

Making a Difference

Offering independence

Supported Housing Strategy
2025-2030



watford
community
housing

We believe that **everyone** should have a home that helps them to get the **best out of life**, whatever their circumstances.

Working hand in hand with our local partners, we are committed to helping people in our communities have the homes and services they need to remain as independent as possible – including signposting healthcare or specialist social care support for those who require it, because of their personal circumstances, age, ill health or disability.

Our Supported Housing Strategy sets out how we will play our part in meeting the demand for supported housing needs in our communities, with a specific focus on independent living, adult social care and temporary accommodation.

We will work with local councils to deliver the right mix of homes to meet local demand, and with a range of partners to ensure that residents can access the support they need.



Meeting local needs

As a Community Gateway housing association, we take a place-based approach to our work.

This means that we think about the bigger picture, making sure that everything we do enhances communities and meets the specific needs of the local area.

We will work with our partners to help our communities have the homes and services they need.



Making an impact

We know that the availability of suitable, good-quality housing has a significant impact on health and wellbeing, and this is especially true for people who have support needs. Because of this, a joined-up approach to housing, healthcare and social care is crucial – which is why we are committed to partnership working.

We will work with local authorities and care providers to invest in shared priorities and deliver comfortable, quality homes that meet local demand, and enable care and support packages to be tailored to individual needs. Together, we will aim to create homes for life, that meet people's needs for the long term.

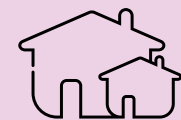


Knowing our role

We know that our expertise is in providing good homes and housing-related services across independent living, adult social care and temporary accommodation. To ensure that our customers can live comfortably in their homes and access any assistance they need, we will continue to partner with care and support providers who have the specialist knowledge and capacity to meet residents' requirements.

These partnerships allow us to cater for a variety of needs, reflecting the diversity of people who live in supported housing. As a housing provider, our focus is on delivering homes that are fit for the future and help residents to live as independently as possible, whatever their individual requirements.

'We will work with local authorities and care providers to invest in shared priorities and deliver comfortable, quality homes.'



900 supported homes

By 2030, we will provide at least 900 homes for supported housing.

The right mix of options

We provide a range of supported housing options to meet a wide variety of needs in the community.

Our focus is on helping people to maintain their independence, working with our partners to ensure that residents have tailored support plans and access to any additional services and assistance they require.





‘We have achieved
Erosh’s Independent
Living Standards
accreditation,
demonstrating the
professionalism and
expertise offered by
our teams.’

Our **independent living** homes offer older people safety, security and comfort at an affordable price. They promote social inclusion, with qualified and professional staff helping to create close-knit communities.

Our **flexicare** homes provide a safe community for people who have ongoing support needs because of their health, mobility or age. The services are flexible and can be adapted to suit people’s changing care and support needs, helping them to remain as independent as possible, while having access to the appropriate level of support.

For both our independent living and flexicare homes, we have achieved Erosh’s Independent Living Standards accreditation, demonstrating the professionalism and expertise offered by our teams to residents – and we will work to retain this throughout the next five years.

For people who are waiting for longer-term housing, we work with local authorities to provide and manage **temporary accommodation** for them.

People-focused services

We know that everyone is different, so we take pride in understanding our customers as individuals. Our teams will continue to provide a visible and trusted presence to our supported housing customers and take into account disabilities, personal preferences and cultural sensitivities.

In line with our ethos as a Community Gateway housing association, we will continue to put customers at the heart of our work, giving supported housing residents opportunities to shape the services we provide and influence how their home is managed.

‘Our teams will continue to provide a visible and trusted presence to our supported housing customers.’



Good-quality supported housing

We already offer a range of supported housing across our communities.

Independent living homes are available at different locations, with three dedicated to flexicare accommodation – including the newly opened Robin House.

We also manage around 200 supported living bed spaces for Hertfordshire County Council.

In Kings Langley, we are developing a dedicated facility for women with autism.



Understanding demand

Everyone should have a home that meets their needs.

To play our part in making this a reality, we will ensure we understand the requirements of our communities and anticipate how demand is changing over time.



‘Our priority is providing affordable homes for rent, including high-quality independent living options.’

Responding to change

Working with our partners, we will keep pace with changing demographics and understand who the residents of the future will be over the years ahead – looking at both the local area and the bigger picture across the country.

The UK’s ageing population presents a significant challenge, putting added pressure on local services, as well as housing. With more people requiring access to homes at below the market rate in order to live comfortably and healthily as they get older, our priority is providing affordable homes for rent, including high-quality independent living options.

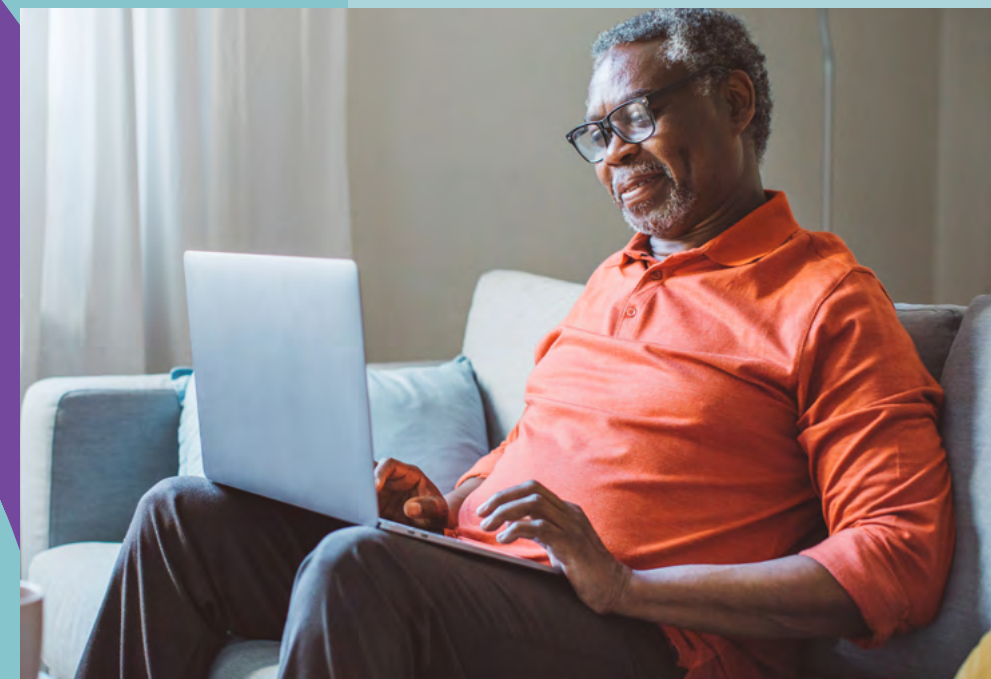
The right homes

To consistently deliver the homes our communities need most, we are committed to maintaining a strong understanding of both local demand and the housing options that are already available to people in our areas.

We know that ongoing funding for support services is vital for people to be able to continue to live independently in their homes. With this in mind, we will also work with partners – including local authorities and the NHS – to understand exactly what they need from the homes we deliver, providing residents with reassurance that their home is fit for purpose and the support they receive is secure for the long-term.

Our investment priorities will be:

- Homes for older people
- Temporary accommodation
- Supported housing developed in partnership with adult care services



Quality that inspires confidence

We want to deliver homes that enhance people's lives, health and wellbeing. Quality will be at the heart of our decision-making around supported housing, so that the homes we provide are modern, long-lasting and designed to work for our residents.

As well as keeping up with modern expectations, we understand the importance of delivering homes that meet the unique requirements of different residents.

Our homes will be designed to help people maintain their preferred lifestyle and remain as independent as possible, while promoting a strong sense of community.

Design standards

We will work with residents and our key partners to develop our design guide, which sets out the standards for the homes we build. By listening to feedback from those who will use, commission and provide services to our supported housing, we will ensure that we are embracing best practice and delivering the homes that our communities need.

As an organisation with a focus on providing homes for people on lower incomes, we will remain mindful of the affordability of our offering while ensuring that our homes meet standards that we can be proud of. By designing homes that meet modern standards and can be converted to alternative uses if support requirements change, we will be confident that they represent a sound investment for our community.



‘We will remain mindful of the affordability of our offering while ensuring that our homes meet standards that we can be proud of.’

Investing in the future

To ensure that our offering is fit for the future and can continue to meet our customers’ needs, we will take a data-driven approach to managing our supported housing. We will use our Asset Investment Model to make informed decisions about how and when to invest in our existing properties.

Although we understand that it will take time to bring some of our older properties up to the latest standards, we will establish clear criteria for our existing homes – such as the removal of shared bathing facilities – and we will work to achieve these standards as quickly as possible.

Unlocking opportunity

We know we are just one piece in the puzzle. To deliver the supported housing our communities need, we will continue to strengthen our partnerships with key local organisations, because we know we can do more together.

As well as maximising development opportunities, working with partners will help us to access funding and secure good-quality support for residents, through closer relationships with service providers.

By making better use of our resources, we will also improve the quality of supported housing on offer to people in our communities.

Doing more together

We are proud to have built a strong reputation as a trusted partner. As a result, we punch above our weight when it comes to building homes, and we will continue to work with others to maximise opportunities to deliver new supported housing.

In keeping with our commitment to taking a joined-up approach to supported housing, we will build relationships with potential delivery partners who can offer specialist insight and solutions that allow us to do more and meet local need. We will also consider opportunities to be the managing partner to organisations with the capacity to deliver supported housing for our communities.

As quality is a key priority, we will give careful consideration to how our existing assets are performing. Where we identify that older properties can no longer meet our customers' needs, we will explore all options to deliver the best outcome for residents, including opportunities for disposal, redevelopment and regeneration.

Funding for new homes

To support the development of new supported housing, we will explore partnerships that help us to access additional funding. We will continue to build our relationship with Homes England, as well as being a trusted partner to local authorities in our area, giving them the confidence that we can help them to achieve their supported housing goals.

'We will continue to work with others to maximise opportunities to deliver new supported housing.'



A strong local offer

To ensure success, we will promote our supported housing options across our communities.

We will be recognised for our compelling offer to people who want a home that allows them to live independently and affordably, with access to the support services they need.

By sharing clear information with existing residents and potential new customers, we will help people understand our full offer and build our reputation as a trusted provider that our partners can recommend with confidence.



Flexible options

By offering a broad range of housing solutions and services that meet local demand, we will appeal to a diverse customer base with a wide variety of needs. We will be sensitive to these different needs, working with our service delivery partners to ensure that residents understand how they can tailor their support packages to suit their personal requirements.

The cost of suitable housing and additional support will be the number one concern for many residents in our communities, especially those considering a move to alternative accommodation as they get older. We will promote the affordability of our offer, which compares favourably with many private sector providers, reassuring people that a good standard of living is within reach for all.

‘We take pride in creating places that are more than just somewhere to live.’



An attractive lifestyle

We take pride in creating places that are more than just somewhere to live. We work to create communities within communities, helping to combat social isolation by bringing residents together in a friendly and sociable environment.

Our supported housing will be known for offering greater independence, with the assurance that support and assistance is available when needed, all within vibrant communities that allow people to connect and get the best out of life.

‘We’ll deliver a mutually beneficial offer that gives people the confidence to make their next step in life.’

Supporting customers

By providing clear information, support and guidance to potential customers, we will make it easy for people to find a home that is right for them, with the support services they need.

Our supported housing will be an attractive proposition for people across our communities, including existing customers as their circumstances and needs change. For those who are ready to rightsize, we’ll deliver a mutually beneficial offer that gives people the confidence to make their next step in life, moving to a home that is right for them and freeing up family homes for those who need them.



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