

SOUTH & CENTRAL REGIONAL PLAN

2017–20



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Foreword

This is our first regional plan for South & Central – an area covering 27,000 square miles from Stoke to Dover, and from Suffolk to Bristol. Across the region we own or manage 11,985 homes in 104 local authority areas.

South & Central region in numbers

60%

stock is
social housing

153

care and support
schemes

>50%

homes have
single occupants

66%

of customers are
aged under 44

To create the plan, we've looked at the performance of our neighbourhoods, identified the characteristics of our customers and, most importantly, looked at what each community needs to thrive.

Last year we developed a programme of priorities that we plan to continue delivering over the next two years. This regional plan will deliver our corporate plan objectives of: stepping up supply, customers first and neighbourhoods matter. For South & Central, this means:

— **Stepping up supply**

We've set ourselves an ambitious target to build 583 homes for rent and sale over the next two years. These will be in our key growth areas of Derbyshire, Kent, Leicestershire and Northamptonshire.

— **Customers first**

As one of the region's largest providers of services to homeless people, we're exploring new ways to end homelessness for good. We've also launched a new repairs and maintenance service. And we're investing in digital technology to make our services more accessible to customers.

— **Neighbourhoods matter**

While most of our neighbourhoods perform well, we've identified five areas that need investment. We'll be working with local residents to make these neighbourhoods better places to live. We're also delivering a multi-million pound redevelopment programme in five boroughs across London.

This is a regional plan but it has a neighbourhood focus. We have five key areas where 69 % of our homes are located – **Derbyshire, Leicester, Stoke-on-Trent, London and Kent**. You can read about our priorities for these areas from page 6.

Our aims are clear: we want to create good neighbourhoods, offer services that are relevant to our customers and improve lives across the South & Central region. If you share our commitment and you'd like to work with us, please get in touch.

Stephen Elliott
South & Central
Regional Director



About us

Riverside is one of the country's leading providers of affordable housing, care and support and neighbourhood regeneration. We've been around for 90 years and we provide services to more than 100,000 customers in England and Scotland.

As a not-for-profit organisation, any money we make is reinvested back into the business to provide more homes and services.

Whether through our charitable housing association, commercial subsidiaries or joint ventures, we deliver a wide range of solutions to make homes and neighbourhoods great places to live.

We're a national provider but we work at a local level, focusing on what each community needs to prosper.

We operate across three regions – North, Liverpool City Region and **South & Central** – to provide:

- homes for affordable rent, low-cost home ownership and outright sale
- care and support for older people
- supported housing for those at risk of homelessness or facing other life challenges
- extra services for customers such as money advice, employment and training support, apprenticeships and affordable warmth advice.

We're committed to supporting neighbourhoods and transforming the lives of the people who live in our communities. We do this by working in partnership with local authorities, residents, businesses and other stakeholders.



...we work in partnership to actively engage in constructive dialogue with national and local government and our regulator.



Key priorities

We work with a broad range of statutory and voluntary organisations across our South & Central region to deliver long-lasting change. We focus on the issues that affect people living in our communities, and what matters most to them. These are our priorities for the region over the next two years.

More homes to rent and buy

We plan to build 583 homes by 2020 – a mixture of affordable rent and shared ownership. Through a new partnership with Bovis, we're also planning to create a further 1,500 homes for affordable housing and outright sale in Wellingborough. Compendium Living, our joint venture with Lovell, is part way through a regeneration scheme in Derby, where 164 homes have been built and occupied, with another 636 homes to be built in phases.

In some neighbourhoods across the Midlands we're trialling the Government's £200 million Voluntary Right to Buy Scheme. This gives eligible tenants an opportunity to buy their home at a discount of up to 70% on the market value of the property. Income generated from this will be reinvested into improving communities and building more homes.

Tackling homelessness

Homelessness is a real challenge across our region. According to the Government's report on rough sleeping in autumn 2017, London has 24% of the country's rough sleepers. And the East Midlands had the second biggest rise in rough sleeping between autumn 2016 and 2017.

We work with our partners across the region to tackle all types of homelessness. We're already the country's third largest provider of services to homeless people, but we know we can do more. We believe that everyone has the right to a decent home, and we continue to look for new solutions to achieve this. For example, for the last few years in Derby, we've been helping to run the 'no second night out' initiative on behalf of the city council. And we're also looking to pilot the Housing First model in Medway. This approach focuses on giving someone a home first, and dealing with any support issues afterwards. The model has proved to be successful in Finland – the only European country where homelessness has reduced in recent years.

We've also earmarked £1 million of our own funds to work with commissioners to tackle social problems such as homelessness on a 'payment-by-results' basis. We'll be both an investor and service provider with the commissioner paying only when agreed outcomes are achieved. This innovative approach reduces risk for the commissioner and provides greater certainty on what works.

We want to partner with commissioners to provide support to people with a range of different needs – whether that's homelessness, mental health problems, resettlement after prison or hospital bed blocking.



Services for older people

It's estimated that by 2033-34 there will be 4.4 million more people in the UK aged 65 and over. New solutions to housing and care for older people are needed now. We know there's a growing demand for a range of 'at home' services, so we plan to extend our care and support offering to people in their own homes. We're piloting an 'at home' service in one of our neighbourhoods in the North West and we're looking to do something similar in this region.

Neighbourhood improvement

We want our communities to be places where people feel proud to live. We've carried out an in-depth assessment of all our neighbourhoods and have identified five areas where there are opportunities for growth and improvement. They are: Castleward in Derby, Long Eaton in Erewash, Braunstone in Leicester, Thanet in Kent, and neighbourhoods in Stoke-on-Trent.

We're focusing on neighbourhoods where we can influence change by harnessing the power of investment for the benefit of local communities. We're planning a strategic stock rationalisation programme which will see us transferring or selling some of our more dispersed housing which have high operating costs. At the same time, we're also looking to increase our stock portfolio by seeking acquisition opportunities in our key neighbourhoods, including large-scale stock transfer opportunities.

New repairs and maintenance service

We're committed to giving customers an efficient, fixed first-time repairs service. This can be a challenge, particularly in this region where properties are spread over a large area. To raise our standards, we've created a completely new repairs service for customers in South and Central. Instead of using a group of local contractors, we're partnering with one contractor – Mears, a leading repairs and maintenance specialist – to create a wholly owned subsidiary called Riverside Direct. This will give us better value for money and a higher level of customer satisfaction.

Digital technology

We need to take full advantage of technology to improve customer experience. Over the next 12 months we'll be launching new digital services, enabling customers to self-serve through our website. It means that they'll be able to do business with us, such as booking a repair appointment, at a time that suits them.

We also want to make our digital services accessible to everyone. We plan to get more customers online by installing Wi-Fi at our largest (10 units or more) retirement living schemes and supported housing services.

Involving customers

Engaging with customers is important to us. We rely on their views and experiences to help us improve existing services and create new ones. We want to give customers a much wider choice of ways to get involved with us. That's why we've established a dedicated customer involvement team. With 60% of our customers aged under 44, the focus will be on developing new ways to connect with younger customers, including maximising the use of social media channels.

Investing in homes

Each year we invest millions into the modernisation, improvement and adaptation of homes. Investing in homes not only makes life better for our customers, it also strengthens the market value of an area.

Over the next two years, we plan to spend £17 million improving homes and £5 million refurbishing some of our retirement living schemes.



Our work across the region

Derbyshire

We own and manage 942 homes in the county across care and support, shared ownership and social housing. Our maintenance and improvement programme will see us investing over £1 million in homes and communities by 2020.

We also have 137 supported housing units across the area, which provide accommodation and support for vulnerable 18–65 year-olds with various support needs. For the last few years, we’ve been involved in the local authority’s ‘no second night out’ programme, which gives support to rough sleepers.

Through our subsidiary Compendium Living, we’re regenerating the Castleward area of Derby. This exciting £100 million project will eventually bring 800 new homes, shops, offices, a primary school and public spaces to the city. Planning has begun on phase two which includes more than 100 homes by 2020.

Leicester

We own and manage 1,521 homes across 13 neighbourhoods in Leicester. We plan to invest more than £4.38 million into the improvement of homes and communities by 2020. We also have two retirement living schemes in the city, which are home to 131 older people.

At Braunstone, where we manage 251 homes, the local community is continuing to experience the effects of high unemployment and social problems. Over the next few years, we’ll be working with local residents and other stakeholders to bring long-term improvements to the area. We’re developing a robust neighbourhood plan for Braunstone, which could include new homes, better facilities and opportunities for work and training.

Stoke-on-Trent

We own and manage 599 homes in Stoke-on-Trent. Over the last few years we’ve created an award-winning development, Weston Place. The new community comprises of 280 homes for affordable rent and sale, and has transformed a former run-down mining estate into an attractive place to live.

We plan to invest more than £2.24 million into the improvement of homes across the city by 2020. And we’re carrying out an appraisal of our neighbourhoods to identify areas where there are opportunities for growth and development.

Derbyshire in numbers

942

homes owned and managed

137

supported housing places

£1m

investment in homes by 2020

Leicester in numbers

1,521

homes owned and managed

131

retirement living places

£4.38m

investment in homes by 2020

Stoke-on-Trent in numbers

599

homes owned and managed

41

supported housing places

£2.24m

investment in homes by 2020

London

In London, we own and manage 2,828 homes in 23 boroughs across the city. We also manage 1,143 housing places for people in our retirement living schemes and our supported housing services.

We're about to start work on an ambitious, multi-million pound redevelopment programme in five boroughs – Newham, Southwark, Lambeth, Lewisham and Bromley. This self-funded scheme will replace existing homes with ones that are more spacious and energy efficient. Plans also include building homes for shared ownership and outright sale as well as creating green public spaces. Crucially, any profit made from property sales will be reinvested and used to build more affordable homes. We'll be working closely with local residents through consultations, workshops, surveys and social media to get their feedback and ideas about the future of their communities.

We work closely with a range of partners to help resolve London's rough sleeping crisis by providing outreach support to people on the streets. Over the next two years, we'll be using our new 'move on' programme, which helps residents move from our supported schemes into a fixed-term tenancy much more quickly.

Kent

We own and manage 1,477 homes in Kent, with 798 homes in Thanet, across three neighbourhoods near the seaside area. This includes a community of 491 homes recently acquired from Hyde Housing Association. There is a need for more supported housing services in Kent. So we're looking at ways to expand our care and support service across the county.

We plan to invest more than £2 million into the improvement of homes in the area by 2020. And we're carrying out an appraisal of Thanet to identify opportunities for neighbourhood improvement.



London in numbers

2,828
homes owned and
managed

486
retirement living
places

657
supported housing
places

Kent in numbers

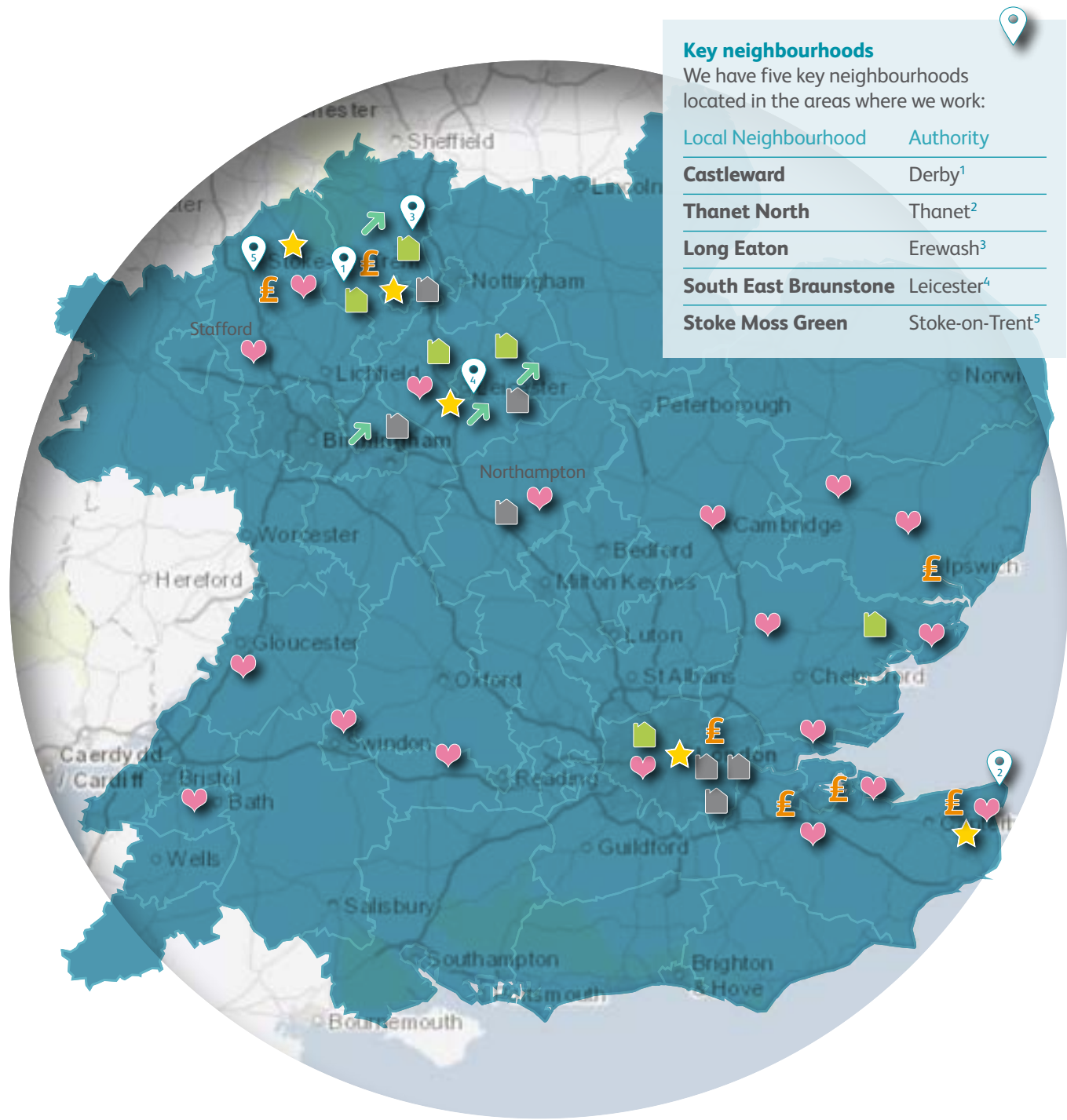
1,477
homes owned and
managed

160
retirement living
places

256
supported housing
places

£2.24m
investment in homes
by 2020

Regional map



Key neighbourhoods
We have five key neighbourhoods located in the areas where we work:

Local Neighbourhood	Authority
Castleward	Derby ¹
Thanet North	Thanet ²
Long Eaton	Erewash ³
South East Braunstone	Leicester ⁴
Stoke Moss Green	Stoke-on-Trent ⁵

Key

- 

Affordable homes in pipeline:
Derby, Warwickshire, London
- 

Affordable homes in development:
Derbyshire, Leicestershire, Wembley
- 

Stock investment programme:
London, Stoke-on-Trent, Leicester, Ipswich, Kent, Derbyshire
- 

Care and support key growth area:
Colchester, London, Kent, Birmingham, Nottingham, Cambridgeshire, Gloucestershire, Bristol, Leicester

- 

Growth areas:
Leicestershire, Derbyshire, East and West Midlands
- 

Priority areas:
Derbyshire, Leicester, Stoke-on-Trent, London, Kent



Get in touch or find out more

For further information please visit



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Follow us on Twitter **@RiversideUK**



Or call **0345 111 0000**

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