

Local Policy

Health & Housing Charter

The Suffolk wide Health & Housing Charter was established in 2015, it has a vision for Suffolk people to live in a suitable affordable home that is in good condition where they feel safe and supported by the local community.

This Charter underpins the Government paper *Joint action on improving health through the home: memorandum of understanding* which details areas of improvement and actions that by working together aims to:

- Establish and support national and local dialogue, information and decision making across government, health, social care and housing sectors
- Co-ordinate health, social care, and housing policy
- Enable improved collaboration and integration of healthcare and housing in the planning, commissioning and delivery of homes and services
- Promote the housing sector contribution to: addressing the wider issues of health; health equity; improvements to patient experience
- Develop the workforce across sectors so that they are confident and skilled in understanding the relationship between where people live and their health and wellbeing and are able to identify suitable solutions to improve outcomes.

A full copy of the paper can be found here: -

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/joint-action-on-improving-health-through-the-home-memorandum-of-understanding>

The New Anglia Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP)

The New Anglia LEP promotes economic growth in Norfolk and Suffolk. It has set ambitious targets for growth in jobs, new businesses and housing, with aspirations to build up to 117,000 homes across the two counties by 2026. This is higher than the homes to be built shown in the Local Plans across Suffolk and Norfolk.

Strategic Housing Market Assessments (SHMA)

Strategic Housing Market Assessments (SHMA) are a requirement under national planning policy and are a key part of the evidence required to ensure the delivery of the right amount of new homes that meet the needs of our communities, now and in years to come. This informs our Local Plans and supports the need for significant numbers of additional homes of all types.

This document covers the Ipswich and Waveney Housing Market Areas. The Ipswich Housing Market Area includes Babergh and Mid Suffolk districts along with Ipswich Borough Council and Suffolk Coastal District Council. The document has been produced to assess and evidence housing mix, tenures and, general and affordable housing need.

However, since the publication of the SHMA, the Government has introduced a standard method for calculating housing need following the publication of the National Planning Policy Framework in July 2018.

Gypsy, Traveller, Travelling Show People and Boat Dwellers Accommodation Needs Assessment May 2017

This document assesses the accommodation needs of Gypsy, Traveller, Travelling Show People and Boat Dwellers. The areas cover the IHMA and Waveney and includes Babergh and Mid Suffolk District Councils. The document has been used to assess and evidence housing needs for these groups.

Gateway to Homechoice Allocation Policy 2016

Gateway to Homechoice is the name given to the single housing register and choice based lettings scheme for the allocation of social housing. Gateway to Homechoice is a partnership register and scheme between Ipswich Borough Council, Babergh District Council, Braintree District Council, Colchester Borough Council, Maldon District Council, Mid Suffolk District Council, Suffolk Coastal District Council (SCDC) and Waveney District Council (WDC) (SCDC & WDC will become a new authority namely East Suffolk District Council

More information about the Gateway to Homechoice can be found here:
<https://www.gatewaytohomechoice.org.uk/content/Information>

Greater Haven Gateway Housing Strategy 2010-2015

The Greater Haven Gateway (GHG) Housing Strategy, which was published in 2010, incorporates the future plans for strategic housing across the Babergh, Braintree, Colchester, Ipswich, Maldon, Mid Suffolk, Suffolk Coastal and Tendring areas. The vision of the GHG Housing Strategy is 'to build on the maturity of the GHG strategic housing partnership to work together on issues that benefit from a collaborative approach'

There are five main objectives of the strategy: -

1. Enable the development of high quality and sustainable affordable housing
2. Improve the condition and use of existing housing
3. Maximise customers housing choices and mobility
4. Provide enhance housing options based on an understanding of links between health, wellbeing, training, employment and housing to help prevent homelessness and support vulnerable people
5. Increase the capacity and skills of the GHG partnership

Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy for Suffolk 2013

The Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy was produced by the Suffolk Health and Wellbeing Board. The vision of the strategy is that people in Suffolk live healthier, happier lives. We also want to narrow the differences in healthy life expectancy between those living in our most deprived communities and those who are more affluent through achieving greater improvements in more disadvantaged communities.

There are four outcomes within the strategy:

- Every child in Suffolk has the best start in life,
- Suffolk residents have access to a healthy environment and take responsibility for their own health and wellbeing,
- Older people in Suffolk have a good quality of life
- People in Suffolk have the opportunity to improve their mental health and wellbeing.

A refreshed version of the Strategy was published in 2016, which highlighted some of the key achievements so far and embedded four cross cutting themes across all outcomes:

- Stronger / Resilient Communities
- Embedding Prevention
- Addressing Inequalities
- Health and Care Integration

Babergh and Mid Suffolk District Councils Joint Strategic Plan (2016 – 2020)

The Councils Joint Strategic Plan (2016 – 2020) sets out how the Council's aim to deliver enduring and positive changes for our many and diverse communities and businesses.

The plan reshapes our role ensuring we deliver good quality services but also encourages and empowers communities, making it easier for them to do more for themselves.

Babergh and Mid Suffolk District Councils Customer Strategy

The Councils Customer Strategy outlines our direction over the next 3 years across 4 main themes supported by some underlying principles.

We will state where we will improve and transform our services, ensuring our customers can gain information and access to our services through a variety of channels, and how we will embed in our organisational culture a customer centred approach.

The main principles are:

- Customer Insight & Understanding;
- Customer Access;
- Customer Experience;
- Our Customer Culture.

Please find Customer Strategy [here](#).

Suffolk Housing Survey (2014)

The first countywide housing survey, commissioned by Suffolk's Strategic Housing Partnership, and independently validated by University Campus Suffolk, painted a compelling picture of what matters to people about where they live and their intentions for the future.

It marked a first for Suffolk, with the county council and all seven district and borough councils joining forces to conduct a single countywide survey, providing a comprehensive overview of the housing needs for Suffolk.

Of the 82,000 households to receive a survey in early 2014, approximately 14,250 residents completed the survey, smashing the target 15% response rate.

Key findings included:

- A resounding 87% of respondents 'love to live in Suffolk' and nine out of 10 households intend to continue to make their home here
- 60% of respondents have lived in Suffolk for over five years
- The main barriers preventing a house move in future are financial considerations, not being able to find the right property and the lack of affordable housing

Babergh & Mid Suffolk District Councils Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Business Plans

The Business Plans work in combination with the Councils' 30-year financial models and outline the financial positions for each Council. Within these documents we have set out how each HRA will be used to help deliver many of the Strategic Priorities which apply to both Councils.

The plans examine various scenarios to assess the impact of a shifting financial landscape and changing government policy. They also identify the risks to the financial strength of each HRA and how the Councils will mitigate these risks.

Our Challenges

Rurality Matters

Suffolk has double the national average of people resident in rural areas and this rural population is older (higher percentage of those aged 65+) than its urban population.

A recent All Party Parliamentary Group inquiry in to rural housing shows: People living in very rural areas like ours experience more limited social networks, isolation, and loneliness which can be exacerbated by poor transport.

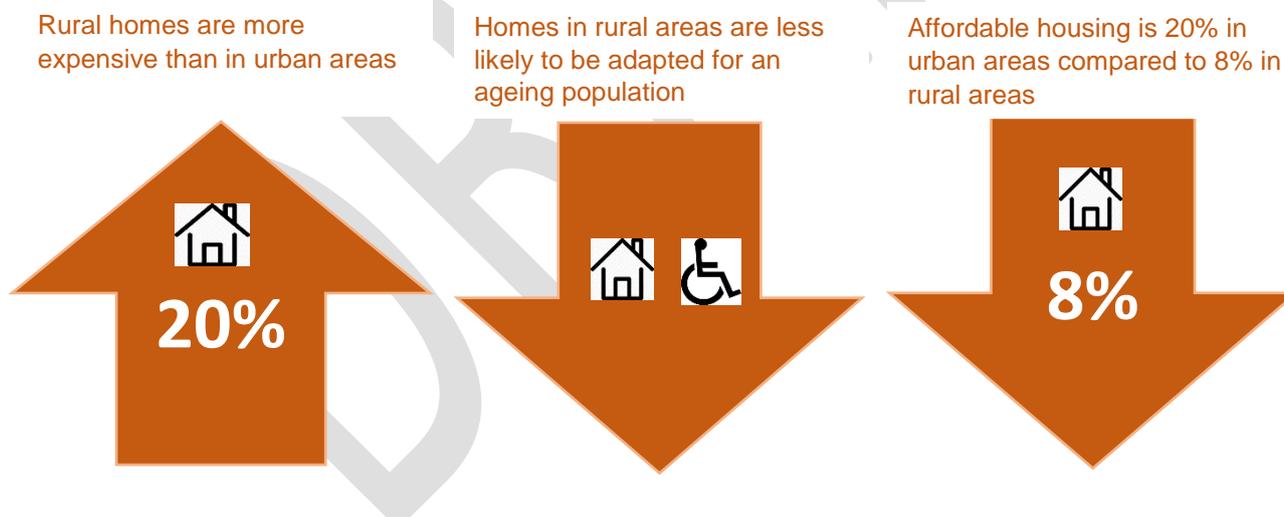
To avoid rural decline there is an urgent need to provide affordable housing for people wanting to live and work in the most rural communities. The level of rurality provides challenges in regard to inclusive new homes growth which, whilst significant to the community, may be relatively low in number compared to urban developments.

We need to be clear about the benefits of new housing growth and realistic about the level of infrastructure investment required to make sure current facilities remain effective and can support increased community demand which accompanies new homes and new households in an area.

As the cost of providing services in rural areas is estimated to be significantly higher than providing services in urban areas this should be factored in to infrastructure and service delivery planning frameworks from the outset. Providers of social housing including Babergh and Mid Suffolk have financial and service delivery protocols in place when regenerating or delivering new homes to make sure the right sort of support for these households is viable over the longer term.

Community engagement events during recent years lead us to believe an increasing number of retirees are choosing our districts for a later life move due to the attractive towns and villages, proximity to major cities and relatively lower house prices compared to London and the south east commuter belt.

Compared to relatively more affordable urban areas the impact of fewer entry level homes in rural areas means there can be less 'churn' / housing turnover per annum – in time this may effectively act as a block to encouraging thriving, vibrant and sustainable communities.



Changes to Funding

This housing strategy is being produced at a time of funding challenges faced by both councils, Suffolk County Council and the wider public sector, registered housing providers and our third sector partners. At the same time local people and households are experiencing higher costs of living for day to day commodities, accommodation and heating costs.

Taken together this means we must work even harder to achieve our strategic outcomes by making the most of all the resources, working collaboratively and promoting achievable, innovative and new approaches to the numbers and types of new homes and the way in which they are delivered.

Infrastructure, Community Infrastructure Levy and S106 agreements

Funding for infrastructure is provided through either section 106 agreement (s.106) or Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL). We adopted a scheme of charging for CIL in April 2016 and in April 2018 both Councils adopted a CIL Expenditure Framework.

Where infrastructure is provided through major housing developments (over 10 dwellings) the CIL funds collected are allocated to offset harm in the community where the development occurs.

Parish or Town Council receive a neighbourhood portion of the CIL, either 15% or 25% where a Neighbourhood Plan has been made. This funding is spent on local community priorities.

Both Councils have developed Parish Investment Infrastructure Plans (PIIP) to support the community to identify their infrastructure priorities. Once priorities have been identified this document can be the start of discussions about how infrastructure can be provided for the improvement of their Community.

If regeneration of older housing stock involves demolition and replacement, such works will need planning permission and the infrastructure for the community would be resolved as part of that planning process.

Our Strategic Priorities

Babergh and Mid Suffolk District Councils' current Strategic Plan sets out how we – and the communities and businesses we serve – can shape the future, for the better.

The precise future for councils, and the communities they serve, might sometimes look unclear – not least due to the huge changes taking place in terms of how we are funded, what we do and how we do it.

Our strategic plan outlines the context in which we are operating at the moment and the challenges and opportunities of the future that will influence how well we do.

It articulates the three main priority areas that our Councillors have identified will have the most positive impact on that future:

- Economy and Environment
- Housing
- Strong and Healthy Communities

These priorities are being delivered under five key strategic outcomes:

- **Housing delivery**
More of the right type of homes, of the right tenure in the right place
- **Business growth and increased productivity**
Encourage development of employment sites and other business growth, of the right type, in the right place and encourage investment in skills and innovation in order to increase productivity
- **Community capacity building and engagement**
All communities are thriving, growing, healthy, active and self-sufficient
- **Assets and investments**
Improved achievement of strategic priorities and greater income generation through use of new and existing assets
- **An enabled and efficient organisation**
The right people, doing the right things, in the right way, at the right time, for the right reasons

Housing and Residents in Babergh and Mid Suffolk

