

DEPAUL

Homelessness has no place

2026-30

**DEPAUL
HOUSING
SERVICES
STRATEGY**

Welcome

We are glad
you are here

In this place you can
take steps towards
a better future

You will lead
the way

We will work and
walk with you

Welcome.

THE DEPAUL WAY

Strategic aims

- 1 Working with partners to increase the supply of housing for people experiencing or at risk of homelessness.
- 2 Ensuring compliance in a changing regulatory environment, aiming for best practice.
- 3 Prudent stewardship of our assets so that they continue to serve our vision and strengthen the Depaul UK Group.
- 4 Putting residents views at the heart of decision-making at Depaul Housing Services.

Our strategic objectives for 2026-2030

Increase the supply of housing:

- 1.a Acquiring properties
- 1.b New builds

Ensuring compliance, aiming for best practice

- 2.a Being a responsive landlord, providing safe homes
- 2.b Ensuring complete and up to date policies and procedures
- 2.c Working with Depaul UK and other partner providers to assure high quality delivery.

Stewardship of our assets

- 3.a Undertaking stock condition surveys of properties that we own or long-lease
- 3.b Delivering a long-term asset management plan

Resident involvement

- 4.a Enabling residents to shape the day-to-day delivery of housing services
- 4.b Giving residents an equitable opportunity to be involved in influencing and scrutinising strategies and policies



Who we are

Depaul UK is the parent charity of Depaul Housing Services (DHS); together they form the Depaul UK group. DHS extends our ability to provide safe, high-quality homes for people who are experiencing or at risk of homelessness.

Our Vincentian foundations

Our Vincentian heritage runs through our strategy, shaping how we understand homelessness, how we work alongside the people we support, and how we make decisions, ensuring everything we do contributes to our long-term goal to end homelessness and change the lives of those affected by it.

WE ARE HERE TO END HOMELESSNESS AND CHANGE THE LIVES OF THOSE AFFECTED BY IT

Strategic objectives

1 Working with partners to increase the supply of housing for people experiencing or at risk of homelessness.

Housing is not the only cause nor means of solving homelessness; but homelessness will not end without an increase to the supply of housing for people without a stable home. Depaul Housing Services (DHS) will contribute to increasing this supply.

Depaul Housing Services will continue to rely on partners to deliver many landlord services to our residents. It is therefore crucial that we work with the right partners in our development work.

Depaul UK will continue to be a key partner for our development work. We will only work with other partners in cases where their values align with ours, where we are confident that they will help us deliver high quality accommodation for residents and where joint work will strengthen DHS.

1.a Acquiring properties to support the work of Depaul UK

Properties that we acquire will provide safe, warm, comfortable homes that our residents and DHS, can be proud of.

In recent years we have purchased 17 properties, ranging in value from £60,000 to over £1m. We will continue to buy properties drawing on government capital grant and secured borrowing, as well as DHS reserves and voluntary income where appropriate.

Our properties will provide supported



accommodation for people who are experiencing or at risk of homelessness. We will continue to acquire housing for young people to support Depaul UK's specialism in working with this group. We are not a general needs landlord, so will acquire properties only when we are confident that support, including floating support, will be delivered to our residents over the long-term.

We will acquire properties that Depaul UK (DUK) manages and delivers support in. This gives DHS assurance that they will be well managed and means our acquisitions are focused on supporting the work of Depaul UK. We will take careful consideration when acquiring properties if we think there is a high likelihood of another agency taking over the management and delivery of support.



We recognise that growing our property portfolio can add resilience and resources to the Group, but that it also adds liabilities. We will undertake thorough due diligence before purchases to avoid excessive risks stemming from the condition of buildings or their ability to generate rental income.

1.b New builds

Every building we buy will be appropriate for its intended occupant group. We will, however, look to take advantages of opportunities that arise to build tailor-made accommodation. Such opportunities may include land becoming available at low cost or chances to build in partnership with another developer.

The group (DHS and DUK) has a huge amount of knowledge around the types of buildings that work for our clients in terms of location, design and layout. We are also able to involve clients in the design of new buildings.

DHS currently has limited capacity to take on the complexity and risks of new build projects. With our current resourcing, we will only take on new build projects when we are confident that we are able to sufficiently mitigate against these risks. This support could be in the form of cheap land or partners assisting us with delivery. We may look again at this approach if our experience and capacity for building grows over the course of this strategy period.

The parameters above around acquisitions, referring to who we house, financing, support, management and risk will also apply to any new build projects.



2 Ensuring compliance in a changing regulatory environment, aiming for best practice.

We support additional regulations and requirements that have been put in place and are planned for social landlords. There are too many examples of residents being put at risk, even losing their lives, due to avoidable incidences of fire, damp, mould and other hazards. We also recognise that we need to be transparent with our residents, ensuring they can hold us to account.

In 2026, we will create a new role of Depaul Housing Services Housing Compliance Officer dedicated solely to meeting DHS' requirements in these areas. This role will add capacity where needed to supplement that which DUK provides. We will also access external advice when necessary, procuring it if needed.

We will comply with the Governance



and Financial Viability Standard, ensuring our activities do not place social housing assets, activities relating to the provision of social housing or our own financial viability at risk. While DUK, as our parent organisation, is required to provide support and assistance to ensure the group's compliance and viability, DHS will continue to become more self-sustaining.

Looking beyond compliance, we pride ourselves on being an exemplary provider of landlord services to our client group. We are well placed to do this because:

- i) we will only provide housing for people who are experiencing or at risk of homeless, so can specialise accordingly
- ii) most of our properties are managed by Depaul UK, meaning we face fewer inter-organisational barriers in getting issues resolved for residents.

responsibility is to provide safe housing. We will ensure that all DHS homes are compliant with health, safety and environmental regulations. We will work to make our homes attractive, homely, psychologically – informed environments. We will continue to ensure that repairs are undertaken within required timescales.

Over the course of the period regulations in these areas will change, increasing requirements for social landlords. Examples include the continued implementation of Awaab's Law and new minimum energy efficiency standards. We will scope these requirements in detail and develop a work plan to ensure that we are well prepared for their implementation.

Ahead of the introduction of the Regulator's Competence and Conduct Standard, the group's Director of Housing Management has already started a course that

“It's like wow. You could have knocked me over with a feather. It's a nice flat, as well. Really quiet area.”

Darren, North East

Several of our properties are already registered with Ofsted as providing accommodation for 16 and 17 year old children involved in the care system. We will continue to register properties with Ofsted when required to do so by Depaul UK.

2.a Being a responsive landlord, providing safe homes

A landlord's most fundamental



they will be mandated to complete by the Standard.

2.b Ensuring complete and up to date policies and procedures

At the start of the strategic period we will prioritise developing our policies and procedures, updating existing policies as necessary and filling gaps where bespoke DHS policies, rather than ones shared with Depaul UK, are preferable. We will ensure sufficient capacity from across the group is allocated to this work. Policies will be reviewed and updated as required.

2.c Working with Depaul UK and other partner providers to assure high quality delivery

The Housing Compliance Officer will prioritise helping us to improve and utilise systems to record and monitor our housing management work. They will also take the lead on the implementation of DHS policies, procedures, including our repairs policy, across our housing.

Our partnership arrangements, i.e. for properties where organisations other than Depaul UK provide housing management, enable DHS to reach many more people in need and boost the work of organisations that share our values. We will implement a strategic pause on taking on additional partner properties while we review the resources that we allocate to this work.

3 Prudent stewardship of our assets so that they continue to serve our vision and strengthen the Depaul UK Group

3.a Undertaking stock condition surveys

We need to maintain and invest in our properties so that they continue to provide high quality housing for our residents. We also need to do this to ensure that our properties maintain their value as assets.

In 2026, we will employ suitably qualified surveyors to undertake stock condition surveys for the buildings for which DHS has a long-term interest (freehold or lease) and substantial repair and maintenance responsibilities. We will also liaise with freeholders of buildings for which we have long-leases, to request relevant information from stock-condition surveys that they undertake.



“ I love working here. If we say we’re going to do something, we do it. ”

Jacko, Middlesbrough



3.b Delivering a long-term asset management plan

These surveys will give us the information needed to draft an asset management plan, outlining costed cyclical maintenance plans over a 30-year period. This plan will inform our annual budgeting for repairs, as well as cyclical and planned works. This will provide us with a framework setting out how we use our surpluses to look after our existing stock and develop new social housing.





**WE BELIEVE EVERYONE
SHOULD HAVE A HOME
AND A STAKE IN THEIR
COMMUNITY**

“ I have my own room with a beautiful big window. It’s nice and calm and I feel happiness. ”

Sofiane, 49, resident

4 Putting residents views at the heart of decision-making at Depaul Housing Services.

4.a Enabling residents to shape the day-to-day delivery of housing services

DHS is well placed to involve residents in the delivery of our housing services due to the regular face-to-face contact that they have with our managing agents. We will ensure, for example, that regular house meetings are held in communal projects, with time put aside to focus on housing management issues. Residents in floating support properties will be encouraged by visiting staff to influence the way in which their properties are managed.

We will ensure that day-to-day resident involvement is recorded and monitored, and that we are able to demonstrate how residents’ input shapes the housing services that are delivered.

4.b Giving residents an equitable opportunity to be involved in influencing and scrutinising strategies and policies

We will create mechanisms that give residents a wide range of meaningful opportunities to influence DHS’ strategic work and policies. We will, for example, actively seek our residents’ input when shaping our resident involvement workstream.

Our existing residents will also help shape our work to buy and build new social housing. They can offer invaluable insight into how buildings should look and feel for our prospective residents, we will include them in the design and furnishing of new properties. DHS has a higher proportion of residents who are over 25 than other parts of the Depaul UK Group. DHS will lead the way in ensuring that over 25s have meaningful high level involvement across the group.

As DHS relies on managing agents to deliver landlord services, we will work with our managing agents to ensure that they give residents meaningful opportunities to influence their policies.



DEPAUL

Homelessness has no place

**WE CELEBRATE THE
POTENTIAL IN PEOPLE
WE BELIEVE IN RIGHTS
RESPONSIBILITIES
WE PUT OUR WORDS
INTO ACTION
WE TAKE A WIDER ROLE
IN CIVIL SOCIETY**



**POSTCODE
SUPPORT
TRUST**

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