



Older Persons Strategy 2030



Executive Summary

The development of this Strategy has taken place at a time of change within Salvation Army Homes following a recent rebrand and structural changes within its housing services.

Our Older Persons Strategy 2024-2030 provides a pathway to excellence detailing key milestones over the coming years with the ambition to be an excellent provider of Older Persons Accommodation.

This Strategy has been devised in partnership with residents and stakeholders with the aim of providing an essential tool to identify and inform priorities for the future that can deliver high-quality cost-effective housing and services for older people residing within Salvation Army Homes.

The strategy supports the delivery of our corporate strategy by outlining the steps our older persons team will take over the coming years to meet the strategic objectives outlined in that document.

- Deliver excellent customer service
- Invest in our existing homes
- Deliver more homes to help residents achieve independent living
- Be a great employer
- Maintain our financial strength

Strategic Context

Current and proposed Government policy changes will have a significant effect within the older persons' housing and support sector.

For example, the Social Housing (regulation) Act 2023 lays foundations for changes to how social housing is managed, with the national housing federation predicting the need for “38,000 new homes for rent for older people each year”.

Older persons housing continues to be defined as accommodation for those aged 55 and above. We recognise that residents can live well beyond 55 and our strategy recognises that within this age span, that residents will have a range of requirements and needs.

Financial Constraints and Funding Challenges

Budget constraints and reductions in public funding for social housing make it difficult to build or maintain housing specifically for older people. Many housing associations are also balancing financial viability with their social mission, which is increasingly challenging.

Adapting to Changing Health and Social Care Needs

Older people often require a mix of housing, health, and social care services. Housing associations will need to offer flexible housing solutions that allow residents to “age in place” comfortably, while also providing options for increasing levels of care if needed.

Meeting the Growing Demand from an Aging Population

The UK population is ageing rapidly, with a growing proportion of people over the age of 65. This increases the demand for housing options specifically designed for older people, such as independent living units and extra-care housing.

Addressing Affordability & Financial Insecurity Among Older Residents

Many older residents face financial insecurity, and a significant portion rely on pensions and benefits that may not keep pace with living costs, including housing expenses.

Leveraging Technology for Support and Independence

Technology can support independent living, for example, through telecare systems, fall sensors, or other assistive devices that help older residents maintain autonomy while accessing necessary care.

Navigating Regulatory and Policy Changes

The rising focus on building safety regulations and the new requirements on landlords (such as those outlined in the Social Housing White Paper) add additional layers of compliance and cost.

Ensuring Social Inclusion and Wellbeing

Social isolation is a significant issue for older adults, and housing associations play a role in promoting social connections through community spaces, organized activities, or proximity to local services.

Housing associations in the UK face a complex set of strategic challenges in providing housing for older people over the coming decade. These challenges are shaped by demographic shifts, funding limitations, regulatory requirements, and changing expectations around care and support. Here are the key strategic issues that are likely to be most significant:

Resident voice

In developing this strategy, we asked residents in our older persons housing schemes what was important to them and what their expectations were in relation to the way we deliver and develop our services. We conducted over 20 workshops across our schemes, and they told us they wanted to be included in any decisions that were made about our services and shared their expectations of us.

Key findings from the resident consultation

- Respondents value ‘peace and quiet’ as well as friendly neighbours and communities.
- Refuse, unkept gardens / communal area and not feeling safe / secure stand out as the main ‘dislikes’.
- Lack of face-to-face contact / advice on accessing improvements / adaptations is clear.
- Lack of support impacts on tenancy sustainment on this client group.
- Satisfaction was impacted by lack of working alarm service
- Perception was poor value for money however a clear understanding.
- Residents requested increased support services now and in the future.
- Three quarters are not satisfied with the maintenance they receive.
- Involvement in community activities could be increased with a greater range of activities.
- 75% responded positively to: ‘do you feel your home is meeting your needs now’.



The above graph illustrates the words used (and heard) by us from residents. We will continue to engage and strengthen our co-production approach with residents. This strategy and the specific aims laid out later in this document have all had some input, involvement or been suggested by residents.

We firmly believe that older people want to be involved in the management of their scheme and in the services provided. Obtaining resident insight will help us continue to improve the service and meet their expectations and needs.

What we do now: Organisational Context

Salvation Army Homes was established in 1959 and was registered as a housing association in 1977. We are a national association operating in 73 local authorities with 293 designated homes for older people.

As of 2024, our service is comprised of the following types of accommodation:

Supported Housing

1873 units

- 456 units directly managed
- 1025 units across 22 TSA Homeless services, including registered care homes
- 402 units with other managing agents
- 248 HMA units – providing asset management support to the TSA

General Needs Housing

1294 Units

- Predominantly 1 person flats and include some repurposed schemes that were formerly supported housing.
- Between 250 - 300 of our general needs residents receive floating support from other providers

Older Persons Housing

293 units

- 275 flats
- 18 bungalows
- 5 schemes with an on-site scheme staff

Retired Officer Accommodation

700 units

- Manage those homes that are provided to retired Salvation Army Officers.
- Property inspection services for The Salvation Army Modern Slavery & Anti - Trafficking team



Of the 312 older persons residents 200 are recipients of either full or partial Housing Benefit / Universal Credit which equates to 64%. The older persons housing service is in areas with different challenges and levels of deprivation

The current Older Persons housing service is committed to providing support to our older residents. There are two main types of specialist housing for older people – schemes with onsite staff and general needs older persons accommodation.

Schemes with onsite staff

Sometimes referred to as ‘very sheltered’ housing. It aims to provide well designed homes that are suitable for frailty and illness in older age to support independent living; and allows care to be delivered to people in their own homes without having to go into residential or nursing care.

General needs older persons accommodation

Are for those over 55 years of age, although people with support needs or vulnerability can be considered if below this age. They are self-contained accommodation aimed to help people lead active and independent lives for as long as possible.

Our Older Persons team are committed to helping residents live independently within their homes. All Older Persons accommodation is let unfurnished with the scheme-based accommodation being specifically designed or adapted for older people

Included at Appendix 1 is a SWOT analysis of each older person’s estate. This snapshot was taken in 2024 and provides us with a strategic assessment tool and will allow us to evaluate progress through the life of this strategy.

**Work together to
provide a range of
quality, affordable
and attractive
housing options to
enable older people
to live
independently**

**Our Strategic
vision**

The aims of our Older Persons Strategy

Key objective 1 Deliver excellent customer services

Satisfaction / Tenure Stream	Older Persons Housing	General Needs Housing	Supported Housing - Directly Managed	Supported Housing - Agency Managed
Well Maintained Home	73%	73%	81%	73%
Safe Home	76%	75%	85%	68%
With Repairs	58%	65%	71%	71%
Overall	63%	71%	96%	71%

We will do this by:

We are disappointed with this position and the target laid out in our corporate strategy is to achieve 95% customer satisfaction by 2030.

- Reviewing existing services, such as the “alarm call system” and work with residents to procure improved systems to provide them with the best technical solution.
- Work with colleagues in Asset Management and with customers to co-produce an older persons repair service that delivers greater customer satisfaction
- Expand our service to provide an enhanced welfare service to residents.
- Improving the quality of older persons’ service; to enable people to live happy and health lives in an enriched community.
- Providing a holistic, person-centred experience, leading to both better health and wellbeing outcomes and wider social and economic benefits.
- Open schemes-based services to the community
- Demonstrating a strong commitment to EDI by working to ensure our staff teams meet the needs of the diverse communities within each scheme.
- We will celebrate and raise awareness of a range of cultures and communities within our services
- Increase partnerships with local charities, services and community interest companies

One of our strengths in our supported housing schemes is listening to what residents tell us about the building they live in and the support we provide and coproducing our service offer.

We will adopt this approach in our Older Persons housing to create an overarching coproduction strategy and plan specific to our supported accommodation offer.



Key Objective 2

Invest in our existing homes

The same STAR survey showed resident satisfaction in our repairs and maintenance service to be at 58%. This is well below the standard we want to achieve. Closer inspection of the specific feedback provided by residents in these services suggests that improved satisfaction with our responsive repairs and maintenance offer will significantly improve our overall satisfaction levels. We will re-invigorate our approach to this.

At the same time, we will undertake an “Options Appraisal” of each scheme to identify work required and to give confidence in its long-term future/suitability for the client group.

We know that when residents feel safe and secure in their homes, that are maintained to a high standard, they are more likely to engage and remain active. We will Co-produce material with residents. For instance, a minimum standard service specification.

- Complete an options appraisal on all existing older person schemes to ensure it is appropriate to the current & future needs of residents, including recognition of the importance of level access/minimum number of steps

- Fully upgrading the social alarm system to ensure that residents have access to innovative technological solutions that meet their needs into the future.

- Rationalise our call monitoring system and move toward a single call monitoring centre

- Ensure that residents can retain a degree of independence whilst also feeling cared for, connected to a community and being safe and secure within it

- Ensure that our schemes are non-institutional, attractive and accessible to promote activity and mobility amongst our residents

- Use our space flexibly, keep communal spaces clean and inviting, consulting residents on any decoration, use of colour and furniture provided

- Explore the need to provide dementia friendly home environments within specific schemes.



Key Objective 3

Deliver more homes to help residents achieve independent living

We currently have 293 homes designated specifically for older people. We also know from our Customer Insight work, that at least 422 residents living in general needs housing are also aged 55 or higher.

We recognise that we are unlikely to develop a new sheltered or extra care scheme in the next five years, but our ambition is to ensure that a greater percentage of our homes are accessible and offer safe living to older residents.

We will work with Local Authority partners to identify projects that enable the achievement of respective strategic ambitions with regard to provision of homes for older residents.

We will specifically:

- Identify options for reducing rent loss and delivering cost-effective refurbishment / development opportunities.
- Enable older people to live independently to live in their own homes for as long as possible.
- Explore Merger & Acquisition opportunities
- Provide solutions that enable older people to continue to live in a home during the ageing process

Key Objective 4

Be a great employer

We want to attract and keep the best people to work in our older person housing services and to do this we will:

- Coproduce our job descriptions and ensure residents are involved in recruitment
- Ensure all older persons housing staff are enabled to attend face to face induction training where the focus is developing the culture and ways of working within a psychologically informed environment
- Review the learning needs for each role in older persons housing with our staff and residents
- Skill up a number of staff to enable them to develop and deliver training to other staff
- Work with The Salvation Army to develop partnership projects that enable staff to expand their skills base and take on new challenges
- Create safe working environments for staff, and support them to progress



Key Objective 5

Maintain our financial strength

We are providing older persons housing in a difficult financial environment. As detailed in the strategic context section, we are faced with the prospect of reduced funding and greater client expectations. To ensure our services are financially viable we will:

Produce Scheme Insight Documents that enable us to have clarity with regard to the financial viability for each of our schemes.

Provide a clear path of investment for each of the Older Person's schemes

Explore partnerships that enable innovate service provision and to mitigate risk

Review our service model and where possible, utilise technology to enable us to be more efficient in the delivery of services.

Support residents in the goal to transform lives, by helping them stay debt free. This in turn will mean higher percentage levels of rental income.



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