

# **Housing and Health Needs Assessment**

**Introduction, overview of Suffolk  
and national and local context**

**Suffolk  
2024**



## Introduction

Housing conditions can impact physical and mental health in a variety of ways. The Marmot Review states housing is a 'social determinant of health' which can affect physical and mental health throughout life<sup>2</sup>. The Marmot Review 10 years on further expanded on the relationship between poor housing and health, with poor quality housing (particularly damp and cold homes) harming physical and mental health, with poor housing conditions widening existing health inequalities<sup>5</sup>.

Unaffordable housing also adversely impacts health, with 21% of adults in England stating a housing issue had negatively impacted their mental health, with housing affordability most frequently stated as the reason<sup>5</sup>. Since 2010, housing costs have risen substantially in England, disproportionately impacting lower income families who must spend more of their household budget to housing, leaving less for other essentials<sup>5</sup>. It is estimated that vulnerable people living in the poorest 15% of England's housing costs the NHS £1.4 billion in first-year treatment costs alone. This is comparable to the burden to the NHS of other risk factors such as smoking and alcohol consumption<sup>62</sup>. Per the Building Research Establishment (BRE) analysis, the annual NHS cost of treating people impacted by England's worst housing is £540 million. BRE also estimate that investment in repairs and upgrades to the 700,000 excessively cold homes in England would repay the outlay within 9 years' time<sup>4</sup>.

A large proportion of the housing stock in England is old, with over 1 in 5 (20.8%) of dwellings built pre-1919<sup>63</sup>. Older houses are more likely to have poor energy efficiency, substandard materials, lack modern amenities, and incur higher maintenance costs. Older households are more likely to require retrofitting to improve energy efficiency and prevent health issues. New houses will also require suitable insulation and fuel sources to provide thermal comfort and affordable energy, while preventing health implications brought on by damp and mould.

Improving housing conditions will lead to improved health for residents. While many neighbourhood renewal programs involve housing upgrades, a primary goal of these initiatives is often to make the area more appealing by attracting new residents. This can end up exacerbating existing inequalities, as the original inhabitants rarely benefit from the changes that cater to attracting a different population to the area<sup>64,65</sup>.

Research indicates that housing investment to improve thermal comfort in homes can lead to health improvements, especially for those with inadequate warmth and chronic respiratory disease. Suitable housing and affordable warmth may also reduce absences from school or work<sup>64</sup>.

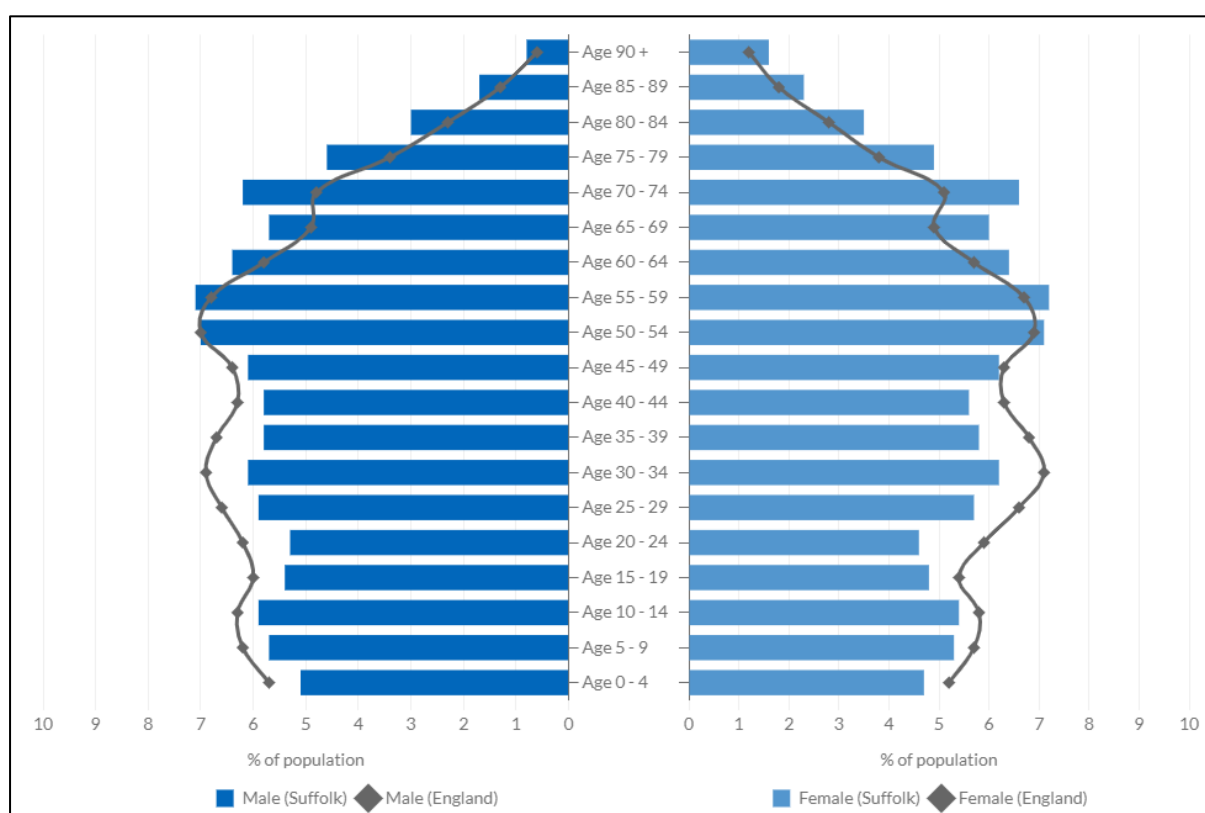
In 2019, the government manifesto pledged to increase the number of homes being built, referring to a need to rebalance the housing market towards greater home ownership<sup>66</sup>. As a result, a target of 300,000 homes being built per year by the mid-2020's was set in England, also confirmed as recently as October 2022<sup>66</sup>. This target was set partly due to population growth, but also because of the number of people living in unsuitable accommodation and affordability pressure preventing people accessing the housing they require.

## Overview of Suffolk

It is vital to understand the changing demography of Suffolk to provide context to the data presented within the Housing and Health Needs Assessment.

Figure 1 presents a population pyramid of Suffolk split by age and sex, compared to England. Suffolk had a population of 760,700 at the time of the 2021 census<sup>67</sup>. Compared to England overall, Suffolk has an older population. 17.1% of Suffolk residents are children aged 0-15 (versus 18.5% in England), and 59.3% are working-age adults aged 16-64 (versus 63.2%). However, 23.6% of Suffolk's population are aged 65 and over, compared to 18.1% in England. This has implications for the housing sector in Suffolk, as an older population will require different housing, with a greater demand for care services.

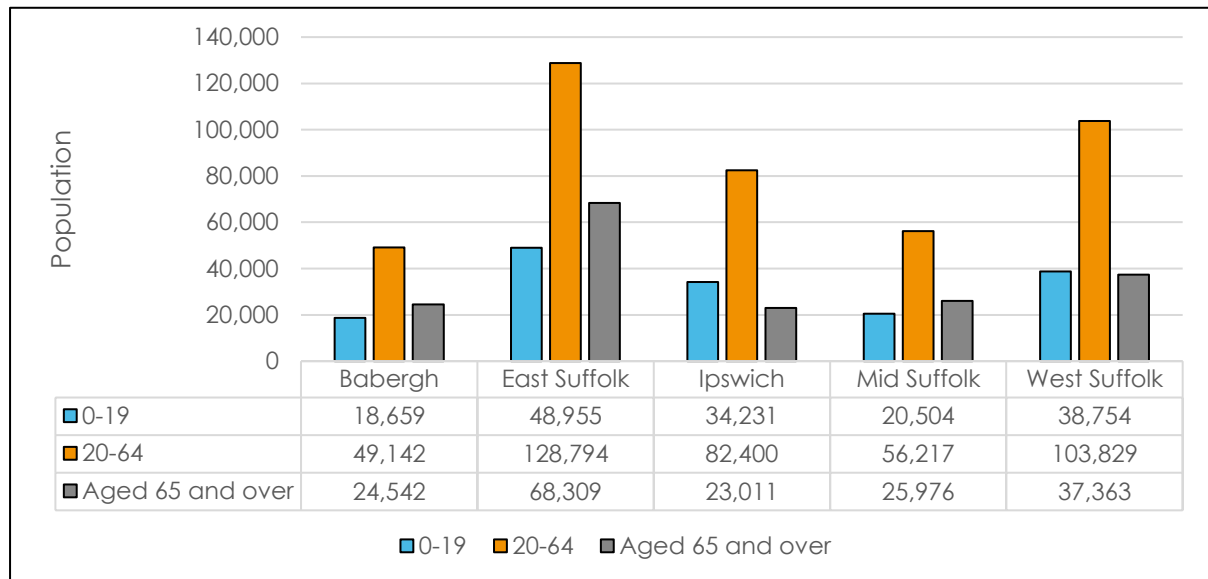
**Figure 1. Population pyramid by age and sex, Suffolk, and England, census 2021**



Source: [Suffolk Observatory – Population](#)

Figure 2 illustrates that East Suffolk has the largest population in Suffolk at 246,058. Babergh is the smallest local authority within Suffolk with 92,343 residents. East Suffolk has both the highest number of young people (aged 0-19) and older people (aged 65 and over) within Suffolk.

**Figure 2. 2021 Census population estimates, Suffolk boroughs/districts by selected age groups**

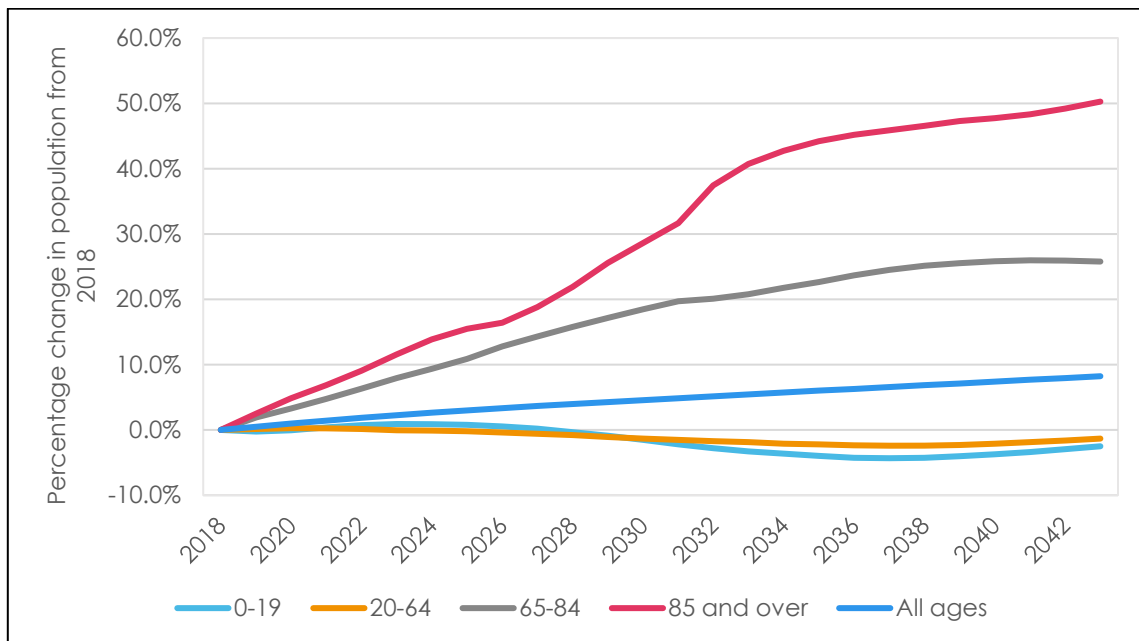


Source: [Office for National Statistics](#)

Figure 3 shows Suffolk's population projections of all ages and selected age groups. Suffolk's projected population growth until 2043 is illustrated below, including the percentage of population growth for age bands 0-19, 20-64, 65-84, 85 and over, and all ages.

The steepest increase is seen in the 85 and over age group, there is also an increase in the proportion of individuals aged 65-84 years of age. Suffolk's population for all ages is expected to increase by 8.2% by 2043, however the proportion of young people (0-19 years) and working age adults (20 to 64 years of age) is expected to decrease - albeit marginally – over the same period. Given the significant increase in the percentage of older adults until 2043, new households constructed in Suffolk need to be suitable for an ageing population.

**Figure 3. Population projections, Suffolk 2018 to 2043, all ages, and selected age groups**

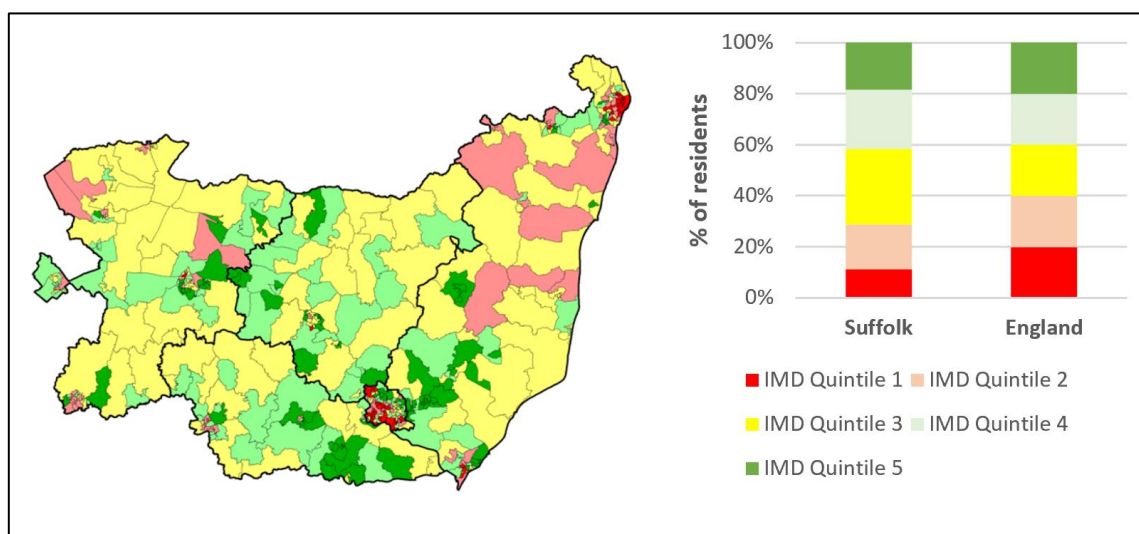


Source: [Office for National Statistics](#)

The Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) measures relative deprivation in small areas in England.

Figure 4 displays an IMD map of Suffolk by Lower Super Output Areas (LSOAs) and an IMD quintile comparison to England. Suffolk is relatively affluent, however 11.3% of LSOAs are within the top 20% most deprived nationally. These areas are situated primarily within Lowestoft and Ipswich. The largest proportion of Suffolk residents (29.7%) live in IMD quintile 3.

**Figure 4. Suffolk IMD map by LSOA area and IMD quintile comparison to England**



Source: [English indices of deprivation 2019](#)

## Policy context

National policies aim to reform the private rented sector, increase housing supply, improve social housing, reduce homelessness, and raise housing quality standards. Key proposals include banning no-fault evictions, building 300,000 homes per year, regulating social housing, and halving the number of non-decent rented homes by 2030.

Locally, Suffolk councils share goals to increase affordable housing supply, improve existing housing quality, meet specific housing needs such as suitable supply for older people, prevent homelessness, and working with partners. Local strategies also emphasise sustainability, energy efficiency, suitable housing options, and support services.

National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) guidelines on indoor air quality at home provide recommendations for local authorities, healthcare professionals, builders, architects, and landlords to improve indoor air quality by addressing sources of pollutants, ensuring proper ventilation, and raising awareness about the health risks associated with poor indoor air quality. The guidelines are particularly for vulnerable groups such as children and those with respiratory conditions.

## What does the H&HNA tell us about housing policy?

This section outlines the key national and local policies in relation to housing and health.

### National context

#### **Renters (Reform) Bill – expected 2024**

This Bill concerns changing legislation for rented homes. It will include provision to abolish fixed term assured tenancies and assured shorthold tenancies, while imposing obligations for landlords and others in relation to rented homes and temporary or support accommodation<sup>68</sup>.

Assured shorthold tenancies have become the default tenancy in the private rented sector in England from the 28<sup>th</sup> of February 1997. However, assured shorthold tenancies provide no long-term security of tenure. The Housing Act 1988 currently allows private landlords to repossess their properties without establishing fault on the tenant's part. This is known as a 'no-fault' ground for eviction<sup>69</sup>.

There is now a body of evidence that demonstrates this lack of security leading to tenants feeling unable to enforce their rights to repairs and challenge unreasonable rent increases. The 'A fairer private rented sector' (detailed below) states many renters "are living in damp, dangerous, cold homes, powerless to put things right, and with the threat of sudden eviction hanging over them."

Local housing authorities believe no fault evictions increase the likelihood of homelessness, while landlord bodies say homeless application from people in the

sector are linked to rent arrears caused by welfare reform. Landlord bodies also use no fault evictions to avoid lengthy processes.

The bill proposes to:

- abolish assured shorthold tenancies and section 21 'no fault' evictions. Private rented sector tenancies will be monthly periodic assured tenancies with no end date
- grounds for landlords to repossess properties would be amended and strengthened where tenants exhibit anti-social behaviour or build up rent arrears
- a process would be established for implementing annual rent increases
- developing an independent Ombudsman for the private rented sector
- a private rented sector Property Portal for tenants, landlords and local council to access information. This would benefit local authorities to target enforcement activity where it is needed most
- landlords would be required to consider tenants' requests to keep a pet

In October 2023, the government announced the ban on no-fault evictions in England has been delayed until after the court system is reformed<sup>70</sup>.

As of April 2024, the UK government set out changes to planned protections for renters in England after concerns were raised that the original proposals would be too burdensome for landlords. These key proposed changes include:

- requiring tenants to commit to a minimum 6-month rental period
- delaying the ban on no-fault evictions for existing tenancies until courts are ready
- allowing landlords to evict students to ensure they move out at end of academic year
- giving evicted tenants a right to homelessness support from councils<sup>70</sup>

### **Tackling the under-supply of housing in England, May 2023**

Following the 2019 election manifesto, the Conservative government pledged to increase the number of homes being built to rebalance the housing market towards more home ownership. The government set a target of 300,000 new homes per year by mid-2020s, which would "see us build at least a million more homes, of all tenures, over the next parliament."

The research briefing states there is a backlog of need among people currently living in unsuitable accommodation, with affordability pressures preventing people from accessing the housing they need. Research from Heriot-Watt University in 2019 estimates 340,000 homes are required each year<sup>71</sup>.

New housing supply in England has increased year-on-year from a low of 125,000 in 2012/13 to a high of 243,000 in 2019/20. Supply declined because of the pandemic in 2020/21 but rose again in 2021/22. The briefing report also outlines barriers and solutions, with an emphasis on affordability, rather than supply. The research from Heriot-Watt identified that of the 340,000 new homes required each year, 145,000 of these new homes must be classified as affordable (more information in the affordability section)<sup>71</sup>.

Within the document, the current government believes the planning system is the reason for the failure to build enough homes<sup>14</sup>. Recommendations in the strategy include public sector investment into housebuilding programmes, the use of more land suitable for development brought forward at reasonable prices and resourcing local authority planning departments to address a system that is viewed as slow, costly, and complex<sup>14</sup>.

### **Social Housing Reform in England: What Next? March 2023**

Social and affordable housing is either housing to rent at below the market rate, or to buy through low-cost home ownership schemes, such as shared ownership. Just under 1 in 5 (17%) of all households in England live in rented social housing in 2021/22. 10% of all households rented from housing associations, while 6% of all households rented from local authorities.

The briefing report outlines the points for discussion in the social housing green paper in 2018 and the recommendations in the social housing white paper from 2020. The current paper provides a framework for reform to social housing; however, many proposals are seen as requiring further development and engagement with the sector. The Social Housing Regulation Bill 2022-23 is currently passing through Parliament, with the objectives of the Bill to:

- facilitate a new, proactive consumer regulation regime
- refine the existing economic regulatory regime
- strengthen the Regulator's powers to enforce the consumer and economic regimes<sup>72</sup>

### **Housing Conditions in the Private Rented Sector (England), December 2022**

In 2021/22, 4.6 million households in England (19.1% of all households) rented their homes from a private landlord. The sector is changing, with more families with children living in the sector. Of all tenure types, the private rented sector had the highest proportion of non-decent homes (23%) in 2021 failing to meet the Decent Homes Standard (compared to 13% of owner-occupied and 10% of social-rented homes)<sup>44</sup>.

The government white paper in June 2022 'A fairer private rented sector' provided a 12-point action plan to deliver a fairer, more secure, higher quality private rented sector, including commitments to:

- halve the number of non-decent rented homes by 2030 and require privately rented homes to meet the Decent Homes Standard for the first time
- introduce a single Ombudsman that all private landlords are required to join
- introduce a digital Property Portal to ensure tenants, landlords and local authorities have the required information
- strengthen local authorities' enforcement powers
- abolish section 21 of the Housing Act 1988 to end 'no-fault' evictions<sup>73</sup>

The research briefing is split into three sections:

- section 1 introduces housing conditions in the private rented sector in England, with an overview of policy developments since 2010



- section 2 gives an overview of the legal framework for housing standards in the private rented sector, in terms of statutory requirements for landlords' repair and maintenance obligations
- section 3 provides an overview of the issues within the legal framework governing housing standards in the private rented sector<sup>73</sup>

### **Ending rough sleeping for good, September 2022**

This cross-government strategy states how the government and partners will end rough sleeping for good, by preventing rough sleeping happening in the first place, and a tailored offer of support where it does happen so people can build an independent life off the streets.

The strategy seeks to build on what works to bring forward new measures to deliver the step change required to end rough sleeping. This will be achieved through four key outcomes; prevention, intervention, recovery, and a transparent and joined-up system<sup>74</sup>.

### **Raising accessibility standards for new homes: summary of consultation responses and government response, July 2022**

In September 2020, government launched a consultation on raising accessibility standards of new homes, recognising the importance of suitable homes for older and disabled people.

The provision of appropriate housing for older and disabled people makes an important contribution to a safe and independent life. An ageing population will see the numbers of disabled people continuing to increase and it is important we plan early to meet their needs through policy change.

- The government has decided to mandate the current M4(2) (Category 2: Accessible and adaptable dwellings) requirement in Building Regulations as the minimum standard for all new homes (Option 2 in the consultation). This will replace the current minimum M4(1) standard.
- Transitional provisions will be included to allow the industry time to adapt to the new minimum M4(2) standard.

More information on the proposals and the accessibility standards is available on the [government consultation page](#).

In summary, the government has decided to raise the minimum accessibility standard for new homes to M4(2) in order to better meet the needs of an ageing population and disabled people<sup>75</sup>.

### **A fairer private rented sector, June 2022**

This government white paper describes plans to reform the private rented sector to level up housing quality in England. The paper commits the government to:

- deliver on their levelling up housing target to halve the number of non-decent rented homes by 2030. This will also require private rented homes to meet the Decent Homes Standard for the first time.

- accelerate quality improvements in the areas that need it most. Pilot schemes will be delivered with local authorities to trial housing improvements and enforce existing standards<sup>76</sup>.

The policy also acknowledges that many people wish to buy their own home and the government must reduce financial insecurities that prevent renters being able to progress to home ownership. In addition, those in the private rented sector can encounter frequent home moves which are expensive due to moving costs, making it harder for renters to save for a deposit to purchase their own home<sup>76</sup>.

### **Integrated health and social care for people experiencing homelessness, March 2022**

This NICE guidance on integrated health and social care for people experiencing homelessness includes the following key points<sup>77</sup>:

- Recognize that more effort and targeted approaches are often needed to ensure health and social care for people experiencing homelessness meets the same standards as for the general population. Involve people with lived experience in co-designing and delivering services.
- Conduct local needs assessments and use these to strategically plan integrated, multidisciplinary health and social care services tailored to the level and type of need. Define and measure outcomes.
- Provide care through specialist multidisciplinary teams and outreach. Design services to reduce barriers to access and engagement. Offer long-term, flexible support that meets changing needs.
- Assess health, care and housing needs holistically. Provide suitable housing and wraparound support. Help people maintain accommodation through transitions.
- Take a targeted approach to safeguarding the welfare of people experiencing homelessness. Ensure staff understand safeguarding duties.
- Prioritize building trusting relationships over time. Recognize that recovery may not be linear. Provide open-access services to prevent return to homelessness.
- Involve peers with lived experience in delivering interventions, co-producing services, and providing support. Offer peers training, governance and wellbeing support.
- Provide staff training on needs, trauma-informed approaches, legal duties, entitlements and tackling stigma. Offer ongoing support and supervision for staff.

### **Indoor air quality at home, January 2020**

Guidance from NICE on indoor air quality within homes covers strategies across different sectors to improve awareness, provide advice, set standards, and take action to create healthier indoor air quality in homes. The focus is on high-risk groups and settings. The key points from the guidance include:

- Local authorities should prioritize improving indoor air quality in local strategies and plans. They should focus on vulnerable groups and poor housing conditions that increase risk.

- Local authorities should develop referral processes for people to request housing assessments if poor indoor air quality is identified.
- Local authorities should raise awareness among the public and professionals about causes of poor indoor air quality, health impacts, and prevention.
- Advice for the general population includes reducing damp and condensation, using ventilation, avoiding pollution sources like gas cookers and candles, and using low-emission materials.
- Healthcare professionals should explain risks, ask about housing conditions, and make specific recommendations for people with asthma, allergies, or who are pregnant.
- Regulators should update standards on safe pollutant limits and enforce building regulations.
- Architects and builders should specify low-emission materials, ensure adequate ventilation, and follow regulations.
- For rental properties, local authorities should use regulations to fix damp/mould and ensure proper heating/ventilation. They should advise landlords on maintenance, ventilation, and low-emission materials<sup>78</sup>.

### **The Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS), July 2019**

The Housing Health and Safety Ratings System (HHSRS) was introduced by the Housing Act 2004. The HHSRS assesses and enforces housing standards in England and Wales.

The tool assesses the likelihood and severity of risk of a hazard in residential housing and can be used to assess hazards in private and social rented housing, as well as owner occupied housing.

Most HHSRS work relates to private rented housing as this sector experiences the worst housing standards<sup>44</sup>. The HSSRS has been criticised due to the knowledge of the system and how it works is limited among landlords and tenants, with calls for a simpler set of quality standards specific to the private rented sector.

The briefing gives an overview of the HHSRS, in addition to the reviews and reports into its operation and effectiveness<sup>79</sup>.

### **All Party Parliamentary Group (APPG) for Healthy Homes and Buildings white paper, October 2018**

The APPG for Healthy Homes and Buildings white paper provides a series of recommendations for the government to deliver healthy homes and buildings:

1. government needs to establish a cross departmental committee for health and buildings to champion change, recognising the interaction between buildings, health, education, and the economy
2. grow the research and evidence base, starting with a focus on housing and schools, to develop a clear case for further government action to improve standards for new builds
3. make renovation of current housing stock and infrastructure a government priority and develop plans for retrofitting that takes a holistic approach to maximising health and wellbeing<sup>80</sup>

The APPG paper also provides further information on the cost of unhealthy homes to the NHS, as well as further information on the three recommendations. The APPG white paper follows the consultation on the 2017 APPG green paper 'Building our Future: Laying the Foundations for Healthy Homes and Buildings'. The consultation attracted responses from over 50 experts and organisations across the industry, which was used to produce the recommendations.

### **Communities and Local Government Select Committee Housing for older people, February 2018**

This national strategy for older people's housing intends to improve policy. The population in England is ageing, with people's housing needs and preferences changing as they grow older. An appropriate, comfortable, and well-located home can improve an individual's physical and mental health, wellbeing, social life, and independence.

The key recommendations within this strategy include:

1. the existing FirstStop Advice Service should be re-funded by the government to provide an expanded national telephone advice service, providing holistic housing advice to older people, and signposting them to local services
2. the coverage of Home Improvement Agencies (HIA) should be expanded so there is access to at least one HIA with a handyman service in each local authority area
3. a range of measures to help older people overcome the barriers to moving home should be implemented: an accreditation for companies which provide tailored services for older people moving home; better customer service and guidance from lenders when applying for a mortgage; and widened access to shared ownership and shared equity
4. the National Planning Policy Framework should be amended to emphasise the key importance of the provision of housing for older people and the new standard approach to assessing need should explicitly address the housing needs of older people
5. to facilitate the delivery of new homes, specialist housing should be designated as a sub-category of the C2 planning classification or be assigned a new use class
6. councils should publish a strategy explaining how they intend to meet the housing needs of older people in their area and, in their Local Plans, identify a target proportion of new housing to be developed for older people along with suitable, well-connected sites for it
7. all new homes should be built to the Category 2 Building Regulations standard so that they are 'age proofed' and can meet the current and future needs of older people
8. the government should accept the Law Commission's code of practice and consider introducing sector specific legislation to promote consumers' and lenders' confidence in specialist housing
9. the social care green paper should consider the range of housing for older people, in particular the potential for extra care housing to play a greater role in providing social care alongside home care and residential care<sup>81</sup>

## **Intermediate care including reablement, September 2017**

NICE also produced guidelines covering referral and assessment for intermediate care and how to deliver the service. Intermediate care is a multidisciplinary service that helps people to be as independent as possible. It provides support and rehabilitation to people at risk of hospital admission or who have been in hospital. It aims to ensure people transfer from hospital to the community in a timely way and to prevent unnecessary admissions to hospitals and residential care.

Recommendations from the guidance include:

- Assessments should identify people's abilities and needs to determine the right intermediate care support. Involve the person and their family/carers.
- Provide intermediate care at home if possible. Offer reablement first when considering home care.
- Agree goals collaboratively with the person. Focus on measurable outcomes that optimise independence and wellbeing.
- Take a flexible, person-centred approach tailored to the individual's needs and abilities. Review and adjust support as needed.
- Ensure smooth transitions between services with clear communication and plans. Give information about ongoing support options.
- Train staff on intermediate care principles and skills to help people regain independence. Promote multidisciplinary teamwork.

## **Home care: delivering personal care and practical support to older people living in their own homes, September 2015**

This guideline covers the planning and delivery of person-centred care for older people living in their own homes (known as home care or domiciliary care). It aims to promote older people's independence and to ensure safe and consistently high-quality home care services. The Care Quality Commission uses NICE guidelines as evidence to inform the inspection process. Recommendations from the NICE guidelines on delivering home care for older people include:

- Ensure care is person-centred by supporting individuals' goals, respecting preferences, and promoting continuity through consistent staffing.
- Provide clear information to service users on care options, rights, making complaints, etc. Tailor information for accessibility.
- Plan care collaboratively with the individual, family, and other practitioners. Assess risks thoughtfully. Address social isolation.
- Allow sufficient time for quality care during home visits. Monitor missed/late visits closely.
- Support staff through training, supervision, and responding promptly to requests for help.
- Promote smooth information sharing and coordination between health and social care.
- Establish clear processes for safeguarding concerns. Encourage staff to report issues.
- Involve service users and families in recruitment, training, reviews, etc to improve care quality<sup>82</sup>.

## Local context

Suffolk County Council's [corporate strategy for 2022-26](#) includes several objectives which will be delivered in part with programmes relating to housing.

Between 2021-2024, £3 million of the county council's budget will be used to invest in assets and planned infrastructure projects to develop land for housing.

One of the council's strategic objectives is "strengthening our local economy". A major programme focussed on delivering this objective is the Housing Joint Venture. This will accelerate the delivery of the council's strategic objective through high-quality residential development, providing the types of homes Suffolk needs while meeting climate and sustainability commitments.

The Suffolk climate emergency plan sets out commitments by Suffolk's public sector leaders to achieve carbon neutrality by 2030. 100 actions are included in the plan, spread across five sectors – sector 2 focuses on sustainable homes. Within this sector, there are 3 goals:

1. Transition to a fully decarbonised heat supply for homes.
2. Improved energy efficiency of homes.
3. Behavioural change to use less energy<sup>83</sup>.

The below section summarises housing plans and statistics for Suffolk's district and boroughs, all of which are available in the public domain at the time of writing.

### Babergh and Mid Suffolk

In March 2019, both Babergh and Mid Suffolk councils adopted the [Homes and Housing Strategy 2019-2024](#) and the [Homelessness Reduction and Rough Sleeper Strategy 2019-2024](#).

Babergh and Mid Suffolk's Homes and Housing strategy aims to build or acquire 65 new homes in each district per year for each of the next 6 years.

The [Babergh and Mid Suffolk Joint local plan](#) runs from 2018 to 2037.

- In Babergh, the Joint Local Plan will seek to deliver a minimum of 7,904 net additional dwellings (416 dwellings per annum) over the plan period.
- In Mid Suffolk, the Joint Local Plan will seek to deliver a minimum of 10,165 net additional dwellings (535 dwellings per annum) over the plan period.

The Homes and Housing Strategy was refreshed in October 2022, with a re-focused delivery plan. The Joint Homes and Housing Strategy for Babergh and Mid Suffolk has the following strategic aims<sup>84</sup>:

1. the housing market functions effectively, providing homes which are as affordable as possible; to meet the needs of residents and support the local economy
2. there is a wide and varied choice of good quality, sustainable homes of different sizes, types and tenures, to meet the needs of a wide range of different households
3. homelessness is prevented and our services provide positive and planned interventions

4. Babergh and Mid Suffolk is an effective social landlord known for delivering quality services
5. homes are in high quality, sustainable environments, served by jobs and community facilities, appropriate green spaces, effective transport links and other necessary infrastructure
6. best use is made of private sector land and private accommodation across the districts
7. people live in vibrant and well-connected communities; and homes and communities continue to meet the changing needs of residents
8. everyone has a suitable home, and residents can live as healthily, safely and independently as possible within sustainable communities
9. both councils have strong relationships with residents, developers and other partners that enable us to deliver housing, infrastructure, and services effectively, and to innovate where appropriate

## East Suffolk

The [East Suffolk Housing Strategy](#) was produced for 2017 to 2023 for both Suffolk Coastal and Waveney district councils, prior to their merger to East Suffolk Council. This strategy is now out of date and is due to be updated in 2024.

The [East Suffolk Council – Suffolk Coastal Local Plan](#) sets a requirement of 542 dwellings per annum over the period 2018-2036 (9,756 in total).

The [East Suffolk Council – Waveney Local Plan](#) sets a requirement of 374 new homes annually (208 need to be affordable to meet local need) with a total requirement of 8,223 new homes over the period 2014-36.

The [East Suffolk 2022 housing action plan](#) is based on targets for the old authorities of Suffolk Coastal (9,756 new homes for the period 2018-36, an average of 542 per year) and Waveney (8,223 for the period 2014-36, an average of 374 per year). In total, East Suffolk is aiming to provide 916 new homes each year until 2036.

The East Suffolk Housing Strategy included nine priorities for East Suffolk's housing:

1. increase the amount of Council owned affordable housing from 4,479 homes to more than 5,100 homes including developing on Council owned and exception site land in Suffolk Coastal
2. utilise the strength of the Waveney housing assets to assertively intervene to deliver the Lowestoft and Outer Harbour Area Action Plan
3. increase the overall number of affordable homes in Waveney by 150 units per annum and in Suffolk Coastal by 100 units per annum
4. actively support the broader supply of housing to ensure East Suffolk is the preferred location for private developers and housing associations
5. implement the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 to ensure members of the community threatened with homelessness are provided with increased support
6. manage and maintain the Council owned homes to ensure customer satisfaction levels exceed 85%
7. work with the private rented sector to ensure properties are well maintained and managed

8. support owner occupiers on low income to remain in their homes through disabled facilities grants and continue to target 'Warm Homes Healthy People' grants helping to tackle fuel poverty in the community
9. use the full range of powers available including Compulsory Purchase Orders to further reduce the number of long-term empty properties in East Suffolk

## Ipswich

Ipswich Borough Council's housing strategy for 2019-2024 has been revised to reflect national and local developments, including the requirement for all local authorities to have separate homelessness and rough sleeping strategies and a new strategic approach to the private rented sector and older person's housing.

The [Ipswich Borough Council housing delivery action plan](#) has a target of 1,000 new homes per year (10,000 new homes by 2031), 15% of which should be affordable homes.

The [Ipswich Borough Council Local Plan](#) reports a housing need figure of 460 dwellings per annum between 2018 to 2036, or 8,280 dwellings for the 18-year period.

The council's vision is to promote sustainable communities by raising the standard of existing homes and enabling provision of quality new ones, resulting in suitable, affordable, decent housing for all Ipswich residents.

[Ipswich's housing strategy for 2019-24](#) has four identified priorities<sup>85</sup>:

1. enabling building of houses of all tenures – to achieve this, the council aims to:
  - build 10,000 homes in a decade
  - ensure the provision of quality, accessible private sector homes
  - embrace any opportunities brought about by future organisational and statutory changes
2. improving access to and the quality of existing housing – this priority will be achieved by:
  - enhancing property standards and property management standards
  - working with landlords to improve the energy efficiency of private rented stock
  - enhance access to good quality accommodation
  - engage and work collaboratively with stakeholders and residents
3. meeting the housing needs of all communities and meeting the challenges of an ageing population – the council's commitments include:
  - undertake a comprehensive review of IBC Sheltered Housing to evaluate the current model to develop further
  - explore how to best support older IBC general needs tenants to sustain independence and health and wellbeing through a range of programmes and measures
  - explore the use of assistive technology to enable independent living for older tenants in both IBC sheltered housing and general needs accommodation



- develop a multi-agency approach for the provision of specialist older persons housing
4. preventing homelessness and rough sleeping – the separate '[Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy](#)' for Ipswich (published March 2019) has four priorities:
- prevention of homelessness
  - increasing access to suitable accommodation
  - supporting vulnerable households with secure, maintained accommodation
  - tackling rough sleeping

## West Suffolk

In December 2023, West Suffolk Council adopted [strategic priorities](#) for 2024 to 2028. The four priorities are:

- Affordable, available, and decent homes
- Sustainable growth
- Environmental resilience
- Thriving communities

A new Housing, Homelessness Reduction and Rough Sleeping Strategy will be adopted in summer 2024.

The [West Suffolk Local Plan Submission Draft 2024](#) states to meet West Suffolk's local housing need, provision is made for at least 13,702 new homes (net) and associated infrastructure to be delivered in the period 1 April 2023 to 31 March 2040.

The current [West Suffolk Housing Strategy](#) was produced for 2018-2023, prior to the merger of Forest Heath Borough Council and St Edmundsbury District Council becoming West Suffolk Council on the 1st of April 2019. A [homelessness reduction and rough sleeping strategy](#) was adopted for 2018 to 2023. The life of both strategies was extended to 2024 to align with the new strategic priorities and emerging local plan.

## Summary of local housing policies

There are several common themes within each of Suffolk's lower-tier local authority area housing strategies. Some key common elements include:

- Increasing the supply of affordable and social housing, with targets set for new affordable homes to be built each year. Most of the lower-tier local authorities within Suffolk are aiming for between 15-40% of new housing to be affordable.
- Improving the quality, sustainability, and energy efficiency of existing housing stock, particularly council owned and private rented housing. This includes upgrading homes to be more energy efficient and meeting climate goals.
- Supporting and meeting the housing needs of specific groups, especially older people, through provision of suitable and accessible housing options.
- Preventing and reducing homelessness through early intervention and support services. All councils aim to implement the Homelessness Reduction Act.

- Making the best use of available land to build new homes, including building on council owned land. Some councils mention utilising compulsory purchase powers.
- Working with partners in the public, private and third sectors to deliver housing strategies and innovation.

The overarching focus is on increasing provision of affordable, sustainable, and good quality homes for all residents, while supporting those most vulnerable to homelessness. Partnership working and making the best use of resources underpins each of the strategies.