I’d like to start by thanking everyone who took part in our ‘Let’s Talk: Housing’ consultation earlier this year.

Between 20 January and 3 March, over 700 people visited our consultation, with 573 of these completing the survey to share their views on the aims and actions we were proposing to include in our new Housing, Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy. The response was four times the number of our previous housing strategy consultation in 2019.

It was really positive to see so many of you taking part in such an important consultation. The strategy, which will cover the period 2025 to 2030, sets out how the council will continue to work with partners to prevent people from becoming homeless; create and retain affordable housing for young people and families; address the housing needs of older people; and improve housing standards for all of our residents.

Over the past few weeks, we’ve been carefully analysing your responses and taking on board your feedback, and I’m pleased to say that the final strategy was approved by councillors at a Full Council meeting last week.

I’m also pleased to tell you that we are introducing a new online housing register and advice system. This is in direct response to customer feedback and will offer a number of benefits for our residents.

The new system will make applying to join the housing register quicker and easier and will make it simpler for people to contact our housing team to seek advice or to access support if they are homeless or facing homelessness.

Work to move across to the new system has already started and is due to be completed in May. As a temporary measure during this time, we will only be able to take new housing register applications if a resident has an urgent housing need. In this instance, people can complete a simple e-form to access support on our website: [**www.chichester.gov.uk/applyhousingregister**](http://www.chichester.gov.uk/applyhousingregister). If anyone is unable to complete this form, they can call our Housing team on: 01243 534734.

While we’re upgrading to the new system, the way people access our housing services will look a little different, but please be assured that our team are available for anyone who needs support — whether it’s offering housing advice ([**www.chichester.gov.uk/housingadvice**](http://www.chichester.gov.uk/housingadvice)); helping those who are homeless or facing homelessness ([**www.chichester.gov.uk/helpwithhomelessness**](http://www.chichester.gov.uk/helpwithhomelessness)); or taking housing register applications from those with an urgent housing need ([**www.chichester.gov.uk/applyhousingregister**](http://www.chichester.gov.uk/applyhousingregister).)

As part of the changeover, residents who are already on the council’s housing register will be contacted to ensure that their details and housing requirements are up to date. This will mean that any housing opportunities suggested to them in the future are tailored to their needs.

Those with an existing housing advice or homelessness application will be moved into the new system automatically and don’t need to take any action. They will be contacted with account details and information about how to use the new service when it is launched.

The new system will offer a more personalised approach and will enable us to keep people’s details and requirements up to date, increasing the chances of a customer being matched with a suitable property — especially if their situation has changed since they joined the register. It will also help us make sure that households with the highest level of housing need are prioritised.

Another benefit of the new system is that residents on the housing list will be able to ‘bid’ for available properties more frequently. This means that residents will have the opportunity to bid on a daily basis for a home that’s suitable for their needs, and for which they are eligible.

To keep updated on this project, and other council news, sign up to our monthly email newsletter at: [**www.chichester.gov.uk/newsalerts**](http://www.chichester.gov.uk/newsalerts)

Best Wishes

Cllr Oona Hickson

Cabinet Member for Housing, Revenues and Benefits at Chichester District Council

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| A logo with text and a building  AI-generated content may be incorrect. | **Sarah J Parker**Communications ManagerCommunicationsChichester District Council |

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