

Private Sector Renewal Strategy



Ashfield

DISTRICT COUNCIL

Private Sector Renewal Strategy

Introduction

It is Ashfield District Council's vision that the residents of Ashfield have affordable and warm housing in a safe community that promotes their health and wellbeing.

The private sector (owner occupier and private rented sector properties) make up 84% of the total housing stock in the district. Local authorities have a number of legal obligations and powers regarding the condition of private sector homes (including caravan residents), including a range of new measures that have been introduced during 2018. A report modelling the condition of private sector homes in Ashfield was prepared by the Building Research Establishment, which identified that between 16-19% of homes have a Category 1 hazard under the Housing Health and Safety Rating System.

In recognition of this, this Strategy has been created to deliver the below stated aims. This Strategy is one of 4 strategies that underpin the Council's Housing Strategy and tackle the key issues required to deliver the Council's housing vision.

Purpose of the strategy

The Council's housing vision is:

“to ensure the population of Ashfield are living in or can access homes that are affordable, warm and within a safe community that promotes the health and wellbeing of residents”

The aims of this strategy are:

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

Summary

Private Rented Sector

PRS properties in the district have the highest percentage of category 1 and fall hazards, whereas owner occupier properties have the highest percentage of excess cold hazard and the poorest thermal comfort/energy efficiency. Overall conditions in the PRS are better than the national average, whereas in owner occupier properties conditions are worse than the national average for 4 indicators (Category 1 hazards, fall hazards, EPC rating F or G, EPC rating A to C).

The Summit and Central and New Cross wards appear most prominently across all indicators of poor property condition in the PRS

There are around 8,000 PRS properties in the district and each year the Private Sector Enforcement Team completes around 1,000 visits and inspections following reports of poor property condition. Until recently, the greatest number of disrepair cases concerned properties in Sutton in Ashfield, however, this is forecast to reduce. There is forecast to be an increasing number of disrepair cases in Kirkby, Stanton Hill and Selston.

Around 80% of cases reported each year concern properties not previously known to the PSE team, meaning there is an ongoing flow of properties falling into disrepair.

To reduce the number of non-decent homes in the PRS, (in addition to the Housing Strategy Action Plan 2018-20) this strategy will focus on the following areas:

- Focus resources on high risk cases, providing information only to low risk cases in the first instance to enable tenants and landlords to resolve the case themselves
- Effective and efficient use of enforcement powers with all high risk cases, minimising the time and resource required to resolve a case
- Improve residents' knowledge and understanding of tenants' rights and landlords obligations regarding property condition
- Ensure all properties in a landlord's portfolio meet the required property standard
- Ensure tenants are referred to the support they need to address any health issues at the root of their behaviour that is impacting on the condition of the property and the tenant's wellbeing

Empty homes

Long term empty homes (empty 6 months+) in Ashfield peaked at 959 in 2005 and were at their lowest point in 2017 at 543. This represents 0.98% of the stock, compared to a national figure of 0.86%. Whilst the percentage of long-term empty properties in the district has been consistently higher than the national average over the last 5 years, though the gap has been narrowing.

It has been identified that around half of the long-term empty homes in the district qualify for an exemption and as such cannot be brought back into use through council action. The areas with the greatest prevalence of empty homes are Sutton and Hucknall, closely followed by Kirkby.

To minimise the number of long-term empty properties, this strategy will focus on the following areas:

- Endeavouring to use the enforced sales power to deal with problematic properties

- Complete a quarterly review of the long-term empty properties to target for purchase by the council for use as affordable housing
- Complete a review of all properties empty for 10 years or more to consider suitability for works in default and enforced sale.
- Make direct contact (telephone or in person) with every owner of a property empty for 10 years or more
- Work with Revenues and Benefits team to investigate all homes subject to a second homes exemption to confirm their eligibility for this exemption
- Work with Legal services to complete a cost/benefit analysis of using the Empty Dwelling Management Order power and make recommendations regarding its use
- Each year, bring 42 empty properties back into use

Health and Housing

In 2018-19, the Council is forecast to spend around £1.08m of Better Care Funding on 126 installations including extensions, level access showers, stair lifts, ramps and warm homes on prescription. This is more than three times the amount spent in 2015-16 and around double the number of installations.

A second report by the Building Research Establishment considered the impact of housing conditions on health – it estimated that poor housing conditions are responsible for around 523 harmful events requiring medical treatment every year in the district. The greatest risks to health result from a risk of falling in the property, excessively cold properties and damp and mould.

The area with the greatest number of properties affected by the falls hazard are Summit, Central and New Cross. For excess cold, the areas are Skegby and Central and New Cross.

The PRS in Ashfield performs better than the national average for excess cold, but worse for fall hazards. Owner occupied properties in the district perform worse than the national average for falls but match the national average for excess cold.

The BCF funded installations are likely to contribute to tackling the risk of falls and excess cold, although the reduction of these risks is not measured. Analysis of the BCF spend by area shows that there is some overlap between the areas receiving the most funding and the areas with the highest number of hazards.

To improve health outcomes through housing, this strategy will focus on the following areas:

- Review the Aids and Adaptation Policy and associated procedures
- Identify opportunities to improve the value for money of Better Care Fund installations
- Record the outcomes of installations
- Complete an annual review of the above outcomes information to evaluate the contribution to tackling the most prevalent hazards
- Research the key factors that contribute to the most prevalent hazards and recommend initiatives to mitigate these within existing resources
- Complete a 12 month review of the Healthy Home MOT monitoring information to identify the most frequent issues identified and referrals completed, recommend initiatives to address these issues within existing resources
- Research the household groups that are at greatest risk of the most prevalent hazards and who are not eligible for BCF support, recommend initiatives to support these households

- Develop a timetable to conduct the next review of housing conditions (due in 2021), setting out the criteria of the review and secure the required funding

Caravan residents (caravan sites, gypsy and travellers sites and unauthorised encampments)

There are currently 19 authorised traveller pitches on 4 sites in the district compared to a need of 17 pitches by 2029.

Between 2014-17, there were 29 unauthorised encampments in the district, this included encampments on both Council and private land. Most of the encampments were moved on within 14 days. These travellers were not looking to settle in the district.

There are 6 licensed mobile homes sites in the district, providing 182 pitches, 46 of which are for residential mobile homes, 10 for static caravans and 126 for touring caravans. Consultation was carried out in 2018 to introduce a licensing fee for these sites and pitches.

To ensure the health, safety and welfare of caravan residents, this strategy will focus on:

- Implement the revised Gypsy and Traveller protocol and complete a 12 month review to ensure the rights of occupants are protected and that unauthorised encampments are moved on at the earliest opportunity
- Introduce a mechanism to record the costs of responding to unauthorised encampments
- Make recommendations on the need for pre-emptive injunctions on council owned land to protect sites that are vulnerable to unauthorised encampments
- Levy a mobile home licence fee

Private Rented Sector

Policy context

The Housing and Planning Act 2016 introduced a number of measures to reform the PRS in England and these have been followed by further measures announced in the Autumn Statement 2016 and Budget 2017. The broad focus of these measures has been to tackle rogue landlords, address unfair practices by letting agents and improve property standards and management in the PRS. The measures include:

Civil penalties	Since April 2017, local authorities can issue civil penalties of up to £30,000 to landlords or letting agents who commit certain offences as an alternative to prosecution
Rent repayment orders	Since April 2017, tenants or local authorities can apply for up to 12 months of rent to be refunded when certain offences have been committed
Banning orders	From April 2018, local authorities can seek a banning order preventing a landlord or letting agent from continuing to operate if they have been convicted of certain offences
Database of rogue landlords	From April 2018, local authorities may register landlords or letting agents that have committed certain offence on the rogue landlord database, which is accessible by all local authorities
Homes Fit for Human Habitation Act 2018	This Act gives private and social tenants the right to take their landlord to court if their property is not safe
Extending HMO licensing	In October 2018, the mandatory licensing scheme for homes in multiple occupation will extend to an estimated 175,000 additional properties
Regulation of letting agents	The government intends to introduce a mandatory system of regulation for letting agents, to be enforced by a new regulator
Banning fees	A bill to ban letting agents charging tenants fees was published in May 2018
Energy efficiency	From April 2018, a landlord may only let a property with a minimum energy efficiency rating of E
Homeless Reduction Act 2018	Increased focus on prevention, end of PRS AST leading cause of homelessness and increasing reliance on PRS to relieve homelessness

See appendix for the existing legal framework utilised by local authorities to improve standards and management in the PRS.

Selective Licensing

On 1st February 2017, the Council brought in a requirement for PRS landlords with properties in the Stanton Hill and Sutton Central areas of the district to have a license in order to rent their property. It is estimated that 650 properties are required to have a license in these areas. At the time of writing, 506 have been granted a license and 55 are pending.

During summer 2018, the Private Sector Enforcement Team has considered the case for selective licensing to be introduced into other areas of the district and alternative options to proactively tackle PRS properties in poor condition. This work is ongoing.

PRS stock condition

In 2017 there were approximately 8,000 PRS properties in Ashfield¹; the sector has grown by approximately 1,000 properties (14%) since 2011. Despite this growth, the PRS remains the smallest of the three main tenures in Ashfield, with approximately 9000 social housing properties in the district. This is contrary to the national trend where the PRS has overtaken the social rented sector to become the second largest tenure. The local and national tenure profile is as follows:

	Ashfield			National		
	PRS	Social	Owner	PRS	Social	Owner
2017	14%	16%	70%	20%	17%	63%
2011	13%	16%	69%	17%	18%	63%

Annual monitoring report

English Housing Survey 2015-16

Census table KS402EW

Figures may not add up to 100% due to rounding and 'other' tenures not included in this table

In 2016, the Council commissioned BRE to complete a private sector stock modelling exercise to identify the condition of properties in the private sector in Ashfield. The table below demonstrates the key findings in PRS and owner occupier properties across 6 key measures of property condition. The findings are compared to national averages taken from the English Housing Survey 2015-16.

	BRE Stock Condition Modelling for Ashfield 2017		English Housing Survey 2015-16	
	PRS	Owner occupier	PRS	Owner occupier
Category 1 hazard	19%	16%	17%	13%
Excess cold	2%	3%	5%	3%
Fall hazards	14%	12%	10%	8%
SAP	61	58	60	60
EPC F or G	5%	5%	6%	6%
EPC A to C	26%	17%	25%	25%

This table shows that PRS properties in the district have the highest percentage of category 1 and fall hazards, whereas owner occupier properties have the highest percentage of excess cold hazard and the poorest thermal comfort/energy efficiency. Overall conditions in the PRS are better than the national average, whereas in owner occupier properties conditions are worse than the national average in 4 cases.

Analysis of the data provided by BRE shows the following

- In the PRS, the top 5 areas with the greatest number of properties featured across all indicators are: Central and New Cross, Hucknall Central, Hucknall North, Summit, Huthwaite and Brierley
- In the PRS, the top 5 areas with highest percentage of properties featured across all indicators are: Central and New Cross, Summit, Kingsway, Stanton Hill and Teversal, Jacksdale
- In owner occupier properties, the top 5 areas with the greatest number of properties featured across all indicators are: Hucknall North, Summit, Central and New Cross, Annesley and Kirkby Woodhouse, Huthwaite and Brierley

¹ ADC Annual Monitoring data 2017

- In owner occupier properties, the top 5 areas with highest percentage of properties featured across all indicators are: Summit, Central and New Cross, Kingsway, Stanton Hill and Teversal, Leamington

There are two areas that appear in the top 5 for each indicator across both tenures: Central and New Cross, Summit. See appendix for details of the 5 lowest performing areas for each indicator, by tenure.

The English Housing Survey 2015-16 also identified the type of property with the worst housing conditions based on failing the decent homes standard and having at least one Category 1 hazard (explain):

Non-decent homes	Category 1 hazards
Pre-1919 – 37%	Pre-1919 – 27%
Converted flats – 36%	Converted flats - 21%
PRS properties – 28%	Rural properties – 20%
Vacant properties – 27%	Vacant properties – 20%
Small terraced houses – 26%	PRS properties – 20%
Rural properties – 26%	

In 2006, the Council commissioned a stock condition survey that identified the breakdown of private sector properties was as follows:

Pre-1919	21%
1919-1944	14%
1945-1964	18%
Post-1964	37%
High rise purpose built	0%
Low rise purpose built	1.5%
Converted flats	1.2%
Bungalow	23%
Detached house	18%
Semi-detached house	35%
Medium/large terrace house	14%
Small terrace house	8%

This survey highlighted that PRS properties in the district were predominantly pre-1919 construction (60%) followed by post-1964 (25%), whereas owner occupier properties were predominantly post-1964 (45%) followed by pre-1919 construction (20%).

Taken together, the above demonstrates pre-1919 properties are in the worst condition nationally, Ashfield PRS conditions are better than the national average and pre-1919 properties are most prevalent in the Ashfield PRS. However, there are limited amounts of other property types in the district, which are in the poorest condition nationally (converted flats, small terrace houses). On average, owner occupier properties in Ashfield are in worse condition than the national average and owner occupiers mostly live in post-1964 properties.

Additionally, the 2006 survey identified that there is a greater prevalence of younger and older households living in non-decent properties, which reflects the association of younger households to the PRS and also raises issues of affordability with older households who are generally owner occupiers.

PRS enforcement action

The tables below demonstrate the work of the Private Sector Enforcement Team in the last 5 years

	2017/18	2016/17	2015/16	2014/15	2013/14
Complaints received	926	876	498	470	480
HHSRS inspections	846	678	345	433	461
Hazard Awareness Notices	4	11	8	6	0
Improvement Notices	42	35	39	24	38
Prohibition Orders	24	6	11	14	15
Emergency Remedial Action	1	0	0	0	1
Prosecutions	0	0	3	5	4

As identified above, there are approximately 8,000 PRS properties in Ashfield, of which 19% have at least one Category 1 hazard. The above shows that in 2017/18 the PSE team received complaints about 11.5% of PRS properties (if each complaint is about a different property) and conducted inspections of 10.5% of PRS properties. It is important to note that not all properties inspected have a Category 1 hazard and that the number of properties in disrepair is not fixed, with a constant flow of properties for the PSE team to deal with.

Prior to the extension of the HMO regulations on 1st October 2018, there were 9 HMOs requiring a license in the district. The table below shows the work of the PSE team in the last 5 years regarding these properties. From 1st October 2018, it is estimated that 200 HMOs will require a license in the district.

	2017/18	2016/17	2015/16	2014/15	2013/14
Complaints received	27	16	21	20	12
HHSRS inspections	27	16	21	20	12
Hazard Awareness Notices	0	0	0	0	0
Improvement Notices	0	0	0	0	0
Prohibition Orders	1	0	0	0	0
Emergency Remedial Action	1	0	0	0	0
Prosecutions	0	0	0	0	0

Disrepair cases

The table below shows a summary of the location of disrepair cases in both the PRS and owner occupied properties in the last 5 years

	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19 HY	2018/19 forecast	Grand Total
Annesley	1	1	1	1	3			7
Annesley Woodhouse	4	1	2	2	3	1	2	13
Bestwood Village		1	1			1	2	3
Hucknall	65	43	41	43	58	24	48	274
Huthwaite	23	15	9	15	22	10	20	94
Jacksdale	5	4	4	2	2			17
Kirkby In Ashfield	72	46	39	37	52	27	54	274
Pinxton					1			1
Pye Bridge				1				1
Selston	8	3	2	6	6	4	8	30
Skegby	4	4	3		3	1	2	15
Stanton Hill	14	11	5	8	21	12	24	71
Sutton In Ashfield	87	82	56	85	116	49	98	480
Teversal	1	1	1		1			4
Underwood	2	2	3	2	2	1	2	12
Westwood				1	1	1	2	3
Grand Total	286	214	168	204	293	131	262	1300

Provided by GIS team, up to 25/10/18

In two of the three largest settlements in the district, following increasing disrepair complaints in the last 2 -3 years, demand is forecast to drop off in 2018/19 (based on demand in first 6 months of the year, though no seasonal adjustment has been made).

In Kirkby, demand is increasing since a low of 37 cases in 2016/17 to a forecast of 54 cases in 2018/19. This is partly driven by an increase in HMOs in the area that are substandard, this increase it anticipated to continue.

Stanton Hill is another area of increasing cases, from a low of 5 in 15/16 to a forecast of 24 in 18/19.

The above table shows the greatest levels of disrepair across the private sector in the three largest settlements can be found in Sutton, jointly followed by Kirkby and Hucknall. The BRE report also places Sutton in first place for PRS disrepair, Hucknall second and Kirkby third. Hucknall is placed first for owner occupier disrepair. However, when considering the 2018/19 forecast, the above table highlights Kirkby, Stanton Hill and Selston as the areas of increasing cases.

This could suggest that progress has been made tackling disrepair in Sutton and Hucknall since the BRE report was produced and that focus now needs to be on these three areas.

Until 2017/18, the greatest demand was from properties in Sutton. This data suggests that Kirkby should now be the area of focus.

There are 253 duplicate records in the data list of 1300 cases (i.e. 1 in 5), either due to multiple reports of the same issue or multiple issues at the same address during the period. This suggests that approximately 80% of cases each year are new cases that the team have

not previously visited. This means that every year the PSE team handles around 200 new cases of disrepair. Whilst in many cases, disrepair results from a landlord's failure to meet their repairing obligation, there are also many cases that result from tenant behaviour that may be caused by an unsupported health issue and lack of social care intervention.

Action

To reduce the number of non-decent homes in the PRS, (in addition to the Housing Strategy Action Plan 2018-20, see appendix) this strategy will focus on the following areas:

- *Focus resources on high risk cases, providing information only to low risk cases in the first instance to enable tenants and landlords to resolve the case themselves*

By September 2019, review the effectiveness of the information provided to low risk cases and the outcome of the case

- *Effective and efficient use of high level enforcement powers with all high risk cases, minimising the time and resource required to resolve a case*

Regularly monitor the time taken to successfully close a case and identify opportunities to improve the service

Regularly monitor the use of new enforcement powers including civil penalties and prosecution and identify opportunities to improve their usage

Identify a digital solution to manage licence applications by September 2020 subject to resources

- *Improve knowledge and understanding of tenants' rights and landlords obligations regarding property condition*

Work with MDC and N&SDC to provide a landlord's forum twice a year, providing key information on their responsibilities

Develop a training offer for landlords and partner agencies by September 2019

By August 2019, review and update information available online and on request to raise awareness with tenants of their rights and where to get advice and assistance

- *Ensure all properties in a landlord's portfolio meet the required property standard*

Proactively inspect all properties belonging to a landlord with a property in disrepair, regularly monitor the number of repeat offenders following service of a Housing Act 2004 notice and following investigations into their entire Ashfield portfolio.

- *Ensure tenants are referred to the support they need to address any health issues at the root of their behaviour that is impacting on the condition of the property and the tenant's*

wellbeing

Regularly monitor the support referrals that are made

Empty homes

Policy context

Since 2011, the New Homes Bonus funding has been in place, providing an amount equivalent to the Council Tax raised for each property brought back into use for a period of six years. This has since been reduced to 4 years and the number of properties eligible for the payment reduced.

ADC has been awarded New Homes Bonus Payments for the following numbers of long-term empty properties brought back into use over the last 5 years:

2016/17	2015/16	2014/15	2013/14	2012/13
43	-18	14	117	74

The HCA's 2011-15 Affordable Homes Programme included a £156million Empty Homes Programme, however, subsequent HCA and Homes England programmes have not included separate funding for empty homes.

The Rating (Property in Common Occupation) and Council Tax (Empty Dwellings) Bill was introduced in March 2018 and extended the powers of local authorities to charge a Council Tax premium on empty homes. Since 2013, local authorities can apply a 50% premium to properties that have been empty or 6 months or more. The 2018 bill allows a 100% premium to be applied to properties that have been empty for 2 years or more.

See appendix for the existing legal framework utilised by local authorities to bring long term empty properties back into use.

Number of empty homes in Ashfield

Long term empty homes (empty 6 months+) in Ashfield peaked at 959 in 2005 and were at their lowest point in 2017 at 543

	2017	2016	2015	2014	2013
Ashfield	543	586	568	582	699
Stock	55640 (estimated)	55080	54520	54100	53640
	0.98%	1.06%	1.04%	1.07%	1.30%
England	205,293	200,145	203,596	205,821	216,050
	23923000 (estimated)	23733000	23543000	23372000	23236000
	0.86%	0.84%	0.86%	0.88%	0.93%

MHCLG Live Table 615²

This table shows that over the last 5 years, there has been an overall decline in long-term empty properties in the district, though numbers did increase in 2016. This is broadly in line with the national picture, though numbers increased nationally in 2017. However, the

² <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistical-data-sets/live-tables-on-dwelling-stock-including-vacants>

percentage of long-term empty properties in the district has been consistently higher than the national average, though the gap has narrowed over the last 5 years.

Analysis of council tax data accessed 10/12/18 shows that whilst there are 531 long term empty homes (a further decrease to the figures above), around half of these are exempt empty homes, as such cannot be brought back into use through council action.

The remaining 50% breaks down across the district as follows:

	2 year empty property	Class C unoccupied 6 months+	Total
Annesley	2	3	5
Bestwood village	1	0	1
Hucknall	34	31	65
Huthwaite	5	11	16
Jacksdale	1	4	5
Kirkby	25	31	56
Mansfield	2	1	3
Pye Bridge	1	0	1
Selston	4	3	7
Skegby	10	4	14
Stanton Hill	2	3	5
Sutton	34	31	65
Teversal	1	0	1
Underwood	1	6	7
Total	123	128	251

This table shows that empty properties are most prevalent in Sutton and Hucknall, closely followed by Kirkby.

Action

To minimise the number of long-term empty properties, this strategy will focus on the following areas:

- Endeavouring to use the enforced sales power to deal with problematic properties
- From April 2019, complete a quarterly review of the long-term empty properties to target for purchase by the council for use as affordable housing
- By July 2019, complete a review of all properties empty for 10 years or more to consider suitability for works in default and enforced sale.
- By July 2019, work with Revenues and Benefits team to investigate all homes subject to a second homes exemption to confirm their eligibility for this exemption
- By September 2019, work with Legal Services to complete a cost/benefit analysis of using the Empty Dwelling Management Order power and make recommendations regarding its use

- By April 2020, make direct contact (telephone or in person) with every owner of a property empty for 10 years or more
- Each year, bring 42 empty properties back into use

Health & housing

Policy context

Better Care Fund

In 2013, the Better Care Fund was introduced providing £3.8 billion budget for health and social services to work more closely in local areas, based on a plan between the NHS and local authorities. The budget is approved by local health and wellbeing boards. The BCF is available for initiatives relating to addressing:

- Admissions to residential or care homes
- Effectiveness of reablement
- Delayed transfers of care
- Patient / service user experience

In Nottinghamshire³, a Housing and Health Delivery Plan is maintained by the Health and Wellbeing Commissioning Group, a sub-group of the Health and Wellbeing Board. This plan sets out how local housing authorities in the county will achieve the strategic aims of the Board

In Ashfield the 2018/19 BCF allocation is around £1million and provides funding for:

- Mandatory DFGs
- Discretionary DFGs
- Handyperson & Preventative Adaptation Scheme (delivered by Nottinghamshire County Council)
- Warm Homes on Prescription
- Assistive Technology

A breakdown of how this funding has been spent in recent years is given below

	2018/19*		2017/18		2016/17		2015/16	
	Total no.	Grant total	Total no.	Grant total	Total no.	Grant total	Total no.	Grant total
Extensions (Committed)	5 (10)	£160,966.50 (£368,310)	5	£166,308.71	1	£8,400.70	5	£123,695.92
Minor works (Committed)	4 (5)	£10,922.09 (£33,907.50)	7	£22,673.77	8	£42,402.50	2	£4,744
Level access showers (Committed)	18 (21)	£100,255.77 (£165,399.61)	55	£321,632.22	63	£353,641.93	24	£92,936.18
Access (e.g stairlifts and ramps) (Committed)	11 (20)	£33,656.72 (£82,074.27)	37	£112,748.75	47	£168,590.79	32	£113,611.67
Affordable warmth and	19 (13)	£69,064.22 (£60,407.61)	24	£93,552.19	3	£7,698.05	N/A	N/A

³ <http://www.nottinghamshire.gov.uk/care/health-and-wellbeing/health-and-wellbeing-board/better-care-fund>

preventative works (Committed)								
Total	126	£1,084,964.29	128	£716,915.64	122	£580,733.97	63	£334,987.77

* As at 2/10/18

The table below shows the breakdown of how this funding has been spent as a percentage of the total number of installations and of the total amount spent on installations

	2018/19*		2017/18		2016/17		2015/16	
	% no.	% amount	% no.	% amount	% no.	% amount	% no.	% amount
Extensions	11.9%	48.8%	3.9%	23.2%	0.8%	1.4%	7.9%	36.9%
Minor works	7.1%	4.1%	5.5%	3.2%	6.6%	7.3%	3.2%	1.4%
Level access showers	31.0%	24.5%	43.0%	44.9%	51.6%	60.9%	38.1%	27.7%
Access (e.g stairlifts and ramps)	24.6%	10.7%	28.9%	15.7%	38.5%	29.0%	50.8%	33.9%
Affordable warmth and preventative works	25.4%	11.9%	18.8%	13.0%	2.5%	1.3%	N/A	N/A

This shows that, as a percentage of the total number of installations completed, the following are at the highest ever proportion: extensions, minor works, affordable warmth and preventative works. In contrast, the following are at their lowest: level access showers and access.

Regarding the percentage of the total funding available spent on the different types of installation, only extensions are at the highest ever proportion. Level access showers and access are at their lowest, and minor works and affordable warmth and preventative works have fluctuated.

BCF Review 2019

The NHS Long Term Plan published in 2019 included a commitment to review the BCF by early 2019. The Plan explains that the BCF is regarded as a success in many areas, with local authorities and CCGs contributing more than their minimum required investment to support integration. However the National Audit Office has reported that the funding mechanism is overly complex, and there is a lack of clarity on the return from investment. The funding has also sometimes been used to replace core council funding rather than add to investment at the interface between health and care services. The Plan makes it clear that there will be a continued requirement in 2019/20 to reduce DTOCs and improve the availability of care packages for patients ready to leave hospital.

DFG review

The Department of Health and Social Care has commissioned the University of West England to carry out a review of DFGs in England, looking at both the operation of the grant and the wider delivery of home adaptations to support the independence of disabled people living in their own homes. The review published its report and a number of recommendations on how the grant could operate in the future in December 2018.

Memorandum of Understanding⁴

In March 2018 a renewed national memorandum of understanding to improve health and social care through the home was signed by over 25 government bodies and organisations in the health, social care and housing sector. The MoU sets out a commitment to joint action to deliver better health and wellbeing outcomes and reduce health inequalities through the design and delivery of healthy homes, communities and neighbourhoods. The MoU considers a healthy home environment to be:

- Warm and affordable to heat
- Free from hazards, safe from harm and promotes a sense of security
- Enables movement around the home and is accessible
- Support is available from others if needed

The Council has committed to this MoU (ODR)

Private Rented Sector Standards

The government announcements to tackle standards in the PRS have been described in an earlier section of this report.

Private Sector Standards in Ashfield

The condition of properties in both tenures of the private sector have been considered and compared to national averages in an earlier section of this report.

Hazards affecting health in Ashfield

A report by the BRE for ADC on the impact of housing conditions on health, estimated that poor housing conditions are responsible for around 523 harmful events requiring medical treatment every year in the district (see appendix for details on how each hazard affects health and how it can be mitigated). The table below sets out the number of hazards affecting health present in the district and the estimated number of instances those hazards lead to medical intervention being required:

4

<http://www.cih.org/resources/PDF/Policy%20free%20download%20pdfs/MOU%20project%20final%20Dec%202014.pdf>

Housing hazard type	No. of hazards (total private sector stock)	No of hazards – owner occupier	No of hazards – PRS	Estimated no. of instances requiring medical intervention
Damp and mould growth	104	68	37	52
Excess cold	1261	1049	212	7
Crowding and space	45	29	16	4
Entry by intruders	68	44	24	23
Domestic hygiene, pests and refuse	5	3	2	2
Food safety	62	40	22	10
Personal hygiene, sanitation and drainage	56	36	20	9
Falls associated with baths	723	569	154	40
Falls on level surfaces	2505	1973	532	139
Falls on stairs	5395	4249	1147	169
Falling between levels	425	276	149	42
Electrical hazards	33	21	11	2
Fire	154	100	54	3
Flames, hot surfaces, etc	73	47	26	12
Collision and entrapment	52	34	18	9
Total	10961	8538	2423	523

The next table summarises the top 5 hazards affecting health in the PRS and owner occupied properties and the top 5 hazards affecting health in the private sector requiring medical intervention.

	Top 5 hazards by type in the private sector:	Top 5 hazards by type in owner occupied properties:	Top 5 hazards requiring medical intervention
1	Falls on stairs	Falls on stairs	Falls on stairs
2	Falls on level surfaces	Falls on level surfaces	Falls on level surfaces
3	Excess cold	Excess cold	Damp and mould growth
4	Falls associated with baths	Falls associated with baths	Falling between levels
5	Falling between levels	Falling between levels	Falls associated with baths

This shows that whilst the hazard of excess cold is prevalent in both tenures, it does not lead to a high number of medical interventions. Conversely, the hazard of damp and mould does not feature in the top 5 hazards present in either tenure, but it is ranked third for hazards

requiring medical intervention. As such, tackling the top 5 hazards affecting health will not necessarily result in a corresponding reduction in medical interventions.

This table shows how the private sector stock in Ashfield compares to the national averages for the top ranking hazards identified above.

	BRE Stock Condition Modelling for Ashfield 2017		English Housing Survey 2015-16	
	PRS	Owner occupier	PRS	Owner occupier
Excess cold	2%	3%	5%	3%
Fall hazards	14%	12%	10%	8%

It can be seen that the Ashfield PRS performs better than the national average for excess cold, but worse for fall hazards. Owner occupied properties in the district perform worse than the national average for falls but match the national average for excess cold.

The BCF funded installations are likely to contribute to tackling the risk of falls and excess cold, although the reduction of these risks is not measured.

Excess cold

In the PRS, the top 5 areas with the greatest number of properties affected by excess cold are: Central and New Cross, Hucknall Central, Skegby, Summit, Hucknall North

In owner occupier properties, the top 5 areas with the greatest number of properties affected by excess cold are: Stanton Hill and Teversal, Hucknall North, Summit, Central and New Cross, Skegby

In the PRS, the top 5 areas with highest percentage of properties affected by excess cold are: Underwood, Kingsway, Skegby, Central and New Cross, Hucknall Central

In owner occupier properties, the top 5 areas with highest percentage of properties affected by excess cold are: Stanton Hill and Teversal, Jacksdale, Central and New Cross, Summit, Skegby

The areas that feature in the top 5 areas, across both tenures, for both measures are Central and New Cross, and Skegby

Falls hazards

In the PRS, the top 5 areas with the greatest number of properties affected by the falls hazard are: Central and New Cross, Hucknall Central, Hucknall North, Summit, Hucknall South

In owner occupier properties, the top 5 areas with the greatest number of properties affected by the falls hazard are: Hucknall North, Summit, Central and New Cross, Hucknall Central, Annesley and Kirkby Woodhouse

In the PRS, the top 5 areas with highest percentage of properties affected by the falls hazard are: Central and New Cross, Summit, Kingsway, Jacksdale, Stanton Hill and Teversal.

In owner occupier properties, the top 5 areas with highest percentage of properties affected by the falls hazard are: Central and New Cross, Summit, Kingsway, Hucknall Central, Leamington

The areas that feature in the top 5 areas, across both tenures, for both measures are Central and New Cross, and Summit.

See appendix for a breakdown by ward and tenure of the prevalence of hazards that may contribute to damp and mould growth, such as disrepair, simpleSAP, fuel poverty.

Better Care Fund spend by ward

The tables below compares the 5 areas receiving the most funding between 2015-19 for affordable warmth and preventative works, level access shower and access to the 5 areas with the greatest prevalence of excess cold, fuel poverty, low SAP ratings and risk of falls as detailed above. The table focuses on owner occupier properties as this is where the majority of BCF funding is allocated.

	Top 5 areas receiving affordable warmth funding	Top 5 areas with excess cold	Top 5 areas with fuel poverty	Top 5 areas with low SAP rating
1	Hucknall West	Central and New Cross	Central and New Cross	Jacksdale
2	Summit	Hucknall Central	Hucknall Central	Kingsway
3	Central and New Cross	Skegby	Hucknall North	Central and New Cross
4	Annelsley and Kirkby Woodhouse	Summit	Summit	Summit
5	Selston	Hucknall North	Huthwaite and Brierley	Underwood

	Top 5 areas receiving level access showers funding	Top 5 areas receiving access funding	Top 5 areas with falls risk
1	Hucknall Central	Central and New Cross	Hucknall North
2	Annesley and Kirkby Woodhouse	Annesley and Kirkby Woodhouse	Summit
3	Hucknall North	St Mary's	Central and New Cross
4	Hucknall West	Hucknall North	Hucknall Central
5	Jacksdale	Hucknall West	Annesley and Kirkby Woodhouse

These tables show that of the 9 areas that feature in the top 5 areas for excess cold, fuel poverty and low SAP rating, 3 of these also feature in the top 5 areas receiving affordable warmth funding.

Of the 7 areas that feature in the top 5 areas for risk of falls, 4 of these also feature in the top 5 areas receiving funding for level access showers and access installations.

Actions

To improve health outcomes through housing (in addition to the Housing Strategy Action Plan 2018-20, see appendix), this strategy will focus on the following areas:

- By October 2020, review the Aids and Adaptations Policy and associated procedures
- By March 2020, identify opportunities to improve the value for money of DFG and discretionary works installations
- From April 2019, record the outcomes of installations (such as reduced running costs, increased SAP/EPC rating, reduced GP visits, reduced number/risk of fall)
- From April 2020, complete an annual review of the above outcomes information to evaluate the contribution to tackling the most prevalent hazards, recommend initiatives to improve this contribution
- By June 2020, research the key factors that contribute to the most prevalent hazards (fuel poverty, falls, excess cold, damp) and recommend initiatives to mitigate these within existing resources
- By April 2020, complete a 12 month review of the Healthy Home MOT monitoring information to identify the most frequent issues identified and referrals completed, recommend initiatives to address these issues within existing resources
- By October 2020, research the household groups that are at greatest risk of the most prevalent hazards and who are not eligible for BCF support, recommend initiatives to support these households
- By December 2019. develop a timetable to conduct the next review of housing conditions (due in 2021), setting out the criteria of the review and secure the required funding

Caravan residents

Gypsy & Traveller policy context

Under s.225 of the Housing Act 2004 requires every local authority to carry out an assessment of the accommodation needs of Gypsies and Travellers residing in or resorting to their district.

Under the 2012 Planning Policy for Traveller Sites, local planning authorities are encouraged to formulate an evidence base for gypsy and traveller needs in their area and this use this to set a pitch target in the area's local plan.

A summary of the powers available to local authorities and policy to deal with illegal and unauthorised encampments is available from MHCLG website⁵.

In April 2018, a consultation on these powers was launched alongside a government review of the powers following a rise in illegal encampments.

The House of Commons Women and Equalities Committee⁶ at the time of writing is conducting an inquiry on the inequalities faced by gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities. The inquiry is considering the impact of 28 commitments made by a ministerial working group in 2012, including what progress has been made in achieving them, the effectiveness of policy-making and implementation for these groups more generally, and how the government can tackle such continuing inequalities.

G&T in Ashfield

The Ashfield Traveller Accommodation Needs Assessment 2015 identified that in April 2014, there was a modest traveller population in Ashfield, comprised of:

- 3 authorised gypsy/traveller sites which were occupied
- 2 unauthorised gypsy/traveller developments
- 1 unimplemented planning approval for gypsy/traveller sites
- 2 authorised showmen's sites

The table below gives details of authorised traveller sites at 1st April 2014:

Site address	Total pitches	Pitches vacant	Pitches occupied	Notes
Hodgkinson Road, Kirkby	4	1	3	
The Willows, Alfreton Road, Jubilee	2	0	2	
Oak Tree Paddock, Adj.	1	0	1	

⁵

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/418139/150326_Dealing_with_illegal_and_unauthorised_encampments_-_final.pdf

⁶ <https://www.parliament.uk/business/committees/committees-a-z/commons-select/women-and-equalities-committee/inquiries/parliament-2017/inequalities-faced-by-gypsy-roma-and-traveller-communities-17-19/>

Brookside, Kirkby Lane, Pinxton				
Park Lane	8	8	0	Planning permission for 8 pitches granted March 2012 Not yet implemented
Total	15	9	6	

The assessment noted that between 2006-14, there had been an average of 1.2 caravans on unauthorised encampments each year, with no recorded activity on 5 of the 9 years. Between 2014-17, there were 29 unauthorised encampments in the district, all of which were moved on within 14 days. These travellers are not looking to settle in the district.

Based on census data, the assessment estimated a population of 81 gypsy/travellers in Ashfield in 2011, comprising 22 households. It assumed that 12 households are residing in traditional housing, supporting other research that around 50% of the gypsy/traveller community live in housing.

The assessment sets out the level of future need in the district for gypsy and traveller pitches for the period 2014 to 2029 as illustrated below:

Ashfield District: Future Pitch/Plot Requirements 2014 to 2029		
Period	Gypsy/Traveller Pitches	Showmen's Plots/Yards
2014 to 2019	0	0
2019 to 2024	1	0
2024 to 2029	1	0

In 2018/19, there are the following authorised traveller sites:

Site address	Total pitches
Hodgkinson Road, Kirkby	7
David Street, Kirkby	6
The Willows, Alfreton Road, Jubilee	4
Oak Tree Paddock, Adj. Brookside, Kirkby Lane, Pinxton	2
Total	19

As such, pitches have increased by 4 since 2014, exceeding the requirement for an additional 2 pitches by 2029.

Mobile home policy context

The Caravan Sites and Control of Development Act 1960 requires that site owners obtain a licence from the local authority before any land may be used as a caravan site. Local authorities have powers to impose conditions in site licences and enforce them.

The Caravan Sites Act 1968 introduced basic protection for all mobile home owners living on protected sites, including preventing site owners from evicting occupiers with residential contracts without a court order.

The Mobile Homes Act 1983 gave security of tenure to residents of mobile homes sites who own the homes in which they live and rent the pitch from the site owner.

The Mobile Homes Act 2013 introduced a new site licensing scheme for relevant protected sites which came into force on 1st April 2014. This Act introduced some important changes to the buying, selling or gifting of a park home and the pitch fee review process. It requires local authorities to inspect sites annually and provides additional powers to ensure compliance with site licence conditions. The Act allows fees to be charged different licensing functions, serving enforcement notices, publishing any new site rules relating to a site and reissuing a site licence to bring them up to the current legislative requirements.

In 2015, the government set up a Park Homes Working Group “to identify evidence of poor practice where it exists, and investigate how best to raise standards and further tackle abuse”. A two-part review commenced in 2017, with the first call for evidence closing on 27th May 2017 and the second on 16th February 2018. The Government published its response to the review in October 2018, setting out proposals to strengthen the existing legislation by:

- improving residents’ rights;
- giving local authorities more enforcement powers to tackle rogue site owners;
- working with the sector to raise awareness of rights and responsibilities of residents; and
- developing and disseminating best practice amongst local authorities.

Mobile homes in Ashfield

There are 6 licensed sites within the Ashfield District

Site Name	Type	Pitches
Ashfield Mobile Homes Park, Sutton in Ashfield	Residential	25
David Street, Kirkby in Ashfield	Residential	6
Teversal Camping & Caravanning Club, Teversal	Residential holiday homes static caravans touring	2 10 126
The Willows Mobile Home park, Selston	Residential	4
Hodgkinson Road, Kirkby in Ashfield	Residential	7
Oak Tree Paddocks, Kirkby in Ashfield	Residential	2
Total		182

To date the Council has not charged a licence fee, however, consultation was carried out during 2018 to introduce a fee.

Actions

To ensure the health, safety and welfare of caravan residents, this strategy will focus on:

- By May 2019, implement the revised Gypsy and Traveller protocol and complete a 12 month review to ensure the rights of occupants are protected and that unauthorised encampments are moved on at the earliest opportunity
- By May 2019, introduce a mechanism to record the costs of responding to unauthorised encampments
- By August 2019, make recommendations on the need for pre-emptive injunctions on council owned land to protect sites that are vulnerable to unauthorised encampments
- From April 2019, levy a mobile home licence fee (subject to approval)

Appendix - Condition of housing stock in Ashfield

PRS

- Top 5 areas with highest count across all indicators: Central and New Cross, Hucknall Central, Hucknall North, Summit, Huthwaite and Brierley
- Top 5 areas with highest percentage across all indicators: Central and New Cross, Summit, Kingsway, Stanton Hill and Teversal, Jacksdale

	1	2	3	4	5
PRS HHSRS count	Central and New Cross	Hucknall Central	Hucknall North	Summit	Huthwaite and Brierley
PRS HHSRS %	Central and New Cross	Summit	Kingsway	Stanton Hill and Teversal	Underwood
PRS excess cold count	Central and New Cross	Hucknall Central	Skegby	Summit	Hucknall North
PRS excess cold %	Underwood	Kingsway	Skegby	Central and New Cross	Hucknall Central
PRS falls count	Central and New Cross	Hucknall Central	Hucknall North	Summit	Hucknall South
PRS falls %	Central and New Cross	Summit	Kingsway	Jacksdale	Stanton Hill and Teversal
PRS disrepair count	Central and New Cross	Hucknall Central	Hucknall North	Summit	Stanton Hill and Teversal
PRS disrepair %	Central and New Cross	Kingsway	Stanton Hill and Teversal	Jacksdale	Summit
PRS fuel poverty 10% count	Central and New Cross	Hucknall Central	Hucknall North	Summit	Huthwaite and Brierley
PRS fuel poverty 10% %	Central and New Cross	Summit	Stanton Hill and Teversal	Leamington	Jacksdale
PRS fuel poverty LIHC count	Central and New Cross	Hucknall Central	Hucknall North	Summit	Huthwaite and Brierley
PRS fuel poverty LIHC %	Summit	Stanton Hill and Teversal	Central and New Cross	Kingsway	Jacksdale
PRS low income count	Central and New Cross	Hucknall Central	Hucknall North	Hucknall South	Summit
PRS low income %	Leamington	Carsic	Abbey Hill	Summit	St Mary's
PRS average simpleSAP	Jacksdale	Kingsway	Central and New Cross	Summit	Underwood

Owner occupier

- Top 5 areas with highest count across all indicators: Hucknall North, Summit, Central and New Cross, Annesley and Kirkby Woodhouse, Huthwaite and Brierley
- Top 5 areas with highest percentage across all indicators: Summit, Central and New Cross, Kingsway, Stanton Hill and Teversal, Leamington

	1	2	3	4	5
OO HHSRS count	Hucknall North	Summit	Central and New Cross	Hucknall Central	Annesley and Kirkby Woodhouse
OO HHSRS %	Central and New Cross	Stanton Hill and Teversal	Summit	Kingsway	Hucknall Central
OO excess cold count	Stanton Hill and Teversal	Hucknall North	Summit	Central and New Cross	Skegby
OO excess cold %	Stanton Hill and Teversal	Jacksdale	Central and New Cross	Summit	Skegby
OO falls count	Hucknall North	Summit	Central and New Cross	Hucknall Central	Annesley and Kirkby Woodhouse
OO falls %	Central and New Cross	Summit	Kingsway	Hucknall Central	Leamington
OO disrepair count	Hucknall North	Central and New Cross	Summit	Hucknall central	Huthwaite and Brierley
OO disrepair %	Central and New Cross	Leamington	Summit	Hucknall Central	Huthwaite and Brierley
OO fuel poverty 10% count	Summit	Central and New Cross	Hucknall North	Huthwaite and Brierley	Annesley and Kirkby Woodhouse
OO fuel poverty 10% %	Leamington	Central and New Cross	Summit	Stanton Hill and Teversal	Carsic
OO fuel poverty LIHC count	Summit	Central and New Cross	Huthwaite and Brierley	Hucknall North	Annesley and Kirkby Woodhouse
OO fuel poverty LIHC %	Summit	Central and New Cross	Stanton Hill and Teversal	Leamington	Kingsway
OO low income count	Summit	Hucknall North	Hucknall South	Hucknall West	Huthwaite and Brierley
OO low income %	Carsic	Leamington	Summit	Central and New Cross	Abbey Hill
OO average simpleSAP	Jacksdale	Stanton Hill and Teversal	Central and New Cross	Kingsway	Summit

Appendix - Impact of hazards on health

Housing hazard type	Main health conditions	Vulnerable groups	Mitigating the hazard
Excess cold	Respiratory diseases, COPD, cardiovascular diseases Increased risk of falls Worsening symptoms of rheumatoid arthritis and leg ulcers Excess winter deaths Work and schools days lost, reduction in educational attainment	Older people People in fuel poverty Families	Improving heating and thermal efficiency measures
Damp and mould growth	Asthma exacerbation, lower respiratory infections Social isolation	Children Adults	Improved heating, ventilation and addressing any structural problems
Entry by intruders	Fear or burglary Emotional stress	All	Window and door locks, security lighting and key safes
Falls in baths, on stairs, trips and slips	Accidents Fractures to older people and subsequent loss of independence General health deterioration	Older people	Stair rails, balustrades, grab rails, repair to paths
Accidents affecting children	Physical injury, falls, electrocution, severe burns and scalds	Children	Identifying hazards, provide more space, education of professionals (children's centre etc re responsibilities of landlords)

Appendix - Legal framework

The Regulatory Reform Order 2002

Abolished most of the national framework for offering grants and other assistance, apart from mandatory Disabled Facilities Grants, and gave local authorities much greater flexibility to offer financial assistance tailor to local needs, circumstances and resources.

The Housing Act 2004

Introduced the Housing Health & Safety Rating System (HHSRS), mandatory licensing of higher risk HMOs, selective licensing powers and stronger powers to deal with long term empty homes.

HHSRS is an evidence-based risk assessment regarding 29 categories of housing hazard. Hazards are classified as either Category 1 or Category 2 depending on their severity. Local authorities have a duty to act when Category 1 hazards are found and a discretionary power to act regarding Category 2 hazards.

The following action can be taken:

- Serve an improvement notice requiring remedial works
- Serve a prohibition order which closes the whole or part of a dwelling or restricts the number of class of permitted occupants
- Suspend improvement or prohibition notices
- Serve a hazard awareness notice
- Take emergency remedial action
- Serve an emergency prohibition order
- Make a demolition order
- Declare a clearance area

This Act required licensing of HMOs of three or more storeys and which are occupied by five or more persons from two or more households.

Section 80 of the Act allows local authorities to apply for selective licensing of privately rented properties in areas which are experiencing low housing demand and/or suffering from anti-social behaviour

The Management of Houses in Multiple Occupation (Regulations) 2006

The Management of Houses in Multiple Occupation (HM) Regulations 2006 apply to all HMOs, whether they are licensable or not.

If an individual fails to comply with the regulatory conditions it can be dealt with as a criminal offence by the Local Authority. They could be tried in a Magistrate's Court and if convicted could be fined up to £5000 per offence

These regulations impose duties on both managers and tenants to ensure that the property is maintained to a good standard.

Local Government Act 2000

Local authorities may acquire land or property under section 2 of this Act in order to promote or improve the economic, social or environmental wellbeing of their community.

Local Government Act 2003

Section 85 of this Act allows the use of information gathered as part of the Council Tax billing process to identify empty properties within an authority's area and take steps to bring them back into use.

The Housing Act 1985

Sections 17 and 18 of this Act provide local authorities with a power to purchase land and housing (compulsory purchase) and bring the property back into use as soon as possible.

Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1982

Section 29 of this Act allows local authorities to undertake any work necessary to prevent unauthorised entry to a property that is believed to be insecure and recover the costs from the owner.

Enforced sale

Where a local authority has invoked enforcement measures using these powers, and the owner expresses no interest in bringing the property back into use, the local authority may complete the works in default and attach a charge to the property on the Local Land Charges Register. This is so that an owner cannot dispose of the property with the benefit of the improvements. Under the enforced sale procedure the property is sold on the open market at auction.

Empty Dwelling Management Orders

The Housing Act 2004 made provision for local authorities to take over management of certain residential properties that had been empty for a specified period, this period is currently two years.

A local authority may seek an interim EDMO to allow it to let out the property with the owner's consent. This must be authorised by a First Tier Tribunal (Property Chamber) and lasts a maximum of 12 months

Following an interim EDMO, a final EDMO may be put in place for a fixed period of no longer than seven years.

Town and Country Planning Act 1990

Section 215 of this Act allows a local authority to serve a notice requiring the owner of an empty property to address the unsightly external appearance. If the owner fails to comply with the notice, the local authority make complete the works in default and make a charge against the property for them.

Local Government Finance Act 2012

Under this Act, billing authorities have powers over certain council tax discounts and the amount of discount offered to properties is at the discretion of the billing authority.

- 'Unoccupied and substantially unfurnished' properties may receive a discount of between 0% and 100% of their Council Tax
- Vacant properties under going 'major repair work' or 'structural alteration' may receive a discount of between 0% and 100% for a maximum of 12 months
- An 'empty homes premium' of up to 150% of the normal Council Tax may also be charged for properties which have been unoccupied and substantially unfurnished for over two years.

Building Act 1984

Section 77 and 78 of this Act give local authorities the power to require the owner of a dangerous or dilapidated building or structure to make the property safe. The local authority may take emergency action to make the building safe where required.

Section 78 allows local authorities to fence off unsecure properties where there is a risk of entry, vandalism, arson or similar.

Appendix - Housing Strategy Action Plan 2018-20

Priority 2 – Energy and sustainability

1. By October 2018, publish an Aids and Adaptations Policy to support tenants and residents to adapt their homes to suit their needs
2. By October 2018, complete a campaign promoting the affordable warmth service, targeting the selective licensing areas and top 5 areas identified in the BRE report for excess cold, low SAP rating and high fuel poverty
3. Participate in future Nottinghamshire collective fuel switching campaigns
4. By March 2018, complete a review of the council's work to tackle fuel poverty to date and make recommendations for a future programme of work

Priority 4 – Tackling disrepair

1. By April 2019, complete an evaluation of phase 1 and phase 2 of the Selective Licensing Scheme
2. By October 2018, ensure all private rented properties in the Selective Licensing areas are either licensed or enforcement action is being taken against the landlord
3. By June 2019, ensure all private rented properties requiring a license under the new HMO regulations are either licensed or enforcement action is being taken against the landlord
4. By July 2018, develop a policy and fee structure regarding the use of civil penalties in private sector enforcement

Ashfield District Council
Brook Street
Sutton in Ashfield
NG17 1AL

www.ashfield.gov.uk



Ashfield
DISTRICT COUNCIL