



## Cambridge City Council Housing Scrutiny Committee

**Date:** Tuesday, 12 March 2019

**Time:** 5.30 pm

**Venue:** Committee Room 1 & 2, The Guildhall, Market Square, Cambridge, CB2 3QJ

**Contact:** [democratic.services@cambridge.gov.uk](mailto:democratic.services@cambridge.gov.uk), tel:01223 457000

### Agenda

- 1 Apologies
- 2 Declarations of Interest
- 3 Minutes  
To follow
- 4 Public Questions

### **Part 1: To be chaired by Vice Chair (Tenant/Leaseholder Representative)** **Decisions for the Executive Councillor for Housing**

- |   |                              |                 |
|---|------------------------------|-----------------|
| 5 | Estate Improvement Programme | (Pages 5 - 26)  |
| 6 | Resident Engagement Review   | (Pages 27 - 54) |

### **Part 2: To be taken by the Chair of the Committee** **Decisions for the Executive Councillor for Housing**

- |   |  |                   |
|---|--|-------------------|
| 7 | Greater Cambridge Housing Strategy 2019-2022   | (Pages 55 - 170)  |
| 8 | Cambridgeshire Adaptations & Repairs Policy  | (Pages 171 - 240) |
| 9 | Update on the Programme to Build new Council Homes Funded Through the Combined Authority | (Pages 241 - 254) |

**Housing Scrutiny Committee Members:** Todd-Jones (Chair), Bird (Vice-Chair), Cantrill, Massey, McGerty, Payne, Sheil and Thittala

**Alternates:** Page-Croft, Barnett and O'Reilly

**Tenants and Leaseholders:** Lulu Agate (Tenant Representative), Diane Best (Leaseholder Representative), Kay Harris (Tenant Representative) and Diana Minns (Tenant Representative)

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

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- 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 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.

**B.** Overview and scrutiny of functions relating to the management of the Council's housing stock.

**C.** 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.

### **Membership**

City Councillors (Such number as shall be decided by the Council from time to time)

Six elected tenants and leaseholders of Cambridge City Council of whom at least five shall be tenants of Cambridge City Council.

### **Appointment of tenant and leaseholder members**

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.

### **Voting**

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.

### **Appointment of Chair**

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.

**Other matters relating to elected tenants and leaseholders**

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





Item

## Estates Improvements Scheme 2019-2024

**To:**

Councillor Richard Johnson, Executive Councillor for Housing

Housing Scrutiny Committee 12/03/2019

**Report by:**

David Greening, Head of Housing

Tel: 01223 - 457997

Email: david.greening@cambridge.gov.uk

**Wards affected:**

All

### Key Decision

#### 1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 As part of the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) medium-term financial strategy (MTFS), this committee approved £1 million per annum for 5 years of capital funding for estate improvements. These funds are available from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2019. An additional revenue resource of £100,000 has been ear-marked in 2019/20 to allow for any revenue investment required to support the programme.
- 1.2 The objective of this report is to introduce members and tenant and leaseholder representatives to the approach officers are taking to:
  - the identification of issues
  - the improvement proposal process
  - officer authorisation
  - prioritisation
  - consultation

## **2. Recommendations**

The Executive Councillor is recommended to:

- 2.1 Endorse the approach taken by officers to establish the Estates Improvement Scheme (EIS) as outlined in this report.
- 2.2 Agree that officers will produce a written annual member briefing, outlining the progress made under this programme, to be sent to all members by email at each financial year end for the lifetime of the programme.

## **3. Background**

- 3.1. Since the funding for the EIS was approved last autumn, officers have established a steering group led by Housing Services and chaired by the Head of Housing, but with representation from officers within Maintenance and Assets, Waste and Recycling, Safer Communities and Environmental Health. Officers from the Police's 'Designing Out Crime' team have also been regular contributors to the steering group and have accompanied officers on site visits.

### **Identification of estate issues**

- 3.2 The Council has identified a number of key issues for local estates via a variety of means. The most notable of these is the introduction of an 'estate walkabouts' programme, which started in 2017 and has been led by the two Estate Champions working within City Homes. Tenants, leaseholders and ward councillors are all invited to attend these events and information is posted on the Council's website and in *Open Door*.
- 3.3 The estate walkabout programme has served to enhance existing methods for tenants and leaseholders to engage with the Council about their surroundings; namely, issues raised with tenant and leaseholder representatives, resident inspectors, environment and community days and the identification of complaint themes on estates.

### **The improvement proposal process**

- 3.4 Proposals for works to improve the look and feel of Council Estates need to meet two fundamental principles:
  - The proposal will add value to the asset (the estate)

- The proposal should not act as a substitute for the planned maintenance programme but it may be prudent for the Council to consider including works from the planned programme where it makes sense to incorporate them.

3.5 The steering group has devised a set of additional criteria by which proposals are assessed. Any proposal brought forward as part of the EIS needs to meet at least one of the following objectives:

- Build out future cost (i.e. a spend to save initiative)
- Design out crime and anti-social behaviour
- Make a visible and positive difference to the aesthetics of an estate
- Contribute to strengthening the community on the estate
- Improve the health and safety and/or health and well-being of those living on the estate

### **Officer authorisation**

3.6 Before proposals can be authorised by the steering group it would need to be satisfied that the following areas have been considered:

- Whether the scheme is currently earmarked for redevelopment or likely to be in the next 5 years
- Health and safety assessments have been thoroughly conducted both before and after the improvement works are carried out
- Whether or not it is appropriate to recharge leaseholders
- Cross-referencing with the planned works programme to ensure that works are completed efficiently with minimal disruption for residents
- Consultation with relevant internal and external services (for example, Finance, Legal, Procurement, Police)
- Each proposal has the support of the community, evidenced through local engagement with residents and ward councillors.

## **Prioritisation**

- 3.7 At Housing Scrutiny Committee in September 2018 a zero tolerance policy around storage in communal areas was approved. The policy's primary objective is to improve fire safety in blocks of flats.
- 3.8 Improvement proposals, which improve secure storage arrangements for residents will be prioritised to make it easier for Council tenants and leaseholders to comply with the zero tolerance policy.
- 3.9 The principle issues of concern for residents attending the estate walkabouts have largely been about anti-social behaviour and fly-tipping. Therefore, many of the proposals under discussion have focused on designing out crime and anti-social behaviour and waste storage re-designs.
- 3.10 The steering group is aiming to step up resident and ward councillor engagement via:
- Improved publicity around the estate walkabouts programme
  - Promoting opportunities via *Open Door* for tenants and leaseholders to submit proposals directly
  - A refresh of the Residents and Officers Asset Management (ROAM) is planned. The group was established to influence the planned works programme, review operational team reports (including responsive repairs and asset management), service development and key performance indicators.
  - Invite member ideas on proposals via the annual briefing referred to in 2.2 of this report as well as on the estate walkabouts
  - Communications to resident groups inviting ideas on proposals

## **4.0 Proposals to be started in 2019-20**

- 4.1 At the time of writing this report there are 4 proposals that the EIS steering group is focusing on; one in the north of the city, one in the south and a city-wide scheme (split into 2 parts). These are as follows:

### **1. Kingsway flats**

### **2. East Road estate**

### **3. City-wide street lighting upgrade**

### **4. City-wide communal lighting upgrade**

#### **Kingsway Flats**

- 4.2 There are 5 blocks of flats at Kingsway and the current design allows for members of the general public to freely access floors 2 to 4 throughout the estate. This has provided a haven for anti-social behaviour and criminal activity. Officers have been working with the Designing Out Crime team and the Council's Fire Safety Advisor to draw up some proposals to divide these areas so that they are accessible by residents only and that movement between blocks is restricted.
- 4.3 At two Kingsway Community meetings, held on 9<sup>th</sup> November and 19<sup>th</sup> December 2018 the proposal was aired and received strong support from residents. A letter of consultation was sent to all 123 households on 11<sup>th</sup> January 2019 inviting responses by 1<sup>st</sup> February. The Council received 35 responses, which represents 28% of households on the estate. 30 residents expressed their support for increased security measures at Kingsway and 5 did not. A number of questions about the proposal were noted on the response forms, these have been recorded and will inform the next stage of the consultation. A further meeting at Kingsway took place on 20<sup>th</sup> February.
- 4.4 Ward councillors have also been consulted. All three councillors (Cllrs O'Reilly, Sheil and Todd-Jones) have expressed support for these proposals.
- 4.5 The project is now moving into specific scheme design phase. Until this is complete it is difficult to provide an accurate assessment of costs but, at this stage, it is anticipated that the works will cost around £200-250k.
- 4.6 Once more specific scheme design has been undertaken, further consultations will be organised with both residents and ward councillors.

#### **East Road Estate**

- 4.7 This proposal is also focused on tackling anti-social behaviour and designing out crime. Notable problems on the estate are fly-tipping, vandalism and free-running. The Council has plans to restrict access to areas where fly-tipping is taking place and to install security

measures to the bin store areas. Enclosing the area between the stairwell and the garages should address the free-running issue.

- 4.8 A rough sleeping issue has been noted in this area; street outreach services are working proactively with individuals found in this area and rough sleeping sites are being secured.
- 4.9 All 90 households of East Road estate were written to on 14<sup>th</sup> January 2019 and responses were returned by 5<sup>th</sup> February 2019. The Council received 20 responses, which is 22% return rate. 19 residents expressed their support for the estate improvements at East Road and 1 did not. A number of questions about the proposal were noted on the response forms; these have been recorded and will inform the next stage of the consultation
- 4.10 All 3 ward councillors (Cllr Blencowe, Cllr Green and Cllr Robertson) are supportive of the proposals and went on an accompanied estate walkabout on 11<sup>th</sup> January 2019 and were briefed on where the changes are to be made.
- 4.11 The project has been fully designed and quotations for the work are around £20k.

### **City-wide street and communal lighting upgrade**

- 4.12 The lighting programmes will run as two separate projects; street lighting and communal lighting. The Council can use an existing contractor to carry out the street lighting works. The project is likely to take up to 2 years and involve considerable planning. The communal lighting programme is less advanced at this stage. There are customer and business drivers for delivering the upgrades. These are:

- Energy saving Light-emitting diode (LED) products with reduced maintenance costs
- Better night-time visibility for more vulnerable residents
- Better energy controls such dimming, light and motion sensors
- The new LEDs, with integral occupancy sensors will mean significant energy savings and improved lighting levels
- Cleaner, well-lit communal areas
- Improvement to the aesthetic appearance of buildings
- Reduced vandalism where lighting is failing due to age
- Site-specific lighting design to suit the neighbourhood
- Wildlife compliant fittings

4.13 There has been no consultation to date on this proposal but, given the economic benefits to the Council, the consultation will centre around the design and deployment rather than whether to go ahead with the upgrade.

4.14 The street lighting programme is expected to cost around £750k

## **5.0 EIS coordination**

5.1 Aside from the three proposals cited earlier in this report there are a further 19 estate improvement proposals submitted for consideration by the steering group. None of these are sufficiently well advanced or consulted on to share in this report but will appear in the annual update reports as they come forward.

5.2 The number of proposals being developed will create a significant drain on surveyor and other technical resources in the Maintenance and Assets service. Additionally, projects such as the city-wide street and communal lighting upgrade will require detailed planning and the coordination of technical lighting expertise.

5.3 In the light of the above, the Maintenance and Assets service will be recruiting a surveyor to coordinate the EIS and this will be funded from the £100k revenue budget assigned to the programme.

## **6. Implications**

### **(a) Financial Implications**

There are no financial implications identified outside of the £5m capital sum and (one-off) £100,000 revenue sum already approved as part of the HRA budget. Revenue resources can be 'capitalised' from the £5m fund as long as the Council can clearly demonstrate that these resources are exclusively devoted to the EIS.

### **(b) Staffing Implications**

Staff working within a number of services (as outlined in 3.1 of this report) are devoting time to this project. A surveyor will be required to coordinate the programme as outlined in 5.3 of this report.

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

The proposals developed so far, and outlined in this report, should improve the safety and security of all residents but particularly the Council's most vulnerable residents. An Equalities Impact Assessment will be carried out in 2019/20 and will be reviewed and updated annually in line with the review for members.

### **(d) Environmental Implications**

There are key environmental improvements outlined on the East Road proposal (paragraphs 4.7 to 4.10 of this report). The street and communal lighting proposals will offer energy efficiency benefits.

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

The works to Kingsway are above European Union thresholds and will need to be procured via competitive tenure. The street lighting programme can be delivered under existing contractual arrangements.

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

All 4 proposals highlighted in this report will have positive community safety implications.

## **6. Consultation and communication considerations**

As outlined throughout this report.

## **7. Background papers**

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

## **8. Appendices**

None



## **9. Inspection of papers**

If you have a query on the report please contact David Greening, Head of Housing Services, tel: 01223 – 457997, email:

[david.greening@cambridge.gov.uk](mailto:david.greening@cambridge.gov.uk)

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Item

## RESIDENT ENGAGEMENT REVIEW



**To:**

Councillor Richard Johnson, Executive Councillor for Housing

Housing Scrutiny Committee 12/03/2019

**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 In March 2017 Housing Scrutiny Committee approved a Resident Involvement Strategy 2017-20. Whilst this continues to outline the objectives of the service, there is a need to consider the engagement activities in more detail to ensure that the opportunities for involvement on offer allow participation from a broad cross section of residents.
- 1.2 The evolving nature of the housing sector highlights the need to stay at the forefront of societal change, the Review aims to ensure our procedures embrace change and increase participation in a sustainable way. The Review is split into 6 key themed headings, each of which provides a description of the current approach and analyses whether they will continue to be supported or whether they could be altered to increase their effectiveness. A number of new initiatives have been created as a direct response to resident demands.

- 1.3 The aim of the report is to seek approval for the implementation of the Review proposals. The eighteen proposals outlined within the Review are not exhaustive and are designed to evolve over time to ensure they remain effective and adhere with best practice.

## **2. Recommendations**

The Executive Councillor is recommended to:

- 2.1 Approve the Resident Engagement Review (Appendix 1)

## **3. Background**

- 3.1. The Resident Engagement Team facilitates a variety of methods to engage with City Council tenants and leaseholders. The approaches form concentric circles of involvement with six elected Tenant and Leaseholder Representatives (TLRs) forming the middle circle, the other forms of engagement feed into the TLRs and allows them to represent the views of residents on the Housing Scrutiny Committee (HSC).
- 3.2 In March 2017 HSC approved a Resident Involvement Strategy 2017-20. Whilst this continues to outline the objectives of the service, there is a need to consider the engagement activities in more detail to ensure that the opportunities for involvement on offer allow participation from a broader cross section of residents. This also facilitates an opportunity to ensure our approach embraces change within existing resources and in a sustainable way.
- 3.6 The Review developed over a 7 month period with the support and input from the following contributors through a variety of methods:
- Elected Tenants and Leaseholder Representatives
  - Wider tenant and leaseholder input
  - Volunteer Resident Inspectors and Green Inspectors
  - Community groups
  - Partnerships of council officers and community groups

- 3.4 The review encompasses six key headings. Under each heading the current approach to engagement is outlined and then analysed to highlight whether any changes could increase its effectiveness. The headings are:
- Development and Accountability
  - Digital
  - Surveys
  - Community Improvement
  - Wider Engagement
  - Communication
- 3.7 Eighteen new proposals are outlined within the Review. They are all considered to be deliverable within current resources and a timeline for initiating the activities will be created to ensure effective monitoring. The recommendations are not exhaustive and are designed to evolve through time and practice to ensure they remain effective. The Review aligns with the following 4 service priorities, which will help determine areas for consultation in the future:
- Place
  - Income maximisation
  - Looking after our most vulnerable residents
  - Ensuring quality and efficiency in service deliver

## **4. Implications**

### **(a) Financial Implications**

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The activities outlined within the Resident Engagement Review are designed to be delivered with the existing budget.

### **(b) Staffing Implications**

The activities outlined within the Resident Engagement Review are designed to be delivered by existing staff.

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

Yes- Appended to the report

**(d) Environmental Implications**

N/A

**(e) Procurement Implications**

N/A

**(f) Community Safety Implications**

N/A

**5. Consultation and communication considerations**

Consultation with a variety of stakeholders covered a 7 month period and was central to compiling this review. Input from elected Tenants and Leaseholder Representatives, individual tenant and leaseholders, volunteers, community groups and local partnerships was gathered through a variety of means. The outcome of the Review will be publicised and shared with residents through a variety of media channels such as Open Door, social media, resident newsletters. Ongoing consultation on the newly implemented initiatives will inform their ongoing progress and development.

**6. Background papers**

Background papers used in the preparation of this report:

(a) RESIDENT INVOLVEMENT STRATEGY 2017-2020

**7. Appendices**

(1) Resident Engagement Review

(2) EqlA

**8. Inspection of papers**

To inspect the background papers or if you have a query on the report please contact Emily Watts, Resident Engagement Officer, tel: 01223 - 458323, email: [emily.watts@cambridge.gov.uk](mailto:emily.watts@cambridge.gov.uk).

## 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>
Resident Engagement Review
<b>2. Webpage link to full details of the strategy, policy, plan, project, contract or major change to your service (if available)</b>
(Use weblink of Housing Scrutiny Committee webpage where the report for Committee and the drafted review will be made available to public)
<b>3. What is the objective or purpose of your strategy, policy, plan, project, contract or major change to your service?</b>
There is a need for the resident involvement team to consider their engagement activities with tenants and leaseholders in more detail to ensure that the opportunities for involvement on offer allow participation from a broader cross section of residents.
<b>4. Responsible Service</b>
Resident Involvement- Housing Services

## APPENDIX 2

<b>5. Who will be affected by this strategy, policy, plan, project, contract or major change to your service? (Please tick those that apply)</b>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Residents of Cambridge City <input type="checkbox"/> Visitors to Cambridge City <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):  City Council tenants and leaseholders. Private residents of Cambridge are not precluded from taking part in the activities but they are not the target audience.
<b>6. What type of strategy, policy, plan, project, contract or major change to your service is this? (Please tick)</b>
<input type="checkbox"/> New <input type="checkbox"/> Major change <input checked="" 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 type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes (Please provide details):  Estate Services, wider Housing Services, Housing Development Agency, Maintenance and Assets Service- All play a role in delivery but the Resident Engagement Officer will have oversight of the individual initiatives.
<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 on 12 March 2019



### **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 following methods were employed to gather resident input- small scale surveys, community meetings, resident feedback/focus groups, resident walkabouts, wider consultation through the Open Door publication. The review document was developed over a 7 month period with the support and input from the following contributors:

- o Elected Tenants and Leaseholder Representatives
- o Wider tenant and leaseholder input
- o Volunteer Resident Inspectors and Green Inspectors
- o Community groups
- o Partnerships of council officers and community groups

At present equalities monitoring information relative to resident involvement is not available; we will start to gather this information by undertaking regular equalities monitoring which will evidence our support for the involvement of a broader cross section of residents. We will be able to update the EqlA with this information as it is available.

### **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

**Note that this refers to any group of people of a particular age (e.g. 32 year-olds) , or within a particular age range (e.g. 16-24 year-olds) – in particular, please consider any safeguarding issues for children and vulnerable adults**

The proposals for new engagement activities outlined within the review aim to increase inclusivity of residents of all ages.

The Council's most recent Tenants Satisfaction Survey found that in 2014 39.2% of City Council tenants did not have access to the internet. Older people and young people from low-income households are especially likely to experience digital exclusion. In 2016, only 38.7% of adults in the UK aged 75 years or over had used the internet in the last 3 months, compared to 87.9% of all adults (Office for National Statistics, 2016 – Statistical Bulletin: Internet users in the UK: 2016). Nationally, 17% of people earning less than £20,000 never use the internet, as opposed to 2% of people earning more than £40,000 (Cabinet Office, 2014, Government Digital Inclusion Strategy). There is a danger for those who cannot access digital facilities or who cannot afford the price of an internet connection to get left behind, so facilitating digital inclusion is a fundamental aspect of resident involvement and aligns with the wider Council's Anti-Poverty Strategy and Digital Transformation Strategy. Proposals 4,5,6 and 15 of the review aim to target these issues directly by providing increased digital access, equipment provision, free digital session and supporting older people in sheltered facilities to engage more.

Resident involvement is also a potential way to help combat loneliness, which is especially likely to be experienced by older people and has been identified as a public health issue by the Campaign to End Loneliness. A study by The Co-op and the British Red Cross reveals over 9 million people in the UK across all adult ages – more than the population of London – are either always or often lonely.

### (b) Disability

**Note that a person has a disability if they have a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on that person's ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.**

## APPENDIX 2

### **(b) Disability**

**Note that a person has a disability if they have a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on that person's ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.**

Disabled people are especially likely to experience digital and social exclusion because they may find it hard to find technology that has been appropriately adapted to meet their needs. Mobility issues may also impede them from taking part in activities which leads to social exclusion. Reasonable adjustments will be made to allow a person with any disability to take part that applies to digital equipment or covering the cost for transport to travel to meetings. Easy read and British Sign Language services will be required where needed to increase resident involvement of disabled people.

The garden competition, sheltered scheme residents group and 65+ digital champion project are examples which highlight how people with disabilities can easily get involved in resident involvement activities. The Tenant and Leaseholder representative position is also fully inclusive allowing people with any disability to take part.

### **(c) Gender reassignment**

No impact has been identified that is specific to this equality group

### **(d) Marriage and civil partnership**

No Impact has been identified that is specific to this equality group

### **(e) Pregnancy and maternity**

Volunteers able to claim expenses which cover the cost of childcare/dependency costs which are incurred to be able to attend meetings.

## APPENDIX 2

### (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.**

In order to increase involvement we would employ the use of translation and interpretation services.

### (g) Religion or belief

No Impact has been identified that is specific to this equality group

### (h) Sex

No Impact has been identified that is specific to this equality group

### (i) Sexual orientation

No Impact

### (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

The review indirectly targets residents on low incomes because they are more likely to live in social housing provided by the Council. The proposals outlined should help deliver aspects of the council's Anti-Poverty Strategy by contributing to increased digital and financial inclusion, reduce social isolation and increase employability skills.

An allowance is available for Tenant and Leaseholder Reps to claim which is separate to expense claims, this additional could help toward combatting poverty. Consideration has been given to the impact that allowance claims could have on benefit recipients so a direct link with the benefits time so that a dedicated officer is available to answer questions on an individual basis.

**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.)**

The progress of the review its proposals and equalities monitoring will be reviewed annually in order to ensure they have been delivered to their timetable. As part of the annual review the EqlA will be refreshed with the monitoring information to ensure any negative impacts can be mitigated. If any situations arise within the year which would suggest that some of the proposals are having a negative impact on residents in any way then they will be tackled immediately.

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

Having residents sitting on the Council's main housing committee is a unique approach to scrutiny and facilitates insight allowing the Council to tailor and target services. Their involvement ensures accurate feedback and challenge from service-users', connecting decision-makers with the grassroots communities they serve. The proposals are all aimed at increasing resident involvement and ensuring that we consult with them meaningfully. For instance, one proposal is to also To strengthen existing scrutiny processes the creation of a resident's panel would facilitate a greater level of input from a wider and more representatives demographic of residents so equalities monitoring will need to be undertaken. Another proposal is to tailor our service to meet these needs localised surveys and consultations will be employed to increase our understanding of what residents want.

**13. Sign off**

## APPENDIX 2

Name and job title of lead officer for this equality impact assessment: Emily Watts, Resident Engagement Officer

Names and job titles of other assessment team members and people consulted:

Date of EqlA sign off:

Date of next review of the equalities impact assessment:

All EqlAs need to be sent to Helen Crowther, Equality and Anti-Poverty Officer. Has this been sent to Helen Crowther?

☒ Yes

☐ No

Date to be published on Cambridge City Council website:



Item

## RESIDENT ENGAGEMENT REVIEW

**To:**

Councillor Richard Johnson, Executive Councillor for Housing

Housing Scrutiny Committee 12/03/2019

**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 In March 2017 Housing Scrutiny Committee approved a Resident Involvement Strategy 2017-20. Whilst this continues to outline the objectives of the service, there is a need to consider the engagement activities in more detail to ensure that the opportunities for involvement on offer allow participation from a broad cross section of residents.
- 1.2 The evolving nature of the housing sector highlights the need to stay at the forefront of societal change, the Review aims to ensure our procedures embrace change and increase participation in a sustainable way. The Review is split into 6 key themed headings, each of which provides a description of the current approach and analyses whether they will continue to be supported or whether they could be altered to increase their effectiveness. A number of new initiatives have been created as a direct response to resident demands.

- 1.3 The aim of the report is to seek approval for the implementation of the Review proposals. The eighteen proposals outlined within the Review are not exhaustive and are designed to evolve over time to ensure they remain effective and adhere with best practice.

## **2. Recommendations**

The Executive Councillor is recommended to:

- 2.1 Approve the Resident Engagement Review (Appendix 1)

## **3. Background**

- 3.1. The Resident Engagement Team facilitates a variety of methods to engage with City Council tenants and leaseholders. The approaches form concentric circles of involvement with six elected Tenant and Leaseholder Representatives (TLRs) forming the middle circle, the other forms of engagement feed into the TLRs and allows them to represent the views of residents on the Housing Scrutiny Committee (HSC).
- 3.2 In March 2017 HSC approved a Resident Involvement Strategy 2017-20. Whilst this continues to outline the objectives of the service, there is a need to consider the engagement activities in more detail to ensure that the opportunities for involvement on offer allow participation from a broader cross section of residents. This also facilitates an opportunity to ensure our approach embraces change within existing resources and in a sustainable way.
- 3.6 The Review developed over a 7 month period with the support and input from the following contributors through a variety of methods:
- Elected Tenants and Leaseholder Representatives
  - Wider tenant and leaseholder input
  - Volunteer Resident Inspectors and Green Inspectors
  - Community groups
  - Partnerships of council officers and community groups



- 3.4 The review encompasses six key headings. Under each heading the current approach to engagement is outlined and then analysed to highlight whether any changes could increase its effectiveness. The headings are:
- Development and Accountability
  - Digital
  - Surveys
  - Community Improvement
  - Wider Engagement
  - Communication
- 3.7 Eighteen new proposals are outlined within the Review. They are all considered to be deliverable within current resources and a timeline for initiating the activities will be created to ensure effective monitoring. The recommendations are not exhaustive and are designed to evolve through time and practice to ensure they remain effective. The Review aligns with the following 4 service priorities, which will help determine areas for consultation in the future:
- Place
  - Income maximisation
  - Looking after our most vulnerable residents
  - Ensuring quality and efficiency in service deliver

## **4. Implications**

### **(a) Financial Implications**

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The activities outlined within the Resident Engagement Review are designed to be delivered with the existing budget.

### **(b) Staffing Implications**

The activities outlined within the Resident Engagement Review are designed to be delivered by existing staff.

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

Yes- Appended to the report

**(d) Environmental Implications**

N/A

**(e) Procurement Implications**

N/A

**(f) Community Safety Implications**

N/A

**5. Consultation and communication considerations**

Consultation with a variety of stakeholders covered a 7 month period and was central to compiling this review. Input from elected Tenants and Leaseholder Representatives, individual tenant and leaseholders, volunteers, community groups and local partnerships was gathered through a variety of means. The outcome of the Review will be publicised and shared with residents through a variety of media channels such as Open Door, social media, resident newsletters. Ongoing consultation on the newly implemented initiatives will inform their ongoing progress and development.

**6. Background papers**

Background papers used in the preparation of this report:

(a) RESIDENT INVOLVEMENT STRATEGY 2017-2020

**7. Appendices**

(1) Resident Engagement Review

(2) EqlA

**8. Inspection of papers**

To inspect the background papers or if you have a query on the report please contact Emily Watts, Resident Engagement Officer, tel: 01223 - 458323, email: [emily.watts@cambridge.gov.uk](mailto:emily.watts@cambridge.gov.uk).

### Resident Engagement Review

*The evolving nature of the housing sector highlights the need to stay at the forefront of societal change; this Review aims to ensure our procedures embrace change and increase participation within existing resources and in a sustainable way. The Review is split into 6 key themed headings, each of which provides a description of the current approach and analyses whether they will continue to be supported, or whether they could be altered to increase their effectiveness. A number of new initiatives have been created as a direct response to resident demands.*

#### Introduction

In March 2017 HSC approved a Resident Involvement Strategy 2017-20<sup>1</sup>. Whilst this continues to outline the objectives of the service, there is a need to consider the engagement activities in more detail to ensure that the opportunities for involvement on offer allow participation from a broader cross section of residents. The evolving nature of the housing sector highlights the need to stay at the forefront of societal change. Since the Grenfell tragedy in 2017 and the resulting Green Paper, there has been a heightened focus on the importance of resident engagement and scrutiny of service.

After securing £70 million of devolution funding Cambridge City Council is delivering a comprehensive building programme designed to expand the city and cater for its residents. With so much new council housing being built this is a key opportunity to review our resident engagement procedures to ensure they embrace change and include as many residents as possible in a sustainable way.

The Resident Engagement team, which comprises of 1 full time and 1 part time member of staff, facilitates a variety of methods to engage with City Council tenants and leaseholders. The various methods form concentric circles of involvement with six elected Tenant and Leaseholder Representatives (TLRs) forming the core circle. The other forms of engagement feed into the TLRs and allows them to represent the views of residents on the Housing Scrutiny Committee. The housing service values the time and dedication that residents contribute to the various resident engagement activities. Their input facilitates a grass-roots response and enriches the quality of the service provided.

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<sup>1</sup> *Resident Involvement Strategy 2017-2020* <https://www.cambridge.gov.uk/media/5624/resident-involvement-strategy-2017.pdf>

## APPENDIX 1

This review is split into 6 key headings, which are listed below. Each heading covers a description of current methods of engagement and analyses whether they will continue or how they could be improved to increase resident involvement and engagement. Fundamental to each of the proposals is for residents to feel empowered to take part and input to a service which delivers for them.

- Development and Accountability
- Digital
- Surveys
- Community Improvement
- Wider Engagement
- Communication

The improvements proposed under these 6 headings are not exhaustive and the approach to delivery will remain flexible in order to ensure the initiatives evolve through time to suit residents' needs and demands. The TLRs input has been instrumental to evidencing the review and they have expressed support for the recommendations. The wider methodologies used have been to:

- Measure the objective effectiveness and value for money of existing services
- Consider feedback from residents on existing services and on other services that they are requesting
- Research other providers' services, to compare for positive practice
- Consider all the above in the light of specific developments in social housing in Cambridge, and the Council's future strategic needs.

Networking and having an awareness of best practice from other housing providers is an ongoing requirement to ensure quality and efficiency in service delivery. In order to analyse different approaches to resident involvement research has been undertaken into other Local Authorities across the country such as Colchester, Nottingham, Brighton, Oxford and Islington. Examples of effective engagement are dotted throughout the Review and serve as a guide to how we can improve our approach. The Review also aligns with the wider service objectives which help determine priorities for consultation moving forward. These are:

- Place
- Income maximisation
- Looking after our most vulnerable residents
- Ensuring quality and efficiency in service delivery

### Development and Accountability

Our key aim is to facilitate empowerment by making sure tenants and leaseholders have an influencing role that is proactive, inclusive and leads to positive service improvements.

The current scrutiny arrangements involve five tenants and one leaseholder being elected by City Council residents to represent their views on the Housing Scrutiny Committee (HSC). Elections take place every 4 years and are independently conducted by the Electoral Reform Society. As Members of HSC, TLRs vote on all decisions relating to the landlord function of the Council which encompass policy, strategy and service-delivery. Having residents sitting on the Council's main housing committee is a unique approach to scrutiny facilitating insight which allows the Council to tailor and target services. Their involvement ensures accurate feedback and challenge from service-users', connecting decision-makers with the grassroots communities they serve.

Our research into other housing providers' approaches to scrutiny highlights the variety in arrangements. Cambridge City Council takes a relatively unique approach by pre-scrutinising decisions before they have formally been made. Having elected TLR's sitting on HSC allows them to scrutinise decisions at the same time as councillors. Although TLR's cannot vote on housing matters that do not relate to the Housing Revenue Account, their position on the HSC does allow them the opportunity to get an insight and verbally scrutinise the wider housing decisions during committee.

Analysis of the current arrangements highlights how the TLR position on the HSC facilitates a level of scrutiny and accountability, however it only operates at the sign-off stage of a decision rather than during its development. In order to create the opportunity for more meaningful resident contribution this Review seeks to strengthen the existing scrutiny processes by increasing their scope for input.

**Proposal 1:** To facilitate input and greater consultation, officers will be encouraged to consult with residents in the infant stages of many of the decisions/reports/policies which relate to tenants and leaseholders.

**Impact of Proposal 1-** *At present the draft HSC agenda containing the Forward Plan items are circulated to relevant officers for administrative purposes long in advance of report deadlines, this could also be sent to TLRs so that they can personally identify reports of interest. Instilling this approach will ensure that resident consultation will become a normal and fundamental part of business practice for officers. It will also enable residents to feed into the decision making process at a stage where they can achieve meaningful input, rather than just at sign off.*

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*Contributing at all stages of the process facilitates effective ‘journey mapping’<sup>2</sup> and ensures resident interests are at the heart of service delivery allowing them to feel an element of ownership over the topic at hand.*

To facilitate an increased level of resident input there needs to be a wider bank of residents available to be called upon. Brighton City Council<sup>3</sup> and Colchester Borough Council<sup>4</sup> have successfully implemented resident panels which are advisory in nature, giving Panel members an opportunity to examine issues which affect how their services are accessed and delivered. The Panel is chaired by a resident member of their Decision Making Board and as such the outcome of panel discussion is fed by the Chair directly back into the Board.

**Proposal 2:** To strengthen existing scrutiny processes, the creation of a residents’ Panel would facilitate a greater level of input from a wider and more representative demographic of residents.

***Impact of Proposal 2:*** *The Panel would meet bi-monthly and be chaired by a TLR. The Panel size would not be limited so interested residents who are prepared to invest a minimum amount of time could all take part. In order to appeal to a greater number of residents, attendance would not be required at every meeting and members could also take part digitally if desired. The terms of reference would be developed in consultation with TLRs in order to establish the responsibility of the panel, which items would be heard and how the information that it produces is used. Once established the panel would be flexibly consulted as a cross- service sounding board on a plethora of topics which impact residents; their response would then be fed back to TLRs by the Chair. Once the governance arrangements are agreed the purpose and remit can be communicated with officers to ensure the panel is utilised effectively. This approach facilitates a greater level of input from a wider and more representative demographic of residents.*

Meanwhile, the City Council’s Housing Development Agency (HDA) has a large programme to deliver private and social housing across the city over the next few years. Many of the proposals will see the creation of whole new estates. Being on the cusp of such large scale projects provides an opportunity for residents to contribute to the design and development of the new communities. TLR’s already

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<sup>2</sup> *Tpas Journey Mapping with our Customers* <https://www.tpas.org.uk/blog/journey-mapping-with-our-customers>

<sup>3</sup> *Area Panels - Housing Management* <https://www.brighton-hove.gov.uk/content/housing/council-housing/area-panels-housing-management>

<sup>4</sup> *CBH Residents Panel* <http://www.cbhomes.org.uk/CHttpHandler.ashx?id=24156&p=0>

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receive quarterly updates from HDA representatives who meet to outline the progress on existing and prospective developments.

**Proposal 3:** Will implement an additional element to the HDA update meetings by dedicating a proportion of time to specific developments which are at their design stage, allowing time to review the plans, materials and layout of the proposals in detail. The HDA representative will take the feedback and contribute it to the ongoing development discussion.

***Impact of Proposal 3:*** This involvement allows residents an opportunity to use their experience of living on estates and in council owned properties to highlight residents' priorities. Their input can also contribute to reviewing the HDA's Employment Standard Specification Requirements. This document sets the required standard for all future HDA housing developments.

## Digital

The digital world is ever expanding and more core services are now transferring to online systems to reduce cost and increase efficiency. There is a danger for those who cannot access digital facilities to get left behind during this switch. Facilitating digital inclusion is a fundamental aspect of resident involvement and aligns with the wider Council's Anti-Poverty Strategy and Digital Transformation Strategy. This Review aims to ensure we are connecting citizens and providing digital customer service where it will be needed in the future.

Over the last few years the Resident Engagement service has trialled a number of digital inclusion projects to identify which approach is the most successful. Examples include:

- Holding drop-in computer sessions in areas of high need to teach residents core usability skills
- Providing free 12 week training courses
- Loaning digital equipment
- Giving residents the opportunity to buy loaned equipment at a reduced rate
- Training residents as Digital Champions in sheltered schemes

The latter is an ongoing programme delivered in sheltered schemes which targets older people and involves training residents to become Digital Champions so they can help teach other residents who need assistance in a sustainable way.

We are committed to continuing to develop and deliver digital initiatives which respond to the challenges experienced by tenants and leaseholders imposed

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through other societal factors such as welfare reform. Analysis of the past projects has highlighted that in order to secure attendance and be effective projects need to be delivered directly within the community they serve, convenience and flexibility are crucial.

Feedback from residents and digital partners across the city<sup>5</sup> confirms that for many residents their main equipment for accessing the internet is through a smartphone or handheld device. We have used this information to propose the following improvement:

**Proposal 4:** Explore the development of alternative digital classes which teach learners how to use their own devices to a greater capacity, for example to make and monitor a Universal Credit application using their smart phone.

**Impact of Proposal 4:** *This approach enables residents to increase their digital capacity by using a device that they already own.*

The cost of an internet connection and an on-going contract can be a barrier for many residents on low incomes. The Housing Service wants to facilitate increased connectivity inside people's homes and in community facilities where it can be used for free. Increasing competition between providers is widely regarded as a way to drive down price.

**Proposal 5:** The housing service is committed to facilitating increased connectivity by working with providers to allow them access to install fibre optic broadband capability into residential housing estates and community facilities owned by Cambridge City Council.

**Impact of Proposal 5:** *A number of companies have approached the Housing Service to request access to install their fibre infrastructure into estates, the Council will do all it can to support companies to do this and help create a competitive marketplace. The Head of Housing has decided to begin this process by granting access to a company who will install the infrastructure to all properties and community rooms for free. Residents can choose to take up a connection package thereafter. The company has developed a reduced price package specifically designed for Cambridge City Council tenants which has options for a short term rolling contract. As part of the agreement the ongoing community room connection will be free of charge to the City Council ensuring a free facility for residents' use. The ongoing programme of delivery will be managed by the Resident Engagement Officer to ensure minimal disruption to residents.*

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<sup>5</sup> Digital Partnership Meeting-Chaired by Cambridge City Council's Digital Inclusion Projects Officer



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In order to make the best use of council resources, plans are in place to recycle some of the digital equipment which is being upgraded as part of the Council's Office Accommodation Strategy. The roll out of the strategy means that a lot of equipment for officers is being upgraded which leaves the old hardware redundant.

**Proposal 6:** Taking a one-council approach, a plan is in place to recycle some of the equipment, install appropriate software and then house it in the City Homes community rooms for public use.

**Impact of Proposal 6:** *Once internet access is established in community rooms and equipment is available for public use, free digital sessions will be held for residents to learn skills and gain a standard of understanding. This can help reduce social isolation, improve employability and digital independence. The classes will be developed in conjunction with the Digital Inclusion Projects Officer who delivers the digital elements of the Anti-Poverty Strategy.*

Research into other housing providers has shown that many have created online digital platforms to gather resident input and satisfaction. Stonewater Housing have created an online Customer Hub<sup>6</sup> which encourages residents to get involved and help shape services by providing a central area for residents to leave feedback about services, reply to consultations/surveys, read others' feedback and discuss ideas about improvements.

**Proposal 7:** Building a similar resident-focussed digital platform will be explored in detail, with a view to connecting residents so they can contribute to housing matters from the comfort of their own home.

**Impact of Proposal 7:** *A digital platform will increase accessibility for residents to take part in discussion without having to be available to attend activities in person.*

## Surveys

Legislation requires all registered housing providers to consult tenants at least once every three years on the best way of involving them in the governance and scrutiny

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<sup>6</sup> Stonewater Customer Hub <https://thehubb.stonewater.org/>

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of the organisation's housing management service<sup>7</sup>. To date, a Survey of Tenants and Residents (STAR) survey has been the main source of wide-scale data gathering for the City Council's Housing Service. STAR Surveys were sent to all tenants and leaseholders every 4 years to measure satisfaction; the results were also used to identify priorities in the following years. The last survey was undertaken in 2014 however, the response rate from tenants was only 26%. Although this approach gathers resident opinion, the low response rate means that the results are limited in both representativeness and generalisability which doesn't signify value for time or money.

Our analysis considered a number of factors; crucially the need to continue to understand levels of resident satisfaction, but based on past response rate, to consider whether a 4-yearly survey is the most effective way for residents to be given a voice. To ensure as many residents as possible have an opportunity to feedback this Review proposes to utilise various avenues of communication which appeals to a broader spectrum of preferences; encompassing digital, paper, telephone and face-to-face. Employing a third party company to undertake telephone interviews was considered as a new approach to data gathering but TLRs felt that the response rate would be low because of scepticism from residents about divulging information over the phone. They felt other survey methods should be explored first.

**Proposal 8:** Cambridge is a relatively small city but its various areas have differing needs. To tailor our service to meet these needs localised surveys and consultations will be employed to increase our understanding of what residents want. The scope for participation in postal surveys will be held in conjunction with wider activities such as resident walkabouts, estate improvements, and policy consultations.

**Impact for Proposal 8:** *The purpose of taking a more direct approach is to ensure we are asking the right people about issues in the areas which impact them directly<sup>8</sup>. Combining different methods of communication allows us to feedback to residents about issues they have raised and to manage their expectations in terms of what is and is not achievable. In each questionnaire residents will be asked to comment on their local area however there will also be a standard set of wider services related questions to build a broader picture of opinion.*

With a large housing development programme underway resident feedback will be crucial to understanding levels of satisfaction within the new communities.

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<sup>7</sup> *Tenant Involvement and Empowerment Standard*- Homes and Communities Agency.  
[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/725831/Tenant\\_Involvement\\_and\\_Empowerment\\_Standard.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/725831/Tenant_Involvement_and_Empowerment_Standard.pdf)

<sup>8</sup> National Principles for Public Engagement, Participation Cymru  
<https://participation.cymru/en/principles/>

**Proposal 9:** To embed engagement from an early stage the Housing Development Agency will provide information on developments which are newly completed and house new tenants. After the first six months residents will receive a survey which asks questions relating to their experience and if there are any issues with the property?

**Impact for Proposal 9:** *This aims to increase our understanding of their experiences enabling the Council to learn and develop its approach. It also builds a line of communication between new residents and their service provider.*

### Community Improvement

A key priority for the housing service is to ensure our estates are safe, clean and enjoyable places to live. If residents are going to contribute to ensuring this is maintained they too need to feel a sense of pride, wanting to make valuable changes to their community. The Review highlighted the benefits that City Council services gain from residents' input and the empowering impact this contribution also has for residents.

A tenant and leaseholder Garden Competition is held every summer with a prize giving ceremony for all participants later in the year. There are a number of different entry categories which enables residents with any type or size of garden, balcony or green space to take part. The competition promotes inclusivity, it is very popular and involves a significant proportion of disabled or vulnerable residents. It is straightforward to administer and will continue to be supported by the Resident Engagement service.

Resident Inspectors and wider resident feedback has highlighted the support for two existing initiatives: Estate Walkabouts and Resident and Officers Asset Management (ROAM)/Void meetings. Resident enthusiasm is displayed through a direct request for both programmes to remain on the future resident involvement agenda and to seek information on how their activities can expand going forward.

Throughout 2018 estate walkabouts were conducted across the city. Residents had the opportunity to join and walk around their estates with council officers and ward councillors to identify issues. The approach has been really successful and empowered residents to directly influence council priorities in their areas. In order to reach more residents additional support will be provided by the Resident Engagement Officer to formalise the organisation, advertise the sessions and publicise the findings more widely.

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**Proposal 10:** The review will support a continued programme of bi-monthly walkabouts which alternates between north and south city estates. The arrangements will be formalised to allow more residents to take part.

**Impact for Proposal 10:** *Formalising the arrangements and advertising the meetings more widely to local residents and providing contact details for those who cannot attend but would like to input via email or telephone. Each officer in attendance will take away their own actions and will have ownership over their delivery.*

Until recently Resident and Officers Asset Management (ROAM) meetings brought together residents and council officers. The group was resident-led and designed to inform/influence the City Council's planned works programme. The meeting was followed by a Voids meeting which provided updates on void properties across the city. Changes to some council services meant that these meetings were put on hold. However Resident Inspectors have highlighted the benefit of the meetings and have made specific requests for them to be re-established.

**Proposal 11:** Re-establish ROAM/Void meetings, and transfer their management from the Maintenance and Assets Team to the Resident Engagement service.

**Impact for Proposal 11:** *Formalising the arrangements and advertising the meetings more widely will ensure greater participation.*

In order to make wider improvements to assets and communal areas on estates, funding has been secured from the budget for a five year Estates Improvement Scheme. The new fund releases £1 million each year for 5 years which will be ring fenced to ensure it is spent solely on capital improvements, rather than on work categorised as planned maintenance. The improvement proposals were submitted by Estate Champions and have arisen directly from resident and ward councillor input through estate walkabouts undertaken during 2018. The walkabouts allowed residents the opportunity to identify first-hand the areas on their estates which they thought could benefit from investment. Input from the Council's Estate and Common Parts Surveys also evidenced the need to invest in certain areas.

**Proposal 12:** The Review supports the Estate Improvement Scheme by encouraging residents to submit new proposals for consideration and to undertake the consultation on accepted proposals.

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**Impact for Proposal 12:** *Once a proposal is identified residents and ward councillors in the area will play a crucial role in helping to design and implement the proposed changes to ensure they are involved at every stage. Going forward, residents will also be encouraged to make suggestions for future proposals spanning the 5 year programme. An ongoing advertisement asking for resident suggestions for estate walkabout locations, Estate Improvement Scheme recommendations and ROAM/Void meetings will be included in each edition of Open Door. The advert will also encourage residents to write in and express what is important on their estate and where improvements could be made.*

Volunteers play a crucial role in inspecting internal and external parts of estates to ensure the maintenance undertaken by both the City Council and external contractors meets agreed service standards. Resident Inspectors and Green Inspectors monitor the internal and external condition of council homes and estates to ensure contractors are accountable and delivery meets agreed standards. The numbers of Resident Inspectors needs to increase to ensure greater accountability.

**Proposal 13:** Undertake recruitment drives on specific estates, allowing new Inspectors to inspect their immediate area rather than having to travel city-wide.

**Impact for Proposal 13:** *The Review has highlighted the need to make it easier for residents to take part so flexibly reducing the capacity of the role by allowing them to inspect their local area might make it easier to take part and more appealing. Supporting inspectors to report back digitally or by phone rather than having to attend formal meetings will also facilitate this.*

## Wider Engagement

One of the five principles underpinning the Social Housing Green Paper (2018)<sup>9</sup> is empowering residents and ensuring their voices are heard so that landlords are held to account. Engagement and facilitating the ability for a wider demographic to participate is a key priority to ensure we are meeting the needs of different types of residents. A variety of methods also need to be available to appeal to the preferences of residents; feedback tells us that some want to get heavily involved whilst others like to casually input into activities in their direct vicinity.

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<sup>9</sup> Social Housing Green Paper (2018) <https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/a-new-deal-for-social-housing>

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At present the Resident Engagement service assists some community groups by facilitating meetings and providing a venue. Guidance and administrative assistance is also provided to those who would like to create an official Residents Association (RA). RAs can apply for a grant from the Council of up to £1000 to spend on community activity. Historically RAs have been a popular way for residents to get involved in their community. Guidance is provided by the Resident Engagement service about how to apply for funding. Although some areas across the city still have thriving RAs their general popularity has dwindled because residents do not want the responsibility of their core formalities. Resident feedback has highlighted a preference to attend more informal ad hoc pop-up community meetings, which often occur in response to a localised issue and then disperse once it's fixed. The Resident Engagement team has also received numerous requests for funding from these pop-up groups, which to date cannot be granted because they do not have a formal bank account which is required within the RA structure.

**Proposal 14:** In order to facilitate wider access to the grant fund the Review proposes to maintain the current RA grant system but also allow pop-up groups to apply for a grant out of the same fund. The pop-up group would be required to apply for funding (satisfying set criteria) for a specific change which can be enjoyed by the whole community. Once granted the money would stay in the Resident Engagement budget but would be ring fenced with a dedicated cost code. Once identified the items would be purchased directly by officers so the financial transaction could still be audited.

**Impact for Proposal 14:** *This adjusted, flexible approach would open more opportunity for residents to make changes to their environment.*

The Sheltered Schemes Resident Association (SSRA) is an example of one RA which ceased in recent years because residents no longer wanted to take on the responsibility of the formal aspects of the group. In order to reinvigorate a sense of community within the 13 sheltered schemes, the Review proposes to:

**Proposal 15:** Create a sheltered scheme community group which meets quarterly. The location will move between the schemes and will be facilitated by the Resident Engagement Officer and sheltered housing staff.

**Impact for Proposal 15:** *All sheltered housing residents will be welcome to attend. At the meeting they will receive service updates from the Housing Services Manager and have the opportunity to request items for discussion or topics of interest.*

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In December 2018 a recruitment drive was undertaken to fill two vacant Tenant Representative positions on the Housing Scrutiny Committee. All tenants were individually written to and invited to apply. The response rate was over four times higher than through previous methods of advertising the position, so this has informed the future approach for recruitment and publicising TLR elections. In order to ensure we captured the enthusiasm of the candidates who were not selected for the positions, all suitable candidates were offered a place on the newly proposed Residents Panel. Going forward, after a TLR election the same approach will be taken if there is a surplus of unsuccessful candidates so that their enthusiasm and expertise isn't lost.

### Communication

A crucial aspect of effective resident involvement is ensuring outcomes are fed back to them so they remain involved in the ongoing process and can see how their contribution has made a difference.

One of the key methods of communication between the housing service and tenants and leaseholders is through Open Door; a 16 page publication which is posted and emailed to residents three times a year. Open Door's content is aligned systematically to help deliver the objectives of the Council's Anti-Poverty Strategy. Its main streams of information relate to; policy changes/ council updates, help and support within the community and updates on resident involvement activities. The magazine is designed and produced in-house and its content is sourced directly from officers across the council and partner agencies. The Open Door Residents' Panel edit the content and ensures it responds to current demands. Resident feedback highlights the value that they place on Open Door. This is evidenced by a recent request to revert back to producing a fourth edition (which was reduced during the Housing Transformation). This request will be fully considered during 2019/20 and responded to accordingly.

**Proposal 16:** The production of Open Door will continue but as part of the review its design has undergone a revamp. The size of the publication remains the same but the colour, layout, material and images have been modernised.

**Impact for Proposal 16:** *Reviewing the design freshens up the look of the publication, it standardises the layout and makes it easier to read.*

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Working closely with the City Council's Corporate Marketing Team ensures we take a one council approach to the messages being conveyed in publications. The resident engagement webpage will be reviewed and updated to ensure it only contains information that is relevant and up to date.

**Proposal 17:** New elements will be added to the web page which encapsulates the new or changed methods of involvement outlined within this Review. Policies, procedures and strategies will also be accessible on the page for residents to self-serve where possible.

**Impact for Proposal 17:** *Enabling residents to access information digitally increases accessibility and transparency of information.*

Brighton City Council<sup>10</sup> takes a dynamic approach to service updates by compiling its annual report into a short graphics based video which is easy to follow, fun to watch and grasps a different kind of audience.

**Proposal 18:** The Resident Engagement team will explore the opportunity to digitalise information such as our annual report and other key messages into a video format which can be shared on social media.

**Impact for Proposal 18:** *Videos are easy to share on social media so can have a wider digital footprint than simply uploading information to a webpage.*

## Conclusion

The eighteen proposals considered within this Review are summarised below. They are all considered to be deliverable within current resources and a timeline for initiating the activities will be created to ensure effective monitoring. We believe the proposals build on previous successes while planning for meeting emerging needs. Fundamental to each of them is for residents to feel empowered to take part and input into a service which delivers for them. The recommendations are not exhaustive and the approach to delivery will remain flexible in order to ensure the initiatives evolve through time to suit resident's needs and demands. The recommendations also align with the wider service objectives which will help determine priorities for consultation moving forward.

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<sup>10</sup> Brighton City Council Annual Report <https://www.brighton-hove.gov.uk/content/housing/council-housing/annual-report-council-tenants-and-leaseholders>



## **APPENDIX 1**

### **Summary of Proposals:**

#### **Development & Accountability**

Proposal 1: To facilitate input and greater consultation, officers will be encouraged to consult with residents in the infant stages of many of the decisions/reports/policies which relate to tenants and leaseholders.

Proposal 2: To strengthen existing scrutiny processes the creation of a Residents' Panel would facilitate a greater level of input from a wider and more representative demographic of residents.

Proposal 3: To implement an additional element to the HDA update meetings by dedicating a proportion of time to specific developments which are at their design stage, allowing time to review the plans, materials and layout of the proposals in detail. The HDA representative will take the feedback and contribute it to the ongoing development discussion.

#### **Digital**

Proposal 4: Explore the development of alternative digital classes which teach learners how to use their own devices to a greater capacity, for example to make and monitor a Universal Credit application using their smart phone.

Proposal 5: The Housing Service is committed to facilitating increased connectivity by working with providers to allow them access to install fibre optic broadband capability into residential housing estates and community facilities owned by Cambridge City Council.

Proposal 6: Taking a one-council approach, a plan is in place to recycle some of the equipment, install appropriate software and then house it in the City Homes community rooms for public use.

Proposal 7: Building a similar resident-focussed digital platform will be explored in detail, with a view to connect residents so they can contribute to housing matters from the comfort of their own home.

#### **Surveys**

Proposal 8: In order to tailor our service to meet residents' needs localised surveys and consultations will be employed to increase our understanding of what residents want. The scope for participation in postal surveys will be held in conjunction with wider activities such as resident walkabouts, estate improvements, and policy consultations.

Proposal 9: In order to embed engagement from an early stage the Housing Development Agency will provide information on developments which are newly completed and contain tenants. After the first six months residents will receive a

## **APPENDIX 1**

survey which asks questions relating to their experience and if there are any issues with the property.

### **Community Improvement**

Proposal 10: The Review will support a continued programme of bi-monthly walkabouts which alternates between north and south city estates. The arrangements will be formalised to allow more residents to take part.

Proposal 11: Re-establish ROAM/Void meetings, transferring the management from the Maintenance and Assets Team to the Resident Engagement service.

Proposal 12: Supports the Estate Improvement Scheme by encouraging residents to submit new proposals for consideration and to undertake the consultation on accepted proposals.

Proposal 13: Undertake recruitment drives on specific estates, allowing new Inspectors to inspect their immediate area rather than having to travel city-wide.

### **Wider Engagement**

Proposal 14: In order to facilitate wider access to the grant fund the Review proposes to maintain the current RA grant system but also allow pop-up groups to apply for a grant out of the same fund.

Proposal 15: Create a sheltered scheme community group which meets quarterly, the location will move between the schemes and would be facilitated by the Resident Engagement Officer and sheltered housing staff.

### **Communication**

Proposal 16: The production of Open Door will continue but its design has undergone a revamp. The size of the publication remains the same but the colour, layout, material and images have been modernised to freshen up the look and make it easier to read.

Proposal 17: New elements will be added to the web page which encapsulates the new or changed methods of involvement outlined with this Review. Policies, procedures and strategies will also be accessible on the page for residents to self-serve where possible.

Proposal 18: The Resident Engagement team will explore the opportunity to digitalise information such as our annual report and other key messages into a video format which can be shared on social media.

## 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>
Resident Engagement Review
<b>2. Webpage link to full details of the strategy, policy, plan, project, contract or major change to your service (if available)</b>
(Use weblink of Housing Scrutiny Committee webpage where the report for Committee and the drafted review will be made available to public)
<b>3. What is the objective or purpose of your strategy, policy, plan, project, contract or major change to your service?</b>
There is a need for the resident involvement team to consider their engagement activities with tenants and leaseholders in more detail to ensure that the opportunities for involvement on offer allow participation from a broader cross section of residents.
<b>4. Responsible Service</b>
Resident Involvement- Housing Services

## APPENDIX 2

<b>5. Who will be affected by this strategy, policy, plan, project, contract or major change to your service? (Please tick those that apply)</b>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Residents of Cambridge City <input type="checkbox"/> Visitors to Cambridge City <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):  City Council tenants and leaseholders. Private residents of Cambridge are not precluded from taking part in the activities but they are not the target audience.
<b>6. What type of strategy, policy, plan, project, contract or major change to your service is this? (Please tick)</b>
<input type="checkbox"/> New <input type="checkbox"/> Major change <input checked="" 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 type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes (Please provide details):  Estate Services, wider Housing Services, Housing Development Agency, Maintenance and Assets Service- All play a role in delivery but the Resident Engagement Officer will have oversight of the individual initiatives.
<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 on 12 March 2019

### **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 following methods were employed to gather resident input- small scale surveys, community meetings, resident feedback/focus groups, resident walkabouts, wider consultation through the Open Door publication. The review document was developed over a 7 month period with the support and input from the following contributors:

- o Elected Tenants and Leaseholder Representatives
- o Wider tenant and leaseholder input
- o Volunteer Resident Inspectors and Green Inspectors
- o Community groups
- o Partnerships of council officers and community groups

At present equalities monitoring information relative to resident involvement is not available; we will start to gather this information by undertaking regular equalities monitoring which will evidence our support for the involvement of a broader cross section of residents. We will be able to update the EqlA with this information as it is available.

### **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

**Note that this refers to any group of people of a particular age (e.g. 32 year-olds) , or within a particular age range (e.g. 16-24 year-olds) – in particular, please consider any safeguarding issues for children and vulnerable adults**

The proposals for new engagement activities outlined within the review aim to increase inclusivity of residents of all ages.

The Council's most recent Tenants Satisfaction Survey found that in 2014 39.2% of City Council tenants did not have access to the internet. Older people and young people from low-income households are especially likely to experience digital exclusion. In 2016, only 38.7% of adults in the UK aged 75 years or over had used the internet in the last 3 months, compared to 87.9% of all adults (Office for National Statistics, 2016 – Statistical Bulletin: Internet users in the UK: 2016). Nationally, 17% of people earning less than £20,000 never use the internet, as opposed to 2% of people earning more than £40,000 (Cabinet Office, 2014, Government Digital Inclusion Strategy). There is a danger for those who cannot access digital facilities or who cannot afford the price of an internet connection to get left behind, so facilitating digital inclusion is a fundamental aspect of resident involvement and aligns with the wider Council's Anti-Poverty Strategy and Digital Transformation Strategy. Proposals 4,5,6 and 15 of the review aim to target these issues directly by providing increased digital access, equipment provision, free digital session and supporting older people in sheltered facilities to engage more.

Resident involvement is also a potential way to help combat loneliness, which is especially likely to be experienced by older people and has been identified as a public health issue by the Campaign to End Loneliness. A study by The Co-op and the British Red Cross reveals over 9 million people in the UK across all adult ages – more than the population of London – are either always or often lonely.

### (b) Disability

**Note that a person has a disability if they have a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on that person's ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.**

## APPENDIX 2

### **(b) Disability**

**Note that a person has a disability if they have a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on that person's ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.**

Disabled people are especially likely to experience digital and social exclusion because they may find it hard to find technology that has been appropriately adapted to meet their needs. Mobility issues may also impede them from taking part in activities which leads to social exclusion. Reasonable adjustments will be made to allow a person with any disability to take part that applies to digital equipment or covering the cost for transport to travel to meetings. Easy read and British Sign Language services will be required where needed to increase resident involvement of disabled people.

The garden competition, sheltered scheme residents group and 65+ digital champion project are examples which highlight how people with disabilities can easily get involved in resident involvement activities. The Tenant and Leaseholder representative position is also fully inclusive allowing people with any disability to take part.

### **(c) Gender reassignment**

No impact has been identified that is specific to this equality group

### **(d) Marriage and civil partnership**

No Impact has been identified that is specific to this equality group

### **(e) Pregnancy and maternity**

Volunteers able to claim expenses which cover the cost of childcare/dependency costs which are incurred to be able to attend meetings.

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### (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.**

In order to increase involvement we would employ the use of translation and interpretation services.

### (g) Religion or belief

No Impact has been identified that is specific to this equality group

### (h) Sex

No Impact has been identified that is specific to this equality group

### (i) Sexual orientation

No Impact

### (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

The review indirectly targets residents on low incomes because they are more likely to live in social housing provided by the Council. The proposals outlined should help deliver aspects of the council's Anti-Poverty Strategy by contributing to increased digital and financial inclusion, reduce social isolation and increase employability skills.

An allowance is available for Tenant and Leaseholder Reps to claim which is separate to expense claims, this additional could help toward combatting poverty. Consideration has been given to the impact that allowance claims could have on benefit recipients so a direct link with the benefits time so that a dedicated officer is available to answer questions on an individual basis.



**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.)**

The progress of the review its proposals and equalities monitoring will be reviewed annually in order to ensure they have been delivered to their timetable. As part of the annual review the EqlA will be refreshed with the monitoring information to ensure any negative impacts can be mitigated. If any situations arise within the year which would suggest that some of the proposals are having a negative impact on residents in any way then they will be tackled immediately.

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

Having residents sitting on the Council's main housing committee is a unique approach to scrutiny and facilitates insight allowing the Council to tailor and target services. Their involvement ensures accurate feedback and challenge from service-users', connecting decision-makers with the grassroots communities they serve. The proposals are all aimed at increasing resident involvement and ensuring that we consult with them meaningfully. For instance, one proposal is to also To strengthen existing scrutiny processes the creation of a resident's panel would facilitate a greater level of input from a wider and more representatives demographic of residents so equalities monitoring will need to be undertaken. Another proposal is to tailor our service to meet these needs localised surveys and consultations will be employed to increase our understanding of what residents want.

**13. Sign off**

## APPENDIX 2

Name and job title of lead officer for this equality impact assessment: Emily Watts, Resident Engagement Officer

Names and job titles of other assessment team members and people consulted:

Date of EqlA sign off:

Date of next review of the equalities impact assessment:

All EqlAs need to be sent to Helen Crowther, Equality and Anti-Poverty Officer. Has this been sent to Helen Crowther?

☒ Yes

☐ No

Date to be published on Cambridge City Council website:



Item

## **GREATER CAMBRIDGE HOUSING STRATEGY 2019-2023**

**To:**

Councillor Richard Johnson, Executive Councillor for Housing  
Housing Scrutiny Committee [12/03/2019]

**Report by:**

Suzanne Hemingway, David Greening  
Tel: 01223 - 457461 Email: [suzanne.hemingwa@cambridge.gov.uk](mailto:suzanne.hemingwa@cambridge.gov.uk)

**Wards affected:**

All

### **Key Decision**

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

- 1.1 This report seeks approval of a new Housing Strategy for Cambridge City and South Cambridgeshire District Councils. The draft Strategy is at Appendix A to this report. Annexes to the Strategy, which include a more detailed action plan, are at Appendix B.
- 1.2 The Greater Cambridge Housing Strategy aims to communicate to partners and to the public at large the councils' aims and aspirations in relation to local housing issues, and how they are intended to be achieved; in relation both to new development and existing homes and communities.
- 1.3 It is set within, and aims to complement a range of council priorities, strategies and plans; in particular the recently adopted Local Plans for Cambridge City and South Cambridgeshire.
- 1.4 The draft Strategy proposes an overarching long-term vision, and a set of objectives, priorities and actions for working towards that vision.

## **2. Recommendations**

The Executive Councillor is recommended to:

- 2.1 Approve the overarching vision statement laid out in the Greater Cambridge Housing Strategy 2019-2023 (attached as Appendix A to this report): 'Healthy, Safe, Affordable: Homes and Communities for All'.
- 2.2 Approve the vision laid out in the Greater Cambridge Housing Strategy 2019-2023 (attached as Appendix A to this report): 'We want Greater Cambridge to be a place where:
  - a) Everyone has access to a suitable home, and residents are able to live as healthily, safely, and independently as possible;
  - b) The housing market functions effectively, providing homes which are affordable to people on all incomes; to meet the needs of residents and support the local economy;
  - c) 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;
  - d) Homes are warm, energy and water efficient, with built-in resilience to climate change and fuel poverty;
  - e) Homes are affordable to live in, located in high quality sustainable environments, served by jobs and neighbourhood facilities, appropriate green space, effective and sustainable transport links and other necessary infrastructure.
  - f) People from all walks of life live in harmony, within mixed, balanced and inclusive communities; and homes and communities continue to meet the needs of residents into the future.
  - g) We have strong relationships with residents, developers and partners that enable housing and services to be delivered effectively, and that support innovation where appropriate.

2.3 Approve the objectives laid out in the Greater Cambridge Housing Strategy 2019-2023 (attached as Appendix A to this report):

- a) Building the right homes in the right places that people need and can afford to live in;
- b) Enabling people to live settled lives; and
- c) Building strong partnerships.

2.4 Approve the priorities laid out in the Greater Cambridge Housing Strategy 2019-2023 (attached as Appendix A to this report):

- a) Increasing the delivery of homes, including affordable housing, along with sustainable transport and infrastructure, to meet housing need;
- b) Diversifying the housing market and accelerating delivery;
- c) Achieving a high standard of design and quality of new homes and communities;
- d) Improving housing conditions and making best use of existing homes;
- e) Promoting health and wellbeing through housing;
- f) Preventing and tackling homelessness & rough sleeping; and
- g) Working with key partners to innovate and maximise resources.

### **3. Background**

3.1. Having worked together for some years to bring forward large scale mixed tenure developments on the fringes of the City, and with proposals in place for a joint Local Plan, it was agreed that Cambridge City and South Cambridgeshire Districts would work together to develop a Housing Strategy for the Greater Cambridge area.

3.2 The Strategy aims to communicate to partners and to the public at large the councils' aims and aspirations in relation to local housing issues,

and how they are intended to be achieved. This is in relation both to new development and existing homes and communities.

- 3.3 The Strategy is set within the context of, and aims to complement, the councils' corporate objectives, and a range other local strategies and plans. In particular the recently adopted Local Plans for Cambridge City and South Cambridgeshire.
- 3.4 Reflecting that the two districts have many issues in common, the Strategy sets a collective vision, objectives and priorities for the area as a whole, and proposes a number of joint actions to be taken forward.
- 3.5 However, it also recognises the distinctive character of both areas, and highlights where the priorities for each council differ.
- 3.6 An action plan, and more detail on some of the issues raised in the Strategy, are available in the Annexes to the Strategy at Appendix B to this report.
- 3.7 Consultation took place both internally involving a range of different council services, as well as externally with the wider public.
- 3.8 167 responses were received through public consultation, from a mixture of individuals, organisations, businesses and community groups.
- 3.9 Responses to consultation were generally positive and supportive of the proposed Strategy. For example; when asked 'To what extent do you agree our vision and objectives are the right ones', 82% of respondents to that question agreed or strongly agreed with them; compared with 8% who disagreed or strongly disagreed. Similarly, when asked the extent to which they agreed the proposed priorities were the right ones, 78% either agreed or strongly agreed, with 11% disagreeing or strongly disagreeing.
- 3.10 The majority of responses related to new development issues. Key messages arising from the consultation included the following:
  - a) Real concerns around affordability and the lack of affordable housing, with strong support for increasing supply of affordable homes to meet a range of needs.
  - b) Lack of housing supply, shortage of the right types of homes, and shortage of homes in the right locations. The need for appropriate development for an ageing population was highlighted as well as building for younger people, other specific groups and to support the economy.

- c) The importance of providing appropriate and sustainable transport and infrastructure, to support new development and minimize negative impact on existing communities. A number of people commented that the draft Strategy did not make sufficient reference to these issues.
- d) Issues around planning, housing delivery, and developer viability; This included concerns around speed, efficiency and effectiveness of the planning system; and the complexities of bringing forward large numbers of homes at pace, to meet a range of different needs, in what is mainly a developer-led market.
- e) Importance of quality, and sustainability of homes – both new and existing - in terms of energy efficiency & climate change, space standards etc; alongside the potential impact on developer viability.
- f) There was some support for diversifying the market, particularly through appropriate development of new private rented sector models.
- g) The importance of maintaining the quality of existing homes, and housing needing to be seen in the context of the wider community. This included the need for services and infrastructure to enable communities to support themselves and to support health and wellbeing. Also the importance of bringing long-term empty homes back into use.
- h) The need to tackle homelessness, with a particular interest from respondents on the publicly visible issue of single homelessness and rough sleeping.
- i) The importance of working in partnership with organisations and communities, and the need to strengthen partnerships in key areas.
- j) Concerns around the strategy itself, including whether it was deliverable, and the need for clearer actions and more measurable outcomes.

3.11 The Strategy has been strengthened in a number of areas to take into account of these views.

3.12 Results of the consultation have also been taken into account in drawing up the action plan.

3.13 Responses will be used to help inform the development of the proposed Housing and Sustainable Design & Construction Supplementary Planning Documents; and discussions around the housing-related elements of the new joint Local Plan. They will also be used to inform the implementation of other agreed actions.

3.14 The Greater Cambridge Housing Strategy will replace the Interim Housing Strategy Statements agreed by each of the councils in 2017.

## **4. Implications**

### **(a) Financial Implications**

A number of the actions included in the Strategy are necessary as part of the the Local Plan process, so in that respect the Strategy itself does not require any additional resource over and above what is being/ will be considered as necessary to implement the council's current Local Plan and deliver a new joint Local Plan for Greater Cambridge.

Any financial implications for delivering the council's own house-building programme will continue to be considered through the process of seeking scheme specific approval.

Resource required to implement housing elements of other council strategies and plans referred to in this Housing Strategy is also outside the scope of this report.

It is anticipated that much of the remainder of the Strategy will be implemented within existing resources. If additional resource is required as further actions emerge, we would look first to whether partnership funding might be available to support implementation.

If any additional council resource is required, this would need to be considered alongside other priorities as part of the council's annual budget setting process.

### **(b) Staffing Implications**

No staffing implications have been identified.

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

An Equality Impact Assessment has been carried out and is available as a background paper.



#### **(d) Environmental Implications**

The Strategy should help to promote with developers the importance of considering the environmental impact of bringing forward new homes.

However, the environmental impact of the numbers of new homes required, locations, transport and infrastructure required to support them etc, is part of a separate assessment through the Local Plan process.

A new Sustainable Design and Construction Supplementary Planning document, whilst referenced in the Strategy, will be the main vehicle for ensuring that environmental impact and climate change issues are considered in the development of new homes and maintenance of existing ones.

Similarly, the Strategy references delivery of the Council's Climate Change Strategy but impact on climate change is a matter for that Strategy, not the Housing Strategy.

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

There are no direct procurement implications from the Strategy itself, although some of the actions in the action plan may need to be procured externally.

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

No direct community safety implications have been identified.

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

The following consultation has taken place:

- a) A series of workshops with key managers and staff, plus one with council tenant and leaseholder representatives, across both councils, to help formulate the initial draft.
- b) A resident and partner survey questionnaire, available online and as a paper alternative; advertised on the councils' websites, and through the local press & social media. The survey ran from 17<sup>th</sup> December 2018 to 25<sup>th</sup> January 2019.
- c) A workshop with developers operating locally.

- d) Discussion with sub-regional partners including Registered Providers through the sub-regional Registered Providers' & Enablers' Forum; and with local authority & other partners through the sub-regional Housing Board.

A summary of the results of the public consultation will be made available on both Cambridge City and South Cambridgeshire District Councils' websites. This will show how the consultation has been used to shape the strategy, and how it will be used to support implementation of the action plan.

## **6. Background papers**

Background papers used in the preparation of this report:

- (a) Public survey questionnaire
- (b) Summary analysis of consultation responses
- (c) Equality Impact Assessment
- (d) Climate change rating

## **7. Appendices**

- (a) Appendix A: Greater Cambridge Housing Strategy 2019-2023
- (b) Appendix B: Annexes 1 to 8 – including action plan

## **8. Inspection of papers**

To inspect the background papers or if you have a query on the report please contact Helen Reed, Housing Strategy Manager, Tel: 01223 - 457943, email: [helen.reed@cambridge.gov.uk](mailto:helen.reed@cambridge.gov.uk).



# Homes for our future

Greater Cambridge Housing Strategy 2019 - 2023

Working in partnership, a collaborative  
Housing Strategy covering both Cambridge  
City and South Cambridgeshire District

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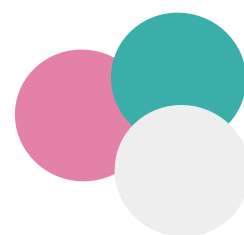
South  
Cambridgeshire  
District Council





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# Foreword from the Cambridge City Council Executive Councillor for Housing

This strategy, jointly produced by Cambridge City and South Cambridgeshire District councils, provides a clear vision of how we can, with the public and other stakeholders, achieve our shared aspiration in providing housing that meets the needs and requirements of the Greater Cambridge area.

Cambridge is a wonderful place to live. But not everyone here currently can have access to affordable, sustainable and good quality housing. Pressures of a growing and aging population, which in turn will create additional demand, will make this issue more acute. This strategy sets out possible solutions and approaches to overcoming these challenges.

Providing new homes for council rent is Cambridge City Council's number one policy priority, and our main contribution in tackling the housing crisis. The £70million from government, as part of the devolution deal, has kick-started the process, and will allow us to build at least 500 council homes over the coming years.

The scrapping of the council's Housing Revenue Account borrowing cap will free us to continue to add to this new

generation of homes once the devolution funding has been allocated and spent. But the council cannot solve this problem alone. We will work with housing associations, developers, planners and others to tackle the shortage of affordable housing in new and innovative ways. Engagement in other relevant policy areas, such as bringing back empty properties back into use, are also key priorities.

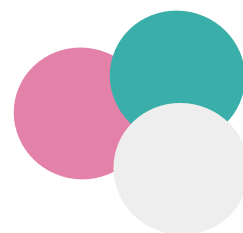
We also need to continue to engage with government, charities and voluntary organisations in addressing, and halting, the rise in rough sleeping and homelessness recorded in recent years. This strategy sets out some of the ways homelessness can be tackled, such as through our 'Housing First' approach which provides intensive support for homeless people with complex or multiple needs.

I am confident that this strategy will succeed in its aim of providing a blueprint for progress over the next few years in delivering the homes we need, as well as identifying additional opportunities for further progress in this important area despite the economic and social challenges ahead.



**Richard Johnson**

*Executive Councillor for Housing*



# Foreword from the South Cambridgeshire District Council Lead Member for Housing

I am pleased that we are launching our new Housing Strategy which is shared with Cambridge City and paves the way to working together in the future to deliver the homes we need that will support our growing economy in Greater Cambridge.

Whilst the strategy focuses on the levers and influence we have in terms of providing new homes and ensuring our existing homes are in good condition, this strategy is really about our people and communities. We want to ensure that our villages remain vibrant places that are sustainable in the future, by building the new homes that are needed, that are well designed and bring benefits to the existing community. Our focus is on 'affordable living' rather than just affordable housing and we want homes to be close to jobs, with good transport links and as energy efficient as possible so that running costs are cheaper and we are doing our bit for the environment.

We know how difficult it is for young people to get a foot on the housing ladder and we are keen to provide a wider choice of housing options. It is also clear that there are some real recruitment challenges for some local businesses where workers

## What we're about

Putting the heart into South Cambridgeshire by:

- Building homes that are affordable to live in
- Helping business to grow
- Being green to our core
- Putting our customers at the centre of everything we do

can't afford to live in the area and we want to support those companies to provide targeted new homes.

Planning for an ageing population is also a high priority and we need to be building new homes which are future-proofed in design and technology.

This strategy reflects how important housing is to the health and well-being of residents, the role it plays in building and maintaining strong communities and how housing is entwined with the economic prosperity of the district.

We cannot achieve these ambitions alone, and we will continue to build strong relationships with key partners to deliver on our priorities.



**Hazel Smith**

*Lead Member for Housing*





## Purpose of the strategy

The Greater Cambridge Housing Strategy is a high level document that sets out the strategic direction for housing activity in Cambridge City and South Cambridgeshire District. Its purpose is to set the context as to how both councils aim to meet the housing challenges facing the area, setting out key priorities for action (*see Annex 1 for detailed Action Plan*).

The Strategy acts as a piece of the jigsaw to support the ambitions of both councils through their Corporate/Business Plans<sup>1,2</sup>. It helps to complement and support a range of existing strategies and plans, providing a framework for decision making by the two councils in relation to housing issues.

For new homes it complements the existing Local Plans<sup>3,4</sup> to help inform planning decisions required to be made separately by each council, as well as joint decisions around development on major fringe sites which straddle the two councils' boundaries. Priorities 01 & 02 and Annex 5 of the Strategy sets out the housing requirements relevant to all development partners in terms of type, size and tenure and will be a material consideration in making planning decisions.

The Strategy will also help to inform the development of joint housing related Supplementary Planning Documents to support both councils' current Local Plans.

The Strategy does not address the overall number of new homes required for the area or allocate land, as this is the role of, and has already been agreed through the two districts' Local Plans. This will be reviewed as part of the process to deliver a proposed new joint Local Plan for Greater Cambridge.

The need for sustainable transport and having the right infrastructure in place were identified through consultation on this Strategy as a major concern for residents and organisations in



bringing forward the development of new homes. We recognise that this is critical to the success of development in the area and the Strategy acknowledges the inter-relationship of both sustainable transport and infrastructure to housing; however, it is not the function of the Housing Strategy to look to resolve these issues. Good transport design, with the aim to reduce car usage, having good public transport links, increased cycleways, etc. is integral to good spatial planning. Both Local Plans promote travel by sustainable transport through designing walking and cycling and public transport options into plans for new housing developments. The development of the new Joint Local Plan will look to build on this work up to and beyond 2031.

Strategically, the Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Combined Authority is the Local Transport Authority for the area and published its Interim Local Transport Plan<sup>5</sup> in June 2017, setting out its ambitions to improve transport and the physical connections between communities as a means of unlocking sustainable growth, and recognising the significance of transport in growing the economy. The Greater Cambridge Partnership also seeks to secure multi-million pound improvements in vital infrastructure. Both councils aim, through this Housing Strategy, to complement and support this work.



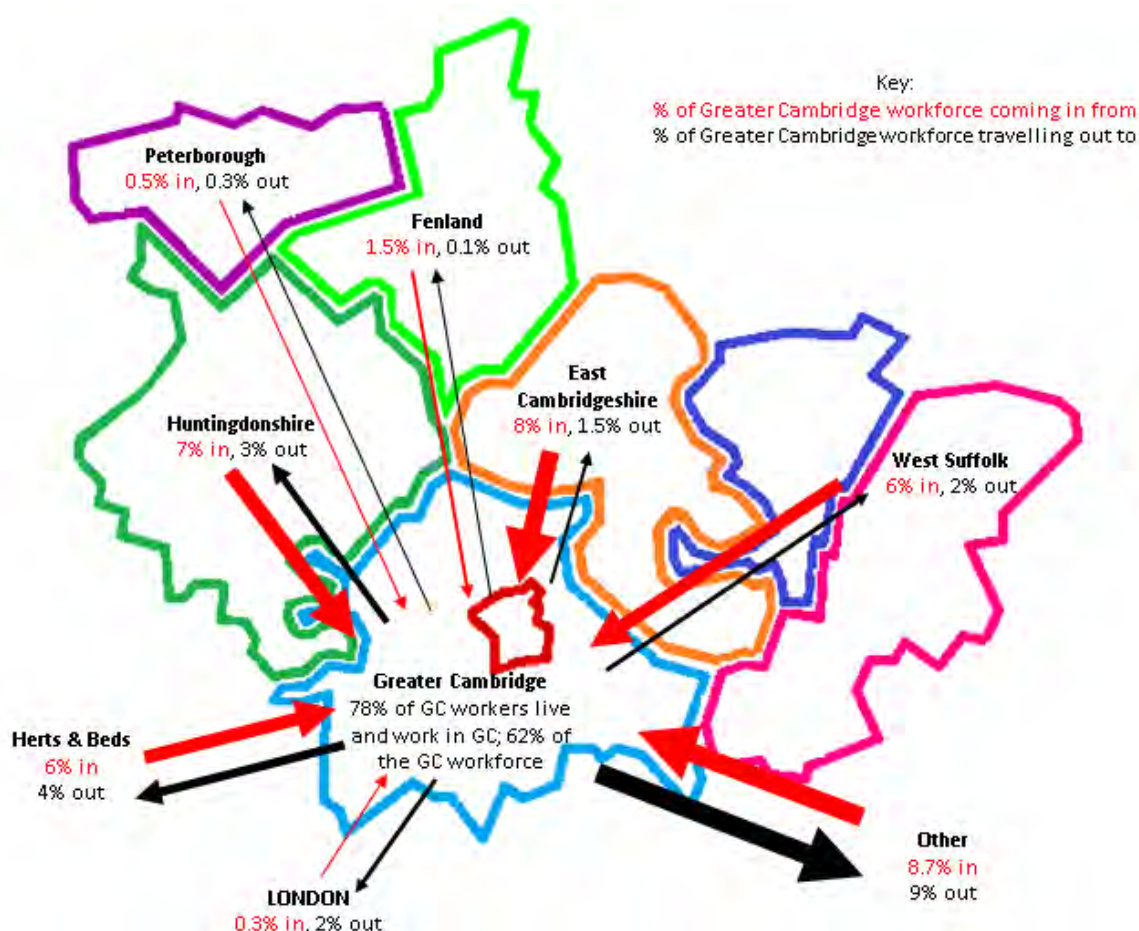
# Introduction

This Greater Cambridge Housing Strategy brings together the two unique areas of Cambridge and South Cambridgeshire, reflecting their joined-up economy and housing market.

Globally renowned for its world-leading scientific research and technology clusters, Cambridge remains top of the UK league for economic growth prospects<sup>6</sup>, and the villages in South Cambridgeshire are regularly ranked amongst the best places to live with the highest quality of life in the UK.

Cambridge City and South Cambridgeshire together forms its own distinctive housing sub-market area, with over three quarters of Greater Cambridge workers both living and working in Greater Cambridge<sup>7</sup>. The councils have already been working together for some years now to bring forward large scale mixed tenure developments on the fringes of the city.

This Strategy looks to build on this joint work and the success of the area, whilst ensuring that we retain the unique character of both areas, including historic Cambridge and the rural nature of the villages within South Cambridgeshire. We want Greater Cambridge to remain a place where people want to live. We want it to be a place that is socially inclusive for everyone, young and old, and provides housing that is affordable to all, including social housing for rent, private rent, intermediate tenures and home ownership. We know that housing is so much more than just bricks and mortar. The impact on health associated with poor housing is well versed, and the functionality of communities is crucial in terms of social interaction and residents' health and wellbeing.



Source: All figures based on 2014 working of ONS ([www.nomis.co.uk](http://www.nomis.co.uk))

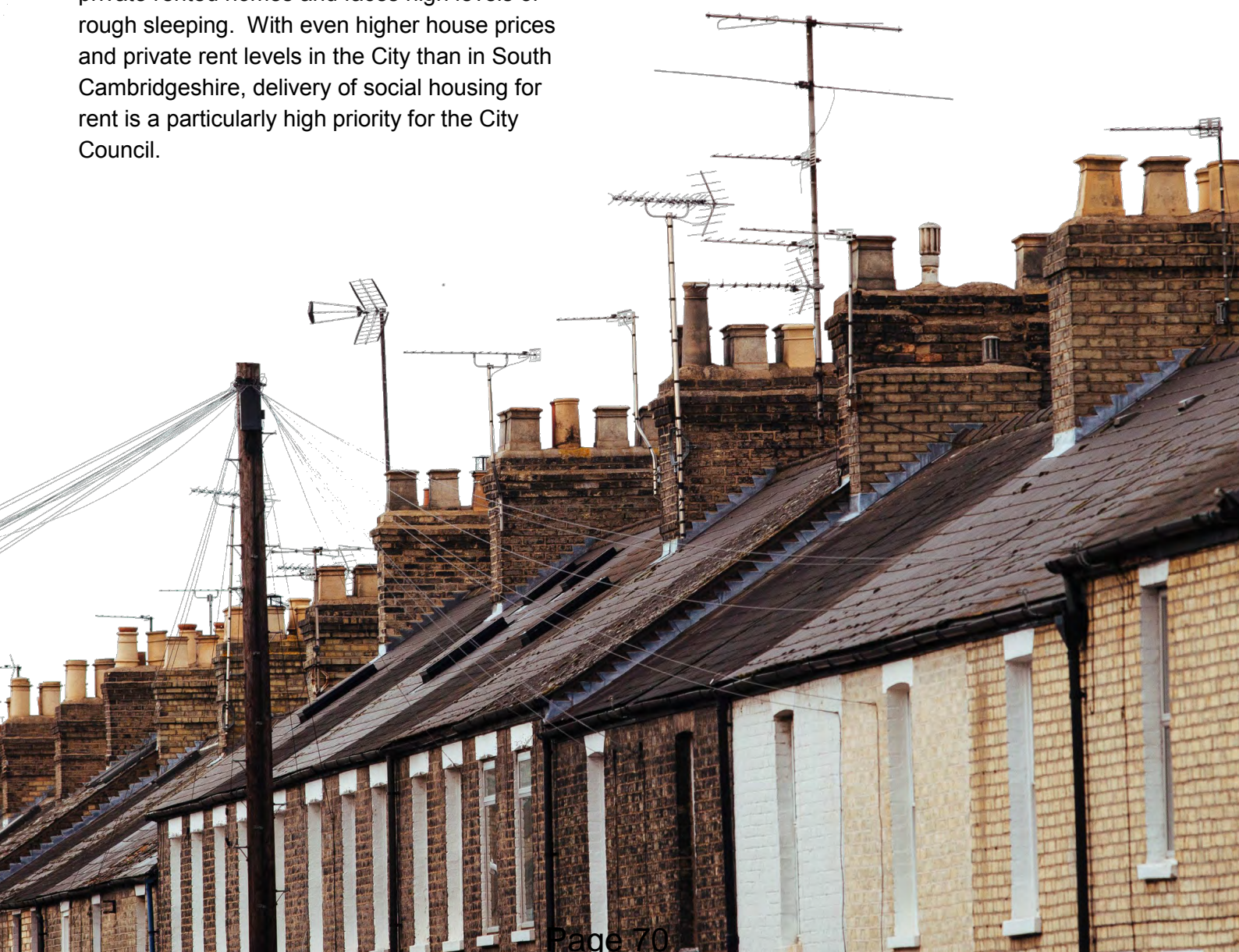
The costs of buying or renting a home and the shortage of homes available for those on low to middle incomes are a real issue for many of those living and wanting to live in Greater Cambridge. This Strategy aims to help ensure we are building the right homes in the right places that people need and can afford, and that support is available where required so that everyone has the opportunity to live settled, healthy lives.

Whilst this is a Strategy developed collaboratively between Cambridge and South Cambridgeshire, acknowledging the acute pressures in terms of affordability and lack of supply and the high level of growth, there are also specific differences against which each local authority will need to prioritise action.

In particular, Cambridge, as well as a significant student population, has a larger proportion of private rented homes and faces high levels of rough sleeping. With even higher house prices and private rent levels in the City than in South Cambridgeshire, delivery of social housing for rent is a particularly high priority for the City Council.

For South Cambridgeshire, ensuring its villages remain vibrant and sustainable, and working with local businesses to ensure homes are affordable and available to local workers are high priorities for the District. For many residents living in rural villages access to good transport is an issue, and where possible we want homes to be built close to places of work, with good transport links and access to services and facilities.

Our objectives cannot be achieved in isolation and working closely with a wide range of partners is essential to the success of the Strategy. Chapter 7 of the Strategy lists some of our key partners and outlines how we will work with them in implementing the Strategy.





## Long term vision and objectives

### Our vision:

**“Healthy, Safe, Affordable:  
Homes & Communities for All”**

### We want Greater 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; to meet the needs of residents and support the local economy.
- 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.
- Homes are warm, energy and water efficient, with built in resilience to climate change and fuel poverty.
- Homes are affordable to live in, located in high quality sustainable environments, served by jobs and neighbourhood facilities, appropriate green space, effective and sustainable transport links and other necessary infrastructure.
- People from all walks of life live in harmony, within mixed, balanced and inclusive communities; and homes and communities continue to meet the needs of residents into the future.
- We have strong relationships with residents, developers and partners that enable housing and services to be delivered effectively, and that support innovation where appropriate.

### Building the right homes in the right places that people need and can afford to live in

**Priority 01:** Increasing the delivery of homes, including affordable housing, along with sustainable transport and infrastructure, to meet housing need

**Priority 02:** Diversifying the housing market and accelerating delivery

**Priority 03:** Achieving a high standard of design and quality of new homes and communities

### Enabling people to live settled lives

**Priority 4:** Improving housing conditions and making best use of existing homes

**Priority 5:** Promoting health and wellbeing through housing

**Priority 6:** Preventing and tackling homelessness and rough sleeping

### Building strong partnerships

**Priority 7:** Working with key partners to innovate and maximise resources available

Our Housing Strategy sets out our overarching objectives, whilst also aiming to achieve the councils' broader objectives:

- Supporting the economy
- Promoting health & wellbeing
- Tackling poverty and inequality
- Reducing carbon emissions and promoting environmental sustainability

*The details of how this strategy links with other strategies and plans is shown at Annex 2.*

# Local and National context

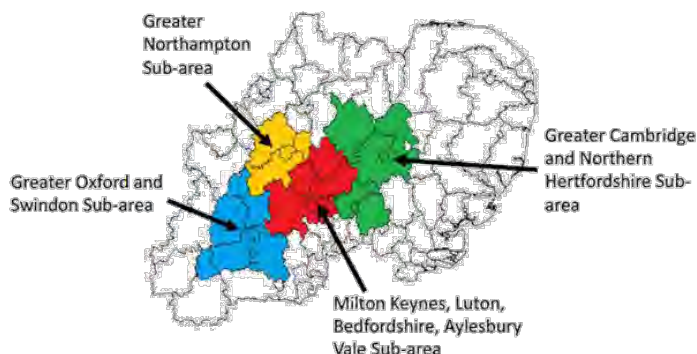
## Economic Growth

Greater Cambridge is an area of high national and international importance, specialising in science, technology and innovation. It is strategically placed to create co-ordinated growth and investment along the corridors of Cambridge, Milton Keynes & Oxford, London-Stansted-Cambridge and the Cambridge-Norwich agri-tech corridor.

The need for 33,500 new homes across Greater Cambridge has been identified through the two councils' recently adopted Local Plans. The housing sub-markets of Cambridge and South Cambridgeshire are interdependent in supporting sustainable economic growth, with the close functional relationship between the two areas recognised through the Local Plans, and the Greater Cambridge Partnership (GCP)<sup>8</sup>. This is further evidenced through the Cambridge & Peterborough Independent Review (CPIER)<sup>9</sup> published in September 2018 which identified Greater Cambridge (in their report consisting of Cambridge, South Cambridgeshire and parts of Huntingdonshire and East Cambridge) as being one of three economies within the Cambridge & Peterborough Combined Authority area.

Whilst strong economic growth brings with it great opportunities for international recognition, investment into the area and local employment, it also creates challenges in terms of high

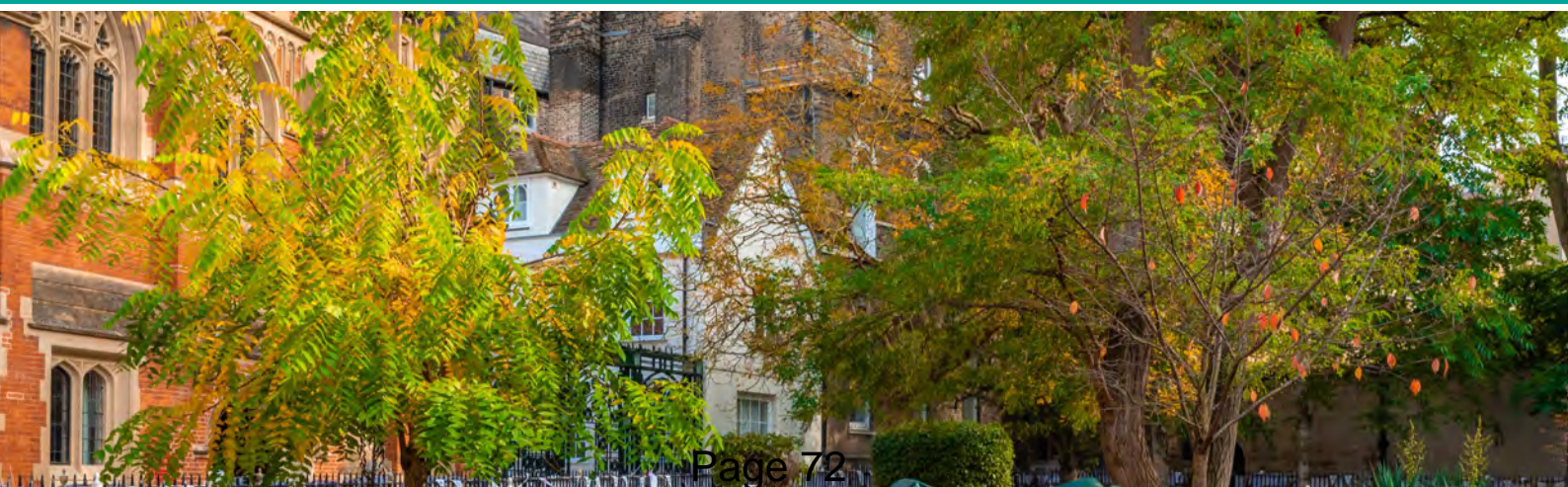
Cambridge - Milton Keynes - Oxford Corridor



housing costs and the ability to find suitable affordable accommodation within close commuting distance to places of work.

Investment in sustainable transport and infrastructure is also critical to securing the delivery of the region's economic and housing growth and to enable those living in more established communities to access jobs and services. We will continue to work with both the Combined Authority and GCP to secure investment for homes and infrastructure for Greater Cambridge. Alongside the need for good transport links, the energy grid and water supply capacity are identified as potential challenges to the delivery of housing and we will need to work with key partners, such as GCP and the Combined Authority, to explore innovative new technologies to secure the infrastructure required.

**78% of working households who live in Greater Cambridge also work in the area and make up 62% of the overall workforce for Greater Cambridge.**





## The 'Affordability' Challenge

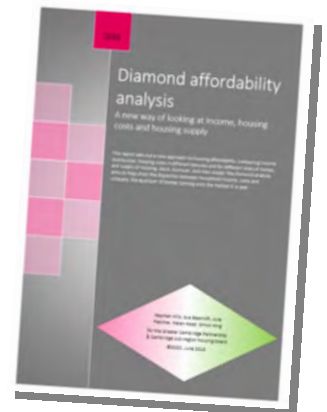
Greater Cambridge is an expensive place to buy or rent a home. High prices are fuelled by high demand, which itself is fuelled by the strength of the local economy and in-migration of highly skilled workers. For those on low incomes, the housing options are scarce with a reliance on social housing for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

There is also a growing 'affordability gap' where middle income households are being squeezed out of the market; with limited housing options for low cost home ownership or the private rented sector. The demand for housing for these groups far outstrips the current supply.

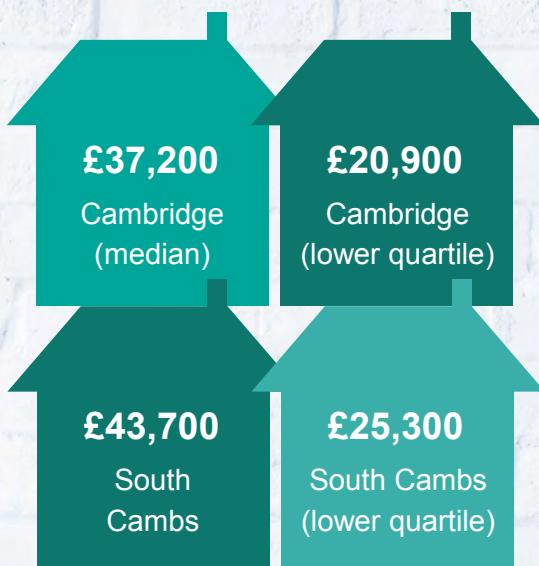
We have undertaken extensive research into the affordability issues for Greater Cambridge<sup>10</sup>.

Affordability is not just about tenure, but is also affected by living costs associated with the location and design of someone's home. For example, a highly energy efficient home can lead to it being more affordable in terms of utility costs. Homes that are located close to good transport links, especially in terms of public transport, can also help make living there more affordable to households on lower to middle incomes.

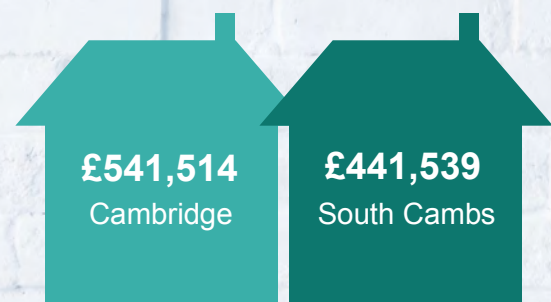
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### Gross household income



### Average House Prices



### Lower quartile price to income ratio

**14.3** (for Cambridge City)  
**10.8** (for South Cambridgeshire)

See annex 3 for more key statistics and data sources.

### Median monthly cost to rent (2 bed house)

**£1,190** per month (for Cambridge City)  
**£893** per month (for South Cambridgeshire)

### Local Housing Allowance (LHA)

**£666.42** per month



## Population Growth

The population of Greater Cambridge is expected to increase by around 26% between 2011 and 2031<sup>11</sup>. The demographic profile is also changing, with the proportion of those aged over 65 significantly increasing, especially within South Cambridgeshire. With an ageing population this presents a challenge for housing health and social care in terms of providing the right type of homes and increased need for health and social care services.

At the other end of the spectrum, Cambridge has one of the 'youngest' populations in the country. People aged 24 and under, including students, make up around 37% of the City's population, and their housing needs tend to be quite different compared to other age groups<sup>12</sup>.



## National Policy

This Housing Strategy sits within the context of a wide range of national strategies and policies.

Housing issues have risen up the national agenda over the last two or three years, with the main focus around boosting supply to support the economy and meet housing demand as well as increasing home ownership. The Grenfell Tower tragedy triggered a new national debate around the quality and management of social housing, and the poverty and inequality affecting so many of those for whom social housing is their only option. These, combined with major welfare reforms such as Universal

Credit, more focus on improving management and conditions in the private rented sector, and changes in how health and social care is commissioned, will all have an influence on our Housing Strategy.

Where the opportunity arises, both authorities continue to lobby government over devolution, to support social care and provide further council housing, and on national policy where it appears to conflict with local needs.

*Further details on changes to national housing policy can be found in Annex 4.*

## Resources

Both councils have strong ambitions, but resources are inevitably limited. We will continue to make the best use of available resources, as well as seeking additional opportunities to harness appropriate investment from other sources.

The work of the Greater Cambridge Partnership and the Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Combined Authority will support the activity

identified in this Strategy. Their work to promote delivery of new homes and improve infrastructure and transport links will widen the scope for housing delivery and help to ensure that residents of Greater Cambridge can live in sustainable and accessible locations.

*The main resources currently available for delivering our Housing Strategy are summarised at Annex 7.*

### **Increasing the delivery of homes, including affordable housing, along with sustainable transport and other infrastructure, to meet housing need**

Housing is at the core of our ambitions for growth, for jobs and prosperity, for the health and wellbeing of our residents and to ensure that Greater Cambridge is one of the best places to live.

There is a recognised mismatch between growth in employment and the corresponding slower growth in house-building and infrastructure, and the adverse impacts this can have on both people and businesses.<sup>13</sup> It is therefore essential for local economic success that the pace of delivery of new homes overall is increased and that we can stimulate the housing market in the case of any market failure. But we also need to make sure that we are providing the right types of homes in the right locations, ensuring these are affordable for those that need to live and work in the area, whilst minimising adverse impacts of growth.

Annex 5 to the Strategy provides further detail on our housing provision requirements, especially in terms of affordable and specialist accommodation.

### **Housing Need**

Through our Local Plans we know that we need to deliver an additional 33,500 homes up to 2031; 19,500 in South Cambridgeshire and 14,000 in Cambridge; with the key challenge that sufficient housing is available which is affordable to everyone who wants to live in the area. The CPIER report suggests that higher housing target numbers are likely to be needed if the potential for higher growth in employment is to be met.

In developing the joint Greater Cambridge Local Plan, a review of housing needs will be undertaken in 2019 building on the new national standard method for calculating local housing need. A further assessment will determine the appropriate size, type and tenure of housing needed for different sections of the community.

## Moving Forward

### **Both councils will:**

- Develop a joint Housing Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) to supplement our Local Plan housing requirements
- Work together to deliver a joint Greater Cambridge Local Plan
- Establish the number of new homes required as part of the development of the joint Greater Cambridge Local Plan, in collaboration with the Combined Authority
- Assess the housing requirements of groups with specific needs
- Work with registered providers to ensure homes are genuinely affordable to those that need them
- Prioritise social housing for rent as part of the wider mix of affordable housing
- Provide choice to those aspiring to own their own home by increasing the range of intermediate housing products
- Agree Local Lettings Plans for the affordable housing on large s106 urban fringe sites and major strategic sites and share those affordable housing allocations between Cambridge and South Cambs
- Use results of new community surveys and focus groups to improve the design, planning and development of and support to new communities
- Work with partners to identify the housing needs of the local workforce



## Increasing the supply of housing that is affordable to those on low to median incomes

The majority of new affordable homes will come from private developments and we will continue to work proactively with developers to secure the provision of affordable housing through our Local Plans. See Annex 5 (*Summary of requirements for development of new homes*) for more detail. In summary, the affordable housing sought on developments will be:

### Cambridge City

25% of homes on sites of 10-14 dwellings and 40% of homes on sites of 15 or more dwellings to be affordable, of which:

**75% Social housing for rent\***  
**25% Intermediate\***

### South Cambridgeshire

40% of all homes on sites of 10 or more dwellings to be affordable, of which:

**70% Social housing for rent\***  
**30% Intermediate\***

### Both councils

All affordable rent homes to have rents, including service charges, capped at the Local Housing Allowance Rate. Our preference, wherever possible, is for social rather than affordable rent, to maximise affordability.

*\*subject to review as part of the Housing SPD*

We are committed to working proactively with developers to help them find ways of making it viable to deliver our affordable housing requirements. Where developers choose not to work with us in this way we will take a robust approach based on the National Planning Policy Framework and Guidance as to how we scrutinise any viability challenges, to ensure we maximise the affordable housing contribution.

We will continue to prioritise social housing for rent to meet the needs of those on low incomes who are unable to afford alternative accommodation.

For those aspiring to own their own home we want to offer choice, and will explore alternative models to shared ownership, such as rent to buy. We also

- Ensure new developments provide appropriate housing for older people and other groups with specific needs
- Require Affordable Rents, including service charges, to be capped at Local Housing Allowance rates

### South Cambridgeshire District Council will:

- Work with businesses to help themselves to provide homes for their workers
- Deliver at least 200 council homes over the next 5 years
- Review what we mean by 'affordable housing' with a focus on 'affordable living'
- Explore opportunities for direct commissioning of land through local authority investment, joint ventures, etc.
- Explore the potential for a retirement village
- Work to identify a site or sites for Gypsies and Travellers and Travelling Showpeople

### Cambridge City will:

- Deliver at least 500 new council homes funded through the devolution deal including on council owned land

want to explore the role that new Private Rented Sector housing can have in broadening housing options.

We need to ensure that homes are affordable to those who need them. As a rough guide, Shelter suggests that affordability should be assessed on the basis that around 35% of net household income spent on housing costs is considered affordable<sup>14</sup>.

Tackling poverty is a priority for both councils, and we are committed to building



new council homes which are affordable to those on low incomes. Over the years we have seen a historic decline in stock numbers - particularly through Right to Buy sales, but we are aiming for this trend to be reversed through our council new-build programmes. Cambridge City Council has an ambitious programme to deliver at least 500 new council homes over 5 years following £70m funding via the

Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Devolution Deal. South Cambridgeshire currently has a programme to build at least 200 new council homes over the next 5 years, with ambitions to double this total following the lifting of the HRA borrowing cap and the potential to apply for Combined Authority funding as part of the £100m available to accelerate the delivery of affordable housing.

## Building sustainable and cohesive communities

We will continue to enable delivery of significant development on the fringes of Cambridge and in larger new communities, such as Northstowe and Waterbeach, to help meet the housing needs of Greater Cambridge, including the need for affordable housing tenures<sup>15</sup>. Building new communities in which people want to live requires considerable master-planning to ensure we have the right mix of homes in terms of sizes, types and tenures. We also need to ensure early provision of appropriate: infrastructure, retail, leisure and other services; green spaces; and links to the natural environment, to enable residents to live settled, healthy lives from the outset. Both councils are committed to working with new communities to

enable them to become established, supporting community cohesion and long term sustainability.

To support well balanced and sustainable communities, Local Letting Plans for the allocation of affordable housing will be used for larger developments.

We know that on previous large sites where the infrastructure and facilities are less established this has led to some residents feeling isolated, often leading or contributing to mental ill health. We are committed to learning lessons from past experience to help improve the design, planning and development of new communities going forwards.

## Understanding the housing needs of the local economy

Shared ownership homes and alternative intermediate models, such as rent to buy and Private Rented Sector models (PRS), can help support the needs of those on middle incomes who come to work in the area but cannot afford to live locally.

Our shared Home-Link choice based letting scheme is also available for low income workers to apply for social housing for rent.

Both councils are keen to work with local employers and other partners to get a better understanding of the housing needs of the local workforce, to support local services, the local economy and further economic growth.





## South Cambridgeshire Priority: Promoting housing for Essential Local Workers

A top priority for South Cambridgeshire District Council is to reduce commuting travel and ensure business growth is sustainable into the future through the provision of homes specifically targeted to essential local workers beyond the 'Essential Local Workers' definition in the NPPF<sup>16</sup>.

As well as public sector employees providing frontline services, we also want to take into account the needs of other workers who provide the services necessary for the economy.

The council has an 'open door' approach to work with businesses to help themselves in terms of providing exemplar schemes that deliver a range of homes that are provided for and are affordable to their workforce. There may also be potential for needs of essential workers to be met on larger sites close to places of work through local lettings plans, to help reduce travel needs.







## Building for an Ageing Population

With a rapidly ageing population, both councils are keen to promote a range of housing options to accommodate people and families throughout their lifetime across all tenures, to enable them to live safely and independently for as long as possible. This could be through the provision of ‘downsizer’ accommodation to provide more choice to older people who want to move to smaller and more suitable accommodation, and to enable them to remain in their local community if they wish to do so. This can also help to free up family homes. In relation to affordable housing, local lettings plans may also be used to give priority to older people wanting to move to smaller homes in particular new housing developments.

We know that loneliness and isolation is one of the biggest issues that may affect older people, and we will promote homes that are well located to services and facilities and well integrated into the community, where people of all ages can help support each other.

There are a number of sheltered housing and extra care schemes for older people in the Greater Cambridge area, which enable older people to remain in the community, whilst at the same time having the opportunity to mix more with people of their own age where they choose to do so. Both councils are interested in exploring options for more housing specifically for older people, including new models of housing. Any new provision has to take into account any impacts on social care and we will continue to work with the County Council to make best use of the financial resources available.

In terms of general housing, both affordable and private, we need to be future-proofing new homes through design so that they can be easily adaptable to enable people to live independently in their own homes as they age.

In accordance with our current Local Plans, all homes within Cambridge City should be built to level M4(2) of the adaptable and accessible building standard with 5% of the affordable housing to be built to wheelchair accessibility standards. For South Cambridgeshire, the current Local Plan seeks 5% of all homes to be built to the accessible and adaptable dwellings M4(2) standard but we will encourage developers to work to this standard where possible<sup>17</sup>.

In addition, from local research carried out by Sheffield Hallam<sup>18</sup>, based on projected need for specialist accommodation we will look to secure the following types of accommodation for older people on larger development sites.

Approximately 5% of new supply to be age exclusive homes - likely to take the form of mainstream housing built with older people in mind, i.e. meeting Building Regulations Part 4 (2 or 3).

Around 7% of homes to be specialist housing for older people, where the size of development makes this practicable. This could take the form of care ready type accommodation or extra care.

Appropriate provision of additional care beds.

According to the research, the number of care beds in Greater Cambridge is insufficient to meet existing needs. The provision of care beds that can be funded through social care is a particular issue facing the County Council and we will continue to work with them to identify how we can support the provision of care homes, including places available for spot purchasing beds for those funded through social care. With the increase of older people suffering from dementia, providers of any new specialist accommodation should consider how it can help meet this need, as well as the potential to help hospital discharge through the provision of intermediate care.

## South Cambridgeshire Priority: Exploring the Potential for a Retirement Village



South Cambridgeshire District Council is keen to explore the potential for a retirement village in the District that provides a retirement lifestyle with a real community spirit where people want to live, alongside affordable homes for care workers needed to support older people with more complex needs.

The council is also keen to understand the role that existing mobile home parks play in the District to meet the accommodation needs of older people, and whether this type of accommodation should be supported in the future mix of homes provided.

## Promoting specialist and other types of housing

We will continue to develop partnership working with appropriate organisations (*see partnership diagram under priority 7*) to ensure that sufficient support is available for those at greatest risk in our communities, including young people, families with young children, young people leaving care, ex-offenders, those suffering from domestic abuse and asylum seekers. Where purpose built accommodation is required, we will work with both commissioners and developers to secure appropriate accommodation on new developments.

Students form a significant part of Cambridge's population and the two universities make a major contribution to the local economy. Provision of new student housing is to be closely aligned with growth in University student numbers and can contribute towards balanced and mixed communities. However, consideration needs to be given to the scale and impact of any such development on local residential amenity. How proposals for new student accommodation will be dealt with is detailed in Cambridge City Council's Local Plan.

## Homes for Gypsies & Travellers and Houseboat Dwellers

Everyone should have the right to a decent home, be that in traditional housing or through other cultural or lifestyle choices. Under the Housing & Planning Act 2016, local authorities have a duty to assess the housing needs of both those residing in caravans and on inland waterways where houseboats can be moored. A key priority for South Cambridgeshire District Council is to identify new sites to accommodate those that wish to live in a caravan. Although a recent assessment did not identify any need for Gypsy & Traveller sites for those meeting the planning definition, it did show a need to provide sites for those residing in caravans who no longer travel, as well as pitches to accommodate Travelling Showpeople<sup>19</sup>.

Across Greater Cambridge there has also been a noticeable increase over the last year or so in

the number of temporary unauthorised encampments, particularly involving gypsies and travellers needing to access hospital treatment. As part of the council's action to identify new sites, we will look to see how we can best accommodate those stopping temporarily in the District.

In terms of houseboat dwellers, there is currently space for around seventy residential boats plus some additional space for visitors, on the river Cam. A site to the north of the City has been allocated for off-river residential moorings, and the Local Plan supports appropriate delivery of residential moorings where they meet agreed criteria. As we develop the Joint Local Plan from 2019, a full assessment of need for these groups will be undertaken.

### Diversifying the housing market & accelerating housing delivery

Everyone has different needs when it comes to the homes people live in. We want to create a place where people have choice, through ensuring that a wide range of different types of housing are available, which at the same time can help accelerate rates of delivery. We also want to provide diversity in how homes are delivered so we are not solely reliant on a handful of developers to build the homes, including the affordable housing that we need.

We are also keen to explore new ways of delivering different types of housing - such as community-led development, including cooperative-housing & Community Land Trusts, and self-build homes.

### Encouraging investment for purpose-built Private Rented Sector Housing (PRS)

The councils want to gain a better understanding of the local need and demand for purpose-built private rented sector (PRS) accommodation; and of the relationship between large PRS schemes and the ability to create settled and cohesive communities.

We recognise that PRS can meet the needs of households on a range of incomes, from those who are unlikely to be considered for social housing for rent to those who can afford but do not want to own their own home. We also recognise PRS can help accelerate overall housing build-out rates on large strategic sites. Subject to clear evidence of need, we may consider proposals for new PRS as part of a wider housing mix. Any such homes provided should remain available as PRS for an agreed period.

They need to be of high quality, well managed and offer longer term tenancies, as well as options for tenants to end tenancies sooner where it meets their needs.

Where the need for PRS has been identified we will seek a range of unit sizes and household types and income levels, including appropriate provision of Affordable Private Rent.

## Moving Forward

### Both councils will:

- Carry out further research to identify need and demand for purpose-built private rented sector housing (PRS)
- Develop a set of local requirements to inform development of PRS schemes that are appropriate to the area
- Work with developers to accelerate delivery, e.g. through off-site and modular construction homes and supporting SME builders to bring forward smaller sites
- Review outstanding planning permissions and work with developers to ensure that schemes are built out in a timely manner

### South Cambridgeshire District Council will:

- Explore what role development of new HMOs could play locally in providing an affordable housing option for single people
- Seek opportunities, where viable, for Ermine Street Housing to be an active private sector landlord for new developments in the District, including exploring the potential to deliver and manage HMOs
- Deliver self and custom-build housing plots on new developments to meet identified demand
- Work with local communities to secure the development they need
- Implement a programme for delivering homes on exception sites in our villages



## Houses in Multiple Occupation

Well managed HMOs have an important part to play in meeting housing needs, offering a more affordable housing solution for single low income households. With HMOs predominantly located in Cambridge, the City Council's Local Plan supports provision of good quality, larger HMOs, in appropriate locations. At the same time the council will seek to avoid over concentration of provision in an area, and to minimise any potential adverse impact on neighbouring occupiers through its registration scheme.

As part of the development of the larger strategic sites we will explore what role new-build HMOs can also play within South Cambridgeshire.

### Cambridge City will:

- Seek opportunities, where financially viable, to buy back new market homes on our own developments to provide as intermediate tenure homes
- Review our approach to self and custom-build housing in line with statutory requirements

## South Cambridgeshire priority: Promoting self-build & custom build housing

With just under 400 applicants on the self-build register in South Cambridgeshire, there is an expectation that new developments will support this need and we will be seeking around 5% of homes on large sites to be for self or custom build. The council has also identified over 100 plots of council-owned land to help meet this demand, with the proceeds going towards funding new council homes. This initiative ensures that the council gets best value from small sites on which it would not be financially viable to build single council houses.

There may also be scope to promote self-build for households wishing to downsize in appropriate circumstances where there is



development potential within their own garden land, subject to Local Plan policy.

In addition, both councils are currently working together to share best practice and identify options for a joint approach in terms of the self-build/custom-build registers and the best ways to meet demand.

## Exploring off-site and modular construction

Innovative and new ways of developing high quality housing more quickly and cheaply than through more traditional construction methods are emerging. Although this is unlikely to completely replace existing housebuilding methods, at least for now, it does offer opportunities for the councils to consider more innovative ways of promoting delivery through their own development programmes, and for supporting carbon reduction and other sustainability objectives.



Any such consideration would need to take into account implications for future repair and maintenance. We will continue to work with developers on the larger strategic sites where the scale of build is appropriate to modern methods of construction.

## Increasing the role of small & medium size enterprise builders (SMEs)

Both councils want to promote diversity in the market, to help speed up delivery and provide a wider range of housing options. We are keen to work with SME builders to bring forward smaller sites that provide variety in the market to meet local needs.

The councils will seek to identify land to accommodate at least 10% of our housing requirement on sites no larger than one hectare, in accordance with the National Planning Policy. This will help to ensure that land is available for small to medium sized housebuilders to develop.

## Increasing rates of build out

Measures above aimed at diversifying the housing market can also help to accelerate the delivery of housing, which in turn can help us to address affordable housing need more effectively.

We await the government's response to recommendations from the recent Letwin review of build out rates, to assess whether there is more we can do to speed up delivery<sup>20</sup>.







## South Cambridgeshire Priority: Supporting villages to remain vibrant and sustainable for the future

With just over 100 villages within South Cambridgeshire District, a high priority for the council is to promote vibrancy and sustainability to enable villages to grow and flourish through appropriate development supported by the local community. We want to make sure that we keep our villages alive, where communities thrive and support networks are created. Our villages should be places where people want and can afford to live in, that offer easy access to work and play.

Maintaining the social fabric of our villages is important; helping young people to stay close to family networks through providing homes they can afford to live in, as well as homes for the older generation who want to stay in the village but need more suitable accommodation. In turn, this will help to sustain village facilities, such as local shops, schools and community activities.

South Cambridgeshire District has an excellent track record for promoting rural exception sites, working alongside parish councils, with around 180 new affordable homes built over the last five years. Whilst providing social housing for rent for local people is still a priority, we want to extend this to cater for a wider range of households through different intermediate products, such as shared ownership and rent to buy. The Local Plan also allows a small proportion of market homes to support sites coming forward which can help to meet local needs in rural areas; this could include an element of self build, such as for those who want to downsize.

Where there are groups of smaller settlements, development in one village may support services in a village nearby and meet housing need within a wider catchment area.

As well as building homes for local people through the exception sites policy, the introduction of entry-level exception sites that provide homes suitable for first time buyers will support the council's ambitions in terms of economic development and enabling people to come and live in the District close to places of work. This will also help to reinvigorate villages, providing a range of housing opportunities for young families on middle incomes to live in our villages.

For villages that have received large planning permissions for developments whilst the council did not have a five year land supply, this does offer opportunity for parishes to work with us to ensure any new development benefits local people, such as homes for first time buyers, older people's accommodation, etc.

We will continue to work with local communities to help them secure the development they want to see through Neighbourhood Plans, Village Design Statements, community-led housing and the promotion of affordable and entry-level housing through exception sites policies.



## Priority 03

### Achieving a high standard of design and quality of new homes and communities

It's not just the cost of rents and mortgages which determines whether a home is affordable but also service charges and running costs, including costs associated with heating a home. We want to see homes built that are environmentally sustainable, and to encourage well-designed developments, especially in terms of on-site renewable energy and low carbon technologies, and in promoting biodiversity.

We need to ensure that homes are of good quality, and that communities are well designed with access to sufficient facilities and open spaces. New communities need to be effectively integrated with existing more established communities so that everyone can benefit from new developments.

Cambridge City Council has published its Sustainable Housing Design Guide<sup>21</sup> as to the standards expected in its own council new build programme and as a guide for developers to follow. The City Council's Climate Change Strategy 2016-2021 aims to achieve zero carbon status in Cambridge by 2050 and stresses the importance of new developments being designed to both respond to and mitigate against climate change<sup>22</sup>.

Whilst South Cambridgeshire District Council has a Design Guide SPD<sup>23</sup> and specific policies within its current Local Plan, one of the key priorities for the council is to do more to drive up standards and make South Cambridgeshire a 'greener' sustainable place to live. The council has also pledged to beat government targets and reduce local carbon emissions to zero by 2050.

New homes need to be flexible to meet the needs of a range of household types and sizes, and to meet individual households' changing needs over time. All new homes have to meet the nationally described space standards<sup>24</sup>.

Ensuring that villages keep their distinctive character, South Cambridgeshire District Council wants to raise the quality of new development and support inclusive, sustainable growth through the use of Village Design

## Moving Forward

### Both councils will:

- Drive up standards for environmental sustainability including onsite renewable energy and low carbon technologies
- Develop a joint Sustainable Design and Construction SPD
- Ensure that housing, in particular affordable housing, is developed alongside the provision of community infrastructure
- Future-proof the design of new homes so that as residents age, homes can be easily adapted to meet changing needs
- Ensure all new homes meet the nationally described space standards as a minimum

### South Cambridgeshire District Council will:

- Work with communities to develop individual Village Design Statements

### Cambridge City will:

- Use the Sustainable Housing Design Guide to support good housing design in its own developments and promote amongst other developers

Statements. These Statements will set out guidelines, worked up in partnership with parishes, that will help shape the character of new development in villages. The council also works with communities to develop Neighbourhood Plans as a way for communities to take a proactive approach to deciding the future of the places where they live and work.

Having easily adaptable homes as a household's circumstances change also helps support people to live independent lives. An ageing population means we must future-proof the design of our homes now, so that as we age homes can be easily adapted to avoid the need for expensive specialist housing. Whilst the Lifetime Homes Standard has been superseded, we will, wherever possible, build to M4(2) adaptable and accessible standards ourselves and encourage other house builders to do so.

We also need to be delivering homes and wider infrastructure that are designed with a view to new technologies, including the move towards a digital connected future.

As part of the Connecting Cambridgeshire programme, led by Cambridgeshire County Council, funding has been secured from the Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Combined Authority to significantly improve mobile, broadband and public WiFi coverage across Cambridgeshire. Being digitally connected will support a range of groups, including those seeking employment, those that want to work from home, and those for whom assistive technology can reduce the need for care.

We are working towards a joint Sustainable Design & Construction SPD which will consider in more detail our requirements around design and construction of new homes, including use of new technologies.



### Improving housing conditions and making best use of existing homes

Everyone has the right to live in a decent home and whilst we have an ambitious programme for building new homes in future years that are well designed and energy & water efficient, we must not forget that the majority of residents live in existing homes, and as many of the homes are older they are likely to in poorer condition, less well insulated, and more expensive to heat.

#### Promoting energy and water efficiency

It is estimated that around 40% of UK emissions come from households, with up to 50% coming from heating and electricity.<sup>25</sup> As well as the effects on our environment, it can also be damaging to the health and wellbeing of residents where homes cannot be heated properly, with an estimated 11.5% of households in fuel poverty in Cambridge, and 8% in South Cambridgeshire.<sup>26</sup>

We therefore have a responsibility to ensure that housing across all tenures meets a high standard for residents and supports our goals to reduce the overall carbon footprint. We will continue to promote greener and energy & water efficient solutions for council tenants and home-owners, Through a new Cambridgeshire Housing Adaptations & Repairs Policy, from April 2019 there is greater scope and flexibility to fund energy efficiency measures for those on low incomes, to promote warm homes. Both councils will look to provide greater support to improve housing conditions through this policy. We will also provide advice and support to private landlords, but where necessary take enforcement action if they fail to meet the expected standards.

Both councils will continue to explore the potential to work together to deliver energy efficiency projects that address issues of fuel poverty and climate change through the Cambridgeshire Energy Partnership.

## Moving Forward

#### Both councils will:

- Promote greener and energy efficient solutions for those in the private sector
- Ensure council homes continue to be well managed and maintained
- Invest in the fabric of our council homes for optimum energy and water efficiency, and ensure they remain good quality homes that people want to live in
- Support tenants through the implementation of Universal Credit
- Work to ensure HMOs are licensed where required
- Support private landlords in managing their homes, and take enforcement action against the minority of landlords who do not meet required standards

#### Cambridge City will:

- Continue to be pro-active in bringing empty homes back into use





## Ensuring our council homes and environments are of high standard and are well managed and maintained

As stock holding authorities, we maintain and manage over 12,200 properties for rent, (7,000 in the City and 5,200 in South Cambridgeshire) accounting for 11% of the overall homes in Greater Cambridge.

Having high quality responsive services for managing and maintaining council properties is something that tenants and leaseholders have identified as particularly important. We know also that the physical appearance of the outside of homes is important to tenants and needs to feature in our investment plans.

Significant investment has been made in maintaining our homes to a good standard and making them more energy efficient. This will continue to be a priority for us in terms of improving our homes and we will work towards any additional requirements following the government's proposed review of the Decent Homes Standard. Cambridge City Council has also committed to investing in a five year programme of environmental improvements on

its council housing estates. South Cambridgeshire District Council has an ongoing programme of improving the energy efficiency of council homes. This includes the installation of triple glazed windows and high thermal efficient doors, improving thermal insulation and replacing electric heating in gas areas with gas heating systems. South Cambridgeshire District Council is also investigating battery storage systems, as well as looking at smart home technology and how it can be used to improve properties.

The roll-out of Universal Credit could have a significant impact on our tenants' welfare, including the ability to pay their rent. This in turn could have a knock-on effect in terms of the councils' rental income, reducing the funding available to invest in homes and services. We will prioritise the support we can give to tenants to ensure they are able to claim and pay their rent on time.

## Making sure private rented homes are of good quality and well managed

The number of private rented homes in Greater Cambridge has seen a significant increase, especially in Cambridge. Housing conditions tend to be worse in private rented accommodation, with an estimated 18% of private rented homes in Cambridge and 15.3% in South Cambridgeshire not meeting the required Health & Safety standards<sup>27, 28</sup>. The councils have an important role to play in improving management and conditions in the private rented sector. We will actively support landlords in meeting their responsibilities in this area, but will take enforcement action against the minority of landlords who do not meet the expected standard. The government has

recently introduced new requirements for councils to register landlords who do not manage or maintain their properties appropriately, together with new financial penalties that should help drive up the standards in private rented accommodation.

In terms of Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs), the classification has been broadened to include smaller HMOs which must be compulsorily licensed. It is estimated that as many as 1,700 additional HMOs may need to be licensed in Greater Cambridge; around 1,000 in Cambridge and 700 in South Cambridgeshire.

## Bringing Empty Homes back into use

Having homes sitting empty when we have such a high demand for housing is a wasted resource. Long-term empty homes can also have a detrimental impact on the wider community, making streets or neighbourhoods appear neglected and uncared for. Whilst the number of long term empty homes is low compared to many other parts of the country and represents less than 1% of the total Greater Cambridge housing stock<sup>29</sup>, it is important that we work with owners to try and bring homes back into use. For example, both Councils' Council Tax schemes<sup>30, 31</sup> include elements designed to help dis-incentivise people from

leaving homes empty for long periods. Whilst empty homes have not been identified as a serious issue for South Cambridgeshire District Council, and therefore not considered a high priority on which to focus resources, the council will continue to offer advice and support and refer owners to its housing companies Ermine Street Housing<sup>32</sup> and Shire Homes Lettings<sup>33</sup> with a view to increasing the availability of private rented housing. Ermine Street Housing has also built up good relationships with the Ministry of Defence (MOD) to release empty properties in the District for private rent.

## Cambridge City Council Priority: Empty Homes Policy

Tackling empty homes is a particular priority for the City Council. The council, through its Empty Homes Policy<sup>34</sup>, actively supports owners of long-term empty homes to bring them back into use. This includes providing informal advice and assistance to owners, and providing interest free loans to enable such homes to be brought up to standard<sup>35</sup>.

Where loans are offered, this is on the basis that the management will be taken over by the

council's social lettings agency, Town Hall Lettings<sup>36</sup> (or another not for profit provider). Where working directly with owners is unsuccessful, the council may go on to use its enforcement powers, including serving Improvement Notices or ultimately resorting to Compulsory Purchase.

The council will also review its approach to dealing with empty homes on new developments.





### Promoting Health & Wellbeing through housing

Poor and/or unsuitable housing, and lack of appropriate transport and community infrastructure, can have a significant effect on people's physical and mental health and wellbeing. In addition, a cold home can lead to respiratory and other diseases, and unsuitable homes can increase trips and falls. It is estimated that poor housing costs health and social care around £2.5bn per year.<sup>37</sup>

Ill health prevention is crucial to improving the population's health. On average, approximately 68.7%<sup>38</sup> of time is spent at home. Therefore housing availability, affordability and quality is essential to staying well, both physically and mentally, and to having the ability to live independently for as long as possible. Access to green space and quality of environment are also important.

Our aim is to help people live safely and independently at home, and encourage residents to be active participants in community life to combat loneliness and isolation.

We will continue to work with partners to improve the integration of housing, health and social care services, including the planning and delivery of new developments, reviewing how we deliver Disabled Facilities Grants (DFGs) and home adaptations, and supporting the county-wide 'Housing Options for Older People' project to help families make informed housing choices as they grow older.<sup>39</sup>

### Improving support to people in their homes

Over the years we have seen a changing tenant profile within our own council homes with an increase in the number of tenants experiencing mental health issues. This has resulted in us moving towards a much more intensive housing management service to help support the needs of our tenants. This is a growing problem generally across all tenures, with people with complex needs ending up as homeless because there is no where else to turn for support. Often homelessness is a symptom, rather than the cause of mental ill health. We will continue to work

## Moving Forward

### Both councils will:

- Work with partners to improve the integration of housing, health and social care and support service transformation
- Work with partners to ensure that there is appropriate support and provision available to meet increasing demand from those suffering with complex health issues
- Implement the proposed Cambridgeshire-wide repairs and adaptations policy to help improve housing conditions and deliver health and social care outcomes
- Support the new Housing Options for Older People scheme and monitor the impact on existing services
- Promote digital inclusion through training up 'champions' to help others get online
- Work with partners to help tackle loneliness and isolation
- Explore opportunities for joint inter-generational work, particularly across the councils' sheltered housing schemes
- Work with health and social care partners to develop a sustainable approach to revenue funding for our shared Home Improvement Agency
- Continue to engage with the Cambridgeshire Community Safety Partnership in tackling crime and anti-social behaviour

with partners to ensure that there is appropriate support and provision available to meet increasing demand.

With continuing reductions in health and social care budgets, it is essential that we work together to ensure that our support services are sustainable for the future.

In particular, forging closer links with GPs and other allied health professionals to resolve health issues as a result of poor housing is a priority. Early intervention and prevention is crucial in helping to reduce costs and provide a better quality of life for residents.



## Tackling poverty and inequality

Welfare reforms are impacting on residents across all tenures. For example, low Local Housing Allowance (LHA) rates compared with local private rents make it increasingly difficult for benefit claimants to rent privately in Greater Cambridge, and the overall benefit cap is already affecting a number of local families. The full local roll out of Universal Credit from 2018 onwards will also have an impact. Both councils are working on a number of projects in this area.

Cambridge, in a recent study, was identified as the most unequal city in the UK<sup>40</sup>. The City Council's work is co-ordinated through its Anti-Poverty Strategy.

This includes actions around, for example: supporting residents to access benefits and respond to the impacts of welfare reform; provision of debt and other financial advice; supporting people to reduce their fuel and water bills; and supporting people into work and training.

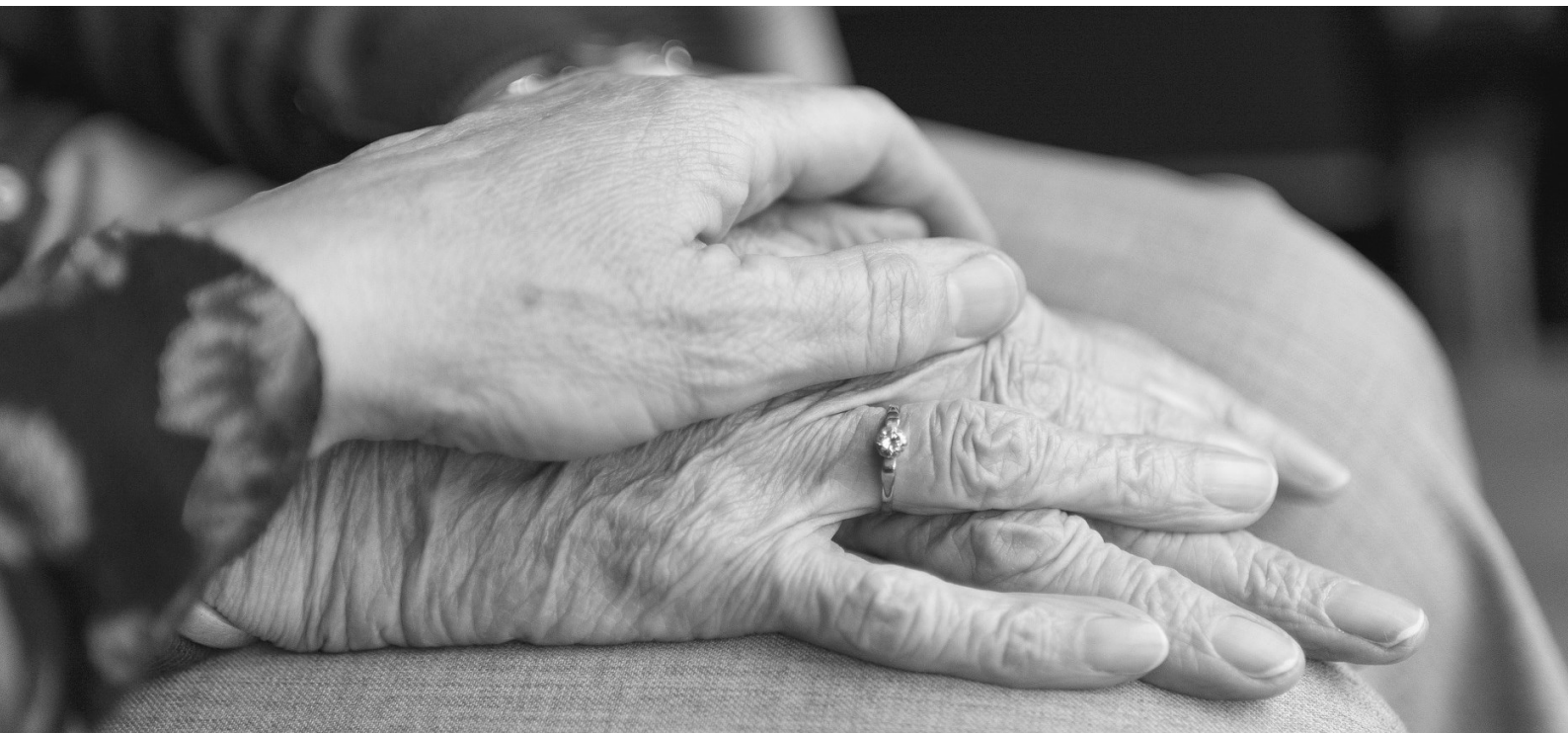
As part of South Cambridgeshire's Financial Inclusion Strategy, the District Council supports the local credit union to provide access to banking for its tenants<sup>41</sup>. Also working in partnership with Mears, a specialist support worker is employed to provide help and advice to tenants who are struggling financially.

Fuel and water poverty are particular issues for local residents who struggle to pay their utility bills. By improving the energy efficiency of new and existing homes, this will reduce the carbon footprint and improve the quality of life for residents. It is therefore a key priority for both councils to continue to ensure through partnership and publicity activities, that owner occupiers and private rented tenants secure their full share of any funding available to help address fuel poverty.

## Promoting Digital Inclusion

Supporting people to develop digital skills and get online is important for a number of reasons. It can help to reduce poverty - e.g. enabling people to make use of benefits and financial and other services which are increasingly only readily available online, access employment, and make savings on utility bills.

It can also help to tackle social isolation. Both councils are involved in projects to promote digital inclusion, including actively working to train up 'champions' who can then help others to get online. Cambridge City Council's activities in this area are outlined in the council's Digital Access Strategy<sup>42</sup>.



## Combating Loneliness and Isolation

The issue of loneliness is rising up the national agenda, particularly in relation to older people, with an estimated 1.2 million chronically lonely older people in the UK<sup>43</sup>. Both councils are working with partners on community development and other initiatives to tackle loneliness, including work on improving digital access as well as improving planning on new

developments. As part of this we want to explore opportunities for joint inter-generational work, particularly across the councils' sheltered housing schemes.

Both councils also offer community grants to voluntary and community groups which help bring people together and improve quality of life.

## Tackling Crime and Anti Social Behaviour

Both councils treat anti-social behaviour and hate crime seriously, engaging proactively with partners and the wider community in terms of both prevention and in dealing with complaints and issues as they arise.

Both councils are also active members of the Cambridgeshire Community Safety Partnership.



### Preventing and Tackling Homelessness and Rough Sleeping

Preventing and tackling homelessness requires a co-ordinated and strategic response, and involves partnership working across a wide range of statutory and voluntary agencies.

The new Homelessness Reduction Act, which came into force in 2018, introduced new responsibilities for housing authorities. Both councils worked together to review their approaches to dealing with homelessness in preparation for the new Act.

South Cambridgeshire has its own Homelessness Strategy (published April 2019) for the district, and a full review of homelessness was undertaken in early 2018 which informed that strategy.

In Cambridge City, issues and approaches to homelessness and rough sleeping are detailed in the council's Homelessness & Rough Sleeping Action Plan 2016-2019. A new action plan for 2019-2022 is being worked on in partnership with a range of agencies through the Homelessness Strategy Implementation Partnership. A Homelessness Summit, with a particular focus on rough sleeping, also took place in 2017 with the City Council and a range of partners, which will help to inform the plan.

More recently, It Takes a City's Summit on Homelessness identified a strong local interest in issues around homelessness and rough sleeping, and presented further opportunities for community engagement and partnership working in this area. It may also open up funding opportunities from private sector sources<sup>44</sup>.

This Greater Cambridge Housing Strategy does not seek to replace the councils' strategies and action plans referred to above. Instead this chapter, together with Annex 6, highlights some of the issues and priorities dealt with in more detail in those other strategies and plans.

## Moving Forward

### Both councils will:

- Work with partners to prevent homelessness
- Continue to lobby government around impact of welfare policy on affordability in the private rented sector
- Review the impact of the Homelessness Reduction Act on our lettings policies
- Prepare for the roll out of Universal Credit and assess what further actions may be needed to prevent homelessness following implementation
- Help shape the county-wide review of housing related support, to ensure that the districts can continue to effectively meet their homelessness prevention obligations
- Improve our understanding of the issues faced by people discharged from prison, and our approach to preventing homelessness amongst ex-offenders

### South Cambridgeshire District Council will:

- Review existing information available to those facing homelessness
- Review the Rent Deposit Guarantee Scheme
- Increase the number of homes available to rent through the council's private sector leasing scheme - Shire Homes Lettings
- Publish a Homelessness Strategy in 2019

## Homelessness: some of the issues

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.

To date we have been able to use Discretionary Housing Payments to help some households to deal with the welfare changes. However this will not be enough going forwards to cover the loss of benefits which some households will experience as they move over to Universal Credit.

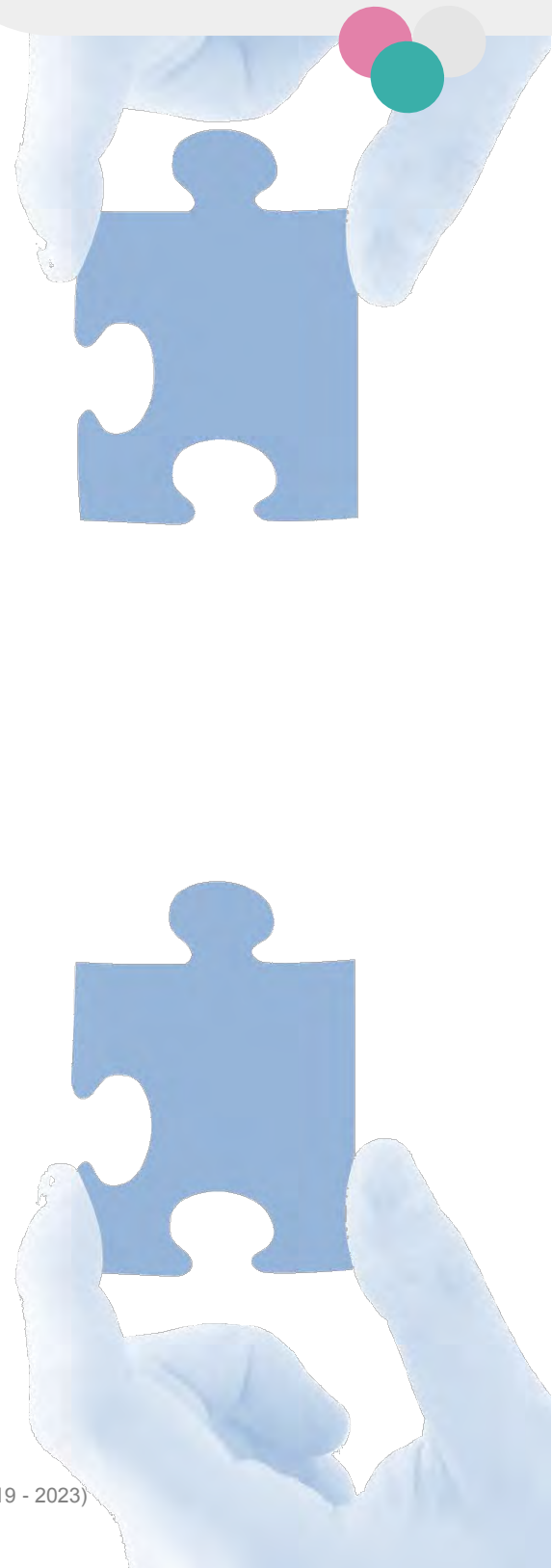
The mismatch between the Local Housing Allowance rate for Greater Cambridge based on the Broad Rental Market Area (BRMA) and the actual costs of private rents in the area, make it extremely difficult for those on benefits to secure private rented accommodation. We will continue to lobby government at every opportunity around concerns about the impact of Universal Credit, and to seek alignment of the BRMA with actual rents.

Single homelessness is on the rise across Greater Cambridge. Both councils are involved in a number of initiatives with partners to help prevent single people from becoming homeless, especially in terms of supporting those with mental health problems. We know that ex-offenders being discharged from prison is one of the groups particularly at risk of becoming homeless and we will continue to work with partners to improve the support available.

For those who require temporary accommodation, the use of Bed & Breakfast has been kept to a minimum and we will only use this form of temporary housing as a last resort.

### Cambridge City Council will:

- Keep the council's strategic approach to homelessness and its homelessness strategy action plan under ongoing review
- Extend the Housing First training flats scheme by sourcing additional homes with links to support services, including through the council's own housing development programme





## Cambridge City priority: Tackling Rough Sleeping

Cambridge City, as a largely urban area, has a tendency to attract rough sleepers from a wide area.

Partners have reported a significant increase over recent years in the number of rough sleepers with mental health problems, many of whom also have alcohol or substance misuse issues. Some engage in street-based anti-social behaviour and begging. Not all rough sleepers, or those begging or adopting a street lifestyle, are homeless, but may have tenancies, and

such behaviours can put tenancies at risk.

The council's focus has been moving away from short term hostel accommodation for single homeless people and rough sleepers, towards supporting partner agencies in the provision of one-to-one support and re-ablement services, including development of skills and employment. We also operate a re-connections policy to reconnect rough sleepers to where they came from.

## Increasing the supply of private rented housing for those on low incomes

To help tackle the difficulties experienced by people on low incomes, Cambridge City Council's social lettings agency Town Hall Lettings (THL) works to secure private rented housing for single people. More recently, some market homes provided on the council's own new developments have been bought back by its arms length housing company (CCHC Ltd) and let out through THL at sub-market rents.

South Cambridgeshire District Council have also set up Shire Homes Lettings, to take forward the management of the private sector leasing scheme which provides affordable, good quality private rented accommodation in the District to help prevent homelessness.

Both councils will continue to explore a range of housing solutions for people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness.

## Homelessness Trailblazer<sup>45</sup>

Both councils are signed up to making homelessness 'the unacceptable outcome' as part of a wider multi-agency partnership across Cambridgeshire and Peterborough.

The number one priority is to help prevent homelessness occurring in the first place, helping people to help themselves before they hit crisis point.

## Funding for housing related support

The County Council's review of housing related support is likely to see a reduction in funding available. Many of the homelessness services provided in Greater Cambridge are run by local charities and organisations which are reliant on long term funding security in order for them to operate viable services.

In the context of shrinking resources there are likely to be significant challenges for the county and district councils in terms of the support available, and we will continue to work in partnership with the County Council to enable us to continue supporting those who are homeless or threatened with homelessness.



## Cambridge City Council Priority: Housing First

Housing First is a relatively new approach in England, aimed at supporting homeless people with multiple and complex needs. It involves providing a secure home, together with personalised support. Providing a home first can provide a stable platform from which other issues can be addressed. There is increasing evidence that Housing First can be an effective way of helping people to come off the streets, and of delivering positive outcomes.

Cambridge City Council is working to pilot a number of different Housing First models on some of its new developments on council owned land, including one with on-site accommodation for a tenant who will provide an essential link to support services. Impacts and outcomes of this new approach will be closely monitored, and we will need to evaluate whether it should be considered more generally as an alternative to hostel accommodation in the longer term.



### Working with key partners to innovate and maximise resources available

Although this is the Housing Strategy for Cambridge City and South Cambridgeshire District Councils, it is clear that we cannot work alone; we rely on working closely with a whole range of partners to help meet our objectives.

In the context of national policy and reduced national funding available for local government, the councils face challenging times in terms of meeting our statutory obligations and our wider objectives. Forming strong investment partnerships can help to strengthen our position in terms of financial capacity and applying for available funding, and we will work with partners to innovate and maximise the resources available.

The success of this Strategy and the economic growth of Greater Cambridge can only be achieved through strong partnership working and collaboration with both private and public sectors.

### Developers and Registered Providers (RPs)

By far the largest investors in new housing are private developers, through direct provision of new homes and through S106 contributions to affordable housing and other facilities and infrastructure. Both authorities are keen to strengthen relationships with existing and potential developers of all sizes, to help ensure that the right homes are delivered in the right places, together with timely provision of infrastructure.

Registered housing providers (housing associations) also have an important role to play in the growth of Greater Cambridge, providing the majority of new affordable homes. Their commitment to invest in the area is critical to delivering the affordable homes that we need. It is estimated that for every £1 of public funding received, registered providers will invest a further £6 to deliver affordable housing in the area<sup>46</sup>.

Quality of management of affordable housing is important, and the councils would urge developers to take this into account when selecting registered providers (RPs). We are keen to engage with RPs at the earliest possible stage when new developments come forward.

## Moving Forward

### Both councils will:

- Work proactively to build on existing and new relationships with key organisations, housing associations and developers
- Work closely with the Greater Cambridge Partnership and the Cambridge & Peterborough Combined Authority to secure investment into the area to support infrastructure and affordable housing
- Explore investment opportunities with the Greater Cambridge Partnership to directly commission housing development that will specifically help address the affordability challenges facing essential local workers
- Actively engage with partners through the Housing Board and other key forums
- Support the Combined Authority in the development and delivery of their new housing strategy

### South Cambridgeshire District Council will:

- Work with the Combined Authority to ensure that schemes are identified locally for the Combined Authority's £100m Housing Fund

### Cambridge City will:

- Continue to work through the Cambridge Investment Partnership to deliver new affordable homes on some of the council's own sites



We are also seeing an increase in 'For Profit' registered providers wanting to invest into the area. Whilst the councils are open to new models that support the provision of affordable housing, any registered provider, including those operating 'for profit' must ensure that Affordable Rents are kept within the LHA rates and that satisfactory local housing management arrangements are in place.

Cambridge Investment Partnership (CIP) has been set up as a joint venture between Cambridge City Council and Hill Investment Partnerships to develop sites to meet the need

for housing, and in particular high quality affordable housing in Cambridge.

South Cambridgeshire District Council has published its Investment Strategy as part of its Medium Term Financial Strategy 2019. This sets out a process to establish a framework of potential investment partners who wish to work with the council to bring forward sites. It is envisaged that the framework will be open to allow new partners to join at any time in the future, with the aim to go out to tender from Spring 2019.

## Parish Councils

The 106 parishes and settlements in South Cambridgeshire are combined to make 90 parish councils, 10 parish meetings and one community council. As key partners to the delivery of homes, South Cambridgeshire District Council is committed to working with parishes to ensure that the right homes are planned in the right places. In particular, parishes have a key role in helping to provide affordable housing for local people through the

rural exception sites policy. Working with parishes on Neighbourhood Plans, community-led development or through the Village Design Statements are further ways that communities can get involved and engaged with the council to deliver the homes that they want and need. The development of the Joint Local Plan will involve extensive engagement and collaboration with parishes.



## Greater Cambridge Partnership<sup>47</sup>

The Greater Cambridge Partnership is the local delivery body for a City Deal with central Government, bringing powers and investment worth up to £1 billion over 15 years to help secure sustainable economic growth and quality of life for the people of Greater Cambridge.

The partnership is working with the councils and the business community to sustain the economic growth taking place within Cambridge, and helping to deliver on our aspirations for the Greater Cambridge area, including accelerating delivery of the 33,500 new homes required and supporting the 44,000 new jobs coming to the area. In terms of housing investment, given the affordability challenges facing local workers, the councils are



keen to work with the Greater Cambridge Partnership to explore investment opportunities. The Greater Cambridge Partnership aims to work with partner authorities to help address delivery challenges and bring forward vital homes to accommodate local workers, both of which are key in order to support the continued economic growth of Greater Cambridge and beyond.

## Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Combined Authority<sup>48</sup>

The Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Combined Authority was established in 2017, following a devolution deal with central government. Powers and funding devolved to the Combined Authority are being used to facilitate delivery of new homes, economic growth, local infrastructure, and jobs across the area.

As part of the 'housing offer' the Combined Authority secured funding of £100m up to 2022 towards accelerating the delivery of affordable housing in Cambridgeshire and Peterborough, with a further £70m allocated to Cambridge City for the delivery of 500 new council homes. This funding was primarily secured in recognition of the significant affordability issues identified in Greater Cambridge.

Both councils are keen to work with the Combined Authority to support the development and delivery of their new Housing Strategy, to help them to achieve the best housing outcomes for our area.

We are keen to ensure that an appropriate proportion of the Combined Authority's £100m funding is available to help alleviate housing pressures in the Greater Cambridge area. South Cambridgeshire District Council, in particular, will work closely with the Combined Authority to ensure that the District is supported in terms of the investment needed to support the economic growth and affordability issues facing the district.





## The Housing Board

We work closely with partners through the Housing Board covering Cambridgeshire, Peterborough and West Suffolk; including the local councils, registered providers and public health. The Board works collaboratively on strategic housing issues, and has been responsible for commissioning a number of major projects, including our sub-regional Choice Based Lettings System (Home-Link) and Strategic Housing Market Assessment; and securing funding for partnership projects<sup>49</sup>.



## Health and social care partners

We as districts have an important role to play in supporting physical and mental health and wellbeing, and enabling people to live safely and independently at home. We also provide and/or fund a number of services which can help prevent hospital or care home admission, and speed up transfers of care from hospitals.

In turn, many of our services can help reduce health and social care system expenditure. For example, it is estimated that fixing Category 1

hazards in England could generate an NHS cost saving of around £1.4bn per annum in first year treatment costs.<sup>50</sup> It is also suggested that every £1 spent on handyperson services could generate £4.28 in savings to health and social care services.

We are committed to strengthening partnership working in this area, to support service transformation and achieve improved outcomes for local residents.

## Resident Involvement Groups

For both councils, engagement with tenants and leaseholders is integral to effective management and maintenance of the councils' homes.

Through a range of dedicated groups and forums, tenants and leaseholders have an important role to play in designing, developing and improving council housing services, and overseeing and scrutinising performance.

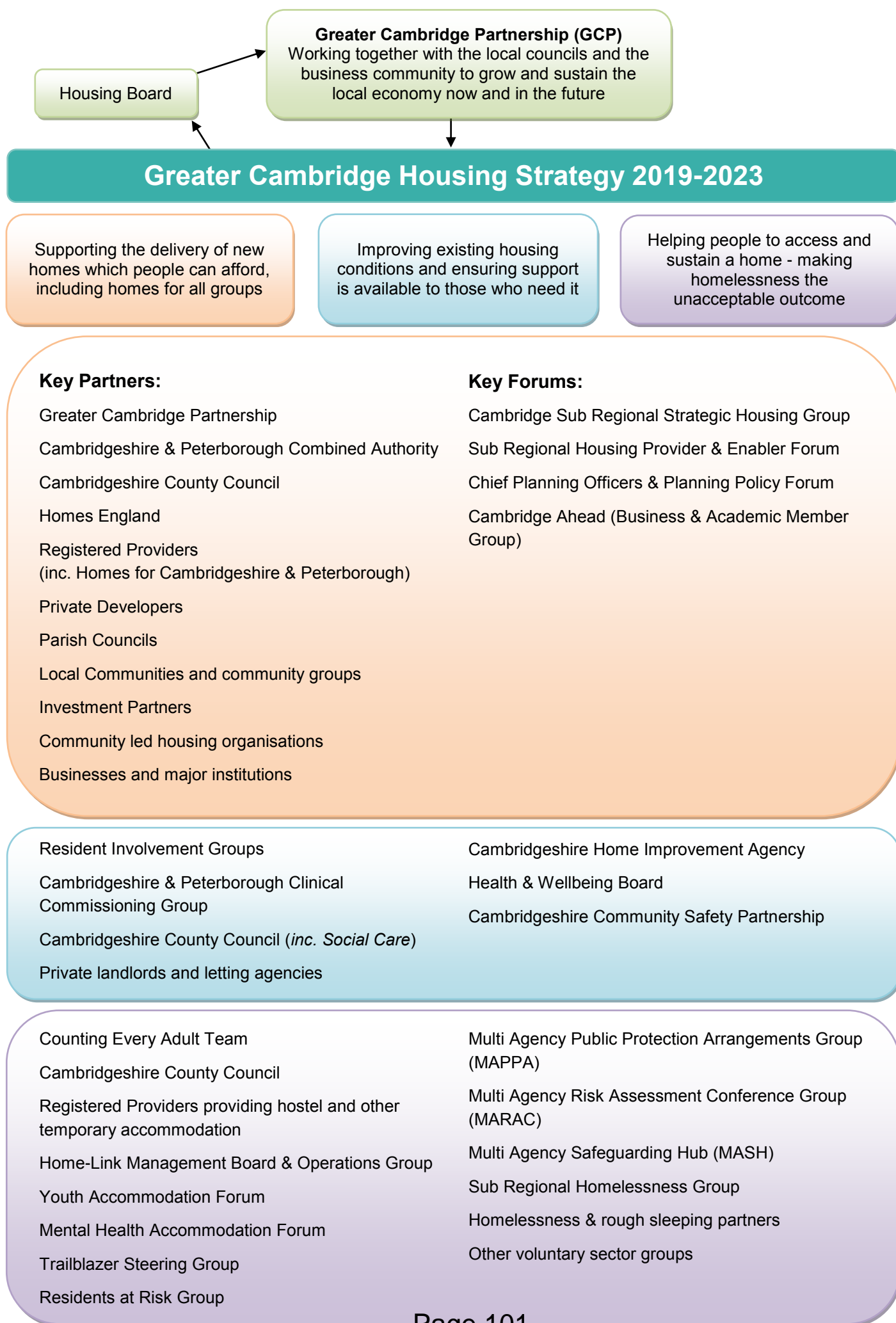
## Other partners

The diagram overleaf demonstrates some of the main inter-linkages and partnerships that support the ambitions for Greater Cambridge.

We will continue to work with a whole host of other partners linking the many activities associated with good housing, health and wellbeing, and economic growth.











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# Greater Cambridge Housing Strategy

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## Annexes

# Greater Cambridge Strategy

## Annexes

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## Greater Cambridge Strategy 2019-2023 – Action Plan (Year 1)

(NB: Actions for year 2 onwards to be agreed during year 1 implementation)

Priority No.	No.	Actions	Comments/Progress	Completion by	Lead
P.1	1.	Develop a joint Housing Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) to supplement housing requirements for current Local Plans.	Working group to be established to progress following adoption of Housing Strategy. Project plan to be agreed. To be informed by results of Housing Strategy consultation.	April 2020	Planning Policy Housing Strategy (City & SCDC)
P.1	2.	Work together to deliver a joint Greater Cambridge Local Plan.	To be informed by results of Housing Strategy consultation	Submit by April 2022	Planning Policy
P.1	3.	Establish the number of new homes required as part of the development of the joint Greater Cambridge Local Plan.	Will need to develop a specification of requirements in line with new national methodology, working in collaboration with the Combined Authority.	Autumn 2019	Planning Policy Housing Strategy (through the Cambridge Sub Regional Housing Group)
P.1	4.	Assess the housing requirements of groups with specific housing needs in relation to disability.	County Council Research Group in process of modelling. Work to feed into the assessment of overall need.	Autumn 2019	Housing Strategy (through the Cambridge Sub Regional Housing Group)
P.1	5.	Analyse and use results of Southern Fringe new community survey and focus groups to inform the design, planning and development of and support to new communities.	Joint working with Cambridgeshire County Council Research Team. Results of survey and focus group meetings for Cambridge Southern Fringe due March 2019. Lessons learnt to be shared through various forums, eg. Housing Board, Planning Policy Forum, and used to inform Housing SPD & s106 negotiations	Analysis completed July 2019  Use ongoing.	Housing Strategy (City)
P.1	6.	Work in partnership with Cambridge University Hospitals to undertake an assessment of housing need for their workforce	Contact made with No.6 Developments (consultant working for CuH) to progress assessment	Initial research Autumn 2019	Housing Strategy (City & SCDC)

Priority No.	No.	Actions	Comments/Progress	Completion by	Lead
P.1	7.	Assess whether further research around housing needs of essential workers is required with a wider range of businesses	Part of wider work to identify housing needs of the local workforce	Assessment by April 2020. Any further work research tbc	Housing Strategy (City & SCDC)
P.1	8.	SCDC to consider proposals by the Wellcome Trust for both employment and housing that supports their economic growth ambitions and housing needs of their workforce	Initial pre app discussions underway	Spring 2019	Development Control Housing Strategy (SCDC)
P.1	9.	SCDC to deliver at least 200 council homes over the next 5 years	Funding to be secured through sale of self build plots and through new borrowing arrangements. Quarterly updates reported as part of Corporate Business Plan	April 2023 (start on site)	Head of Housing Development (New Build) – SCDC
P.1	10.	Cambridge City Council to deliver at least 500 new council homes funded through the Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Combined Authority devolution deal	Funding secured through the devolution deal of £70m. Local Lettings Plans to be developed to promote mixed and sustainable communities on larger sites.	April 2022 (start on site)	Housing Development Agency
P.1	11.	SCDC to review what we mean by 'affordable housing' with a focus on 'affordable living'	SCDC to explore options for alternative models, such as London Living Rent.  To inform the next Joint Local Plan in terms of lower living costs relating to location (transport expenses) and energy costs (energy efficiency).	March 2020	Housing Strategy (SCDC)

Priority No.	No.	Actions	Comments/Progress	Completion by	Lead
P.1	12.	SCDC to explore opportunities for direct commissioning of land through local authority investment, joint ventures, etc.	Investment partnerships with third party developers to deliver new homes included in Medium Term Financial Strategy. To establish framework for potential partners through invitation to tender.	Framework in place by July 2019	Housing Innovations Delivery
P.1	13.	SCDC to explore the potential for a retirement village	Through Issues and Options for developing the Joint Local Plan  Responses received from Housing Strategy consultation were mixed on this issue.	April 2020	Planning Policy Housing Strategy (SCDC)
P.1	14.	SCDC to work to identify a site or sites for Gypsy and Travellers and Travelling Showpeople	Through Issues and Options for developing the Joint Local Plan.	April 2020	Planning Policy Housing Strategy (SCDC) Environmental Health (SCDC)
P.1	15.	SCDC to review how it works with Parish Councils in terms of new developments	Joint Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) for Greater Cambridge out to consultation. This will give parish councils, neighbourhood forums residents, businesses and other groups the opportunity to have a say in how they want to be involved in guiding development.	To be adopted Summer 2019	Planning Policy

Priority No.	No.	Actions	Comments/Progress	Completion by	Lead
P.1	16.	SCDC to consider the appropriate use of Local Lettings Plans, especially in terms of local village connection.	Local Lettings Plans already included for exception site schemes and on larger strategic sites  Further consideration to be given as part of the development of the Housing Supplementary Planning Document relating to local needs.	April 2020	Housing Strategy (SCDC)
P.2	17.	Carry out further research to identify need and demand for purpose-built private rented sector housing (PRS)	Research to be commissioned. Assessment of need from CuH will feed into this. Work with relevant groups, such as. Cambridge Ahead for evidence base	April 2020	Housing Strategy (City & SCDC) Planning Policy
P.2	18.	Develop a set of local requirements to inform development of PRS schemes that are appropriate to the area.	To be developed as part of the Housing SPD	April 2020	Planning Policy Housing Strategy (City & SCDC)
P.2	19.	To develop better intelligence concerning housing delivery and how it could be improved.	Review outstanding planning permissions and work with developers to ensure that schemes are built out in a timely manner	Autumn 2019	Planning Policy
P.2	20.	Explore the role that new purpose built HMOs could have to provide an affordable housing option for single people on the Cambridge Northern Fringe development.	Consultation February – March 2019  Identified as part of the Cambridge Northern Fringe Area Action Plan	Submission of Area Action Plan to Secretary of State for examination Summer 2021	Housing Strategy (City & SCDC) Planning Policy
P.2	21.	SCDC to seek around 5% of new homes on schemes of 20 or more dwellings to be self build.	To be included in the Housing Supplementary Planning document.  .	April 2020  Monitored annually	Self and Custom Build Manager Planning Policy

Priority No.	No.	Actions	Comments/Progress	Completion by	Lead
P.2	22.	SCDC target to sell 18 plots of council owned land for self build, average £67,000 per plot.	Monitored quarterly through Corporate Business Plan.	April 2020	
P.2	23.	SCDC to implement a programme for delivering homes on exception sites in villages.	Working in partnership with Cambridgeshire Acre.  To work with ten villages per year (starting with those most in need and without any substantial development)	Monitored annually as part of Corporate Business Plan.	Housing Strategy (SCDC)
P.2	24.	Cambridge City Council to review approach to self and custom-build housing in line with statutory requirements.	Requirement to implement individual registers.	October 2019	Planning Policy and Housing Strategy (City)
P.3	25.	Develop a joint Sustainable Design and Construction SPD.	SPD will help to drive up standards for environmental sustainability, including energy efficiency, carbon reduction and onsite renewable energy & low carbon technologies.  SPD will consider the design of new homes so that as residents age, homes can be easily adapted to meet changing needs.  SPD currently being drafted – to take into account responses received through Housing Strategy consultation.	Consultation June/July 2019  Adoption January 2020	Planning Policy
P.3	26.	SCDC to work with eight identified communities to develop individual Village Design Statements.	Village Design Statements to go out to consultation  Adoption of Statements as Supplementary Planning Documents	June 2019  September 2019	Built and Natural Environment Team

Priority No.	No.	Actions	Comments/Progress	Completion by	Lead
P.3	27.	Cambridge City to implement the housing-related actions agreed through the council's Climate Change Strategy 2016-2021.	Progress updates published annually on website	2021	Climate Change (City)
P.3	28.	Investigate the possibility of entering into an arrangement with an energy installer for the purposes of referring households for insulation and other home energy improvements funded through ECO (Energy Company Obligation scheme)	Working together to deliver energy efficiency projects that address issues of fuel poverty and climate change through the Cambridgeshire Energy Partnership	Summer 2019	Through the Cambridgeshire Energy Partnership
P.4	29.	City Council to review approach to dealing with empty homes on new developments	Review to be carried out and action plan to be developed.	tbc	Housing Strategy & Environmental Health (City)
P.5	30.	Implement the proposed Cambridgeshire-wide repairs and adaptations policy to provide home adaptations, improve housing conditions and deliver housing, health and social care outcomes.	Policy awaiting final approval by the five neighbouring local authorities.  To be monitored quarterly by HIA Board and Adaptions Pathway Steering Group	April 2019	Housing Strategy (City & SCDC)
P.5	31.	SCDC to pilot project working with Granta Medical Practice to help tackle loneliness and isolation.	Jointly funded with Cambridgeshire County Council for the recruitment of a Care Navigator (Social Prescriber). This gives GPs a non medical referral option to ensure the right support can be given to help people who feel isolated access other services and local groups.  Project started April 2018 and is funded for 2 years.  Outcomes to be evaluated.	April 2020	Through the Social Isolation Loneliness Group
P.5	32.	SCDC – Communal Room Review to identify more innovative use of sheltered communal rooms, including the potential for mixed aged groups to better integrate through use of communal facilities.	To promote inter-generational work.	Interim Report Spring 2019	Leasehold Services (SCDC)



Priority No.	No.	Actions	Comments/Progress	Completion by	Lead
P.6	33.	SCDC Homelessness Strategy and Action Plan 2018-2023 - to be agreed	Key actions included in Housing Strategy - see separate Homelessness Strategy Action Plan for further details	April 2019	Housing Advice & Options (SCDC)
P.6	34.	SCDC to increase the number of homes by ten per year through the Council's private sector leasing scheme - Shire Homes Lettings.	Target of 10 homes to be achieved by end of March 2019.	Ongoing to March 2023	Housing Advice & Options (SCDC)
P.6	35.	Cambridge City Council Homelessness & Rough Sleeping Action Plan for 2019–2022 - to be agreed.	Project to be managed through Homelessness Strategy Implementation Partnership.	Mid 2019	Housing Advice (Cambridge City)
P.6	36.	Cambridge City Council to deliver six Housing First clusters, consisting 12 flats for residents and 6 for caretakers, through the council's housing development programme	To be delivered through the City's council housing development programme.	March 2022	Cambridge City Housing Development Agency
	37.	Review this action plan annually to assess what further actions are required to achieve Strategy's objectives and priorities	Housing Strategy Implementation Board to be established	To meet quarterly	Housing Strategy (City & SCDC)

## Links to Strategies and Plans

### Evidence Base

The following are some of the key sources of data which have helped to inform the Greater Cambridge Housing Strategy.

Sub Regional Strategic Housing Market Assessment	Cambridge & South Cambridgeshire Objectively Assessed Housing Need – Further Evidence 2015	Quarterly Housing Market Bulletins (Hometrack data)
Savills detailed Affordability Analysis for Cambridge & South Cambridgeshire – June 2017	Diamond Affordability Analysis for the Cambridge Sub Region – June 2018	Older People’s housing, care and support needs in Greater Cambridge – November 2017
Gypsy & Traveller Accommodation Needs Assessment – October 2016	Cambridgeshire County Council population estimates & forecasts	Home-Link housing applicant data

### External Context

The Greater Cambridge Housing Strategy supports the development and delivery of the Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Combined Authority Housing Strategy and is also aligned to the ambitions of the Greater Cambridge Partnership.

### Local Context

The Greater Cambridge Housing Strategy supports the overriding aims and objectives of both councils as set out in the following documents:

Cambridge City Council Corporate Plan 2019-2022	South Cambridgeshire: Your Place, Our Plan 2018-2019
Cambridge City Annual Statement	South Cambridgeshire Business Plan 2019-2024
Cambridge City Local Plan 2018	South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2018

The Strategy will also support the development of the new Joint Local Plan, setting out the strategic approach and direction for housing in Greater Cambridge.

### Supporting Strategies and Plans

The delivery of the Greater Cambridge Housing Strategy will help to contribute towards a wide-ranging suite of existing and new strategies, policies and plans. The table below sets out some of the main ones (both current and planned).

Reference	Existing	To be reviewed	To be developed
<b>Cambridge City</b>		<b>South Cambridgeshire District Council</b>	<b>Joint</b>
Affordable Housing SPD 2006 (to be replaced)		Affordable Housing SPD 2010 (to be replaced)	Joint Housing SPD [to be developed 2019]
Sustainable Design and Construction SPD 2006		District Design Guide SPD 2010	Joint Sustainable Design and Construction SPD [to be developed 2019]
Cambridge Sustainable Housing Design Guide		Health & Wellbeing Strategy [to be developed 2019]	Joint Local Plan
Climate Change Strategy 2016-2021 Carbon Management Plan 2016-2021 Fuel & Water Poverty Action Plan		Economic Development Strategy [to be developed 2019]	
Tenancy Strategy 2012 (to be reviewed)		Tenancy Strategy 2012 (to be reviewed 2019)	
Anti Poverty Strategy 2017-2020		Financial Inclusion Strategy 2015-2017 (to be reviewed 2019)	
Empty Homes Policy 2017		Empty Homes Strategy 2012-2016 (to be reviewed 2019)	
Homelessness Strategy Action Plan 2016-2019 and proposed 2019-2022 version now being worked on		Homelessness Strategy 2018-2023 (published April 2019)	
Home-Link Lettings Policy 2018		Lettings Policy – February 2018	
Anti Social Behaviour Policy 2018 Community Safety Plan 2018-19 (to be reviewed)		Anti Social Behaviour Policy Tenancy Fraud Policy Domestic Abuse Policy (to be developed 2019)	
Digital Access Strategy 2018-20		Digital Inclusion Strategy 2015-17 (to be reviewed 2019)	
HRA Business Plan 2012-2042		HRA Business Plan 2012-2042	
HRA Asset Management Plan 2012-2042		HRA Asset Management Strategy (to be reviewed 2019)	
Capital Strategy 2019/20 – 2027/28		Housing Revenue Account Medium Term Financial Strategy November 2018/19 to 2047/48 (to be published February 2019)	
		HRA Asset Sustainability Policy (Acquisitions & Disposals) (to be reviewed 2019)	
		New Build Strategy for council homes 2012-2016 (to be updated)	
		Resident Involvement Strategy 2016 -2018 (to be reviewed 2019)	

## Reference Links

Sub Regional Housing Strategic Market Assessment
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<a href="https://www.scams.gov.uk/media/11617/corporate_plan_brochure_2018_version_2small_0.pdf">https://www.scams.gov.uk/media/11617/corporate_plan_brochure_2018_version_2small_0.pdf</a>
Cambridge City Annual Statement
<a href="https://www.cambridge.gov.uk/annual-statement">https://www.cambridge.gov.uk/annual-statement</a>
South Cambridgeshire Business Plan 2019-2024 [currently out to consultation]
<a href="https://www.scams.gov.uk/the-council/performance-and-plans/council-plans-and-reports/our-business-plan/">https://www.scams.gov.uk/the-council/performance-and-plans/council-plans-and-reports/our-business-plan/</a>
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## KEY STATISTICS

### Housing Need and Affordability Analysis

	Greater Cambridge	Cambridge City	South Cams	Source
<b>Housing Need</b>				
Overall Objectively Assessed Housing Need up to 2031	33,500	14,000	19,500	Local Plans
Numbers on Housing Register for rented accommodation	2,393	2,301	2418	Home Link Register (August/September 2018)
Number of 'all' homes completed over the last 5 years up to March 2017	7,856	4,580	3,276	Annual Monitoring Report
Of which Affordable Homes completed over last 5 years up to March 2017	2,554 (Ave 511 p.a.)	1,629 (Ave 326 p.a.)	925 (Ave 185 p.a.)	Annual Monitoring Report
Number of social and affordable rent homes relet 2011-2017	6,282	2,968	3,314	Home-Link data
<b>Older People</b>				
Projected increase in the number of 65-75 year olds from 2011-2036	13,950 (69%)	4,760 (69% increase)	9,190 (70% increase)	Cambridgeshire County Council's 2015 Based Population Forecasts
Projected increase in the number of 75-84 year olds from 2011-2036	10,800 (81% increase)	3,170 (63% increase)	7,630 (93% increase)	
Projected increase in the number of Over 85 year olds from 2011-2036	9,930 (162% increase)	3,220 (119% increase)	6,710 (196% increase)	
<b>Affordability</b>				
Gross household income	Not available	£37,200 (median) £20,900 (lower quartile)	£43,700 (median) £25,300 (lower quartile)	CACI 2017
Median house price to income ratio	Not available	10.6	8.3	Hometrack, based on sales & valuations: Housing Market Bulletin Sept 2018 data
Average house price	Not available	£541,514	£441,539	
Estimated Annual Income required for a mortgage for median house price (excluding any service charges)	Not available	£146,000 (£54,000 deposit)	£115,000 (£44,150 deposit)	Based on 10% deposit, 3.9% annual interest, 25 year repayment period and mortgage costs 35% of net household income



	Greater Cambridge	Cambridge City	South Cambs	Source
Lower quartile price to income ratio	Not available	14.3	10.8	Hometrack: Housing Market Bulletin Sept 2018 data
Lower quartile house price	Not available	£332,000	£295,000	
Estimated Annual Income required for a mortgage for lower quartile sale price (excluding any service charges)	Not available	£78,228 (£33,000 deposit)	£68,506 (£29,500 deposit)	Based on 10% deposit, 3.90% annual interest, 25 year repayment period and mortgage costs 35% of net household income
Median weekly cost of a private rented property (2 bed house)	Not available	£276	£206	Hometrack; Housing Market Bulletin Sept 2018 data
Local Housing Allowance for 2 bed house (weekly)	£149.31	£149.31 to Mar 2019 £153.79 from Apr 2019	£149.31 to Mar 2019 £153.79 from Apr 2019	Valuation office –

#### Existing homes and communities

% Tenure breakdown (Source: 2011 Census)	Greater Cambridge	Cambridge City	South Cambridgeshire
Owner occupied	61.9%	48.6%	72.4%
Local authority rented	11.8%	15.2%	9.1%
Social rented (eg housing association)	6.6%	8.4%	5.1%
Privately rented	18.2%	26.2%	12.0%
Other	1.5%	1.6%	1.4%
Number of council homes in the district (local data) at April 2018	Greater Cambridge	Cambridge City	South Cambridgeshire
General housing	10,658	6,481	4,177
Sheltered/extra care housing	1,578	511	1,067
Supported housing	19	19	0
Total rented (excl. temporary housing & miscellaneous leases)	<b>12,255</b>	<b>7,011</b>	<b>5,244</b>
Shared ownership	139	87	52

Leasehold	1,290	1,167	123
Shared equity	293	0	293
<b>Total</b>	<b>13,977</b>	<b>8,265</b>	<b>5,712</b>
<b>Long-term activity limiting illness (Census 2011)</b>	Greater Cambridge	Cambridge City	South Cambridgeshire
% of population with a long-term activity limiting illness	N/A	13.0%	13.9%

### Homelessness

	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	Source
Number of homeless applications where a decision is made						Table 784, MHCLG
<b>Greater Cambridge</b>	<b>357</b>	<b>383</b>	<b>586</b>	<b>611</b>	<b>617</b>	
Cambridge City	189	262	418	393	374	
South Cambridgeshire District	168	121	168	218	243	
Number accepted as being homeless and in priority need						Table 784, MHCLG
<b>Greater Cambridge</b>	<b>254</b>	<b>380</b>	<b>293</b>	<b>297</b>	<b>270</b>	
Cambridge City	127	146	172	130	112	
South Cambridgeshire District	127	86	121	167	158	
Snapshot of total households in temporary accommodation as of 31 March each year						Table 784, MHCLG
<b>Greater Cambridge</b>	<b>134</b>	<b>135</b>	<b>134</b>	<b>135</b>	<b>98</b>	
Cambridge City	81	91	79	75	52	
South Cambridgeshire District	53	44	55	60	46	
... of which were accommodated in Bed & Breakfast (snapshot)						Table 784, MHCLG
<b>Greater Cambridge</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>12</b>	
Cambridge City	0	12	0	26	12	
South Cambridgeshire District	0	0	0	0	0	
Estimated Number of Rough Sleepers (Autumn snapshot 2010-2017)						Table 1 MHCLG
<b>Greater Cambridge</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>30</b>	
Cambridge City	9	10	18	40	26	
South Cambridgeshire District	2	1	0	0	4	

Total number of cases where positive action was successful in preventing or relieving homelessness						Table 792
<b>Greater Cambridge</b>	<b>551</b>	<b>701</b>	<b>868</b>	<b>1,123</b>	<b>1,447</b>	
Cambridge City	404	483	718	997	1,270	
South Cambridgeshire District	147	218	150	126	207	
Supply of rented homes let through Home-Link housing register						Home-Link data
<b>Greater Cambridge</b>	<b>1,240</b>	<b>1,149</b>	<b>1,115</b>	<b>956</b>	<b>1,227</b>	
Cambridge City	704	601	634	519	661	
South Cambridgeshire	536	548	481	437	566	

NB different data sets are being collected from 2018/19 onwards following implementation of the Homelessness

## Changes to National Housing Policy

### Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 and Rough Sleeping

The Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 has introduced new duties around preventing and relieving homelessness. This includes extending the period within which an applicant is considered to be threatened with homelessness, and new requirements around provision of advice.<sup>1</sup>

Homelessness and rough sleeping levels continue to increase both nationally and locally, and the government has been making more funding available for dealing with homelessness. For example, both councils were part of a successful sub-regional bid for Homelessness Prevention Trailblazer grant funding, which is being used to develop a more effective and innovative multi-agency approach to preventing homelessness. The government has also committed to halve rough sleeping by 2022 and eliminate it by 2027; and consultation is due on identifying the barriers to landlords in making longer, more secure tenancies available.

Although both councils are already engaged in a range of prevention work, the Homelessness Prevention Act will introduce new challenges for both councils in implementing the new statutory requirements. This has meant that both councils have needed to increase their staff capacity following the implementation of the Act.

### Fixing the Broken Housing Market – Government's White Paper

In February 2017 the Government published a White Paper 'Fixing our Broken Housing Market'. This set out the Government's plans to boost new housing supply; speed up the delivery of new homes; help aspiring home owners; tackle the shortage of affordable housing; widen the definition of affordable housing; boosting delivery of infrastructure; and increasing skills and capacity in the construction industry<sup>2 3</sup>. With a sharp focus on the delivery of new housing, Government expects local authorities to be ambitious and innovative in seeking to meet their objectively assessed need for housing. A national target to build 300,000 new homes a year was subsequently set in the Budget 2017.

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<sup>1</sup> Homelessness Reduction Act 2017: <https://services.parliament.uk/bills/2016-17/homelessnessreduction.html>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/housing-white-paper>

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/draft-revised-national-planning-policy-framework>

### Changes to National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

In July 2018 Government released a revised version of the NPPF. Changes include updates to national planning guidance, proposals for reforming developer contributions, and proposed changes to the assessment methodology for housing needs. The new methodology should include an assessment of the size, type and tenure of housing needed for different groups in the community (including, but not limited to, those who require affordable housing, families with children, older people, students, people with disabilities, service families, travellers, people who rent their homes and people wishing to commission or build their own home).

The definition of affordable housing has been broadened to include starter homes, discounted market sale and other affordable routes to home ownership, such as other low cost homes for sale and rent to buy. Whilst we are supportive in principle of providing alternative options to diversify the local market, this will need to be balanced against affordability in the area to ensure we are meeting the needs of those who most need affordable housing.

### Independent Review of Build Out ('The Letwin Review')<sup>4</sup>

In 2017, the government commissioned an independent review to establish reasons for the significant gap between housing completions and the amount of land allocated or permissioned in areas of high housing demand, and make recommendations for closing it. Interim results of the review concluded that lack of variety of types and tenures of the homes on offer, and the rate at which the market will absorb such homogenous products, were the fundamental drivers of the slow rate of build out on large sites.

The final report was published in October 2018, and recommended ways in which the government could 'increase the variety and differentiation of what is offered on these large sites, raise the proportion of affordable housing, and raise the rate of build out'.

We await the government's response to the findings. Both councils are committed to working with the government, developers and other partners to help increase build out rates, and to diversify the variety of homes available through the market to meet housing need.

### Housing and Planning Act 2016

This Act contained numerous legislative changes to housing policy including:

- **Introduction of Starter Homes** – a new product for people aged under 40 years with an income of less than £80,000 will be able to purchase a Starter Home at 80% of the market level capped at £250k for Greater Cambridge. The intention in the Act

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<sup>4</sup> Independent Review of Build Out, led by Sir Oliver Letwin:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/independent-review-of-build-out>



was for a proportion of new affordable homes to be ‘starter homes’ and the NPPF sets out how this should be interpreted.

- **Extension of Right to Buy** - The Right to Buy is due to be extended to housing association tenants. Housing associations will be required to replace homes on a ‘one for one’ basis. Providers would be required to replace any units sold through Right to Buy and we will encourage those to be replaced as close as possible to where the disposal occurred. This is particularly important in rural areas where there is less affordable housing. At the time of writing the detail on how this Policy will be implemented is yet to be released but a national pilot is underway.
- **Tackling Rogue Landlords** – the Act introduced various measures to improve standards in the private rented sector by tackling rogue landlords. These include introducing civil penalties of up to £30,000; rent repayment orders; banning orders and a database of rogue landlords. Other recent changes in the sector include a draft Tenant Fees Bill (November 2017) banning letting agents’ fees and capping deposits, and the extension of mandatory HMO licensing to a wider range of properties together with requiring minimum room sizes and a specification of the maximum number of people the HMO should house.
- **Self-build and custom built housing** – The government aims to increase the provision of self-build and custom built housing. Local authorities are required to hold a register of applicants who are interested in self and custom build housing and to allocate appropriate sites through the planning system.

### Government Changes to Delivery Agencies

In 2017 Government changed the main delivery agencies for housing. The Government department was renamed ‘Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government’ raising the profile of housing delivery. A new Minister for Homelessness was also created. The Homes and Communities Agency (HCA) was disbanded and ‘Homes England’ was established to oversee housing growth and infrastructure, and the regulation of social housing. These changes emphasise the national priority that has been given to housing growth over the last couple of years.

### HRA Debt Cap – Delivering More Council Housing

Rent cuts have had a significant impact on the councils’ Housing Revenue Accounts, reducing the amount available for providing services to tenants and for investing in new homes. However, the announcements that the proposed Higher Value Asset Levy (whereby councils would have been required to sell some of their higher value empty homes when they became empty) is not to be introduced, and that councils will be able to start increasing social rents again from 2020 is welcome in terms of managing and maintaining and improving council homes.

The lifting of the HRA borrowing cap is also welcome, and provides the councils with the opportunity to continue to increase their council new build programmes when existing resources are depleted.

### Welfare Reform

The implementation of a major national programme of welfare reforms aimed mainly at working age people is well under way. Key aims are to cut the overall welfare bill and encourage people into work.<sup>5</sup>

A key driver of the welfare changes is to make it financially worthwhile for people to take on paid employment rather than claim benefits. This, combined with advice and support around seeking employment, education and/or training should lead to improved opportunities for some people who would previously have been caught in the 'benefit trap'.

However, with severe cuts to the national welfare budget happening at the same time, many claimants are finding their benefits reduced, and struggling to make ends meet; including those who are already in work. This is compounded by the size of the local Broad Rental Market area (BRMA) which does not reflect local rents within Greater Cambridge. This means that Local Housing Allowance rates are insufficient to cover even the cheapest rents in Greater Cambridge, making it extremely difficult for those on benefits to access or remain in private rented housing.

Some more recent announcements have been welcomed, including: the scrapping of plans for housing benefit for social housing tenants to be capped at Local Housing Allowance rates; and some changes to Universal Credit including removing delays before those eligible can claim and making it easier for claimants to have the housing element of their award paid direct to their landlord.

Nationally the risk of Universal Credit claimants falling into rent arrears has been found to be high, and both councils as landlords will need to find ways of managing this risk going forwards.

### Care Act 2016 and Better Care Fund

The Care Act 2016 requires local social services authorities to carry out a needs assessment in order to determine whether an adult has needs for care and support, it also supports closer working between health, housing and social care services. From 2015/16 onwards the Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG) allocation to housing authorities, including district councils, has been channelled through the Better Care Fund (BCF). The BCF created a pooled budget in each local authority area to encourage health, social care and other related services to work more closely together. The inclusion of the DFG allocation is intended to recognise the vital role that the home plays in helping people to remain healthy and independent. Central Government has increased the amount given to local authorities significantly over the last few years with the expectation that local areas will be more flexible in how the money is spent. Wider health and social care priority health outcomes such as delayed transfers of care and readmission to hospital can be supported using some of the DFG capital allocation.

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<sup>5</sup> CLG Welfare Reform web pages: <https://www.gov.uk/government/policies/welfare-reform>

### A new deal for social housing Green Paper 2018

The government issued a social housing green paper in August 2018, 'A New Deal for Social Housing', plans for which were announced following the 2017 Grenfell Tower disaster.

As well as announcing that enforced sale of higher value assets and compulsory fixed term tenancies for local authorities would no longer go ahead, key proposals, around five core themes, include:

- **Safe and decent homes:** Legislation to improve building regulations and fire safety; measures to support improved social resident and landlord engagement; and reviewing the Decent Homes standard.
- **Improving complaints resolution:** e.g. improving resident awareness of how complaints can be made and escalated, and speeding up & simplifying complaint systems.
- **Empowering residents and strengthening regulation** – e.g. through social landlord performance league tables, taking performance into account when allocating funding to councils –including grant for new homes; improvements to resident engagement; and considering a new stock transfer programme to promote transfer of local authority housing, particularly to community-based housing associations.
- **'Tackling stigma and celebrating thriving communities'** eg through: introducing a 'best neighbourhood' competition; measures to improve design of social housing; and considering how residents can be better involved in planning and design of new developments.
- **Expanding supply and supporting home ownership**, building on the Housing White Paper 'Fixing the Broken Housing Market: eg, considering changes to how local authorities can use Right to Buy receipts to build new homes; overcoming barriers to delivering new community owned homes; reviewing how homes are allocated & ensuring social housing is going to those who need it most; and Investigating introduction of new shared ownership products that enable purchasers to build up more equity in their homes.

Some changes have started to happen, including lifting the borrowing cap to enable stock-holding councils in some areas to build new homes. We are waiting to see the extent to which the Green Paper will lead to further changes in national social housing policy.

### Funding of Supported Housing

In 2017, government consulted on possible alternative funding options for supported housing. Both councils expressed concern, alongside many other national and local organisations, of the potential impact on the long term security of supported accommodation if the current funding through the welfare system was abolished. On 9 August 2018, government announced that, having listened to views from providers, stakeholders and councils, the current system would remain in place. In addition, a review

of housing related support will be undertaken to better understand how housing and support currently fit together.

### **Brexit**

At the time of writing, the government is negotiating the UK's proposed withdrawal from the European Union. National reports suggest that uncertainty around the arrangements for withdrawal, in particular the risk of a 'no deal Brexit', may be starting to impact on the housing market and parts of the wider economy as a whole. Both councils are working to assess the potential risks and how they might be mitigated. For the moment it remains unclear how Brexit will impact on our ability to achieve objectives and priorities through our Strategy. We are committed to working with partners to try to minimise any negative, and capitalise on any positive outcomes arising from the process.

## Summary of requirements for development of new homes

These requirements will remain in place until a new joint Housing Supplementary Planning Document has been adopted, to support delivery of new homes through the councils' current Local Plans.

### 1. Housing Design Standards

- 1.1 In developing this Strategy, workshops were held with key officers and tenant & leaseholder representatives. It was clear from discussions that design and quality were of high importance in new developments, as well as the importance of engaging with existing communities at an early stage and having the right transport options, community facilities, and other infrastructure in place. Design and quality of homes and communities also came out in the wider public consultation on the Strategy.
- 1.2 New homes need to be flexible to meet the needs of a range of household types and sizes, and to meet individual households' changing needs over time. All new homes have to meet the nationally described space standards<sup>6</sup>.
- 1.3 Having easily adaptable homes as families' circumstances change also helps enable people to live independent lives. An ageing population over the next 20 years means we need to be future-proofing the design of our homes now, so that residents can age independently at home without the need for expensive specialist housing. Whilst the Lifetime Homes Standard has been superseded, we will, wherever possible, build to to M4(2) adaptable and accessible standards ourselves as a minimum, and encourage other house builders to do so.
- 1.4 Our current Local Plans seek:
  - **Cambridge** – All homes should be built to level M4(2) of the adaptable and accessible building standard with 5% of the affordable housing to be built to wheelchair accessibility standards.<sup>7</sup>
  - **South Cambridgeshire** - 5% of all homes to be built to the accessible and adaptable dwellings M4(2) standard, and in response to identified need the inclusion of Wheelchair Housing Design standards as part of the affordable housing contribution.

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<sup>6</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/technical-housing-standards-nationally-described-space-standard>

<sup>7</sup> Accessible Housing in Cambridge- A study into accessible housing requirements in Cambridge for the emerging Local Plan: <https://www.cambridge.gov.uk/public/ldf/coredocs/RD-CFM/rd-cfm-040.pdf>

- 1.5 Mitigating against climate change must also be at the heart of any new development to ensure we are building a sustainable future. For all new dwellings in South Cambridgeshire there will be a requirement to reduce carbon emissions by a minimum of 10% through the use of on-site renewable energy and low carbon technologies. In Cambridge, all new dwellings will be required to reduce carbon emissions by 44% compared to Part L 2006 (or 19% compared to Part L 2010 (2013 edition)).
- 1.6 We want to drive standards up above our current minimum requirements in terms of well designed homes to meet future needs of an ageing population and ensuring our homes are environmentally sustainable and we will work closely with developers to do so wherever possible.
- 1.7 We are working on a Sustainable Design and Construction Supplementary Planning Document to give more detail around the councils' design standard requirements to support the current Local Plans. Further work around future design standard requirements will be undertaken as part of the process of developing the joint Local Plan

## 2. Affordable housing requirements and tenure mix

- 2.1 The policy, as set out in the councils' adopted Local Plans<sup>8 9</sup> for affordable housing is:
- **Cambridge** – 25% of homes on sites of 11-14 units should be affordable, with 40% on sites of 15 or more.
  - **South Cambridgeshire** – 40% affordable homes on all sites of 11 or more dwellings.
- Note that in the application of these Local Plan policies significant weight will be given to the affordable housing threshold set out in the NPPF which allows for a lower threshold of 10 or more dwellings or where the site area is 0.5 hectares or more.**
- 2.2 Until the review of the Housing Supplementary Planning Document (SPD), our tenure mix policy will continue to be:
- **Cambridge** - A 75% : 25% split of rented (social or affordable rent capped at LHA rates) : intermediate (other forms of affordable housing set out in the NPPF)

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<sup>8</sup> South Cambridgeshire District Council Local Plan, Chapter 7, Policy H/10: Affordable Housing - <http://www.scambs.gov.uk/media/12533/8-chapter-7-housing.pdf>

<sup>9</sup> Cambridge City Council Local Plan, Section 6, policy 45: <https://www.cambridge.gov.uk/local-plan-2018>



- **South Cambridgeshire** - A 70% : 30% split of rented (social or affordable rent capped at LHA rates) : intermediate( other forms of affordable housing set out in the NPPF)

Our preference, wherever possible, will be for social rent rather than affordable rent, to maximise affordability.

### 3. Social housing for Rent

- 3.1 There are two tenure types that sit under the banner of social housing for rent:
- Social Rent housing is the most affordable tenure type; locally this is typically up to around 60% of an open market rent.
  - Affordable Rent is subject to rent controls that require a rent of no more than 80% of the local market rent, inclusive of service charges. To ensure homes are affordable, we will cap rents at the LHA rate, currently typically around 60-70% of an open market rent.
- 3.2 The greatest need is for social housing for rent for those on low incomes, and all such new homes will be required to be made available to those on the Home-Link Housing Register<sup>10</sup> through the sub-regional choice based lettings scheme, unless otherwise agreed with the relevant council. We will also continue to share allocations on larger strategic sites to allow those on the housing register to secure an affordable home either in South Cambridgeshire or Cambridge.
- 3.3 In terms of the affordable housing provision, there is an acknowledgement that a high proportion of social housing for rent can run the risk of concentrations of households with high priority needs in relatively small areas. To help mitigate potential imbalances we will ensure well designed, bespoke Local Lettings Plans, setting out specific criteria, are put in place to help address some of these issues where it is considered necessary. Delivery of any supported housing on larger strategic sites should be considered as part of later phases when transport infrastructure and facilities are in place.

### 4. Intermediate Housing (Other forms of Affordable Housing)

- 4.1 Generally, shared ownership has been the traditional route for other forms of affordable housing for those on middle incomes, and we will continue to support this as an affordable tenure where it is sufficiently affordable to meet the needs of those who cannot access suitable market housing. All shared ownership sales

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<sup>10</sup> <https://www.helptobuyese.org.uk/>

should be sold in line with Homes England criteria, and available to those registered on the Help to Buy register.<sup>11</sup>

- 4.2 New models of intermediate housing are emerging and we are keen to consider wider options for middle income households. For example: homes available at sub-market rents; and Rent to Buy schemes which enable tenants paying a sub-market rent to buy their home after a period of time, can provide an alternative affordable housing offer for those who either don't want to buy, or who would find it difficult to save for a deposit if paying market rents. Other examples include equity share and 'Do It Yourself' shared ownership.
- 4.3 We encourage both developers and registered providers to talk to the housing strategy teams at an early stage, preferably as part of the pre- planning application stage, to ascertain the right affordable housing mix for that area.
- 4.4 Although interested in widening the choice of intermediate tenures, both councils have raised concerns as to the affordability of the national Starter Homes model and the ultimate loss of affordable housing upon resale. South Cambridgeshire District Council is working with Homes England on a bespoke equity model for starter homes at Northstowe. In addition to this, , we would like to work with interested providers to establish a local approach to using starter homes to ensure that it meets identified needs.
- 4.5 Discounted market sales housing is a new model of affordable housing under the NPPF where homes are sold at a discount of at least 20% below local market value. The evidence provided in the 'affordability analysis'<sup>12</sup> identifies a gap in the local market for those earning between around £30,000 - £50,000. Discounted market homes should therefore be set at a level that will help to meet this need and; to be affordable are likely to comprise mainly one and two bedroom homes suitable for those on middle incomes.
- 4.6 We urge providers to ensure that affordable housing remains available as affordable housing for future eligible households. Where capital receipts are generated from shared ownership, Rent to Buy or any other forms of intermediate tenure sales, the councils would urge registered providers to recycle these to provide new affordable housing in the Greater Cambridge area, to meet the high levels of need identified locally.

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<sup>11</sup> <https://www.helptobuyese.org.uk/>

<sup>12</sup> Cambridgeshire Insight – Affordability Analysis: <https://cambridgeshireinsight.org.uk/housing/local-housing-knowledge/our-housing-market/affordability-analysis/>

## 5. *Affordable housing sizes*

- 5.1 The greatest need for social housing for rent across Greater Cambridge over recent years has been for one bedroom properties, followed by two bedrooms. When agreeing the dwelling mix on new development sites it is important that provision broadly reflects this balance of need, whilst also giving consideration to providing some larger properties where appropriate.
- 5.2 The number of bedspaces required per property and the proportion of sizes is currently as follows (although may be subject to change):

Size of property	Bedspaces	Proportion of need from the Home-Link Register (2017)	
		Cambridge	South Cambridgeshire
One bedroom	Two person	64%	56%
Two bedroom	Four person	27%	30%
Three bedroom	Five person	7%	11%
Four bedroom	Six person	2%	3%

- 5.3 For smaller village schemes, the property sizes will be based on localised housing needs which may identify a different mix. For rural exception site schemes, a village housing needs assessment will be undertaken to identify the types and tenures of properties needed.

## 6. *Viability of delivering affordable housing*

- 6.1 The new NPPF states that where up to date policies have set out the contributions expected from development, planning applications that comply with them should be assumed to be viable. However, if there are particular site specific circumstances that justify the need for a viability assessment at the application stage, assessments should reflect the recommended approach in national planning guidance, including standardised inputs, and should be made publicly available.
- 6.2 Where appropriate, consideration will be given to positive changes so that the site may come forward for development. All options will be explored to support the scheme to be viable, such as;
- supporting bids for grant funding for the delivery of affordable housing/upfront infrastructure costs,
  - review mechanisms, including claw-back arrangements
  - re-negotiation of tenure mix and alternative affordable models.

## **7. *Providing different types of homes to meet specific need***

### **7.1 Promoting housing for Essential Local Workers**

- 7.1.1 Both councils are keen to work with local employers and other partners to get a better understanding of the potential need for housing for local workers to support local services, the local economy and further economic growth.
- 7.1.2 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) defines ‘essential local workers’ as certain groups of public sector employees who provide frontline services in areas including health, education and community safety. However, we do not believe there is a ‘one size fits all’ definition. As well as public sector employees providing frontline services, we also want to take into account the needs of other workers who provide the support services necessary for the economy. It is important that housing provision, in particular a range of affordable housing options, supports the local economy and helps to reduce long commuting distances to work.
- 7.1.3 South Cambridgeshire in particular is interested in working with businesses to help themselves to deliver a range of homes that are provided for and are affordable to their workforce. The aim would be to provide additional homes specifically to address the housing needs of their workforce without impacting on the delivery of housing, including affordable housing, more generally.
- 7.1.4 Any development for essential local workers will need to be evidenced based in terms of how it supports economic growth and housing need. Analysis of income levels, household type, etc. will inform the type and size of development
- 7.1.5 Whether such housing should be provided on a particular development is also likely to be dependent on issues such as location of the development, the particular needs of the employer(s) concerned, and the need to create mixed communities that support the needs of the wider population.
- 7.1.6 Cambridge City Council’s preference is to use the tools already available, such as Local Lettings Plans, to enable local workers more generally to access available homes.

### **7.2 Providing Student Accommodation**

- 7.2.1 Students form a significant part of Cambridge’s population and the two universities make a major contribution to the local economy. Purpose built student accommodation can help to free up existing housing, but the need for it must be balanced with that of other forms of housing.
- 7.2.2 Any new student accommodation in Cambridge will, through Policy 46 of the City Council Local Plan, be required to meet the identified needs of an existing

educational institution within Cambridge for students attending full time courses. The council also supports the growth of specialist and language colleges, but requires that when they seek to grow, appropriate accommodation and facilities are provided to mitigate the impact of that growth.

### 7.3 Providing for an Ageing Population

- 7.3.1 With a rapidly ageing population, both councils are keen to promote a range of housing options for older people across all tenures to enable them to live safely and independently for as long as possible. Ensuring a range of housing options is available for older people can also help to free up family housing for households who need it.
- 7.3.2 Using NHS Healthy Towns funding we have worked with Sheffield Hallam University to develop a tool to appraise the amount of housing that is required for older people into the future. The tool is now available nationally.<sup>13</sup>
- 7.3.3 The research has projected that, if current levels of provision were to be projected forward, future supply would need to be:

#### Projections of future recommended supply in Greater Cambridge based on current provision

	Current supply	Recommended supply	Difference (shortfall)	Recommended future supply			
		2016		2020	2025	2030	2035
<b>Age exclusive</b>	<b>239</b>	<b>1,145</b>	<b>-906</b>	<b>1,321</b>	<b>1,619</b>	<b>1,835</b>	<b>2,062</b>
<b>Specialist housing</b>	<b>3,280</b>	<b>3,422</b>	<b>-142</b>	<b>3,950</b>	<b>4,839</b>	<b>5,485</b>	<b>6,163</b>
<b>Care beds</b>	<b>1,825</b>	<b>2,152</b>	<b>-327</b>	<b>2,484</b>	<b>3,043</b>	<b>3,449</b>	<b>3,876</b>

Source: Older People's housing, care and support needs in Greater Cambridge 2017 – 2036 [Tables 4.3 & 4.6 combined]: Sheffield Hallam University [November 2017]

- 7.3.4 However, this provides only a starting point. Any decisions on future supply requirements need to take into account wider strategic direction and policy decisions. For example, prioritising 'upstream' support for older people to enable them to remain living independently in their own homes for longer may reduce the need for specialist housing. Similarly, a move away from the traditional forms of sheltered housing to floating support services can reduce the need for purpose built

<sup>13</sup> <https://cambridgeshireinsight.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/07/older-peoples-housing-care-support-greater-cambridge.pdf>

sheltered housing but may increase the need for more age exclusive and extra care properties.

- 7.3.5 As well as more traditional models, we are also keen to explore wider options for older people's housing. South Cambridgeshire in particular is interested in exploring the potential for a retirement village or intergenerational living arrangements.
- 7.3.6 In terms of suggested tenure splits for age exclusive and specialist housing, the above research suggests that ownership forms of specialist and age-exclusive housing will need to increase significantly in percentage terms, but that rental options will remain predominant. This reflects findings using the more established SHOP@ model, which suggests that in affluent areas such as Greater Cambridge, around two thirds of sheltered and extra care housing should be for ownership.<sup>14</sup> This is significantly at odds with current provision in the area.
- 7.3.7 Assessing housing needs, and any new provision, also needs to take into account people's aspirations. With most older people reluctant to move until it becomes a necessity, and a general lack of understanding on the options available, a significant shift is needed in the way the next generation of older people view their housing situation if they are to consider moving to more appropriate housing at an earlier stage, and if social care costs incurred when a crisis hits are to be reduced in favour of 'up stream' preventative provision.
- 7.3.8 To get a clearer picture of need going forwards we will continue to work with Cambridgeshire County Council to support further development of the Cambridgeshire Older People's Accommodation Strategy, together with an Extra Care Statement to demonstrate to partners the county's approach to extra care provision going forwards<sup>15</sup>. As in interim position, we will look to secure cross-tenure older people's accommodation on new developments on larger sites across Greater Cambridge, based on the Sheffield Hallam Research, as follows:

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Approximately 5% of new supply to be age exclusive homes (likely to take the form of mainstream housing built with older people in mind, i.e. meeting Building Regulations Part M4 (2 or 3))

Around 7% of homes to be specialist housing for older people, where the size of the development makes this practicable. This could take the form of care ready type accommodation or extra care, dependent on availability of revenue funding from the County Council.

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<sup>14</sup> SHOP@ model, produced by the Housing LIN (Strategic Housing for Older People Analysis Tool)

<sup>15</sup> Cambridgeshire Older People's Accommodation Programme Board: Draft Older People's Accommodation Strategy [Version 0.9. April 2016]



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Appropriate provision of additional care beds, consisting of residential and/or nursing care taking into account health and social care policy requirements.

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- 7.3.9 Housing for older people needs to be well located close to services and facilities and well integrated. Proposals are expected to comply with the amenity standards set out in the policies of the Local Plan for general needs housing. Any departure from these standards would need to be robustly justified.

## 7.4 Gypsies & Travellers

- 7.4.1 The 2011 census identified 0.1% of the population as a white Gypsy/Irish Traveller in Cambridge and 0.3% in South Cambridgeshire, equating to an overall figure of just under 600 Gypsies & Travellers recorded as residing in Greater Cambridge.
- 7.4.2 In 2016 a sub-regional Gypsy & Traveller Accommodation Needs Assessment was undertaken to provide an evidence base to the Local Plans.<sup>16</sup> The study was carried out based on the more recent national planning definition of a Gypsy, Traveller or Travelling Showperson which meant that persons who ceased to travel permanently would no longer be considered under the definition of a Gypsy & Traveller. The findings of the survey identified that there was no requirement to provide additional Gypsy and Traveller pitches, either public or private, in Greater Cambridge.
- 7.4.3 For Travelling Showpeople, 12 additional pitches were identified to be provided over the plan up to 2036 for South Cambridgeshire. The District Council has been in discussions with the Showmen's Guild and with neighbouring authorities to try to identify a site close to the strategic highway network that is sufficient to meet this modest need.
- 7.4.4 Although no requirement for new Gypsy & Traveller pitches was identified, the study suggested that there could potentially be additional need from existing households with whom it had not been possible to engage through the survey following at least three attempts. This could mean a requirement of anything between 0 and 68 additional pitches in South Cambridgeshire, although based on national average figures it is likely that approximately 10% of those not contacted may meet the new definition.
- 7.4.5 There has been a noticeable increase over the last year in the number of temporary unauthorised encampments across Greater Cambridge, particularly Gypsies and

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<sup>16</sup> Cambridgeshire, Kings Lynn & West Norfolk, Peterborough & West Suffolk Gypsy & Traveller Accommodation Needs Assessment 2016: [https://cambridgeshireinsight.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2017/10/2016\\_10\\_05\\_cambridgeshire\\_gtaa\\_final\\_report\\_0.pdf](https://cambridgeshireinsight.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2017/10/2016_10_05_cambridgeshire_gtaa_final_report_0.pdf)

Travellers needing to access hospital treatment. Over recent years the councils have tried to identify an appropriate location for a transit and/or emergency stopping place site in the area but have been unable to find anything suitable. We will need to reconsider how we can meet these needs going forward.

## **7.5 Non-Travelling Gypsies & Travellers and Houseboat Dwellers**

- 7.5.1 The Gypsy & Traveller Accommodation Needs Assessment 2016, identified 61 Gypsy & Traveller households in South Cambridgeshire who no longer meet the planning definition but have a housing need. Consideration will need to be given in the new joint Local Plan as to how this need can be met.
- 7.5.2 Both councils need to assess the housing needs of people needing or wanting to live in caravans and houseboats. Ideally, due to the integrated nature of local waterways this needs to be carried out in conjunction with other sub-regional authorities.
- 7.5.3 In terms of houseboat dwellers, there is currently space for 70 residential boats, plus 8 for visitors to moor on the River Cam within Cambridge. One site in Cambridge City has been allocated for off-river residential moorings, and Policy 54 of Cambridge City Local plan supports appropriate delivery of residential moorings where they meet agreed criteria.

## **7.6 Private Rented Sector Housing (PRS)**

- 7.6.1 The councils are interested in considering proposals for new PRS schemes. In particular PRS housing can help to diversify the housing mix on strategic development sites, accelerating build out rates. In addition, PRS can provide for a wide range of housing need, including affordable housing at below market rents (known as Affordable Private Rent), as well as for those that can afford home ownership but choose to rent.
- 7.6.2 Recognising the different financial model involved in delivering PRS, consideration may be given to part of the affordable housing requirement on a strategic site being met through provision of Affordable Private Rent as part of a PRS scheme (rents set at least 20% below local market rents). For any new PRS scheme we will seek a range of rent levels to meet a variety of income levels. Rent levels in any scheme would need to be agreed with the relevant council, based on robust evidence around needs and income levels. As a guide, it is considered that 35% of net household income is reasonable to spend on housing costs, including rent and any service charges.
- 7.6.3 Prior to the review of the local housing needs assessment, as a benchmark for the level of affordable private rent homes on PRS schemes, the local authorities will seek at least 20%.

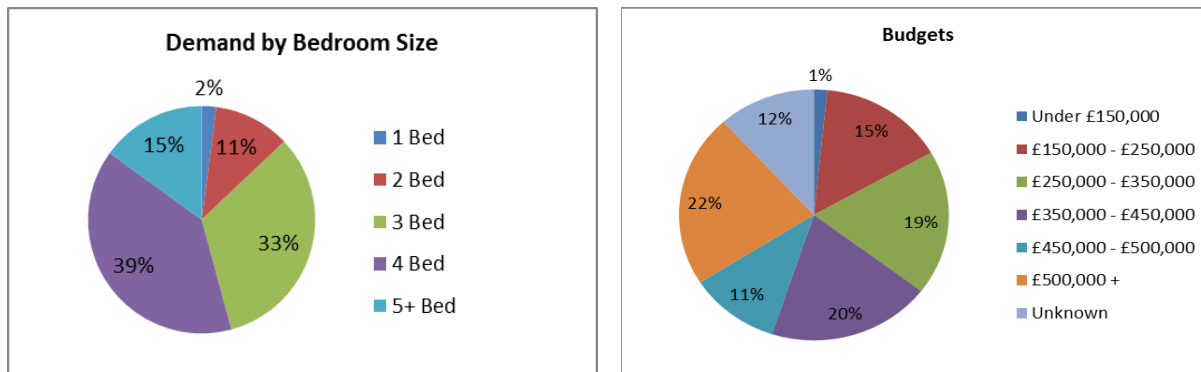
7.6.4 Proposals for PRS will only be considered acceptable where they form part of the housing mix to be provided through the development; are in single ownership and management; are held under covenant as PRS for a period of a minimum of 15 years; are self-contained; provide for long-term tenancies; and provide acceptable management and maintenance arrangements.

7.6.5 As this is a relatively new concept for the area, further work will be undertaken in terms of understanding the relationship between large PRS schemes and the ability to create settled and cohesive communities.

## 7.7 Self-Build and Custom Build Housing

7.7.1 The Local Plan for South Cambridgeshire identifies that on all sites of 20 or more dwellings, and in each phase of strategic sites, developers will supply dwelling plots for sale to self and custom builders. Although no particular percentage has been set, it is suggested that provision seeking around 5% custom/self-build would be necessary to address evidence of current demand.

7.7.2 There are currently 379 people on the self build register (as of September 2018), with around 72% wanting to self build individual plots as part of a larger site and 28% interested in customised homes. The breakdown of demand is set out below:



## 7.8 Rural Exception Site Housing

7.8.1 Delivering homes that are affordable to local people is a top priority for South Cambridgeshire District Council and through its rural exception site policy it has enabled around 180 new affordable homes to be built over the last five years. Through this policy a small proportion of market homes is permitted and it is hoped that this will support more sites coming forward, providing a range of homes including self build and 'downsizer' type accommodation to meet local need in rural areas. Where there are groups of smaller settlements, development in one village may support services in a village nearby and meet housing need within a wider catchment area. An up to date housing needs assessment should be undertaken to ascertain the numbers, types and tenures of homes needed to meet local housing need.

## **7.9 Entry Level Exception Sites**

- 7.91 Given the affordability issues in Greater Cambridge, we will support the development of entry-level exception sites that are suitable for first time buyers or those looking to rent their first home. Entry Level Exception Sites must provide 100% affordable housing and largely comprise of one and two bedroom homes suitable for first time renters or buyers based on low to middle income households.

## **7.10 Community led housing**

- 7.10.1 Community led development enables local groups to provide affordable homes for local people through public support and community ownership. Government grant through the Community Housing Fund has enabled the councils to work together to promote community led housing across Greater Cambridge, including offering set-up grants to groups to help develop their plans. So far, 16 communities have shown an interest, with three community groups successfully bidding for funding to help bring a scheme forward. We will continue to offer grants whilst grant funding remains available. Any schemes coming forward will need to accord with the general housing policies within the Local Plans and be aligned to Neighbourhood Plans where relevant. Where development is outside of the village framework within South Cambridgeshire, schemes will be considered under the existing Exception Sites policy.
- 7.10.2 The NPPF states that the landlord for affordable housing for rent (other than build to rent schemes) should be a registered provider. Whilst we support this view, we will consider exceptions where community led groups, such as charitable trusts, community land trusts, etc. come forward with an affordable housing scheme for local people; and can provide assurances that the homes will be properly managed and maintained.
- 7.10.3 The allocations of any community led housing will need to be agreed on a scheme by scheme basis with the relevant local authority.

## Homelessness and Rough Sleeping

### Homelessness and rough sleeping – the scale of the problem

In the five years between 2013/14 and 2017/18.

- The number of homeless applications where a decision was made has risen considerably in both Councils with over 600 applications in 2017/18.
- The number of households accepted as homeless and in priority need has increased slightly with 270 households being accepted in 2017/18.
- The number of households in temporary accommodation at any one time has been reduced considerably, particularly over the last year. The number in Bed & Breakfast has fluctuated from year to year.
- The number of rough sleepers has tripled with 30 recorded street sleepers in 2017/18.
- The number of households preventing from becoming homeless has risen three-fold from around 550 to almost 1500 in 2017/18.
- The number of social housing lettings available has remained constant over that period.
- The main causes of homelessness in both districts is the loss of private tenancy, eviction by friends / family and relationship breakdown.

### Preventing Homelessness in Greater Cambridge

The councils have numerous approaches to help prevent homelessness including the following:

- Cambridge City's financial advice and support, and home visiting services- providing conciliation and advocacy to prevent evictions from the homes of family and friends.
- South Cambridgeshire District Council's work with Cambridge Citizens Advice Bureau to provide a money advice outreach service from the Council's offices. A Spend to Save scheme gives officers discretion to provide one-off loan solutions up to a maximum of £2,000 per applicant to prevent homelessness.
- Improved approaches to tackling domestic abuse. It is estimated that 1 in 4 women experience domestic abuse, with the number one barrier to women leaving abusive situations being access to appropriate housing. To improve the support and advice available the councils are working towards formal accreditation through the Domestic Abuse Housing Alliance.<sup>17</sup> And CIH 'Make a Stand' pledge<sup>18</sup>.

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<sup>17</sup> Domestic Abuse Housing Alliance: <https://www.dahalliance.org.uk/>

- A successful bid for Government funding as a 'Homelessness Trailblazer' resulting in a wider partnership across Cambridgeshire and Peterborough. Multi-agency working to make homelessness 'the unacceptable outcome' is a key objective of the project.
- Social housing lettings policies which include priority given to people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness.<sup>19 20</sup> However, with limited supply of social housing, improving access to the private rented sector for those at risk of homelessness, will continue to be a major priority for both councils, through a variety of initiatives.
- Supporting access to the private rented sector including payment of rent deposits.
- Cambridge City's social lettings agency - Town Hall Lettings, and South Cambridgeshire's Shire Homes Ltd private sector leasing scheme. Both are aimed at enabling homeowners to let out their homes at an affordable rate with guaranteed rental payments.<sup>21 22</sup>
- Cambridge City's Housing Benefit Plus and Housing Benefit Family Plus schemes which provide top-up payments for those whose housing benefit is insufficient to cover the rent, and offers employment advice and financial support to help people to improve their financial circumstances.
- The City's tenancy sustainment service, which provides support to residents whose tenancies may be at risk due to such issues as mental ill health, anti-social behaviour, and/or history of homelessness
- Encouraging the use of empty homes for use by homeless households including via Town Hall Lettings.<sup>23</sup> South Cambridgeshire District have invested around £2million since 2012 on purchasing 15 empty homes to utilise as temporary accommodation.
- Both councils provide grant aid to a number of organisations that offer housing advice and other support to homeless and potentially homeless households.

#### Temporary and emergency accommodation

- Both Councils use temporary and emergency accommodation, which sometimes includes bed and breakfast. The City Council in particular is increasingly having to look for housing outside the district to be able to meet its statutory requirements around rehousing homeless households. This is far from ideal for those wanting to remain close to family, schools, existing social and support networks, but the

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<sup>18</sup> <http://www.cih.org/makeastand>

<sup>19</sup> SCDC Lettings policy:  
<https://www.scambs.gov.uk/sites/default/files/documents/Lettings%20Policy.pdf>

<sup>20</sup> CCC Lettings policy: <https://www.cambridge.gov.uk/sites/default/files/lettings-policy.pdf>

<sup>21</sup> SCDC Shire Homes web page: <https://www.scambs.gov.uk/ShireHomes>

<sup>22</sup> CCC Town Hall Lettings web page: <https://www.cambridge.gov.uk/town-hall-lettings>

<sup>23</sup> CCC Empty homes web page: <https://www.cambridge.gov.uk/empty-homes>



shortage of housing available locally which is affordable to those on low incomes often leaves the Council with little choice. For South Cambridgeshire, whilst it has managed to accommodate homeless households mostly within the District, given its rurality it is often difficult to find accommodation close to support networks, etc.

- Where households require rehousing on a temporary basis, use of temporary, Bed and Breakfast (B&B) and other emergency accommodation for households to whom the councils owe a statutory interim or permanent duty, is expensive - and for households it is far from ideal. Where households are reliant on housing benefit, the councils can only recover about one third of the cost of B&B provision. In addition, because of the difficulty in securing B&B from hoteliers, homeless households in Cambridge often have to be placed in B&B outside of Cambridge. This is also the case occasionally for South Cambridgeshire, although less so here because of the lower number of placements.
- Both councils' use of Bed & Breakfast has been reduced over recent years, with the councils maintaining a supply of hostel and other temporary accommodation for households awaiting a homelessness decision or waiting for permanent accommodation. This is kept under regular review to ensure that it continues to meet local needs.
- Both councils will continue to consider alternative options for providing appropriate forms of temporary and/or emergency accommodation, as necessary.

### The Homelessness Reduction Act 2018

Duties under the new Act include:

- an enhanced prevention duty extending the period during which a household is threatened with homelessness from 28 days to 56 days, meaning that housing authorities are required to work with people to prevent homelessness at an earlier stage; and
- a new duty for housing authorities in relation to those who are already homeless, requiring them to support households for 56 days to relieve their homelessness by helping them to secure accommodation.

With a good track record around homelessness prevention, both councils welcome the principles of the Act. However, together with housing authorities nationally, we have concerns about the increase in capacity and resources likely to be required to successfully implement the Act's requirements.

A workshop held with housing advice & homelessness officers from both local authorities, in developing this Strategy in the context of the new Act, identified three key areas of concern:

- The need to increase the supply of accommodation that is genuinely affordable and the growing gap in provision of sub market and other affordable private rented sector accommodation.
- The challenges presented by both councils needing to implement the requirements of the new Act and ensure compliance with the new duties and responsibilities, at a

time of local government spending pressures and the need to make significant financial savings.

- Potential impact on lettings through Home-Link following the implementation of the Act. A further review of the lettings policy is likely to be required once the implications become clearer.

### Single homelessness & rough sleeping

Single homelessness is on the rise across Greater Cambridge, with rough sleeping an increasing problem in Cambridge. Both councils are involved in a number of initiatives to help prevent single people from becoming homeless:

- Cambridge City Council's Single Homelessness service helps single people with low support needs who are threatened with homelessness to find somewhere to live and to settle into their new home, with access to private sector housing available through the council's social lettings agency, Town Hall Lettings.
- Initiatives to support those with mental health problems – including an Accommodation Forum for specialist mental health accommodation. We also work with the Riverside Floating Support service and the Chronically Excluded Adults service to find suitable support for those who need it.
- In Cambridge a 'training flats' model is used to provide housing for rough sleepers with complex needs who have a history of repeat homelessness and failure to progress through the hostel and established supported housing pathways. This offers accommodation together with training on how to manage a tenancy; a type of 'Housing First' approach.
- A dual diagnosis street outreach service is also being piloted in Cambridge, to support rough sleepers with mental health problems who also have drug or alcohol dependency issues.
- The City Council has, over recent years, been shifting focus from provision of short term accommodation for single people towards supporting partner agencies in providing one to one support and reablement services, including development of skills and employment. The council is currently working to deliver some new Housing First accommodation through its council house building programme, to provide accommodation with access to support for homeless people with complex or multiple needs.

Ex-offenders being discharged from prison are one of the groups particularly at risk of becoming homeless. They may be 'sofa-surfing' (staying with friends/ relatives), therefore not showing up in official homelessness figures, and end up sleeping rough further down the line. We need to improve our understanding of this issue and work with partners to improve our approach to preventing homelessness amongst ex-offenders.

We know that some rough sleepers engage in street based anti-social behaviour and begging. In addition we know that not all rough sleepers or those with a street based lifestyle are homeless but already have tenancies, and such behaviours can put individuals'

tenancies at risk. The Cambridge Street Aid initiative aims to discourage the direct giving of financial donations to people on the streets, instead enabling them to donate through the scheme. Donations are used to provide grants to individuals to help them to get back on their feet.

See South Cambridgeshire District Council's Homelessness Strategy 2018-2023<sup>24</sup> (published April 2019) and Cambridge City Council's Homelessness and Single Homelessness & Rough Sleeping action plan (currently being reviewed) for more detail and for further actions being taken forward.<sup>25</sup>

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<sup>24</sup> South Cambridgeshire District Council Homelessness Strategy 2018-2023 - [https://www.scambs.gov.uk/media/12752/homelessness\\_strategy\\_2018.pdf](https://www.scambs.gov.uk/media/12752/homelessness_strategy_2018.pdf)

<sup>25</sup> Cambridge City Council Homelessness Strategy Action Plan: <https://www.cambridge.gov.uk/media/6092/homelessness-strategy-action-plan.pdf>

## Resources

This chapter summarises the main sources of funding available to meet Greater Cambridge’s strategic housing objectives.

<b><i>Council funding</i></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Housing Revenue Accounts – funded by rents and used to pay for management and maintenance of the Councils’ housing. Directed by HRA Business Plans.</li> <li>➤ Money from the councils’ General Fund pot to fund expenditure on private sector housing.</li> </ul>
<b><i>New Homes</i></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Investment by private Developers, Registered Providers and other interested investors.</li> <li>➤ Contributions including s106 for affordable housing and in-lieu contributions (in exceptional circumstances).</li> <li>➤ Combined Authority Funding – Devolution deal includes £100m for 2,000 new additional affordable homes across Cambridgeshire and Peterborough, plus a further £70m to deliver 500 new council homes in Cambridge City: all homes to have been started on site by 2022.</li> <li>➤ New Council Homes Funded by: Right to Buy receipts, Housing Revenue Account borrowing, s106 developer contributions, affordable housing grant, and provision of land. In addition, South Cambridgeshire is supplementing funding through the sale of self-build housing plots</li> <li>➤ Government Grant – via Homes England for infrastructure or housing. Also for community led housing schemes.</li> </ul>
<b><i>Private sector housing adaptations and repairs funding</i></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Disabled Facilities Grant via Better Care Fund.</li> <li>➤ Discretionary Housing grants – to repair and improve homes.</li> </ul>
<b><i>Homelessness and support Services</i></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Annual prevention grant from Government.</li> <li>➤ Trailblazer innovation grant.</li> <li>➤ Flexible Homelessness Support Grant – funds temporary accommodation.</li> <li>➤ New Burdens Funding – to implement Homelessness Reduction Act.</li> <li>➤ Housing related support funding to providers of sheltered and supported accommodation.</li> <li>➤ Other government grants from time to time becoming available.</li> <li>➤ Potential for additional funding arising from local interest in tackling homelessness and rough sleeping issues.</li> </ul>

## Glossary

Term	Definition
<b>Affordable Housing / Social Housing</b>	<p>NPPF definition: housing for sale or rent, for those whose needs are not met by the market (including housing that provides a subsidised route to home ownership and/or is for essential local workers); and which complies with one of the following</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Affordable housing for rent (social rented or Affordable Rent)</li> <li>• Starter Homes</li> <li>• Discounted market sales housing</li> <li>• Other affordable routes to home ownership</li> </ul> <p>(See <a href="#">National Planning Policy Framework</a> for full definition)</p>
<b>Affordable Rent</b>	<p>One of the two forms of ‘social housing for rent’ (the other being Social Rent )</p> <p>Rented housing provided by Local Authorities and Private Registered Providers of social housing to households that are eligible for Social housing for rent. 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>In Greater Cambridge we require all Affordable Rent homes to be let at or below Local Housing Allowance rates.</p> <p>Some existing Social Rent homes may be converted to Affordable Rents in agreement with Homes England.</p>
<b>Better Care Fund</b>	<p>Health led fund to improve health, social care and housing outcomes through improved integration. Disabled Facilities Grant funding to district councils is allocated through this fund.</p>
<b>Broad Rental Market Area (BRMA)</b>	<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 Local Housing Allowance rates for Cambridge are significantly lower than private rents in the more expensive area of Greater Cambridge .</p>
<b>Cambridgeshire Home Improvement Agency</b>	<p>The <a href="#">Cambridgeshire Home Improvement Agency</a> set up as a shared service, currently covering Cambridge City, South Cambs and Huntingdonshire district councils. The Agency provides advice, support and assistance to older, disabled and vulnerable people who own and live in their own property, or those in privately rented or housing association accommodation. The</p>

	purpose of the service is to help people to remain independent, warm, safe and secure in their own homes.
<b>Choice Based Lettings (CBL)</b>	The scheme under which Council and Housing Association homes for rent are let. Applicants (including existing tenants who want a transfer) are able to bid for properties which become available. The councils are part of a sub-regional CBL scheme – Home Link.
<b>Disabled Facilities Grants (DFGs)</b>	Grants provided by the Council for adaptation works in the home for disabled people. The government allocates a sum to each local authority each year, but councils may choose to top up the amount payable.
<b>Discounted market sale housing</b>	Included within the definition of Affordable housing as an intermediate product to help those wishing to buy a home. Properties are sold at a discount of at least 20% below local market value. Eligibility is determined with regard to local incomes and local house prices. Provisions should be in place to ensure housing remains at a discount for future eligible households.
<b>Exception Site</b>	An exception site is a site outside of the village framework/development boundary which would never normally get planning consent but may be considered where it provides affordable homes for local people.
<b>Extra care</b>	<p>Specialist accommodation designed to maximise the independence of older people, in which residents live in their own home with their own front door, but can benefit from around the clock social care and housing support. A number of different models exist nationally.</p> <p>Some of the services provided in extra care housing can also be extended to people living in non-specialist accommodation in the wider community.</p>



<b>Fuel Poverty</b>	<p>A person is regarded to be living in fuel poverty if they are a member of a household living on a lower income in a home which cannot be kept warm at reasonable cost.</p> <p>Under this ‘Low Income High Costs’ definition of fuel poverty, used nationally, households are considered fuel poor if they have:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• an income below the poverty line (including if meeting its required energy bill would push it below the poverty line); and,</li> <li>• higher than typical energy costs.</li> </ul>
<b>General Fund</b>	An account held by each council to fund activities other than those related to council owned housing. (See Housing Revenue Account below).
<b>Gypsies &amp; Travellers</b>	There are a number of definitions governing different areas of law that apply to Gypsies and Travellers. The Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment include the needs of Gypsies (including English, Scottish, Welsh and Romany Gypsies), Irish Travellers, New (Age) Travellers and Travelling Showpeople.
<b>Home Improvement Agency</b>	An agency which provides disabled adaptations and home improvements for vulnerable people living in private homes, and signposts people to other services. <a href="#">Cambs HIA</a> is the agency provided as a joint service across Cambridge City, South Cambridgeshire and Huntingdonshire District Councils.
<b>Home Link</b>	<a href="#">Home Link</a> is the choice based lettings scheme (see above) through which council and Housing Association homes are let across the Cambridge sub-region.
<b>Homes England</b>	<p><a href="#">Homes England</a> (previously the Homes &amp; Communities Agency) is the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government’s non-departmental public body.</p> <p>Its remit is to bring together land, money, expertise, and planning and compulsory purchase powers, to facilitate delivery of sufficient new homes, where they are most needed, to deliver a sustained improvement in affordability. It is also responsible for social housing regulation through the <a href="#">Regulator of Social Housing</a>.</p>
<b>Housing Associations</b>	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.
<b>Housing First</b>	Housing First is a relatively new approach in England, aimed at supporting homeless people with multiple and complex needs. It involves providing secure home, together with personalised support. Providing a home first can provide a stable platform from which other issues can be addressed.
<b>Housing Revenue Account (HRA)</b>	The account which deals with the rent and service charge money paid by council tenants and leaseholders, and pays for management, maintenance and improvement of the council's homes and surrounding areas and development of new council homes.
<b>Housing Supplementary Planning Document (SPD)</b>	Provides guidance to partners on the councils' expectations around the delivery of new homes including the type and mix of housing required, how Affordable Housing should be located on sites, the council's approach to viability, etc. Is a material consideration when assessing planning applications.  The SPD will be reviewed in 2019.
<b>House in Multiple Occupation (HMO)</b>	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'.
<b>Intermediate Housing</b>	All other forms of affordable housing, excluding affordable housing for rent. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Starter Homes</li> <li>• Discounted market sale housing</li> <li>• Other affordable routes to home ownership (including shared ownership, relevant equity loans, other low cost homes for sale and rent to buy)</li> </ul>
<b>Local Housing Allowance (LHA) rates</b>	<a href="#">LHA rates</a> 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 30 <sup>th</sup> percentile of rents in the local Broad Market Rental Area (BRMA) – see above.
<b>Local Plan</b>	Local Planning Authorities, including district councils, must provide a Local Plan which sets planning policies in the local authority area. Both councils have recently adopted their Local Plan and are working towards a joint Local Plan from 2019.

<b>Local Lettings Plan</b>	Local Lettings plans are agreed local plans for the allocation and letting of homes within an agreed area to help create balanced, mixed and sustainable communities. For an exception site scheme, Local Lettings Plans are used to ensure that priority is given to those with a local village connection.
<b>Mandatory licensing of HMOs</b>	<p>Large HMOs must be licensed by the local authority. Up until recently these have been HMOs which are: rented to five or more people who form more than one household; are at least three storeys high; and tenants share toilet, bathroom or kitchen facilities.</p> <p>From October 2018 HMOs, mandatory licensing apply to: any property occupied by five or more people forming two or more separate households; or any purpose-built flat in a block of up to two flats, occupied as an HMO by five or more people</p>
<b>National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)</b>	The <a href="#">national framework</a> which sets out the government's policies around new developments, including the development of Affordable Housing. It was originally published in 2012, and updated most recently in 2018.
<b>Neighbourhood Plan</b>	A Neighbourhood Plan helps set out a community's vision for their area. It is an important and powerful tool that gives communities statutory powers to shape how their communities develop. Once adopted, the Neighbourhood Plan has the same legal status as the Local Plan.
<b>Registered Providers</b>	Providers of social housing registered with Homes England
<b>Rent to Buy</b>	Homes are let to eligible households at an intermediate rent/Affordable Rent with a view to purchasing the property at a later date.
<b>Right to Buy (RTB)</b>	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.
<b>Section 106 Agreement</b>	Section 106 of the Town & Country Planning Act 1990 allows a local planning authority to enter into a legally binding agreement with a developer. Such agreements can be used to require developers to provide Affordable Housing and/or community facilities on a site. Alternatively, financial contributions (commuted sums) can be agreed in place of delivering new affordable homes on site. The Greater Cambridge councils will normally only accept financial contributions in place of Affordable

	Housing in exceptional circumstances.
<b>Shared Ownership</b>	A form of Intermediate Tenure Low Cost Home Ownership housing. Homes in which the occupier owns a share of the equity and pays rent on the remaining share.
<b>Social Housing</b>	See 'Affordable Housing' above.
<b>Social Rent Housing</b>	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.
<b>Social Rent</b>	The rent charged for social rented housing. (Differs from Affordable Rent). Typically around 60% of an open market rent.
<b>Starter Homes</b>	<p>Introduced by the <a href="#">Housing &amp; Planning Act 2016</a>. Starter homes are aimed at first time buyers aged over 23 and under 40. Properties to be sold to purchasers at a discount of at least 20% of market value, with a discounted price cap of £250k (£450k in London).</p> <p>The NPPF provides for Starter Homes to count as Affordable Housing. Secondary legislation may be made, such as limiting a household's eligibility to purchase a starter home to those with a particular maximum level of household income.</p> <p>At the time of publication, secondary legislation has not been implemented.</p>
<b>Village Design Statement</b>	<p>A Village Design Statement (VDS) is a document that describes the distinctive characteristics of the locality, and provides design guidance to influence future development and improve the physical qualities of the area.</p> <p>It helps communities and planners shape the character of new development in the area, in response to community priorities, and carries significant weight in the planning process.</p>



# EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

The Greater Cambridge Housing Strategy has been developed jointly between South Cambridgeshire District Council and Cambridge City Council. An Equality Impact Assessment has been completed using the City Council's format for both areas. No negative impacts have been identified.

## Cambridge City Council & South Cambridgeshire District Council Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA)

This tool helps the Councils 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.

<b>1. Title of strategy, policy, plan, project, contract or major change to your service:</b>
Homes for our Future: Greater Cambridge Housing Strategy 2019-2023
<b>2. Webpage link to full details of the strategy, policy, plan, project, contract or major change to your service (if available)</b>
Will be available at: <a href="https://www.cambridge.gov.uk/housing-and-related-strategies">https://www.cambridge.gov.uk/housing-and-related-strategies</a> and <a href="https://www.scambs.gov.uk/housing/housing-strategy/housing-strategy-and-policy/">https://www.scambs.gov.uk/housing/housing-strategy/housing-strategy-and-policy/</a>
<b>3. What is the objective or purpose of your strategy, policy, plan, project, contract or major change to your service?</b>
The Greater Cambridge Housing Strategy is a high level document that sets out the strategic direction for housing activity in Cambridge City and South Cambridgeshire District. Its purpose is to set the context as to how both councils aim to meet the housing challenges facing the area, setting out key priorities for action. It replaces the Cambridge City Council and South Cambridgeshire District Councils' individual Housing Strategy Statements 2017
<b>4. Responsible Service</b>
Cambridge City Council – Housing Services South Cambridgeshire District Council – Affordable Homes



**5. Who will be affected by this strategy, policy, plan, project, contract or major change to your service? (Please tick those that apply)**

- ☒ Residents of Cambridge City and South Cambridgeshire District
- ☐ Visitors to Cambridge City
- ☐ Staff

Please state any specific client group or groups (e.g. Council tenants, tourists, people who work in the area but do not live here):

- People living and/or working in Greater Cambridge
- Residents of all tenures

**6. What type of strategy, policy, plan, project, contract or major change to your service is this? (Please tick)**

- ☒ New
- ☐ Major change
- ☐ Minor change

Replaces the Cambridge City Council and South Cambridgeshire District Councils' individual Housing Strategy Statements 2017

**7. Are other departments or partners involved in delivering this strategy, policy, plan, project, contract or major change to your service? (Please tick)**

☐ No

☒ Yes (Please provide details):

Other council departments:

- Joint Planning Service
- Environmental Services (City) and Environmental Services (South Cambs)
- Community Services (City)
- Sustainable Communities and Wellbeing (South Cambs)
- Housing Development Agency (City)
- Housing Development (South Cambs)
- Housing Advice & Options (South Cambs)

A whole range of external partners, including:

- Registered Providers
- Housing developers
- Businesses operating locally
- Potential housing investors
- South Cambridgeshire Parish Councils
- Cambridgeshire County Council
- Neighbouring district councils
- Residents' Associations
- Council tenant and leaseholder representatives
- Greater Cambridge Partnership
- Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Combined Authority
- Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Clinical Commissioning Group
- Private landlords and letting agencies
- Cambridgeshire Home Improvement Agency
- Cambridgeshire Community Safety Partnership,
- Homelessness Strategy Implementation Group
- Voluntary groups working with vulnerable people
- Etc.

**8. Has the report on your strategy, policy, plan, project, contract or major change to your service gone to Committee? If so, which one?**

Cambridge City Council: Housing Scrutiny Committee 12th March 2019

South Cambridgeshire District Council: Overview & Scrutiny Committee 21<sup>st</sup> March 2019 and Cabinet 3<sup>rd</sup> April

**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?**

- Demographic data
- National housing, income and other data
- Local housing needs data
- Consultation survey – individuals and interested groups

See links below as footnotes

**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**

**Note that this refers to any group of people of a particular age (e.g. 32 year-olds) , or within a particular age range (e.g. 16-24 year-olds) – in particular, please consider any safeguarding issues for children and vulnerable adults**

Younger people – POSITIVE IMPACT

Cambridge City in particular has a relatively young population compared to the rest of Cambridgeshire and many other parts of the country. People aged 24 and under, including students, make up around 37% of the City's population. Around 32% of the population in the City is aged 25-44, and 25% in South Cambs, compared with 27% in Cambridgeshire as a whole.

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. In 2006/07 18% of households aged 16-34 were owner occupiers, falling to 9% in 2016/17. Around a third of households in the private rented sector are headed by a 25-34 year old.

Our Housing Strategy should support younger people by

- Increasing the delivery of homes, including affordable housing, to meet housing need
- Working proactively with developers to secure provision of affordable housing through our local plans
- Carry out research to identify need and demand for high quality, purpose-built private rented sector housing (PRS)
- Providing choice to those aspiring to own their own home by increasing the range of intermediate housing products
- Working with local employers and other partners to get a better understanding of the housing needs of the local workforce; and South Cambs promoting housing for essential local workers
- Outlining our Local Plan requirements around provision of student accommodation in Cambridge City
- Outlining the City's Local Plan requirements around larger new Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs), and exploring the role new-build HMOs can take in South Cambridgeshire
- Recognising opportunities around entry level exception sites to provide homes suitable for first time buyers and for young families on middle incomes

## Older people - POSITIVE IMPACT

Despite Cambridge City having a relatively young population, the number of older people, as nationally, is growing. Between 2016 and 2036, the population aged 65 and over is expected to rise by around 9,610 people, from 16,200 to 25,810 (a 59% increase). In South Cambridgeshire numbers are expected to rise from £29,560 to £48,330 (a 63% increase).

The numbers aged 75 and over are expected to increase by 77% in the City (from 7,980 to 14,150) and 98% in South Cambridgeshire (from 13,120 to 25,950).<sup>1</sup> This means there are likely to be increasing numbers of people with complex health problems and disabilities, who may have different housing and service needs to other age groups.

There is a nationally recognised shortage of housing options for older people. One UK study found that 58% of people aged over 60 would consider moving at some point in the future.<sup>2</sup>

Good quality housing is well-recognised as a key factor in promoting health and wellbeing and supporting independent living, and moving towards more integrated services to prevent ill health and reduce dependence on health and social care services is high on the national and local agenda.

There are an estimated 1.2 million chronically lonely older people in the UK.<sup>3</sup>

The prevalence of dementia nationally amongst over 65s is 3.94% in Cambridgeshire, compared with 4.33% in England as a whole.<sup>4</sup>

Our Housing Strategy aims to:

- Prioritise building for an ageing population
- Promote a range of housing options to enable people to live safely and independently for as long as possible; including new and existing models of specialist and mainstream housing, and use of Local Lettings plans where appropriate to prioritise lettings to older people wanting to 'downsize' into new developments
- Explore the potential for a retirement village (SCDC)
- Future-proof new homes through design so that they can be easily adaptable to enable people to live independently in their own homes as they age
- Promote homes that are well located to services and facilities and well integrated into the community, where people of all ages can help support each other
- Work with the County Council to identify how we can support the provision of care homes, including places available for spot purchasing beds for those funded through social care
- Support providers of any new specialist accommodation in considering how it can help meet dementia need as well as the potential to help hospital discharge through the provision of intermediate care
- Consider scope for promoting self-build for households wishing to downsize where there is development potential within their own garden land within South Cambridgeshire, subject to Local Plan policy
- Continue to work with partners to improve the integration of housing, health and social care services, including the planning and delivery of new developments, reviewing how we deliver Disabled Facilities Grants (DFGs) and home adaptations, and supporting the county-wide 'Housing Options for Older People' project to help families make informed housing choices as they grow older
- Support people to develop digital skills and get online
- Help combat loneliness and isolation by promoting homes that are well located to services and facilities and well integrated into the community, where people of all ages can help support each other
- Explore opportunities for joint inter-generational work, particularly across the Councils' sheltered housing schemes

<sup>1</sup> Cambridgeshire County Council 2105-based population forecasts

**(b) Disability**

**Note that a person has a disability if they have a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on that person's ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.**

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<sup>2</sup> Demos Top of the Ladder, 2013

<sup>3</sup> Campaign to End Loneliness

<sup>4</sup> PHE Dementia Profile: Sep 2017



## **Disability – POSITIVE IMPACT**

### **DATA**

Census data suggests that around 13% of residents in Cambridge and 13.9% of residents in South Cambridgeshire have a long-term activity limiting illness.

More recent national data showed 22% of people nationally reporting a disability in 2016/17 (up from 19% in 2013/14) Although the Eastern Region showed a slightly lower than average disability rate at around 20%.<sup>5</sup>

Of those who reported a disability, 24 per cent nationally reported a mental health impairment in 2016/17, up from 20 per cent in 2014/15. Mental health impairments were most prevalent amongst working age adults.<sup>6</sup>

This is also reflected locally, with partners reporting an increase in the number of service users with mental health issues over recent years. 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.

Mobility was the most prevalent impairment reported nationally. (FRS)

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 get to and through the 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 needs adaptations.<sup>7</sup>

In 2011 around 24% of individuals living in social housing in Cambridge, and 25% in South Cambridgeshire had a long-term health problem or disability.<sup>8</sup> Nationally 50% of households in the social rented sector include someone with a long term illness or disability.<sup>9</sup>

Mobility issues are most prevalent amongst those of state pension age.<sup>10</sup>

People in families with disabled members are more likely to be in poverty than those with no disabled person in the family.<sup>11</sup>

Nationally, 8% of hate crime offences recorded during 2017/18 were disability related.<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> Family Resources Survey 2016/17

<sup>6</sup> Family Resources Survey 2016/17

<sup>7</sup> Disability in the United Kingdom 2016 – Papworth Trust

<sup>8</sup> Census 2011

<sup>9</sup> English Housing Survey 2016/17

<sup>10</sup> Family Resources Survey 2016/17

<sup>11</sup> JRF Poverty rates in families with a disabled person

<sup>12</sup> Hate Crime England & Wales 2017/18 statistical bulletin

Through our Housing Strategy we will:

- Promote health and wellbeing through housing
- Assess the housing requirements of disabled people
- Ensure new developments provide appropriate housing for disabled people
- Increase the provision of housing for those on low incomes, including social housing
- Build new council homes, including a proportion of homes built to wheelchair standards
- Require affordable rents to be set at or below Local Housing Allowance rates to support those on low incomes
- Promote provision of new homes which are easily adaptable
- Work with partners to improve the integration of housing, health and social care services, including in the planning and delivery of new developments
- Implement the proposed Cambridgeshire-wide repairs and adaptations policy, reviewing how we deliver Disabled Facilities Grants and home adaptations, to help deliver health and social care outcomes
- Work with health and social care partners to develop a sustainable approach to revenue funding for our shared Home Improvement Agency
- Prevent rough sleeping, including implementing Cambridge City Council's Homelessness & Rough Sleeping action plan
- Work with partners to improve the integration of housing, health and social care and support service transformation
- Outlining our commitments to tackling poverty through Cambridge City's Anti-Poverty Strategy and South Cambridgeshire's Financial Inclusion Strategy
- Work with partners to ensure that there is appropriate support and provision available to meet increasing demand from those suffering with complex health issues
- Treat anti-social behaviour seriously and tackle hate crime to promote health and wellbeing, and continue to engage with the Cambridgeshire Community Safety Partnership

### **(c) Gender reassignment**

#### **Gender reassignment: POSITIVE IMPACT**

Transgender people are particularly likely to experience discrimination and be victims of hate crime; it is estimated that 2 in 5 trans people nationally have experienced a hate crime or incident because of their gender identity in the last 12 months.<sup>13</sup>

Transgender hate crime accounted for 2% of hate crimes recorded nationally in 2017/18.<sup>14</sup>

Through our Strategy we are committed to treating anti-social behaviour seriously and tackling hate crime to promote health and wellbeing, and will continue to engage with the Cambridgeshire Community Safety Partnership.

<sup>13</sup> Stonewall website: <https://www.stonewall.org.uk/lgbt-britain-hate-crime-and-discrimination>

<sup>14</sup> Hate Crime England & Wales 2017/18 statistical bulletin

**(d) Marriage and civil partnership**

No impact has been identified specific to this equality group.

**(e) Pregnancy and maternity**

Pregnancy and maternity: POSITIVE IMPACT

- Our Strategy requires provision of a mix of housing sizes, types and tenures, including family sized housing, which can have a positive impact on women and families during pregnancy and immediately after birth.

**(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.**

## **(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.**

### **Race: POSITIVE IMPACT**

The UK poverty rate is twice as high for Black & Minority Ethnic groups as for white groups. Nationally, ethnic minority groups are more likely than White British households to spend a high proportion of income on rent, regardless of whether they live in social or private rented housing.<sup>15</sup>

However, the housing they live in tends to be of lower quality, especially among households of Pakistani origin, and overcrowding is more common, particularly among households of Bangladeshi origin.<sup>16</sup>

76% of hate crimes in 2017/18 were recorded as race hate crimes.

Our Gypsy & Traveller Accommodation Assessment 2016 identified a need for pitches for those residing in caravans who no longer travelled, as well as pitches to accommodate Travelling Showpeople.<sup>17</sup>

Local research has identified a range of issues experienced by asylum seekers and refugees residing in Cambridge who had arrived through their own efforts. These included: access to appropriate housing, and difficulties in understanding the complexities of the welfare system & accessing benefits.<sup>18</sup>

Our Housing Strategy includes provision for:

- Increasing the supply of housing that is affordable to those on low to median incomes
- Prioritising social and affordable rent as part of the wider mix of affordable housing
- Improving housing conditions for those on low incomes to promote health and wellbeing
- Improving management and conditions in the private rented sector
- Working to identify a site or sites for Gypsy & Travellers and Travelling Showpeople in South Cambridgeshire
- Continuing to develop partnership working with appropriate organisations to ensure that sufficient support is available for those at greatest risk in our communities, including asylum seekers
- A commitment to treating anti-social behaviour seriously and tackling hate crime to promote health and wellbeing, and will continue to engage with the Cambridgeshire Community Safety Partnership

<sup>15</sup> Weekes-Bernard (2017), Poverty and Ethnicity in the Labour Market: Joseph Rowntree Foundation

<sup>16</sup> Cabinet Office (2017), Race Disparity Audit: Summary Findings from the Ethnicity Facts and Figures Website

<sup>17</sup> GTAA 2016 covered needs of Gypsies (including English, Scottish, Welsh and Romany Gypsies), Irish Travellers, New (Age) Travellers, and Travelling Showpeople.

<sup>18</sup> Cambridge Ethnic Community Forum (2016): A Report On Asylum Seekers & Refugees In Cambridge 2016

**(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.**

- Supporting a number of activities being taken forward as part of Cambridge City Council's Anti-Poverty Strategy and South Cambridgeshire's Financial Inclusion Strategy

**(g) Religion or belief**

Religion or belief – POSITIVE IMPACT

9% of hate crimes nationally in 2017/18 were recorded as religious hate crime

Through our Strategy we will:

- Treat anti-social behaviour seriously and tackle hate crime to promote health and wellbeing, and continue to engage with the Cambridgeshire Community Safety Partnership



## (h) Sex

### Women: POSITIVE IMPACT

There remains a gender pay gap with women tending to earn less than men, and women are more likely than men to live in poverty. As a result, women are more likely to be eligible for social housing: 58% of social rented homes nationally are headed by a female Household Reference Person.<sup>19</sup>

Lone parent households are also more likely to be headed by women, again many of whom are on low incomes. For example; 24% of social housing households in England are lone parent households.<sup>20</sup>

Women are also considerably more likely to suffer from mental health issues. For example, nationally, around 1 in 5 women aged 18-64 reported symptoms of a common mental health disorder in 2014, compared with around 1 in 9 men; and 10% of women reported severe symptoms, compared with 6% of men.<sup>21</sup>

Women are more likely to have experienced domestic abuse than men (7.5% compared with 4.3% across England and Wales in 2017).<sup>22</sup>

Through our strategy we aim to:

- Increase the supply of housing that is affordable to those on low to median incomes
- Prioritise social and affordable rent as part of the wider mix of affordable housing
- Promote delivery of new homes to meet the needs of an ageing population
- Improve the design, planning and development of new communities to help prevent mental ill health in large scale new communities
- Improve housing conditions to help support positive mental health outcomes
- Work with partners to improve the support available to people who need it, those with mental health issues and those experiencing domestic abuse
- Implement the proposed county-wide adaptations and repairs policy
- Promote digital inclusion
- Support a number of activities being taken forward as part of Cambridge City Council's Anti-Poverty Strategy and South Cambridgeshire's Financial Inclusion Strategy

<sup>19</sup> National Housing Survey Social Housing Report 2016-17

<sup>20</sup> National Housing Survey Social Housing Report 2016-17

<sup>21</sup> Survey of Health and Wellbeing, England 2014

<sup>22</sup> ONS Domestic abuse in England and Wales: year ending March 2017

## **(h) Sex**

### **Men: POSITIVE IMPACT**

Rough sleeping is more common amongst men than women; in autumn 2017 it was estimated nationally that over 80% of rough sleepers were men.<sup>23</sup>

Cambridge City Council will:

- Implement and keep under review the council's Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Action Plan
- Deliver a number of 'Housing First' schemes on its own land, aimed at supporting single homeless people with multiple and complex needs

## **(i) Sexual orientation**

### **Sexual orientation - POSITIVE IMPACT**

It is estimated that 1 in 5 LGBT people have experienced a hate crime or incident because of their sexual orientation and/or gender identity in the last 12 months.<sup>24</sup>

We are committed to treating anti-social behaviour seriously and tackling hate crime, and will continue to engage with of the Cambridgeshire Community Safety Partnership.

## **(j) Rurality**

### **Rurality – POSITIVE IMPACT**

With just over 100 villages within South Cambridgeshire District, a high priority for the Council is to promote vibrancy and sustainability to enable villages to grow and flourish through appropriate development supported by the local community.

Through our Strategy we aim to:

- Implement a programme for delivering homes on exception sites in our villages to provide affordable housing for local people
- Promote essential local worker housing so that residents can live close to where they work
- Work with communities to develop individual Village Design Statements
- Promote Neighbourhood Plans and community-led development
- Make use of entry-level exception sites, where appropriate, with a focus on first time buyers
- Adopt a Joint Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) for Greater Cambridge to give parish councils' neighbourhood forums, residents, businesses and other groups the opportunity to have a say in how they want to be involved in guiding development

<sup>23</sup> MHCLG Rough Sleeping in England Autumn 2017

<sup>24</sup> Stonewall website

**(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**

Low income groups: POSITIVE IMPACT

People on low incomes are finding it increasingly difficult to find housing in Greater Cambridge. Local Housing Allowance (LHA) rates – which are used to calculate the amount of housing benefit which can be paid to claimants in private rented housing – are considerably lower than local rents.

For example, the Local Housing Allowance in Greater Cambridge for a two bedroom property at September 2018 is £149.31 per week, compared with local two bedroom private rents of £276 in the City and £206 in South Cambs; with the tenant having to make up the shortfall.<sup>25</sup>

The situation is likely to continue to worsen as rent levels continue to rise and working age benefits remaining frozen. Further welfare reforms are compounding the issue, including: social housing tenants receiving lower benefits if they are deemed to have ‘spare bedrooms’ (aka the ‘bedroom tax’); reducing the overall amount of certain benefits that a household can receive (the ‘benefit cap’); and the rolling out of Universal Credit as a single benefit payment made direct to tenants and required to be claimed online.

Through our strategy we will:

- Increase the supply of housing that is affordable to those on low to median incomes
- Prioritise social and affordable rent as part of the wider mix of affordable housing
- Require new social housing for rent to be let at or below Local Housing Allowance rates
- Provide and enable debt and other financial advice, and support tenants in applying for Universal Credit
- Promote digital inclusion to enable people, access employment, make savings on utility bills, apply for Universal Credit, etc. Support people to reduce their fuel and water bills
- Continue to lobby government around Universal Credit issues, and to align the local Broad Rental Market Area with actual rents
- Support a number of other activities being taken forward as part of Cambridge City Council’s Anti-Poverty Strategy and South Cambridgeshire’s Financial Inclusion Strategy

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<sup>25</sup> Cambridge Sub-region Housing Market Bulletin Dec 2018 (from VOA and Hometrack)

**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.)**

The action plan arising from the Strategy will be kept under periodic review, and equality impacts taken into account at the point of review.

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

**13. Sign off**

Name and job title of lead officer for this equality impact assessment:

Helen Reed, Housing Strategy Manager, Cambridge City Council

Names and job titles of other assessment team members and people consulted:

Julie Fletcher, Head of Housing Strategy, South Cambridgeshire District Council

Date of EqlA sign off: 25 February 2019

Date of next review of the equalities impact assessment: April 2021

All EqlAs need to be sent to Helen Crowther, Equality and Anti-Poverty Officer. Has this been sent to Helen Crowther? YES

☒ Yes

☐ No

Date to be published on Cambridge City Council website: 28 February 2019

Date to be published on South Cambridgeshire District Council website 13 March 2019



Item

## **CAMBRIDGESHIRE ADAPTATIONS & REPAIRS POLICY**

**To:**

Councillor Richard Johnson, Executive Councillor for Housing

Housing Scrutiny Committee 12/03/2019

**Report by:**

Suzanne Hemingway, David Greening

Tel: 01223 - 457461 Email: [suzanne.hemingway@cambridge.gov.uk](mailto:suzanne.hemingway@cambridge.gov.uk)

**Wards affected:**

All

### **Key Decision**

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

- 1.1 The proposed Cambridgeshire Repairs and Adaptations Policy is aimed at helping people to live safely and independently at home. It stems from requirements for housing, health and social care services to work more closely together to enable people to manage their own health and wellbeing, and live independently in their communities for as long as possible.
- 1.2 It would replace Cambridge City Council's current Grants & Loans Policy. It proposes four categories of financial assistance for eligible residents, together with the option to fund additional partnership projects or other services to meet the objectives of the policy.
- 1.3 This version of the policy is aimed at Cambridge City, Huntingdonshire and South Cambridgeshire District Council residents, to support the delivery of adaptation and repair works through the shared service Home Improvement Agency.

- 1.4 Separate arrangements are in place for council tenants for interventions funded through the Housing Revenue Account.

## **2. Recommendations**

- 2.1 The Executive Councillor is recommended to:

- 2.1.1. Approve the draft Adaptations & Repairs Policy shown at Appendix A to this report; and
- 2.1.2 Give delegated authority to the Strategic Director to make decisions - in consultation with the Executive Councillor, Chair & Vice Chair of Housing Scrutiny Committee, and Housing Opposition Spokesperson - around whether to convert capital DFG grant to revenue, should the DFG grant conditions allow; to fund partnership projects or other services to meet the objectives of the draft Adaptations & Repairs Policy shown at Appendix A to this report.

## **3. Background**

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- 3.1. Government grant has historically been paid to district councils in two tier authorities to help meet their statutory obligations around providing home adaptations for disabled people. Cambridge City Council currently uses this money to provide mandatory Disabled Facilities Grants to older and disabled people (other than those living in council homes) to adapt their homes.
- 3.2 Since 2015-16 the grant funding has been channelled to the districts via the health-led Better Care Fund (BCF), which aims to join up health and care services so that people can manage their own health and wellbeing, and live independently in their communities for as long as possible.
- 3.3 Alongside putting the funding through the Better Care Fund, the government promised a phased increase in the national allocation up to 2019-20. For the year 2018-19 Cambridge City Council received just over £692k in capital grant; the allocation for 2019/20 is expected to rise from that figure, but this is yet to be confirmed. A proportion of this is being 'top-sliced' by Cambridgeshire county council to fund new prevention pathways.



- 3.4 A county-wide project was carried out in 2016-17 to review the joint approach to DFGs. Alongside an agreement to improve upstream prevention and intervention, one of the outputs from the review was a joint Adaptations Agreement, signed up to by key partners, including the five districts. This included a commitment to making better use of the DFG grant funding available, and to supporting a joined up approach to improving outcomes across health, social care and housing.
- 3.5 The draft policy for the five Cambridgeshire districts builds on that commitment. It aims to achieve a joint policy for home adaptations and other interventions which could be funded through the government grant. Although the aim has been to achieve consistency across the five districts, a few differences remain, reflecting local priorities. This version aims for as much consistency as possible across Cambridge City, Huntingdonshire and South Cambridgeshire District Councils, to support delivery of works through the shared service Home Improvement Agency for the three districts.
- 3.6 There remains a statutory duty on local authorities to provide mandatory Disabled Facilities to eligible applicants.
- 3.7 Cambridge City Council currently earmarks additional capital of £190k per year from its own resources to help fund additional discretionary assistance beyond DFGs. This has historically tended to be underspent, with the underspend remaining available for other priorities through the housing capital programme.
- 3.8 The policy makes clear that discretionary elements of the proposed policy (ie DFG Top Up, Relocation, Special Purposes Assistance, and spending on partnership work or other services) will only be able to be funded if there is sufficient money available over and above legal requirements around DFGs.
- 3.9 The council's current approach to mandatory DFGs and other discretionary interventions is through the council's Grants and Loans (Regulatory Reform Order) policy 2007. Other districts have their own existing policies which can vary considerably across the districts.
- 3.10 Cambridge City Council's existing policy currently offers ten different grants and loans:

- i. Disabled Facilities Grant up to £30k for adults on low incomes. Not means tested for children (strict legal requirements exist around the maximum amount payable, eligibility and means testing);
  - ii. Top up loans of up to £15k for those eligible for DFG where work would increase the value of the property;
  - iii. Top up grants of up to £15k for those eligible for DFG where work would not increase the value of the property;
  - iv. Relocation grants of up to £30k for moving costs for applicants eligible for DFG, where the current property cannot be adapted or where costs would be excessive;
  - v. Special Purpose Assistance loans for owners of up to £15,000, where work is required as part of DFG works but is not eligible for DFG funding;
  - vi. Repair grants of up to £5k for owners on low incomes with less than £20k savings;
  - vii. Repair loans of up to £20k for those eligible for repair grant;
  - viii. Home energy grants of up to £1k for owners on low incomes with less than £20k savings;
  - ix. Quick hit grants of up to £1k for home owners aged over 60 with up to £20k savings;
  - x. Decorating grants of up to £5k for applicants aged over 60 or disabled and on low incomes.
- 3.11 The proposed new policy would be used to cover many of the same sorts of interventions already provided, but under just four headings, which should be more flexible, and be simpler to understand and administer.
- 3.12 It also includes the option to fund wider services or partnership projects which might help to meet the objectives of the policy.
- 3.13 Some potential applicants may be better off under the new system, and some may be worse off. However, it aims to be more flexible and to provide a more outcome based and person-centred approach to meeting individual needs.
- 3.13 It is hoped that being more flexible around how the money is used could help to reduce demand for mandatory DFGs. For example, preventative

measures such as helping people to make informed choices about their housing options could in some cases help to prevent the need for a more expensive adaptation.

- 3.14 As well as representatives from the districts and other Home Improvement Agencies, representatives from Cambridgeshire County Council and the Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Clinical Commissioning Group were involved in developing the policy. The Integrated Commissioning Board (the group responsible for the Better Care Fund) were the project commissioners and had input into the policy.
- 3.15 Consultation was carried out with key groups, including potential service user groups, during July to September 2018. The Older People's Partnership Board and Physical Disability & Sensory Impairment Partnership Board also had some input into the policy during the development stage.
- 3.16 Changes made as a result of consultation, apart from attempting to make some elements clearer included:
- a) Adding prevention of admission to residential schools, and savings in the health and education sectors to the objectives of the policy;
  - b) Adding work to make a home dementia friendly;
  - c) Adding an option to fund wider partnership projects or other services which would help to meet the objectives of this policy;
  - d) Widening the scope for relocation assistance to be paid beyond just where an existing home cannot be adapted, including spending on relocation where it would be better and cheaper than a DFG higher up the list of priorities.
- 3.18 A national review of DFGs was recently carried out, and the government's response is awaited. This draft policy aims to be flexible to allow for any national policy changes which may arise.
- 3.19 The other districts are in the process of putting their versions of the policy through their formal decision making processes. Subject to this approval, the policy would run from early April 2019.

## **4. Implications**

### **(a) Financial Implications**

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It is intended that the Policy will be implemented within existing resources. However, as a self-financing service, there could be potential revenue implications for the shared Home Improvement Agency if their costs were to increase as a result of the new policy, and they were unable to sufficiently recoup these costs through fees or other income.

### **(b) Staffing Implications**

There are no immediate staffing implications, although if the launch of the policy were to lead to increased demand for adaptations and other works, the shared service Home Improvement may need to consider recruiting additional staff.

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

An equality impact assessment has been carried out and is available as a background paper.

### **(d) Environmental Implications**

NIL impact.

The new policy allows for adaptations and repairs, including home energy improvement and other works in people's homes, with potential positive and negative impacts on the environment. However, the current policy it replaces also supports such works. Any change in environmental impact would relate to changes in demand for adaptations and repairs, which are not currently possible to assess.

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

There are no direct procurement implications, as the proposed new policy allows for similar types of works already procured under the existing policy through the Home Improvement Agency.

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

There are no community safety implications.

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

Consultation took place with key partners and other groups. These groups will be contacted to advise them of the new policy and how the consultation helped shape the policy.

## **6. Background papers**

Background papers used in the preparation of this report:

- (a) Cambridge City Council Grants & Loans (Regulatory Reform Order) Policy 2007.
- (b) Comparison with Cambridge City's current policy.
- (c) Equality Impact Assessment.

## **7. Appendices**

- (a) Appendix A: Cambridgeshire Adaptations & Repairs Policy – Cambridge City, Huntingdonshire and South Cambridgeshire.
- (b) Appendix B: Cambridgeshire Adaptations and Repairs Policy Summary of Policy – Cambridge City, Huntingdonshire and South Cambridgeshire.

## **8. Inspection of papers**

To inspect the background papers or if you have a query on the report please contact Helen Reed, Housing Strategy Manager, tel: 01223 - 457943, email: [helen.reed@cambridge.gov.uk](mailto:helen.reed@cambridge.gov.uk).

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# **Cambridge City, East Cambridgeshire, Fenland, Huntingdonshire & South Cambridgeshire District Councils**

## **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.



<b>1. Title of strategy, policy, plan, project, contract or major change to your service:</b>
<b>Cambridgeshire Housing Adaptations and Repairs Policy</b>
<b>2. Webpage link to full details of the strategy, policy, plan, project, contract or major change to your service (if available)</b>
<p>The Equality Impact Assessment will be available at:</p> <p><a href="https://www.cambridge.gov.uk/equality-impact-assessments">https://www.cambridge.gov.uk/equality-impact-assessments</a></p> <p><a href="https://www.eastcambs.gov.uk/equalities/completed-equality-impact-assessments-eias">https://www.eastcambs.gov.uk/equalities/completed-equality-impact-assessments-eias</a></p> <p><a href="https://www.fenland.gov.uk/article/13900/Equality-Impact-Assessments">https://www.fenland.gov.uk/article/13900/Equality-Impact-Assessments</a></p> <p><a href="http://huntingdonshire.gov.uk/council-democracy/equality/equality-impact-assessments-eias/">http://huntingdonshire.gov.uk/council-democracy/equality/equality-impact-assessments-eias/</a></p> <p><a href="https://www.scambs.gov.uk/the-council/equality-and-diversity/equality-impact-assessments/">https://www.scambs.gov.uk/the-council/equality-and-diversity/equality-impact-assessments/</a></p>
<b>3. What is the objective or purpose of your strategy, policy, plan, project, contract or major change to your service?</b>

The policy outlines the interventions which the five district councils in Cambridgeshire have agreed may be funded through the Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG) Capital Allocation paid to them through the Department of Health's Better Care Fund, and aims to provide a consistent approach across the county.

The key objectives of the Policy are:

- To support healthy, safe and independent living
- To help prevent hospital, care home or residential school admission
- To facilitate a patient being discharged from hospital and enabling them to live safely and independently at home, including making it easier for carers to provide support
- To prevent the need for higher expenditure elsewhere in the health and/or social care system
- To improve housing conditions and remove hazards in the home (ie Category 1 hazards under the Health & Safety Rating System)

It includes four types of financial assistance which may be available to disabled people and those on low incomes:

1. Mandatory Disabled Facilities Grants (DFGs) to provide disabled adaptations in people's homes
2. Discretionary Top Up Assistance where the cost of works agreed through a Disabled Facilities Grant application is above the statutory maximum amount of £30,000
3. Discretionary Relocation Assistance to help disabled people to move to a more appropriate home; and
4. Discretionary Special Purposes Assistance for capital repairs or other minor works or interventions in the home.

It also allows funding of wider partnership projects or other services to help to meet the objectives of the policy.

It replaces each of the district councils' existing Regulatory Reform Order policies in relation to home adaptations and repairs.

#### **4. Responsible Service**

Cambridge City Council: Housing Services  
East Cambridgeshire District Council: Environmental Services  
Fenland District Council: Housing & Community Support  
Huntingdonshire District Council: Development Service  
South Cambridgeshire District Council: Affordable Homes

<p><b>5. Who will be affected by this strategy, policy, plan, project, contract or major change to your service? (Please tick those that apply)</b></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Residents of Cambridgeshire <b>YES</b></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Visitors to Cambridgeshire <b>NO</b></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Staff <b>NO</b></p> <p>Please state any specific client group or groups (e.g. council tenants, tourists, people who work in the city but do not live here):</p> <p>Disabled people and people on low incomes living in Cambridgeshire.</p>
<p><b>6. What type of strategy, policy, plan, project, contract or major change to your service is this? (Please tick)</b></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> New <b>YES</b></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Major change</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Minor change</p> <p>It introduces a new county-wide policy, replacing each of the district councils' Regulatory Reform Order policies in relation to housing adaptations and repairs.</p>
<p><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></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> No</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> <b>YES</b> (<i>Please provide details</i>): Cambridgeshire County Council; Cambridgeshire &amp; Peterborough Clinical Commissioning Group; Cambridgeshire Home Improvement Agency; Cambridgeshire &amp; Peterborough NHS Foundation Trust (CPFT); East Cambridgeshire Care &amp; Repair; Fenland Home Improvement Agency.</p>
<p><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></p> <p>No – not yet.</p>

**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?**

Data: Demographic data; national housing occupation and conditions data; poverty data; etc

Involvement of partners:

- Project commissioned and steered by Integrated Commissioning Board (a health led group with responsibility for the Better Care Fund)
- Cambridgeshire County Council Adult Social Care, Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Clinical Commissioning Group and district Home Improvement Agencies were members of the project team.

**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 - Any group of people of a particular age (e.g. 32 year-olds) , or within a particular age range (e.g. 16-24 year-olds) – in particular, please consider any safeguarding issues for children and vulnerable adults**

**(a) Age - Any group of people of a particular age (e.g. 32 year-olds) , or within a particular age range (e.g. 16-24 year-olds) – in particular, please consider any safeguarding issues for children and vulnerable adults**

All age groups: POSITIVE IMPACT

The policy provides for adaptations and home repairs and improvements for people of any age group who are disabled or on a low income; but it will particularly benefit those aged 55 and over.

- In Cambridgeshire in 2016 there are estimated to be around 652,000 people living in Cambridgeshire. Made up of: 120,000 children aged 0-15; 413,000 adults aged 16-64; and 119,000 older people 65 & over. <http://opendata.cambridgeshireinsight.org.uk/dataset/2015-based-population-and-dwelling-stock-forecasts-cambridgeshire-and-peterborough>
- In the next five years to 2021 the population is forecast to grow by an additional 28,800 adults (+7%), 11,200 children (+9%) and 15,900 older people (+13%). The main percentage increase is likely to be amongst the 75 & overs; a 21% increase during that period.
- In the Census 2011 around 15% of Cambridgeshire residents reported a long-term activity limiting health problem or disability. For those aged over 65 the percentage was 45%.

Building Research Establishment research found that, in England:

- Over one fifth of all older household groups (55 – 64, 65 – 74, over 75 and over 80) lived in a home that failed to meet the Decent Homes standard
- 780,000 households aged 55 years and over were in fuel poverty
- 1.3 million households aged 55 years and older lived in a home with at least one Category 1 hazard
- For households aged 55 years or more, the cost of poor housing to the NHS (for first year treatment costs) is £624 million with these costs dominated by excess cold hazards and those associated with falls (on stairs and on the level)
- The proportion of older households living in a home with the four “visitability” accessibility features assessed by the English Housing Survey (level access, flush threshold, WC at entrance level and sufficiently wide doors and circulation space) ranged from 4% (aged 55 – 64 years) to 7% (aged 80 years and over). Around a fifth of homes occupied by all age groups aged 65 years and over had none of these key features and this figure was 24% for households aged 55 – 64 years.

The National House Condition Survey 2015-16 estimated that:

- Around 29% of households where the oldest member was 85 are estimated to live in a non-decent home.
- Older people had less energy efficient homes compared with younger people, and those aged 85 and over had the lowest energy efficiency.

No direct safeguarding issues have been raised as being impacted by the policy, but the policy does include reference to the districts’ own Safeguarding Policies.

**(b) Disability - A person has a disability if she or he has a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on that person's ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities**

**POSITIVE IMPACT**

- In the Census 2011 around 15% of Cambridgeshire residents reported a long-term activity limiting illness.
- Around 31% of households in England are estimated to contain someone with a long-term sickness or Disability. (English Housing Survey - Variations in Housing Circumstances report 2016-17)
- In 2014-15, around 9% of all households in England (around 1.9 million households) had one or more people with a long-term limiting disability that required adaptations to their home. (English House Condition Survey, Adaptations & Accessibility of Homes report 2014-15)

The policy offers:

- Disabled Facilities Grants (DFGs) and Top-Up DFG assistance to disabled people to help them to live safely and independently at home
- Relocation assistance to disabled people where moving to another home is considered the best option.
- Discretionary Special Purposes assistance, including provision to help disabled people to have adaptations carried out more quickly.

Key objectives of the policy include:

- To support healthy, safe and independent living
- To help prevent hospital, care home or residential school admission
- To facilitate a patient being discharged from hospital and enabling them to live safely and independently at home, including making it easier for carers to provide support

**(c) Sex – A man or a woman.**

**POSITIVE IMPACT** on both – particularly on women

With higher levels of long term illness or disability amongst older people, and higher numbers of women than men in the older population, the positive impact is more likely to be felt by women.

Census 2011 data shows 54,700 women and 45,500 men aged 65 and over in Cambridgeshire. Women make up around 55% of the population aged over 65, and 67% of the population over 85.



**(d) Transgender – A person who does not identify with the gender they were assigned to at birth (includes gender reassignment that is the process of transitioning from one gender to another)**

NO IMPACT

**(e) Pregnancy and maternity**

NO IMPACT

**(f) Marriage and civil partnership**

NO IMPACT

**(g) Race - The protected characteristic 'race' refers to a group of people defined by their race, colour, and nationality (including citizenship) ethnic or national origins.**

NO IMPACT

The policy itself should not disadvantage any particular race or ethnic group. However uptake of grants and loans by different equalities groups will be monitored, and actions put in place to try to redress if any imbalance becomes apparent.

**(h) Religion or belief**

NO IMPACT.

**(i) Sexual orientation**

NO IMPACT

**(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**

**Low income groups: POSITIVE IMPACT**

Index of Multiple Deprivation figures show that Cambridgeshire has 16 Lower Super Output Areas in the 20% most deprived nationally. Fenland has the highest levels of deprivation in Cambridgeshire, followed by Cambridge City, East Cambridgeshire, Huntingdonshire then South Cambridgeshire.

<https://data.cambridgeshireinsight.org.uk/dataset/indices-deprivation>

[https://data.cambridgeshireinsight.org.uk/sites/default/files/IMD2015\\_Cambs%26Pet\\_Rank\\_A0\\_v4\\_0.pdf](https://data.cambridgeshireinsight.org.uk/sites/default/files/IMD2015_Cambs%26Pet_Rank_A0_v4_0.pdf)

9.3% of Cambridgeshire households are estimated to be in fuel poverty.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/sub-regional-fuel-poverty-data-2018>

Eligibility for Disabled Facilities Grants & DFG top up for adults, and Special Purposes Assistance (which may include home energy improvements) are based on assessment of financial circumstances of the applicant.

**Carers: POSITIVE IMPACT**

It is likely that a number of people requiring adaptations will be receiving some level care, either professionally or from family and/or friends. One of the objectives of the policy is: To facilitate a patient being discharged from hospital and enabling them to live safely and independently at home, 'including making it easier for carers to provide support'.

**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.)**

Implementation of the policy will be monitored through the Home Improvement Agencies, which will include monitoring uptake of grants and loans based on protected characteristics.

The EqlA will be updated once the outcome of the government's reviews of Disabled Facilities Grants and Social Care is known.

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

### 13. Sign off

Name and job title of lead officer for this equality impact assessment:

- Helen Reed, Cambridge City Council, Housing Strategy Manager.

Names and job titles of other assessment team members and people consulted:

- Liz Knox, Environmental Services Manager, East Cambridgeshire District Council
- Marie Beaumont, Senior Caseworker, East Cambridgeshire District Council
- Steve Hammond, Private Sector Housing Officer, Fenland District Council
- Caroline Hannon, Housing Strategy Manager, Huntingdonshire District Council
- Keith Tayler, Private Sector Housing Officer, Huntingdonshire District Council
- Julie Fletcher, Head of Housing Strategy, South Cambridgeshire District Council
- Alasdair Gladman, Grant Validation Officer, South Cambridgeshire District Council#
- Frances Swann, Manager, Cambs Home Improvement Agency
- Debra Barker, Caseworker, Cambs Home Improvement Agency
- Diana Mackay, Commissioner (Adults), People & Communities Directorate  
Cambridgeshire County Council
- Lisa Sparks, Commissioning Manager, Cambridgeshire County Council
- Aleksandra Mecan, Head of Community Services & Integration, Cambridgeshire &  
Peterborough Clinical Commissioning Group

Date of EqlA sign off: 15<sup>th</sup> February 2019

Date of next review of the equalities impact assessment: Date of policy review – to be agreed.

Date to be published on websites (if known): March/April 2019

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## **Cambridgeshire Housing Adaptations & Repairs Policy**

**FOR RESIDENTS LIVING IN THE FOLLOWING COUNCIL AREAS:**

**CAMBRIDGE CITY**

**HUNTINGDONSHIRE &**

**SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE**

**(Separate documents are available for residents of East Cambridgeshire and Fenland District Council areas. Their versions of the policy are largely the same as this one, but with some slight differences).**

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## Part 1: INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Purpose and objectives of the Policy

This Housing Adaptations & Repairs Policy applies to those living in Cambridgeshire (not including Peterborough), and highlights the importance that housing can play in promoting physical and mental health and wellbeing.

Please note: THERE ARE SEPARATE ARRANGEMENTS OUTSIDE OF THIS POLICY FOR ADAPTATIONS FOR COUNCIL TENANTS IN CAMBRIDGE CITY AND SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE.

Cambridge City Council's policy for adaptations for council tenants is at:

<https://www.cambridge.gov.uk/policy-on-adaptations-for-tenants-with-a-disability>

South Cambridgeshire District Council's policy for adaptations for council tenants is at:

<http://www.scambs.gov.uk/housing/council-tenants/repairs-and-maintenance/aids-and-adaptations-to-your-home/>

The five district councils in Cambridgeshire are committed to supporting people to live independently and safely in homes which are suitable for their needs. This policy outlines the interventions which the councils have agreed may be funded through the Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG) Capital Allocation paid to them through the Department of Health's Better Care Fund, and aims to provide a consistent approach across the county. (Peterborough City Council has its own separate Housing Renewal policy).

The key objectives of the Policy are:

- To support healthy, safe and independent living
- To help prevent hospital, care home or residential school admission
- To facilitate a patient being discharged from hospital and enabling them to live safely and independently at home, including making it easier for carers to provide support
- To prevent the need for higher expenditure elsewhere in the health and/or social care system
- To improve housing conditions and remove hazards in the home (ie Category 1 hazards under the Health & Safety Rating System)

**A summary of the policy will be available on the council's website, or on request**

**Cambridge City Council:** <https://www.cambridge.gov.uk/>

**Huntingdonshire District Council:** <http://www.huntingdonshire.gov.uk/>  
**South Cambridgeshire District Council:** <https://www.scambs.gov.uk/>

## 1.2 Background

The Policy stems from a county-wide review of Disabled Facilities Grants carried out during 2016-17, and the need for housing, health and social care services to work in a more joined up way.

Key principles for how the district councils' Disabled Facilities Grant Allocation could be better used to support wider health and social care outcomes formed part of a Cambridgeshire Housing Adaptations Agreement which was developed, following the review, between the district and county councils in partnership with the Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Clinical Commissioning Group.

This Policy incorporates some of these key principles. It contributes to the Cambridgeshire Better Care Fund Plan vision, which involves diverting resources away from acute health services and ongoing social care, focusing on helping people to help themselves, and returning people to independence wherever possible.<sup>1</sup> It also helps to support some of the priorities identified in a number of key local strategies, including: Cambridgeshire's Health and Wellbeing Strategy, Older People's Accommodation Strategy; an Ageing Well Strategy; and the district councils' own Housing Strategies. There are also links with the Cambridgeshire Housing and Health Joint Strategic Needs Assessment.<sup>2</sup>

The Policy also helps to meet each of the five district councils' wider responsibilities around tackling hazards in the home, and will form part or all of each council's Regulatory Reform Order Repair & Renewal policies.

Housing adaptations represent just one of a range of other interventions helping people to remain living at home. These include reablement services, provision of assistive technology and other daily living equipment, and Cambridgeshire Handyperson Service, to name a few.

One of the findings of the Review was that in order to achieve better outcomes for people, and to make best use of the resources available, providing repairs and adaptations in the home in which someone is currently living will not always be the best solution

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<sup>1</sup> Cambridgeshire Better Care Fund: <https://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/residents/working-together-children-families-and-adults/working-with-partners/section-115/cambridgeshire-better-care-fund-bcf/>

<sup>2</sup> Cambridgeshire Housing & Health JSNA 2013: <http://cambridgeshireinsight.org.uk/housing-jsna-2013>

With limited funding available, for the Policy to be successful it will need to be implemented hand in hand with a new approach to considering people's wider housing options. Independent advice and information on alternative housing options – for example sheltered or extra care housing or moving to a more suitable home – will, where appropriate, be made available at an early stage. This is particularly important where someone's home is unlikely to remain suitable in the longer term.

Further information on Cambridgeshire's approach to considering applicants' wider housing options is at Appendix 1.

Examples of evidence to support this policy are shown in Appendix 2.

The Policy will take effect from April 2019.

### 1.3 Capital resources

Government funding for Disabled Facilities Grants has historically been insufficient to meet demand for mandatory DFGs, with the district councils providing additional funding to meet their statutory responsibilities.

To help achieve broader health and social care outcomes, the Disabled Facilities Grant Capital Allocation for Cambridgeshire has increased from £1.9m in 2015-16 to just under £3.6m by 2018-19.

However, even with the increase in capital funding, with an ageing population and large-scale housing growth in many parts of the county there is a risk that much of it may be used up through increasing demand. It is essential that we make best use of the limited resources available to achieve the required outcomes.

### 1.4 The role of the Home Improvement Agency

#### **Cambridge City, Huntingdonshire and South Cambridgeshire District Councils:**

Our Home Improvement Agency (Cambs HIA) is a shared council service operating across Cambridge City, South Cambridgeshire and Huntingdonshire.

The Home Improvement Agency will assist a people in applying for grants and loans, design and organise works, obtain quotes, supervise the works on site and complete all of the administrative support required to enable a person to maximise their independence in their own home.

Staff at the Agency work closely with district council officers, Occupational Therapists and other professionals.

[www.cambshia.org](http://www.cambshia.org) | [www.facebook.com/cambshia](https://www.facebook.com/cambshia) | [www.twitter.com/cambshia](https://www.twitter.com/cambshia) | [www.instagram.com/cambshia](https://www.instagram.com/cambshia)

## **PART 2: ASSISTANCE AVAILABLE**

### **2.1 Mandatory Disabled Facilities Grants**

Mandatory Disabled Facility Grants are available to people with disabilities living in the district, to provide disabled adaptations to the home.

The Council will award Mandatory Disabled Facilities Grants (DFGs) according to the governing legislation and guidance issued by central government and in force at the time, which determines amongst other things: the maximum amount of grant payable; the type of work that can be funded; the test of financial resources that must be applied to determine the contribution to be made by the applicant. Further information is available on request.

See Appendix 3 for more details on Disabled Facilities Grants.

Contact details are available in the Policy Summary, and in paragraph 3.1 below.

Note that the Care Act includes duties to provide equipment, and adaptations up to a value of £1,000, free of charge where there is an assessed need. These are outside the scope of this policy.

#### **2.1.1 Eligibility**

Occupiers of all types and tenures of residential properties are eligible to apply. This also includes park homes and houseboats, and eligibility extends to a range of licencees, including agricultural workers and service employees.

Applications for grant aid on a dwelling owned by a trust will be considered on a case by case basis.

Council tenants should apply, in the first instance, to the council's housing adaptations service, and may need to go through a different application process. For details on who to contact, see paragraph 3.1 below.

In assessing whether an applicant is eligible for a Disabled Facilities Grant, the council or Home Improvement Agency will consult with Social Services, and other agencies as appropriate.

Applications for Disabled Facilities Grants for adults will normally be subject to a means test to assess income and savings levels, using the national Financial Test of Resources. (See Appendix 4 for more detail). No means test will apply in relation to Disabled Facilities Grant applications for children up to the mandatory maximum grant amount (currently £30,000). For the purposes of this policy, 'children' are as defined in the Glossary at Appendix 6)

Some applicants may be eligible for a Disabled Facilities Grant, but be required to make a financial contribution, depending on their financial circumstances.

### **2.1.2 Determining whether works are appropriate**

Disabled Facilities Grants are available for adaptations which the Council considers are necessary and appropriate to meet the needs of the disabled occupant, and reasonable and practicable having regard to the age and condition of the dwelling. Steps will be taken to consider, at an early stage, and in liaison with the applicant, whether moving to alternative accommodation might be a better option. In these circumstances, help and support will be offered in considering what housing options might be available. Details of the Cambridgeshire Early Help, Housing Options for Older People and Older People's Visiting Support service are at Appendix 1.

If moving is considered a better option, Discretionary Persons Relocation Assistance grant may be available (see section 2.3 below).

In deciding whether adaptations are necessary, appropriate, reasonable and practicable, and whether they are likely to meet the person's needs, an assessment of the internal layout of the existing dwelling will be carried out. Consideration may be given to funding additional sleeping and/or bathing accommodation by way of an extension to the existing dwelling where neither rearrangement, nor moving to an alternative property is feasible.

### **2.1.3 Amount of grant payable**

The mandatory maximum amount available for a Disabled Facilities Grant is currently set nationally at £30,000. Where the works required, including any fees, will cost more than the maximum amount set by government, an applicant may be asked to seek additional sources of funding and/or make a financial contribution themselves. In some circumstances they may be able to apply for Discretionary Top Up Assistance to help with this. See section 2.2 below for details.

In the case of housing association tenants the council or Home Improvement Agency may be able to arrange for the landlord to cover some of the cost.

If the work is arranged through the local Home Improvement Agency, the cost of work will be assessed, and contractors appointed, in accordance with arrangements agreed between the council and the appropriate Home Improvement Agency.

If the applicant arranges for the work to be carried out him/herself, the council will pay the lower of a minimum of two quotations provided those received are reasonable, taking into account all the circumstances.

Where the applicant or a member of the family proposes to carry out the work, rather than through the Home Improvement Agency, Disabled Facilities Grant assistance

will cover reasonable costs for materials, subject to suitable invoices or receipts.  
Labour costs may not be covered in these circumstances.

#### **2.1.4 Means test**

Applicants not receiving one or more qualifying benefits will be means tested using the national Financial Test of Resources in place at the time. More detail on how this assessment will be carried out is at Appendix 4. Applicants for grants for children will not be assessed unless the cost of the work is likely to go above the mandatory maximum grant amount – currently £30,000. (See Glossary at Appendix 6 for definition of who counts as a child for these purposes).

Advice will be given on whether or not a disabled person might be eligible and the Home Improvement Agency can assist with the application. Where applicants are not eligible for assistance; or their financial circumstances mean that they will need to make a contribution to the cost; the council or Home Improvement Agency may be able to help the applicant to seek other sources of funding, such as charitable contributions or releasing equity in their home, etc.

#### **2.1.5 Carrying out of works**

We encourage applicants to have works project managed by, and delivered through, the local Home Improvement Agency. A fee for this service is charged, and will usually be included in the grant award.

In some cases the applicant may wish to carry out additional work, over and above what the council or Home Improvement Agency deems is necessary to meet the needs of the disabled person. In this situation, the council will need to be satisfied that s/he has sufficient financial resource to fund the additional work.

#### **Cambridge City, Huntingdonshire and South Cambridgeshire residents:**

In addition, where someone wants help to coordinate adaptations which would help to meet the objectives of this policy, but is not eligible for a grant or loan, Cambs HIA can help them to have the work carried out as a private customer.

#### **2.1.6 Repayment of assistance when the property is disposed of**

Where the value of the grant to an owner occupier exceeds £10,000 a charge may be registered against the property, making some of the grant repayable if the property is disposed of or transferred within 10 years of completion of the work. The minimum charge registered will be £500; the maximum will be £10,000.



**Cambridge City, Huntingdon and South Cambridgeshire residents:**

The charge registered against the property will be a local land charge.

### **2.1.7 Future applications**

Where work is completed following a Mandatory DFG application, and the applicant has been required to make a financial contribution to the work, this may in some circumstances reduce the contribution required to be made on future applications for Mandatory DFG works. Further information is available on request.

### **2.1.8 Smaller adaptations**

Some small standard adaptations eligible for a DFG may be offered as a Special Purposes Assistance grant if the council is satisfied that funding it through Discretionary Special Purposes Assistance would significantly speed up the process and improve the outcome for the applicant. (See section 2.4 below). The council or Home Improvement Agency will discuss with the applicant the most appropriate route for the individual concerned. This option, if offered, does not affect the disabled person's statutory right to apply for a Disabled Facilities Grant

## **2.2 Discretionary Disabled Facilities Grant Top Up Assistance**

In cases where the cost of works agreed through a Disabled Facilities Grant application is above the mandatory maximum grant amount - currently £30,000 - applicants may be able to apply for Discretionary Top Up Assistance in the form of a loan which will be secured on the property.

This is a discretionary loan and the decision on whether to award it in each case will depend on the individual's needs and the resources available. Details of how discretionary cases may be prioritised is shown in paragraph 4.1 below.

### **2.2.1 Eligibility**

This is available to those with an owner's interest in their home who have been assessed as eligible for a mandatory DFG where the cost of approved works is above the mandatory maximum grant amount – currently set at £30,000.

Discretionary Top Up Assistance may be available in cases where:

- The option to move to more suitable accommodation has been explored fully but found not to be feasible, and;
- Having taken all reasonable steps, funding cannot be found from other sources; and
- Not carrying out the works would mean that the applicant would be unable to remain living in the community; or the person or their carer would be at significant risk if the work was not completed; or completion of the work would potentially bring significant savings in other areas of public provision including health, social care, and education.

Discretionary Top Up Assistance will be offered as a loan, secured on the property. There should be sufficient equity in the property to meet the cost of the assistance, taking into account any other charges on the property, and any potential uplift in value which might, in the council's opinion, apply to the property once the work is completed. If there is insufficient equity, or if the applicant is a housing association tenant, and no other suitable accommodation can be found, the council may, in exceptional circumstances, consider offering all or part of Discretionary Top Up Assistance as a grant.

In the case of Discretionary Top Up Assistance for adults, the means test carried out to assess eligibility for and any contribution towards mandatory Disabled Facilities Grant will take into account the full cost of the works, including the need for any Top Up Assistance.

Where an application for Discretionary Top Up Assistance is for a child (as defined in the Glossary at Appendix 6) financial circumstances will be taken into account.

**Cambridge City, Huntingdonshire and South Cambridgeshire residents:**

The standard DFG means test will be used to assess financial circumstances where the overall cost of the works is more than the maximum grant amount set by government for a DFG. Mortgage outgoings of the person responsible for the child or young person will also be taken into account.

### **2.2.2 Maximum amount payable**

The maximum amount payable for Discretionary Top Up Assistance will be £15,000 including the local Home Improvement Agency's fees where their services have been used.

### **2.2.3 Repayment**

**Cambridge City, Huntingdonshire and South Cambridgeshire residents:**

Where top up assistance is awarded, a local land charge will be registered against the property in order to secure the loan. The loan will be required to be repaid in full when the property is disposed of.

### **2.2.4 Future applications**

Future applications for DFG Top Up assistance, where assistance has previously been awarded for that disabled person, will only be considered in exceptional circumstances.

## **2.3 Discretionary Disabled Persons' Relocation Assistance (DPRA)**

Applications for a Disabled Persons' Relocation Assistance can be considered for people living in the district where:

- a) Adaptations are required for a person who is eligible for a DFG, but relocation may be a better and cheaper option, taking into account the cost of the works and any future works likely to be required in the new property; or
- b) Where adaptations are required but it is not reasonable or practicable to adapt a disabled person's existing accommodation; or
- c) Where relocation is likely to lead to savings to the wider public purse, or it would help a disabled person to resolve other issues which might impact on health, and/or well-being.

In each case, a suitable alternative property must have been identified before a formal application for Relocation Assistance is submitted.

Disabled Persons' Relocation Assistance may contribute towards reasonable costs of moving to a more appropriate property: Examples of what this may cover include:

- removal expenses
- estate agent fees
- legal fees
- other relocation expenses reasonably incurred.

It will not include any adaptations which may be required to the new home.

The council will advise whether there is a financial limit on the amount which can be awarded to any one applicant.

Disabled Persons' Relocation Assistance is discretionary assistance and depends on the individual's needs and the resources available. Details on how discretionary cases may be prioritised is shown in paragraph 4.1 below.

### **2.3.1 Eligibility**

Disabled Persons' Relocation Assistance can be considered for applicants who meet the criteria above, where the council is satisfied that the property to which the disabled person is moving more closely meets his/her needs and those of the family than the existing one.

Applications may be considered from/on behalf of owner occupiers and tenants.

**Cambridge City and South Cambridgeshire council tenants:** Council tenants should apply to the council's housing adaptations service, and may need to go through a different application process. For details on who to contact, see paragraph 3.1 below).

A representative of the council may visit the property being considered for relocation, to ensure it is suitable to meet the needs of the disabled person.

Applicants for Disabled Persons' Relocation Assistance will not be means-tested.

Only applications made before the person has moved home will be considered.

### 2.3.2 Grant payable

**Cambridge City, Huntingdonshire and South Cambridgeshire District Council residents:** The maximum sum payable as a relocation grant will be £5,000.

### 2.3.3 Future applications

If an applicant subsequently moves again, further application for Disabled Persons' Relocation Assistance may only be considered where the disabled person's circumstances have changed significantly since moving into the property for which the assistance was awarded. This will be at the council's discretion.

## 2.4 Discretionary Special Purposes Assistance

Discretionary Special Purpose Assistance may be available for repairs, or other minor works or interventions in the home which the council is satisfied is reasonable and practicable and will help to meet one or more of the Policy's key objectives.

It will not normally be offered for interventions which are readily available through other services, or where work is covered under an existing warranty.

Examples of the types of work may include:

- Property repairs and replacement of fixtures/fittings
- Remedying of Category 1 hazards, including work to reduce the risk of falls
- Energy efficiency measures to promote warm homes
- Security measures
- Works not eligible for a Mandatory Disabled Facilities Grant but would help prevent hospital or care admission, speed up transfers of care, and/or save money elsewhere in the health, social care and/or education system
- Additional work to facilitate work required under a Mandatory Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG) but which is not eligible for Mandatory DFG funding
- Work to make a home dementia-friendly
- Adaptations which would normally be funded through a Mandatory Disabled Facilities Grant but where the council is satisfied that funding it through Discretionary Special Purposes Assistance would significantly speed up the process and improve the outcome for the applicant. The council would also have to be satisfied that there were exceptional circumstances which justified the mandatory DFG process being waived for that particular applicant.
- Larger items of personal equipment where alternative funding is not available, and where provision would be cheaper and/or provide a better outcome for the individual than would be achieved through adaptations.
- Any other request deemed by the council to be reasonable & practicable, and necessary & appropriate to meet the objectives of the Policy.

Discretionary Special Purposes Assistance is not available for repairs to disability equipment, such as stairlifts, ceiling track hoists, etc, as ongoing maintenance, if not covered by warranty, is generally the responsibility of the owner.

Discretionary Special Purposes Assistance is a discretionary grant and will depend on the individual's needs, the resources available, and the particular district council's wider objectives and priorities. Details on how discretionary cases may be prioritised is given in paragraph 4.1 below.

### 2.4.1 Eligibility

Applicants must be living in the district, and living in the property in question.

If repair or other work is required, other than disabled adaptations, the applicant must normally have been resident in that home for a minimum of two years prior to the date of application.

Applications from tenants will normally only be considered for work which is not the responsibility of the landlord.

Discretionary Special Purposes Assistance will normally only be considered for those in receipt of a qualifying benefit (with the exception of adaptations for children – which would normally expected to be funded through mandatory Disabled Facilities Grant). (See Appendix 4 for more detail). Evidence of being in receipt of benefits will normally be required, although if providing evidence would lead to unreasonable delays in work being carried out, the council may use its discretion to accept a signed declaration that the person for whom the work is required is in receipt of one of these benefits. If this statement is later found to be false then the applicant will be required to repay the grant in full.

#### **Cambridge City, Huntingdonshire & South Cambridgeshire residents:**

Where the applicant is required to make a contribution but does not have sufficient savings, and the council concerned is satisfied that seeking a contribution would give rise to financial hardship and be detrimental to the health and wellbeing of the applicant, a decision may be made to waive the contribution. This would be subject to the discretion of the council concerned and availability of funding.

The council or Home Improvement Agency may consider whether other funding options are available in considering whether assistance is payable.

### 2.4.2 Amount of assistance payable

**Cambridge City residents:** The maximum amount allowed to one household will generally be £10,000. However, for work for an owner-occupier which would result in remedying of Category 1 hazards - the maximum will be £20,000. This includes any Home Improvement Agency fees.

**Huntingdonshire and South Cambridgeshire residents:** The maximum amount allowed to one household will be £10,000 including any Home Improvement Agency fees.



### 2.4.3 Repayment

**Cambridge City residents:** Where the value of the assistance to an owner occupier exceeds £10,000 a local land charge may be registered against the property, making the loan element repayable on disposal of the property. The minimum charge registered will be £500; the maximum will be £10,000.

**Huntingdonshire and South Cambridgeshire residents:** No repayment required.

### 2.4.4 Carrying out of works

**Cambridge City, Huntingdonshire and South Cambridgeshire residents:**

We expect that all discretionary work will be managed through the Home Improvement Agency, Cambs HIA.

### 2.4.5 Future applications

Further applications for Discretionary Special Purposes Assistance will not normally be considered from an applicant household within three years of the work being completed unless there are extenuating circumstances. Eg if refusal would lead to significant health impact or a delayed transfer of care.

## 2.5 Discretionary funding of partnership work and other services

This policy allows for DFG capital grant provided through the Better Care Fund to be made available to fund wider partnership projects or other services where it can be clearly demonstrated that they would help to meet the objectives of this policy.

## PART 3: ACCESS TO THE SERVICE

### 3.1 How to apply and who to contact for further information

**Cambridge City, Huntingdonshire and South Cambridgeshire District Council residents:**

Please contact:

Cambs Home Improvement Agency,  
South Cambridgeshire Hall,  
Cambourne Business Park,  
Cambourne,  
Cambridge, CB23 6EA

Tel: 01954 713330/713347

Email: [hia@cambshia.org](mailto:hia@cambshia.org)

[www.cambshia.org](http://www.cambshia.org) | [www.facebook.com/cambshia](https://www.facebook.com/cambshia) | [www.twitter.com/cambshia](https://www.twitter.com/cambshia)  
| [www.instagram.com/cambshia](https://www.instagram.com/cambshia)

### 3.2 Valid applications

For an application to be valid, it must be in writing, and all the information required by the council must be provided. This may include, amongst other things:

- Details of why the work is needed
- Details of the relevant works
- Estimates of the cost of the works
- Any financial information required for a financial assessment to be carried out
- Written documentation evidencing a legal interest in the property, and that the occupant on behalf of whom the application is made intends to live there as their only or main residence throughout the grant/loan condition period. If the application is for a property held in trust or is occupied under another licence, for example in the case of agricultural workers, it will be at the council's discretion as to the appropriateness or otherwise of the requirement for written documentation.
- For works to be carried out for the benefit of a tenant, a statement of consent to the works signed by the person who at the time of the application is the landlord under the tenancy.

Exactly what information is required in each case will depend on the type of assistance being applied for and the circumstances of the applicant. More information is available on request.

Where the applicant is using the services of the local Home Improvement Agency, the Agency can help with completing the application.

Further information on the types of legal interest and occupancy documentation required are at Appendix 4.

### **3.3 Fees to be charged**

It will be at the discretion of the Council as to the level of professional fees deemed reasonable to be covered in the calculation of financial assistance. Where an applicant uses the services of the Home Improvement Agency then the Council will generally include the fees in the calculation of financial assistance.

**Cambridge City, Huntingdonshire and South Cambridgeshire District Council residents:** The fees charged may vary from time to time, and applicants will be advised of the current rate when they appoint the agency. The agency's fees are subject to VAT.

### **3.4 Conditions**

Information on grant/loan conditions are available from the council or Home Improvement Agency. These conditions remain in force throughout the relevant grant/loan condition period.

In making an application for financial assistance the applicant agrees to the terms and conditions attached to the provision of that assistance.

## **PART 4: ADDITIONAL INFORMATION**

### **4.1 Prioritisation of funding**

While this policy is designed to encourage flexible use of the DFG Capital Allocation, where insufficient funding is available, Mandatory Disabled Facilities Grants will generally need to be given first priority over discretionary assistance.

Where the council considers there will be sufficient funding to provide discretionary assistance on top of Mandatory Disabled Facilities Grant work, then applications for discretionary assistance will be dealt with on a first come first served basis, so long as sufficient funding remains available.

If there are a number of applications being considered at any one time, applications will generally be prioritised in the following order:

- Mandatory Disabled Facilities Grants, and Relocation Assistance for applicants, for applicants who would be eligible for a DFG, within the terms of paragraph 2.3(a) above.
- Work to facilitate a Disabled Facilities Grant which is not eligible for Mandatory DFG funding
- Relocation assistance under the terms of paragraph 2.3(b) above
- Discretionary Top Up Assistance
- Disabled Facilities Grant works to be carried out under Discretionary Special Purposes Assistance where the council is satisfied that funding it through Discretionary Special Purposes Assistance would significantly speed up the process and improve the outcome for the applicant.
- Other Discretionary Special Purposes Assistance
- Relocation assistance under the terms of paragraph 2.3(c) above
- Discretionary partnership projects and/or other services.

The council reserves the right to amend this priority ordering if the need arises. For example: where additional funding becomes available from elsewhere with the intention of it being used for a particular type of assistance; if changes in legislation enable or require it; etc

In assessing whether to fund assistance other than Mandatory DFGs, and what priority should be given, the council will also consider:

- a) The extent to which providing assistance will meet the objectives of this Policy;

- b) Whether the need for assistance is considered serious and urgent both in its own right and relative to any other current applications and enquiries for assistance which the council is considering;
- c) The extent to which the applicant is able, and can him/ herself afford to resolve the problem and /or pay for the work;
- d) Whether the work to which the application relates is considered serious or urgent relative to the general state of repair of dwellings in the district.
- e) Any other circumstances which may be relevant at the time.

#### **4.2 Approval of application and payment of grant**

Before approving an application the Council will need to be satisfied that the application is complete and that it accurately reflects the applicant's circumstances; also that the applicant clearly understands and accepts the conditions of any financial assistance being provided.

Where the assistance is to pay for work to be carried out:

- The council must be satisfied that the cost of the works is reasonable and that all the appropriate notifications and/or permissions have been obtained eg, Building Regulations, Planning Permission etc.
- If the applicant is arranging their own work, s/he should not make any arrangements for the work to start until they have received the grant/loan approval in writing from the council.
- If carrying out their own work the applicant must notify the Council when the work is completed. A council representative may need to visit the property to inspect the works before arranging payment. No payment will be made until the relevant work is completed to the Council's satisfaction. The applicant will be responsible for ensuring that any defects are remedied.
- Unless otherwise specified, payment will be made direct to the contractor.
- Where the approved work has not been carried out to the satisfaction of the applicant the Council may, at the request of the applicant and if it considers it to be reasonable, withhold payment.

**Cambridge City, Huntingdonshire and South Cambridgeshire District Council residents:**

Generally it is expected that works will be completed within 12 months of grant/loan approval.

Further conditions may apply to the payment of any assistance under this policy, which applicants need to formally agree to before any application can be approved. Details are available from the council or the Home Improvement Agency.

### 4.3 Local authority decision making & appeals

All applications for assistance contained within this Policy are subject to the local authority's decision making processes.

If an applicant wishes to appeal against a decision under this Policy:

**Cambridge City, Huntingdonshire and South Cambridgeshire District Council residents:** Should contact the Manager at Cambs HIA in the first instance. The Manager will advise the applicant of how it will be taken forward.

The council may make exceptions to the policy in exceptional circumstances, and each case will be considered on its merits.

### 4.4 Equalities

The public sector equality duty under the Equality Act 2010 requires public bodies, in exercising their functions, to have due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act;
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not; and
- Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

The protected characteristics are: age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion and belief, sex and sexual orientation.

An Equality Impact Assessment has been carried out on this Policy to ensure that the Policy takes into account the needs of all groups, and that particular groups of people are not adversely affected by it.



#### 4.5 Safeguarding

**Cambridge City, Huntingdonshire and South Cambridgeshire residents:**

There are national requirements for safeguarding and protecting people at risk of abuse or neglect. All the Cambridgeshire councils are committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and adults who may be at risk, and their policies and processes reflect the direction of Cambridgeshire County Council in relation to safeguarding. All key staff are trained in safeguarding issues. Your council can provide details of its own policies in relation to safeguarding.

#### 4.6 Customer Care & Complaints

**Cambridge City, Huntingdonshire and South Cambridgeshire District Council residents:**

Customer care is of paramount importance. Staff are trained in their area of work and most are experienced at supporting disabled and or vulnerable people. Contractors are required to act in accordance with a code of conduct, and health and safety is taken very seriously.

However, occasionally things may go wrong. Customers who wish to make a complaint should speak first to the Manager of Cambs HIA, who will advise on how to make a complaint and to whom the complaint should be made. Complaints will initially be dealt with by the Home Improvement Agency or the relevant council, depending on the nature of the complaint.

#### 4.7 Recourse to public funds

Assistance will not be available to individuals who have no National Insurance number or recourse to public funds. Further details are available from the government's website.<sup>3</sup>

#### 4.8 Monitoring of outcomes

The five Cambridgeshire district councils signed up to this Policy will agree a common set of outcomes with health and social care partners which will be used to monitor implementation of this policy.

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<sup>3</sup> Gov.uk web page re public funds: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/public-funds--2/public-funds>

#### **4.9 Policy Review**

The Policy will run from April 2019. The government recently announced a national review of Disabled Facilities Grants. This Policy may need to be reviewed once the outcome of this is known. Otherwise the Policy will be reviewed as and when necessary.

## Appendix 1

### Early Help & Housing Options

One of the findings of the Cambridgeshire Disabled Facilities Grants Review carried out in 2016 was that in order to achieve better outcomes for people, and to make best use of the resources available, providing repairs and adaptations in the home in which someone is currently living will not always be the best solution; options must also be available for people to move to more suitable accommodation.

The Home Improvement Agencies already provide basic housing options advice. However, with limited funding available, for the Policy to be successful it will need to be implemented hand in hand with a new approach to considering people's wider housing options at an earlier stage.

For adults where their current home may not meet their needs now or in the future, there is a Specialist Housing Officer who works with the Adult Early Help Team working with Social Workers and Occupational Therapists. This service provides advice and information on all the possible options that may be available at an early stage.

For older people the Councils also promote the use of the Elderly Accommodation Council (First Stop – HOOP) resources to deliver early advice and information on alternative housing options prior to a request for an adaptation. This provides comprehensive information on services available to maintain independence and also an independent advice line. Information on alternative housing opportunities - for example sheltered housing, extra care or the purchase of a more suitable home, can inform early decisions. This is especially important if the home will not be suitable in the longer term. See the Cambridgeshire Older Peoples Factsheet for further information.<sup>4</sup>

The Housing Options for Older People (HOOP) tool is available both on line and in leaflet format and is designed to help older people think about how suitable their current home is and if submitted can identify what alternative options are nearby. See the website online tool.<sup>5</sup>

Support with planning, managing and facilitating a move can be sought from the Older Peoples Visiting Support Services which are delivered across the county to people in all tenures, be they property owners or renters, if this is not readily available from family or friends.

For working age people with a disability who are considering applying for an adaptation to their home, information and advice can be sought on alternative social housing options from the local Home-link teams. Support with planning, managing and facilitating a move may be available from the Floating Support Services available across the county.

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<sup>4</sup> Cambridgeshire Older People's Factsheet: <http://www.housingcare.org/downloads/kbase/3501.pdf>

<sup>5</sup> HOOP online tool: <https://hoop.eac.org.uk/hoop/start.aspx>

For families with a child or young person with Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) 0 – 25) where their current home may not meet the child's needs now or in the future there is a Specialist Housing Officer who works with the SEND Social Care, Occupational Therapists and others.

These services provide advice and information on all the possible options that may be available at an early stage. Often major adaptations can be expensive and the limits of the Grant funding available means that sometimes more expensive works (i.e. extensions with specialist equipment) cannot be fully funded that way. Options may include a move to a more suitable property, accessing or moving within social housing, or a new build opportunity.

## Appendix 2

### National and Local Context and Supporting Data

#### Legislative background

The Care Act 2014 focusses on prevention. Guidance states “*Local authorities must provide or arrange services, resources or facilities that maximise independence for those already with such needs, for example interventions such as rehabilitation/reablement services, e.g. community equipment services and adaptations.*” The guidance goes on to state “*Integrated services built around an individual’s needs are often best met within the home. The suitability of living accommodation is a core component of an individual’s wellbeing and when developing integrated services, local authorities should consider the central role of housing within integration.*”

The Public Health Outcomes Framework “Healthy Lives, Healthy People: Improving Outcomes and Supporting Transparency” (Dept of Health, 2013) sets out desired outcomes for public health and how they will be measured. Many of the outcomes have links to housing including prevention of falls and injuries in over 65s, Fuel Poverty and Excess Winter Deaths.

The Regulatory Reform (Housing Assistance) (England & Wales) Order 2002 (RRO 2002) repealed much of the Housing Renovation Grants regime of the previous Housing Grants, Construction and Regeneration Act of 1996 but left in place the Mandatory Disabled Facility Grants and discretionary grant duties.

In 2008/09 the government extended the scope of the Regulatory Reform Order, allowing authorities to use the Disabled Facilities Grant capital allocation on other types of adaptations, repairs and assistance. The Cambridgeshire authorities hadn’t until now adopted this approach and continued to use the DFG Allocation purely for Mandatory Disabled Facilities Grants which they have a statutory duty to provide; although some have been funding a range of discretionary Regulatory Reform Order policy initiatives through separate capital funding directly from their own budgets.

The Housing Act 2004 placed a duty on local authorities to keep housing conditions under review. The Act introduced the Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS) risk assessment for residential properties, which replaced the old housing fitness standard. In addition, the Home Energy Conservation Act 1995 continues to place a requirement on the authority to have a strategy for promotion and adoption of energy efficiency measures and to work towards the reduction of fossil fuel use.

## National data

Around 12% of homes in England are estimated to have Category 1 hazards.<sup>6</sup> Most of those are in the private rented and owner occupied sectors. In addition, around one in five homes do not meet the national ‘decent homes’ standard.<sup>7 8</sup>

National research by the Building Research Establishment (BRE) estimated that it was costing the NHS around £1.4bn per annum in first year treatment costs to leave people living in the poorest housing in England (ie with at least one Category 1 hazard).<sup>9</sup>

Further Building Research Establishment research found that, in England:

- Over one fifth of all older household groups (55 – 64, 65 – 74, over 75 and over 80) lived in a home that failed to meet the Decent Homes standard
- 780,000 households aged 55 years and over were in fuel poverty
- 1.3 million households aged 55 years and older lived in a home with at least one Category 1 hazard
- For households aged 55 years or more, the cost of poor housing to the NHS (for first year treatment costs) is £624 million with these costs dominated by excess cold hazards and those associated with falls (on stairs and on the level)
- The proportion of older households living in a home with the four “visitability” accessibility features assessed by the English Housing Survey (level access, flush threshold, WC at entrance level and sufficiently wide doors and circulation space) ranged from 4% (aged 55 – 64 years) to 7% (aged 80 years and over). Around a fifth of homes occupied by all age groups aged 65 years and over had none of these key features and this figure was 24% for households aged 55 – 64 years.
- A permanent home for a person with restricted mobility requires suitable parking, downstairs living space, shower on the ground floor, wheelchair turning space, bed space on the ground floor and the entrance illuminated or covered. The research estimated that only 110,000 dwellings (0.5%) were fully accessible.

## Cambridgeshire Population Data<sup>10 11</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> As measured by the Housing Health & Safety Rating System – HHSRS;

<sup>7</sup> English House Condition Survey 2015:

[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/627688/Potential\\_stock\\_improvements\\_Report\\_2015-16.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/627688/Potential_stock_improvements_Report_2015-16.pdf)

<sup>8</sup> Housing Health & Safety Rating System <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/hhsrs-operating-guidance-housing-act-2004-guidance-about-inspections-and-assessment-of-hazards-given-under-section-9>

<sup>9</sup> BRE, The Cost of Poor Housing to the NHS briefing: <https://www.bre.co.uk/filelibrary/pdf/87741-Cost-of-Poor-Housing-Briefing-Paper-v3.pdf>

<sup>10</sup> Census 2011, Cambridgeshire Atlas: <http://atlas.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/census/2011/atlas.html>

According to the Census 2011:

- The number of households was 251,241
- Around 15% reported a long-term activity limiting illness

Cambridgeshire County Council's Research Group estimates that:

- In Cambridgeshire in 2016 there are estimated to be over 409,000 adults (18-64 years), over 138,000 children (0-18 years) and nearly 116,500 older people (65+).
- In the next five years the population is forecast to grow by an additional 30,800 adults (+8%), 15,700 children (+11%) and 10,400 older people (+14%). The biggest percentage change is amongst the oldest age group – an additional 4,000 people aged 85 and over by 2021.

### **Local Data**

The Home Improvement Agency produces an annual report which is available online at [www.cambshia.org](http://www.cambshia.org) and provides more information about the types of adaptations completed each year.

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<sup>11</sup> From Cambridgeshire DFG review 2016



## Appendix 3

### Mandatory Disabled Facilities Grants – further information

The provisions governing Mandatory Disabled Facility Grants are set out in the Housing Grants, Construction and Regeneration Act 1996, as amended by the Regulatory Reform (Housing Assistance)(England & Wales) Order 2002.

A summary of the purposes for which Mandatory DFGs may be given are as follows:

**a) Facilitating Access and Provision**

These include works to remove or help overcome any obstacles which prevent the disabled person from moving freely into and around the dwelling and enjoying the use of the dwelling and the facilities or amenities within it.

**b) Making a dwelling or building safe**

Adaptations to the dwelling or building to make it safe for the disabled person and other persons residing with him/her.

**c) Room usable for sleeping**

The provision of a room usable for sleeping should therefore only be undertaken if the council is satisfied that the adaptation of an existing room in the dwelling (upstairs or downstairs) or the access to that room is unsuitable in the particular circumstances..

**d) Bathroom**

A disabled person should have access to a wash hand basin, a WC and a shower or bath (or if more appropriate, both a shower and a bath).

**e) Facilitating preparation and cooking of food**

A wide range of works are available to enable a disabled person to cater independently.

**f) Heating, lighting and power**

The improvement of an existing heating system in the dwelling to meet the disabled occupant's needs. Where there is no heating system or where the existing heating arrangements are unsuitable to meet his needs, a heating system may be provided.

**g) Dependent residents**

Works to a dwelling required to enable a disabled occupant better access and movement around the dwelling in order to care for another person who normally resides where whether or not they are related to the disabled person.

**h) Access to garden**

Works for facilitating access to and from a garden by a disabled occupant, or making access to a garden safe for a disabled occupant.

Further details are available from the council or Home Improvement Agency.

## Appendix 4

### Test of Resources/ Means Testing

Where required under this policy, a test of resources will be carried out in order to assess the amount, if any, that the applicant must contribute to cost of the works. If the applicant is not in receipt of a passporting benefit they will have to provide details of income and capital.

For those in receipt of one or more of certain qualifying benefits or any equivalent or successor benefits at the time of the application, their contribution towards the financial assistance will be NIL.

The relevant qualifying benefits set by government at the time of publishing this policy are:

- Universal credit
- Income Support
- Income based Job Seekers Allowance or Income Based Employment Support Alliance
- Working Tax Credit with gross income less than the current level set by the Department of Work & Pensions
- Housing Benefit,
- Guaranteed Pension Credit,
- Or child tax credit with a relevant income less than the current level set by the DWP

In addition to the qualifying benefits set by government, Council Tax Benefit may, under this policy, be treated as a qualifying benefit for Discretionary Special Purposes Assistance adaptations which would normally be funded through a Mandatory Disabled Facilities Grant but where funding it through Discretionary Special Purposes Assistance would, in the council's view, significantly speed up the process and improve the outcome for the applicant.

For those not on one of the qualifying benefits listed above, where means testing is required legally and/or under the policy, a full means test will be carried out under the National Test of Resources in accordance with the Housing Renewal Grants Regulations 1996 (as amended), or any future legislation that replaces it. This will calculate the applicant's contribution in order to assess the extent to which any assistance may be given up to the maximum eligible expense limit.

The council may in some cases, and where legally permitted, exercise the discretion to consider a grant or loan where applicants are not on qualifying benefits but instead:

- have an income (at the time of application), of less than the current income level recognised by the DWP,
- **and** have savings less than the current cut off level determined by the benefits service,
- **and** are considered to be a priority due to their situation or their urgency of the works required.

The means test or other financial assessment will apply to the person for whom the intervention is being applied for, and any spouse/partner.

## Appendix 5

### Documentation required to demonstrate a legal interest in the property and intention to remain in the property.<sup>12</sup>

#### a) Owner-Occupiers

An owner's certificate which certifies that the applicant has or proposes to acquire an owner's interest in the dwelling, and that the applicant intends that the person requiring financial assistance will live in the dwelling as their only or main residence throughout the relevant grant/loan condition period, or for such shorter period as his/her health and other relevant circumstances permit. The Council retains the discretion to demand repayment of the grant or loan if this condition is breached.

#### b) Tenants

A tenant's certificate which certifies that the person requiring financial assistance is a tenant, and that they intend that the occupant for whom the assistance is being sought will live in the dwelling as their only or main residence throughout the relevant grant/loan condition period, or for such shorter period as his/her health and other relevant circumstances permit.

The Council retains the discretion to demand repayment of the grant or loan if this condition is breached. It will be at the Council's discretion whether an application should also be accompanied by an owner's certificate from the landlord.

#### c) Occupiers (in relation to houseboats and park homes)

An occupier's certificate that states the applicant intends that the occupant for whom assistance is being sought will live in the qualifying houseboat or park home as their only or main residence throughout the relevant grant/loan condition period or for such shorter period as his/her health and other relevant circumstances permit. The Council retains the discretion to demand repayment of the financial assistance if this condition is breached. A consent certificate must also accompany an occupier's application, from each person with an interest in the land or mooring, or in the park home site or boatyard itself.

If none of the above certificates are appropriate to the applicant's situation then signed documentation shall be provided by either the owner or the occupier to

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<sup>12</sup> See sections 21-22A of the Housing Grants, Construction & Regeneration Act 1996 for more detail: <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1996/53>

confirm the intention for future occupation of the property by the person for whom financial assistance is being sought.

**d) Availability for letting**

In a case where a certificate of intended letting accompanies the application:

- It is a condition of any financial assistance under this Policy that, throughout the relevant grant/loan condition period the dwelling will be let or available for letting to the applicant as a residence. Being available as a holiday letting will not satisfy compliance with this requirement.
- It is also a condition of the financial assistance that the Council, may, by written notice require the owner to provide, within 21 days of that notice, a statement showing how the property is occupied and by whom.

## Appendix 6

### Glossary

Term	Definition
Assistance	Any form of financial assistance approved under this Policy
Better Care Fund	<p>The <u>Better Care Fund</u> (BCF) is a programme spanning both the NHS and local government which seeks to join-up health and care services, so that people can manage their own health and wellbeing, and live independently in their communities for as long as possible.</p> <p>The BCF has been created to improve the lives of some of the most vulnerable people in our society, placing them at the centre of their care and support, and providing them integrated health and social care services, resulting in an improved experience and better quality of life.</p>
Category 1 Hazards	Hazards in the home as assessed as ‘serious’ through the <u>Housing Health &amp; Safety Rating System</u> .
Children	<p>For mandatory DFG applications the relevant person is a child if;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• under the age of 16</li> <li>• a person who is 16 or over but not yet 20 and is still in full-time non-advanced education (A level and below) and not getting Income Support, income-based Job Seekers’ Allowance, income-related Employment and Support Allowance or Universal Credit.</li> </ul>
Condition	Any condition attached to financial assistance approved under this Policy. Details of conditions are available on request.
Council	Any reference to council means the local housing authority operating in the area in which the person on behalf of whom an application is made resides, or an authorised representative of that housing authority. I.e Cambridge City Council; East Cambridgeshire District Council; Fenland District Council; Huntingdonshire District Council; or South Cambridgeshire District Council. An authorised representative could include, for example: the Home Improvement Agency commissioned by that authority, an Occupational Therapist, a Trusted Assessor, etc.



Disabled person	<p>For the purposes of this policy, a person is disabled if:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• their sight, hearing or speech is substantially impaired;</li> <li>• they have a mental disorder or impairment of any kind; or</li> <li>• they are physically substantially disabled by illness, injury, impairment present since birth, or otherwise.</li> </ul> <p>(s100 <i>Housing Grants, Construction and Regeneration Act 1996</i>)</p>
Discretionary assistance	Grants and/or loans which the council may make available to applicants, subject to having a policy in place, and to having sufficient funding available to offer that assistance. The extent to which discretionary assistance may be available to an applicant may also be subject to how the council concerned interprets and/or implements financial regulations – eg use of capital grant funding for revenue purposes.
Disposal of a property	<p>Any reference to ‘disposal’ of a property means:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A conveyance of the freehold</li> <li>• An assignment of the lease – where the lease was used to qualify for the assistance: eg a long lease that was treated as effective ownership</li> <li>• The grant of a lease, other than a mortgage term, for a term of more than 21 years otherwise at a rack rent</li> <li>• In the case of a mobile home or a houseboat, the sale, pledge or assignment of the mobile home or houseboat.</li> </ul>
Home Improvement Agency	An agency commissioned by the council to support people to remain independent at home. The role of the local agency is outlined in section 1.4 of this Policy.
Household	The person or persons who occupy a dwelling as their only or main residence.
Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS)	<u>National system for assessing risks in residential properties</u> . Replaced the old housing fitness standard.
Mandatory assistance	Disabled Facilities Grants are ‘mandatory’ in that local authorities are legally required to provide them to applicants who meet national eligibility requirements.
Maximum grant amount for DFGs	The maximum amount the government says that a council can pay as a mandatory Disabled Facilities Grant. At the time of writing this policy the maximum was set at £30,000, but the government has indicated that this is likely to change in future.

Means test/Test of resources	As part of an application for some forms of assistance under this policy, a test of resources must be carried out in order to assess the amount, if any, that the applicant must contribute to cost of the works. If the applicant is not in receipt of a passporting benefit they will have to provide details of income and capital. More information is available in Appendix 3 to this Policy
Owner's interest	Where an application for a DFG (or other works to the home) has been made by an owner-occupier the applicant must provide proof of ownership. Under the 1996 legislation : An owner's certificate' certifies that the applicant has, or proposes to acquire, an owner's interest (as defined in section 21(2)) in the dwelling, and that he intends that the disabled occupant will live in the dwelling as his only or main residence'. For more information see Appendix 5 to this Policy
Regulatory Reform Order Repair & Renewal policies	Councils have powers to provide financial assistance to individuals to help them improve living conditions. In order to be able to use those powers they need to have a published policy detailing how they will use those powers.

# Cambridgeshire Housing Adaptations & Repairs Policy

## Summary of Policy

### INTRODUCTION

This policy is aimed at helping people in Cambridgeshire to live safely and independently at home.

**This version of the policy applies to people living in the areas covered by:**

- **Cambridge City Council**
- **Huntingdonshire District Council; and**
- **South Cambridgeshire District Council**

(Separate documents are available for residents of East Cambridgeshire and Fenland District Council areas. Their versions of the policy are largely the same as this one, but with some slight differences).

**There are separate arrangements, outside of this policy, for adaptations for council tenants of Cambridge City and South Cambridgeshire District Councils. See page 3 below for contact details.)**

### Types of financial assistance

The policy includes four types of financial assistance – in the form of grants or loans - which may be available to disabled people and those on low incomes:

1. Mandatory **Disabled Facilities Grants (DFGs)** to provide disabled adaptations in people's homes
2. Discretionary **Top Up Assistance** where the cost of works agreed through a Disabled Facilities Grant application is above the statutory maximum amount – currently set nationally at £30,000 (may be subject to change).
3. Discretionary **Relocation Assistance** to help disabled people to move to a more appropriate home; and
4. Discretionary **Special Purposes Assistance** for repairs, or other minor works or interventions in the home.

The tables below on pages 4 to 7 below give more detail on each of these.

The funding available to the council may also be used to fund wider partnership projects or other services to meet the objectives of the policy.

### **Objectives of the policy**

The key objectives of the policy are:

- To support healthy, safe and independent living
- To help prevent hospital, care home or residential school admission
- To facilitate a patient being discharged from hospital and enabling them to live safely and independently at home, including making it easier for carers to provide support
- To prevent the need for higher expenditure elsewhere in the health and/or social care system
- To improve housing conditions and remove hazards in the home (ie Category 1 hazards under the Health & Safety Rating System)

### **Further information and how to apply**

Your council or local Home Improvement Agency, Cambs HIA, can help you to apply for financial assistance.

If the grant or loan is to pay for work to be done in your home, the Home Improvement Agency can also arrange for that work to be carried out on your behalf.

If you need help to coordinate adaptations which would help to meet the objectives of this policy, but are not eligible for a grant or loan, Cambs HIA may be able to help you to have work carried out as a private customer.

As part of considering any application, there is likely to be an initial discussion with you on whether, if you are offered financial assistance, your home is likely to remain suitable for you in the longer term. As part of this discussion you may, if appropriate, be pointed towards advice and help in thinking about longer term housing options.

**The district councils have a statutory duty to provide Disabled Facilities Grants to those who need them. However, the extent to which the other three discretionary forms of assistance can be offered will depend on both the individual's needs and the resources available.**

For more information on what the policy covers and whether you might be eligible, please contact:

Cambs Home Improvement Agency,  
South Cambridgeshire Hall,  
Cambourne Business Park,  
Cambourne,  
Cambridge, CB23 6EA

Tel: 01954 713330/713347

If you are a **council tenant** living in Cambridge City or South Cambridgeshire, separate arrangements apply. Please contact:

Cambridge City Council  
PO Box 700  
The Guildhall  
Cambridge  
CB1 0JH

Tel: 0345 045 5202

<https://www.cambridge.gov.uk/contact-us>

Or:

South Cambridgeshire District Council  
South Cambridgeshire Hall  
Cambourne Business Park  
Cambourne  
Cambridge  
CB23 6EA

Telephone: 03450 450 051

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A full version of the policy will be available on the council's websites at:

Cambridge City Council: <https://www.cambridge.gov.uk/>

Huntingdonshire District Council: <http://www.huntingdonshire.gov.uk/>

South Cambridgeshire District Council: <https://www.scambs.gov.uk/>

## Grants and Loans: Summary

<b>Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG)</b>	
Section in policy	Section 2.1
Mandatory or discretionary	Mandatory (Eligibility is based on current legislation – may be subject to future change)
Description	Home adaptations for disabled people
Grant or loan	Grant
Maximum amount	Maximum amount allowed to be paid is set by government. (£30,000 at April 2019 but this may change)
Means test	Adults: In receipt of one or more qualifying benefits or full Financial Test of Resources.  Children and eligible young people: not means tested
Tenure	All tenures (except council tenants in Cambridge City and South Cambs)
Specific restrictions	National eligibility criteria apply
Residency requirements	None
Secured on property	Yes – for grants over £10,000. Minimum charge £500; maximum charge £10,000
Repayable	Yes, if property disposed of within 10 years
Restrictions on future applications	Further applications may be considered.



<b>Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG) Top Up</b>	
Section in policy	Section 2.2
Mandatory or discretionary	At the discretion of the council
Description	Where the cost of mandatory DFG works is higher than the maximum amount allowed by government to be paid for a DFG. (See Disabled Facilities Grants above).
Section in policy	Section 2.2
Grant or loan	Loan
Maximum amount	£15,000
Means test	Adults: means test for DFG will take into account full cost of work.  Applications on behalf of children (as defined in the full policy): Standard DFG means test will be carried out, but mortgage outgoings will also be taken into account.
Tenure	All tenures (except council tenants in City & South Cambs)
Specific restrictions	Applicant is eligible for DFG. Also where a move to alternative accommodation is not feasible; and funding is not available from elsewhere. Without work applicant would be unable to remain living in the community, or person or carer would be at significant risk; or work would generate public service savings.
Residency requirements	None
Secured on property	Yes – full amount
Repayable	Yes – full amount repayable on disposal of property.
Restrictions on future applications	Further applications only considered in exceptional circumstances

<b>Disabled Persons' Relocation Assistance</b>	
Section in policy	Section 2.3
Mandatory or discretionary	At the discretion of the council
Description	To help with reasonable costs of a disabled person moving to a more suitable home.
Grant or loan	Grant
Maximum amount	Cambridge City , Huntingdonshire and South Cambridgeshire residents: Maximum amount payable £5,000
Means test	No
Tenure	All tenures (except council tenants in Cambridge City and South Cambs)
Specific restrictions	<p>a) Adaptations required, but moving home may be better and cheaper, taking into account cost of works required in current and new home; or.</p> <p>b) Existing accommodation not adaptable and new home more closely meets needs; or</p> <p>c) Moving home is likely to lead to savings public service savings, or would help to resolve other health and/or wellbeing issues.</p> <p>A suitable alternative property must have been identified.</p> <p>Cost of Disabled Persons' Relocation Assistance and any work to adapt the new property must not exceed the cost of adapting the disabled person's existing accommodation.</p>
Residency requirements	None
Secured on property	No
Repayable	No, unless applicant decides not to go ahead with the move.
Restrictions on future applications	Individual's circumstances must have changed significantly

<b>Special Purposes Assistance</b>	
Section in policy	Section 2.4
Mandatory or discretionary	At the discretion of the council
Description	Repairs, minor works or other interventions in the home to meet policy objectives.
Grant or loan	<p><b>Cambridge City residents:</b> First £10,000 as a grant, anything above that offered as a loan</p> <p><b>Huntingdonshire and South Cambridgeshire residents:</b> Grant</p>
Maximum amount	<p><b>Cambridge City residents:</b> £10,000; except for work for an owner-occupier which would result in removal of Category 1 hazards* where the maximum will be £20,000.</p> <p><b>Huntingdonshire &amp; South Cambridgeshire residents:</b> £10,000</p> <p>*Category 1 hazards under the Housing Health &amp; Safety Rating System</p>
Means test	In receipt of a qualifying benefit (except adaptations for children which would normally be funded as a mandatory DFG)
Tenure	All tenures (except council tenants in City & South Cambs)
Specific restrictions	<p>Not available for repairs to disability equipment.</p> <p>Cambridge City, Huntingdonshire and South Cambridgeshire residents: work is expected to be managed through Cambs HIA.</p>
Residency requirements	<p>Disabled adaptations: None</p> <p>Other works: 2 years</p>
Secured on property	<p><b>Cambridge City residents:</b> Yes – for amounts over £10,000. Minimum charge £500; maximum charge £10,000</p> <p><b>Huntingdonshire and South Cambridgeshire residents:</b> No</p>

<b>Special Purposes Assistance</b>	
Repayable	<b>Cambridge City residents:</b> Loan element repayable  <b>Huntingdonshire &amp; South Cambridgeshire residents:</b> Not repayable
Restrictions on future applications	3 years unless except in extenuating circumstances

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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 12/03/2019

### **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

## **Not a 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 Following some minor revisions to the housing schemes outlined in the January report, the total Council housing programme now shows 536 homes.
- 1.3 The Council now has 132 Council rented homes being built on site with first completions programmed for August 2019.

### **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 funding structure for the Combined Authority programme.

### **3. Background**

- 3.1 In January 2019, the Housing Scrutiny Committee was provided with a report showing progress against the Combined Authority target of 500 Council rented homes.
- 3.2 The report confirmed that the 500 home target is now forecast to be met with a total programme outturn of 535 homes.
- 3.3 In the past two months the Housing Development team have progressed the identified schemes as forecast with some minor revisions to the overall programme.

### **4. Combined Authority**

- 4.1 The Council's housing programme is part funded by a £70million grant from the Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Combined Authority.
- 4.2 Quarterly grant claims are made to the Combined Authority in arrears. Cambridge City Council is forecast to draw down £13,686,542 in financial year 18/19, for a total expenditure by financial year end of £14,270,717.
- 4.3 Provision of a quarterly report from Cambridge City Council against the £70m programme is one condition of the original grant from the Combined Authority. The most recent report to the Combined Authority was made on the 6th of February 2019 and replicated the information provided to the Housing Scrutiny Committee on the 16th January.

## **5. Delivery Programme**

- 5.1 The delivery programme provided in January 2019 included 535 (net gain) Council homes to be delivered on named sites through the devolution programme. The Committee also approved capital budgets for major development sites at the Meadows Centre & Buchan Street and Colville Road, as well as the purchase of the S106 affordable housing provision within a private sector housing development at Clerk Maxwell Road.
- 5.2 Since January the development of all named housing schemes has been progressed (see items 7 and 8). Following revisions to existing schemes, the programme is now set to deliver 536 new homes with the option to pursue 277 additional homes on a range of prospective sites.
- 5.3 Appendix 1 shows the current programme, which now shows the total market housing provided as well as the net gain of Council homes. It also includes 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 (including those added to the rolling programme in January 2019)
- 6.2 The Housing Development team are continuing to over-programme and explore additional sites to allow for slippage of existing schemes and allow others to come forward should additional funding opportunities present themselves.
- 6.3 As below, the overall programme shows an outturn of 536 new homes commencing construction by March 2022.



Table 1: Start on Site Forecast Profile

Year	2017/8 (actual)	2018/19 (forecast)	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	Pipeline schemes
Number of starts	2	132	311	91	0	277
Cumulative total	2	134	445	536	536	813

## 7. Start on Sites Achieved 2018/19

7.1 The total number of Start on Sites achieved at the end of February 2019 is 132. All starts on site now programmed for 2018/19 have been achieved.

7.2 The schemes that have met the start on site requirement are as follows:

### 7.2.1 Schemes Completed Total 2 homes

- **Uphall Road:** this scheme was completed in January 2018 and was the first project completed by the Cambridge City Council Housing Maintenance & Assets team.

### 7.2.2 Schemes on Site: Net gain 132 homes.

- **Mill Road:** This is a mixed tenure scheme delivering 91 new Council rented homes. Works are on programme and the foundations of the first new street have been laid. The scheme is being delivered through the Cambridge Investment Partnership (CIP). The programme shows 143 week build programme including demolitions A Section 73 application was submitted in January 2019 to incorporate Mill Road Phase 2 (see below) into a combined scheme outturn of 118 units.



Postal 161 & 162 - Substructure blockwork started



Postal 163 & 164 - loaded out with blocks

- **Anstey Way:** This regeneration scheme is delivering 56 Council homes in total (a net gain of 29) all for rent. There are 12 specifically for the over 55s. The first floor slabs have been laid on site and the 74 week build programme is on track.
- **Ditchburn Day Centre / Community Rooms:** Following the purchase of this centre from Cambridgeshire County Council, HSC approved the redevelopment of the site for 2 Council homes in September 2018. Planning permission was granted in November 2018. The contractor already engaged in the refurbishment of Ditchburn Place, Cocksedge, took possession of the site and commenced work in January 2019. Practical completion is anticipated in September 2019.
- **Nuns Way and Wiles Close:** this scheme is split across two former garage sites delivering 10 new homes for rent. Marfleet Construction are now in possession of the site and commenced work in January 2019, with a forecast build programme of 40 weeks.

## 8. Update on other approved schemes:

8.1 Schemes target to Start on site in 2019/20 with planning permission

- **Kendal Way:** planning permission was obtained in 2017 for the development of two homes on this site. The scheme was approved by

HSC on the basis of delivery by the Housing Maintenance & Assets team. The start on site has been delayed by a boundary dispute with a neighbour. The 3C legal team are currently working to resolve this and start on site is provisionally forecast for summer 2019.

- **CIP small sites package:** this group of five garage and infill sites have now all achieved planning permission. In total they will provide 15 units for Council rent. They will be delivered by CIP as a single scheme but starts on site are staggered through the first four months of financial year 2019/20, as follows,
  - **Queens Meadow:** This scheme will deliver two homes; start on site is forecast for April 2019.
  - **Markham Close:** this scheme will deliver five homes; start on site is forecast for April 2019.
  - **Gunhild Way:** this scheme will deliver two homes; start on site is forecast for July 2019.
  - **Colville Road Garages:** this scheme will deliver three homes; start on site is forecast for May 2019.
  - **Wulfstan Way:** this scheme will deliver three homes for Council rent. Start on site is forecast for June 2019.

## 8.2 Schemes target to start on site in 2019/20 planning submission made

- **Ventress Close:** this scheme is being delivered through CIP. Three tenants have been rehoused as part of this redevelopment which will deliver 15 Council rented homes, for a net gain of 13. Planning surveys have been delayed to work around the nesting seasons for wildlife on site and the target to achieve planning permission is now March 2019 with a provisional Start on Site date of October 2019.
- **Tedder Way:** this scheme comprises two homes for Council rent and will be delivered by the Council's Housing Maintenance & Assets team. The target to achieve planning permission has been pushed back to April 2019 by on-going discussions over drainage. Start on site is provisionally forecast for August 2019.
- **Kingsway Medical Centre:** this scheme is being delivered by the Housing Maintenance & Assets team. It will deliver four new Council rented homes through the conversion of a former surgery. The

planning application was submitted in September 2018. It is anticipated this scheme will start construction in July 2019.

- **Mill Road phase 2.** This scheme, approved for development in September 2018, will add at least 25 Council rented homes to the overall Mill Road delivery programme. Following a public consultation, a planning application was submitted in February 2019, this includes a purpose built community centre.
- **Clerk Maxwell Road:** This is a private scheme being brought forward by Hill Residential. Approval was secured in January 2019 to acquire the 14 S106 affordable homes included in this scheme. Hill has submitted a planning application and is planning to start on site in summer 2019.

### 8.3 Schemes approved by the Executive Councillor. Not submitted for planning.

- **Cromwell Road:** This is a major development with CIP which required a substantial land acquisition in March 2018. It will deliver a 118 new Council rented homes as well as market housing on a mixed tenure site. Following a public consultation and scheme revisions requested during the pre-application process, a planning application will be made by the end of February 2019.
- **Akeman Street:** This regeneration scheme, delivering a net gain of 12 council rented homes, was approved for development in July 2018. CIP is currently preparing a planning application which meets the expectations of the 2018 adopted local plan. The application is on track for submission in February.
- **Colville Road phase 2:** this regeneration scheme, delivering a gain of 42 Council rented homes, was approved by housing committee in January 2019. A planning application is currently being drawn up via CIP and is scheduled for submission in July 2019.
- **Meadows & Buchan:** this scheme, which comprises the regeneration of two community centres and their environs, was approved by HSC in January 2019 and will deliver 106 Council rented homes. A public consultation is planned to launch in March 2019. A planning application will be submitted through CIP in June 2019.

### 8.4 Schemes awaiting committee approval.

- **Campkin Road:** Detailed pre-planning work is taking place on this scheme, with the aim to present a report to HSC in June 2019.

## 9. Delivering Accessible Housing

- 9.1 Cambridge City Council is committed to providing a range of housing options for residents with limited mobility. To accomplish this, the Council looks meet a minimum target for accessible homes on the delivery programme as a whole as well as on individual sites.
- 9.2 In March 2017, the Council committed to delivering as a minimum 2% of new housing to wheelchair accessible standards and in developments over 20 homes 5% will meet Wheelchair Housing Design Standards or be able to be easily adaptable to meet Wheelchair Housing Design Standards.
- 9.3 This target is restated in the Cambridge Sustainable Housing Design Guide, which also stipulates that all units built by the City Council must be Adaptable Lifetime Homes (M4 category 2 of the Building Regulations 2010).
- 9.4 The new local plan requires all homes to be M4(2) (accessible and adaptable dwellings), and 5% of new build affordable homes to be M4(3) (wheelchair user dwellings). We will be delivering this on all relevant new planning applications going forward.
- 9.5 There are currently 27 wheelchair user dwellings (fully adapted) in the programme. These are spread across the six largest sites (see table 2). 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 in every scheme over 20 units will be exceeded.

### 9.6 Table 2: Wheelchair user homes

	Total Council rented homes	Total wheelchair user homes in designs
--	----------------------------	--

Mill Road phases 1 & 2	118	7
Anstey Way	56	3
Cromwell Road	118	6
Colville Road Ph 2	62	3
Campkin Road	70	3
Meadows & Buchan	106	5

## 10 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 536 homes identified	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. Strategy is to exceed target.
<b>Land Assembly issues delaying start on sites</b>	Medium - a number of the schemes in the programme require purchase of land/property from 3 <sup>rd</sup> parties	High- if vacant possession or access not achieved the scheme cannot be developed.	Council putting in place resources to support residents to move. Process also in place to use statutory powers if required.

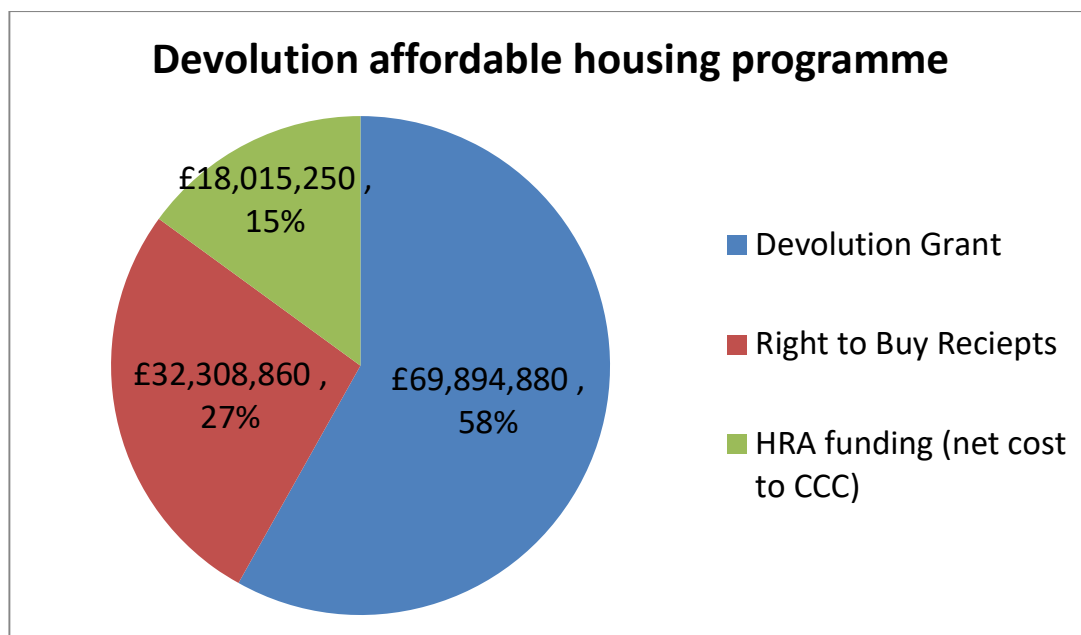
<b>Cost increases on approved projects</b>	Low - updated Budget Setting Report for the Housing Revenue account was approved by HSC 16/01/2019 and incorporates contingency at scheme level.	Medium - depending on the extent of the additional cost this may be managed within contingency which has now been added.	Initial budgets either developed with Hill or Employers Agent. Cost plans are regularly reviewed and updated.
<b>Planning</b>	Medium- The Housing Development team works closely with the Planning department but resourcing issues have delayed planning decision on several projects over the last six months..	High- if planning is not achieved the scheme cannot be delivered.	Pre –apps take place with planning service. Strategy is to deliver policy compliant development. Concerns over planning resource have been escalated to Strategic Director level.
<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.	Medium – new homes are expensive but retain considerable inherent value and have other uses than market sale.	Commission of private sector sales team and engagement with private sector partners to monitor market fluctuations.
<b>Decanting residents / leaseholders</b>	Low – decanting process has been agreed with City Homes and no evident delays have come up to date	High – regeneration schemes will not be progressed if residents are not decanted.	Close cooperation with City Homes has been agreed; departments liaise and jointly attend interviews with residents.

## 12. Implications

### (A) Financial Implications

The Devolution Housing Grant and Right to Buy Receipts will be the main source of funding for schemes in the Rolling Programme that progress into development. However, scheme funding will be confirmed should a scheme be brought to the Committee for scheme specific approval.

Currently the 500 programme has a total approved Capital budget of £120,218,990. This is funded as follows:



### (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**

There are no procurement implications of this report. Each scheme specific approval will cover any procurement implications, although it anticipated that the majority of schemes will be delivered through the Cambridge Investment Partnership.

**(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) 19/01/16 HSC report

**14. Appendices**

- (a) Appendix 1: Programme Summary

**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	21/02/2019															
Scheme Name	Ward	Net Affordable	Market homes	Total homes	Delivery	Committee	Approval date	Planning Submitted	Planning Granted	Est. SOS	Practical Completion	Budget approval	Spend to date	RTB receipts	Devo grant funding	Net cost to HRA
BUILD COMPLETED																
Uphall Road	Romsey	2	0	2	H M & A	HSC	Mar-15	Aug-16	Dec-16	Jun-17	Jan-18	£322,000	£351,826	-£96,600	-£221,900	£3,500
Sub total		2	0	2												
ON SITE																
Nuns Way & Wiles Close	Kings Hedges	10	0	10	Tender	HSC	Mar-15	Aug-16	Jul-17	Jan-19	Aug-19	£2,081,000	£143,454	-£624,300	-£1,456,700	£0
Anstey Way	Trumpington	29	0	56	CIP	HSC	Mar-17	Jan-18	Jul-18	Oct-18	Apr-20	£11,489,640	£3,723,114	-£1,826,810	-£3,434,600	£6,228,230
Mill Road	Petersfield	91	91	182	CIP	S & R	Nov-17	Dec-17	Jun-18	Aug-18	Sep-21	£19,296,730	£3,373,957	-£5,789,020	-£13,507,710	£0
												joint w/ wider				
Ditchburn Place Community Rooms	Petersfield	2	0	2	Tender	S & R	Sep-18	Aug-18	Nov-18	Jan-19	Sep-19	£332,000	Ditchburn	-£99,600	-£232,400	£0
Sub total		132	91	250												
PLANNING APPROVED																
Kendal Way	East Chesterton	2	0	2	H M & A	HSC	Mar-15	Aug-16	Feb-17	Jul-19	Feb-20	£367,000	£16,915	-£110,100	-£256,900	£0
Colville Garages	Cherry Hinton	3	0	3	CIP	HSC	Sep-17	Sep-18	Nov-18	May-19	May-20	£900,460	£40,031	-£270,140	-£630,320	£0
Queens Meadow	Cherry Hinton	2	0	2	CIP	HSC	Jun-17	Dec-17	Jul-18	Apr-19	Apr-20	£619,590	£54,668	-£185,880	-£433,710	£0
Markham Close	Kings Hedges	5	0	5	CIP	HSC	Jan-18	May-18	Oct-18	Apr-19	Jun-20	£1,063,870	£55,580	-£319,160	-£744,710	£0
Gunhild Way	Queen Ediths	2	0	2	CIP	HSC	Jan-18	Jul-18	Oct-18	Jul-19	Jun-20	£655,040	£32,340	-£196,510	-£485,530	-£27,000
Wulfstan Way	Queen Ediths	3	0	3	CIP	HSC	Sep-17	Oct-18	Jan-19	Jun-19	Jun-20	£884,740	£43,694	-£265,420	-£619,320	£0
Sub total		17	0	17												
SUBMITTED FOR PLANNING																
Ventress Close	Queen Ediths	13	0	15	CIP	HSC	Mar-17	Sep-18	Mar-19	Oct-19	Oct-20	£3,665,550	£711,648	-£777,550	-£1,814,280	£1,073,720
												joint w/ Mill				
Mill Road Phase 2	Petersfield	25	25	50	CIP	HSC	Sep-18	Feb-19	Apr-19	Sep-19	Jun-21	£5,340,000	Road	-£1,602,000	-£3,738,000	£0
												joint w/Nuns				
Tedder Way	Arbury	2	0	2	H M & A	HSC	Mar-15	Mar-17	Apr-19	Oct-19	Apr-20	£389,000	Way	-£116,700	-£272,300	£0
Kingsway Medical Centre	Arbury	4	0	4	H M & A	HSC	Sep-17	Sep-18	Apr-19	Jul-19	Apr-20	£410,000	£25,646	-£123,000	-£287,000	£0
Clerk Maxwell Road	Newnham	14	21	35	S106	HSC	Jan-19	Dec-18	Jul-19	Aug-19	Jan-21	£2,837,760	£0	-£851,330	-£1,986,430	£0
Sub total		58	46	106												
COMMITTEE APPROVED																
Cromwell Road	Romsey	118	177	295	CIP	S & R	Mar-18	Feb-19	Jun-19	Jan-20	Sep-22	£25,254,300	£11,443,844	-£7,576,290	-£17,678,010	£0
Akeman Street	Arbury	12	0	14	CIP	HSC	Jun-18	Feb-19	Jun-19	Sep-19	Nov-20	£4,148,830	£49,951	-£1,051,880	-£2,454,410	£642,540
Meadows and Buchan	Kings Hedges	106	0	106	CIP	HSC	Jan-19	Jun-19	Nov-19	Jan-20	Jun-21	£26,379,890	£114,819	-£7,913,970	-£13,777,920	£4,688,000
Colville Phase 2	Cherry Hinton	42	0	62	CIP	HSC	Jan-19	Jul-19	Oct-19	Apr-20	Jan-22	£13,781,590	£31,811	-£2,512,600	-£5,862,730	£5,406,260
Sub total		278	177	477												
FEASIBILITY STAGE																
Campkin Road	Kings Hedges	45	0	70	CIP	HSC	Jun-19	Sep-19	Dec-19	May-20	Mar-22	TBC	TBC	TBC	TBC	TBC
Potential scheme	East Chesterton	4	0	4	CIP	S & R	Jun-19	Aug-19	Nov-19	Apr-20	Jun-21	TBC	TBC	TBC	TBC	TBC
Sub total		49	0	74												
GRAND TOTAL		536	314	926								£120,218,990	£20,213,298	-£32,308,860	-£69,894,880	£18,015,250

Progress to 500 Starts on Site	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	Future Pipeline
Starts by year	2	132	311	91	0	277
Cumulative Total	2	134	445	536	536	813

Progress to 500 Completions	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23
Completions by year	2	0	14	89	313	118
Cumulative Total	2	2	16	105	418	536

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