

## Cambridge City Council Housing Scrutiny Committee

**Date:** Tuesday, 19 January 2021

**Time:** 5.00 pm

**Venue:** This meeting will take place virtually via Microsoft Teams

**Contact:** democratic.services@cambridge.gov.uk, tel:01223 457000

### Second Circulation Agenda

**Agenda item 8 (Housing Revenue Account Budget Setting Report) was published 16.12.20, this report can be found on the website under 'Agenda Reports Pack'. This second circulation agenda contains all of the reports excluding agenda item 8.**

#### **Part 1: To be chaired by Vice Chair (Tenant/Leaseholder Representative)**

##### **Decisions for the Executive Councillor for Housing**

- |   |  |                 |
|---|--|-----------------|
| 5 | Housing Ombudsman Self Assessment  | (Pages 7 - 20)  |
| 6 | Structural Repairs and Associated Works to Council-Owned Blocks of Flats | (Pages 21 - 28) |
| 7 | Estates & Facilities Service Review and Compliance Update                | (Pages 29 - 36) |

#### **Part 2: To be taken by the Chair of the Committee**

##### **Decisions for the Executive Councillor for Housing**

- |    |  |                      |
|----|--|----------------------|
| 9  | Cambridgeshire Home Improvement Agency – Works Contract Procurement  | (Pages 37 - 42)      |
| 10 | Feasibility Study for the Implementation of Selective Licensing in the City of Cambridge - Publication and Actioning the Recommendations | (Pages 43 -<br>124)  |
| 11 | Homelessness and Rough Sleeper Strategy 2021 – 2026  | (Pages 125 -<br>214) |
| 12 | Homelessness Prevention Grants to Agencies   | (Pages 215 -<br>224) |
| 13 | Update on the Work Towards a new Council Housing Programme   | (Pages 225 -<br>246) |

14	Proposed new Build Passivhaus Housing Schemes	(Pages 247 - 282)
15	Update on the Programme to Build new Council Homes Funded Through the Combined Authority	(Pages 283 - 308)

**Housing Scrutiny Committee Members:** Todd-Jones (Chair), Bird (Vice-Chair), Hadley, McGerty, Martinelli, Porrer, Robertson and Sheil

**Alternates:** Barnett, McQueen and Page-Croft

**Tenants and Leaseholders:** Lulu Agate (Tenant Representative), Christabella Amiteye (Tenant Representative), Diane Best (Leaseholder Representative), Mandy Powell-Hardy (Tenant Representative), Diana Minns (Tenant Representative) and Colin Stevens (Tenant Representative)

**Executive Councillors:** Johnson (Executive Councillor for Housing)

## Information for the public

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Members of the public are welcome to view the live stream of this meeting, except during the consideration of exempt or confidential items, by following the link to be published on the Council's website.

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If members of the public wish to address the committee please contact Democratic Services by 12 noon two working days before the meeting.

For full information about committee meetings, committee reports, councillors and the democratic process:

- Website: <http://democracy.cambridge.gov.uk>
- Email: [democratic.services@cambridge.gov.uk](mailto:democratic.services@cambridge.gov.uk)
- Phone: 01223 457000

### Housing Scrutiny Committee

#### Terms of Reference

**A.** Overview and scrutiny of the strategic and other housing functions for

<p>which the Executive Councillor for Housing is responsible, including responsibility for the development of housing strategies and policies, tackling homelessness, the Council’s housing responsibilities with regard to the private rented sector, bringing vacant homes back into use, the development of new homes and partnership working with other housing providers.</p>
<p><b>B.</b> Overview and scrutiny of functions relating to the management of the Council’s housing stock.</p>
<p><b>C.</b> To be the main discussion forum between the Council, its tenants and its leaseholders for all matters relating to the landlord function of Cambridge City Council.</p>
<p><b>Membership</b></p>
<p>City Councillors (Such number as shall be decided by the Council from time to time)</p>
<p>Six elected tenants and leaseholders of Cambridge City Council of whom at least five shall be tenants of Cambridge City Council.</p>
<p><b>Appointment of tenant and leaseholder members</b></p>
<p>Tenant and leaseholder members shall be co-opted by the Scrutiny Committee following the procedure for election set out in the Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rules in Part 4E.</p>
<p><b>Voting</b></p>
<p>Tenant and leaseholder members are voting members in respect of matters concerning the management of the Council’s housing stock (Part 1 of the agenda.) Tenant and leaseholder members may contribute to discussion of other matters (Part 2 of the agenda) but shall not have a vote.</p>
<p><b>Appointment of Chair</b></p>
<p>The Chair of the Scrutiny Committee shall be appointed by the Council and be a councillor and shall chair Part 2. The Vice-chair shall be nominated by the elected tenants and leaseholders and shall chair Part 1 if present. If the Chair or Vice-chair is not present, a councillor shall be appointed as the Vice-chair for that meeting.</p>
<p><b>Other matters relating to elected tenants and leaseholders</b></p>
<p>These are set out in the Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rules in Part 4E. They include information about the roles, responsibilities and training of tenant and leaseholder representatives, expenses and allowances,</p>

and the circumstances in which they may cease to be members of the Committee.

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Item

## **HOUSING OMBUDSMAN SELF-ASSESSMENT COMPLAINTS REPORT**

**To:**

Councillor Richard Johnson, Executive Councillor for Housing

Housing Scrutiny Committee 19/01/2020

**Report by:**

David Greening, Head of Housing

Tel: 01223 - 457997

Email: david.greening@cambridge.gov.uk

**Wards affected:**

All

### **Not a Key Decision**

#### **1. Executive Summary**

1.1 This report presents the findings of a self-assessment undertaken in response to the publication of the Housing Ombudsman's (HO) [Complaint Handling Code and Self-Assessment Tool](#). Membership of the [HO Scheme](#) is a requirement for all Registered Providers (RPs) of social housing. Cambridge City Council (CCC) is required to publish its findings prior to the 31<sup>st</sup> December 2020. The self-assessment work is now complete and the Complaint Handling Code Self-Assessment report (Appendix A) is available to view on the [CCC website](#). All recommendations contained within the action plan, have been discussed and are due for implementation in 2021.

## 2. Recommendations

The Executive Councillor is recommended to:

- 2.1 Approve the report and associated action plan included in Appendix A.

## 3. Background

- 3.1 The Housing Ombudsman (HO) is responsible for examining complaints about our services as a landlord. Residents can escalate their complaint to the HO if they feel that the complaint was not resolved within the CCCs internal two-stage process.
- 3.2 In 2020, as a member of the HO Scheme, CCC was required to demonstrate its compliance with the HO Complaint Handling Code. The purpose of the Code is to enable landlords to resolve complaints raised by residents quickly and to use the learning from complaints to drive service improvements. The Self-Assessment Tool provided a framework by which landlords could effectively assess its own complaint handling processes and identify areas of learning and development.
- 3.3 Compliance with the Code forms part of the membership obligations set out in the [Housing Ombudsman Scheme](#). Failure to comply with the conditions of membership may result in an Ombudsman determination of complaint handling failure<sup>1</sup>. Each quarter the Ombudsman will publish the total number of complaint handling failure orders issued and this information will be shared with the Regulator of Social Housing. The number of complaint handling failure orders issued against a landlord will also form part of the Ombudsman annual landlord performance reports and will be available on the Ombudsman website.

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<sup>1</sup> Paragraphs 13 and 73 of the [Housing Ombudsman Scheme](#)

3.4 Housing Services have embraced the opportunity to review its current complaint handling process in response to the requirements of the HO scheme and Code. This has involved working jointly with our corporate colleagues in Business Support who are responsible for the overall management of the complaints handling process and Complaints Tracker system.

## 4. Content

4.1 The self-assessment tool provided members with a list of thirty-six (36) questions across 6 themes:

- Definition of a complaint
- Accessibility and awareness
- Team, procedure, timeliness and responsiveness
- Fairness in complaint handling
- Putting things right
- Continuous learning and development

Twenty-six (26) questions required a yes or no response, and ten (10) required the inclusion of evidence. The officers involved in the assessment provided a full and evidenced response to each of the 36 questions. This thorough approach has meant that, in addition to demonstrating our compliance to the requirements of the Code, we have also been able to suggest improvements which build upon CCC's current offering.

### 4.3 Three areas CCC could improve

**Question 2(3)** Do CCC have a reasonable adjustments policy?

A reasonable adjustments policy is a document which sets out an organisation's commitment to improving accessibility for everybody. It sets out the principles of its approach and the factors that it will consider when dealing with requests for reasonable adjustments.

CCC has in place several policies, which set out its approach to equalities, including Comprehensive Equalities and Diversity Policy and the Single Equality Scheme. However, it was agreed that CCC's approach to accessibility could be more explicit. It is therefore acknowledged that further work could be done to ensure the council's policy on reasonable adjustments is reflected more explicitly in the Council's Comprehensive Equalities and Diversity Policy.

**Question 4(10)** What proportion of complaints do we resolve to residents' satisfaction?

CCC does not currently collect satisfaction monitoring information from complainants, because it is expected that a complainant will seek to escalate a complaint if they are not satisfied with the outcome. It is perhaps appropriate, therefore, to consider monitoring customer satisfaction with the *handling* of a complaint, rather than satisfaction with the *outcome*. This could be achieved through linking a short survey to the foot of the response template.

**Question 5(1)** Were all requests for evidence (by the Housing Ombudsman) responded to within 15 days?

To answer this question, a sample of complaints from January to November 2020 were analysed. In all cases CCC acknowledged the request within 15 days. In most cases CCC was able to provide the requested evidence in the required time frame except for one case where the volume of supporting evidence was too large to be sent by email. In this case CCC had to find an alternative solution in conjunction with the HO to transfer the information. This delayed the response by 4 weeks. To avoid this from happening again CCC will need to work with 3CICT and the HO to identify a secure but efficient way of transferring large quantities of documents.

## 5. Implications

### (a) Financial Implications

None

**(b) Staffing Implications**

None

**(c) Equality and Poverty Implications**

As set out in 4.3 of this report

**(d) Environmental Implications**

None

**(e) Procurement Implications**

None

**(f) Community Safety Implications**

None

**6. Consultation and communication considerations**

A verbal update on the findings contained within the report have been shared with Housing Scrutiny Committee (HSC) Resident Representatives for information. This meeting took place prior to publication of the Complaint Handling Code Self-Assessment report (31<sup>st</sup> December 2020).

**7. Background papers**

No background papers were used in the preparation of this report.

## **8. Appendices**

Appendix A - Complaint Handling Code Self-Assessment report

## **9. Inspection of papers**

For queries about this report please contact:

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## APPENDIX A

### Housing Ombudsman Complaint Handling Code: Self-assessment form

Compliance with the Complaint Handling Code			
1	Definition of a complaint	Yes	No
1.1	Does the complaints process use the following definition of a complaint?  <i>An expression of dissatisfaction, however made, about the standard of service, actions or lack of action by the organisation, its own staff, or those acting on its behalf, affecting an individual resident or group of residents.</i>	√	
1.2	Does the policy have exclusions where a complaint will not be considered?	√	
1.3	Are these exclusions reasonable and fair to residents?  Evidence relied upon	<b>Please see <a href="#">Note 1</a></b>	
<b>2</b>	<b>Accessibility</b>		
2.1	Are multiple accessibility routes available for residents to make a complaint?	√	
2.2	Is the complaints policy and procedure available online?	√	
2.3	Do we have a reasonable adjustments policy?	√	
2.4	Do we regularly advise residents about our complaints process?	√	
<b>3</b>	<b>Complaints team and process</b>		
3.1	Is there a complaint officer or equivalent in post?	√	
3.2	Does the complaint officer have autonomy to resolve complaints?	√	
3.3	Does the complaint officer have authority to compel engagement from other departments to resolve disputes?	√	
3.4	If there is a third stage to the complaints procedure are residents involved in the decision making?	<b>N/A</b>	
3.5	Is any third stage optional for residents?	<b>N/A</b>	
3.6	Does the final stage response set out residents' right to refer the matter to the Housing Ombudsman Service?	√	
3.7	Do we keep a record of complaint correspondence including correspondence from the resident?	√	
3.8	At what stage are most complaints resolved?	<b>Please see</b>	

		<a href="#">Note 2</a>	
<b>4</b>	<b>Communication</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>
<b>4.1</b>	Are residents kept informed and updated during the complaints process?	√	
<b>4.2</b>	Are residents informed of the landlord's position and given a chance to respond and challenge any area of dispute before the final decision?	√	
<b>4.3</b>	Are all complaints acknowledged and logged within five days?	√	
<b>4.4</b>	Are residents advised of how to escalate at the end of each stage?	√	
<b>4.5</b>	What proportion of complaints are resolved at stage one?	<b>Please see <a href="#">Note 3</a></b>	
<b>4.6</b>	What proportion of complaints are resolved at stage two?	<b>Please see <a href="#">Note 4</a></b>	
<b>4.7</b>	What proportion of complaint responses are sent within Code timescales?  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stage one: 10 working days (Max) Stage one (with extension): extension of further 10 days (Max)</li> <li>• Stage two: 20 working days (Max) Stage two (with extension): extension of further 10 days (Max)</li> </ul>	<b>Please see <a href="#">Note 5</a></b>	
<b>4.8</b>	Where timescales have been extended did we have good reason?	√	
<b>4.9</b>	Where timescales have been extended did we keep the resident informed?	√	
<b>4.10</b>	What proportion of complaints do we resolve to residents' satisfaction	<b>Please see <a href="#">Note 6</a></b>	
<b>5</b>	<b>Cooperation with Housing Ombudsman Service</b>		
<b>5.1</b>	Were all requests for evidence responded to within 15 days?		√
<b>5.2</b>	Where the timescale was extended did we keep the Ombudsman informed?	√	
<b>6</b>	<b>Fairness in complaint handling</b>		
<b>6.1</b>	Are residents able to complain via a representative throughout?	√	
<b>6.2</b>	If advice was given, was this accurate and easy to understand?	√	
<b>6.3</b>	How many cases did we refuse to escalate?  What was the reason for the refusal?	<b>Please see <a href="#">Note 7</a></b>	
<b>6.4</b>	Did we explain our decision to the resident?	<b>N/A</b>	

		Yes	No
<b>7</b>	<b>Outcomes and remedies</b>		
<b>7.1</b>	Where something has gone wrong are we taking appropriate steps to put things right?	√	
<b>8</b>	<b>Continuous learning and improvement</b>		
<b>8.1</b>	What improvements have we made as a result of learning from complaints?	Please see <a href="#">Note 8</a>	
<b>8.2</b>	How do we share these lessons with: a) residents? b) the board/governing body? c) In the Annual Report?	Please see <a href="#">Note 9</a>	
<b>8.3</b>	Has the Code made a difference to how we respond to complaints?	√	
<b>8.4</b>	What changes have we made?	Please see <a href="#">Action Plan (Appendix)</a>	

## Notes with evidence

### 1. Is our policy not to consider certain complaints fair and reasonable to residents?

The Council's '[Unreasonably persistent complainants policy](#)' and '[Unreasonable complainant behaviour policy](#)' respectively seek to:

- Allow all complainants fair and equal access to the finite resources available within the Council, and
- Protect staff against abusive, offensive, discriminatory or threatening behaviour.

It is therefore reasonable to exclude some people from continuing to complain to the Council, in order to meet these aims. This decision will not be taken lightly and will be subject to agreement between the relevant Head of Service and their Director. At least one warning will be given about sanctions being imposed.

The Council's '[Unreasonably persistent complainants policy](#)' distinguishes between complaining about the same issue after it is considered resolved, and the treatment

of complaints on a new issue. New complaints on other matters will be treated on their merits. This means someone who has been treated as an unreasonably persistent complainant may still bring new, unrelated issues to the Council's attention, if they are not trivial or vexatious.

When we decide to treat someone as an 'unreasonable' or 'unreasonably persistent' complainant, we will write to tell them why we believe this to be the case, what action we are taking and how long that action will last. If we are still treating someone as an unreasonable or unreasonably persistent complainant after a year, the decision will be reviewed by the Council's Monitoring Officer, and a decision taken as to whether the restrictions should continue.

If we consider a complainant's behaviour unacceptable under the '[Unreasonable complainant behaviour policy](#)' we will tell them why and ask them to change it. We will only restrict access to the Council's staff if the unacceptable behaviour continues or constitutes a serious risk.

## **2. At what stage are most complaints resolved?**

Most complaints are resolved at Stage 1.

## **3. What proportion of complaints are resolved at stage one?**

91% are resolved at stage one.

## **4. What proportion of complaints are resolved at stage two?**

86% of the complaints reaching stage two were resolved at that stage.

## **5. What proportion of complaint responses are sent within Code timescales?**

Eighty seven percent (87%) of Stage 1 complaints are sent within 10 working days. Eight five percent (85%) of Stage 2 complaints are sent within 20 working days.

## **6. What proportion of complaints do we resolve to residents' satisfaction?**

We do not currently collect satisfaction monitoring information from complainants, because we expect that a complainant will seek to escalate a complaint if they are not satisfied with the outcome. We will explore options for how we monitor satisfaction with complaint handling, for example by linking a short survey to the foot of the response template (see [Action Plan](#)).

## **7. How many cases did we refuse to escalate, and why?**

We did not refuse to escalate any housing-related complaints.

## **8. What improvements have we made as a result of learning from complaints?**

- Introduction of Complaints Handling Procedure 2019 for Housing Services. This new procedure introduced a system of calling people at the start of the process,

in order to clarify the core reason for the complaint and the customer's expectations for a successful outcome. The new procedure incorporated a policy for considering financial redress (where appropriate).

- If mistakes are identified, procedures are reviewed to ensure they mitigate the risk of a repeat. An example is in the review of how we identify and advertise 'sensitive lets'. This review was stimulated by a complaint. We have also amended our Abandonment Flowchart, to clarify the timescales involved.
- An analysis of complaints is now presented to senior officers, and they take ownership of progressing any improvements required, or changes in practice.
- We communicate resulting changes in procedure immediately to Housing Services via the Intranet and Housing News
- An on-line procedure manual, ENLIGHT has been developed to ensure that staff have easy/quick access to relevant guidance. It is updated immediately in response to complaint findings.

#### **9. How do we share lessons with residents, the governing body and in an annual report?**

In the Housing Ombudsman's Complaint Handling Code it states 'A good culture should also recognise the importance of resident involvement, through the formation of resident panels, consulting with residents on the formulation of complaints policies and procedures and through including them in panel hearings as part of the dispute resolution process, where appropriate'.

CCC have a Residents' Panel which meets quarterly, and work is underway to ensure that Housing Services Key Performance Indicators (including complaints), are shared with members. Panel members will be asked to share their thoughts and suggest improvements from a customer point of view. This feedback will be embedded and used to make customer centred improvements to the way the Housing Service deliver day to day service.

An annual complaints report is presented to the Strategy and Resources Scrutiny Committee of the Council and a quarterly complaints report is presented to the Senior Management Team and to Executive Councillors. The report contains a commentary from each Head of Service including reflections on any lessons learned; and is published on the Council's website.

## Housing Ombudsman Self-assessment: Action Plan

### \*Mandatory

Question	Action	Lead	Target date	Notes on progress
1.2	Review the corporate <i>'Unreasonably Persistent Complainants Policy'</i> and <i>'Unreasonable Complainant Behaviour Policy'</i> and consider establishing and publishing a formal overarching 'Complaints Policy' document	Customer Services Operations Manager	June 1 2021	
2.3*	Ensure the council's policy on reasonable adjustments is reflected more explicitly in the Council's Comprehensive Equalities and Diversity Policy	Equality and Anti-Poverty Officer	July 1 2021	
2.1	Investigate introducing Govmetric satisfaction monitoring (or similar) into email footers for Supported Housing, City Homes and repairs handling staff who correspond with the public	Transformation Consultant	December 2021 (tbc)	
2.1	Review how we handle social media complaints, particularly in the light of maintaining anonymity and confidentiality	Corporate Marketing and Communications Manager	December 2021	
2.1	Improve how quickly customers can reach information on how to complain on the corporate website	Digital and Web Manager	June 1 2021	
2.4	Improve proactive promotion of our complaints process, and promotion of the dispute support services provided by the Housing Ombudsman Service (HOS). This could be achieved via the website, via Open Door, and by including standard paragraphs in template letters	Digital and Web Manager; Housing Services Manager (Supported Housing); Customer Services Operations Manager	Sept 30 2021	
2.4	Add information about the complaints process to Service Standards documents relating to housing services	Policy & Performance Officers	March 31 2021	

<b>3.6</b>	Develop new housing-related response templates in the Complaints Tracker system which refer to the respective jurisdictions of the HOS and Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman (LGSCO)	Business Development Manager	December 31 2020	
	Investigate incorporating tracking of complaints which are escalated to the Ombudsman into the Complaints Tracker system, for consistency and ease of reporting.	Business Development Manager	March 31 2021	
<b>3.6; 6.1; 6.2</b>	Review and update the Housing Service Complaints Handling Procedure (2019) to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Ensure staff have clear guidance on the respective jurisdictions of the HOS and LGSCO, and the difference in the escalation rules.</li> <li>– Include a section on support and representation arrangements.</li> <li>– Provide guidance on explaining policies clearly and succinctly, without reference to sector jargon, acronyms or irrelevant legislation.</li> </ul>	Policy & Performance Officers	March 31 2021	
<b>4.10*</b>	Introduce monitoring of customer satisfaction with the handling of each complaint	Business Development Manager	March 31 2021	
<b>5.1*</b>	Identify a secure but efficient way of transferring large quantities of documents to the HOS	3CICT	TBC <sup>2</sup>	
<b>8.3</b>	Give the Resident Panel a summary of the Annual Complaints Report before it goes to Strategy and Resources Scrutiny Committee.	Business Development Manager; Housing Services Manager	Next committee meeting (July 2021)	

<sup>2</sup> Data sharing with external organisations via Microsoft Teams requires Council Anywhere Transformation Organisational Link (CATOL) approval. Due to meet in 2021.

		(Supported Housing)		
<b>8.3</b>	Meet with the Residents Panel and present options for how they could be more involved with the complaints process, as per recommendations in the <a href="#">Charter for Social Housing Residents Whitepaper (2020)</a>	Housing Services Manager (Supported Housing)	March 31 2021	



Item

## **PROCUREMENT OF CONTRACT TO CARRY OUT STRUCTURAL REPAIRS TO COUNCIL BLOCKS OF FLATS - 2021**

**To:**

Councillor Richard Johnson, Executive Councillor for Housing  
Housing Scrutiny Committee 19/01/21

**Report by:**

Lynn Thomas, Head of Housing Maintenance and Assets  
Tel: 01223 - 457831

Email: [Lynn.thomas@cambridge.gov.uk](mailto:Lynn.thomas@cambridge.gov.uk)

**Wards affected:**

Arbury, Trumpington, Coleridge

Key Decision

### **1. Executive Summary**

The Council owns a number of blocks of flats built in the 1950s and 1960s. Many of these flats have structural concrete elements. Further to a report submitted to Housing Scrutiny Committee in January 2020, Estates and Facilities have been surveying blocks of flats that have three stories or more and a further list of properties where structural repair work is required has been identified. Details designs are underway, and the work now needs to be tendered in order to award a contract(s) to a building contractor.

## **2. Recommendations**

The Executive Councillor is recommended to:

Approve the issue of tenders and, following evaluation of tenders, authorise the Strategic Director (following consultation with Executive Councillor, Chair and Spokes of the Committee) to award a contract(s) to a contractor(s) to carry out structural repairs and associated repair works to Council housing flats.

## **3. Background**

Estates and Facilities have been identifying and surveying blocks of flats built in the 1950s and 1960s to identify where repair work is required.

A report was submitted to committee in January 2020 covering works to maisonettes and flats at Hawkins Road, Ekin Road and flats above shops in Colville Road. This work has been procured and is due to be completed in summer 2021 (N.B. Colville Road has been omitted from the programme as it is to be redeveloped.)

A further programme of work is now being developed at blocks of flats including Hanover Court, Princess Court, Cockerel Road, Rutland Close, Brackley Close, Fordwich Close, Perse Way, Fanshaw Road, and Davy Road.

The Council has engaged design and project management consultants (Mace) to carry out detailed structural surveys and produce a specification for the works. This will include invasive surveys concrete testing and drainage surveys.

As the value of the proposed work is estimated to be more than £1,000,000 the tender and award of a contract is a key decision.

### **3.1 Details of proposed work**

#### **Hanover Court and Princess Court**

The proposed work is:

- Masonry repairs
- Completion of concrete repairs to balcony beams
- Replacement of metal screens to balconies
- Re-routing of downpipes and alterations to drainage
- Upgrade handrails and roof protection

- Safety upgrades to communal staircases and landing balustrades
- Drainage repairs
- Minor roofing works and bin chute alterations
- Fire compartment improvements between flats and service risers (potential)
- Landlord electrical supply replacement (potential)

The masonry and concrete repairs are a continuation of work that was started in 2018/19. Due to the nature of this repair work and the fact the blocks are five and eight stories high, additional work came to light that had not been identified at the start of the last project. These repairs have been left in a safe condition but have not been fully completed.

### **3.2 South Arbury Maisonettes and flats**

These maisonettes and flats were built in the early to mid-1960's and consist various configurations for flats and maisonettes in three and four storey blocks.

The work proposed is:

- Remedial works to walkway / balcony slabs, balustrading and canopies (over communal walkways and communal entrance doors)
- Remedial works to masonry walls
- Reinforced concrete remedial works
- Remedial works to the access core staircases and rear balconies (to raise balustrading, and any openings greater than 100mm reduced by addition of steelwork, to comply with the HHSRS regulations)
- Replacement of the landlord's electrical distribution system, including an upgrade to the communal lighting system and to include emergency lights
- Remedial works to rainwater goods and underground drainage
- Install a waterproof membrane MMA (Methyl Methacrylate) resin flooring system to those blocks that do not already have it.
- Internal and External decoration where required
- Drainage repairs and alterations where required

### **3.3 Fanshaw Road and Davy Road flats**

- Concrete repairs including repairs to exposed concrete beams
- Repairs to shed blocks including roofing works and footpaths
- Brickwork repairs to balcony walls

- Remedial works to the access core staircases and rear balconies (to raise balustrading, and any openings greater than 100mm reduced by addition of steelwork, to comply with the HHSRS regulations)
- Drainage repairs where required
- Replacement of canopy roofs with new GRP canopies
- Resurfacing of the balconies with a waterproof membrane
- Replacement of concrete window boxes with new GRP window boxes
- Internal and external decoration

### 3.4 Estimated costs

<b>Hanover and Princess Court</b>				
	<b>Estimated cost of work</b>	<b>Fees</b>	<b>Contingency</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Hanover Court 1-78</b>	£810,000	£160,000	£80,000	£1,050,000
<b>Princess Court 1-49</b>	£550,000	£110,000	£50,000	£710,000
	<b>£1,360,000</b>	<b>£270,000</b>	<b>£150,000</b>	<b>£1,760,000</b>

<b>South Arbury Maisonettes and flats</b>				
	<b>Estimated cost of work</b>	<b>Fees</b>	<b>Contingency</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Cockerell Road</b> 30 - 52 (3 storey) 54 - 76 (4 storey) 78 -100 (3 storey) 102 -124 (4 storey) 126 -148 (3 storey) 150 -172 (4 storey)	£600,000	£120,000	£60,000	£780,000
<b>Rutland Close</b> 2-24 - (4-storey) 26-48 (4-storey)	£300,000	60,000	£30,000	£390,000
<b>Brackley Close</b> 2-24 (3-storey) 26-48 (3-storey)	£300,000	60,000	£30,000	£390,000
<b>Fordwich Close</b> 2-24 (4-storey)	£150,000	£30,000	£15,000	£195,000

<b>Perse Way</b> 37-67 (4-storey) 69-91 (3-storey)	£100,000	£20,000	£10,000	£130,000
	<b>£1,450,000</b>	<b>£290,000</b>	<b>£145,000</b>	<b>£1,885,000</b>

<b>Fanshawe and Davy Road flats</b>				
	<b>Estimated cost of work</b>	<b>Fees</b>	<b>Contingency</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Fanshawe Road</b> 12 –14b (3-storey) 16- 26b (3-storey) 28- 30b (3-storey)	£210,000	£40,000	£20,000	£270,000
<b>Davy Road</b> 2 - 28b (3-storey) 10- 20b (3-storey) 22- 28b (3-storey)	£210,000	£40,000	£20,000	£270,000
	<b>£420,000</b>	<b>£80,000</b>	<b>£40,000</b>	<b>£540,000</b>

Estimated costs include estimated cost of works, contractor's costs, design costs and contingency up to March 2021.

## 4. Implications

### a) Financial Implications

A budget for the estimated cost of this work was established in 20/21 and there is provision in the HRA capital plan to cover the cost of this work from a combination of the Wall Structure budget and the Decent Homes Backlog budget.

It is expected that leaseholders will be recharged for their share of the cost, subject to the completion of a S20 consultation process.

**b) Staffing Implications**

The work will be managed by the Estates and Facilities team. It is intended to procure design and project management services to assist with delivery of this project.

Project consultants will be managed by the Estates and Facilities surveying team.

City Homes staff will be responsible for arranging S20 consultation documentation to leaseholders.

**c) Equality and Poverty Implications**

An Equality Impact Assessment is not required – this project is repair work only

**d) Environmental Implications**

The Council's climate change rating tool has been completed to assess the environmental implications of this proposal.

The assessment is that there is Nil net overall impact.

There is possibly a small positive impact from the installation of new communal and emergency lighting in some blocks which will be LED lighting with improved controls to minimize energy use.

#### **e) Procurement Implications**

The work will be procured via open tender on the Council's procurement portal.

It is intended to deliver the work in two separate contracts:

1. Hanover Court and Princess Court
2. Arbury flats and maisonettes, including Fanshaw and Davy Road.

Depending on survey results and the final design it may be better value for money to split item two into separate contracts. In this case there would be three separate contracts.

The corporate procurement team will be involved in the project team and the Council's legal team will provide contract advice.

#### **f) Community Safety Implications**

Essential repairs to structural concrete, steel handrails, balconies and walkways in these blocks of flats will ensure that residents remain safe in well maintained accommodation.

Concrete and masonry repairs are required to remove risk of loose masonry and concrete falling and causing injury.

Emergency lighting installations will improve safety

### **5. Consultation and communication considerations**

In summer 2019 estate information letters were sent out to affected residents to advise them that specialist structural building surveys, investigations, and monitoring to the blocks had been completed and as a result of these investigations the Council was planning a programme of essential repairs and maintenance. (N.B. this did not include Fordwich Close or Perse Way)

Update letters are being sent to all residents in January 2021.

Resident consultation meetings would normally be planned to take place once the work is approved, but this may not be possible at present due to Covid 19 and social distancing rules.

A "Section 20" consultation will be completed for all affected leaseholders. This is required before the work can be tendered. Further

consultation will take place after tenders are received and contracts awarded.

As part of the development of this project Estates and Facilities have consulted with City Homes and the Housing Development team and their comments have been incorporated into the proposed scope of works.

**6. Background papers**

None

**7. Appendices**

None

**8. Inspection of papers**

To inspect the background papers or if you have a query on the report please contact Will Barfield, Asset Manager  
Tel: 01223 457843  
email: [will.barfield@cambridge.gov.uk](mailto:will.barfield@cambridge.gov.uk)



Item

## Estates & Facilities Service Review and Compliance

### Update

**To:**

Councillor Richard Johnson, Executive Councillor for Housing  
Housing Scrutiny Committee 19<sup>th</sup> January 2021

**Report by:**

Lynn Thomas, Head of Housing Maintenance and Assets  
Tel: 01223 457831 Email: lynn.thomas@cambridge.gov.uk

**Wards affected:**

All Wards

This report is for information and not for decision.

### 1. Executive Summary

The report provides an update on the Estates & Facilities Service Review and information on compliance related work within the service, including a summary on gas servicing, electrical testing and fire safety work.

### 2. Recommendations

The Executive Councillor is recommended to note the progress of the service review and compliance related work detailed within the report.

### 3. E&F Service Review Update

This is a further update to that provided during the last Housing Scrutiny Committee in September.

The service review has consisted of more than the restructure of staff, we identified 6 themes from a series of consultation and work shop events with the staff within the service, tenants reps, and colleagues across the organisation that we work closely with, based around the four guiding principles of:

- Customers
- Business
- Value
- Risk

These themes were:

- Structure
- Responsibility and Accountability
- Efficiency & Effectiveness
- Performance Management
- Risk Management
- Communication and Engagement

Within these themes we identified action plans to achieve the transformation required within our service delivery and behavioral and cultural change of staff to achieve the improvements within the service in the six identified themes that underpins my mission for the service, “To be a customer focused and business-like Estates & Facilities Service that manages and maintains the Council’s housing stock and other buildings in a safe, efficient and financially sustainable manner.” There have been 74 actions identified, me and the Estates & Facilities Service Managers have been working on these actions during the past year and so far, we have completed 72% of them. A proportion of the remaining actions are relating to embedding the new repairs scheduling system and the implementation of Orchard Asset modules and will be updated over the course of their roll out.

We have continued to actively recruit to the newly identified posts and existing vacancies within the staffing restructure that was approved in July. We have now advertised all posts except the trade apprenticeships, these are being worked upon with local colleges and will be advertised in the spring 2021. A number of new staff have already joined us with others due to start early next year. Some posts are being re-advertised where we have been unable to appoint to the roles in the previous recruitment process. The members of staff that were given notice of redundancy have now left the organisation.

## **4. Compliance Progress report**

### **4.1 Gas Servicing**

Mears are contracted to complete our gas servicing and maintenance. The table below shows their performance since January 2020 and prior to

January they have constantly achieved 100% compliance. From April – September we changed the approach for gaining access in line with the Covid-19 guidance issued at that time to take in consideration those tenants that were self-isolating and shielding. Since September we have been following our usual approach in obtaining access for gas servicing. Our Officers have been working with Mears to ensure we return to full compliance as soon as possible. You will see from the table below that we have reduced the number of properties out of compliance and at the time of writing the report this has improved further to 14 properties, 7 of these are in the process to gain access.

	Jan 20	Feb 20	Mar 20	May 20	June 20	July 20
<b>Services completed</b>	686	803	642	605	625	781
<b>service compliance</b>	100%	100%	100%	99%	99%	99%
<b>overdue within month</b>	0	0	0	2	56	74

	Aug 20	Sept 20	Oct 20	Nov 20
<b>Services completed</b>	462	649	561	535
<b>service compliance</b>	99%	99%	99%	99%
<b>overdue within month</b>	87	85	48	27

#### 4.2 Electrical Testing

All properties that are planned for electrical testing this financial year have been ordered with our contractor TSG Building Services. Due to Coronavirus the start of work was postponed until 1/8/20. All tenants have been contacted and to the end of November 243 electrical hard wire tests had been undertaken. Testing is ongoing although gaining access remains to be an issue for the contractors despite the implementation of the incentive prize draw.

#### 4.3 Fire Safety

The following fire safety measures have been ordered with our contractors and are being programmed for delivery in 20/21:

1. Installation of internal fire doors and fire protection to 188 above ground floor maisonettes.

A pilot study identified some additional works to internal walls, the program has commenced with all tenants being written to and the first batch of surveys undertaken. These results have been provided to officers to review and remaining surveys are ongoing.

2. Installation of external fire doors to over 300 fire doors at Hanover Court, Princess Court, Kingsway flats and other flats

Within Kingsway, Hanover and Princess on the 3<sup>rd</sup> December, 97% of the doors have been either completed or in progress/booked. We are currently working with colleagues in City Homes where we have been unable to gain access to the other 3% of flats. Progress is now being made in completing fire doors within the other flat blocks in the program.

3. Continuation of the program to replace all non-compliant "Manse" fire doors

The program to replace these doors is now almost complete.

4. Installation of new emergency lighting in blocks of flats in the Hawkins Road estate

This work has been tendered and will be completed as part of a larger structural works project; at this stage the electrical works are anticipated to take place during February 2021.

5. Improvements to vents and glazing facing onto escape routes in 84 locations

Our Officers are currently working with our contractors to determine the extent of the work required at the various locations, all tenants are being written to so access arrangements can be made.

6. Continuation of the heat detector installation program to all properties

Due to Coronavirus the start of these works was postponed until 1/8/20. All tenants have been contacted by the contractors and to the end of November 30% of the program has been completed. The contractors have been experiencing difficulties in gaining access to properties.

## 7. Continuation of the smoke detector replacement program

Due to Coronavirus the start of these works was postponed until 1/8/20. All tenants have been contacted by the contractors and to the end of November 30% of the program have been completed. The contractors have been experiencing difficulties in gaining access to properties.

## 8. Fire compartmentation works to houses that have been converted into flats

This work has been ordered with our contractor, who have written to residents requesting to arrange access. Access has been obtained to one property but unfortunately access has not been gained to other flats and therefore no work has commenced yet. Officers are working with the contractors to obtain access.

When major capital work taking place in line with the Decent Homes Standard is proposed to tenants, they have the option to refuse or decline replacement or installation where there is not a detriment to the fabric of the building. However, where the work is of a health and safety nature or forms part of legislation, such as gas servicing, urgent asbestos removal, fire prevention, electrical work (where the installation could be dangerous) this is not the case.

Our contractors use an agreed four-stage contact process with tenants via letter or phone call. Once contractors have completed this process, and access is not arranged, the properties are returned to the Council.

Where tenants tell us they do not want work completed, we ask them to sign a "waiver form." In the waiver form, the tenant acknowledges that they will be removed from the scheduled programme of work and their home may not meet the Decent Homes standard. If a tenant withdraws from any programme of heating work, electrical work, or work to address an identified HHSRS hazard, they are informed no other Decent Homes work will be completed until we are allowed access to do the heating, electric or HHSRS work.

If there is no response, then a final letter is sent that reminds residents that their tenancy agreement requires them to agree access. If there is still no response, then the property is removed from the scheduled programme of work.

## **5. Implications**

### **5.1 Financial Implications**

There are no new financial implications directly relating to the content of this report.

### **5.2 Staffing Implications**

There are no new staffing implications directly relating to this report. The service review restructure holds staffing implications that are dealt with through the organisational change policy, formal consultation, and implementation process.

### **5.3 Equality & Poverty Implications**

There are no new equality and poverty implications associated with this report. An EQIA has been developed for the service restructure and is included within the formal implementation papers.

### **5.4 Environmental Implications**

There are no new environmental implications directly relating to the content of this report.

### **5.5 Procurement Implications**

There are no new procurement implications directly relating to the content of this report.

### **5.6 Consultation and Communication**

Consultation with tenant and leaseholder representatives is an integral part of the Housing Scrutiny Committee.

### **5.7 Community Safety**

There are no new community safety implications directly relating to the content of this report.

## **6. Background Papers**

Background papers used to compile this report:

- a) Estates & Facilities Service Review Consultation Paper
- b) Estates & Facilities Service Review Implementation Paper

To inspect the background papers or if you have a query on the report please contact Lynn Thomas, Head of Housing Maintenance and Assets, Tel: 01223 457831, email: [lynn.thomas@cambridge.gov.uk](mailto:lynn.thomas@cambridge.gov.uk).

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Item

## **CAMBRIDGESHIRE HOME IMPROVEMENT AGENCY – WORKS FRAMEWORK PROCUREMENT**

**To:**

Councillor Richard Johnson, Executive Councillor for Housing  
Housing Scrutiny Committee 19/01/2021

**Report by:**

Frances Swann, Manager, Cambs HIA

Tel: 01954 713456 Email: frances.swann@cambshia.org

**Wards affected:**

All

### Key Decision

#### **1. Executive Summary**

- 1.1 Cambridge City Council are the lead authority with overall management responsibility for the Cambridgeshire Home Improvement Agency (CHIA) shared service. In accordance with the city council's corporate governance, this report seeks approval for the CHIA Board's decision to procure new contractors for delivery of adaptations work managed by the Agency. In total, the service manages over £3.7m worth of [disabled] adaptation and repairs work each year. The value of the procurement covered by this report is projected to be about £9.6m over four years and is in addition to other existing contracts. The contract term is initially two years with an option for two one-year extensions and tendering will be subject to the procurement regulations as they exist at the time.

## **2. Recommendations**

The Executive councillor is recommended:

- 2.1 To approve the CHIA board's decision to proceed with a procurement exercise for up to four years for the provision of three contracts for adaptation and repairs related work.
- 2.2 To authorise CHIA to invite, evaluate tenders and to award contracts to suitable bidders following a competitive tender evaluation process.

## **3. Background**

- 3.1 Cambridgeshire Home Improvement Agency (CHIA) was established as a shared service on behalf of City Council, Huntingdonshire District Council and South Cambridgeshire District Council in 2012 and delivers adaptations and repairs work for elderly and disabled adults and children.
- 3.2 The Agency works closely with Occupational Therapists who assess the clinical needs of clients and make recommendations to the Agency for the type of work required. The Agency is then responsible for designing the work, securing the disabled facilities grant funding on behalf of the client, commissioning the works, liaising with the contractors, and overseeing the works throughout the build stage.
- 3.3 The adaptation work is largely funded from Disabled Facilities Grants (DFG's) allocated by central government or from Special Purpose Assistance Grants (SPA's) funded by Cambridge City and South Cambridgeshire District Council. Additionally, the Agency delivers a small amount of non-grant aided adaptation work for those who, following a means test, are not eligible for grant and still require help to adapt or repair their home.
- 3.4 The total anticipated value of the proposed contracts is £9.6m over four years. It is proposed that the contracts will be awarded in lots with the first proposed start date towards the Summer 2021.
- 3.5 Currently, the arrangement for procuring works by the CHIA comprises a mixture of call offs from two existing sets of contracts for 1) equipment and 2) bathroom and kitchens. All other works are procured in an individual basis via a mini competition exercise using the LGSS pro contract tendering portal.

- 3.6 The proposed procurement and contracts will ensure that Cambs HIA is compliant with the Procurement Regulations. It will ensure that there is standardisation in specifications and access to pre-tendered and fixed and variable price contractors / suppliers who will be able to deliver all work in much shorter timescales and at more competitive rates. Importantly, the simplified delivery model, made possible with the contracts in place, will enable grant applications to be processed and completed much quicker and at lower overall cost.
- 3.7 Local contractors will be encouraged to tender for construction works specific to their operational area which will be important given the large geographical coverage of the three partner authorities. The intention is to appoint several contractors per Lot.
- 3.8 The Lots and their anticipated value over four years will be as follows:
- |  |            |
|--|------------|
| Lifts (stairlifts, step lifts and through floor lifts) | £1,076 000 |
| Kitchens and Bathrooms                                 | £4,528 000 |
| Minor Building Works (all other building works)        | £4,000 000 |
- 3.9 This is part of a suite of £12m worth of contracts being procured in the next 12 months including heating and smaller equipment contracts. Whilst Cambs HIA procures and manages the work on behalf of the shared service, each contract will be between the relevant district council and the successful suppliers.

## **4. Implications**

### **a) Financial Implications**

Availability of priced and standardised specifications for disabled adaptation work will reduce not only the costs of actual construction work but just as importantly this initiative should ensure a reduced overall staff time required to administer and manage each project.

### **b) Staffing Implications**

None.

### **c) Equality and Poverty Implications**

There is evidence that suggests that people with a long-term health condition are more likely to suffer from the effects of poor housing. Installing building components that improve energy efficiency also contribute to reduced fuel costs for customers.

The provision of adapted homes for disabled people also helps improve inequalities by enabling people to feel safer for longer in their own home.

### **d) Environmental Implications**

Work specifications will be written to maximise opportunities to improve energy efficiency including low energy light fittings, replacement window and doors and high efficiency boilers or heat pumps where practicable.

### **e) Procurement Implications**

Covered elsewhere in the report

### **f) Community Safety Implications**

There are no community safety implications

### **g) Consultation and communication considerations**

Cambs HIA will consult with all three partner authorities who are all fully represented on the HIA Board.

Consultation where appropriate, will also include representatives from the Occupational Therapy Service in Cambridgeshire who are closely involved with CHIA in the design and delivery of Disabled Facility Grant approved schemes.

Cambs HIA attaches a code of conduct for all contractors which has been written based in part on customer feedback.

## **5. Background papers**

None

## **6. Appendices**

None

## **7. Inspection of papers**

To inspect the background papers or if you have a query on the report please contact Frances Swann, tel: 01954 713456, email: frances.swann@cambshia.org.

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## Item

# FEASIBILITY STUDY FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF SELECTIVE LICENSING IN THE CITY OF CAMBRIDGE - PUBLICATION AND ACTIONING THE RECOMENDATIONS

Councillor Richard Johnson, Executive Councillor for Housing  
Housing Scrutiny Committee 19<sup>th</sup> January 2021

Report by: Claire Adelizzi, Team Manager – Residential, Environmental Services

Tel: 01223 - 457724

Email: [Claire.adelizzi@cambridge.gov.uk](mailto:Claire.adelizzi@cambridge.gov.uk)

### **Wards affected:**

All

## Non-Key Decision

### **1. Executive Summary**

- 1.1 An independent feasibility study has been conducted into the need for selective licensing of private rented properties within Cambridge City. The study was for the purpose of identifying if it was appropriate for the Council to implement a scheme, please see Appendix A, Feasibility Study Report.
- 1.2 In addition to mandatory licensing of houses in multiple occupation, HMO's, local authorities can introduce certain discretionary licensing in relation to the private rented sector within their area. This discretionary licensing is in the form of selective licensing for all privately rented properties in a designated area and/or additional licensing for only HMO's which do not fall under mandatory licensing criteria. Please note that additional licensing was not in scope for this feasibility study and prior to implementation would require an additional evidence base focused on issues specific to HMO's only.

At this stage this was not considered necessary following the extension of mandatory licensing from October 2018 meaning that more HMO's are now subject to licensing.

1.3 Section 3 of the Housing Act 2004 places a duty on all local housing authorities to keep the housing conditions in their area under review, with a view to identifying any action that may need to be taken.

1.4 As part of the feasibility study specific geographical areas within the city were assessed against six general conditions specified within Part 3 of the Housing Act 2004 for making a selective licensing designation:

- Low housing demand
- A significant and persistent problem with anti-social behaviour
- Poor property conditions
- High levels of migration
- High levels of deprivation
- High levels of crime

Modelled, anecdotal and actual data was used to conduct this analysis. Relevant data relating to Cambridge City being compared against national averages.

1.5 The summary of the report findings recommended that selective licensing is not an appropriate tool within Cambridge at this time. The report went on to make recommendations around other courses of action available to the Council at this time to ensure continuous improvement of private rented sector homes within the City. The recommendations for action are:

- Targeted enforcement of properties not meeting the Minimum Energy Efficiency Standards Regulations, MEES, with EPC ratings below E.
- Procuring software that can accurately assess category 1 hazards dealt with at ward/LSOA level.
- Work to set up an enforcement group to share intelligence across regulatory services within the council as well as with external stakeholders including the Fire Service.

- Targeted proactive work around HMOs within the applicable Lower Layer Super Output Areas, (LSOA's), within the City.

1.6 In line with targeted enforcement it is also recommended that the Feasibility Study Report is released into the public domain to increase customer and stakeholder understanding of the action Cambridge City Council is taking to ensure continuous improvement of the private rented sector within the City.

## **2.0 Recommendations**

The Executive Councillor is recommended to:

- 2.1 Agree that the Feasibility Study Report, Appendix A, can be released into the public domain as appropriate.
- 2.2 Agree the actions outlined within this Committee Report to address recommendations of the Feasibility Study Report throughout 2021/22, continuing the Council's focus of improving and sustaining the quality of the private rented sector within the City.

## **3. Background**

- 3.1 Cambridge City has 14 wards. The 2011 Census showed that there were 46,714 households in the city of which 26% or 12,258 were rented privately. Between Census 2001 and Census 2011 there was a 40% increase in the privately rented households in the City.
- 3.2 When the Housing Act 2004 came into force, (April 2006), the general conditions for selective licensing were to tackle problems such as low housing demand or levels of anti-social behavior (ASB).
- 3.3 In April 2015, a new general approval came into force. This means that local authorities need only obtain confirmation from the Secretary of State for discretionary licensing schemes covering over 20% of a geographical area or constituting 20% or greater of the LA's PRS. Schemes that fall below 20% coverage do not need this approval. However, all proposals need an extensive consultation period and may be subject to judicial review.
- 3.4 Guidance produced by the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG, now known as the Ministry of Housing

Communities and Local Government, MHCLG) in March 2015 stated that local authorities may only make a designation if the area has a high proportion of property in the private rented sector. Nationally the private rented sector currently makes up 19% of the total housing stock in England. Therefore, if an area has more than 19% PRS it can be considered as having a high proportion of privately rented properties.

- 3.5 To be considered for selective licensing, an area must be made up of 20% or more privately rented properties. In the absence of clear guidelines as to what constitutes an area, central government consider an area as either a ward or Lower Layer Super Output Area (LSOA).
- 3.6 LSOAs are a geographic hierarchy designed to improve the reporting of small area statistics in England and Wales. LSOAs have an average population of 1500 people or 650 households. A lot more data is available directly at LSOA level. These Small geographical areas known LSOAs within the city were assessed against the six general conditions set out within the Housing Act 2004 in terms of making a selective licensing designation.
- 3.7 There are 34 eligible LSOAs in Cambridge containing more than 20% privately rented properties. These were highlighted as potential candidates for selective licensing and were assessed across the six conditions as defined in the legislation. Each of the conditions were evaluated in turn and the main indicator for each condition was mapped and the following was determined:
  - Low housing demand, high levels of migration or high levels of deprivation do not affect any of our 34 candidate lower super output areas.
  - Three wards identified as containing high levels of excess cold hazards also contained the highest number of solid wall construction properties.
  - ASB and Crime were mostly prevalent in and around the city centre and as such were classed as outliers for the purposes of this study as this cannot be directly attributed to the housing.

- 3.8 Using Modelled, anecdotal and actual data Cambridge data was compared against national averages. Three of the six criteria identified low housing demand, migration and deprivation, were found not to apply due to the affluency and high housing demand in the city. The remaining criteria were found to be applicable in sporadic areas where there were other outlier factors contributing to increased rates in relation to certain condition criteria.
- 3.9 Cambridge was found to have typical crime and anti-social behavior rates, that would be expected for any city of its size and the housing stock is said to be in a typical condition, given the age and construction types. For these reasons, the implementation of selective licensing would not be deemed an appropriate course of action, at this time as no major areas of concern have come to light as a result of the feasibility study.
- 3.10 Although the report concludes that at this stage selective licensing is not an appropriate tool within the city, recommendations have been made which can be proactively actioned specifically by the Residential Team, Environmental Health, Environmental Services.

### **Actioning the Recommendations**

- 3.11 The recommendations as set out on page 41 of the feasibility study report, Appendix A are as follows with proposed action from April 2021 detailed under each:
- 3.12 Recommendation a -Targeted enforcement of properties not meeting the Minimum Energy Efficiency Regulations, with EPC ratings below E.
- 3.13 Since 1 April 2020, landlords / other persons responsible should not have continued to let properties within the scope of the MEES Regulations if they have an EPC rating below E, unless they have a valid exemption in place.
- 3.14 Enforcement officers within the Residential Team will continue their work to reactively address and enforce the requirements of the MEES Regulations appropriately and in line with the Councils Enforcement Policy, Appendix B in terms of cases that come to the attention of the service.

- 3.15 It is proposed that proactive work will also be undertaken to target those properties within the City identified as being privately rented with an EPC rating below E for which there are understood to be in excess of 400 within the City when taking into consideration data drawn from the Ministry of Housing Communities and Local Government, (*MHCLG*) datasets, Appendix C. This will involve investigation and targeted enforcement through information gathering with the Council initially working to encourage landlords to improve a property's energy rating to E or register an exemption where appropriate. Encouragement of landlords / other responsible persons to make necessary improvements will include signposting to applicable funding that may be available to improve energy efficiency in homes as well as communicating that the Government are indicating the minimum energy efficiency banding will be raised to at least a C rating in future and thus encouraging their investment in achieving higher than an E rating at this stage.
- 3.16 Where informal approaches to landlords / responsible persons do not work enforcement action will be taken in line with the provisions of the regulations and the Councils Enforcement Policy, Appendix B.
- 3.17 The outcome of this proactive targeted work can be reported via the Environmental Health Operational Plan and corporate KPI's for 2021/22 as appropriate.
- 3.18 It is worth mentioning that preliminary work has already been done to date to produce an officer procedure and template documentation in respect of this for use when actioning such cases in line with the requirements of the regulations. Newsletter content and additional e-mail updates have also been forwarded to landlords / property managers that the team have an established contact list for bringing the requirements of the regulations to their attention and providing them with relevant contact details for the team in terms of any queries they may have relating to this.
- 3.19 Recommendation b - Procure software that can accurately assess category 1 hazards dealt with at ward/LSOA level.
- 3.20 Currently Environmental Health are in the process of migrating to a new database system and provider, Tascomi, for which regard is being had to this recommendation as part of system configuration.

- 3.21 Recommendation c - Prior to Covid-19 lockdown, an enforcement group was going to be set up to share intelligence across regulatory services within the council as well as with external stakeholders including the Fire Service. The implementation of this is highly recommended to help with targeted enforcement of rogue landlords.
- 3.22 It is proposed that the formation of this group is pursued with colleagues from Planning and Building Control as well as Cambridgeshire Fire & Rescue Service who the Residential Team already work closely with in terms of intelligence sharing and assistance to each other where necessary. This will also facilitate action in relation to the 'Relevant Observations' outlined across pages 42-44 of the feasibility study report – Appendix A.
- 3.23 Recommendation d - Targeted proactive work around HMOs within the applicable LSOA's within the City and looking for correlations between those HMOs and other factors such as ASB/crime. If any significant links are made, a study could be commissioned for the implementation of additional licensing in the city following this work.
- 3.24 The findings of the feasibility study as well as proactive targeted communication work carried out jointly by the Residential Team and colleagues from Revenues & Benefits during the initial stages of the COVID-19 pandemic has facilitated some additional preparatory work in relation to planning of proposed targeted enforcement work around HMOs within applicable LSOA's within the City. Initial focus is proposed on a compiled list of in the region of 530 properties thought to be HMO's within the lowest percentage decile in terms of deprivation within the City. Further desktop work is needed with regards to this list that has been compiled from both Environmental Health database records and Revenues and Benefits records to identify which addresses the Residential Team may not be currently aware of as HMO's prior to further investigation / enforcement being undertaken specifically in relation to those. Appendix D provides a visual representation of the five wards with the lowest percent decile in terms of deprivation within the City around which this work will be

focussed. Since the implementation of extension of mandatory licensing of HMO's in October 2018 an additional 404 mandatory HMO licences have been issued following both the proactive submission of licence application forms as well as enforcement officers from the Residential Team ensuring that those unlicensed properties that have come to the Council's attention reactively have been licensed and appropriate enforcement action taken where necessary regarding this. By undertaking this proposed targeted work enforcement officers will act to ensure that necessary improvements to housing conditions identified as part of their investigations are undertaken and properties are licensed as necessary and that any associated appropriate enforcement action is taken. This will secure further improvements in the private rented sector within the City.

3.25 The outcome of this proactive targeted work can be reported via the Environmental Health Operational Plan and corporate KPI's for 2021/22 as appropriate. Page: 8

## **4. Implications**

### **a) Financial Implications**

There should not be any financial implications resulting from implementation of the proposed actions in this report. As detailed an element of the proposed proactive work will be undertaken by existing enforcement officers within the team of which there are 6.5 FTE's. Also, currently there is ring fenced income within the Councils Housing Standards cost centre from issue of Financial Penalties for Housing Act offences which can be used in terms of proposed recruitment as detailed within staffing implications below. It is specified within legislation that this income must be used to further housing enforcement.

It is worth noting that enforcement of the MEES regulations involves issue of Financial Penalty Notices of up to a maximum of £5,000 with this income like that detailed above being ring fenced for use to further housing enforcement.

### **b) Staffing Implications**

There is a recognised training need for existing enforcement officers within the Residential Team, Environmental Health in terms of the requirements of the MEES Regulations and officer procedure relating to investigation and enforcement of cases. This can be addressed in house to include ongoing team case review exercises to ensure maintained competency and consistency.

Recruitment of 1x additional fixed term part time officer is proposed to kick start the proactive work in relation to MEES with support from Project Officer from the team and in liaison with colleagues undertaking home energy work from within the Environment Quality & Growth Team within Environmental Health where necessary.

### **c) Equality and Poverty Implications**

An Equality Impact Assessment has been completed and accompanies this report.

### **d) Environmental Implications**

The Councils Climate Change Rating Tool has been used in respect of the implementation of the recommendations in this report and has indicated a Net Medium Positive Rating, particularly in respect of proactive enforcement of MEES regulations owing to the following explanation:

While MEES does not lead to in depth energy efficiency improvements, it does enforce minimum standards across the private rented sector which is the lowest performing tenure in terms of energy efficiency. The scale of properties included in this means we estimate a medium positive outcome due to the energy conservation outcomes, and general positive impact on tenants and their living conditions. A high positive outcome is not considered due to unlikely uptake of renewable energy as a result.

### **e) Procurement Implications**

There are no procurement implications associated with this report.

### **f) Community Safety Implications**

Proposed proactive intervention and improvement work relating to both the physical and management standards of properties within the private rented sector within the City in turn facilitates improved community safety and a reduction in antisocial behavior. All those responsible for private rented

property have a duty to comply with relevant landlord and tenant legislation and ensure that properties under their control are free from significant hazards that may cause harm to occupiers / visitors. Additionally, all those responsible for the management of HMO's have a duty to comply with the requirements of The Houses in Multiple Occupation (England) Regulations 2006 and those responsible for licensable HMO's should take reasonable and practicable steps to prevent or reduce anti-social behaviour by persons occupying or visiting the house as per the conditions of a property licence.

## **5. Consultation and communication considerations**

There is no requirement for consultation in relation to the proposed proactive enforcement of the Councils statutory function in respect of private rented sector properties however it is worth noting the following:

The Residential Team have formed a Landlord Steering Group with whom we consult / communicate as necessary. The Steering Group comprises seven active stakeholders; representing Cambridge University, Anglia Ruskin University, letting agents, property managers & private landlords as well as Cllr Johnson, Executive Councillor for Housing. The Team hosts Landlord Forums and more recently webinars and actively communicates with the landlord / property agent community and local residents within the City via newsletters, e-mail updates, press releases and the Councils website.

## **6. Background papers**

Feasibility Study Report for the Implementation of Selective Licensing in the City of Cambridge

[The Housing act 2004](#)

[The Energy Efficiency \(Private Rented Property\) \(England and Wales\) Regulations 2015](#)

[Minimum Energy Efficiency Standards](#)

## **7. Appendices**

Appendix A - Feasibility Study for the Implementation of Selective Licensing in the City of Cambridge

[Appendix B - CCC Enforcement Policy](#)

[Appendix C – Energy Performance of Buildings Data: England and Wales](#)

Appendix D – HMO – Inspections and Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD)

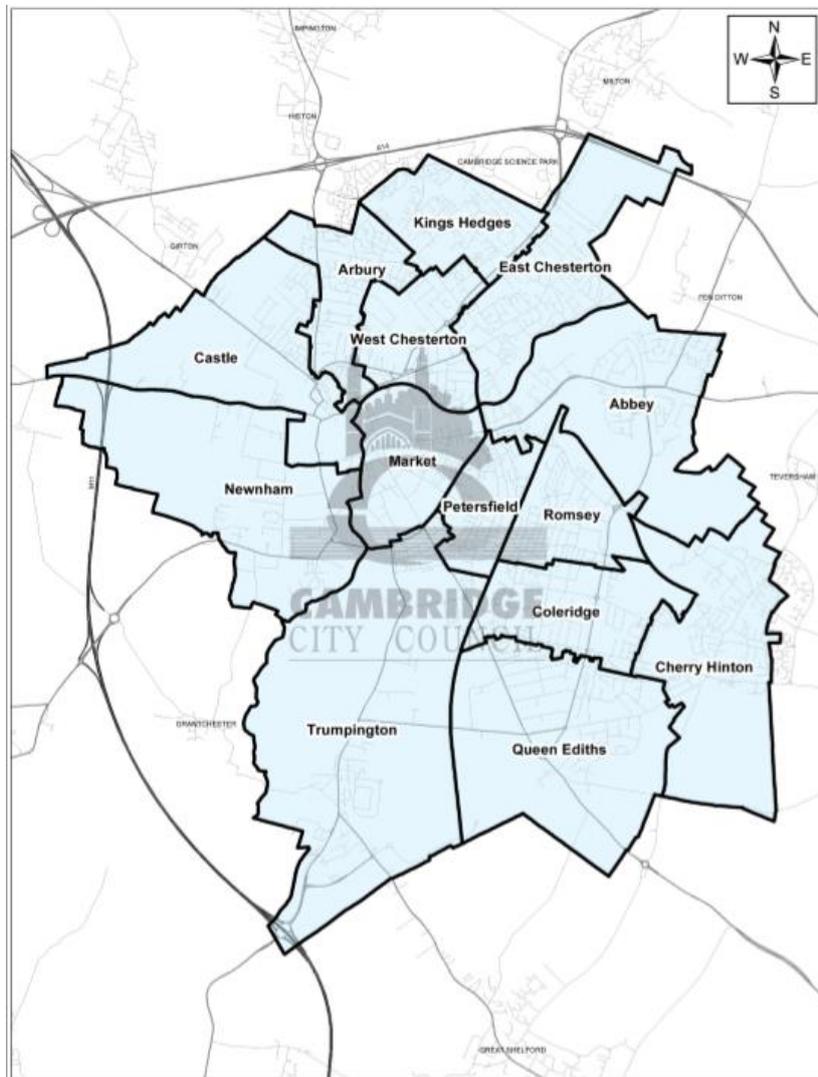
## **8. Inspection of papers**

To inspect the background papers or if you have a query on the report please contact Claire Adelizzi, Team Manager – Residential, Environmental Health, tel: 01223 457724, email: [claire.adelizzi@cambridge.gov.uk](mailto:claire.adelizzi@cambridge.gov.uk).

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## Feasibility Study for the Implementation of Selective Licensing in the City of Cambridge



Ravi Phull BSc MSc MCIEH CEnvH Grad IOSH

## **Foreword**

This study has been conducted in the midst of a national (and international) pandemic of Covid-19. The effects on every aspect of our lives, including personal, social, and economic will be felt for many years to come. Loss of lives, businesses and livelihoods have hit the country in an unprecedented way.

Against this backdrop, caution is advised for any action(s) taken as a result of this study, particularly on the risk of further homelessness to vulnerable residents in the private rented market of Cambridge.

## **Executive Summary**

A feasibility study was commissioned into the implementation of selective licensing of private rented properties in the city of Cambridge.

Small geographical areas within the city were assessed against six criteria set in legislation:

- Low housing demand
- A significant and persistent problem with anti-social behaviour
- Poor property conditions
- High levels of migration
- High levels of deprivation
- High levels of crime

Modelled, anecdotal and actual data were used to conduct this analysis. Cambridge data was compared against national averages.

Three of these criteria; low housing demand, migration and deprivation, were completely eliminated due to the affluency and high housing demand in the city.

The remaining criteria were found to be applicable in sporadic areas where there were other outlier factors contributing to increased rates.

**It is therefore recommended that selective licensing is not an appropriate tool for Cambridge at this time.**

Recommendations are made in the report around other courses of action available to Cambridge City Council.

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## Glossary

**House in Multiple Occupation (HMO)** - Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMO) are a sub-set of properties within the PRS and represent the cheapest rental accommodation- rent by room with the sharing of amenities. The Housing Act 2004 defines HMOs as a “*dwelling of 3 or more persons not forming a single household*”. This definition has been used for the purposes of this report.

**Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS)** - The housing health and safety rating system (HHSRS) is a risk-based evaluation tool to help local authorities identify and protect against potential risks and hazards to health and safety from any deficiencies identified in dwellings. It was introduced under the Housing Act 2004 and applies to residential properties in England and Wales.

**Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB)** The Metropolitan Police define anti-social behaviour in the following way:

There are three main categories for antisocial behaviour, depending on how many people are affected:

- Personal antisocial behaviour is when a person targets a specific individual or group.
- Nuisance antisocial behaviour is when a person causes trouble, annoyance or suffering to a community.
- Environmental antisocial behaviour is when a person’s actions affect the wider environment, such as public spaces or buildings.

**Lower Super Output Area LSOA** - A Lower Super Output Area (LSOA) is a geographic area. Lower Layer Super Output Areas are a geographic hierarchy designed to improve the reporting of small area statistics in England and Wales. LSOAs have an average population of 1500 people or 650 households. A lot more data is available directly at LSOA level.

**Minimum Energy Efficiency** - The Energy Efficiency (Private Rented Property)(England and Wales) Regulations 2015 established the new Minimum Energy Efficiency Standards (MEES) in the residential and commercial private rented sector.

**Energy Performance Certificate (EPC)** – is a certificate that shows how energy efficient a property is.

## **1.0 Feasibility Study**

Section 3 of the Housing Act 2004, places a duty on all local housing authorities to keep the housing conditions in their area under review, with a view to identifying any action that may need to be taken. In compliance with this, Cambridge City Council commissioned the Building Research Establishment in 2015 to conduct a stock condition survey of all private housing stock in Cambridge.

Further to the findings of this report, this feasibility study looks into the need, suitability, and appropriateness for the implementation of Selective Licensing under Part 3 of the Housing Act 2004; on privately rented properties, in Cambridge.

## **2.0 Introduction to Cambridge**

The most recent estimate of the city's population (2018) by the Office for National Statistics (ONS) shows that there were 125,758 people living in just over 50,000 dwellings.

Cambridge City's population is defined by high migration rates and population churn, a young adult population with a preponderance of people between 18 and 26 years of age and an under representation of children and the elderly. The average age of people living in the city is 36 years, one of the lowest in the country. As an international centre of excellence, renowned for its universities and research, it attracts both internal and international migration with around 20,000 people arriving each year – however, a similar number leave the city each year.

According to the Cambridge Centre for Planning and Research, there are about 50,000 students in either full time or part-time study in the city's universities. It is estimated that 5,000 students rent privately in the city (outside of university/college-maintained accommodation or private halls).

Nearly two thirds of the city's residents describe themselves as White British, whilst nearly a fifth describe themselves as BAME. White Other, mainly European, make up a sixth of the population.

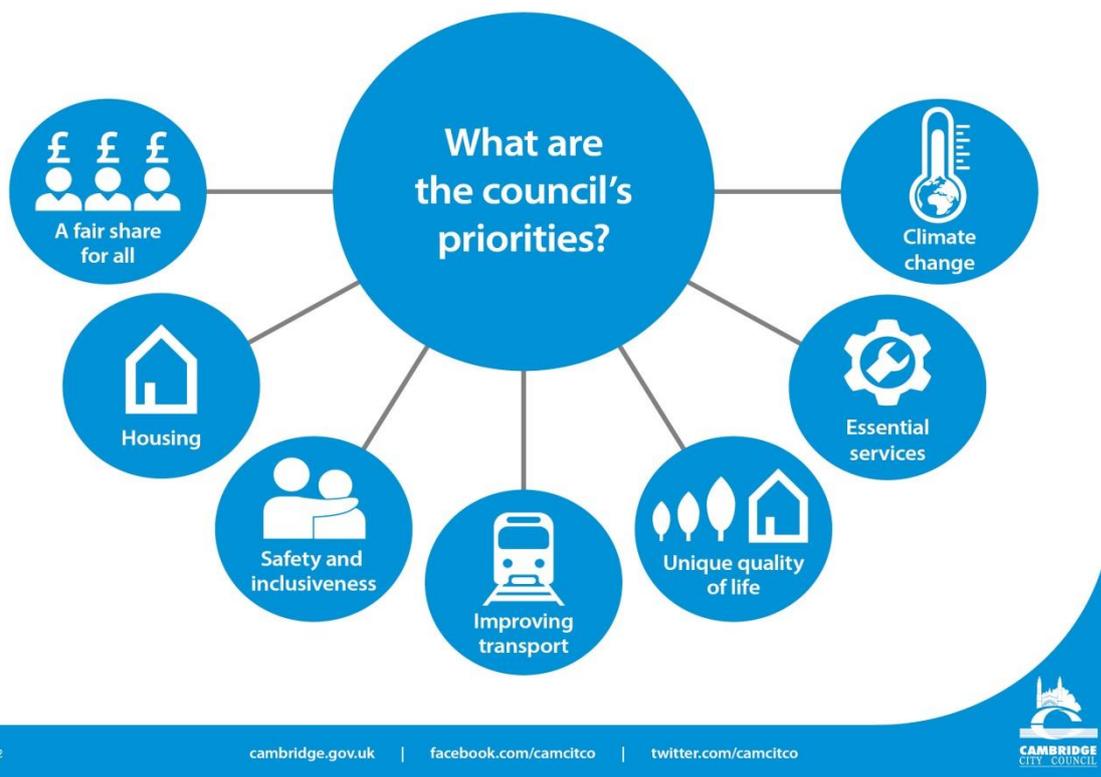
Generally, the health of people living in the city is significantly better than the England average, although this does vary with life expectancy in the city's most deprived areas being 11.6 years lower for men and women.

House prices are generally unaffordable in the city, as reported in the latest Cambridge sub-regional Housing Market Bulletin, for people on lower quartile earnings, with a house price to earnings ratio of 14.4 for lower quartile house prices, one of the highest ratios in the region. Private rents are an average of £1,225 per month, at the higher end within the Broad Rental Market Area, making them difficult to afford for people on lower incomes in the city.

Cambridge is split into 14 wards and has a high level of private renting with up to 26% of the city's households accommodated in this way compared to the national average of 19%. With the average house prices at 40% above national average and the demand for social housing high, additional pressure continues to be placed on the private rented sector.

### 3.0 Council Priorities

Housing is one of the Council's priorities and the private rented sector is seen as an important and increasingly essential part of the Council's housing strategy. It is important as a local authority we sustain the quality of the private rented sector, specifically by improving.



One way in which the Council can look at improving and regulating housing standards is by implementing a discretionary licensing scheme. The council have an important role to play in improving management and conditions in the private rented sector.

### 4.0 Private Rented Sector in Cambridge

Cambridge City has 14 wards. Census 2011 showed that there were 46,714 households in the city of which 26% or 12,258 were rented privately. Between Census 2001 and Census 2011 there was a 40% increase in the privately rented households in the City. Cambridge City is a place of growth and it is estimated by the county council's forecasting model that there will be an additional 10,000 households in place by 2021 as a result of development. The most significant changes forecast in the number of dwellings are for Trumpington ward, at 3,500, and Castle ward, at 2,050.

## **5.0 Licensing Overview**

### **Housing Act 2004 – Mandatory Licensing**

Parts 2 and 3 of The Housing Act 2004 introduced licensing of properties in the private rented sector (PRS). Mandatory licensing of the PRS currently only extends to the licensing of certain Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs), however in October 2018 the definition of mandatory licensing was extended to include more HMOs. Local authorities are still in the process of administering this increase and await to see the impact of this change on the market.

### **Housing Act 2004 – Discretionary Licensing**

Local authorities (LAs) can introduce extra mandatory licensing of the PRS, in the form of selective licensing for all privately rented properties in a designated area and/or additional licensing for only HMOs which do not fall under mandatory licensing.

This report focusses on the feasibility of introducing selective licensing in Cambridge. Additional licensing is not in scope for this study and will require an additional evidence base focused on issues specific to HMOs only.

### **Selective Licensing – General Conditions**

When the Housing Act 2004 came into force, the general conditions for selective licensing were to tackle problems such as low housing demand or levels of anti-social behaviour (ASB). In April 2015, a new general approval came into force. This means that local authorities need only obtain confirmation from the Secretary of State for schemes covering over 20% of a geographical area or constituting 20% or greater of the LA's PRS. Schemes that fall below 20% coverage do not need this approval. However, all proposals need an extensive consultation period and maybe subject to judicial review.

The Selective Licensing of Houses (Additional Conditions) (England) Order 2015 introduced additional conditions for making a scheme:

*3. (1) The following conditions are specified as additional conditions for the purposes of section 80(2)(b) of the 2004 Act, which a local housing authority must consider are satisfied in relation to the area before making a selective licensing designation under this provision— (a) that the area contains a high proportion of properties in the private rented sector, in relation to the total number of properties in the area; (b) that the properties referred to in sub-paragraph (a) are occupied either under assured tenancies or licences to occupy; and (c) that one or more of the sets of conditions in articles 4 to 7 is satisfied.*

Guidance produced by the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG, now known as the Ministry for Communities and Local Government, MHCLG) in March 2015 stated that local authorities may only make a designation if the area has a high proportion of property in the private rented sector. Nationally the private rented sector currently makes up 19% of the total housing stock in England. Therefore, if an area has more than 19% PRS it can be considered as having a high proportion of privately rented properties.

It is important to understand the difference between the two criteria; to be considered for selective licensing, an area must be made up of 20% or more privately rented properties. In the absence of clear guidelines as to what constitutes an area, central government consider an area as either a ward or LSOA.

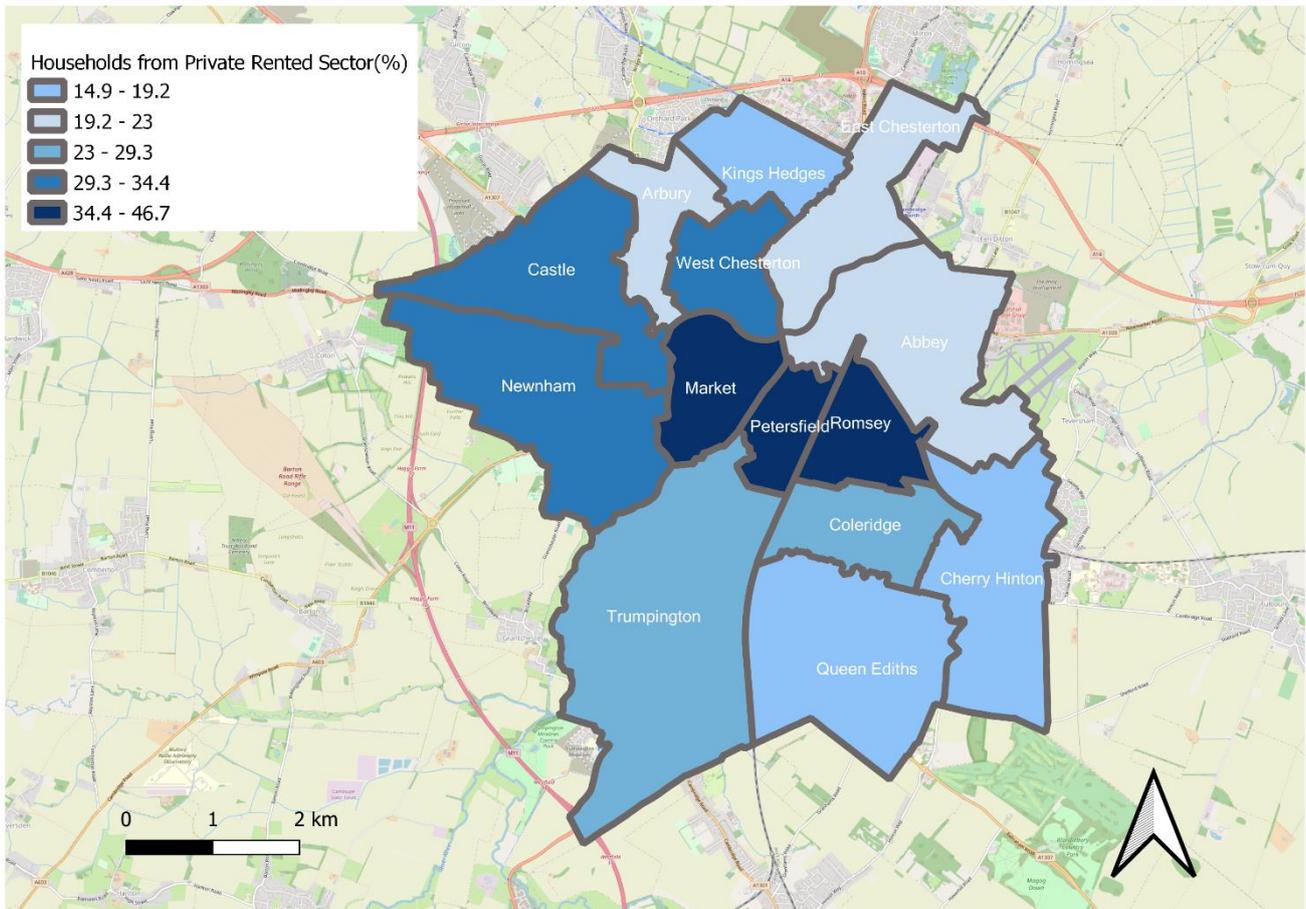
When determining the need for Secretary of State approval, if the cumulative percentage of the above-mentioned wards or LSOAs exceed 20% of the City's private rented sector, approval is needed.

Articles 4 -7 stated in the Regulations refer to housing conditions, migration, deprivation and crime and are analysed in more depth further in this report.

## 6.0 Percentage Private Rented Stock in Cambridge

Map 1 below shows from Census 2011 that there is a greater concentration of private rented households towards the centre of the city, with a lower proportion around the periphery. Market ward has the highest proportion of private rented households at 40% closely followed by Petersfield ward at 38%. The lowest proportion of private rented households fall within Kings Hedges, Cherry Hinton and Queen Edith's wards at around 14%. West Chesterton ward has 31%, whilst Trumpington, Coleridge and Castle wards are around 25%.

**Map 1: Proportion of privately rented properties in Cambridge City by Ward**



Wards within Cambridge are unique compared to other cities, in that they accommodate a diverse housing market within themselves. In a typical Cambridge ward, you can find properties ranging from £300,000 to more than £1 Million on neighbouring streets. This makes a study such as this difficult to conduct at ward level accurately. For this reason, smaller geographical areas known as Lower Super Output Areas (LSOA) were used to assess the need for selective licensing in Cambridge.

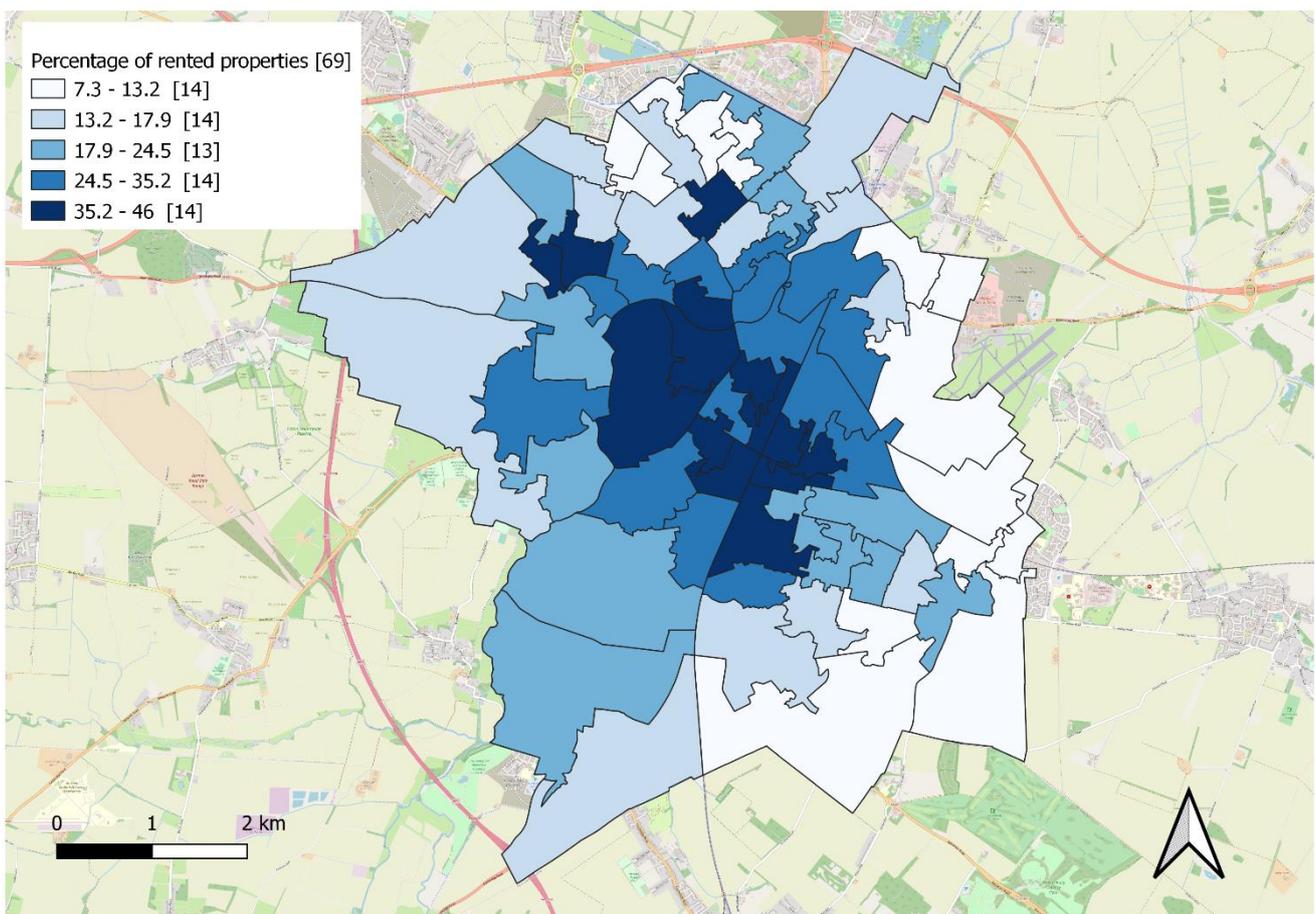
## 7.0 Lower Super Output Area (LSOA)

A Lower Layer Super Output Area (LSOA) is a geographic area. Lower Layer Super Output Areas are a geographic hierarchy designed to improve the reporting of small area statistics in England and Wales. LSOAs have an average population of 1500 people or 650 households. A lot more data is available directly at LSOA level.

People generally tend to be more familiar with wards. However, datasets are often not published directly at ward level. Firstly, because ward boundaries change a lot and are therefore less likely to be consistent over time. Secondly, wards vary greatly in size (anything from 1000 to 30,000 people), and therefore it is difficult to compare different areas to each other.

Cambridge has 69 LSOAs.

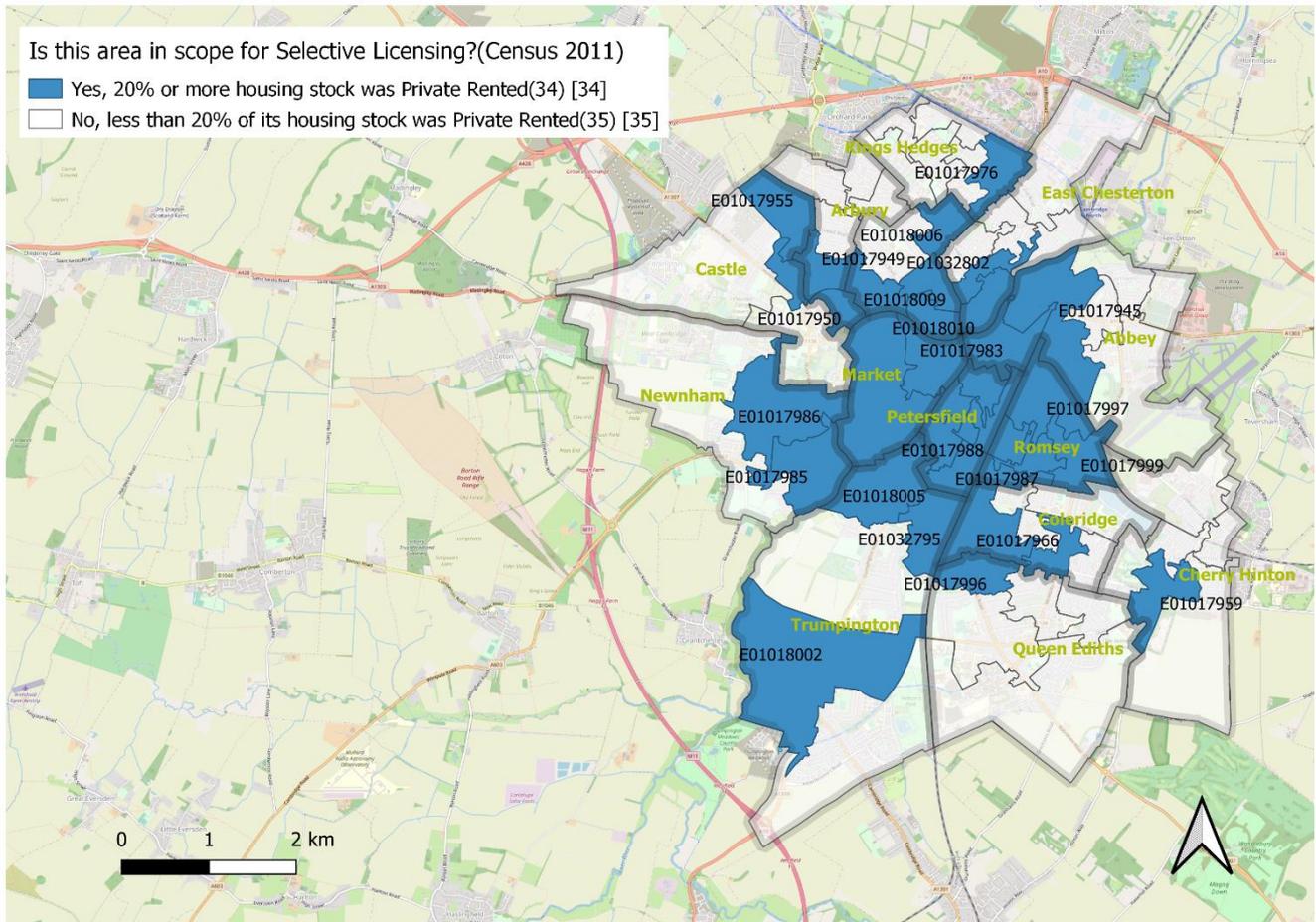
**Map 2 shows that the range for private sector rented households as a proportion of all households in the city's LSOAs is from 46% to 7.3%**



## 8.0 Lower Super Output Areas with more than 20% Private Rented Stock

There are 34 eligible LSOAs in Cambridge containing more than 20% privately rented properties. These are highlighted as potential candidates for selective licensing in Map 3 and listed in Table 1, (pg's 15-16).

**Map 3: The 34 eligible LSOAs for Selective Licensing where private rented stock is over 20%**



**Table 1: LSOAs comprising more than 20% PRS therefore eligible for Selective Licensing**

LSOA Code	LSOA Name	Ward	PRS (%)	Nearest Main Roads	Postcode
E01017990	Cambridge 008D	Petersfield	46	Mill Road	CB1
E01032797	Cambridge 007G	Market	43.3	King Street	CB2
E01017966	Cambridge 010B	Coleridge	42.5	Cherry Hinton Road Coleridge Road	CB1
E01018000	Cambridge 009D	Romsey	42.2	Mill Road	CB1
E01017998	Cambridge 009B	Romsey	41.8	Mill Road	CB1
E01017988	Cambridge 008B	Petersfield	40.8	Mill Road	CB1
E01018001	Cambridge 009E	Romsey	39.3	Mill Road	CB1
E01018010	Cambridge 004E	West Chesterton	38.9	Chesterton Road Elizabeth Way	CB4
E01017949	Cambridge 002A	Arbury	38.4	Histon Road	CB4
E01017989	Cambridge 008C	Petersfield	37.5	East Road	CB1
E01017983	Cambridge 007C	Market	37	Newmarket Rd	CB5
E01017957	Cambridge 005C	Castle	36.1	Histon Road Huntingdon Road	CB4
E01018006	Cambridge 004A	West Chesterton	35.7	Milton Road	CB4
E01017987	Cambridge 008A	Petersfield	35.3	Mill Road	CB1
E01018009	Cambridge 004D	West Chesterton	35.1	Victoria Road Chesterton Road	CB4
E01017943	Cambridge 006A	Abbey	34.9	Newmarket Road	CB5
E01017950	Cambridge 002B	Arbury	33.1	Chesterton Rd Victoria Rd	CB4
E01018005	Cambridge 012D	Trumpington	32.8	Trumpington Road	CB2
E01017945	Cambridge 006C	Abbey	32.2	Newmarket Road	CB5

E01032802	Cambridge 003G	East Chesterton	31.7	High Street Chesterton	CB4
E01017991	Cambridge 008E	Petersfield	28.3	East Road	CB1
E01017986	Cambridge 007F	Newnham	27.6	Grange Road	CB3
E01017997	Cambridge 009A	Romsey	27.4	Coldham's Lane	CB1
E01017999	Cambridge 009C	Romsey	27.4	Brookfields	CB1
E01032792	Cambridge 003F	East Chesterton	26.6	Elizabeth Way Newmarket Road	CB4
E01032795	Cambridge 012F	Trumpington	26.6	Brooklands Avenue	CB2
E01018008	Cambridge 004C	West Chesterton	25.4	Elizabeth Way	CB4
E01017996	Cambridge 013E	Queen Ediths	24.5	Hills Road	CB1
E01018002	Cambridge 012A	Trumpington	24.4	Trumpington High Street	CB2
E01017955	Cambridge 005A	Castle	23	Histon Road	CB4
E01017985	Cambridge 007E	Newnham	22.9	Barton Road Newnham Road	CB3
E01017959	Cambridge 011A	Cherry Hinton	22.3	Cherry Hinton High Street	CB1
E01017968	Cambridge 010D	Coleridge	22.2	Cherry Hinton Rd	CB1
E01017976	Cambridge 001B	Kings Hedges	22	Milton Road	CB4

## 9.0 Analysis of candidate LSOAs based on each criterion for Selective Licensing

The 34 LSOAs eligible for selective licensing were assessed across the six conditions as defined in the legislation. Each of the conditions were evaluated in turn and the main indicator for each condition was mapped.

## 10.0 Data sources for Selective Licensing

**Table 2: List of indicators to evaluate areas for Selective Licensing**

Criteria	Indicators	Time Period	Source
Low Housing Demand	Price to income ratio	2018 – 2019	Cambridge City Council
	Average rent to LHA		
Anti-Social Behaviour	Anti – Social Behaviour (ASB)	Apr 2018 – Mar 2019	Police.uk
	ASB Incidents (Env Health)	Apr 2018 – Mar 2019	Cambridge City Council
Property Conditions	Modelled PRS Hazards	2017	Building Research Establishment (BRE)
	Modelled PRS Disrepair Estimates	2017	Building Research Establishment (BRE)
Migration	Persons resident less than 2 years	2011	Office for National Statistics
	Student Accommodation	2011	Office for National Statistics
Deprivation	Overall Indices of Deprivation	2019	Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government
	Modelled PRS Fuel Poverty	2017	Building Research Establishment (BRE)
Crime	Crime	Apr 2018 – Mar 2019	Police.uk

The remaining four indicators are from Building Research Establishment (BRE)'s housing stock modelling in Cambridge in 2015. BRE's modelling approach provides information of local housing stock status for targeted housing condition improvement. It provides estimates of dwelling levels of house conditions, tenure type and geographical contribution. The data is aggregated by tenure and calculated at LSOA level for PRS housing stocks across the categories of HHSRS category 1

hazard, dwellings in disrepair, fuel poverty, dwellings occupied by a low-income household and estimated numbers of HMOs.

## 11.0 Low Housing Demand

Section 80 of the Housing Act 2004 states the following:

### **Designation of selective licensing areas**

*(1) A local housing authority may designate either (a) the area of their district, or (b) an area in their district, as subject to selective licensing, if the requirements of subsections (2) and (9) are met. (2) The authority must consider that (a) the first or second set of general conditions mentioned in subsection (3) or (6), or (b) any conditions specified in an order under subsection (7) as an additional set of conditions, are satisfied in relation to the area.*

*(3) The first set of general conditions are—*

*(a) that the area is, or is likely to become, an area of low housing demand; and*

*(b) that making a designation will, when combined with other measures taken in the area by the local housing authority, or by other persons together with the local housing authority, contribute to the improvement of the social or economic conditions in the area.*

*(4) In deciding whether an area is, or is likely to become, an area of low housing demand a local housing authority must take into account (among other matters)—*

*(a) the value of residential premises in the area, in comparison to the value of similar premises in other areas which the authority consider to be comparable (whether in terms of types of housing, local amenities, availability of transport or otherwise);*

*(b) the turnover of occupiers of residential premises;*

*(c) the number of residential premises which are available to buy or rent and the length of time for which they remain unoccupied.*

The following extracts from the Greater Cambridge Housing Strategy 2019 – 2023 highlight the fact that the City of Cambridge has the highest housing demand outside of London.

**Fig 1.**

### **The 'Affordability' Challenge**

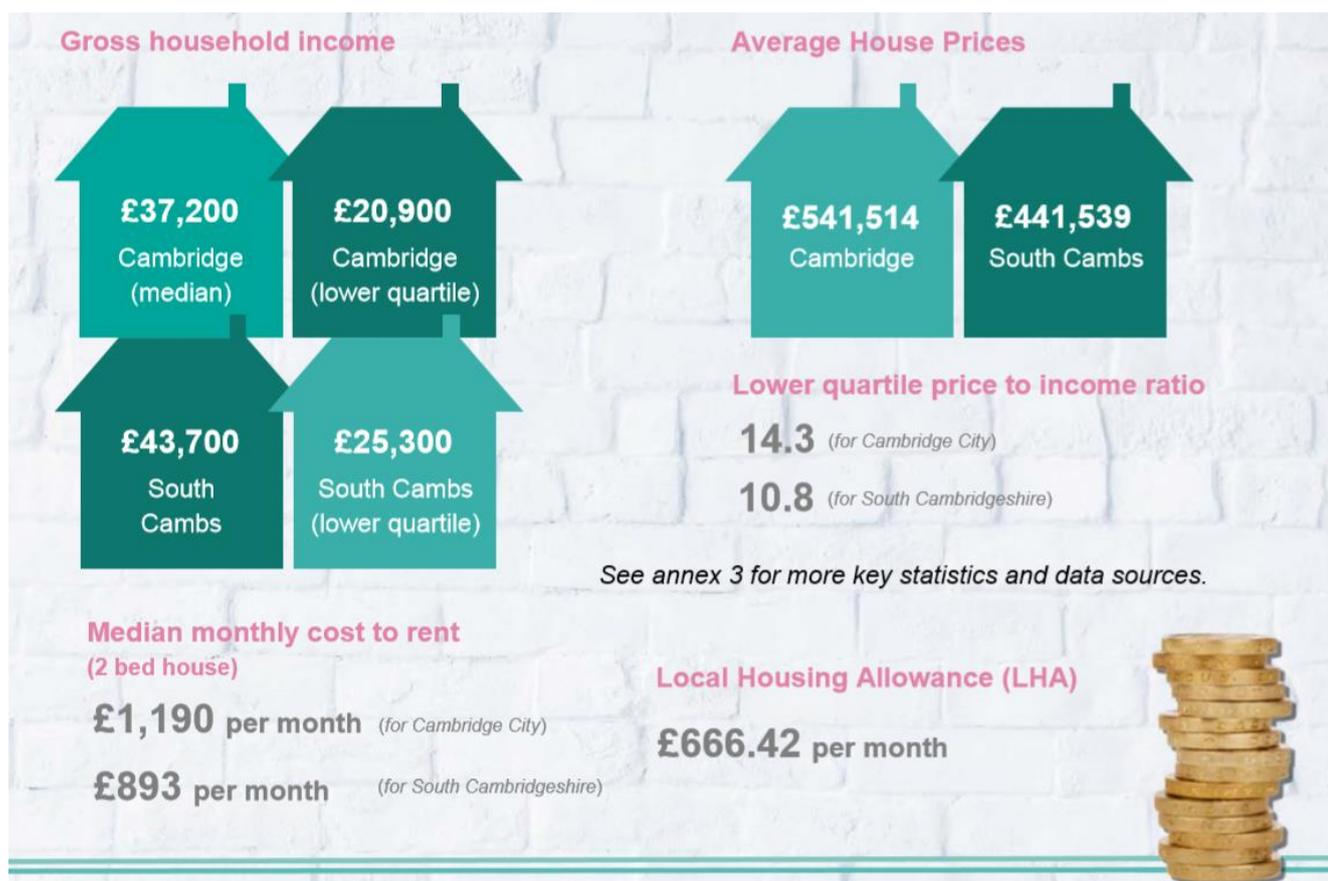
Greater Cambridge is an expensive place to buy or rent a home. High prices are fuelled by high demand, which itself is fuelled by the strength of the local economy and in-migration of highly skilled workers. For those on low incomes, the housing options are scarce with a reliance on social housing for rent; but even so-called 'affordable rent' at up to 80% of market rents is unaffordable to many.

## 12.0 Price to Income Ratio

Figure 2 uses the house price-to-income ratio as an indicator of affordability in Cambridge. House price-to-income ratios are calculated by dividing property prices by annual earnings. For example, if the average property price was £150,000 and the average salary £25,000 the property price to earnings ratio would be 6.

Cambridge is one of seven cities in the country with average house prices above 10 times the average annual earnings.

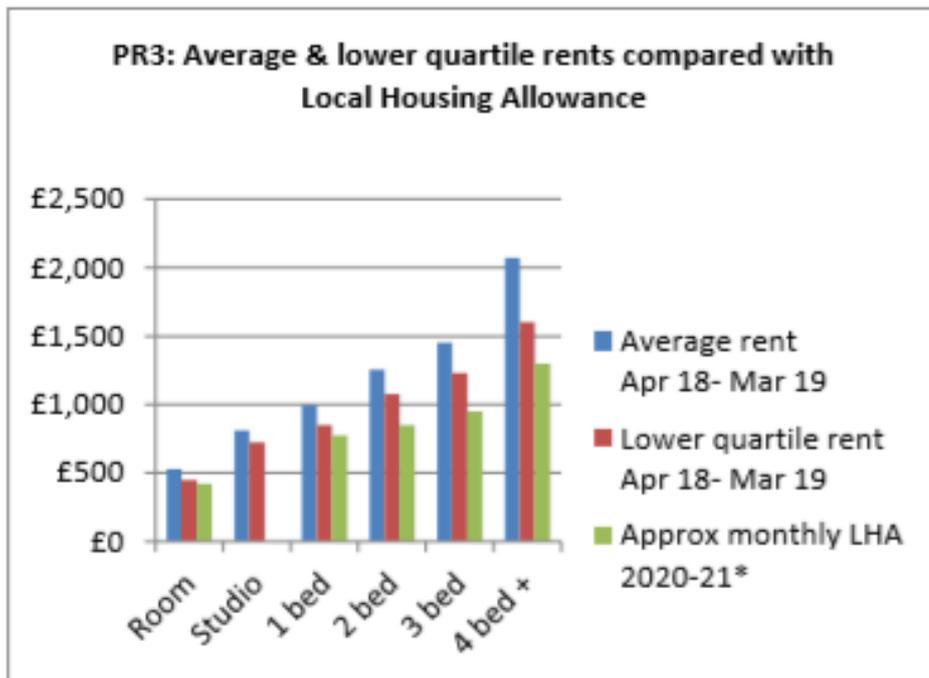
**Fig. 2**



### 13.0 Comparison of Average Rent with Local Housing Allowance

Figures 2 and 3 show the affordability gap between average rents by property size compared with local housing allowance rates. An average family living in a two bedroomed house on local housing allowance would need to top up £523 just in their monthly rent. This gap becomes proportionately greater as property sizes increase. This would potentially price larger low income families out of Cambridge.

**Fig 3**



#### 14.0 Result for Low Housing Demand in Cambridge

The statistics and data cited above, demonstrate without any doubt that Cambridge does not fit into the first selective licensing criteria for an area (or likely to become) of low housing demand.

## 15.0 Significant and Persistent problem caused by Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB)

(6)The second set of general conditions are—

- (a)that the area is experiencing a significant and persistent problem caused by anti-social behaviour;
- (b)that some or all of the private sector landlords who have let premises in the area (whether under leases or licences) are failing to take action to combat the problem that it would be appropriate for them to take; and
- (c)that making a designation will, when combined with other measures taken in the area by the local housing authority, or by other persons together with the local housing authority, lead to a reduction in, or the elimination of, the problem.

## 16.0 What is Anti-Social Behaviour?

The Metropolitan Police define anti-social behaviour in the following way:

There are three main categories for antisocial behaviour, depending on how many people are affected:

- Personal antisocial behaviour is when a person targets a specific individual or group.
- Nuisance antisocial behaviour is when a person causes trouble, annoyance or suffering to a community.
- Environmental antisocial behaviour is when a person's actions affect the wider environment, such as public spaces or buildings.

## 17.0 Anti-Social Behaviour in Cambridge

ASB is measured at a rate of per 1,000 population. The national average ASB rate for England and Wales in 2019-2020 was 25 per 1,000 population. 18 of our 34 candidate LSOAs fell below this national average.

In the remaining 16 LSOAs that recorded higher than the national average; 5 LSOAs recording the highest rates are shown in table 3:

**Table 3**

LSOA Name	Ward	Nearest Main Road, Postcode	ASB Rate per 1000 (Police.uk) 2019 - 2020	Noise & fly tipping complaints to CCC Env. Health (2017-2020)
Cambridge 007G	Market	King Street, CB2	97	160
Cambridge 008E	Petersfield	East Road, CB1	79	67
Cambridge 007C	Market	Newmarket Rd, CB5	73	96

Cambridge 004D	West Chesterton	Victoria Rd, Chesterton Rd, CB4	62	68
Cambridge 012D	Trumpington	Trumpington Road, CB2	52	175

## 18.0 Analysis of Anti-Social Behaviour data

For the purposes of selective licensing, it is important to ascertain if the ASB is coming from privately rented properties where some or all landlords are failing to take action to combat these problems.

It is therefore imperative to understand what factors within these 5 LSOAs may contribute to the levels of ASB. Where LSOA data is not available, ward data has been used.

### Market

Market ward covers the city centre. This is a busy ward with an active street life and night time economy enjoyed by all, including students and visitors into Cambridge. These two particular LSOAs cut straight through the town centre and include Cambridge university sites. There are also a number of rough sleepers and associated begging. There is a street life working group in operation here, who proactively target and assist people such as rough sleepers to get assistance and support.

Between 2017 – 2020 the Council’s environmental health team received only 160 noise and fly tipping complaints from 007G and 96 noise complaints from 007C by formal and informal means.

### PRS in Market

The number of privately rented properties in these two wards is also high with 43.4% of Cambridge 007G being privately rented and Cambridge 007C having 37% PRS.

Census 2011 captured that students in full time education made up 58% of the population in Market ward. This requires further analysis on numbers of houses in multiple occupation and any associated ASB.

### Petersfield (008E)

This LSOA also falls in the city centre, with all the associated issues faced by market ward. Again, complaints to the environmental health team were low at 67 over a three year period.

### PRS in Petersfield (008E)

28% of this LSOA is made up of privately rented properties, however it worth noting that 30% of this LSOA is comprised of social housing.

### **West Chesterton (004D)**

This LSOA falls just on the outskirts of the city centre.

### **PRS in West Chesterton (004D)**

35% of this LSOA comprises privately rented properties.

### **Trumpington (012D)**

This ward has recently seen a huge growth in its housing market. With new housing developments. These are mixed tenure estates including housing association properties. 175 complaints to environmental health were from this LSOA, which are the highest number in our comparison but average at 58 per year.

### **PRS in Trumpington (012D)**

33% of this LSOA is made up of privately rented properties.

## **19.0 Analysis of Environmental Health Data**

Environmental health incidents including fly tipping and noise were collected as representatives for environmental health incidents. Other incidents such as rubbish had relatively low numbers therefore were not included in the analysis.

Between 2017-2020, Noise incidents in LSOAs with over 20% PRS stock were 1543, compared to total noise incidents across the city 4143. Between 2018 to 2019, fly tipping incidents in LSOAs with over 20% PRS stocks are 990; compared to total fly tipping incidents across the city 2107. The low proportion of noise and fly tipping (<50%) suggests that environmental health problems are not typical in those candidate LSOAs in a city wide scale.

## **20.0 Result for Anti-Social Behaviour in Cambridge**

Amongst our 34 candidate LSOAs, 5 of them returned high levels of ASB when compared with the national average. It is however difficult to apportion this ASB predominantly to the PRS. Three of the five LSOAs are situated in the city centre and have a high level of student population. The anti social behaviour team are very proactive in these areas and operate a working group promoting complaints of any ASB nature. This promotion may result in higher levels being recorded as more people now come forward.

Before selective licensing could be considered in these LSOAs, further work would need to be conducted on the prevalence of HMOs in these areas and if it is found that the ASB correlates to the HMOs, additional licensing would be more appropriate than selective.

## 21.0 Housing Conditions

*Conditions in relation to housing conditions 4. The first set of conditions is— (a) that having carried out a review of housing conditions under section 3(1) of the 2004 Act, the local housing authority considers it would be appropriate for a significant number of the properties referred to in article 3(1)(a) to be inspected, with a view to determining whether any category 1 or category 2 hazards exist on the premises(3); (b) that the local housing authority intends to carry out such inspections as referred to in paragraph (a), with a view to carrying out any necessary enforcement action; and (c) that making a designation will, when combined with other measures taken in the area by the local housing authority, or by other persons together with the local housing authority, including any licence conditions imposed under section 90 of the 2004 Act, contribute to an improvement in general housing conditions in the area.*

## 22.0 Housing and Health

The link between housing and health is well researched, understood and accepted. Hazards within a home can lead to accidents, ill health both physically and psychologically. This in turn costs the NHS millions of pounds every year.

With the growing affordability gap, many low to average income households are priced out of the owner-occupied market. This is particularly prevalent in Cambridge as discussed earlier in this report. A lack of social housing means the only tenure available to many households is the private rented sector.

## 23.0 Housing, Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS)

The Housing, Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS) is a measure of 29 hazards within a home, including excess cold, damp and mould growth, falls and food safety. Once identified within a dwelling, these hazards are then categorised into cat 1 and cat 2 hazards. Category 1 hazards are higher risk and the council has a duty to take action, whilst category 2 hazards are lower risk and the council has powers to take action.

## 24.0 Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs)

Houses in Multiple Occupation are further regulated by management regulations, which are the preferred tool used by councils to address issues in HMOs as they are straight offences and do not require the service of a legal notice giving the landlord time to comply before an offence is committed.

## 25.0 Cambridge City Council Private Sector Housing Team

Cambridge City Council deal predominantly with HMOs, this is through complaint work and mandatory licensing. The department deals with poor conditions in these properties very stringently and a number of prosecutions and civil penalties have resulted from their work.

When dealing with complaints from single family dwellings, officers exercise caution so as not to risk homelessness or retaliatory eviction in an already unaffordable market where tenants are limited with choice. An informal approach has worked well with landlords over the years and very few prosecutions or legal action stems from single family properties.

## 26.0 Landlord Steering Group

The private sector housing team hold quarterly landlord steering group meetings. There are seven active stakeholders; representing Cambridge University, Anglia Ruskin University, letting agents, property managers & private landlords as well as the council's Executive Councillor for Housing.

## 27.0 Landlord Forum

In addition to the landlord steering group there is an annual landlord forum for which there is an attendance of 70..

## 28.0 Age profile of Housing Stock in Cambridge

Certain hazards within a dwelling are linked to the age and construction of a property. For example, excess cold is linked to older solid wall or uninsulated cavity wall construction as are falls in homes with steep stairs etc. Table 4 shows the age profile of all housing stock in Cambridge.

**Table 4 Age Profile of Housing Stock in Cambridge (all tenures)**

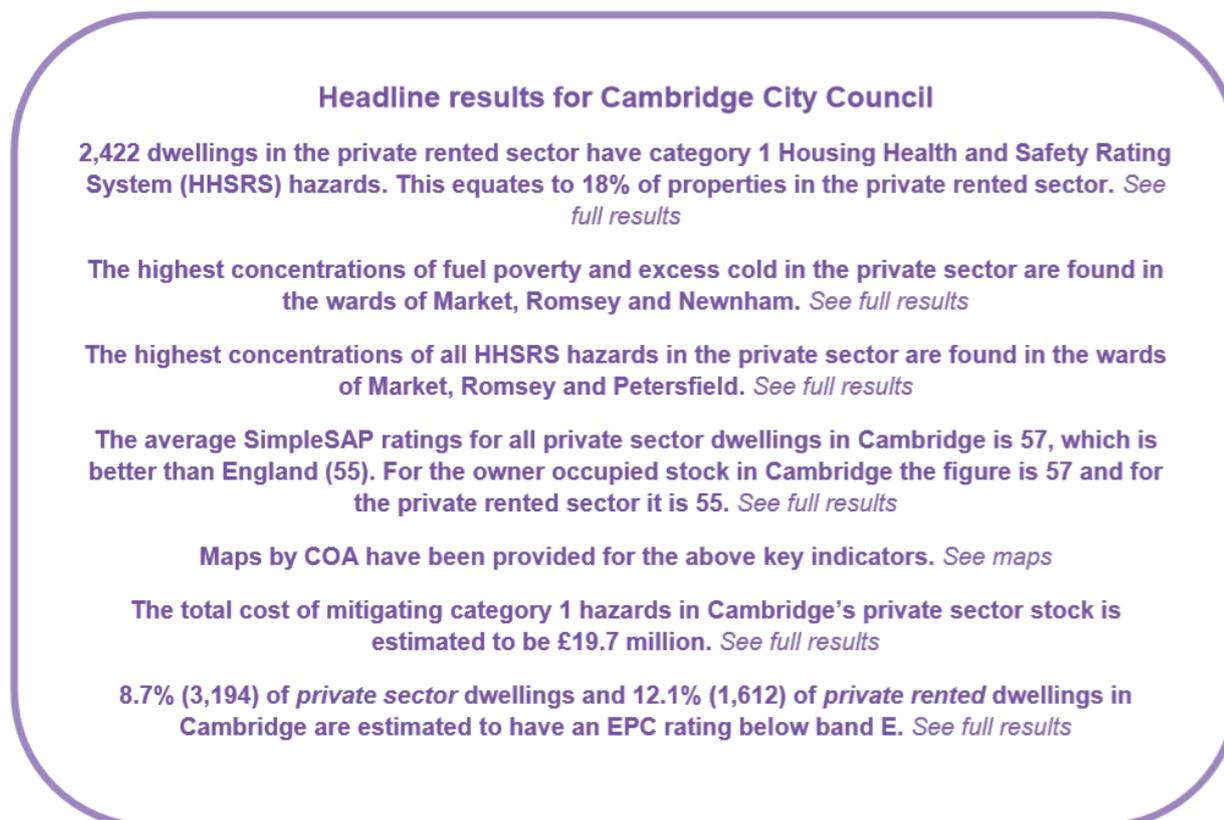
Property Age Profile	Cambridge (%)
Pre 1900	15%
1900-1918	3.9%
1919-1929	3.7%
1930-1939	9.9%
1945-1954	5.1%
1955-1964	10.4%
1965-1972	7.8%
1973-1982	8.8%
1983-1992	6.8%
1993-1999	4.1%
2000-2009	8%
2010-2019	15%

Cambridge has a high proportion of residential properties built pre 1900 and then more recently there has been a period of growth in housing development.

## 29.0 Building Research Establishment (BRE) Stock Condition Survey (2015)

Figure 4 shows the key findings from the BRE report:

**Fig 4 BRE Report Headline**



The BRE modelled that 18% of the PRS in Cambridge have category 1 hazards. This percentage is in line with national averages.

Table 5 shows a sample of local authorities and their percentage PRS containing cat 1 hazards:

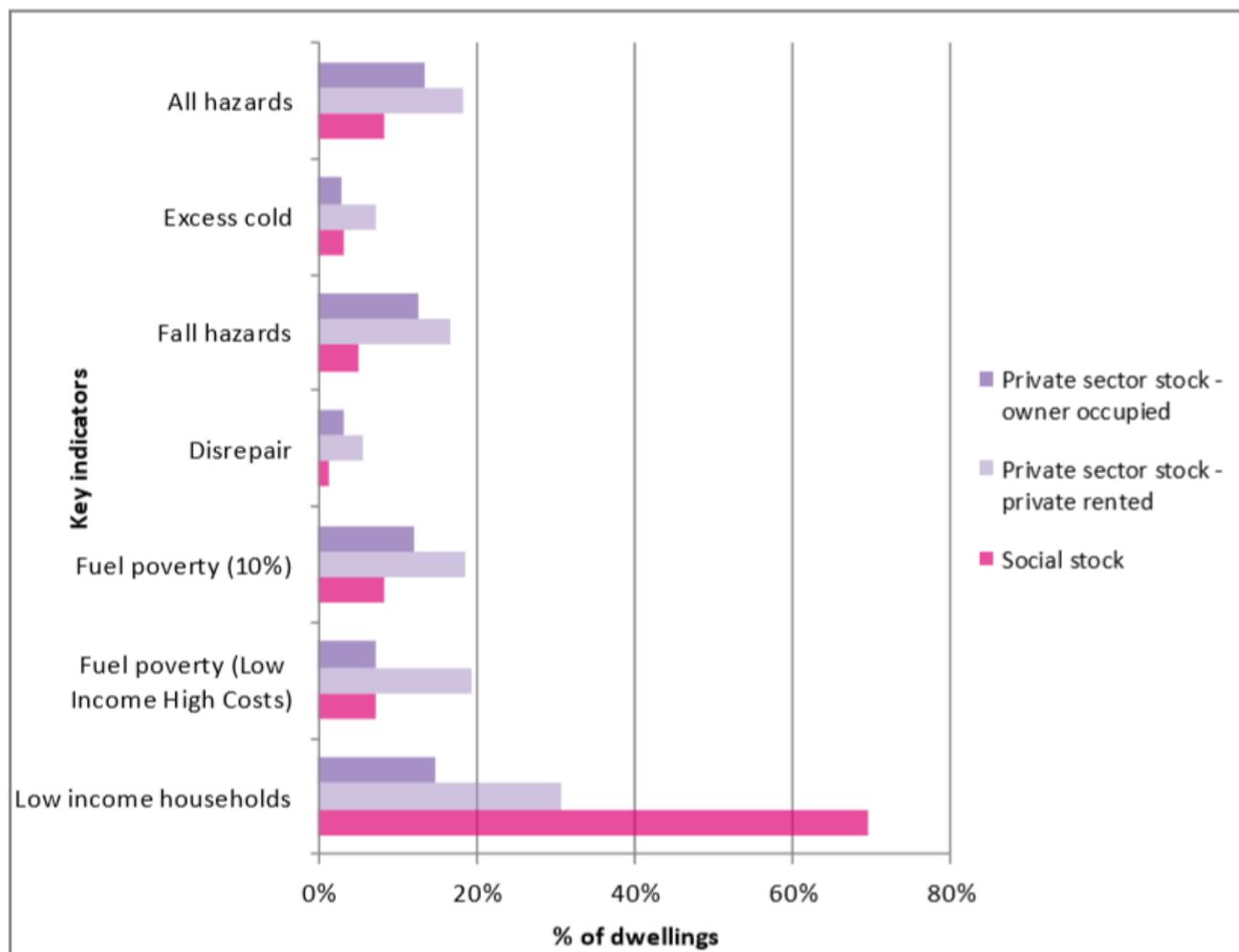
**Table 5 Local Authority comparison**

Local Authority	Percentage PRS containing Cat 1 hazards
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Cambridge	18%
Oxford	17%
East Cambridge	22%
Newcastle upon Lyme	20%
Preston	16%
Liverpool	21%
<b>Average England</b>	<b>15%</b>

Figure 5 shows the hazards broken down in to hazard type and tenure type.

**Figure 5.**



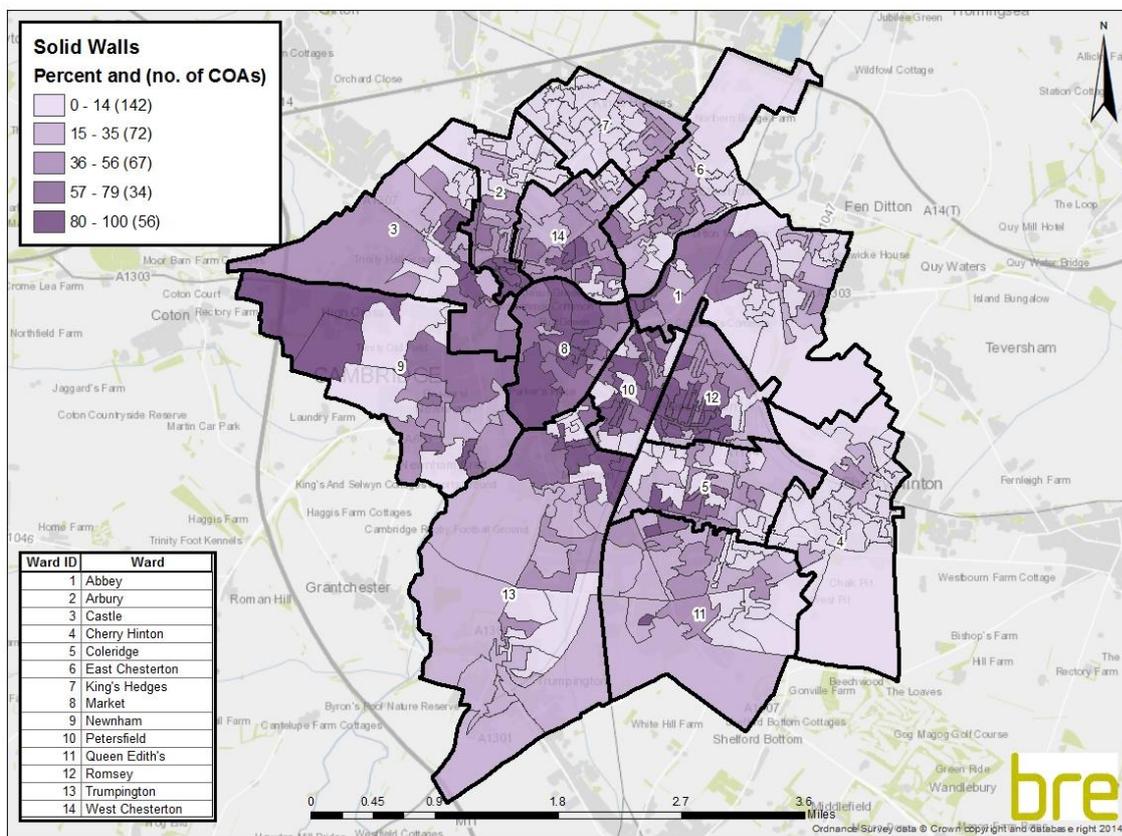
This graph shows that excess cold and fall hazards affect the private rented sector the most in Cambridge. Excess cold seems to be further exacerbated by fuel poverty issues in this tenure type. Hazards linked to disrepair have scored relatively low in comparison.

The BRE report highlights the highest concentration of HHSRS hazards are found in Market, Romsey and Petersfield Wards, these particular statistics are for all private sector properties including owner occupied.

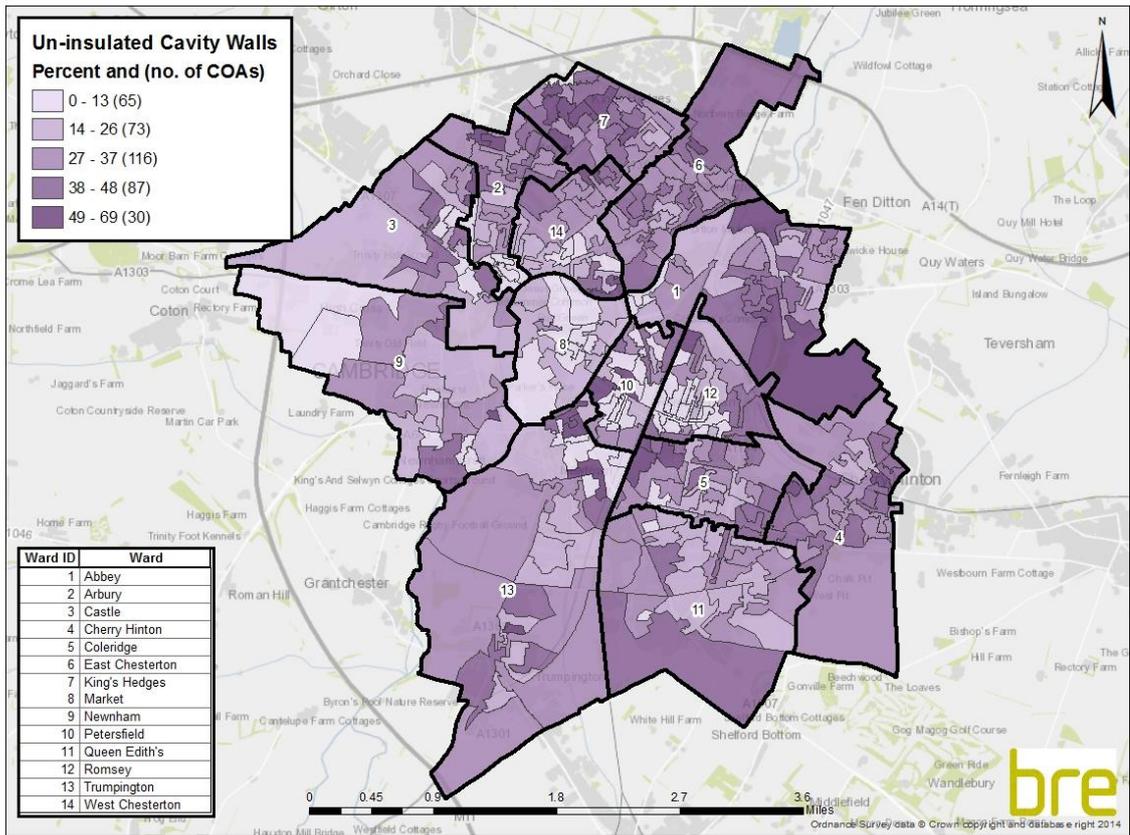
The report further states that the private sectors in Market, Romsey and Newnham wards suffer with the highest levels of fuel poverty and excess cold.

In order to understand the make up of these wards, the following maps show wards with excess cold and compares them to wards with solid wall construction/properties with uninsulated cavity walls to see if these correlate.

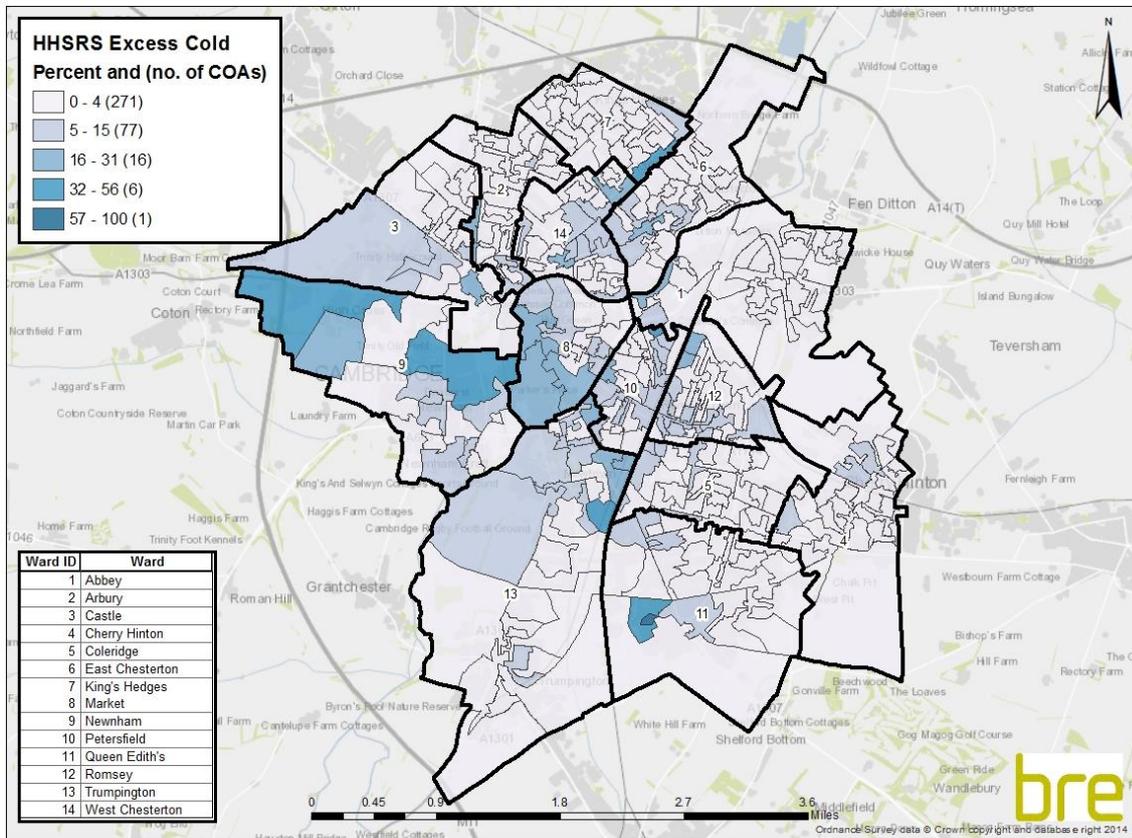
**Map 4 – Percentage Solid Walls by Ward**



**Map 5 – Map 5 Map 5 Percentage Uninsulated Cavity Walls by Ward**



**Map 6 – Percentage Excess Cold by Ward**



Maps 4, 5 and 6 show Market, Romsey, Petersfield and Newnham containing a high percentage of excess cold HHSRS hazards whilst also showing that these are also the same 4 wards with the highest percentage of dwellings with solid wall construction / uninsulated cavity walls.

### **30.0 Private Sector Housing Service Delivery**

Since 2017, the private sector housing team have responded to 789 requests for service from tenants residing in privately rented properties. These are a mix of HMOs and single family dwellings. They have used a variety of tools statutory and/or informal to make these properties safe and fit for habitation. This has resulted in 3 prosecutions and 9 civil penalties against rogue landlords, totalling £38K in fines.

This figure does not include the 748 HMOs which have been mandatorily licenced in the City. Since a change in definition, it is now estimated that a further 700 HMOs will need to be licensed by the team, with no provision for additional resource. For a city, the size of Cambridge this number of HMOs is very high.

### **31.0 Result for Housing Conditions in Cambridge**

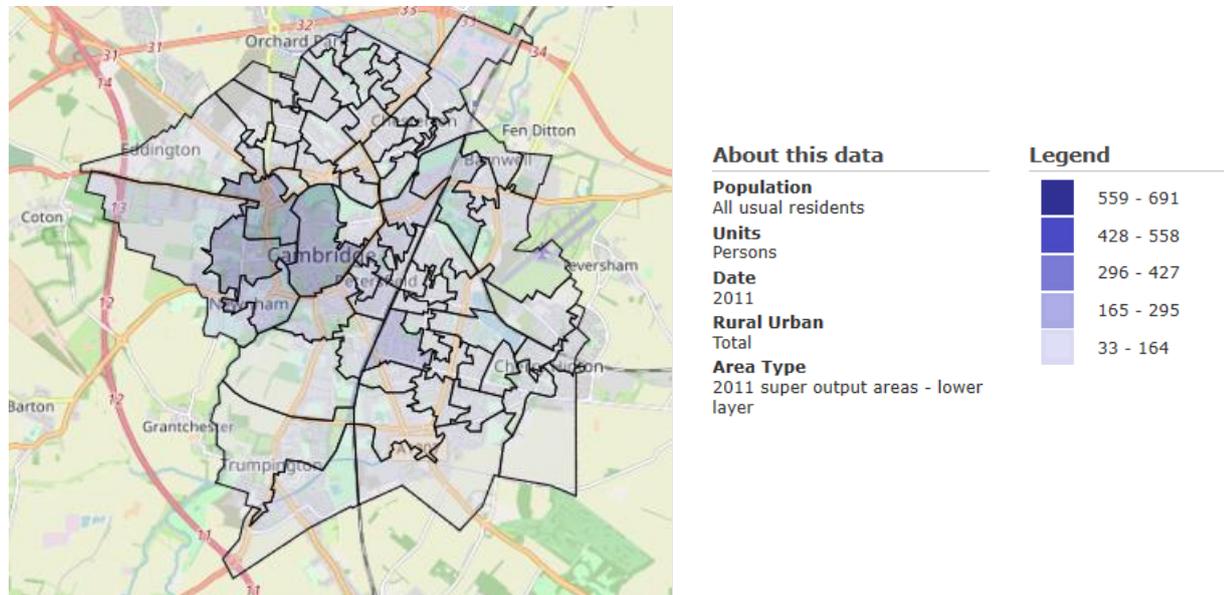
The four wards identified in the BRE report as containing the highest percentage of HHSRS cat 1 hazards, mainly being excess cold were identified as being linked to the construction of properties in those wards. Selective licensing, at this stage, would not be the most appropriate course of action. Targeted enforcement of properties failing the minimum energy efficiency standards with energy performance certificates below an 'E' rating would be a more appropriate course of action.

## 32.0 High levels of Migration

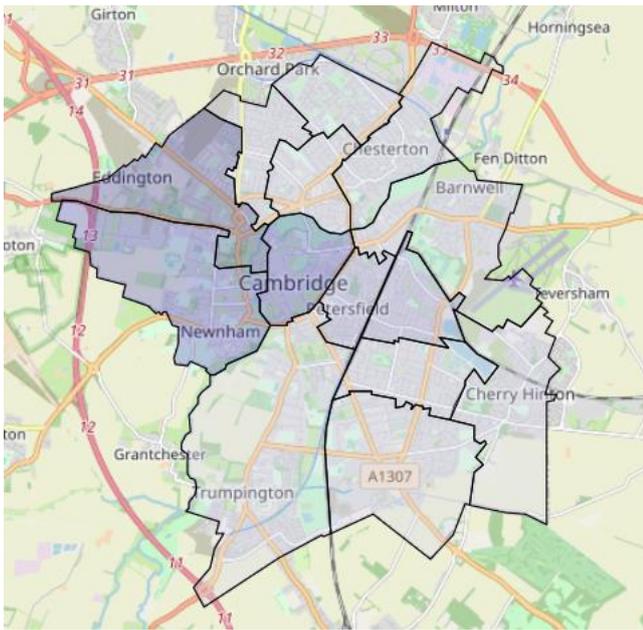
Conditions in relation to migration. The second set of conditions is— (a) that the area has recently experienced or is experiencing an influx of migration into it; (b) that a significant number of the properties referred to in article 3(1)(a) are occupied by those migrants referred to in paragraph (a); and (c) that making a designation will, when combined with other measures taken in the area by the local housing authority, or by other persons together with the local housing authority, contribute to— (i) the preservation or improvement of the social or economic conditions in the area; and (ii) ensuring that the properties referred to in article 3(1)(a) are properly managed, and in particular, that overcrowding is prevented.

The length of residency is the determinant for migration. The highest levels of transience for people whose length of residency is less than 2 years in Cambridge City are shown to be for an LSOA (E01032797) in Market, (E01017956) Castle and (E01017956) Newnham wards. Map 7 shows these LSOAs in dark blue. These areas coincide with concentrations of education accommodation, shown in Map 8. It can be seen that educational accommodation in Castle (5,639), Newnham (4,308) and Market (4,216) hold the largest number of students.

**Map 7: Persons resident less than 2 years**



## Map 8: Concentrations of student accommodation



**Table of data displayed on the map**

Arbury	991
Castle	5639
Cherry Hinton	527
Coleridge	1536
East Chesterton	729
King`s Hedges	642
Market	4216
Newnham	4308
Petersfield	2112
Queen Edith`s	1518
Romsey	1580
Trumpington	1029
West Chesterton	1034

### 33.0 Result for High levels of Migration in Cambridge

This criterion is not met in Cambridge. Migration into Cambridge is hindered by unaffordable rents and house prices. Any transiency can be directly attributed to students living in the city during term times.

### 34.0 High levels of Deprivation

*Conditions in relation to deprivation (1) The third set of conditions is— (a) that the area is suffering from a high level of deprivation, which affects a significant number of the occupiers of properties referred to in article 3(1)(a); and (b) that making a designation will, when combined with other measures taken in the area by the local housing authority, or by other persons together with the local housing authority, contribute to a reduction in the level of deprivation in the area. (2) In determining whether an area is suffering from a high level of deprivation, the local housing authority may have regard to the following factors in relation to the area— (a) the employment status of adults; (b) the average income of households; (c) the health of households; (d) the availability and ease of access to education, training and other services for households;*

Overall, Cambridge City is a relatively prosperous place with an Index of Multiple Deprivation 2019 Rank of Average Score amongst local authorities of 205 (66%) out of the 317 local authorities, with 1 being the most deprived.

Table 6 shows candidate LSOAs and their IMD score.

**Table 6. Index of Multiple Deprivation in Candidate LSOAs**

LSOA Code	LSOA Name	Ward	IMD Decile
E01017945	Cambridge 006C	Abbey	4
E01018009	Cambridge 004D	West Chesterton	4
E01032802	Cambridge 003G	East Chesterton	5
E01017991	Cambridge 008E	Petersfield	5
E01017999	Cambridge 009C	Romsey	5
E01018005	Cambridge 012D	Trumpington	5
E01017943	Cambridge 006A	Abbey	6
E01017949	Cambridge 002A	Arbury	6
E01032797	Cambridge 007G	Market	6
E01017997	Cambridge 009A	Romsey	6
E01017976	Cambridge 001B	Kings Hedges	7
E01017989	Cambridge 008C	Petersfield	7
E01018000	Cambridge 009D	Romsey	7
E01018002	Cambridge 012A	Trumpington	7
E01032795	Cambridge 012F	Trumpington	7
E01017966	Cambridge 010B	Coleridge	8
E01032792	Cambridge 003F	East Chesterton	8

E01017983	Cambridge 007C	Market	8
E01017987	Cambridge 008A	Petersfield	8
E01017990	Cambridge 008D	Petersfield	8
E01018001	Cambridge 009E	Romsey	8
E01017950	Cambridge 002B	Arbury	9
E01017968	Cambridge 010D	Coleridge	9
E01017986	Cambridge 007F	Newnham	9
E01017988	Cambridge 008B	Petersfield	9
E01017998	Cambridge 009B	Romsey	9
E01018006	Cambridge 004A	West Chesterton	9
E01018008	Cambridge 004C	West Chesterton	9
E01018010	Cambridge 004E	West Chesterton	9
E01017955	Cambridge 005A	Castle	10
E01017957	Cambridge 005C	Castle	10
E01017959	Cambridge 011A	Cherry Hinton	10
E01017985	Cambridge 007E	Newnham	10
E01017996	Cambridge 013E	Queen Ediths	10

### **35.0 Result for High Levels of Deprivation in Cambridge**

None of our 34 candidate LSOAs can be classed as suffering from high levels of deprivation. The lowest percentage decile in the candidate LSOAs which falls in Abbey Ward is 30-40%. It is worth noting here that 5 candidate LSOAs fall in the 10<sup>th</sup> decile. This means they are amongst the wealthiest / most affluent LSOAs in the Country.

## 36.0 High levels of Crime

*Conditions in relation to crime 7. The fourth set of conditions is— (a) that the area suffers from high levels of crime; (b) that the criminal activity affects those living in the properties referred to in article 3(1)(a), or other households and businesses in the area; and (c) that making a designation will, when combined with other measures taken in the area by the local housing authority, other persons together with the local housing authority or by the police, contribute to a reduction in the levels of crime in the area, for the benefit of those living in the area.*

When analysing crime rates for the purposes of selective licensing, it is extremely important to understand the context of which crimes within an area can be attributed to areas with a large PRS. City centres will always have high crime rates as these will include shoplifting etc.

### National and City Average Crime Rates

- The national average crime rate (all crimes) for England and Wales for the period 2019 – 2020 was 102.7 per 1,000 population.
- The city average for Cambridge for this time period was 82.3 per 1,000 population.

### LSOA Rates

- For this criterion, candidate LSOAs were compared with the national average excluding ASB, as this has already been discussed separately within this report.
- The national average crime rate excluding ASB for 2019 – 2020 was 78.1.
- The city average for Cambridge was 66.5.
- 15 of the candidate LSOAs recorded a higher than national average crime rate.
- A majority of the LSOAs with the highest crime rates are all associated with the city centre and as such cannot be apportioned fairly to the high levels of PRS within those LSOAs.
- West Chesterton, Abbey and Trumpington also returned high crime rates.

## 37.0 Result for High levels of Crime in Cambridge

The majority of LSOAs recording a high crime rate are within the city centre and as such would class as an outlier in terms of this study. There are a remainder few LSOAs with

higher than average crime rates, but could not warrant a large intervention such as selective licensing in isolation.

### **38.0 Conclusions**

- Low housing demand, high levels of migration or high levels of deprivation do not affect any of our 34 candidate lower super output areas.
- Three wards identified as containing high levels of excess cold hazards also contained the highest number of solid wall construction properties.
- ASB and Crime were mostly prevalent in and around the city centre and as such were classed as outliers for the purposes of this study.

## 39.0 Considerations for Selective Licensing Implementation

The DCLG 2015 guidance states the following:

- *When considering whether to make a selective licensing designation a local housing authority must first identify the objective or objectives that a designation will help it achieve. In other words it must identify whether the area is suffering problems that are caused by or attributable to any of the criteria for making the designation and what it expects the designation to achieve - for example, an improvement in property conditions in the designated area.*

It is important to note that conditions attached to selective licences *cannot* relate to the improvement of property conditions as these powers sit under part 1 of the act and selective licensing sits under part 3. This was tested at the Court of Appeal, Civil Division in the case of *Brown v Hyndburn Borough Council*. This tool is mainly for the management of properties.

- *Secondly, it must also consider whether there are any other courses of action available to it that would achieve the same objective or objectives as the proposed scheme without the need for the designation to be made. For example, if the area is suffering from poor property conditions, is a programme of renewal a viable alternative to making the designation? In areas with Anti-Social Behaviour, where landlords are not taking appropriate action, could an education programme or a voluntary accreditation scheme achieve the same objective as a selective licensing designation?*
- *Only where there is no practical and beneficial alternative to a designation should a scheme be made.*
- *If the local housing authority decides there is no practical and beneficial alternative to the scheme, it must only make the designation if it is satisfied that the scheme will significantly assist it in achieving its objective or objectives, with other actions the local housing authority may be taking.*
- *Any designation made must:*

- *ensure that the exercise of the power is consistent with their overall housing strategy; and*
  - *seek to adopt a co-ordinated approach in connection with dealing with homelessness, empty properties and anti-social behaviour affecting the private rented sector as regards combining licensing with other action taken by them or others.*
- Much has been discussed in this report about the affordability aspects of housing in Cambridge. The increasing gap between LHA rates and private rents especially for larger properties which may typically house larger families with children, means the risk of homelessness increases for this demographic.
  - The Greater Cambridge Housing Strategy 2019-2023 states the following:

*Cuts in welfare funding, combined with high housing costs and low Local Housing Allowance rates, mean that people on low incomes are becoming increasingly vulnerable to homelessness. This is evidenced by the number of homeless people coming through our doors, which has significantly increased over the last five years; with the main reasons being the loss of a private tenancy, eviction by friends / family and relationship breakdown. Through our prevention work, our success in helping to prevent or relieve homelessness has increased over the years, with nearly 1,500 households supported in 2017/18.*

- The DCLG selective licensing guidance 2015 states:

*Local authorities should also carefully consider any potential negative economic impact that licensing may have on their area – particularly the risk of increased costs to landlords who are already fully compliant with their obligations. These additional costs can reduce further investment and are frequently passed on to tenants through higher rents.*

- One such case study reported that Nottingham had seen the highest percentage rise in rent compared to anywhere else in the country since the implementation of selective licensing. Landlords who had been interviewed in Nottingham stated that they would sell up or pass the extra costs onto their tenants.

#### **40.0 Consultation with Stakeholders**

There is a requirement for extensive consultation with landlords and other stakeholders who may be affected by any designations made. It is clear why landlords do not welcome such interventions as they find them costly and burdensome. This is often a cause for relationships between good landlords and local authorities to suffer. Designations made where good landlords feel adequate efforts to target rogue landlords and poor properties have not been made and instead a blanket licensing regime has been designated affecting good landlords as well as the bad, there is a tendency for these to be taken through the judicial review process where evidence is further scrutinised for the need of such an intervention. This is timely and costly and should only be done when the local authority believes that they have serious issues within their PRS and all other efforts to engage and enforce have been exhausted.

#### **41.0 Selective Licensing in Cambridge**

The private rented stock in the city of Cambridge has been assessed at lower super output area level and no major areas of concern have come to light. Cambridge has typical crime and anti-social behaviour rates, that would be expected for any city of this size and the housing stock is again in a typical condition, given the age and construction types.

For these reasons, the implementation of selective licensing would not be deemed an appropriate course of action, at this time.

#### **42.0 Recommendations**

- a. Targeted enforcement of properties not meeting the Minimum Energy Efficiency Regulations, with EPC ratings below E.
  - i. to target these properties and promote the Green Homes Grant Scheme announced in the 2020 mini budget which will provide £5,000 for all homeowners and up to £10,000 for low income households to improve energy efficiency in homes (including privately rented).
- b. Procure software that can accurately assess category 1 hazards dealt with at ward/LSOA level.
- c. Prior to Covid-19 lockdown, an enforcement group was going to be set up to share intelligence across regulatory services within the council as well as with external stakeholders including the Fire Service. The implementation of this is highly recommended to help with targeted enforcement of rogue landlords.
- d. Targetted proactive work around HMOs within the applicable LSOA's within the City and looking for correlations between those HMOs and other factors such as ASB/crime. If any significant links are made, a study could be commissioned for the implementation of additional licensing in the city following this work

### 43.0 Relevant Observations

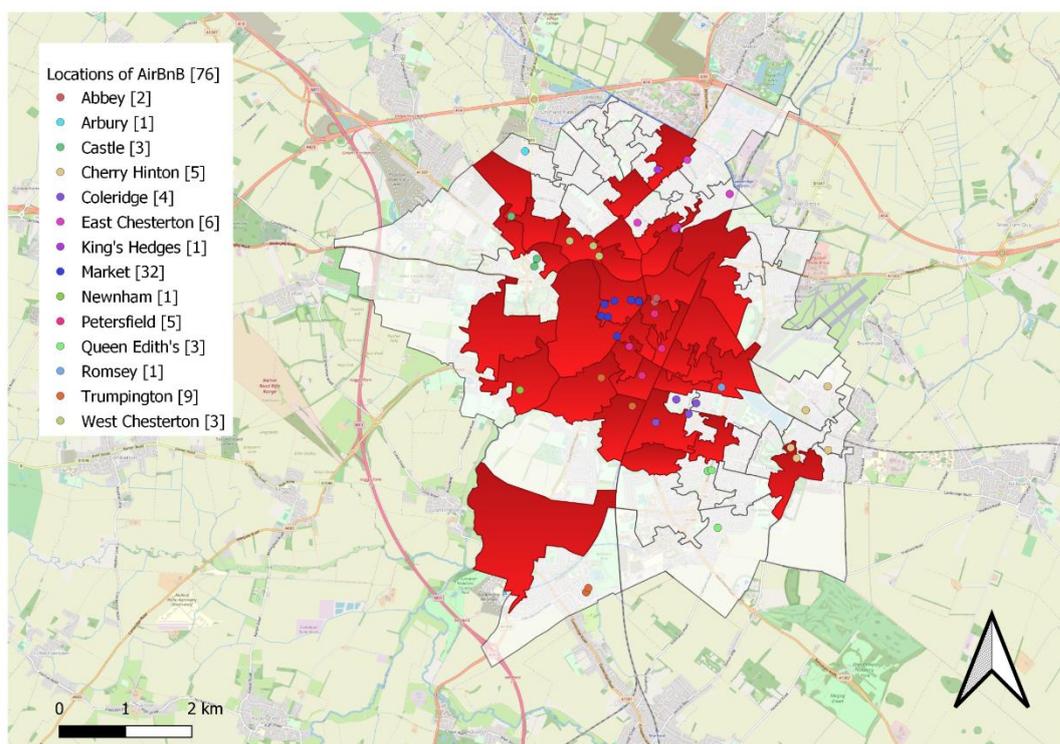
During the course of this study an issue which falls out of the scope of this report was found to be prevalent and associated with issues of anti-social behaviour in the city. A brief summary of Airbnbs is given below:

### 44.0 Airbnbs

There are a large number of Airbnbs in the City. It is difficult to know the exact number as there are a number of platforms where they are advertised. A basic search on Airbnb.co.uk returns 300+ rooms/properties available in Cambridgeshire. An educated guess might suggest that the majority of these would be around the City Centre.

The map below shows the location of Airbnb sites that the Council's planning department have received complaints about:

**Map 9: Distribution of AirBNB complaints**



The House of Commons briefing paper (number 8395, 2018) titled 'The growth in short-term lettings (England) states that according to Airbnb, 168,000 active listings were posted between July 2016 and July 2017, 55% of which were for an entire property.

Despite there being a number of benefits to Airbnb type sharing, such as increased choice for the consumer at often cheaper rates than standard hotels and property owners being able to benefit from earning additional income from their house, flat or spare room.

There are also concerns such as: commercial operators using residential properties as letting businesses in breach of planning rules; the challenges local authorities face in taking planning enforcement action; impacts on local housing markets; negative impacts on neighbours and local communities, for example from ***noise disturbance and anti-social behaviour***; taxation compliance; compliance with health and safety regulations; and the implications for traditional short-term accommodation businesses such as hotels and Bed and Breakfast accommodation.

Due to their transient nature, Airbnbs do not fall under the remit of Housing legislation.

#### **45.0 Airbnbs in London**

Local authorities in London are addressing this issue through their planning controls. A 90 day rule means that anyone letting their entire property for more 90 days in a year, must seek planning permission from their local authority to do so.

A report by Labour London Assembly Member Tom Copley (January 2018) proposed a range of regulatory measures to address the issue in London, including:

- legislation to require home-sharing platforms to provide the details of property owners suspected of breaking the 90-night limit on short-term lettings in London;
- powers for the Mayor of London to determine applications from individual London boroughs to ban the renting out of whole properties for short-term lettings; and
- legislation to require short-term accommodation providers to register with their local authority.

## 46.0 Airbnbs in Cambridge

Cambridge City Council's planning department is actively looking to deal with this growing issue. The council's planning department state the following concerns:

- Patterns of behaviour of short-term tenants including the continual disruption caused by visitors moving in and out of the premises, disruptive occupants and associated servicing of the unit(s).
- Frequent rotation of unknown, neighbouring occupiers undermines residents' sense of security of living in their own homes.
- In summary, communities can experience:
  - a lack of social cohesion from extensive change in occupiers
  - ***disruption to the local housing market because residential properties are not available or are unaffordable to rent.***

The Planning Department are working in a staged manner to:

- Identify whole properties that are permanently used as an Airbnb or for much of the year as such. Pursue as unauthorised development converting a residential property into visitor accommodation on an individual, fact and degree basis.
- Include policy in new Greater Cambridge (City & SCDC) Local Plan to manage/control/restrict corporate lets & Airbnb.

## Appendices

### ASB Raw Data

Table 8: Anti Social Behaviour Rate per 1,000 (Cambridgeshire Insight 2019-2020)

LSOA Name	Ward	ASB Rate
Cambridge 007G	Market	97
Cambridge 007C	Market	73
Cambridge 008E	Petersfield	79
Cambridge 004D	West Chesterton	62
Cambridge 008A	Petersfield	32
Cambridge 012D	Trumpington	52
Cambridge 008B	Petersfield	39
Cambridge 002A	Arbury	27
Cambridge 006A	Abbey	47
Cambridge 002B	Arbury	38
Cambridge 012F	Trumpington	32
Cambridge 003F	East Chesterton	39
Cambridge 004C	West Chesterton	26
Cambridge 006C	Abbey	35
Cambridge 009C	Romsey	25
Cambridge 010B	Coleridge	19

Cambridge 008C	Petersfield	18
Cambridge 010D	Coleridge	11
Cambridge 009B	Romsey	24
Cambridge 003G	East Chesterton	17
Cambridge 009E	Romsey	14
Cambridge 011A	Cherry Hinton	13
Cambridge 001B	Kings Hedges	30
Cambridge 008D	Petersfield	24
Cambridge 013E	Queen Ediths	8
Cambridge 004A	West Chesterton	11
Cambridge 012A	Trumpington	21
Cambridge 009A	Romsey	14
Cambridge 009D	Romsey	13
Cambridge 004E	West Chesterton	13
Cambridge 005A	Castle	11
Cambridge 005C	Castle	5
Cambridge 007E	Newnham	11
Cambridge 007F	Newnham	3



## Property Conditions Raw Data

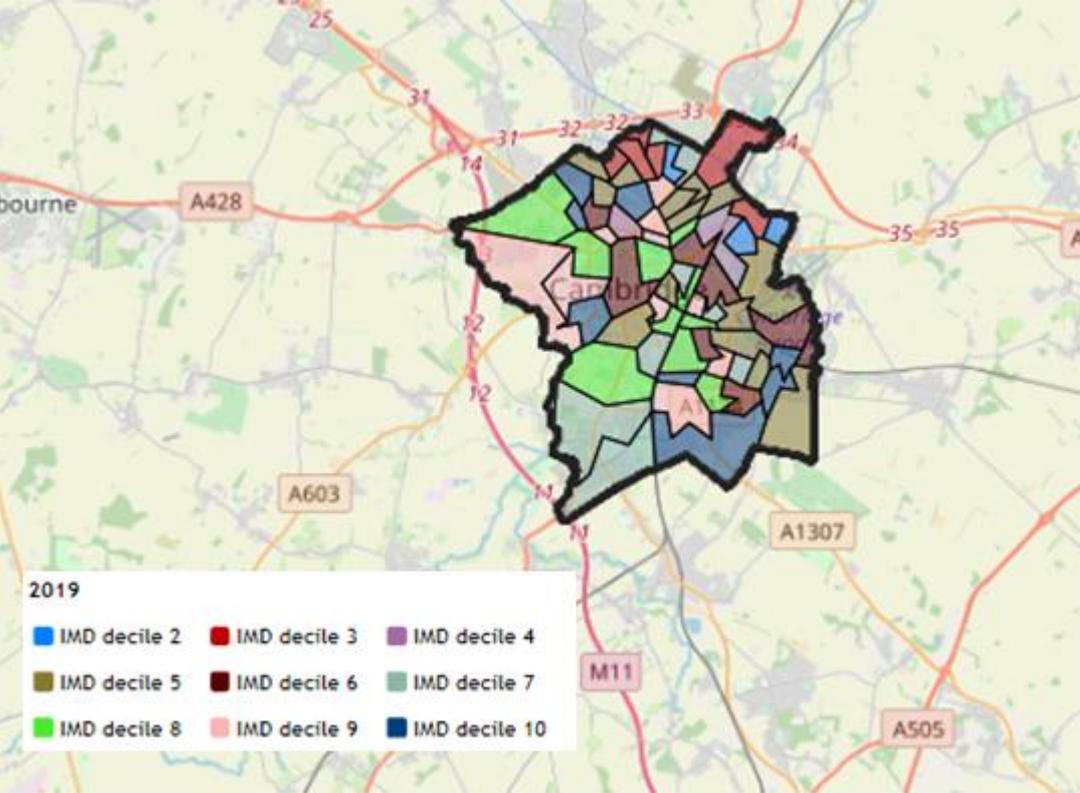
Table 9: Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS) hazards and disrepair estimated from BRE models at LSOA level

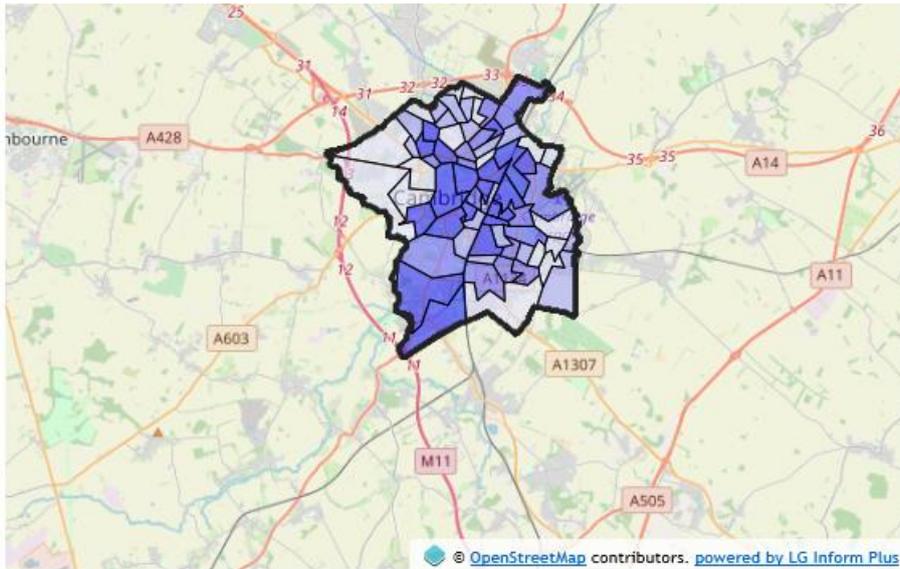
LSOA code	LSOA name	Ward	HHSRS	Rank HHSRS	Disrepair	Rank Disrepair
E01017998	Cambridge 009B	Romsey	28.70%	1	5.86%	18
E01017950	Cambridge 002B	Arbury	27.62%	2	9.52%	1
E01018000	Cambridge 009D	Romsey	27.38%	3	7.74%	5
E01032797	Cambridge 007G	Market	25.72%	4	7.00%	6
E01017983	Cambridge 007C	Market	25.71%	5	8.02%	4
E01017989	Cambridge 008C	Petersfield	24.30%	6	6.84%	8
E01032795	Cambridge 012F	Trumpington	24.23%	7	9.28%	2
E01017988	Cambridge 008B	Petersfield	22.82%	8	4.56%	29
E01018001	Cambridge 009E	Romsey	22.71%	9	6.62%	10
E01017990	Cambridge 008D	Petersfield	22.70%	10	6.74%	10
E01017943	Cambridge 006A	Abbey	22.67%	11	8.67%	3
E01018005	Cambridge 012D	Trumpington	22.18%	12	6.91%	7
E01017949	Cambridge 002A	Arbury	21.76%	13	6.76%	9
E01018009	Cambridge 004D	West Chesterton	21.32%	14	6.27%	15
E01018008	Cambridge 004C	West Chesterton	20.34%	15	5.65%	20
E01017997	Cambridge 009A	Romsey	19.30%	16	6.32%	14

E01017986	Cambridge 007F	Newnham	19.21%	17	6.62%	11
E01017976	Cambridge 001B	King's Hedges	18.52%	18	5.56%	21
E01017996	Cambridge 013E	Queen Edith's	18.49%	19	6.16%	16
E01017957	Cambridge 005C	Castle	18.14%	20	6.05%	17
E01017999	Cambridge 009C	Romsey	18.09%	21	6.53%	13
E01017968	Cambridge 010D	Coleridge	17.79%	22	4.91%	27
E01017985	Cambridge 007E	Newnham	16.60%	23	5.02%	25
E01017955	Cambridge 005A	Castle	16.48%	24	5.11%	24
E01017987	Cambridge 008A	Petersfield	16.43%	25	5.00%	26
E01017991	Cambridge 008E	Petersfield	15.38%	26	6.59%	12
E01018002	Cambridge 012A	Trumpington	14.16%	27	5.15%	23
E01032802	Cambridge 003G	East Chesterton	13.85%	28	5.19%	22
E01017966	Cambridge 010B	Coleridge	13.05%	29	4.40%	30
E01018010	Cambridge 004E	West Chesterton	12.53%	30	3.07%	31
E01017945	Cambridge 006C	Abbey	11.94%	31	4.85%	28
E01018006	Cambridge 004A	West Chesterton	11.07%	32	2.93%	32
E01017959	Cambridge 011A	Cherry Hinton	9.36%	34	2.92%	33
E01032792	Cambridge 003F	East Chesterton	6.97%	35	1.49%	34

Deprivation Raw Data

Map 13: National IMD Deciles for LSOAs





No. of households in fuel poverty (2017)

- $\geq 99 \leq 167$
- $\geq 85 < 99$
- $\geq 70 < 85$
- $\geq 32 < 70$

### About this data

**Population**

All full-time students aged 16 and over

**Units**

Persons

**Student Accommodation**

All categories: Student accommodation

**Economic Activity**

All categories: Full-time students and economic activity

**Age**

All categories: Age 16 and over

**Area Type**

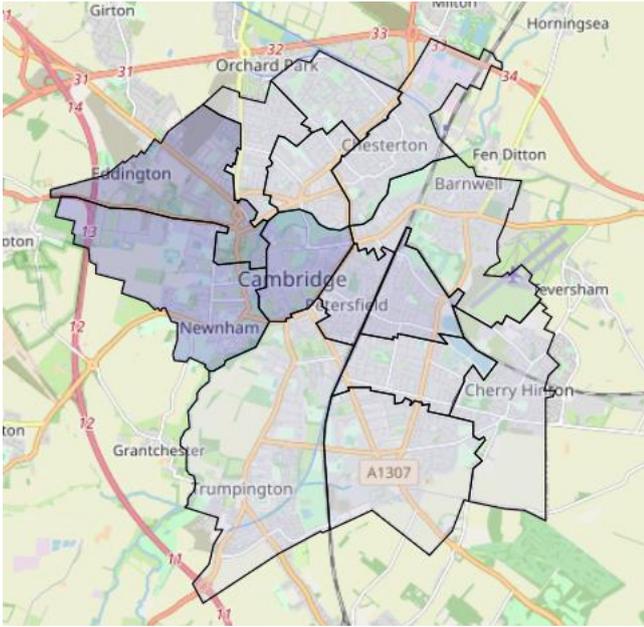
2011 census merged ward

**Date**

2011

**Data**

number



## Communal establishments

A communal establishment is an establishment providing managed residential accommodation. 'Managed' in this context means full-time or part-time supervision of the accommodation. Types of communal establishment include:

- Sheltered accommodation units where fewer than 50 per cent of the units in the establishment have their own cooking facilities, or similar accommodation where residents have their own rooms, but the main meal is provided. If half or more possess their own facilities for cooking (regardless of use) all units in the whole establishment are treated as separate households.
- Small hotels, guest houses, bed & breakfasts and inns and pubs with residential accommodation with room for 10 or more guests (excluding the owner/manager and his/her family).
- All accommodation provided solely for students (during term-time). This includes university-owned cluster flats, houses and apartments located within student villages, and similar accommodation owned by a private company and provided solely for students (University owned student houses that were difficult to identify and not clearly located with other student residences are treated as households, and houses rented to students by private landlords are also treated as households). Accommodation available only to students may include a small number of care-taking or maintenance staff, or academic staff.
- Accommodation available only to nurses. This includes cluster flats and similar accommodation, provided solely for nurses. Nurses' accommodation on a hospital site that does not also contain patients is treated as a separate communal establishment from the hospital (and not categorised as a hospital), so that nurses are treated as 'residents' and not 'resident staff' or 'patients'. This ensures consistency with similar nurses' accommodation not on a hospital site.

### About this data

**Population**

All communal establishments

**Units**

Communal establishments

**Communal Establishment Type**

Other establishment: Education

**Area Type**

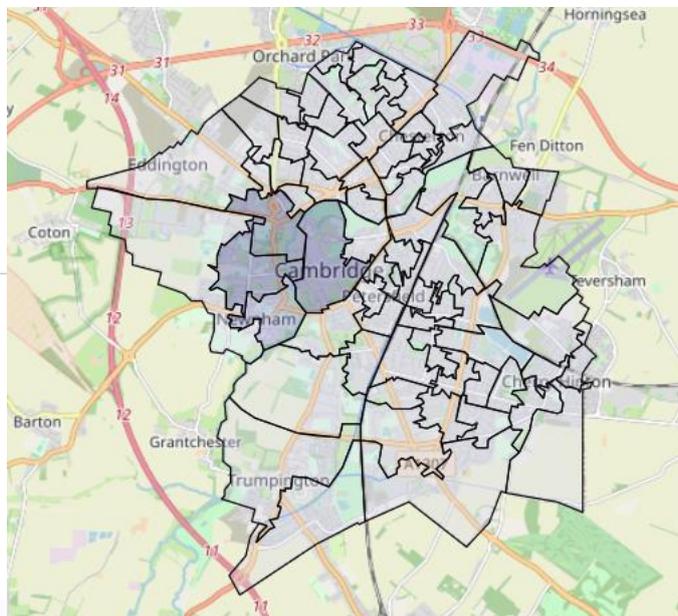
2011 super output areas - lower layer

**Date**

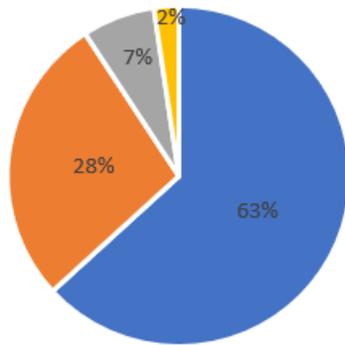
2011

**Data**

number



Private Rented Households by Age:  
DC4601EW



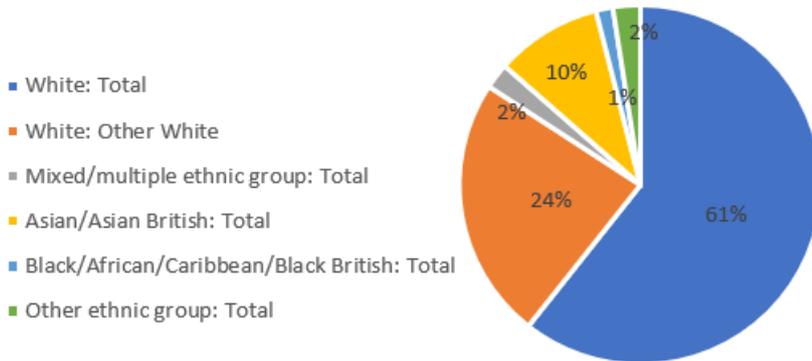
■ Age 16 to 34 ■ Age 35 to 49 ■ Age 50 to 64 ■ Age 65 and over

**DC4601EW - Tenure by economic activity by age - Household Reference Persons**

ONS Crown Copyright Reserved [from Nomis on 19 May 2020]

population	All Household Reference Persons aged 16 and over				
units	Household reference persons				
area type	local authorities: district / unitary (prior to April 2015)				
area name	Cambridge				
tenure	Private rented: Private landlord or letting agency				
economic activity	All categories: Economic activity				
<b>Age</b>	<b>2011</b>				
Age 16 to 34	7,051				
Age 35 to 49	3,080				
Age 50 to 64	766				
Age 65 and over	262				

## Ethnic Groups Privately Renting



### DC4201EW - Tenure by ethnic group by age - Household Reference Persons

ONS Crown Copyright Reserved [from Nomis on 19 May 2020]

population	All Household Reference Persons				
units	Household reference persons				
date	2011				
area type	local authorities: district / unitary (prior to April 2015)				
area name	Cambridge				
age	All categories: Age				
<b>Ethnic Group</b>	<b>Private rented: Private landlord or letting agency</b>				
White: Total	8,863				
White: Other White	3,449				
Mixed/multiple ethnic group: Total	335				
Asian/Asian British: Total	1,392				
Black/African/Caribbean/Black British: Total	222				
Other ethnic group: Total	358				

## DC3408EW - Long-term health problem or disability by tenure by sex by age

ONS Crown Copyright Reserved [from Nomis on 19 May 2020]

population	All usual residents in households			
units	Persons			
date	2011			
area type	local authorities: district / unitary (prior to April 2015)			
area name	Cambridge			
age	All categories: Age			
sex	All persons			
<b>Disability</b>	<b>Owned or shared ownership: Total</b>	<b>Rented: Private rented or living rent free</b>		
Day-to-day activities limited a lot	2,704	553		
Day-to-day activities limited a little	4,565	1,113		
Day-to-day activities not limited	45,361	29,322		

## Crime – Raw Data

**Table 14:**

LSOA Name	Ward	
Cambridge 007G	Market	395
Cambridge 008A	Petersfield	220
Cambridge 007C	Market	216
Cambridge 004D	West Chesterton	168
Cambridge 008E	Petersfield	166
Cambridge 006A	Abbey	142
Cambridge 012D	Trumpington	135
Cambridge 008D	Petersfield	134
Cambridge 009B	Romsey	111
Cambridge 002A	Arbury	99
Cambridge 009C	Romsey	93
Cambridge 012F	Trumpington	90
Cambridge 008C	Petersfield	90
Cambridge 010B	Coleridge	86
Cambridge 008B	Petersfield	84
Cambridge 004A	West Chesterton	76
Cambridge 006C	Abbey	72
Cambridge 003F	East Chesterton	71
Cambridge 004E	West Chesterton	71
Cambridge 012A	Trumpington	68
Cambridge 004C	West Chesterton	68
Cambridge 003G	East Chesterton	64
Cambridge 009A	Romsey	61
Cambridge 010D	Coleridge	52
Cambridge 002B	Arbury	49
Cambridge 009E	Romsey	48
Cambridge 007E	Newnham	36
Cambridge 009D	Romsey	35
Cambridge 011A	Cherry Hinton	34
Cambridge 007F	Newnham	32
Cambridge 001B	Kings Hedges	32
Cambridge 005C	Castle	29
Cambridge 013E	Queen Ediths	25

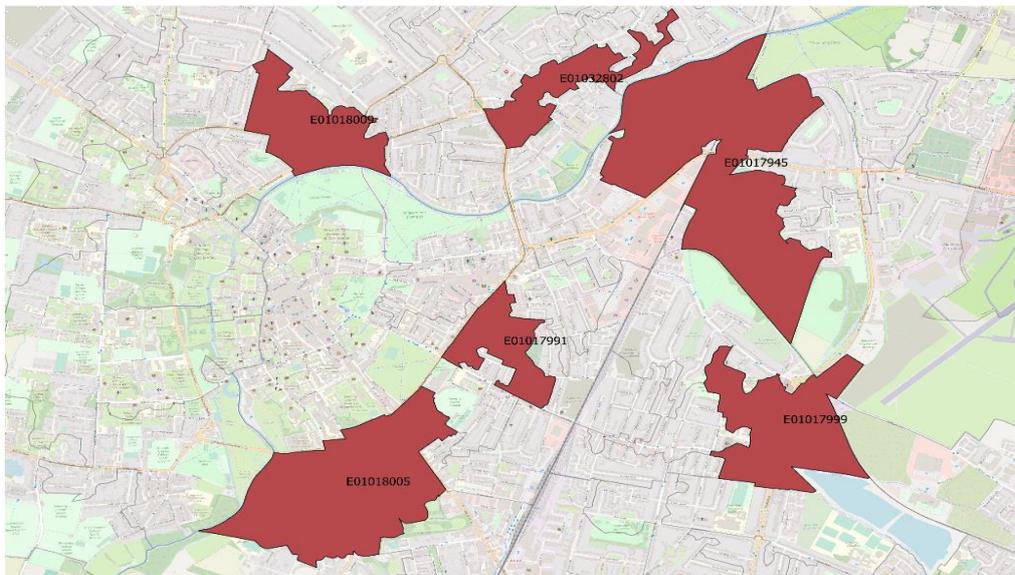
Cambridge 005A	Castle	24
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## Appendix D - Houses in multiple occupation, (HMO's) – Inspections and Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD)

This shows the five wards with the lowest percent decile. None of the wards in Cambridge are suffering from high levels of deprivation.

LSOA Code	LSOA Name	Ward	IMD Decile
E01017945	Cambridge 006C	Abbey West	4
E01018009	Cambridge 004D	Chesterton	4
E01032802	Cambridge 003G	East Chesterton	5
E01017991	Cambridge 008E	Petersfield	5
E01017999	Cambridge 009C	Romsey	5
E01018005	Cambridge 012D	Trumpington	5

The map below shows the areas in the city with the lowest percentile decile



### HMO's in the lowest Percentage decile

In May 2020 a list of suspected and known HMO's was compiled using data from multiple sources including Revenues & Benefits and the Environmental Health. Using the breakdown of postcodes of properties in the lowest percentile decile a comparison made against those unknown suspected HMOs that were placed on the list identifies 532 HMO's that are either within or are close to the lowest percentile LSOA.

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## Cambridge City Council Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA)

This tool helps the Council ensure that we fulfil legal obligations of the [Public Sector Equality Duty](#) to have due regard to the need to –

- (a) eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Equality Act 2010;
- (b) advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;
- (c) foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

Guidance on how to complete this tool can be found on the Cambridge City Council intranet. For specific questions on the tool email Helen Crowther, Equality and Anti-Poverty Officer at [equalities@cambridge.gov.uk](mailto:equalities@cambridge.gov.uk) or phone 01223 457046.

Once you have drafted the EqIA please send this to [equalities@cambridge.gov.uk](mailto:equalities@cambridge.gov.uk) for checking. For advice on consulting on equality impacts, please contact Graham Saint, Strategy Officer, ([graham.saint@cambridge.gov.uk](mailto:graham.saint@cambridge.gov.uk) or 01223 457044).

<b>1. Title of strategy, policy, plan, project, contract or major change to your service</b>
Feasibility Study for the Implementation of Selective Licensing in the City of Cambridge - publication and actioning the recommendations
<b>2. Webpage link to full details of the strategy, policy, plan, project, contract or major change to your service (if available)</b>
N/A

### **3. What is the objective or purpose of your strategy, policy, plan, project, contract or major change to your service?**

Cambridge City Council has an existing mandatory obligation to license Houses in Multiple Occupation. We currently have over 770 properties that are licensed within the City with a team who is highly experienced with investigating housing complaints and ensuring properties meet the relevant standards.

Section 3 of the Housing Act 2004 places a duty on all local housing authorities to keep the housing conditions in their area under review, with a view to identifying any action that may need to be taken.

In March 2020, a feasibility study was commissioned, this feasibility study investigates the need, suitability, and appropriateness for the implementation of Selective Licensing under Part 3 of the Housing Act 2004, on privately rented properties, in Cambridge. The study was carried out following guidance produced by the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG, now known as the Ministry for Communities and Local Government, MHCLG) that states that local authorities may only make a designation if the area has a high proportion of property in the private rented sector.

In coming to conclusions small geographical areas within the city were assessed against six criteria set in legislation:

- Low housing demand
- A significant and persistent problem with anti-social behaviour
- Poor property conditions
- High levels of migration
- High levels of deprivation
- High levels of Crime

The report identified several areas where recommendations need to be followed. These include

- Targeted enforcement of properties not meeting the Minimum Energy Efficiency Regulations, with EPC ratings below E.
- Targeted proactive work around HMOs within the applicable LSOA's within the City and looking for correlations between those HMOs and other factors such as ASB/crime. If any significant links are made, a study could be commissioned for the implementation of additional licensing in the city following this work

### **4. Responsible service**

Residential Team, Env Health, Env Services

<b>5. Who will be affected by this strategy, policy, plan, project, contract or major change to your service?</b>  <b>(Please tick all that apply)</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Residents <input type="checkbox"/> Visitors <input type="checkbox"/> Staff
Please state any specific client group or groups (e.g. City Council tenants, tourists, people who work in the city but do not live here):  Landlords <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Owners of property in the private rented sector</li> <li>• Managing agents</li> <li>• Tenants in the Private Rented Sector</li> </ul>	

<b>6. What type of strategy, policy, plan, project, contract or major change to your service is this?</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> New <input type="checkbox"/> Major change <input type="checkbox"/> Minor change
---	---

<b>7. Are other departments or partners involved in delivering this strategy, policy, plan, project, contract or major change to your service? (Please tick)</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
If 'Yes' please provide details below:  The future work to carry out recommendations made in the feasibility study will involve forging new relationships both with internal and external stakeholders. This may include continued work with the fire service, relevant services if safeguarding issues are identified as well as internal services such as planning, housing advice, building control and antisocial behaviour. This will develop as the project progresses.	

<b>8. Has the report on your strategy, policy, plan, project, contract or major change to your service gone to Committee? If so, which one?</b>
Housing Scrutiny Committee 19th January 2020

**9. What research methods/ evidence have you used in order to identify equality impacts of your strategy, policy, plan, project, contract or major change to your service?**

The equality impacts were based around the finding of Feasibility Study for the implementation of Selective Licensing in the City of Cambridge. The study was prepared with evidence from the following sources.

- Police.uk
- Building Research Establishment (BRE)
- Office for National Statistics
- Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government
- Building Research Establishment (BRE)
- Police.uk

Remaining indicators are from Building Research Establishment (BRE)'s housing stock modelling in Cambridge in 2015. BRE's modelling approach provides information of local housing stock status for targeted housing condition improvement.

The Housing Health and Safety Rating system which focuses on the links between unsatisfactory housing and the health of residents. It is enforced under the Housing Act 2004.

The 2018 English Private Landlord Survey (EPLS), this is a national survey of landlords and letting agents<sup>1</sup> who own and/or manage privately rented properties in England. It was commissioned by the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG).

The Energy Efficiency (Private Rented Property) (England and Wales) Regulations 2015 establish a minimum level of energy efficiency for privately rented property in England and Wales. Since 1 April 2020, landlords can no longer let or continue to let properties covered by the Minimum Energy Efficiency Standards (MEES) Regulations if they have an EPC rating below E, unless they have a valid exemption in place.

## 10. Potential impacts

For each category below, please explain if the strategy, policy, plan, project, contract or major change to your service could have a positive/ negative impact or no impact. Where an impact has been identified, please explain what it is. Consider impacts on service users, visitors and staff members separately.

### (a) Age - Please also consider any safeguarding issues for children and adults at risk

#### Property Owner /Landlord / Agent.

The 2018 English Private Landlord Survey (EPLS) is a national survey of landlords and letting agents who own and/or manage privately rented properties in England. It was commissioned by the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG). This survey indicates that over half (59%) of landlords are aged 55 years or older. Given the older age profile, a third (33%) of landlords are retired.

It is likely that targeted enforcement will identify those who have failed to ensure they meet with legal requirements prescribed in housing legislation. To mitigate the negative effects of enforcement action in the first instance an informal approach will be used to try resolve issues of compliance where possible. Cambridge City Councils enforcement policy also supports the use of informal action initially. The Residential Team have a lot of experience in this field of work and can offer support and advice to landlords to try and avoid the necessity to take enforcement action. However, it is important to recognise that landlords who fail to take the action required maybe subject to enforcement action.

#### Residents in the private rented sector

Cambridge City's population is defined by high migration rates and population churn, a young adult population with a preponderance of people between 18 and 26 years of age and an under representation of children and older people. The average age of people living in the city is 36 years, one of the lowest in the country. The Enforcement of the Minimum Energy Standards will look to improve health through better living conditions as well as the reduction of fuel bills through better fuel efficiency. The Housing Health and Safety rating system classes those aged over 65 as the most vulnerable to suffer harm from excess cold. Due to higher house prices within Cambridge City people now rent for longer, so although the age profile for Cambridge is younger it may also affect older people.

It is possible landlords may withdraw properties from the rental market where they are unwilling to carry out enough work to bring the property up to the correct standard leading to displacement of tenants. This can only be done by following a legal process to regain possession of property and avoid illegal eviction. It is possible that households with children, or vulnerable adults could be displaced. However retaliatory eviction and prohibition within Cambridge following housing inspections is not common. In the event of this happening support could be provided from the Housing Advice team. When investigating complaints or carrying out inspections, officers give careful consideration to the best course of action including reducing the risk of homelessness or retaliatory eviction.

## **(b) Disability**

### **Property Owner /Landlord / Agent.**

Mitigation of the negative effects of enforcement action will be the same as those detailed under the age category 10(a).

We encourage landlords to bring to our attention to any relevant matters which may need to be taken into consideration by us when seeking improvements to private rented properties in the City. Following which we can work to support them in relation to this.

Reasonable adjustment can be made where necessary with regard to disability, including provision of accessible documents and meeting locations and online meetings. Where a disability is likely to affect an individual's ability to carry out their function as a landlord we would advise them to engage a property manager.

### **Residents in the private rented sector**

The feasibility study supports improved physical and mental health through delivering improved environments for residents and providing positive health effects via increasing housing standards. The link between housing and health is well researched, understood and accepted. Higher housing standards including energy efficiency reduce mould and damp, which can cause health implications to residents including those with underlying health conditions. Health conditions are reflected in the Housing Health and Safety Rating System which includes statistical information from cardiovascular and respiratory illness serious enough to lead to hospital admission. Targeted enforcement will ensure that properties meet the minimum energy requirements and have an EPC rating of "E" or above. The impact from following the recommendations in the feasibility study will be positive for tenants as they will benefit from improved living conditions.

Risk of displacement of tenants could be the same as that detailed under the age category 10(a). Tenants with a disability are likely to have priority need in relation to the local authorities' provision of alternative temporary accommodation.

## **(c) Gender reassignment**

No impacts identified specific to this equality group for property owners, landlords, agents, residents in the private rented sector or staff.

**(d) Marriage and civil partnership**

No impacts identified specific to this equality group for property owners, landlords, agents, residents in the private rented sector or staff.

**(e) Pregnancy and maternity**

**Property Owner /Landlord / Agent.**

Reasonable adjustments can be made to ensure that people within this category are supported where necessary including scheduling of meetings and telephone appointments at an agreed time to allow for childcare responsibilities.

**Residents in the private rented sector**

The Enforcement of the Minimum Energy Standards as well as targeted enforcement in relation to houses in multiple occupation (HMO) looks to improve health through better living conditions as well as the reduction of fuel bills through better fuel efficiency.

The Housing Health and Safety Rating System specifically identifies pregnant people as being more susceptible under the hazard of food safety and un-combusted fuel gas in a dwelling meaning they would have a more server outcome.

Risk of displacement of tenants could be the same as that detailed under the age category 10(a). Tenants within this category are likely to have priority need in relation to the local authorities' provision of alternative temporary accommodation.

(f) **Race – Note that the protected characteristic ‘race’ refers to a group of people defined by their race, colour, and nationality (including citizenship) ethnic or national origins.**

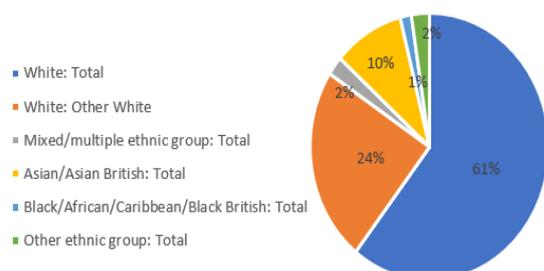
**Property Owner /Landlord / Agent.**

The 2018 English Private Landlord Survey (EPLS) is a national survey of landlords and letting agents<sup>1</sup> who own and/or manage privately rented properties in England. It was commissioned by the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG). In terms of ethnicity, 89% of landlords identified as White<sup>16</sup>, with 4% Indian, 2% Black, 1% Pakistani or Bangladeshi and the remaining 4% Other, Annex Table 1.10. This compares to the 2011 Census statistics for England and Wales, where 86% of the population identified as White, with 3% Indian, 3% Black, 3% Pakistani or Bangladeshi and the remaining 5% other. An interpretation and translation service can be used to communicate with people who have English as a second language and need to understand our communications fully.

**Residents in the private rented sector.**

The chart below displays tenure by ethnic group taken from the 2011 Census data used within the feasibility study. An interpretation and translation service can be used to communicate with people who have English as a second language and need to understand our communications fully.

Ethnic Groups Privately Renting



(g) **Religion or belief**

**Property Owner /Landlord / Agent.**

The importance of understanding and acknowledging religious events and holidays is recognised. During these periods’ steps will be taken to avoid appointments being made however this may not always be possible if a housing emergency is identified.

**Residents in the private rented sector.**

The importance of understanding and acknowledging religious events and holidays is recognised. During these periods’ steps will be taken to avoid disruption and take into account tenants wishes regarding visits to affected properties and progression of enforcement action, this may not always be possible if a housing emergency is identified.

**(h) Sex**

No impacts identified specific to this equality group for property owners, landlords, agents, residents in the private rented sector or staff.

**(i) Sexual orientation**

No impacts identified specific to this equality group for property owners, landlords, agents, residents in the private rented sector or staff.

**(j) Other factors that may lead to inequality – in particular, please consider the impact of any changes on low income groups or those experiencing the impacts of poverty**

A feasibility study was commissioned into the implementation of selective licensing of private rented properties in the city of Cambridge. This considers each of the following points:

- If a significant and persistent problem existed from anti-social behaviour
- poor property conditions
- high levels of migration
- high level of deprivation
- high levels of crime

None of our 34 candidate LSOAs looked at in the study can be classed as suffering from high levels of deprivation. Overall, Cambridge City is a relatively prosperous place with an Index of Multiple Deprivation 2019 Rank of Average Score amongst local authorities of 205 (66%) out of the 317 local authorities, with 1 being the most deprived.

**11. Action plan – New equality impacts will be identified in different stages throughout the planning and implementation stages of changes to your strategy, policy, plan, project, contract or major change to your service. How will you monitor these going forward? Also, how will you ensure that any potential negative impacts of the changes will be mitigated? (Please include dates where possible for when you will update this EqlA accordingly.)**

If appropriate the EqlA can be updated following the first 6 months of targeted enforcement. This is likely to be necessary should the effect of enforcing The Minimum Energy Efficiency Standard provide new data.

**Staff** -There is no substantial change for staff, there will be some training need around the implementation of the Minimum Energy Efficiency Standards, but this falls within normal work.

**12. Do you have any additional comments?**

N/A

**13. Sign off**

Name and job title of lead officer for this equality impact assessment: Claire Adelizzi, Team Manager – Residential Team

Names and job titles of other assessment team members and people consulted: Philip Winter, Project Officer – Residential Team, Helen Crowther Equality and Anti-Poverty Officer

Date of EqIA sign off: 22/12/2020

Date of next review of the equalities impact assessment: 01/10/2021

Date to be published on Cambridge City Council website: 20/01/2021

**All EqIAs need to be sent to Helen Crowther, Equality and Anti-Poverty Officer. Ctrl + click on the button below to send this (you will need to attach the form to the email):**

[Send form](#)



Item

## HOMELESSNESS AND ROUGH SLEEPING STRATEGY 2021-26

**To:**

Councillor Richard Johnson, Executive Councillor for Housing  
Housing Scrutiny Committee 19/01/2021

**Report by:**

David Greening, David Greening

Tel: 01223 - 457997 Email: david.greening@cambridge.gov.uk

**Wards affected:**

All

Key Decision

### 1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 The Council is required by law to produce a Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy. This requirement is provided for in the [Homelessness Act 2002](#) (as amended). Ahead of the revised strategy the Council published a [Homelessness Review](#) on 31<sup>st</sup> December 2019. This is a pre-cursor to the consultation and drafting of the 2021-26 strategy and is also an obligation conferred on local authorities by the Act.
- 1.2 The Council had intended to publish its new strategy in June 2020 but the Covid-19 pandemic and the requirement to provide emergency accommodation for rough sleepers under what came to be known as the Government's '[Everyone In](#)' programme meant that the resources required to produce the strategy were limited in the Spring of this year and it made sense to pause and understand more about the potential effects the pandemic would have on homelessness pressure and the lessons the Council and its partners have identified during this period.

This is especially true in relation to measures employed to tackle rough sleeping since March 2020.

## 2. Recommendations

The Executive Councillor is recommended to:

- 2.1 Approve the Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy (2021-26) and the year one and two action plan as appended to this report.
- 2.2 Delegate authority to the Head of Housing to approve annual reiterations of the strategy action plans at years 3,4 and 5 of the strategy in consultation with the Executive Councillor

## 3. Background

*Page: 2*

- 3.1 In preparation for the publication of this strategy, the Council produced a Homelessness Review in December 2019. The Homelessness Review looks at homelessness data, analyses the Council's performance on homelessness and assesses the efficacy or otherwise of initiatives that have been introduced to prevent or relieve homelessness.
- 3.2 Homelessness is prevented via interventions that allow a household to remain in their current home. Homelessness relief occurs when the authority assists a household to find alternative accommodation. Sometimes homelessness relief is achieved prior to the household losing a home (usually where the loss of that home is inevitable). Where homelessness cannot be prevented, the Council needs to consider whether it has reason to believe the individual or family is in ['priority need'](#) and, if this is the case, establishes a 'relief duty' under the Act and offers the household a placement in temporary accommodation.
- 3.3 Preventing homelessness is less disruptive to the family or household threatened with such a scenario; it is also a less costly outcome for the Council because it means that the need for a placement in temporary accommodation is averted. Therefore, prevention is a fundamental tenet of the strategy

- 3.4 The Council's efforts to tackle homelessness in Cambridge are not all centred around its statutory homelessness duties. These duties start at a point where homelessness is within 56 days. However, the Council works to effect homelessness prevention and relief work for households who are threatened with eviction from points in excess of 56 days. An example of this is the work that has been done to encourage private rented sector tenants to come forward when they have been served notices (known as section 21 notices) on assured shorthold tenancies. Many of these notices are invalid and this has afforded officers the opportunity to engage with both landlord and tenant to find solutions to avoid an eviction or to buy time to seek an alternative housing option.
- 3.5 In the same way the Council does not have a statutory responsibility to house rough sleepers per se, but this authority has a long tradition of working closely with partners in both the statutory and non-statutory sectors to support rough sleepers into accommodation. There is more the Council and its partners can do to prevent rough sleeping too and this is reflected in the new strategy.
- 3.6 The strategy focuses on 6 key priorities, which are as follows:
1. Support those at risk of homelessness to remain in their homes where possible
  2. Improve access to a range of permanent accommodation
  3. Minimise the use of temporary and emergency accommodation
  4. Improve access to, and effectiveness of, support services
  5. Prevent rough sleeping
  6. Break the cycle of chronic and repeat street homelessness and rough sleeping
- 3.7 This Strategy is accompanied by a detailed action plan for years 1 and 2 of the strategy, which will be outcome focused, with clear targets for delivery.
- 3.8 A higher-level framework will be in place for subsequent years, with more detailed actions developed on an annual basis for the duration of the strategy. This approach is to allow flexibility in exactly how the objectives and priorities outlined in the strategy are to be achieved, accounting for changing needs and circumstances and the resources available over time. This is particularly important in the current context of uncertainty around the full impact of Covid-19 on homelessness and rough sleeping and on the funding available to tackle the issues involved.

3.9 Implementation of the Strategy will require close partnership working across a wide spectrum of partners. Achievement against the action plan will be monitored on an ongoing basis through the cross-partner Homelessness Strategy Implementation Partnership. An annual outcomes report will be scrutinised by the council's Strategic Leadership Team.

## **4. Implications**

### **a) Financial Implications**

*Page: 4*

This is a five-year strategy; any financial requirements to support the strategy will be highlighted in annual budget setting reports. The existing funding mechanisms to fund work to tackle homelessness and rough sleeping are set out in the strategy itself (at appendix 1)

### **b) Staffing Implications**

There are no immediate staffing implications, but the pursuance of objectives outlined in the strategy may prompt the need to undertake a review of the deployment of staffing across the five-year period.

### **c) Equality and Poverty Implications**

An Equality Impact Assessment has been completed and is available as a background paper to this report. Tackling homelessness is a key tenet of the Council's Anti-Poverty Strategy

### **d) Environmental Implications**

Nil. There are no direct impacts, but the Council's Affordable Housing Programme will support the strategy and decisions around the design and build of the existing and forthcoming programmes will have an impact and is reported to committee.

### **e) Procurement Implications**

The strategy outlines proposals to develop a new Streets to Home Service, which will be jointly commissioned with the County Council.

### **f) Community Safety Implications**

There are linkages between street life activity such as begging and anti-social behaviour and drug dependency and homelessness. These are picked up in the strategy.

## **5. Consultation and communication considerations**

Extensive consultation with stakeholders has taken place. The responses to the consultation have been recorded as a background paper to this report

## **6. Background papers**

Background papers used in the preparation of this report:

- Summary of consultation responses
- EqIA

## **7. Appendices**

- Appendix A – Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2021-26

## **8. Inspection of papers**

To inspect the background papers or if you have a query on the report please contact David Greening, Head of Housing, tel: 01223 - 457997, email: [david.greening@cambridge.gov.uk](mailto:david.greening@cambridge.gov.uk).

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Cambridge City Council  
**Homelessness & Rough Sleeping  
Strategy**  
**2021-2026**

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## Foreword from Richard Johnson, Executive Councillor for Housing

Cambridge is a place of contrasts. For many it is a great place to live and work, offering significant opportunities. But with success come real issues of inequality and a chronic shortage of housing that people can afford. With high rents and house prices, and with around 1600 applicants on the council's housing register, homelessness and rough sleeping are big issues for the City.

People often see homelessness as mainly a problem for those seen sleeping on the streets. But there are many more Cambridge households experiencing housing stress such as those living in poor or overcrowded conditions; private tenants unsure whether their lease will be renewed; people living in hostels; people forced to leave their homes because of domestic abuse; the 'hidden homeless' sleeping on friends' sofas because they have nowhere else to go. The list goes on.

This new Homelessness & Rough Sleeping Strategy outlines how we intend to work in partnership with others to help prevent as many people as possible from experiencing the misery of becoming homelessness.

Our council house building programme is part of the solution, as is work with developers to bring forward new affordable homes. But it is not just about building. It is also about ensuring that the right support is available - to help people to remain in their homes or to find alternative accommodation where necessary.

We are determined to continue to improve engagement with a whole range of partners, such as statutory services, private sector landlords and the voluntary sector. We also recognise the need to invest in more financial support to those who need a helping hand as part of our approach to homelessness prevention.

For many of those affected, risk of homelessness is tied up with a combination of other issues, such as poor mental and/or physical health, drug and alcohol problems or being in debt. A much more joined up approach is needed across a whole range of services, including mental & physical health services, social care and other housing providers. One example of this involves our commitment to a new cross-partner 'Streets to Home' service, to help move people rapidly off the streets and into accommodation, providing individually tailored support to help them to get back on their feet.

The Strategy has been developed during the Covid-19 pandemic which has affected all our lives. This has created additional risks and challenges which need to be overcome, but it has also opened up new and unexpected opportunities and ways of working, and we need to continue to build on these.

I am confident that the improvements proposed through this Strategy will increase our success in preventing homelessness and make a real difference to people's lives.

## Executive Summary

### Introduction

The most visible form of homelessness involves people who are seen living on the streets, but the issue of homelessness is much broader than that, including, for example, people living in overcrowded or temporary accommodation or who are threatened with eviction. Anyone can become homeless, but issues such as unemployment, poor physical and mental health, alcohol and substance misuse, relationship breakdown, and combinations of all these, will increase the risk of losing a home and of being unable to quickly find another. As well as the impact on the individuals, there are also recognised costs to the economy.

This new Strategy confirms the council's commitment to preventing and relieving homelessness and rough sleeping, and how we will work with partners to meet our objectives and priorities.

It is an ambitious strategy, written at a time of uncertainty as to the full impact of the Covid-19 pandemic. There are already signs that the fall-out from the pandemic is putting more people at risk of homelessness and this may present challenges to achieving what we set out to achieve. But work with partners in responding to the crisis has also opened the door to exploring new and innovative solutions and different ways of working. Our proposed actions moving forward have been developed in this context.

### Vision, objectives and priorities

The objectives of the Strategy are to:

- Prevent people from becoming homeless
- Where homelessness cannot be avoided, help people to find suitable accommodation
- Minimise rough sleeping; and
- Ensure that housing outcomes for all residents reflect the Council's vision of 'One Cambridge, Fair for All'.

To achieve these objectives, the council will work with partners to realise the following priorities:

- Support those at risk of homelessness to remain in their homes whenever possible or to find a new home without an intervening period of homelessness.

- Improve access to a range of permanent accommodation.
- Minimise the use of temporary and emergency accommodation.
- Improve access to, and the effectiveness of, support services.
- Prevent rough sleeping.
- Break the cycle of chronic and repeat street homelessness and rough sleeping.

The chapter headings in the strategy reflect these priorities and a year 1 and 2 action plan is at Annex 5.

## National and local context

Our objectives and priorities are set within the council's broader strategic objectives, and in the context of other national and local strategies and plans. National examples include the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017, the National Rough Sleeping Strategy, and proposed private rented sector reforms.

Issues which are contributing to housing stress and homelessness locally include:

- High demand, a shortage of homes and affordability issues locally across all tenures, particularly, although not exclusively, affecting those on low incomes.
- Issues such as poverty, inequalities in health and education, and being members of certain minority groups can increase housing pressures and the risk of homelessness.
- How welfare benefits aimed at covering housing costs are set and major reforms to the welfare system, which have been taking place over the last few years.
- Shortage of funding available for new affordable homes.

These local housing issues, and our plans to tackle them, are set out in our [Greater Cambridge Housing Strategy](#). That document sets out the strategic direction for housing activity in Cambridge City and South Cambridgeshire District. It should be seen as the companion document to this homelessness strategy and read alongside.

## **Priority 1: Support those at risk of homelessness to remain in their homes where possible**

Early intervention is essential to helping prevent homelessness.

Although there may be many reasons for homelessness, loss of a privately rented home and family or friends no longer willing to accommodate are the two most common main reasons recorded locally. Other reasons include relationship breakdown, eviction from supported housing, the end of a social housing tenancy, and violence & harassment (including domestic violence). For many people there will be a number of reasons, and some will have multiple and complex needs.

The Strategy highlights a number of services available to help people remain in their homes, including: financial and debt advice; work with landlords and letting agencies; work with family and friends with whom the person at risk is living; a tenancy sustainment service for council tenants; and partnership work to tackle anti-social behaviour, harassment and domestic abuse. Work in all of these areas needs to continue to be strengthened.

To support those at risk of homelessness to remain in their homes we will:

- Strengthen and better define (preferably backed with written agreements) how we work with health service and County Council partners to better support people with poor mental health or substance misuse problems to sustain a tenancy.
- Expand and better resource and publicise existing early intervention and financial support initiatives for people facing the loss of a private sector tenancy.
- Better support people to remain living with family or friends until a new home can be found.
- Encourage private landlords and letting agencies, social housing providers, owner-occupiers and tenants to contact the Council at an early stage when a home is at risk.
- Explore further tenancy rescue solutions for private tenants including the potential for targeted grants and loans.
- Review the financial advice services available, to identify any gaps, duplication or problems with accessing services.
- Review the effectiveness of financial advice and tenancy sustainment services for council tenants.
- Seek to set up a working group with other housing providers operating locally, to help agree common policies and approaches and help minimise the number of social housing evictions.

- Continue to work with partners on a 'whole housing approach' to dealing with domestic abuse.
- Improve how we capture reasons for homelessness.
- Improve understanding of what impact of Covid-19 might have on the risk of homelessness, so that we can plan and respond accordingly.

## **Priority 2: Improve access to and range of permanent accommodation**

With high demand and with housing of all tenures (but particularly social housing) in short supply, there is a need to expand the housing options available to those who are homeless or at risk of homelessness. This includes looking beyond just social housing as the main tenure of choice and improving access to other tenures and housing types.

The current approach includes increasing the supply of social housing through the council's new-build programme; financial advice and support, including our Housing Benefit top-up scheme (HB+) and grants & loans to help people to access the private rented sector; encouraging landlords to lease homes through the council's social lettings agency, Town Hall Lettings; and loans for bringing private long-term empty homes back into use.

To help improve access to and the range of permanent accommodation available the council will:

- Explore how access to homes across a range of tenures might be improved, and how homes might be used more flexibly to meet a wider range of needs.
- Encourage take-up of private rented sector housing options, including out of town lets, through better promotion, additional incentives and improving support available.
- Improve engagement and partnership working with landlords, letting agencies and other private owners.
- Introduce additional incentives to improve the availability of private rented homes through Town Hall Lettings.
- Review the council's Housing Benefit Plus scheme with a view to making it a more attractive option
- Work with housing providers to explore how better use might be made of existing homes.
- Work with housing providers with a view to increasing access to housing for those with high levels of need, and better alignment of council and other providers' allocations policies.

- Investigate the feasibility of delivering more specialist forms of housing, and homes for people previously on middle incomes who may be at risk of homelessness, through the council's house-building programme.
- Investigate potential for conversion of commercial property to good quality accommodation through the council's housing development programme.
- Review the council's approach to Local Lettings Plans in the context of access to housing for those with high levels of need.
- Review the sub-regional Home-Link Lettings policy with partners to ensure it best serves local authorities' homelessness prevention objectives.

### **Priority 3: Minimise use of temporary and emergency accommodation**

The chronic shortage of permanent housing means there is a need for a supply of suitable temporary accommodation for those for whose cases are being investigated and those waiting for more permanent accommodation. Accommodation for use at short notice in an emergency is also important (issues around hostel accommodation for single homeless people and rough sleepers are dealt with under Priority 6).

Demand for such accommodation and length of stay has been increasing and additional use of hotel rooms was necessary during the coronavirus lockdown. Long stays in temporary accommodation are far from ideal for the households concerned and are financially costly – particularly use of commercial hotels. There is a need to reduce overall reliance on temporary accommodation (through interventions such as those already referred to above) whilst at the same time ensuring sufficient is available to meet needs.

To help minimise the use of temporary and emergency accommodation the council will:

- Systematically reduce demand for temporary and emergency accommodation by focusing relentlessly on preventing homelessness.
- Build on our understanding of the recent increase in the use of and length of stay in temporary accommodation to develop alternatives and keep information on demand under regular review.
- Improve our approach to monitoring of pathways through interim accommodation, and regularly review placement decisions to ensure consistency in decision making.
- Get a better understanding of the sizes and types of temporary and emergency accommodation needed.

- Continue to look for alternative ways of providing temporary and emergency accommodation, including for those for whom standard provision is unsuitable.
- Ensure we have the right internal processes in place to enable us to use our council housing stock to respond quickly to peaks and troughs in demand for temporary accommodation.
- Review the extent to which housing related debt should remain a barrier to being offered a home.

#### **Priority 4: Improve access to and effectiveness of support services**

Access to accommodation is only part of the solution in relation to homelessness, with significant numbers of people affected having additional support needs which put them more at risk of homelessness. Mental health support is the most common need, but many will have multiple needs.

The council supports (in some cases financially) a range of other agencies. Examples include those providing financial advice; drug & alcohol services; support for prison leavers, domestic abuse services; etc.

There is a strong commitment from most partners to work together in this area. However, issues such lack of resources and gaps in services mean that people all too often fall through the cracks. Areas identified as particularly needing attention include mental health services and dealing with homelessness & anti-social behaviour linked to misuse of drugs and alcohol. There is a need to move more towards a 'whole systems' approach across services, agencies and the wider community.

To help improve access to and effectiveness of support services the council will:

- Further improve working arrangements with mental health, substance misuse and social/social care services, including investigating the potential for some co-location of services and/or development of multi-disciplinary teams.
- Strengthen work with partners to provide a joined-up approach to preventing and tackling drug and alcohol related anti-social behaviour.
- Improve our understanding of the underlying reasons for homelessness, and use this understanding to help inform service design, planning and operation.
- Work to improve collaboration with statutory partners at a strategic level, including working with the County Council and other partners with a view to developing a fully integrated, multi-disciplinary homelessness service across a range of agencies.

## Priority 5: Prevent rough sleeping

Homelessness is linked in the popular imagination with rough sleeping, but the majority of people presenting to the Council as homeless are not sleeping rough and, happily, are unlikely ever to face the prospect of having to do so.

Rough sleeping is a special case of homelessness which needs to be understood on its own terms and tackled in a way that is informed by that understanding. A key consideration is that for many chronic and repeat rough sleepers, if not most, their homelessness is a symptom and not the primary problem. To complicate the issue further, some rough sleepers are known to have a permanent home or a hostel bed. Similarly, people street begging may not necessarily be without accommodation, and their presence on the street often causes the public to underestimate the scale of local provision and the open availability of local hostel spaces and support services.

Chronic and repeat rough sleepers strongly tend toward having multiple and complex needs. Mental health and/or substance misuse issues are often the main ones, but there may also be a number of other contributory factors.

Whether measured locally or nationally, the vast majority (usually above 80 percent) of rough sleepers are men. But while women are comparatively less likely to sleep rough, they often present with particular mental health and substance abuse problems and very often have particular needs, including a greater likelihood of being subjected to sexual and other forms of exploitation. Informed by research and experience, and the recent intensive training of housing advice staff in identifying and responding to domestic abuse, we feel we have a good understanding of the differing needs of male and female rough sleepers, but we plan to improve that understanding through consultation with female rough sleepers.

There is a significant flow of rough sleepers onto the streets of Cambridge each year – often originating from outside the City - and targets for maximum numbers of rough sleepers are being missed. A significantly improved, more joined-up approach is needed in this area, with early intervention a critical part of this.

To help prevent rough sleeping the council will:

- Improve our understanding of the nature and causes of rough sleeping in Cambridge.
- Work with partners to understand how prevention activities, as a whole, can help identify those at risk of rough sleeping, and help to intervene early to prevent the flow of new rough sleepers onto the streets.
- Gain a better understanding of where rough sleepers have come from, develop a more proactive approach to reconnecting rough sleepers to where

they came from and review the offer available to those without a local connection.

- Aim to keep the number of rough sleepers below 10 for any one count, reducing to five through the lifetime of the strategy.
- Set demanding new targets for the number of individual rough sleepers seen in any year and the length of time they are on the streets before they are housed.
- Seek the views of female rough sleepers as to their experience of homelessness and local service provision and, informed by this, consider what we might additionally need to do to ensure that the particular needs of homeless women are met.
- Work with partners to explore how an emergency accommodation offer can be made available for anyone sleeping rough across Cambridgeshire and Peterborough.
- Review the current approach to education around homelessness prevention amongst young people and step up our ongoing publicity campaign to better inform the public about homelessness and rough sleeping and the services we and partners provide.
- Review the current approach to street begging and anti-social behaviour.
- Ensure we assist every European Economic Area (EEA) national rough sleeper capable of achieving, and wishing to obtain, UK settled status to do so before the end of the 'grace period' in June 2021, and ensure that advice and practical support compliant with the law is available for those remaining rough sleepers without access to public funds.
- Promote and support effective implementation of the young people's assessment and care leaver protocols across all relevant partners.
- Review the prison leavers' protocol and identify how prison leavers' housing needs can be identified and addressed at an earlier stage.
- Work with South Cambridgeshire District Council to help prevent single homelessness within their district.

## **Priority 6: Break the cycle of chronic and repeat street homelessness and rough sleeping**

Once people have started sleeping on the streets there is a high risk of remaining there and being caught in a 'revolving door' of insecure accommodation and street homelessness and rough sleeping.

Although it does not suit everyone, hostel accommodation has an important part to play in supporting people off the streets and helping them to prepare for a move towards more permanent accommodation. The council considers there to be enough hostel accommodation to meet the City's needs, but that spaces are not becoming

available often enough to meet demand because people are remaining in hostels for longer than may be necessary. Working with hostel providers, we will ensure that move-on planning with residents will begin early in their stay and that full advantage is taken of the various schemes we have introduced to make a private-rented move-on solution more affordable and more desirable. In support of this change of emphasis we will review our hostel allocation and resettlement panel (HARP) process in order to increase move-on capacity and ensure a fair balance between people in hostels and other housing register applicants.

As well as working with other agencies, the council is keen to work with, and harness the interest shown by, the wider community in dealing with issues of homelessness and rough sleeping. This interest has been particularly evident during the Covid pandemic.

To help break the cycle of chronic and repeat street homelessness & rough sleeping the council will:

- Work with providers to speed up move on from hostels, whilst at the same time reviewing how evictions and abandonments can be reduced.
- Work with providers to review the scope and effectiveness of hostel-based support, particularly in relation to move-on advice.
- Explore whether being excluded from moving on due to previous breaches of tenancy can be prevented.
- Work with sub-regional partner authorities to help ensure a proportionate provision of accommodation for rough sleepers in order to reduce drift into Cambridge.
- Work with the County Council to assess what balance between hostel and other accommodation might be appropriate going forwards.
- Promote and make private rented housing a more attractive option, to help make it available to a wider range of applicants.
- Review the effectiveness of the Housing First model of permanent provision and explore whether it should be extended to include private rented sector homes.
- Explore with social housing providers whether there are opportunities for short life or low demand social housing available, including to single sharers.
- Expand the provision of modular homes and explore other innovative ways of providing accommodation to prevent and relieve single homelessness.
- Continue to seek and make best use of funding opportunities to purchase new homes to accommodate rough sleepers.
- Work with the County Council in considering the need for commissioning longer term supported provision for those for whom mainstream housing with support may not be suitable.

- Work collaboratively on shifting emphasis from mainly a streets-based to a mainly home-based service model.

## **Funding the Strategy**

The work of partners is fundamental to meeting the objectives and priorities in this Strategy. Each will, to a greater or lesser extent, have their own funding streams to draw upon.

The main sources of funding for the council itself include council General Fund resources, housing benefit, and various government grants, including those requiring bids for specific projects. The council will continue to take every opportunity to maximise and make best use of resources available.

The council will seek to develop a series of 'off the shelf' bids so that it is ready for external funding opportunities as they arise.

## **Implementing and Monitoring the Strategy**

A detailed Years 1&2 action plan is at Annex 5 of the Strategy. Further actions will subsequently be developed around a broad delivery framework for the remaining years of the Strategy.

This is to allow for flexibility as the Strategy moves forward, taking into account changing needs and circumstances and the resources available over time. This approach also reflects current uncertainty around the impacts of Covid-19 on homelessness and rough sleeping and on the resources available to deal with them. Monitoring and scrutiny will be through the cross-partner Homelessness Strategy Implementation Partnership and the council's Strategic Leadership Team.

## Introduction & Purpose

The popular perception of homelessness is where someone has nowhere to live. This is most visible where homeless people are seen sleeping rough on the streets, and government has a national target of ending rough sleeping by 2027. But there are also other forms of homelessness, often hidden from wider public view. These include people living in some form of temporary accommodation or shelter; living in insecure housing – for example, where threatened with eviction or staying with family or friends (sometimes known as 'sofa surfing'); or living in inadequate housing such as in severely overcrowded or poor conditions.

Almost anyone can find themselves facing homelessness, whether it be due to losing a job, relationship breakdown, fire or natural disaster. However, there are a number of factors which make it far more likely a person will lose accommodation. Long-term unemployment, poverty, poor physical or mental health, relationship breakdown, drug and/or alcohol problems and leaving institutional care are just a few examples. It is already evident that Covid-19 is increasing the risk of homelessness by exacerbating tensions in the home and increasing job insecurity. Rising unemployment will put more households at risk, particularly those already on low incomes with little or no savings behind them, and those living in insecure accommodation.

During 2018/19 and 2019/20, the council accepted over 1,600 applications from households who were homeless or at risk of homelessness and to whom the council owed a statutory homelessness duty. During each of those two years around 160 individuals were counted as sleeping rough on the streets.

Not only is homelessness and rough sleeping traumatic for those experiencing it, a [government evidence review in 2012](#) identified some of the financial costs to the economy. These included provision of benefits and employment programmes, health and care services, costs to the criminal justice system, and grants to and expenditure by local authorities.

Cambridge City Council has, for many years, prioritised the prevention of homelessness and rough sleeping. We have a well-established homelessness and rough sleeping action plan, which has been developed and implemented and kept under regular review by a partnership of organisations operating locally.

This new Homelessness & Rough Sleeping Strategy outlines our strategic direction and the actions we propose to take to help prevent and relieve homelessness and rough sleeping in Cambridge. It aims to communicate our vision and priorities to partners and the wider public and helps to support broader council ambitions set out

in its other strategies and plans. It also meets the [statutory requirement](#) for each housing authority to have a strategy for preventing homelessness in their district.

## Vision, objectives & priorities

### Corporate objectives

As well as helping to support national policy, this Homelessness & Rough Sleeping Strategy is also important in helping to achieve three of the council's broader objectives:

- Supporting the economy.
- Promoting health and wellbeing; and
- Tackling poverty and inequality

### Housing Strategy vision and objectives

This Strategy also helps support the vision in our [Greater Cambridge Housing Strategy](#): 'Healthy, Safe, Affordable: Homes & Communities for All'. In particular, it will contribute to the council wanting Cambridge to be a place where:

- Everyone has access to a suitable home, and residents are able to live as healthily, safely, and independently as possible.
- The housing market functions effectively, providing homes which are affordable to people on all incomes.
- There is a wide and varied choice of good quality, sustainable homes of different sizes, types and tenures, including new provision of council homes, to meet the needs of a wide range of different households and age groups.
- We have strong relationships with residents, developers and partners that enable housing and services to be delivered effectively, and that support innovation where appropriate.

Other relevant council strategies and plans are listed at Annex 1 of this Homelessness & Rough Sleeping Strategy.

### Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy objectives and priorities

Through this Strategy, the council will deal with homelessness and rough sleeping by working with partners to achieve the following objectives:

- Prevent people from becoming homeless.
- Where homelessness cannot be avoided, help people to find suitable accommodation.
- Minimise rough sleeping; and
- Ensure that housing outcomes for all residents reflect the Council's vision of 'One Cambridge, Fair for All'.

To help meet these objectives the Strategy is based around six key priorities:

- Support those at risk of homelessness to remain in their homes where possible or to find a new home without an intervening period of homelessness.
- Improve access to a range of permanent accommodation.
- Minimise the use of temporary and emergency accommodation.
- Improve access to, and effectiveness of, support services.
- Prevent rough sleeping.
- Break the cycle of chronic and repeat street homelessness and rough sleeping.

## Local & national context

### Factors contributing towards homelessness

There are a number of factors which contribute towards homelessness and how we and our partners are able to respond to it.

#### High demand and lack of affordability

As our Housing Strategy outlines, high employment levels and strong economic growth bring major opportunities for Cambridge, but also present significant challenges, including high housing costs and a shortage of accommodation which is affordable to local people.

The issue is particularly acute for those on low incomes. Key problems include:

- High demand for and a shortage of social housing for rent. There are currently around 1,800 households on the council's Home-Link housing register. Although this includes some people with low priority for housing, we know that there are also people in housing need who are not registered. For example, those with very complex needs – including some rough sleepers - may not be sufficiently well engaged with services to register; others may decide not to if they feel they have no chance of being housed – e.g., if they have been evicted from previous accommodation or have a housing related debt.
- A mismatch between the profile of social housing applicants and the size and type of housing becoming available for letting.
- Shortage of private rented homes, leading to high rents. This is compounded by a Local Housing Allowance (the maximum amount which housing benefit, or the housing element of Universal Credit will cover for housing costs) which is intended only to meet the lower one-third of local private rents - for which there is great competition. Unaffordability for people on benefits remains the case even following the recent welcome increase in Local Housing Allowance rates (and we understand that these rates are now due to be frozen).
- Affordability of rents on new council and housing association homes. Most new affordable homes for rent are now only available at 'affordable rents' which can be charged at up to 80% of market rents and are higher than social rents. The council's policy has been to request that providers charge no higher than Local Housing Allowance rates to ensure that rents are as

affordable as possible. However, even this is unaffordable to some, and under our existing policy (currently under review), the recent increase in Local Housing Allowance rates may have the perverse effect of social housing rents being increased, making them less affordable to those on low incomes.

## Poverty & Inequality

In 2017, Centre for Cities identified Cambridge as the most unequal City in the UK. <sup>1</sup>For example, 2018 income related indicators <sup>2</sup>show that average weekly earnings for the lowest 10% of earners were 3.5 times less than the average for all Cambridge employees; and council data shows that in 2017 around 14,000 of Cambridge residents lived in households claiming Housing Benefit and/or Council Tax support through the Council Tax Reduction Scheme. <sup>3</sup>

The impact of Covid-19 on jobs and incomes is likely to lead to many more people in Cambridge experiencing economic hardship, including some of those who have previously been relatively well off. It will also exacerbate existing poverty; those who have no credit history or savings to fall back on are likely to be particularly hard hit. The Council's Anti-Poverty Strategy (currently under review) gives more information on the links between poverty and homelessness.<sup>4</sup>

In terms of protected characteristics, evidence from the Cabinet Office identifies that Black and minority ethnic (BAME) people are more likely than non-BAME people to experience housing issues in relation to quality of housing, cost of renting as a proportion of income and overcrowding. <sup>5</sup> LGBT research from Stonewall also found that around one in five trans people had experienced homelessness at some point in their lives.<sup>6</sup>

Inequalities in health and educational attainment are also factors.

A full Equality Impact Assessment will be carried out on the Strategy.

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<sup>1</sup> [Centre for Cities, City Outlook 2017](#)

<sup>2</sup> [ONS Earnings and hours worked in the UK 2018](#)

<sup>3</sup> [Council Tax reduction scheme](#)

<sup>4</sup> [CCC Anti-Poverty Strategy](#)

<sup>5</sup> [Cabinet Office Race Disparity Audit](#)

<sup>6</sup> [LGBT in Britain Trans Report 2018](#)

## National Policy

### The Homelessness Reduction Act

The Homelessness Reduction Act 2017<sup>7</sup> introduced new legal duties aimed at preventing homelessness, and swiftly relieving homelessness where it cannot be prevented or has already happened.

Although the council has had a long history of actively helping to prevent and relieve homelessness, the Act has required a number of changes to be made to services and to ways in which the council works with other partners. This strategy aims to continue to build on those changes.

Pleasingly, the number of people seeking housing or homelessness advice and assistance has shown a marked increase since the Act came into force, indicating that people are identifying, and seeking a solution to, an impending housing difficulty earlier.

### National Rough Sleeping Strategy

The government's Rough Sleeping Strategy aims to halve rough sleeping nationally between 2018 and 2022, and to eliminate it by 2027.<sup>8</sup> It is intended to support every person who sleeps rough off the streets and into a home, and to prevent rough sleeping from happening in the first place. Several funding streams are in place to support delivery of the strategy.

Whilst the council fully supports this as an aspiration, with an ongoing flow of rough sleepers into Cambridge from elsewhere it is unlikely that we will be able to fully eliminate rough sleeping in Cambridge. A proposed local target is referred to elsewhere in this Strategy.

### Welfare Reforms

A programme of major changes to the welfare system has been taking place recent years, aiming to simplify the system, cut the overall welfare bill and encourage people into work. As a result, many people have had their benefits cut, including those in work. Research carried out for Crisis suggests a link between the national increase in homelessness over the last few years and the roll out of welfare reforms.

<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> Implemented from April 2018

<sup>8</sup> [National Rough Sleeping Strategy](#)

<sup>9</sup> [Crisis Homelessness Monitor England 2019](#)

For example, single people under 35 only being entitled to the Local Housing Allowance shared room rate, the impact of benefit sanctions on vulnerable people, and loss of income and through introduction of Universal Credit all increase the risk of people on low incomes becoming homeless.

Locally this has been compounded by the size of the local Broad Rental Market area (BRMA) which does not reflect local private rents. The aforementioned increase in rates for 2020-21 in response to the Covid-19 epidemic should bring more homes within reach of benefit claimants. However, rates are still below lower quartile rents in the City, and more people are likely to be impacted by the overall benefit cap.

The council continues to work closely with partners to help manage the impacts of reforms.

### **Delivery of new homes**

The government aims to deliver 300,000 new homes per year, with their main priority in relation to affordable housing being to promote low-cost home ownership. However, with a severe shortage of housing and high house prices locally, for people on low to middle incomes buying a home is simply unachievable.

The council was successful in securing funding for 500 new council homes as devolution grant through the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority.<sup>10</sup> Building is well under way and discussions for a further delivery programme are taking place. However, only limited grant is available and there are restrictions on how receipts from Right to Buy sales can be spent in conjunction with other sources of funding. This impacts on the ability to develop as well as the rent levels which need to be charged to cover costs of development. The Covid-19 crisis may also affect future delivery plans – both for the council and for other developers.

### **Care Act 2014**

Our strategic and operational approach to homelessness is set within the context of the Care Act 2014, which requires public sector services to work in partnership to deliver preventative services which promote well-being in the community.

### **Private Rented Sector Reforms**

Prior to the Covid-19 outbreak, government had started on a series of reforms to support people in the private rented sector. Changes still to be progressed include

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<sup>10</sup> [Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority.](#)

proposals to abolish no-fault evictions; further measures to deal with rogue landlords; and the introduction of an independent regulator for letting agents.

## **Other Local Policy**

### **Health and Wellbeing Strategy**

Housing is well recognised as one of the key determinants of health and wellbeing.

Consultation has taken place on a draft Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2019-2023. Relevant proposed areas of focus include preventing homelessness and improving pathways into housing for vulnerable people, improving access to mental health services, and embedding a 'Think Communities' approach into place-based working.

### **Housing Related Support Review & Homelessness Transformation**

A county-wide review of housing related support services in 2018 identified a number of gaps in service provision and recommended some redesigning of services.

Further research was commissioned to consider the potential for 'homelessness transformation' across the two areas. Consultation on a housing related support commissioning strategy has taken place, with the main commissioning priorities over the next few years expected to be around services for homeless adults, rough sleepers, ex-offenders and young people at risk of homelessness. The aim is to move away from a predominantly hostel focussed approach to a wider mix of services.

## **Priority 1: Support those at risk of homelessness to remain in their homes where possible**

### **Introduction**

Early intervention is essential to helping prevent homelessness.

During 2019/20 the council recorded over 200 cases where homelessness was successfully prevented, over 40% of which were outside of the statutory 56-day prevention period.

[Our 2019 review](#) of homelessness and rough sleeping in Cambridge has shown that the two most common causes of people becoming homeless in Cambridge are the loss of a privately rented home and family or friends being no longer willing to provide accommodation. Together these account for more than half of all homelessness presentations the council receives in a typical year. However, 2020 has not been a typical year and our most recent statistics show that relationship breakdown and family and friends being unwilling to accommodate on their own now account for the vast majority of homeless presentations.

Other prominent reasons for households and individuals presenting as homeless are eviction from supported housing, the end of a social housing tenancy, and violence (including domestic abuse) and harassment.

Early intervention is less easy to encourage when homelessness is predominantly caused by sudden personal crisis, but it is important nevertheless that we promote the message that homelessness is easier to resolve the earlier people seek advice.

Personal housing plans are also an important tool in enabling people at risk of homelessness to remain in their homes and sustain tenancies longer term.

### **Preventing loss of private rented tenancy**

According to the Census 2011, around 28% of households in Cambridge were living in the private rented sector. More recent estimates, although less reliable, suggest that this could have risen to around 35% and possibly more.

Where tenants have problems paying the rent, the council will signpost to services providing financial advice around issues such as entitlement to benefit, budgeting and dealing with debt. Discretionary Housing Payments may also be used to top up

benefit payments for a period, but in coming years we intend to be bolder in our willingness to financially support people to remain in their existing home, recognising that this will often be more financially prudent in the long run for the council, relative to providing expensive temporary accommodation, and will, in most cases, be far better for households facing homelessness.

It is important to recognise that most landlords in Cambridge provide a good service and take a responsible approach when dealing with their tenants. Building on this understanding, we will continue to improve how we engage with landlords, letting agencies and tenants themselves to ensure that all parties are aware of their rights and responsibilities, and can obtain advice and support from agencies when they need it.

Within that context, the council will continue to take a proactive approach where tenants are threatened with eviction. The reasons why tenants will be required to leave will vary, but the council will negotiate with landlords to try to prevent eviction, or to delay it to give time for the tenant to find alternative accommodation. We will also continue to be active in dealing with quality and safety standards in privately rented homes.

Preventing unlawful eviction is also a priority. For example, a significant proportion of section 21 notices have been found to be invalid when they first come to the attention of the council's housing advice service. The council will continue to challenge invalid notices, working with landlords and tenants to try to resolve the situation; and will continue to develop private rented sector advice and support services.

Enforcement powers may be used, although only as a last resort.

## **Supporting people to remain with family or friends**

It has already been mentioned that being asked to leave by family or friends is a major cause of local homelessness. As shown in our homelessness review, in 2018/19, around 1 in 7 households were owed a statutory homelessness prevention or relief duty due to this cause and indications are that, following the pandemic, this proportion is now far greater.

Through its home visiting service, the council negotiates with the parties concerned, and provides and/or signposts to appropriate advice and support to help people to remain where they are for as long as possible. We will continue to develop this role, particularly in relation to mediation between the parties concerned, and the potential for offering incentives to allow people to remain where they are until we can help them find an alternative home. We recognise, however, that there will be situations where the relationship has deteriorated to such an extent that it is unreasonable to expect someone threatened with homelessness to remain where they are.

## **Preventing loss of social housing tenancy**

A comprehensive financial and debt advice service is available to council tenants who may have difficulty in paying their rent. In addition, a bespoke advice service for Universal Credit claimants has been introduced, in recognition of significantly higher arrears often occurring amongst that group than amongst other tenants

The council also runs a tenancy sustainment service aimed at council tenants whose tenancy may be at risk due to complex support needs such as mental health issues, local antisocial behaviour, or a previous history of homelessness. The scope and effectiveness of this service will be reviewed.

The council enjoys good working relationships with its housing associations partners, in particular those with a strong local base. We are, however, aware that we need to improve lines of communication with larger local stockholders with more centralised management and customer services. We will continue, and better promote, more effective early intervention in situations where households in housing association homes are at risk of losing their tenancy, working, in particular, through the existing 'Tenants at Risk' forum of providers and through the new housing providers' network we are proposing as part of this Strategy.

We have been working closely with registered providers in managing the impact of welfare reforms, to help prevent both council and housing association tenants from losing their homes due to issues such as changes in benefit entitlement or switching from Housing Benefit to Universal Credit.

## **Violence and harassment (including domestic abuse)**

The council works closely with partners in dealing with issues such as anti-social behaviour, harassment and domestic abuse. This includes working through both the Cambridge Community Safety Partnership and the Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence Partnership.

Having already achieved White Ribbon accreditation, we have made significant improvements in our approach more recently in dealing with domestic abuse. As a result, the council has now been awarded accreditation through the Domestic Abuse Housing Alliance (DAHA). We will continue to build on this to help prevent domestic abuse from happening and to ensure that we can respond appropriately when it does.

Cambridgeshire, as one of three project sites nationally, has adopted a government funded 'Whole Housing Approach' to domestic abuse. This aims to enable early identification and intervention, reduce homelessness related to domestic abuse, and

enable survivors to remain where they are if they choose, or keep their tenancy status if they relocate.<sup>11</sup>

## Impact of Covid-19

It is not yet clear what the full impact of Covid-19 pandemic will be on the economy and jobs, but there are already signs that rent and mortgage repossessions will increase. As mentioned, we will introduce mechanisms to support early intervention including prudent, but bold, financial intervention subject to rigorous cost-benefit analysis.

There are also already indications that there may be an increase in mental ill-health and that this may lead to an increased risk of homelessness – for example, through more evictions from supported housing, or through increased levels of domestic abuse.

We are already aware of issues around how reasons for homelessness are captured. For example, loss of a private rented sector tenancy may be recorded as a main reason for homelessness, but is likely to be driven by other factors such as loss of employment, mental health issues etc. The need to deal with the potential effects of the pandemic increase the importance of improving monitoring in this area. A better understanding of the wider reasons for a household becoming homeless or being threatened with homelessness is important to ensure we respond appropriately to individual cases, and to help with prioritising, developing and improving services.

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<sup>11</sup> [Domestic abuse Whole Housing Approach](#)

## **Supporting those at risk of homelessness to remain in their homes where possible**

### **Moving forward the council will:**

Continue to recognise the strong links between mental health, substance misuse and homelessness, and work with the County Council to ensure that service design supports tenancy sustainment and homelessness prevention

Improve our approach to preventing private sector evictions and to preventing homelessness for people living with family or friends.

Improve engagement with private landlords, letting agencies, social housing providers and tenants; and promote the importance of those threatened with homelessness seeking help at an early stage

Explore further tenancy rescue solutions for private tenants including the potential for targeted grants and loans.

Review the financial advice services available, to identify any gaps, duplication or problems with accessing services.

Review the effectiveness of financial advice and tenancy sustainment services for council tenants.

Seek to set up a working group with other housing providers operating locally, to help agree common policies and approaches and help minimise the number of social housing evictions.

Continue to work with partners on a 'whole housing approach' to dealing with domestic abuse.

Improve how we capture reasons for homelessness.

Improve understanding of what impact of Covid-19 might have on the risk of homelessness, so that we can plan and respond accordingly.

## **Priority 2: Improve access to a range of permanent accommodation**

### **Introduction**

This Strategy has already identified a shortage of supply and high housing costs in Cambridge, and that many people are unable to afford market rents. Access to good quality housing that is affordable is critical to both preventing and relieving homelessness.

For many years, the main route out of homelessness has been through an often-lengthy wait for a social housing tenancy. Our homelessness review identified that in 2018-19, provision of a social housing tenancy was the second most common successful intervention (second only to provision of supported accommodation - dealt with elsewhere in this Strategy). However, with demand outstripping supply, as well as measures to increase the numbers of social homes for rent it is also important to find other ways into more permanent housing.

One of the priorities in our Greater Cambridge Housing Strategy is around making better use of existing homes, which is particularly important in the context of tackling homelessness.

### **Making private rented sector housing more attractive as an option**

The shortage of social housing means that the private sector represents the only realistically available option for many people.

However, there is often resistance from applicants to taking up private rented sector offers, partly because they want the long-term security of a social tenancy but also because there are limited homes available within the City which are affordable, meaning people have to move further out into neighbouring districts.

The council is committed to doing more to make private rented housing more attractive both to potential tenants and to landlords, including better promotion and ensuring people moving into private rented homes receive the advice and support they need.

Our social lettings agency, Town Hall Lettings (THL), is aimed at encouraging landlords (private and Housing Association) to lease homes to the council to be let to

those who need them. Any homes let through THL must meet agreed quality and safety standards.

Our Housing Benefit Plus (HB+) scheme offers financial assistance to those on benefits or a low income who, with a little assistance, can be helped to improve their financial situation. It provides a time-limited benefit top-up, in return for which households are expected to engage with financial and employment advice. The aim is that at the end of the top-up period they should be able to afford the full rent without the top-up.

While HB+ has proved successful in helping to both prevent and relieve homelessness, we believe that take up of the scheme could and should be greater. A recent review has identified that the offer should be made more flexible, offering a higher maximum level of supplement, a longer maximum duration of support, and stronger promotion of the scheme by housing advisors and in our homelessness prevention literature. We will also develop and promote targeted financial support to help people remain at home and review the range of financial support services available from all agencies, to understand where there might be gaps or duplication, and to identify reasons for any issues people might be experiencing in accessing services.

In addition to Housing Benefit Plus and Discretionary Housing Payments, our Access Scheme offers interest free loans and, in limited cases, grants, to help people meet the costs of entering the private rented sector. We will launch a pilot to help us decide whether it is more effective, and more financially prudent in the long run, to make the Access Scheme one where all assistance is in the form of a grant. We are also prepared to guarantee rents for a period or pay a lump sum covering several months advance rent to a landlord, where this will open up the sector to people who can afford the rent but are barred from entering it due to an unconventional employment or credit history. In summary, we are open to considering on a case-by-case basis any approach that might enable more people to gain and sustain a private sector tenancy, subject to two key considerations: will this prevent or relieve a household's homelessness; and do we have reasonable assurance that it will cost less, or certainly no more, than the cost of providing emergency and temporary accommodation.

Good, affordable privately rented accommodation is to be had a short distance out of the city, but some homeless households are resistant to an out-of-town offer, often for reasons that are understandable, but which might be overcome with a relatively small additional increment of support or assurance. In the early period of this strategy, we will explore the potential costs and efficacy of practical support measures such as subsidising for a limited period travel back into Cambridge for work, support or medical services; support to find employment or training in the new

location or innovations such as households retaining a time-limited local connection to Cambridge or gaining an enhanced banding on Home-Link.

## Working with private landlords

With high demand for rental properties there is a reluctance amongst some landlords to accept people on benefits on the basis that they may be at higher risk of not being able to pay the rent.

Town Hall Lettings offers a guarantee to landlords letting homes through the agency that rents will be paid. The council also [offers loans to owners to bring long-term empty homes up to standard](#) so that they can be let through THL. As mentioned, we are prepared to offer additional incentives, including advance rental loans paid directly to landlords, but we need to improve our approach to publicity in this area to try to encourage more landlords to participate.

Whilst we have good relationships with many private landlords and letting agents, there is still a need to improve communication, engagement, and partnership working.

## Broadening the range of housing available

The undoubted preference of people unable to buy a home of their own is to rent a home from a social landlord and the council is committed to making this option available whenever possible. The Greater Cambridge Housing Strategy gives more information how the council is increasing the supply of social housing, both through the council's own new build programme and through working with developers and other housing providers.

However, as well as a shortage of supply, there is also a mismatch between the size and type of stock available and the needs of people on the housing register. The council therefore needs to consider diversifying how its own new build homes are designed and used, as well as the use of existing homes.

For example, 80% of demand on the housing register is for one- and two-bedroom homes, with over half of applicants requiring one bedroom. However, studios and one-bedroom homes make up only 25% of the council's own housing stock, with 35% being two-bedroom homes.<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>12</sup> Strategic Housing Key Facts

Because of this, the focus of the council's new build programme to date has been on smaller properties, although providing some larger homes also in recognition of lower turn-over of family homes and the need to create mixed communities.

Moving forward, we are exploring the need to provide more specialist forms of housing to help meet the specific needs of homeless people. For example, increasing provision of self-contained accommodation as a steppingstone to a full tenancy, or piloting provision of small blocks with some form of on-site supervision.

Alternative options for use of new and existing homes are being considered. One example is leasing homes to the council's Housing Company for use as Houses in Multiple Occupation. This could include existing council homes and/or market homes delivered as part of the council's development programme. There may also be the potential for leasing short-life and/or low demand homes from other housing association partners.

Potential conversion of surplus commercial property to good quality homes through our Housing Development Agency is another area to be explored; particularly in the context of the potential impact of Covid-19 on future demand for office space.

We are also keen to explore securing some private rented homes to be offered through the Home-Link choice-based lettings system to applicants who may be homeless or at risk of homelessness but not in priority need.

## **Improving access to social housing**

Some social housing providers have allocations policies which, in effect, can reduce the number of homes available for those with high levels of need. Building on the good relations we have with local providers we need to work with them to try to increase access to housing for those most in need and assess whether we can achieve better alignment between council and housing association allocation policies.

We also need to work with providers to establish whether better use can be made of existing homes, including potential for flexing tenures in some circumstances where that would better meet the needs of the council and of the provider.

This is likely to be more of a challenge in relation to some of the larger and less locally focused associations, with whom we need to improve lines of communication.

Bespoke Local Lettings Plans (LLPs) for particular developments, both council and housing association, can also have the effect of reducing the number of areas where those with high needs can be housed.

We need to review the council's own suite of Local Lettings Plans to understand the overall impact across the City and whether a change in approach is required. We have also identified in our Housing Strategy the need to develop a Local Lettings Plan framework to try to achieve greater consistency of approach between the council and other providers, and to ensure LLPs are not overly restrictive.

There is also the need to review how we implement the policy in relation to applicants with outstanding debts being excluded from an offer of a social housing tenancy.

## **Improving access to housing for people on middle incomes**

One of the potential impacts of Covid-19 on the economy is that households previously on middle incomes could become more at risk of homelessness. We will consider how the council's own development programme might be able to help in providing private sector accommodation at sub-market levels, as well as at market rents to help cross-subsidise the wider new affordable housing programme.

## **Lettings policy**

The council is part of a sub-regional lettings policy which operates across six different neighbouring councils. Under the policy, homeless applicants to whom the councils owe the 'main' homelessness duty are awarded Band A (urgent need) priority.

Having a consistent policy which suits the needs of all partner authorities is inherently challenging, as needs in Cambridge are clearly different to those of some of the other districts. For example, as already highlighted the council is increasing the range of alternative housing options in addition to social housing; and rough sleeping is also a particular issue for the City.

The council will review the current policy and its impacts and consider whether being part of the current sub-regional approach is the best way of meeting local needs going forwards. Examples of issues to consider include: the priority given to statutorily homeless applicants on the register compared with the priority given to other groups including those at risk of becoming street homeless; how local connection criteria are applied; whether more priority should be available for multi-generational households or house-sharers; whether the offer to middle-income households should be improved; and whether those willing to take up a private rented sector offer should be awarded a higher priority banding.

## **Improving access to and range of permanent accommodation**

Moving forward the council will:

Explore how access to homes across a range of tenures might be improved, and how homes might be used more flexibly to meet a wider range of needs.

Encourage take-up of private rented sector housing options, including out of town lets, through better promotion, considering additional incentives and improving support available.

Improve engagement and partnership working with landlords, letting agencies and other private owners.

Consider whether additional incentives may be needed to improve the availability of private rented homes through Town Hall Lettings.

Review the council's Housing Benefit Plus scheme with a view to making it a more attractive option.

Work with housing providers to explore how better use might be made of existing homes

Work with housing providers with a view to increasing access to housing for those with high levels of need, and better alignment of council and other providers' allocations policies.

Investigate the feasibility of delivering more specialist forms of housing, and homes for people previously on middle incomes who may be at risk of homelessness, through the council's house-building programme.

Investigate potential for conversion of commercial property to good quality accommodation through the council's housing development programme.

Review the council's approach to Local Lettings Plans in the context of access to housing for those with high levels of need.

Review whether continuing to subscribe to the sub-regional Home-Link lettings policy can continue to meet Cambridge City's needs.

## **Priority 3: Minimise use of temporary and emergency accommodation**

### **Introduction**

However effective a homelessness service may be, there will always be situations where homelessness cannot be prevented and a household in need must be found an emergency or temporary home. The use of emergency accommodation – usually, in Cambridge, a local hotel – or the provision of a home intended to be occupied for a temporary period, is not necessarily a bad thing and, indeed, may be considered a necessary and commendable part of any authority's range of measures to help households in housing crisis. It is, however, undoubtably a bad thing if the emergency or temporary accommodation maintains a household in unsuitable accommodation for a lengthy period - especially if there are children in the household - and if the numbers in temporary accommodation are high relative to the supply of permanent homes.

As well as being a bad deal for homeless households, temporary and particularly emergency accommodation is a bad, high-cost deal for housing authorities.

Cambridge tries to minimise these problems by using its own council housing as temporary accommodation. At the time of writing our temporary stock numbers just over 100 units, the vast majority of which is owned by the council (our use of single homelessness and rough sleeping hostel accommodation is dealt with elsewhere in this strategy).

### **Use of temporary and emergency accommodation**

Following introduction of the Homelessness Reduction Act 56-day homelessness duty period, the numbers of people needing to be housed in temporary accommodation peaked in 2019/20, with families making up the largest proportional increase. The Covid-19 lockdown has since led to a fall in numbers, although this is expected to rise again following lifting of the temporary suspension of court proceedings. Rough estimates suggest that the council could see an increase in demand in the order of around 20% over pre-lock down numbers.

Length of stay has also increased, with some households waiting more than the statutory 56 days before being rehoused.

As mentioned, there are occasions when use of commercial hotels is unavoidable. This may sometimes mean people having to be located outside of Cambridge.

A special case of temporary accommodation has been our response to the Covid-19 pandemic. Here, the council initially secured temporary use of a number of hotel rooms so that rough sleepers unable to isolate might be kept safe. We have more lately commissioned former student accommodation for this purpose. By December 2020, the council had housed over 200 people. At its peak there were 140 people under cover falling to around 60 by the end of the year. A commitment has been made to find a permanent home for everyone willing to work with us, and we have a target to have no further rough sleepers in Covid accommodation by April 2021.

## **Reducing reliance on temporary accommodation**

As has been mentioned several times in this strategy, a key future objective is to prevent households from becoming homeless, in turn reducing our need for, and reliance upon, temporary accommodation. Priorities dealt with elsewhere in the strategy, such as supporting people to remain in their homes, securing better access to permanent accommodation, and understanding how the current lettings policy may be impacting, are all important in trying to reduce reliance on temporary housing. In addition, the council needs to consider and/or enhance the use of other solutions, such as direct lets to homeless households outside of the Home-Link choice-based lettings system and reviewing the extent to which housing related debt should remain a barrier to being offered a home.

We also need to better monitor the speed of decision making on homelessness cases and how quickly we are able to bring an interim accommodation duty to an end. In addition, we need to keep decisions to place people in interim accommodation under regular review to ensure consistency of decision making.

It is also important to ensure that benefit claims are processed as swiftly as possible.

Although we need to reduce use of commercial hotels overall, we also need to explore opportunities for bringing in different types of commercial provision; in particular, for high need households for whom standard provision is unsuitable.

## **Minimising use of temporary and emergency accommodation**

Moving forward the council will...

Further develop our existing plan to reduce reliance on the use of temporary and emergency accommodation.

Continue work on identifying reasons for the recent increase in use of and length of stay in temporary accommodation, and keep information on demand under regular review.

Improve our approach to monitoring of pathways through interim accommodation, and regularly review placement decisions to ensure consistency in decision making.

Get a better understanding of the of the sizes and types of temporary and emergency accommodation needed.

Continue to look for alternative ways of providing temporary and emergency accommodation, including for those for whom standard provision is unsuitable.

Make use of council owned homes where appropriate.

Ensure that rough sleepers housed temporarily in hotels are moved into appropriate accommodation in a planned way so that they do not end up back on the streets.

Review the extent to which housing related debt should remain a barrier to being offered a home.

## Priority 4: Improve access to and effectiveness of support services

### Introduction

Whilst access to accommodation is essential for preventing and relieving homelessness, it is only part of the solution.

A significant proportion of households and individuals seeking housing advice and facing homelessness have a need for some form of additional support if their issues are to be addressed. Our Homelessness Review identified that of 1078 presentations in 2018-19, around two thirds were recorded as having support needs. Mental health support was the most common one recorded as a primary need, but many will have had multiple needs. Lack of appropriate support for such individuals or households increases their risk of being made homeless for the first time or becoming caught in a cycle of homelessness.

Public service cuts over recent years have taken their toll in terms of preventative services and are thought to be a key contributor to the numbers of people with high level and/or multiple support needs becoming homeless or sleeping rough.

### Improving joint working

Working closely with partners is key to helping people avoid homelessness, or at least the worst effects of homelessness. Under the Homelessness Reduction Act 'duty to refer', partnership working is now effectively a statutory requirement.

The council involves and supports – in some cases financially - a whole range of organisations in dealing with homelessness, including statutory agencies, contracted services, other housing providers and the voluntary sector. Single homeless and rough sleeper support, drug & alcohol services, supporting prison leavers, and services for those experiencing or at risk of domestic abuse are just a few examples. It is also important to ensure that people can access more generic services, such as those providing services such as: financial advice; access to education, training and volunteering/employment opportunities; and cultural & leisure activities.

The council has a long history of partnership working in relation to homelessness, with a strong commitment across most partners to work together. However, there is still significant need for improvement. All too often issues such as gaps in services, lack of resources, inadequate working protocols and absence of rapid referral routes can lead to people falling through the cracks. In some cases, duplication of services also needs addressing.

Mental health and substance misuse support is a particular area where working needs to become more joined up. Another area is in dealing with homelessness and anti-social behaviour linked to misuse of drugs and alcohol.

It is important that all partners, including the council as the housing authority, have clearly defined roles and a clear and agreed direction of travel in relation to preventing and tackling homelessness. Building on the improved understanding gained through our response to Covid-19, we need to review how non-commissioned voluntary services can be more effectively integrated with statutory and commissioned services.

Collaboration at a strategic level needs to be improved – particularly amongst statutory services – to ensure that those with a complex range of needs can receive the support they need. A list of key partners is at Annex 2.

## Homelessness Transformation

The homelessness Trailblazer service has taken joint working a step further forward over the last few years. Part of a multi-agency partnership across Cambridgeshire and Peterborough, involving public, private and voluntary sector partners, it helps prevent people from becoming homeless by helping them to help themselves before they hit crisis point. Its main aim is to make homelessness the ‘unacceptable outcome.’<sup>13</sup>

However, more of a ‘whole system’ approach across services, agencies and the wider community will be needed if we are to achieve maximum effectiveness around homelessness prevention.

As a result of the recent county-wide Homelessness Transformation research (referred to previously in this Strategy) one of the recommendations the councils involved are exploring is the feasibility of having a fully integrated multi-disciplinary homelessness service across a range of agencies. Any proposals in this area would require full commitment to joint working from multiple partners, potentially including some co-location of services.

A key element of this from Cambridge City Council’s point of view will be to ensure that the City’s needs, as well as those of the wider Cambridgeshire and Peterborough area, can be appropriately met.

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<sup>13</sup> [Cambridgeshire & Peterborough homelessness Trailblazer](#)

It will be important to engage not only partner agencies but also service users and the wider community in designing any new services.

## **Improving access to and effectiveness of support services**

Moving forward the council will...

Explore how working arrangements with mental health, substance misuse and social/ social care services can be improved, including investigating the potential for some co-location of services and/or development of multi-disciplinary teams.

Strengthen work with partners to provide a joined-up approach to preventing and tackling drug and alcohol related anti-social behaviour.

Improve monitoring of the underlying reasons for homelessness, to help inform service design, planning and operation.

Work to improve collaboration with statutory partners at a strategic level, including working with the County Council and other partners to explore the potential for a fully integrated, multi-disciplinary homelessness service across a range of agencies.

## Priority 5: Prevent rough sleeping

### Introduction

As previously highlighted, prior to additional temporary accommodation being provided in response to Covid-19, rough sleeping had become a growing and more publicly visible issue over recent years.

However, homelessness and rough sleeping, although often overlapping, are not necessarily the same thing. There are many people who are homeless who do not sleep rough, and some rough sleepers are known to have permanent homes, or at least a bed in a hostel or other temporary accommodation.

Similarly, street begging involves individuals who may or may not be sleeping rough, again some of whom are known to have access to accommodation.

The council has had a long-standing target of keeping rough sleeping numbers to fewer than 10 (as measured by street counts now carried out six times a year). However, 33 were identified in the autumn 2019 count and even in November 2020 when there remained more than 60 former rough sleepers in Covid emergency accommodation 16 people were found sleeping rough on the night of the count. 166 separate individuals were recorded as sleeping rough in Cambridge between April 2019 and March 2020, against a target of fewer than 135.

Our Homelessness Review identified that well over half of rough sleeping individuals identified in Cambridge over the period of a year appear to be new to the streets that year.

This is a complex area with no single solution. It is essential that we do all we can to promote early intervention to enable people to access accommodation and appropriate support and other services to reduce the risk of them moving onto the streets.

### Profile of rough sleepers

Rough sleepers and people at risk of rough sleeping tend to have multiple and complex needs, with a high proportion of rough sleepers in Cambridge having severe mental health problems and/or alcohol and substance misuse issues, including use of Class A substances. National research also shows that they tend to have higher rates of long-term physical health and mental health problems compared with the general population.<sup>14</sup>

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<sup>14</sup> Public Health England [Inequalities of homelessness blog](#)

Other National research also identifies life experiences, threat of violence or abuse and lack of family and/or other support as just a few of the potential contributory factors.<sup>15</sup>

Street homelessness disproportionately affects males, those who have experienced trauma, and those leaving institutional settings such as care and prison leavers. Although unlike some other areas there appear to be relatively few street homeless people in Cambridge who have been in the armed forces.

Around 1 in 5 Cambridge rough sleepers using Covid-19 hotel provision were identified as foreign nationals, many of whom were thought to have no recourse to public funds. However, our targeted work with those from the European Economic Area (EEA) has shown that it is possible to help those willing to work with us to find employment or otherwise gain pre-settled or settled status, allowing them to continue to live and work in the UK and access healthcare and any social security benefits they may be eligible to claim. We will build on the insights gained from this exercise so that we can assist any potentially eligible rough sleepers and will consider new eligibility rules following the ending of the transition period following Britain's departure from the European Union.

## Setting targets for rough sleeping

As previously stated, it is unlikely that we will be able to completely eliminate rough sleeping in Cambridge by 2027 in line with government aspirations. We propose a local target of fewer than 10 rough sleepers picked up in any one count by 2022, moving to fewer than five throughout the lifetime of this Strategy. We will also set a demanding target for the duration a person found rough sleeping remains on the street before being housed. This target will form part of the service specification for the proposed [Streets to Home](#) service.

## Early up-front prevention

To help young people to understand the implications and risks of leaving home without alternative accommodation being available, the council has formerly supported a programme of education within local schools, colleges and specialist young persons' accommodation. We now think that a better approach is to target those likely to be at highest risk, and to better engage both young people and parents/carers at an early stage before the risk of homelessness arises.

We also need to improve how those at risk of rough sleeping are identified to help prevent the flow of new rough sleepers onto the streets.

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<sup>15</sup> St Mungos, [On My Own Two Feet](#)

## Young people leaving care

There is a strongly recognised link between rough sleeping and having been in local authority care. In Cambridge in 2016 just under 1 in 5 rough sleepers were found to have been in care at some point in their childhood. This broadly reflects earlier national research which estimated a figure of around 1 in 4.<sup>16</sup>

It is essential that partners work effectively together to manage the transition between care and independence. There is a joint protocol between Cambridge City and Cambridgeshire County Councils for the assessment of 16 and 17 year olds, and we are also in the process of finalising a joint accommodation pathway protocol for care leavers.

For these protocols to be effective, they need strong and sustained commitment on all sides, and we need to ensure that they become fully embedded in the practice of all partners.

## Prison leavers

Homelessness prevention visits are made to people due to leave prison, but by the time the council is aware of someone being discharged it is often too late to provide effective homelessness prevention support. We will continue to work with the Police & Crime Commissioner and with prison and probation services to improve the approach to prison discharge, including considering extending the use of video links to carry out virtual housing assessments (introduced in response to Covid-19), and reviewing and revitalising the existing discharge protocol.

We also need to explore how links with each of the local prisons can be improved, and how individuals' housing needs can be identified and addressed at an earlier stage.

## Access to accommodation

There is no statutory requirement to provide temporary accommodation for single people not thought to be in priority need. This, combined with a shortage of suitable housing, means that people with no place to stay are at risk of moving onto the streets. The council's Single Homelessness Service assists single people not in priority need but at risk of homelessness and rough sleeping to quickly gain a secure home. So far, the scheme has assisted over 500 single people into private rented sector housing, but as highlighted elsewhere in this Strategy, lack of appropriate and affordable accommodation remains a challenge.

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<sup>16</sup> Randall, G and Brown, S, Helping rough sleepers off the streets: A report to the Homelessness Directorate, ODPM, 2002.

In terms of short-term accommodation, there is a need to explore, county-wide, how an emergency accommodation offer can be made available for anyone sleeping rough across Cambridgeshire and Peterborough.

## Reducing the ‘pull’ of the streets

As mentioned previously, some people who live on the streets already have access to accommodation. For many people it is difficult to understand why people would ‘choose’ to live on the streets as opposed to living in settled accommodation or taking up a hostel place.

National research has identified that as well as ‘push’ factors (such as eviction or abandonment - e.g., through poor housing conditions or threat of violence/abuse) other ‘pull’ factors are also influential. This may include a sense of community on the street, compared with boredom and isolation living alone. A recurring theme was the absence of both informal support (from family and friends) and formal ongoing support.<sup>17</sup>

Local consultation has also identified that one of the benefits of living on the street is the ability to raise money through begging.

We need to improve public awareness of alternative ways of giving – including through Cambridge Street Aid, which funds individually tailored grants to help people to move off the streets.<sup>18</sup>

We need to work with public health to try to tackle the root causes of begging, which are often related to drug and alcohol dependency issues. We also need to work with the police and other partners to explore how enforcement against begging and street-based anti-social behaviour can be improved in parallel with improved provision of accommodation and health and support services.

## Reconnections policy

Cambridge as a well-renowned city attracts people from across the region, the country, and indeed the world, some of whom sadly end up sleeping on the streets. This inward migration of rough sleepers is one reason why, prior to the Covid accommodation effort, numbers sleeping rough remain stubbornly above our target of ten.

The council has for many years had a policy of encouraging rough sleepers not connected to Cambridge to return to places where they may have family and friends able to support them. But individuals are free to choose where they live in an open society and there is an understandable and, probably, irreconcilable tension between

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<sup>17</sup> St Mungo Trust: [On My Own Two Feet](#),

<sup>18</sup> [Cambridge Street Aid](#):

making sure that we care for everyone who lands on our streets and seeming to encourage people to migrate to a city where services are good and local people are welcoming and generous.

One avenue we will wish to explore in the lifetime of this strategy is to work with our neighbouring local authorities, especially South Cambridgeshire District Council, to develop joint approaches to a shared rough sleeping problem which is sub-regional in origin but often manifests itself on the streets of Cambridge.

An ambition we will pursue under this strategy will be to gain a better understanding of where rough sleepers are coming from so that we can improve our approach for reconnection within the context of duties under the new Homelessness Reduction Act.

## Preventing rough sleeping

Moving forward the council will...

- Improve our understanding of the nature and causes of rough sleeping in Cambridge.
- Work with partners to understand how prevention activities as a whole can help identify those at risk of rough sleeping and help to intervene early to prevent the flow of new rough sleepers onto the streets.
- Gain a better understanding of where rough sleepers have come from, develop a more proactive approach to reconnecting rough sleepers to where they came from, and review the offer available to those without a local connection.
- Aim to keep the number of rough sleepers below 10 for any one count, reducing to five through the lifetime of the strategy; and agree additional targets around length of stay and time taken to make a housing offer.
- Work with partners to explore how an emergency accommodation offer can be made available for anyone sleeping rough across Cambridgeshire and Peterborough.
- Review the current approach to education around homelessness prevention amongst young people.
- Review the current approach to street begging and anti-social behaviour.
- For people thought to have no recourse to public funds, ensure help is available for those who may wish to apply for pre-settled or settled status.
- Promote and support effective implementation of the young people's assessment and care leaver protocols across all relevant partners.
- Review the prison leavers' protocol and identify how prison leavers' housing needs can be identified and addressed at an earlier stage.
- Work with South Cambridgeshire District Council to help prevent single homelessness within their district.

## Priority 6: Break the cycle of chronic and repeat street homelessness and rough sleeping

### Introduction

Once people have started sleeping on the streets there is a high risk of remaining there and we need to improve approach to stopping people getting caught in the 'revolving door' of street homelessness and rough sleeping.

Rough sleeping tends to last longer than other forms of homelessness and is much more likely to be cyclical. One London study in 2017-18 found that one-in-six people sleeping out in the capital in that year had returned to the street after a gap of at least a year.<sup>19</sup> This same pattern is familiar to us here in Cambridge.

Locally, although the majority of rough sleeping appears to involve those new to the streets in the last year, there are also significant numbers who have either returned to the streets or are 'entrenched' as rough sleepers.

There is also a surprising number of individuals who, having been found a home, remain deeply involved in the life of the streets, mixing intermittent rough sleeping with nights spent in their own home, often hosting associates from the streets - not always willingly.

It is often overlooked that for some rough sleepers the price paid for gaining a home is boredom and isolation, prompting disinterest in maintaining a home, the continuation of a street lifestyle and sometimes the abandonment of the accommodation. It is a strategic aim for us to better understand these factors, including the extent to which befriending schemes, skill sharing and peer support may help to anchor people in the home and neighbourhood. We will also want to analyse whether the alternative accommodation options we are developing - particularly our small, dispersed developments of compact modular homes and our experimental 'supported shared' homes where two friends live together - might better suit people with a street past than conventional one-bedroom flats which have hitherto been our best offer. Our innovative Housing First (HF) scheme which links two purpose-built HF flats to a third housing a 'good neighbour' is a further response to our current understanding of why people sometimes return to the street. Four flats

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<sup>19</sup> St Mungo Trust: [On My Own Two Feet](#).

over two schemes are anticipated to be completed in 2020-21 with a further five planned to be completed the following year.

## Improving hostel capacity

### **The life of the street**

Although hostel accommodation does not suit everyone, it has an important part to play in supporting people off the streets and helping them to prepare for the move towards more permanent accommodation.

Around 345 beds are available in the city in hostels and dispersed 'move-on houses'. This is a significant number for a relatively small city, and we think adequate to meet the needs of the local rough sleeper population; although we need to better understand what an appropriate balance is locally between hostel and permanent housing provision.

However, there is an issue around the rate at which hostel places become available for new rough sleepers. Residents are expected to move on within two years, but a number stay for longer. Also, for some, two years may be too long to remain in an institutional setting.

While there are exceptions, the usual route into a mainstream homelessness hostel is through Jimmy's Assessment Centre. Slow rates of move-on from hostels affect the rate at which rough sleepers can move from Jimmy's, which in turn affects the rate at which people on the street can get a bed in Jimmy's.

More post-hostel accommodation and promoting and making private rented sector alternatives more attractive are needed if we are to move people through the hostels more quickly. We will also develop additional home-based support for people leaving hostels who feel they are still not ready to live independently.

We need to work with providers and other partners to help people move on more quickly. As well as advice and support to the services concerned, more challenging move-on target times are likely to be needed, as well as improvements in how progress through the system is monitored. There is also a need for better up-front information for residents and support workers on the range of accommodation and support options available to them.

Move-on discussions with individuals need to start as soon as possible after they have moved into a hostel and their position has stabilised. A 'Streets to Home approach' as proposed below could play a major part in this, to ensure that hostel discharges are well planned and accompanied by appropriate treatment and support.

South Cambridgeshire and Huntingdonshire District Councils currently have equal access, with Cambridge City, to hostel places in the City. With high levels of need just within Cambridge itself we need to consider the potential for reciprocal accommodation arrangements with other districts and support them to help increase hostel capacity with their own districts.

Although it is important to move people on, it is just as important to avoid unplanned move-on wherever possible, including through abandonment or eviction. Whether being excluded from moving to more permanent accommodation due to previous breaches of tenancy can be prevented also needs to be explored. We need to work with accommodation providers to review how incidents of eviction and abandonment can be reduced.

We need to work with the County Council to weigh up the advantages and disadvantages of hostel accommodation compared with other housing options, to consider what balance of provision should be available moving forward.

### **Improving suitability of hostel accommodation**

We need to ensure that the supported housing available to individuals is suitable to for those presenting with complex needs. We will work with partners to review the scope and effectiveness of support provided in hostels, including in relation to move-on advice.

We also need to work with the County Council in considering the need for commissioning longer term supported provision for those for whom mainstream housing with support may not be suitable.

### **Access to housing**

As highlighted earlier, expanding access to homes that are affordable is an important part of the solution to preventing homelessness and keeping people off the streets.

We have already mentioned our Housing First model of accommodation for those with complex needs who are rough sleeping or have a history of repeat homelessness. HF is not a panacea, but national and international research has identified it as being very effective for people for who have serially failed to maintain a hostel place or who refuse to go into a hostel. By some accounts it can also be a more cost-effective solution than hostel provision.<sup>20</sup>

We plan to have 14 Housing First homes occupied by the end of 2020-21 with a target have a total of 24 HF homes of different types in this first phase of the project. At that point we will pause and review how successful HF has been - both for individuals and the wider community - and whether the programme should be

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<sup>20</sup> Pleace & Bretherton, [The cost effectiveness of Housing First in England 2019](#)

expanded. We will also consider whether we can develop a private sector model of HF; our current project is based on social sector accommodation.

We are conscious that there is a tension between providing self-contained social accommodation through both HF and the HARP<sup>21</sup> process, and negative perceptions of fairness among the wider number of applicants looking for a social home.

Research on the views of hostel residents has identified that, understandably, most want social housing rather than a private rented tenancy, but we have been working, and will continue to work, to counter perceptions that a social tenancy is the only, and guaranteed, route out of homelessness or a hostel. The best antidote to this perception is for us to be able to demonstrate that a private rented option is a good and financially viable option and, as has been mentioned, we now have a wide range of schemes to make private renting easier, affordable and sustainable. We will continue to promote private renting to people needing to leave hostels and we will be reviewing our HARP process to see whether it might be expanded to include the offer of a guaranteed affordable private let rather than a social home.

The effect of our current approach to Home-Link applicant banding and moving towards more homes offered through Housing First is that around 20% of one-bedroom homes and 10% of all homes available through Home-Link are being let to single people with a street homeless background. Although it is important that housing is provided for this group, it does mean that others are having to wait much longer for a home, and it also presents challenges in achieving mixed and balanced communities to help meet our broader strategic housing objectives.

The position we want to achieve is that a social home will be available for people who have been street homeless, or who need to move on from a hostel, whenever there is an attested need for that this kind of tenure rather than a (perfectly understandable) preference for a social home.

We acknowledge a clear need for a flexible range of accommodation types for this group. Accordingly, the council has supported partners in the delivery of six modular units on Newmarket Road which are now occupied. In our market testing with rough sleepers, fully self-contained but compact (around 25 metres square) modular homes scored very highly in terms of desirability and so we have also embarked on our own programme to provide up to 16 further modular homes on three council-owned sites across the city. These units have been donated by our development partner, Hill. This activity has taught us that it takes time to get modular homes through the planning process so we will look at whether an 'off the shelf' planning brief can be developed to help speed the process for any future developments.

We will investigate opportunities to work more collaboratively with other housing providers on projects to help prevent and tackle homelessness in addition to provision of social housing tenancies. This includes exploring whether there are opportunities for making use of any short-life and/or low demand social housing

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<sup>21</sup> The hostel allocation and resettlement panel (HARP) provides that up to 40 social tenancies a year can be awarded to assist people to move on from hostels.

properties available – for example to single sharers or for general needs housing - through Town Hall Lettings.

We will also explore the potential for self-build and/or self-managed co-operative housing models for people who have been on the streets.

## **Streets to Home service**

A major focus up to now has been on providing services, such as day centre facilities, health services, education & skills development, welfare checks etc, to those living on the streets. There are also many informal voluntary and church-based services offering food, clothing and bedding to those living a street-based lifestyle. Rather than simply supporting people to remain on the streets, a major shift in approach is required if the cycle of street homelessness is to be tackled effectively.

The council is working with Cambridgeshire County Council and other partners to commission a comprehensive 'streets to home' service with the aim of helping people sleeping rough to rapidly get off the streets and into accommodation. Under a model which we are presently developing through consultation with service users and partner agencies we envisage there will be 'link worker' who will remain engaged with an individual throughout their journey from streets to home. This worker will not necessarily themselves provide services but will ensure that the individual is supported to get what he or she needs in what is inevitably a complex and sometimes challenging period of transition. Streets to home will view all rough sleepers as people with agency and ambitions for a better life. Accordingly, the starting point will be a thorough assessment of circumstances, need and the rough sleeper's own ambitions and goals, leading to an action plan agreed with, and shaped by, the rough sleeper themselves.

Once settled, new types of support services will be required which are tailored to individuals' needs, to help prevent people from returning to the streets.

To be successful this will depend on close collaboration with partners, including health and social care related support services, the voluntary sector, businesses and the wider community. We will also need to work closely with existing street-based services and with service users themselves to identify what role they can play in designing and facilitating this shift in approach.

## **Working with the wider community**

There has been considerable interest from the wider community in trying to deal with the problem of street homelessness and rough sleeping.

The community group It Takes a City (ITaC), along with other informal voluntary support services, have helped to enable a strong and collaborative approach to getting people off the streets in response to the coronavirus pandemic. We are strongly committed to building on this positive work, working with the community to

help find more permanent housing solutions for rough sleepers and to help shape and implement new ways of working.

Among the things the experience of Covid has illuminated is that statutory and contracted services cannot do it all and that the value well-motivated, organised and properly integrated groups in the local community can add has the potential to be enormous. Accordingly, we intend to work with ITaC and other groups to support befriending, mentoring and skill-sharing initiatives.

It is also important to continue to increase public awareness of the issues involved and how they can help in keeping people off the streets.

## **Breaking the cycle of chronic and repeat street homelessness and rough sleeping**

Moving forward the council will:

- Work with providers to help speed up move on from hostels, whilst at the same time reviewing how evictions and abandonments can be reduced.
- Work with providers to review the scope and effectiveness of hostel-based support, particularly in relation to move-on advice.
- Explore whether being excluded from moving on due to previous breaches of tenancy can be prevented.
- Work with sub-regional authorities to help improve City access to existing hostel beds.
- Work with the County Council to assess what balance between hostel and other accommodation might be appropriate going forwards.
- Promote and make private rented housing a more attractive option, to help make it available to a wider range of applicants.
- Review the effectiveness of the Housing First model of provision and explore whether it should be extended to include private rented sector homes.
- Explore with social housing providers whether there are opportunities for short life or low demand social housing available, including to single sharers.
- Expand the provision of modular homes, and explore other innovative ways of providing accommodation to prevent and relieve single homelessness.
- Continue to seek and make best use of funding opportunities to purchase new homes to accommodate rough sleepers.
- Work with the County Council in considering the need for commissioning longer term supported provision for those for whom mainstream housing with support may not be suitable.
- Work collaboratively on shifting emphasis from a mainly streets-based towards more of a home-based service model.

## Funding the Strategy

As has already been highlighted throughout this Strategy, the work of partners is fundamental to meeting the proposed objectives and priorities; and each will, to a greater or lesser extent, have their own funding streams to draw upon.

For the council itself, the main sources of funding for dealing with homelessness and rough sleeping are a combination of its own resources together with government grant. The following is a list of what is currently available to support our work around homelessness and rough sleeping.

- Council General Fund resources
- Housing Benefit (for stays in bed & breakfast and Cornerhouse temporary accommodation)
- [MHCLG flexible homelessness support grant](#)
- [MHCLG Homelessness Reduction Grant](#)
- [MHCLG Rough Sleeping Initiative Grant](#)
- [MHCLG Covid-19 rough sleepers contingency fund grant](#)

Many of the government grants available for homelessness and rough sleeping require submission of bids for projects which meet the specific aims of that grant funding pot. The council will continue to work with partners to assess whether any funding which comes available can be used effectively to help meet the objectives in our Strategy, and to bid for funding where appropriate. The council will aim to write a series of 'off the shelf' bids which will enable it to act swiftly when bidding opportunities (which often have short timeframes for response) arise.

The full financial impacts of Covid-19 on local and national government spending, and funding available to other partners are not yet fully understood. This may of course pose risks to the extent to which some of our objectives can be met, at a time when a further increase in homelessness and rough sleeping is also highly likely. This makes it more important than ever that we take every opportunity to maximise and make best use of any resources available now and in the future.

## Implementing and Monitoring the Strategy

This Strategy will be accompanied by a detailed action plan for years 1 and 2 of the Strategy, which will be outcome focused, with clear targets for delivery. (See Annex 5).

Detailed actions for subsequent years will be developed on an annual basis, based on a broader delivery framework. This approach is to allow flexibility in exactly how the objectives and priorities outlined in the Strategy are to be achieved, accounting for changing needs and circumstances and the resources available over time. This is particularly important in the current context of uncertainty around the full impact of Covid-19 on homelessness and rough sleeping and on the funding available to tackle the issues involved.

Implementation of the Strategy will require close partnership working across a wide spectrum of partners.

Achievement against the action plan will be monitored on an ongoing basis through the cross-partner Homelessness Strategy Implementation Partnership. An annual outcomes report will be scrutinised by the council's Strategic Leadership Team.

## Annexes

## **Annex 1: Links to relevant council strategies, policies and plans**

[Corporate Plan](#)

[Greater Cambridge Housing Strategy 2019-2023 plus annexes](#)

[Anti-Poverty Strategy 2020-2023](#)

[Empty Homes Policy](#)

Progress against previous Homelessness & Rough Sleeping Action Plan *Link to be added*

[Home-Link Lettings Policy 2018](#)

[Community Safety Plan](#)

[Anti-Social Behaviour Policy](#)

[Local Lettings Plans](#)

[Homelessness Review 2019](#)

## **Annex 2: Links to key data**

[Homelessness & Rough Sleeping Review 2019](#) (Cambridge City Council)

[Strategic Housing Key Facts](#) (Cambridge City Council)

[Sub-regional Housing Market Bulletins](#) (Cambridge sub-region)

[Government Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Statistics](#)

[Homelessness Monitor](#) (Crisis)

## Annex 3: Key partners

**(NB this list is not exhaustive)**

Cambridgeshire County Council  
Public Health England, East of England  
Cambs HIA  
Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Clinical Commissioning Group  
Cambridge Access Surgery  
Addenbrooke's Hospital  
Cambridgeshire & Peterborough NHS Foundation Trust  
South Cambridgeshire District Council and other Cambridgeshire districts  
Peterborough City Council  
Cambridgeshire Police  
Probation  
Bedfordshire, Northamptonshire, Cambridgeshire and Hertfordshire Community  
Rehabilitation Company. (BeNCH CRC)  
Cambridge City Council Housing Development Agency  
Citizens Advice Bureau  
Change Grow Live  
P3  
St Giles Trust  
Department of Work & Pensions  
Cambridge Ethnic Community Forum  
Disability Cambridgeshire  
CHS Group  
Jimmy's Cambridge  
Cambridge Women's Aid  
Homelessness Strategy Implementation Group  
Emmaus  
Wintercomfort  
Cambridge Cyrenians  
Link UP  
YMCA  
Riverside  
Centre 33  
Break  
Counting Every Adult  
Registered Housing Providers operating locally  
Residents' Associations

## Annex 4: Glossary

Affordable Rent	<p>Rented housing provided by Local Authorities and Private Registered Providers of social housing to households that are eligible for Social Rented housing. Affordable Rent is subject to rent controls that require a rent of no more than 80% of the local market rent (including service charges, where applicable).</p> <p>Some existing Social Rent homes may be converted to Affordable Rents in agreement with <a href="#">Homes England</a>.</p>
Assured Shorthold Tenancy (AST)	<p>A tenancy can be an AST if all of the following apply:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the rental property is private</li> <li>• the tenancy started on or after 15 January 1989</li> <li>• the property is the tenant’s main accommodation</li> <li>• the landlord does not live in the property</li> </ul> <p>Circumstances where a tenancy cannot be an AST are detailed on the <a href="#">Government’s website</a></p>
Broad Rental Market Area (BRMA)	<p>A geographical area defined by government for the purposes of setting Local Housing Allowance rates. The Cambridge BRMA covers a wide area, including Ely &amp; Littleport, Newmarket, Haverhill, Huntingdon, St Neots, etc and surrounding areas. The result is that, up until recently, Local Housing Allowance rates for Cambridge have been significantly lower than private rents in the City.</p>
Choice based lettings	<p>The scheme under which Council and Housing Association rented homes are let. Applicants (including existing tenants who want a transfer) bid for properties which become available. The Councils are part of a sub-regional CBL scheme – Home Link.</p>
Duty to refer	<p>Under the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017, named public bodies have a duty to refer users of their service who they have reason to believe are homeless or threatened with</p>

	becoming homeless within 56 days, to a local authority of the service users' choice.
Homelessness Prevention	Duty under the Homelessness Act 2017 to provide people with the ways and means to address their housing and other needs to avoid homelessness.
Homelessness Relief	Duty under the Homelessness Act 2017. Where an authority has been unable to prevent homelessness but helps someone to secure accommodation.
Home-Link	Home Link is the choice-based lettings scheme (see above) through which Council and Housing Association homes are let across the Cambridge sub-region.
Housing Associations	Independent societies, bodies of trustees or companies established for the purpose of providing low-cost social housing for people in housing need on a non-profit-making basis. Any trading surplus is used to maintain existing homes and to help finance new ones
Housing Benefit	State payments to cover housing costs for those on low incomes. Being phased and replaced with Universal Credit for most people of working age.
House in Multiple Occupation	A property rented out by at least three people who are not from one 'household' (eg a family) but share facilities like the bathroom and kitchen. Sometimes called a 'house share'.
Local Housing Allowance (LHA) rates	LHA rates are set by government, and used to assess the level of housing benefit (or housing element of Universal Credit) to be paid to tenants renting from private landlords, depending on the area in which they live and the size of their household.  LHA rates are set at the 30th percentile of rents in the local Broad Market Rental Area (BRMA) – see above.
Local Lettings Plans	A set of guidelines and/or criteria governing which households can be allocated accommodation in a specific designated area.

Main homelessness duty	A 'main homelessness duty' is owed where the authority is satisfied that the applicant is eligible for assistance, unintentionally homeless and falls within a specified priority need group. The priority need groups and what the duty involves are detailed on the <a href="#">Government website</a>
MHCLG	Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government
Right to Buy	Scheme introduced by the Housing Act 1980 which enables secure Local Authority tenants (and some assured Housing Association tenants) to buy their rented home at a discount.
Rough sleepers	<p>Rough sleepers are defined for the purposes of rough sleeping counts and estimates as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• people sleeping, about to bed down (sitting on/in or standing next to their bedding) or actually bedded down in the open air (such as on the streets, in tents, doorways, parks, bus shelters or encampments)</li> <li>• people in buildings or other places not designed for habitation (such as stairwells, barns, sheds, car parks, cars, derelict boats, stations, or 'bashes').</li> </ul> <p>It does not include people in hostels or shelters, people in campsites or other sites used for recreational purposes or organised protest, squatters or travellers.</p> <p>See the <a href="#">Government website</a> for more information</p>
Section 21 notice of seeking possession	<p>A notice served on a tenant with an assured shorthold tenancy (other than where the tenant has broken the terms of the tenancy) in order to end the tenancy Can be served, either:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• After a fixed term tenancy ends – if there is a written contract; or</li> <li>• During a tenancy with no fixed end date (a 'periodic tenancy')</li> </ul> <p>Requirements, and circumstances where a section 21 notice cannot be used are detailed on the <a href="#">Government website</a>.</p>

<p>Social Housing</p>	<p>Includes housing provided to eligible households whose needs are not met by the market. It should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Meet the needs of eligible households including availability at a cost low enough for them to afford, determined with regard to local incomes and local house prices</li> <li>• Include provision for the home to remain at an affordable price for future eligible households or, if these restrictions are lifted, for the subsidy to be recycled for alternative Affordable Housing provision.</li> </ul>
<p>Social Rent Housing</p>	<p>Rented housing owned by local authorities and Registered Providers, for which guideline target rents are determined through the national rent regime. It may also be owned by other persons and provided under equivalent rental arrangements to the above, as agreed with the local authority or with the Homes England.</p>
<p>Social Rent</p>	<p>The rent charged for social rented housing. (Differs from Affordable Rent) - typically around 60% of an open market rent.</p>

## Annex 5: Year 1&2 Action Plan

Objective	Priority	Actions	Commentary	Completion by	Target (if applicable)	Lead service / Lead role
<b>Objective 1:</b> Prevent people from becoming homeless.	<b>Priority 1:</b> Support those at risk of homelessness to remain in their homes where possible or to find a new home without an intervening period of homelessness.	<b>Action 1A:</b> Continue to provide and further develop specialist private rented sector support and advice, especially in the area of section 21 notices.	Our 2019 homelessness review showed the loss of a private tenancy to be the second largest cause of homelessness. Preventing the loss of a private sector home will be a priority throughout the period of this plan.	Ongoing throughout the period of the plan.	Fewer than 1 in 10 people presenting with a section 21 notice go on to lose their home.	Housing Advice Service / Senior Housing Officer.
		<b>Action 1B:</b> Develop and launch a publicity campaign to encourage people facing homelessness to seek advice at an early stage.	Following the introduction of the Homelessness Reduction Act there was an increase in the number of people seeking early advice, but many people leave it too late. The evidence is that we can better prevent homelessness the earlier action is taken.	Ongoing throughout the period of the plan.	Fewer than 1 in 10 people presenting with a section 21 notice go on to lose their home.	Corporate Strategy / Housing Advice Service / Policy and Performance Unit.
		<b>Action 1C:</b> Develop the homelessness prevention role of all housing advice service officers, especially in the area of mediation when someone is asked to leave accommodation by family or friends.	The 2019 homelessness review showed that being asked to leave accommodation by family or friends is the single largest reason why people approach the Council for advice. The number and proportion of in this category has risen significantly during the Covid outbreak. Negotiating	Ongoing throughout the period of the plan.	<b>Year 1:</b> Achieve a reduction in the proportion of people presenting as being asked to leave by friends or family who go on to become homeless.	Housing Advice Service / Senior Housing Officer.

Objective	Priority	Actions	Commentary	Completion by	Target (if applicable)	Lead service / Lead role
		Analyse on a regular basis the numbers of people on the housing needs register being accommodated by friends or family.	(where appropriate) an extended stay while a new home is found has been shown to be an effective homelessness prevention method.		<b>Year Two:</b> set a numerical target.	
		<b>Action 1D:</b> Explore range of incentives to encourage people required to leave by family or friends to remain in their current accommodation.  (Link to <b>Action 1F</b> ).	Incentives may include priority access to financial assistance to move on or enhanced Home-Link priority in return for there being no intervening period of homelessness.	Recommendations in Q.2  Implement as able during 2021-22 and 2022-23	<b>Year 1:</b> Achieve a reduction in the proportion of people presenting as being asked to leave by friends or family who go on to become homeless.  <b>Year Two:</b> set a numerical target.	Housing Advice Service.
		<b>Action 1F:</b> Reconsider and revise work being undertaken with young people in the greatest risk order to improve their understanding of housing availability and choices.	This activity will target young people in pupil referral units, those undergoing counselling and those in specialist young persons' accommodation.	Q.4	Complete review Q.4 2021-22 with any recommended activities implemented in Year Two.	Housing Advice Service / Commissioned Young Persons' Services / Schools and Colleges.
		<b>Action 1G:</b> Explore (with a full cost-benefit analysis) setting up a private sector tenancy rescue scheme making loans or grants to	The proposed scheme would be limited in scope, working with private sector tenants in temporary difficulty due to, for example, the loss of a job.	Feasibility report Q.2.	Cost-Benefit analysis completed end Q.2.	Housing Advice Service / Town Hall Lettings.

Objective	Priority	Actions	Commentary	Completion by	Target (if applicable)	Lead service / Lead role
		tenants in arrears to assist them to remain in their home.	If scheme can be shown to provide a cost-effective alternative to becoming homeless, implement for 1 year trial period.	If positive, implement in Q.3.		
		<b>Action 1J:</b> Pilot for one year changing the Access Scheme from a loan-based to a grant-based scheme.	Presently the Access Scheme (the scheme which helps households meet the entry costs into the privately rented sector) makes loans to prospective tenants. The loan adds to household debt in situations where households are likely already to be struggling, making the current scheme less attractive and effective than it should be. Repayment rates are accordingly low. This action proposes that we trial making this scheme grant based, and that a full analysis of the costs versus benefits of grants is undertaken at the end of the period.	Introduce for new applicants in April 2021 and report in Q.4		THL
		<b>Action 1K:</b> Work with partner housing associations to understand eviction rates and causes between associations and between housing	Consider what action may be taken (if any) in the light of the review and our proposed local social housing provider group <b>(Action 2K)</b>	Review carried out during Q.2.	Review document completed Q.3.	Housing Advice Service / City Homes / Housing Associations

Objective	Priority	Actions	Commentary	Completion by	Target (if applicable)	Lead service / Lead role
		associations and City Homes.				
		<b>Action 1L:</b> Carry out a review of the range of financial support services including internal Council services and contracted, voluntary and on-line assistance with a view to understanding potential duplication, gaps and causes of failure to timely access.	In the light of review make recommendations, consult and implement.	Complete Q.4.	Review complete Q.4 and recommendations implemented <b>Year Two.</b>	Housing Advice Service / Revenue and Benefits / City Homes
		<b>Action 1M:</b> Analyse how effectively our 'Tenants at Risk' panel is in working, with a particular focus on our work with housing association partners. (Link to <b>Action 2L</b> ).	In the light of review make recommendations, consult and implement.	Complete Q.4	Introduce any changes agreed in <b>Q1 Year Two.</b>	Housing Advice Service / Revenue and Benefits / City Homes / Safer Communities / Housing Associations
		<b>Action 1N:</b> Review the effectiveness and scope of the Council's tenancy sustainment service.	In the light of review make recommendations, consult and implement.	Complete Q.4	Introduce any changes agreed in <b>Q1 Year Two.</b>	Housing Advice Service / Independent Living Service / City Homes.
		<b>Action 1O:</b> Ensure that the Council remains ahead of the housing and homelessness implications of the Covid virus, including		Ongoing throughout year.		Housing Advice Service / Housing Strategy / City

Objective	Priority	Actions	Commentary	Completion by	Target (if applicable)	Lead service / Lead role
		developing an understanding of the economic implications for working and formerly working households.				Homes / Town Hall Lettings.
		<b>Action 1P:</b> Using modern research tools (such as the low income family tracker [LIFT]) to enable a fuller understanding of households at risk of homelessness, enabling better targeted, and earlier implemented, prevention work,			Evaluate and decide best use in <b>Year One.</b>	Housing Advice Service / Corporate Strategy.
	<b>Priority 2:</b> Support access to a range of long-term, affordable accommodation	<b>Action 2A:</b> Launch a publicity campaign to encourage private landlords to offer accommodation more readily to people approaching the Council for assistance.	Campaign launched in April 2020.  There has since been an increase in landlord interest and in homeless households securing privately rented housing.	Ongoing throughout the period of the plan.	A 10 percent increase in each category (single persons and families) in the number of PRS homes secured relative to 2020-21.	Corporate Strategy / Housing Advice Service / Town Hall Lettings.
<b>Objective 2:</b> Where homelessness can't be avoided, help people find	.	<b>Action 2B:</b> Introduce more-generous HB Plus rules including increasing the maximum top-up available and extending the	HB Plus (paying a top-up allowance on top of housing support benefits) has made a significant contribution to allowing low-income households to access and retain privately	Introduce Q.4.	Set enhanced target for <b>Year Two.</b>	Housing Advice Service / Town Hall Lettings / Cambridge Housing Society / Wintercomfort.

Objective	Priority	Actions	Commentary	Completion by	Target (if applicable)	Lead service / Lead role
suitable accommodation		period for which it is available.	rented accommodation and improve financial wellbeing. This action will aim to build on that success.			
		<b>Action 2C:</b> Introduce further range of incentives for private landlords including lump-sum advance rent payments.		Review and propose in Q.1.	A 10 percent increase in each category (single persons and families) in the number of PRS homes secured relative to 2020-21.	Housing Advice Service / Town Hall Lettings.
		<b>Action 2D:</b> Introduce further incentives to encourage homeless households, and in particular families, to take up a private sector offer.	The Council already offers a range of tenant incentives. <b>Action 2D</b> will examine the efficacy of current incentives and consider others such as removal and related expenses, or the retention of local connection if accepting a home outside the city.	Review and propose in Q.1.  Implement in Q.2	A 10 percent increase in each category (single persons and families) in the number of PRS homes secured relative to 2020-21.	Housing Advice Service / Town Hall Lettings.
		<b>Action 2E:</b> Provide up to 20 modular homes for single homeless people	This element of the modular homes programme will be delivered in combination with Hill, the Council's development partner, and Jimmy's Cambridge which will own and manage the homes. (Link to <b>Objective 3: minimise rough sleeping</b> )	Three-stage programme. Complete final stage by Q.1.	Homes occupied by end Q.1.	Housing Advice Service / Housing Development / Jimmy's Cambridge.

Objective	Priority	Actions	Commentary	Completion by	Target (if applicable)	Lead service / Lead role
		<b>Action 2F:</b> Finance permitting, purchase and site a further 10 modular homes for single homeless people.	This project will be the subject of an application to the MHCLG for part-funding and is unlikely to go ahead without this input. Any homes realised will be for rough sleepers or those at risk of sleeping rough. (Link to <b>Objective 3 minimise rough sleeping</b> )	Q.4	Homes occupied by end Q.4.	Housing Advice Service / Housing Development / City Homes.
		<b>Action 2G:</b> With City Homes and housing association partners, seek to make use of miscellaneous and short-life properties (including low-demand three-bedroom homes for use as accommodation for two single sharers) for private rental through Town Hall Lettings.  Homes may be for rough sleepers or general needs.	Seek to extend the existing council 'supported shared' scheme to local housing association partners.  Seek to expand on existing models developed with Hundred Houses Society, Cambridge Housing Society and Aldwyck Housing Association. (Link to <b>Action 2L</b> )	Ongoing throughout year as opportunity arises.	Five further shared homes in <b>Year 1</b> (subject to assessment of demand for and suitability of the earlier shared schemes).	Housing Advice Service / Town Hall Lettings / Housing Associations / City Homes.
		<b>Action 2H:</b> With development and environmental health colleagues seek suitable empty homes and empty commercial properties for			Ongoing as opportunity arises.	Housing Advice Service / Housing Development / Environmental Health Service.

Objective	Priority	Actions	Commentary	Completion by	Target (if applicable)	Lead service / Lead role
		conversion into housing for people in need.				
		<b>Action 2I:</b> Carry out a full review the Council's Lettings policy.	<p>Terms of reference to include</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Considerations of building mixed and balanced communities.</li> <li>▪ Review the sub-regional partnership .</li> </ul>	On the basis of findings make proposals in Q.4.	Conduct wide-ranging consultation and make final proposals for implementation in <b>Year Two.</b>	Housing Advice Service / Housing Strategy / City Homes / Sub-regional partners.
		<b>Action 2J:</b> Review our housing offer to middle-income households unable to afford to become homeowners but earning above the Lettings Policy threshold.	Terms of reference to include a review of the role Cambridge City Housing Company may play in providing private sector accommodation at sub-market and market rents (as a means of generating income for cross-subsidy).		Review complete Q.4.	Housing Advice Service / Housing Strategy / Housing Finance.
		<b>Action 2K:</b> Establish a high-level Cambridge Social Housing Providers' Group to include City Homes and all housing associations with stock in Cambridge.	<p>Terms of reference to include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Allocation and housing management policies, including debt and anti-social behaviour.</li> <li>• Common approach to preventing evictions and subsequent homelessness</li> </ul>		Establish in <b>Year One.</b>	Housing Advice Service / City Homes / Housing Associations / Safer Communities.

Objective	Priority	Actions	Commentary	Completion by	Target (if applicable)	Lead service / Lead role
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Common front on housing initiatives (e.g., Housing First; anti-social behaviour).</li> <li>• Better integration of services (e.g., homelessness prevention; debt advice; domestic violence).</li> <li>• Pet policy.</li> <li>• Ensure a 'Whole Housing' approach to domestic abuse involving all Cambridge City Council housing services and our housing association partners. (Link to <b>Actions 2K, 2M, 2N</b>)</li> </ul>			
		<p><b>Action 2L:</b> Consider with housing association partners whether low-demand shared ownership homes might be switched to sub-market PRS.</p>			Establish feasibility by Q.4.	Housing Advice Service / Housing Associations.
		<p><b>Action 2M:</b> Establish a private sector provider group.</p>	Landlord group should include both individual landlords and letting agents.		Research and proposals in year.  Establish in <b>Year 2.</b>	Housing Advice Service / Town Hall Lettings.

Objective	Priority	Actions	Commentary	Completion by	Target (if applicable)	Lead service / Lead role
			Better contact with private-sector providers has been attempted on previous occasions with limited success. This action will include research into what will make the group want to better engage with the Council.			
		<b>Action 2N:</b> Establish a high-level group of decision makers and policy-formers within housing, health, law enforcement, social services, mental and physical health services with a view to establishing both bipartite and multipartite working agreements.	<p>This action arises from an understanding that housing is an important but singular element in the provision of welfare to people who often have a complex range of needs.</p> <p>This action will seek to embed the role of the Council as the statutory housing authority within a framework of mutual responsibilities and obligations across the local statutory sector. Its focus will be on practical collaborative arrangements which officers in the field will understand and apply on a day-to-day basis.</p>	This is a complex and ambitious area of the homelessness and rough sleeper strategy which will only progress in relation to the degree of commitment of partners. Year 1 will consequently be a scoping exercise with a target for completion set accordingly.		Housing Advice Service / County Council Adult and Children Services / Cambridge University Hospitals NHS Trust / Clinical Commissioning Group / Cambridgeshire Police / Cambridge and Peterborough Foundation Trust /

Objective	Priority	Actions	Commentary	Completion by	Target (if applicable)	Lead service / Lead role
	<b>Priority 3:</b> Minimise the use of temporary and emergency accommodation	Seek to keep people in existing accommodation whenever possible. (Refer to <b>Actions 1A, 1B, 1C, 1D, 1E, 1G, 1H, 1I and 1L</b> ).				
		<b>Action 3A:</b> Review demand quarterly to ensure a sufficiency of temporary accommodation from City Homes stock, other social providers, and specialist providers keeping use of hotel accommodation to a minimum.		Continuous throughout the year.  Written report each quarter.	<b>Year 1:</b> Return the use of hotel accommodation to the average for the period 2015-16 - 2017-18. Seek to reduce further in Year 2.	Housing Advice Service / Temporary Accommodation Manager / Senior Housing Advisors
		<b>Action 3B:</b> Capitalise on contacts made as a result of the Covid effort to gain alternative emergency accommodation (including market purchase) especially for high needs households for whom standard provision is unsuitable.		Q.1	<b>Year 1:</b> Return the use of hotel accommodation to the average for the period 2015-16 - 2017-18. Seek to reduce further in <b>Year 2</b> .	Temporary Accommodation Service
		<b>Action 3C:</b> Review team performance which impacts on length of temporary accommodation stays and make recommendations for improvement.	15-day target	Q.4		Housing Advice Service

Objective	Priority	Actions	Commentary	Completion by	Target (if applicable)	Lead service / Lead role
		<b>Action 3D:</b> Building on our understanding of how housing debt traps households in expensive temporary accommodation, introduce a new approach setting debt relief off against the cost of TA in appropriate circumstances.			Parameters of scheme established in <b>Year One</b> and introduced on a pilot basis in <b>Year Two.</b>	Housing Advice Service
<b>Objective 4:</b> Minimise rough sleeping.	<b>Priority 4:</b> Improve access to and the effectiveness of support services.	<b>Action 4A:</b> With County Council colleagues investigate, propose and consult upon the creation of a 'streets to home' service for rough sleepers.		Q.2	Consultation complete Q1.	Housing Advice Service / County Council / Homelessness Partnership
		<b>Action 4B:</b> Set out the scope of the streets to home services and the outcomes required.	Subject to member approval	Q.3	Subject to member approval introduce invite organisations to tender in Q.2. and introduce service in Q.1 of <b>Year Two.</b>	Housing Advice Service / County Council / Homelessness Partnership
		<b>Action 4C:</b> Set up a working group to include social services, mental and physical health services to agree a common approach in cases of rough sleepers	(Link to <b>Action 20</b> )	Complex needs protocol by Q.3.		Housing Advice Service / County Council Social Services / Health Service / Public

Objective	Priority	Actions	Commentary	Completion by	Target (if applicable)	Lead service / Lead role
		and single homeless people with complex mental and physical health needs. Agree a protocol and a procedure document				Health England / Community Safety
		<b>Action 4D:</b> Building on the understanding gained during the Covid outbreak of the effectiveness of non-commissioned voluntary services, establish how the sector can be integrated with statutory and commissioned support to enhance value, scope and depth. Link to <b>Action 4A</b> (streets to home service).	Work with non-commissioned voluntary sector organisation to agree that activities are fully integrated into the streets to home concept, with a consequent decline in on-street support.	Q.4		Housing Advice Service / Homelessness Partnership / Non-Commissioned Voluntary Services
		<b>Action 4E:</b> With housing providers, review the scope and effectiveness of support provided in hostels, especially in the area of move-on advice and support.	Review potentially led by County Council commissioners.	Q.4	Review completed Q.4 and implemented <b>Year Two.</b>	County Council / Housing Advice Service / Hostel Providers
	<b>Priority 5:</b> Prevent rough sleeping.	<b>Action 5A:</b> Review present approaches to begging and anti-social behaviour as a precursor to developing an enforcement strategy.	Terms of reference to include how to balance a sympathetic and tolerant approach alongside active discouragement.	Enforcement strategy Q.4		Housing Advice Service / Police / Safer Communities / Public Realm Enforcement

Objective	Priority	Actions	Commentary	Completion by	Target (if applicable)	Lead service / Lead role
		<b>Action 5B:</b> Financially secure Cambridge Street Aid.			Financial strategy by Q.4.  Prepare report to take to committee in 2022.	
		<p><b>Action 5C:</b> In addition to current rough sleeper targets set targets for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ the average duration of rough sleeping in a period; and</li> <li>▪ the average time from verification of rough sleeping to the offer of a home.</li> </ul>	<p>Current measures are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ T1: Fewer than 10 rough sleepers on any count.</li> <li>▪ T2: Fewer than 135 individuals in year.</li> </ul>		T3 (average duration of rough sleeping per quarter) and T4 (average period between street and offer) agreed during Q.1 and Q.2 and incorporated into streets to home service specification (link to <b>Action 4B</b> ).	
		<b>Action 5D:</b> With Jimmy's Cambridge, review Assessment Centre allocation policy.	<p>Evaluate with Jimmy's the cost, process and likely efficacy of an emergency accommodation offer to anyone rough sleeping.</p> <p>Consider in the light of proposed 'streets to home' service.</p>	Q.3	Review completed in Q.3 in order to inform streets to home service specification. ( <b>Action 4B</b> )	County Council / Housing Advice Service / Homelessness Partnership.

Objective	Priority	Actions	Commentary	Completion by	Target (if applicable)	Lead service / Lead role	
		<b>Action 5E:</b> Review offer to non-connected rough sleepers.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review our present practice regarding what constitutes a connection to Cambridge and use of Jimmy's in relation to non-connected rough sleepers.</li> <li>Review access to Second Tier hostels in Cambridge (link to <b>Action 5D</b>)</li> </ul>	Q.3	Review completed in Q.3 in order to inform streets to home service specification. ( <b>Action 4B</b> )	County Council / Housing Advice Service / Homelessness Partnership.	
	<b>Priority 6:</b> Break the cycle of chronic and repeat street homelessness and rough sleeping.	<b>Action 6A:</b> Undertake a thorough analysis of the nature and causes of rough sleeping in Cambridge using the 'Flow, Stock, Return' model				Review completed in Q.3 in order to inform streets to home service specification. ( <b>Action 4B</b> )	Housing Advice Service / Homelessness Partnership / Policy and Performance Unit
		<b>Action 6B:</b> Carry out a critical review of the HF1 project.	Review will undertake a broad impact assessment. (See <b>Objective 4</b> )	Q.3.		County Council Housing First Service / Housing Advice Service / City Homes / Housing Associations.	
		<b>Action 6C:</b> Implement Housing First 2 (HF2) programme.	Progress the Housing First 2 model of purpose-built custodian-assisted accommodation.		Cluster 1 (Ventress Close) – Q.1  Cluster 2 (Mill Road) – Q.3	Housing Advice Service / Housing Development / City Homes.	
		<b>Action 6D:</b> Carry out a critical review of the pilot			Q.4.	County Council Housing First Service	

Objective	Priority	Actions	Commentary	Completion by	Target (if applicable)	Lead service / Lead role
		HF2 project with particular focus on the custodian service.				/ Housing Advice Service / City Homes / Tenancy Sustainment Service (lead).
		<b>Action 6E:</b> Carry out a review of the Hostels Allocation and Resettlement Panel (HARP).	To consider in particular: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of awards.</li> <li>• Integration with PRS and novel single homelessness offers (e.g. modular homes).</li> </ul> Link to review of housing allocation policy <b>Action 2J</b> ).	Review completed Q.2.	Any agreed actions implement by Q.3.	Housing Advices Service Partnerships Manager

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Item

## HOMELESSNESS PREVENTION GRANTS 2021-22

**To:**

Councillor Richard Johnson, Executive Councillor for Housing  
Housing Scrutiny Committee 19/01/2021

**Report by:**

James McWilliams, Housing Services Manager  
Tel: 01223 - 457813 Email: james.mcwilliams@cambridge.gov.uk

**Wards affected:**

All

Key Decision

### 1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 This report outlines grant funding to organisations providing homelessness prevention services. It provides an overview of the process, eligibility criteria and budget in Section 3 and Appendix 1 details the applications received with recommendations for 2021-22 awards.

### 2. Recommendations

The Executive Councillor is recommended to:

- 2.1 Approve the Homelessness Prevention Grants to voluntary, community and statutory organisations for 2021-22, as set out in Appendix 1 of this report, subject to the budget approval in February 2021 and any further satisfactory information required of applicant organisations.

### 3. Background

- 3.1. **Budget** - Homelessness Prevention Grants are funded from the General Fund. In 2021-22 the total prevention funding available (net of recharges and subject to approval) is £695,770. By contrast, in 2020-

21 the amount of grant available for distribution to organisations (i.e. net of recharges) was £689,510, meaning a net increase in funding of £6,258 in 2021-22. The programme is specifically designed to relieve pressure on the Council's statutory and non-statutory homelessness services and, while most recipients are from the voluntary and community sector, the Council will consider funding statutory partners and internal departments where the funding outcomes are met.

3.2 As in previous years, not all services recommended for funding in this round have been required to submit a grant application due to the following:

- a) to achieve strong competition among suppliers and a consistent longer-term service, a multi-year arrangement has been previously approved and a contract entered into with a supplier. An example of this is the Change, Grow, Live contract (the street outreach service).
- b) where the continuation of a service is considered to be vitally important to the achievement of the stated objectives; where the supplier is effectively the only possible provider; and where it is necessary to offer some surety to the supplier at an early stage to ensure that key staff are retained. An example of this is the dual diagnosis street project (DDSP) provided by the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Foundation Trust (CPFT), the mental health service provider for Cambridgeshire.

The table below sets out services falling into these categories.

<b>Organisation</b>	<b>Purpose</b>	<b>Amount (£)</b>
Change, Grow, Live	Street Outreach Project contract to March 2022	181,980
Homelessness Link	IT software for homeless client information to be documented and securely exchanged between partners	10,000
YMCA/Riverside	Young person's emergency bed spaces	10,000
DDSP (CPFT)	Two nurses providing mental health and substance abuse services to people on the street. (Please note that the full cost of this service is £125,000 with funding split between the	65,000

	homelessness prevention grant budget and another council fund).	
Total pre-allocated to services		<b>266,980</b>
Total HPG budget (net of recharges)		<b>695,770</b>
<b>Total for remaining grant applications</b>		<b>428,790</b>

3.3 **Corporate Grants Gateway** – Following a review in 2018, the gateway was implemented in 2019 to achieve greater transparency, consistency and accountability of grants to voluntary and community sector organisations for the following major grant funds:

- Community Grants
- Area Committee Community Grants
- Homelessness Prevention Grants
- Sustainable City Grants

3.4 These funds are now managed by one team using the same process and timescale. The awards are considered across the funds at the same time to ensure a consistent and accountable process by experienced officers from the different service areas. The funds remain within their appropriate portfolios for decision making and to ensure alignment to each fund's strategic priorities.

3.5 **Homelessness Prevention Grants** are awarded according to consistent criteria. Successful applications are those able to show that the grant-aided service will achieve the following outcomes:

Primary Outcome - Reduce the levels of homelessness and rough sleeping in Cambridge

Strategic Outcomes - As well as the primary outcome activities must achieve one or more of the following strategic outcomes:

- Prevent homelessness and rough sleeping in Cambridge
- Relieve homelessness and rough sleeping in Cambridge

3.6 Applications for 2021-22 Homelessness Prevention Grants were invited between August - 5th October 2020. A communications and publicity plan was implemented including a press release, newsletter articles, workshops, emails, networking and targeted conversations to promote the grant fund.

- 3.7 A range of activities have been undertaken to support organisations to understand the funding criteria and requirements needed for a successful application, including:
- Attending organisation's committee meetings, individual meetings
  - Training sessions and application workshops held jointly with Cambridge Council for Voluntary Service (CCVS)
  - Application Guide detailing the priorities, outcomes and eligibility criteria and giving guidance on requirements, question by question
  - Factsheets, templates and signposting to other funding providers
- 3.8 Even though organisations were encouraged to engage with us for help and support with their applications some chose not to and some applications were received which did not meet the basic criteria of the fund, requesting funds for non-targeted activity.
- 3.9 The Homelessness Prevention Grants fund continues to fund Discretionary Rate Relief (DRR) for several properties supporting the funding outcomes. These are listed in Appendix 1.
- 3.10 All applications were assessed against the same assessment matrix developed around the priorities and outcome, ensuring a consistent approach. These assessments were then moderated by strategy officer meetings informing the award recommendations detailed in Appendix 1. The Executive Councillor attended a meeting with officers to review the process and outcomes.
- 3.11 **SWEP.** Attention is drawn to Application 18, concerning the provision of severe weather emergency accommodation (SWEP), where an award of £10,000 is recommended against an application for £27,930. The recommended reduction in the award is explained by the fact that in the current year it has not been possible to provide SWEP in its usual form (in which a number of people are accommodated in the same room) due to Covid-19. Instead, SWEP has been provided directly by the Council in accommodation consisting of separate rooms procured by the Council. This means that this season Jimmy's has not drawn down the SWEP grant made last year (minus some minor expenses for administration). It is anticipated that in the winter of 2021-22 similar arrangements to the current year will need to be entered into. The £10,000 recommended to be set aside for SWEP next year is therefore a contingency against needing to involve Jimmy's in some aspect of that season's provision but will not be drawn upon unless needed.

- 3.12 Where no funding is proposed it will be due to one or more of the following not being adequately met:
- Grant scheme outcomes
  - Identifying need
  - Quality or viability of the project, or
  - Proposals were the remit of another service or organisation
- 3.13 If the recommended awards are approved the budget available will be completely spent.

#### **4. Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2021-2026**

- 4.1 In the previous report regarding the above it was emphasized that keeping people in their existing home or assisting a move to a new stable home without an intervening period of homelessness was to be the primary objective. As noted in the strategy, resources that would otherwise have been spent on temporary accommodation, including commercial hotels, will alternatively be spent on sustaining existing accommodation and procuring alternative homes. This homelessness prevention objective has informed the criteria for deciding between competing claims for the homelessness prevention grant fund in this round and will continue to be the focus in coming years.
- 4.2 **Streets to Home Service** - As set out in the strategy, some elements of the service currently supported by homeless prevention grants will be incorporated into the budget set aside for that innovative service. There will remain a substantial sum outside of the new service available for independent and niche services to continue to bid for. Additionally it should be noted that the size of the funding envelope remains constant and that the driving objective of streets to home is to achieve a better service to customers by encouraging providers to work with others to avoid duplication and misalignment.

#### **5. Implications**

- a) **Financial Implications** - Set out in section 3 of the report
- b) **Staffing Implications** - There are no staffing implications
- c) **Equality and Poverty Implications** - Equalities Impact Assessments were carried out as follows:
  - EQIA undertaken September 2018 on the grant fund

- EQIA undertaken on the Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2021-2026

**d) Environmental Implications** – Funded organisations are expected to have or develop environmental policies.

**e) Procurement Implications** - The Council's approach to grant aid through the Homelessness Prevention Grants is via an application process rather than through the direct commissioning of services. Paragraph 4.2 explains the approach to the new Streets to Home Service.

**f) Community Safety Implications** - Some of the funded projects will have a positive impact on community safety.

## **6. Consultation and communication considerations**

Applicants were notified when this report was published detailing recommended awards, giving an indication of proposed funding from April 2021. This adhered to the Cambridgeshire Compact framework to give three months' notice of funding changes where possible. Officers will continue the process of award notification, signposting and support, and implementing and monitoring awards. Organisations have also been involved in discussions regarding the new Streets to Home Service development.

## **7. Background papers**

No background papers were used in the preparation of this report.

## **8. Appendices**

Appendix 1 – Homelessness Prevention Grants 2021-22 Award Recommendations

## **9. Inspection of papers**

To inspect the background papers or if you have a query on the report please contact James McWilliams, Housing Services Manager, tel: 01223 - 457813, email: james.mcwilliams@cambridge.gov.uk.

## Appendix 1 – Homelessness Prevention Grants 2021-22 Applications and Grant Recommendations

The following recommendations are subject to the confirmation of the Council’s budget in February 2021 and, in some cases, the receipt of satisfactory information from applicant organisations (this could include projects, programmes, finances, governance etc).

- The activity being funded will be detailed in grant agreements
- Figures in brackets are the numbers of beneficiaries
- Where no funding is recommended it is due to one or more of the reasons stated in 3.12 of the report

No	Group	Activity	Full Cost	Request	Grant award	2020-21 award
1	Cambridge and District Citizen's Advice Bureau - provide advice people need for the problems they face	Specialist independent support, advice and representation around housing and debt issues (target 800)	£49,856	£40,000	<b>£35,000</b>	£35,000
2	Cambridge Cyrenians - accommodation for approx 104 homeless people in Cambridge plus specialised support and services	Older Homeless Floating Support Service for single people over 50 to access and maintain move on accommodation (approx 25-27 bens)	£36,046	£7,091	<b>£5,000</b>	£5,000
3	Cambridge Cyrenians	Supported Housing Service - accommodation for 104 single homeless meeting Council local connection policy	£36,400	£15,000	<b>£5,000</b>	£5,000
4	Cambridge Cyrenians	Discretionary Rate Relief			<b>£1,360</b>	Estimate
5	CHS Group (The Cambridge Housing Society Ltd) - social enterprise and charitable housing association	Outreach employment advice for Housing Benefit+ and Housing Benefit+ family projects. Money Matters Advice	£53,209	£53,209	<b>£30,000</b>	£30,000
6	CHS Group (The Cambridge Housing Society Ltd)	Supported housing for 8 young homeless parents (7 will move on)	£174,743	£24,742	<b>£15,000</b>	£15,000
7	CHS Group (The Cambridge Housing Society Ltd)	Outreach employment advice for homeless and those vulnerably housed in Cambridge	£32,475	£22,732	<b>£14,000</b>	£14,000
8	Cambridge Women's Aid - information, advice, support for women who have experienced domestic abuse	Community based specialist support service for victims of domestic abuse. Telephone, email, face to face support groups and social programmes. 24hr call service (200+ bens)	£164,804	£43,000	<b>£43,000</b>	£43,000
9	Cambridge Women's Aid	Discretionary Rate Relief – 4 properties			<b>£4,800</b>	Estimate

10	Cambridgeshire Community Foundation - award grants for local projects	Support for the Street Aid fund including 10 contactless terminals, branding, marketing etc. Donations paid to fund in full	£15,000	£15,000	<b>£10,000</b>	£7,500
<b>No</b>	<b>Group</b>	<b>Activity</b>	<b>Full Cost</b>	<b>Request</b>	<b>Grant award</b>	<i>2020-21 award</i>
11	Cambridgeshire County Council - Counting Every Adult: work with hardest to reach with multiple disadvantages where previous responses have not succeeded	Co-ordination and support for homeless adults at risk of exclusion (45 bens)	£157,038	£20,600	<b>£20,000</b>	£20,000
12	Cambridgeshire County Council - Housing First Programme: providing accommodation for those "at risk"	Housing First Project Management - target the 'harder to reach' homeless population who have been going around the system for many years (up to 25 bens)	£367,940	£56,940	<b>£0</b>	<i>New bid</i>
13	Cambridgeshire County Council - Co-production Group: enable adults who have experienced multiple disadvantages service planning	Co-production facilitator to enable to voices of Lived Experience (10 + bens)	£20,173	£6,724	<b>£0</b>	<i>New bid</i>
14	Cambridgeshire County Council - Substance Abuse: dedicated outreach to provide expertise around drug and alcohol interventions to clients who are homeless or sleeping rough	Substance Misuse Outreach Service targeting rough sleepers in Cambridge. Weekly street-based outreach sessions, local hostel and supported housing visits, advice and information, dual diagnosis work, client case load (35 bens)	£33,466	£33,466	<b>£15,000</b>	£15,000
15	Centre 33 - support and empower young people to overcome their problems through a range of free, confidential services	Young People's Homeless and Housing Support Project (150 bens)	£47,008	£47,008	<b>£43,000</b>	£43,000
16	It Takes A City - fund to support volunteer led action groups working together to strengthen existing services to improve the lives of rough sleepers	Co-ordinate Action Groups and delivery of street support - run a website	£76,700	£31,140	<b>£10,000</b>	£10,000

17	Jimmy's Cambridge - emergency accommodation and supported housing for homeless or vulnerably housed people	Emergency accommodation. Assessment, resettlement and support in addressing needs and providing extended floating support to clients moving on to their own tenancies. Provision of early intervention diversions and opportunities for newcomers to homelessness. New service - Volunteer Outreach. (20 individuals per night)	£958,871	£63,012	<b>£55,000</b>	<i>£55,000</i>
18	Jimmy's Cambridge	Severe weather emergency provision (SWEP) night shelter for all adults - up to 26 per night for up to 60 nights (189 over last 2 years)	£68,187	£27,930	<b>£10,000</b>	<i>(£27,930)</i>
<b>No</b>	<b>Group</b>	<b>Activity</b>	<b>Full Cost</b>	<b>Request</b>	<b>Grant award</b>	<i>2020-21 award</i>
19	Jimmy's Cambridge	Flexible support for adults in external/independent accommodation - project called "STAY" via a new support worker enabling the "street to home" strategy (20-30 beds)	£38,880	£30,000	<b>£0</b>	<i>new</i>
20	Jimmy's Cambridge	Day service support via the Abstinence House Project two hours twice a week drop in - accommodation and reduction/abstinence support of previously alcohol dependent clients. Includes budgeting drop-in sessions. Also trialling community detoxes	£7,056	£7,056	<b>£4,500</b>	<i>£4,500</i>
21	Riverside Group Ltd (The) - seek to transform the lives of individuals and revitalise the places where they live	Resettlement and pre-tenancy support to homeless individuals living in hostel accommodation 3 month move-on support and help to maintain tenancies (17 single homeless and 6 pre-tenancy workshops across Riverside services and at Jimmy's and Centre 33)	£30,972	£30,972	<b>£5,000</b>	<i>£10,000</i>
22	Wintercomfort for the Homeless - day centre supporting homeless and vulnerably housed people	Homelessness Prevention Programme: supporting the homeless and vulnerably housed via learning new skills, gain qualifications, job skills activities, receive support for mental health and substance misuse issues, housing advice, work experience and training (800-840)	£693,888	£137,000	<b>£95,000</b>	<i>£91,630</i>
23	Wintercomfort for the Homeless	Discretionary Rate Relief			<b>£3,130</b>	<i>Estimate</i>
				<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>428,790</b>	





## Item

### **UPDATE ON WORK FOR NEW BUILD HOUSING PROGRAMME 2022-2032**

#### **To:**

Councillor Richard Johnson, Executive Councillor for Housing  
Housing Scrutiny Committee 19/01/2020

#### **Report by:**

Claire Flowers, Head of Housing Development Agency  
Tel: 01223 - 457928 Email: [claire.flowers@cambridge.gov.uk](mailto:claire.flowers@cambridge.gov.uk)

#### **Wards affected:**

All

## **1. Executive Summary**

- 1.1 This report provides an update on the new build housing programme for 2022-2032.
- 1.2 This report provides an update on work undertaken since the September 2020 committee and focuses specifically on sustainable housing standards and the delivery routes available to the Council.
- 1.3 A road map towards Net Zero Carbon has been developed with a commitment, subject to technical and financial constraints, for new build Council homes to attain Net Zero Carbon from 2030; and to Passivhaus from 2021. This report sets out the seven principles to be applied to all new developments.
- 1.4 The Council has utilised several delivery routes for new housing since it was able to develop again. Over recent years the Cambridge investment partnership (CIP) has proved to be an effective delivery

model. This alongside securing S106 opportunities, traditional tendering and being open to new opportunities will be required to deliver a programme at the scale proposed.

- 1.5 This report reviews options for delivery of the 1,000 new Council rented housing programme that was agreed by Exec Cllr at Housing Scrutiny Committee in September 2020. It considers the mechanisms that the Council has used to deliver new housing – most recently in the ‘devolution 500’ programme.
- 1.6 It proposes that the major element in the delivery should be provided by the Cambridge Investment Partnership (CIP) at least for the duration of the agreement, subject to regular reporting and review. Subsidiary contributions could be made through the procurement of Design and Build contracts, S106 agreements and joint ventures / development agreements with other partners. It should be noted that each scheme will continue to require decision by the Executive Councillor following a report to the Housing Scrutiny Committee before proceeding.
- 1.7 The Cambridge Investment Partnership (CIP) is a twenty-year agreement from 2017. It has the following benefits:
  - delivering at scale and pace.
  - ongoing learning and development particularly in relation to sustainability.
  - early scheme appraisal and development to bring forward new opportunities.
  - commercial input to site-finding and mixed tenure developments
  - adding project management capacity to the in-house capacity in the HDA.
  - Value for money and high-quality development.

1.8 The operation of CIP has progressed substantially since it commenced in 2017. Further review has been carried out and additional steps have been identified to improve its functioning further.

## 2. Recommendations

The Executive Councillor is recommended to

2.1 Approve the recommendations from the Buro Happold Report, and to include them in the Updated Sustainable Housing Design Guide so that all council developments will be required to:

- Target Net Zero Carbon from 2030.
- Target Passivhaus certification from 2021.
- Attain Sustainability targets for water, overheating, post-occupancy evaluation (POE), Electric vehicle charging, car parking and biodiversity.

To attain this will require the adoption of:

- the Sustainability Roadmap to Net Zero Carbon.
- the decision-making process for sustainability standards.
- the seven principles of sustainability.

2.2 Approve the following delivery strategy:

2.2.1. Pursue a mix of delivery strategies to deliver the 10-year programme.

2.2.2. The majority of the programme to be delivered through CIP.

2.2.3. A programme of smaller schemes to be delivered through design and build contracts.

2.2.4. Purchase of affordable units from developers delivered as a result of S106 agreements.

2.2.5. Consideration of other opportunities which may arise for joint ventures or development agreements with other partners.

## 3. Background

- 3.1 In September 2020 as part of the MTFs proposals were put forward for a new 1,000 net new Council homes programme. This was accompanied by a report setting out the framework principles of the new programme.
- 3.2 This paper provides an update on the new programme work and focuses specifically on two areas- sustainable housing standards and delivery routes.
- 3.3 As part of the framework presented in September there was a commitment to higher sustainability standards and additional capital allowances were built into the MTFs to support this. It was noted that work had been commissioned with Buro Happold to review the options and implication for the new programme. There have been member, officer, and tenant representative briefings to go through the detail of this work to explain the approach and what it will mean for the Council and our residents.
- 3.4 The report in September 2020 set out a need to identify not only where new housing delivery can come forward but also how. The Council needs to have delivery routes available to meet the programme ambitions. A review has been undertaken to assist to consider the options including our direct experience in Cambridge of what has been achieved through different routes.

#### **4. General Progress**

- 4.1 The Council Officers have an approved Project Initiation Document and a New Housing Programme Project Board is operational. Updates on key workstreams / projects are listed below:
- 4.2 Identifying sites:
  - Market intelligence has led to the investigation of a number of possible land opportunities and some small-scale purchases (71-73 Fen Road, 129 Ditton Fields; and continuing negotiations at Queens Meadow. The investigations are continuing.
  - Proposals for a package of sites to deliver Passivhaus units is being presented to this Committee.

- HRA estates review with asset management and housing is continuing.
- A list of possible small HRA sites has been developed: title and access issues are under review in each case.
- A review is under way with Property Services on opportunities on General Fund sites; there will be a report to Strategy and Resources on this.
- Officers are exploring models for ‘airspace development’ - building over existing properties – to assess whether this has any potential.
- Ward Member discussions on possible sites are on-going.

#### 4.3 One Public Estate – East Barnwell Regeneration.

Following the publication in September of the interim master planning document, “East Barnwell – A Framework for Change”, the HDA has commenced public consultation on the work carried out to date. Working with Abbey People, the HDA ran the East Barnwell Conversation Part 2 from the 30<sup>th</sup> of October to the 14<sup>th</sup> of December.

A virtual “town hall” meeting was held on the 1<sup>st</sup> of December. The comments received will inform the final masterplan report which will be published in Summer 2021. The next stage of the regeneration plans will be developing detailed design options for the key sites identified. The HDA team has applied for further funding from the One Public Estate programme, building on the success of the work carried out to date.

- 4.4. Homes England have released their prospectus for funding opportunities that would fit with this programme. It has been confirmed that Local Authorities can bid to become strategic partners –giving flexibility and programme-level funding rather than only being able to bid on a project by project basis. As well as affordable housing funding, there may be opportunities to utilize their program aimed at unlocking stalled sites and infrastructure development.

## 5. Sustainability Standards

- 5.1 The 2017 Sustainable Housing Design Guide (SHDG) has informed the design of council house building for the 500 programme and stated a target to meet the Cambridge Local Plan for reduced carbon emissions

(19%) compared to 2013 building regulations. An average of 8 out of 10 schemes in the 500 programme exceeded the SHDG and are expected to attain carbon emissions of 35% below building regulations.

- 5.2 Although progress in sustainability has been encouraging, three policy changes have prompted a review of the current SHDG. First, the Council declared a Climate Emergency in January 2019. Second, the government is proposing changes to building regulations in 2025 by introducing the Future Homes Standards which will mean gas free developments and higher fabric standards. Third, the shared planning service of Cambridge City Council and South Cambridge District Council are developing a new local plan which is likely to be in place from 2025 onwards, with a Net Zero Carbon target for new homes from 2030.
- 5.3 Without changes to the SHDG, the sustainability guidance will be out of date for the Councils proposed 1000 new homes programme. Therefore, it is proposed to update the SHDG to ensure it is fit for purpose for the new programme and to keep ahead of legalisation.
- 5.4 Buro Happold were commissioned to undertake work on developing a roadmap to Net Zero Carbon for new Council developments. The work also considered the benefits and impacts on issues such as capital costs, tenant costs, repair and replacement costs, together with the carbon impacts.
- 5.5 Their work showed that Passivhaus can be delivered within the MTFs whereas Net Zero Carbon exceeds the MTFs parameters, requiring a further £227m borrowing. These increases to Net Zero Carbon would, at this stage, make the programme financially unsustainable. This is in the main due to the on-going maintenance and replacement costs.
- 5.6 Based on the work undertaken and considering the constraints, it is proposed that the Sustainable Housing Design Guide is updated so that all council developments will be required to:
- Target Net Zero Carbon from 2030.
  - Target Passivhaus certification from 2021.

- Attain Sustainability targets for water, overheating, post-occupancy evaluation (POE), Electric vehicle charging, car parking and biodiversity.
- Produce a Sustainability Options appraisal for every development, to include:
  - Future proofing all schemes to Net Zero Carbon when funds permit.
  - Technical and financial justification for not attaining Passivhaus.

5.7 To attain these targets approval is required for the council to adopt the following into the Sustainable Housing Design Guide:

- the sustainability roadmap to Net Zero Carbon.
- the process map in decision making on sustainability.
- the 7 sustainability principles.

5.8 The Buro Happold report summarizes the technology options towards Net Zero Carbon and has suggested the following steps: Local Plan, Local Plan Plus, Passivhaus and Net Zero Carbon. Note that this Sustainability Roadmap also includes other sustainability standards for each step.

# Sustainable housing standard options

## Operational energy

This outlines potential standards and targets that could be applied to new council homes delivered. Standards will be applied through the Interim Sustainable Housing Standards 2020. Standards focus on operational energy, the energy used for living in a home from fixed heating, hot water, lighting, ventilation, plugs, cooking and appliances. It however excludes consideration of electric vehicle (EV) charging.

### 1. Existing Local Plan

Homes will require:

- Typical energy efficiency
- Gas fuelled heating and hot water
- Solar technologies for energy generation

### 2. Local Plan Plus

Homes will require:

- High levels of energy efficiency
- Heat pumps for heating and hot water
- Solar technologies for energy generation
- Hot water store with WWHR

### 3. Passivhaus Certification

Homes will require:

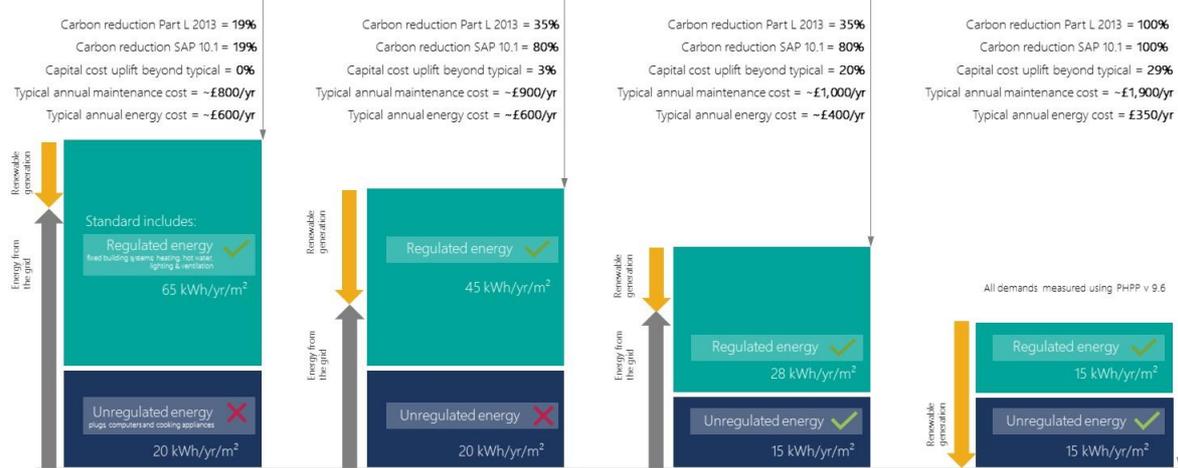
- Ultra-high levels of energy efficiency
- Electric heating and hot water
- Solar technologies for energy generation
- Hot water store with WWHR

### 4. Net Zero Carbon on-site

Homes will require:

- Ultra-high levels of energy efficiency
- Heat pumps for heating and hot water
- Solar technologies for energy generation
- Batteries for energy storage

Building Regulations Part L baseline  
Current UK Government legal requirement for new homes



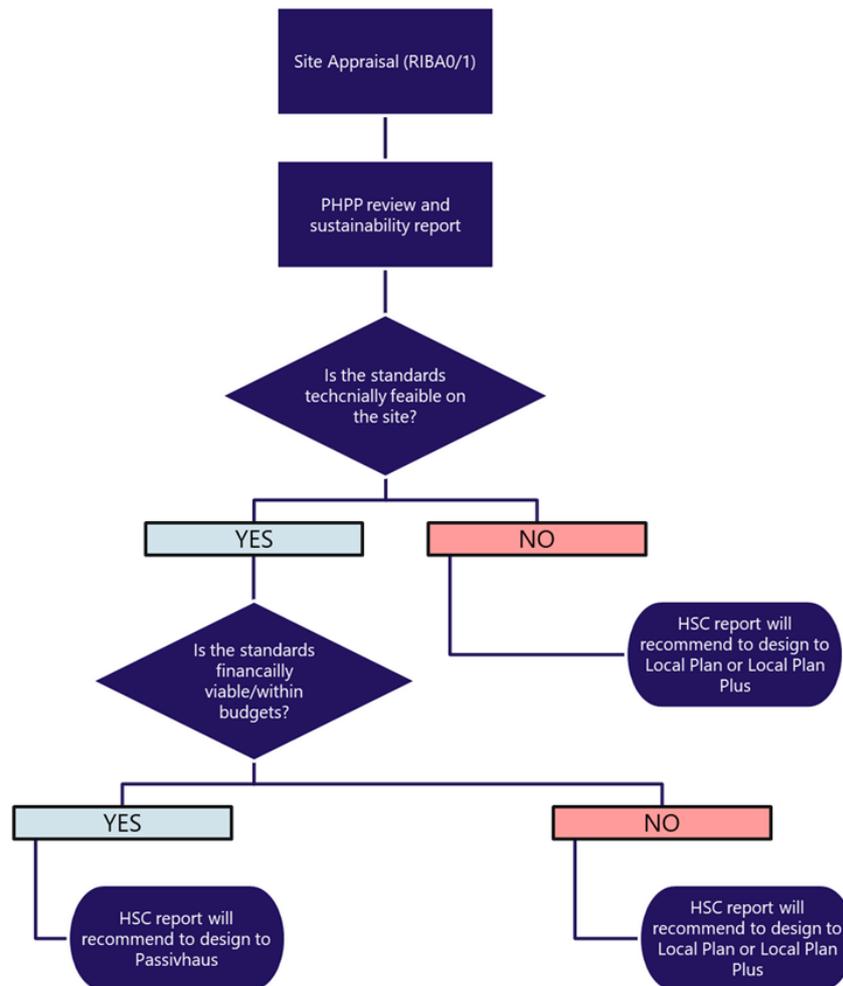
## Other Sustainability Standards

	Baseline	Local Plan Plus	Passivhaus Certification	Net Zero Carbon
<b>Water Summary</b>	110 l/p/d Rainwater for irrigation.	90 l/p/d Rainwater for irrigation.	90 l/p/d Rainwater for irrigation.	80 l/p/d Rainwater for irrigation.
<b>Overheating Summary</b>	Recommended but not mandatory to use TM59.	Mandatory use of TM59 and reduced risk through optimised glazing ratio, building form, balconies, and the use of internal blinds.	More than 25 °C for no more than 10% of hours a year. Mandatory use of TM59 and reduced risk through use of optimised glazing ratio, building form, balconies, and the use of external shading.	Mandatory use of TM59 and reduced risk through use of optimised glazing ratio, building form, balconies, and the use of external shading.
<b>POE Summary</b>	Recommended through SHDG but not mandatory in Local Plan. Reactive ongoing maintenance be Estates teams	POE for first year of occupation with reactive ongoing maintenance by estates teams.	Performance validation for Passivhaus certification and POE for first 5 years of occupation.	Performance validation for Passivhaus certification and POE for first 5 years of occupation.
<b>EV Summary</b>	SPD: 50% active and 50% passive charging points.	SPD: 50% active and 50% passive charging points.	50% active and 50% passive charging points.	50% active and 50% passive charging points.

<b>Other Sustainability Standards</b>				
	<b>Baseline</b>	<b>Local Plan Plus</b>	<b>Passivhaus Certification</b>	<b>Net Zero Carbon</b>
<b>Car Park ratios across developments</b>	~0.7-0.9 parking spaces per home.	~0.5-0.6 parking spaces per home.	0.5 parking spaces per home.	<0.5 parking spaces per home.
<b>Car Club provision</b>		Increased Car Club provision.	Increased Car Club provision all with active charging.	Increased Car Club provision all with active charging.
<b>Biodiversity Summary using DEFRA calculation</b>	10% net gain in biodiversity.	10% net gain in biodiversity.	20% improvement in biodiversity.	20% improvement in biodiversity.
<b>Green Roofs</b>	Flat roof must be green roof.	Flat roof must be green roof.	All roofs to be green/brown roofs.	All features with habitat value to be retained and green/brown roofs.

- 5.9 As stated before, it should be noted that even if finance was not an issue, there are likely to be technical challenges in delivering each sustainability standard on some sites or for all the homes on any given site. Viability issues will also vary from site to site.
- 5.10 Attaining Passivhaus certification and the associated sustainability targets will require supply chains, contractors, the council's estate and facilities teams and tenants to adopt new approaches to house building, maintenance and day to day running of a house/flat. This is not without risk to the council as learning and increasing knowledge takes time to develop. To mitigate against this risk, Buro Happold have advised that the council develops pilot Passivhaus schemes to learn to design and build to a higher sustainability standard. With increased knowledge, the risks will decline as it will be clearer where the technical and financial constraints are.
- 5.11 Therefore, the Council needs to ensure flexibility in decision making, adopting a process that allows such flexibility for sites that have technical and financial constraints.
- 5.12 It is highly recommended that each scheme is assessed on sustainability so that officers and members can make an informed decision to proceed to Passivhaus Certification (or Net Zero Carbon in the future if costs permit). Technically constrained sites are likely to cost more than the additional cost uplift stated in this report.

5.13 The decision-making process below sets out how each development will be appraised in terms of meeting each of the sustainability targets. Where targets may not be technical feasible to meet within the budget, the sustainability appraisal will explain why. For example, in item 14, HSC report on the **Proposed New Build Passivhaus Pilot**, which is a small site scheme, Passivhaus certification is recommended, but the sustainability targets on car parking and biodiversity are more difficult to attain.



5.14 With this flexibility, the Council can ensure that it keeps within the MTFs as well as balancing Council objectives on housing need, tenure and climate change.

5.15 In order to demonstrate a rigorous and transparent approach to sustainability, it is suggested in the Buro Happold report that seven principles of sustainability are adopted in the updated Sustainable Housing Design Guide. These are:

- **Principle 1:** ensure all schemes undertake a PassivHaus Planning Package (PHPP).
- **Principle 2:** start Passivhaus and sustainability standards now developing house types.
- **Principle 3:** ensure all new builds can be retrofitted, where possible, in the future, to Net Zero Carbon.
- **Principle 4:** design and build to Net Zero Carbon only when costs allow and after experiential learning on Passivhaus schemes.
- **Principle 5:** ensure training is provided to upskill Council departments and tenants understanding of Passivhaus technologies.
- **Principle 6:** complete the review on the capital, maintenance, and tenant costs in retrofitting current housing stock to Passivhaus.
- **Principle 7:** adopt Passivhaus certification as the Council's sustainability standard for all Council developments when it is technically and financially possible.

5.16 Where there are technical and financial constraints to developing designs to Passivhaus, there will be flexibility to proceed to Local Plan and Local Plan Plus, but it will be required to demonstrate how a similar level of carbon reduction can be attained.

5.17 The proposed principles set are within the financial envelope approved in the MTFs and should be seen, compared to other local authorities, as ambitious and would make the programme one of the largest portfolios in the country setting such high sustainability standards.

## 6. Delivery Options

6.1 Since the Council returned to the provision of new rented housing it has pursued a range of delivery mechanisms:

- Reliance on the s106 regime.
- Design and Build Contract Procurement with CCC as Developer

- Developer Agreement, CCC development brief for a site, with a private sector partner to deliver to that brief.
- Joint Venture, where CCC works with a private sector partner within a jointly owned “virtual” developer entity.
- Wholly owned Company (which has not at this stage engaged in development).
- Direct development in-house.

6.2 Of these the most significant in terms of volume have been Developer Agreement (Virido, Keepmoat) and JV (CIP), as evidenced in the below table. The table is based upon schemes that have been approved by the Executive Council following reports to HSC.

<b>Delivery mechanism</b>	<b>New Council Rented Units</b>	<b>Total New Units</b>
Reliance on the s106 regime	80	80
Design and Build Contract Procurement with CCC as Developer	26	26
Developer Agreement, CCC development brief for a site private sector partner to deliver to that brief	255	316
Joint Venture, where CCC works with a private sector partner within a jointly owned entity	661	1002
Wholly owned Company	0	0
Direct development in-house	2	2

6.3 This report reviews options for delivery of the 1,000 new Council rented housing programme that was agreed by Exec Cllr at Housing Scrutiny Committee in September 2020. It considers the mechanisms that the Council has used to deliver new housing – most recently in the ‘devolution 500’ programme.

6.4 This report sets out an assessment of the options through a matrix (Appendix 1) summarising considerations against a number of criteria. The aim of the matrix is to stand back and review the options. It takes account of the Council’s experience but does not attempt to describe it or discuss how the Council has addressed issues that have arisen.

Below is a summary of key reasons for the recommendations based on the matrix.

#### **6.4.1 Securing sites and development opportunities**

The JV offers the best opportunity to pursue a range of development opportunities, given the capacity constraints within the Council and the need to bring the Council's objectives into alignment with private sector commerciality to engage with the opportunities successfully. Other options would be more restricted to development on the council's own land.

#### **6.4.2 Achieve proposed sustainability standards (Passivhaus)**

The Council could seek consultants and contractors experienced in Passivhaus through competitive contracting, but this would not secure the continuity through the development process, the access to the supply chain and the learning which are key to delivering Passivhaus. For the JV option it is essential that the JV partner is committed to developing Passivhaus and to the learning process and that this is spread through the supply chain. When this is the case there are substantial advantages. Many of the other options offer the Council little control and are vulnerable to low standards; this negative impact on standards is not confined to sustainability. There are also risks around contract disputes/claims. The in-house option offers the control in principle but there is a capacity issue in delivering that benefit.

#### **6.4.3 Deliver at pace**

The JV has demonstrated significant benefits in delivering at pace, reducing delays in procurement, scheme development and appraisal, and between planning approval and start on site. Some of these benefits could be achieved through development agreements but this will depend upon the successful management of site issues and will be linked to a lower level of control. Design and Build contracts with CCC as developer have been significantly slower. The one project delivered

in-house was slow prior to start-on-site and the other three planned projects have been transferred from in-house delivery.

#### **6.4.4 Deliver open market housing for sale and investigate alternative tenures**

This is required for delivery on purchased land, General Fund sites and potentially some housing regeneration sites. Private sector commerciality is essential to delivering open market housing successfully, and this includes many alternative tenures. In previous cases the HDA has found that some Shared Ownership units of different sizes and unit types are more difficult to sell than others. As per previous committee reports (Item 38, September 2018), without the right experience and knowledge additional costs can be incurred in the market for shared ownership units. The JV offers the opportunity for the commercial awareness to be shared and objectives to be aligned.

#### **6.4.5 Develop the Council's in-house development capability**

It is important to develop the Council's in-house development capacity but also be realistic about the team's capabilities and the need for partners to deliver the programme. There has been significant development of the capacity in the HDA. This has been alongside working with CIP through shared knowledge and learning. The schemes which have been delivered through Design and Build contracting with CCC as developer have been small scale and required a substantial level of management resource throughout the development process. The level of capacity available indicates that this option should be considered for smaller sites. The one scheme that has been delivered in-house required even more substantial management input and this has not continued to be available. The relative costs were also not entirely factored in at the time but have since been found to be significantly higher than costed.

#### **6.4.6 Ensure build quality and effective after-care during defects liability period**

In past Development Agreement schemes from the last 10 years, significant issues have been encountered. In addition, there have been ongoing issues post defects-period, relating to the management of a

CHP scheme and water metering. There are also issues with the Community Centre. There have not been similar issues with the Design and Build with CCC as developer schemes, or with the in-house scheme, but this was linked to a high level of CCC management input.

#### **6.4.7 Value for Money**

The schemes delivered in house and through Design and Build with CCC as Developer have been delivered at lower nominal costs than other elements in the programme but they have required significantly greater management input from CCC which is not reflected in these figures. These have also been small scale schemes delivering straight-forward house types. Generally, the Design and Build with CCC as Developer option is subject to the market position at the time of tender. The level of interest in the tender for the project that was delivered through this route was very low and some of this interest took the form of non-qualifying tenders. There is also an issue of a focus on price and the pressure this can put on contractors and the potential for costs recovery by contractors through claims or through reduced standards. Scheme by scheme tendering also loses benefits of accurate costing related to contractors understanding the specification and of learning and development that can lead to more cost-effective solutions to recurrent problems. Framework agreements are an important way of managing these issues, but these can also be combined with other approaches including delivering through a JV. CCC is now contracting directly as developer through a framework with Hill on 100% Council rented schemes.

#### **6.4.8. Risk**

Delivery through a JV allows the Council to share in commercial risks and benefits with a commercial partner benefitting from their commercial risk management. This includes sharing contracting risks. These risks can then be reduced through a thorough and continuous understanding of the specification and shared learning and identification of solutions. Design and Build Contracts with the Council as developer place design risks on the contractor but are vulnerable to claims and an adversarial approach to cost and delay challenges which arise. This requires the management resource to be directed.

## 6.5 Developing the effective management of CIP - progress and next steps

6.5.1. CIP was established in 2017 as a 20-year partnership with a member's agreement in place and initial business plan. There has been significant work to ensure the effective operation of the partnership in the period between 2017 and 2020. This has included:

- Setting out agreed processes for project approvals.
- Robust programme leadership at Strategic Director and Head of Service level.
- Establishing contractual arrangements for individual projects.
- Ensuring the partnership delivers value for money (VFM) and that there is external verification of this; this has been delivered by Employers Agents appointed for each scheme.
- Ensuring the ambitions of the Council are met on each project; achieved through clear project briefs, leadership and allocation of a Council project manager within CIP and project boards.
- Establishing Employers requirements and robust specifications.
- Quality control throughout the construction phase and monitoring of defects.
- Learning from projects being passed to subsequent schemes.

6.5.2 The CIP vehicle has already exceeded the delivery against the previous Keepmoat programme in a shorter time frame. The 500 programme would not have been delivered at the pace it has without the Partnership, and there is a strong collaborative working environment.

The benefits that CIP has brought to delivery of the Council's housing programme include:

- delivering at scale and pace.
- ongoing learning and development particularly in relation to sustainability.
- early scheme appraisal and development to bring forward new opportunities.
- commercial input to site-finding and mixed tenure developments.

- adding project management capacity to the in-house capacity in the HDA.
- Value for money and high-quality development.

6.5.3 As the Council/CIP moves into a new wave of development it is important to reflect and review opportunities to continue to improve the effectiveness of CIP. Proposals include:

- A new 5-year CIP Business Plan to be developed to include key performance indicators.
- Operate on a programme level basis rather than project level to support delivery.
- Continue Robust Governance through CIP Board and Strategic Director level leadership on officer side.

## 6.6. Proposed strategy

- 6.6.1. It is proposed to pursue a mix of delivery strategies to deliver the 10-year programme, the majority of the programme to be delivered through CIP.
- 6.6.2. A programme of smaller schemes could be delivered through design and build contracts.
- 6.6.3. Opportunities to purchase affordable units from developers delivered as a result of S106 agreements which may arise.
- 6.6.4. Other opportunities may arise for joint ventures or development agreements with other partners.
- 6.6.5. It should be noted that each scheme will continue to require decision by the Executive Councillor following a report to the Housing Scrutiny Committee before proceeding.

## 7. Implications

### (A) Financial Implications

The assumptions for the new programme have been included within the budget setting report and MTFS (Sept 2020).

## **(B) Staffing Implications**

The CIP Investment team is the interface with CIP at Officer (under the Board) and has played an important part in the success of the partnership. The Investment Team is made up of representatives of the Council (Strategic Director, Head of HDA and Senior Development Managers) and representatives of Hill Partnerships. The HDA team is a small yet robust team who have ensured new housing projects are effectively managed. Additional Development officer resource was brought in to support work in progressing new HRA sites.

The team currently has a number of existing schemes as part of the 500 programme to manage, along with identifying new opportunities. Depending on the time frames of schemes and coming in their scale additional resources may be required.

## **(C) Equality and Poverty Implications**

The current Devolution 500 programme is guided by an overarching EQIA, with scheme specific EQIAs being undertaken on a scheme-by-scheme basis as required. A Revised EQIA to inform the Envisaged New Programme is under review.

## **(D) Environmental Implications**

This report covers the approach to low carbon housing.

## **(E) Procurement Implications**

Advice specific to each project.

## **(F) Consultation and communication**

There are no consultation and communication implications of this report. The development framework for new housing by the Council approved at the March 2017 Housing Scrutiny Committee sets out the Council's commitment to involve residents in new housing schemes.

## **(G) Community Safety**

There are no community safety implications for this report. Each scheme specific approval will cover any community safety implications.

## **8. Background papers**

Background papers used in the preparation of this report:

- a) 20/35/HSC report on new programme for 1000 Council homes.

## **9. Appendices**

Appendix 1 – New Programme Matrix of Delivery options.

## **10. Inspection of papers**

To inspect the background papers or if you have a query on the report please contact Claire Flowers, Head of Housing Development Agency, tel: 01223 - 457928, email: [claire.flowers@cambridge.gov.uk](mailto:claire.flowers@cambridge.gov.uk).

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	Rely on the s106 regime	D and B Contract Procurement	Developer Agreement	Joint Venture	Wholly owned Development Company	Direct development in-house
<b>Experience in CCC</b>	Jane's Court; Homerton Completed • Clerk Maxwell Road; Histon Road Not on site yet	• Roman Court, Nuns Way and Wiles Close; Additional units at Ditchburn; Completed • Kingsway; Tedder and Kendal	• Virido and Keepmoat: Completed	• CIP • Programme in progress. 75 Completed; Exec Councillor (HSC) approval in place for a further 586	• CCHC • To date limited to purchasing completed units •	• In-house • One of four projects delivered
<b>New Council Rented Units</b>	80	26	255	661	0	2
<b>Total New Units</b>	80	26	316	1002	0	2
<b>Securing sites and development opportunities</b>	• Smaller sites • Limited opportunities for additional affordable	• Used for Council owned land small scale sites • Purchase of land at scale would require additional market expertise	• Used for Council owned land • An agreement could provide for developer-led land purchases • Development agreement must create a viable proposition for developer	• CIP has generated competitive bids for land • Private sector contacts have assisted sourcing land • Flexible risk / reward sharing has been converted into additional affordable housing	• Company could go beyond buying completed units • Would have to buy in skills and knowledge • Company must trade commercially	• Used for Council owned land • Purchase of land at scale would require additional market expertise
<b>Achieve sustainability standards (Passivhaus)</b>	• CCC has less influence over standards than with other options • Reliance on Planning and Building Regulations.	• Delivery was successful on small schemes • Limitations to integration of planning and construction stages, supply chain transparency and opportunities for team commitment and learning .	• CCC reliant on the framework of the agreement and quality of initial brief • Integration depends upon the consultants and contractor • Limited opportunities for learning	• CIP has created greater integration of design with construction stages • It has generated learning and technical solutions • Passivhaus will mean extending that through the supply chain	• CCC could incorporate standards into shareholder agreement • Company must trade commercially	• CCC could seek to deliver integration, team commitment and learning through the supply chain
<b>Deliver at pace reducing delays</b>	• Programme for delivery is dictated by market conditions • Not necessarily aligned with affordable housing	• Lack of integration and overlap of planning and detailed design lengthens process • Potential delays through multiple procurement processes in pre-contract stages	• Once brief and contract are successfully developed this could deliver at pace provided site issues can be managed	• Reduced lead in times through planning and detailed design • Ability to commence works far quicker due to the flexibility of the partnering arrangement.	• Procurement could be quicker than OJEU compliant procurement • Pace would depend upon working practices of the Development Company	• Track record suggests this is a slow route due to capacity constraints • Potentially multiple procurement issues for construction process elements due to limited internal capacity
<b>Deliver open market housing for sale and investigate alternative tenures</b>	• Not applicable	• More risk more profit • requires sales and marketing knowledge which can be procured • Flexibility and responsiveness to market could be a challenge	• Private sector partner would have open market delivery capacity • Less control over sales and marketing knowledge • Less risk less profit	• Private sector partner would have open market delivery capacity • Greater alignment of interests can be achieved through joint venture process and shared risk / reward.	• Development Company would have to buy in expertise	• More risk more profit • requires sales and marketing knowledge which can be procured • Flexibility and responsiveness to market could be a challenge
<b>Council's in-house development capability</b>	• Skills required include valuation and negotiation of agreements and monitoring of development • Very little contribution to improvement of Council skills	• Robust development management skills essential • Sales and marketing skills needed if not just Council rented housing • Could be achieved through recruitment and training building on development of HDA	• Robust skills in negotiating development agreements and development management essential • Could be achieved through recruitment and training building on development of HDA	• Opportunity for CCC to leverage pre-planning, development management and sales and marketing skills of a private sector partner • Opportunities for skills transfers through team working in addition to recruitment and training • Positive role in developing HDA	• Robust development management skills essential • Also requires commercial sales and marketing skills • Could be achieved through recruitment and training but not available at present	• Robust development management and construction skills essential • Experience was reliance on individuals rather than sustained organisational capacity • Could be achieved through recruitment and training but not available at present and in-house capacity focus is on maintenance priorities
<b>Ensure build quality and effective after-care</b>	• Limited control over build quality • Limited transparency of supply chain	Robust quality management skills essential - important to quality at Nuns Way and Wiles Close • Lack of continuity limits influence over contractor, development of shared solutions and team commitment • Limited transparency of supply chain and potential sub-contractor issues.	• Potential for standard specifications which contractor is familiar with • Influence of Council could be limited once agreement is made • Lack of alignment of objectives once agreement is signed • Limited transparency of supply chain and potential contract/sub-contractor issues • Council has experience of these issues	• Potential for a standard specifications including learning and improvement • Contractor is familiar with all the specification and procedures. • Added benefits from early Contractor involvement working with CCC on design specification adapted to different sites.	• Quality control mechanisms would have to be determined by the Development Company	• Potential for standard specifications including learning and improvement • The Council is familiar with all the specification • Quality relies on continuous development of internal skills base and management processes
<b>Value for Money</b>	• Subsidy from market housing created by the planning obligation • Affordable housing will be competitively tendered by developers - other RPs may have greater potential to improve bids especially on larger sites	• Competitive tender • Need to balance price and quality • Exposed to rapidly changing market conditions • Lacks the benefits of standard specification with economies of scale and understanding of what is being priced. • Frameworks can address some of these issues	• Value determined through complex process of selecting Development Partner and coming to agreement • Local Authority may sacrifice land value in order to make scheme viable. • Opportunity for overage although this can be limited by transparency	• CCC shares in private sector commerciality (risk / reward) • Benefits from value engineering at design stage, reduced delays, supply chain loyal to a private sector partner, development of standard specification and economies of scale • Potter Raper assessment is that open book contracts are providing VFM • Risk management improved through avoiding contractor risk pricing and costs-savings offsets • Increased pace • Design-construction integration • Learning and improvement	• Further development of Company structures would be needed to deliver development • Value determined through processes adopted by Company • Approach to value of affordable housing must be commercial	• Low cost to completed project but management costs understated and costs to schemes not progressed • Future schemes would incur cost in setting up and running the internal departments. • Issue of scale and achievement of economies of scale • Value depends upon trade-off between these costs and risk/reward approach of other options
<b>Risk</b>	• Less planning risk • Delivery timescales dependent upon market factors • Low quality control and low influence over defects management	CCC carries Planning risk • Tender values exposed to rapidly changing market conditions • Potential for disputes and claims • Limited transparency of supply chain	• Planning risk negotiated in Development Agreement • Risks to outturn costs, timings and quality • Risks from lack of access to supply chain, high costs in management time to rectify problems and overall reputational damage •	• Shared risk and reward • Risk have been addressed through development of processes to achieve agreed objectives and to manage areas of potential conflicts of interest. • Cost risks addressed through independent professional advice and use of frameworks. Quality risks addressed through supervision. • Risk management improved through avoiding contractor risk pricing and costs-savings offsets	• As sole owner Council is ultimately liable for Company risks • Profit/surplus transfers back to can have tax implications	• Risk of capacity building being time consuming and dependent upon high level of resource which will not be matched for an extended period by economies of scale • Risk of distraction from focus on other priorities

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## Item

### Proposed New Build Passivhaus Pilot Package

#### To:

**Councillor Richard Johnson, Executive Councillor for Housing**

**Report by:** Jim Pollard, Senior Development Officer Housing Development Agency

Tel: 01223 – 457924 Email: jim.pollard@cambridge.gov.uk

#### Wards affected:

Abbey, Arbury, East Chesterton, Kings Hedges

## Key Decision

### 1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 On 24 September 2020 the Executive Counsellor approved a new housing programme following scrutiny in public at Housing Scrutiny Committee. The proposed programme includes a strong commitment to increased sustainability standards in support of the Council's commitment on climate change. The costs in the financial appraisal to support that decision were based on the introduction of Passivhaus principles in construction.
- 1.2 This commitment to enhanced sustainability standards for the new programme is outlined in the previous Housing Scrutiny Committee report (Item 13) at this meeting. Following the recommendations of Buro Happold, the first step towards Net Zero Carbon is to undertake a Passivhaus pilot scheme to learn and develop the approach to sustainability in the new programme.
- 1.3 This report brings forward proposals for 35 dwellings across five sites as a first step in delivering homes on Passivhaus principles. This is an

important pilot project to further the Council's understanding of Passivhaus development by bringing forward developments focussed on developing standard house types which have been informed from the outset by Passivhaus principles.

1.4 The sites included in the package are:

- Ditton Walk - infill site at gardens of 129-131 Ditton Fields – the homes will face Ditton Walk and this will be the short scheme title (Abbey Ward) - 6 houses.
- 71-73 Fen Road - replacing two existing buildings previously providing shared accommodation for people with learning disabilities) (East Chesterton Ward) - 12 houses including 2 larger wheelchair accessible houses.
- Aragon Close – garage and parking site (Kings Hedges Ward) - 7 houses.
- Sackville Close – garage and parking site (Kings Hedges Ward) - 7 houses.
- Borrowdale - garage and parking site (Arbury Ward) – 3 houses.

1.5 The schemes are indicative and subject to further review during pre-application planning consultation.

1.6 The total indicative works cost is currently estimated at £10,151,413 including pre- and post-planning statutory fees, professional consultant fees, survey and site investigation costs, demolition and construction costs, other associated costs and HDA fees. (Land assembly costs of £761,972 have already been incurred at 71-73 Fen Road and 129 -131 Ditton Fields.)

1.7 The breakdown of costs including land assembly across the sites is as follows:

HSC Budget	Fen Road	Ditton Walk	Aragon Close	Sackville Close	Borrowdale	TOTAL
Design & Works Costs	£3,657,449	£1,918,233	£1,850,494	£1,850,494	£874,742	<b>£10,151,413</b>
Land assembly	£596,350	£169,650	£0	£0	£0	£761,972.46
TOTAL	£4,253,799	£2,087,883	£1,850,494	£1,850,494	£874,742	£10,913,385

## **2. Recommendations**

The Executive Councillor is recommended to:

- 2.1 To approve a new build housing scheme at Ditton Walk.
- 2.2 To approve a new build housing scheme at 71-73 Fen Road.
- 2.3 To approve a new build housing scheme at Aragon Close.
- 2.4 To approve a new build housing scheme at Sackville Close.
- 2.5 To approve a new build housing scheme at Borrowdale.
- 2.6 To approve the capital budget as set out in this report for the package of Passivhaus schemes noting that this will be reduced should any of the five sites not proceed.
- 2.7 Authorise the Strategic Director in consultation with the Executive Councillor for Housing to approve variations to the schemes, including the number of units and mix of property types and sizes outlined in this report.
- 2.8 Subject to Council approval of the budget, approve the development to be carried out through the Cambridge Investment Partnership (CIP) subject to a value for money assessment to be carried out on behalf of the Council.

## **3. Background**

- 3.1 This Development opportunity addressed a number of the Council's key Corporate Objectives:
  - Tackling the City's housing crisis.
  - Delivering sustainable prosperity for Cambridge.
  - Protecting essential services and transforming council delivery.
  - Tackling climate change and making Cambridge cleaner and greener.

## 3.2 Local Housing Need

3.2.1 There is a recognised need for more affordable housing across the city. The table below demonstrates the number of households on the Housing Needs Register as of December 2020. There are currently 1,785 households on the Housing Register.

	Band A	Band B	Band C	Band D	Total
1 bedroom	61	131	589	254	<b>1035</b>
2 bedroom	15	163	125	147	<b>450</b>
3 bedroom	15	159	17	63	<b>254</b>
4 bedroom +	7	29	3	7	<b>46</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>98</b>	<b>482</b>	<b>734</b>	<b>471</b>	<b>1785</b>

New programme Target mix	
1 bedroom	<b>50%</b>
2 bedroom	<b>25%</b>
3 bedroom	<b>20%</b>
4 bedroom +	<b>5%</b>

### 3.2.2 Proposed Dwelling mix:

The developments will deliver 35 new properties, two of which will be wheelchair accessible or adaptable larger family homes. All 35 units will be Council-rented.

- Ditton Walk - infill site at gardens of 129-131 Ditton Fields (Abbey Ward) - 6 houses.
- 71-73 Fen Road - replacing two existing buildings previously providing shared accommodation for people with learning disabilities) (East Chesterton Ward) - 12 houses including 2 larger wheelchair accessible houses.
- Aragon Close – garage and parking site (Kings Hedges Ward) - 7 houses.
- Sackville Close – garage and parking site (Kings Hedges Ward) - 7 houses.
- Borrowdale - garage and parking site (Arbury Ward) – 3 houses.

<b>Scheme</b>	129-131 Ditton Walk	71-73 Fen Road	Aragon Close	Sackville Close	Borrow- dale	<b>TOTAL</b>
2B4P House	2	8	7	7	3	27
3B5P House	4	2				6
3B5P Wheelchair House		1				1
4B7P Wheelchair House		1				1
<b>Total</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>35</b>

3.2.3 After reviewing the proposed tenure mix, it is recommended that the development is delivered as Council rented housing. The indicative mix of the proposed schemes will provide 35 Council rented homes. These will all represent a net gain to the Council's stock. (The two units at fen road were owned by a Housing Association). Alternatives available include a proportion of units being shared ownership, intermediate rent or private rented sector homes managed by a vehicle at arms-length from the Council. Given the small number of units to be developed in each scheme priority has been given to meeting the need for Council rented housing. In this case there is also the uncertainty of cost recovery in the sale of Passivhaus homes and the importance of retaining learning on the development management and maintenance of these type of properties.

3.2.4 Homes will be owned and managed by Cambridge City Council and let on Cambridge City Council tenancies. The properties will be let in accordance with the Council rent policy (where rent and service charges together do not exceed Local Housing Allowance levels). The policy is under review and this review will include consideration of what account should be taken of the reduced fuel bills that can be expected in Passivhaus developments. Currently an inflated version of the January 2020/21LHA (Pre-COVID) rate will be adopted for new schemes:

<b>Pre COVID LHA rents 2021</b>		<b>2020/21 LHA rate inflated by 1.5%</b>
1 bedroom	£135.99	£138.03
2 bedroom	£156.40	£158.75
3 bedroom	£181.75	£184.48
4 bedroom +	£242.43	£246.07

3.2.5 This package of schemes will deliver a mix of 2-, 3- and 4-bedroom homes. Other schemes focussed on apartment developments will deliver a higher proportion of small units to balance the mix.

#### **4. Site Details**

Note that the schemes shown in the appendices are indicative schemes and subject to Planning Permission and further design development.

##### Ditton Walk

4.1 The site is in Abbey Ward at Ditton Walk and is formed by garden land from 129 - 131 Ditton Fields. A location plan of the site is attached as Appendix 1.

- The site is made up of parts of the gardens of two properties which are owned by the council.
- Following a report to Housing Scrutiny Committee 20 June 2017 it was agreed to add 131 Ditton Fields to the Rolling Programme. The report noted that the house was currently let as Temporary Accommodation to facilitate investigation of development potential. This remains the case.
- The property at 129 Ditton Fields was previously sold under the Right to Buy. The property was re-purchased by the Council in September 2020. The house has been used for Temporary Accommodation since the purchase. The owner had secured planning permission for a dwelling on the garden land with access from Ditton Walk.
- The site has been hoarded and fenced.

4.2 The site is approx. 0.1ha in size.

4.3 Planning: Early advice was sought from planning consultants and pre-application meetings have been held with planning and urban officers and the Highway authority. Following the meetings, a scheme has been developed that provides for two terraces of three dwellings each which respond to the alignment of the properties on either side on Ditton Walk. To improve the frontage, enable it to be greener, and to reduce the impact on the highway there will be a single parking court for the six houses.

Consideration has been given to locating cycle stores in easily accessible locations.

#### Borrowdale

4.4 The site is in Arbury Ward at Borrowdale. A location plan of the site is attached as Appendix 4.

- The site is currently occupied by 8 garages and 8 parking bays. To the south of the site is a parking court with a further 8 spaces. To the west of the site is the flank wall of a two-storey block of flats. The other two sides abut rear gardens of two storey properties.

4.5 Planning: The proposed scheme will create a terrace of houses facing the parking court to the south. Some re-planning and improvement of this area will be considered to improve the scheme and the estate environment. The layout of the scheme may be amended following public consultation and discussions with Planning which could affect unit numbers and will also determine the level of parking provided.

4.6 The site is approx. 0.05 ha in size

#### 71-73 Fen Road

4.7 The site is in East Chesterton Ward. at 71 – 73 Fen Road. A location plan of the site is attached as Appendix 2.

- The City Council sold a long lease on the site to Granta Housing Society in 1992 (through a series of Housing Association mergers the lease transferred to Metropolitan Thames Valley). The site is currently occupied by 2 single-storey buildings which comprised group accommodation for residents with learning disabilities. The use of the site as a care home ended around 2 years ago. It has been unoccupied since then and the properties are currently uninhabitable. The City Council has bought back the long lease. The decision to end the previous use was not linked to the redevelopment of the site now put forward by the City Council.
- Following discussions with both City Council and County Council officers it is proposed to the opportunity of the redevelopment to provide within

the scheme two large wheelchair homes. There is an acute need for these homes; while schemes do provide smaller wheelchair units as a result of Planning Policy it is rare to secure 3- and 4-bedroom wheelchair homes. The County Council is currently reviewing needs for people with Learning Disabilities and liaison on the needs of this group will continue.

4.8 Planning: The site is surrounded by existing dwellings on two sides and the Five Trees protected open green space to the north. The proposed development has been designed looks to improve access to the Five Trees by providing pedestrian and cycle access through the site to replace the existing intimidating alleyway to the side of the site and to improve the overall visual appearance and safety of the site.

4.9 The site is approx. 0.31 ha in size.

#### Aragon Close

4.10 The site is in Kings Hedges Ward at Aragon Close. A location plan of the site is attached as Appendix 3.

- The site is currently occupied by 10 garages and 22 car parking bays
- The site is bounded by an open space to the west. The other side of the open space is Aragon Court which is an extended four-story block of Council flats. There is an electricity sub-station on the edge of the open space. On three sides the site is bounded by adopted highway which serves the houses which are turned away from the highway and face pedestrian access courts on the other side of the properties. There is a small area of open space.
- The effect of the existing planning of the estate is to create an environment which is not over-looked as residents have rear fences facing the highway with gates to allow access from vehicles. There are also two garages.

4.11 The site is approx. 0.10 ha in size.

4.12 Planning: The proposed scheme will create a terrace of houses facing Aragon Close which will improve over-looking and security in the area. It is intended to re-provide some of the parking spaces within the site in

addition to parking for the new dwellings. The layout of the scheme may be amended following public consultation and discussions with Planning which could affect unit numbers and will also determine the level of parking provided.

### Sackville Close

4.13 The site is at Sackville Close and in the Kings Hedges ward. A location plan of the site is attached as Appendix 3.

- The site is currently occupied by 10 garages and 21 car parking bays within the area under consideration.
- The site is bounded by an open space to the west. The other side of the open space is Sackville Court which is an extended four-story block of Council flats. On three sides the site is bounded by adopted highway which serves the houses which are turned away from the highway and face pedestrian access courts on the other side of the properties. There is a small area of open space.
- The effect of the planning of the estate is to create an environment which is not over-looked as residents have rear fences facing the highway with gates to allow access from vehicles. There are also two garages.

4.14 The site is approx. 0.10 ha in size.

4.15 Planning: The proposed scheme will create a terrace of houses facing Aragon Close which will improve over-looking and security in the area. It is intended to re-provide some of the parking spaces within the site in addition to parking for the new dwellings. The layout of the scheme may be amended following public consultation and discussions with Planning which could affect unit numbers and will also determine the level of parking provided.

### Surveys and Investigations

4.16 The following surveys and investigations have been undertaken or are programmed as part of the feasibility work for investigating the viability of the site for development:

- Arboriculture Impact Assessment
- Flood Risk / Drainage Assessment

- Ecology Survey
- Topographical Survey
- Utility Mapping
- Asbestos Survey
- Daylight / Sunlight Assessment
- Energy Assessment
- Overheating Assessment

4.17 There will be a need for further invasive ground and soil investigations. Following early identification of the issues there are strategies in place to manage and mitigate any impact on timescales and costs.

## **5. Design and Sustainability**

5.1 The plan is for the new homes to be built to Passivhaus certified standard (subject to further detail), a highly sought-after accolade and one that has been proven to result in lower energy bills and lower operational energy consumption. This is the first development that is following the proposed updated Sustainable Housing Design Guide (SHDG) which is also for approval at this committee meeting. The updated SHDG has a roadmap to Net Zero Carbon with targets for energy, carbon, water, biodiversity, electric vehicle charging and car parking. The updated SHDG requires each new development to complete a matrix setting out the sustainability performance of the scheme against the key new targets providing clarity on how the targets will be met. This development is the first one to use the matrix which is set out below.

5.2 This development is the first Passivhaus scheme for the council and the Cambridge Investment Partnership and it is important as a pilot from which the Partnership can learn for future schemes.

SHDG Range of Targets					This Development targets					
	Local Plan	Local Plan Plus	Passivhaus Certification	Net Zero Carbon	Fen Road	Ditton Walk	Aragon Close	Sackville Close	Borrowdale	Combined Total
Units					12	6	7	7	3	35
PHPP kWh/m <sup>2</sup>	65	45	28	15	28	28	28	28	28	28
Water l/d	110	90	90	80	90	90	90	90	90	90
Biodiversity Net gain	n/a	10%	20%	20%	+20%	n/a	n/a	n/a	+20%	10%
Car Parking ratios across schemes	0.7-0.9	0.5-0.6	0.5	<0.5	1	1	1	1	1	1
<b>Are there technical constraints?</b>	<b>PHPP:</b> This is a pilot scheme to deliver Passivhaus homes. These principles have been incorporated from the outset and there is confidence that Certification can be achieved									
	<b>Water:</b> The target is 90lppd but the detailed design to deliver this has not yet been developed. The measures required and their impact on residents will be assessed as part of this pilot.									
	<b>Biodiversity:</b> The opportunities for improvement vary substantially across the sites. The target will be exceeded at Fen Road and Borrowdale but there will be a negative impact at Aragon Close, Sackville Close and Ditton Walk. The current overall assessment is a 7% improvement. The target has been set to improve the outcome to 10% overall. It is likely that the three sites which are currently negative will remain so but consideration will be given to further steps across all the sites to achieve a better outcome. It should be noted that there is a conflict with car parking and with gardens									
	<b>Car Parking:</b> The target is across schemes; these are larger family dwellings and parking has been provided 1:1; other sites will have to provide less than 1:1 if the overall target is to be achieved. It should be noted that in three of the locations the proposals involve a reduction in existing car parking.									
<b>Are there financial constraints</b>	Estimated costs for the programme have included a cost allowance for Passivhaus. This pilot project will inform a review of that for this type of dwelling. Water and bio-diversity costs will also be assessed within the pilot. Allowance will be made for the costs of delivering two large wheelchair accessible units at Fen Road									
<b>Recommended Sustainability Target</b>	Passivhaus Certification									
<b>Additional measures included to meet Net Zero Carbon in the future</b>	<p>Future proofing - Measures in future are likely to include: Solar PV, battery storage and air source heat pumps. Detailed design to facilitate later introduction to be developed. An additional capital costs of c. £20,000 for ASHP, battery storage and additional solar PV. This does not include prelim costs or OHP.</p> <p>Yearly maintenance costs will rise from c. £1000 p/a to c. £1900 p/a</p> <p>Note that these are estimates based on today's costs. Future costs may change.</p>									

## 6. Programme

6.1 The overall indicative programme for the development is set out below but it should be noted that a Planning Application will be submitted for each site when the preparation work is completed and this will vary from site to site:

Submission of Planning Application: March 2021  
 Planning Permission Granted: July 2021  
 Start on Site: November 2021  
 Completion: May 2023

## 7. Financial Implications

7.1 The total indicative works cost is currently estimated at £10,151,413 including pre and post statutory planning fees, professional consultant fees, survey and site investigation costs, demolition and construction costs, other associated costs and HDA fees. (Land assembly costs of £761,972 have already been incurred at 71-73 Fen Road and 129 -131 Ditton Fields.)

7.2 The breakdown of costs including land assembly across the sites is as follows:

HSC Budget	Fen Road	Ditton Walk	Aragon Close	Sackville Close	Borrowdale	TOTAL
Design & Works Costs	£3,657,449	£1,918,233	£1,850,494	£1,850,494	£874,742	£10,151,413
Land assembly	£596,350	£169,650	£0	£0	£0	£761,972
TOTAL	£4,253,799	£2,087,883	£1,850,494	£1,850,494	£874,742	£10,913,385

7.3 It is proposed that the Design and Works cost investment will be met from a combination of Homes England grant and HRA resources / borrowing subject to successful bids to Homes England. If the Council is unsuccessful in securing grant Right to Buy receipts will be applied as an alternative funding source subject to availability.

7.4 This will result in the following mix of funding:

Right to Buy receipts:	£	0
Homes England Grant:	£	2,450,000

HRA resources / borrowing:	£ 7,701,413
Total:	£10,151,413

7.5 The indicative capital budget proposed in this report is £10,151,413

7.6 Funding costs are based on the loss of potential interest on Council resources at 1%.

## **8. Implications**

### **(a) Staffing Implications**

The development scheme will be managed by the Housing Development Agency which will also provide the Council's staffing contribution to the development of the scheme. The scheme will be developed by the Cambridge Investment Partnership (CIP) which is a 50-50 partnership.

### **(b) Equality and Poverty Implications**

A scheme specific EQIA accompanies this report as Appendix 5.

### **(c) Environmental Implications**

See Para 5.

### **(d) Procurement Implications**

The package of schemes will be delivered by the Cambridge Investment Partnership (CIP). The report on the New Programme being presented to this meeting of the Housing Scrutiny Committee sets out the proposed approach to delivery of the programme. These schemes will be the first Passivhaus homes the Council will deliver. The Council will both draw on the experience which Hill can bring to CIP of delivering Passivhaus projects and will ensure that the learning is captured. The project will be subject to an independent Value for Money assessment by the Employers Agent for the Council.

### **(e) Community Safety Implications**

The scheme will be built in accordance to Secure by Design guidelines as set out within the City Councils Design Brief.

## 7. Consultation and communication considerations

- 7.1 Following the decisions to purchase land at Fen Road and Ditton Walk schemes were developed and public consultation on the projects at Fen Road and Ditton Walk took place in December 2020.
- 7.2 Residents of Aragon Close, Sackville Close and Borrowdale will be notified of the publication of this report. If the scheme is approved there will be public consultation on all three schemes prior to a Planning Application being submitted.
- 7.2 There has been consultation with Ward Councillors about the proposals. The Ward Councillors were supportive of the proposed developments coming forward.
- 7.5 There will be formal consultation through the planning process.

## 8. Risks

- 8.1 Below is a table setting out key risks associated with the project:

Description of risk	Likelihood	Impact	Mitigation
Passivhaus – challenging to achieve the accreditation, very stringent requirements	High – Achieving the levels of insulation required is demanding on all elements of the supply chain. Errors can have significant cost and delay implications.	High Reputational risk if not achieved. Higher energy costs for tenants.	Training, draw on Hill experience of Passivhaus development, employ specialist consultant (WARM), site visits to Passivhaus developments, Will need to be carefully managed throughout every stage of the design and build to ensure we achieve this.
Cost: Indicative costs have been set out in the report; this is an occupied site and further work including intrusive site investigations remains to be carried out and is limited by existing occupation of the site. Market conditions in the construction industry can also	Med- further investigations could uncover unknown issues. Costs could arise in relation to achieving Passivhaus certification.	Med Delays to start on site and contract negotiations leading to the potential increase in costs.	CIP are required to ensure all site surveys are accurate. CIP have a survey tracker. The HDA will engage an Employers Agent to scrutinise costs. CIP will be tasked in providing information on impact on life-cycle costs.

impact on estimated costs.			
Planning: The planning application will be subject to the observations of consultees, the assessment of planning officers, and ultimately the decision of the Planning Committee.	Medium Current scheme has been through a Pre-Application discussions with Planning. There is a need to balance planning policy and views of the local people and ward members.	Medium Potential change in unit mix and reduction in numbers.	CIP will continue to be developed in response to the comments received from the pre-application discussions with the LPA which have been carried out. Further discussions and consultation will be carried out.

## 9. Background papers

20/35/HSC Approval of New Council Housing Programme

## 10. Appendices

Appendix 1 - Ditton Walk location plan and Proposed scheme Layout

Appendix 2 - Fen Road location plan and Proposed scheme Layout

Appendix 3 - Aragon Close and Sackville Close location plan and Proposed scheme Layout

Appendix 4 - Borrowdale location plan and Proposed scheme Layout

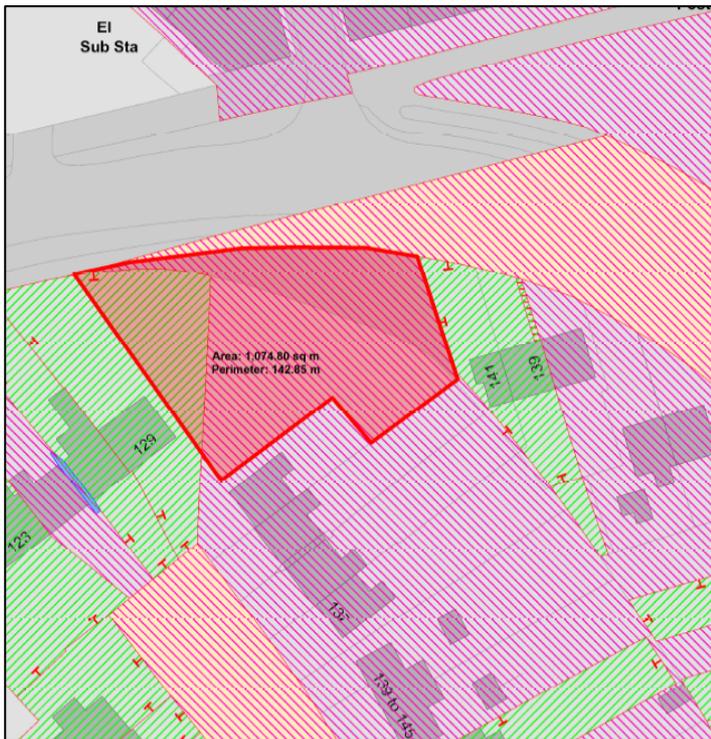
Appendix 5 - Equality Impact Assessment – Passivhaus Package

## 11. Inspection of papers

To inspect the background papers or if you have a query on the report please contact Daniel Roberts, Housing Development Agency, tel: 01223 457944, email: [daniel.roberts@cambridge.gov.uk](mailto:daniel.roberts@cambridge.gov.uk).

# Appendix 1

## Ditton Walk Site Location plan



## Ditton Walk proposed scheme layout



## Ditton Walk Street view of proposed scheme



## Appendix 2 – Fen Road

### Site Location plan



### Fen Road – Site constraints



## Fen Road - Proposed scheme layout



## Fen Road – Street view of shared surface access through the scheme

Note that this is an indicative scheme and subject to Planning Permission and further design development.





## Appendix 4 - Borrowdale

### Borrowdale location plan



### Borrowdale proposed scheme layout



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# Cambridge City Council Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA)



This tool helps the Council ensure that we fulfil legal obligations of the [Public Sector Equality Duty](#) to have due regard to the need to –

- (a) eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Equality Act 2010;
- (b) advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;
- (c) foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

Guidance on how to complete this tool can be found on the Cambridge City Council intranet. For specific questions on the tool email Helen Crowther, Equality and Anti-Poverty Officer at [equalities@cambridge.gov.uk](mailto:equalities@cambridge.gov.uk) or phone 01223 457046.

Once you have drafted the EqIA please send this to [equalities@cambridge.gov.uk](mailto:equalities@cambridge.gov.uk) for checking. For advice on consulting on equality impacts, please contact Graham Saint, Strategy Officer, ([graham.saint@cambridge.gov.uk](mailto:graham.saint@cambridge.gov.uk) or 01223 457044).

<b>1. Title of strategy, policy, plan, project, contract or major change to your service</b>
Proposed development of 35 new council homes on 5 sites at 71 -71 Fen Road, Ditton Walk, Borrowdale, and Sackville Close and Aragon Close to Passivhaus certification including 2no wheelchair accessible homes.

<b>2. Webpage link to full details of the strategy, policy, plan, project, contract or major change to your service (if available)</b>
<a href="https://www.cambridge.gov.uk/housing-development">https://www.cambridge.gov.uk/housing-development</a> <a href="https://www.cambridge.gov.uk/affordable-housing-programme">https://www.cambridge.gov.uk/affordable-housing-programme</a>

<b>3. What is the objective or purpose of your strategy, policy, plan, project, contract or major change to your service?</b>
Proposed development of 35 new council homes on 5 sites at 71 -71 Fen Road, Ditton Walk, Borrowdale, and Sackville Close and Aragon Close to Passivhaus certification including 2no wheelchair accessible homes.

To provide council homes to Passivhaus certification. To provide 2 no larger family homes accessible to applicants on the housing register who are wheelchair users.

The aims of the Council in providing new housing directly itself are as follows;

1. Provide additional social housing to help meet the shortfall in Cambridge and to replace the loss of social housing through the Right to Buy.
2. Replace some of the Council's existing housing which no longer meet present-day standards and are becoming less popular with residents.
3. Build new house types which will better meet the overall mix of social housing needed in the future.
4. Improve the energy efficiency of the Council's housing stock, reducing the cost of utility bills for residents and improving the environmental sustainability of the housing.

The type of new housing will be planned to ensure that it fits with the local community and adds to the range of housing available locally, including any specialist housing.

#### 4. Responsible service

Cambridge City Council Housing Development Agency (HDA)

#### 5. Who will be affected by this strategy, policy, plan, project, contract or major change to your service?

(Please tick all that apply)

- Residents
- Visitors
- Staff

Please state any specific client group or groups (e.g. City Council tenants, tourists, people who work in the city but do not live here):

The plan to develop new council housing in the city and as such impacts on:

- Housing applicants registered on Home-Link (the Council's choice-based lettings system) i.e. households who need to find somewhere to live
- Transfer applicants registered on Home-Link whose circumstances have changed and who may need to find somewhere alternative to live (a single person under-occupying a three bedroom family house for example).

Home-link prioritises applicants on need criteria. The priority bandings also take into account housing needs related to related to abuse, medical circumstances and disability, pregnancy and maternity.

The 1996 Housing Act as amended by the 2017 Homelessness Reduction Act determines the categories of homeless applicants that the council owes a 'main' statutory housing duty to. The council must make suitable accommodation available to applicants it owes a 'main'

housing duty to. These categories include 16/17 year olds, young people leaving care, older people, those with physical or learning disabilities, mental health issues, domestic abuse.

In relation to the Equalities impact, many of those on the housing register (particularly those on the highest banding for need) will have a level of vulnerability. Although not all vulnerabilities are captured under the Equality Act 2010, many will be such as disability including mental health, age, pregnancy and maternity, and sex (as sex relates to domestic abuse). For those residents who are existing tenants or leaseholders, many of them will also have a protected characteristic as it will be the reason they are able to access social housing. This will be considered in more detail under the following sections which look at each of protected characteristics.

By adding to the general housing stock within the City, housing opportunities are also increased for staff seeking to relocate.

**6. What type of strategy, policy, plan, project, contract or major change to your service is this?**

- New  
 Major change  
 Minor change

**7. Are other departments or partners involved in delivering this strategy, policy, plan, project, contract or major change to your service? (Please tick)**

- Yes  
 No

If 'Yes' please provide details below:

- Housing Management- managing the new homes
- Estates & Facilities- maintaining the new homes
- Property Services- advice on land issues, valuations, disturbance costs, commercial leases etc in connection with new developments
- Housing strategy – informing the need for tenure mix and specialist or adapted housing
- Finance Team- to provide funding for every aspect of developing the new homes from initial surveys to construction, all in line with projected cash flow
- Streets and Open Spaces- advice and input on the design of new open spaces and equipment provided as part of the new homes, subsequent maintenance of same
- Safer communities – providing advice on the design of the new schemes and homes from a community safety and designing out crime perspective
- Health & safety – commentary on the design of new schemes and homes from a personal safety, fire safety and usability perspective
- 3Cs Legal Services- dealing with land title and transfer to facilitate putting together the sites on which to build the new homes, subsequent issue of leases
- CCC parking services – collaboration in re-provision of parking facilities where affected by the development of new homes
- Cambridge Investment Partnership (CIP) - a joint venture partnership between CCC and Hill Homes to assist in the delivery of the Councils Affordable home goals.

**8. Has the report on your strategy, policy, plan, project, contract or major change to your service gone to Committee? If so, which one?**

The report on the proposed Passivhaus developments at 71-73 Fen Road, Ditton Walk, Borrowdale, and Aragon Close and Sackville Close is to be presented to the Housing Scrutiny Committee meeting of 19 January 2021.

**9. What research methods/ evidence have you used in order to identify equality impacts of your strategy, policy, plan, project, contract or major change to your service?**

The HD A has consulted with the Independence Works occupational therapy service and the Housing Advice Coordinator and they have identified a need for larger family homes suitable for family members who are wheelchair users who have high needs but find it hard to secure a move to suitable accommodation because of the lack of existing adapted or adaptable stock.

Consultation will be undertaken with the local community prior to planning applications being submitted. Concilio Communications [conciliocomms.com](http://conciliocomms.com) have been appointed to manage the initial public consultation for the Fen Road and Ditton Walk schemes. See [yoursay.online/fen-road](http://yoursay.online/fen-road).

The 2011 Census provides information on the demographics of the Cambridge City population to assist strategic planning by CCC.

Census Data has been supplemented by a 2020 HDA Needs Analysis report compiled by CCC staff which accompanies and informs the New Development Programme planning.

The HDA primarily on behalf of Housing Strategy, from whom the lead is taken regarding the type of provision under new build programme. This requirement is informed by Housing Needs data provided by the Housing Advice Operations Manager. Individual consultation with Housing is conducted on a scheme by scheme basis and up to data included by HDA for scheme reports to the Strategy and Resources or Housing Scrutiny Committees. The data records the numbers of those on CCC waiting list. Further information on housing need and strategy can be found as follows: [www.cambridge.gov.uk/housing-research](http://www.cambridge.gov.uk/housing-research)

## 10. Potential impacts

For each category below, please explain if the strategy, policy, plan, project, contract or major change to your service could have a positive/ negative impact or no impact. Where an impact has been identified, please explain what it is. Consider impacts on service users, visitors and staff members separately.

### (a) Age - Please also consider any safeguarding issues for children and adults at risk

#### Housing Register and Homelessness

The 1996 Housing Act as amended by the 2017 Homelessness Reduction Act determines the categories of people that are considered as priority need for social housing including because of their age, including older people, those with children, people aged 16 or 17, and care leavers aged 18 to 20. Further provision of social housing in Cambridge will have a positive impact for these groups.

#### Older People

The schemes in this proposal are made up of general need accommodation and 2 no adapted homes suitable for wheelchair users.

The provision of new homes that are accessible for household members who are wheelchair users will mean these homes will be suitable for older people with reduced mobility as long as their needs require this type of home.

The provision of housing for older people in the city is generally good. The city is just completing a comprehensive upgrading of all sheltered and extra care housing, as have other social housing providers. Housing for older people is not generally in short supply. An older applicant on the housing needs register can apply both for specialist housing, which excludes other types of applicant, and for general needs housing as not all older people want to live in specialist housing.

The Council has recently completed over-55 schemes in Colville Road and at Anstey Way that in part replaced small one bedroom one person bungalows with modern day one and two bedroom flats that meet current day aspirations in terms of space; accessibility; warmth and energy efficiency.

#### Younger people – positive impact

The homes on these proposed schemes will be family home of 2 – 4 bedrooms. Young people with a need for this type of accommodation will be eligible to bid for these homes

In our Housing Strategy consultation in 2015 the most common concerns raised amongst younger people were in relation affordability and condition of the private rented sector, homelessness issues and the need to support vulnerable people. The provision of more affordable housing will enable the Council to house more people who are in need of housing. This will also aid to alleviating the pressure on the private rented sector.

Cambridge has a relatively young population compared to the rest of Cambridgeshire and many other parts of the country. Around 35% of the population is aged 20-34.

Younger people are finding it increasingly difficult to get on the housing ladder, having to remain longer with parents or in expensive private rented accommodation. For example, England as a whole has seen a significant increase in the proportion of younger households in the private rented sector over the last ten years. In 2004/05, 24% of those aged 25-34 lived in the private rented sector; by 2014-15 this had increased to 46%. (English Housing Survey 2014-15)

Affordability issues are particularly acute in Cambridge, with the price of even the cheapest 25% (the lowest quartile) of homes now standing at over £350k – more than nineteen times lower quartile lower earnings. Private rents are also significantly higher than most other parts of the country, with the average rent for just a one bedroom currently around £800 a month.

Increasing the supply of general needs Council housing through this programme will:

- Increase the supply of genuinely affordable homes in the city of Cambridge, enabling the council to provide a competitive accommodation option for younger people on low incomes;

Ensure that the Council can provide accommodation to young people in acute housing need caused by homelessness or economic deprivation.

**(b) Disability**

The proposal includes a 3 bedroomed wheelchair adapted property and a 4 bedroomed wheelchair adapted property at Fen Road.

The HD A has consulted with an occupational therapist, the Adaptations Officer and the Housing Advice Coordinator and they have identified a need for larger family homes suitable for family members who are wheelchair users who have high needs but find it hard to secure a move to suitable accommodation because of the lack of existing adapted or adaptable stock.

The HD A will remain actively engaged with occupational therapists, the Adaptations Officer, the Housing Advice Coordinator and other relevant partners to ensure that the new schemes deliver housing that is suitable adapted or adaptable.

There is one marked disabled parking bay close to the Aragon Close development however this will be retained under the proposals.

The loss of amenity parking may have an impact on local residents with disabilities who need to park close to their homes. However this will be mitigated as at least half of the amenity parking at Borrowdale, and Aragon Close and Sackville Close will be retained.

There is no information currently available on garage users with disabilities.

The loss of garages is unlikely to have an impact on residents with disabilities as the small garages and their 'up and over' doors are unlikely to be convenient to use for those with disabilities.

The loss of the garages for use for storage may have an impact on those with disabilities but this must be balanced against the positive impact on the families with members with disabilities who will be occupying the new disabled adapted homes.

Almost one in five people in the UK have a disability, with mobility being the most common impairment. At the same time there is a nationally recognised shortage of housing for people with disabilities. For example: around 2% of the UK population are wheelchair users, yet 84% of homes in England do not allow someone using a wheelchair to enter their home through their front door without difficulty. Around 15% of households containing at least one wheelchair user feel that their current home is not suitable for their needs, and so requires adaptations.

Around 22% of individuals living in social housing in Cambridge have a long-term health problem or disability.

Disabled people tend to have lower incomes, and are twice as likely as non-disabled people to be social housing tenants.

Around 16% of the national population has a common mental health disorder, and professionals nationally and locally are reporting an increase in the number of service users with mental health issues. For example: increasing numbers of rough sleepers with mental health problems, many of whom also have alcohol and substance misuse issues; and an increase in numbers of older people with dementia.

We will make information in the proposals available to residents in other formats where it's needed.

### **(c) Gender reassignment**

Increasing the supply of affordable housing in Cambridge is expected to have a positive impact on those members of the community undergoing gender reassignment.

According to research undertaken by LGBT+ charity Stonewall for their 2018 publication [LGBT in Britain - Trans Report](#), trans people commonly face a range of barriers to housing. One in four trans people have experienced homelessness at some point in their lives, with a similar proportion having also faced discrimination when searching for housing in the preceding year. One in five non-binary people has also faced discrimination when looking for a new home.

By providing more general needs housing, the Council is in a stronger position to ensure that any residents, trans, non-binary or otherwise, who are facing homelessness will be able to find affordable accommodation through the Council. Similarly, applicants who are facing abuse in their current home environment will be able to apply for a wider range of housing options for the council. As with other protected characteristics, an increase of the Council housing supply will provide more Cambridge residents with the option of applying to the Council rather than relying on inconsistent practices within the private sector.

### **(d) Marriage and civil partnership**

We have not identified any equalities issues specific to this protected characteristic in relation to need in the affordable housing development programme.

### **(e) Pregnancy and maternity**

All the homes on the proposed scheme are family homes of 2 - 4 bedrooms. They will be available to bid on by women who are pregnant or who have recently had children meaning they need to move to larger accommodation.

The loss of amenity parking may have an impact on women who are pregnant or have recently had children who need to park close to their homes. However this will be mitigated as at least half of the amenity parking spaces at Borrowdale, and Aragon Close and Sackville Close will be retained.

The loss of garages is unlikely to have an impact on women who are pregnant or have recently had children as the small garages and their 'up and over' doors are unlikely to be convenient to use when pregnant or with a young child.

The loss of the garages for use for storage may have an impact but this must be balanced against the positive impact on the families and children who will be occupying the new homes.

National policy dictates that certain groups of people are considered as priority need for social housing because they are more likely to be vulnerable, including women who are pregnant, extra support from Council officers will be offered to those that are affected by the redevelopment. Further provision of social housing in Cambridge will have a positive impact for these groups.

As with other protected characteristics, an increase of the Council housing supply will provide more Cambridge residents with the option of applying to the Council rather than relying on high rents in the private sector, which impact families with young children particularly severely.

**(f) Race – Note that the protected characteristic ‘race’ refers to a group of people defined by their race, colour, and nationality (including citizenship) ethnic or national origins.**

Increasing the supply of affordable housing in Cambridge is expected to have a positive impact on those members of the community who are classified as Black and Minority Ethnic (BAME).

According to the annual [Measuring Poverty report](#) published by the Social Metrics Commission, 46% households in the UK where the head of the household is BAME are classified as living in poverty, compared with 19% where the head of the household is white. People in BAME families are also between 2-3 times more likely to be living in persistent poverty than white families. It follows that BAME households are likely to have a greater need overall for a range of affordable housing options in the site.

Increasing the supply of general needs housing in Cambridge should therefore have a proportionate impact on housing options for BAME families in the city. As with other protected characteristics, an increase of the Council housing supply will provide more Cambridge residents with the option of applying to the Council rather than relying solely on high rents in the private sector.

We will make information available to residents in other languages where it’s needed.

**(g) Religion or belief**

We have not identified any equalities issues specific to this protected characteristic in relation to the affordable housing development programme. Designs and specifications can however be enhanced to accommodate cultural preferences if instructed to do so by the relevant Housing Authority (for example facilitating spray taps adjacent WCs).

#### **(h) Sex**

No specific issues have been identified in relation to sex, although it is worth noting that most of those fleeing domestic abuse for whom we have a statutory responsibility will be women. This accounted for 3% of lettings last year. In domestic abuse cases the location where people are housed can be an important factor, for example away from the perpetrator or near to a family support network.

#### **(i) Sexual orientation**

Increasing the supply of affordable housing in Cambridge is expected to have a positive impact on LGBT+ members of the community.

LGBT people face unique pressures within the housing system at present. [Current research](#) from the Albert Kennedy institute indicates that within the youth homeless population, LGBT people are greatly over-represented. Young LGBT people who are homeless are likely to have a reduced support network as a high proportion (62-69%) have become homeless due to parental rejection or family abuse.

Comparable conditions prevail among older LGBT people according to [research undertaken](#) by Stonewall Housing, with many older persons having a history of homelessness and a smaller family support network than non-LGBT older people. Older LGBT people are also more likely to live alone.

Overall there is a similar trend among the LGBT population where the limited options of Cambridge residents more generally are likely to be further reduced or placed under greater pressure by sexual orientation.

As with other protected characteristics, an increase of the Council housing supply will provide more Cambridge residents with the option of applying to the Council rather than relying on high rents in the private sector, which is likely to have a higher impact on LGBT people.

**(j) Other factors that may lead to inequality – in particular, please consider the impact of any changes on low income groups or those experiencing the impacts of poverty**

**Homelessness – positive impact**

The 1996 Housing Act as amended by the 2017 Homelessness Reduction Act provides that the council has a duty to agree reasonable steps to try and prevent or relieve the homelessness of those that are threatened with homelessness or homeless. A reasonable step under the Act could include advice and assistance with applying for social housing.

The development of new family sized homes on these schemes will allow homeless families currently living in temporary accommodation to have the opportunity to bid on the homes and secure a move to permanent accommodation.

**Low income families – positive impact**

Households living on low incomes come under greater housing pressure than those on higher incomes due to a range of factors. This has been discussed at length elsewhere in the document, but the primary driver behind the affordable housing programme remains the strictly limited housing options to which Cambridge residents on low incomes have access. Cambridge remains one of the most expensive places in the UK to live and an increase in the Council housing supply will provide more options for residents who choose to live in the city and will ensure that it is easier to build a mixed and balanced community within the city,

As can be seen elsewhere in this EQIA, the inequality in the housing market affects some groups more than others, but in all circumstances an increase in general needs Council housing will improve housing options across the board.

**11. Action plan – New equality impacts will be identified in different stages throughout the planning and implementation stages of changes to your strategy, policy, plan, project, contract or major change to your service. How will you monitor these going forward? Also, how will you ensure that any potential negative impacts of the changes will be mitigated? (Please include dates where possible for when you will update this EQIA accordingly.)**

An occupational therapist, Adaptations Officer and Housing Advice Coordinator and other relevant partners will be consulted through design and building process to ensure the needs of those applicants in need on the housing register in particular applicants that have disabilities are considered.

**12. Do you have any additional comments?**

None

**13. Sign off**

Name and job title of lead officer for this equality impact assessment:

[Daniel Roberts Development Officer](#)

Names and job titles of other assessment team members and people consulted:

[Rory Lowings, Housing Development Officer](#)

Date of EqIA sign off: [Click here to enter text.](#)

Date of next review of the equalities impact assessment: [EqIAs will be carried out for individual developments as explained in action plan above](#)

Date to be published on Cambridge City Council website: [Click here to enter text.](#)

**All EqIAs need to be sent to Helen Crowther, Equality and Anti-Poverty Officer. Ctrl + click on the button below to send this (you will need to attach the form to the email):**

**Send form**

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## Item

### **Update on the Programme to Build New Council Homes Funded through the Combined Authority**

#### **To:**

Councillor Richard Johnson, Executive Councillor for Housing  
Housing Scrutiny Committee 19/01/2020

#### **Report by:**

Claire Flowers, Head of Housing Development Agency  
Tel: 01223 - 457928 Email: [claire.flowers@cambridge.gov.uk](mailto:claire.flowers@cambridge.gov.uk)

#### **Wards affected:**

All

## Key Decision

### **1. Executive Summary**

- 1.1 This report provides an update on the programme to deliver 500 Council homes with funding from the Combined Authority.
- 1.2 89 Homes have now been completed across 10 sites under the City Council programme. 27 of these have replaced homes demolished to accommodate redevelopment, with the further 62 being net new Council homes.
- 1.3 The Council currently has 308 new Council rented homes being built on site, with a further 142 starts expected by the 2020/21 financial year end.
- 1.4 Renewed COVID-related restrictions have had limited effect on programme delivery, related to delays in decanting and resident involvement. Social distancing and outbreak response procedures on active sites are now well-established and remain in place.

- 1.5 The modular housing programme is progressing well, with the first occupations having taken place in December 2020.

## **2. Recommendations**

The Executive Councillor is recommended to:

- 2.1 Note the continued progress on the delivery of the Combined Authority programme.
- 2.2 Note the revised budget related to the Kingsway refurbishment scheme as detailed in 7.4.2, approval of which is being sought under the HRA Budget Setting Report (HSC Item 8, Section 5).
- 2.3 Note the revised budget related to the Tedder Way and Kendal Way schemes as detailed in Part 7.4.2, approval of which is being sought under the HRA Budget Setting Report (HSC Item 8, Section 5).
- 2.4 Approve the revisions to the proposed Scheme at Tedder Way as outlined in Part 7.4.2 and Appendix 3.
- 2.5 Approve the revisions to the proposed Scheme at Kendal Way as outlined in Part 7.4.2 and Appendix 3.

## **3. Background**

- 3.1 This is a quarterly report showing progress against the Combined Authority target of 500 Council rented homes.

## **4. Combined Authority**

- 4.1 The Council's housing programme is part funded by a £70million grant to date this has been paid via the Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Combined Authority in arrears.
- 4.2 Quarterly grant claims are made in arrears against the Devolution funding to the Combined Authority. There is £53,000,000 to be claimed from the Combined Authority with £31,867,733 claimed to date. A

further £17,000,000 was paid directly to the City Council from MHCLG for 2020/21, with £2,390,073 of this invested to date. Cambridge City Council anticipates drawing down / utilizing a further £9,822,869 by the end of the current financial year.

- 4.3 To date Cambridge City Council has drawn down / utilized a total of £34,257,806 of Devolution funding, with the remaining £35,742,194 due to be drawn down / utilized by financial year end 2023/24.
- 4.4 MHCLG and the Combined Authority remain in discussion around the target date for the starts on site for this programme along with their own £100m housing programme. We have been working to the March 2022 date not the March 2021 which has been suggested by MHCLG.

## **5. Delivery Programme**

- 5.1 The delivery programme provided in June 2020 confirmed that the devolution programme consisted of 546 Council Homes.  
There have been two revisions of this delivery figure:
  - 1) The September HSC Approval of the Colville Road Phase 3 Scheme has required the reduction of 2 Units at Colville Phase 2. This is toward enabling an improved design interface between the phases
  - 2) Revised developments are detailed within this reporting for both Tedder Way and Kendal Way, proposing delivery of these schemes as bespoke accessible units. This will require a reduction of 1 unit per scheme.
- 5.2 A further three schemes were approved by the Housing Scrutiny Committee in September on the basis of reducing the risks on the 500 programme/providing early sites under a new programme. The potential exists to consider rationalizing the split of schemes across the new programme and current 500 programme if necessary. It is always important to be overprogrammed to allow for slippage and manage risk.
- 5.3 Appendix 1 shows the current programme, indicating total market housing provided as well as the net gain of Council homes. Appendix 2

shows the approved budgets per scheme and the net cost to the Council's Housing Revenue account.

## 6. Profile of Start on Sites

- 6.1 The start on site profile for the 500 devolution programme is shown in table 1. This is based on all the named schemes being delivered.
- 6.2 The total starts on site currently stand at 370, or 74% of the total programme target of 500 Homes.
- 6.3 For the current 2020/21 financial year, the further starts on site are currently scheduled for January and March 2021 (142 new Council rented dwellings over three schemes), with which we will have exceeded the target 500 Starts on Site for the programme (512 new Council rented homes).
- 6.4 The programme currently targets working to Start on Site by 31 March 2022. There are continuing discussions with MHCLG to clarify programme expectations related completion dates. Further update on this matter will be reported in the next Update report to the Committee.
- 6.5 As below, the overall programme currently shows an outturn of 542 new homes commencing construction by March 2022.

**Table 1: Start on Site Forecast Profile**

Progress to 500 starts on site	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23
Starts by year	2	132	189	187	30	0
Cumulative total	2	134	323	510	542	542

## 7. Scheme details

### 7.1 Schemes Completed: Net gain 62 homes.

<b>Scheme</b>	<b>Ward</b>	<b>Net Affordable</b>	<b>Total Homes</b>	<b>Delivery</b>	<b>Completion Date</b>
<b>Uphall Road</b>	Romsey	2	2	E & F	<i>Jan-18</i>
<b>Nuns Way &amp; Wiles Close</b>	Kings Hedges	10	10	Tender	<i>Aug-19</i>
<b>Ditchburn Place Community Rooms</b>	Petersfield	2	2	Tender	<i>Sep-19</i>
<b>Queens Meadow</b>	Cherry Hinton	2	2	CIP	<i>Jun-20</i>
<b>Anstey Way</b>	Trumpington	29	56	CIP	<i>Jun-20</i>
<b>Colville Garages</b>	Cherry Hinton	3	3	CIP	<i>Jul-20</i>
<b>Gunhild Way</b>	Queen Ediths	2	2	CIP	<i>Jul-20</i>
<b>Wulfstan Way</b>	Queen Ediths	3	3	CIP	<i>Sep-20</i>
<b>Markham Close</b>	Kings Hedges	5	5	CIP	<i>Sep-20</i>
<b>Mill Rd (Partial)</b>	Petersfield	4	23	CIP	<i>Dec-21</i>

## **7.2 Schemes on Site: Net gain 308 homes**

### **7.2.1 Project updates**

- Mill Road:** This is a mixed tenure scheme formerly on the Council's Mill Road Depot site. The second phase of the scheme received planning permission in June 2019 and the total scheme will deliver 118 new build Council homes. Current completion is envisioned to be December 2021. Handover of the first 4 completed affordable homes as well as 19 market sale homes have been completed. Further handovers are scheduled to commence from March 2021 onwards.
- Cromwell Road:** This scheme will provide 295 homes on the former Ridgeons site on Cromwell Road. 118 of these will be new Council rented homes, with the other properties being sold on the open market. New public open space and an early years facility/community room will be provided. Construction started in December 2019 after demolition of the current buildings on site. Current completion is envisioned to be December 2022.



*Cromwell Road, Nov 2020*

- **Ventress Close:** This estate regeneration scheme replaces two existing Council homes and will deliver 15 new Council rented homes, for a net gain of 13. Scheduled completion has been brought forward from May 2021 to early 2021. The HDA is currently compiling online-viewing videos to promote tenant interest in the properties. The objective is to use this as a pilot for future tenant engagement covering viewing as well as use-instruction videos.
- **Akeman Street:** This estate regeneration scheme will replace two existing Council homes, commercial units and community centre with a new Council rented development of 14 homes, community centre and replacement shops for a net gain of 12 council homes. Construction commenced in October 2019, with the existing community centre relocated to a temporary replacement facility on the same street. Current completion is envisioned to be July 2021.
- **Colville Road phase 2:** this regeneration scheme received planning permission in November 2019 and replaces 20 existing homes and will deliver a gain of 47 Council rented homes. Start on site commenced in December 2020, following COVID-related delays in obtaining vacant possession.



*Colville Phase 2, Nov 2020; Primary School involvement and new temporary car park*

## 7.3 Approved schemes; Nett gain 142 new homes

### 7.3.1 Schemes target to Start on site in 2020/21 with planning permission:

- **Campkin Road:** This scheme will replace an existing Council block at Campkin Road with a modern scheme, increasing the Council's housing stock by 50 homes. Enabling works started in December 2020 with the aim for the contract to be un-conditional once the 2 remaining residents move out. Both have agreed to move and have homes to go to, however there is a risk on vacant possession until they actually move.
- **Clerk Maxwell Road:** This is a private scheme being brought forward by Hill Residential. Committee approval was secured in January 2019 to acquire the 14 S106 affordable homes included in this scheme. Planning committee approval for this scheme was granted in July 2020, and a current Start on Site is scheduled for January 2021, however this is dependent on finalisation of land transfer.
- **Meadows & Buchan:** These schemes, which comprise the development of a new community centre as well as improvements to open space, were approved by HSC in January 2019 and are expected to deliver 106 Council rented homes. The Resolution to grant planning was approved for The Meadows site on August 4<sup>th</sup> 2020 and Buchan Street August 5<sup>th</sup> 2020.

The Meadows site will provide 78 new one- and two-bedroom apartments for council rent and the Buchan Street site will see 28 one- and two-bedroom council rented flats built. Five of the flats across these schemes will be adapted for wheelchair users. The

Section 106 agreement has now been signed for the Meadows Centre and Start on Site is now forecast for March 2021. Signing of the Section 106 agreement for Buchan street is still awaited.

## **7.4 Revisions to Approved Schemes**

### **7.4.1 Kingsway Medical Centre**

#### **7.4.1.1 Background**

This scheme was being delivered by the City Council's Housing Maintenance & Assets team, providing four new Council rented homes through the conversion of a former surgery. Work on site commenced in November 2019, but has however been subject to significant delays due to issues raised with UK Power Network.

Following significant internal discussions and guidance from external consultants, it has now been agreed that this scheme be taken forward through the Housing Development Agency. Completion of the scheme is currently rescheduled for September 2021 but remains under review.

#### **7.4.1.2 Budget Implications**

Approval for the revised budget to bring forward this accessible refurbishment scheme is being sought in the separate Budget Setting Report to this Committee (HSC Item 8, Section 5).

The current Revised Budget for Kingsway stands at £554,000.00 (increased from the previously approved budget of £410,00.00).

### **7.4.2 Tedder and Kendal Way**

#### **7.4.2.1 Background**

Kendal Way was approved by the HSC in March 2015 and received Planning Permission in February 2017 for the delivery of two new council homes. Following an unresolved boundary dispute with an adjacent landowner, Planning Permission has now lapsed.

Tedder Way was approved by the HSC in March 2015, with a planning application lodged in March 2017 for the development of two new council homes. It has since been subject to delay following an unresolved boundary issue.

Both of these schemes have been subject to internal review regarding avenues for proceeding with developments which will best utilise the respective sites.

#### **7.4.2.2 Accessible housing need**

An acute need has been identified for large family homes suitable for households on the housing register which include household members with disabilities who need wheelchair accessible homes. The need is set out at Appendix 3.

There is a limited number of homes suitable for adaptation for wheelchair users in existing Council stock.

Ward Members have been consulted and are supportive of the proposals.

#### **7.4.2.3 Revised schemes**

To respond to this need it is proposed to develop the sites at Kendal Way and Tedder Way to provide a single large family wheelchair accessible home on each site.

The reduced footprint compared to the previous schemes can be delivered within the area of land that is not affected by the boundary issues which have arisen. Discussions will take place with neighbours on this basis.

The properties are proposed as 3-bedroom, 5 person / 4-bedroom, 6 person units. Discussion is continuing with Housing Needs officers, Accessible Housing officers, and Occupational Therapists to agree a process through which allocations can be made, to determine the level of adaptation and the extent of tailoring to individual needs that will be achievable within the construction programme.

#### **7.4.2.4 Budget Implications**

Approval for the revised budgets to bring forward these accessible homes is being sought in the separate Budget Setting Report to this Committee (HSC Item 8, Section 5).

The current Revised Budget for Tedder Way stands at £506,000.00 (increased from the previously approved budget of £389,000.00)

The current Revised Budget for Tedder Way stands at £524,000.00 (increased from the previously approved budget of £374,0000.00)

## **7.5 Reserve Schemes**

The following schemes have been Approved by the Housing Scrutiny Committee, and while they remain in principle earmarked for delivery under the new housing programme currently being developed by the Housing Development Agency, the potential exists to consider rationalising the split of schemes across the new programme and current 500 programme if necessary, to ensure successful delivery of the target 500 homes started on site by March 2022.

### **7.5.1 The Mews, Histon Road**

This scheme of 27 units is being delivered by Laragh homes, with the Council purchase 7 of the 10 Affordable housing units approved by the HSC in September 2020. The scheme has planning approval and start on site anticipated by March 2021.

### **7.5.2 Colville Road Phase 3**

This Scheme was approved by the HSC in September 2020 and is under development through CIP. It will provide and a total of 47 new units (replacing 16 existing homes and providing 31 net new council rented homes). The detailed Scheme proposal is currently being finalised for planning submission, expected to be lodged by March 2021.

### **7.5.3 L2 Orchard Park**

This Scheme was approved by the HSC in September 2020 and is under development through CIP. It will provide and a total of 76 new units (30 new council rented homes and 46 Market sale homes). A planning application was submitted in August 2020 to S Cambs DC and Approval is awaited.

## **8 Update on the Modular Housing project**

8.1 In January 2020 the Housing Scrutiny Committee delegated authority to the Strategic Director, in consultation with the Executive Councillor, to approve sites to develop as “pod” schemes in support of Hill’s Foundation200 modular housing project. Three small sites in Council ownership will be developed as housing for applicants on the housing register with a history of homelessness.

8.2 The first phase of the project will deliver 16 one-bedroom modular homes on Council land. All three sites have been selected on existing City Council garage blocks:

**Northfield Avenue Garages** – will deliver 6 modular homes. Planning permission was achieved in September 2020, however delays in gaining the discharge of planning conditions have delayed start on site here. This site will now likely complete in February 2021.

**Dundee Close Garages** – will deliver 4 modular homes. Planning permission was achieved in October 2020. The modular units have now been delivered to site and completion is forecast for December 2020.

**Barnes Close Garages** – will deliver 6 modular homes. Alterations have been made to the planning application in line with planners’ requirements and it is hoped planning permission will be achieved in January 2021, with completion before the close of March 2021.



*Modular Homes at Dundee Close, Nov 2020*

- 8.3 The Council has appointed Jimmy's Cambridge as the charity partner who will take on the housing management and ownership of the modular homes and work with the Housing Advice team to jointly allocate suitable residents to each scheme.
- 8.4 The HDA is continuing work with the Estate Regeneration Scheme (EIS) to ensure reprovision of parking facilities for communal use by residents in the vicinity of the modular homes.

## **9 Delivering Accessible Housing**

- 9.1 Cambridge City Council is committed to providing a range of housing options for residents with limited mobility. The Council adheres to the accessibility standards laid out in the Local Plan 2018. This requires 100% of new build Council homes to be M4(2) (accessible and adaptable dwellings), and 5% of new build affordable homes to be M4(3) (wheelchair user dwellings).

9.2 There are currently 27 fully adapted wheelchair user dwellings planned in the programme (see table below). This along with meeting the local plan of delivering all homes to be accessible and adaptable will mean the requirement to provide 5% wheelchair user homes will be met.

9.3 Table 2: Wheelchair user homes

	Total Council rented homes (100% M4 (2) wheelchair adaptable)	Total M4 (3) wheelchair user homes	Total 1 bed M4 (3)	Total 2 bed M4(3)
Mill Road phases 1 & 2	118	5	5	0
Anstey Way	56	3	3	0
Cromwell Road	118	6	4	2
Colville Road Ph 2	69	4	0	4
Campkin Road	75	4	1	3
Meadows & Buchan	106	5	2	3

9.4 A new M4(2) home at Queen's Meadow is in the process of being adapted to receive an accessible ground floor shower to suit the needs of the new tenant.

9.5 Approval for the delivery of bespoke accessible homes is currently being sought herein as a departure from the formerly approved housing schemes at Tedder Way and Kendal Way. This will provide an additional 2 accessible units to the programme, with these units being developed for use by families in need of larger accommodation.

## 10. Sustainability

10.1 The Council's commitment is for all developments that are part of the Council's Housing Programme to adhere to the 2017 Sustainable Housing Design Guide. This covers a number of areas including: energy and water; space standards and biodiversity. The Sustainable Housing Design Guide targets are now part of the 2018 Cambridge Local Plan. Currently out for consultation is the draft Greater Cambridge

Sustainable Design and Construction Supplementary Planning Document (SPD).

10.2 The table below highlights the Council’s forthcoming schemes and how they are meeting or exceeding the Sustainable Housing Design Guide (part of the 2018 Cambridge Local Plan) and the draft Greater Cambridge Sustainable Design and Construction SPD.

Scheme	Mandatory Sustainability Standard	Actual Sustainability Standard (reduction from 2013 building regulations)	Key Sustainability components
Mill Rd Phase 1 Anstey Way Garage Sites Ventress Cromwell Rd Akeman	10% on-site renewable energy	19% reduction in carbon emissions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fabric First</li> <li>• MVHR</li> <li>• Solar PV</li> <li>• Battery Storage</li> </ul>
Mill Rd Phase 2	19% reduction in carbon emissions	35%-40% reduction in emissions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fabric First</li> <li>• MVHR</li> <li>• Solar PV</li> <li>• Combined Heat and Power</li> </ul>
Colville Road Campkin Road (proposed) Meadows & Buchan (proposed)	19% reduction in carbon emissions	35%-40% reduction in emissions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fabric First</li> <li>• MVHR</li> <li>• Detailed assessments in progress</li> </ul>

10.3 Detailed sustainability assessments have taken place in relation to Colville Road and Campkin Road where the following technologies will be employed: Communal Air Source Heat Pumps (ASHP), Solar PV and Thermal and waste water heat recovery. This should result in lower energy, carbon emissions and heating bills to a level comparable to a Passivhaus dwelling.

It is expected that the Meadows & Buchan development will attain a similar standard to Campkin and Colville using a similar range of

technologies. This will bring the three developments into close alignment with the proposed sustainability standards and roadmap in the updated Sustainable Housing Design Guide which is expected to be approved in this committee meeting.

## 11. Risks

<b>Risk</b>	<b>Likelihood</b>	<b>Impact</b>	<b>Mitigation</b>
<b>Not achieving the 500 homes target</b>	Low- current programme has 542 homes identified, with 74% of the target 500 homes having started on site. Furthermore, approval has been gained for additional schemes which remain in reserve should delays or disruption threaten successful delivery	Med- impact would be delivery of a lower number of much needed homes and reputational risk in the Councils ability to deliver and therefore attract future grant funding.	Programme level monitoring of delivery in place. Strategy is to exceed target. All schemes have now secured a capital budget for delivery and updated in MTFS as required. In addition, the approved schemes at L2 Orchard Park and Colville Road Phase 3 will deliver further affordable homes as a contingency.
<b>MHCLG – outcomes on agreement in respect of programme end date</b>	Low – Current forecasts indicate exceeding the target of 500 New homes on site by March 2021	Med- impact would be delivery of a lower number of much needed homes and reputational risk in the Councils ability to deliver and therefore attract future grant funding	The programme currently targets working to Start on Site by 31 March 2022. There are continuing discussions with MHCLG to clarify programme completion date.
<b>Cost increases on approved projects</b>	High – Requested budget increases for respective schemes are sought in this reporting as outlined. Furthermore, risk remains of increased budget requirements due to COVID-related delays/ rescheduling.	Medium - depending on the extent of the additional cost this may be managed within scheme level contingencies approved in Budget Setting Report.	Cost plans are regularly reviewed and updated. Latest budgets reviewed as part of BSR. Regular updated risk management budgeting completed as part of Covid-19 risk work across the Council.

<b>Planning</b>	Low – two schemes of a combined 2 homes remain which require renewed planning applications and approvals.	Low - While planning needs to be achieved for schemes to be delivered, the 500-target has already been reached with a total of 540 now having obtained planning.	Review required on remaining 2 small sites requiring new planning applications.
<b>Sales risk – exposing Council cash flow forecast</b>	Medium – Housing market fluctuations are beyond Council control but do occur over long periods and affect the entire economy. Current circumstances may exacerbate such fluctuations or delay buyer activities in the short-medium term.	Medium – new homes are expensive but retain considerable inherent value and have uses other than market sale.	Mill road sales have launched regular reporting through CIP processes on sales. Strategy for Cromwell road in development. Regular updates received in the market for sales of these sites.
<b>Decanting residents / leaseholders</b>	Low– 2 remaining residents at Campkin have homes to move to and have agreed to move.	High – regeneration schemes will not be progressed if residents are not decanted.	Decant and rehousing officer regularly liaising with remaining residents to ensure vacant possession

## 12. Implications

### (A) Financial Implications

The Devolution Housing Grant and Right to Buy Receipts are the main source of funding for schemes in the current 500 Programme that progress into development. However, the sources of funding for each new housing scheme are laid out when a detailed report for that scheme is brought to the HSC.

Currently the 500 Programme has a total cost to date, or approved HRA budget going forward, of £140,570,014, including some re-provision of existing dwellings.

This is funded through four avenues:

- Funding provided by the Combined Authority Devolution grant
- Funding provided from Section 106 agreements
- Funding provided by Right to Buy receipts
- Funding provided direct from HRA

The general fund has also supported the delivery of the programme through its investments through the Cambridge Investment partnership at Mill Road and Cromwell Road.

### **(B) Staffing Implications**

The scheme on the Rolling Programme will be project managed by the Cambridge City Council Housing Development Agency in liaison with City Homes; Housing Maintenance & Assets; and the Council's corporate support teams. Some of the schemes are being delivered through the Cambridge Investment Partnership.

### **(C) Equality and Poverty Implications**

The development framework for new housing by the Council, approved at the March 2017 Housing Scrutiny Committee was informed by an EQIA. Each scheme specific approval is informed by an EQIA if current residents are required to move.

### **(D) Environmental Implications**

There are no environmental implications of this report. Each scheme specific approval will cover any environmental implications.

### **(E) Procurement Implications**

Advice specific to each project.

### **(F) Consultation and communication**

There are no consultation and communication implications of this report. The development framework for new housing by the Council approved at the March 2017 Housing Scrutiny Committee sets out the Council's commitment to involve residents in new housing schemes.

### **(G) Community Safety**

There are no community safety implications for this report. Each scheme specific approval will cover any community safety implications.

## **13. Background papers**

Background papers used in the preparation of this report:

- a) 24/09/2020 HSC Programme report

#### **14. Appendices**

- (a) Appendix 1: Programme milestone summary
- (b) Appendix 2: Programme finance summary
- (c) Appendix 3: Development Need – Tedder Way and Kendal Way

#### **15. Inspection of papers**

To inspect the background papers or if you have a query on the report please contact Claire Flowers, Head of Housing Development Agency, tel: 01223 - 457928, email: [claire.flowers@cambridge.gov.uk](mailto:claire.flowers@cambridge.gov.uk).

HDA Delivery Programme		15/12/2020									
Scheme Name	Ward	Net Affordable	Market homes	Total homes	Delivery	Committee	Approval date	Planning Submitted	Planning Granted	Est. SOS	Practical Completion
<b>BUILD COMPLETE</b>											
Uphall Road	Romsey	2	0	2	E & F	HSC	Mar-15	Aug-16	Dec-16	Jun-17	Jan-18
Nuns Way & Wiles Close	Kings Hedges	10	0	10	Tender	HSC	Mar-15	Aug-16	Jul-17	Jan-19	Aug-19
Ditchburn Place Community Rooms	Petersfield	2	0	2	Tender	S & R	Sep-18	Aug-18	Nov-18	Jan-19	Sep-19
Queens Meadow	Cherry Hinton	2	0	2	CIP	HSC	Jun-17	Dec-17	Jul-18	May-19	Jun-20
Anstey Way	Trumpington	29	0	56	CIP	HSC	Mar-17	Jan-18	Jul-18	Oct-18	Jun-20
Colville Garages	Cherry Hinton	3	0	3	CIP	HSC	Sep-17	Sep-18	Nov-18	May-19	Jul-20
Gunhild Way	Queen Ediths	2	0	2	CIP	HSC	Jan-18	Jul-18	Oct-18	May-19	Jul-20
Wulfstan Way	Queen Ediths	3	0	3	CIP	HSC	Sep-17	Oct-18	Jan-19	May-19	Sep-20
Markham Close	Kings Hedges	5	0	5	CIP	HSC	Jan-18	May-18	Oct-18	May-19	Sep-20
Mill Road	Petersfield	4	19	4	CIP	S & R	Nov-17	Dec-17	Jun-18	Aug-18	Dec-21
<b>Sub total</b>		<b>62</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>89</b>							
<b>ON SITE</b>											
Mill Road	Petersfield	114	99	232	CIP	S & R	Nov-17	Dec-17	Jun-18	Aug-18	Dec-21
Ventress Close	Queen Ediths	13	0	15	CIP	HSC	Mar-17	Sep-18	Mar-19	Oct-19	Mar-21
Kingsway Medical Centre	Arbury	4	0	4	E & F	HSC	Sep-17	Sep-18	Apr-19	Nov-19	Sep-21
Cromwell Road	Romsey	118	177	295	CIP	S & R	Mar-18	Mar-19	Jun-19	Dec-19	Dec-22
Akeman Street	Arbury	12	0	14	CIP	HSC	Jun-18	Apr-19	Jul-19	Oct-19	Jul-21
Colville Phase 2	Cherry Hinton	47	0	67	CIP	HSC	Jan-19	Jul-19	Dec-19	Nov-20	Apr-22
<b>Sub total</b>		<b>308</b>	<b>276</b>	<b>627</b>							
<b>PLANNING APPROVED</b>											
Campkin Road	Kings Hedges	50	0	75	CIP	HSC	Jul-19	Nov-19	Mar-20	Jan-21	Jan-23
Clerk Maxwell Road	Newnham	14	21	35	S106	HSC	Jan-19	Dec-19	Jul-20	Jan-21	Mar-22
Meadows and Buchan	Kings Hedges	106	0	106	CIP	HSC	Jan-19	Dec-19	Aug-20	Mar-21	Mar-23
<b>Sub total</b>		<b>170</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>216</b>							
<b>HSC APPROVED SCHEMES (UNDER REVIEW)</b>											
Tedder Way	Arbury	1	0	1	TBD	HSC	Mar-15	Mar-21	TBD	TBD	TBD
Kendal Way (Planning Lapsed)	East Chesterton	1	0	1	TBD	HSC	Mar-15	Mar-21	TBD	TBD	TBD
<b>Sub total</b>		<b>2</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>2</b>							
<b>GRAND TOTAL</b>		<b>542</b>	<b>297</b>	<b>934</b>							

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Reserve Schemes	Ward	Net Affordable	Other	Total Homes	Delivery	Committee	Committee Approved	Planning Submitted	Planning Granted	Est. SOS	Practical Completion
Colville Road Phase 3	Cherry Hinton	31	0	47	CIP	HSC	Sep-20	Mar-21	Jul-21	Dec-21	TBD
L2 Orchard Park	SCDC	30	46	76	CIP	HSC	Sep-20	Aug-20	Jan-21	Apr-21	Nov-22
The Mews, Histon Road	Arbury	7	0	7	S106 Laragh	HSC	Sep-20	May-19	Feb-20	Oct-21	Dec-22
<b>Ttotal Reserve</b>		<b>68</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>130</b>							

Progress to 500 starts on site	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23
Starts by year	2	132	189	187	30	0
Cumulative total	2	134	323	510	542	542

Progress to 500 Completions	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23
Completions by year	2	0	12	82	125	321
Cumulative total	2	2	14	96	221	542

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New Build Programme - 500 New Homes								December 2020			
Scheme Name	Project stage	Net affordable homes	Total affordable homes	Budget per 2021/22 HRA BSR Table	Total Spend to 31 March 2020	Budget RTB receipts (Actual where complete / on hold)	Budget Devo grant funding (Actual where complete / on hold)	Section 106	Net cost to HRA	Total development cost per unit	Cost to HRA per unit
Uphall Road	Build completed	2	2	322,000	356,829.05	(105,330)	(242,596)	0	8,903	178,415	4,452
Nuns Way & Wiles Close	Build completed	10	10	1,976,189	1,934,897.58	(583,857)	(1,308,231)	0	54,101	194,619	5,410
Tedder Way	Feasibility stage	1	1	506,000	10,938.00	(151,800)	(354,200)	0	0	506,000	0
Kendal Way	Feasibility stage	1	1	524,000	28,416.50	(157,200)	(366,800)	0	0	524,000	0
Anstey Way	Build completed	29	56	11,285,455	11,185,439.05	(1,855,033)	(3,500,204)	0	5,930,218	201,526	105,897
Colville Garages	Build completed	3	3	847,300	734,752.31	(254,190)	(593,110)	0	0	282,433	0
Queensmeadow	Build completed	2	2	621,040	593,491.95	(186,312)	(434,728)	0	0	310,520	0
Wulfstan Way	Build completed	3	3	816,810	528,683.01	(245,043)	(571,767)	0	0	272,270	0
Markham Close	Build completed	5	5	1,186,650	1,070,819.62	(355,995)	(830,655)	0	0	237,330	0
Gunhild Way	Build completed	2	2	664,140	534,652.74	(199,242)	(464,898)	0	0	332,070	0
Ditchburn Place	Build completed	2	2	322,000	333,957.43	(101,115)	(232,842)	0	(0)	166,979	(0)
Mill Road	On site	118	118	24,965,630	13,318,316.41	(7,489,689)	(17,475,941)	0	0	211,573	0
Ventress Close	On site	13	15	3,689,920	2,210,920.21	(783,909)	(1,828,596)	0	1,077,415	245,995	71,828
Kingsway	On site	4	4	554,000	79,275.81	(166,200)	(387,800)	0	0	138,500	0
Cromwell Road	On site	118	118	24,865,800	14,110,559.21	(5,308,692)	(17,406,060)	0	2,151,048	210,727	18,229
Akeman Street	On site	12	14	4,526,720	1,893,155.83	(910,682)	(2,108,742)	0	1,507,296	323,337	107,664
Clerk Maxwell Road	Planning approved	14	14	3,046,760	0.00	(914,028)	(2,132,732)	0	0	217,626	0
Meadows and Buchan	Planning approved	106	106	27,318,760	686,480.99	(2,063,746)	(13,351,819)	0	11,903,195	257,724	112,294
Colville Road Phase 2	On site	49	69	14,467,580	1,111,519.99	(2,746,587)	(6,408,278)	0	5,312,715	209,675	76,996
Campkin Road Phase 2	Planning approved	50	75	18,063,260	640,537.11	(3,243,247)	0	(1,750,000)	13,070,013	240,843	174,267
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>544</b>	<b>620</b>	<b>140,570,014</b>	<b>51,363,642.80</b>	<b>(27,821,896.45)</b>	<b>(70,000,000.00)</b>	<b>(1,750,000.00)</b>	<b>41,014,904.03</b>	<b>226,752.90</b>	<b>66,153.07</b>
<b>Mean average</b>											
Reserve Schemes Scheme Name	Project stage	Net affordable homes	Total affordable homes	Budget per 2021/22 HRA BSR Table	Total Spend to 31 March 2020	Budget RTB receipts (Actual where complete / on hold)	Budget Devo grant funding (Actual where complete / on hold)	Section 106	Net cost to HRA	Total development cost per unit	Cost to HRA per unit
L2	Planning Submitted	30	30	6,207,000	0.00	(620,700)	0	0	5,586,300	206,900	186,210
Histon Road	Planning Approved	7	7	1,513,000	0.00	(151,300)	0	0	1,361,700	216,143	194,529
Colville III	Pre-planning	31	47	11,103,200	0.00	(1,288,916)	0	0	9,814,284	236,238	208,815
<b>Total</b>		<b>68</b>	<b>84</b>	<b>18,823,200</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>(2,060,916)</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>16,762,284</b>	<b>219,760</b>	<b>196,518</b>

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## **Appendix 3: Development Need – Tedder Way and Kendal Way**

### **1. Background**

- 1.1 Both Tedder Way and Kendal Way were included within a package of small sites approved by the Housing Scrutiny Committee in March 2015. Other sites within that package have to date been successfully delivered (Nuns Way, Cameron Road, Wiles Close, Uphall Road).
- 1.2. Planning Permission for two dwellings at Kendal Way was secured in February 2017 but has subsequently lapsed. A planning application was submitted for two dwellings at Tedder Way but has not progressed to Planning Committee due to site constraints, including boundary/access issues.
- 1.3 Because of these constraints, revised feasibility studies now show a 4-bed bungalow on Tedder Way and a 3-bed bungalow at Kendal way to be developable. Bungalows are more appropriate accommodation for families with disabled family members. Bungalows may also be more acceptable to local residents due to lower density and lower risk of overlooking due to the associated lower building heights.

### **2. Acute need for larger adapted / adaptable properties**

- 2.1 An acute need has been identified for large family homes suitable for households on the housing register which include household members with disabilities who need wheelchair accessible homes. Discussion with members and colleagues in the Housing Needs Service and Occupational Therapy service has confirmed this need.
- 2.2 There is a clear and demonstrated need for homes for families with household members with disabilities within Cambridge. Housing Register data from October 2020 shows that there are:

- **5 families** on the housing register with the need for a 4 bedroomed property\*1 that have also been assessed as having a need to move for medical reasons because their 'medical condition or disability is affected by their current accommodation', and have been assessed as being eligible for a property suitable for an applicant who uses a wheelchair some or all of the time.

*\*1: includes those who have been assessed as needing a 3 or 4 bedroomed property. Because of the shortage of suitable 4 bedroomed houses this assessment is normally made to allow families to bid for a property smaller than they really need but which has an extra living room (normally a dining room) that could be used as a bedroom.*

- **7 families** on the housing register with a need for a 3 bedroomed property that have also been assessed as having a need to move for medical reasons because their 'medical condition or disability is affected by their current accommodation', and have been assessed as being eligible for a property suitable for someone who uses a wheelchair some or all of the time.
- There are a further **9 families** on the housing register who need 4 bedroomed accommodation\* and have been assessed as being eligible for a property suitable for someone who uses a wheelchair some or all of the time.
- There are a further **23 families** on the housing needs register who need 3 bedroomed accommodation and have been assessed as being eligible for a property suitable for someone who uses a wheelchair some or all of the time.
- There are **3 families** on the housing register that have been assessed as being in Band A with an 'urgent' need to move to 4 bedroomed accommodation suitable for someone who uses a wheelchair all of the time.

- There is **1 family** assessed and being in Band A with an 'Urgent' need to move to accommodation suitable for someone who uses a wheelchair most of the time.
- 2.3 There is a limited number of homes suitable for adaptation for wheelchair users in existing Council stock.
- 2.4 Cambridge City Council holds a stock of 2,174 three bedroomed properties and 101 four bed houses as of April 2020. However much of this stock is an older type which is difficult to adapt for the needs of people with disabilities. Information from the Council's Strategic Housing Key Facts Apr – June 2020 report states that there were just 4 lettings of 4 bedroomed properties or larger in 2019-20 and 71 lettings of 3 bedroomed properties in the same period.
- 2.5 As demonstrated above, there is a clear need for larger properties designed for and suitable for occupation by disabled people. In particular, there is a need family homes suitable for families with children with disabilities. There is a high need for family homes in Cambridge suitable for children with disabilities in commuting distance of the Castle School in the West Chesterton Ward of Cambridge for children with complex needs which cannot be met by mainstream schools or colleges. With this requirement not being met through the provision of general needs housing, the need is acute.

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