



West
Northamptonshire
Council

Housing Strategy

Evidence Base

September 2022

This document outlines the available evidence to inform strategic decision making for the Housing Strategy under four themes:

Theme 1: Deliver the homes that people need and can afford to live in.

Theme 2: Improve the quality, standard and safety of homes and housing services.

Theme 3: Enable residents to live safe, healthy, independent and active lives.

Theme 4: Support thriving and sustainable communities



Context: Our growing and diversifying population

This section is an overview of the population demographic of West Northamptonshire and provides context to the other data contained within this document.

The Census (2021) shows that 425,700 people live in West Northamptonshire

224,290 in the urban area



182,443 in the rural areas

In West Northamptonshire, the population size has increased by 13.5% between 2011 and 2021. This is higher than the overall increase for England (6.6%)

The population is projected to grow by 7% up to 2030, with the rural areas growing at a faster rate than Northampton. This is almost double the rate of growth than the national average.



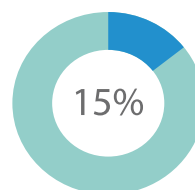
The number of households in West Northamptonshire is projected to grow by 12% by 2030.



The number of people aged 65 or over accounts for 1/5 of the population and this is predicted to grow.

In 2020, there were an estimated 72,609 people aged 65+ living in West Northamptonshire of which three quarters live in the rural areas. This is projected to grow by 59% by 2050 and represents 76% of total population growth.

Under 18s comprise almost a quarter of the population, with over half living in Northampton.



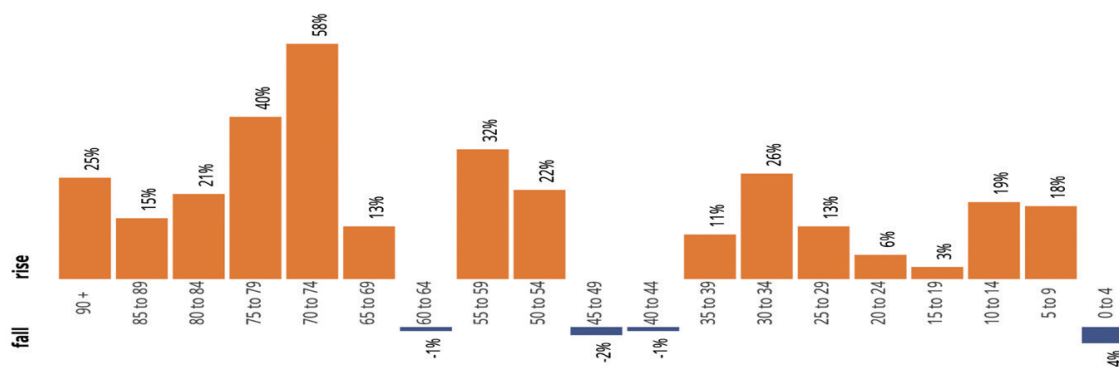
15% of people are living with a disability

In 2015 there were 61,300 adults with a disability in West Northants - 89% have physical disabilities and 11% have learning disabilities. This is expected to increase by a third by 2030.

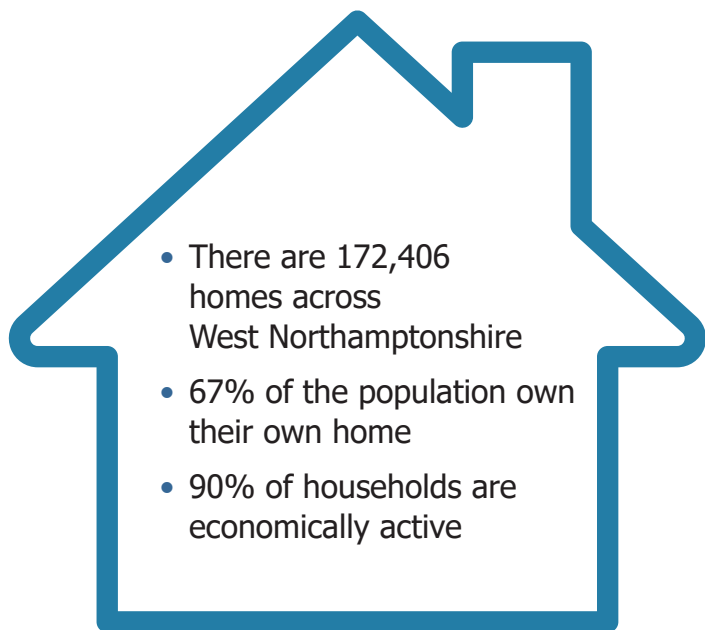
In 2019 it was estimated that West Northamptonshire's population was 8% non-White, whilst the population of Northampton locality was 17% non-White. This is compared to a national average of 16% non-White.

Population change (%) by age group in West Northamptonshire, 2011 to 2021

The Census (2021) has shown that the population has continued to age. In West Northamptonshire, there has been an increase of 30.3% in people aged 65 years and over, an increase of 10.5% people aged 15-64 years, and an increase of 10.8% in children aged under 15 years.



Context: Our growing and diversifying population



Northampton has the lowest homeownership levels but the highest private rented and social housing levels.

Economically active means at least one person who is in employment. 10% of households are economically inactive, meaning those who are of working age but unable to work due to study, retirement, sickness or disability, or caring responsibilities.

5% of the working age population are unemployed and claiming out of work benefits, with 6% in Northampton, which is above the national average of 4.7%.

Area	Owner Occupation	Private Rented	Social Housing
Daventry	25,921 (71%)	5,420 (15%)	5,128 (14%)
South Northants	30,255 (76%)	5,675 (14%)	4,103 (10%)
Northampton	59,677 (63%)	19,692 (21%)	16,535 (16%)
West Northants	115,853 (67%)	30,787 (18%)	25,766 (15%)
England	66%	18%	16%

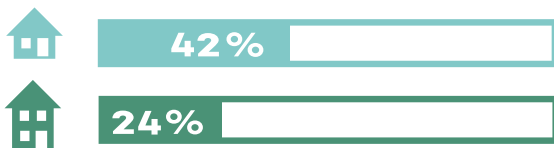


Theme 1: Deliver the homes that people need and can afford to live in

To meet the housing needs of our growing and ageing population, we will support the delivery of the right number and types of new homes in the right locations.

Affordable Housing Need

- In March 2021 there were **4,828** households on the housing register, of which 61% are from the Northampton area. 90% of households require general needs accommodation and the remaining 10% require sheltered/extra care housing.
- There are three housing registers (waiting lists) operating across West Northants.
- A third of applicants have an acute housing need.
- 42% of those on the housing registers need a one-bedroom home and 24% need a two-bedroom home.
- This indicates a requirement for most of the affordable housing for young people, single households, small families, and older people. However, the supply of larger family homes is scarcer, and larger households are waiting on average much longer.
- 1,253 new affordable homes are needed every year until 2050, of which 90% are for rent.
- The HENA (Housing and Economic Needs Assessment) 2021 states that 2,139 dwellings are needed per year between 2020-2050, including 59% new affordable properties.



59%
Affordable
properties

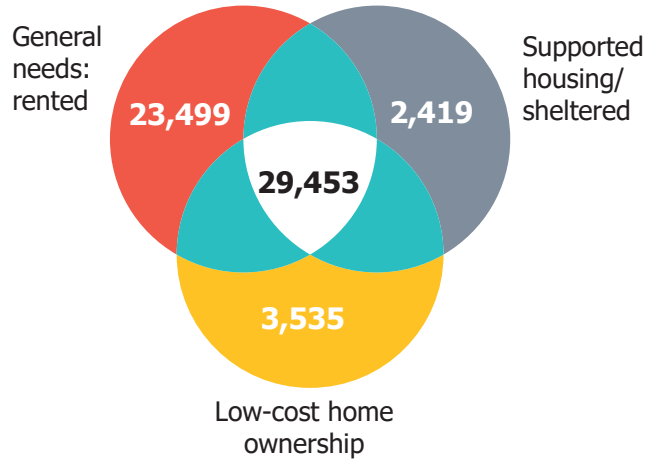


Theme 1: Deliver the homes that people need and can afford to live in

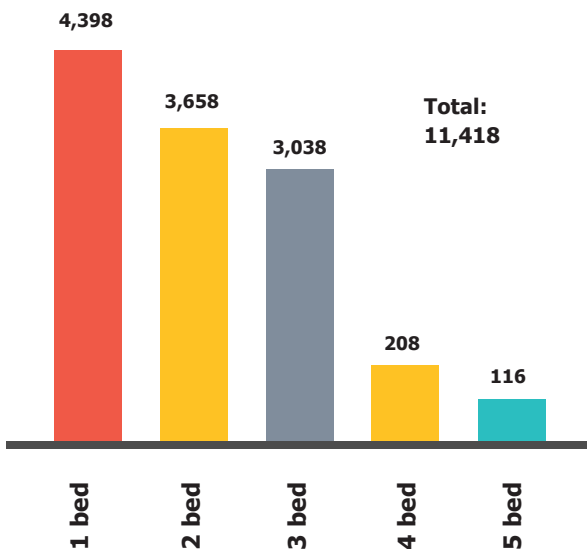
Affordable Housing Supply

There are just under 30,000 affordable homes across West Northants

The total amount of all affordable housing stock (council owned and RP - registered provider, also known as Housing Association - owned) stock in March 2021 is shown to the right.

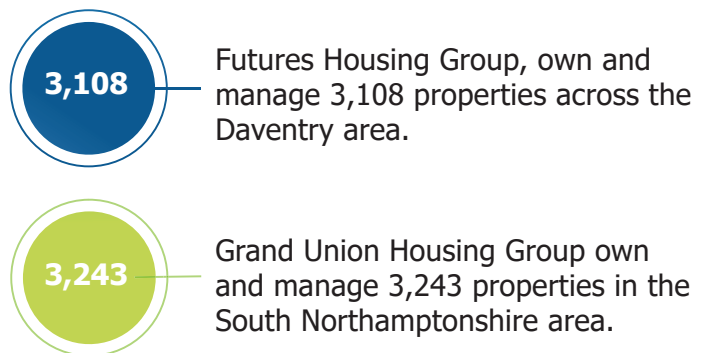


The council owns just over 12,000 affordable homes managed by Northampton Partnership Homes (NPH), the council's ALMO (arms length management organisation).



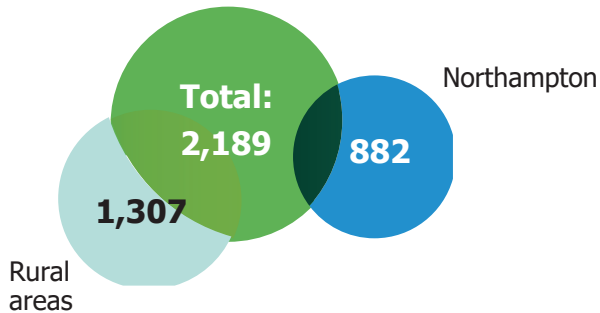
Future's Housing Group and Grand Union Housing Group own and manage 6,351 properties

Around 30 Registered Providers own and manage approximately 12,174 additional affordable homes for rent and at least 3,530 low-cost home ownership properties in the West Northants area.



Theme 1: Deliver the homes that people need and can afford to live in

2,182 new affordable homes completed over the last five years



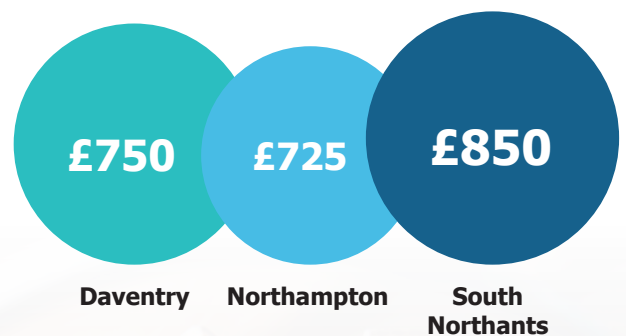
973 new affordable homes due to complete over the next two years, comprising 418 in the rural areas and 555 in Northampton (including 222 new council homes).

781 council homes were sold via the Right to Buy between 2015 and 2021.

The Right to Buy has had a significant impact on the overall supply of affordable homes in Northampton.

Private rents are higher than the national figures

- A median private rent in Daventry is £750 a month.
- A median private rent in Northampton is £725 a month.
- A median private rent in South Northants is £850 a month.
- Local Housing Allowance (LHA) is the maximum limit of how much housing benefit can be paid to people living in private rented accommodation.
- The LHA rates do not cover the cost of privately renting a property.



Affordability

House prices are higher than the national average

- For West Northants the median house price is £274,998.
- For West Northants the median gross annual earnings is £26,662.
- This would mean that a typical house is 10 times more than a typical salary.
- This however does not reflect that there are large variations in house prices across West Northants. House prices in the rural areas, particularly in South Northants are overall the most expensive.

Theme 2: Improve the quality, standard and safety of homes and housing services

Everyone has the right to live in a decent home. We will ensure that homes in all tenures are of good quality and are safe and there are high-quality landlord services across West Northants.

Housing Standards

Part of the Council's role is to ensure that homes meet good standards across all tenures, including council homes. New consumer and safety regulations will be enforcing new standards and we want to be sure that we are ready for these changes.

The council has limited information on the condition of all housing stock and therefore it is recognised that there is a need for a survey, across all tenures, to provide this information.

New tenant satisfaction measures will be introduced for registered providers which will provide a consistent approach in gathering this information and allow comparisons across providers to be made.

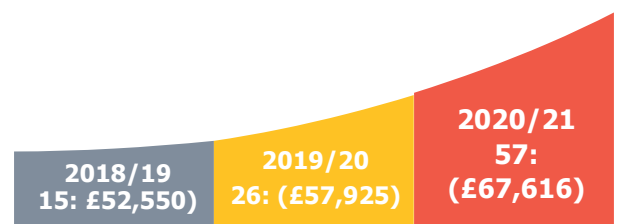
West Northants currently licence 1,280 properties as HMOs

1,233 Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs) in Northampton (of which mostly support the student population) and 47 in the rural areas.

18% of households live in the private rented sector

The number of private sector housing tenants living in unacceptable conditions are increasingly being investigated. This can be seen by the the number of Civil Penalty Notices being served year on year between 2018 and 2021.

Civil Penalty Notices:



In 2020 there were 1,332 long term empty properties

66% of long-term empty properties (those empty for at least 6 months) were in the Northampton area. Empty properties make up 0.7% of the total dwellings in the area.

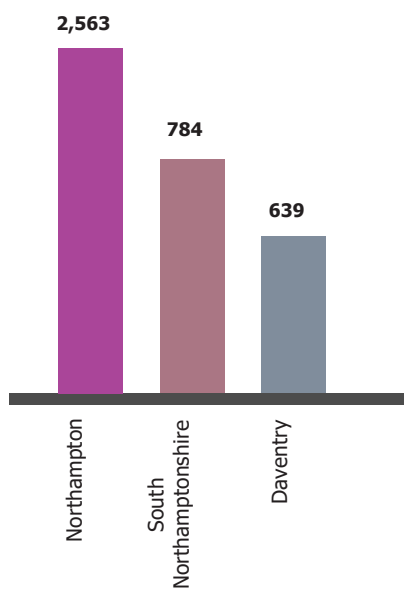
Most of the empty properties are either in an uninhabitable condition and/or unavailable, otherwise the council works with owners to bring empty properties back into use.

Theme 3: Enable residents to live safe, healthy, independent and active lives

Settled, safe, good quality housing with tailored support to meet individuals' needs can significantly reduce health inequalities and improve life chances.

During 2020/21 3,986 people asked the council for advice about housing and homelessness

The above figure can be broken down into the following three areas:



The main reasons for homelessness were:

- Family and friends no longer willing or able to accommodate.
- Loss of private rented accommodation (where the main reason is an Assured Household ending).
- Domestic abuse.

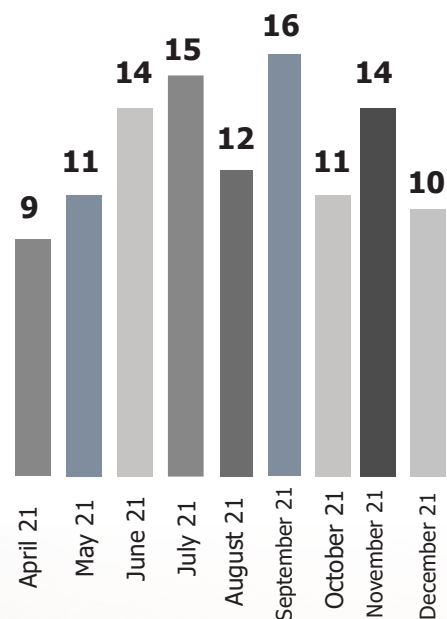
There has been an increase in domestic abuse, which may be a result of the Covid-19 pandemic.

As of December 2021, there were 380 households in temporary accommodation

Most of these households come from and are housed in the Northampton area.

15 people were estimates to be sleeping rough on a single night in November 2021

Councils are also required to provide monthly snapshot single night figures throughout the year.



Supporting households at risk of homelessness

In 2020/21 the council helped **1,083 households** to secure settled accommodation and to either prevent or relieve their homelessness.

Theme 3: Enable residents to live safe, healthy, independent and active lives

Ageing Population

With an increasing ageing population and the frailty that may accompany it, there is a need to understand the housing provision requirements to meet their needs in West Northants.

The HENA 2021 suggests there has been an:

- increase in the number of people over 65 with dementia by 116%.
- increase in the number of people with mobility issues by 98%.

There is a need to increase the provision of specialist housing to meet older people's care and support needs in the future.

Disabilities and Ill-health

- Linked to an ageing population is the increase in people with long term health problems or disability.
- During 2020/21 465 disabled facilities grants were approved and 107 disabled facilities works completed.
- Approximately 29% of households include someone with a long term health problem or disability.

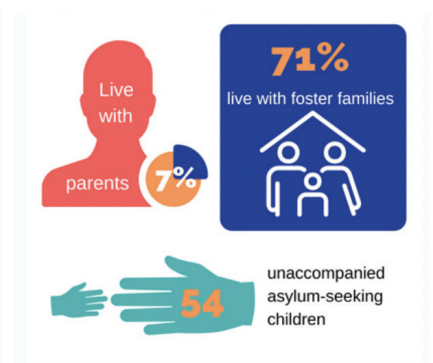
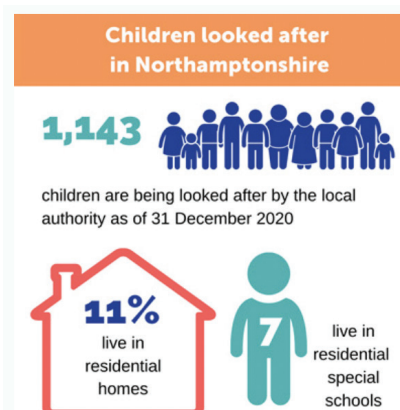
Need for supported accommodation

We need to provide a range of housing to meet different kinds of need in order to achieve better health outcomes. There is a need to increase the housing provision for people with learning disabilities and/or autism spectrum disorders.

Future Provision 18/19 to 22/23	Purpose built for people with complex needs	Supported living	Extra care housing units for people with learning disabilities	Total
Daventry	5	24	2	31
Northampton	15	37	14	66
South Northants	6	24	3	33
Total units	26	85	19	130

Young People

Access to housing for young people and care leavers need to be addressed. As of December 2020 there were 1,143 children being looked after in Northamptonshire.



Theme 3: Enable residents to live safe, healthy, independent and active lives

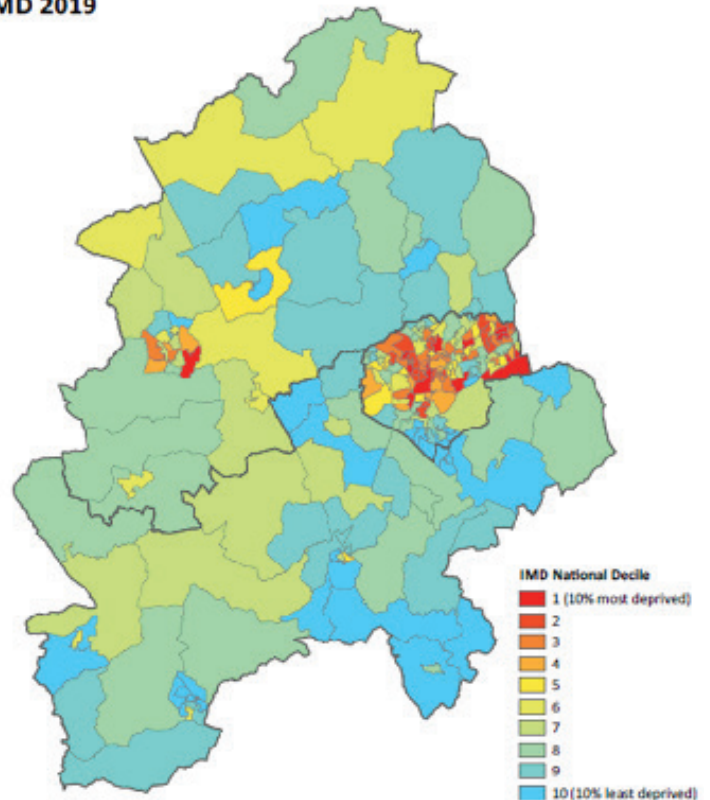
Poverty and Deprivation

In 2019 9.6% (37,318) people in West Northants were living in income deprivation. This is lower than England (12.9%).

In 2019 10.8% (9,398) of older people in West Northants were living in deprivation. This is lower than England (14.2%).

- The Indices of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) shows that 16.95% of the population of West Northamptonshire live in the 20% most deprived areas.
- The area with the highest proportion of residents living in the top 20% deprived areas is Northampton (28.2%).

West Northamptonshire
IMD 2019



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Domestic Abuse

The overall level of economic and social costs due to domestic abuse in Northamptonshire is estimated at £1,081m per year.

£91m of these costs falls on public sector and voluntary and community sector organisations. The average costs are £37k per victim-survivor per year, of which public services incur around £4.3k.

Refuge provision within Northamptonshire is 36% below recommended capacity. 7% of households presenting as homeless do so for reasons of domestic abuse and most are housed in temporary accommodation rather than refuge.

Most victim-survivors prefer to remain safe in their own homes. However, arrangements to

ensure this are inconsistent across landlords and target-hardening budgets are often underspent. There are variations in approach and support for refuge residents seeking to move on.

Complications result in long stays and exacerbate shortages taking up spaces which are no longer needed.

During 2020-21 of almost 9,000 social care assessments completed, 40% had 'Domestic Violence' recorded as a factor of concern.

40%

Theme 4: Support sustainable and thriving communities

We want to create vibrant, economically active and resilient neighbourhoods that meet residents' needs locally and improve quality of life, while minimising the impact on the environment.

Climate Change

Across West Northamptonshire, our 170,000+ homes are responsible for an estimated 2.2 million tons of CO2 emissions each year. Through changing the way we approach our residences, there is a huge opportunity to greatly reduce our net carbon emissions and effectively combat the climate crisis.

West Northamptonshire has a significant amount of agricultural industry and rural communities which play an integral part in tackling the climate crisis. Agriculture across the UK is responsible for 10% of all total greenhouse gas emissions, and with over 122,000 hectares of West Northants land being farmed, it is crucial to create a sustainable future for our farmers, food, and rural communities.

Energy Efficiency & Fuel Poverty

The average EPC rating in West Northants for new properties is 'B' and for existing properties is 'D'.

Area	Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) Ratings (% of properties)		
	C+	D/E	F/G
Daventry	49	48	3
Northampton	49	50	1
South Northants	54	43	3
England	48	49	3

All areas of West Northamptonshire had a higher percentage of surveyed properties with an EPC rating of C or above than the national average.

The baseline carbon footprint of council homes for the financial year 2018-19 was 2,474 tCO2e (tonnes of Carbon Dioxide equivalent)

We will target continual reductions in carbon emissions of 7% per year, and a 20% reduction in the NPH carbon footprint by 2023, compared to the baseline.

Northampton Partnership Homes have been upgrading 150 Council homes to help improve energy efficiency and reduce energy bills.

Additional government funding will also continue to support more council homes (up to 400) becoming zero carbon.

These works and funding have been able to support the local economy and helped create jobs.

Nearly 20% of rural households in West Northants are in fuel poverty

8.7% in the urban area of Northampton and 19.9% in the rural areas, which ties with the fact that almost a third of rural properties are not on mains gas and therefore, have alternative sources of heating.



Through the work with our emerging sustainability strategy, we will have more data and information about the impact of climate change in West Northants.