



East Cambridgeshire  
District Council

# Housing Strategy

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Revision due in June 2028

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# Foreword

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As our population continues to grow and our housing needs evolve, East Cambridgeshire District Council recognises the importance of delivering homes that are genuinely affordable, safe, sustainable, and reflective of the needs of our residents.

This Housing Strategy outlines our commitment to improving housing outcomes across East Cambridgeshire over the next three years. It brings together the priorities and actions from a suite of key strategies and policies, ranging from the East Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2015 (as amended 2023), homelessness prevention and private sector housing enforcement to health and wellbeing, equality, and community resilience.

Our ambition is to ensure that everyone in our district has access to a decent home they can afford and that supports their health and wellbeing. Whether it is through enabling the delivery of genuinely affordable housing, improving standards in the private rented sector, tackling homelessness with compassion and innovation, or working with communities to deliver housing that meets local need.

We are proud of the progress made to date. Initiatives such as the £100K Homes scheme and community-led housing projects have already provided many residents with the opportunity to remain in the communities they love. The success of our holistic Housing and Community Advice Service, our Domestic Abuse Housing Alliance accreditation, and our proactive approach to energy efficiency demonstrate our commitment to delivering housing services that are forward-thinking and person-centred.

However, challenges remain, from rising house prices and energy costs to the increased demand for supported and specialist housing. This strategy reflects our understanding of these pressures and our resolve to address them.

We are grateful to our many partners, registered providers, local health services, community organisations, and residents themselves, whose collaboration is essential to making our housing ambitions a reality.

**Councillor Anna Bailey**

**Leader of the Council**



# Introduction

This housing strategy sets out how the council intends to improve housing in the district over the next three years.

This high-level overarching document consolidates the key priorities and actions from the following housing related strategies and policies:

- [East Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2015 \(as amended 2023\) \(opens in new window\)](#)
- [Equality, diversity and inclusion policy 2025 to 2028 \(opens in new window\)](#)
- [Homelessness and Rough Sleeper Strategy \(opens in new window\)](#)
- [East Cambridgeshire's Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2024 to 2027 \(opens in new window\)](#)
- [Private Sector Housing Environment Policy 2022 \(opens in new window\)](#)
- [Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Healthy Places JSNA \(opens in new window\)](#)
- [Allocations and Lettings Policy \(opens in new window\)](#)
- [Cambridgeshire Housing Adaptation and Repairs and Policy 2019 \(opens in new window\)](#)
- [Vulnerable Community Strategy 2024 to 2029 \(opens in new window\)](#)

This strategy does not seek to replicate information that is already covered in the above documents. Further information on the priorities and actions can be found via the links provided to those documents. Each strategy has its own process for monitoring and reporting, details of which can be found in those documents.

**Figure 1 (next page).** Links between plans, strategies and policies for East Cambridgeshire.

# National context Agenda Item 12 - Appendix 1

The council's housing related strategies have all been developed having regard to national housing and planning policy, guidance and legislation, the key themes are summarised below.

- strong emphasis on building more new homes across the district, including affordable housing, particularly for low-cost home ownership
- local authority homelessness responsibilities, with a strong emphasis on early intervention and prevention
- ongoing transformation and integration of health, social care and other public sector services
- regulation and funding to improve the energy efficiency of homes alongside a move to support low carbon sustainable heating systems
- new and emerging policies focusing on improving housing design and quality, accessibility, environmental performance and health

**Corporate Plan 2023 to 2027**

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy 2025 to 2028

Vulnerable Community Strategy 2024 to 2029

East Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2015 (amended 2023)

Annual Monitoring Return

Housing Strategy 2025 to 2028

Private Sector Housing Environment Policy 2022

Allocations and Lettings Policy

Homelessness and Rough Sleepers Strategy 2025 to 2030

Housing Adaptation and Repairs Policy 2019

East Cambridgeshire Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2024 to 2027

C and P Healthy Places JSNA

# Local context

East Cambridgeshire District Council plays a vital role in delivery local and national housing priorities by building an evidence base of local housing needs, using our housing and planning powers to ensure that existing homes are fit for purpose, and ensuring that new housing developments are more sustainable and meet local needs, both now and in the future.

The East Cambridgeshire District Council Corporate Plan 2023 to 2027 sets out the Council's overall ambitions and priorities. The priorities and actions that relate to the housing related strategies are to:

- support our residents to live happy and healthy lives
- deliver genuinely affordable homes that enables people to live and work locally
- deliver an excellent Housing and Community Advice Service, work with partners to protect more people in their homes and deliver an integrated Health and Wellbeing Strategy
- continue to support existing Community Land Trusts across the district and work with communities to establish new ones and work with partners to deliver other affordable initiatives

The vision East Cambridgeshire District Council sets out in its [Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy \(opens in new window\)](#) is "to improve the lives of residents and build a community where everyone has the opportunity to participate and be involved".

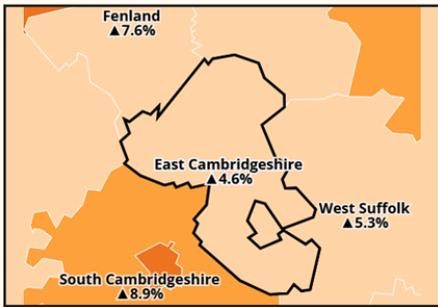
The council works to increase and improve access to affordable, safe and sustainable housing in East Cambridgeshire through the following three areas of work.

**Delivering growth** - Deliver sustainable and inclusive housing growth that meets the needs of current and future residents in East Cambridgeshire.

**Better homes** - Ensure that as many homes as possible, in all tenures, are of good quality and support health and wellbeing.

**Supporting people** - Support people to access and sustain housing appropriate for their needs.

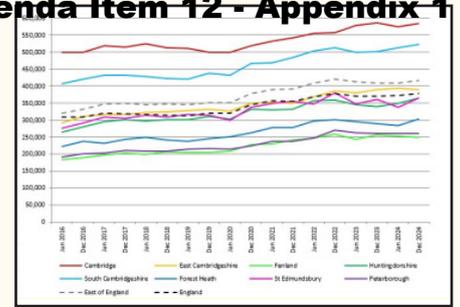
Key facts relating to East Cambridgeshire's population and housing are provided on the following page. Further data can be found on [Cambridgeshire Insight website](#) [Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Insight – Welcome to Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Insight \(opens in new window\)](#).



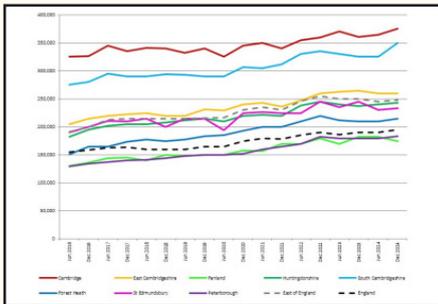
East Cambridgeshire’s population, 87,755 (Census 2021).



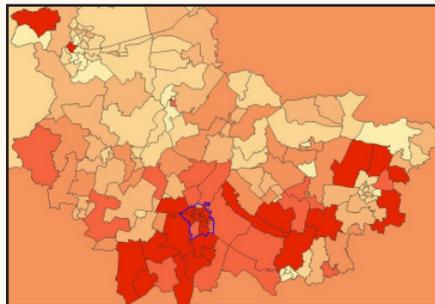
New homes needed in East Cambridgeshire by 2031, 5,400 (ECDC AMR 2023-24).



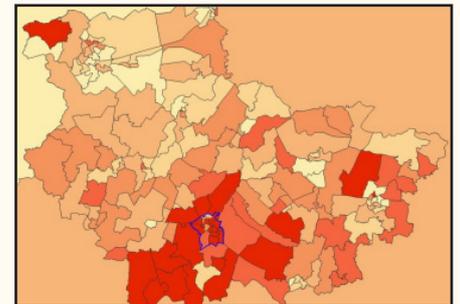
Average House Price across East Cambridgeshire, £389,851.



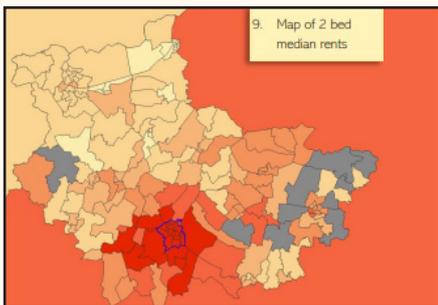
Lower quartile house price, £260,000.



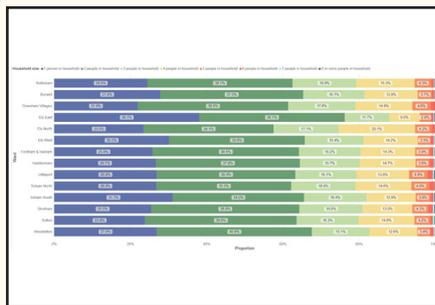
Ratio of median house prices for median incomes for East Cambridgeshire.



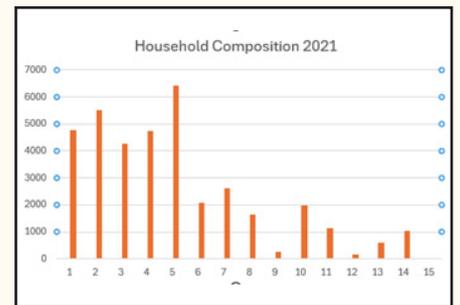
Ratio of lower quartile house prices to lower quartile incomes for East Cambridgeshire.



Weekly median private rents, 1 bed, £184; 2 beds, £231; 3 beds, £298; 4beds, £369.



Average household size, 2.36 people (Census 2021).



Proportion of East Cambridgeshire households aged 66 and over, 24%.



Approx. number of households on social housing register, 1,243.



There are 2,780 homes with planning permission which haven’t started or are currently under construction (April 2023).



Number of affordable housing completions in East Cambridgeshire in past 3 years, 489.

Unless otherwise stated, all data was taken from the [Housing Market Bulletin \(opens in new window\)](#), published in May 2025 and using data from December 2024.

# Delivering growth

In recent years, East Cambridgeshire has experienced considerable population and housing growth due to its location within a growth area. In particular, the success of the Cambridge economy has stimulated rapid population growth in East Cambridgeshire.

There is a high level of affordable housing need in the district and continuing concerns about housing affordability, with average house prices out of reach for many on lower to middle incomes.

The current assessment of affordable housing need across the district is provided by [GL Hearn "Cambridgeshire and West Suffolk Housing Needs of Specific Groups 2021" \(opens in new window\)](#) shows that the overall annual need for homes of all tenures is 597 homes with 215 affordable homes to rent needed per year.

The accommodation needs of older people and those requiring specialist and supported housing is also increasing.

There are currently 1,243 applicants on the council's Housing Register, some of which have indicated that they have a specific vulnerability for example mental health issues, permanent physical disability or age related physical impairment.

To ensure that housing provision meets the needs of all sectors, it is important that a range of house types and sizes are provided as part of new residential developments within the district. The East Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2015 (as amended 2023) ensures that future housing needs within the district are addressed as part of new development. This requires the provision of affordable homes as well an appropriate range of housing types and sizes to meet the needs of households (including families and older people).

The last five years have seen consistently and considerably higher levels of completions than in previous years. 616 dwellings (net) were completed in 2023/2024 in East

Cambridgeshire, the third highest completions in the district since 2011. The average delivery over the past 13 years was 354 homes per year, ranging from 162 to 820.

A total of 489 affordable homes were completed over the past 3 years; 24% of the total homes delivered.

The council works with partners such as registered providers, CLTs and Cambridgeshire ACRE to maximise opportunities to deliver affordable housing in the district.

As reported in the most up to date 5 year land supply report, ECDC anticipates the delivery of 2,958 additional homes during the period 1 April 2023 to 31 March 2029, a sizeable proportion of which will include affordable housing tenures.



## £100K Homes scheme

£100k Homes in East Cambridgeshire

£100k Homes are new-build, 100% owned, one-bedroom properties, available to buy at a discounted market rate of £100,000. They are aimed at giving people who live or work in East Cambridgeshire a genuinely affordable step on the housing ladder, while enabling them to live close to where they work.

16 £100k Homes have been delivered in the district to date and there are 9 more in the pipeline which will be delivered by Bellway Homes in the Kennett Garden Village site. The council is due to start the nomination process for 4 of these properties which will be available later this year.



## Delivery of Community Led Housing

East Cambridgeshire District Council actively supports community-led housing and is recognized as a trailblazing leader in this area. Community-led housing involves communities taking initiative to build and manage affordable, sustainable homes in their own village or town.

81 CLT homes have been delivered in the district and a further 90 homes have planning permission.





# Better homes

The council is committed to improving conditions across all tenures, including privately rented and owner-occupied houses. It is primarily an owner's responsibility to maintain their own home, but the council acknowledges that some homeowners, particularly the elderly and vulnerable do not have access to resources to keep their homes in good repair.

The result of poor-quality housing has an adverse impact on the health and safety of occupiers that impacts upon other services provided throughout the district. By improving housing conditions, contributions are made to broader policies such as health and wellbeing, regeneration, energy efficiency and environmental sustainability.

The council supports local residents and works with other agencies, statutory and voluntary, to help with housing renewal via grant aid for disabled and vulnerable people, improving standards in existing homes through advice and/or enforcement, or through encouraging and supporting the bringing of empty homes back into use.

The council's Environmental Health Team works with private landlords, tenants, registered social landlords and homeowners on a range of housing issues, some of them statutory, including works and advice to improve the condition of homes, to put right serious disrepair and taking enforcement action if a property fails to reach a minimum standard.

Officers undertake inspections when required and will initially work with the owner or occupier if matters can be resolved informally. They will signpost residents to other forms of assistance when applicable, for example the Safe and Well service provided by the Fire Authority or Care and Repair if they are eligible for grant assistance. However, formal enforcement action will be taken if issues cannot be resolved or if there has been a clear and serious disregard for the safety of the tenants.

The Private Sector Housing Enforcement Policy 2022 identifies the actions Environmental Health will take in addressing poor quality rented accommodation in more detail.

The Renters' Rights Bill, which is expected to become law in late 2025 is designed to improve conditions and security for tenants in the private rental sector by enforcing higher standards, protecting tenants who speak up, holding landlords accountable and will extend Awaab's Law to privately rented homes.

The Renters' Rights Bill will allow regulations to be made setting out Decent Homes Standard requirements for private rented sector homes and will provide local councils with effective and proportionate enforcement powers.

The council also has home energy advisors who work with the Cambridgeshire Energy Retrofit Partnership consortium to obtain funding to improve energy efficiency of homes for residents on low income and high fuel cost as part of its ongoing work to help residents tackle the cost of living crisis and to help make homes as energy efficient as possible.

## **Working with private landlords to tackle cold damp mouldy homes**

In January 2025, Landlords from East Cambridgeshire were invited to a free information event to find out how to prepare for upcoming changes to Awaab's Law and effectively tackle damp and mould in their rented properties.

## **Improving energy efficiency of homes**

Through our Action on Energy partnership with other councils, we apply for and administer government grants to help low-income households install energy-efficiency improvements and low-carbon heating. Working with the Cambs Retrofit Partnership £10M of funding for residents was secured across the 5 districts of Cambridgeshire to improve energy efficiency of homes for residents.

# Supporting people

The council provides a holistic Housing and Community Advice service with the emphasis on preventing homelessness and offering a fully accessible Community Advice Service.

The council's [Homelessness Review and Strategy 2025 to 2030 \(opens in new window\)](#) sets out key objectives, developed to address homelessness in East Cambridgeshire in 2025 to 2030. The focus on early intervention and prevention has resulted in zero families with children being housed in bed and breakfast accommodation since August 2012 and enabled many residents to remain at home in a dwelling that meets their needs.

From 1 April 2020 to 31 March 2025 the council has assisted:

- 3,506 households with matters related to the threat of homelessness, becoming homeless or community advice leading to early intervention.
- 1,062 households to remain in their own home using mediation, prevention initiatives and funding and resolving housing benefit or income issues
- 484 households into alternative accommodation including supported housing and private rented

The council provides Free Landlord Resolution Service, introduction of landlord incentives and guaranteed rent in advance to encourage more landlords to work with the council in using private rented accommodation

East Cambridgeshire's Home Improvement Agency provides a service to enable elderly, vulnerable and disabled people to remain at home in a dwelling that meets their needs. Between 2020 to 24 some 327 Disabled Facilities Grants (DFGs) were approved, totalling £2,218,000 spend. In addition to supporting healthy, safe and independent living, this work can help prevent hospital, care home or residential school admission and prevent the need for higher expenditure elsewhere in the health and/or social care system.

The Housing and Community Service has regular catch-up meetings with the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) and the local job centres and has good working partnerships and referral pathways to our drug, alcohol and mental health services.

The council continues to monitor and manage the impact of Universal Credit Migration and the Renters Reform Bill. Understanding the future challenges and setting objectives around these enables the council to take a holistic view of the demands and pressures that it faces and facilitates the provision of a proactive housing and community advice service that seeks to tackle these issues.

## DAHA Accreditation

In 2025 the council secured Domestic Abuse Housing Alliance (DAHA) accreditation and has been recognized for its trauma informed approach.

The council has received accreditation from the DAHA - which is the benchmark in the UK for how housing providers should respond to domestic abuse to deliver safe and effective responses and support.

The council was only the third non-stock holding housing authority in the country to receive the accreditation, and the first non-stock housing authority to receive it in Cambridgeshire.



## Housing First

The council is working in partnership with Cambridgeshire County Council to jointly fund a full time Housing First project worker dedicated to providing one to one support for homeless people with multiple or complex needs.

The Housing First model prioritises getting people into safe and stable homes. From this point, any other support needs they might have – such as alcohol and drug dependency, physical and/or mental health problems – are addressed through coordinated and intensive support. It has a proven track record, having lifted around 80% of people, who have complex high support needs out of homelessness permanently.

