

Huntingdonshire Local Housing Needs Assessment

Final Report

Iceni Projects Limited on behalf of
Huntingdonshire District Council

August 2025

Contents

1. Executive Summary	2
2. Introduction.....	14
3. Demographic Profile	27
4. Housing Stock and Supply Trends	34
5. Housing Market Dynamics.....	45
6. Overall Housing Need	58
7. Affordable Housing Need	87
8. Need for Different Sizes of Homes	124
9. Older and Disabled People.....	147
10. Other Specific Groups	178
11. Glossary and References	201

1. Executive Summary

Demographics

- 1.1 Huntingdonshire's population grew from 170,000 in 2011 to 186,000 in 2023, making up about 27% of Cambridgeshire's total.
- 1.2 The district's growth was greater than the national rate but below the county and regional rates.
- 1.3 The district has an older age profile than the county and region, with more residents aged 50 and above and fewer student age groups.
- 1.4 In 2021, Huntingdonshire had 76,880 households. This equates to an average household size of 2.35. This is smaller than the other comparable areas.
- 1.5 Single-family households dominate in Huntingdonshire, especially married or civil partnership couples. Single-person households are less common than in the county or region.

Housing Stock and Supply Trends

- 1.6 The total number of dwellings in Huntingdonshire in 2024 was 83,400, a 17% increase since 2011. This is a faster rate of growth than the national and regional growth rates.
- 1.7 Huntingdonshire has a lower implied vacancy rate than the wider comparators.
- 1.8 Over the last five years, housing delivery in Huntingdonshire has increased to an average annual rate of 1,139 dwellings.

- 1.9 Huntingdonshire has a larger proportion of detached dwellings than the wider comparators. Conversely, there is a smaller proportion of flatted developments.
- 1.10 Linked to this, Huntingdonshire has a greater percentage of homes with four or more bedrooms when compared to the wider comparators.
- 1.11 Huntingdonshire has a larger proportion of owner-occupied households than the wider comparators and conversely a smaller proportion of renters (social and private).
- 1.12 The district has a higher proportion of under-occupied homes than the wider comparators and, conversely, a lower rate of overcrowding in the district. This is linked to the ageing population and the size of the housing stock.

Housing Market

- 1.13 Huntingdonshire's median house price is £315,000, lower than the county (£337,000) and regional (£340,000) medians, but higher than the national median of £290,000.
- 1.14 Apart from flats, Huntingdonshire's property prices are above the England average but below county and regional averages for all home types.
- 1.15 Over the past decade, house prices in Huntingdonshire have grown by 69%, similar to the county (67%), but below regional growth (74%) and above national growth (57%).
- 1.16 In the last 5 years, overall median house price growth was 18%, lower than in the other wider areas.
- 1.17 Property sales in Huntingdonshire have followed benchmark trends, with significant declines since 2022.

- 1.18 The affordability ratio in Huntingdonshire is 8.45, showing long-term deterioration but recent improvements.
- 1.19 The median private rental value is £875 per month, lower than county and regional values, but higher than the national rate.
- 1.20 Single-room rents have increased the most, indicating a high demand for smaller, affordable homes.

Housing Need and Demographics

- 1.21 Applying the government's Standard Method for assessing housing need to Huntingdonshire results in an annual housing need of 1,214 dwellings per annum.
- 1.22 At a late stage in the production of the report, this figure was increased to 1,232 dwellings per annum. This change is not considered significant enough to alter the main findings of this report.
- 1.23 The report has developed a projection linked to the delivery and occupation of 1,214 dwellings per annum, which shows a population increase of around 54,700 people by 2046.
- 1.24 This equates to a 29.1% increase, which is higher than a trend-based projection based on the last five years (24.5%).
- 1.25 Further analysis indicates that with the Standard Method, the increase in the economically active population is projected to be up to 30,300, which, taking account of double jobbing, could support up to 31,400 additional jobs.
- 1.26 The main changes to economic activity rates are projected in the 60-69 age groups, linked to changes in pensionable age and trends in older people working longer.

Affordable Housing

- 1.27 The analysis has taken account of local housing costs (to both buy and rent) along with estimates of household income. The evidence indicates that there is an acute need for affordable housing in the District and a need in all sub-areas.
- 1.28 The majority of need is from households who are unable to buy OR rent and therefore points particularly towards a need for rented affordable housing rather than affordable home ownership.
- 1.29 Affordable housing need for households unable to buy or rent equates to 480 homes per annum.
- 1.30 Despite the level of need being high, it is not considered that this points to any requirement for the Council to increase the Local Plan housing requirement due to affordable needs.
- 1.31 The link between affordable need and overall need (of all tenures) is complex, and in trying to make a link, it must be remembered that many of those picked up as having an affordable need are already in housing (and therefore do not generate a net additional need for a home).
- 1.32 In addition, the private rented sector is providing benefit-supported accommodation for many households. That said, the level of affordable need does suggest the Council should maximise the delivery of such housing at every opportunity where viability allows.
- 1.33 The current Council's approach of seeking 40% affordable housing with 70% being either Affordable Rent or Social Rent would be justified.
- 1.34 The analysis suggests there will be a need for both social and affordable rented housing – the latter will be suitable particularly for households who are close to being able to afford to rent privately and possibly also for some households who claim full Housing Benefit.

- 1.35 It is, however, clear that social rents are more affordable and could benefit a wider range of households – social rents could therefore be prioritised where delivery does not prejudice the overall delivery of affordable homes.
- 1.36 The study also considers different types of AHO (notably First Homes and shared ownership) as each may have a role to play.
- 1.37 Shared ownership is likely to be suitable for households with more marginal affordability (those only just able to afford to privately rent) as it has the advantage of a lower deposit and subsidised rent.
- 1.38 There was no strong evidence of a need for First Homes or discounted market housing more generally. Shared Ownership is considered more flexible, accommodating a wider range of income groups.
- 1.39 In deciding what types of affordable housing to provide, including a split between rented and home ownership products, the Council will need to consider the relative levels of need and also viability issues. For example, seeking Social Rented in place of Affordable Rented Housing could reduce the viable quantum the Council could secure.
- 1.40 Viability consideration should recognise, for example, that providing AHO may be more viable and may therefore allow more units to be delivered, but at the same time, noting that households with a need for rented housing are likely to have more acute needs and fewer housing options.
- 1.41 The evidence would justify a policy position of 70% low-cost rented and 30% affordable home ownership homes. The evidence indicates that up to 70% of rented affordable housing at social rents could be justified in need terms (therefore, about 50% of all affordable housing). Low-cost home ownership provision should focus on shared ownership, with no strong evidence of a need for First Homes or discounted market housing identified.

- 1.42 Overall, the analysis identifies a notable need for affordable housing, and it is clear that the provision of new affordable housing is an important and pressing issue in the area.
- 1.43 It does, however, need to be stressed that this report does not provide an affordable housing target; the amount of affordable housing delivered will be limited to the amount that can viably be provided.
- 1.44 The evidence does, however, suggest that affordable housing delivery should be maximised where opportunities arise.

Housing Mix

- 1.45 Analysis of the future mix of housing required takes account of demographic change, including potential changes to the number of family households and the ageing of the population.
- 1.46 The proportion of households with dependent children in Huntingdonshire is about average, with around 28% of all households containing dependent children in 2021 (compared with around 29% regionally and nationally).
- 1.47 There are notable differences between different types of households, with married couples (with dependent children) seeing a high level of owner-occupation, whereas lone parents are particularly likely to live in social or private rented accommodation.
- 1.48 There are a range of factors which will influence demand for different sizes of homes, including demographic changes, future growth in real earnings and households' ability to save, economic performance and housing affordability.
- 1.49 The analysis linked to future demographic change concludes that the following represents an appropriate mix of affordable and market homes, which takes account of both household changes and the ageing

of the population, as well as seeking to make more efficient use of new stock by not projecting forward the high levels of under-occupancy (which is notable in the market sector).

Table 1.1 Suggested size mix of housing by tenure –
Huntingdonshire

	Market	Affordable home ownership	Affordable housing (rented)	
			Under 65	65 and over
1-bedroom	5%	15%	25%	50%
2-bedrooms	30%	45%	35%	50%
3-bedrooms	40%	30%	30%	
4+-bedrooms	25%	10%	10%	

Source: *Iceni Analysis*

- 1.50 For affordable rented housing, the Council's letting policies are such that they are seeking to minimise housing families with children in flats. Consequently, properties of 2 bedrooms or more will therefore mostly be houses.
- 1.51 In all sectors, the analysis points to a particular need for 2- and 3-bedroom accommodation, with varying proportions of 1- and 4+-bedroom homes.
- 1.52 For rented affordable housing for under-65s, there is a clear need for a range of different sizes of homes, including 40% to have at least 3-bedrooms, of which 10% should have at least 4-bedrooms.
- 1.53 The strategic conclusions in the affordable sector recognise the role which delivery of larger family homes can play in releasing a supply of smaller properties for other households.
- 1.54 Also recognised is the limited flexibility which 1-bedroom properties offer to changing household circumstances, which feed through into higher turnover and management issues.

- 1.55 The conclusions also take account of the current mix of housing by tenure and also the size requirements shown on the Housing Register.
- 1.56 The mix identified above could inform strategic policies, although a flexible approach should be adopted.
- 1.57 Additionally, in applying the mix to individual development sites, regard should be had to the nature of the site and character of the area, and to up-to-date evidence of need (including the Housing Register) as well as the existing mix and turnover of properties at the local level and recent housing delivery.

Older and Disabled People

- 1.58 Huntingdonshire has a very slightly older age structure than is seen regionally and nationally, and lower levels of disability compared with other areas.
- 1.59 The older person population (65+) shows high proportions of owner-occupation, and particularly outright owners who may have significant equity in their homes (79% of all older person households are outright owners).
- 1.60 The older person population is projected to increase notably moving forward. An ageing population means that the number of people with disabilities is likely to increase. Key findings for the 2024-46 period include:
- a 38% increase in the population aged 65+ (potentially accounting for 32% of total population growth);
 - a 64% increase in the number of people aged 65+ with dementia and a 54% increase in those aged 65+ with mobility problems;
 - a need for around 2,000 additional housing units with support (sheltered/retirement housing) – around 70% in the market sector;

- a need for around 1,200 additional housing units with care (e.g. extra-care) – the majority (around three-quarters) in the market sector;
- a need for additional nursing and residential care bedspaces (around 1,300 in the period); and
- a need for around 670 dwellings to be for wheelchair users across all tenures (meeting technical standard M4(3)).

- 1.61 This would suggest that there is a clear need to increase the supply of accessible and adaptable dwellings and wheelchair-user dwellings, as well as providing specific provision of older persons housing.
- 1.62 The evidence justifies current Council policy requiring all dwellings (in all tenures) to meet the M4(2) standards, and around 5% of homes meeting M4(3) – wheelchair user dwellings in the market sector (a higher proportion of around 10% in the affordable sector).
- 1.63 Where the authority has nomination rights, the supply of M4(3) dwellings would be wheelchair-accessible dwellings (constructed for immediate occupation) and in the market sector, they should be wheelchair-user adaptable dwellings (constructed to be adjustable for occupation by a wheelchair user) and mostly in the form of bungalows).
- 1.64 It should, however, be noted that there will be cases where this may not be possible (e.g. due to viability or site-specific circumstances) and so any policy should be applied flexibly.
- 1.65 In framing policies for the provision of specialist older persons accommodation, the Council will need to consider a range of issues. This will include the different use classes of accommodation (i.e. C2 vs. C3) and requirements for affordable housing contributions (linked to this, the viability of provision).

Other Specific Groups

Looked After Children

- 1.66 The County Council's overarching policy is to ensure as few children as possible will be placed in residential care homes.
- 1.67 There are currently around 700 looked-after children within the county and Peterborough (0.4%), of which 63 are placed in residential children's care homes (0.03%).
- 1.68 Although the county has 32 registered children's care facilities, a significant proportion of these are filled by placements from outside the area. As a result, there is insufficient local provision.
- 1.69 To address this shortage, the County Council is developing its own facilities and actively seeking to expand provision through collaboration with the independent sector.
- 1.70 If current prevalence rates continue, the projected population growth, linked to the Standard Method, would result in an increased demand for 3 additional residential beds in children's care homes by 2045 (a total of 14).
- 1.71 But additional demand for residential care bedspaces for children will depend on the success or otherwise of preferred alternatives such as familial care or foster care.
- 1.72 Regardless, the Council are encouraged to support further proposals to meet growing demands.
- 1.73 There will also be a need for supported accommodation for young adults, and the Council should work with the County Council and Registered Providers to explore opportunities to provide this.

Service Families

- 1.74 Huntingdonshire is home to several military establishments, including RAF Alconbury and RAF Molesworth. RAF Alconbury is a joint-service base with the US Air Force and the RAF.
- 1.75 According to data from the Ministry of Defence (MOD), as of April 2024, there are 2,200 military (UK Regular Forces) and MOD Civilian Personnel based in Huntingdonshire.
- 1.76 Overall, the presence of regular forces in Huntingdonshire is not considered to be significant and is unlikely to have any implications on overall affordability, but it may be driving demand in local areas.
- 1.77 It is considered that the most pressing issue is likely to be finding accommodation for those transitioning out of the forces, as well as existing personnel who are seeking to buy in the District.
- 1.78 Provision of Low-Cost Home Ownership can help account for this, as well as the Allocation of Housing regulations, which allow military personnel to establish local connections to the area.
- 1.79 Overall, this group are likely to already be accounted for within affordable housing need and is not considered to be additional to it.

Custom and Self-Build

- 1.80 The Council is required to grant sufficient planning permissions to meet the demand identified on the Register within 3 years of the end of each base period.
- 1.81 There has been a total of 356 registered expressions of interest in a serviced plot of land in Huntingdonshire. This is an average of 42 registrations per base period (12 months, but not a calendar year). Although recent registrations have fallen.

- 1.82 Although this indicates the future need for plots, the actual requirement will depend on the numbers entering the register and any unmet need, of which to date there is none.
- 1.83 There will also be a more stringent requirement for the Council to demonstrate that this supply is being occupied by those commissioning or customising the build before it can be counted towards the supply.
- 1.84 The Council may wish to consider a policy for self and custom build as a proportion of new homes on larger developments, as well as its current policy supporting it.
- 1.85 We do not consider it to be necessary to develop a policy to address the need for students or Co-living.

2. Introduction

- 2.1 Huntingdonshire District Council commissioned Iceni Projects ('Iceni') and Justin Gardner Consulting to prepare this Local Housing Needs Assessment ('LHNA').
- 2.2 This LHNA provides an evidence base on housing issues to support informed decision-making and development of housing policies within the Local Plan.
- 2.3 The Assessment calculates housing need and examines other issues across the district and three sub-areas. This includes evaluating affordable housing need, recommending a housing mix, and examining the need for specific groups.
- 2.4 The report is based on the best and most up-to-date information available at the time of drafting in Spring 2025. The report therefore incorporates changes to the National Planning Policy Framework published in December 2024.
- 2.5 The housing need identified in this report is based on a technical assessment of overall housing figures using the Planning Practice Guidance. It does not constitute a housing target.
- 2.6 These figures must then be translated into a housing requirement for local plans, considering broader factors such as growth strategies, capacity and infrastructure.

National Planning Policy Framework

- 2.7 The latest version of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) was published by the Government in December 2024. The NPPF sets

out the Government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied.

- 2.8 Paragraph 7 in the NPPF states that the purpose of planning is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. It sets out that planning policies and decisions should play an active role in guiding development towards sustainable solutions, but in doing so should take local circumstances into account, to reflect the character, needs and opportunities of each area.
- 2.9 Paragraph 17 of the NPPF states that development plans must include strategic policies to address each local planning authority's priorities for the development and use of land in its area.
- 2.10 Paragraph 16 states that Plans should be prepared with the objective of contributing to the achievement of sustainable development and be positively prepared in a way that is aspirational but deliverable.
- 2.11 Strategic policies should, as a minimum, provide for objectively assessed needs for housing and other uses, as well as any needs that cannot be met within neighbouring authorities, where it is sustainable to do so. Paragraph 11 b reiterates that for plan-making:
- “strategic policies should, as a minimum, provide for objectively assessed needs for housing and other uses, as well as any needs that cannot be met within neighbouring area, unless...i) the application of policies in this Framework that protect areas or assets of particular importance provides a strong reason for restricting the overall scale, type or distribution of development in the plan area; or ii) any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits when assessed against the policies in this Framework taken as a whole.”*
- 2.12 To support the Government's objective of significantly boosting the supply of homes, Paragraph 61 in the NPPF states that it is important that a sufficient amount and variety of land can come forward where it is

needed, that the needs of groups with specific housing requirements are addressed, and that land with permission is developed without unnecessary delay. Adding “The overall aim should be to meet an area’s identified housing need, including with an appropriate mix of housing types for the local community.”

- 2.13 Paragraph 62 sets out that to determine the minimum number of homes needed, strategic policies should be informed by a local housing need assessment (this report), conducted using the standard method in national planning guidance. We have provided more detail on the calculation of the standard method in Chapter 8 of this report.
- 2.14 The NPPG adds in paragraph 62, “In addition to the local housing need figure, any needs that cannot be met within neighbouring areas should also be taken into account in establishing the amount of housing to be planned for. “
- 2.15 Paragraph 63 goes on to set out that within this context, the size, type and tenure of housing needed for different groups in the community should be assessed and reflected in planning policies including, but not limited to, those who require affordable housing, families with children, older people, students, people with disabilities, people who rent their homes and people wishing to commission or build their own homes.
- 2.16 Paragraphs 64-68 address affordable housing provision. Paragraph 64 states that where an affordable housing need is identified, planning policies should specify the type of affordable housing required (including the minimum proportion of Social Rent homes required) and expect it to be met on-site unless off-site provision or a financial contribution in lieu can be robustly justified, or the agreed approach contributes to the objectives of creating mixed and balanced communities.
- 2.17 Paragraph 65 states that the provision of affordable housing should not be sought for residential developments that are not major developments

(major development is where 10 or more homes will be provided), other than in designated rural areas.

- 2.18 Paragraph 66 states “Where major development involving the provision of housing is proposed, planning policies and decisions should expect that the mix of affordable housing required meets identified local needs, across Social Rent, other affordable housing for rent and affordable home ownership tenures.”
- 2.19 The NPPF’s Glossary (Annex 2) provides an updated definition of affordable housing; as well as definitions of Build to Rent development, local housing need, older people; and self-build and custom housebuilding.

Levelling Up and Regeneration Act (2023)

- 2.20 The Levelling-up and Regeneration Bill was introduced to the House of Commons on the 11 May 2022 and received Royal Assent on the 26 October 2023 and in doing so became the Levelling Up and Regeneration Act (LURA).¹
- 2.21 Although the Act initiated several laws which affect planning, none of these laws directly impact the production of this report in relation to overall need.
- 2.22 However, it did impact specific groups including those wishing to self or custom build their own home. This is set out in the appropriate section of this report.

¹ <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2023/55/enacted>

The Planning Practice Guidance

- 2.23 The Government’s Planning Practice Guidance (PPG)² includes several sections which are relevant to the assessment of housing need. This sub-section summarises the relevant sectors.
- 2.24 Guidance on Housing and Economic Needs Assessments³ explains that housing need is “an **unconstrained assessment** of the number of homes needed in an area” and should be **undertaken separately** from assessing land availability, establishing a housing requirement figure and preparing policies to address this such as site allocations.
- 2.25 The guidance also examines affordable housing need (as does the PPG relating to the Housing Needs of Different Groups). The PPG sets out how affordable housing need can be assessed, and this is set out in Chapter 9 of this report.
- 2.26 The affordable housing need (and the housing needs of individual groups) may well exceed, or be proportionally high in relation to, the overall housing need figure calculated using the standard method, as these will often be calculated having consideration to the whole population as opposed to new households.
- 2.27 The PPG for Housing for Older and Disabled People⁴ describes the need to provide housing for older people as critical, as people are living longer, and the older population is increasing. It sets out that the health,

² MHCLG, 2016. Planning practice guidance.

³ <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/housing-and-economic-development-needs-assessments>

⁴ <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/housing-for-older-and-disabled-people>

lifestyle and housing needs of older people will differ greatly as will their housing need.

- 2.28 These needs can be met with housing needs ranging from accessible and adaptable general needs housing to specialist housing with high levels of care and support.
- 2.29 The PPG provides guidance on how the housing needs of older and disabled people can be assessed and sets out that this should inform clear policies within plans which may include specific site allocations to provide greater certainty to developers.
- 2.30 Separate guidance is provided on optional technical standards⁵ including for accessible and adaptable housing, use of national space standards and wheelchair-accessible housing.
- 2.31 Separate PPGs have also been prepared which address Build to Rent⁶ and Self-Build and Custom Housebuilding⁷. The Build-to-Rent Guidance requires authorities to assess need, and where a need is identified to include a planning policy setting out the circumstances and locations where build-to-rent development will be encouraged.
- 2.32 The Self-Build Guidance sets the requirements of the Self-Build and Custom Housebuilding Act 2015 (as amended), including the requirement for local authorities to maintain a Register of those interested in self-build housing and to grant consents to meet the need shown. It also sets out that needs assessments can consider other secondary data sources.

⁵ <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/housing-optional-technical-standards>

⁶ <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/build-to-rent>

⁷ <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/self-build-and-custom-housebuilding>

Other Legislation

- 2.33 Wider legislation affecting housing need includes the 1996 Housing Act (as amended), the Housing and Social Care Act 2012, the 2014 Care Act and the 2017 Homelessness Reduction Act.
- 2.34 The 2014 Care Act sets out local authorities' duties in relation to assessing people's needs and their eligibility for publicly funded care and support.
- 2.35 Under the Act, local authorities must assess anyone who appears to require care and support and focus the assessment on the person's needs, how they impact their well-being, and the outcomes they want to achieve.
- 2.36 Local authorities must also consider other things besides care services that can contribute to the desired outcomes (e.g., preventive services, community support and specialised housing needs).
- 2.37 The Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 places legal duties on English Councils so that everyone who is homeless or at risk of homelessness will have access to meaningful help.
- 2.38 Local Authorities have a duty to produce homelessness strategies to prevent homelessness in their respective areas.

Huntingdonshire's Local Plan to 2036 (Adopted May 2019)

- 2.39 The Huntingdonshire's Local Plan to 2036 was adopted in May 2019 and sets out key policies to shape development in the district. The key housing policies are summarised below:
- **Policy LP24: Affordable Housing** – States that proposals will be supported where. a. it delivers a target of 40% affordable housing on a site where 11 homes; b. it provides approximately 70% of the new affordable housing units as social or affordable rented properties with the balance made up of other affordable tenures; c. affordable

housing is dispersed across the development; and d. it ensures that the appearance of affordable housing units is externally indistinguishable from that of open market housing. Deviation from this is allowed but it needs to be demonstrated that the required mix is not viable.

- **Policy LP25 – Housing Mix and Accessibility** – Development should provide a mix of sizes, types and tenures. However, proposals should reflect the need set out within the Council's existing evidence.
- Housing which meets Building Regulations for accessible and adaptable dwellings will be supported, ensuring 100% of new dwellings across all tenures meet requirement M4(2). There is also an expectation that larger developments and all affordable housing, deliver an element of M4(3) housing.
- Local requirements for self and custom-build homes will be addressed, as identified in the self and custom-build register.
- **Policy LP26 – Specialist Housing** – Will be supported where it is easily accessible to services and social infrastructure and integrated with the wider community. It should also incorporate a mix of tenures, including affordable.

Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Housing Strategy (2018)

- 2.40 The Combined Authority's strategy aims to deliver 100,000 new homes, emphasising affordability, accelerated delivery, economic growth and diverse house choices.
- 2.41 The Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Memorandum of Cooperationⁱ sets out Huntingdonshire's links to the Cambridge and Peterborough HMA's.
- 2.42 The Cambridge Sub Region Housing Market Area comprises all five Cambridgeshire districts (Cambridge City, East Cambridgeshire, Huntingdonshire, Fenland and South Cambridgeshire), plus the west Suffolk districts of Forest Heath and St Edmundsbury which were merged in 2019.

2.43 Due to its historic and functional ties with Cambridgeshire, plus its own housing market area overlapping with the Cambridge Housing Market Area, Peterborough City Council has also collaborated with these local authorities.

2.44 Within that memorandum, Huntingdonshire's housing targets are also part of this coordinated strategy, with a planned provision of 17,000 homes (extending to 21,000 by 2036 as per Huntingdonshire's Local Plan horizon).

HMA Update

2.45 The HMA was last reconfirmed in the Huntingdonshire Objectively Assessed Housing Need April 2017⁸ did not seek to redefine the HMA but notes "The Cambridge housing market area - defined as Cambridge, East Cambridgeshire, Fenland, Forest Heath, Huntingdonshire, South Cambridgeshire and St Edmundsbury council areas - is an established assessment area."

2.46 However, a range of data has since been published, and we have summarised this in the table below while still seeking to test if the Cambridge HMA remains a reasonable starting point.

⁸ https://cambridgeshire.wpengine.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/12/HDC_OAN-Update_28-04-2017.pdf

Migration

2.47 The most recent migration data from the 2021 census shows that Huntingdon's strongest flows are with South Cambridgeshire and Peterborough. The South Cambridgeshire flow is largely inward to Huntingdonshire, while the Peterborough flow is more balanced. These flows are the greatest in gross terms as well as when weighted to reflect their relative population size.

Table 2.1 Migration Flows to/from Huntingdonshire (2021)

Local Authority	In-Migrants	% of In-Migration	Local Authority	Out Migrants	% of Out Migration
Huntingdonshire	9,002	52.0%	Huntingdonshire	9,002	56.3%
South Cambridgeshire	850	4.9%	Peterborough	735	4.6%
Peterborough	751	4.3%	South Cambridgeshire	461	2.9%
Central Bedfordshire	461	2.7%	Fenland	428	2.7%
Cambridge	381	2.2%	North Northamptonshire	340	2.1%
Fenland	326	1.9%	Cambridge	238	1.5%
Bedford	291	1.7%	Bedford	235	1.5%
North Northamptonshire	287	1.7%	Central Bedfordshire	166	1.0%
East Cambridgeshire	166	1.0%	East Cambridgeshire	158	1.0%
North Hertfordshire	163	0.9%	South Kesteven	149	0.9%

Source: ONS, Census 2021

2.48 There are also notable flows to and from Fenland and Cambridgeshire, and to a lesser degree, Bedfordshire and North Northamptonshire. This demonstrates the interaction with directly neighbouring authorities and would justify the continuation of the existing HMA by this measure alone.

2.49 Overall, Huntingdonshire has a self-containment rate of between 52% and 56%. This increases to 62% to 67% when long-distance (outside the East of England and East Midlands) moves are removed. This would not be sufficient to see the district as an HMA in its own right.

Commuting

- 2.50 In 2021, Huntingdonshire had a job self-containment ratio of 81.7% meaning that 81.7% of jobs in the District are taken by people residing there.
- 2.51 Conversely, it had a resident self-containment rate of 78.8%, meaning that 78.8% of working residents in Huntingdonshire are employed within the district. This includes those working from home.
- 2.52 These rates are significantly higher than those derived from the 2011 Census data; however, comparisons between the 2011 and 2021 census data should be treated with caution due to changes in working patterns as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic. This particularly relates to the much higher incidence of people working from home and, conversely, fewer people commuting.
- 2.53 As set out in the table below, around 5% of jobs in Huntingdonshire are taken up by Peterborough residents and 2.4% by Fenland residents (including those working from home). Around 3,850 people commute to Peterborough from Huntingdonshire, which is around 4.2% of all residents.
- 2.54 This means that there is a greater flow from Peterborough to Huntingdonshire than from Huntingdonshire to Peterborough. This is perhaps expected given the larger population of Peterborough.

Table 2.2 Commuting Flows to and from Huntingdonshire (2021) – including home workers

In-commuting	Commuters	% Job	Out-Commuting	Commuters	% Residents
Huntingdonshire	71,833	81.7%	Huntingdonshire	71,833	78.8%
Peterborough	4,391	5.0%	Peterborough	3,849	4.2%
Fenland	2,142	2.4%	South Cambridgeshire	3,476	3.8%
South Cambridgeshire	1,677	1.9%	Cambridge	3,344	3.7%
North Northamptonshire	1,550	1.8%	Bedford	2,046	2.2%
Bedford	1,493	1.7%	Central Bedfordshire	897	1.0%

Source: ONS, Census 2021

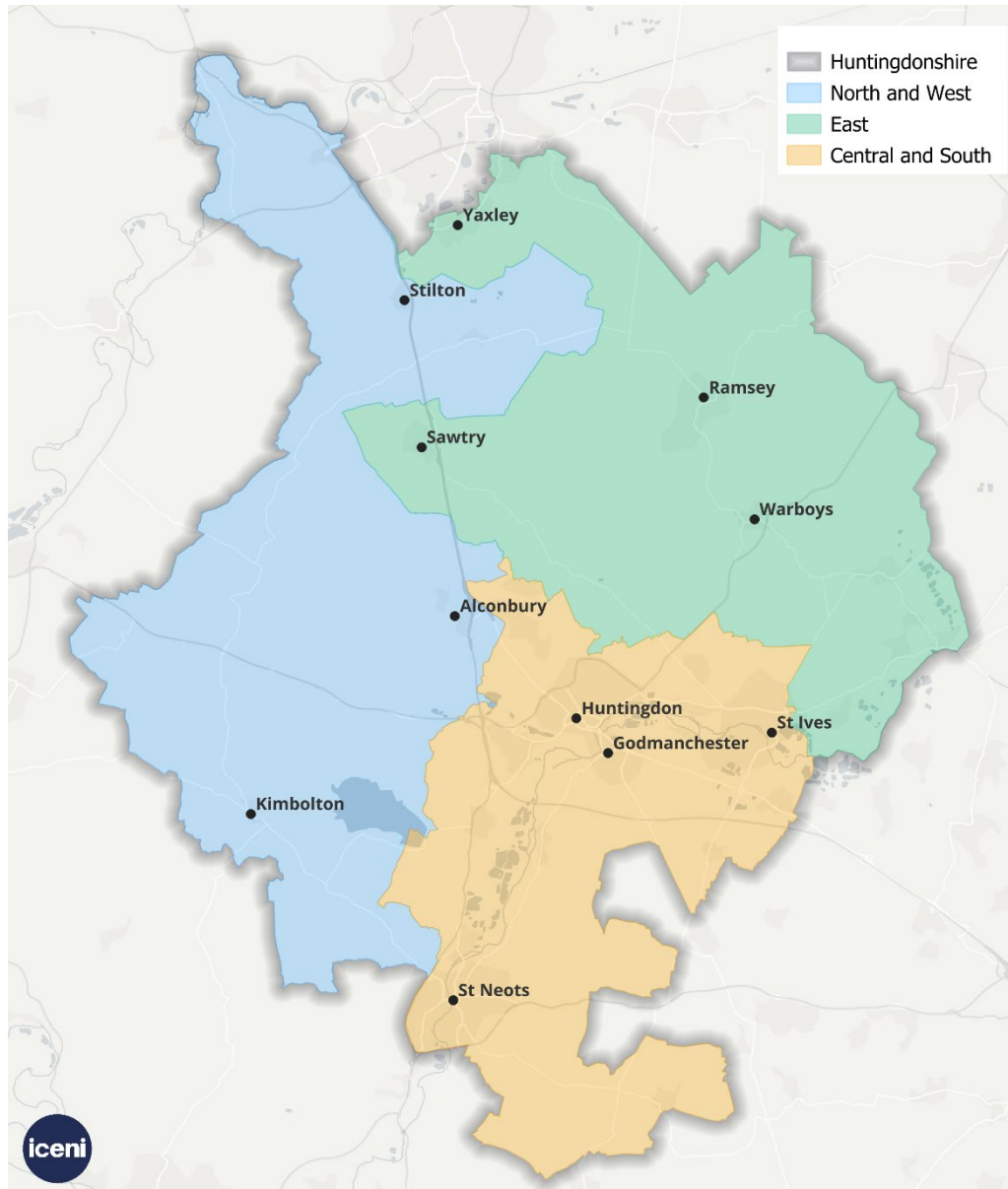
- 2.55 The flows to Cambridge and South Cambridgeshire are smaller than to Peterborough. However, these flows is largely one-way with much more commuting to Cambridge and South Cambridge than commuting from them.
- 2.56 This analysis would also demonstrate Huntingdonshire's continuing relationships with its neighbouring authorities. This would justify the continuation of the Cambridge Sub Region HMA (Cambridge City, East Cambridgeshire, Huntingdonshire, Fenland and South Cambridgeshire) as well as West Suffolk. There also appears to be notable overlap with Peterborough and this particularly relates to Huntingdonshire.

Sub Areas

- 2.57 This assessment provides analysis and outputs for three sub-areas of the district (see below). These sub-areas reflect geographic areas of the district and are based on wards:
- The **North and West** sub-area is largely rural and includes Alconbury, Great Stoughton, Kimbolton, Stilton, Folksworth & Washingley.
 - The **Central and South** sub-area includes Alconbury Weald, St Ives, St Neots, Godmanchester and Huntingdon.

- The **East** sub-area includes Holywell-cum-Needingworth, Sawtry, Warboys, Somersham and Ramsey. It also includes Yaxley and Farcet.

Figure 2.1 Huntingdonshire Sub-Areas



Source: Iceni Projects

3. Demographic Profile

- 3.1 This section sets out the existing demographic profile and future population projections across all the spatial study areas. Regional and national figures have been included as benchmarks.

Population

- 3.2 As of 2023, the population of Huntingdonshire is 186,000. This comprised 27% of Cambridgeshire. Since 2011, the population in the district has increased by 16,000 (9.4%). This compares to 12.4% in the county, 10.3% regionally and 8.6% nationally.

Table 3.1 Changes to the resident population (2011-2023)

Area	2011	2023	Net Change	% change
Huntingdonshire	170,000	186,000	16,000	9.4%
Cambridgeshire	622,000	700,000	77,300	12.4%
East of England	5,860,000	6,470,000	606,000	10.3%
England	53,100,000	57,700,000	4,580,000	8.6%

Source: ONS, 2011ⁱⁱ and MYE 2023ⁱⁱⁱ

- 3.3 Mid-year estimates are unavailable for the sub-areas, however between 2011 and 2021, the population decreased in the North and West sub-area (-3%), while Central and South increased by 9% and the East by 2.6%.

Table 3.2 Changes to the resident population (2011-2021)

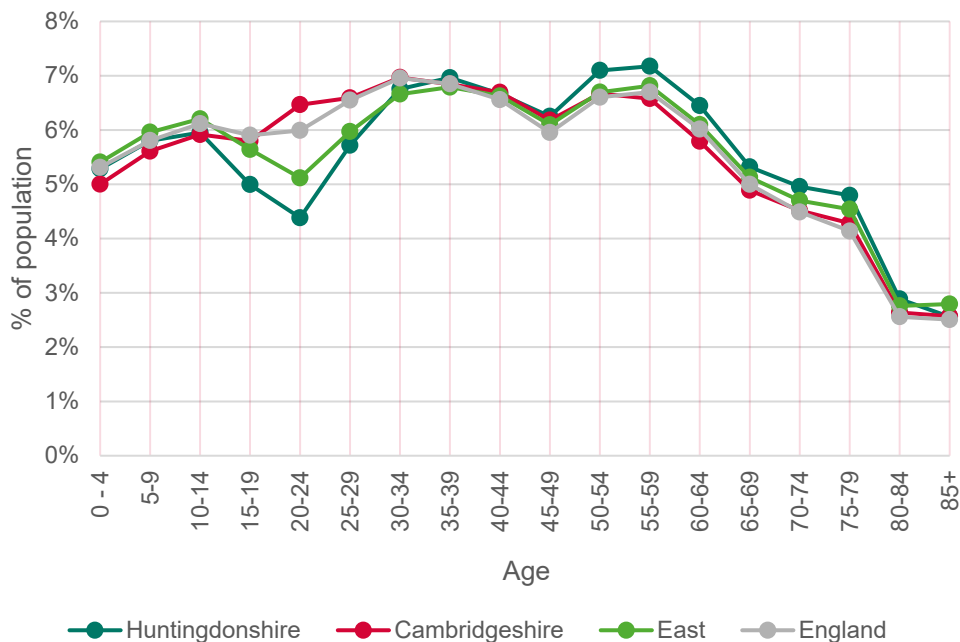
Area	2011	2021	Net Change	% change
North and West	18,335	17,860	-475	-2.6%
East	45,266	46,443	1,177	2.6%
Central and South	106,438	116,528	10,090	9.5%
Huntingdonshire	170,039	180,832	10,800	6.3%

Source: Census 2011 and Census 2021^{iv}

Age Profile

3.4 Huntingdonshire has a lower percentage of younger population and a higher percentage in most older age groups compared to the wider comparators, as shown in the figure below.

Figure 3.1 Age Profiles (2023)

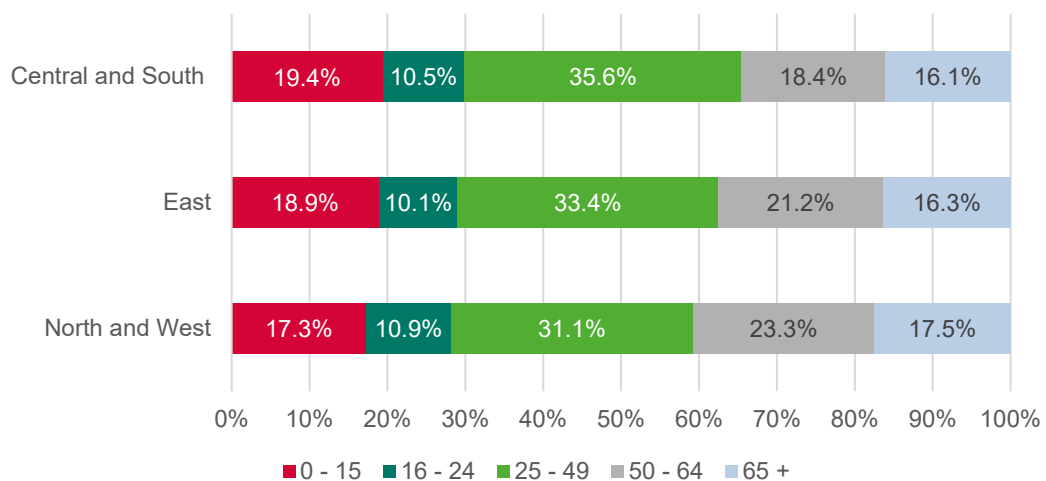


Source: ONS, 2023

- 3.5 Huntingdonshire has a smaller proportion of 15-24 year olds, which can be attributed to the lack of higher education institutions. Particularly, in comparison to Cambridge which has two major universities.
- 3.6 The Central and South sub-area has the highest proportion of young children, while the North and West has the lowest rates. Conversely, the North and West shows higher rates in the over 50s age groups. This is a reflection of the sub-area's more rural setting.

The Central and South sub-area also show a higher percentage in the 25-49 age brackets compared to the North and West and East sub-areas. For all age groups, except 16-24 year olds, the percentages in the East sub-area sit between the other two sub-areas

Figure 3.2 Sub-area profiles (2021)



Source: ONS, 2021

Household Composition

- 3.7 In 2021, Huntingdonshire had 76,880 households. This equates to an average household size of 2.35. This is smaller than the other comparable areas.

Table 3.3 Average Household Size (2011)

Area	Households	Population	Average Household Size
Huntingdonshire	76,880	180,832	2.35
Cambridgeshire	277,635	678,849	2.45
East of England	2,628,778	6,335,074	2.41
England	23,436,086	56,490,048	2.41

Source: ONS, 2021

- 3.8 In all areas, most households are single-family, but the proportion is higher in Huntingdonshire (67.3%) than in the rest of the county and region.
- 3.9 Huntingdonshire also has a slightly lower percentage of single-person households (28.1%) and Other Household Types (4.7%) than these areas.
- 3.10 Within the family household type the largest group in all areas is the married or civil partnership composition. However, Huntingdonshire has a slightly above average number of households where everyone was aged over 65.

Table 3.4 Household Composition

	Huntingdon shire	Cambridge shire	East of England	England
One-person household - Total	28.1%	28.4%	28.9%	30.1%
One-person household: Aged 66 years and over	12.4%	12.3%	13.2%	12.8%
One-person household: Other (not over 66)	15.6%	16.1%	15.7%	17.3%
Single-family household⁹ - Total	67.3%	65.1%	65.2%	63.0%
SFH: All aged 66 years and over	11.2%	10.3%	10.4%	9.2%
SFH: Married or civil partnership couple	34.4%	33.4%	32.3%	30.4%
SFH: Cohabiting couple family	12.3%	12.1%	11.8%	11.6%
SFH: Lone-parent family	8.9%	8.7%	10.2%	6.3%
SFH: Other	0.5%	0.6%	0.6%	0.8%
Other household types - Total	4.7%	6.5%	5.9%	6.9%
Other: With dependent children	1.8%	2.0%	2.4%	2.7%
Other: Other, including all full-time students and all aged 66 years and over	2.9%	4.5%	3.5%	4.2%

Source: Census, 2021

- 3.11 Cambridgeshire stands out for having a higher proportion of households with full-time students or all aged 66+, and this is linked to the universities in Cambridge.
- 3.12 The Central and South sub-area has the highest proportion of younger one-person households. The North and West sub-area shows the lowest percentage of this group.

⁹ A single-family household is a home occupied by individuals living together as one household, including married couples, relatives and those connected through couples and their relatives.

Table 3.5 Household Composition by Sub-Area

	North and West	East	Central and South	Huntingdonshire
One-person household - Total	24.4%	26.5%	29.2%	28.1%
One-person household: Aged 66 years and over	12.5%	12.9%	12.2%	12.4%
One-person household: Other (not over 66)	11.8%	13.6%	17.0%	15.6%
Single-family household - Total	71.8%	69.2%	65.9%	67.3%
SFH: All aged 66 years and over	14.8%	12.0%	10.4%	11.2%
SFH: Married or civil partnership couple	40.6%	36.1%	32.8%	34.4%
SFH: Cohabiting couple family	9.8%	12.1%	12.7%	12.3%
SFH: Lone-parent family	6.3%	8.6%	9.4%	8.9%
SFH: Other	0.3%	0.3%	0.6%	0.5%
Other household types - Total	3.8%	4.2%	5.0%	4.7%
Other: With dependent children	1.4%	1.8%	1.8%	1.8%
Other: Other, including all full-time students and all aged 66 years and over	2.4%	2.4%	3.2%	2.9%

Source: Census, 2021

- 3.13 Single-family households comprise the majority of households. The North and West has the highest proportion of this household type, with the lowest seen in Central and South.
- 3.14 The North and West sub-area has the highest percentage of single-family households where all members are over 66. However, the East sub-area has the highest percentage of older one-person households.

Demographic Profile: Summary

- 3.15 Huntingdonshire's population grew from 170,000 in 2011 to 186,000 in 2023, making up about 27% of Cambridgeshire's total.
- 3.16 The districts growth was greater than the national rate but below the county and regional rates.
- 3.17 The district has an older age profile than the county and region, with more residents aged 50 and above and fewer student age groups.

- 3.18 In 2021, Huntingdonshire had 76,880 households. This equates to an average household size of 2.35. This is smaller than the other comparable areas.
- 3.19 Single-family households dominate in Huntingdonshire, especially married or civil partnership couples. Single-person households are less common than in the county or region.

4. Housing Stock and Supply Trends

- 4.1 Between 2011 and 2024, every area examined experienced growth in the number of households. Huntingdonshire and Cambridgeshire show a 17% increase, outpacing the East of England (13%) and England as a whole (11%).

Table 4.1 Number of Dwellings (2024)

Area	2011	2024	Net Change	% change
Huntingdonshire	71,400	83,400	12,000	17%
Cambridgeshire	259,000	304,000	45,000	17%
East of England	2,530,000	2,849,000	319,000	13%
England	23,000,000	25,600,000	2,600,000	11%

Source: Census 2011 and 2024 Dwelling Estimates^v

- 4.2 When the number of households and dwellings are compared for 2021, we can see that Huntingdonshire has a lower implied vacancy rate than the wider comparators. This is only an implied vacancy rate as the gap between households and dwellings can be filled by other uses such as short term lets or second homes.

Table 4.2 Implied Vacancy Rate (2021)

Area	Households	Dwellings	Vacancy Rate
Huntingdonshire	76,880	79,850	3.7%
Cambridgeshire	277,635	290,889	4.6%
East of England	2,628,778	2762299	4.8%
England	23,436,086	24,927,588	6.0%

Source: Census, 2021

- 4.3 Between 2011 and 2021, there was growth in the housing stock across all sub-areas. The North and West had the highest growth proportionally (34%). The East experienced a 19% increase, and the

Central and South sub-area had a lower increase of 11% but this was the highest absolute growth.

Table 4.3 Number of dwellings by sub-area

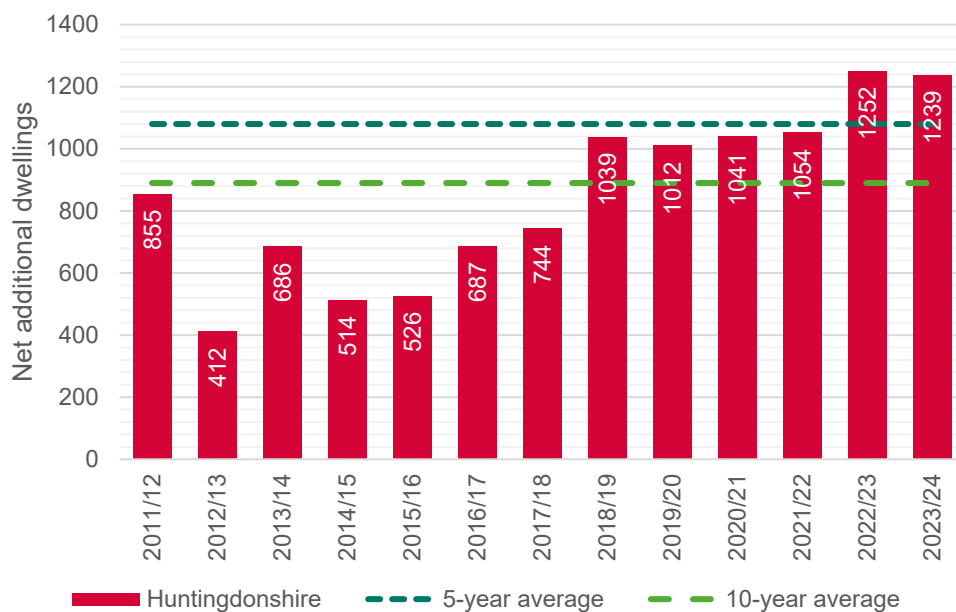
	2011	2021	Net Change	% change
North and West	10,041	10,787	746	7%
East	18,146	19,464	1,318	7%
Central and South	43,212	49,594	6,382	15%
Huntingdonshire	71,399	79,845	8,446	12%

Source: 2011 and 2021 Census *best fit 2011 OAs have been used to calculate dwelling stock.

Housing Completions

- 4.4 According to Council monitoring, since 2011/2012, there have been 11,061 (net) new homes delivered in Huntingdonshire, showing a five-year average of 1,120 homes. The ten-year average in the district equates to 890 homes, as shown in the figure below.

Figure 4.1 Net Housing Delivery Rate – Huntingdonshire

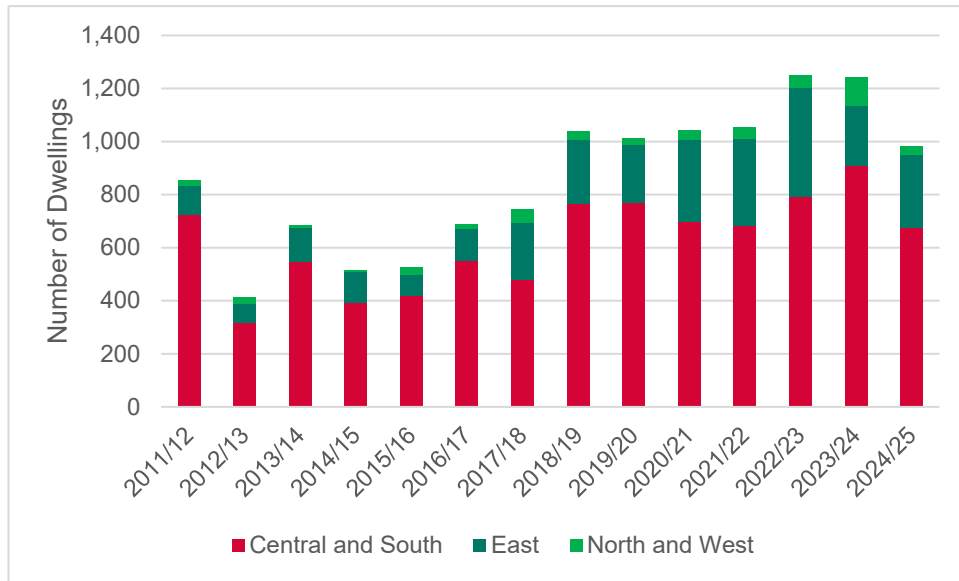


Source: Annual Monitoring Report, 2024 (Part 1)^{vi}

- 4.5 The figure below sets out the number of completions by sub-area in Huntingdonshire drawn from Annual Monitoring. Although this source does not apply to the conversion of listed buildings.

- 4.6 The Central and South has contributed the greatest number of new dwellings (72%), peaking in 2019 with 8,727 dwellings. The East has shown steady growth since 2017, before this, the sub-area contributed an average of 17% of completions. However, since 2017 its average contribution has been 27%.
- 4.7 Both the Central and South and the East sub-areas have strategic expansion sites: Alconbury Weald and Wintringham Park, respectively and the delivery of these sites is reflected in the high number of homes delivered.
- 4.8 The North and West area has consistently low numbers throughout the period. There is a decline in the Central and South and North and West sub-areas in the last year.
- 4.9 It is important to note that two developments (Grange Farm and Ermine South South) have now secured outline planning permission and will likely contribute to housing delivery within the next five years.
- 4.10 Along with ongoing development at Wintringham Park and Alconbury Weald, various smaller sites across the district have the potential to increase housing delivery above the annual target requirement significantly.

Figure 4.2 Completions, by sub-area



Source: Council Annual Monitoring Data

Dwelling Type

4.11 Huntingdonshire has a larger proportion of detached dwellings than the wider comparators. Conversely, there is a smaller proportion of flatted developments.

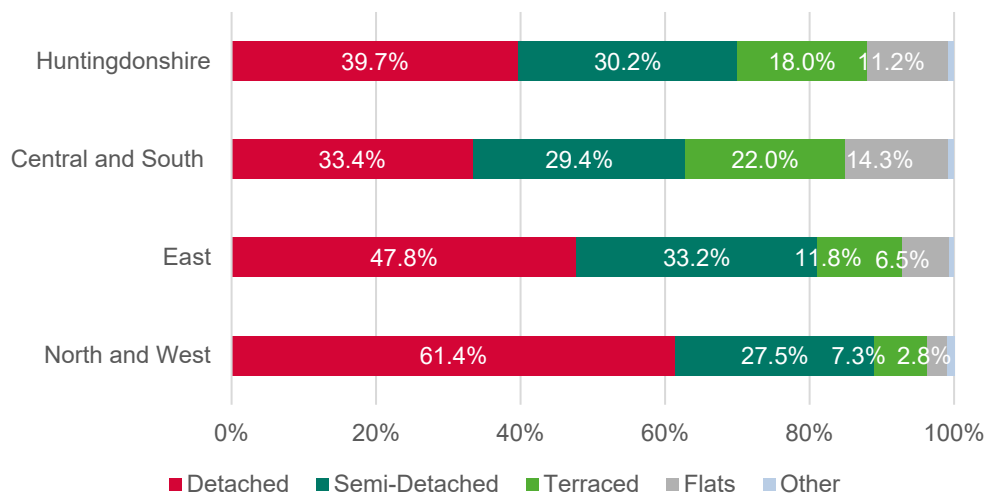
Figure 4.3 Dwelling Types



Source: Census 2021

- 4.12 For semi-detached and terraced homes, the district has a similar percentage to the county. In both instances, this is less than the regional and national figures.
- 4.13 The North and West is dominated by detached homes and has a lower proportion of flatted developments, similar to the East sub-area. Central and South has a higher proportion of terraced homes and flats. Again, this is reflecting urban and rural characteristics.

Figure 4.4 Dwelling Types by sub-area

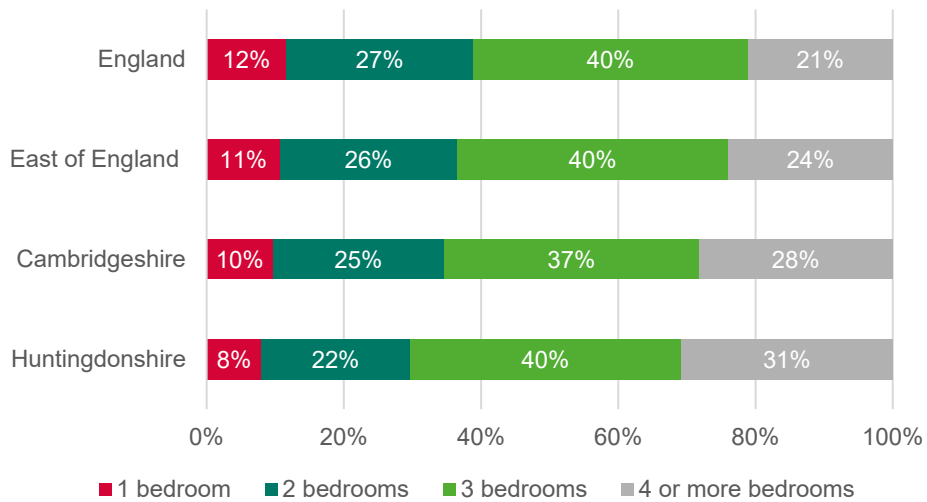


Source: Census 2021

Number of Bedrooms

- 4.14 Huntingdonshire has a greater percentage of homes with four or more bedrooms when compared to the wider comparators. Conversely, it has a smaller percentage of one bedroom homes. This would be expected in a predominantly rural area but is also driven by the greater proportion of detached properties.

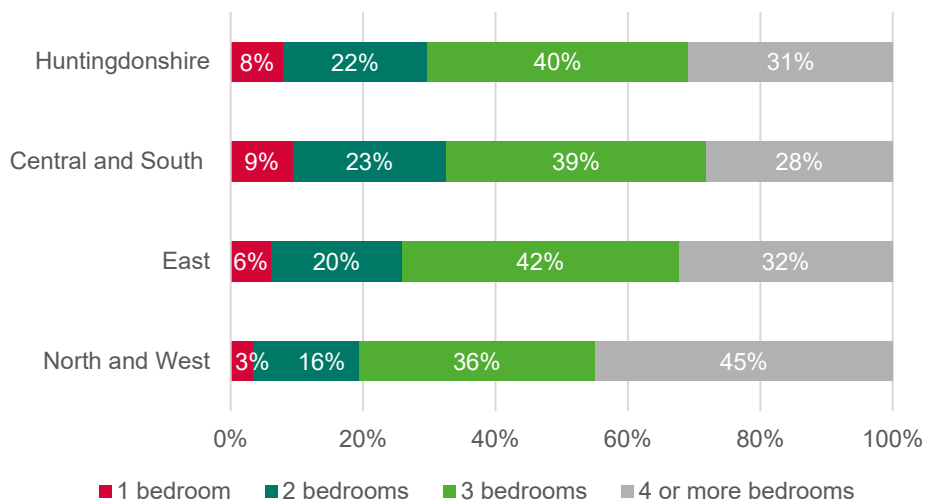
Figure 4.5 Sizes of Dwellings



Source: Census 2021

4.15 This is further demonstrated by the North and West sub-area displaying the same characteristics with it being the most rural of the sub-areas. In the Central and South area, which has the largest urban centres, displays the smallest proportion of large homes and the greatest percentage of small homes.

Figure 4.6 Sizes of Dwellings by sub-area



Source: Census 2021

4.16 Since 2021/2022, 3,602 (gross) dwellings have been completed in Huntingdonshire. Of these, there has been a fairly even split across

two, three and four bedrooms, all around 30%. Around 11% of completions have been in one bedroom properties.

Table 4.4 Gross Completions by Bedroom

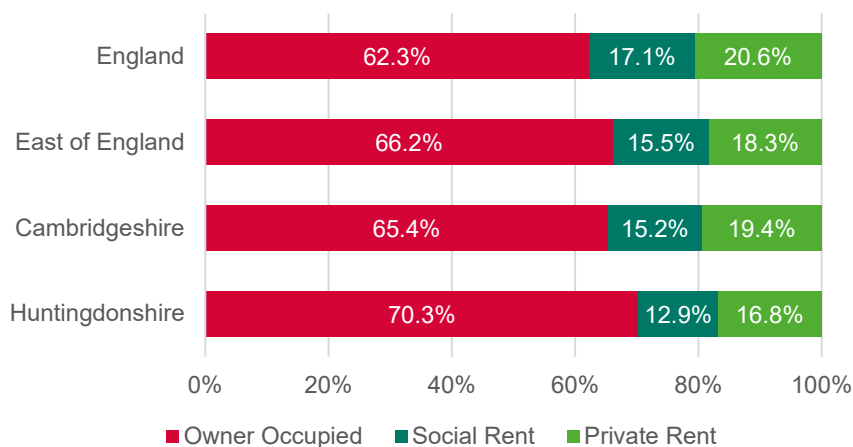
Bedrooms	Completions	%
1 Bed	321	11%
2 Bed	901	29%
3 Bed	1,261	31%
4+ Beds	1,119	29%
Total	3,602	

Source: HDC, 2025

Tenure

- 4.17 Huntingdonshire has a larger proportion of owner-occupied households than the wider comparators. Conversely, the district shows a smaller proportion of renters (social and private) in comparison to all other areas.

Figure 4.7 Tenure (2021)

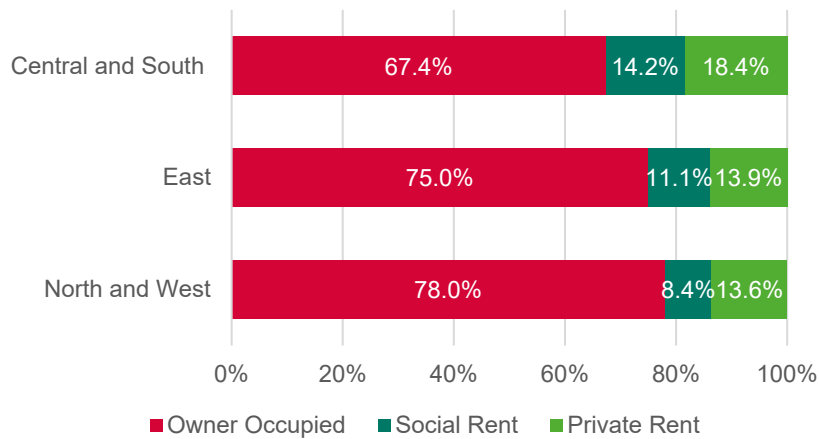


Source: Census 2021

- 4.18 The Central and South has a higher proportion of social and private renters whereas the North and West shows the lowest proportions for both social and private renters. The tenure split in the East sub-area

falls in between the Central and South and North and West sub-areas for all types, as shown in the figure below.

Figure 4.8 Tenure (2021)



Source: Census 2021

Occupancy Patterns

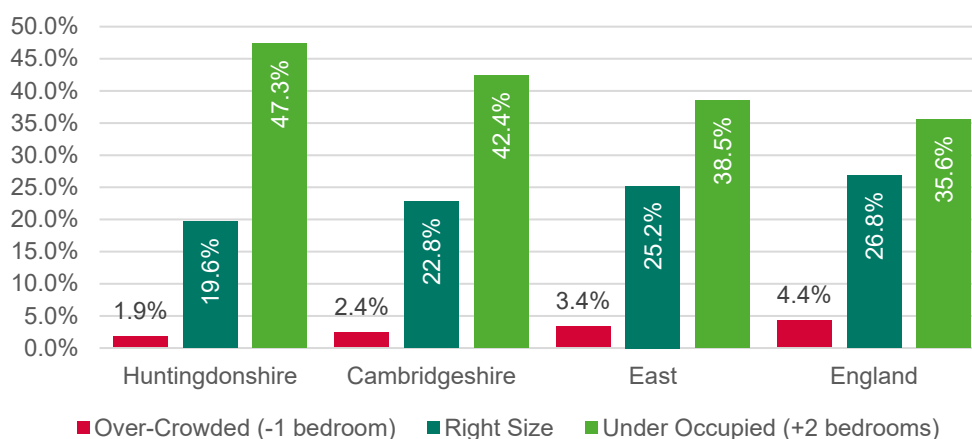
4.19 The Census bedroom occupancy rating assesses whether a home has the right number of bedrooms for its occupants.

4.20 A household's bedroom needs are determined by ONS' Bedroom Standard, which requires that the following groups should have their own bedroom:

- adult couple;
- any remaining adult (aged 21 years or over);
- two males (aged 10 to 20 years) or;
- one male (aged 10 to 20 years) and one male (aged 9 years or under), if there is an odd number of males aged 10 to 20 years or;
- one male aged 10 to 20 years if there are no males aged 0 to 9 years to pair with him;
- repeat steps 3 to 5 for females;
- two children (aged 9 years or under) regardless of sex;
- any remaining child (aged 9 years or under).

- 4.21 A score of +1 or more means a home is under-occupied (has more bedrooms than needed), 0 means it's "rightsized," and -1 or less means it's over-occupied (overcrowded¹⁰).
- 4.22 For this assessment, only homes with +2 or more (at least two spare bedrooms) are counted as under-occupied, excluding +1 scores (which may reflect legitimate needs like a home office or carer's room). As a result, the percentages in the table do not total 100%.
- 4.23 As shown in the figure below, Huntingdonshire has a higher proportion of under occupied homes than the wider comparators. Conversely, the rate of overcrowding in the district is lower than all other areas shown.

Figure 4.9 Occupancy Rating (Bedrooms)



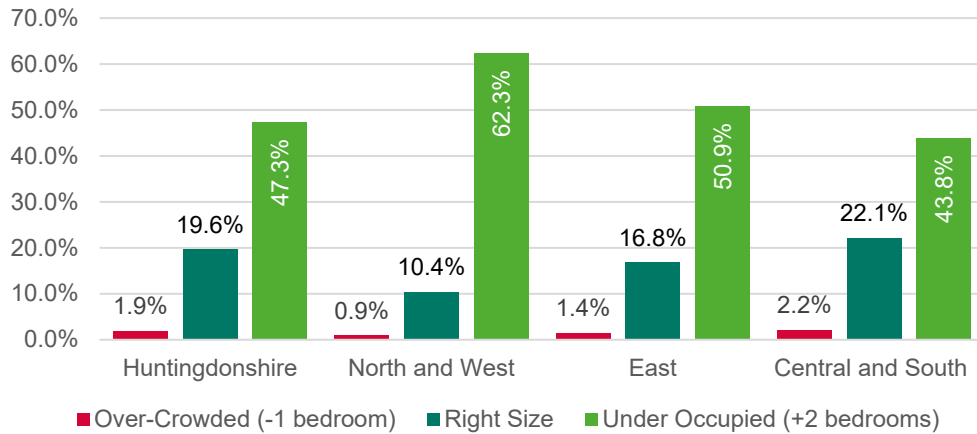
Source: Census 2021

- 4.24 This would be expected in an area with an older population and a large percentage of detached properties. This is often described as the empty nest effect. Indeed, even within the housing register, there are 27 applicants in Band A that are under-occupying 2-bedroom homes.

¹⁰ It is calculated based on household size, age and relationships of household members. Whilst under-occupied properties are those with more bedrooms than the house theoretically needs. For instance, an under-occupied property can relate to a couple with no children living in a two or more-bedroom property.

- 4.25 The Central and South sub-area has the largest proportion of over-crowded homes at 2.2%. Of all sub-areas, the North and West has the highest percentage of under-occupied dwellings.

Figure 4.10 Occupancy Rating (Bedrooms) by sub-area



Source: Census 2021

Housing Stock: Conclusions

- 4.26 The total number of dwellings in Huntingdonshire in 2024 was 83,400, a 17% increase since 2011. This is a faster rate of growth than the national and regional growth rate.
- 4.27 Huntingdonshire has a lower implied vacancy rate than the wider comparators.
- 4.28 Over the last five years, housing delivery in Huntingdonshire has totalled 5,598 dwellings and this has increased the average annual rate of delivery to 1,120 dwellings.
- 4.29 Huntingdonshire has a larger proportion of detached dwellings than the wider comparators. Conversely, there is a smaller proportion of flatted developments.
- 4.30 Linked to this, Huntingdonshire has a greater percentage of homes with four or more bedrooms when compared to the wider comparators.

- 4.31 Huntingdonshire has a larger proportion of owner-occupied households than the wider comparators and conversely, a smaller proportion of renters (social and private).
- 4.32 The district has a higher proportion of underoccupied homes than the wider comparators and conversely, a lower rate of overcrowding in the district. This is linked to the ageing population and the size of the housing stock.

5. Housing Market Dynamics

- 5.1 This section of the report considers housing market dynamics across all spatial study areas. The section addresses the housing market dynamics with respect to both the sales market and the lettings market.

House Prices

- 5.2 In the year to March 2025, Huntingdonshire's median house price (£356,396) is lower than the regional (£416,584) and national medians (£377,621), as shown in the table below.

Table 5.1 Average House Prices (March 2025)

Area	Price
Huntingdonshire	£356,396
East of England	£416,584
England	£377,621

Source: Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Housing Market Bulletin 2025 based on hometrack data

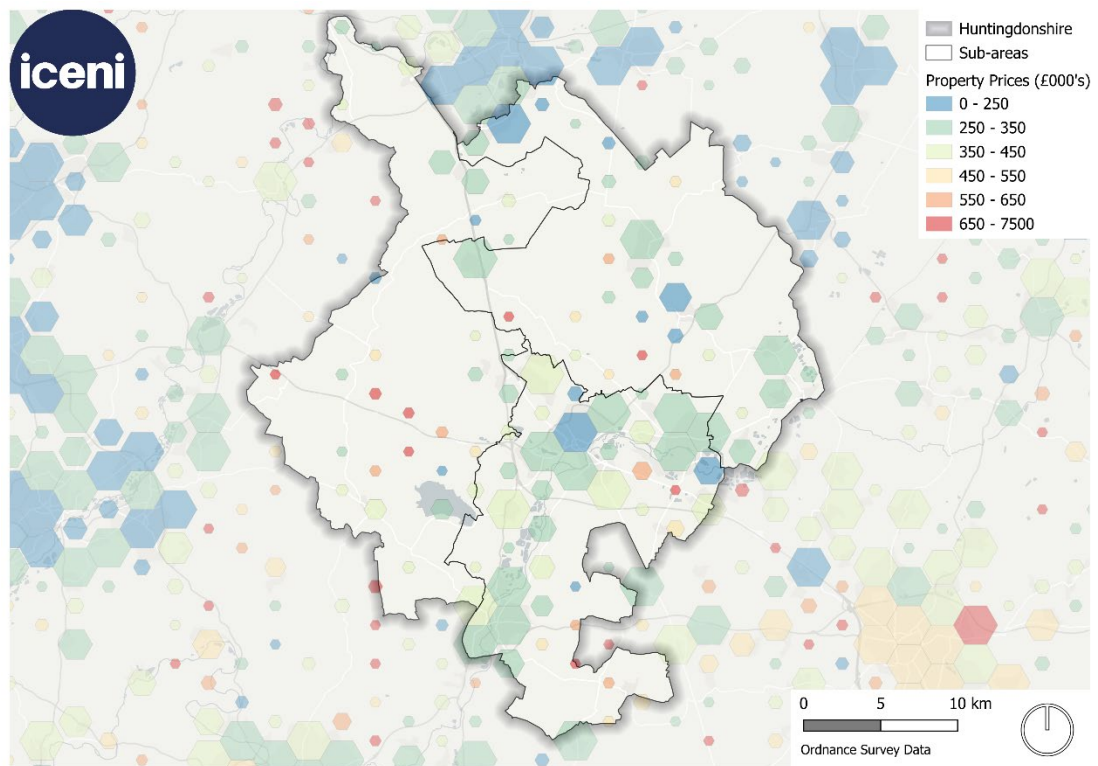
- 5.3 Drawing on HMLR Price Paid data, it is possible to look at median costs at a sub-area level. At £410,000, the North and West sub-area has a considerably higher median than the other two sub-areas, although the Central and South sub-area median is also above the Huntingdonshire average (which is notably different to the hometrack data and also more dated). The East sub-area shows the lowest median house prices, as shown in the table below.

Table 5.2 Median House Prices (2023)

Area	Price
North and West	£410,000
East	£292,000
Central and South	£320,000
Huntingdonshire	£315,000

Source: HMLR Price Paid Data,

- 5.4 A shown in the figure below, property prices under £350,000 are concentrated in the Central and South and East sub-areas. Higher-priced properties are found mainly in the North and West sub-areas with various pockets seen across the other sub-areas.

Figure 5.1 Median Property Prices

Source: HM Land Registry Price Paid Data^{vii}, 2025

- 5.5 As shown in the table below, Huntingdonshire is consistently above the England average for all property types except flats. In contrast, the district is below the county and regional averages for all types of homes.

Table 5.3 Median Price by Type (2023)

Area	Overall	Detached	Semi	Terraced	Flatted
Huntingdonshire	£312,000	£442,000	£310,000	£260,000	£165,000
Cambridgeshire	£337,000	£452,000	£315,000	£285,000	£210,000
East of England	£340,000	£485,000	£350,000	£310,000	£205,000
England	£290,000	£440,000	£274,000	£240,000	£232,000

Source: ONS price paid data (blue cells = highest for each type)

- 5.6 North and West shows the highest median price for detached dwellings across all other areas. The East sub-area has the lowest overall median prices in comparison to all other areas shown in the table below.

Table 5.4 Median Price by Type (2023)

Area	Overall	Detached	Semi	Terraced	Flatted
North and West	£410,000	£503,000	£293,000	£238,000	£130,000
East	£292,000	£395,000	£260,000	£210,000	£120,000
Central and South	£320,000	£440,000	£330,000	£260,000	£170,000
Huntingdonshire	£312,000	£442,000	£310,000	£260,000	£165,000

Source: ONS price paid data (blue cells = highest for each type)

House Price Change

- 5.7 Median prices in Huntingdonshire have grown by 69% over the last decade. This is similar to the rest of the county at 67%. But it is notably below the regional growth (74%) but above the national growth (57%). In the shorter term (5-year) growth at 18% has been lower than all other areas examined.

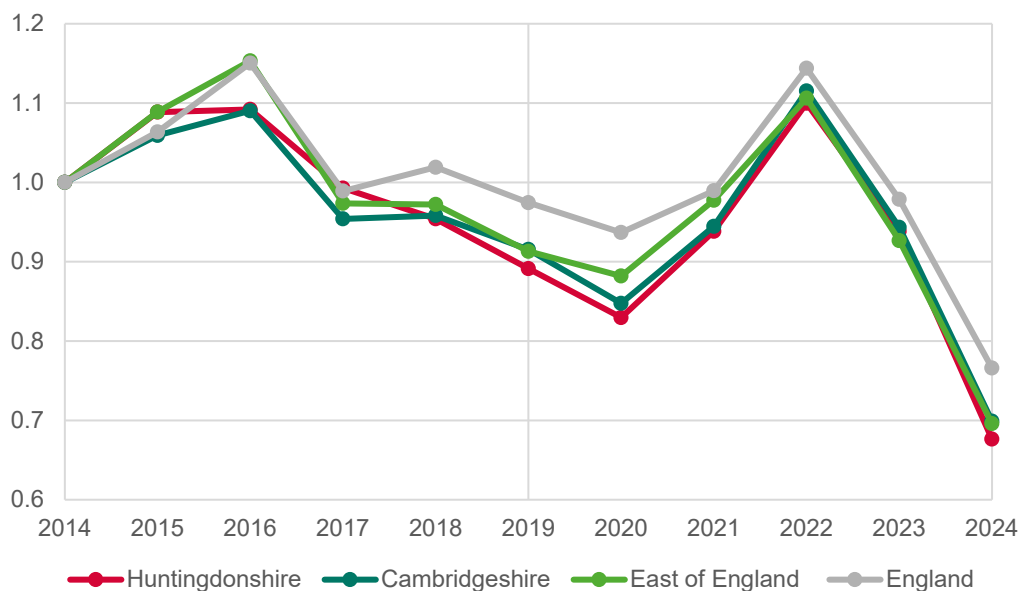
Table 5.5 House Price Growth

Area	2023	5 Year Change		10 Year Change	
		Absolute	%	Absolute	%
Huntingdonshire	£312,000	£47,000	18%	£127,000	69%
Cambridgeshire	£337,000	£57,000	28%	£135,000	67%
East of England	£340,000	£60,000	31%	£145,000	74%
England	£290,000	£55,000	23%	£105,000	57%

Source: ONS, Median House Price for Administrative Geographies

Residential Sales

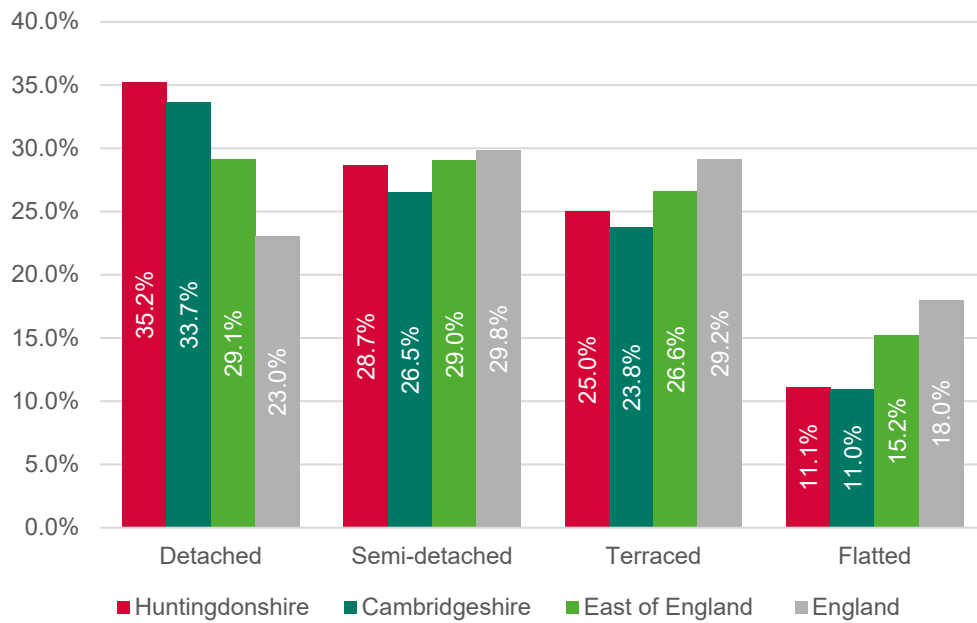
- 5.8 Since 2014, Huntingdonshire has generally tracked the benchmark areas for property sales, which demonstrates macroeconomic factors. Across all areas, there were peaks in the number of sales in 2016 and post-pandemic in 2022, with a decline from 2016 to 2020 and from 2022 onwards, with the most recent fall being the most notable. This is linked to mortgage rate increases and the general cost of living crisis.

Figure 5.2 Property sales (indexed to the year 2014)

Source: Iceni analysis of ONS data

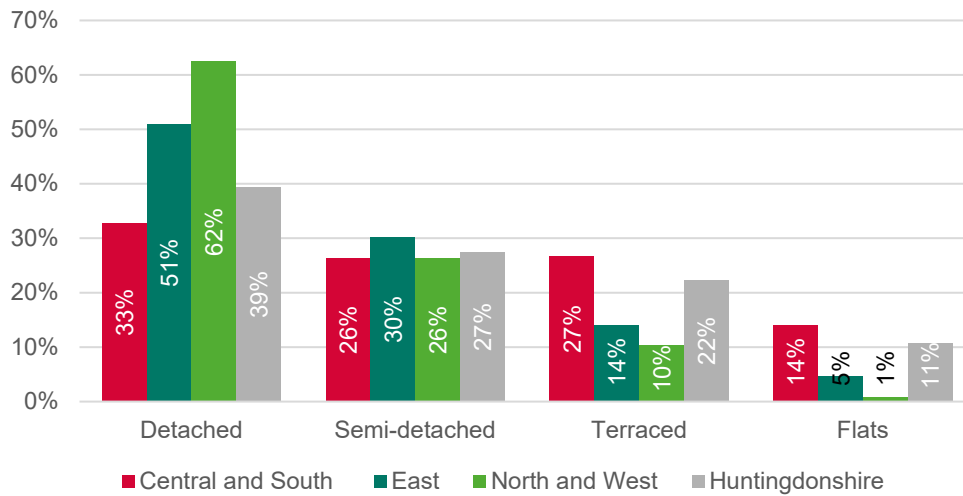
- 5.9 The figure below shows that Huntingdonshire housing stock is more dominated by detached properties than the wider comparators. Flatted homes are least common in Huntingdonshire, broadly in line with the county rate but below the regional and national figures.

Figure 5.3 Property Sales by Type (Year to Sept 2024)



Source: Iceni analysis of ONS data

- 5.10 The North and West sub-area shows the highest percentage of detached sales and, conversely, the lowest percentage of flat sales. This is not unexpected for a rural area. The East sub-area has a higher percentage of semi-detached property sales.

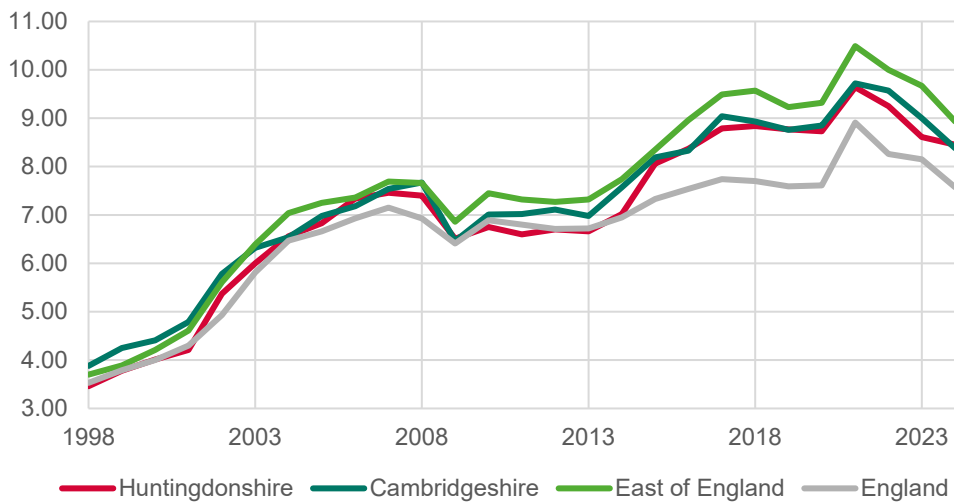
Figure 5.4 Sub-area Property Sales by Type (Year to Sept 2024)

Source: Iceni analysis of ONS data

- 5.11 The Central and South sub-area has the highest percentage of smaller flats and terraced property sales. Again, this would not be unexpected in the district's most urban settings.

Affordability

- 5.12 As with all areas, Huntingdonshire shows long-term deterioration in affordability. There have been periodic downturns, particularly around 2008-2009 and since 2020-21. The affordability ratio in Huntingdonshire now stands at 8.45.

Figure 5.5 Affordability Ratio (1997-2024)

Source: ONS, *Housing Affordability in England and Wales*^{viii}

- 5.13 The ONS affordability ratio is just one measure of affordability in a given area, as it compares median earnings with median property prices overall.
- 5.14 However, it does not take into account other important factors affecting affordability, such as savings, stamp duty and additional costs associated with moving.

Private Rental Market

- 5.15 Huntingdonshire shows a lower overall median rental value (£875) when compared to the regional and county values but higher than the national rate.

Figure 5.6 Median Rental Values

Source: VOA Private Rental Statistics, 2023

- 5.16 Between 2018/19 and 2022/23, rents increased across all sizes in Huntingdonshire. The largest rent increase is shown for rooms in Huntingdonshire, while the smallest increase is seen for 4+ bed homes, a higher rate than all other areas shown. This suggests the demand is greatest for smaller affordable homes, as shown in the table below.

Table 5.6 Rental Change by Size, (2018/19 - 2022/23)

Area	Room	Studio	1 bed	2 beds	3 beds	4+ beds
Huntingdonshire	46%	15%	14%	17%	16%	12%
Cambridgeshire	21%	29%	17%	15%	16%	10%
East of England	24%	24%	15%	16%	22%	11%
England	25%	22%	21%	22%	19%	17%

Source: VOA Private Rental Statistics^{ix}, 2023

Agent Engagement

- 5.17 Iceni have engaged with estate and lettings agents within Huntingdonshire; a summary of the findings is set out below.

- 5.18 It should be noted that the information is qualitative and will be subject to each agent's opinions. The agents consulted include Harvey Robinson, Oliver James, Thomas Morris, Lennon James, Sharman Quinney, Ellis Winters and Giggs & McGrath.
- 5.19 In sales, three-bedroom homes and detached properties dominate buyer preferences, with local movers and first-time buyers comprising the majority of sales.
- 5.20 Meanwhile, the lettings market is under significant pressure due to sustained demand from key workers and military personnel, particularly for smaller properties.
- 5.21 Across both sectors, proximity to transport links, schools, and amenities remains a major draw, and appetite for Build-to-Rent opportunities is emerging across several areas.

Sales Market

- 5.22 The sales market across Huntingdonshire demonstrates a healthy balance of supply and demand, with strong interest across a range of property types and demographics.
- 5.23 Key drivers of demand in Huntingdon include proximity to well-regarded school catchments and the local train station, which has good links to London and is on the East Coast main line.
- 5.24 The area also has a significant proportion of key workers in the town, owing to the presence of the local hospital.
- 5.25 One agent suggested the buyer profile in Huntingdon is mixed, though there is a notable prevalence of first-time buyers. Most purchasers are local to the area, continuing the trend of internal migration that began a few years ago. Although another suggested an element of relocation-driven demand

- 5.26 Three-bedroom properties are particularly sought after in the town and tend to sell quickly, with larger homes, particularly detached, increasingly in demand. Homes priced between £200,000 and £500,000 attract the most attention.
- 5.27 The Huntingdon market is well-balanced, with supply generally meeting demand and vendors achieving their asking prices.
- 5.28 While the demand for flats has seen a decline in popularity over recent years – possibly due to younger individuals returning to live with parents. Properties generally sell within 3–4 weeks, with some achieving instant sales.
- 5.29 The majority of recent transactions have involved local movers, though a small number of buyers from London are also present.
- 5.30 In St Neots, the agents noted a gap in the supply of one-bed and two bed properties – most popular. These are often workers at Hinchingsbrooke Hospital in Huntingdon, looking to live in the town and commute to work either by road or train.
- 5.31 In Godmanchester, semi-detached, freehold homes are in high demand, whereas interest in flats remains relatively low.
- 5.32 An agent in the rural parts of the district noted that the sales market is predominantly local movers.
- 5.33 The highest demand was for two- and three-bedroom houses, with the average time on market not exceeding four weeks.
- 5.34 Key worker housing is not a dominant feature of the sales landscape in the rural areas.
- 5.35 Within the Ramsey area, agents reported the market primarily serving first-time buyers and investors. The most sought-after property type remains the 3 bed semi-detached houses which are typically purchased by first-time buyers and are prominent in the buy-to-let market.

- 5.36 The highest demand spans a mix of buyers typically aged late 20s to late 30s. The main reasons for relocation to Ramsey are stated as being closer to family and seeking more affordable options.
- 5.37 Overall, the market appears stable and is expected to remain robust over the coming months. Over the longer term the outlook remains positive, with expectations of continued progression and stability.

Lettings

- 5.38 The lettings market across the district is experiencing particularly high levels of demand, especially among key workers and those in the healthcare and military sectors.
- 5.39 Across all agencies, the consensus is that rental properties are letting quickly, with particular pressure on smaller units.
- 5.40 The rental sector in Huntingdonshire is performing strongly, noting demand across all property types. The tenant mix in Huntingdonshire is also varied.
- 5.41 Carers and key workers are a significant component of the tenant base in Huntingdon due to the hospital and nearby military base. This was exacerbated by the closure of staff accommodation for NHS workers at the hospital.
- 5.42 Furthermore, RAF and USAAF personnel often arrive with substantial budgets and contribute to a dynamic and aggressive rental market.
- 5.43 Huntingdon's Private Rental Supply (PRS) supply is insufficient to meet the high demand, creating a highly competitive market.
- 5.44 Agents believe there is growing interest in Build-to-Rent (BTR) schemes in the town due to the high demand and lack of supply. The town could also tap into the commuter market to London and Cambridge as the area's train station adds to its appeal.

- 5.45 Agents confirmed that one- and two-bedroom properties are most in demand, suggesting a need for smaller affordable homes.
- 5.46 Similar demand is seen in St Ives although demand is greater for three-bedroom semi-detached properties.
- 5.47 St Ives' rental market also sees a broad demographic mix, including both key workers and private tenants.
- 5.48 The demand is such that properties tend to let within two weeks, and there is definite interest in Build-to-Rent offerings.
- 5.49 In St Neots there is an acute shortage of one- and two-bedroom properties – the most popular among tenants.
- 5.50 The area's excellent road and rail links further contribute to demand. There is strong interest in Build-to-Rent in this locality as well.

Housing Market Dynamics – Summary

- 5.51 In 2023, Huntingdonshire's median house price was £315,000, lower than the county (£337,000) and regional (£340,000) medians, but higher than the national median of £290,000.
- 5.52 Apart from flats, Huntingdonshire's property prices are above the England average but below county and regional averages for all home types.
- 5.53 Over the past decade, house prices in Huntingdonshire have grown by 69%, similar to the county (67%), but below regional growth (74%) and above national growth (57%).
- 5.54 In the last 5 years, growth was 18%, lower than in the other areas.
- 5.55 Property sales in Huntingdonshire have followed benchmark trends, with significant declines since 2022.

- 5.56 The affordability ratio in Huntingdonshire is 8.45, showing long-term deterioration but recent improvements.
- 5.57 In 2023, The median rental value is £875 per month, lower than county and regional values, but higher than the national rate.
- 5.58 Single-room rents have increased the most, indicating a high demand for smaller affordable homes.

6. Overall Housing Need

Introduction

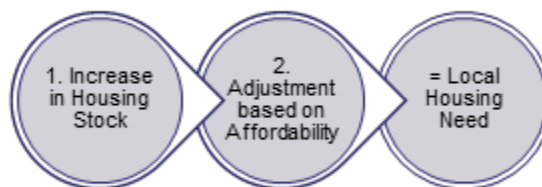
- 6.1 This section of the report considers overall housing need set against the NPPF and Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) – specifically the Standard Method for assessing housing need.
- 6.2 Before its publication, the policy objectives of the 2024 NPPF consultation in terms of housing were clear, including to:
- get Britain building again, to build new homes, create jobs, and deliver new and improved infrastructure;
 - take a brownfield first approach and then release low-quality grey belt land, while preserving the Green Belt;
 - boost affordable housing, to deliver the biggest increase in social and affordable housebuilding in a generation;
 - bring home ownership into reach, especially for young first-time buyers; and
 - promote a more strategic approach to planning, by strengthening cross-boundary collaboration, ahead of legislation to introduce mandatory mechanisms for strategic planning;
 - The consultation also noted that ‘We must deliver more affordable, well-designed homes quickly. We are changing national policy to support more affordable housing, including more for Social Rent, and implementing golden rules to ensure development in the Green Belt is in the public interest. Promoting a more diverse tenure mix will support the faster build out we need’.
- 6.3 The Government’s Standard Method seeks to support the ambition to deliver 1.5 million homes over the next five years (300,000 per annum on average) with the method seeking to provide a ‘more balanced distribution of homes across the country, by directing homes to where they are most needed and least affordable and ensure that all areas contribute to meeting the country’s housing needs’.

- 6.4 It is further suggested that ‘High and rapidly increasing house prices indicate an imbalance between the supply of and demand for new homes, making homes less affordable. The worsening affordability of homes is the best evidence that supply is failing to keep up with demand’.
- 6.5 Looking beyond overall housing numbers, the NPPF seeks to deliver a high proportion of affordable housing, particularly social rented housing.

The Standard Method

- 6.6 The starting point for assessing housing need is the standard method, which is set out by the Government in Planning Practice Guidance. The two-step process is summarised in the figure below and worked through below for Huntingdonshire.

Figure 6.1 Overview of the Standard Method



The Standard Method figures produce an estimate of ‘housing need’ and later in this section projections have been developed to consider the implications of housing delivery in line with this number.

- 6.7 The Standard Method is a simplified variation of the previous standard method. Step 1 seeks to grow the housing stock in each area by a flat 0.8% growth per annum.
- 6.8 Step 2 is an affordability uplift which uses an average of the last five years' affordability ratios, and for each 1% the average ratio is above 5 the housing stock baseline is increased by 0.95%, with the calculation being as follows:

$$\text{Adjustment Factor} = (\text{Affordability Ratio} - 5) / 5 \times 0.95 + 1$$

Step One: Setting the Baseline

- 6.9 The first step in considering housing need is to establish a baseline of housing stock. This is taken from Live Table 125, which is published annually.
- 6.10 According to ONS 2023 Dwelling Estimates, Huntingdonshire had 82,155 dwellings. The baseline is 0.8% of the existing housing stock for the area and this equates to 657 dwellings per annum.

Step Two: Affordability Adjustment

- 6.11 The second step of the standard method is to consider the application of an uplift on the housing stock baseline, to take account of market signals (i.e. relative affordability of housing).
- 6.12 The adjustment increases the housing need where house prices are high relative to workplace incomes. It uses the published workplace-based median affordability ratios from ONS for the most recent five years.
- 6.13 The latest (workplace-based) affordability data relates to 2024 and was published by ONS in March 2025. For Huntingdonshire, the average ratio was 9.46. Based on the calculation set out above, this results in an uplift of 185% in Huntingdonshire.
- 6.14 The table below sets out the Standard Method for Huntingdonshire, which results in an annual housing need of 1,214 per annum.

Table 6.1 Standard Method – March 2025

	Huntingdonshire
Total Dwelling Stock	82,155
Step 1. Annual Dwellings Stock Increase (0.8%)	657
Average Affordability Ratio (2020-24)	9.46
Uplift	185%
Step 2. Housing Need	1,214

Source: MHCLG^x, 2024

- 6.15 At a late stage in the production of the report, ONS released new dwelling stock estimates for every local authority. For Huntingdonshire, the new estimate is that there are 83,394 dwellings in the district. Applying the 185% uplift to this figure results in a need for 1,232 dpa.
- 6.16 While this equates to an uplift of 18 dpa, this is not considered material to change the findings of this report in relation to affordable housing and housing mix. It would also only result in a minor increase in the other population-driven need for specific groups.

Population

- 6.17 We have also developed a trend-based projection and then flex levels of migration to and from the district, so there is a sufficient population to fill 1,214 homes per annum. The projections look at the 2024-46 period. The analysis below starts with a review of local population trends.
- 6.18 As of mid-2023 (the latest date for which ONS has published mid-year population estimates (MYE)), the population of Huntingdonshire is estimated to be 186,100; this is an increase of around 13,500 people over the previous decade (an 8% increase), which is slightly higher than seen nationally, but slightly below equivalent figures for the County and region.

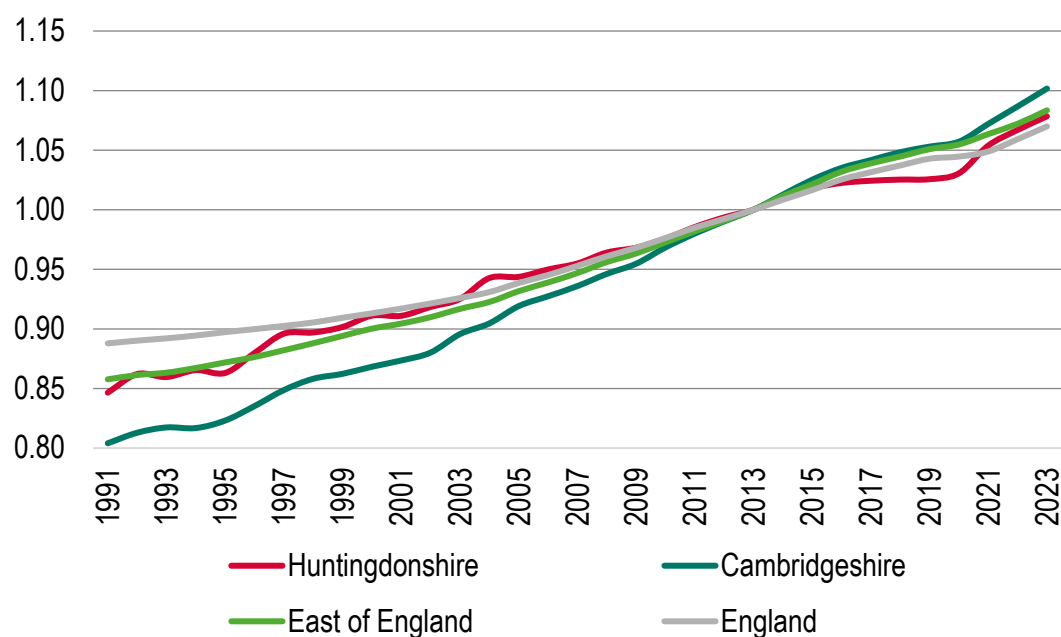
Table 6.2 Population change (2013-23)

	2013	2023	Change	% change
Huntingdonshire	172,540	186,066	13,526	7.8%
Cambridgeshire	634,996	699,573	64,577	10.2%
East of England	5,970,484	6,468,665	498,181	8.3%
England	53,918,686	57,690,323	3,771,637	7.0%

Source: ONS

6.19 The figure below shows an indexed population change back to 1991 (index to 1 in 2013). This shows population growth to have generally followed the regional trend historically. The data also shows particularly strong growth over the past 4-years or so.

Figure 6.2 Indexed Population Change – 1991-2023



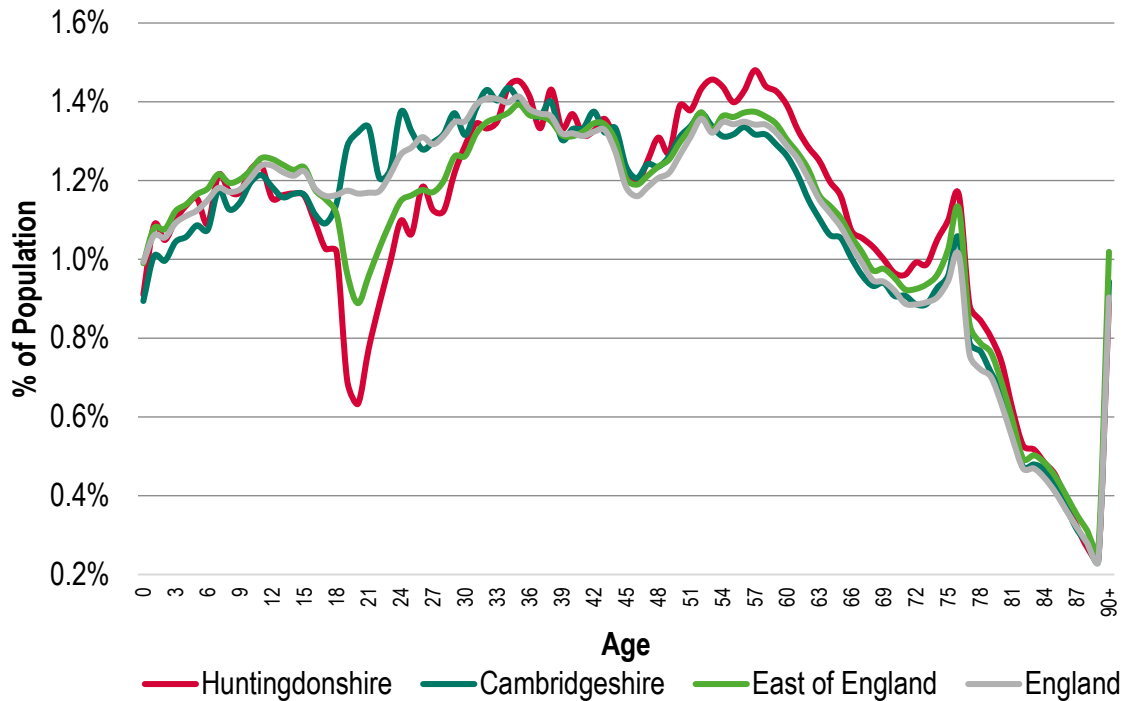
Source: ONS, 2024

Age Structure

6.20 The figure below shows the age structure by single year of age (compared with a range of other areas). Overall, the population structure is broadly similar to that seen in other locations with key differences being in some younger age groups, notably a lower proportion of people in their

late teens and early 20s – this observation will be linked to people moving away for further education although the data also points to many of these returning over time.

Figure 6.3 Population profile (2023)



Source: ONS, Mid-Year Population Estimates

- 6.21 The analysis below summarises the above information (including total population numbers for Huntingdonshire) by assigning population to three broad age groups (which can generally be described as a) children, b) working age and c) pensionable age).
- 6.22 This analysis confirms the similar age structure between the different areas examined but does highlight a slightly higher proportion of older people (21% aged 65 and over) in Huntingdonshire.

Table 6.3 Population profile (2023) – summary age bands

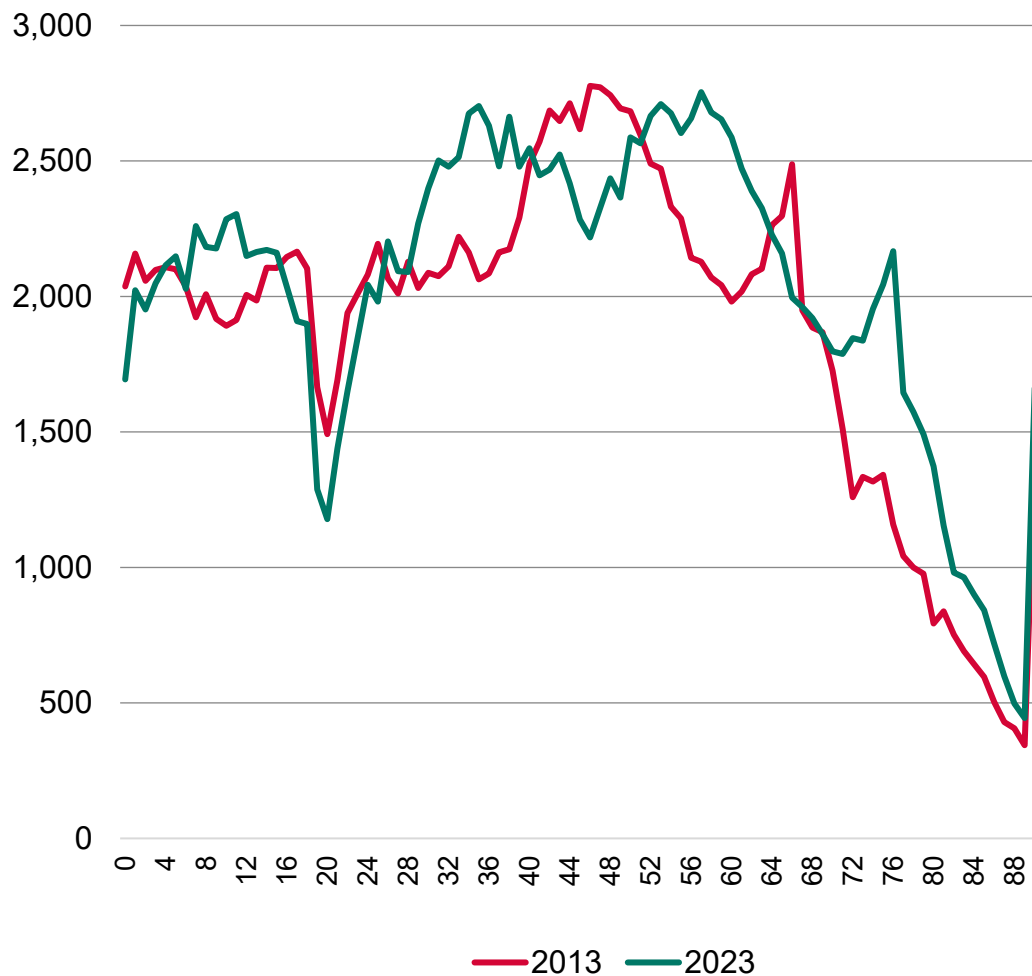
	Huntingdonshire		Cambridge -shire	East of England	England
	Population	% of population	% of population		% of population
Under 16	33,863	18.2%	17.7%	18.8%	18.5%
16-64	114,030	61.3%	63.4%	61.3%	62.9%
65+	38,173	20.5%	18.9%	19.9%	18.7%
All Ages	186,066	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Source: ONS

Age Structure Changes

- 6.23 The figure below shows how the age structure of the population has changed in the 10-year period from 2013 to 2023 – the data used is based on population, so it will also reflect the increase seen in this period.
- 6.24 There have been some changes in the age structure, including increases in the population in their 50s; the number of people aged 65 and over also looks to have increased notably. Where there are differences, it is often due to cohort effects (i.e. smaller or larger cohorts of the population getting older over time).

Figure 6.4 Population age structure (people) (2013 and 2023) – Huntingdonshire



Source: ONS

- 6.25 Again, the information above is summarised into the three broad age bands to ease comparison. This shows population increases in all age bands with the highest total and proportionate increase being amongst those aged 65 and over – this age group increasing by 7,600 people, accounting for 56% of all population change in the area.

Table 6.4 Change in population by broad age group (2013-23) –
Huntingdonshire

	2013	2023	Change	% change
Under 16	32,451	33,863	1,412	4.4%
16-64	109,550	114,030	4,480	4.1%
65+	30,539	38,173	7,634	25.0%
TOTAL	172,540	186,066	13,526	7.8%

Source: ONS

Components of Population Change

- 6.26 The table below considers the drivers of population change from 2011 to 2023. The main components of change are natural change (births minus deaths) and net migration (internal/domestic and international).
- 6.27 There is also an Unattributable Population Change (UPC), which is a correction made by ONS upon publication of Census data if the population has been under- or over-estimated (this is only calculated for the 2011-21 period).
- 6.28 There are also ‘other changes’, which are variable (sometimes positive and sometimes negative but generally balancing out over time) – these changes are often related to armed forces personnel, prisons or boarding school pupils.
- 6.29 The data shows natural change to generally be dropping over time – in the last year for which there is data there were more deaths than births for the first time going back to at least 2011.
- 6.30 Migration is variable, and generally positive for internal (domestic) migration. It ranges from -108 to 2,858 with the peak in 2020/21 which could be a pandemic effect as people moved to the country. It could also be to do with higher (or lower) rates of housing delivery in certain years.

- 6.31 For international net migration figures are much lower; however, the last two years for which data is available show a notably higher level of international migration than had been seen generally in the past – this being a consistent trend to that seen nationally. Internal net migration has been particularly high over the past four years.
- 6.32 The analysis also shows (for the 2011-21) period a negative level of UPC (totalling around 3,200 people over the 10-year period), which suggests that when the 2021 Census was published, ONS had previously over-estimated population change. Overall, the data shows a continuing trend of increasing population throughout the period studied.

Table 6.5 Components of population change, mid-2011 to mid-2023
– Huntingdonshire

	Natural change	Net internal migration	Net international migration	Other changes	Other (unattributable)	Total change
2011/12	879	732	196	-62	-347	1,398
2012/13	702	802	238	-310	-329	1,103
2013/14	754	979	391	-46	-335	1,743
2014/15	551	129	391	625	-332	1,364
2015/16	650	52	444	-61	-307	778
2016/17	375	20	146	121	-344	318
2017/18	336	65	2	97	-334	166
2018/19	387	-108	-26	118	-312	59
2019/20	137	1,034	-109	30	-244	848
2020/21	124	2,858	92	1,240	-303	4,011
2021/22	264	1,750	500	-245	0	2,269
2022/23	-102	1,663	758	-349	0	1,970

Source: ONS

Developing a Trend-Based Projection

- 6.33 The purpose of this section is to develop a trend-based population projection using the latest available demographic information – this

projection then being used as a base to develop an alternative scenario linking to the Standard Method.

- 6.34 A key driver for developing a new projection is due to the publication of 2021 Census data, which has essentially reset estimates of population (size and age structure) compared with previous mid-year population estimates (MYE) from ONS (ONS has subsequently updated 2021 MYE figures to take account of the Census). In addition, as referenced above, a 2023 MYE is now available.
- 6.35 The projection developed looks at estimated migration trends over the past 5-years with this period being used as it is consistent with the time period typically used by ONS when developing subnational population projections.
- 6.36 Below, the general method used for each of the components and the outputs from the trend-based projection are set out. The population projection uses the framework of ONS subnational population projections (SNPP) as a starting point.
- 6.37 This means considering data on births, deaths and migration. The most recent ONS projections are 2018-based and therefore quite out-of-date, given there are now population estimates and components of change data up to 2023. The 2018-based projections are, however, used as a starting point from which up-to-date projections can be developed.

Natural Change

- 6.38 Natural change is made up of births and deaths and the analysis above has shown a general downward trend over time. To project trends forward, the analysis looks at each of births and deaths separately and compares projected figures in the 2018-SNPP with actual recorded figures in the MYE.

- 6.39 The analysis also takes account of differences between the estimated population size and structure in the 2018-SNPP compared with ONS MYE (up to 2023).
- 6.40 Overall, it is estimated that recent trends in fertility are slightly lower (around 6% lower than projected in 2018) and mortality rates are slightly higher (8% higher) when compared with data in the 2018-SNPP and so adjustments have been made on this basis.

Migration

- 6.41 The migration analysis looks separately at each of in- and out-migration and for internal and international migration, all data being considered by sex and single year of age.
- 6.42 Trend-based projections do not typically simply project trends forward and can vary year by year, in part relating to how the population of other areas is projected to change.
- 6.43 The approach used is to look at migration trends in the 2018-23 period and compare these with figures projected back in the 2018-SNPP for the same period. Adjustments are then made to migration numbers to provide a best estimate of a future projection based on recent trends.
- 6.44 This method will provide a realistic view of projected migration in the absence of being able to develop a full matrix of moves at a national level (as ONS would do).

Population Projection Outputs

- 6.45 The estimates of fertility, mortality and migration (including changes over time) have been modelled to develop a projection for the period to 2046 (the end of the plan period).

- 6.46 The projection outputs start from 2024, but as we only have ONS estimates to 2023, the data to get from 2023 to 2024 is also projected (on this trend-based position).
- 6.47 The table below shows overall projected population growth of around 46,100 people – a 25% increase from 2024 levels.

Table 6.6 Projected population growth under a trend-based scenario – Huntingdonshire (2024-46)

	Population 2024	Population 2046	Change	% change
5-year trend	187,953	234,072	46,119	24.5%

Source: Iceni analysis

Household Projections

- 6.48 To understand what this means for housing need the population growth is translated into household growth using household representative rates and data about the communal (institutional) population (which are not in households). These have again been updated using data from the Census with the table below summarising the assumptions used.
- 6.49 For the communal population, it is assumed actual numbers are held constant up to ages under 75, with the proportion of the population being used for 75+ age groups – this approach is consistent with typical ONS projections.
- 6.50 In interpreting the table below (by way of examples) the data shows around 8.8% of females aged 85-89 live in communal establishments (i.e. are not part of the household population) whilst around 78% of males aged 50-54 are considered to be a 'head of household' (where they are living in a household).

6.51 Generally, the HRRs increase by age, this is due to older people being more likely to live alone, often following the death of a spouse or partner. The rates reflect the percentage of each person in that age group being the head of the household or household Representative.

Table 6.7 Communal Population and Household Representative Rates from 2021 Census – Huntingdonshire

Age	Communal population		Household Representative Rates	
	Male	Female	Male	Female
0 to 15	4	10	-	-
16 to 19	36	23	0.020	0.025
20 to 24	159	42	0.158	0.162
25 to 29	195	27	0.446	0.306
30 to 34	146	14	0.651	0.336
35 to 39	137	11	0.735	0.342
40 to 44	131	0	0.753	0.373
45 to 49	120	14	0.755	0.407
50 to 54	121	3	0.783	0.431
55 to 59	157	6	0.790	0.441
60 to 64	108	20	0.761	0.469
65 to 69	84	14	0.706	0.415
70 to 74	72	20	0.752	0.458
75 to 79	0.022	0.013	0.819	0.557
80 to 84	0.036	0.032	0.852	0.673
85 to 89	0.041	0.088	0.904	0.773
90 or over	0.096	0.240	0.919	0.871

Source: Derived from Census 2021 (mainly Tables CT 106 and 107)

6.52 For household representative rates (HRRs), the figures are calculated at the time of the Census. If ONS follow the method used in their most recent projections for future releases, then they are likely to build in the trend between the last three Census points (2001, 2011 and 2021). The figure below shows a summary analysis of the changes in HRRs by age.

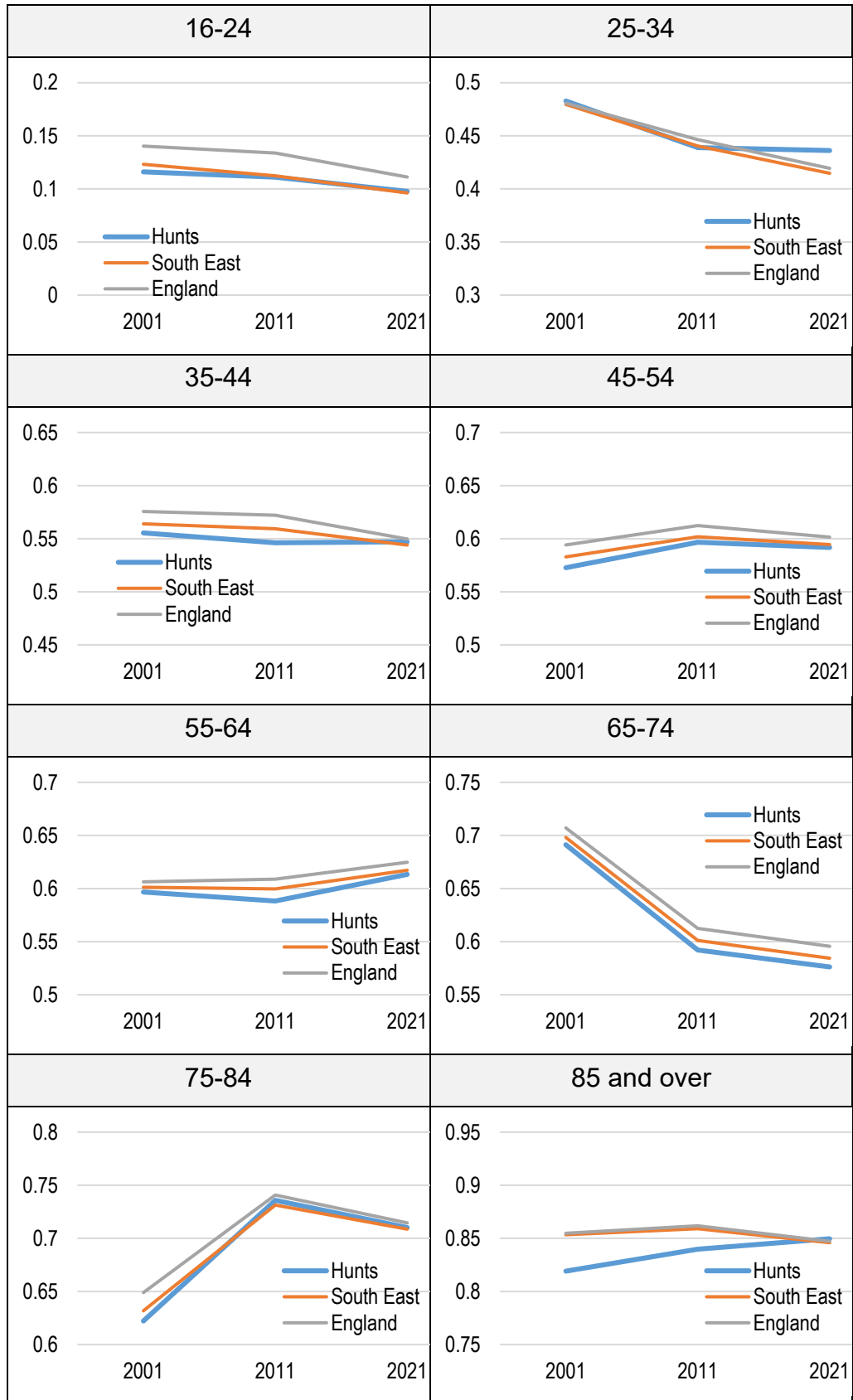
6.53 Arguably the key groups to look at are younger age groups where there may have been a degree of suppression in household formation (due to

affordability) and this does appear to be the case in Huntingdonshire – particularly for those aged 25-34 and to a lesser extent 16-24 and 35-44.

6.54 Continuing this trend in the projection would therefore potentially build in further suppression and would not be a positive reaction to the Standard Method seeking to improve affordability.

6.55 For some older age groups, there does also appear to be a trend of increasing or decreasing HRRs – particularly the 65-74 and 75-84 age groups (and mainly in the 2001-11 period). For these age groups, it is considered that the ‘trends’ are more likely to be due to cohort effects rather than any trend that should be modelled moving forward.

Figure 6.5 Change in household representative rates by age 2001-21



Source: ONS

- 6.56 The approach to HRRs taken in this report for the trend-based projection is to hold figures constant at the levels shown in the 2021 Census. However, when considering a higher housing need (linking to the Standard Method), the possibility of some increases for younger age groups is modelled (i.e. to reduce or reverse suppressed household formation) – this is discussed in relation to the Standard Method projection below.
- 6.57 Applying the HRRs to the trend-based population projection shows a projected increase of 21,400 households over the 2024-46 period, at an average of 975 per annum.

Table 6.8 Projected change in households – trend-based – Huntingdonshire

	Households 2024	Households 2046	Change in households	Per annum
5-year trend	80,351	101,796	21,445	975

Source: Iceni analysis

Developing a Projection linking to the Standard Method

- 6.58 As well as developing a trend-based projection it is possible to consider the implications of housing delivery in line with the Standard Method. The analysis below looks at how the population might change if this level of homes occurs. This is 1,214 dwellings per annum.
- 6.59 A scenario has been developed which flexes migration to and from the District such that there is sufficient population for this level of additional homes to be filled each year.
- 6.60 In addition, as the new Standard Method was only introduced in December 2024, the dwelling growth estimate for 2024-25 has been set at 987 (based on 8-months at 874 (the previous Standard Method) and 4-months at 1,214 (the new method)).

6.61 Within the modelling, migration assumptions have been changed so that across the District the increase in households matches the housing need (including a standard 3% vacancy allowance). Adjustments are made to both in- and out-migration (e.g. if in-migration is increased by 1% then out-migration is reduced by 1%).

6.62 The analysis also considers Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) was revised in December 2024, alongside the new Standard Method and provides some indication of why the Government sees a need to increase housing delivery¹¹. Paragraph 006 (Reference ID: 2a-006-20241212) states:

'Why is an affordability adjustment applied?

An affordability adjustment is applied as housing stock on its own is insufficient as an indicator of future housing need because:

- housing stock represents existing patterns of housing and means that all areas contribute to meeting housing needs. The affordability adjustment directs more homes to where they are most needed*
- people may want to live in an area in which they do not reside currently, for example to be near to work, but be unable to find appropriate accommodation that they can afford.*

The affordability adjustment is applied in order to ensure that the standard method for assessing local housing need responds to price signals and is consistent with the policy objective of significantly boosting the supply of homes. The specific adjustment in this guidance is set at a level to ensure that minimum annual housing need starts to address the affordability of homes.'

6.63 The previous PPG also stated that an affordability uplift is required because *'household formation is constrained to the supply of available*

¹¹ <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/housing-and-economic-development-needs-assessments>

properties – new households cannot form if there is nowhere for them to live’.

- 6.64 Essentially, the Government considers that by providing more homes there is the opportunity for increased migration to an area to fill the homes, whilst equally, one of the Government’s core objectives in planning for the delivery of 370,000 homes a year nationally is to improve affordability. Increased housing provision should provide the opportunity for additional household formation.
- 6.65 The modelling therefore considers the possibility of additional housing delivery allowing the opportunity for additional households to form. For the Standard Method projection it has been modelled that HRRs for age groups up to 44 could return to the levels seen in 2001 (and shown on the figure above).
- 6.66 In developing this projection, a population increase of around 54,700 people is shown – a 29% increase and higher than the trend-based projection (which is shown in the table below for context).

Table 6.9 Projected population growth under a range of scenarios – Huntingdonshire (2024-46)

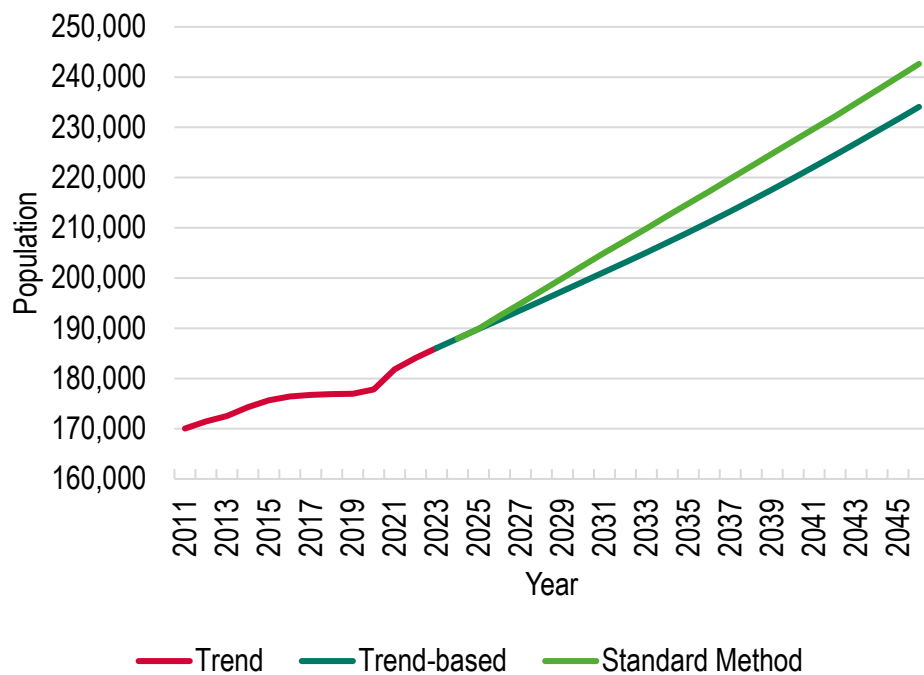
	Population 2024	Population 2046	Change	% change
5-year trend	187,953	234,072	46,119	24.5%
Standard Method	187,953	242,631	54,678	29.1%

Source: Iceni analysis

- 6.67 Below are a series of charts showing past trends and projected population growth and key components of change for each of the projections developed. The first figure looks at overall population growth, before considering natural change and net migration.

- 6.68 The analysis suggests the population of Huntingdonshire could rise to 242,600 by 2046 (up from 188,000 in 2024 (estimated)), a 29% increase, or 1.3% per annum. For comparison, between 2013 and 2023, the population increased by an average of around 0.8% per annum and so the Standard Method would be projected to provide a boost in population growth.

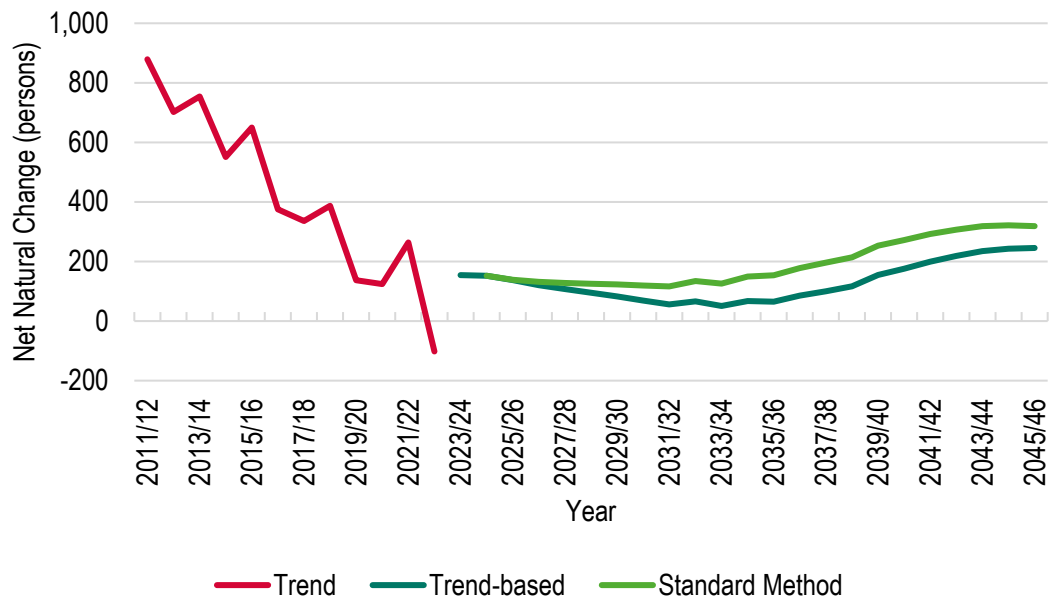
Figure 6.6 Past trends and projected population – Huntingdonshire



Source: ONS and Iceni analysis

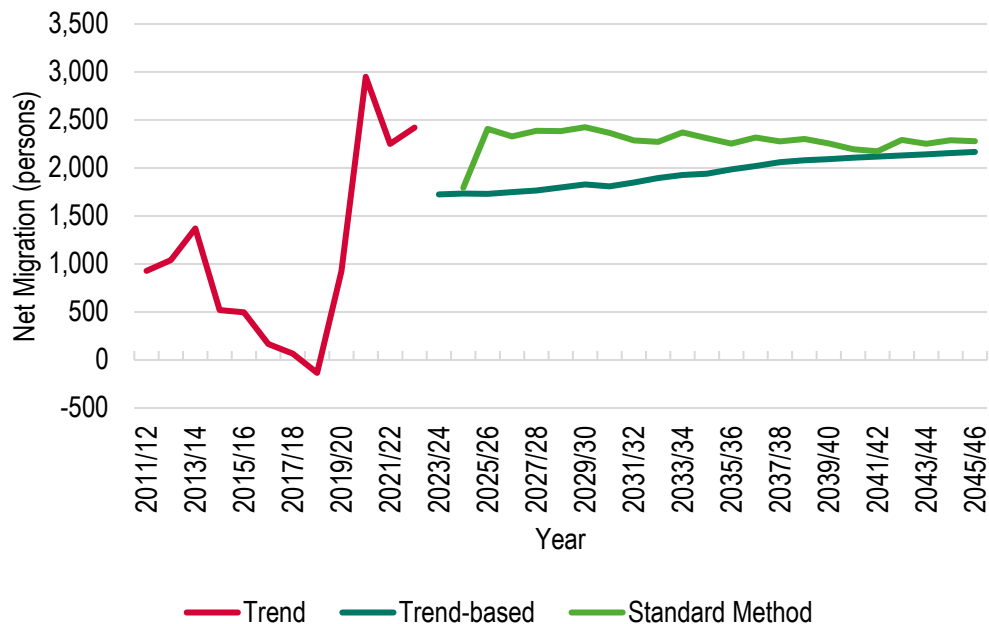
- 6.69 The main reason for the higher population growth would be due to increased net in-migration, although the decline in natural change (births minus deaths) would also be projected to flatten off or reverse as the population rises (as there will be more females of child-bearing age).
- 6.70 The figures below show projected natural change and net migration under the scenarios. Focussing on net migration, the analysis suggests that with higher delivery linked to the Standard Method net migration would generally be at a level higher than typical past trends – although generally at the sort of levels seen between 2020 and 2023.

Figure 6.7 Past trends and projected natural change – Huntingdonshire



Source: ONS and Iceni analysis

Figure 6.8 Past trends and projected net migration – Huntingdonshire



Source: ONS and Iceni analysis

6.71 A final analysis compares age structure changes under each of these projections. In both cases the projections show an ageing of the population and that with higher growth there would be higher increases in the number of children and people of ‘working-age’ (16-64).

Table 6.10 Projected population change 2024 to 2046 by broad age bands – trend-based – Huntingdonshire

	2024	2046	Change in population	% change
Under 16	34,017	41,186	7,169	21.1%
16-64	115,023	139,331	24,308	21.1%
65 and over	38,912	53,555	14,642	37.6%
Total	187,953	234,072	46,119	24.5%

Source: Iceni analysis

Table 6.11 Projected population change 2024 to 2046 by broad age bands – Standard Method – Huntingdonshire

	2024	2046	Change in population	% change
Under 16	34,017	43,225	9,207	27.1%
16-64	115,023	144,796	29,773	25.9%
65 and over	38,912	54,610	15,698	40.3%
Total	187,953	242,631	54,678	29.1%

Source: Iceni analysis

Relationship Between Housing and Economic Growth

6.72 The analysis to follow considers the relationship between housing and economic growth; seeking to understand what level of jobs might be supported by changes to the local labour supply (which will be influenced by population change). To look at estimates of the job growth to be supported, a series of stages are undertaken. These can be summarised as:

- Estimate changes to the economically active population (this provides an estimate of the change in labour-supply);
- Overlay information about commuting patterns, double jobbing (i.e. the fact that some people have more than one job) and potential changes to unemployment; and

- Bringing together this information will provide an estimate of the potential job growth supported by the population projections.

Growth in Resident Labour Supply

- 6.73 The approach taken in this report is to derive a series of age and sex specific economic activity rates and use these to estimate how many people in the population will be economically active as projections develop.
- 6.74 This is a fairly typical approach with data being drawn in this instance from the Office for Budget Responsibility (OBR) – July 2018 (Fiscal Sustainability Report) – this data has then been rebased to information in the 2021 Census (on age, sex and economic activity).
- 6.75 The table below shows the assumptions made for the District. The analysis shows that the main changes to economic activity rates are projected to be in the 60-69 age groups – this will to a considerable degree link to changes to pensionable age, as well as general trends in the number of older people working for longer (which in itself is linked to general reductions in pension provision).

Table 6.12 Projected changes to economic activity rates (EARs) (2024 and 2046) – Huntingdonshire

	Males			Females		
	2024	2046	Change	2024	2046	Change
16-19	42.6%	43.1%	0.5%	46.2%	46.6%	0.4%
20-24	86.0%	86.1%	0.0%	84.2%	84.2%	0.0%
25-29	90.1%	90.0%	0.0%	84.4%	84.4%	0.0%
30-34	92.2%	92.2%	0.0%	84.4%	84.4%	0.0%
35-39	91.8%	91.7%	-0.2%	82.7%	83.7%	0.9%
40-44	91.2%	90.3%	-0.9%	86.0%	88.0%	2.0%
45-49	91.6%	90.4%	-1.2%	86.4%	89.8%	3.5%
50-54	89.2%	88.4%	-0.8%	82.5%	86.6%	4.1%
55-59	84.1%	83.3%	-0.7%	74.0%	77.2%	3.2%
60-64	71.0%	75.1%	4.1%	58.3%	64.8%	6.5%
65-69	34.9%	48.4%	13.5%	25.9%	39.8%	13.9%
70-74	13.5%	17.5%	4.0%	7.3%	14.6%	7.3%
75-89	6.0%	6.4%	0.4%	2.8%	5.5%	2.7%

Source: Based on OBR and Census (2021) data

- 6.76 In addition, a sensitivity has been developed where the EARs are held constant at 2021 levels. It is considered the sensitivity is reasonable given data (including from the Census) has shown activity rates to have not grown as they had previously been forecast to do.
- 6.77 Working through an analysis of age and sex specific economic activity rates it is possible to estimate the overall change in the number of economically active people in the area – this is set out in the table below (linking to the 5-year trend based projections and the Standard Method).
- 6.78 The analysis shows that a trend-based projection results in growth in the economically-active population of up to 25,500 people – a 26% increase. With the Standard Method the increase in the economically active population is projected to be up to 30,300 – a 31% increase.

Table 6.13 Estimated change to the economically active population (2024-46) – Huntingdonshire

		Econom- ically active (2024)	Econom- ically active (2046)	Total change in econom- ically active	% change
Trend- based	OBR EAR	98,163	123,713	25,549	26.0%
	EAR no change	97,373	118,429	21,056	21.6%
Standard Method	OBR EAR	98,163	128,480	30,316	30.9%
	EAR no change	97,373	123,062	25,688	26.4%

Source: *Iceni Analysis*

Linking Changes in Resident Labour Supply to Job Growth

6.79 The analysis above has set out potential scenarios for the change in the number of people who are economically active. However, it is arguably more useful to convert this information into an estimate of the number of jobs this would support. The number of jobs and resident workers required to support these jobs will differ depending on three main factors:

- Commuting patterns – where an area sees more people out-commute for work than in-commute it may be the case that a higher level of increase in the economically active population would be required to provide a sufficient workforce for a given number of jobs (and vice versa where there is net in-commuting);
- Double jobbing – some people hold down more than one job and therefore the number of workers required will be slightly lower than the number of jobs; and

- Unemployment – if unemployment were to fall then the growth in the economically active population would not need to be as large as the growth in jobs (and vice versa).

Commuting Patterns

- 6.80 The table below shows summary data about commuting to and from Huntingdonshire from the 2011 and 2021 Census. Data from both sources is used as the 2011 data is quite old, but the 2021 data could be influenced by the COVID-19 pandemic.
- 6.81 Overall, from both sources the data shows a level of net out-commuting (around 15% more people living in the District and working than work in the District in 2011 (a much lower figure of 4% in 2021). This is shown as the commuting ratio in the final row of the table and is calculated as the number of people living in an area (and working) divided by the number of people working in the area (regardless of where they live).
- 6.82 When comparing the two sources, it is worth reflecting on a large increase in the number of home workers (or those of no fixed workplace) in 2021 compared with 2011.
- 6.83 In 2011, a total of 16,700 people were recorded as home workers or with no fixed workplace; in 2021 this figure had nearly tripled (to 43,900). As the country has moved away from the pandemic, it is possible this figure has started to reduce slightly with possible implications on commuting dynamics.

Table 6.14 Commuting Patterns – Huntingdonshire

	2011	2021
Live and Work in the District	40,861	27,932
Home Workers or No Fixed Workplace	16,687	43,901
In Commute	20,321	16,139
Out Commute	31,892	19,556
Total Working in Huntingdonshire	77,869	87,972
Total Living in Huntingdonshire and Working Anywhere	89,440	91,389
Commuting Ratio	1.149	1.039

Source: Census 2011, 2021

- 6.84 The analysis below looks at both sets of Census data with a further sensitivity of a balanced (1:1) commuting ratio (i.e. the increase in the number of people working in the area is equal to the number of people living in the area who are working).

Double Jobbing

- 6.85 The analysis also considers that a number of people may have more than one job (double jobbing). This can be calculated as the number of people working in the local authority divided by the number of jobs. Data from the Annual Population Survey (available on the NOMIS website) for the past 5-years (for which data exists) suggests across Huntingdonshire that typically about 3.4% of workers have a second job. It has therefore been assumed that around 3.4% of people will have more than one job moving forward.
- 6.86 This means the number of jobs supported by the workforce will be around 3.4% higher than workforce growth. It has been assumed in the analysis that the level of double jobbing will remain constant over time.

Unemployment

- 6.87 The last analysis when looking at the link between jobs and resident labour supply, is a consideration of unemployment. Essentially, this is

considering if there is any latent labour force that could move back into employment to take up new jobs. The latest model-based unemployment data from the Annual Population Survey (for October 2023- September 2024) puts unemployment at around 3.4%, which is a level that might be considered as full employment (noting there will always be some level of unemployment as people enter the labour market or move between jobs). No further adjustment is made to the data to take account of unemployment.

Jobs Supported by Growth in the Resident Labour Force

6.88 The tables below show how many additional jobs might be supported by population growth under the different projection scenarios. It is estimated under the Standard Method that up to 31,400 additional jobs could be supported by the changes to the resident labour supply over the 2024-46 period.

Table 6.15 Jobs supported by demographic projections (2024-46) – Huntingdonshire – 5-year trends

		Total change in economically active	Allowance for double jobbing	Allowance for net commuting (= jobs supported)
OBR	2021 commuting	25,549	26,449	25,460
EAR	2011 commuting	25,549	26,449	23,027
	1:1 commuting	25,549	26,449	26,449
EAR no change	2021 commuting	21,056	21,797	20,982
	2011 commuting	21,056	21,797	18,977
	1:1 commuting	21,056	21,797	21,797

Source: Iceni analysis

Table 6.16 Jobs supported by demographic projections (2024-46) – Huntingdonshire – Standard Method

		Total change in economically active	Allowance for double jobbing	Allowance for net commuting (= jobs supported)
OBR	2021 commuting	30,316	31,383	30,210
EAR	2011 commuting	30,316	31,383	27,323
	1:1 commuting	30,316	31,383	31,383
EAR no change	2021 commuting	25,688	26,593	25,598
	2011 commuting	25,688	26,593	23,152
	1:1 commuting	25,688	26,593	26,593

Source: Iceni analysis

Housing Need and Demographics Summary

- 6.89 Applying the government's Standard Method for assessing housing need to Huntingdonshire results in an annual housing need of 1,214 dwellings per annum.
- 6.90 At a late stage in the production of the report, this figure was increased to 1,232 dwellings per annum. This change is not considered significant enough to alter the main findings of this report.
- 6.91 The report has developed a projection linked to the delivery and occupation of 1,214 dwellings per annum, which shows a population increase of around 54,700 people by 2046.
- 6.92 This equates to a 29.1% increase, which is higher than a trend-based projection based on the last five years (24.5%).
- 6.93 Further analysis indicates that with the Standard Method, the increase in the economically active population is projected to be up to 30,300, which, taking account of double jobbing, could support up to 31,400 additional jobs.

7. Affordable Housing Need

Introduction

- 7.1 This section provides an assessment of the need for affordable housing in Huntingdonshire. The analysis follows the methodology set out in Planning Practice Guidance (Sections 2a-018 to 2a-024) and looks at the need from households unable to buy OR rent housing; and also, from households able to afford to rent privately but not buy.
- 7.2 During an engagement session with the council, a range of housing affordability issues were discussed:
- Affordable Rents (AR), while legally capped at Local Housing Allowance (LHA) rates, are now often out of reach for many households, with growing reports of rent stress.
 - Social rent has become a greater priority, but its delivery has slowed since a recent peak year when 100% affordable schemes were made possible through Registered Provider grant funding.
 - The persistent need is for more rented homes. Low Cost Home Ownership (LCHO) is viewed as a supplementary option that helps create mixed-tenure developments, rather than as a substitute for rented housing. Nonetheless there has been demand and LCHO in the form of shared ownership has enabled the Council to achieve the overall quantum of 40% affordable housing.
- 7.3 On strategic growth sites like Wintringham Park in St Neots, and Alconbury Weald, high infrastructure costs have limited affordable proportions. The Private Rented Sector (PRS) is no longer a viable affordable option due to soaring rents and limited supply, driven by demand from commuters and not eased by declining MOD/USAAF use. Many local workers now rely on benefits to bridge income gaps.
- 7.4 To further supplement affordable housing delivery, the council is working with institutional investors and pension funds to deliver

affordable rented housing at LHA rates, with full nomination rights and legal protections.

Affordable Housing Sector Dynamics

- 7.5 The 2021 Census indicated that 13% of households in Huntingdonshire lived in social or affordable rented homes, with the sector accommodating around 9,900 households.
- 7.6 Data from the Regulator of Social Housing (RSH) for 2024 indicates that Registered Providers (RPs) owned 12,500 properties in the District (there is no Council owned stock), of which 77% were for general needs rent; 12% supported housing or housing for older people; and 11% low cost home-ownership homes (such as shared ownership properties).
- 7.7 The majority of general needs homes are rented out at social rents (84% of all homes) and the rest at affordable rents.

Table 7.1 Stock owned or Managed by Registered Providers – Huntingdonshire

	Total	% of stock
General needs rented	9,626	77.0%
Supported/older persons housing	1,494	12.0%
Low-cost home ownership	1,382	11.1%
Total	12,502	100.0%

Source: RSR Geographical Look-Up Tool 2024

- 7.8 As of April 2024, there were 2,651 households on the Council's Housing Register. In addition, MHCLG data for December 2024 shows there were 113 households accommodated in temporary accommodation (some 29% (33 households) of these being households with children).

Overview of Method

7.9 In summary, the methodology looks at a series of stages as set out below:

- Current affordable housing need (annualised so as to meet the current need over a period of time);
- Projected newly forming households in need;
- Existing households falling into need; and
- Supply of affordable housing from existing stock

7.10 The first three bullet points above are added together to identify a gross need, from which the supply is subtracted to identify a net annual need for additional affordable housing.

7.11 Examples of different affordable housing products are outlined in the box below.

Affordable Housing Definitions

Social Rented Homes – are homes owned by local authorities or private registered providers for which rents are determined by the national rent regime (through which a formula rent is determined by the relative value and size of a property and relative local income levels). They are low-cost rented homes.

Affordable Rented Homes – are let by local authorities or private registered providers to households who are eligible for social housing. Affordable rents are set at no more than 80% of the local market rent (including service charges).

Rent-to-Buy – where homes are offered, typically by housing associations, to working households at an intermediate rent which does not exceed 80% of the local market rent (including service charges) for a fixed period after which the household has the chance to buy the home.

Shared Ownership – a form of low-cost market housing where residents own a share of their home, on which they typically pay a mortgage; with a registered provider owning the remainder, on which they pay a subsidised rent.

Discounted Market Sale – a home which is sold at a discount of at least 20% below local market value to eligible households, with provisions in place to ensure that housing remains at a discount for future households (or the subsidy is recycled).

First Homes – a form of discounted market sale whereby an eligible First-time Buyer can buy a home at a discount of at least 30% of the market value. Councils can set the discounts and local eligibility criteria out in policies.

Affordability

- 7.12 An important first part of the affordable needs modelling is to establish the entry-level costs of housing to buy and rent.
- 7.13 The affordable housing needs assessment compares prices and rents with the incomes of households to establish what proportion of households can meet their needs in the market, and what proportion require support and are thus defined as having an ‘affordable housing need’.
- 7.14 For the purposes of establishing affordable housing need, the analysis focuses on overall housing costs (for all dwelling types and sizes).
- 7.15 The table below shows estimated current prices to both buy and privately rent a lower quartile home in the District (excluding newbuild sales when looking at house prices). Across all dwelling sizes, the analysis points to a lower quartile price of £240,000 and a private rent of £975 per month.

Table 7.2 Estimated lower quartile cost of housing to buy (existing dwellings) and privately rent (by size) – Huntingdonshire

	To buy	Privately rent
1-bedroom	£120,000	£795
2-bedrooms	£180,000	£950
3-bedrooms	£260,000	£1,200
4-bedrooms	£375,000	£1,500
All dwellings	£240,000	£975

Source: Land Registry and Internet Price Search

- 7.16 The table below shows how prices and rents vary by location. The analysis shows some variation in prices and rents, with prices (and rents) estimated to be highest in the North & West sub-area; the lower prices and rents are seen in both the East and Central & South areas.

Table 7.3 Lower Quartile Prices and Market Rents, by sub-area

	Lower quartile price (existing dwellings)	Lower Quartile rent, pcm
East	£230,000	£975
Central & South	£240,000	£975
North & West	£280,000	£1,125
TOTAL	£240,000	£975

Source: Land Registry and Internet Price Search

- 7.17 Next, it is important to understand local income levels as these (along with the price/rent data) will determine levels of affordability (i.e. the ability of a household to afford to buy or rent housing in the market without the need for some sort of subsidy).
- 7.18 Data about total household income has been based on ONS modelled income estimates, with additional data from the English Housing Survey (EHS) being used to provide information about the distribution of incomes. Data has also been drawn from the Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings (ASHE) to consider changes since the ONS data was published.
- 7.19 Overall, the average (mean) household income across Huntingdonshire is estimated to be around £61,200, with a median income of £51,300; the lower quartile income of all households is estimated to be £29,600. There are some differences between areas, with the range of median incomes going from £49,400 in the East, up to £54,700 in the North & West sub-area.

Table 7.4 Estimated average (median) household income

	Median income	As a % of the District average
East	£49,400	96%
Central & South	£51,700	101%
North & West	£54,700	107%
TOTAL	£51,300	-

Source: Iceni analysis

- 7.20 To assess affordability, two different measures are used; firstly, to consider what income levels are likely to be needed to access private rented housing, and secondly to consider what income level is needed to access owner occupation.
- 7.21 This analysis therefore brings together the data on household incomes with the estimated incomes required to access private sector housing. For the purposes of analysis, the following assumptions are used:
- Rental affordability – a household should spend no more than 35% of their income on rent; and
 - Mortgage affordability – assume a household has a 10% deposit and can secure a mortgage for four and a half times (4.5×) their income.

Need for Affordable Housing

- 7.22 The sections below work through the various stages of analysis to estimate the need for affordable housing in the District and sub-areas. Final figures are provided as an annual need (including an allowance to deal with current need). As per 2a-024 of the PPG, this figure can then be compared with the likely delivery of affordable housing.

Current Need

- 7.23 In line with PPG paragraph 2a-020, the current need for affordable housing has been based on considering the likely number of households with one or more housing problems (housing suitability).
- 7.24 The table below sets out estimates of the number of households within each category. This shows an estimated 3,700 households as living in 'unsuitable housing', with 70% of these being in the Central & South area. Around 430 of these (across the District) currently having no accommodation (homeless or concealed households).

Table 7.5 Estimated number of households living in unsuitable housing (or without housing)

	Concealed and homeless households	Households in overcrowded housing	Existing affordable housing tenants in need	Households from other tenures in need	TOTAL
East	144	272	48	386	850
Central & South	248	1,097	154	1,103	2,602
North & West	37	67	13	141	257
TOTAL	429	1,436	215	1,629	3,709

Source: Iceni analysis

- 7.25 These figures can also be standardised based on the size of each location (in this case linked to the number of households shown in the 2021 Census).
- 7.26 This shows a slightly higher proportion of households living in unsuitable housing (or without housing) in the Central & South area; with the lowest figure being seen in the North & West area.

Table 7.6 Standardised level of unsuitable housing

	Number living in unsuitable housing	Estimated households (2021)	% of households in unsuitable housing
East	850	19,823	4.3%
Central & South	2,602	49,868	5.2%
North & West	257	7,183	3.6%
TOTAL	3,709	76,874	4.8%

Source: Iceni analysis

- 7.27 In taking this estimate forward, the data modelling next estimates the need by tenure and considers affordability. Based on affordability analysis, it is estimated that around half of those households identified above are unlikely to be able to afford market housing; therefore, an estimated current need from around 1,870 households.

- 7.28 From this estimate, households living in affordable housing are excluded (as these households would release a dwelling on moving and so no net need for affordable housing will arise) and the total current need is estimated to be 1,218 households.
- 7.29 For the purposes of analysis, it is assumed that the Council would seek to meet this need over a period of time. Given that this report typically looks at needs in the period from 2024 to 2046, the need is annualised by dividing by 22 (to give an annual need for around 55 dwellings).
- 7.30 This does not mean that some households would be expected to wait 22-years for housing, as the need will be dynamic, with households leaving the current need as they are housed, but with other households developing a need over time.
- 7.31 The table below shows this data for sub-areas – this is split between those unable to rent OR buy and those able to rent but NOT buy. Given the pricing of housing in Huntingdonshire, this analysis shows a more modest need for those able to rent but not buy and in all cases the number unable to rent OR buy is notably higher.

Table 7.7 Estimated current affordable housing need by affordability

	Number in need (excluding those in AH)	Annualised		
		TOTAL	Unable to rent OR buy	Able to rent but NOT buy
East	300	14	11	2
Central & South	825	37	28	9
North & West	94	4	3	1
TOTAL	1,218	55	43	12

Source: Iceni analysis

Projected Housing Need

- 7.32 Projected need is split between newly forming households who are unable to afford market housing and existing households falling into

need. For newly forming households, a link is made to demographic modelling, with an affordability test also being applied.

Newly-Forming Households

- 7.33 The number of newly forming households has been estimated through demographic modelling with an affordability test also being applied. This has been undertaken by considering the changes in households in specific 5-year age bands relative to numbers in the age band below, 5 years previously, to provide an estimate of gross household formation.
- 7.34 The number of newly-forming households is limited to households forming who are aged under 45 – this is consistent with CLG guidance (from 2007) which notes after age 45 that headship (household formation) rates ‘plateau’. There may be a small number of household formations beyond age 45 (e.g. due to relationship breakdown) although the number is expected to be fairly small when compared with formation of younger households.
- 7.35 In assessing the ability of newly forming households to afford market housing, data has been drawn from the English Housing Survey – this establishes that the average income of newly forming households is typically around 87% of the figure for all households.
- 7.36 The analysis has therefore adjusted the overall household income data to reflect the slightly lower average income for newly forming households. The adjustments have been made by changing the distribution of income by bands such that the average income level is 87% of the all household average. In doing this, it is possible to calculate the proportion of households unable to afford market housing.
- 7.37 Overall, it is estimated that 1,648 new households would form each year, and just over half will be unable to afford market housing; this equates to a total of 889 newly forming households that will have a

need per annum on average – the majority are households unable to rent OR buy.

Table 7.8 Estimated Need for Affordable Housing from Newly Forming Households (per annum)

	Number of new households	% unable to afford market housing	Annual newly forming households unable to afford market housing	Unable to rent OR buy (per annum)	Able to rent but NOT buy (per annum)
East	389	53.7%	209	146	63
Central & South	1,135	53.5%	608	403	205
North & West	123	58.7%	72	48	24
TOTAL	1,648	54.0%	889	597	293

Source: Projection Modelling/Affordability Analysis

Existing Households Falling into Affordable Housing Need

- 7.38 The second element of the newly arising need is existing households falling into need. To assess this, information about households entering the social/affordable rented sector housing has been used to represent the flow of households onto the Housing Register over this period.
- 7.39 Following the analysis through suggests a need arising from 140 existing households each year – again most are households unable to buy OR rent.

Table 7.9 Estimated Need for affordable housing from Existing Households Falling into Need (per annum)

	Total Additional Need	Unable to rent OR buy	Able to rent but NOT buy
East	30	24	6
Central & South	99	77	22
North & West	11	9	2
TOTAL	140	110	30

Source: Iceni analysis

Supply of Affordable Housing Through Relets/Resales

- 7.40 The future supply of affordable housing through relets is the flow of affordable housing arising from the existing stock that is available to meet future need. This focusses on the annual supply of social/affordable rent relets. Information from CoRe (which is a government recording system for affordable lets) has been used to establish past patterns of social housing turnover. Data for three-years has been used (2021-22 to 2023-24).
- 7.41 The figures are for general needs lettings but exclude lettings of new properties and also exclude an estimate of the number of transfers from other social rented homes.
- 7.42 These exclusions are made to ensure that the figures presented reflect relets from the existing stock. Based on past trend data it has been estimated that 270 units of social/affordable rented housing are likely to become available each year moving forward.

Table 7.10 Analysis of Past Social/Affordable Rented Housing Supply, 2021/22 – 2023/24 (average per annum) – Huntingdonshire

	Total Lettings	% as Non-New Build	Lettings in Existing Stock	% Non-Transfers	Lettings to New Tenants
2021/22	412	73.8%	304	67.0%	204
2022/23	679	64.1%	435	62.4%	272
2023/24	989	51.8%	512	65.5%	335
Average	693	60.1%	417	64.8%	270

Source: CoRe

7.43 It is also possible to consider if there is any supply of affordable home ownership products from the existing stock of housing. One source is likely to be resales of low-cost home ownership products with data from the Regulator of Social Housing showing a total stock in 2024 of 1,382.

7.44 If these homes were to turnover at a rate of around 5%, then they would be expected to generate around 69 resales each year. These properties would be available for these households and can be included as the potential supply. The table below shows the estimated supply of affordable housing from relets/resales in each sub-area.

Table 7.11 Estimated supply of affordable housing from relets/resales of existing stock by sub-area (per annum)

	Social/affordable rented	LCHO	TOTAL
East	60	14	74
Central & South	194	53	247
North & West	17	2	18
TOTAL	270	69	339

Source: CoRe/LAHS

7.45 The PPG model also includes the bringing back of vacant homes into use and the pipeline of affordable housing as part of the supply calculation. These have, however, not been included within the modelling in this report.

- 7.46 Firstly, there is no evidence of any substantial stock of vacant homes (over and above a level that might be expected to allow movement in the stock).
- 7.47 Secondly, with the pipeline supply, it is not considered appropriate to include this as to net off new housing would be to fail to show the full extent of the need, although in monitoring, it will be important to net off these dwellings as they are completed.

Net Need for Affordable Housing

- 7.48 The table below shows the overall calculation of affordable housing need. The analysis shows that there is a need for 746 dwellings per annum across the District – an affordable need is seen in all sub-areas. The net need is calculated as follows:

$$\text{Net Need} = \text{Current Need (allowance for)} + \text{Need from Newly-Forming Households} + \text{Existing Households falling into Need} - \text{Supply of Affordable Housing}$$

Table 7.12 Estimated Need for Affordable Housing (per annum)

	Current need	Newly forming households	Existing households falling into need	Total Gross Need	Relet/resale supply	Net Need
East	14	209	30	252	74	178
Central & South	37	608	99	745	247	498
North & West	4	72	11	88	18	70
TOTAL	55	889	140	1,085	339	746

*Source: Iceni analysis *numbers may not sum due to rounding*

- 7.49 This can additionally be split between households unable to afford to BUY or rent and those able to rent but not buy. For this analysis it is assumed the LCHO supply would be meeting the needs of the latter group, although in reality there will be a crossover between categories.

7.50 For example, it is likely in some cases that the cost of shared ownership will have an outgoing below that for privately renting and could meet some of the need from households unable to buy or rent – the issue of access to deposits would still be a consideration.

7.51 The table below shows the affordable need figure split between the two categories. Across the whole District the analysis shows around 64% of households as being unable to buy OR rent, with this figure varying slightly from 63% in Central & South and North & West, up to 68% in the East sub-area – the differences are largely driven by the pricing of housing in different locations.

Table 7.13 Estimated Need for Affordable Housing (per annum) – split between different affordability groups

	Unable to buy OR rent	Able to rent but not buy	TOTAL	% unable to buy OR rent
East	121	57	178	68%
Central & South	315	183	498	63%
North & West	44	26	70	63%
TOTAL	480	265	746	64%

Source: Iceni analysis

7.52 These figures can also be standardised based on the size of each location (in this case linked to the number of households shown in the 2021 Census). This shows a slightly higher need in the Central & South area; overall, the differences between locations are not substantial.

Table 7.14 Standardised level of affordable housing need

	Net Need	Estimated households (2021)	Net need per 1,000 households
East	178	19,823	9.0
Central & South	498	49,868	10.0
North & West	70	7,183	9.7
TOTAL	746	76,874	9.7

Source: Iceni analysis

- 7.53 Whilst the need above is provided down to sub-area level, it should be remembered that affordable need can be met across the area as and when opportunities arise, and so specific sub-area data should not be treated as a local target.

Affordable Need and Overall Housing Numbers

- 7.54 The PPG encourages local authorities to consider increasing planned housing numbers where this can help to meet the identified affordable need. Specifically, the wording of the PPG (housing and economic needs) Ref ID 2a-024 states:

“The total affordable housing need can then be considered in the context of its likely delivery as a proportion of mixed market and affordable housing developments, given the probable percentage of affordable housing to be delivered by market housing led developments. An increase in the total housing figures included in the strategic plan may need to be considered where it could help deliver the required number of affordable homes”

- 7.55 However, the relationship between affordable housing need and overall housing need is complex. This was recognised in the Planning Advisory Service (PAS) Technical Advice Note of July 2015¹². PAS conclude that there is no arithmetical way of combining the OAN (calculated through demographic projections) and the affordable need. There are several reasons why the two cannot be ‘arithmetically’ linked.
- 7.56 Firstly, the modelling contains a category in the projection of ‘existing households falling into need’; these households already have accommodation and hence if they were to move to alternative

¹² <https://www.local.gov.uk/sites/default/files/documents/objectively-assessed-need-9fb.pdf>. While the technical note produced by PAS is arguably becoming dated, there is no more up-to-date guidance on this matter from a Government source and the remarks remain valid.

accommodation, they would release a dwelling for use by another household – there is, therefore, no net additional need arising.

- 7.57 The modelling also contains ‘newly forming households’; these households are a direct output from demographic modelling and are therefore already included in overall housing need figures (a point also made in the PAS advice note – see paragraph 9.5).
- 7.58 The analysis estimates an annual need for 480 affordable homes from households unable to buy OR rent housing (see table 7.11). However, as noted, caution should be exercised in trying to make a direct link between affordable need and planned delivery, with the key point being that many of those households picked up as having a need will already be living in housing and so providing an affordable option does not lead to an overall net increase in the need for housing (as they would vacate a home to be used by someone else).
- 7.59 It is possible to investigate this in some more detail by re-running the model and excluding those already living in accommodation. This is shown in the table below, which identifies that meeting these needs would lead to an affordable need for 346 homes per annum across the District – 72% of the figure when including those with housing.
- 7.60 This figure is, however, theoretical and should not be seen to be minimising the need (which is clearly acute). That said, it does serve to show that there is a difference in the figures when looking at overall housing shortages.
- 7.61 The analysis is arguably even more complex than this – it can be observed that the main group of households in need are newly forming households. These households are already included within demographic projections, and so demonstrating of a need for this group again should not be seen as additional to overall figures from demographic projections.

Table 7.15 Estimated Annual Need for Affordable Housing (households unable to buy OR rent), excluding households already in accommodation

	Including existing households	Excluding existing households
Current need	43	20
Newly forming households	597	597
Existing households falling into need	110	0
Total Gross Need	750	616
Re-let Supply	270	270
Net Need	480	346

Source: Iceni analysis

- 7.62 Additionally, it should be noted that the need estimate is on a per annum basis and should not be multiplied by the plan period to get a total need. Essentially, the estimates are for the number of households expected to have a need in any given year (i.e., needing to spend more than 35% of their income on housing).
- 7.63 In reality, some (possibly many) households would see their circumstances change over time such that they would ‘fall out of need’ and this is not accounted for in the analysis.
- 7.64 One example would be a newly forming household with an income level that means they spend more than 35% of their income on housing. As the household’s income rises, they would potentially pass the affordability test and therefore not have an affordable need.
- 7.65 Additionally, there is the likelihood when looking over the longer-term that, a newly forming household will become an existing household in need and would be counted twice if trying to multiply the figures out for a whole plan period.
- 7.66 It also needs to be remembered that the affordability test used for analysis is based on assuming a household spends no more than 35% of their income on housing (when privately renting).

- 7.67 In reality, many households will spend more than this and so would be picked up by modelling as in need, but in fact are paying for a private sector tenancy.
- 7.68 The English Housing Survey (2022-23) estimates private tenants are paying an average of 32% of their income on housing (including benefit support), and this would imply that approaching half are spending more than the affordable level assumed in this report.
- 7.69 A further consideration is that some 265 of the 746 per annum affordable need is a need from households able to rent in the market (but not buy). Technically, these households can afford market housing (to rent) and historically would not have been considered as having a need in assessments such as this – until recently, only households unable to buy OR rent would be considered as having a need for affordable housing. For these reasons, these households have not been included in the analysis, looking at households with and without accommodation.
- 7.70 Finally, it should be recognised that Planning Practice Guidance does not envisage that all needs will be met (whether this is affordable housing or other forms of accommodation such as for older people). Paragraph 67-001 of the housing needs of different groups PPG states:
- “This guidance sets out advice on how plan-making authorities should identify and plan for the housing needs of particular groups of people. This need may well exceed, or be proportionally high in relation to, the overall housing need figure calculated using the standard method. This is because the needs of particular groups will often be calculated having consideration to the whole population of an area as a baseline as opposed to the projected new households, which form the baseline for the standard method”.*

- 7.71 Notwithstanding these factors the need for affordable housing is sufficient for the Council to maximise affordable housing delivery through the Council's Local Plan policies.
- 7.72 The current approach of seeking 40% affordable housing on development schemes with 70% being either Affordable Rent or Social Rent and 30% being shared ownership, with the latter aiding viability, would likely be justified based on the needs analysis. However, the Council will need to take into account the latest viability study.

The Role of the Private Rented Sector (PRS)

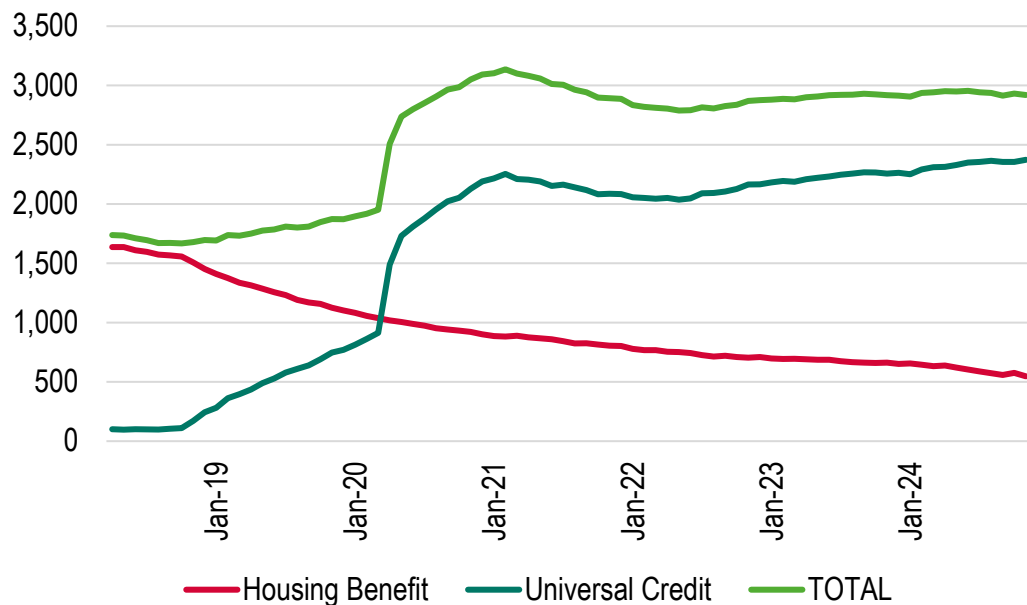
- 7.73 The discussion above has already noted that the need for affordable housing does not generally lead to a need to increase overall housing provision.
- 7.74 However, it is worth briefly thinking about how affordable need works in practice and the housing available to those unable to access market housing without Housing Benefit.
- 7.75 In particular, the role played by the Private Rented Sector (PRS) in providing housing for households who require financial support in meeting their housing needs should be recognised.
- 7.76 Whilst the Private Rented Sector (PRS) does not fall within the types of affordable housing set out in the NPPF (other than affordable private rent which is a specific tenure separate from the main 'full market' PRS), it has evidently been playing a role in meeting the needs of households who require financial support in meeting their housing need.
- 7.77 Government recognises this and indeed legislated through the 2011 Localism Act to allow Councils to discharge their "homelessness duty" through providing an offer of a suitable property in the PRS.

- 7.78 Data from the Department of Work and Pensions (DWP) has been used to look at the number of Housing Benefit supported private rented homes. As of November 2024, it is estimated that there were around 2,900 benefit claimants in the Private Rented Sector in Huntingdonshire. From this, it is clear that the PRS contributes to the wider delivery of 'affordable homes' with the support of benefit claims.
- 7.79 Whilst the PRS is providing housing for some households, there are, however, significant risks associated with future reliance on the sector to meet an affordable housing need. The last couple of years have seen rents increase whilst Local Housing Allowance (LHA) levels have remained static.
- 7.80 In the Autumn Statement 2023, the then Government increased the LHA rent to the 30th percentile of market rents (although this is based on existing rents and not rents likely to be payable by those moving home).
- 7.81 However, demand pressure could nonetheless have some impact on restricting future supply of PRS properties to those in need, emphasising the need to support delivery of genuinely affordable homes.
- 7.82 The figure below shows the trend in the number of claimants in the District. This shows there has been a notable increase since March 2020, which is likely to be related to the Covid-19 pandemic. However, even the more historical data shows a substantial number of households claiming benefit support for their housing in the private sector (typically around 1,800 households).
- 7.83 The data about the number of claimants does not indicate how many new lettings are made each year in the PRS. However, data from the English Housing Survey (EHS) over the past three years indicates that nationally around 7% of private sector tenants are new to the sector each year. If this figure is applied to the number of households claiming

Housing Benefit/Universal Credit, then this would imply around 200 new benefit supported lettings in the sector.

- 7.84 Whilst we would not recommend including PRS supply as part of the modelling, not least as it is uncertain whether the availability of homes will remain at this level as well as concerns about the security of tenure, it is the case that the sector does provide housing and again the overall analysis does not point to the need to increase overall provision.

Figure 7.1 Number of Housing Benefit/Universal Credit claimants in the PRS in Huntingdonshire



Source: Department of Work and Pensions

- 7.85 Whilst housing delivery through the Local Plan can be expected to secure additional affordable housing it needs to be noted that delivery of affordable housing through planning obligations is an important, but not the only means, of delivering affordable housing. The Council should also work with housing providers to secure funding to support enhanced affordable housing delivery on some sites and through use of its own land assets.
- 7.86 Overall, it is difficult to link the need for affordable housing to the overall housing need; indeed, there is no justification for trying to make the link. Put simply the two do not measure the same thing and in interpreting

the affordable need figure, consideration needs to be given to the fact that many households already live in housing, and do not therefore generate an overall net need for an additional home.

- 7.87 Further issues arise as the need for affordable housing is complex, and additionally, the extent of concealed and homeless households needs to be understood, as well as the role played by the private rented sector.
- 7.88 Regardless of the discussion above, the analysis identifies a notable need for affordable housing, and it is clear that the provision of new affordable housing is an important and pressing issue across the District.
- 7.89 It does, however, need to be stressed that this report does not provide an affordable housing target; the amount of affordable housing delivered will be limited to the amount that can viably be provided.
- 7.90 As noted previously, the evidence does, however, suggest that affordable housing delivery should be maximised where opportunities arise. Rolling forward the current policy position would seem a reasonable starting point for developing new policies as these are known to be viable. Equally, if viability has improved, then the affordable housing contributions should increase and vice versa.

Types of Affordable Housing

- 7.91 The analysis above has clearly pointed to a need for affordable housing, and particularly for households who are unable to buy OR rent in the market. There are a range of affordable housing options that could meet the need, which will include rented forms of affordable housing (such as social or affordable rents) and products which might be described as intermediate housing (such as shared ownership or discounted market housing/First Homes). These are discussed in turn below.

Social and Affordable Rented Housing

- 7.92 The table below shows current rent levels in the District for a range of products along with relevant local housing allowance (LHA) rates. Most of Huntingdonshire falls into the Huntingdon Broad Rental Market Area (BRMA) and so this has been used for comparative purposes.
- 7.93 Data about average social and affordable rents has been taken from the Regulator of Social Housing (RSH) and this is compared with lower quartile market rents. This analysis shows that social rents are significantly lower than affordable rents; the analysis also shows that affordable rents are well below lower quartile market rents, particularly for larger property sizes.
- 7.94 The LHA rates for all sizes of home are below lower quartile market rents for all sizes of accommodation. This does potentially mean that households seeking accommodation in many locations may struggle to secure sufficient benefits to cover their rent.

Table 7.16 Comparison of rent levels for different products – Huntingdonshire

	Social rent	Affordable rent (AR)	Lower quartile (LQ) market rent	LHA (Huntingdon)
1-bedroom	£401	£550	£795	£648
2-bedrooms	£464	£666	£950	£793
3-bedrooms	£509	£787	£1,200	£947
4-bedrooms	£583	£983	£1,500	£1,247
ALL	£474	£682	£975	-

Source: RSH and VOA

- 7.95 To some extent, it is easier to consider the data above in terms of the percentage one housing cost is of another and this is shown in the tables below.
- 7.96 Focusing on 2-bedroom homes the analysis shows that social rents are significantly cheaper than market rents (and indeed affordable rents)

and that affordable rents (as currently charged) represent 70% of a current lower quartile rent.

Table 7.17 Difference between rent levels for different products – Huntingdonshire

	Social rent as % of affordable rent	Social rent as % of LQ market rent	Affordable rent as % of LQ market rent
1-bedroom	73%	50%	69%
2-bedrooms	70%	49%	70%
3-bedrooms	65%	42%	66%
4-bedrooms	59%	39%	66%
ALL	70%	49%	70%

Source: RSH and VOA

7.97 The table below suggests that around 20% of households that cannot afford to rent privately could afford an affordable rent at 80% of market rents, with a further 11% being able to afford current affordable rents. There are also an estimated 25% who can afford a social rent (but not an affordable one).

7.98 A total of 44% of households would need some degree of benefit support (or spend more than 35% of their income on housing) to be able to afford their housing (regardless of the tenure). This analysis points to a clear need for social rented housing.

Table 7.18 Estimated need for affordable rented housing (% of households able to afford to buy OR rent)

	% of households able to afford
Afford 80% of market rent	20%
Afford the current affordable rent	11%
Afford social rent	25%
Need benefit support	44%
All unable to afford market	100%

Source: Affordability analysis

7.99 The analysis indicates that provision of around 70% of rented affordable housing at social rents could be justified; albeit in setting planning policies, this will need to be considered alongside viability evidence.

Higher provision at social rents will reduce the support through housing benefits required to ensure households can afford their housing costs.

Intermediate Housing

- 7.100 As well as rented forms of affordable housing, the Council could seek to provide forms of intermediate housing with the analysis below considering the potential affordability of shared ownership and discounted market sale housing (which could include First Homes).
- 7.101 Generally, intermediate housing will be a newbuild product, sold at a discount (or on a part buy, part rent arrangement with shared ownership) and will therefore be based on the Open Market Value (OMV) of a new home.
- 7.102 The table below sets out a suggested purchase price for affordable home ownership/First Homes in Huntingdonshire by size. It works through first (on the left-hand side) what households with an affordable home ownership need could afford (based on a 10% deposit and a mortgage at 4.5 times' income).
- 7.103 The right-hand side of the table then sets out what Open Market Value (OMV) this might support, based on a 30% discount. The lower end of the range is based on households who could afford to rent privately without financial support at LQ rents, with the upper end based on the midpoint between this and the lower quartile house price.
- 7.104 Focusing on 2-bedroom homes, it is suggested that an affordable price is between £162,900 and £171,400, and therefore the open market value of homes would need to be in the range of £232,700 and £244,900 (if discounted by 30%).

Table 7.19 Affordable home ownership prices – Huntingdonshire

	What households with an affordable home ownership need could afford	Open Market Value (OMV) of Home with 30% Discount
1-bedroom	£120,000	£171,400
2-bedrooms	£162,900-£171,400	£232,700-£244,900
3-bedrooms	£205,700-£232,900	£293,900-£332,700
4+-bedrooms	£257,100-£316,100	£367,300-£451,500

Source: *Iceni analysis*

- 7.105 It is difficult to definitively analyse the cost of newbuild homes as these will vary from site to site and will be dependent on a range of factors such as location, built form and plot size.
- 7.106 We have, however, looked at newbuild schemes currently advertised on Rightmove at the point of undertaking this assessment in May 2025, with the table below providing a general summary of existing schemes.
- 7.107 This analysis is interesting as it shows the median newbuild price for all sizes of homes is above the top end of the OMV required to make homes affordable to those in the gap between buying and renting. That said, homes at the bottom end of the price range could potentially be discounted by 30% and considered as affordable.
- 7.108 This analysis shows how important it will be to know the OMV of housing before discount, to be able to determine if a product is going to be genuinely affordable in a local context – providing a discount of 30% will not automatically mean it becomes affordable housing.
- 7.109 Overall, it is considered the evidence does not support a need for First Homes (or other discounted market products) in a local context.

Table 7.20 Estimated newbuild housing cost by size –
Huntingdonshire – May 2025

	No. of homes advertised	Range of prices	Median price
1-bedroom	0	-	-
2-bedrooms	27	£240,000-£575,000	£265,000
3-bedrooms	80	£260,000-£850,000	£360,000
4+-bedrooms	136	£375,000-£1,250,000	£500,000

Source: Iceni analysis

- 7.110 The analysis below moves on to consider shared ownership, for this analysis an assessment of monthly outgoings has been undertaken with a core assumption being that the outgoings should be the same as for renting privately so as to make this tenure genuinely affordable.
- 7.111 The analysis has looked at what the OMV would need to be for a shared ownership to be affordable with a 10%, 25% and 50% share. To work out outgoings, the mortgage part is based on a 10% deposit (for the equity share) and a repayment mortgage over 25 years at 5% with a rent at 2.75% per annum on unsold equity.
- 7.112 The findings for this analysis are interesting and do point to the possibility of shared ownership being a more affordable tenure than discounted market housing (including First Homes).
- 7.113 By way of an explanation of this table (focussing on 2-bedroom homes) – if a 50% equity share scheme came forward then it is estimated the OMV could not be above £252,000 if it is to be genuinely affordable (due to the outgoings being in excess of the cost of privately renting).
- 7.114 However, given the subsidised rents, the same level of outgoings could be expected with a 10% equity share but a much higher OMV of £367,000.
- 7.115 Although affordability can only be considered on a scheme by scheme basis, it is notable that we estimate a median 2-bedroom newbuild to cost around £265,000, this points to shared ownership an equity share

level slightly below 50% as being genuinely affordable, although lower shares could increase the number of households able to afford; lower equity shares are likely to be needed for larger (3+-bedroom) homes.

Table 7.21 Estimated OMV of Shared Ownership with a 50%, 25% and 10% Equity Share by Size – Huntingdonshire

	50% share	25% share	10% share
1-bedroom	£210,000	£262,000	£307,000
2-bedroom	£252,000	£313,000	£367,000
3-bedroom	£318,000	£395,000	£463,000
4-bedrooms	£397,000	£494,000	£579,000

Source: Iceni analysis

- 7.116 A further affordable option is Rent to Buy; this is a Government scheme designed to ease the transition from renting to buying the same home. Initially (typically for five years), the newly built home will be provided at the equivalent of an affordable rent (approximately 20% below the market rate).
- 7.117 The expectation is that the discount provided in the first five years is saved in order to put towards a deposit on the purchase of the same property. Rent to Buy can be advantageous for some households as it allows for a smaller 'step' to be taken on to the home ownership ladder.
- 7.118 At the end of the five-year period, depending on the scheme, the property is either sold as a shared ownership product or to be purchased outright as a full market property. If the occupant is not able to do either of these, then the property is vacated.
- 7.119 To access this tenure, it effectively requires the same income threshold for the initial phase as a market rental property, although the cost of accommodation will be that of affordable rent. The lower-than-market rent will allow the household to save for a deposit for the eventual shared ownership or market property.
- 7.120 In considering the affordability of rent-to-buy schemes, there is a direct read across to the income required to access affordable home

ownership (including shared ownership). It should therefore be treated as part of the affordable home ownership products suggested by the NPPF.

- 7.121 The Council has previously supported Registered Provider developments with a proportion of Rent to Buy homes on mixed tenure developments.

Engagement With Housing Team

Housing Register

- 7.122 Over the past year, the housing register has steadily grown to around 3,000 households/applications.
- 7.123 This is despite an existing process that removes inactive applicants, particularly those in lower priority bands.
- 7.124 This group is not broken down geographically by area of choice, limiting spatial analysis. However, the Key Housing Register Statistics (as of May 2025)
- **Total applications:** 3,015 (includes suspended, under offer, and nominated)
 - **Household types:** 47% single-person households
 - **Bedroom needs:** 54% require 1 bed, 25% need 2 beds, 15% require 3 beds, 4% need 4 beds, and 1% require 5+ beds
 - **Age profile:** 33% aged 50+, rising to 51% for 40+
 - **Mobility needs:** 23% of households have a member with a mobility issue, 5% require M4(3) compliant housing
 - **Priority banding:** 13% Band A, 25% Band B, 31% Band C
- 7.125 Anecdotally, rural areas, particularly certain villages, experience lower levels of bidding, primarily due to limited services and transport links.
- 7.126 The overall housing register shows a pressing demand for 1- and 2-bedroom properties for single individuals and couples, reflecting the

broader pressures around homelessness and use of temporary accommodation (TA).

- 7.127 While larger households needing 4+ bedrooms are few in number, they often present complex housing challenges, especially where disability needs are involved. It also means larger families will sometimes be waiting longer for accommodation to meet their needs.

Ageing Population

- 7.128 There is a broader trend of ageing demographics on the register—one-third are aged 50+, increasing to half if including those aged 40+. This necessitates age-appropriate housing such as bungalows and homes with accessible layouts. The council promotes inclusive design without moving into supported housing models.

Table 7.22 Population change forecasts for Huntingdonshire per age range

Age range	Year 2021	Year 2041	% Change
0-17	36,545	38,620	6%
18-64	108,200	119,270	10%
65+	36,660	52,245	42.5%

*(Source: Population figures are taken from Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Insight - *Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Insight – Population – Local. Population Estimates and Forecasts (Cambridgeshireinsight.org.uk)*

- 7.129 The existing housing strategy confirms the Council does not rigidly use a recommended mix which is the same for each development, arguing instead for a more integrated approach to affordable housing that includes the housing register, local strategy, and site-specific characteristics.
- 7.130 There has been no new Sheltered housing in 25 years. Several older schemes have been repurposed to accommodate homelessness and in two cases, demolished to provide extra care.
- 7.131 There is a growing recognition of the need for older persons' housing, and ongoing dialogue with county partners around learning disability/mental health (see [Cambridgeshire Specialist Supported Accommodation Needs Assessment 2024](#) – and learning disability housing needs).

Affordable Housing Mix

- 7.132 Affordable Rents (AR), although technically capped at Local Housing Allowance (LHA) levels, are increasingly unaffordable for many, with anecdotal evidence showing rising rent stress.
- 7.133 Social rent is increasingly prioritised, and delivery has slowed following a peak year in which RPs have been able to deliver Social Rent via 100% affordable schemes enabled by grant funding.
- 7.134 The overwhelming need remains for rented accommodation. LCHO is in demand, supporting mixed tenure development but rented housing remains the priority.

Affordable Housing Delivery

- 7.135 Recent delivery has occurred on sites throughout the District. On strategic growth sites such as Wintringham Park St Neots, and Alconbury Weald, infrastructure costs have limited the proportion of affordable homes (e.g. only 10 to 12.5% at Alconbury Weald during the first phase).
- 7.136 The Private Rented Sector (PRS) no longer functions as an affordable alternative. PRS rents have become unaffordable due to high demand, particularly from London and Cambridge commuters, and the local PRS stock is limited.
- 7.137 Declining MOD/USAAF use has not eased the cost pressure, and many employed residents now rely on benefits to bridge income gaps.
- 7.138 In response, the council is engaging with institutional investors and pension funds to explore the delivery of affordable private rented housing within LHA levels, with full nomination rights and legal agreements ensuring affordability. Parallel plans involve delivering approximately 100 homes across nine council-owned sites
- 7.139 Several RPs have successfully delivered over 1,000 homes through 100% affordable schemes. Close partnerships are in place to support sustainability and meet local lettings objectives that include those in work or benefiting from shared ownership.
- 7.140 Direct stock management or buy-back programs are not being pursued.

Accessible Homes

- 7.141 The council currently seeks M4(3) accessible/ adaptable homes on market housing schemes of 50 homes or more dwellings and on affordable schemes, subject to negotiation with indicative aspirations of 9% of eligible market homes and 30% of eligible affordable homes.
- 7.142 In the 3 years 2022/23 to 2024/25, 156 M4(3) market homes and 358 M4(3) affordable homes have been permitted.
- 7.143 Nationally Described Space Standards (NDSS) are not mandatory, but the council feel these should be encouraged, especially given higher occupation ratings in affordable units versus market housing. The Council has included a preference for these standards in its Affordable Housing Advice Note.

Low-Cost Home Ownership

- 7.144 Low-Cost Home Ownership (LCHO) remains in demand, particularly 2- and 3-bedroom homes.
- 7.145 That said, Registered Providers (RPs) and the council tend to specify few 4-bedroom shared ownership (SO) homes due to affordability concerns.
- 7.146 The withdrawal of Help to Buy has not affected demand for SO. Small numbers of alternative affordable routes such as rent-to-buy have proven successful locally.
- 7.147 Regarding First Homes, only two developments have involved this tenure, and they have been come about as a result of unique circumstances rather than a preferred route. Shared Ownership is considered more flexible and accessible.
- 7.148** The previous SHMA potentially downplayed the need for LCHO, concluding that just 10% was needed. The council has continued to deliver LCHO in the form of Shared Ownership, which historically

performs well. It also provides mixed tenure developments and supports the policy (40%) level of affordable housing, which is achieved on most eligible sites.

Affordable Housing Summary

- 7.149 The analysis has taken account of local housing costs (to both buy and rent) along with estimates of household income. The evidence indicates that there is an acute need for affordable housing in the District and a need in all sub-areas.
- 7.150 The majority of need is from households who are unable to buy OR rent and therefore points particularly towards a need for rented affordable housing rather than affordable home ownership.
- 7.151 Despite the level of need being high, it is not considered that this points to any requirement for the Council to increase the Local Plan housing requirement due to affordable needs.
- 7.152 The link between affordable need and overall need (of all tenures) is complex, and in trying to make a link, it must be remembered that many of those picked up as having an affordable need are already in housing (and therefore do not generate a net additional need for a home).
- 7.153 In addition, the private rented sector is providing benefit-supported accommodation for many households. That said, the level of affordable need does suggest the Council should maximise the delivery of such housing at every opportunity.
- 7.154 The analysis suggests there will be a need for both social and affordable rented housing – the latter will be suitable particularly for households who are close to being able to afford to rent privately and possibly also for some households who claim full Housing Benefit.

- 7.155 It is, however, clear that social rents are more affordable and could benefit a wider range of households – social rents could therefore be prioritised where delivery does not prejudice the overall delivery of affordable homes.
- 7.156 The study also considers different types of AHO (notably First Homes and shared ownership) as each may have a role to play.
- 7.157 Shared ownership is likely to be suitable for households with more marginal affordability (those only just able to afford to privately rent) as it has the advantage of a lower deposit and subsidised rent.
- 7.158 There was no strong evidence of a need for First Homes or discounted market housing more generally.
- 7.159 In deciding what types of affordable housing to provide, including a split between rented and home ownership products, the Council will need to consider the relative levels of need and also viability issues. For this reason, the Council has previously supported shared ownership as opposed to First Homes.
- 7.160 Viability consideration should recognise, for example, which providing AHO may be more viable and may therefore allow more units to be delivered, but at the same time, noting that households with a need for rented housing are likely to have more acute needs and fewer housing options.
- 7.161 The evidence would justify a policy position of 70% low cost rented and 30% affordable home ownership homes. The evidence indicates that up to 70% of rented affordable housing at social rents could be justified in need terms (therefore about 50% of all affordable housing). Low cost home ownership provision should focus on shared ownership, with no strong evidence of a need for First Homes or discounted market housing identified.

- 7.162 Overall, the analysis identifies a notable need for affordable housing, and it is clear that the provision of new affordable housing is an important and pressing issue in the area.
- 7.163 It does, however, need to be stressed that this report does not provide an affordable housing target; the amount of affordable housing delivered will be limited to the amount that can viably be provided.
- 7.164 The evidence does, however, suggest that affordable housing delivery should be maximised where opportunities arise and that a preference for social rental would be justified.

8. Need for Different Sizes of Homes

Introduction

- 8.1 This section considers the appropriate mix of housing across Huntingdonshire, with a particular focus on the sizes of homes required in different tenure groups.
- 8.2 This section looks at a range of statistics in relation to families (generally described as households with dependent children) before moving on to look at how the number of households in different age groups are projected to change moving forward.

Background Data

- 8.3 The number of families in Huntingdonshire (defined for the purpose of this assessment as any household which contains at least one dependent child) totalled 21,400 as of the 2021 Census, accounting for 28% of households; this proportion is similar to that seen across other areas.

Table 8.1 Households with Dependent Children (2021)

	Huntingdonshire		Cambrid- geshire	East of England	England
	No.	%	%	%	%
Married couple	12,125	15.8%	16.1%	15.5%	14.4%
Cohabiting couple	3,650	4.7%	4.4%	4.8%	4.5%
Lone parent	4,229	5.5%	5.4%	6.3%	6.9%
Other households	1,359	1.8%	2.0%	2.4%	2.7%
All other households	55,517	72.2%	72.1%	71.0%	71.5%
Total	76,880	100.0 %	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
Total with dependent children	21,363	27.8%	27.9%	29.0%	28.5%

Source: Census (2021)

- 8.4 The table below shows the same information for each of the sub-areas. There are some variations in the proportion of households with dependent children, this being highest in the Central & East area (29% of households) and lowest in North & West (at 24% of households) – the proportion of lone parent households is particularly low in the North & West compared with other locations.

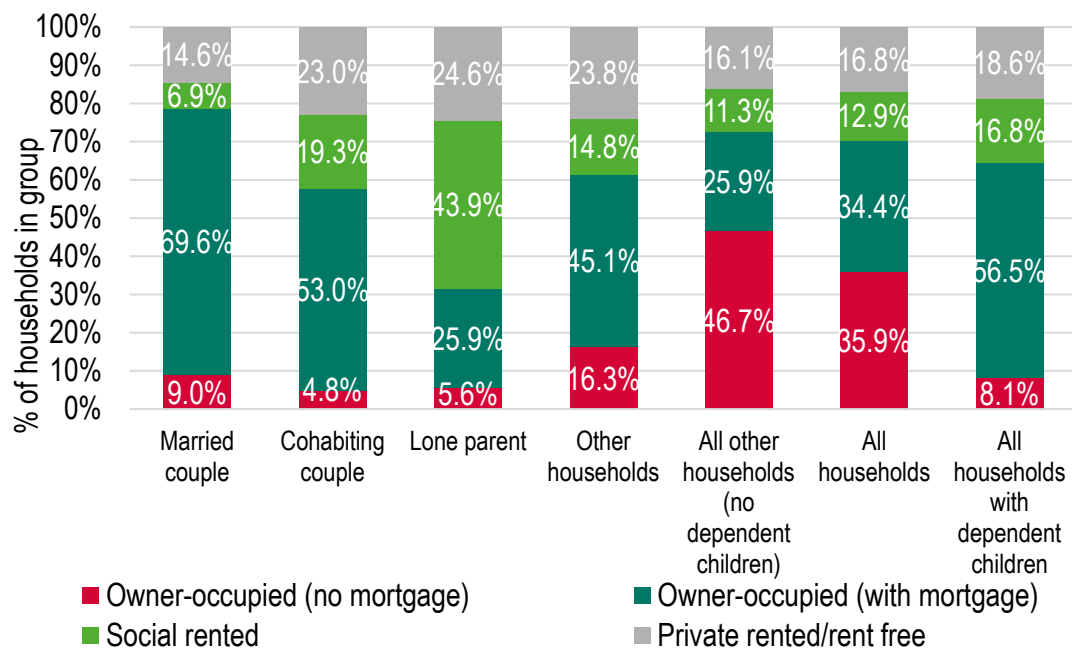
Table 8.2 Households with dependent children (2021) – sub-areas

	East	Central & South	North & West	TOTAL
Married couple	15.4%	15.9%	15.6%	15.8%
Cohabiting couple	4.9%	4.9%	3.3%	4.7%
Lone parent	5.2%	5.9%	3.7%	5.5%
Other households	1.8%	1.8%	1.4%	1.8%
All other households	72.7%	71.5%	76.0%	72.2%
Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
Total with dependent children	27.3%	28.5%	24.0%	27.8%

Source: Census (2021)

8.5 The figure below shows the current tenure of households with dependent children. There are some considerable differences by household type, with lone parents having a very high proportion living in the social rented sector and also in private rented accommodation. Across the District, only 32% of lone-parent households are owner-occupiers compared with 79% of married couples with children.

Figure 8.1 Tenure of households with dependent children (2021) – Huntingdonshire

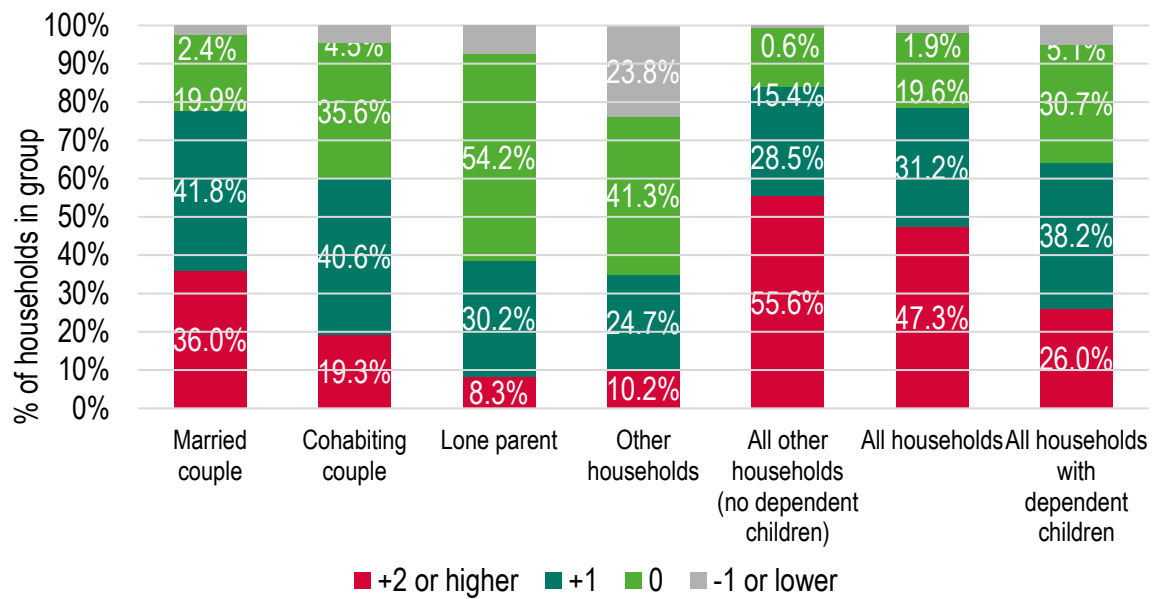


Source: Census (2021)

8.6 The figure below shows levels of overcrowding and under-occupancy of households with dependent children. This shows higher levels of overcrowding (minus figure) for all household types with dependent children, with 7% of all lone parents and 24% of ‘other’ households being overcrowded.

8.7 Overall, some 5% of households with dependent children are overcrowded, compared with less than 1% of other households. Levels of under-occupancy (positive figures) are also notably lower in households with dependent children.

Figure 8.2 Occupancy rating of households with dependent children (2021) – Huntingdonshire



Source: Census (2021)

The Mix of Housing

8.8 A model has been developed that starts with the current profile of housing in terms of size (bedrooms) and tenure. Within the data, information is available about the age of households and the typical sizes of homes they occupy. By using demographic projections, it is possible to see which age groups are expected to change in number, and by how much.

8.9 On the assumption that occupancy patterns for each age group (within each tenure) remain the same, it is therefore possible to assess the profile of housing needed over the assessment period (taken to be 2024-46 to be consistent with other analyses in this report).

8.10 An important starting point is to understand the current balance of housing in the area – the table below profiles the sizes of homes in different tenure groups across areas. The data shows a market stock (owner-occupied) that is dominated by 3+-bedroom homes (making up

82% of the total in this tenure group, a higher proportion to that seen in other areas). The profile of the social rented sector is broadly similar across areas, whilst the private rented sector is generally slightly larger than seen in other locations. Observations about the current mix feed into conclusions about future mix later in this section.

Table 8.3 Number of Bedrooms by Tenure, 2021

		Huntingdonshire	East of England	England
Owner-occupied	1-bedroom	3%	4%	4%
	2-bedrooms	15%	20%	21%
	3-bedrooms	42%	44%	46%
	4+-bedrooms	40%	32%	29%
	Total	100%	100%	100%
	Ave. no. beds	3.19	3.05	3.01
Social rented	1-bedroom	25%	29%	29%
	2-bedrooms	38%	35%	36%
	3-bedrooms	31%	32%	31%
	4+-bedrooms	5%	4%	4%
	Total	100%	100%	100%
	Ave. no. beds	2.17	2.11	2.10
Private rented	1-bedroom	17%	21%	21%
	2-bedrooms	36%	38%	39%
	3-bedrooms	34%	30%	29%
	4+-bedrooms	13%	11%	11%
	Total	100%	100%	100%
	Ave. no. beds	2.43	2.31	2.30

Source: Census (2021)

Overview of Methodology

- 8.11 The method to consider future housing mix looks at the ages of the Household Reference Persons and how these are projected to change over time. The sub-sections to follow describe some of the key analyses.

Understanding How Households Occupy Homes

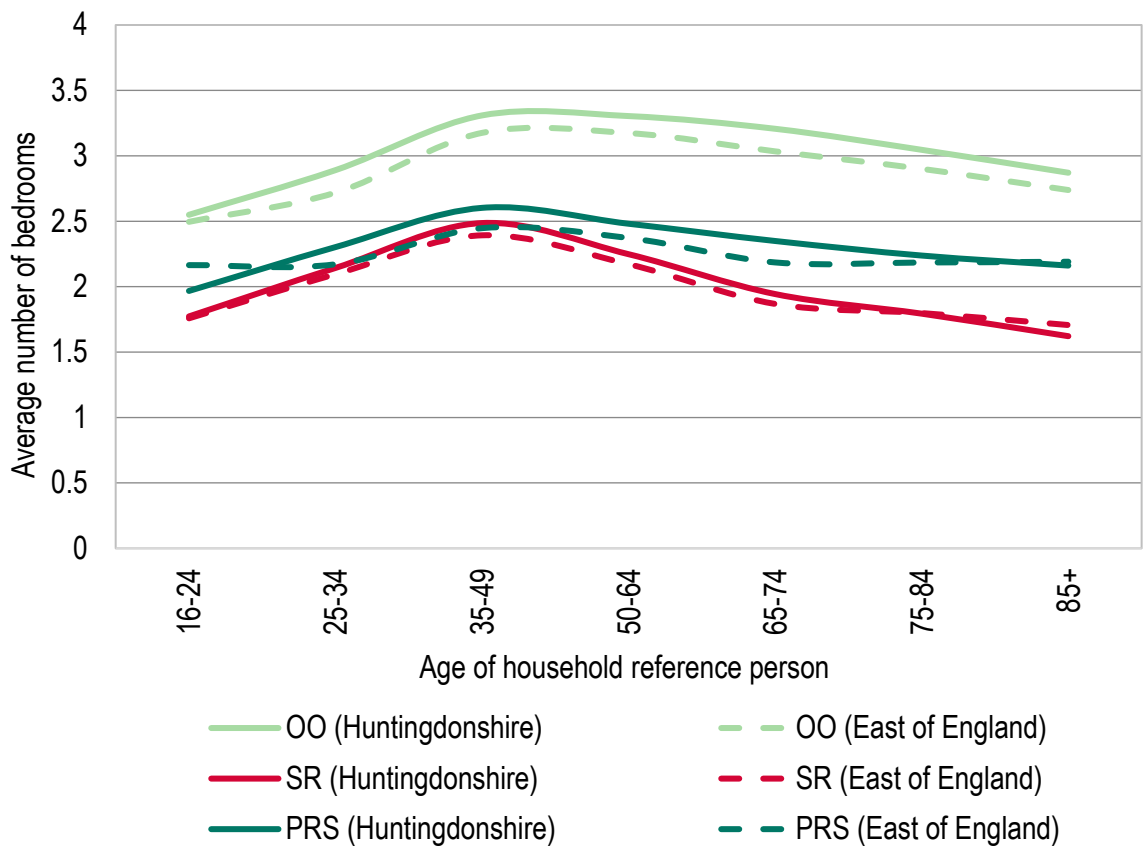
- 8.12 Whilst the demographic projections provide a good indication of how the population and household structure will develop; it is not a simple task to convert the net increase in the number of households into a suggested profile for additional housing to be provided.
- 8.13 The main reason for this is that in the market sector, households are able to buy or rent any size of property (subject to what they can afford) and therefore knowledge of the profile of households in an area does not directly transfer into the sizes of property to be provided.
- 8.14 The size of housing which households occupy relates more to their wealth and age than the number of people they contain. For example, there is no reason why a single person cannot buy (or choose to live in) a 4-bedroom home as long as they can afford it, and hence projecting an increase in single-person households does not automatically translate into a need for smaller units.
- 8.15 That said, issues of supply can also impact occupancy patterns, for example, it may be that a supply of additional smaller-level accessible homes would encourage older people to downsize but in the absence of such accommodation, these households remain living in their larger accommodation.
- 8.16 The issue of choice is less relevant in the affordable sector (particularly since the introduction of the social sector size criteria) where households are allocated properties which reflect the size of the household, although there will still be some level of under-occupation moving forward with regard to older person and working households who may be able to under-occupy housing (e.g. those who can afford to pay the spare room subsidy ('bedroom tax')).
- 8.17 The approach used is to interrogate information derived in the projections about the number of household reference persons (HRPs)

in each age group and apply this to the profile of housing within these groups (data being drawn from the 2021 Census).

8.18 The figure below shows an estimate of how the average number of bedrooms varies by different ages of HRP and broad tenure group for Huntingdonshire and the East of England region.

8.19 In all sectors, the average size of accommodation rises over time to typically reach a peak around the age of 50. After peaking, the average dwelling size decreases – as typically some households downsize as they get older. The analysis confirms Huntingdonshire as having slightly larger dwelling sizes across tenure groups (notably in the owner-occupied sector).

Figure 8.3 Average Bedrooms by Age and Tenure in Huntingdonshire and the region



Source: Census (2021)

- 8.20 The analysis uses the existing occupancy patterns at a local level as a starting point for analysis and applies these to the projected changes in Household Reference Person by age discussed below. The analysis has been used to derive outputs for three broad categories. These are:
- **Market Housing** – which is taken to follow the occupancy profiles in the market sector (i.e. owner-occupiers and the private rented sector);
 - **Affordable Home Ownership** – which is taken to follow the occupancy profile in the private rented sector (this is seen as reasonable as the Government’s desired growth in home ownership looks to be largely driven by a wish to see households move out of private renting); and
 - **Rented Affordable Housing** – which is taken to follow the occupancy profile in the social rented sector. The affordable sector in the analysis to follow would include social and affordable rented housing.

Changes to Households by Age

- 8.21 The table below presents the projected change in households by age of household reference person under the Standard Method. This shows growth as being expected in all age groups and in particular older age groups (notably 85+), although some high growth is also projected in younger age groups, in part due to an assumption that household formation could improve over time (and from a low base in the Under 25 age group).

Table 8.4 Projected Change in Household by Age of HRP in Huntingdonshire

	2024	2046	Change in Households	% Change
Under 25	1,407	2,546	1,139	80.9%
25-34	9,959	13,201	3,242	32.5%
35-49	20,794	26,812	6,017	28.9%
50-64	23,299	27,885	4,586	19.7%
65-74	10,894	13,853	2,959	27.2%
75-84	10,263	14,477	4,215	41.1%
85+	3,734	7,286	3,552	95.1%
TOTAL	80,351	106,060	25,710	32.0%

Source: *Iceni Analysis*

Modelled Outputs

- 8.22 By following the methodology set out above and drawing on the sources shown, a series of outputs have been derived to consider the likely size requirement of housing within each of the three broad tenures at a local authority level.
- 8.23 The analysis is based on considering both local and regional occupancy patterns. The data linking to local occupancy will to some extent reflect the role and function of the local area, whilst the regional data will help to establish any particular gaps (or relative surpluses) of different sizes/tenures of homes when considered in a wider context.
- 8.24 The table below shows the modelled outputs of need by dwelling size in the three broad tenures. Market housing focusses on 3+-bedroom homes, affordable home ownership on 2- and 3-bedroom accommodation and rented affordable housing showing a slightly smaller profile again.

Table 8.5 Initial Modelled Mix of Housing by Size and Tenure – Huntingdonshire

	1- bedroom	2- bedrooms	3- bedrooms	4+ bedrooms
Market	7%	24%	41%	28%
Affordable home ownership	20%	38%	31%	11%
Affordable housing (rented)	29%	37%	30%	4%

Source: *Housing Market Model*

Rightsizing

- 8.25 The analysis above sets out the potential need for housing if occupancy patterns remain the same as they were in 2021 (with differences from the current stock profile being driven by demographic change).
- 8.26 It is however worth also considering that the 2021 profile will have included households who are overcrowded (and therefore need a larger home than they actually live in) and also those who under-occupy (have more bedrooms than they need).
- 8.27 There is a case to seek for new stock to more closely match actual size requirements. Whilst it would not be reasonable to expect to remove all under-occupancy (particularly in the market sector) it is the case that in seeking to make the most efficient use of land it would be prudent to look to reduce this over time. Further analysis has been undertaken to take account of overcrowding and under-occupancy (by tenure).
- 8.28 The table below shows a cross-tabulation of a household's occupancy rating and the number of bedrooms in their home (for owner-occupiers). This shows a high number of households with at least 2 spare bedrooms who are living in homes with 3 or more bedrooms.

8.29 There are also a small number of overcrowded households. In the owner-occupied sector in 2021, there were 48,500 households with some degree of under-occupation and around 420 overcrowded households – some 90% of all owner-occupiers have some degree of under-occupancy.

Table 8.6 Cross-tabulation of occupancy rating and number of bedrooms (owner-occupied sector) – Huntingdonshire

Occupancy rating	Number of bedrooms				
	1-bed	2-bed	3-bed	4+-bed	TOTAL
+2 spare bedrooms	0	0	14,334	18,168	32,502
+1 spare bedrooms	0	6,724	6,323	2,912	15,959
0 "Right sized"	1,394	1,363	2,096	338	5,191
-1 too few bedrooms	57	117	176	71	421
TOTAL	1,451	8,204	22,929	21,489	54,073

Source: Census (2021)

8.30 For completeness the tables below show the same information for the social and private rented sectors. In both cases there are more under-occupying households than overcrowded, but differences are less marked than seen for owner-occupied housing.

Table 8.7 Cross-tabulation of occupancy rating and number of bedrooms (social rented sector) – Huntingdonshire

Occupancy rating	Number of bedrooms				
	1-bed	2-bed	3-bed	4+-bed	TOTAL
+2 spare bedrooms	0	0	808	169	977
+1 spare bedrooms	0	1,669	912	169	2,750
0 "Right sized"	2,389	1,838	1,173	152	5,552
-1 too few bedrooms	93	269	208	37	607
TOTAL	2,482	3,776	3,101	527	9,886

Source: Census (2021)

Table 8.8 Cross-tabulation of occupancy rating and number of bedrooms (private rented sector) – Huntingdonshire

Occupancy rating	Number of bedrooms				
	1-bed	2-bed	3-bed	4+-bed	TOTAL
+2 spare bedrooms	0	0	1,773	1,146	2,919
+1 spare bedrooms	0	3,135	1,721	396	5,252
0 "Right sized"	2,102	1,357	790	97	4,346
-1 too few bedrooms	125	142	107	30	404
TOTAL	2,227	4,634	4,391	1,669	12,921

Source: Census (2021)

- 8.31 In using this data in the modelling an adjustment is made to move some of those who would have been picked up in the modelling as under-occupying into smaller accommodation. Where there is under-occupation by 2 or more bedrooms, the adjustment takes 25% of this group and assigns to a '+1' occupancy.
- 8.32 This does need to be recognised as an assumption but can be seen to be reasonable as they do retain some (considerable) degree of under-

occupation (which is likely) but does also seek to model a better match between household needs and the size of their home.

- 8.33 For overcrowded households a move in the other direction is made, in this case households are moved up as many bedrooms as is needed to resolve the problems (this is applied for all overcrowded households).
- 8.34 The adjustments for under-occupation and overcrowding lead to the suggested mix as set out in the following tables. It can be seen that this tends to suggest a smaller profile of homes as being needed (compared to the initial modelling) with the biggest change being in the market sector – which was the sector where under-occupation is currently most notable.

Table 8.9 Modelled Mix of Housing by Size and Tenure –
Huntingdonshire

	1- bedroom	2- bedrooms	3- bedrooms	4+- bedrooms
Market	7%	30%	41%	22%
Affordable home ownership	19%	41%	30%	10%
Affordable housing (rented)	28%	37%	29%	6%

Source: Housing Market Model

- 8.35 Across the District, the analysis points to over a quarter of the social/affordable housing need being for 1-bedroom homes and it is of interest to see how much of this is due to older person households.
- 8.36 Household sizes are projected to drop whilst the population of older people will increase. Older person households (as shown earlier) are more likely to occupy smaller dwellings. The impacts older people have on demand for smaller stock is outlined in the table below.

- 8.37 This indeed identifies a larger profile of homes needed for households where the household reference person is aged Under 65, with a concentration of 1-bedroom homes for older people. This information can be used to inform the mix required for General Needs rather than Specialist Housing, although it does need to be noted that not all older people would be expected to live in homes with some form of care or support.
- 8.38 The 2, 3, and 4+-bedroom categories have been merged for the purposes of older persons as we would not generally expect many (if any) households in this category to need (or indeed be able to be allocated) more than 2-bedrooms in the rented affordable housing sector.

Table 8.10 Modelled Mix of Housing by Size and Age – affordable housing (rented) – Huntingdonshire

	1- bedroom	2- bedrooms	3- bedrooms	4+- bedrooms
Under 65	21%	38%	33%	8%
65 and over	44%	56%		
All affordable housing (rented)	28%	37%	29%	6%

Source: Housing Market Model

- 8.39 A further analysis of the need for rented affordable housing is to compare the need with the supply (turnover) of different sizes of accommodation.
- 8.40 This links back to estimates of need in the previous section (an annual need for 480 dwellings per annum from households unable to buy OR rent) with additional data from CoRe about the sizes of homes let over the past three years.
- 8.41 This analysis is quite clear in showing the very low supply of larger homes relative to the need for 4+-bedroom accommodation in

particular, where it is estimated the supply is only around 15% of the need arising each year, whereas for 1-bedroom homes approaching half of the need can be met.

Table 8.11 Need for rented affordable housing by number of bedrooms

	Gross Annual Need	Gross Annual Supply	Net Annual Need	As a % of total net annual need	Supply as a % of gross need
1-bedroom	178	78	100	20.9%	43.7%
2-bedrooms	314	132	183	38.0%	41.9%
3-bedrooms	215	54	161	33.5%	25.1%
4+-bedrooms	43	7	36	7.6%	15.4%
Total	750	270	480	100.0%	36.0%

Source: Iceni analysis

Indicative Targets for Different Sizes of Property by Tenure

- 8.42 The analysis below provides some indicative targets for different sizes of home (by tenure). The conclusions take account of a range of factors, including the modelled outputs and an understanding of the stock profile and levels of under-occupancy and overcrowding.
- 8.43 The analysis (for rented affordable housing) also draws on the Housing Register data as well as taking a broader view of issues such as the flexibility of homes to accommodate changes to households (e.g. the lack of flexibility offered by a 1-bedroom home for a couple looking to start a family).
- 8.44 The Housing Register (see table below) shows a pattern of need which is focussed on 1-bedroom homes but with over a fifth of households requiring 3+-bedroom accommodation.

Table 8.12 Size of Social/Affordable Rented Housing Needed – Housing Register Information (2024)

	Number of households	% of households
1-bedroom	1,417	53.5%
2-bedrooms	665	25.1%
3-bedrooms	418	15.8%
4+-bedrooms	151	5.7%
TOTAL	2,651	100.0%

Source: Local authority housing statistics

Social/Affordable Rented

- 8.45 Bringing together the above, a number of factors are recognised. This includes recognising that it is unlikely that all affordable housing needs will be met and that it is likely that households with a need for larger homes will have greater priority (as they are more likely to contain children).
- 8.46 That said, there is also a possible need for 1-bedroom social housing arising due to homelessness (typically, homeless households are more likely to be younger single people). The following mix of social/affordable rented housing is therefore suggested:

Table 8.13 Recommended Social/ Affordable Rented Housing Mix

Bedrooms	% of New Social/ Affordable Rented Homes for Under 65	% of New Social/ Affordable Rented Homes for 65 and over
1-bedroom	25%	50%
2-bedrooms	35%	50%
3-bedrooms	30%	
4+ bedrooms	10%	

Source: Iceni Analysis

- 8.47 Regarding older persons housing, the above recommendations aim to promote the opportunity for older person households to downsize, with a 2-bed offering being more likely to encourage this than 1-bed homes.
- 8.48 Also, whilst technically most older person households will only have a 'need' for a 1-bed home, a larger property remains affordable as most older person households are not impacted by the bedroom tax / spare room subsidy.
- 8.49 While we have identified a need for 50% of affordable older person homes to be 2+ bedrooms it is likely that delivery will be focused on those with only 2-bedrooms.
- 8.50 It should be noted that the above recommendations are to a considerable degree based on projecting the need forward to 2046 and will vary over time. It may be at a point in time the case that Housing Register data identifies a shortage of housing of a particular size/type which could lead to the mix of housing being altered from the overall suggested requirement.
- 8.51 In terms of the space standards of affordable housing, the supporting text to Local Plan LP25 refers to Nationally Described Space Standards (NDSS). It outlines the benefits of NDSS in achieving sustainable communities and how (unlike market housing) it should be recognised that affordable homes are likely to be fully occupied.

Affordable Home Ownership

- 8.52 In the affordable home ownership sector a profile of housing that more closely matches the outputs of the modelling is suggested. It is considered that the provision of affordable home ownership should be more explicitly focused on delivering smaller family housing for younger households and childless couples.

- 8.53 The conclusions also take account of the earlier observation that it may be difficult to make larger homes genuinely affordable for AHO. Based on this analysis, it is suggested that the following mix of affordable home ownership would be appropriate:

Table 8.14 Recommended Affordable Home Ownership Housing Mix

Bedrooms	% of New AHO Homes
1-bedroom	15%
2-bedrooms	45%
3-bedrooms	30%
4+ bedrooms	10%

Source: *Iceni Analysis*

Market Housing

- 8.54 Finally, in the market sector, a balance of dwellings is suggested that takes account of both the demand for homes and the changing demographic profile (as well as observations about the current mix when compared with other locations and also the potential to slightly reduce levels of under-occupancy).
- 8.55 We have also had regard to the potential for rightsizing but also recognise that in the market sector there is limited ability to control what households purchase. This sees a slightly larger recommended profile compared with other tenure groups.

Table 8.15 Recommended Market Housing Mix

Bedrooms	% of New Market Homes
1-bedroom	5%
2-bedrooms	30%
3-bedrooms	40%
4+-bedrooms	25%

Source: *Iceni Analysis*

- 8.56 Although the analysis has quantified this on the basis of the market modelling and an understanding of the current housing market (including the stock profile in different tenures as set out earlier in this section), it does not necessarily follow that such prescriptive figures should be included in the plan making process (although it will be useful to include an indication of the broad mix to be sought across the District) – demand can change over time linked to macro-economic factors and local supply. Policy aspirations could also influence the mix sought.
- 8.57 The suggested figures can be used as a monitoring tool to ensure that future delivery is not unbalanced when compared with the likely requirements as driven by demographic change in the area.
- 8.58 The recommendations can also be used as a set of guidelines to consider the appropriate mix on larger development sites, and the Council could expect justification for a housing mix on such sites which significantly differs from that modelled herein.
- 8.59 Site location and area character are also relevant considerations as to what the appropriate mix of market housing on individual development sites.

Smaller-area Housing Mix

- 8.60 The analysis above has focussed on overall study District-wide needs with conclusions at the strategic level. It should however be recognised that there will be variations in the need within the area due to the different role and function of a location and the specific characteristics of local households (which can also vary over time).
- 8.61 This report does not seek to model smaller-area housing mix although data is available that can help inform specific local issues (including

data about household composition, current housing mix and overcrowding/under-occupation).

8.62 Below are some points for consideration when looking at needs in any specific location:

- a) Whilst there are differences in the stock profile in different locations this should not necessarily be seen as indicating particular surpluses or shortfalls of particular types and sizes of homes;
- b) As well as looking at the stock, an understanding of the role and function of areas is important. For example, areas traditionally favoured by family households might be expected to provide a greater proportion of larger homes;
- c) That said, some of these areas will have very few small/cheaper stocks and so consideration needs to be given to diversifying the stock; and
- d) The location/quality of sites will also have an impact on the mix of housing. For example, brownfield sites in urban locations may be more suited to flatted development (as well as recognising the point above about role and function) whereas a more suburban/rural site may be more appropriate for family housing. Other considerations (such as proximity to public transport) may impact on a reasonable mix at a local level.

8.63 Overall, it is suggested the Council should broadly seek the same mix of housing in all locations as a starting point in policy; but should be flexible to a different mix where specific local characteristics suggest (such as site characteristics and location).

8.64 Additionally, in the affordable sector it may be the case that Housing Register data for a smaller area identifies a shortage of housing of a particular size/type, which could lead to a different mix.

Housing Mix - Summary

- 8.65 Analysis of the future mix of housing required takes account of demographic change, including potential changes to the number of family households and the ageing of the population.
- 8.66 The proportion of households with dependent children in Huntingdonshire is about average with around 28% of all households containing dependent children in 2021 (compared with around 29% regionally and nationally).
- 8.67 There are notable differences between different types of households, with married couples (with dependent children) seeing a high level of owner-occupation, whereas lone parents are particularly likely to live in social or private rented accommodation.
- 8.68 There are a range of factors which will influence demand for different sizes of homes, including demographic changes; future growth in real earnings and households' ability to save; economic performance and housing affordability.
- 8.69 The analysis linked to future demographic change concludes that the following represents an appropriate mix of affordable and market homes, this takes account of both household changes and the ageing of the population as well as seeking to make more efficient use of new stock by not projecting forward the high levels of under-occupancy (which is notable in the market sector).

Table 8.16 Suggested size mix of housing by tenure –
Huntingdonshire

	Market	Affordable home ownership	Affordable housing (rented)	
			Under 65	65 and over
1-bedroom	5%	15%	25%	50%
2-bedrooms	30%	45%	35%	50%
3-bedrooms	40%	30%	30%	
4+-bedrooms	25%	10%	10%	

Source: *Iceni Analysis*

- 8.70 In all sectors the analysis points to a particular need for 2- and 3-bedroom accommodation, with varying proportions of 1- and 4+-bedroom homes.
- 8.71 For rented affordable housing for Under 65s there is a clear need for a range of different sizes of homes, including 40% to have at least 3-bedrooms of which 10% should have at least 4-bedrooms.
- 8.72 The strategic conclusions in the affordable sector recognise the role which delivery of larger family homes can play in releasing a supply of smaller properties for other households.
- 8.73 Also recognised is the limited flexibility which 1-bedroom properties offer to changing household circumstances, which feed through into higher turnover and management issues.
- 8.74 The conclusions also take account of the current mix of housing by tenure and also the size requirements shown on the Housing Register.
- 8.75 The mix identified above could inform strategic policies although a flexible approach should be adopted. For example, affordable housing registered providers find difficulties selling 1-bedroom affordable home ownership (AHO) homes and therefore the 1-bedroom elements of AHO might be better provided as 2-bedroom accommodation.

- 8.76 Flats can also present difficulties for affordable home ownership, hence the Council tends to seek houses and a minimum of 2 bedrooms. That said, given current house prices, there are potential difficulties in making (larger) AHO genuinely affordable, so the council may wish to ease these restrictions.
- 8.77 Additionally, in applying the mix to individual development sites, regard should be had to the nature of the site and character of the area, and to up-to-date evidence of need as well as the existing mix and turnover of properties at the local level. The Council should also monitor the mix of housing delivered.

9. Older and Disabled People

Introduction

- 9.1 This section studies the characteristics and housing needs of the older person population and the population with some form of disability. The two groups are taken together as there is a clear link between age and disability.
- 9.2 We respond to Planning Practice Guidance on Housing for Older and Disabled People, published by the Government in June 2019. It includes an assessment of the need for specialist accommodation for older people and the potential requirements for housing to be built to M4(2) and M4(3) housing technical standards (accessibility and wheelchair standards).

Older People

- 9.3 The table below provides baseline population data about older persons in Huntingdonshire and compares this with other areas. The table shows the District has a very slightly older age structure to that seen regionally and nationally, with 21% of the population being aged 65 and over.
- 9.4 The proportion of people aged 75 and over is also slightly above equivalent figures for other areas. Overall, differences between locations are not significant.

Table 9.1 Older Persons Population, 2023

	Huntingdonshire	Cambridge-shire	East of England	England
Under 65	79.5%	81.1%	80.1%	81.3%
65-74	10.3%	9.4%	9.8%	9.5%
75-84	7.7%	6.9%	7.3%	6.7%
85+	2.6%	2.6%	2.8%	2.5%
Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
Total 65+	20.5%	18.9%	19.9%	18.7%
Total 75+	10.2%	9.5%	10.1%	9.2%

Source: ONS

9.5 The table below shows the same data for sub-areas. This is based on the 2022 mid-year population estimates (MYE) and so is slightly different to the 2023 MYE as shown above.

9.6 The analysis points to some variation in the proportion of older people, this being higher in North & West sub-area – Central & South has the lowest proportion of people aged 65+ at 19% of the population.

Table 9.2 Older Persons Population, 2022 – sub-areas

	East	Central & South	North & West	TOTAL
Under 65	78.2%	80.9%	75.2%	79.6%
65-74	11.5%	9.6%	13.4%	10.5%
75-84	7.8%	7.0%	8.8%	7.4%
85+	2.6%	2.4%	2.5%	2.5%
Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
Total 65+	21.8%	19.1%	24.8%	20.4%
Total 75+	10.4%	9.5%	11.3%	9.9%

Source: ONS

Projected Future Change in the Population of Older People

9.7 Population projections can next be used to provide an indication of how the number of older persons might change in the future with the table below showing that Huntingdonshire is projected to see a notable

increase in the older person population – the projection is based on the Standard Method.

- 9.8 For the 2024-46 period a projected increase in the population aged 65+ of around 38% is shown – the population aged under 65 is in contrast projected to see a more modest increase (of 21%).
- 9.9 In total population terms, the projections show an increase in the population aged 65 and over of 14,600 people. This is against a backdrop of an overall increase of 46,100 – population growth of people aged 65 and over therefore accounts for 32% of the total projected population change.

Table 9.3 Projected Change in Population of Older Persons, 2024 to 2046 – Huntingdonshire

	2024	2046	Change in population	% change
Under 65	149,041	180,517	31,476	21.1%
65-74	19,161	23,696	4,536	23.7%
75-84	14,820	20,401	5,581	37.7%
85+	4,932	9,457	4,525	91.7%
Total	187,953	234,072	46,119	24.5%
Total 65+	38,912	53,555	14,642	37.6%
Total 75+	19,752	29,858	10,107	51.2%

Source: *Iceni Analysis*

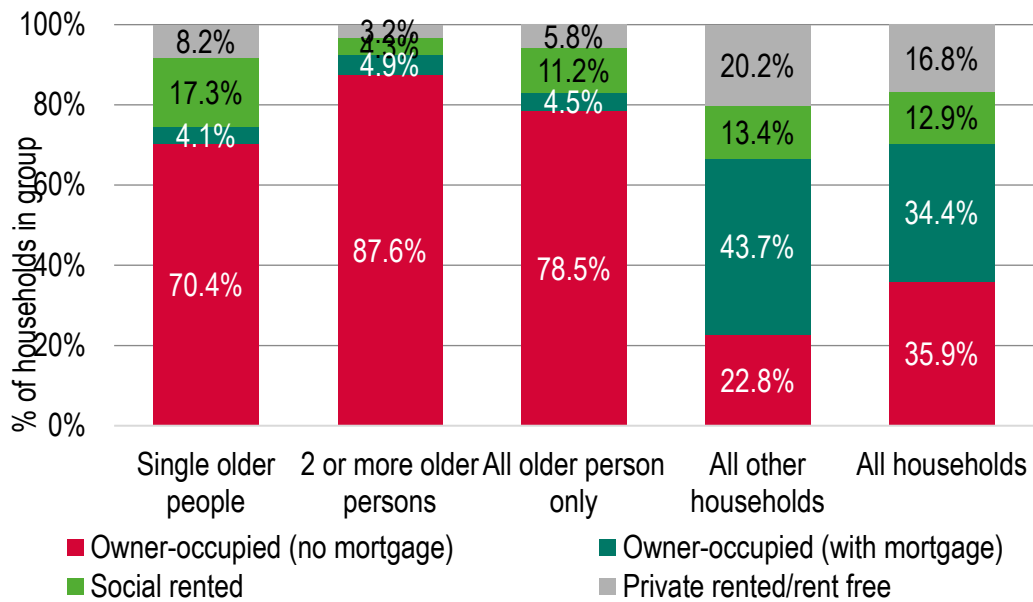
Characteristics of Older Person Households

- 9.10 The figure below shows the tenure of older person households. The data has been split between single older person households and those with two or more older people (which will largely be couples).
- 9.11 The data shows that the majority of older persons households are owner occupiers (83% of older person households), and indeed most are owner-occupiers with no mortgage and thus may have significant equity which can be put towards the purchase of a new home.

9.12 Some 11% of older persons households live in the social rented sector and the proportion of older person households living in the private rented sector is relatively low (about 6%).

9.13 There are also notable differences for different types of older person households with single older people having a lower level of owner-occupation than larger older person households – this group also has a higher proportion living in the social rented sector.

Figure 9.1 : Tenure of Older Persons Households in Huntingdonshire, 2021



Source: 2021 Census

9.14 The table below shows the tenure of older person households by sub-area (figures are for all older person households). This shows modest differences between areas, with a range from 83% of older persons being owner-occupiers in Central & South, up to 86% in North & West.

9.15 Figures for the proportions living in social rented housing show the opposite pattern, varying from 7% in North & West, up to 12% in Central & South. There is little variance in the proportions living in the private rented sector – between 5% and 7% in all areas.

Table 9.4 Tenure of Older Persons Households in Huntingdonshire, 2021 – sub-areas

	Owner-occupied (no mortgage)	Owner-occupied (with mortgage)	Social rented	Private rented	TOTAL
East	78.5%	4.4%	10.8%	6.3%	100.0%
Central & South	78.1%	4.4%	12.0%	5.4%	100.0%
North & West	80.9%	4.9%	6.9%	7.2%	100.0%
TOTAL	78.5%	4.5%	11.2%	5.8%	100.0%

Source: 2021 Census

Disabilities

- 9.16 The table below shows the proportion of people who are considered as disabled under the definition within the 2010 Equality Act¹³, drawn from 2021 Census data, and the proportion of households where at least one person has a disability.
- 9.17 The data suggests that some 30% of households in the District contain someone with a disability. This figure is lower than seen nationally and in-line with figures for Cambridgeshire and the East of England. The figures for the population with a disability also show lower levels than nationally – some 16% of the population having a disability.

¹³ The Census uses the same definition of disability as described in the Equality Act. This defines disability as a person with a physical or mental impairment that has a 'substantial' and 'long-term' negative effect on their ability to do normal daily activities.

Table 9.5 Households and People with a Disability, 2021

	Households Containing Someone with a Disability		Population with a Disability	
	No.	%	No.	%
Huntingdonshire	22,915	29.8%	29,577	16.4%
Cambridgeshire	83,500	30.1%	109,908	16.2%
East of England	811,942	30.9%	1,053,832	16.6%
England	7,507,886	32.0%	9,774,510	17.3%

Source: 2021 Census

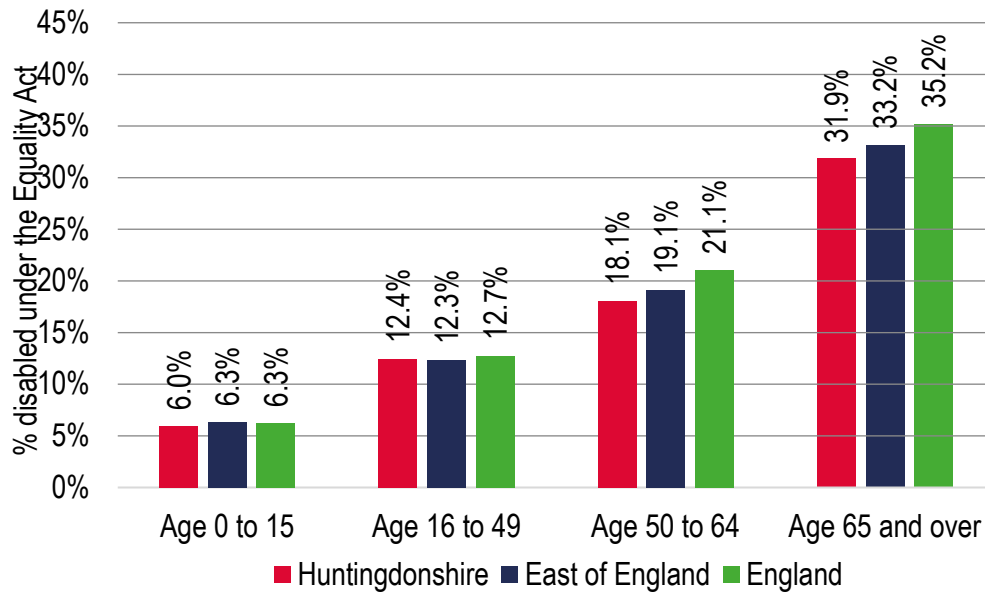
- 9.18 The table below shows the same information for sub-areas; this shows similar proportions of the population and households with a disability across all areas – figures being slightly higher in East and lower in Central & South.

Table 9.6 Households and People with a Disability, 2021 – sub-areas

	Households Containing Someone with a Disability		Population with a Disability	
	No.	%	No.	%
East	6,297	31.8%	8,020	17.3%
Central & South	14,516	29.1%	18,496	15.9%
North & West	2,112	29.4%	3,058	17.1%
TOTAL	22,925	29.8%	29,574	16.4%

Source: 2021 Census

- 9.19 As noted, it is likely that the age profile will impact upon the numbers of people with a disability.
- 9.20 The figure below shows the age bands of people with a disability. It is clear from this analysis that those people in the oldest age bands are more likely to have a disability.
- 9.21 The analysis also shows generally slightly lower levels of disability when compared with the regional and national position.

Figure 9.2 : Population with Disability by Age

Source: 2021 Census

Health Related Population Projections

- 9.22 The incidence of a range of health conditions is an important component in understanding the potential need for care or support for a growing older population.
- 9.23 The analysis undertaken covers both younger and older age groups and draws on prevalence rates from the PANSI (Projecting Adult Needs and Service Information) and POPPI (Projecting Older People Population Information) websites. Adjustments have been made to take account of the age specific health/disabilities previously shown.
- 9.24 Of particular note are the large increases in the number of older people with dementia (increasing by 64% from 2024 to 2046 and mobility problems (up 54% over the same period).
- 9.25 Changes for younger age groups are smaller, reflecting the fact that projections are expecting older age groups to see the greatest proportional increases in population.

- 9.26 When related back to the total projected change to the population, the increase of people aged 65+ with a mobility problem represents around 6% of total projected population growth.

Table 9.7 Projected Changes to Population with a Range of Disabilities – Huntingdonshire

Disability	Age Range	2024	2046	Change	% change
Dementia	65+	2,434	3,983	1,549	63.7%
Mobility problems	16-64	6,055	7,393	1,338	22.1%
	65+	6,421	9,893	3,472	54.1%
Autistic Spectrum Disorders	18-64	1,027	1,289	262	25.6%
	65+	333	469	135	40.6%
Learning Disabilities	15-64	2,653	3,339	686	25.9%
	65+	730	1,017	287	39.3%

Source: POPPI/PANSI and Demographic Projections

- 9.27 Invariably, there will be a combination of those with disabilities and long-term health problems that continue to live at home with family, those who chose to live independently with the possibility of incorporating adaptations into their homes and those who choose to move into supported housing.
- 9.28 The projected change shown in the number of people with disabilities provides clear evidence justifying delivering ‘accessible and adaptable’ homes as defined in Part M4(2) of Building Regulations, subject to viability and site suitability.

Need for Specialist Accommodation for Older People

- 9.29 Given the ageing population and higher levels of disability and health problems amongst older people, there is likely to be an increased requirement for specialist housing options moving forward. The box below shows the different types of older persons housing which are considered.

Definitions of Different Types of Older Persons' Accommodation

Age-restricted general market housing: This type of housing is generally for people aged 55 and over and the active elderly. It may include some shared amenities such as communal gardens but does not include support or care services.

Retirement living or sheltered housing (housing with support): This usually consists of purpose-built flats or bungalows with limited communal facilities such as a lounge, laundry room and guest room. It does not generally provide care services but provides some support to enable residents to live independently. This can include 24-hour on-site assistance (alarm) and a warden or house manager.

Extra care housing or housing-with-care (housing with care): This usually consists of purpose-built or adapted flats or bungalows with a medium to high level of care available if required, through an onsite care agency registered through the Care Quality Commission (CQC). Residents are able to live independently with 24-hour access to support services and staff, and meals are also available. There are often extensive communal areas, such as space to socialise or a wellbeing centre. In some cases, these developments are known as retirement communities or villages - the intention is for residents to benefit from varying levels of care as time progresses.

Residential care homes and nursing homes (care bedspaces): These have individual rooms within a residential building and provide a high level of care meeting all activities of daily living. They do not usually include support services for independent living. This type of housing can also include dementia care homes.

Source: Planning Practice Guidance [63-010]

- 9.30 The need for specialist housing for older persons is typically modelled by applying prevalence rates to current and projected population changes and considering the level of existing supply. There is no standard methodology for assessing the housing and care needs of older people.

- 9.31 The current and future demand for elderly care is influenced by a host of factors including the balance between demand and supply in any given area and social, political, regulatory and financial issues.
- 9.32 Additionally, the extent to which new homes are built to accessible and adaptable standards may over time have an impact on specialist demand (given that older people often want to remain at home rather than move to care) – this will need to be monitored.
- 9.33 There are a number of ‘models’ for considering older persons’ needs, but they all essentially work in the same way. The model results are however particularly sensitive to the prevalence rates applied, which are typically calculated as a proportion of people aged over 75 who could be expected to live in different forms of specialist housing.
- 9.34 Whilst the population aged 75 and over is used in the modelling, the estimates of need would include people of all ages.
- 9.35 Whilst there are no definitive rates, the PPG [63-004-20190626] notes that ‘the future need for specialist accommodation for older people broken down by tenure and type (e.g. sheltered housing, extra care) may need to be assessed and can be obtained from a number of online tool kits provided by the sector, for example SHOP@ for Older People Analysis Tool’.
- 9.36 The PPG does not specifically mention any other tools and therefore seems to be indicating that SHOP@ would be a good starting point for analysis. Since the PPG was published the Housing Learning and Information Network (Housing LIN) has removed the Shop@ online toolkit although the base rates used for analysis are known.
- 9.37 The SHOP@ tool was originally based on data in a 2008 report (More Choice Greater Voice) and in 2011 a further suggested set of rates was published (rates which were repeated in a 2012 publications). In 2016,

Housing LIN published a review document which noted that the 2008 rates are 'outdated' but also noting that the rates from 2011/12 were 'not substantiated'. The 2016 review document therefore set out a series of proposals for new rates to be taken forward onto the Housing LIN website.

9.38 Whilst the 2016 review rates do not appear to have ever led to an update of the website, it does appear from reviewing work by Housing LIN over the past couple of years as if it is these rates which typically inform their own analysis (subject to evidence based localised adjustments).

9.39 For clarity, the table below shows the base prevalence rates set out in the various documents described above. For the analysis in this report the age-restricted and retirement/sheltered have been merged into a single category (housing with support).

Table 9.8 Range of suggested baseline prevalence rates (units per 1,000 people aged over 75) from a number of tools and publications

Type/Rate	SHOP@ (2008) ¹⁴	Housing in Later Life (2012) ¹⁵	2016 Housing LIN Review ¹⁶
Age-restricted general market housing	-	-	25
Retirement living or sheltered housing (housing with support)	125	180	100
Extra care housing or housing-with-care (housing with care)	45	65	30-40 ('proactive range')
Residential care homes	65	(no figure apart from 6 for dementia)	40
Nursing homes (care bedspaces), including dementia	45		45

Source: *Housing LIN*

9.40 In interpreting the different potential prevalence rates, it is clear that:

- The prevalence rates used should be considered and assessed taking account of the authority's strategy for delivering specialist housing for older people;
- The Housing LIN model has been influenced by existing levels of provision and their view on what future level of provision might be reasonable taking account of how the market is developing, funding availability etc. It is more focused towards publicly commissioned provision. There is a degree to which the model and assumptions within it may not fully capture the growing

¹⁴ Based on the More Choice Greater Voice publication of 2008 ([SHOP@ Tool](#)). It should be noted that although these rates are from 2008, they are the same rates as were being used in the online toolkit when it was taken offline in 2019.

¹⁵ [Housing in Later Life](#)

¹⁶ [2016 Housing LIN Review](#)

recent private sector interest and involvement in the sector, particularly in extra care; and

- The assumptions in these studies look at the situation nationally. At a more local level, the relative health of an area's population is likely to influence the need for specialist housing with better levels of health likely to mean residents are able to stay in their own homes for longer.

- 9.41 These issues are considered to provide appropriate modelling assumptions for assessing future needs. Nationally, there has been a clear focus on strengthening a community-led approach and reducing reliance on residential and nursing care – in particular focussing where possible on providing households with care in their own home.
- 9.42 This could however be provision of care within general needs housing; but also care which is provided in a housing with care development such as in extra care housing.
- 9.43 We consider that the prevalence rates shown in the 2016 Housing LIN Review is an appropriate starting point; but that the corollary of lower care home provision should be a greater focus on delivery of housing with care.
- 9.44 Having regard to market growth in this sector in recent years, and since the above studies were prepared, we consider that the starting point for housing with care should be the higher rate shown in the SHOP@ report (this is the figure that would align with the PPG).
- 9.45 Rather than simply taking the base prevalence rates, an initial adjustment has been made to reflect the relative health of the local older person population.
- 9.46 This has been based on Census data about the proportion of the population aged 75 and over who have a long-term health problem or

disability (LTHPD) compared with the England average. In Huntingdonshire, the data shows slightly better health in the 75+ population and so a modest decrease has been made to the prevalence rates (41.2% of the population age 75+ in Huntingdonshire has a LTHPD compared with 43.9% nationally).

- 9.47 A second local adjustment has been to estimate a tenure split for the housing with support and housing with care categories. This again draws on suggestions in the 2016 Review which suggests that less deprived local authorities could expect a higher proportion of their specialist housing to be in the market sector.
- 9.48 Using 2019 Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) data shows Huntingdonshire to be the 247th most deprived local authority in England (out of 317). This is a relatively low level of deprivation and suggests a slightly greater proportion of market housing than a local authority in the middle of the range (for housing with support and housing with care).
- 9.49 The following prevalence rates, expressed as a need per 1,000 people aged 75 and over have been used in the analysis:
- Housing with support (market) – 65 units;
 - Housing with support (affordable) – 52 units;
 - Housing with care (market) – 29 units;
 - Housing with care (affordable) – 13 units;
 - Residential care– 38 bedspaces; and
 - Nursing care– 42 bedspaces
- 9.50 It is also important to understand the supply of different types of specialist accommodation with the tables below showing various categories by sub-area.

- 9.51 The first table is for housing with support and housing with care, which are more likely to be self-contained dwellings with the second table looking at residential and nursing care bedspaces. The total figures have also been standardised on the basis of the number of units per 1,000 people aged 75 and over.
- 9.52 The analysis shows a total current supply of just over 1,600 units of housing with support or care, which represents around 90 per 1,000 people aged 75 and over.
- 9.53 There is some variation by sub-area with Central & South seeing both the highest number (1,318 units) and the highest proportion per population aged 75+ (117 units). The supply per 1,000 people aged 75+ is only 10 in North & West.
- 9.54 For nursing and residential care, a lower level of supply is shown, with a total of 1,100 bedspaces, the highest number being in Central & South (885 bedspaces), this area also seeing the highest supply per 1,000 people aged 75+ (at 79 bedspaces).

Table 9.9 Current supply of housing with support and housing with care by sub-area

	Housing with support		Housing with care		Total	Popn aged 75+ (2022)	Supply per 1,000 aged 75+
	Market	Affordable	Market	Affordable			
East	48	257	0	0	305	4,905	62
Central & South	510	685	0	123	1,318	11,246	117
North & West	17	3	0	0	20	2,064	10
TOTAL	575	945	0	123	1,643	18,215	90

Source: Elderly Accommodation Council (EAC)

Table 9.10 Current supply of residential and nursing care bedspaces by sub-area

	Residential care	Nursing care	Total	Popn aged 75+ (2022)	Supply per 1,000 aged 75+
East	149	0	149	4,905	30
Central & South	474	411	885	11,246	79
North & West	64	0	64	2,064	31
TOTAL	687	411	1,098	18,215	60

Source: EAC

- 9.55 Taking the supply forward and using the prevalence rates suggested the tables below shows estimated needs for different types of housing linked to the population projections.
- 9.56 The analysis is separated into the various different types and tenures although it should be recognised that there could be some overlap

between categories (i.e. some households might be suited to more than one type of accommodation).

- 9.57 The analysis suggests for all types and tenures of accommodation there is a current shortfall of provision and with increases in the older person population there is potentially a notable level of additional need over the period to 2046.
- 9.58 For housing with support (e.g. sheltered/retirement housing) the analysis points to a particular need for market housing (around 70% of the need), whilst for housing with care (e.g. Extra-care) the main need is again likely to be in the market sector but about a quarter being for affordable housing.

Table 9.11 Specialist Housing Need using adjusted SHOP@Review Assumptions, 2024-46 – Huntingdonshire

		Housing demand per 1,000 75+	Current supply	Current demand	Current shortfall / surplus (-ve)	Additional demand to 2046	Shortfall /surplus by 2046
Housing with support	Market	65	575	1,293	718	696	1,413
	Affordable	52	945	1,025	80	552	632
Total (housing with support)		117	1,520	2,317	797	1,248	2,045
Housing with care	Market	29	0	582	582	313	895
	Affordable	13	123	253	130	136	266
Total (housing with care)		42	123	834	711	449	1,160
Residential care bedspaces		38	687	742	55	399	454
Nursing care bedspaces		42	411	834	423	449	872
Total bedspaces		80	1,098	1,576	478	848	1,326

Source: Iceni analysis/EAC

- 9.59 The provision of a choice of attractive housing options to older households is a component of achieving good housing mix. The

availability of such housing options for the growing older population may enable some older households to downsize from homes which no longer meet their housing needs or are expensive to run.

- 9.60 The availability of housing options which are accessible to older people will also provide the opportunity for older households to ‘downsize’ which can help improve their quality of life.
- 9.61 It should also be noted that within any category of need there may be a range of products. For example, many recent market extra-care schemes have tended to be focused towards the ‘top-end’ of the market and may have significant service charges (due to the level and quality of facilities and services).
- 9.62 Such homes may therefore only be affordable to a small proportion of the potential market, and it will be important for the Council to seek a range of products that will be accessible to a wider number of households if needs are to be met.

County Council Needs Assessment

- 9.63 As well as the above assessment Cambridgeshire County Council has produced “[District Demand Profiles for Older People’s Accommodation 2021 – 2036](#)”. This shows a significantly lower level of need than that set out in our modelling and uses a different approach to assessing it.
- 9.64 The County Council focused on individuals requiring support services (or care packages) rather than solely on accommodation needs, which includes individuals living independently at home.
- 9.65 That said, when the County Council calculate the need for specialist accommodation, they overlay housing survey data to reflect that the fact that not everyone with a care package wants to live in specialist accommodation.

- 9.66 The County Council's approach to population growth is also linked to the planned housing stock growth and assumptions around average household size.
- 9.67 As such, the modelled approach set out herein and summarised in Table 9.11, while compliant with the PPG, could potentially overstate the need within Huntingdonshire. Therefore, any applications for new specialist accommodation for older people should also be assessed against the County Council's needs assessment.

Engagement with Cambridgeshire County Council

- 9.68 To inform this study, we have engaged with officers within the Adult Social Care Team at Cambridgeshire County Council. A summary of that discussion is set out below.
- 9.69 Officers highlighted that Cambridgeshire County Council does not directly manage sheltered accommodation but does offer associated care packages. Assessments are available to determine the specific needs of older people and individuals with learning disabilities.
- 9.70 Officers commented that dialogue is ongoing with residential care home providers concerning unfilled vacancies, which are filtering to the market, resulting in fewer planning applications to the council for care homes.
- 9.71 Recently, planning applications for extra-care development have been limited. Officers highlighted that while the County Council is not actively pursuing additional block bed contracts, site managers retain the option to apply for spot bed contracts with the County Council, where the mutually agreed price and terms and conditions of care are negotiated individually at the time that the bed is required.

- 9.72 Officers commented that current trends indicate declining demand for lower-level residential care, contrasted with increased demand for higher-level nursing and complex care.
- 9.73 Presently, the older person's residential care market is stable according to officers, supported by county-wide block bed contracts negotiated with various providers at fixed rates, supplemented by spot framework placements. Presently, there is minimal waiting time for placements in residential care.
- 9.74 Officers highlighted that block bed contracts, generally established for 10-15 years, have reached their first extension point. These typically incorporate uplift clauses linked to inflation and real living wage adjustments, thus mitigating financial concerns related to accommodation costs.
- 9.75 Officers noted that the county has an increasingly ageing population, exceeding the national growth, and the age of those entering nursing and dementia care is now older, predominantly aged 75 and above, compared to those in their late-60s previously.
- 9.76 Officers highlighted that residential care is declining in the county with the exception of Cambridge City. The County Council has invested significantly in reablement services and domiciliary care packages post-hospitalisation to reduce unnecessary admissions to residential care.
- 9.77 Officers highlighted that the County Council actively promotes extra care housing, allowing individuals to live independently with onsite carers available.
- 9.78 These schemes have operated within the county for 15 years, with a pressing requirement for further extra-care developments. This would shift some of the need from residential care to extra-care as demand for these types of accommodation is linked.
- 9.79 Officers commented that strategies aimed at promoting independent living have been successful, evidenced by decreasing demand for

lower-end residential care. Dementia incidences are rising proportionately with the ageing population.

- 9.80 The quality of care homes is not a concern, with ratings surpassing national and regional averages according to officers. Nevertheless, some older, smaller properties require modernisation or redevelopment to contemporary standards, a trend being actively pursued by several providers.
- 9.81 Officers commented that there are no significant issues regarding care standards. Most complex care requirements can be accommodated within county facilities, with only exceptional cases necessitating specialist private arrangements or out-of-area placements.
- 9.82 Local care homes, as listed on the County Council's website, predominantly provide en-suite accommodation, with most schemes recently updated. The majority of extra-care units are one-bedroom, though there is some demand for two-bedroom units, leading to waiting lists in some facilities.
- 9.83 Officers highlighted that residential care occupancy rates are declining, whereas nursing and complex care occupancy remains high. Extra-care housing units typically have high occupancy rates aided by council placements.
- 9.84 Brokerage services generally encounter minimal difficulty in securing residential placements across the county. Placements generally occur promptly, indicating effective demand management.
- 9.85 Officers highlighted that new builds conform to higher accessibility standards, complemented by the Home Improvement Agency's adaptation services for discharged hospital patients and individuals requiring wheelchair-accessible housing when adaptations to existing homes are not feasible.

- 9.86 Furthermore, grants have supported improvements to the older stock of specialist accommodation to enhance accessibility within the existing stock.

Wheelchair User Housing

- 9.87 The analysis below draws on secondary data sources to estimate the number of current and future wheelchair users and to estimate the number of wheelchair accessible/adaptable dwellings that might be required in the future.
- 9.88 Estimates of need produced in this report draw on data from the English Housing Survey (EHS) – mainly 2020/21 data. The EHS data used includes the age structure of wheelchair users, information about work needed to home to make them ‘visitable’ for wheelchair users and data about wheelchair users by tenure.
- 9.89 The table below shows at a national level the proportion of wheelchair user households by the age of the household reference person. Nationally, around 3.1% of households contain a wheelchair user – with around 1% using a wheelchair indoors.
- 9.90 There is a clear correlation between the age of household reference person and the likelihood of there being a wheelchair user in the household.

Table 9.12 Proportion of wheelchair user households by age of household reference person – England

Age of household reference person	No household members use a wheelchair	Uses wheelchair all the time	Uses wheelchair indoors only	Uses wheelchair outdoors only	TOTAL
24 and under	99.4%	0.4%	0.0%	0.1%	100.0%
25-34	99.4%	0.1%	0.1%	0.3%	100.0%
35-49	97.9%	0.4%	0.3%	1.4%	100.0%
50-64	97.1%	0.5%	0.2%	2.2%	100.0%
65 and over	94.3%	1.3%	0.5%	4.0%	100.0%
All households	96.9%	0.6%	0.3%	2.2%	100.0%

Source: English Housing Survey (2020/21)

9.91 The prevalence rate data can be brought together with information about the household age structure and how this is likely to change moving forward – adjustments have also been made to take account of the relative health (by age) of the population. The data estimates a total of 1,973 wheelchair user households in 2024, and that this will rise to 2,675 by 2046.

Table 9.13 Estimated number of wheelchair user households (2024-46) – Huntingdonshire

	Prevalence rate (% of households)	Households 2024	Households 2046	Wheelchair user households (2024)	Wheelchair user households (2046)
24 and under	0.7%	1,407	2,546	10	18
25-34	0.5%	9,959	13,201	47	62
35-49	1.5%	20,794	26,812	313	403
50-64	1.9%	23,299	27,885	440	527
65 and over	4.7%	24,890	35,616	1,164	1,666
All households	-	80,351	106,060	1,973	2,675

Source: *Iceni analysis*

- 9.92 The finding of an estimated current number of wheelchair user households does not indicate how many homes might be needed for this group – some households will be living in a home that is suitable for wheelchair use, whilst others may need improvements to accommodation, or a move to an alternative home.
- 9.93 Data from the EHS (2014-15) shows that of the 814,000 wheelchair user households, some 200,000 live in a home that would either be problematic or not feasible to make fully ‘visitable’ – this is around 25% of wheelchair user households.
- 9.94 Applying this to the current number of wheelchair user households across the District gives a current need for 493 additional wheelchair user homes. If the projected need is also discounted to 25% of the total (on the basis that many additional wheelchair user households will already be in accommodation) then a further need for 175 homes in the 2024-46 period can be identified. Added together this leads to a need

estimate of 669 wheelchair user homes – equating to 30 dwellings per annum.

Table 9.14 Estimated need for wheelchair user homes, 2024-46

	Current need	Projected need (2024-46)	Total current and future need
Huntingdonshire	493	175	669

Source: Iceni Analysis

- 9.95 Furthermore, information in the EHS (for 2020/21) also provides national data about wheelchair users by tenure. This showed that, at that time, around 6.7% of social tenants were wheelchair users (including 1.8% using a wheelchair indoors/all the time), compared with 2.6% of owner-occupiers (0.8% indoors/all the time).
- 9.96 These proportions can be expected to increase with an ageing population but do highlight the likely need for a greater proportion of social (affordable) homes to be for wheelchair users.

Table 9.15 Proportion of wheelchair user households by tenure of household reference person – England

Tenure	No household members use a wheelchair	Uses wheel-chair all the time	Uses wheel-chair indoors only	Uses wheel-chair outdoors only	TOTAL
Owners	97.4%	0.6%	0.2%	1.8%	100.0%
Social sector	93.3%	1.3%	0.5%	4.9%	100.0%
Private renters	98.6%	0.2%	0.2%	1.0%	100.0%
All households	96.9%	0.6%	0.3%	2.2%	100.0%

Source: English Housing Survey (2020/21)

- 9.97 To meet the identified need, the Council could seek a proportion of all new market homes to be M4(3) compliant and potentially a higher figure in the affordable sector.
- 9.98 The current policy LP25, means that the proportion of M4(3) compliant homes within affordable developments is open to negotiation with the Council's housing team based on a starting point of 30%. On sites with 50 or more market homes 9% are sought as M4(3). This would seem reasonable if it is delivering the homes necessary.
- 9.99 These figures reflect that not all sites would be able to deliver homes of this type. In the market sector these homes would be M4(3)A (adaptable) and M4(3)B (accessible) for affordable housing.
- 9.100 As with M4(2) homes, it may not be possible for some schemes to be built to these higher standards due to built-form, topography, flooding, etc. It is noted that six years after the introduction of the policy requirements for provision of M4(2) and M4(3) homes, the majority of planning applications are now meeting the preferred levels of provision.
- 9.101 It is worth noting that the Government has now reported on a consultation (Raising Accessibility Standards for New Homes¹⁷ on changes to the way the needs of people with disabilities and wheelchair users are planned for as a result of concerns that, in the drive to achieve housing numbers, the delivery of housing that suits the needs of the households (in particular those with disabilities) is being compromised on viability grounds.
- 9.102 The key outcome is: "Government is committed to raising accessibility standards for new homes". The government response sets out their

¹⁷ [Raising accessibility standards for new homes: summary of consultation responses and government response - GOV.UK](#)

plans to mandate the current M4(2) requirement in Building Regulations as a minimum standard for all new homes. This change is due to be implemented shortly through a change to building regulations.

9.103 The consultation outcome still requires a need for M4(3) dwellings to be evidenced, stating 'M4(3) (Category 3: Wheelchair user dwellings) would continue as now, where there is a local planning policy in place in which a need has been identified and evidenced. Local authorities will need to continue to tailor the supply of wheelchair user dwellings to local demand.'

9.104 As well as evidence of need, the viability challenge is particularly relevant for M4(3)(B) standards. These make properties accessible from the moment they are built and involve high additional costs that could, in some cases, challenge the feasibility of delivering all or any of a policy target.

9.105 It should be noted that local authorities only have the right to request M4(3)(B) accessible compliance from homes for which they have nomination rights. They can, however, request M4(3)(A) adaptable compliance from the wider (market) housing stock.

Affordability

9.106 Huntingdonshire offers a variety of sheltered and retirement housing options, each with unique features to suit different levels of independence and care needs.

9.107 Typical rents seen for one-bed flats across several sheltered/retirement/extra care housing in Huntingdonshire are set out in the table below. The average across the supported housing providers listed in the table equates to £690. The average for extra care housing equates to £1,198.

Table 9.16 Average rental figures for sheltered housing

Huntingdonshire Providers/ Schemes	Rental Cost (monthly)
Supported Housing (sheltered or retirement)*	
Hanover Court, Brampton	£644
Broad Leas Court, St Ives	£657
De Ramsey Court, Warboys	£675
Ashleigh Court, Warboys	£683
Skeels Court, Huntingdon	£698
McNish Court, St Neots	£529
Oak Tree Court, Godmanchester	£760
Average	£668
Extra Care Housing (monthly)	
Eden Place, St Ives	£1,079
Park View, Huntingdon	£1,317
Average	£1,198

Source: Iceni review of multiple online directories^{xi}

**Supported housing schemes typically have extra service charges on top of rent, which residents pay monthly as part of their housing costs.*

- 9.108 The cost of supported housing is close to that for a 1-bedroom flat in the general housing stock (£678 per month). However, once an element of care is added prices begin to increase rapidly.
- 9.109 According to the Regulator of Social Housing data^{xii}, the average rent for supported housing by social landlords in Huntingdonshire, including service charges, was £156.85 per week, with Affordable Rents at £168.99. The average rent for supported housing by private registered providers in Huntingdonshire, including service charges, was £181.02 per week.

- 9.110 Data from the care home market database indicates the national average monthly cost of extra care housing ranges between £1,000 and £1,500 (£230-£346 pw), varying by area and care needs. Care home costs in the East of England, which can overlap in services with extra care housing, averaging from around £1,339 per week for residential to £1,595 for nursing care.
- 9.111 Differences in rent levels are likely influenced by the location of properties, the type of accommodation and the use of private financing for development. However, this does highlight the affordability issues surrounding the existing residential care offering and to a lesser degree extra-care.

Older and Disabled People - Summary

- 9.112 A range of data sources and statistics have been accessed to consider the characteristics and housing needs of the older person population and the population with some form of disability. The two groups are taken together as there is a clear link between age and disability.
- 9.113 The analysis responds to Planning Practice Guidance on Housing for Older and Disabled People published by Government in June 2019 and includes an assessment of the need for specialist accommodation for older people and the potential requirements for housing to be built to M4(2) and M4(3) housing technical standards (accessibility and wheelchair standards).
- 9.114 The data shows that Huntingdonshire has a very slightly older age structure than is seen regionally and nationally, and lower levels of disability compared with other areas.
- 9.115 The older person population shows high proportions of owner-occupation, and particularly outright owners who may have significant

equity in their homes (79% of all older person households are outright owners).

- 9.116 The older person population is projected to increase notably moving forward. An ageing population means that the number of people with disabilities is likely to increase. Key findings for the 2024-46 period include:
- a 38% increase in the population aged 65+ (potentially accounting for 32% of total population growth);
 - a 64% increase in the number of people aged 65+ with dementia and a 54% increase in those aged 65+ with mobility problems;
 - a need for around 2,000 additional housing units with support (sheltered/retirement housing) – around 70% in the market sector;
 - a need for around 1,200 additional housing units with care (e.g. extra-care) – the majority (around three-quarters) in the market sector;
 - a need for additional nursing and residential care bedspaces (around 1,300 in the period); and
 - a need for around 670 dwellings to be for wheelchair users (meeting technical standard M4(3)).
- 9.117 This would suggest that there is a clear need to increase the supply of accessible and adaptable dwellings and wheelchair-user dwellings, as well as providing specific provision of older persons housing.
- 9.118 Given the evidence, the Council's current policy requiring all dwellings (in all tenures) to meet the M4(2) standards is justified. A proportion of market sector homes could be required to meet M4(3) – wheelchair user dwellings in the market sector (a higher proportion for affordable housing could be left open to negotiation as under the current policy).

- 9.119 Where the authority has nomination rights, the supply of M4(3) dwellings would be wheelchair-accessible dwellings (constructed for immediate occupation), and in the market sector, they should be wheelchair-user adaptable dwellings (constructed to be adjustable for occupation by a wheelchair user).
- 9.120 It should, however, be noted that there will be cases where this may not be possible (e.g. due to viability or site-specific circumstances) and so any policy should be applied flexibly.
- 9.121 In framing policies for the provision of specialist older persons accommodation, the Council will need to consider a range of issues. This will include the different use classes of accommodation (i.e. C2 vs. C3) and requirements for affordable housing contributions (linked to this, the viability of provision).
- 9.122 There may also be some practical issues to consider, such as the ability of any individual development being mixed tenure given the way care and support services are paid for.

10. Other Specific Groups

Children in Care

- 10.1 The Care Standards Act 2000 defines a Children's Home stating 'an establishment is a children's home... if it provides care and accommodation wholly or mainly for children'. 'Wholly or mainly' means that most of the people who stay at a home must be children.
- 10.2 Key legislation relating to the accommodation and maintenance of a looked-after child is defined and outlined in Sections 22A to 22D of the Children Act 1989.
- 10.3 The legislation provides a framework within which decisions about the most appropriate way to accommodate and maintain children must be considered:
- Section 22A of the Children Act 1989 imposes a duty on the responsible authority when a child is in their care to provide the child with accommodation.
 - Section 22B of the Children Act 1989 sets out the duty of the responsible authority to maintain a looked-after child in other respects apart from providing accommodation.
 - Section 22C of the Children Act 1989 sets out the ways in which a looked-after child is to be accommodated.
 - Section 22D of the Children Act 1989 imposes a duty on the responsible authority to formally review the child's case prior to making alternative arrangements for accommodation.
 - Section 22G of the Children Act 1989 gives a local authority a general duty to secure sufficient accommodation for looked after children and it also requires local authorities to take strategic action in respect of those children they look after and for whom it would be consistent with their welfare for them to be provided with accommodation within their own local authority area.

- 10.4 In a [Written Ministerial Statement](#) (WMS) made in May 2023, the Housing and Planning Minister reminded local authorities of their requirement to assess the housing need of different groups in the community, including “accommodation for children in need of social services care”.
- 10.5 The WMS said, “Local planning authorities should give due weight to and be supportive of applications, where appropriate, for all types of accommodation for looked after children in their area that reflect local needs and all parties in the development process should work together closely to facilitate the timely delivery of such vital accommodation for children across the country”.
- 10.6 The WMS follows on from the Department for Education (DfE) [Implementation Strategy](#) to fix children’s social care from February 2023. The “Stable Homes Built on Love” Strategy has undergone a recent consultation, the results of which have not yet been published.
- 10.7 The strategy outlines an ambition to transform Children’s Care through six pillars. The first of these pillars makes it clear that providing support to families is the first priority. This ensures that children can remain in their family home for as long as possible (Pillar 1) and then within their wider family if this is not possible (Pillar 3).
- 10.8 If both the immediate and wider family cannot look after a child, then Pillar 4 seeks to ensure that “when care is the best choice for a child, it is critical that the care system provides stable, loving homes close to children’s communities.”
- 10.9 To achieve this, the strategy aims to increase and support foster carers; develop a programme to support improvements in the quality of leadership and management in the children’s homes sector and path-find Regional Care Cooperatives to plan, commission and deliver care places.

- 10.10 The report sets out a mission to “see an increase of high-quality, stable and loving homes available for every child in care, local to where they are from.” To do this, it suggests that an immediate action is to “boost the number of the right homes in the right places available for children as a matter of urgency.”
- 10.11 The strategy notes, “Local authorities have primary responsibility for the children in their care. This includes ensuring there is sufficient accommodation locally to meet the range of needs of children in care in their area,” and that there is a “statutory duty to ensure there is sufficient provision for their children in care.”
- 10.12 It also states that the DfE “will continue to build on our work reforming supported accommodation for 16- to 17-year-olds. Semi-independent provision, including supported lodgings, can be the right option for some older children, but only where it is high-quality, and the young person is ready for the level of independence it promotes.”
- 10.13 The DfE will also continue “with the Children’s Home Capital Programme, which has seen £259 million of capital funding invested to increase provision in local authority-run open and secure children’s homes. We are working with local authorities to create new children’s homes and increase provision in their local area.”
- 10.14 At a similar time, the government also launched a consultation on the [“Children’s Social Care National Framework”](#) and the “Children’s Social Care Dashboard”.
- 10.15 The Framework sets out some of the outcomes to be measured, including Outcome 4 relating to those seeking to ensure “children in care and care leavers have stable, loving homes”.
- 10.16 The indicators include the percentage of children in care living in foster care and living in residential care homes, and the distance of placements from home. This is important to ensure the stability of

schooling and contact with their siblings. The framework recognises that this will mean prioritising foster homes rather than residential homes.

- 10.17 The outcome can also be achieved by leaders undertaking “sufficiency planning and working with other local authorities and partners to jointly invest in care options that meet the future needs of children.”

Engagement with Cambridgeshire County Council Children's Services

- 10.18 To inform this study, we have engaged with officers within the Children's Services at Cambridgeshire County Council. A summary of that discussion is set out below.
- 10.19 Children's Services currently cover a broad area across the county and Peterborough. The area is mainly rural, although there are large urban areas in Peterborough and Cambridge.
- 10.20 Cambridgeshire County Council has an old sufficiency strategy, which, according to officers, is no longer relevant, and they are in the process of updating this strategy.
- 10.21 The County Council's overarching policy is to ensure children are cared for as long as possible within their own families (where it is safe to do so). If this is not possible, then children should be placed in foster care again, where this is available and safe to do so. If not, then children will be placed in residential care homes.
- 10.22 Officers commented that there are currently around 700 looked-after children within the county and Peterborough (0.4% of the population under 18), of which 63 are placed in residential children's care homes (0.03%).
- 10.23 Although the county has 32 registered children's care facilities offering 193 residential beds, officers highlighted that a significant proportion of these are filled by placements from outside the area, such as children from London and elsewhere.

- 10.24 As a result, approximately 53% of children in Cambridgeshire requiring specialised care are placed outside the county due to insufficient local provisions. Officers highlighted a particular lack of provision for single children with more complex needs.
- 10.25 To address this shortage, officers commented that the County Council is developing its own facilities. They have secured approval to refurbish two council-owned farmhouses, each of which will accommodate two children.
- 10.26 Because these sites are in remote locations, these homes will specifically cater to children with complex needs and those who are difficult to place, thereby reducing the necessity of sending children out of the area for solo provisions.
- 10.27 Foster care provision remains inadequate, with only 180 foster carers available in the county, according to officers. To alleviate this issue, officers highlighted that the council is adopting the "Christian Bale model", whereby larger new-build affordable housing is offered to foster families, enabling them to accommodate more children.
- 10.28 This initiative is particularly crucial as there is an increasing number of siblings requiring placements, necessitating larger homes. Moreover, officers highlighted that the current foster carer population is ageing, leading to a decline in numbers.
- 10.29 The County Council emphasises the importance of placing children in family environments, and fostering is also encouraged to support children stepping down from residential care home placements.
- 10.30 Typically, children in care homes range in age from 11-16 before moving into semi-independent accommodation. However, officers commented that fostering aims to allow children to "stay put" until the age of 21.
- 10.31 The County Council is actively seeking to expand provision and is eager to collaborate with multiple providers to enhance sufficiency. Local

authorities across the County and Peterborough are encouraged to support further proposals to meet growing demands.

- 10.32 Regionally, there has been a marked increase in children whose assessed care needs remain unmet, often resulting in inappropriate placements in residential care rather than foster families, particularly affecting younger children who then risk becoming institutionalised.
- 10.33 To better serve local children, officers highlighted that the County Council intends to work proactively with external providers and establish block book provision through a tendering process, thus ensuring local supply for Cambridgeshire children.
- 10.34 The County Council recognises an urgent need for more single child provision specifically aimed at children aged 12-15 with complex needs.
- 10.35 Ideally, any new residential children's care homes should be situated near public transport links with easy access to essential services and education.
- 10.36 This strategic placement aims to reduce dependency on private transport and taxis and ensure minimal disruption to children's educational continuity.
- 10.37 As well as new provision, officers are seeking to repurpose existing stock. However, when refurbishing council properties for foster carers and residential care, officers noted that considerations must include mitigating property damage from complex-needs children.
- 10.38 Design recommendations include installing underfloor heating rather than radiators, spotlights rather than hanging lights, and ensuring properties are free from ligatures and potential weapons.
- 10.39 Finally, officers highlighted that while there is a range of supported accommodation available within Cambridgeshire and Peterborough, most Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Children (UASC) prefer placements in Peterborough to remain close to local mosques.

- 10.40 Efforts are underway to collaborate more closely with mosques in Cambridge to support these children within this locality. For Huntingdonshire, this might mean providing accommodation in the Yaxley area.

Projecting Need

- 10.41 Engagement with the County Council has revealed the number of Children in Care and looked after children in Cambridgeshire and Peterborough. We have translated these into prevalence rates based on the known population aged under 18 in this area.
- 10.42 These prevalence rates have then been applied to the projected population growth linked to the Standard Method for Huntingdonshire. As shown in the table below, this would result in an increased demand for 3 additional residential beds in children’s care homes by 2046.

Table 10.1 Need for Residential Children's Care Homes

Component	Cambridgeshire and Peterborough	Huntingdonshire 2024	Huntingdonshire 2046	Change
Under 18s Population	195,148	38,240	48,300	10,060
Children in Care	700	153	193	40
Prevalence	0.40%	0.40%	0.40%	
Residential Care	63	11	14	3
Prevalence	0.03%	0.03%	0.03%	

Source: Iceni Projects based on County Council Data

- 10.43 However, it should be reiterated that this is a nominal calculation, and the demand for additional residential care bedspaces for children will depend on the success or otherwise of preferred alternatives such as familial care or foster care.

Meeting the Needs Of Looked After Children

- 10.44 The WMS statement said “Local planning authorities should give due weight to and be supportive of applications, where appropriate, for all

types of accommodation for looked after children in their area that reflect local needs”

- 10.45 The national and County policy direction is to provide in-situ support, followed by familial and foster support. Therefore, the demand for care homes will largely be determined by the success of these policies. Where this is not possible, then local authorities will be required to provide safe accommodation in the right places.
- 10.46 When considering future supply, the Council should seek to include such accommodation as part of wider, appropriately located, housing allocations or larger permissions. Typically, these are “ordinary homes.”
- 10.47 This need would be met and managed by a combination of the County Council and through external providers. Such sites should align with the most appropriate locations according to [Ofsted’s Location Assessment](#) for such accommodation. In summary, this includes ensuring safeguarding concerns are met and that children have access to services.
- 10.48 There will also be a need for supported accommodation for young adults, and the Council should work with the County Council and Registered Providers to explore opportunities to provide this through developer contributions and in the existing stock.
- 10.49 The Council may also wish to explore opportunities to access future independent sector supply for local children rather than out-of-area placements. This could be achieved through planning or licensing regulations forcing operators to give first refusal to local children.

Service Personnel

- 10.50 There are active and former military bases in Huntingdonshire, specifically RAF Wyton, RAF Alconbury and RAF Molesworth. RAF Alconbury is a joint-service base with the US Air Force and the RAF.
- 10.51 According to data from the Ministry of Defence (MOD), as of April 2024, there are 2,200 military (UK Regular Forces) and MOD Civilian Personnel based in Huntingdonshire. Data was not made available to this study on the number of US military personnel and their dependents resident in the district.
- 10.52 The proportion of service personnel within Huntingdonshire makes up 13% of all service personnel across the East of England region and 26% of the county.
- 10.53 The Census also collects data on those who have previously served in the UK armed forces. This shows that Huntingdonshire has an above average level of population who previously served in the UK regular armed forces and similar levels of reservists.

Table 10.2 Previously Served Population (2021)

	Huntingdonshire		Cambridge-shire	East of England	England
	number	%	%	%	%
All usual residents aged 16 and over	148,261	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Previously served in UK regular armed forces	6,769	4.6	3.2	2.9	2.9
Previously served in UK reserve armed forces	1,100	0.7	0.7	0.7	0.7
Previously served in both regular and reserve UK armed forces	295	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2
Has not previously served in any UK armed forces	140,097	94.5	96.0	96.2	96.2

Source: ONS, Census 2021

- 10.54 In total, around 8,164 people living in Huntingdonshire have served in the regular or reserved armed forces at one stage.

National Policy

- 10.55 Annex 2 of the NPPF identifies Military Personnel as Essential Key Workers. Depending on their incomes, this group will already be accounted for within the affordable housing need and will largely not be additional to it.
- 10.56 The Planning Practice Guidance for First Homes also allows local authorities to set out their own criteria for accessing such housing. One such criterion could be a key worker requirement, which would include service personnel. Although it is unlikely that First Homes will be delivered in Huntingdonshire or indeed anywhere as the tenure has not been met with much success.
- 10.57 The most acute and pressing issue is likely to be finding accommodation for those transitioning out of the forces. Low Cost Home Ownership routes could play a part in meeting this demand.
- 10.58 While there are issues with homeless veterans, the scale of this need is potentially overstated according to MOD representatives. One reason for this perception is that some beggars portray themselves as veterans when often they are not. Data shows that service personnel are less likely to be homeless and have greater access to help.
- 10.59 The Allocation of Housing (Qualification Criteria for Armed Forces) (England) Regulations ensure that Service personnel (including bereaved spouses or civil partners) are not required to have a local connection in order to access housing.
- 10.60 This means that ex-service personnel would not suffer a disadvantage from any 'residence' criteria chosen by the Local Authority in their allocations policy.
- 10.61 Furthermore, any ex-armed forces personnel with mental health issues who present themselves to the Council as homeless would be assisted as a vulnerable group and would be given priority need for housing.

- 10.62 The Council is a signatory to the Armed Forces Covenant, which is a promise between the Council and the armed forces and their families to ensure they will be prioritised, including for housing need and supporting adjustments made to homes if disabled in service.

Engagement with USAAF

- 10.63 To inform this study, we have engaged with the USA Air Force. However, they were unable to say how many service personnel were based in Huntingdonshire as their report system does not pick up the continuous movement of service members moving in and out the area
- 10.64 They noted that they had no barracks on RAF Alconbury; however, their dorms are currently running at 100% occupancy, and government-owned housing (on-base) is at 82%.
- 10.65 They noted that prices are rising off-base, meaning service members are finding it difficult to find something that fits their needs within the price limitations they have. Contracting costs are also rising, meaning on-base properties are harder to 'turn around' to get them ready for new occupiers.
- 10.66 They noted that off-base housing is becoming limited as new laws come in for landlords, and a number of them are choosing to sell and move on from being a landlord meaning fewer rentals are available for service members.
- 10.67 They did not have any plans to change the number of personnel stationed in Huntingdonshire. Service members have the right to choose where they live when moving off-base, but are advised to stay close to work for commuting purposes.

Custom and Self-build Register

- 10.68 As of 1st April 2016, and in line with the 2015 Act and the Right to Build, relevant authorities in England are required to have established and publicised a self-build and custom housebuilding register which records those seeking to acquire serviced plots of land in the authority's area to build their own self-build and custom houses.
- 10.69 Huntingdonshire Self-Build and Custom Housebuilding Register was introduced on the 1st of April 2016, and there have now been eight and a half base periods up to 30th October 2024.
- 10.70 A base period is a period of typically 12 months in which demand for custom and self-build is recorded. However, the first base period began on the day on which the register was established and ended on 30 October 2016 in accordance with national requirements.
- 10.71 Each subsequent base period is the period of 12 months beginning immediately after the end of the previous base period. Subsequent base periods will therefore run from 31 October to 30 October each year.
- 10.72 The Council is required to grant sufficient planning permissions to meet the demand identified on the Register as per the 2015 Act (as amended) within 3 years of the end of each base period.
- 10.73 There is no reporting mechanism to know if self-built homes have actually been delivered or if the people on the register have secured a plot. It should be noted that people can register on as many local authorities' Custom and Self-build Registers as they choose to.
- 10.74 The table below provides a base period breakdown of those individuals who have expressed demand for serviced plots of land in Huntingdonshire. We have also included data on the number of plots permitted three years after each base period.

- 10.75 Huntingdonshire's Custom and Self-Build Register is divided into two parts: Part One records local demand from those who meet the Local Connections Test, while Part Two tracks general demand without requiring a local connection. For plan-making purposes, both Part 1 and Part 2 need to be considered.
- 10.76 In total, around 356 people have registered an interest in a self and custom build plot in Huntingdonshire over the last eight and a half base periods.
- 10.77 This averages out at 42 per base period, although registration numbers have declined in recent years, with an average of only 13 individuals on Part One and Part Two for the two most recent base periods (2022-2024).
- 10.78 Although this indicates the future need for plots, the actual requirement will depend on the numbers entering the register. There will also be a need to address any backlog.
- 10.79 Since 2016, there have been 378 Custom and Self-Build permissions granted at an average of 44 per base period. The table below outlines registrations and permission figures for each base period.

Table 10.3 Summary of self-build registrations and commencement figures

Base Period	Part 1	Part 2	Total Annual Entries	Permissions
Base Period 1 (1st April 2016 to 30th October 2016)	10	2	12	18
Base Period 2 (31st October 2016 to 30th October 2017)	23	2	25	39
Base Period 3 (31st October 2017 to 30th October 2018)	47	21	68	55
Base Period 4 (31st October 2018 to 30th October 2019)	43	30	73	55
Base Period 5 (31st October 2019 to 30th October 2020)	27	16	43	50
Base Period 6 (31st October 2020 to 30th October 2021)	36	26	62	49
Base Period 7 (31st October 2021 to 30th October 2022)	31	16	47	43
Base Period 8 (31st October 2022 to 30th October 2023)	15	1	16	40
Base Period 9 (31st October 2023 to 30th October 2024)	9	1	10	29
Total	241	115	356	378
Average (8.5 base periods)			42	44
Timed Out Requirements (excluding the last three years)			283	378
Supply and Demand Balance				95

Source: Annual Monitoring Report, 2023/24

- 10.80 Under the current legislation, local authorities have three years to respond to the identified need. This means that if we exclude the last three years of demand, the council will have been required to permit 283 suitable plots against which there has been a delivery of 378. This includes permissions up to the current year, as anything in the last three years can address historic need.
- 10.81 Overall, there has been an oversupply of permitted plots in the region of 95 dwellings. This would also address the need in the interim period, which stands at around 73 people.

Annual Monitoring Report

10.82 The annual monitoring report also examines several qualitative aspects of custom and self-build demand in Huntingdonshire. This has revealed:

- The most common reasons for interest in self-build are given as higher environmental performance (24%), larger home (18%) and improving or learning building and construction skills (15%).
- Demand is found across the district, but the greatest demand is for smaller settlements (32%) and in the countryside (28%).
- Half of those registered have said they are interested in building a home greater than 500 sqm, with 40% seeking 5+ bedrooms.
- Around 61% are seeking a detached house and 23% a detached bungalow; and
- Around 80% said they anticipated spending more than £400,000.

Broader demand evidence

10.83 To supplement the data from the authority's register, we have looked to secondary sources as recommended by the PPG, which for this report is data from NaCSBA - the national association for the custom and self-build housing sector.

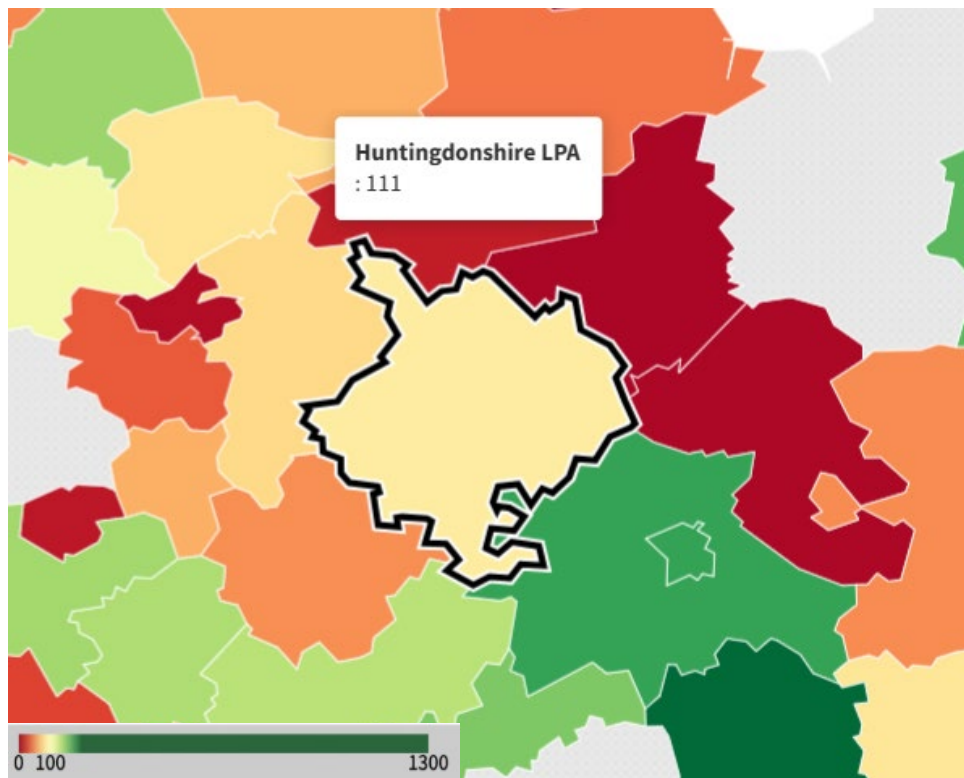
10.84 First, it is worth highlighting that the October 2020 survey undertaken by YouGov on behalf of NaCSBA found that 1 in 3 people (32%) are interested in building their own home at some point in the future, including 12% who said they were very interested.

10.85 Notably, almost half (48%) of those aged between 18 and 24 were interested in building their own home, compared to just 18% of those aged 55 and over.

10.86 This is notable as, traditionally, self-build has been seen as the reserve of older members of society aged 55 and over, with equity in their property^{xiii}.

- 10.87 Secondly, we can draw on NaCSBA data to better understand the level of demand for serviced plots in Huntingdonshire in relative terms. The association published an analysis with supporting maps and commentary titled “Mapping the Right to Build” in 2020.
- 10.88 This document includes an output on the demand for serviced plots as a proportion of the total population relative to all other local authorities across England (see Figure below).

Figure 10.1 Total registrations per 100,000 population in Huntingdonshire in 2020



Source: NaCSBA

- 10.89 This shows that the demand in Huntingdonshire was 111 per 100,000 population. Based on the population of the district in 2024 of around 188,000, this would equate to a need for around 208 units.
- 10.90 With the population projected to increase to 234,000, this would generate a need for 260 dwellings. This is slightly lower than the identified need on the register.

10.91 Despite the figure from NaCSBA being lower than the level of demand shown on the register, the council still have a duty to permit enough plots for self and custom build as indicated by the register.

Potential Policy Response

10.92 The Self-Build and Custom Housebuilding PPG sets out how authorities can increase the number of planning permissions which are suitable for self-build and custom housebuilding and support the sector.

10.93 The PPG is clear that authorities should consider how local planning policies may address identified requirements for self and custom housebuilding to ensure enough serviced plots with suitable permission come forward, and can focus on playing a key role in facilitating relationships to bring land forward.

10.94 There are several other measures which can be used to meet demand, including but not limited to:

- supporting Neighbourhood Planning groups where they choose to include self-build and custom-build housing policies in their plans;
- working with Homes England to unlock land and sites in wider public ownership to deliver self-build and custom-build housing;
- when engaging with developers and landowners who own sites that are suitable for housing, encouraging them to consider self-build and custom housebuilding, and facilitating access to those on the register where the landowner is interested; and
- working with local partners, such as Housing Associations and third sector groups, to custom build affordable housing for veterans and other groups in acute housing need.

10.95 An increasing number of local planning authorities have adopted specific self-build and custom housebuilding policies in their respective Local Plans to encourage delivery, promote and boost housing supply.

10.96 There are also several appeal decisions in the context of decision-making which have found that paragraph 11(d) of the Framework is

engaged in the absence of specific policy on self-build housing when this is the focus of a planning application.

- 10.97 At present, the Local Plan Policy LP25 states, “Where appropriate, the Council will work with developers, registered providers, landowners and relevant individuals or groups to address identified local requirements for self and custom-build homes as identified in the Huntingdonshire self and custom-build register.” This would be classed as a general encouragement policy.
- 10.98 Another policy option would typically require that a minimum proportion of plots within development schemes (often over a certain size) are offered to self-builders or as custom-build plots and/or allocation of sites solely for their use. This is often known as the “Teignbridge Rule” after the first District Council to adopt the first self-build policy. In that instance, 5% of all developable housing land is allocated for custom and self-build on larger sites.
- 10.99 Iceni consider that to respond to demand in the sector and in response to the PPG’s requirements, the Council should continue to support, through planning policy, the submission and delivery of self-build and custom housebuilding sites, where land opportunities arise and where such schemes are consistent with other planning policies.

Co-Living

- 10.100 There is no accepted planning definition of "co-living" in either the NPPF or planning practice guidance. However, Co-living developments generally involve private rooms or studios with access to shared communal facilities like kitchens, living areas and workspaces. They are often large-scale developments.
- 10.101 While the NPPF does not specifically mention co-living, it highlights that the needs of specific housing groups should be addressed with

reference to the size, type and tenure of housing (paragraph 63) they require.

10.102 Savills' research^{xiv} indicates that demand for co-living accommodation is concentrated in London and other major regional cities and estimates the potential size of the target market for Co-living across the UK to be around 725,000 units. There are currently no Co-living developments in Huntingdonshire.

10.103 The closest co-living scheme to the district is the Marmalade Lane co-housing scheme, located in Orchard Park in Cambridge, which offers 42 units with a focus on community and a wide mix of homes. The development is suitable for residents of all ages and a mix of family types. When available, units are available to buy or rent.

The Profile of Co-Living Tenants

10.104 Target residents of co-living developments are typically students, recent graduates and young professionals and most development is located in city centres.

10.105 Savills also profiled a co-living development in Guildford and noted that it has attracted residents working in "healthcare, gaming, and technology."

10.106 In another co-living development in Wembley, the same research showed that only around 41% of residents had lived in London previously, and 35% of residents were from overseas.

10.107 Although open to all ages, residents of co-living developments are predominantly aged 18–40 years old. However, Co-living is also increasingly seen as a valuable option for older people, offering frameworks for older adults that address the risks of loneliness and social isolation while providing affordable accommodation. Of the limited case studies available for older persons, these tend to be in the form of cohousing rather than co-living.

- 10.108 Given the above, there is only likely to be limited demand for Co-living in Huntingdonshire. Although engagement with the USAAF suggests that the cost and availability of rental accommodation is becoming an issue and this suggests that there could be a market for transient military personnel stationed nearby.

Benefits of Co-Living

- 10.109 As well as addressing housing need, co-living benefits young professionals facing affordability pressures, as well as those who are new to an area, as it allows them to establish roots and make friendships when otherwise they might face a degree of isolation.
- 10.110 The Savills research also stated that co-living has several pull factors (extensive amenities, interaction with fellow residents, flexible leases and all-inclusive bills) but demand is also aided by the push factors of high house prices, a lack of PRS stock, high rents and people seeking to avoid house-shares, some of which are not relevant to Huntingdonshire.

Co-living Potential Policy Response

- 10.111 The PPG on Build to Rent (of which Co-living is a component) recognises that where a need is identified that local planning authorities should include a specific plan policy relating to the promotion and accommodation of Build to Rent.
- 10.112 At the present time, we do not think that it would be necessary for the Council to consider a policy to respond to future applications.
- 10.113 However, if the council do think otherwise, given that the sector is still evolving, we would recommend that the Council is not overly prescriptive on the mix of dwelling sizes within new such developments.

- 10.114 The Council should also recognise that the viability of Co-living schemes is likely to differ relative to other forms of development, as income is generated over time rather than when the market properties are sold.
- 10.115 Therefore, the Council's policy on affordable housing provision in such schemes should be informed by up-to-date viability evidence which recognises this.
- 10.116 This may mean seeking a different contribution of affordable housing than the wider general housing policies.

Students

- 10.117 There are no higher education providers/facilities in Huntingdonshire and the 2021 Census reported only 19 all-student households in the District. There is therefore no justification for a specific policy relating to student housing in the District.

Other Specific Groups – Summary

Looked After Children

- 10.118 The County Council's overarching policy is to ensure as few children as possible will be placed in residential care homes.
- 10.119 There are currently around 700 looked-after children within the county and Peterborough (0.4%), of which 63 are placed in residential children's care homes (0.03%).
- 10.120 Although the county has 32 registered children's care facilities, a significant proportion of these are filled by placements from outside the area. As a result, there is insufficient local provision.

- 10.121 To address this shortage, the County Council is developing its own facilities and actively seeking to expand provision through collaboration with the independent sector.
- 10.122 If current prevalence rates continue, the projected population growth, linked to the Standard Method, would result in an increased demand for 3 additional residential beds in children's care homes by 2045 (a total of 14).
- 10.123 But additional demand for residential care bedspaces for children will depend on the success or otherwise of preferred alternatives such as familial care or foster care.
- 10.124 Regardless, the Council are encouraged to support further proposals to meet growing demands.
- 10.125 There will also be a need for supported accommodation for young adults, and the Council should work with the County Council and Registered Providers to explore opportunities to provide this.

Service Families

- 10.126 The Huntingdonshire is home to several military establishments, including RAF Wyton, RAF Alconbury and RAF Molesworth. RAF Alconbury is a joint-service base with the US Air Force and the RAF.
- 10.127 According to data from the Ministry of Defence (MOD), as of April 2024, there are 2,200 military (UK Regular Forces) and MOD Civilian Personnel based in Huntingdonshire.
- 10.128 Overall, the presence of regular forces in Huntingdonshire is not considered to be significant and is unlikely to have any implications on overall affordability, but it may be driving demand in local areas.
- 10.129 It is considered that the most pressing issue is likely to be finding accommodation for those transitioning out of the forces, as well as existing personnel who are seeking to buy in the District.

10.130 Provision of Low-Cost Home Ownership can help account for this, as well as the Allocation of Housing regulations, which allow military personnel to establish local connections to the area.

10.131 Overall, this group are likely to already be accounted for within affordable housing need and is not considered to be additional to it.

Custom and Self-Build

10.132 The Council is required to grant sufficient planning permissions to meet the demand identified on the Register within 3 years of the end of each base period.

10.133 There has been a total of 356 registered expressions of interest in a serviced plot of land in Huntingdonshire. This is an average of 42 registrations per base period (12 months, but not a calendar year). Although recent registrations have fallen.

10.134 Although this indicates the future need for plots, the actual requirement will depend on the numbers entering the register and any unmet need, of which to date there is none.

10.135 There will also be a more stringent requirement for the Council to demonstrate that this supply is being occupied by those commissioning or customising the build before it can be counted towards the supply.

10.136 The Council may wish to consider a policy for self and custom build as a proportion of new homes on larger developments, as well as its current policy supporting it.

Students and Co-living

10.137 We do not consider it to be necessary to develop a policy to address the need for students or Co-living.

11. Glossary

Affordable Home Ownership	A variety of sub-market home ownership products. This category includes shared ownership, shared equity and First Homes.
Affordable Housing Need	All households whose needs are not met by the market can be considered in affordable housing need.
Base Period	A specific timeframe used for monitoring self and custom build dwellings (typically 1 st November to 31 st of October)
Bedroom Standard	The Bedroom Standard is an ONS definition of the ideal number of bedrooms a household needs based on its composition and sets criteria for when a home is overcrowded, ideally occupied or under-occupied. It allocates bedrooms by age, sex and relationships among household members to assess housing.
Build to Rent	Residential developments, constructed specifically for the purpose of being rented out, rather than sold.
CIL	Community Infrastructure Levy is a charge which can be levied by local authorities on new development in their area. It is an important tool for local authorities to use to help them deliver the infrastructure needed to support development in their area.
Co-living	A form of Build to Rent this is a modern living arrangement where someone rents a room or studio apartment within a communal

	property, benefiting from shared amenities and activities.
Custom and Self-Build	Self-build and custom housebuilding cover a wide spectrum, from projects where individuals are involved in building or managing the construction of their home from beginning to end, to projects where individuals commission their home, making key design and layout decisions, but the home is built ready for occupation
HMA	Housing Market Area is a functional geography effectively replicating typical areas of search
HMO	Houses in Multiple Occupation – Shared accommodation among unrelated adults within a single dwelling
Household	The Census defines a household as “either one person living alone or a group of people (not necessarily related) living at the same address with common housekeeping – that is, sharing at least one meal a day or sharing a living room or sitting room.”
Housing Need	The quantum of homes need in an area and is calculated using the standard method
Housing Requirement	The quantum of homes being planned for within an area also known as a housing target. This may differ from the housing need.
Household Reference Person	A household member who is effectively head of a household. If there are joint householders, the one with the highest income is the household reference person under the ONS definition

Housing with Care	Housing, which comes with an element of care from a third party includes tenures such as extra care housing, assisted living, retirement villages, independent living, assisted living, close care and sheltered living.
Housing with Support	Housing, which comes with an element of support from a third party, including sheltered accommodation.
Labour Supply	The number of people who are available for work in a given area
Looked After Children	A child who has been in the care of their local authority for more than 24 hours is known as a looked-after child.
LURA	Levelling-up and Regeneration Act 2023 which provided additional legislation in relation to housing issues including self and custom build.
Median Incomes	Midpoint of all incomes if sorted from highest to lowest
M4(2)	A building regulation standard where dwellings are accessible and adaptable.
M4(3)	A building regulation standard where dwellings are fully suitable for those who use a wheelchair.
MYE	Mid-year population estimates produced annual by ONS
NPPF	National Planning Policy Framework is the UK government's national policy for England's planning system, outlining policies for housing, economic development, and the environment
Occupancy rating	Whether a household's accommodation is overcrowded,

	ideally occupied or under-occupied. This is calculated by comparing the number of bedrooms the household requires (see bedroom standard) to the number of available bedrooms. Occupancy rating of -1 or less implies the accommodation has fewer bedrooms than required, +1 implies more bedrooms than required and 0 suggests there are an ideal number of bedrooms.
Older person	Individuals over the age of 65
PBSA	Purpose Built Student Accommodation
PPG	Planning Practice Guidance provide further guidance on how the NPPF is applied
SNPP	Subnational Population Projections produced by ONS
Service Families	Families of individuals serving or previously served in the UK armed forces.
Standard Method	The standard method is a formula for determining housing need it uses a formula that incorporates a baseline of local housing stock, which is then adjusted upwards to reflect local affordability pressures to identify the minimum number of homes expected to be planned for.

References

- ⁱ Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Memorandum of Co-operation. Supporting the Spatial Approach 2011-2031.
- ⁱⁱ Office for National Statistics, 2011. Census.
- ⁱⁱⁱ Office for National Statistics, 2024. Population estimates for England and Wales:mid-2023.
- ^{iv} Office for National Statistics, 2021. Census.
- ^v MHCLG, 2025. Dwelling Stock Estimates.
- ^{vi} Huntingdonshire District Council Local Plan, 2023/24. Annual Monitoring Report – Part 2 (Policy Analysis)
- ^{vii} HM Land Registry, 2025. Price Paid Data.
- ^{viii} Office for National Statistics, 2025. Housing affordability in England and Wales.
- ^{ix} Valuation Office Agency, 2023. Private rental market statistics.
- ^x MHCLG, 2025. Housing and economic needs assessment.
- ^{xi} [Housing21.org.uk](https://www.housing21.org.uk); [housingcare.org](https://www.housingcare.org); [Huntingdonshire.gov.uk/housing](https://www.huntingdonshire.gov.uk/housing); [carehome.co.uk](https://www.carehome.co.uk); [helpinghandshomecare.co.uk](https://www.helpinghandshomecare.co.uk); [platformhg.com](https://www.platformhg.com); [anchor.org.uk](https://www.anchor.org.uk); [housing.org.uk](https://www.housing.org.uk); [Huntingdonshire.gov.uk/media](https://www.huntingdonshire.gov.uk/media); [rightmove.co.uk](https://www.rightmove.co.uk)
- ^{xii} Regulator of Social Housing, 2023. Registered providers stocks and rent.
- ^{xiii} NaCSBA, 2020. Self and Custom Build: Consumer Survey of Self-Build Intentions & The Effect of COVID-19 on How We See Our Homes.
- ^{xiv} Savills, 2022. UK Co-living: a market poised for huge growth.