

# Peterborough Housing Strategy 2024-2029





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# Foreword from Councillor Alison Jones

## Cabinet Member for Housing and Communities

**Welcome to our new Housing strategy for Peterborough.**

This strategy sets out the main housing related challenges we face and how we will respond to them through the priorities and objectives we have set for the next five years.

Our aim is to provide secure, good quality and affordable housing that contributes to improved health and wellbeing. Housing plays a significant role in determining people's quality of life, opportunities, and outcomes. We recognise the impact of suitable housing on not only people who need support, but also family members who provide support including young carers.

In this strategy, we state our commitment to increasing the supply of good quality homes that are affordable to a range of incomes, located in attractive, well designed, communities.

The climate emergency and our ambition for Peterborough to become a net zero carbon city means that we will work hard to reduce housing related carbon emissions.

The strategy outlines the actions we will take to enhance existing homes by improving standards and safety whilst increasing energy efficiency.

It sets out our response to preventing and tackling homelessness in an environment where the cost-of-living crisis is increasing the number of households dealing with financial hardship and the risk of homelessness.

The strategy details how we will support older people and vulnerable people who wish to remain living independently in their own homes, as well as well as addressing the needs of those who need more specialist accommodation.

**We look forward to turning this strategy into action and are committed to working with our partners to deliver the priorities set out in this document.**

*Councillor Alison Jones*

Councillor Alison Jones

# Consultation and Engagement

The Housing Strategy brings together in a single document the various elements that make up the council's strategic housing function. The purpose of the Housing Strategy is to identify the key housing issues and challenges facing the city over the next five years and to set high level priorities and objectives across the full range of housing-related areas.

The Housing Strategy and its Delivery Plan has been developed and prepared in collaboration with the relevant service areas within the Council, to ensure that the housing related themes and issues relevant to the delivery of their service area are reflected in the strategy and inform the priorities and areas for actions set out in the Delivery Plan.

Ongoing engagement with our Affordable Housing Provider partners and Homes England has taken place through our Strategic Housing Partnership as the strategy develops with the opportunity for further engagement during the period of Public Consultation.

The Peterborough Housing Strategy is a major policy item for the city council. It sets out our priorities, commitments and programme for the period 2024 to 2029 for a wide range of housing matters, including::

- How we will Support Sustainable Growth and Regeneration in Peterborough
- How we will Increase the supply of homes which people can afford and tackle homelessness
- How we will raise housing quality standards in existing homes to support health and wellbeing
- How we will meet the need for accessible and adapted housing, supported accommodation, and housing for specific groups

**We would like to thank everyone who contributed to the shaping of this strategy. A full draft of the Housing Strategy was published for public consultation between 22nd January 2024 and 4th March 2024.**

A report summarising the key and most frequently raised issues arising from the consultation can be viewed at [www.peterborough.gov.uk/strategic-housing](http://www.peterborough.gov.uk/strategic-housing)



# Monitoring and Review

To monitor the progress of the Housing Strategy and its Delivery Plan regular reviews will be undertaken and an annual report will be produced and published commencing one year after the date of the strategy's adoption. The report will include :

Performance against the Delivery Plan for each of the four priorities;

A profile of new risks and opportunities which impact on the council's ability to deliver its housing agenda including any significant national legislation or local policy changes;

New initiatives that support the priorities of the strategy so that the delivery plan grows and evolves as some actions are completed and new ones arise



# Setting The Context

This section highlights some key national and local housing-related policies, strategies and plans that inform our housing agenda and underpin the priorities of the Peterborough Housing Strategy 2024 to 2029.

## National Context

This Housing Strategy has been developed in the context of evolving national policy and legislation in housing, welfare and planning. Below is a summary of the key legislative changes of recent years and some proposed legislative changes that are relevant to the housing sector and shape our response to meeting housing needs and demand in Peterborough.

### Homelessness Reduction Act 2017

The Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 which came into effect in April 2018 represented a fundamental change to homelessness legislation. It introduced new duties around preventing and relieving homelessness. The act extended the period which a person can be at risk of homelessness from 28 days to 56 days. This required local authorities to work with people to prevent homelessness at an earlier stage.

The act also requires local authorities to provide homelessness advice and support to all applications for housing assistance and make inquiries to see if they have a duty to help. This is a change from the previous duty where local authorities only had to help those at risk of homelessness if they considered them to be in priority need.

### Changes to Government's Departments and Delivery Agencies

In 2018 as part of the government's bid to raise the profile of Housing, a new minister for housing was appointed and the Department for Communities and Local Government was renamed Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG).

The Homes and Communities Agency (HCA) was rebranded as Homes England and the Regulator of Social Housing (RSH) was created as a stand-alone body. In September 2021 the MHCLG was renamed to become the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) "to help deliver on the government's mission to level up every part of the UK as we build back better from the pandemic and deliver on the people's priorities".

### Revised National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2018 and 2023

A revised version of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) released by Government in July 2018 broadened the definition of affordable housing to include a range of products aimed at providing affordable routes to home ownership including starter homes, discounted market sale and rent to buy. The Definition of affordable housing for rent was also expanded to include affordable private rent which is expected to be the normal form of affordable housing provision in a Build to Rent scheme.

In December 2023 following a consultation process a further revised NPPF was published. This removed the requirement for Planning Authorities to continually demonstrate a deliverable five-year housing land supply. The updated NPPF states that local planning authorities will not need to meet this requirement as long as their adopted plan is less than five years old and had identified "at least a five year supply of specific, deliverable sites at the time that its examination concluded".

### Homes England Affordable Homes Programme (AHP) 2021 -2026

Homes England announced that grant funding provided through the Government's Affordable Homes Programme 2021-26 can now be used to fund replacement homes, alongside new affordable homes, as part of wider estate regeneration plans and to help bolster the affordable housing sector and maintain housing supply. Previously, affordable housing funds were limited to new build projects. AHP can also be used on replacement homes as part of estate regeneration, as long as schemes are providing additional new affordable homes.

All schemes must start on site by 31 March 2025 and will need to complete within the AHP's current timeframes. The updated guidance reiterates Homes England's commitment to affordable homeownership as a priority.

## First Homes

The government First Homes scheme was launched in June 2021 and is a new policy that aims to provide discounted homes to first time buyers in England who otherwise wouldn't be able to afford to purchase a home. To be eligible for the scheme you must be a first-time buyer and purchase the home in your local area as your sole occupancy.

The First Homes policy requires that a minimum of 25% of all affordable housing units secured through developer contributions in S.106 agreements should be First Homes. However transitional arrangements allow for the delay of implementing First Homes until the implementation of a new Local Plan in certain circumstances.

## The Rough Sleeping Strategies 2018 and 2022

The Rough Sleeping Strategy 2018 set out the government's vision for halving rough sleeping by 2022 and ending it entirely by 2027. In September 2022 the government published a refreshed rough sleeping strategy "Ending rough sleeping for good".

The strategy has four key themes to end rough sleeping which are prevention, intervention, recovery and a transparent and joined up system. This was also accompanied with a further £2billion investment over a three-year period into policy and schemes to end rough sleeping such as Housing First and the Single Homelessness Accommodation Programme.

## Domestic Abuse Act 2021

Domestic Abuse Act 2021 introduced a statutory definition for domestic abuse for the first time and placed a duty on local authorities in England to provide safe accommodation-based support to victims of domestic abuse and their children. The Act amended homelessness legislation so that all eligible victims of domestic abuse that are homeless because of domestic abuse are regarded as being in priority need under the Housing Act 1996 and Homelessness Act 2002.

## Social Care White paper (2021)

In 2021, the government published their 10-year vision for adult social care in England. The Health and Social Care White Paper highlights the importance of an integrated approach to meeting people's day-to-day health and social care needs and the government's aims and proposals regarding, amongst other things, housing adaptations and the Disabled Facilities grant (DFG).

The principles of the paper of "Providing the Right Care, in the Right Place at the Right Time" provides for individuals to have choice over their housing arrangements which play a crucial role for achieving positive outcomes. This could be in the form of a new home or their existing home, purpose designed or not to meet their needs and have access to technologies and adaptations.

## The Social Housing Regulation Act 2023

The Social Housing Regulation Act received Royal Assent in July 2023 and is now officially law. The Act aims to improve the standard of social housing in the UK. It includes increased regulation for social landlords and new rules for the protection of tenants in their homes against serious health and safety hazards. It will require social landlords to investigate and fix hazards, such as damp and mould, in their homes within strict time limits for tenants

The intention of the Act is to enable proactive regulation to improve these standards and provide tenants a voice that ensures that social landlords are held accountable by the Regulator of Social Housing.



## The Supported Housing Regulatory Oversight Act 2023

Supported accommodation describes a range of housing types, such as group homes, hostels, refuges, supported living complexes and sheltered housing where residents receive support to help them live independently.

The Act is aimed at improving conditions in exempt supported housing and came into force on 29th August 2023. Its aim is to raise standards of providers of supported accommodation and allow action to be taken against below standards providers. The detail of the act will be developed through Regulations that will be subject to consultation. It is expected that the regulations will be implemented within 18 months of the date of enactment.

## Levelling Up and Regeneration Act 2023

The Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill (LURA) received Royal Assent on 26th October 2023 and is now law. The LURA intends to change the planning and regeneration system in many ways by putting local people at the heart of development. It will now be easier to put Local Plans in place and future Local Plans will be limited to 'locally specific' matters with general policies set out in a suite of National Development Management Policies which will have regard to climate change.

Local Planning Authorities are now required to develop design codes for their entire area that will set out where homes can be built and how they will look. It is important to note that the provisions it contains will require a raft of secondary legislation and further consultation before coming into effect.

The Act makes provision for a new Infrastructure Levy will replace the s106 and CIL regime, but it is anticipated that the new Infrastructure Levy will take several years to enact.

## Future Homes Standard

The Future Homes Standard is an energy efficiency standard that comes into force in 2025. The key purpose of the standard is to significantly reduce carbon emissions. Homes constructed under the future home's standard should produce 75-80% less carbon emissions and deliver homes that are zero carbon ready so that homes built under this standard will not need retrofitting to become net zero.

Ahead of the Standard coming into effect, a technical specification will be consulted on by the DLUHC, with the necessary legislation introduced in 2024, ahead of implementation in 2025.

## The Renters (Reform) Bill

The Renters Reform bill aims to change the law to provide a better deal for renters and landlords in the private rented sector. Following the publication of the government white paper "A fairer Private Rented Sector" in June 2022, the Renters (Reform) Bill was published on the 17th May 2023. In October 2023 the bill received its second reading and the House of Commons deliberations of the Bill completed on 28th November 2023.

The amended Bill will now proceed to the next stage, and it is likely that changes will continue to be made. No confirmed date has been provided for the implementation of the proposed bill however the government have stated it is the intention for it to be in place before the next general election.

## Local Context

The Housing Strategy links with several corporate strategies and plans and reflects the housing related priorities and actions identified within them. The starting point for the strategy is the Sustainable Future City Council Corporate Strategy and our City Priorities adopted in September 2022, which sets out at a high-level the aspirations and vision of the council.

These documents were developed in response to the council's financial pressures and the challenges we face as a city as we navigate the cost-of-living crisis, the legacy of the pandemic and the resulting impact on our communities and support services. The corporate strategy provides a shared long-term vision for Peterborough and looks to change our approach to public service with a greater emphasis on innovation and working in partnership so that we are better able to manage demand and help and support people before they reach crisis point.

**The four priorities of the corporate strategy are:**

- 1. Maximise Economic Growth and prosperity in an inclusive and environmentally sustainable way.**
- 2. Create healthy and safe environments where people want to live, invest, work, visit and play.**
- 3. Help and support our residents early on in their lives and prevent them from slipping into crisis.**
- 4. Adjust how we work, serve and enable. Supported by strong data and insight capability.**

## **Maximise economic growth and prosperity in an inclusive and environmentally sustainable way**

This priority of the corporate strategy identifies the themes of homes and workplaces, the environment and jobs and money, as its key areas of focus. The following housing related outcomes are identified as a measure of our progress against achieving sustainable growth

- The number of new homes and affordable homes built in each financial year
- Levels of homelessness, prevention, temporary accommodation
- Suitable accommodation for vulnerable residents
- Tracking progress against our Local Plan
- Quality of Private and Social rented sector accommodation
- Proportion of homes meeting energy efficiency rating D and above
- Energy efficiency schemes of new and existing housing

These outcomes have informed the priorities of the Housing Strategy and its Delivery Plan. They provide a benchmark for the actions and outcomes linked to each of the strategy's four priorities.

There are many other council strategies and plans which are linked to delivering Peterborough's housing agenda. The Housing Strategy brings together the housing related parts of other plans and strategies including the current Peterborough Local Plan adopted in 2019. The Housing Strategy is not a planning policy tool.

To ensure that the right kind of housing is built in the right place, the Local Plan contains the policies used to determine planning applications and sets out locations for future development. The development of this renewed Housing Strategy for Peterborough has taken place alongside the development of an emerging refreshed Local Plan. Both documents are major policy items for the council and play significant and complementary roles in achieving the inclusive and sustainable growth of our economy and the creation of healthy and safe places and communities that this council is working to deliver for Peterborough.

This Housing Strategy will form part of the evidence base to support the emerging Local Plan and therefore informs and plays a role in shaping the housing related policies in the emerging Plan so that the housing agenda of both documents is aligned.

The diagram below shows the strategies and plans that have informed and underpinned this Housing Strategy:



# 1 Priority One

Delivering sustainable growth and regeneration in Peterborough through high quality place making that enhances health and wellbeing and supports the council's ambitions for Peterborough to become a net zero carbon city.

## Key Peterborough Snapshot Facts:

- Census data shows that the population grew by 17.5% to 215,700 in 2021, an increase of 32,100 from Census 2011 (population 183,600) that 11.2% of Peterborough's Population live in rural wards
- that the total number of households increased by 14.2% to 84,500, an increase of 10,500 from census 2011 (74,000 households)
- 56.8% of households or around 48,059 owned their own home including those with a mortgage, owned outright including 1,167 households in shared ownership. 24.5% of households or around 20,714 were living in privately rented homes. An increase of 5.3% from 19.1% from Census 2011
- 18.7% of households or around 15,760 were renting social or affordable housing from a housing association
- There are over 89,500 dwellings in Peterborough
- The adopted Local Plan requires an average provision of 942 dwellings per year to 2021, and 982 per year thereafter
- 7,146 net new homes were built between April 2016 and March 2023 of which 1,220 (17.1%) were affordable housing dwellings

**Between 1st April 2022 and 31st March 2023 765 net new homes were completed in Peterborough, the lowest annual delivery rate since April 2016, the base date for the adopted Local Plan Peterborough is entering a new phase in its ambition for sustainable growth and regeneration. We are currently the second fastest growing city in the country by population and housing stock.**

Housing growth is an important part of Peterborough's strategy for economic growth and regeneration. A core element of Peterborough's economic development strategy includes encouraging higher value employment opportunities and businesses in the city and in particular attracting new and expanding companies in the environmental and knowledge-based sectors to the area. If this is to succeed, Peterborough needs to offer a diversity of housing and tenure mix to meet the needs and aspirations of all its residents including large, top-of-the-range dwellings that will enable business leaders to live locally.

Between April 2016 (the base date of the adopted Local Plan) and March 2023, 7,146 net new homes have been delivered in Peterborough. Of this total, 1,220 have been provided as affordable homes.

In common with the rest of the UK, Peterborough is experiencing a slowing down in the construction industry's housing delivery rate. This impact has resulted in a notable reduction of the net number of new homes delivered last financial year (2022/23). However, our higher rates of delivery in earlier years have meant that our overall delivery since 2016 has exceeded the average Local Plan requirement for dwelling completions in this seven-year period.

Peterborough has an increasingly internationally diverse population and a younger population than regional and national averages. Our local housing market continues to experience a high demand for all types and tenures of housing. Our house prices are lower than regional and national averages and we still have a relatively low-skill, low-wage economy although these indicators are improving.

## Delivering Sustainable Growth

### A City Of Growing Skills

The successful establishment of Peterborough's new university in partnership with Anglia Ruskin University and the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority (CPCA) in 2022 is set to play a crucial role in delivering higher value skills and educational attainment to enable productive growth of the economy, not just for Peterborough but for the surrounding sub regional area. It will bring additional opportunity and prosperity to Peterborough, boosting people's health, wealth and wellbeing and employment opportunities.

Providing a university in Peterborough has been achieved with the help of a devolution commitment within the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Devolution Deal agreed with government in 2017. This deal reflected the agreed priorities of Peterborough and all the Cambridgeshire authorities and has demonstrated that working in partnership on strategic growth issues can deliver more effective results. An initial allocation of £12.3m of devolution deal funding has enabled leverage of a £90m finance package to secure the funding of all 3 phases of the university's development and drive the ambition to grow the student cohort from the initial intake of 2,000 in 2022 to 12,500 students by 2030.

### Seizing Opportunities

Devolved decision-making powers and funding through the CPCA, has enabled the delivery of a range of growth initiatives in Peterborough including road and transport infrastructure as well as funding to deliver new affordable housing. The Affordable Housing Funding Programme ran in two phases. The first phase which required start on site by 31st March 2021 has enabled the delivery of 304 affordable homes in Peterborough and the second phase has funded a further 564 affordable dwellings, all of which have now started on-site. The long stop completion date for dwellings funding requires completion by the end of 2024.

The CPCA is now working to prepare a bid for a second round of Devolution funding and Peterborough is collaborating with its partner councils in Cambridgeshire to prepare a proposal to government that will continue to support and enable local priority growth and regeneration projects for all local authorities within the sub region.

### Preparing for the Future

We believe that growth must not come at the expense of the environment or our commitment to creating high-quality places that enhance the health and wellbeing of Peterborough's residents.

In 2019 Peterborough City Council declared a climate emergency, committing to becoming a net zero organisation by 2030 and to support Peterborough to progress towards becoming a net zero carbon city with the aim to be truly sustainable. In November 2022 we adopted a Local Area Energy Plan that provides a comprehensive insight into Peterborough's current and future energy demands and sets out the transformation approaches that we will need to adopt to become a net zero city. Achieving net zero in Peterborough's housing stock will require new homes to be designed and constructed to a standard that makes them net zero ready without requiring expensive retrofitting. For the existing housing stock, energy efficiency upgrades will need to be carried out on an estimated 66,000 dwellings to achieve net zero.

The drive to become a net zero carbon city also contributes to achieving homes and places that enhance health and wellbeing. It will deliver homes that are healthy, comfortable, and affordable places to live, and neighbourhoods that are resilient, greener, and healthier for everybody. Well insulated, warmer dwellings will reduce damp and mould and reduce asthma and other respiratory diseases. Reduced energy usage will assist those in fuel poverty and a transition away from fossil fuel burning will increase residents' health through improved air quality.

These outcomes support the housing related priority themes of the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough

Health and Wellbeing Integrated Care Strategy which include delivering new homes to meet health and wellbeing needs improving the quality of housing to enable health and wellbeing resilience.

The delivery of off-site construction plays a significant role in sustainable housing. The decision by house builder Taylor Wimpey to open a new timber frame manufacturing hub in Peterborough in 2023 is an encouraging indicator that confidence in off-site construction is getting back on track in the housing industry. The presence of this facility in Peterborough will contribute towards the drive to deliver low carbon, energy efficient homes and communities in the city.

- To show our commitment to the delivery of sustainable homes in Peterborough, the council has allocated £2 million capital to a project to build new eco homes in Peterborough.
- There are five objectives that we aim to deliver through this project:
- To provide a valuable evidence base for the emerging Local Plan regarding the viability implications of requiring higher than national minimum Building Regulations standards, when setting new policies.
- To determine the most appropriate delivery mechanism (e.g. Council delivery, partnership with a Registered Provider) to construct a range of property types from apartments to family homes that showcase the construction Eco Homes for a range of tenure types.
- To identify opportunities to develop and grow the local supply chain with the associated training, apprenticeship and employment opportunities.
- To demonstrate how sustainable construction can provide the right environment for improved health and wellbeing outcomes of residents.
- To demonstrate the viability of developing new homes that are comparatively cost effective to live in and maintain in comparison to a standard property compliant with Building Regulations standards.

Work is ongoing to identify appropriate sites for the scheme and to determine the precise specification of the eco homes, with the intention to exceed the required National Building Regulations standards.

## A New Local Plan

We are preparing a new Local Plan to identify new locations for growth in Peterborough, to meet both our longer-term housing and employment needs up to 2044.

The current Local Plan was adopted in July 2019. It sets out the overall approach to development within Peterborough for the period of 2016 to 2036 and makes provision for 19,440 new homes and 17,600 new jobs through the allocation of suitable sites for housing and employment uses. Every five years planning policy requires local plans to be updated, Peterborough began the review process of its Local Plan in March 2023.

The emerging Local Plan will set new targets for the number of new homes and jobs needed in Peterborough up to 2044 and will allocate sufficient suitable land to meet our housing demand and employment growth needs.

The first public consultation stage of preparing the new Local Plan commenced in July 2023. It asks residents for their views on a range of planning issues and proposed options for the future development of Peterborough and will inform the next stage of the Local Plan when draft policies and suggested sites will be published for a second round of consultation in autumn 2024. Preparing a Local Plan is a lengthy statutory process, and it is expected to complete in 2026.

## Local Housing Demand

The housing market in Peterborough needs to provide for the demands of all our residents in both our urban and rural communities. To achieve this, it must deliver a range of housing types and tenures.

### **These include:**

- high-value prestige homes that will attract business leaders to live locally
- mid-range and entry-level market housing for purchase to reflect the range of income levels of potential buyers
- rented tenure affordable housing that meets the need of the most vulnerable groups
- affordable home ownership tenures to help people who need assistance with taking the first step onto the property ladder
- high-quality private rented housing including student accommodation to cater for the growing demand for housing in this sector

To inform our understanding of our housing market and calculate the size, type, and tenure of both market and affordable housing required to meet Peterborough's growth needs, an evidence base in the form of a refreshed Local Housing Needs Assessment (LHNA) will be required. The LHNA has been jointly commissioned with an Economic Needs Assessment to deliver a comprehensive Housing and Economic Needs Assessment (HENA). The method for conducting this assessment is set out in planning policy and guidance. The LHNA will also assess the housing needed for different groups in the community.

We recognise that delivering new homes that are suitable and flexible to respond to the changing needs of individuals and families at different stages of life, is essential to supporting the health and wellbeing of the people that live in them. Well-designed accessible homes contribute to maintaining quality of life for longer and supports independent living, particularly for older people and people with reduced mobility or physical disabilities. To help achieve these outcomes, the adopted Local Plan sets additional higher access standards for all new homes and requires that 5% of homes are provided as wheelchair adaptable homes on developments of 50 or more dwellings.

The policies in the emerging Local Plan will be updated to reflect national policy developments and to align with our local corporate strategies and priorities to ensure that the Plan contributes to the development of sustainable communities.

## **Rural Housing Need**

The housing stock in Peterborough's rural wards has a greater proportion of larger properties compared with the urban wards and has less entry-level housing available for purchase. The prevalence of private rented housing and affordable housing is lower than in our urban communities making it more challenging for lower income households to access suitable housing in our rural communities.

The adopted Local Plan provides for 5% of Peterborough's housing growth (972 new dwellings) to be delivered on sites allocated in village locations. Between 1st April 2016 and 31st March 2023, 801 new homes have been delivered in Peterborough's villages. Of these dwellings, a total of 196 have been affordable homes with a tenure split of 98 homes for affordable rent, 81 homes for shared ownership, and 17 homes for rent to buy, helping to address the affordability issues faced by some households looking to find suitable housing in our rural communities.

Neighbourhood Planning provides the opportunity for Parishes and neighbourhoods to shape the development and growth of their local area. Neighbourhood plans must be in general conformity with strategic policies in the Local Plan and with national policy and once adopted they form part of the overall development plan that informs decisions on planning applications for that area.

A neighbourhood area must be formally 'designated' before they can undertake to prepare a neighbourhood plan. Currently, there are eleven designated neighbourhood areas and one designated neighbourhood forum in the Peterborough area. Six neighbourhood plans have been adopted by the council and one is currently in the preparations stage.

## Better By Design

The government's Levelling Up and Regeneration Act introduces a range of reforms to the plan making system including the introduction of mandatory Local Design Codes. Our emerging Local Plan will set out in detail how we require good design to ensure that all new development in Peterborough enhances the health and well-being of local communities and creates safe, accessible homes and environments.

The development of a Design Code for Peterborough will ensure a baseline standard of quality for new developments that not only informs the design of buildings, but also reflects the character of the local setting. It will inform the layout of new developments including infrastructure, public realm and green spaces to encourage active living, access to culture and foster a sense of community by creating a welcoming and inviting environment. Setting a design code for Peterborough will enable the council to shape the environmental performance of places and buildings to ensure that they contribute to our net zero target at the same time as delivering high quality place making that enhances health and wellbeing.

## Delivering Sustainable Regeneration

We are looking to build upon the success of the regeneration of Fletton Quays which so far has delivered 350 high quality riverside apartments, the council's offices, a government hub building, and a soon to be completed Hilton Hotel.

We are actively driving opportunities to regenerate key brownfield sites in the city to provide new homes, commercial development, and amenities that will revitalise our city, improve the lives of residents and the experience of visitors to Peterborough.

## Partnership Working

Joint working with our public sector partners in the DLUHC, CPCA and Homes England is providing Peterborough with access to vital enabling expertise and substantial financial support to facilitate the delivery of a wide-ranging regeneration programme in the city.

Our strong relationships forged with private sector partners are bringing private capital investment into the city which is also crucial to supporting our housing and economic growth.

## A City For Investment

The council's bid to the government's Towns Fund scheme in 2020 has resulted in an allocation of £22.9 million investment to support a range of projects including infrastructure delivery, visitor attractions, and skills and enterprise initiatives that will deliver long term economic growth and help revitalise the City Centre following the pandemic.

It has also funded the development of a masterplan for the embankment area of Peterborough to guide and inform development in this area strategically, allowing for a comprehensive look at aspirations and proposals for the area as the city expands. The masterplan addresses the planning and delivery of future phases of the university campus, as it continues to expand in response to the growing cohort of students and looks at other options as well as exploring other potential infrastructure projects for delivery in this area.

Towns Fund investment has enabled the council to commence work on producing a contamination and remediation strategy for Middleholme, a brownfield site jointly owned by the council and Milton Estates that is allocated for housing in the Local Plan. The land was formerly a landfill site and the development of this strategy will help with the process of de-risking the site and preparing it for marketing. A project to deliver improved accessibility and connectivity between Peterborough Train Station and the city centre secured a £1.5 million share of the Towns Funding investment. The aim of this project is to create a welcoming entrance to our city for visitors arriving by train, and a safer and more visible route between the station and city centre. It will deliver improved station accessibility for pedestrians, cyclists and those with restricted mobility. Construction of these improvements is due to start in 2024.



A further award of £48 million following a successful Levelling Up Fund (LUF) bid for the first phase of regeneration of the area around Peterborough Train Station – known as Station Quarter – was announced in January 2023. The project, led by Peterborough City Council in partnership with Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority, Network Rail and LNER, involves Station improvements and enhancements and will also result in the release of land for commercial and residential developments enabling future private investment in development as a follow-on phase of the Station Quarter programme. The current Local Plan has allocated land within the Station Quarter for residential and employment uses with an indicative figure of the provision of 600 homes as part of the development.

## Enabling Regeneration

We recognise that some regeneration projects are very complex and will take a long time to come to fruition.

North Westgate is a significant city centre site in council and multiple private ownerships. Various initiatives to kickstart its regeneration over the years have been conceived but due to a number of factors, have not been delivered. The council is seeking a regeneration partner who will work with them to deliver this strategic mixed use regeneration area and is willing to leverage its Compulsory Purchase Order (CPO) powers to enable this site to come forward.

The project to unlock Middleholme the 42-acre brownfield site jointly owned by Milton Estates and the council is a stated aim of Local Plan policy and a long-held ambition of both landowners. A jointly funded project led by the council is underway to enable the site to be sold on a competitive basis through a planning and de-risking process before it is presented to the market. Hive Land and Planning has been appointed to devise a delivery strategy that will achieve outline planning approval and marketing and disposal of the site.

A capacity funding bid to Homes England to contribute to the professional fee expenditure involved in bringing this site to the market may be necessary as the project progresses. If market failure or sufficient viability concerns are evidenced a separate infrastructure funding bid could also be made to seek a contribution towards infrastructure and/or abnormal costs at the site.

The overall aim of this project is to secure the delivery of a high-quality design led development that will offer a diverse local housing choice from executive housing to affordable homes.

Council owned brownfield sites including underutilised car parks have been earmarked for development as part of the council's focus on driving Peterborough's growth and regeneration. These sites will provide opportunities for some shorter-term regeneration projects, and we are working to secure private investment to ensure that they deliver a sustainable mix of residential and commercial uses that will enhance Peterborough's housing, retail, leisure, public realm and cultural offer.

A recent Localities Review of all council owned community assets including community buildings, leisure facilities and libraries has been undertaken to ensure the best use of council buildings and to identify opportunities to work with partners in terms of future use and service provision. The review process included an assessment of the management, compliance status, and condition of each building.

The outcome of the Localities Review aligns to the council's own 'Sustainable Future City Council Strategy' and will produce a repurposing plan for those assets considered surplus and to ensure that the retained assets are invested in and fit for purpose.

Subject to approval of the strategy, the rationalisation of council owned assets will enable the council to play an active role in the regeneration in those neighbourhoods where the buildings are located and support the delivery of residential and other uses for the community.

# CASE STUDIES

## Affordable Rural Housing Developments

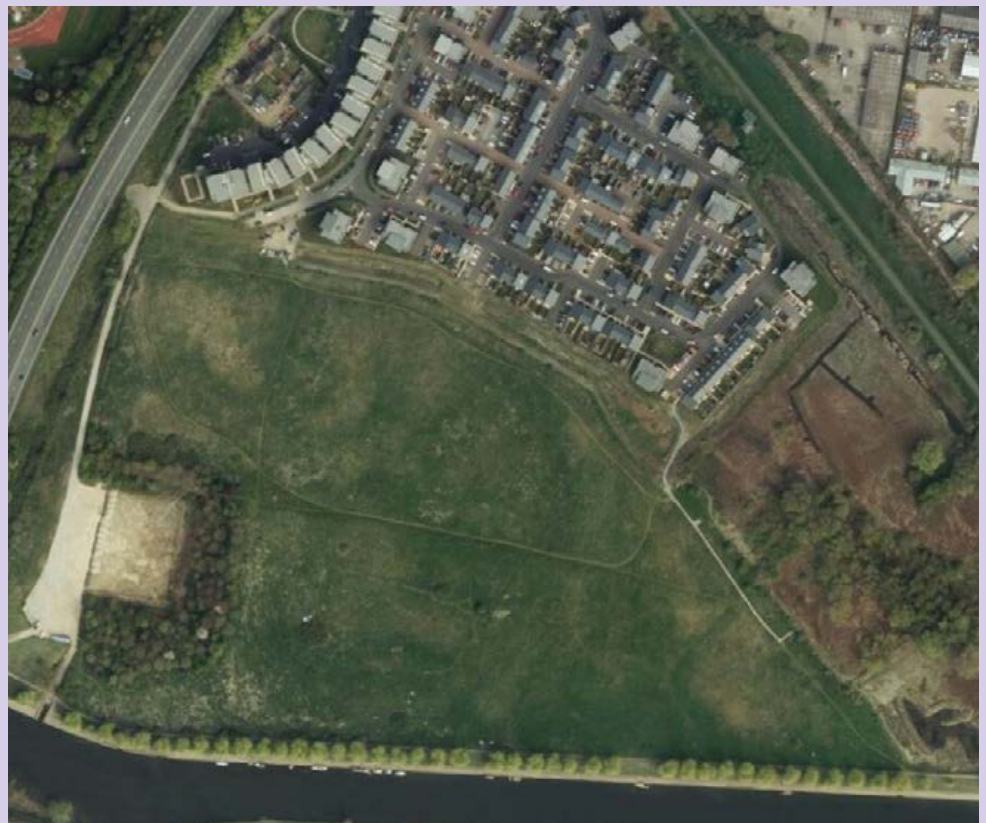
Longhurst Group has secured planning permission to deliver 30 new affordable homes in the village of Newborough. The development, off Thorney Road, will provide a mix of 1, 2 and 3 bedroom homes. The scheme will provide a mix of tenures comprising affordable rent, Rent to Buy and Shared Ownership. The plans also include green open space, as well as improved pedestrian routes back into the village. Longhurst Group is keen to support housing provision in rural areas as well as urban locations where there's a known need for affordable housing.



## Middleholme

The site, jointly owned by Peterborough City Council and Milton Estates, is ideally positioned to deliver a high-quality design-led residential development that will enhance its riverside setting.

Delivery challenges associated with the site due to its former use as a land fill site has initiated a jointly funded project to enable the site to be sold on a competitive basis through a planning and de-risking process before it is presented to the market.



The strategy of de-risking and securing outline planning will not only ensure the council maximises the capital receipt but also that it will be able to control the nature of development that comes forward.

## Housing Strategy Delivery Plan Priority 1 • Delivering sustainable growth and regeneration

Action	Outcome	Responsible Team	Achieving the Delivery of the Corporate Strategy Outcomes
<b>Refresh The Peterborough Local Plan</b>	Identify new locations for growth in Peterborough to meet both our longer-term housing and employment needs up to 2044	<b>Planning Policy Team</b>	<p>Enabling more new and more affordable homes for purchase or rent, and the improvement of existing properties</p> <p>Make suitable housing available to everyone, including quality standards in the private rented housing sector.</p>
<b>Commission a Housing and Economic Needs Assessment (HENA)</b>	Update our understanding of Peterborough local economy and housing market	<b>Planning Policy Team</b>	<p>Enable safer and more independent living for our most vulnerable residents and those who require additional support. This includes finding permanent, safe and stable homes for our children and young people in care</p>
<b>Produce a city-wide Design Code for Peterborough as required by the Levelling up and Regeneration Act</b>	A city-wide Design Code for Peterborough that will deliver high quality place making and enhance health and wellbeing	<b>Planning Policy Team</b>	<p>Enable more facilities and flexible office and co-working spaces to meet the needs of new and expanding businesses</p> <p>Reduce poverty and inequality by attracting good paying jobs whilst working together with our City Partners to increase employability for those who need it most.</p>
<b>Produce a development prospectus to showcase investment opportunities for key brownfield sites in Peterborough</b>	Market Peterborough potential and key growth sites to potential investors	<b>Growth and Regeneration</b>	<p>Support existing and new businesses to make it easy to invest and grow in our city in a way which ensures that everyone benefits.</p> <p>Enabling our most vulnerable residents to live healthy and independent lives whilst upskilling and attracting more workers into the local care sector</p>
<b>Undertake Localities Review of circa 80 properties to inform a strategy to ensure the council is making best use of its community assets</b>	Ensure best use of council buildings and produce a disposal and repurposing plan for assets considered to be surplus	<b>Commercial, Property and Asset Management</b>	<p>Deliver on our aspirations to become a net-zero Council and City</p> <p>Provide safe and green spaces for residents to both socialise and exercise offering both health and social benefits</p> <p>Cut congestion and promote walking, cycling and the use of public transport and reduce the need to travel by car.</p>
<b>Develop a De-risking and Delivery Strategy for Middleholme site</b>	Enable the site to be unlocked and brought forward for residential development	<b>Growth and Regeneration</b>	<p>A Culture, Heritage and Leisure offering that meets the expectations of our residents, visitors and business and with a vigorous mission to promote our City's past and its' connection to the present and future</p>

### Associated Strategies and Policies

**Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Health and Well Being Integrated Care Strategy (2022-2030)**  
**PCC Carbon Management Action Plan 2022**  
**Peterborough Local Area Energy Plan 2022**  
**Peterborough Local Plan 2016-2036**  
**Sustainable Future City Council Strategy 2022-2025**  
**The Medium Term Financial Strategy 2023-26**

## 2 Priority Two

Increasing the supply of homes that people can afford and tackling homelessness through prevention with a greater emphasis on early help.

### Key Peterborough Snapshot Facts:

- In 2022/23 there were 153 new affordable homes delivered with a tenure split of 56% affordable rented and 44% was shared ownership
- In Peterborough the turnover of social housing stock at 3% is lower than the regional rate of 7%
- 36.1% of households in Peterborough are not economically active
- 2500 households currently have a live application for housing on the Peterborough Housing register
- Total Number of 3,569 Homeless Applications were received by the council in 2022/2023
- Total Number of 407 Homeless Preventions were recorded by the council in 2022/2023
- Average house prices based on sales and valuation for Peterborough in March 2023 was £270,047 compared with £422,353 for East of England and £373,827 nationally
- Average house prices in Peterborough based on Land Registry actual Sales in March 2023 was £274,959 compared with £410,715 for East of England and £372,539 nationally
- Lower quartile house price based on sales and valuation for Peterborough in March 2023 was £185,000 compared with £252,00 for East of England and £190,000 nationally

#### Median weekly rents between March 2021 and March 2023 increased as follows:

1 bed - £126 to £150 16% (LHA rate £110)

2 bed - £162 to £189 14% (LHA rate £137)

3 bed - £190 to £219 14% (LHA rate £160)

4 bed - £264 to £311 15% (LHA rate £207)

LHA room rate £65.59

LHA rates have remained static since April 2020

Everyone needs a safe and secure home that they can afford and as Peterborough continues to grow, our challenge is to shape the housing market so that it provides a diverse range of housing options that can meet the needs, demands and aspirations of the residents of Peterborough at a price that they can afford. Access to good quality, well-maintained housing that is truly affordable is key to addressing housing needs and preventing homelessness.

## Peterborough Housing Market

### Owner Occupation

Owner occupation rates in Peterborough are lower than the national average (56.8% of households compared with 62% nationally) and despite both average house prices and lower quartile house prices in Peterborough remaining consistently lower than the regional and national averages, affordability continues to be a challenge for many households.

Our workplace earnings are below the national average and rates of in-work poverty are high. Higher mortgage interest rates have significantly increased the cost of borrowing for potential buyers and have put further pressure on the household incomes of existing homeowners.

Affordable Home Ownership provides a route into home ownership for households that cannot afford to access the market without a level of subsidy or support. Currently 1.3% of households in Peterborough own their homes through a shared ownership arrangement with an affordable housing provider. The provision of shared ownership housing remains the council's priority for meeting the need for help with accessing home ownership in Peterborough. This is because of its capacity to cater for a wider range of household incomes by varying the initial share required to enable access to home ownership making it more flexible and affordable to more households.

## Social Rented Housing

Becoming a homeowner is the ambition of many, but it is not an option or the best choice for everyone.

While the proportion of rented tenure affordable housing stock in Peterborough is marginally above the national average (18.7% compared with 17% nationally), the supply of new affordable homes and the turnover of vacancies in the existing social housing stock is unable to keep pace with the demand from households seeking assistance from the council as homeless and applicants on the housing register.

## Private Rented Housing

The private rented sector in Peterborough houses nearly one quarter of all households (24.5% compared with 18.2% nationally) and plays a vital role within our housing market but also poses affordability and accessibility challenges for many residents.

Private sector average rent levels for homes of all sizes have increased by 15% between March 2021 and March 2023. Local Housing Allowance (LHA) rates have not kept pace with rent levels and have remained static since April 2020. As part of the Autumn Statement November 2023 the government has announced that LHA rates will be raised to the 30th percentile of local market rents from April 2024. This will go some way towards alleviating the affordability pressures for low-income households living in the private rented sector, but the increase is not expected to fully reflect local market rents.

The cost-of-living crisis is contributing further to affordability pressures and these factors combine to make it increasingly difficult for tenants to afford market rent levels and sustain tenancies. It has increased the demand for cheaper, more secure social housing and has contributed to the rise in the number of households seeking assistance from the council as homeless or threatened with homelessness.

## Homelessness Pressure

In common with most local authorities in England, Peterborough is seeing a year-on-year increase in the number of households approaching the council for help with preventing or relieving their homelessness situation.

A key factor influencing this trend was a fundamental change to homelessness legislation through the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 which came into effect in April 2018. It requires local authorities to work with people to prevent homelessness at an earlier stage, extending the period in which a person can be considered at risk of homelessness from 28 days to 56 days. The act also requires local authorities to provide homelessness advice and support to all applications for housing assistance and make inquiries to see if they have a duty to help. If an eligible applicant becomes homeless, local authorities now have a duty to provide suitable accommodation and support for a period of 56 days, regardless of priority need or intentionality. This is a change from the previous duty where local authorities only had to help those at risk of homelessness if they considered them to be in priority need.

## Temporary Accommodation Usage

On the 31st March 2023, over 104,000 households were in temporary accommodation across England, an increase of 10% from the previous year. Peterborough experienced a 9% increase for the same 12-month period resulting in a total of 331 households living in temporary accommodation at the end of March 2023.

Research has clearly shown that living in temporary accommodation can be detrimental to health and wellbeing, impacting physical and mental health, child development and educational attainment.

The average time spent in temporary accommodation in Peterborough is 156 days which is much longer than the intended use as a short-term measure before more appropriate accommodation is secured. Our challenge is to not only to reduce the time that homeless households spend in temporary accommodation, but also to reduce the number of households reaching the crisis stage where temporary accommodation is the only solution to their housing situation.

## Meeting Housing Need And Tackling Homelessness

The high demand for assistance to prevent and alleviate homelessness in Peterborough is expected to continue to grow. Forecasts indicate that nationally, the demand for assistance from households who may be at risk of homelessness could increase by up to 25% over the coming years.

To achieve the best outcomes for households in housing crisis and reduce the pressure on temporary accommodation, the council is adopting a new approach when responding to those in housing need with an even greater focus on early help and prevention.

Three key areas for action have been identified as part of ensuring the success of this new approach:

- Reducing the flow of households into temporary accommodation through early intervention and prevention
- Making best use of our temporary accommodation stock for those households whose homelessness cannot be prevented
- Maximising the supply of suitable permanent housing options available to accelerate move on into settled housing for those in temporary accommodation and to provide solutions for households seeking our assistance prior to becoming homeless.

## Early Help and Prevention Approach

We believe that the chances of homelessness prevention are much greater if we can intervene earlier. Through a council-wide approach to joint working with partner agencies to identify and support households who may be on the cusp of crisis, we can increase the chances of those families being able to remain in their homes.

While the Homeless Reduction Act introduced earlier intervention responsibilities for local authorities when responding to households at risk of homelessness, our new operating model enables working with households at an even earlier stage.

Successful early help and prevention provides significantly better outcomes for households and avoids the long-lasting impact on families and children that homelessness and temporary accommodation is proven to have. It will also reduce the reliance on temporary accommodation and reduce the operational costs for the council and impacts for households to their health and wellbeing.

## Optimising the use and suitability of temporary accommodation provision

The council's current temporary accommodation provision consists of hostels and a small stock of flats and houses offering self-contained temporary accommodation. Bed and Breakfast (B&B) accommodation is only used once all other options have been explored but our reliance on this unsuitable and costly emergency is far greater than acceptable.

To mitigate the overuse of B&B accommodation in an environment of increasing demand, the council is working to increase access to, and the availability of, suitable quality temporary accommodation. We are exploring a number of measures including, minimising void times in our existing supply to increase the

overall occupation rates, increasing our offer to landlords to encourage participation in our landlord leasing scheme, and increasing the supply of quality self-contained temporary accommodation for homeless households. We are considering options for repurposing assets currently owned by the council for temporary accommodation use including providing accommodation suitable for those requiring wheelchair access to further increase and enhance the offer available. We are also developing plans to acquire additional units of temporary accommodation. We also know that a key cause of overuse of temporary accommodation and B&B accommodation is the lack of affordable rented accommodation, so we are also building our tool kit of incentives for landlords in the private rental sector to support move on from temporary accommodation.

## Maximising the supply of suitable permanent housing options

We recognise that not all homelessness can be prevented. Therefore, to reduce the time spent in temporary accommodation, we need to maximise the supply of suitable housing options available to the council to fulfil its duty to secure permanent housing solutions for homeless households.

To address the gap between the supply and demand for suitable, secure housing options, we need to achieve the following objectives:

- Increase the supply of new affordable housing delivered and build even stronger relationships with partners in the social housing sector to ensure the most appropriate mix of new build affordable homes are delivered and the best use is made of existing stock.
- Cultivate and strengthen relationships with private sector landlords to increase access to private rented housing as a viable alternative option to social housing.
- Bring more long-term empty homes back into use and where viable and appropriate, work with owners to secure suitable dwellings as a means of increasing the supply of rented homes available.

## Maximising the supply of affordable housing

We recognise that social housing cannot provide all the answers, but maximising the supply of new affordable homes, particularly rented tenure homes, is vital to increasing the supply of permanent suitable housing solutions that we can access for households in housing need.

Peterborough voluntarily transferred its housing stock to Cross Keys Homes in 2004, therefore we rely on our registered provider partners for the ongoing delivery of new affordable homes. Medesham Homes, a joint venture between the council and Cross Keys Homes has facilitated the delivery of 94 rented tenure affordable homes in recent years and will continue to work towards increasing the supply of affordable homes in Peterborough. Through continued collaboration with all our registered provider partners, we aim to ensure the delivery of a range of size and type of dwellings that can meet the most pressing housing needs.

To support improved partnership working, the council has recently reviewed its housing governance structures to strengthen links at a strategic, delivery and operational level. The new structure was developed in conjunction with partners to enable better housing outcomes and service delivery in the city, by tackling pressures with a collaborative approach.

An outcome of the new structure was the relaunch of the registered housing providers forum under the new name of Peterborough Strategic Housing Partnership. One of the agreed objectives of the partnership is to work collaboratively to develop homes that meet identified needs and requirements, including specialised forms of accommodation which will enable better health, well-being and allow residents to live independently and sustainably.

In collaboration with the Partnership, the council has pledged to secure the delivery of 1,250 affordable homes in Peterborough, between 2023-28, achieving a tenure split of 70% rented tenure homes and 30% affordable home ownership tenure homes.

This is an ambitious target when compared against delivery in the preceding five-year period when 971 affordable homes were delivered and achieved a tenure split of 59% rented and 41% shared ownership tenure homes.

## **The council has an important role in supporting and facilitating delivery of this target by:**

- Implementing our Local Plan policy to secure 30% affordable housing on schemes of 15 dwellings or more
- Supporting affordable housing provider partners' funding bids to enable the delivery of land-led affordable housing schemes that deliver a mix of tenures and property types that meet the needs of Peterborough residents
- Working with developers and affordable housing providers to secure opportunities to deliver additional affordable homes on larger market led schemes to boost the overall percentage of affordable homes provided, particularly where due to viability issues, our policy of 30% affordable housing has not been achieved
- Prioritising disposal of council owned sites suitable for affordable housing delivery to our affordable housing provider partners
- Working in partnership Homes England and DLUHC to benefit from funding streams that target increasing the supply of specialist accommodation for specific groups

## **Increasing access to the private rented sector and reducing empty homes**

As part of implementing an early help and prevention model for the council's housing needs service, a dedicated team is being created to work with private sector landlords. By developing a culture of partnership working and trust we aim to increase the supply of landlords willing to work with us and reduce repeat homelessness by ensuring private sector tenancies are suitable, affordable, and sustainable.

We are committed to bringing empty homes back into use and dealing with the issues associated with long term empty properties such as antisocial behaviour and crime.

The council is currently exploring an initiative to work with the owners of empty properties that will bring properties back into use and help to address the shortfall of suitable housing options at the council's disposal for discharging housing duties to homeless households.

The initiative would bring dwellings with minor levels of disrepair back into use by providing an interest-free loan to the owner to facilitate the necessary works. In exchange, a tenancy would be offered to a household currently in temporary accommodation, once the dwelling was ready for occupation.



## CASE STUDIES

### Providing Affordable Housing

TreLOWen Way is an Accent Housing new affordable housing development located in Peterborough. The scheme consists of 75 new affordable rent homes ranging from maisonettes to four-bedroom houses. It also includes two x 2-bedroom wheelchair adapted bungalows and two x 2-bedroom accessible bungalows for rent to address housing need.

The building process was centred on the reduction of carbon emissions. This was achieved through the utilisation of off-site construction methods to create energy efficient homes that have achieved an EPC A rating, thereby reducing running costs for residents and helping to tackle fuel poverty. Each home has photo voltaic (PV) panels installed and infrastructure in place to easily connect an electric vehicle charging point.



### New Affordable Homes for Residents

Cross Keys Homes with the help of funding from the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority have developed the second phase of the Newark Road brownfield development, known as Vixen Close, in Peterborough.

The development is a 100% affordable housing scheme and provides 96 homes offering a tenure mix of affordable rented tenure and shared ownership tenure. The scheme consists of a range of 1, 2, 3 and 4 dwellings and includes the provision of two x 3-bedroom houses and two x 3-bedroom bungalows for rent that are wheelchair adapted to address housing need.



## Housing Strategy Delivery Plan Priority 2 • Increasing the supply of homes that people can afford and tackling homelessness

Action	Outcome	Responsible Team	Achieving the Delivery of the Corporate Strategy Outcomes
Deliver on our pledge to secure 1,250 new affordable homes in Peterborough between 2023/24-2028/29, achieving an overall tenure split of 70% rented tenure homes and 30% affordable home ownership.	Increase the supply of affordable homes to maximise the supply of permanent suitable housing for households in housing need.	Housing Strategy and Implementation	Enabling more new and more affordable homes for purchase or rent, and the improvement of existing properties Make suitable housing available to everyone, including quality standards in the private rented housing sector. Enable safer and more independent living for our most vulnerable residents and those who require additional support. This includes finding permanent, safe and stable homes for our children and young people in care
Increase the number of homeless preventions recorded	Reduce the number of households requiring temporary accommodation	Housing Needs	Prevent homelessness across the city whilst reducing the requirement for the use of temporary accommodation
Reduce households in B&B to be monitored by B&B reduction task force	Have less than five households in B&B at any one time	Housing Needs	Reduce poverty and inequality by attracting good paying jobs whilst working together with our City Partners to increase employability for those who need it most.
Increased supply of self-contained temporary accommodation available	Secure 40 properties through a mix of acquisitions and Private Sector Leasing (PSL) for temporary accommodation including 10 empty homes added to the PSL scheme.	Housing Needs	Enabling our most vulnerable residents to live healthy and independent lives whilst upskilling and attracting more workers into the local care sector
Establish a Peterborough Private Landlords network for landlords and the city council.	Increase access to private rented housing as a viable alternative option to social housing.	Housing Needs	Deliver on our aspirations to become a net-zero Council and City Provide safe and green spaces for residents to both socialise and exercise offering both health and social benefits
Increase the supply of suitable housing options to accelerate the move on into settled housing for those in temporary accommodation	Bring 10 empty homes back into use through the PSL Scheme to provide tenancies for households in Housing Need	Housing Need / Housing Compliance	Achieve better outcomes for our Children Reduce inequalities in preventable deaths before the age of 75

### Associated Strategies and Policies

**Allocations Policy 2022**  
**Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Adult Social Care Market Position Statement**  
**Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2021-26**  
**Housing and Health Action Plan 2023/2024**  
**Joint Protocol for Young People Leaving Care**

**PCC Carbon Management Action Plan 2022**  
**Peterborough City Council Sufficiency Strategy Children and Young People with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities 2021 - 2024**  
**Peterborough Local Plan 2016-2036**

## 3 Priority Three

Raising housing quality and standards in existing homes across all tenures to achieve improved health and wellbeing for residents.

### Key Peterborough Snapshot Facts:

- There are 453 licenced Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs) in Peterborough
- There are 567 empty homes in Peterborough of which 232 have been empty for 12 to 24 months and 152 homes have been empty for more than 24 months
- 41 notices to tackle hazards in private rented housing were served by the Housing Standards team in 2022/23
- 77.9% of Households in Peterborough use gas as the main heating source
- 0.3% of Households solely use renewable energy to heat their homes 85% of affordable housing within the city has an energy efficiency rating of EPC C or above
- 12.8% of households in Peterborough are in fuel poverty
- 22.5% of Peterborough's Carbon Footprint is generated by the build process and domestic use of its housing stock
- LHA rates have remained static since April 2020

**While growth is a key component of our housing agenda, we do not underestimate the importance of raising quality and improving standards in Peterborough's existing housing stock. We know that living in poor or unsuitable housing conditions has a detrimental influence on physical and mental health outcomes. It undermines the ability of older people and vulnerable people to live safely and independently, and impacts childhood development and educational attainment.**

### A Joined-Up Approach

The Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Health and Wellbeing and Integrated Care Strategy 2022-30 recognises the vital role that housing plays in improving the health and wellbeing outcomes of the residents of Peterborough and Cambridgeshire. A dedicated Housing and Health Action Plan for 2023/24 linked to the strategy focuses on actions to achieve the following key deliverables:

- Deliver new homes to meet health and wellbeing need.
- Improve quality of housing to enable health and wellbeing resilience.
- Increase the proportion of residents in safe and secure housing.
- Support mental health at home (for new and existing homes).

This Housing Strategy is working to deliver these same outcomes. We want everyone in Peterborough across all tenures to have a safe warm home that is free from hazards such as damp and disrepair that enables them to live safely and independently within their local community.

Through joined up working between council services and collaboration with external agencies and partners, we are working to deliver a range of services, initiatives and programmes that will improve living conditions in Peterborough's existing homes across all tenures. These measures aim to enhance the health and wellbeing of households and increase the sustainability of the housing stock.

## Knowing Our City's Homes

We recognise the value of having an up to date understanding of the condition of the private sector housing stock in Peterborough. The council is currently investigating commissioning a new stock condition survey to provide data regarding the current condition of the stock in terms of the presence of health hazards in dwellings, disrepair, energy efficiency and the vulnerability of occupants due to low income and fuel poverty. This refreshed data will enable a more targeted intervention approach to improving housing conditions.

## Managing standards in the private rented sector

The increasingly important role that the private rented sector in Peterborough plays in meeting the housing needs of households unable to access home ownership or social housing, means that it is vital that the housing market provides a housing offer that is sustainable and meets a decent standard. A decent home is one that meets the current minimum standard for housing, is in a reasonable state of repair, has reasonably modern facilities and services, and is reasonably well insulated and can be effectively heated. Housing in the private rented sector can take the form of either self-contained housing or shared accommodation where tenants share at least one amenity. Shared accommodation is classed as a HMO if the dwelling is let to 3 or more people from 2 or more households.

## Managing the growth of HMO accommodation in the private rented sector

Peterborough has a large HMO market, and a range of factors contribute to the local demand for this type of housing. Peterborough's growth agenda, our younger than average demographic profile, restrictions to shared accommodation LHA rates for tenants up to the age of 35, and more recently the growing demand for student accommodation has meant that demand for this type of housing has continued to increase.

National Planning Policy allows for the conversion of a property to a small-scale HMO (dwellings occupied by up to 6 persons forming 2 or more households) without planning permission. These HMOs benefit from 'permitted development rights', which means that no planning consent is required to change the use of a property from a single household occupancy to shared use.

Large scale HMO dwellings (dwellings occupied by 7 or more persons forming 2 or more households) are required to seek planning permission and therefore are subject to control in terms of their growth within a local authority area. The notable growth of HMO accommodation in particular neighbourhoods in Peterborough has largely gone unchecked because most HMO dwellings locally fall into the category of small-scale HMO and therefore not subject to planning controls.

We acknowledge that well managed, quality HMO accommodation is a vital part of our private rented sector market. However, we recognise that badly managed, poor quality HMO accommodation not only impacts on the health and wellbeing of the tenants living in them but can also impact on the wider neighbourhood resulting in a lack of community cohesion and anti-social behaviour.

To enable the council to better monitor and manage the growth of new HMOs within these areas via the planning process, we have written to the Secretary of State to notify of our intention to introduce an article 4 Direction in three pilot areas comprising Hampton, Fletton and Woodston and Park wards for a two year trial period. An article four Direction withdraws permitted development rights and requires small scale HMOs to apply for planning consent from the city council. The scheme will come into force on 1st January 2024.

## Housing Compliance

Our Housing Standards team is responsible for enforcing, undertaking, and administering a range of functions to maintain and improve housing conditions in the private rented sector. There are various tools available to the council to enable it to fulfil its housing duties including licencing schemes, enforcement powers and penalties, and the housing health and safety rating system (HHSRS). To maximise the effective

delivery of our housing standards functions and improve conditions across the rented sector, we are working to deliver a more integrated service delivery approach that enables better regulation of the sector and better use of enforcement measures when needed to ensure housing conditions requirements are met.

As a local authority we have a statutory duty to address conditions in homes that are assessed to be unsafe or in a particularly poor state of disrepair. The Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS) introduced by the Housing Act 2004, provides local authorities with an assessment tool to identify and protect against potential risks and hazards to health and safety arising from any deficiencies identified in dwellings. It assesses 29 categories of housing hazard which are classified as either Category 1 (serious) or Category 2 (other). The Act imposes a duty on Local Authorities to deal with identified Category 1 hazards and a power to deal with Category 2 hazards. The most prevalent category one hazards found in homes are damp and excess cold, fixtures that pose a risk of and trips and falls and risk of entry by intruders.

## Proactive Engagement

We want to take a proactive and preventative approach to raising housing standards and only take enforcement action as a final resort. We recognise that many responsible landlords when provided with advice and guidance, will take the appropriate steps to meet housing condition requirements. We aim to engage with landlords first but are committed to the effective use of enforcement sanctions where there is a failure to comply. Providing financial assistance to lower income and vulnerable owner occupiers as well as taking appropriate and proportionate enforcement action on landlords of privately rented properties are two ways Local Authorities may exercise that duty and power.

## Using Our Tools

The Housing Act 2004 introduced three different types of licencing, two of which relate to HMO accommodation:

- Mandatory HMO licencing
- Additional HMO licencing
- Selective licencing of all privately rented housing in specific areas

As a council we have a duty to administer a Mandatory HMO Licencing scheme and discretion to introduce additional licencing to regulate HMOs which are not subject to mandatory licencing. We can also introduce Selective licencing which enables us to regulate all privately rented housing (including self-contained dwellings) in specified areas, subject to the approval of the scheme by the Secretary of State. To improve housing standards across the rented sector in the city, the implementation of a combination of the above licencing schemes is currently being progressed.

## Mandatory HMO Licencing

The Housing Act 2004 requires all HMO accommodation occupied by 5 or more people, forming two or more separate households to be licenced by the local authority. This Mandatory Licencing Scheme regulates housing standards requirements in relation to safety and management of Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs) that meet this criterion. There are currently 453 dwellings licenced in Peterborough through this mandatory scheme.

## Additional HMO Licencing

Additional Licencing Schemes can be implemented at the discretion of the local authority. It applies to smaller HMO accommodation not covered by the mandatory HMO licencing scheme and enables the regulation of dwellings where 3 or 4 people in 2 or more households share amenities. There are estimated to be between 1,500-2,000 properties in Peterborough that fall into this HMO category.

Work is underway to identify those areas of the city where implementing an Additional Licencing scheme would assist with raising housing standards.

## Selective Licencing

Selective Licencing schemes enables local authorities to regulate all privately rented housing (including self-contained dwellings) in specified areas, subject to the approval of the scheme by the Secretary of State. An approved Selective Licencing Scheme was introduced in a designated area of Peterborough in 2016 but expired in 2021 at the end of the five-year licence period. Following public consultation, a new scheme based on a revised and extended area took place in 2022 and has been submitted to the Secretary of State for approval. The proposed new scheme, which received approval on 4th December 2023 will cover 39.75% of the city's private rented stock and reinstate added controls to help raise housing standards. The scheme will be implemented in March 2024.

The council will enter into an agreement with a third-party organisation to undertake the administration and compliance of the new scheme. The third party will be funded from the licencing fee, with the council retaining some funding to issue the licence once the application process and all compliance checks are complete. The council will pick up referrals from the third-party provider in the instances where enforcement sanction needed to be exercised, such as landlords refusing to licence properties, or raise standards to meet scheme conditions. This approach to implementing the scheme will demand less of the council's resources and leave us with more capacity to carry out housing compliance activities across the breath of the council's statutory housing compliance responsibilities and support private landlords and tenants to ensure renting remains a sustainable housing option that meets all required standards.

## Tackling Empty Homes

Empty homes are a waste of precious housing stock. In November 2023 there were 567 dwellings in Peterborough that have been vacant for six months or longer and around a quarter of this total have been empty for two years or more. By bringing empty homes back into use we aim to make best use of the existing housing stock, and in the process improve housing conditions. Empty homes and particularly those vacant long term can blight neighbourhoods. Through engagement and targeted support for owners, backed up by enforcement action, when necessary, we are working to reduce the number of empty homes and contribute to the enhancement of health and wellbeing in the local environment. Our empty homes strategy is due to be refreshed providing the opportunity to update our approach to tackling empty homes and encouraging owners to bring them back into use.

## Improving Energy Efficiency and Contributing to Net Zero

Raising standards, and particularly the energy efficiency of the existing housing stock is an essential element of delivering the council's ambitions for a truly sustainable Peterborough and the government's net zero commitment to reducing the UK's greenhouse gas emissions by 100% from 1990 levels by 2050.

The UK Housing stock is responsible for 24.3% per cent of the country's overall greenhouse gas emissions. Housing accounts for 24.9% of carbon emissions in Peterborough.

Reducing carbon emissions and improving the health of residents are both linked to the ability of households to adequately and efficiently heat and power their homes in an affordable and sustainable way. Our ambition set out in the Affordable Warmth Strategy 2021-25 is to work with partners to raise living standards for households living in all tenures in Peterborough by improving the energy efficiency of homes and reducing fuel poverty. Our aim is to improve household heating without increasing carbon emissions where possible.

## Addressing Fuel Poverty

We are part of the Warmer Homes programme, which is a consortium of 23 local authorities working in

partnership with Agility Eco that has secured government funding to provide a range of funded energy efficiency improvements to eligible owner occupiers and tenants living in private rented homes. These improvements are funded by the Home Upgrade Grant (HUG), which is administered by the government's Department for Energy Security & Net Zero (DESNZ).

Larger scale energy efficiency measures such as boiler repair, boiler replacement, loft, cavity, external and internal wall and underfloor insulation, solar panels and low carbon technologies are available under the programme. Funding totalling £160,502 was granted for energy measure in 14 Peterborough homes as part of the first round of the HUG programme. The second round runs until March 2025.

We also operate a Winter Warmth programme funded by Public Health which provides assistance to vulnerable owner occupiers living in cold homes. The service is delivered by the council's Care and Repair service and provides boiler servicing, repairs and replacements, damp and mould advice and mitigation measures, and upgrading single glazed windows to double glazing.

## Local Energy Advice Partnership

Since January 2017, our partnership working with Agility Eco has enabled the delivery of a fuel poverty outreach service which provides residents with help and access to a range of initiatives designed to cut their energy bills and reduce carbon emissions. The service is funded by the Warm Homes programme and provides:

- Installation of free and simple energy saving measures - such as LED lightbulbs, draught proofing, letter box brushes, reflective radiator panels, hot water cylinder insulation etc
- Referrals for income/benefit maximisation checks, bill management advice and debt advice
- Routes into utility companies' customer support services and charities for residents who are struggling with their bills
- Referrals for eligible households to access the HUG funding government funding secured by the Warmer Homes Programme for larger scale energy efficiency measures.

Since 2017, 3,400 advice visits have been completed through this service, identifying £4,187,232 in bills savings and extra income identified for Peterborough residents.

## Decarbonisation and Energy Efficiency in Social Housing Stock

As part of the government's wider ambition to meet the 'net-zero-carbon' challenge by 2050, social housing providers were set a target to attain a C rating on Energy Performance Certificates (EPC) for all their housing stock by 2030. However, on 20th September 2023 the Government announced delays to the 2030 target and amendments to the timetable for the adoption of green technologies in the UK.

Despite this change, the national response from many social housing providers has been to commit to continue with their programmes of investment to reduce carbon outputs and make their stock more energy efficient. Currently 85% of the social housing stock in Peterborough has an energy efficiency rating of EPC C or above. However, there are older homes within the housing stock which are harder to retrofit that will require further investment. New build homes within the city have an average energy efficiency rating of an EPC B.

Social housing landlords with stock in Peterborough have been securing grant funding from the Government's Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund. This fund was set up to enhance the energy efficiency of socially rented homes. It covers several upgrades to heating, including new heating systems, energy efficient doors and windows and upgraded insulation. We are engaging with partners to build a picture of their programmes for enhancing their housing stock in Peterborough through this funding source and other capital investment programme works.

## Housing Standards in Peterborough's Social Housing Stock

Tenants living in social housing expect to live in homes that are safe, of a decent standard, and free from serious hazards including damp and mould. Maintaining homes that are safe and in good condition is a core function of all social landlords. The condition of their homes and quality of repairs services are the main ways residents judge the performance of their landlord.

The Social Housing (Regulation) Act received Royal Assent in July 2023. It includes increased regulation of social landlords and new rules for protecting tenants from serious hazards in their homes.

The Act introduces what has become known as 'Awaab's Law', named after two-year old Awaab Ishak, who died in December 2020 from exposure to serious mould in his parents' social rented home. Many of the provisions in the Act need regulations before they can come into force including the detail regarding new requirements for social landlords to address hazards such as damp and mould within a fixed period. These are expected to be published in 2024.

In the meantime, expectations on landlords to provide good quality homes to their tenants and deal with any problems quickly has continued to increase.

In November 2022 the RSH contacted all registered social housing providers, asking them to provide information and evidence on their approach to assessing the extent of damp and mould issues in their tenants' homes.

On 28th June 2023 the RSH published a report setting out its findings. The report highlights the features of the strongest and weakest approaches, so that landlords can learn lessons from others in the sector.

## Supporting our Partners

We acknowledge that the provisions of the Act and the forthcoming regulations will place considerable demands on our partners in the social housing sector. Over the years they have significantly invested in their Peterborough stock to ensure their dwellings meet the Decent Homes standard. The provisions in the Act will present new opportunities and challenges for providers as they strive to meet the new requirements it will introduce.

The regulation framework to implement the measures within the Act will bring about important changes that will raise the condition of social housing stock and enhance the health and wellbeing of tenants. We are committed to working with and supporting our partners as they prepare for the new provisions the Act introduces.



## CASE STUDIES

### Improving Housing Standards

The council Housing Standards team were passed information from our planning services regarding the possible unlawful division of a home into two separate flats. Following an inspection of the property, both flats were found to be in a poor state of repair.



The building had been converted poorly without proper consideration for fire safety or the separation of utilities.

A suspicion was raised that other properties owned by the same individual may be in a similar poor condition. Officers inspected 5 buildings, which were found to house 11 total dwellings; all in a poor state of repair and inadequately converted.

The dwellings were also found to have inadequate heating provision. The council served 11 improvement notices under the Housing Act 2004 sections 11 & 12, requiring large amounts of remedial works to convert the properties back into single dwellings. These notices were served with a strict time limit for compliance, with a failure to comply possibly resulting in civil penalties of up to £30,000 being served for each offence.

### Retrofitting - Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund

Accent Housing have secured Social Housing Decarbonisation Funding (SHDF) to deliver energy efficiency improvements to its Housing Stock with 33 properties in Peterborough that will specifically benefit from this funding.

All properties in the project are EPC D or below and will receive measures which will increase the property to at least an EPC C rating. The project will install a combination of energy efficiency measures, which will be defined following PAS 2035 Retrofit Assessments being undertaken.

Accent Housing are committed to a fabric first approach, with loft and cavity wall insulation being a key focus, with a mix of new windows and doors, heating upgrades and some PV also being considered.



## Housing Strategy Delivery Plan Priority 3 • Raising housing quality and standards in existing homes

Action	Outcome	Responsible Team	Linking to Delivery of the Corporate Strategy Outcomes
Commission the Building Research Establishment (BRE) to carry out a refreshed stock modelling survey for Peterborough's private sector housing stock.	Update our knowledge of Housing Standards in Peterborough Private Rented Sector	Housing Compliance Team	Enabling more new and more affordable homes for purchase or rent, and the improvement of existing properties
Implement a Selective Licencing Scheme for designated areas of Peterborough.	Raise standards in specified areas of Peterborough Private Rented Sector	Housing Compliance Team	Make suitable housing available to everyone, including quality standards in the private rented housing sector.  Deliver on our aspirations to become a net-zero Council and City
Develop and adopt an Additional Licencing scheme in areas not covered by Selective Licencing	Raise standards across the city in the Private Rented Sector by implementing additional licencing in designated neighbourhoods in Peterborough for 3- and 4-bedroom properties.	Housing Compliance Team	Re-imagine our inner-City street scene and workplaces, and maintaining and promoting our public places including our transport network  A community-based enforcement and safety service to promote civic pride and to shift the behaviour of those who act irresponsibly or without due regard for others
Refresh and adopt a new Empty Homes Strategy	Increase the number of Empty Homes being brought back in to use in the city through negotiation and enforcement when required	Housing Compliance Team	Seamless working between us as a Council, our residents, city developers and businesses to ensure we all work towards joined up priorities  Achieve better outcomes for our Children
Implement an Article 4 direction to regulate the growth of smaller HMOs in designated areas of Peterborough	Manage the growth of small-scale HMOs in the City	Planning Services	Reduce inequalities in preventable deaths before the age of 75

### Associated Strategies and Policies

**Affordable Warmth Programme 2021 – 2025**  
**Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Health and Well Being Integrated Care Strategy (2022 - 2030)**  
**Empty Homes Strategy 2017-19**  
**Housing and Health Action Plan 2023/2024**  
**Housing Renewals Policy 2021 - 2024**  
**PCC Carbon Management Action Plan 2022**  
**Peterborough Local Area Energy Plan 2022**  
**Peterborough Local Plan 2016-2036**  
**Sustainable Future City Council Strategy 2022-2025**

## 4 Priority Four

Meeting the need for accessible and adapted housing, supported accommodation, and housing for specific groups to promote health and wellbeing.

### Key Peterborough Snapshot Facts:

- 14.2% of residents in Peterborough are aged 65 and over
- 8% of Peterborough residents provide weekly unpaid care
- 22.1% of Peterborough residents report having a disability or long-term health condition
- 4.4% of economically active households in Peterborough are classed as long-term sick or disabled
- 21% of households registered on the Peterborough Housing register require a property with a level of adaptations
- The number of adults with a learning disability is forecast to rise by 10% by 2030
- The number of people with physical disabilities is forecast to rise by 14% by 2030
- 11 new affordable housing wheelchair adapted homes have been provided between 2016 to 2023
- 6 new affordable housing wheelchair adapted homes are on track for delivery in 2023-24 and a further 11 are expected to complete in 2024-25
- In 2022/23 197 mandatory Disabled Facility Grants (DFG) were funded for households totalling £2,042,507. Twelve discretionary top up grants were also awarded to complex adaptations amounting to £183,414

**Delivering an appropriate mix of housing types and tenures is a vital part of creating sustainable communities and meeting the diverse needs of all people living in Peterborough. Different groups within our community have differing accommodation needs. Not everyone can thrive in the mainstream, general needs dwellings that form the vast majority of Peterborough's housing stock.**

We want to ensure that our residents live in homes that are suited to their needs, that are accessible, affordable, safe, and enable independent living for as long as possible. To achieve this, we are working to improve:

- the accessibility standards in both new and existing homes to support independent living
- the availability of supported accommodation to meet the needs of vulnerable groups
- the provision/supply of housing that responds to the housing needs of specific groups

### Accessibility Standards in New and Existing Homes

The provision of homes that are accessible and adaptable is key to enabling older people and people with disabilities to live independently and remain in their own homes. Most people with a physical disability live in mainstream housing. In some instances, this may be a dwelling that has been built to an accessible standard or a dwelling that has been adapted to a greater or lesser extent to meet their needs.

Our Local Plan adopted in 2019 sets a higher accessibility standard (building regulations Part M4(2)) for all new build homes in Peterborough exceeding the national mandatory housing access standard (building regulations Part M4(1)). This higher M4(2) standard makes the dwellings more accessible and adaptable over time as people's needs change.

Our planning policy also requires that developments delivering 50 dwellings or more provide 5% of homes to be built to wheelchair adaptable standard (building regulations Part M4(3)(2)(a)) to enable people with disabilities to live independently.

While Local Plan policy enables us to enhance access standards for new homes delivered in Peterborough, it does not address the need for adaptations to the homes of people with disabilities and vulnerable and older households living in the existing housing stock.

## Home Service Delivery Model

The Care Act 2014 emphasises the importance of early intervention. It introduced a legal duty for local authorities to prevent, reduce and delay people's needs from worsening and to ensure the suitability of accommodation.

The Home Service Delivery Model, which the council has operated since 2017, delivers a coordinated early help approach to keeping older, vulnerable or disabled people living in their homes independently and safely for as long as possible. It provides a single point of referral for housing and health related council services and a wide range of partner agencies such as the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough NHS Foundation Trust (CPFT), social housing providers and voluntary organisations within Peterborough.

The Home Service Delivery Team brings together three complementary service areas to deliver a coordinated early help approach to keep older, vulnerable or disabled people living in their homes independently and safely for as long as possible:

- Adult Social Care services with a focus on improving personal independence skills such as therapy, reablement and assistive technology
- Care and Repair, our in-house Home Improvement Agency to address conditions and safety in the home through adaptations, repairs and maintenance.
- Housing Programmes to monitor and deliver grant funding through the council's capital grants programme for adaptations, repairs and energy efficiency measures.

Through the interventions of this service, we can make grant delivery more effective, and customer focused. This is vital because the council's financial pressures in recent years have significantly reduced our capacity to provide discretionary grant funding.

## Housing Renewals Policy 2021-2024

Our Housing Renewals Policy 2021-2024 sets out the types of capital grant assistance that the council may make available to improve the living conditions of residents and the circumstances and conditions that apply to the provision of the assistance. Four areas of grant assistance are within the scope of the policy:

## Mandatory Disabled Facilities Grants

As a local authority, we have a legal duty to provide Disabled Facilities Grants (DFGs) to assist disabled households who qualify for assistance to adapt their homes. These grants, which can be up to a maximum of £30,000, help to provide financial assistance to those in need so that people with disabilities in all tenures can live independently in their existing home. DFGs cover the costs associated with various types of adaptations, including level access showers, stair lifts and through floor lifts, changes to room layouts, extensions to properties and the widening of doors and entrances.

The council receives £2.2 million DFG funding per year from government as part of the Better Care Fund awarded to Adult Social Care and in the financial year 2022-23, this full allocation was spent to deliver 197 grants to households in Peterborough.

## Discretionary Disabled Facility Grant

The council has identified capital funds from within our budget to enable an award of discretionary grant funding in certain circumstances. A Discretionary Disabled Facility Grant may be made available in conjunction with a Mandatory Disabled Facility Grant to provide additional assistance where the cost of eligible works exceeds the current mandatory maximum grant limit of £30,000 per client.

It can also be used to support disabled and vulnerable clients to live independently, by providing adaptations and improving conditions in the home to avoid future hospital admissions or enable discharge from hospital into a warm, safe and accessible home environment.

## Disabled Persons Relocation Grant

The council may provide a discretionary relocation grant to enable a disabled person to move to more suitable accommodation if their existing home is not reasonably and practically capable of being adapted to meet their needs. The alternative suitable accommodation must provide a long-term and secure home.

## Repairs Assistance Fund

The purpose of this discretionary fund is to provide grants to low-income owner-occupied households and in some instances private sector tenants, to cover the cost of urgent improvements that address dangerous hazards identified in the home. In many cases, people are living in hazardous accommodation due to hardship or vulnerability. The council's Care and Repair Home Improvement Agency project manages the delivery of all works funded through a Repairs Assistance grant.

## Supported Accommodation To Meet The Needs Of Vulnerable Groups

The delivery of safe, good quality supported housing that meets identified local needs relies on strong partnership working and collaboration between the council and a diverse range of providers.

To ensure that planning applications for new supported housing developments for vulnerable groups meet an identified local need, Policy LP8 of the Local Plan includes a requirement that proposed schemes must meet an identified need, be suitable in terms of the facilities and care provision and have the support of Adult Social Care Commissioning in order to gain planning consent.

This can include large schemes, such as Extra Care developments, through to bespoke single-user homes for individuals with complex needs.

Not all vulnerable people need supported housing, for many remaining in their own home or their family home with support may be the best solution.

Some people may require ongoing support and care in permanent supported housing accommodation, whereas for others the need for support may be for a limited period requiring tailored services that may be only for a few months or perhaps up to two years to support them into more independent living, a settled lifestyle, education, training and employment. Supported accommodation is specifically designed to provide different levels of support for individuals, depending on need.

## Children In Care

We are committed to securing the best possible outcomes for those children and young people in our care, leaving our care, or at significant risk of coming into care. Children's Commissioning services work to place children in the most appropriate accommodation to meet their needs.

This can range from short breaks and emergency placements, through to adoption, fostering, residential care and secure accommodation.

Local authorities are required to take steps to secure, as far as is reasonably practicable, sufficient accommodation for children in care within their local area. The Peterborough Children in Care Market Position Statement published in August 2023 sets out the existing supply of accommodation types, and the need for additional residential services to meet demand, particularly residential services for children with complex needs.

## Young People

We recognise that suitable, safe housing underpins success in other areas of life. Our Social Care and Housing Needs services have worked to develop protocols to respond to the housing and support needs of young people and care leavers as they take their first steps towards independent living.

## Care Leavers

When young people are leaving care, it is particularly important that their housing needs are addressed and met promptly. A joint protocol addresses the housing needs of young people leaving care and the obligations of each service to address these needs. Those that are ready to live independently and take on the responsibility for a tenancy are provided the highest priority for re-housing on the housing register, to try to enable a managed transition into permanent accommodation.

When living independently is identified as not being appropriate at that time, we continue to work with our partners in Peterborough to ensure that there are a range of supported accommodation schemes available to meet the needs of our vulnerable young people that require further housing support. Tailored support is provided to assist with access to benefits, securing employment and developing tenancy management skills in preparation for future independent living.

## 16-17 years olds

Some young people and especially 16 and 17 year olds who present to the council as homeless, require additional support to prepare for independence in adult life. A joint protocol between the services aims to ensure that by working together the needs of homeless 16 and 17 year olds will be addressed with the best outcome for the young person. The underlying principle of the protocol is to strive to prevent homelessness where possible and encourage a return to the family home or family network if it is a safe environment. Where homelessness cannot be prevented, joint working through the protocol ensures that a package of support and appropriate housing options are offered to each young person.

## Vulnerable adults with eligible social care needs

Our Adult Social Care Commissioning Team lead on the development and procurement of services for all adults who have eligible social care needs, which can include a housing element. This includes:

- people with Learning Disabilities
- autistic people
- people with Mental Health needs
- older people

Until August 2023 Peterborough City Council and Cambridgeshire County Council operated a shared service for Adult Social Care (ASC) and Commissioning and delivered a joint Market Position Statement (MPS), needs profiles and accommodation strategies to respond to the services and accommodation needs of vulnerable adults across Peterborough and Cambridgeshire.

Now that this shared arrangement has drawn to a close, work is underway to prepare a Peterborough focused set of documents that will provide information for providers and other partners regarding the supply and demand for care services and accommodation for vulnerable adults locally and serve as the basis for strategic commissioning going forward.

In line with national trends, ASC Commissioning in Peterborough have observed an increased demand in care for individuals of working age with complex needs, including Learning Disabilities, Mental Health needs, Neurodiversity and Personality Disorders. These individuals often require bespoke purpose-built or refurbished accommodation, developed in conjunction with care specialists. Therefore, a particular focus will be on developing and securing sufficient housing of this nature to meet this increased demand.

There is also an increase in demand for 'core and cluster' models, with a hub of individual housing units supported by a single care office with a flexible workforce. This model supports individuals to live in the community and maximise independence, while also ensuring that they have the care and support they need.

We recognise the need to work differently with our current and future providers to build capacity within communities using a neighbourhood approach to meet the rising demand for accommodation and support for vulnerable groups. Once produced and published the accommodation strategy for vulnerable adults and the refreshed Market Position Statement will form part of the housing related strategic documents that underpin this Housing Strategy.

## Older People

The majority of older people live out their lives in mainstream housing rather than moving to specialist older person's accommodation. Most existing homes and communities have not been designed to meet people's changing needs as they get older. The suitability of the built environment and placemaking plays an important role in enabling older and vulnerable people to live independently in their local communities.

Planning for new homes and neighbourhoods to take our ageing population into account is therefore recognised as an important policy consideration within the Peterborough Local Plan.

As well as the inclusion of the higher Housing Access standards described earlier in this chapter, Policy LP8 also includes provisions to encourage all new housing developments to help meet the demand for homes suitable for an ageing population and requires that planning applications for major developments set out how such measures have been considered and incorporated into the proposal.

ASC prioritises the importance of supporting older people to remain in their own homes. Through the interventions of the Home Service Delivery Model they ensure the provision of necessary adaptations and/or care packages to older people in their own homes to reflect their changing needs and maintain independence where possible.

Some older people however will require specialist accommodation which can provide a level of care and support to cater for their needs. Specialist accommodation provision such as Extra Care housing and Care Homes play an important role in providing alternative housing with care solutions.

## Rough Sleepers and people at risk of rough sleeping

A key focus of our approach to preventing and relieving rough sleeping has been strengthening our partnership and multi agency work to deliver a whole city approach to tackling homelessness. We continue to experience a flow of people who find themselves rough sleeping. It is unsafe and unacceptable for anyone to be homeless on the streets. With our partners we want to continue our commitment to reducing and working towards eliminating rough sleeping in the city. Our Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2021-26 includes empowering rough sleepers and those at risk of rough sleeping to make positive choices to move on to suitable homes.

## A range of programmes and initiatives have been actioned to support delivery of this priority:

- We have been successful in securing numerous funding streams to work with our partners to identify people at risk of rough sleeping and engage with them at the earliest opportunity

- We are working with partners to deliver a holistic approach to addressing the needs of rough sleepers including access to services to tackle drug and alcohol dependency, access to mental health services and using funded floating support teams
- We have dedicated prevention officers based at the Prison and Hospital in Peterborough to work to try and ensure that any rough sleeper who goes into these settings, does not return to the streets
- Through partnership working we have developed a Housing First offer to support people with complex needs to address their homelessness or rough sleeping. The Housing First model prioritises getting people quickly into stable homes. From this point, any other support needs they might have such as alcohol and drug dependency, physical and/or mental health problems are addressed through coordinated and intensive support
- We have delivered a scheme of 22 dwellings for people who have previously experienced rough sleeping using council capital funding and government grant funding secured from the Next Steps Accommodation Programme. Residents can stay at the scheme for up to 2 years and receive support to build their capacity to sustain an independent tenancy
- We are on target to deliver 25 units of self-contained accommodation using funding secured from the Single Homeless Accommodation Programme (SHAP) to provide housing for rough sleepers with complex needs in tandem with a high level of targeted individual support to address support needs

## Meeting the Housing Needs of Specific Groups

Everyone has the right to a decent, safe and affordable home, which is suited to their needs and located in a community where they want to live. Our housing market should respond to the housing needs of a wide range of specific groups to support the creation of sustainable, inclusive, mixed communities throughout the city. To support the preparation of the emerging Local Plan, we are commissioning a Local Housing Needs Assessment which will provide an evidence base of current and forecasted housing need in Peterborough and an assessment of the housing needs of different groups.

## Gypsy Traveller and Travelling Show People

We are currently seeking to appoint consultants to carry out a new needs assessment of the accommodation needs of Gypsy and Traveller communities in Peterborough. The assessment will also look at the needs of Travelling Show people and other people living in caravans and houseboats. The evidence collected will show whether more local accommodation is needed for these groups; and if so, how much. It will help to inform the emerging Local Plan, which is currently being developed, and it should also help us to understand the needs of families or groups needing somewhere to stop temporarily in the area. We expect the work to be completed in spring 2024.

## Armed Forces Personnel

We recognise the difficulties which may be faced by armed forces personnel in seeking new accommodation. Leaving the military may mean having to relocate, move home, find new employment and undergo a lifestyle change. Accordingly, within the Peterborough Common Housing Register Allocations Policy, serving and former members of the forces and bereaved spouses and civil partners of members of the forces who are eligible for rehousing are given additional priority to ensure that their housing needs are addressed at the earliest possible opportunity.

## Students

As Peterborough's university continues to grow the demand for appropriate and affordable student housing will also increase. The current student cohort includes a high percentage of 'home grown' students originating from within the PE region, and therefore the existing supply of student accommodation available in the city satisfies current levels of demand.



As the university expands over the coming years, we want to ensure that the increased demand for accommodation from students moving to Peterborough to study is adequately catered for and does not cause an added strain on the existing private rented sector.

The number of students studying at the university is expected to reach 5,000 by 2027. As part of our programme for regeneration of city centre sites, we are working to ensure that purpose-built student accommodation is provided in the city to support our university's development and keep pace with demand. There is already considerable interest from providers who deliver this type of accommodation, and we are working with them to identify appropriate sites for delivery.

## Key Workers

Key worker housing is usually provided to key public sector employees who provide an essential service and who may find it difficult to access housing in the area where they work. Key worker housing initiatives can provide discounted home ownership, shared ownership or discounted market rent products in areas where market housing is unaffordable. In Peterborough, where incomes are lower than the national average, the salaries of traditional key workers such as teachers, social workers nurses and police officers, exceed average income levels and therefore affordability is less of a barrier for these groups. Key workers can access affordable home ownership housing such as shared ownership locally and where eligible join the housing register to apply for rented social housing.

## Refugees

Peterborough has a history of welcoming and supporting refugees who have come from difficult and traumatic circumstances. As part of the national response to conflicts in Afghanistan, Syria and Ukraine we have helped refugees secure accommodation and access support and assistance as they address the challenges of integrating to a new way of life.

We have been successful in securing grant funding in Rounds One and Two of the government's Local Authority Housing Fund (LAHF) to supplement the council's own capital investment to obtain housing for those who are unable to find settled accommodation on resettlement schemes.

Our bid of Round 1 funding has secured grant to support the purchase of 25 homes for families with housing needs who have arrived in the UK via Ukrainian and Afghan resettlement and relocation schemes. Delivery of these homes is well underway with all 25 homes due to be ready for occupation by the end of March 2024.

Our bid for Round 2 funding has secured grant to support the purchase of a further 15 family homes with a particular focus on housing those on Afghan resettlement schemes currently in bridging accommodation in the private rented sector. These dwellings are expected to be acquired by the end of March 2024

## CASE STUDIES

### Technology Enabled Care (TEC)

A referral was received from a Social Worker to the TEC Team for a client who had a learning disability and anxiety. The Client had 24/7 care from a care agency including an overnight carer. Just Checking Sensors were installed by the TEC team to monitor activity 24/7.

This evidenced the client was not needing the support overnight. In response, a person-centred process involving regular multi-disciplinary team meetings with the client, along with the installation of a range of technology, enabling care to be gradually withdrawn as the client's independence increased.



Addressing potential risks and ensuring the client's safety remained at the centre of this piece of work at the same time as working to enhance the client's well-being and independence.

### Supported Accommodation

Lincoln House has been acquired using council capital funding and grant funding secured from the former Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government under the Next Steps Accommodation programme. The grant also included revenue funding which secured dedicated workers to support clients housed at the scheme.

The scheme is made up of 22 properties for single people and couples who have previously experienced rough sleeping and are now ready to take their final steps into semi-independent accommodation before moving on to their own permanent home. Residents can stay at the scheme for up to 2 years and receive support to build their capacity to sustain an independent tenancy.



## Housing Strategy Delivery Plan Priority 4 • Meeting the need for accessible and adapted housing, supported accommodation, and housing for specific groups

Action	Outcome	Responsible Team	Linking to Delivery of the Corporate Strategy Outcomes
Commission a Gypsies, Travellers, Travelling Show people and Bargee Travellers and Other Caravan and Houseboat Dwellers needs assessment	Update our knowledge of Housing Standards in Peterborough Private Rented Sector	Planning Policy Team	<p>Enabling more new and more affordable homes for purchase or rent, and the improvement of existing properties</p> <p>Make suitable housing available to everyone, including quality standards in the private rented housing sector.</p>
Deliver 25 units of accommodation using funding secured from the Single Homeless Accommodation Programme (SHAP)	Increase the supply of single person accommodation for those in housing need.	Housing Needs	<p>Enable safer and more independent living for our most vulnerable residents and those who require additional support. This includes finding permanent, safe and stable homes for our children and young people in care</p> <p>Prevent homelessness across the city whilst reducing the requirement for the use of temporary accommodation</p>
Deliver 25 units of accommodation using funding secured from the Local Authority Housing Fund 1 (LAHF)	Provide permanent housing for refugees as part of a local resettlement scheme	Commercial, Property & Asset Management	<p>Reduce poverty and inequality by attracting good paying jobs whilst working together with our City Partners to increase employability for those who need it most.</p> <p>Enabling our most vulnerable residents to live healthy and independent lives whilst upskilling and attracting more workers into the local care sector</p>
Deliver 15 units of accommodation using funding secured from the Local Authority Housing Fund 2 (LAHF)	Provide permanent housing for refugees as part of a local resettlement scheme	Commercial, Property & Asset Management	<p>Deliver on our aspirations to become a net-zero Council and City</p>

Continued overleaf on page 44

**Housing Strategy Delivery Plan Priority 4 • Meeting the need for accessible and adapted housing, supported accommodation, and housing for specific groups**

Action	Outcome	Responsible Team	Linking to Delivery of the Corporate Strategy Outcomes
<p><b>Work with developers and Registered Providers to increase supply of supported accommodation for adults with care and support needs, including bespoke single-person units and core-and-cluster models</b></p>	<p>Greater supply of suitable local accommodation settings</p>	<p><b>ASC Commissioning</b></p>	<p>Provide safe and green spaces for residents to both socialise and exercise offering both health and social benefits</p> <p>All young care leavers can access a good, enhanced local offer that meets their health, education, housing and employment needs</p> <p>React to pressing social challenges and emergencies (i.e. cost-of-living-crisis), providing imminent help &amp; support to those who are most at risk of slipping into crisis</p> <p>Long-term care and support when needed is personalised and keeps people connected to their communities</p>

**Associated Strategies and Policies**

Affordable Warmth Programme 2021 – 2025

Allocations Policy 2022

Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Adult Social Care Market Position Statement

Children in Care Market Position Statement 2023

Health and Well Being Integrated Care Strategy (2022 to 2030)

Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2021-26

Housing and Health Action Plan 2023/2024

Housing Renewals Policy 2021 - 2024

Joint Protocol for 16-17 year olds

Joint Protocol for Young People Leaving Care

PCC Carbon Management Action Plan 2022

Peterborough City Council Sufficiency Strategy Children & Young People with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities 2021 – 2024

Peterborough Local Area Energy Plan 2022

Peterborough Local Plan 2016-2036

Sustainable Future City Council Strategy 2022-2025

# Glossary of Terms

## Affordable Housing

Affordable Housing is a broad category covering all homes for rent or sale below market rates. This includes homes let at Social Rent and Intermediate Rent. It also includes homes for sale on a Shared Ownership basis or as Discounted Market Sale.

## Community Infrastructure Levy Charging Schedule

The Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) came into force in April 2010. It allows local authorities to raise funds from developers undertaking new building projects in their area. The money can be used to fund a wide range of infrastructure that is needed as a result of development. This includes new or safer road schemes, flood defences, schools, hospitals and other health and social care facilities, park improvements, green spaces and leisure centres. Local authorities implementing CIL must produce a charging schedule setting out the charge rates for different types of development in their area.

## Domiciliary care

Domiciliary care is care provided to people who still live in their own homes but who require additional support with household tasks, personal care or any other activity that allows them to maintain their independence and quality of life. Residential care Residential care refers to long-term care given to adults or children who stay in a residential setting rather than in their own home or family home. There are various residential care options available, depending on the needs of the individual.

## Extra Care Housing

Extra Care Housing is housing designed with the needs of frailer older people in mind and with varying levels of care and support available on site. People who live in Extra Care Housing have their own self-contained homes, their own front doors and a legal right to occupy the property.

## Homes England

Homes England is the government housing and regeneration agency with an aim to accelerate the pace of house building and regeneration across the country. It works with housing provider partners to bring together land, money, expertise, and planning and CPO powers to facilitate the delivery of new homes. In May 2023 HE published its new five-year strategic plan that has been signed off by government and supports the levelling up agenda. The strategy has a strong emphasis on supporting regeneration.

## Net-Zero Carbon

Net zero is the state in which as much greenhouse gas emissions are removed from the atmosphere as are produced. The term can be applied any many levels, for instance a home, city or country. In the example of a home, the emissions associated with the construction of the property and the day-to-day use of the house (e.g. heating and electricity use) should equal to emissions captured. In practice, this means reducing emissions as much as possible, through energy efficient design and use of low carbon heating and renewable electricity

## Registered Provider

A Registered Provider is an organisation that provides social housing but must be registered by the Regulator of Social Housing.

# Glossary of Terms (continued)

## Regulator of Social Housing

The Regulator of Social Housing is a stand-alone non departmental public body of government. Its role is to promote a viable, efficient, and well-governed social housing sector that can deliver and maintain homes of appropriate quality that meet a range of needs. It is a stand-alone non departmental public body of government.

## Statutorily Homeless

A household will be considered as statutorily homeless by their local authority if they meet specific criteria set out in legislation. Broadly speaking, somebody is statutorily homeless if they do not have accommodation that they have a legal right to occupy, which is accessible and physically available to them and which it would be reasonable for them to continue to live in.

In cases where an authority is satisfied that an applicant is eligible for assistance, is in priority need, and has become homeless through no fault of their own, the authority will owe a main homelessness duty to secure settled accommodation for that household. Such households are referred to as acceptances.

## S.106 Agreement

S.106 agreements are those struck between developers and the local authority to support planning applications. The agreements included in a s.106 agreement can be broad, but they are usually utilised to ensure that a local community affected by development actually benefits from it. This is usually through the provision of affordable housing on the development where the s.106 agreement is in place, or as a financial contribution from a developer towards schools and other local services.

## Temporary Accommodation

Temporary Accommodation is a category of housing provided by a council either while it investigates a homelessness application, or when it has confirmed that it has a duty to provide settled housing under Part 7 of the Housing Act 1996.

When that legal duty applies this is because somebody is homeless but has not made themselves homeless deliberately and is also in a defined priority need group. Temporary accommodation provided on an emergency basis while a homeless application is investigated is also called 'interim' or 'emergency' accommodation, and it might either be a hostel, self-contained or hotel accommodation.

## Thermal efficiency

The ability to use or produce heat without wasting materials, time, or energy Supported housing Supported housing is an umbrella term which is applied to a whole range of housing based solutions for vulnerable people. It caters for a wide range of client groups with diverse needs who require different levels of support in a range of accommodation models.

## Social Housing

Social housing, or social rented housing is a sub-set of affordable housing. Social housing refers specifically to rental properties owned by local authorities or non-profit Registered Provider



