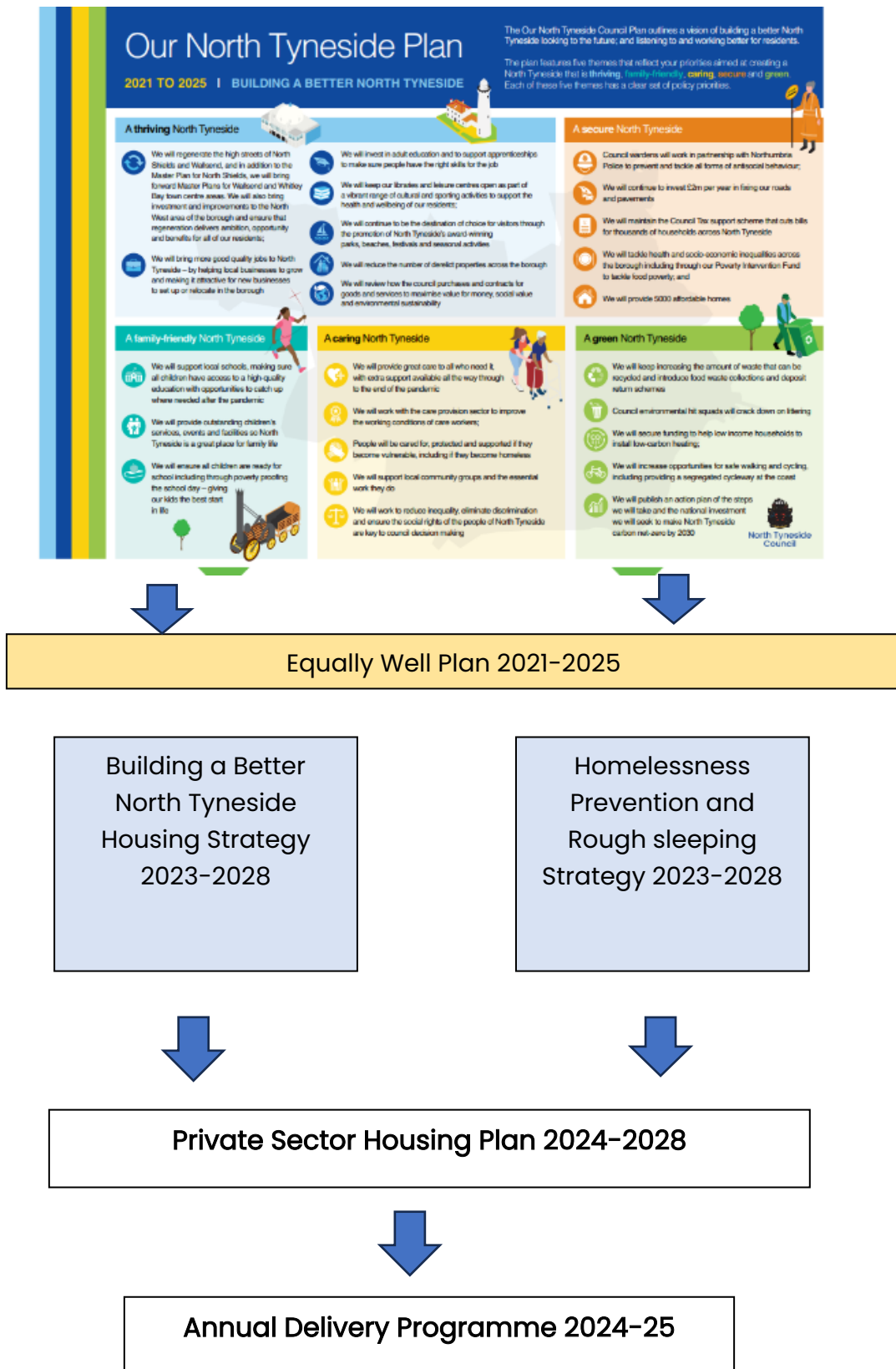
1. Improving our private rented sector
2. Tackling derelict and long-term empty properties
3. Enabling safe and independent living
4. A Greener North Tyneside – Improving Energy Efficiency in Private Sector Homes

Each theme is based around a set of strategic priorities that will be delivered over the 4-years of the plan and supported by a Delivery Programme that will be refreshed on an annual basis.



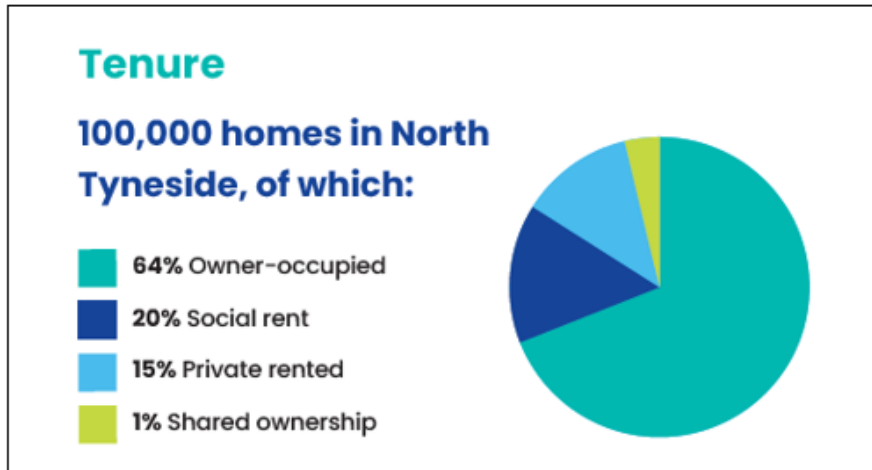
**Councillor John Harrison**  
**Cabinet Member responsible for Housing**

## 2.0 Making the Links



### 3.0 The Private Sector Picture in North Tyneside

#### 3.1 Tenure



#### 3.2 Private Sector Properties

Property Type	Properties	%
Detached house	10,861	14%
Semi-detached house	25,456	32%
Terraced House	2,581	33%
Flat in mixed use building	1,316	2%
Flats	5,845	7%
Small block of flats/dwelling converted in to flats	10,916	14%
<b>Total</b>	<b>78,889</b>	<b>100%</b>

(Source: Home Analytics database 2023)

#### 3.3 Private Rented Rents

**Average private rent £608**

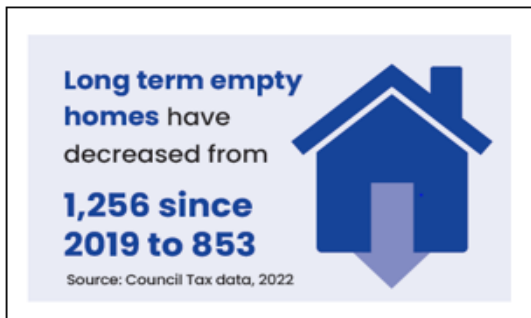
1 bed	<b>£462</b>
2 bed	<b>£560</b>
3 bed	<b>£721</b>
4 bed	<b>£1,016</b>

Source: VOA, 2022

Rental values in the North East have risen 8.67% from October 2022 to October 2023

(Source: The RICS: UK Residential Market Survey October 2023)

### 3.4 Long-Term Empty Homes



60 Empty homes brought back into use as affordable since 2015.

### 3.5 Enabling independent living

Over 70% of older people want to remain in their current home with help and support to live independently

Since 2021 a total of 297 Disabled Facility Grants were completed

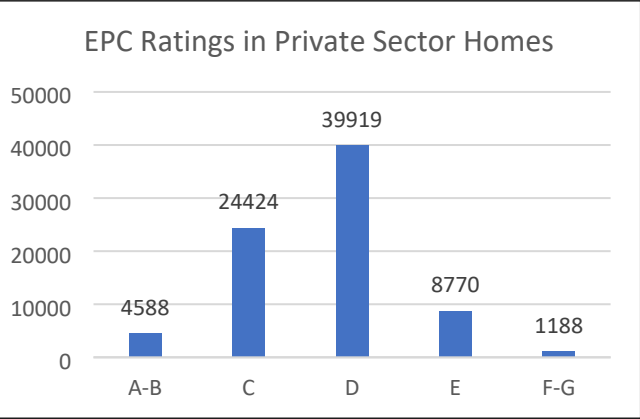
On average, 20 referrals per month are received by the Safe and Healthy Homes Team

The private rented sector has the highest number of hazards, falls and properties in disrepair compared to owner occupiers and social housing.

(Source: BRE Housing Stock Condition Survey, 2016)

### 3.6 Leading the Way - A Greener North Tyneside

Since declaring a Climate Emergency, we have brought in £9.3M of government funding for low carbon energy efficiency measures.



105 people helped with improved heating through the Energy Company Obligation Scheme (ECO)

(data 2022-23)

installed energy measures in 950 homes



## 4.0 Key Themes for Delivery

### 4.1 Improving our Private Rented Sector

There are approximately 15,000 privately rented homes in the borough. The sector continues to expand and grow, giving people more housing options and in some cases earlier access to suitable accommodation. Many of the borough's private rented homes are Tyneside flats and terraced houses which are some of the oldest in the borough. These properties are generally in areas that have higher levels of deprivation and health inequalities, with many not meeting the Decent Homes standard. As well as housing conditions, environmental blight and anti-social behaviour can all influence the way people feel about where they live.

The private rented sector provides accommodation for some of the most vulnerable households. There are variations in the standards and professionalism of landlords across the borough and this Plan aims to tackle poor quality housing to reduce the damaging effect on people's lives.

The use of short-term tenancies can have a negative effect on the sustainability of neighbourhoods and longer-term regeneration plans. We need to work closely with and support landlords to provide the best possible standards of accommodation by building good relationships and by providing advice and training to landlords and their tenants. We will improve our engagement with tenants and landlords by providing online training modules and re-establishing a landlord forum.

We have several solutions to improve management standards and property conditions in the private rented sector, including the launch of our private landlord leasing offer. This scheme offers private landlords the ability to lease their properties to the Council for at least three-years. These homes will be used for temporary accommodation and to those on our waiting list.

#### **Key priorities by 2028:**

1. Enhance our approach to supporting private landlords and tenants
2. Improve property standards and deliver housing solutions that supports the Council's regeneration ambitions

## 4.2 Tackle Derelict and Long-term Empty Properties

Most empty properties are generally vacant for a relatively short period of time, usually associated with the sales process or undergoing repairs or improvements.

However, when properties stand empty for more than six months, they can start to generate complaints, especially if this vacancy is accompanied by deterioration in maintenance and antisocial behaviour. If left unchecked these properties can become derelict. It is therefore important that the Council can support empty homeowners who wish to return properties to use as soon as possible as well as tackling landlords who wilfully allow properties to become derelict.

We have continued to reduce the number of empty properties across the borough by 35% over the last three years. Bringing empty properties back into use will contribute towards addressing housing need by increasing housing provision and help support our ambitious target to provide 5,000 affordable homes. It will support the wider aims of regenerating our town centres particularly in the Wallsend area where we will be rolling out solutions such as a purchase and repair schemes to assist with tenure rebalance and improved quality.

Our action plan will include a toolkit of options to tackle derelict and empty properties including review of our approach to take into consideration the latest national best practice.

### **Key Priorities by 2028:**

1. Continue to reduce the number of long-term empty homes in North Tyneside
2. Target derelict homes and commercial properties utilising a range of innovative solutions and where possible bring them back as affordable homes
3. Support the Regeneration ambitions of North Tyneside Council and target empty properties in Town Centers



### 4.3 Enable Safe Independent Living

Most households in the borough, regardless of tenure, can manage their home, carry out repairs to their property and move to a new home with no extra help from the Council.

We know that the population of people aged 65 and over will continue to increase in the borough. Our residents prefer to maintain their independence and would like to stay in their own homes for as long as safely possible with help and support when required. The Specialist Housing Market Position Statement will be refreshed in May 2024 and will include the collation of statistics of people wanting to remain in their homes, allowing the Council to shape services to support this.

The Better Care Fund is a shared resource with the North East and North Cumbria Integrated Care Board which allows the Council to provide Disabled Facilities Grants (DFGs). Disabled Facilities Grants enable people to live independently in their own home, minimise risk of injury and prevent hospital admissions as well as Improving quality of life/well-being and maintaining family stability. We are looking at widening the way this fund is used to further increase support for our residents at home.

In addition, our Safe and Healthy Homes team continue to support those with underlying health conditions to carry out repairs to their homes.

It is important to ensure services are developed to safeguard people's independence both for the good of our residents and to save on expensive care costs in the future.

#### **Key Priorities by 2028:**

1. Review and update our DFG policy to expand the support available
2. Complete a review of the DFG service
3. Further promote independent living via a range of support services

#### **4.4 A Greener North Tyneside – Improving Energy Efficiency in Private Sector Homes**

In 2019, North Tyneside Council declared a climate emergency and set ambitious targets to reduce our carbon footprint. We know that 22% of carbon emissions come from the way homes are powered and heated and this plan will look to build on work that we have undertaken to decarbonize our own housing stock.

59% of homes that are owned privately in North Tyneside have an energy efficiency rating of between D-G with households living in private rented properties experiencing disproportionately high levels of fuel poverty.

To improve the energy efficiency of homes in the private sector, we will continue to lead the way, encouraging homeowners and private landlords to make the necessary changes to their property. Where appropriate we will support homeowners and private landlords through grant funding.

The Authority's ambitious net zero targets for housing can only be met with the support of private homeowners making changes and working with a range of partners. There are several different initiatives and projects being developed in partnership with the North of Tyne Combined Authority and the emerging North East Mayoral Combined Authority. An example of this is the Local Energy Advice Demonstrator project which will specifically look at providing support to hard to reach and hard to treat properties. Along with the Combined Authority the Council are also working on the development of a 'one stop shop' to allow people to assess the options that are best for their property and become the first point of call for all enquires in relation to retrofit measures.

##### **Key Priorities for 2028:**

1. Work with our regional partners to develop a "One Stop Shop" to support homeowners in improving the energy efficiency of their homes
2. Maximise grant funding to deliver energy efficiency measures in homes

## 5. Measuring our Progress

Due to the changing nature of the private sector housing market, measuring the success of this plan is not always straightforward. Changing environmental and economic factors can have a significant impact on both the private sector market (house prices & rental values) as well as customer perception with the built environment, perception of homes and communities.

The priorities within the themes of the PSHP are focused on 2028. To track and measure these, the table below identifies some key metrics that we will be monitored on an annual basis with a view measuring our success in 2028.

Theme	Metric	Baseline Position	Target to 2028
Improving our private rented sector	Number of private rented property inspections	New Metric	300
	Number of accredited properties	New Metric	300
	Landlord Forums meetings held	New Metric	20
	Number of private rented tenants assisted	New Metric	150
	Landlord training sessions held	New Metric	20
	Number of advice drop-ins held	New Metric	160
Tackle derelict and long-term empty properties	Number of empty properties returned to occupation	30 P.A.	180
	Number of empty homes secured as affordable homes	3 P.A.	20
	Number of empty homeowners contacted	100%	100%
Enable safe independent living	Number of safe & healthy homes cases raised	270	900
	Number of DFG adaptations installed	143	580
Improving energy efficiency in private sector homes	Number of Energy Company Obligation (ECO) Four claims processed	190	750
	Local Energy Advice Demonstrator households helped	New Metric	163
	Number of properties helped through the Local Authority Retrofit Programme (subject to funding)	New Metric	300

## Appendix 1: 2024–25 Delivery Programme

### Priority 1– Improve our Private Rented Sector

#### Actions

a) Enhance our approach to supporting private landlords and tenants.

Action	When
Complete a landlord survey to inform future service delivery	Annually
Improve access to training and learning, and increase awareness of landlord/tenant rights and responsibilities	March 2025
Re-establish a Landlords' Forum to provide partnership working opportunities and publicise regulatory changes	December 2024
Establish a partner steering group to identify areas of the borough appropriate for focused intervention	June 2024

b) Improve property standards and deliver housing solutions that support the Council's regeneration ambitions.

Action	When
Establish a single point of contact to provide private landlords and tenants with dedicated support and advice	May 2024
Support our residents to address damp and mould concerns	April 2024–2025
Keep under review the need for selective and additional licensing in the borough	March 2025
Introduce a private landlord leasing scheme	May 2024

Introduce a landlord accreditation scheme, initially focussing on Wallsend regeneration area	June 2024
--	-----------

**Priority 2 – Tackle Derelict and Long-Term Empty Properties**

**Actions**

a) Continue to reduce the number of long-term empty homes

Action	When
Complete a mapping exercise of all long-term empty properties in the borough to assess geographical patterns and future responses	Annually
Improve our empty property database to include a wider range of reasons (probate, second homes, no Council tax record)	June 2024
Develop new solutions to reduce the number of properties in a prolonged probate period	March 2025
Ensure investigation processes are aligned with the Local Government Association (LGA) recognised best practice.	June 2024

b) Target derelict homes and commercial properties utilising a range of innovative solutions and where possible bring them back as affordable homes.

Action	When
Review and improve our enforcement toolkit based on national best practice including compulsory purchase, enforced sale, insolvency and Empty Dwelling Management Orders	March 2025
Establish an investor register to match property investors with empty homes	December 2024
Launch a targeted purchasing partnership scheme to deliver housing-led regeneration in Wallsend town center with Aurora Affordable Homes	May 2024

### Priority 3- Enable Safe Independent Living

Action	When
Update the Disabled Facilities Grants policy and procedures	March 2025
Review the use of DFGs to ensure It meets residents needs considering increasing costs	March 2025
Continue to promote the work of our Safe and Health Homes Officers	March 2025
Promote the use of Assistive technology to allow people to stay in their home	February 2025
Explore the introduction of a handyperson scheme for elderly and vulnerable residents	March 2025

## Priority 4 –Improve the energy Efficiency of Homes

### Actions

a) Work with our regional partners to develop a “One Stop Shop” to support homeowners in improving the energy efficiency of their homes.

Action	When
Promote a fabric first approach and explore retrofit options for private homes with the development of a one stop shop service	March 2025
Explore finance models to provide greener energy measures in homes and continue to review our framework for low carbon energy installers	March 2025

b) Maximise grant funding to deliver energy efficiency measures in homes

Action	When
Promote and verify the Energy Company Obligation (ECO) 4 flex statement of intent and support the Great British Insulation Scheme (GBIS)	March 2025
Utilise our Home Analytics Housing Stock Database to support, recommend and develop a package of measures and funding to retrofit homes	Ongoing
Deliver Local Energy Advice Demonstrator to provide energy efficiency advice to “hard to reach” households	May 2024
Deliver Home Upgrade Grant Programme 2	March 2025
Ensure landlords are compliant with minimum efficiency standards (MEES)	March 2025
Apply for any further funding opportunities to support energy efficiency improvements	March 2025