



# Housing Background Paper

**June 2026**



## Contents

|   |                                                                |     |
|---|----------------------------------------------------------------|-----|
| 1 | Housing Need and Five Year Supply.....                         | 4   |
| 2 | Housing Mix.....                                               | 12  |
| 3 | Affordable Housing .....                                       | 24  |
| 4 | Housing for Older People .....                                 | 33  |
| 5 | Custom and Self-Build Homes .....                              | 43  |
| 6 | Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Show People .....           | 51  |
| 7 | Housing for Looked After Children.....                         | 61  |
| 8 | Housing for Adults Requiring Care, Support or Management ..... | 711 |
| 9 | Houses of Multiple Occupation (HMOs) .....                     | 84  |

## **1 Housing Need and Five Year Supply**

- 1.1 The planning system requires local planning authorities to identify and meet the housing needs of their area, as set out in national planning policy and guidance. This involves establishing the need for housing and developing this into an appropriate housing requirement through the development plan process. In doing so, the Council must take account of demographic trends, household projections, affordability pressures, economic growth ambitions, and the needs of different groups within Fylde.
- 1.2 It is also necessary to ensure that sufficient and suitable land is identified to accommodate this growth over the plan period. This requires the Council to maintain an up-to-date evidence base and identify a supply of sites capable of delivering housing in sustainable locations.
- 1.3 A key component of this process is maintaining a deliverable supply of housing land. National policy requires local planning authorities to identify and update annually a supply of specific deliverable sites sufficient to provide a minimum of five years' worth of housing against the adopted housing requirement or local housing need figure. Deliverable sites are those which are available now, offer a suitable location for development, and are achievable with a realistic prospect that housing will be delivered within five years. This requires ongoing monitoring of sites, engagement with developers and landowners, and a clear understanding of delivery rates.
- 1.4 Maintaining a sufficient housing land supply is crucial to supporting the Government's objective of significantly increasing the supply of homes. A five year housing land supply helps to support continued housing delivery, provide certainty for communities and developers, and ensure that growth is directed to sustainable and planned locations in accordance with the development strategy.
- 1.5 The preparation of a new Local Plan provides an opportunity to establish an up-to-date housing requirement and identify a deliverable supply of land to meet both short term and longer term development needs. This includes identifying broad locations for growth and allocating sites to support the delivery of new homes, infrastructure, and associated development, thereby establishing a clear spatial strategy for Fylde over the plan period.

### **National Context**

- 1.6 National planning policy requires local planning authorities to plan positively for long term housing growth through the preparation of up to date development plans. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) expects strategic policies within a Local Plan to cover a minimum 15 year period from adoption and to identify sufficient land to meet housing needs and support sustainable patterns of growth.
- 1.7 The NPPF also requires local planning authorities to maintain a clear understanding of both current and future housing land supply. This is intended to ensure that housing needs can be met throughout the plan period and that there is sufficient flexibility in the supply of land to respond to changing circumstances, market conditions, and delivery rates.
- 1.8 The emerging Fylde Local Plan will extend the plan period to 2042, providing a long-term framework for housing growth delivery and development across the borough. The Plan will establish the overall housing requirement and identify the land needed to support delivery over the full plan period. In doing so, the Council is required to identify and maintain a supply of housing land through a combination of site allocations, commitments, and other sources of

supply. This includes:

- Identifying specific deliverable sites to maintain a minimum five-year housing land supply;
- Identifying specific developable sites or broad locations for growth for years 6-15 and beyond;
- Ensuring a continuous and flexible supply of housing land to support delivery across the plan period.

- 1.9 Maintaining an adequate housing land supply is important because it supports the delivery of new homes, provides certainty to communities, infrastructure providers, developers and investors, and helps ensure that development is directed towards sustainable and planned locations. A housing land supply position also supports the implementation of the spatial strategy and reduces the risk of unplanned or speculative development coming forward outside the development plan framework.

## National Policy

### Meeting Housing Needs

- 1.10 The NPPF sets out the Government's objective of significantly increasing the supply of homes and delivering sufficient housing to meet the needs of present and future communities.

- 1.11 Paragraph 61 of the NPPF emphasises that:<sup>1</sup>

*'It is important that a sufficient amount and variety of land can come forward where it is needed...'*

- 1.12 This reflects the Government's intention that the planning system should not only provide enough land to meet housing requirements overall, but also ensure that the supply of sites supports choice, competition and flexibility within the housing market.

- 1.13 In practice, this requires local planning authorities to identify sufficient land to meet housing needs and to demonstrate that sites are available, suitable and deliverable. The NPPF also expects authorities to provide a range of site sizes and types in order to support a diverse housing market and improve delivery rates.

### Five Year Housing Land Supply

- 1.14 Paragraph 78 of the NPPF states:

*'Local planning authorities should identify and update annually a supply of specific deliverable sites sufficient to provide a minimum of five years' worth of housing against their housing requirement... The supply of specific deliverable sites should in addition include a buffer (moved forward from later in the plan period) of:*

*a) 5% to ensure choice and competition in the market for land; or*

*b) 20% where there has been significant under delivery of housing over the previous three years, to improve the prospect of achieving the planned supply; or*

*c) From 1 July 2026, for the purposes of decision-making only, 20% where a local planning authority has a housing requirement adopted in the last five years examined against a previous version of this Framework, and whose annual average housing requirement<sup>42</sup> is 80% or less of*

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<sup>1</sup> NPPF Section 5 [National Planning Policy Framework - 5. Delivering a sufficient supply of homes - Guidance - GOV.UK](#)

*the most up to date local housing need figure calculated using the standard method set out in national planning practice guidance.'*

- 1.15 The purpose of the buffer is to ensure choice and competition in the market for land and to improve the prospect of achieving the planned supply of homes. This requirement means that local planning authorities must not only identify sufficient land to meet housing needs over the plan period, but also ensure that enough sites are capable of being delivered within the next five years. The assessment of five year housing land supply is therefore focused on deliverability rather than simply the overall quantity of land identified.
- 1.16 To be considered deliverable, sites must offer a suitable location for development and be achievable with a realistic prospect of housing. This requires the Council to consider a range of factors that may influence delivery, including site constraints, infrastructure requirements, viability considerations and land ownership.
- 1.17 The requirement to maintain a five year housing land supply is an important part of the planned system. It supports the Government's objective of increasing housing supply and helps ensure that development comes forward in sustainable and planned locations in accordance with the spatial strategy of the Local Plan.

### **Test of Soundness**

- 1.18 Paragraph 36 of the NPPF confirms that Local Plans are examined against the tests of soundness<sup>2</sup>. To be considered sound, plans must be:
- ***'Positively prepared: providing a strategy which, as a minimum, seeks to meet the area's identified housing and development needs, including accommodating unmet needs from neighbouring authorities where it is practical and consistent with sustainable development;***
  - ***Justified: An appropriate strategy, taking into account the reasonable alternatives, and based on proportionate evidence;***
  - ***Effective: deliverable over the plan period and supported by effective cross-boundary working on strategic matters; and***
  - ***Consistent with national policy: enabling the delivery of sustainable development in accordance with the Framework and national policy.'***
- 1.19 These tests place significant importance on the identification of housing need and the ability of the Local Plan to demonstrate how those needs will be met over the plan period. In particular, the Council must show that the housing requirement is supported by an appropriate and proportionate evidence base, and that sufficient land is available to support delivery both in the short term and long term.
- 1.20 The requirement for plans to be positively prepared and effective means that the Council must identify a realistic and deliverable supply of housing land capable of maintaining housing delivery throughout the plan period. This includes demonstrating a deliverable five year housing land supply, identifying developable land for later years of the plan, and ensuring that infrastructure, site constraints and market considerations have been appropriately considered.

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<sup>2</sup> NPPF Section 3 [National Planning Policy Framework - 3. Plan-making - Guidance - GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/617353/National-Planning-Policy-Framework-3-Plan-making-Guidance.pdf)

## Housing Need

- 1.21 The NPPF establishes a clear expectation that Local Plans should aim to meet the housing needs of their area in a way that is consistent with the principles of sustainable development. The identification of housing need is therefore a crucial component of plan-making and provides the basis for establishing an appropriate housing requirement and spatial strategy.
- 1.22 Paragraph 11 of the NPPF sets out the presumption in favour of sustainable development and confirms that, for plan making<sup>3</sup>:
- ‘11. Plans and decisions should apply a presumption in favour of sustainable development.*
- For plan-making this means that:*
- a) all plans should promote a sustainable pattern of development that seeks to: meet the development needs of their area; align growth and infrastructure; improve the environment; mitigate climate change (including by making effective use of land in urban areas) and adapt to its effects;*
  - b) 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 areas , 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.*
- 1.23 This highlights the expectation that Local Plans should positively plan for growth and ensure that sufficient land is identified to meet housing and development needs over the plan period. The presumption in favour of sustainable development establishes a clear expectation that housing needs should be met wherever possible.
- 1.24 The policy also highlights the importance of aligning housing growth with infrastructure provision and ensuring that development is directed towards sustainable locations. This requires local planning authorities to balance the need to deliver sufficient housing with considerations such as environmental protection, infrastructure capacity, accessibility, and the overall sustainability of the spatial strategy.
- 1.25 In practice, this means that the emerging Fylde Local Plan must establish an appropriate housing requirement, identify sufficient deliverable and developable land to meet that requirement, and ensure that housing growth is supported by the necessary infrastructure and services throughout the plan period.
- 1.26 Overall, national policy requires Local Plans to:
- Identify housing need using an appropriate and nationally recognised methodology;
  - Aim to meet identified housing needs in full;
  - Ensure that housing growth is aligned with infrastructure and sustainable development objectives; and
  - Engage constructively with neighbouring authorities on cross-boundary housing matters, including any unmet housing need.

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<sup>3</sup> NPPF section 2 [National Planning Policy Framework - 2. Achieving sustainable development - Guidance - GOV.UK](#)



- 1.27 These requirements are important because they ensure that Local Plans are based on an understanding of future housing needs and provide an appropriate framework for delivering homes over the long term. Establishing a clear housing requirement also provides certainty for communities, developers and infrastructure providers, and helps ensure that housing growth is planned and coordinated. An assessment of housing need is therefore a key element of the evidence base supporting the emerging Fylde Local Plan.

### **Establishing Housing Need**

- 1.28 Paragraph 62 of the NPPF requires local housing need to be assessed using the Government's standard method, as set out in national planning practice guidance. The Framework states:

*'To determine the minimum number of homes needed, strategic policies should be informed by a local housing need assessment, conducted using the standard method in national planning practice guidance. 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.'*

- 1.29 The standard method provides a nationally consistent approach for calculating local housing need. It uses household projections and affordability data to identify the minimum number of homes needed in an area and is intended to provide a clear starting point for plan-making.
- 1.30 The local housing need figure produced through the standard method represents the minimum level of housing need that strategic policies should address, unless exceptional circumstances justify an alternative approach. The NPPF also makes clear that authorities should consider whether additional housing may be required to support economic growth ambitions, infrastructure investment, regeneration objectives, affordable housing needs, or unmet needs arising from neighbouring authorities.
- 1.31 National policy therefore distinguishes between the calculation of local housing need and the housing requirement ultimately established through the Local Plan. While the standard method provides the starting point, the housing requirement set out within the plan must also take account of wider strategic considerations, constraints, infrastructure capacity, and the overall spatial strategy.
- 1.32 The requirement to use the standard method is important because it ensures a consistent and transparent basis for assessing housing need across local authority areas. It also provides clarity for plan-making and decision-taking by establishing an evidence-based starting point for identifying the scale of housing growth that should be planned for over the plan period.
- 1.33 The Council has applied the standard method to calculate local housing need for the emerging Plan, which includes<sup>4</sup>:
- Baseline: The baseline is calculated as 0.8% of the existing housing stock. The most recent dwelling stock data published by the Office for National Statistics (Table 125: dwelling stock estimates by local authority district) is used<sup>5</sup>.
  - Affordability adjustment: The baseline is adjusted to reflect affordability pressures, using the

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<sup>4</sup> Housing and economic needs assessment [Housing and economic needs assessment - GOV.UK](#)

<sup>5</sup> Live tables (Gov.UK, 2026) [Live tables on dwelling stock \(including vacants\) - GOV.UK](#)



median workplace based affordability ratio, published by the Office for National Statistics<sup>6</sup>. Where the ratio exceeds 5, the baseline is increased by 0.95% for every 1% the ratio is above this threshold, based on the average of the five most recent years of available data.

- 1.34 This approach establishes the minimum annual housing need figure for the plan area, which forms the starting point for identifying the overall housing requirement.

### The Calculation

- 1.35 At the time of preparing this document, the latest published dwelling stock data from national statistics indicates that Fylde's housing stock is 41,892 (2024). However, to ensure the calculation reflects the most up to date position, the Council has used the Housing Flow Reconciliation closing stock figure for 2024/25, which identifies a total of 42,180 dwellings. This approach ensures that the calculation is based on the most current data available.

- 1.36 The calculation for Fylde follows the standard method and is show in Table 1 below:

$$\text{Adjustment factor} = \left( \frac{\text{five year average affordability ratio} - 5}{5} \right) \times 0.95 + 1$$

| Standard method calculation (2025) |                  |
|------------------------------------|------------------|
| 42,180 x 0.8%                      | = <b>337</b>     |
| (6.23 – 5)                         | = <b>1.23</b>    |
| 1.23 / 5                           | = <b>0.246</b>   |
| 0.246 x 0.95                       | = <b>0.2337</b>  |
| 0.2337 + 1                         | = <b>1.2337</b>  |
| 1.234 x 337                        | = <b>416 dpa</b> |

Table 1 - Standard method calculation

- 1.37 The calculation therefore shows that the minimum local housing need figure of 416 dwellings per annum (dpa) for Fylde.

### Historic Housing Requirements

- 1.38 The housing requirement for Fylde has been established through the adopted Local Plan (2018) and Partial Review (2021). Following the Partial Review, the adopted housing requirement comprises:

- 415 dpa between 2011 and 2019;
- 305 dpa from 2019 onwards; and
- A total housing requirement of 7,275 dwellings over the plan period.

- 1.39 These requirements formed the basis for the Council's housing land supply calculations and the identification of housing allocations within the adopted development plan.

- 1.40 The emerging Local Plan will replace the existing housing requirement and establish a new requirement covering the plan period to 2042. Based on the most recent standard method calculation, Fylde's minimum local housing need is currently identified as 416 dpa (2025). This figure represents the minimum annual housing need identified through national policy and will

<sup>6</sup> House price to workplace based earnings ratio (Office for National Statistics) [House price to workplace-based earnings ratio - Office for National Statistics](#)

provide the starting point for preparing the emerging Local Plan and considering the scale of future housing growth across the borough.

- 1.41 The preparation of a new housing requirement also provides the opportunity to review whether additional factors should influence the overall level of housing provision. This may include consideration of economic growth ambitions, affordable housing needs, demographic change, infrastructure capacity, environmental constraints, and any unmet housing needs arising from neighbouring authorities. The housing requirement established through the Local Plan will therefore be informed by both the standard method and the wider evidence base supporting the emerging plan.

### **Five Year Housing Land Supply**

- 1.42 National policy requires local planning authorities to identify and maintain deliverable supply of housing land sufficient to provide a minimum of five years' worth of housing against the housing requirement, as set out in the NPPF.
- 1.43 The Council's latest published housing land supply position (base date 1<sup>st</sup> April 2025) indicates that Fylde can demonstrate 4.35 years of deliverable housing land supply<sup>7</sup>. The five-year requirement has been calculated in accordance with national policy and includes the application of a 5% buffer to ensure choice and competition in the market for land.
- 1.44 As a result, the Council is currently unable to demonstrate a full five-year supply of deliverable housing sites.

### **Existing Local Plan Policy**

- 1.45 The adopted Fylde Local Plan to 2032 establishes the framework for housing delivery through a series of strategic policies relating to housing requirement, land supply, site allocation and housing mix.
- 1.46 Strategic Policy H1: *Housing Delivery and Allocation* sets out the overall housing requirement and delivery strategy for the borough. The policy establishes:
- A housing requirement of:
    - 415 dpa between 2011 and 2019; and
    - 305 dpa between 2019 and 2032;
  - A minimum total requirement of 7,275 dwellings over the plan period;
  - A requirement to maintain a continuous five year supply of deliverable housing land, calculated using the Liverpool method; and
  - A delivery strategy based on allocated sites, existing commitments and windfall development.
- 1.47 Strategic Policy H2: *Density and Mix* supports the delivery of housing by setting out requirements for the density, type, and mix of housing development. The policy seeks to ensure that new development provides a range of homes to meet the needs of different groups within the community, including families, older people and those seeking access to the housing market.

### **Implications for the Emerging Local Plan**

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<sup>7</sup> Five Year Housing Supply (2025) [Five Year Housing Land Supply – Fylde Council](#)

## **The Role of the Emerging Local Plan (2025)**

- 1.48 The emerging Local Plan will establish a new framework for housing delivery and housing land supply over the plan period to 2042. In response to updated national policy, current housing land supply circumstances, and the need to maintain delivery over the long term, the Plan will establish an updated housing requirement and identify sufficient deliverable and developable land to support this growth.
- 1.49 A key role of the emerging Local Plan will be to ensure that Fylde is able to maintain a continuous supply of housing land throughout the plan period. To achieve this, the Plan will:
- Identify and allocate sufficient deliverable housing sites to maintain a minimum five year housing land supply;
  - Identify developable land and broad locations for growth for years 6–15 and beyond;
  - Establish a clear housing trajectory demonstrating how the housing requirement will be delivered over the plan period to 2042;
  - Allocate a range of sites of different sizes, types and locations to support delivery from a range of developers and maintain flexibility within the housing market;
  - Identify sufficient small and medium-sized sites capable of contributing towards delivery within the first five years of the plan period;
  - Ensure that site allocations are supported by appropriate infrastructure provision and informed by site constraints, viability considerations and land ownership;
  - Maintain flexibility within the housing supply to respond to delays on strategic sites or changes in delivery rates over time;
  - Direct housing growth towards sustainable locations with access to employment opportunities, services, facilities and public transport; and
  - Monitor housing completions, commitments and delivery rates to ensure that housing supply and delivery remain up to date throughout the plan period.
- 1.50 The emerging Local Plan will continue to use a combination of strategic allocations, non-strategic allocations, existing commitments and windfall development to support delivery. However, greater emphasis will be placed on ensuring that the housing land supply is realistic, deliverable and sufficiently flexible to maintain supply over the full plan period.
- 1.51 The Plan will also ensure that housing growth is aligned with infrastructure delivery, including transport improvements, education provision, utilities, green infrastructure, health facilities and community infrastructure. This will be important in demonstrating that the strategy is deliverable, effective and consistent with the principles of sustainable development.
- 1.52 Overall, the emerging Local Plan will provide an updated and strengthened policy framework for housing delivery across Fylde. It will establish an up-to-date housing requirement, maintain a five year housing land supply, ensure a continuous pipeline of developable land, and implement a clear spatial strategy capable of supporting sustainable housing growth over the plan period to 2042.

## 2 Housing Mix

- 2.1 Housing mix refers to the range of dwelling types (such as detached, semi-detached, terraced, bungalow, and apartments), sizes (including number of bedrooms and overall floor area), and tenures (including market housing, private rented accommodation, and affordable housing such as shared ownership, social rent, and affordable rent). It also includes specialist forms of accommodation, such as extra care and supported housing for those with specific needs.
- 2.2 Ensuring that an appropriate housing mix is delivered is a key part of creating sustainable, inclusive, and balanced communities. A diverse housing stock supports a wide range of households, including families, younger people seeking to access the housing market, older residents wishing to downsize, and those requiring more specialist accommodation. Providing a suitable mix of homes can help residents remain within their communities as their housing needs change over time, supporting community cohesion and long term social sustainability.
- 2.3 National planning policy emphasises the importance of planning for a mix of housing based on demographic trends, market signals, and the needs of different groups within the community. An appropriate mix of homes can contribute to improved affordability and greater housing choice by increasing the availability of homes suited to a range of household sizes, incomes, and life stages.
- 2.4 The housing stock within many areas can become imbalanced over time where development is dominated by particular dwelling types or sizes. For example, an over supply of larger family housing may limit opportunities for younger households, first time buyers, smaller households, and older people seeking more manageable accommodation. Conversely, a lack of family sized housing may reduce opportunities for households to remain within the areas as their circumstances change. Delivering a balanced mix of homes is therefore important in supporting mixed communities.
- 2.5 Housing mix also has wider economic and social implications. Providing homes that meet local needs can reduce the need for residents to move away to access suitable housing, and assist in addressing inequalities in housing access and affordability. In addition, a broader range of housing types and tenures can support adaptable communities by offering greater flexibility and choice throughout different stages of life.
- 2.6 The appropriate housing mix for new development will vary across the plan area and should be informed by evidence including demographic trends, household projections, affordability data, existing housing stock characteristics, and identified needs for different types of accommodation, including affordable and specialist housing.

### National Policy Context

- 2.7 Securing an appropriate mix of housing types, sizes, and tenures is a crucial requirement of national planning policy. The NPPF places clear emphasis on ensuring that housing delivery responds to the needs of different groups within the community and supports the creation of sustainable and inclusive places.
- 2.8 Paragraph 61 of the NPPF states that<sup>8</sup>:

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<sup>8</sup> NPPF (2024) Section 5 [National Planning Policy Framework - 5. Delivering a sufficient supply of homes - Guidance - GOV.UK](#)

*'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.'*

- 2.9 This means that housing delivery should not solely focus on meeting overall housing numbers, but must also ensure that the homes provided are suitable for the needs of existing and future residents. Delivering an appropriate mix of housing is important because communities are made up of households with differing circumstances, incomes, and needs.
- 2.10 Ensuring a suitable mix of homes helps support balanced and inclusive communities by improving housing choice and enabling people to remain within their local area as their needs change over time. It can also help address affordability pressures, reduce imbalances in the housing stock, and support wider economic and social objectives, including labour force retention and community cohesion.
- 2.11 Paragraph 63 further states that:
- 'Within this context of establishing need, the size, type and tenure of housing needed for different groups in the community should be assessed and reflected in planning policies.'*
- 2.12 This requires local planning authorities to understand the characteristics and needs of their population and ensure that these are reflected in Local Plan policies and development decisions. Housing mix should therefore respond to evidence relating to demographic trends, household composition, affordability, existing housing stock, and the needs of specific groups within the community, including older people, families, younger households, people with disabilities, and those requiring affordable housing.
- 2.13 Reflecting the needs of different groups within the community is important because housing requirements vary significantly across Fylde. If policies do not respond to these differing needs, there is a risk that new development will deliver dwelling types or tenures that do not align with local demand. This can contribute to affordability issues, limit opportunities for households to access suitable housing, and reduce the ability of residents to remain within their communities throughout different stages of life.
- 2.14 These provisions establish a clear expectation that Local Plans should be informed by proportionate and up-to-date evidence so that housing mix policies respond effectively to current and future demographic and market conditions. This means that local planning authorities must translate housing need evidence into clear policy requirements that guide the type, size, and tenure of homes delivered across the area. In doing so, planning policies can help ensure that new development contributes to sustainable, mixed, and resilient communities and provides a sufficient range of homes to meet identified needs.
- 2.15 Paragraph 64 addresses the delivery of affordable housing, stating that on-site provision should be secured unless:
- a. *'off-site provision or an appropriate financial contribution in lieu can be robustly justified; and*
  - b. *the agreed approach contributes to the objective of creating mixed and balanced communities.'*
- 2.16 This emphasises that affordable housing should normally be integrated within development schemes rather than delivered separately. The policy reflects the principle that mixed tenure developments can help create more inclusive and sustainable communities by ensuring that households with different incomes and housing needs are able to live within the same neighbourhoods.

- 2.17 Integrating affordable housing within new development is important because it helps widen access to housing choice, supports social inclusion, and reduces concentrations of housing inequality or segregation. Mixed and balanced communities are generally more resilient and sustainable, benefiting from a broader demographic profile and supporting access to local services, schools, employment opportunities, and public transport. On-site affordable housing provision can also help ensure that affordable homes are delivered in accessible and well connected locations alongside market housing, contributing to better overall place making outcomes.

#### **Emerging National Policy (December 2025)**

- 2.18 The emerging changes to national planning policy reinforce the importance of securing a diverse and balanced housing mix through local plan policies and ensuring that housing delivery responds more effectively to differing local and demographic needs.
- 2.19 As part of the *Twelve Key Policy Changes*, the proposed reforms state that:
- ‘We want to better support the needs of different groups through the planning system. This includes stronger support for rural social and affordable housing, and setting clearer expectations for accessible housing to meet the needs of older and disabled people.’*
- 2.20 This is particularly relevant in the context of Fylde’s ageing population, declining household sizes, and the need for more accessible and adaptable forms of accommodation. The proposed policy direction strengthens national support for housing that responds to changing demographic needs and reinforces the importance of delivering a wider range of housing types, sizes, and tenures, including homes suitable for people and those with additional needs.
- 2.21 Chapter 6: *Delivering a sufficient supply of homes* also highlights the need to:
- ‘Support a diverse range of accommodation and mix of tenures to speed up the building of homes, and create thriving and resilient communities across our towns, cities, and rural areas alike.’*
- 2.22 This reinforces that housing delivery should not focus just on overall housing numbers, but also ensuring that new development contributes towards mixed, balanced, and sustainable communities.
- 2.23 Policy HO4: *Land for large scale residential and mixed-use development* places greater emphasis on the role of larger strategic developments in supporting housing diversity, stating that such sites should support:
- ‘A comprehensive approach to development, including a diverse range of housing types, high quality design and ensuring appropriate infrastructure provision.’*
- 2.24 The draft policy also proposes that:
- ‘Local plans set out expectations for a mix of tenures to be provided on these sites.’*
- 2.25 This reflects increasing national recognition that larger developments should contribute towards a broad range of housing needs and tenures, including affordable housing, in order to support mixed communities and improve housing choice. The emphasis on tenure diversity also aligns with wider objectives relating to affordability, housing accessibility, and build-out rates.
- 2.26 Policy HO5: *Meeting the needs of different groups* further strengthens support for housing that meets the needs of different groups within the community. The proposed policy states that

changes are intended to:

- 2.27 The draft policy also states that local planning authorities should:  
*'Set out requirements for a broader mix of tenures to be provided on larger sites to encourage diversity and faster build out.'*
- 2.28 This is significant in reinforcing the role of housing mix policies in supporting both community diversity and housing delivery. The emphasis on specialist accommodation and mixed tenure development reflects the increasing importance of planning for a broader range of housing needs, particularly in areas experiencing demographic change.
- 2.29 The emerging policy additionally confirms that national policy is not seeking to impose a standardised approach to tenure mix, recognising instead that:  
*'The mix should take into account local assessments of need.'*
- 2.30 This supports the importance of evidence led local policy approaches and reinforces the need for housing mix requirements within Fylde to respond to local demographic trends, affordability pressures, and existing stock imbalances.
- 2.31 Draft Policy *HO6: Planning for Diverse Sites* also highlights the importance of ensuring that local plans support:  
*'A diverse mix of sites,'*
- 2.32 and proposes that authorities should allocate sites where these will:  
*'Support the vitality of rural communities.'*
- 2.33 This is particularly relevant to Fylde's rural settlements, where the housing stock is often dominated by larger detached homes and where opportunities for smaller or more affordable housing can be limited. The emerging policy direction therefore reinforces the need for rural housing mix policies that support more balanced and sustainable communities.
- 2.34 Overall, the emerging national policy direction strengthens support for a more diverse, flexible, and locally responsive approach to housing delivery. The proposed reforms reinforce the importance of securing a broad mix of housing types, sizes, and tenures, planning for the needs of different groups within the community, and ensuring that housing policies are informed by up-to-date evidence of local need.

## **Demographic Context**

- 2.35 The demographic profile of an area is an important consideration in understanding housing need and informing the appropriate mix of homes to be delivered through new development. Changes in population size, household composition, age structure, and the levels of economic activity all influence the type, size, tenure, and specialist accommodation required within the housing market.
- 2.36 The population of Fylde has increased over recent years, reaching an estimated 85,447 in 2024<sup>9</sup>. An increase of 7.4% was witnessed Between the 2011 and 2021 Census, the Borough experienced population growth of 7.4%, exceeding both the North West average of 5.2%, and the England and Wales figure of 6.6%. Despite this overall growth, the Fylde's birth rate

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<sup>9</sup> Office for National Statistics: Mid-Year Population Estimates [Population estimates - Office for National Statistics](#)



continues to remain below the death rate, indicating that population change is being driven largely by inward migration rather than natural increase.

- 2.37 Population projections indicate that this trend is expected to continue over the plan period. Between 2022 and 2047, Fylde's population is projected to increase by approximately 21.7%, compared to a projected increase of around 12% across the wider Lancashire-14 area<sup>10</sup>. In addition, the number of households is predicted to increase by 24.6% between 2018 and 2043, representing the highest percentage increase within the Lancashire-14 area. This growth in households is significant in housing mix terms, as it reflects not only overall population growth but also changing household structures and occupancy patterns.
- 2.38 Fylde has a notably older population profile when compared to regional and national averages. The average age of the population was estimated at 51.3 years in 2022, compared to a median age of 40.5 for England (Census Mid-2022). Approximately 14.8% of the Borough's population is aged 15 and under, whilst around 28.4% is aged 65 and over. By comparison, only 56.8% of Fylde's population is of working age (aged between 16 and retirement), compared to 64.3% nationally. Since 2001, the proportion of residents above retirement age has continued to increase, whilst the proportion of children has gradually declined. This indicates that the dependency ratio between the working age and non-working age population is increasing over time.
- 2.39 Fylde's ageing population is therefore a particularly important consideration in planning for future housing needs. Current data indicates that approximately 27.8% of residents are aged 65 and over<sup>11</sup>, substantially above the national average of 18.5%<sup>12</sup>, and this proportion is expected to rise further over the plan period to 2042. As the population ages, housing needs are likely to change significantly, generating increased demand for smaller homes, accessible and adaptable dwellings, bungalows, apartments, and accommodation that supports independent living.
- 2.40 This demographic trend also has implications for the provision of specialist accommodation, including extra care housing, supported housing, and other forms of housing designed to meet the needs of older people and adults requiring varying levels of care and support. Please refer to the Housing for Older People subsection and any future evidence relating to specialist and supported accommodation needs within the Borough.
- 2.41 At the same time, average household sizes are declining, with growth in single-person households and smaller households. This reflects wider national demographic trends, including increased life expectancy, changing family structure, later household formation, and growth in older single person households. These trends reinforce the need for a broader range of dwelling types and sizes across the Borough, particularly smaller homes capable of meeting the needs of newly forming households, older residents wishing to downsize, and households seeking more manageable or affordable accommodation.
- 2.42 Without a responsive housing mix, there is a risk that future development will not align with changing demographic and household needs. An imbalance in the housing stock may reduce housing choice, worsen affordability pressures, and limit opportunities for residents to move within the local housing market as their circumstances change. This includes households seeking to downsize, upsize, access more suitable accommodation, or remain living

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<sup>10</sup> Lancashire County Council, Fylde district [Fylde district - Lancashire County Council](#)

<sup>11</sup> Census Fylde demographics [How life has changed in Fylde: Census 2021](#)

<sup>12</sup> Census National statistics [Population aged 65 and over - ONS](#)

independently within their local community. Ensuring that housing delivery reflects demographic change is therefore essential to supporting sustainable, inclusive, and balanced communities over the plan period.

### **Housing Stock and Tenure Profile**

- 2.43 Evidence from the Fylde Housing Needs Survey (2022) provides insight into the existing housing stock profile within the Borough<sup>13</sup>. Flats and maisonettes account for 23.6% of properties, followed by semi-detached homes (21.9%) and detached homes (19.3%). The profile of the existing stock reflects both historic patterns of development and the differing roles played by the owner occupied, private rented, and affordable housing sectors within the local housing market.
- 2.44 The tenure profile indicates a clear segmentation within the housing market:
- Owner occupied homes are more likely to be detached and larger family housing, with limited provision flats within this sector;
  - More than half of dwellings within the social rented sector are flats;
  - The private rented sector also contains a high proportion of flats and smaller properties.
- 2.45 This distribution highlights an imbalance within the housing market whereby larger homes are concentrated predominantly within owner occupation, while smaller dwellings are disproportionately associated with rented tenures. This means that households seeking smaller homes may have limited options outside the rented sector, whilst access to larger homes is more strongly linked to higher levels of affordability and owner occupation.
- 2.46 The concentration of smaller properties within rented tenures can create barriers for households wishing to access home ownership at lower price points, particularly younger households, newly forming households, and first time buyers. Where smaller owner occupied properties are limited in supply, households may remain in the private rented sector for longer periods, potentially affecting affordability, housing security, and the ability to progress within the housing market.
- 2.47 Similarly, the lack owner occupied homes may limit opportunities for older households withing to downsize whilst remaining within their existing communities. This may result in older residents remaining in larger family housing that no longer reflects their needs, reducing the availability of such homes for growing families and restricting the efficient use of the existing housing stock. A limited downsizing market can therefore have wider implications for housing mobility across the Borough.
- 2.48 Reduced housing mobility can contribute to restrictions within the local housing market, where households are unable to move into accommodation better suited to their circumstances. This can affect multiple stages of the housing ladder, including younger households seeking smaller or more accessible homes. Over time, this can reduce overall housing choice and weaken the ability of the housing market to respond effectively to changing demographic and economic conditions.
- 2.49 The existing stock profile also impacts affordability and tenure choice. Where smaller and more affordable market homes are limited, there may be increased pressure on both the affordable housing sector and the private rented sector. This can reduce opportunities for households to

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<sup>13</sup> Fylde's Housing Need Survey (2022) [Microsoft Word - Fylde\\_Final\\_HNS\\_140922](#)

transition between tenures and may contribute to increased housing costs and reduced accessibility within the local market.

- 2.50 As a result, the current housing stock does not fully align with the needs of a changing population, particularly in the context of an ageing demographic profile, declining households sizes, and affordability pressures affecting younger households. This reinforces the importance of securing a broader and more balanced mix of dwelling types, sizes, and tenures through new development.
- 2.51 These issues have direct implications for the development of housing mix policies within the emerging Local Plan. Future policy approaches should seek to ensure that new development contributes towards a more balanced housing stock by increasing the supply of homes that are currently underrepresented within particular tenures or size categories. This may include greater provision of smaller market homes, accessible and adaptable dwellings, family housing, and a wider range of affordable housing products. Ensuring an appropriate housing mix will help support housing choice, improve mobility within the housing market, and create more balanced and sustainable communities over the plan period.

### **Spatial Variation Across the Borough**

- 2.52 There are notable spatial variations in housing mix, household composition, and dwelling characteristics across Fylde. These differences reflect the distinct roles and functions of settlements within the Borough, as well as historic patterns of development, demographic characteristics, housing affordability, and the nature of the existing housing stock. Understanding these localised variations is important in ensuring that housing mix policies respond appropriately to the differing needs and characteristics of individual communities.
- 2.53 St Annes has the lowest average household size within the Borough, at approximately 2.01 persons per household, and contains a high proportion of flats, which account for approximately two-fifths of all properties. This reflects the area's role as a more urban and higher density settlement, as well as its older population profile and greater prevalence of smaller households, including single person households and older residents.
- 2.54 In contrast, Kirkham has the highest average household size, at approximately 2.33 persons per household, indicating a comparatively greater presence of family households and larger dwelling requirements. Rural areas across the Borough typically exceed the Borough average household size and are characterised by a higher proportion of detached dwellings and bungalows, reflecting both the rural character of these settlements and the prevalence of larger homes within the existing stock.
- 2.55 These spatial differences demonstrate that housing needs and market characteristics vary significantly across the Borough. Areas dominated by smaller households may require a continued supply of smaller dwellings, accessible homes, and accommodation suitable for older people or single person households. Whereas, areas with larger household sizes may generate stronger demand for family housing, including large properties with access to services, schools, and open space.
- 2.56 The variation in housing stock also reflects differing levels of affordability, tenure patterns, and demographic pressures across settlements. In some locations, an over concentration of smaller flats may limit opportunities for families or households seeking larger accommodation, whilst in other areas the predominance of larger detached homes may restrict options for younger

households, downsizers, or those seeking more affordable housing. This can affect the ability of residents to remain within their local community as their housing needs change over time.

- 2.57 These variations indicate that housing mix requirements should respond to the individual characteristics, role, and function of different settlements rather than applying a uniform approach across the Borough. Rural areas remain dominated by larger homes and lower density development, while areas such as St Annes contain a greater proportion of smaller dwellings and smaller households. The differing characteristics of settlements therefore influence the type and size of homes likely to be required in each location.
- 2.58 This demonstrates that a 'one size fits all' approach to housing mix would not be appropriate. Instead, a more flexible and locally responsive approach is required to ensure that new development reflects the characteristics, constraints, and identified needs of individual settlements within the Borough. Housing mix policies should therefore be sufficiently adaptable to respond to local evidence, demographic trends, existing stock profiles, and the role each settlement preforms within the wider housing market area.
- 2.59 A locally responsive approach will help ensure that new development contributes positively to the creation of balanced and sustainable communities across Fylde, supports housing choice, and better aligns future housing delivery with the needs of existing and future residents.

#### **Policy Context and Existing Approach**

- 2.60 The adopted Local Plan to 2032 requires new development to deliver an appropriate housing mix alongside the provision of affordable housing. The Plan states that it will:  
*'Provide for an appropriate housing mix and provision of affordable housing. Opportunities for infill development should be maximised, whilst taking into account the characteristics of the area and seeking to avoid the loss of viable employment sites and public open space.'*
- 2.61 This establishes a clear requirement that new residential development should not only contribute towards meeting overall housing requirements, but also deliver homes that respond to the needs of different households within the Borough. The policy recognises that the quantity of housing delivered alone is insufficient if the homes provided do not reflect local demographic trends, affordability pressures, and the characteristics of the existing housing stock.
- 2.62 This emphasis on responding to local character and achieving sustainable patterns of growth is important because housing mix requirements must operate alongside wider place making objectives, reflect the role and function of settlements, and contribute positively to the quality and sustainability of neighbourhoods. This includes ensuring that higher density development is directed towards suitable and accessible locations whilst maintaining the character and amenity of existing areas.
- 2.63 The adopted Plan also recognises the importance of making efficient use of previously developed and infill sites where appropriate. Infill development can contribute towards meeting housing needs within sustainable locations and support existing services and infrastructure, provided that development aligns with the character of the surrounding area and does not result in unacceptable impacts on employment land, public open space, or residential amenity.
- 2.64 Strategic Policy H2: *Density and Mix* provides the primary policy requirement for securing an appropriate housing mix within new residential development. In particular, the policy aims to

address identified imbalances in the existing housing stock by requiring that, on sites of 10 dwellings or more, at least 50% of homes comprise 1, 2 or 3 bedroom properties.

- 2.65 This approach reflects evidence that the existing housing market contains a comparatively high proportion of larger homes and that there is a need to broaden the supply of smaller dwellings across the Borough. Requiring a greater proportion of smaller homes is intended to support a wider range of households, including first time buyers, younger households, smaller families, single person households, and older residents seeking to downsize.
- 2.66 Increasing the supply of smaller homes is important in supporting housing affordability and improving access to the housing market. Smaller properties are generally more attainable for households on lower or moderate incomes and can help provide opportunities for households to move within the local housing market as their circumstances change. A broader range of dwelling sizes can also improve overall housing mobility, helping to reduce pressures arising from under occupation and limited downsizing opportunities.
- 2.67 The policy also supports the delivery of a range of housing types, including accommodation suitable for older people, alongside higher density development in appropriate and sustainable locations. This reflects the need for housing delivery to respond to changing demographic trends, particularly Fylde's ageing population and increasing number of smaller households.
- 2.68 In addition, the policy includes minimum density requirements to support the efficient use of land. Making efficient use of land is an important planning objectives, particularly in locations with good access to services, facilities, employment opportunities, and public transport. Higher density development in suitable locations can help support sustainable patterns of growth, maximise the use of existing infrastructure, and reduce pressure for development on less sustainable patterns of growth, maximise the use of existing infrastructure, and reduce pressure for development on less sustainable sites.
- 2.69 Furthermore, the policy recognises that density and housing mix should respond appropriately to local context. Different parts of the Borough have differing settlement patterns, character, and housing needs, and therefore flexibility is required to ensure that development remains locally appropriate whilst still contributing towards wider housing objectives.
- 2.70 Overall, the adopted policy recognises that density and housing mix should respond appropriately to local context. Different parts of the Borough have differing settlement patterns, character, and housing needs, and therefore flexibility is required to ensure that development remains locally appropriate whilst still contributing towards wider housing objectives.

### **Effectiveness and Ongoing Relevance**

- 2.71 The current approach is informed by evidence identifying the need to rebalance the housing stock towards smaller dwellings and to secure a more diverse, flexible, and accessible housing offer across the Borough<sup>14</sup>. In this respect, the existing policy framework remains broadly consistent with national policy objectives and continues to provide a clear basis for securing an appropriate housing mix through new development.
- 2.72 The emphasis within the adopted Local Plan on increasing the supply of smaller homes and broadening housing choice reflects long standing structural characteristics of the local housing

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<sup>14</sup> Evidence gathered from SHMA (2014) [Fylde-Coast-SHMA-2014.pdf](#)

market, including the predominance of larger detached properties and comparatively limited availability of smaller market homes with certain tenures. These issues continue to influence affordability, housing accessibility, and mobility within the Borough.

- 2.73 Updated evidence presented within this paper indicates that many of the underlying drivers informing the current policy approach remain evident. Fylde continues to experience significant demographic change, including an ageing population, increasing numbers of older households, and declining average household sizes. At the same time, population and household projections indicate continued growth over the plan period, increasing pressure on the housing market and reinforcing the need for a wider range of homes capable of meeting differing household needs.
- 2.74 The boroughs housing stock also continues to display imbalances in terms of dwelling size and tenure distribution. Larger detached homes remain a significant component of the owner occupied sector, whilst smaller properties are more heavily concentrated within rented tenures. This can limit opportunities for younger households to access home ownership, restrict downsizing options for older residents, and reduce overall movement within the housing market.
- 2.75 These trends suggest that the need to secure a greater proportion of smaller homes, alongside a broader range of housing types and tenures, remains both justified and relevant. Delivering a more balanced housing mix can help address identified gaps within the housing stock, improve housing choice, and support a wider range of households at different stages of life.
- 2.76 The continued relevance of the existing approach is also reinforced by wider affordability pressures. Increasing house prices, changing economic circumstances, and constraints within both the owner occupied and private rented sectors have contributed to growing challenges for many households in accessing suitable housing. A broader mix of dwelling sizes and tenures can help improve accessibility within the housing market by increasing the availability of homes suited to differing income levels and household circumstances.
- 2.77 In addition, the ageing demographic profile of the Borough increases the importance of delivering homes that are adaptable, accessible, and suitable for independent living. Without an appropriate supply of such homes, there is a risk that older households may remain in accommodation that no longer meets their needs, limiting housing mobility and reducing the availability of larger family housing elsewhere within the market.
- 2.78 The evidence also demonstrates that housing needs vary across different parts of the Borough, reinforcing the importance of retaining sufficient policy flexibility to respond to local circumstances and settlement characteristics. While the overall direction of the current policy approach remains appropriate, updated evidence provides an opportunity to refine and strengthen future policy requirements to ensure that they continue to respond effectively to demographic change, market conditions, affordability pressures, and national policy expectations.
- 2.79 Overall, the evidence indicates that the core objectives underpinning the existing housing mix policy remain valid and continue to be necessary in supporting the delivery of balanced, inclusive, and sustainable communities across Fylde.

## Implications for the Emerging Local Plan

- 2.80 The evidence presented in this paper demonstrates a clear and ongoing need to secure a more balanced housing mix across Fylde. This evidence highlights interconnected demographic and housing market trends which are continuing to shape housing needs within the borough, including:
- An ageing population and increasing demand for smaller, accessible, and adaptable homes;
  - A growing proportion of smaller households; and
  - An existing housing stock characterised by a relatively high proportion of larger, detached dwellings, particularly within rural areas and the owner occupied sector.
- 2.81 These factors indicate that imbalances within the existing housing stock remain evident and that future housing delivery must respond more effectively to the changing needs of the Borough's population. Without an appropriate policy response, there is a risk that new development could continue to reinforce existing imbalances, limited housing choice, reducing accessibility within the housing market, and constraining opportunities for households to move within the Borough as their circumstances change.
- 2.82 The evidence also demonstrates that housing needs are becoming increasingly diverse. Future housing demand is likely to arise from a broader range of household types, including older households, younger people seeking to access the housing market, smaller families, single person households, and households requiring specialist or supported accommodation. This reinforces the importance of ensuring that the emerging Local Plan supports the delivery needs over the plan period.
- 2.83 The emerging Local Plan will therefore include a policy framework which:
- Requires the delivery of a proportion of smaller homes on qualifying sites in order to improve housing choice and support downsizing opportunities and mobility within the housing market;
  - Ensures that housing mix requirements are informed by up-to-date evidence, including housing needs assessments, demographic projections, affordability data, and analysis of the existing housing stock;
  - Reflects spatial variation across the Borough by supporting a more locally responsive approach to housing mix, taking account of the differing role, function, and characteristics of settlements;
  - Supports the delivery of a broad range of housing types and tenures, including affordable housing, accessible and adaptable homes, accommodation suitable for older people, and housing for other groups with specific needs; and
  - Promotes balanced and sustainable communities by ensuring that new development contributes positively to the overall diversity and resilience of the Borough's housing stock.
- 2.84 The emerging policy approach will also need to maintain sufficient flexibility to respond to changing market conditions, viability considerations, and future evidence of housing need over the plan period. This is particularly important given the pace of demographic change, evolving affordability pressures, and changing patterns of household formation.
- 2.85 In doing so, the emerging Plan will retain the core objective of Strategic Policy H2 in aiming to rebalance the housing stock and broaden housing choice across Fylde. However, the updated approach will also ensure that housing mix requirements remain responsive to changing

demographic, economic, and spatial circumstances, allowing policies to better reflect local needs and support needs and support the delivery of inclusive, sustainable, and mixed communities across the Borough.

- 2.86 The policy framework will therefore play an important role not only in shaping the quantity of housing delivered, but also in influencing the quality, diversity, accessibility, and long term sustainability of the Borough's future housing stock.

## **Conclusion**

- 2.87 Building on the existing policy framework and the evidence presented within this paper, the emerging Local Plan will aim to retain a clear and consistent approach towards securing a balanced housing mix across the Borough. The proposed approach is intended to address identified housing needs and stock imbalances whilst maintaining sufficient flexibility to respond to local circumstances, site characteristics, and development viability considerations.
- 2.88 The emerging Local Plan will continue to require all developments of 10 or more dwellings will therefore be required to include at least 50% of dwellings that are 1-, 2- or 3-bedroom homes. Developments within or in close proximity to the Tier 1 Larger Rural Settlements or Tier 2 Smaller Rural Settlements should include at least 33% 1- or 2-bedroom homes. In assessing the number of bedrooms proposed, all habitable rooms excluding a single main reception/living room and a kitchen will be counted as bedrooms where they meet the Nationally Described Space Standard. Where very large rooms are included that are capable of straightforward subdivision.
- 2.89 Developments will be expected to make efficient use of land, whilst avoiding detrimental impact on the amenity, character, appearance, distinctiveness and environmental quality of the surrounding area. It is expected that this will normally result in a minimum net residential density of 30 homes per hectare.
- 2.90 When considering a proposal for a significantly higher density development, in addition to the above considerations, particular attention will be paid to ensuring that there is no unacceptable impact on highway safety and that sufficient car parking is provided on-site. High density development should be very carefully designed to relate well to its surroundings, be orientated towards and have principal entrances facing towards the street, and should include sufficient usable amenity space to provide for the needs of residents.
- 2.91 Overall, the proposed policy approach seeks to balance consistency with flexibility. It will retain a strong focus on addressing identified housing needs and improving the diversity of the housing stock, whilst ensuring that policy requirements remain responsive to local circumstances and capable of supporting sustainable and deliverable development across the Borough.



### 3 Affordable Housing

- 3.1 Affordable housing is a key component of the planning system, intended to ensure that households whose needs are not met by the market are able to access suitable and secure homes. It plays a critical role in supporting mixed and balanced communities, addressing affordability pressures, reducing inequalities, and enabling sustainable economic growth by ensuring all groups within the community can be accommodated.
- 3.2 The NPPF defines affordable housing as<sup>15</sup>:  
*‘Housing for sale or rent, for those whose needs are not met by the market (including housing that provides a subsidised route to home ownership and/or is for essential local workers).’*
- 3.3 National policy identifies a range of affordable housing tenures designed to meet differing needs and circumstances, including:
- **Social rented housing:** Typically owned by local authorities or housing associations, with rents set in line with local income that are below market level and targeted to those in greatest need.
  - **Affordable rented housing:** Provided by local authorities or housing associations, with rents below market levels. This tenure provides a more affordable option to market renting.
  - **Discounted market sale housing:** Homes sold at a discount to market value. This is intended to support households who are unable to afford market housing but are not eligible for rented affordable housing.
  - **First Homes:** A specific form of discounted market sale housing for first time buyers, secured with a minimum 30% discount to market value.
- 3.4 These tenures provide a variety of options, ranging from subsidised rented housing for those in greatest need to assisted home ownership products for households seeking access to the housing market.
- 3.5 Within Fylde, the delivery of affordable housing is a key priority, reflecting the need to ensure that local residents are able to access suitable housing. The Council does not own or manage its own housing stock, following the transfer of stock to Progress Housing Group. As a result, the delivery and management of affordable housing is reliant on partnership working with registered providers and developers.
- 3.6 This reinforces the importance of the planning system as the primary mechanism for securing affordable housing provision, particularly through new residential development. Affordable housing is typically secured through planning obligations, ensuring that new development contributes to meeting identified local needs.
- 3.7 To support this, the Council has adopted an Affordable Housing Supplementary Planning Document (SPD), which provides detailed guidance on the application of Policy H4: *Affordable Housing*<sup>16</sup>. The SPD expands on the requirements set out in the Fylde Local Plan to 2032 (incorporating Partial Review) and shows how affordable housing should be delivered through the planning process.
- 3.8 The SPD is informed by local evidence on housing need and affordability, recognising that house

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<sup>15</sup> NPPF Affordable housing 2024 [National Planning Policy Framework - Annex 2: Glossary - Guidance - GOV.UK](#)

<sup>16</sup> Affordable Housing SPD (2024) [Affordable-Housing-SPD-April-2024.pdf](#)

prices in Fylde are relatively high compared to the wider sub-region, and that lower income households face challenges in accessing suitable housing. The document emphasises the importance of delivering affordable housing to support sustainable and mixed communities.

- 3.9 It establishes the Council's expectations in relation to the proportion, tenure mix, size, type and distribution of affordable housing within new developments, alongside guidance on design considerations and integration within schemes. The SPD also outlines the process for securing affordable housing through legal agreements and the approach to decision-making, implementation, and monitoring.

### **National Policy Context**

- 3.10 The NPPF requires local planning authorities to assess, plan, and deliver the housing needs of different groups within the community, including those requiring affordable housing. It establishes affordable housing as a key component of sustainable development.

- 3.11 Paragraph 63 of the NPPF states that<sup>17</sup>:

*'Within this context of establishing need, the size, type and tenure of housing needed for different groups in the community should be assessed and reflected in planning policies...including those who require affordable housing (including Social Rent)...'*

- 3.12 In practice, this means that local authorities must not only identify the overall need for housing, but also understand the specific requirements of different groups, including those unable to access market housing. Planning policies must then actively respond to this evidence by securing an appropriate mix of affordable housing tenures through new development.

- 3.13 National policy also sets clear expectations for how affordable housing should be delivered, 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.'*

- 3.14 This reinforces the role of the planning system in securing not just the quantity, but the appropriate mix of affordable housing through new development. It highlights the importance of aligning delivery within identified needs, particularly in ensuring that affordable rented housing is provided alongside home ownership products.

- 3.15 More recent national policy also introduces specific requirements for certain types of development, including higher affordable housing expectations for development involving land released from the Green Belt. This reflects a broader emphasis on maximising affordable housing delivery where opportunities arise.

- 3.16 Affordable housing is therefore central to achieving sustainable development objectives set out in the NPPF. It supports the creation of inclusive and mixed communities, helps to reduce inequalities in access to housing, and enables people to live near employment opportunities, services, and support networks. In doing so, it also contributes to economic growth by supporting the functioning of local economies.

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<sup>17</sup> NPPF Section 5 2024 [National Planning Policy Framework - 5. Delivering a sufficient supply of homes - Guidance - GOV.UK](#)

### Emerging National Policy (December 2025)

- 3.17 In addition to the current NPPF, the Government has consulted on proposed changes to national planning policy intended to support increased housing delivery, improve affordability, and strengthen the role of the planning system in meeting a wider range of housing needs.
- 3.18 While these proposed changes have not yet been adopted and therefore carry limited weight at this stage, they provide an indication of the Government's intended direction of travel and are relevant to the preparation of the emerging Fylde Local Plan.
- 3.19 The draft policy proposals place increased emphasis on delivering a wider range of homes and responding to the needs of different groups within the community. In relation to securing a diverse mix of homes, the consultation states that the Government wants to:
- 'Better support the needs of different groups through the planning system.'
- 3.20 This includes stronger support for social and affordable housing, accessible housing for older and disabled people, and housing provision within rural areas.
- 3.21 The draft proposals also place greater emphasis on supporting small and medium-sized sites. The consultation states that the Government wants to:
- 'Make it easier to bring forward small sites.'
- 3.22 This will be achieved through clearer policy support and a more streamlined planning system. This reflects increasing national recognition that a wider range of sites and developers can help improve housing delivery rates and maintain resilience within the housing land supply.
- 3.23 Draft Policy HO5 – *Meeting the Needs of Different Groups* proposes strengthened support for the delivery of housing which responds to the needs of different sectors of the community, including social and affordable housing in rural areas. The proposed policy builds upon recent changes to national policy which strengthened support for mixed tenure development and social rent provision.
- 3.24 Draft Policy HO8 – *Providing Affordable Homes* places significant emphasis on the delivery of affordable housing as part of mixed and balanced communities. The consultation confirms that the Government retains:
- 'A strong preference for, and commitment to, on-site delivery of social and affordable housing.'
- 3.25 The draft proposals also reinforce the importance of ensuring that development delivers wider community benefits alongside housing growth. Draft Policy GB8 – *Golden Rules* states that development should deliver:
- 'Higher levels of social and affordable housing, green space, and necessary infrastructure improvements.'
- 3.26 Taken together, the proposed changes reinforce the importance of ensuring that the emerging Fylde Local Plan:
- Identifies a sufficient and deliverable supply of housing land;
  - Allocates a range of sites of different sizes, types and locations;
  - Supports delivery from a range of developers;

- Provides flexibility and resilience within the housing trajectory;
- Responds to identified affordable and specialist housing needs; and
- Ensures that housing growth is aligned with infrastructure provision and sustainable development objectives.

3.27 The emerging Fylde Local Plan will continue to monitor changes to national planning policy as reforms progress and will take account of relevant changes where appropriate during the preparation of the Plan.

### **Identified Need in Fylde**

3.28 Evidence from Fylde's Housing Needs Survey (2022) identifies a significant and ongoing need for affordable housing across the Borough over the next five years, particularly for social and affordable rented housing<sup>18</sup>. The study identifies a requirement for approximately:

- 418 affordable homes for rent per annum; and
- 175 affordable homes for affordable home ownership per annum.

3.29 This equates to a total annual need of 593 affordable homes.

3.30 This level of need represents a substantial proportion of overall housing delivery and indicates that a significant number of households are unable to access suitable housing through the open market. In practice, it demonstrates a clear and persistent imbalance between local incomes and house prices, resulting in affordability pressures across a range of household types.

3.31 The need is particularly high for affordable rented housing, reflecting the number of households who are unable to afford either home ownership or market rents. This reinforces the importance of securing a significant amount of rented affordable housing within new development.

3.32 The Housing Needs Survey identified that 3,900 households are living in unsuitable housing, of which 910 are owner occupied, 732 are socially rented and 2,257 are within the private rented sector. This highlights that the greatest proportion of unsuitable housing conditions are experienced within the private rented sector, suggesting that households renting privately are more likely to face issues such as overcrowding, poor housing conditions, affordability pressures or accommodation that does not meet their needs. The findings also demonstrate that housing need is not confined solely to affordable housing tenants, but exists across all tenures, indicating a broader requirement for improved housing quality, affordability and choice within the Borough.

3.33 The highest levels of affordable rented housing need are identified in Lytham and St Annes. The evidence indicates that most housing pressure is experienced by lower income households who are unable to access market housing, highlighting a clear priority for the delivering of affordable rented homes, while also recognising a need for affordable home ownership.

3.34 Earlier evidence, including the Fylde Coast Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) (2014), also identified significant affordability pressures, indicating that these are long term challenges. The consistency between the SHMA and more recent evidence suggests that affordable housing need has remained persistently high over time.

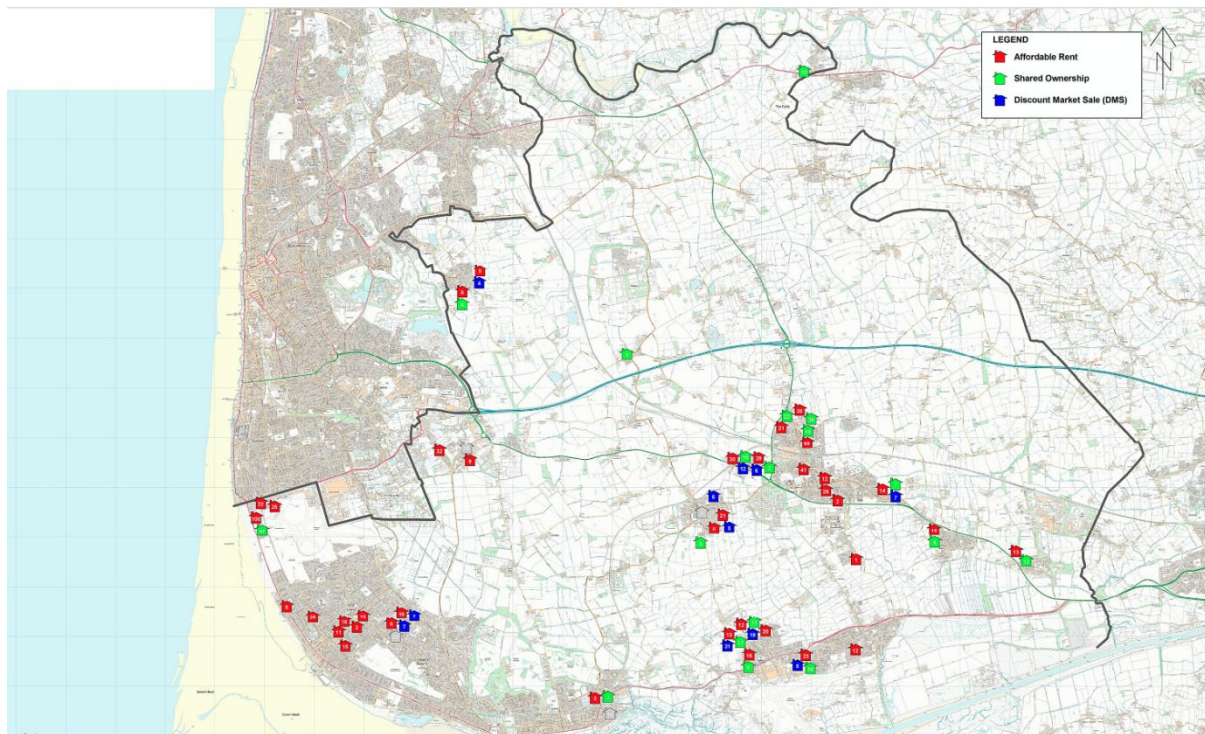
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<sup>18</sup> Fylde Council Housing Needs Survey 2022 [Microsoft Word - Fylde\\_Final\\_HNS\\_140922](#)

- 3.35 Affordability pressures vary across the Borough. Housing in Lytham and St Annes is among the least affordable areas, reflecting higher property values and demand, while rural areas also experience high house prices relative to local incomes. Although some areas, such as Warton, are comparatively more affordable, affordability challenges remain evident across all parts of the Borough.
- 3.36 The spatial variation indicates that affordable housing need is not confined to specific locations but is instead a borough wide issue. As a result, policies should seek to secure affordable housing provision across all suitable development sites, ensuring that delivery is aligned with local needs in different communities and supports the creation of mixed and balanced neighbourhoods.
- 3.37 Evidence of demand for affordable housing is also reflected in housing registers and lettings data. Choice-based lettings systems, such as *My Home Choice Fylde Coast*, demonstrate continued demand for affordable homes, with multiple applicants typically bidding for available properties. This indicates that existing provision is sufficient to meet identified need and that a proportion of demand is not being met through current supply.
- 3.38 The private rented sector plays an important role in accommodating households who are unable to access owner occupation or social housing. However, evidence indicates that many lower-income households rely on this sector, often in small or less secure forms of accommodation. While it provides flexibility, it does not fully address the need for genuinely affordable and long-term housing.
- 3.39 Given the scale of identified need, it is not realistic for all affordable housing requirements to be met in full through new development alone. Viability considerations and overall housing delivery levels mean that a balance must be made between meeting affordable housing needs and ensuring that development remains deliverable.

#### **Affordable Housing Delivery Map**

- 3.40 The figure below shows the distribution of affordable rent, shared ownership and discount market sale dwellings.



- 3.41 As shown in the figure, affordable rent is the tenure with the highest number of dwellings across the Borough, with high concentrations in Lytham, St Annes and Kirkham. The map demonstrates that affordable housing provision is distributed across the Borough.
- 3.42 The distribution of affordable housing highlights the importance of ensuring that future housing growth continues to provide access to affordable homes in sustainable locations with access to employment opportunities, services, facilities and public transport.
- 3.43 The spatial distribution of affordable housing will therefore be an important consideration for the emerging Local Plan. Future housing allocations and development policies will need to support the continued delivery of affordable housing across the borough, including in areas where affordability pressures are greatest, in order to support mixed and balanced communities and respond to identified local housing needs.

#### **Local Plan to 2032: Current Plan Policy and Context**

- 3.44 The Fylde Local Plan to 2032 addresses affordable housing through Strategic Policy H4: *Affordable Housing*, which sets out the Council's approach to securing affordable housing through new residential development<sup>19</sup>.
- 3.45 Policy H4 states that:
- 'All market housing schemes of 10 or more homes will be required to provide 30% affordable housing...'*
- 3.46 This means that all qualifying residential developments are expected to make a direct contribution towards affordable housing provision as part of the development process. This

<sup>19</sup> Fylde Local Plan to 2032 (incorporating Partial Review (2021) [Fylde-Local-Plan-to-2032-incorporating-Partial-Review-adopted.pdf](#)

establishes a clear baseline expectation that a significant proportion of new residential development will contribute towards meeting affordable housing needs. The 30% requirement reflects both the scale of identified need and the findings of viability testing undertaken during the plan preparation, ensuring that an appropriate balance between maximising delivery and maintaining development viability is achieved.

- 3.47 Policy H4 also emphasises the importance of aligning provision with local needs:

*'The precise requirements for tenure of affordable homes will be negotiated on a case-by-case basis, having regard to the viability of individual sites, local need and compliance with other policies of the plan.'*

- 3.48 This means that, while the overall proportion of affordable housing is set by policy, the tenure mix, size, and type of affordable homes are determined at the application stage, informed by up to date evidence of local housing need and site specific circumstances. In practice, this requires developers to engage with the Council and registered providers to agree an appropriate mix of affordable housing as part of the planning process.

- 3.49 This approach ensures that affordable housing delivered through new development responds directly to identified needs, rather than being driven solely by developer preference or market demand. It allows flexibility to reflect changing evidence over time, including shifts in demand between affordable rent, social rent, and home ownership products.

- 3.50 This process is also supported by wider Local Plan policies, including Policy H2, which requires a mix of dwelling sizes across new developments, including a focus on smaller homes (1, 2 and 3 bedrooms). This provides an additional policy framework to guide the size and type of homes delivered, ensuring that affordable housing contributes to meeting identified needs for smaller and more accessible properties.

- 3.51 However, the reliance on site by site negotiation can also result in variability in outcomes between schemes, particularly where viability considerations influence the final tenure mix.

- 3.52 This is important because it highlights the need for a clear evidence base, alongside well defined policy expectations, to ensure that affordable housing provision consistently addresses needs.

- 3.53 This ensures that affordable housing delivered through new development responds directly to identified needs, rather than being driven solely by developer preference. In practice, this typically results in smaller units and a mix of tenures, particularly affordable rented housing.

- 3.54 The policy further highlights that:

*'The Council will take account of viability when assessing individual schemes.'*

- 3.55 This demonstrates the important role that viability in decision-making has and reflects the need to balance the delivery of affordable housing with the overall deliverability of development. This means that while the 30% requirement is the starting point, developers may seek to provide a lower proportion where they can demonstrate that full policy compliance would make a scheme unviable.

- 3.56 The consideration of viability therefore introduces flexibility into the policy framework, allowing site specific circumstances, such as market conditions or site constraints to be considered. However, it also means that the level of affordable housing delivered can vary between schemes, depending on viability outcomes. This reinforces the importance of clear guidance to ensure that viability is applied consistently.



- 3.57 In spatial terms, Policy H4 distinguishes between urban and rural areas, requiring that development in rural locations primarily meets locally arising needs, while also contributing to borough wide requirements where appropriate. This reflects the differing housing market characteristics across Fylde and supports the delivery of sustainable communities in both urban and rural areas.
- 3.58 Overall, Policy H4 provides a clear and structured framework for securing affordable housing through the planning system. It establishes a strong starting point for delivery, while allowing sufficient flexibility to respond to site specific circumstances. This approach aligns with national policy and ensures that affordable housing remains a central consideration in the delivery of new housing across the Borough.

#### **Provision of Affordable Homes in Fylde**

- 3.59 Within 23/24 not all market housing schemes of 10 or more homes granted planning permission provided 30% affordable homes, this was evident in the application for 52 dwellings at Land at Roseacre, Wildings Lane, Lytham St Annes where no affordable housing was required. Therefore, the Target/Policy outcome has not been met for 23/24.
- 3.60 In 24/25, 100% of the market housing schemes of 10 or more homes granted planning permission provided 30% affordable homes, these 11 dwellings were identified as on-site provision. Therefore, the Target/Policy outcome has been met for 24/25.
- 3.61 This indicates that, while the policy requirement is capable of being met, delivery is not consistent across all schemes. The absence of affordable housing on some qualifying sites highlights the influence of site specific factors, particularly viability considerations, in determining whether policy requirements are achieved in practice. However, in 2024/25 where all qualifying schemes met the 30% requirement, suggests that the policy can be effective in securing affordable housing.
- 3.62 This demonstrates that affordable housing delivery is influenced not only by policy requirements, but also wider factors including site viability, market conditions, and the nature of development. As a result, delivery can fluctuate over time.
- 3.63 This reinforces the need for the emerging Local Plan to obtain a policy approach that provides both clarity and consistency, while also ensuring that viability considerations are applied in a transparent manner.

#### **Emerging Policy Response**

- 3.64 The emerging Local Plan will:
- 3.65 Maintain a borough wide affordable housing requirement of 30% on residential schemes of 10 or more dwellings, ensuring that development continues to make a positive contribution towards meeting needs. This provides continuity with the existing policy approach while reinforcing affordable housing as a central component of new residential development across the Borough.
- 3.66 Maintain a tenure mix that consists of 70% of the affordable homes for affordable rent and 30% for other affordable housing tenues.
- 3.67 Prioritise on-site provision as the primary delivery mechanism, with off-site contributions or commuted sums only accepted in clearly justified and limited circumstances. This will support the creation of mixed and balanced communities and ensure that affordable housing is



integrated within new developments.

- 3.68 Provide clearer guidance on viability, including expectations for transparency and the use of standardised assumptions where appropriate. This will improve consistency in decision making.
- 3.69 The policy will continue to operate alongside other Local Plan policies, including those relating to housing mix, design, and sustainable development, to ensure that affordable housing is well-integrated within new development and contributes to the creation of mixed and inclusive communities. This will help ensure that affordable housing is not only delivered in sufficient quantities, but also provides high quality homes that meet the needs of residents.

## **Conclusion**

- 3.70 The evidence demonstrates a clear and sustained need for affordable housing within Fylde. Addressing this need is essential to supporting mixed and balanced communities, improving access to suitable housing, and contributing to the overall sustainability of the Borough.
- 3.71 The Fylde Local Plan to 2032 (incorporating Partial Review) provides an established framework for securing affordable housing through the planning system. Building on this foundation, the emerging Local Plan presents an opportunity for further refine and strengthen the policy approach to ensure that it continues to respond effectively to identified needs.
- 3.72 The emerging Local Plan will maintain the requirement that all market housing schemes of 10 or more homes to provide 30% affordable housing. However, robust viability testing demonstrates that the cost of the affordable housing provision would prevent the development from being delivered.
- 3.73 In order to match the balance of affordable housing need, an overall balance of affordable homes to be 70% for rent and 30% to buy. The precise requirements for tenure of affordable homes will be negotiated on a case by case basis, taking into consideration the viability of individual sites, local need and compliance with other policies of the plan.
- 3.74 Through a strengthened and clearly defined policy framework, the emerging Local Plan will play a key role in supporting the delivery of affordable housing and ensuring that the needs of current and future residents are met over the plan period.

## 4 Housing for Older People

- 4.1 Housing for older people is an important factor for delivering sustainable and inclusive communities. As the population ages, the type, design and location of housing becomes even more important to ensure that health, wellbeing and independence are supported.
- 4.2 Appropriate housing can enable older people to remain in their communities for longer whilst reducing pressure on health and social care services. Housing for older people ensures efficient use of existing housing stock including a range of provision, for instance accessible and specialist accommodation such as supported housing.
- 4.3 For the Local Plan, effective planning for older people supports specific needs being met whilst ensuring the overall housing market functions effectively. Providing suitable downsizing opportunities can reduce under occupied family housing, improve housing mobility, and support a more balanced housing mix across the Borough.
- 4.4 This is important for Fylde, as demographic trends indicate a significant and growing ageing population. Ensuring that sufficient and appropriate housing is delivered for older people will therefore be a key consideration in shaping the spatial strategy and housing policies of the emerging Local Plan.

### National Policy

- 4.5 The NPPF (December 2024) sets out the Government's planning policies for England and establishes how these should be applied through both plan-making and decision-taking<sup>20</sup>. A key objective of the Framework is to support the delivery of sufficient homes to meet the needs of different groups within the community, including older people, through the creation of inclusive and sustainable communities.
- 4.6 The National Planning Policy Framework (December 2024) defines older people as:  
*'People over or approaching retirement age, including the active, newly retired through to the very frail elderly; and whose housing needs can encompass accessible, adaptable general needs housing through to the full range of retirement and specialised housing for those with support or care needs.'*
- 4.7 Paragraph 63 of the Framework requires local planning authorities to assess the size, type and tenure of housing needed for different groups in the community, including older people. As such, addressing the housing needs of Fylde's ageing population forms a key component of the Borough's overall housing strategy.
- 4.8 National policy also emphasises the importance of planning proactively for the needs of an ageing population through the delivery of a range of housing options, including accessible and adaptable homes, retirement living, extra care accommodation and residential care facilities. The Framework supports the creation of healthy, inclusive and safe communities, recognising that well designed and appropriately located housing can help older people remain independent for longer, reduce social isolation, and support wider health and wellbeing objectives. In this context, local planning authorities are expected to ensure that their evidence base and planning policies respond positively to identified demographic needs and support the delivery of suitable accommodation for older people across the plan period.

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<sup>20</sup> NPPF (2024) [National Planning Policy Framework - Guidance - GOV.UK](#)

## Emerging National Policy (Draft NPPF, December)

- 4.9 Proposed changes to national policy, published in December 2025, introduce changes to both plan-making and decision-taking within the planning system<sup>21</sup>. While these changes remain subject to consultation, they provide a clear direction for emerging national policy and are therefore an important consideration in the preparation of the emerging Local Plan.
- 4.10 The emerging Framework outlines twelve key policy changes intended to unlock more homes in appropriate and sustainable locations, alongside improving the overall quality and inclusivity of housing provision.
- 4.11 Key policy four is particularly relevant to housing for older people. It states:
- ‘Secure a diverse mix of homes...to better support the needs of different groups through the planning system...and setting clear expectations for accessible housing to meet the needs of older people.’*
- 4.12 This reflects a clearer national expectation that local planning authorities should actively plan for a wider range of housing types, including specialist and accessible accommodation. It reinforces the role of the planning system not only in delivering housing numbers, but also in shaping communities that are inclusive and adaptable to changing demographics.
- 4.13 In practice, this policy direction requires local plans to move beyond general housing targets and consider how different tenures, house types and design standards can support an ageing population. This includes the provision of accessible and adaptable homes, specialist accommodation such as extra care and retirement housing, and ensuring that new development supports independent living for longer.
- 4.14 For plan-making, this signals the need to clearly identify current and future needs of older people, and for policies that clearly articulate expectations around accessibility standards and the delivery of appropriate housing options. It also suggests that decision-making should give greater weight to proposals that contribute to meeting these identified needs.
- 4.15 Taken together, this approach ensures necessary levels of accessible housing are provided without mandating M4(2) as a minimum standard for all housing, while providing authorities with the necessary flexibility to maximise housebuilding overall.
- 4.16 Requiring authorities to identify sites, or set requirements for parts of allocated sites, which can provide specific types of housing such as older persons housing, purpose-built accommodation for students, plots for self and custom build, and traveller sites.
- 4.17 The draft Framework also introduces more prescriptive requirements in relation to accessibility standards and the provision of specialist housing. It proposes that local planning authorities will be expected to clearly specify the proportion of new homes to be delivered to the M4(2) (accessible and adaptable dwellings) and M4(3) (wheelchair user dwellings) standards within Building Regulations.
- 4.18 In particular, authorities will be required to:
- ‘Set out the proportion of new housing that should be delivered to M4(2) and M4(3) standards

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<sup>21</sup> Draft NPPF (December 2025) [National Planning Policy Framework: proposed reforms and other changes to the planning system - GOV.UK](#)

of the building regulations, to ensure plans adequately provide for the accessibility needs of an ageing population.’;

- Set requirements for M4(2) that meet or exceed their locally assessed need for this housing, and ensure that need is met.’ ; and
- The government is proposing a national minimum that ensures at least 40% of new housing over the course of the plan period is delivered to M4(2) standards, formalising best practice and driving up provision in areas without clear requirements.’

- 4.19 This approach is intended to significantly increase the supply of accessible housing, particularly in areas where such requirements have not previously been applied, while still allowing flexibility for local authorities to balance viability and overall housing delivery.
- 4.20 The policy provides a framework through which authorities can respond to local evidence, ensuring that accessibility needs, especially those arising from an ageing population, are addressed in a proportionate and deliverable way.
- 4.21 Alongside accessibility standards, the draft policy strengthens expectations around the provision of specialist housing. Authorities will be required either to allocate specific sites, or to include clear requirements within site allocations, to support the delivery of particular housing types. This includes housing for older people, self and custom build plots, and traveller sites.
- 4.22 This represents a more proactive and planned approach to meeting diverse housing needs, ensuring that specialist forms of accommodation are considered as an integral part of housing. This reinforces the need for local plans to identify suitable locations and provide a supportive policy framework to facilitate delivery at an appropriate scale and in accessible locations.
- 4.23 The draft Framework introduces a revised approach to transport policy through Chapter 15: *Promoting Sustainable Transport*, replacing Chapter 9 of the current Framework on *Sustainable Transport*. This reflects a shift in emphasis, particularly through the introduction of a more clearly defined ‘vision-led’ approach to transport planning. This approach prioritises the creation of places that are designed around sustainable transport objectives from the outset, rather than redeveloping infrastructure to accommodate predicted traffic demand.
- 4.24 The revised chapter also streamlines plan-making requirements, recognising that some transport considerations can be more effectively addressed through national decision-making policies. This is intended to support a more consistent approach across the planning system, while maintaining a strong focus on sustainable and well-integrated transport networks.
- 4.25 Policy TR4: *Street Design, Access and Parking*, is of particular relevance in the context of inclusive communities. It refines elements of existing policy to promote a more cohesive approach to how transport considerations are integrated into the design of development proposals. It includes new provisions for incorporating facilities that prioritise sustainable transport to meet the needs of specialist accommodation including housing for older people.
- 4.26 This strengthened emphasis on inclusive design closely aligns with the objectives of housing for older people. It highlights the importance of creating environments where walking, wheeling and access to public transport are safe and convenient, thereby supporting independence and reducing reliance on private vehicles. The reference to national design guidance, including *Manual for Streets* and the forthcoming *Design and Placemaking Planning Practice Guidance*, further reinforces the expectation that developments should be designed with high standards

and be accessible and useable.

- 4.27 For plan-making, this underlines the need to ensure that sites allocated for older persons housing are well-connected to local services and facilities, and that the design of streets and public spaces actively supports mobility and inclusion for all users.

### **Demographic Evidence**

- 4.28 Fylde has a significantly ageing population. Census 2021 data indicates that 27.8% of the Borough's population is aged 65 and over<sup>22</sup>, substantially higher than the national average of approximately 18.5%<sup>23</sup>. This proportion has increased steadily since 2001, and demographic projections indicate that this trend will continue over the plan period to 2042. The proportion of residents aged 85 and over increased from 3.6% in 2011 to 3.9% in 2021, and is projected to rise more rapidly over the coming decades.
- 4.29 Population projections highlight particularly strong growth in the older age cohorts. Data from the Projecting Older People Population Information System (POPPI) indicates a substantial increase in residents aged 75 and over. POPPI (2024) data shows that in 2023 the population aged 75-79 was approximately 5,700, which is projected to increase to around 7,500 by 2040. Similarly, the population aged 85-89 is expected to rise from approximately 2,200 in 2023 to 3,500 by 2040.
- 4.30 The 85+ age group is more likely to require specialist housing, accessible and adaptable homes, and higher levels of care and support.
- 4.31 This demographic shift will have important implications for housing provision across the Borough. An ageing population is likely to drive increased demand for both accessible and adaptable general needs housing, as well as a range of specialist accommodation, including extra care and residential care settings. There is also likely to be greater pressure on health and support services, reinforcing the importance of well-located and appropriately designed housing that enables older people to live independently for as long as possible.
- 4.32 Due to the scale of projected change, a proactive and plan-led approach to meeting older people's housing needs will be essential. This will require not only an increase in overall provision, but also a focus on the type, design and location of housing to ensure it responds effectively to the Borough's changing demographic profile.

### **Identified Needs and Challenges**

- 4.33 As Fylde's population ages, a growing number of households are likely to experience reduced mobility, accessibility constraints, and increasing support needs. This will generate demand for a broader range of housing options capable of meeting differing levels of independence, care and support throughout later life. The need for appropriate accommodation is likely to increase across both general needs and specialist housing sectors, including:
- Accessible and adaptable dwellings (Building Regulations M4(2))<sup>24</sup>;

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<sup>22</sup> Census Fylde demographics [How life has changed in Fylde: Census 2021](#)

<sup>23</sup> Census National statistics [Population aged 65 and over - ONS](#)

<sup>24</sup> Building Regulations Access to and use of buildings  
[BR PDF AD M1 2015 with 2016 amendments V3.pdf](#)

- Wheelchair user dwellings (M4(3)) where justified by evidence;
  - Downsizing opportunities within local communities;
  - Sheltered and retirement housing;
  - Extra care accommodation;
  - Residential and nursing care homes.
- 4.34 The delivery of homes meeting M4(2) standards will be particularly important in ensuring that new housing stock is capable of accommodating changing needs over time and supporting independent living. Accessible and adaptable homes can help residents remain in their homes for longer, reduce the cost for further adaptations, and support wider health and wellbeing outcomes. Where evidence supports this, a proportion of homes meeting M4(3) wheelchair user standards may also be required to address more complex accessibility needs.
- 4.35 The scale and tenure split of provision should be informed by up to date evidence, including housing needs assessments, demographic projections, disability data, and viability considerations. In addition to specialist accommodation, there is also likely to be increasing demand for smaller and more manageable homes that enable older households to downsize while remaining within their existing communities and support networks.
- 4.36 Planning for accessible general needs housing is particularly important in rural areas, where housing choice and specialist accommodation options are more limited. Enabling older residents to remain within their local communities can help maintain social connections, reduce isolation, and support access to established care and support networks. This approach also aligns with wider sustainability objectives by supporting inclusive communities and reducing the need for residents to relocate in later life.
- 4.37 Failure to proactively plan for these needs could lead to increased pressure on health and social care services, reduced housing choice for older residents, and a mismatch between the Borough's housing stock and its changing demographic profile. Ensuring an appropriate mix of accessible and specialist housing will therefore form an important component of delivering sustainable communities over the plan period.

### **Existing Housing Stock**

- 4.38 Fylde's housing stock is characterised by a high proportion of larger, detached dwellings and high levels of owner occupation. Whilst this reflects market demand, it also limits the availability of smaller and more accessible homes, restricting opportunities for downsizing and reducing housing mobility. As a result, many older households may remain in under occupied properties that no longer meet their changing needs due to a lack of alternatives within their local area.
- 4.39 This has implications for both older residents and the wider housing market. The delivery of small and specialist accommodation can contribute towards the creation of more balanced and sustainable communities by supporting independent living, improving housing choice for older people, releasing under occupied family housing back into the market, and reducing pressure on health and social care services.
- 4.40 Evidence suggests that this issue is particularly evident in parts of the Borough with older demographic profiles and more limited housing choice. Rural North (25.1%) and Lytham (24.9%)

both contain particularly high proportions of residents aged 60-74 and are also characterised by housing stock dominated by detached properties. This indicates an uneven distribution between the existing housing offer and the needs of an ageing populations, particularly in locations where demand for downsizing and specialist accommodation is likely to increase over time.

- 4.41 Previous evidence from the Office for National Statistics identifies that a substantial proportion of residents aged 65 and over are living in larger homes of three bedrooms or more, including residents aged 80 and over. Evidence also found that older people living in flats were heavily concentrated with Lytham and St Annes, suggesting that alternative forms of accommodation are comparatively limited elsewhere in the Borough. Whilst a significant number of flats exist overall, only a small proportion were specifically designed to meet the needs of older people.
- 4.42 Historic patterns of development have also influenced the current housing mix. In Lytham and St Annes, a high proportion of residential completions between 2001 and 2014 consisted of apartments, many of which were attractive to older households and retirement in-migration<sup>25</sup>. While this contributed towards housing choice for some older residents, it also limited the delivery of new family housing in these areas.
- 4.43 This evidence highlights an imbalance between Fylde's housing stock and its changing demographic profile. It reinforces the need for a more diverse and adaptable housing offer across the Borough, including accessible general needs housing, opportunities for downsizing within local communities, and appropriately located specialist accommodation. Supporting the delivery of housing that is suitable for older people will be important in maintaining mixed and sustainable communities whilst ensuring that residents can remain living independently for longer.
- 4.44 In 2023, Lancashire County Council published an evidence base assessing estimated need for supported housing and accommodation for older people across Lancashire<sup>26</sup>. The study identified that Fylde had a total of 113 housing with care (HwC) units, comprising 59 sale/shared ownership units and 54 social/affordable rented units.
- 4.45 The evidence also considers levels of deprivation amongst older people through the Income Deprivation Affecting Older People Index (IDAOPI). Fylde records an IDAOPI score of 10.5%, which is lower than both the Lancashire average of 14.1% and the England average of 13.6%, representing a difference of -3.6% compared to the county average. The analysis suggests that areas with lower levels of deprivation among older people are likely to experience greater demand for sale or shared ownership housing with care products, rather than affordable rented provision. As a result, the projected tenure split for future housing with care need in Fylde is identified as 35% social/affordable rented accommodation and 65% sale/shared ownership accommodation. This indicates that future demand in Fylde is expected to be weighted more heavily towards older households who are able to access owner-occupied specialist housing options.
- 4.46 Looking ahead to 2038, the evidence projects a net need for 399 additional housing with care

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<sup>25</sup> Fylde Council Local Plan (incorporating partial review) [Fylde-Local-Plan-to-2032-incorporating-Partial-Review-adopted.pdf](#)

<sup>26</sup> Lancashire County Council. Evidence base: Estimated need for supported housing and accommodation in Lancashire (2023) [LCC-Supported-Housing-Needs-Housing-LIN.pdf](#)

units in Fylde. Of this total, 259 units are expected to be required for sale/shared ownership accommodation, while 140 units are projected to be needed for social or affordable rented accommodation. The findings demonstrate a substantial future requirement for specialist accommodation for older people within the Borough, particularly for owner-occupied housing care, reflecting both the ageing population profile and comparatively lower levels of deprivation amongst older residents.

#### **Current Policy in Current Local Plan**

- 4.47 Strategic Policy H2 of the Fylde Local Plan to 2032 established the Council's approach to securing an appropriate housing mix across the Borough. The policy states:

*'A broad mix of types and sizes of homes, suitable for a broad range of age groups, will be required on all sites to reflect the demographics and housing requirements of the Borough...The mix required will be adjusted according to updated future Housing Needs Assessments over the plan period.'*

- 4.48 The policy recognises that housing delivery should respond to both overall housing need and the changing demographic profile of the Borough. It provides a flexible framework through which the Council can provide a more balanced mix of housing types and sizes, informed by updated evidence over time. Due to Fylde's ageing population, this is particularly important in ensuring that new development includes homes capable of meeting the needs of older residents, including smaller homes, accessible and adaptable dwellings, and specialist forms of accommodation where appropriate.
- 4.49 The policy also supports wider housing market objectives by encouraging a more diverse housing stock capable of accommodating households at different stages of life. Ensuring an appropriate mix of housing can support downsizing opportunities, improve housing mobility, and contribute towards the creation of balanced and sustainable communities.
- 4.50 This also comes under strategic policy H2. Supporting text to Strategic Policy H2 further states:
- 'The Council recognises that, although all the growth in population will be from those 65 and over, the demographics of new house buyers will be very different. The Council is committed to the creation of sustainable, mixed communities with a cross-section of age ranges. Sites of 20 or more homes should therefore include this proportion of accommodation that is genuinely suitable for older people without the prospect of significant further costs for adaptation.'*
- 4.51 This recognises that, whilst population growth is expected to be concentrated within older age groups, communities must continue to provide housing for a range of households and life stages. The policy therefore aims to ensure that the needs of older people are integrated into mainstream housing delivery, rather than addressed solely through specialist accommodation.
- 4.52 Delivering homes that can accommodate changing mobility and support needs over time can help residents remain independent for longer, reduce the need and cost of household adaptations, and improve the overall quality and resilience of the Borough's housing stock. This approach also supports the creation of inclusive communities where residents are able to remain within their local area as their housing needs change.
- 4.53 The existing Local Plan also contains specific requirements relating to specialist accommodation for the elderly. These requirements seek to ensure that the needs arising from Fylde's ageing population are addressed through the provision of accommodation that is genuinely suitable



for older residents.

4.54 The policy requires that:

*'At least 20% of homes within residential developments of 20 or more homes should be designed specifically to accommodate the elderly, including compliance with optional technical standard M4(3(2a)) (wheelchair-adaptable dwellings), unless it is demonstrated that this would render the development unviable. Affordable housing requirements set out in Policy H4 may be met partly by the provision of homes designed to accommodate the elderly, where these also fall into the definition of affordable housing set out in the Framework.'*

4.55 The Policy also provides specific support for developments comprising 100% specialist accommodation for the elderly. Such development will be approved providing that:

- *'It is situated to provide easy access to regular public transport. Within larger development sites, the part of the site in closest proximity to bus stops with a regular service should be chosen for this type of accommodation;*
- *The proposal is well-designed, avoiding unnecessary use of high fencing around the perimeter, orientated towards the street with an entrance on the street side of the building providing the shortest possible pedestrian access, including usable outside landscaped gardens with seating, and access and parking for vehicles well separated from pedestrian routes;*
- *The development complies with the development strategy and other policies of the plan; and*
- *Convenient access arrangements are provided for vehicles providing hospital transport.'*

4.56 These requirements are intended to ensure that specialist accommodation is appropriately located and integrated within the wider community.

4.57 The policy further states that:

*'Developments will be considered by the Council to be purpose-built 100% specialist accommodation for the elderly if:*

- *All areas used by residents will comply with optional technical standard M4(3(2a)) (wheelchair-adaptable dwellings);*
- *A communal lounge or similar social facility for the exclusive use of all residents is included within the development;*
- *A shared laundry service is provided for the use of all residents;*
- *The development will be marketed with a restriction on age for residents of over 55;*
- *A daily hot meals service is provided either through a central facility on-site or through an outside provider to residents who require it; and*
- *An emergency alarm call service is provided for all residents.'*

4.58 Where a development provides 100% specialist accommodation for the elderly and meets the policy definition of purpose-built specialist accommodation, the Local Plan states that affordable housing contributions will not be sought. This represents a specific policy approach for developments that are directed towards meeting the accommodation needs of older people.

4.59 The supporting text to the policy provides the justification for these requirements, identifying

the significant existing and projected growth in Fylde's older population. It also identifies the relatively limited supply of accommodation specifically designed for older people, including sheltered, extra care and care accommodation. The policy therefore aims to increase the supply of suitable accommodation for older residents whilst ensuring that new provision genuinely responds to their needs.

- 4.60 This establishes a clear policy approach to meeting the housing needs of Fylde's ageing population. The policies aim to both ensure that mainstream housing developments provide an appropriate proportion of accessible and adaptable homes and to support purpose build specialist accommodation where this is appropriately designed, located and equipped to meet the needs of older people. This approach is intended to support independent living, reduce the need for significant future adaptations and contribute to the creation of sustainable, mixed and inclusive communities.

#### **Policy Response**

- 4.61 The evidence presented demonstrates that Fylde's ageing population will have significant implications for future housing needs across the Borough. The projected growth in older groups, particularly those aged 75 and over and 85 and over, is likely to increase demand for a range of housing options that enable older people to remain independent, including accessible and adaptable homes and specialist forms of accommodation.
- 4.62 The emerging Local Plan will retain a targeted approach to increasing the supply of housing for older people, whilst providing greater flexibility as to how this is achieved. The Plan will require 20% of dwellings on residential development sites of over 20 dwellings, including smaller sites that form part of larger allocations of over 20 dwellings, to be designed specifically to accommodate older people.
- 4.63 The purpose of the 20% requirement is to increase the supply and choice of housing available to an ageing population and to ensure that new development makes an appropriate contribution towards addressing housing needs. The requirement is not intended to prescribe a single form of accommodation, recognising that older people have a diverse range of needs and preferences and may require different types of housing at different stages of later life. This may include specialist accommodation, such as extra care housing, as well as mainstream housing that is specifically designed to meet the needs of older residents. The detailed design and form of provision should ensure that the accommodation is genuinely suitable for older people, rather than relying on dwelling size or floorspace to demonstrate suitability.
- 4.64 The emerging Local Plan will also support the provision of specialist accommodation, including extra care flats where an element of care is provided, in appropriate and accessible locations. Proposals should be located where residents can access services and facilities that support independence, health and social inclusion.
- 4.65 The existing Local Plan stated that developments comprising 100% older people's housing could be exempt from affordable housing requirements where the relevant criteria were met. The review of the existing approach recognises the importance of ensuring that the delivery of specialist housing is balanced with the Borough's wider need for affordable housing. The emerging Local Plan will therefore aim to ensure that the provision of housing for older people is considered alongside the Council's wider affordable housing requirements.

- 4.66 The emerging Local Plan does not propose separate specific percentage requirements for M4(2) or M4(3) dwellings. The focus of the policy will instead be to secure an appropriate overall contribution of housing specifically designed to meet the needs of older people, with flexibility as to how this is achieved.
- 4.67 This approach will allow the emerging Local Plan to respond to the demographic needs of Fylde, whilst recognising the diversity of older people's housing needs and ensuring that new provision represents an improvement in housing choice and suitability.

## 5 Custom and Self-Build Homes

- 5.1 Custom and self-build housing refers to homes that are commissioned or built by individuals or groups for their own occupation. In self-build development, the individual typically manages the design and construction process, whereas in custom build schemes a developer may be involved, but the occupier retains primary influence over the design and layout.
- 5.2 Custom and self-build housing therefore represents a distinct form of housing delivery, enabling individuals or associations of individuals to create homes tailored to their specific needs and circumstances.
- 5.3 This form of housing provides opportunity for people to create homes that reflect their specific needs and circumstances. While custom and self-build housing is well established in many other countries, it has historically made up only a small proportion of housing delivery in the UK. However, in recent years the Government has sought to increase its role through legislative changes and national policy, recognising its potential to diversify the housing market and contribute to overall housing supply.
- 5.4 Custom and self-build housing can:
- Increase housing supply and delivery rates;
  - Support a more diverse housing market;
  - Increase consumer choice by offering alternatives to standard developer-built homes;
  - Support a more diverse and competitive housing market;
  - Enable innovative and more suitable forms of development; and
  - Help meet specific local housing needs.
- 5.5 As such, it forms an important component of a balanced and responsive housing strategy.

### Custom and Self-Build Register

- 5.6 As required by the Self-build and Custom Housebuilding Act 2015 (as amended), local authorities must maintain a register of individuals and groups seeking to acquire serviced plots of land for custom and self-build housing. Fylde Council has maintained a register since 24<sup>th</sup> March 2016, and the level of interest recorded is used to inform plan-making, alongside other relevant evidence sources.
- 5.7 Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) makes clear that authorities must have regard to the level of demand evidenced on the register when carrying out their planning, housing, land disposal and regeneration functions<sup>27</sup>. In particular, Paragraph 028 states that authorities:
- ‘Must give suitable development permission to enough suitable serviced plots of land to meet the demand for self-build and custom housebuilding in their area.’*
- 5.8 This requirement places a statutory duty on the Council to grant sufficient planning permissions for serviced plots to meet the level of demand arising from the register. This duty is measured over specific base periods, with authorities required to permission enough plots within three years of each base period to meet the number of entries added to the register during that time.
- 5.9 In practice, this means that the Council must not only monitor the level of interest in custom and self-build housing, but also actively plan for and facilitate delivery. This may include

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<sup>27</sup> Planning Practice Guidance Self build and custom housebuilding [Self-build and custom housebuilding - GOV.UK](#)

identifying suitable sites, supporting windfall opportunities, and implementing planning policies that enable or require the provision of serviced plots as part of larger developments.

- 5.10 The information collected through the register is therefore an important evidence source in understanding the scale and nature of demand. It can help inform decisions on the location, size and type of plots provided, ensuring that opportunities align with identified needs.

### Legislation Framework

- 5.11 National policy and legislation place clear responsibilities on local planning authorities to support the delivery of custom and self-build housing.

- 5.12 The Self-build and Custom Housebuilding Act 2015 (as amended) requires authorities to maintain ‘registers of persons seeking to acquire land to build a home.’ The Act states that<sup>28</sup>:

*‘1. Each authority must keep a register of –*

*(a) individuals and*

*(b) associations of individuals (including bodies corporate that exercise functions on behalf of associations of individuals),*

*who are seeking to acquire serviced plots of land in the authority’s area in order to build houses for those individuals to occupy as homes.’*

Under ‘(2) Duty as regards registers’, authorities must also have regard to this register when exercising their functions. This includes:

*‘(4) (a) planning;*

*(b) housing;*

*(c) the disposal of any land of the authority; and*

*(d) regeneration.’*

- 5.13 This highlights that the register is a statutory tool that is used to identify need and influence how land is allocated and developed.

- 5.14 The legislation does not distinguish between self-build and custom housebuilding but instead focuses on the outcome that the individual(s) has primary input into the final design and layout of their home.

- 5.15 These duties were strengthened under the 2016 Act, ‘2A. Duty to grant planning permissions’, which introduced a requirement for authorities to grant sufficient planning permissions to meet identified demand. The Act requires authorities to:

*‘(2) Give development permission for self-build and custom housebuilding on enough serviced plots of land to meet the demand for self-build and custom housebuilding in the authority’s area in each base period.’*

- 5.16 A base period is defined as the period used to measure demand and delivery. The first base period commenced on the date the authority’s register was established and ended in October 2016; this initial period was therefore shorter than 12 months. Subsequent base periods run annually from October to October. Authorities must therefore grant enough suitable permissions within a specified timeframe (currently three years) to meet the level of demand recorded in each base period.

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<sup>28</sup> Self-build and Custom Housebuilding Act 2015 [Self-build and Custom Housebuilding Act 2015](#)

- 5.17 This aligns with PPG, which emphasises that authorities should use the register to inform their understanding of demand and to shape their planning response. PPG also sets out the requirements for maintaining registers, stating that:

*‘The information that relevant authorities must include on their register differs for entries for individuals and entries for associations of individuals and entries for associations of individuals.*

*For entries on the register for individuals, relevant authorities must record the name and address of the individual on the register.*

*For entries on the register for associations of individuals, relevant authorities must record the following information on the register:*

- *the name and address of the association;*
- *the name and address (if different from that of the association) of the lead contact; and*
- *the number of serviced plots of land in the relevant authority’s area the members of the association are seeking to acquire.’*

- 5.18 This demonstrates that the register is intended to capture the scale of demand and composition, including whether demand arises from individuals or groups and the number of plots sought. This information helps understand local need and supports to inform the type, size and distribution of plots brought forward.

- 5.19 Overall, the legislative and policy framework establishes a clear and enforceable link between identified demand and planning delivery. Local planning authorities are required to monitor interest through the register and proactively respond through planning permissions, housing strategy and land disposal, ensuring that sufficient and suitable opportunities are available to meet demand.

### **Serviced Plots of Land**

- 5.20 Serviced plots of land are parcels of land that are suitable for residential development, with the necessary infrastructure either in place or capable of being delivered. Ensuring that land is serviced is important, as it reduces barriers to development for individuals, making plots more accessible and viable of being development.

- 5.21 Paragraph 026 of the PPG defines a serviced plot of land as a plot of land that either has:

*‘Access to a public highway and has connections for electricity, water and waste water, or, in the opinion of a relevant authority, can be provided with access to those things within the duration of a development permission granted in relation to that land.’*

- 5.22 This definition allows authorities to include plots where servicing is not yet in place but can be delivered as part of the development. This allows a wide range of sites to contribute towards meeting demand, rather than limiting provision to fully serviced land.

- 5.23 Serviced plots can include both new build opportunities and the conversion of existing buildings, provided that the relevant criteria are met. This flexibility enables a wide range of sites, including small plots and redevelopment opportunities.

- 5.24 Local planning authorities are expected to take a proactive approach to ensuring that sufficient plots come forward. This includes:

- Monitoring demand through the register;

- Considering how that demand can be met through site allocations and planning permissions; and
- Ensuring that enough suitable permissions are granted within the required time periods to meet identified need.

## National Policy Context

5.25 The NPPF supports custom and self-build housing as part of delivering a sufficient and diverse supply of homes<sup>29</sup>.

5.26 National policy requires local planning authorities to assess and reflect the needs of different groups within the community, including those seeking to build or commission their own homes. This sits within the wider objective of delivering a suitable mix of housing types and tenures, ensuring that the housing market caters for a wide range of needs and preferences.

5.27 The NPPF places strong emphasis on significantly boosting housing supply while ensuring that delivery responds to local needs and supports balanced communities. Paragraph 61 and 64 of the NPPF states that:

*‘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...creating mixed and balanced communities’*

5.28 This emphasises that local planning authorities should focus on both the overall number of homes delivered and the composition of that supply. In this context, custom and self-build housing plays an important role in diversifying the types of homes available and supporting a wider range of households, including those with specific design requirements or long term housing aspirations.

5.29 The NPPF also highlights the importance of locally responsive planning. Paragraph 69 requires that:

*‘Strategic policies should also set out a housing requirement for designated neighbourhood areas which reflects the overall strategy for the pattern and scale of development.’*

5.30 This reinforces the need for housing provision to be aligned with local circumstances and community priorities. Once established, these requirements provide a clear framework for neighbourhood planning, giving local communities greater certainty and influence over how development comes forward within specific areas. Custom and self-build housing can support this approach by enabling more locally driven forms of development and increasing community involvement in the design and delivery of new homes.

5.31 The role of sites is also recognised, with paragraph 73 stating that:

*‘Small and medium sized sites can make an important contribution to meeting the housing requirement of an area.’*

5.32 Custom and self-build housing strongly aligns with this objective, as it is often delivered on smaller or non-strategic sites that may not be attractive to volume housebuilders. This can help to create additional supply, make more efficient use of available land, and support the growth of small and local builders. Custom and self-build housing therefore directly supports national

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<sup>29</sup> NPPF Section 5 [National Planning Policy Framework - 5. Delivering a sufficient supply of homes - Guidance - GOV.UK](#)

policy objectives by contributing to a more diverse and competitive housing market, broadening the range of housing providers, and encouraging unique design. It also helps to ensure that a wider range of sites can be brought forward, supporting delivery that is closely aligned with identified needs.

#### **Emerging National Policy (Draft NPPF, December)**

5.33 Proposed changes to national policy, published in December 2025, introduce changes to both plan-making and decision-taking within the planning system<sup>30</sup>. While these changes remain subject to consultation, they provide a clear direction for emerging national policy and are therefore an important consideration in the preparation of the emerging Local Plan.

5.34 Within the draft plan-making policies, Policy HO5: *Meeting the needs of different groups*, proposes a more proactive role for local planning authorities in delivering a range of housing types. It states that this may include:

*‘Requiring authorities to identify sites, or set requirements for parts of allocated sites, which can provide specific types of housing such as older persons housing, purpose-built accommodation for students, plots for self and custom build, and traveller sites.’*

5.35 This represents a clear strengthening of national policy, moving beyond general support for housing diversity towards a clearer expectation that authorities will actively plan for and secure the delivery of specialist housing types. In this context, custom and self-build housing is positioned alongside other priority housing needs, reinforcing its importance as a component of overall housing supply.

5.36 The draft Framework also introduces national decision-making (DM) policies, which are intended to provide a more consistent basis for determining planning applications. The document explains that:

*‘The national decision-making policies are intended to influence the way that development proposals are shaped, as well as the decisions made on them by decision-makers.’*

5.37 These policies place greater emphasis on a positive and proactive approach to decision makers. For example, Policy DM3 requires local planning authorities to:

*‘Take a positive and proactive approach, work collaboratively with applicants, and apply proportionality when considering material considerations.’*

5.38 The draft Framework indicates a broader shift towards greater consistency in both plan making and decision taking, alongside a stronger emphasis on delivery. This is beneficial in providing clearer expectations for local authorities and applicants and supporting timely implementation of development proposals.

5.39 For custom and self-build housing, the expectation that authorities identify sites or set requirements for specific housing types, combined with an emphasis on proactive and proportionate decision-making, highlights the need for policies that support a wide range of delivery mechanism. This includes site allocations, opportunities within larger developments, and windfall schemes.

5.40 Thereby, the emerging Local Plan will need to:

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<sup>30</sup> Draft NPPF (December 2025) [National Planning Policy Framework: proposed reforms and other changes to the planning system - GOV.UK](#)



- Remain flexible and responsive to evolving national policy, ensuring that it can adapt to changes as the draft Framework is finalised and implemented;
- Ensure alignment with national decision-making policies, particularly the requirement to take a positive and proactive approach and to apply proportionality in decision-making; and
- Provide a clear and deliverable framework to support the provision of custom and self-build housing, including mechanism to identify, secure and bring forward suitable serviced plots.

### Existing Local Policy

5.41 The Fylde Local Plan to 2032 supports custom and self-build housing primarily through Policy H2: *Density and Mix of New Residential Development*. Policy H2 states that:

*‘Proposals to include plots for custom and self-build homes within larger housing development sites will be approved, subject to compliance with other requirements of the plan with respect to layout, density, mix and access. Developers of strategic housing sites will be encouraged to devote a proportion of the site to provide serviced plots for custom- and self-build homes.’*

5.42 This establishes a supportive approach, particularly by encouraging provision within larger sites, rather than requiring standalone allocations.

5.43 Policy H2 also sets out broader requirements relating to density and housing mix, which have a direct influence on how sites are planned and delivered. In terms of density, development is expected to make efficient use of land (typically a minimum of 30 dwellings per hectare) while ensuring that layout, amenity, character and highway safety are not adversely affected. In terms of mix, schemes must provide a broad range of dwelling types and sizes, including a significant proportion of smaller homes, to reflect identified housing needs.

5.44 These requirements are important in the context of custom and self-build housing, as they influence how plots can be integrated within wider developments. Density expectations affect plot size and layout, while mix requirements may shape the type and scale of homes delivered. Together, these factors require custom and self-build plots to be carefully planned so that they contribute positively to the overall design, character and functionality of a site.

5.45 The supporting text to Policy H2 provides further justification and context. It highlights that national policy requires councils to plan for a mix of housing, including people wishing to build their own homes, and that the Self-build and Custom Housebuilding Act 2015 places a duty on authorities to have regard to demand evidenced through the register.

5.46 At the time the Local Plan was prepared, evidence suggested that the supply of permitted small sites and plots exceeded the level of demand recorded on the register. As a result, no immediate intervention was considered necessary. However, the Plan recognises that demand may increase over time and therefore emphasises the need for a flexible approach to ensure ongoing compliance with statutory duties.

5.47 To achieve this, the Local Plan proposes that demand for custom and self-build housing will be met through a combination of:

- Smaller sites, including windfall and non-strategic developments; and
- Plots within larger strategic housing sites.

5.48 This approach is supported by Policy DLF1, which allows for windfall and small sites within

defined locations, and reflects the role that such sites can play in bringing forward custom and self-build opportunities. Larger strategic sites are also identified as key delivery mechanisms, where developers may either provide serviced plots for sale or offer custom build options as part of their overall scheme.

- 5.49 Wider policies such as Policy GD7: *Achieving Good Design* also places strong emphasis on design quality which applies to all development and requires proposals to respond positively to local character, provide high quality layouts, and ensure appropriate amenity standards. This is particularly important for custom and self-build housing, where greater flexibility in design must be balanced with the need to achieve cohesive and well functioning developments.
- 5.50 Overall, the existing policy approach is supportive, it encourages the provision of custom and self-build plots through a range of site types, while relying on general policies relating to density, mix and design to ensure that such development is appropriately integrated and contributes to the creation of sustainable and well-designed communities.

#### **Implications for the Emerging Local Plan**

- 5.51 Current evidence indicates that the supply of custom and self-build plots continues to exceed the level of demand recorded on the register. However, past delivery trends suggest that the register may not fully capture the true level of interest, as permissions granted and homes in recent years have exceeded recorded demand.
- 5.52 This indicates that the register should not be relied upon as the sole measure of need. Instead, a broader evidence base is required, incorporating past delivery rates, market activity and planning permissions to provide a more complete understanding of demand for custom and self-build housing.
- 5.53 The emerging Local Plan must therefore:
- Demonstrate how Fylde will meet its statutory duties to grant sufficient permissions for serviced plots. This is important to ensure ongoing compliance with the Self-build and Custom Housebuilding Act 2015 (as amended) and to provide certainty that identified demand can be met within the required timeframes;
  - Be informed by the Council's self build and custom house building register and associated monitoring of permissions granted to meet identified demand;
  - Provide a clear and deliverable framework for implementation,; and
  - Align with national policy, including emerging changes, to ensure consistency with the evolving planning framework and to support a positive and proactive approach to delivery.
- 5.54 An updated policy approach should focus on strengthening delivery mechanisms for custom and self-build housing, while maintaining sufficient flexibility to respond to changing demand and evolving national policy.
- 5.55 This background paper has identified recent delivery of dwellings that can be considered custom- and self-build; this has been taken as a separate indicator of demand. Based on this, need for around 10 undeveloped serviced plots per annum for custom- and self-build dwellings is identified.
- 5.56 Development sites encompassing 50 or more dwelling plots (including parts of such sites where allocated sites are delivered in phases or by multiple developers) will be required to provide 4% of dwellings (rounded up where applicable) as unbuilt serviced plots, for sale to people seeking custom- or self-build a dwelling for themselves to live in.

- 5.57 In meeting needs it is recognised that some windfalls will occur as at present. However complete reliance on windfalls could lead to unmet need which would then require the granting of permissions on out-of-settlement locations not in accordance with the development strategy.
- 5.58 Wherever custom and self build homes are proposed, they should be well designed and in accordance with achieving good design in development.
- 5.59 Overall, the emerging policy direction should balance the need to proactively support and secure delivery with the flexibility required to respond to changing demand, market conditions and national policy. It should provide a clear and positive framework that encourages a range of delivery mechanisms, supports innovation and diversification within the housing market, and ensures that custom and self-build housing continues to contribute to the creation of mixed and sustainable communities.

## 6 Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Show People

- 6.1 Gypsies, Travellers, and Travelling Showpeople form an important part of the community, contributing to the social, cultural and economic diversity of the area. National Planning Policy recognises that these groups have specific accommodation needs and requires local planning authorities to assess and plan for those needs through the preparation of Local Plans.
- 6.2 The Planning Policy for Traveller Sites (PPTS), sets out the national policy framework for planning for traveller sites<sup>31</sup>. The policy aims to ensure fair and equal treatment for Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople, while aligning with the traditional and nomadic way of life of these communities. It also ensures that local planning authorities make provision for accommodation needs and support the creation of sustainable and inclusive communities.
- 6.3 The PPTS defines Gypsies and Travellers as:  
*‘Persons of nomadic habit of life whatever their race or origin, including such persons who on grounds only of their own or their family’s or dependants’ educational or health needs or old age have ceased to travel temporarily or permanently, and all other persons with a cultural tradition of nomadism or of living in a caravan, but excluding members of an organised group of travelling showpeople or circus people travelling together as such.’*
- 6.4 Travelling Showpeople are defined as:  
*‘Members of a group organised for the purposes of holding fairs, circuses or shows (whether or not travelling together as such). This includes such persons who on the grounds of their own or their family’s or dependants’ more localised pattern of trading, educational or health needs or old age have ceased to travel temporarily or permanently, but excludes Gypsies and Travellers as defined above.’*
- 6.5 National policy requires local authorities to identify and maintain an appropriate supply of deliverable and developable sites to meet identified needs over the plan period. As part of the emerging Local Plan, the Council must therefore ensure that appropriate consideration is given to the accommodation requirements of Gypsies, Travelers and Travelling Showpeople, alongside the needs of the wider community.

### National Policy Context

- 6.6 National Policy relating to Gypsy and Traveller accommodation is set out within the PPTS, which should be read alongside the NPPF<sup>32</sup>. Together, these documents establish the overall approach to delivering a sufficient supply of homes and meeting the accommodating needs of different groups within the community.
- 6.7 The overarching aim of the PPTS is:  
*‘To ensure fair and equal treatment for travellers, in a way that facilitates the traditional and nomadic way of life of travellers while respecting the interests of the settled community.’*
- 6.8 This objective is important as it recognises the need to balance the accommodation requirements and cultural traditions of Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople communities with the creation of sustainable and inclusive communities. National policy aims to ensure that these groups have access to safe, secure and appropriate accommodation, while

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<sup>31</sup> Planning policy for traveller sites (2024) [Planning policy for traveller sites - GOV.UK](#)

<sup>32</sup> National Planning Policy Framework (2024) [National Planning Policy Framework - Guidance - GOV.UK](#)

enhancing community cohesion and environmental quality.

- 6.9 To support this objective, national policy requires local planning authorities to assess accommodation needs and plan to meet identified needs through the development plan process. Policy A of the PPTS states that local planning authorities should:

*‘Use a robust evidence base to establish accommodation needs to inform the preparation of local plans and make planning decisions.’*

- 6.10 This requirement base is important as it ensures that planning policies and site allocations are informed by up-to-date and proportionate evidence regarding current and future accommodation needs. This helps local authorities to identify the provision required over the plan period.

- 6.11 The Fylde Coast Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showperson Accommodation Assessment 2023 (GTAA) provides the most up-to-date evidence relating to accommodation needs across the Fylde Coast authorities of Blackpool, Fylde and Wyre. The assessment includes a review of existing accommodation provision, demographic information, stakeholder engagement, and analysis of current and future pitch and plot requirements. The GTAA therefore forms a key part of the evidence base to identify and meet accommodation needs within the Borough.

- 6.12 National policy also emphasises that new and sites should be well designed and integrated with their surroundings. The PPTS states that sites should be:

*‘Well planned or soft landscaped in such a way as to positively enhance the environment and increase its openness.’*

- 6.13 This is important in ensuring that sites are deigned and integrated appropriately with surrounding areas, and minimise potential impacts on the character of the landscape and local amenity. Well designed sites can also support relationships within the community and contribute towards creating sustainable and inclusive places.

- 6.14 The PPTS distinguishes between accommodation provided for Gypsies and Travellers and that provided for Travelling Showpeople. A ‘pitch’ relates to a Gypsy and Traveller site, and a ‘plot’ (often referred to as a ‘yard’) relates to Travelling Showpeople accommodation, which may/will need to incorporate space or to be split to allow for the storage of equipment. These definitions are important as they recognise the differing accommodation and operational requirements of each groups and help ensure that appropriate provision is planned for through the Local Plan.

- 6.15 The PPTS further states that:

*‘Local planning authorities should set pitch targets for gypsies and travellers and plot targets for travelling showpeople as which address the likely permanent and transit site accommodation needs of travellers in their area.’*

- 6.16 These national policy requirements form the basis for the Council’s approach to planning for Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople accommodation within the Borough and inform the preparation of local planning policies and site allocations. The GTAA identifies pitch and plot need across Fylde, Blackpool and Wyre, and provides the evidence base for determining future accommodation requirements over the plan period.

## Emerging National Policy (December 2025)

- 6.17 In December 2025, a draft revised NPPF was published for consultation<sup>33</sup>. At the time of writing, the revised Framework has not been finalised and therefore does not yet form part of adopted national policy. However, the consultation draft provides an indication of the emerging direction of travel in relation to plan making and decision taking and is therefore a material consideration in the preparation of the emerging Local Plan.
- 6.18 The draft revised NPPF continues to rely on the PPTS, which remains the principal source of national policy relating specifically to Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople. The consultation draft does not propose any substantive changes to the PPTS itself and it does not introduce significant amendments to the existing national approach to assessing and meeting Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople accommodation needs.
- 6.19 However, wider changes proposed through the draft Framework may have indirect implications for the future delivery of Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople sites. For instance, the consultation introduces a new approach to National Decision-Making policies (National DM policies), which become material considerations in the determination of planning applications. The intention of the National DM policies is to create a more consistent and standardised approach to decision making.
- 6.20 The draft Framework also proposes changes to policies relating to development outside settlements, density expectations and development within the Green Belt. While these policies are not specifically directed at Gypsy, Traveller or Travelling Showpeople accommodation, the consultations acknowledges that proposals may have implications for these communities.
- 6.21 Chapter 4 of the draft Framework focuses on achieving sustainable development, whereby draft Policy S5: *Principle of Development Outside Settlements*, proposes a more restrictive approach to development in rural areas, whilst identifying certain forms of development that may be acceptable in principle. The Framework acknowledges that some forms of accommodation, including traveller sites, may not align with proposed density expectations, stating that:
- 'It is recognised that high densities can limit certain types of development coming forward, including traveller sites and some other forms of accommodation, for which the proposed density requirements in chapter 12 are unlikely to be appropriate.'*
- 6.22 Gypsy and Traveller sites and Travelling Showpeople yards typically require lower density forms of development, often with additional operational space requirements. National density-based approaches may therefore require flexibility in their application to traveller accommodation.
- 6.23 Similarly, draft Policy L3: *Achieving Appropriate Densities*, proposes minimum residential density requirements, particularly in locations close to public transport infrastructure and well-connected railway stations. The Framework recognises the potential implications of this approach as standardised density requirements may not always be appropriate for Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople accommodation due to the spatial and operational characteristics of such sites. Thereby, conventional housing density assumptions may not be suitable in all circumstances.
- 6.24 The draft consultation also proposes revisions to Green Belt policy through National DM policies

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<sup>33</sup> NPPF: Proposed reforms and other changes to the planning system (December 2025) [National Planning Policy Framework: proposed reforms and other changes to the planning system - GOV.UK](#)

GB6 and GB7. Draft Policy GB7 proposes a more flexible approach to certain forms of development within the Green Belt and introduces provisions relating to development near well connected transport hubs. While these changes are primarily directed towards housing and mixed use development, the consultation seeks views on whether the proposals could lead to adverse impacts on Gypsies and Travellers.

- 6.25 A proportion of Gypsy and Traveller site provision historically has come forward within rural and Green Belt locations, where site availability and affordability may differ from urban housing markets. Changes to national Green Belt policy and development priorities may therefore have indirect implications to future site delivery and land availability.
- 6.26 These proposed changes remain subject to consultation and may be amended before adoption. The Council will continue to rely primarily on the adopted NPPF and PPTS in informing plan making and decision taking relating to Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople accommodation.

### **Local Evidence Base**

#### **Previous Evidence**

- 6.27 Prior to the preparation of the Fylde Coast Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showperson Accommodation Assessment 2023 (GTAA), the evidence base supporting the adopted Fylde Local Plan to 2032 included the Blackpool, Fylde and Wyre Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment Update 2016<sup>34</sup>. This study assessed the accommodation needs of Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople across the Fylde Coast authorities.
- 6.28 The assessment was prepared jointly by the three authorities in order to provide a consistent and comprehensive evidence base for plan making and to ensure compliance with national planning policy requirements set out in the PPTS.
- 6.29 The 2016 assessment considered a range of factors including:
- Existing authorised and unauthorised sites and encampments;
  - Household formation and population change;
  - Concealed and emerging households;
  - Movement between sites and conventional housing; and
  - The need for additional residential pitches and plots over the plan period.
- 6.30 The findings of the study informed the preparation of policies within the adopted Local Plan and established the level of accommodation need which the Plan aims to address.
- 6.31 The assessment identified a net requirement for:
- 5 Gypsy and Traveller pitches across the Fylde Coast (-2 within Fylde).
  - 24 Travelling Showpeople plots across the Fylde Coast (0 within Fylde).
- 6.32 In response to the identified need, Strategic Policy H5 of the Fylde Local Plan made provision for Gypsy and Traveller accommodation through specific site allocations, including:
- The Stackyard, Bryning with Warton – 2 pitches; and
  - Thames Street, Newton – up to 3 pitches.

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<sup>34</sup> Blackpool, Fylde and Wyre Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment Update (2016) [EL1.002-Fylde-Coast-GTAA-Update-Dec-2016.pdf](#)

- 6.33 In addition to site allocations, the Local Plan also includes criteria-based policies to guide the determination of planning applications for traveller sites where additional need may arise or where proposals come forward outside allocated sites. This approach provides flexibility whilst ensuring that proposals are assessed against environmental, infrastructure and sustainability considerations.
- 6.34 National policy supports the use of criteria-based policies. The PPTS states that:
- ‘Criteria should be set to guide land supply allocations where there is identified need. Where there is no identified need, criteria-based policies should be included to provide a basis for decisions in case applications nevertheless come forward. Criteria based policies should be fair and should facilitate the traditional and nomadic life of travellers while respecting the interests of the settled community.’*
- 6.35 The continued use of a criteria-based approach within the emerging Local Plan will ensure that any proposals for Gypsy, Travellers or Travelling Showpeople accommodation can be assessed against relevant planning considerations, including matters such as flood risk, accessibility to services and facilities and the impact of the surrounding area.
- 6.36 This approach allows the Council to respond to future accommodation needs and planning proposals, whilst ensuring that any proposed sites are located in suitable and sustainable locations consistent with national planning policy.

#### **Updated Evidence**

- 6.37 The most recent evidence base is provided by the Fylde Coast Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showperson Accommodation Assessment 2023/24 (GTAA), published in February 2024<sup>35</sup>. The assessment considers the accommodation needs of Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople across the Fylde Coast authorities of Fylde, Blackpool and Wyre.
- 6.38 The 2023/24 GTAA replaces the earlier Blackpool, Fylde and Wyre Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment Update 2016 and provides an updated assessment of current and future accommodation needs over the study period.
- 6.39 The study was jointly prepared by Fylde Council, Blackpool Council and Wyre Council. This collaborative approach reflects national policy expectations that neighbouring authorities work together to understand accommodation needs across wider housing market areas and plan strategically for the provision of traveller accommodation.
- 6.40 Section 3, Paragraph 24 of the NPPF states<sup>36</sup>:
- ‘Effective strategic planning across local planning authority boundaries will play a vital and increasing role in how sustainable growth is delivered...Strategic policy-making authorities should collaborate to identify the relevant strategic matters which they need to address in their plans.’*
- 6.41 Traveller accommodation needs are recognised as cross-boundary matter due to the mobile nature of some households and the limited number of suitable sites available across individual authority areas. The preparation of the GTAA jointly with neighbouring authorities therefore demonstrates ongoing cooperation in accordance with national policy and helps ensure that

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<sup>35</sup> Fylde Coast Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showperson Accommodation Assessment 2023/24 [Fylde Coast Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showperson Accommodation Assessment 2023/24](#)

<sup>36</sup> NPPF Section 3 [National Planning Policy Framework - 3. Plan-making - Guidance - GOV.UK](#)



accommodation needs are consistently considered across the Fylde Coast.

### **Existing Provision**

- 6.42 Table 4.3a of the GTAA identifies that, as of September 2023, there are 21 Gypsy and Traveller sites across the Fylde Coast, providing a total of 77 pitches, of which 70 are occupied and 7 are vacant.
- 6.43 Within Fylde, this includes:
- 8 private authorised sites, providing 23 pitches (18 occupied and 5 vacant); and
  - 1 unauthorised site, providing 1 occupied pitch.
- 6.44 The existing provision includes the allocated sites at The Stackyard, Bryning Hall Lane, which provides 2 occupied pitches, and The Old Builder's Yard, Thames Street, Newton, which provides 3 vacant pitches.
- 6.45 Table 4.4b of the GTAA identified that, as of September 2023, there are 4 Travelling Showpeople yards across the Fylde Coast, providing 27 plots, of which 25 are occupied, 1 is vacant and 1 is reserved for emergency accommodation.
- 6.46 Within Fylde, there is one private authorised Travelling Showpeople yard providing 2 plots, both of which are occupied by a single household.
- 6.47 The evidence demonstrates that traveller accommodation within Fylde is currently provided primarily through small privately owned sites, with a limited overall supply of pitches and plots. Existing authorised sites therefore represent an important component of the Borough's accommodation provision and contribute towards meeting both current and future accommodation needs.
- 6.48 The presence of vacant pitches on authorised sites may also provide some flexibility within the existing supply, although future needs arising from household formation and demographic change will continue to require monitoring throughout the plan period.

### **Role of Updated Evidence**

- 6.49 The updated GTAA should be read alongside this background paper as it provides the most current understanding of:
- Demographic change;
  - Household formation;
  - Existing site supply; and
  - Accommodation pressures across the Fylde Coast area.
- 6.50 This updated evidence that the emerging Local Plan is informed by the most recent available information regarding current and future accommodation needs and enables the Council to plan for Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople in accordance with national policy requirements.
- 6.51 As stated within the PPTS, the definition of Gypsies and Travellers includes:
- 'Persons of nomadic habit of life whatever their race or origin, including such persons who on grounds only of their own or their family's or dependants' educational or health needs or old age have ceased to travel temporarily or permanently, and all other persons with a cultural tradition of nomadism or of living in a caravan.'*

- 6.52 This recognises that some households may have ceased travelling temporarily or permanently due to factors such as age, health or education, whilst still retaining a cultural tradition of nomadism. The assessment of accommodation needs must therefore consider a broad range of households and living circumstances to ensure that identified needs are accurately reflected within the evidence base.

## **Methodology**

- 6.53 The GTAA uses a range of primary and secondary data sources to establish current and future accommodation needs across the Fylde Coast. The methodology includes:
- Analysis of existing authorised and unauthorised sites;
  - A comprehensive household survey and site/yard observation;
  - Household interviews with Gypsy and Traveller families;
  - Consultation with local authorities and stakeholders;
  - Demographic modelling and household formation rates; and
  - Review of planning and site records held by authorities.
- 6.54 Using a range of data sources allows the study to develop a strong and comprehensive understanding of accommodation needs. Using both quantitative data and qualitative insights from local communities ensures that the assessment reflects statistical trends and experiences of local Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople communities.
- 6.55 A total of 67 Gypsy and Traveller households across the Fylde Coast participated in the household survey. The survey collected demographic information including age, ethnicity and household size and type. This information was used to identify concealed and emerging households and to project future accommodation need arising from household formation.
- 6.56 As part of the survey process, households were also asked whether they considered additional pitches to be required within the area. Responses indicated that 51.2% considered that additional pitches were needed, while 48.8% considered that no further provision was required.
- 6.57 These findings indicate that views within the community are balanced. While some households perceive a need for additional provision, others consider existing accommodating to be sufficient. This highlights the importance of maintaining an up-to-date and evidence led assessment process rather than relying on perception based responses.
- 6.58 The GTAA notes that these responses were used to help understand community perspectives but did not directly determine the needs modelling itself, which was based on demographic evidence and established methodology.
- 6.59 In addition, information was obtained from 21 Travelling Showperson households across the Fylde Coast. Data relating to Travelling Showpeople was primarily gathered through detailed discussions rather than standardised household surveys.
- 6.60 This approach aligns with Policy A of the PPTS, which requires local authorities to use an evidence base and engage with Gypsy and Traveller communities in order to inform plan making and decision taking.
- 6.61 As part of the methodology, the assessment also analysed the nature and capacity of existing sites and pitches, including:
- The number of caravans (static and touring) on each pitch;
  - Household occupancy levels; and

- Site layout and capacity.

6.62 This enabled the study to identify whether sites are operating at capacity, experiencing overcrowding, or have potential for intensification or expansion.

### **Identified Need**

6.63 The GTAA identifies a requirement for 15 additional Gypsy and Traveller pitches within Fylde between 2022/23 and 2039/40.

6.64 The assessment did not identify any additional need for Travelling Showpeople plots within Fylde over the study period. However, the GTAA notes that ongoing monitoring will remain important throughout the plan period as circumstances and accommodation requirements may change over time.

6.65 The identified need forms the basis for the Council's consideration of future traveller accommodation provision through the emerging Local Plan.

### **Supply and Potential Capacity**

6.66 The GTAA also identifies potential sources of supply and future capacity within Fylde, including provision arising through existing sites and future planning applications considered through criteria based policies.

6.67 The assessment identifies that:

- There are 5 vacant pitches on existing authorised sites;
- There is 1 pitch which is not permanently authorised<sup>37</sup>; and
- 'Survey respondents suggested potential for additional pitches on existing sites. Through discussions with residents on private sites, the GTAA identified a total of between 17 and 21 potential pitches.'

6.68 Existing Gypsy and Traveller sites and Travelling Showpeople yards are listed within the GTAA (September 2023), with details of residential pitches set out on pages 30-37 of the assessment.

6.69 The potential for intensification or expansion of existing sites may provide additional opportunities to contribute towards future accommodation needs, subject to planning considerations and site specific constraints.

### **Future Need and Monitoring**

6.70 The GTAA acknowledges that further accommodation demand may arise over time. This may include:

- Households currently living outside the Fylde Coast area who may wish to move into the Borough;
- Gypsy and Traveller households currently living in conventional housing who may wish to return to site based accommodation; and
- Changes in household formation rates, family circumstances or demographic trends.

6.71 The assessment advises that the identified level of need should be treated as a minimum level of provision. The Council will therefore continue to monitor traveller accommodation needs throughout the plan period, including through:

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<sup>37</sup> Kays Farm, Dagger Road, Treales, Roseacre and Wharles.

- Regular monitoring of planning permissions, site supply and completions;
- Future updates to the evidence base where necessary; and
- Continued engagement and cooperation with neighbouring Fylde Coast authorities.

6.72 This approach will help ensure that accommodation needs continue to be addressed in a flexible and responsive manner throughout the emerging Local Plan period.

### **Implications for the Local Plan**

6.73 The updated evidence base confirms that there remains an ongoing need to plan for Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople accommodation within the Fylde Borough. In accordance with national policy, the emerging Local Plan will therefore need to ensure that suitable provision is made to address identified accommodation needs over the plan period.

6.74 The GTAA identifies a requirement for 15 additional Gypsy and Traveller pitches within Fylde between 2022/23 and 2039/40, including a need for 4 pitches within the first five years of the study period. No additional requirement for Travelling Showpeople plots was identified during the assessment period, although ongoing monitoring will remain necessary as circumstances may change over time.

6.75 National policy expects local planning authorities to identify and maintain a supply of specific deliverable sites sufficient to provide five years' worth of traveller accommodation against locally identified need. The PPTS states that local authorities should:

*'Identify and update annually, a supply of specific deliverable sites sufficient to provide 5 years' worth of sites against their locally set targets.'*

6.76 The identified need over the plan period is relatively small and is expected to arise gradually over time rather than requiring the immediate delivery of a significant number of new pitches. The GTAA also identifies that there may be opportunities to meet needs through the expansion, intensification or regulation of existing authorities sites.

6.77 The assessment states:

*'Assuming that additional pitches are brought forward through regularisation and intensification/expansion, the identified minimum need would be met.'*

6.78 This is an important consideration in the context of plan-making, as it demonstrates that a proportion of future need may potentially be accommodated through existing authorised sites, subject to planning considerations and site-specific constraints.

6.79 Due to the relatively low level of identified need and the potential opportunities available through existing authorised sites, the Council does not currently consider it necessary to allocate additional specific traveller sites through the emerging Local Plan. Instead, the preferred approach is to continue to apply a criteria-based policy framework which allows proposals to come forward and be individually assessed as need arises.

6.80 This approach is consistent with national policy set out in the PPTS, which supports the use of criteria based policies both where identified need exists and where applications may come forward during the plan period.

6.81 A criteria based policy approach provides flexibility and enables the Council to respond positively to changing circumstances, future accommodation needs and windfall proposals, whilst ensuring that traveller accommodation is located in suitable and sustainable locations.

6.82 The adopted Fylde Local Plan currently includes criteria within Strategic Policy H5 against which proposals for Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople accommodation are assessed. The criteria is stated below:

- 'There is evidence of need for a new Gypsy, Traveller or Travelling Showpeople's site.'
- 'The site is not in the Green Belt or in an Area of Separation.'
- 'The site is not in Flood Risk Zones 2 or 3.'
- 'The location and design of the site would protect local amenity and the local environment.'
- 'The site would not be isolated and would be within or proximate to a settlement which can provide education, health, welfare and employment infrastructure. Local environmental quality with respect to noise and air quality should not have a detrimental impact.'
- 'There should be safe vehicular and pedestrian access to the site and adequate parking.'
- 'The number of pitches and / or plots should be related to the specific size and location of the site and the size and density of the surrounding population. In a rural or semi-rural location, the scale of the site should not dominate the settled community.'
- 'The site should have the potential to allow mixed-use development.'
- 'The site should not place unacceptable pressure on existing infrastructure.'

6.83 These principles remain consistent with national planning policy objectives and continue to provide an appropriate framework for assessing future traveller accommodation proposals.

6.84 The use of a criteria-based approach also assists in reducing the likelihood of unauthorised developments and encampments by providing a clear framework through which planning applications can be considered where needs arise.

6.85 The provision of suitable and authorised sites can help provide greater certainty for both travelling and settled communities and reduce the need for enforcement action associated with unauthorised developments. It also helps ensure that travelling households have access to essential services, including education, healthcare and employment opportunities, in accordance with the sustainability objectives of national planning policy.

## 7 Housing for Looked After Children

- 7.1 Children's care homes provide residential accommodation and support for children and young people. These homes provide a supportive environment where children can live safely while receiving care, supervision and assistance from trained staff.
- 7.2 Children's homes are regulated by Ofsted, which is responsible for registering and inspecting homes to ensure they meet national standards. Under Section 11 of the Care Standards Act 2000, it is an offence to operate or manage a children's care home without being registered with Ofsted<sup>38</sup>.
- 7.3 Local authorities are responsible for arranging placements for children requiring care and must ensure that appropriate accommodation is available to meet their needs.
- 7.4 Children's care homes are often located within residential areas and may involve the conversion of existing dwellings. As a result, their development can raise planning considerations relating to land use and the distribution of such facilities within local communities.
- 7.5 In 2024, Fylde Council published the 'Children's Home Guide for Applicants and interested parties,' the document provides guidance for both planning permission and certificates of lawful use. The document is available here: [Care-Home-guidance-note.pdf](#) and should be read alongside this document.

### National Context

- 7.6 Ofsted's Children's Social Care in England 2025 report provides an overview of children's residential care provision across the country<sup>39</sup>.
- 7.7 The report identifies that:
- Approximately 3% of children in England are in the social care system at any one time;
  - There were 3,950 registered children's homes in England in 2025; and
  - The average number of places per home is relatively small, with a mean of 3-4 places.
- 7.8 The number of children's homes has increased significantly in recent years, with:
- A 15% increase in the number of registered homes; and
  - An 11% increase in the number of registered places.
- 7.9 However, the distribution of children's homes is uneven across England. The North West contains the largest concentration of children's homes, despite having a smaller proportion of looked-after children relative to other regions.
- 7.10 For example:
- 26% of children's homes are located in the North West, while
  - Only 18% of looked after children originate from the region.
- 7.11 This imbalance contributes to the growing trend of children being placed outside their home local authority area.

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<sup>38</sup> Care Standards Act 2000, Section 11 [Care Standards Act 2000](#)

<sup>39</sup> Ofsted children's social care in England (2025) [Main findings: children's social care in England 2025 - GOV.UK](#)

7.12 The Children's Commissioner (2019) found that<sup>40</sup>:

- More than 30,000 looked children in care live outside their local authority area, representing around 41% of looked after children;
- Over 11,000 of these children live more than 20 miles from home; and
- More than 2,000 children live over 100 miles away.

7.13 These figures highlight wider structural issues within the national care system, including the availability and location of suitable residential care placements. In particular, the uneven distribution between where children originate and where provision is located, resulting in increasing reliance on out of area placements.

7.14 This has implications for children's wellbeing and access to support networks, including family connections. It also reflects broader market and delivery issues, where provision is not always aligned with identified need.

### **Planning Context**

7.15 Children's care homes typically fall within Use Class C2 (Residential Institutions) under the Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987 (as amended).

7.16 Use Class C3 (Dwellinghouses) relates to residential use by individuals living together as a single household, including small groups where care is provided. Smaller-scale children's homes may, in some cases, fall within Class C3 rather than C2. This is because the use can operate as a single household, with residents living together and receiving care in a domestic setting, rather than functioning as an institutional form of residential care.

7.17 Class C2 includes a range of residential care facilities such as:

- Children's care homes;
- Residential care homes;
- Hospitals; and
- Nursing homes.

7.18 In some circumstances, planning permission may not be required for the establishment of a children's care home where:

- The proposed use remains within Use Class C2, for example, as a residential care home for the elderly and a children's care home both fall within Class C2, a change between such uses would not constitute development and would not require planning permission; or
- The use of a dwelling (Class C3) is not considered to represent a material change of use, for example where the scale and nature of the use remain comparable to a family household.

7.19 Where a change of use is considered to be material, planning permission would be required.

7.20 Applicants may also apply for a Lawful Development Certificate to confirm whether planning permission is required for a proposed change of use. This means that, in some cases, the principle of a children's home can be established without the need for a full planning application, provided that it is demonstrated to be lawful.

7.21 As a result, some children's homes may be established without full planning permission, limiting the ability of local planning authorities to influence their location or distribution. This means

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<sup>40</sup> The Children's Commissioner (2019) [Pass the parcel: children posted around the care system | Children's Commissioner for England](#)

that the planning system does not always have full control over where such uses are located.

### **National Policy**

7.22 The NPPF emphasises the need for the planning system to ensure that a sufficient supply and range of housing is delivered to meet the needs of different groups within the community.

7.23 Paragraph 61 of the NPPF states that:

*'To support the Government's objective of significantly boosting the supply of homes...the needs of groups with specific housing requirements are addressed... 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.'*

7.24 This highlights the importance of ensuring that the housing needs of different groups within the community are considered as part of the planning system. Children's care homes provide accommodation and support for vulnerable children and young people and therefore form part of the specialist and supported housing provision required to meet the needs of certain groups within society. This means that the provision of children's care homes is a relevant planning consideration, and that local planning policies should support the delivery of appropriate forms of accommodation while ensuring that development is located and designed in a way that is sustainable and reflects the needs of the local area.

7.25 To support this, Paragraph 62 states that:

*'To determine the minimum number of homes needed, strategic policies should be informed by a local housing need assessment.'*

7.26 This identifies that housing needs within an area should be clearly assessed and understood so that planning policies can respond appropriately to local circumstances. This is particularly important for children's care homes where demand for accommodation may arise both from local need and placements from other local authority areas, which can influence the level and distribution of provision within a Borough.

7.27 Paragraph 63 states that:

*'Within this context of establishing need, the size, type and tenure of housing needed for different groups in the community should be assessed and reflected in planning policies.'*

7.28 This indicates that planning policies should consider the range of accommodation types required within a community, including specialist residential accommodation where appropriate. Children's care homes provide residential accommodation for children who require care and supervision and therefore represent a form of specialist and supportive residential provision that may need to be considered as part of the wider housing mix within an area.

7.29 The NPPF also emphasises the importance of creating well-designed, safe and inclusive communities, aiming to ensure that developments function well with local character. As a result, local planning authorities must balance the need to support appropriate provision of specialist accommodation, such as children's care homes, with the need to ensure that development is located in suitable areas and does not result in harmful impacts on the overall character and function of communities.



## Emerging National Policy (Draft NPPF, December)

- 7.30 Proposed changes to national policy, published in December 2025, introduce changes to both plan-making and decision-taking within the planning system<sup>41</sup>. While these changes remain subject to consultation, they provide a clear direction for emerging national policy and are therefore an important consideration in the preparation of the emerging Local Plan.
- 7.31 The draft Framework states:
- ‘The government is committed to tackling this country’s housing crisis. Decades of failure to build enough homes has constrained growth, pushed ownership out of reach for too many, driven rents to unaffordable levels, and seen more and more people fall into temporary accommodation – including 170,000 children.’*
- 7.32 This highlights the Government’s focus on addressing housing need and improving outcomes for children, including those in vulnerable circumstances. While the draft Framework does not include specific policy relating to children’s care homes, it reinforces the importance of ensuring that all children have access to stable and suitable accommodation.
- 7.33 In this context, children’s care homes form part of the broader housing and care landscape, and their provision, location and distribution are relevant planning considerations. The preparation of locally specific policy can therefore assist in ensuring that such development is delivered in a way that supports sustainable communities, protects residential amenity, and responds to identified needs.
- 7.34 This is particularly relevant in circumstances where there is evidence of both increasing provision and unmet need, and where the planning system currently has limited ability to influence outcomes.

## Local Context

- 7.35 In recent years Fylde has experienced a notable increase in the number of children’s care homes, reflecting wider trends across Lancashire and the North West.
- 7.36 As of March 2025, there were approximately:
- 347 Ofsted registered children’s homes across Lancashire; and
  - 52 of these were located within Fylde, representing a significant proportion of the county’s total provision<sup>42</sup>.
- 7.37 Lancashire has the largest number of children’s homes of any local authority area in England. Approximately 8% of all children’s homes in England are located within Lancashire, with the majority operated by private agency providers (330 out of 347 as of March 2025). This highlights the extent to which Lancashire, and Fylde in particular, has become a significant location for residential childcare provision at both a regional and national level. The predominance of privately operated provision also indicates that market factors are playing a substantial role in determining the location and concentration of homes.
- 7.38 The above figures represent a substantial increase from September 2023, when there were 242

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<sup>41</sup> Draft NPPF (December 2025) [National Planning Policy Framework: proposed reforms and other changes to the planning system - GOV.UK](#)

<sup>42</sup> Lancashire County Council (2025) [Market Position Statement April 2025: Children's Homes - Lancashire County Council](#)

homes across Lancashire and 28 within Fylde. This demonstrates a rapid rate of growth across a short period of time, indicating increasing development pressure for children's care homes within the borough. The concentration of provision impacts the local communities, local services and the balance of residential uses within certain areas.

- 7.39 Fylde and Wyre have been a particular focus for new provision, with 41% of all new children's homes in Lancashire over the past two years located within these areas. This highlights the need for a coordinated strategic approach between neighbouring authorities, particularly Fylde and Wyre, in order to understand implications, distribution patterns and the relationship between provision and identified need across the wider area.
- 7.40 The growth of children's homes within Lancashire is widely considered to be influenced by placements from other local authority areas, with children being placed away from their home authority due to a shortage of suitable accommodation elsewhere. This has contributed to increased demand for residential care provision within Lancashire from external placing authorities, influencing the location and scale of new homes. As a result, patterns of provision may not necessarily reflect locally identified need within Fylde itself.
- 7.41 Despite the number of homes within Lancashire, Lancashire County Council (LCC) Children's Services has reported continued difficulty in securing suitable placements to meet the specific needs of children in care. This suggests that the issue is not solely one of overall supply, but also relates to the type, location and suitability of provision. In particular, it indicates that the current pattern of development is not fully aligned with identified needs, with provision being driven in part by external demand and market factors rather than local requirements. Evidence indicates that:
- Only a small proportion of available beds are occupied by Lancashire children; and
  - A notable number of Lancashire children continue to be placed outside the county due to a lack of appropriate provision.
- 7.42 This highlights a disconnect between the overall number of homes within the area and the ability of the current provision to meet identified local needs. It suggests that existing provision is not necessarily delivering the type, scale or specialist accommodation required by Lancashire children, despite the overall concentration of homes.
- 7.43 In addition to understanding the scale of provision, it is important to consider the level of need for children's care accommodation. Demand is influenced by the number of looked after children, the complexity of needs, safeguarding requirements, placement stability and the availability of appropriate accommodation. As a result, an increase in the number of homes does not necessarily equate to improved placement availability where provision is not appropriately aligned to identified needs.
- 7.44 Lancashire currently has approximately 1,700 looked after children, with around 260 children requiring residential care placements. While these figures have remained relatively stable in recent years, the complexity of needs has increased. This is significant because it indicates growing demand for specialist and appropriately located provision, rather than simply additional numerical capacity. It also reinforces the importance of ensuring that future provision is informed by evidenced needs and service requirements.
- 7.45 To address these challenges, LCC has agreed to expand its own children's homes provision from 15 to up to 30 homes, increasing capacity from approximately 52 placements to up to 100 placements. This demonstrates that LCC recognises an ongoing need for additional and more

suitable residential provision within the county. It also reflects a strategic approach towards delivering accommodation that better aligns with identified placement needs and service priorities.

- 7.46 LCC Children's Services can provide guidance on the number and nature of care provision required within the borough. Potential applicants are encouraged to contact LCC at an early stage to better understand identified needs and service requirements.
- 7.47 In 2023 Fylde Council conducted a call for evidence and scrutiny review into the use of residential premises as children's care homes. Evidence was gathered from residents, providers, LCC Children's Services, and elected members.
- 7.48 A total of 28 submissions were received as part of the review process. The findings identified concerns relating to the rapid growth and concentration of children's care homes within the borough, the cumulative impact on local communities and services, and limitations within the existing planning framework. The review concluded that there had been a significant increase in provision within Fylde, resulting in concerns regarding the potential oversupply and concentration of homes in certain areas. Despite this, LCC Children's Services continued to identify difficulties in securing suitable placements, reinforcing that the issue relates to the type, location and suitability of provision rather than the overall quantity of homes.
- 7.49 The review also identified that many new children's homes are established through Lawful Development Certificates, meaning proposals are not assessed against planning policy and are not subject to public consultation. This has limited the Council's ability to influence the scale, location and distribution of provision across the borough.
- 7.50 These issues highlight limitations in the current planning framework. In particular, the absence of specific local planning policies relating to children's care homes, combined with the ability for some homes to be established without the need for planning permission, has restricted the Council's ability to effectively manage the number, location and distribution of provision within Fylde.

#### **Fylde Local Plan to 2032 (incorporating Partial Review)**

- 7.51 The Fylde Local Plan does not contain any policies that directly relate to the establishment of children's homes. There are, however, a number of policies that would need to be taken into consideration in determining a planning application for a children's home.
- 7.52 Strategic Policy H2: *Density and Mix of New Residential Development* seeks to deliver a broad mix of new residential development to reflect the demographics of the borough. This would require ensuring that there are sufficient properties to meet the needs of looked after children. The policy seeks to ensure sufficient accommodation is provided for each section of the local community and so it does not place a "cap" on the amount of accommodation provided.
- 7.53 Strategic Policy GD7: *Achieving Good Design in Development*, sets out the general principles of good design, including the promotion of social cohesion and strong neighbourhoods, protecting residential amenity, securing appropriate car parking, creating safe and accessible environments and making provision for the needs of specific groups in the community.
- 7.54 Non-strategic Policy H7: *Replacements of, and Extensions to, Existing Homes in the Countryside* would be relevant to any planning application that proposed the replacement of, or significant extension to, a dwelling located in the countryside.

- 7.55 Strategic Policy HW1: *Health and Wellbeing*, promotes the provision of social care facilities in accessible locations and promotes healthy lifestyles.
- 7.56 Strategic Policy INF1: *Service Accessibility and Infrastructure*, requires developments to make the most of existing infrastructure and demonstrate how new development can be accessed by means other than the private car.
- 7.57 Non-strategic Policy T5: *Parking Standards* requires new developments to provide adequate car parking to ensure that there is no detriment to highway safety. Further guidance on car parking standards, design and layout is provided in the council's Provision of Parking on New Developments Supplementary Planning Document (SPD), available here: [Provision-of-Parking-on-New-Developments-SPD-adopted.pdf](#)

### **Neighbouring Authorities**

- 7.58 A number of neighbouring authorities have introduced planning approaches to help manage the establishment and distribution of children's care homes within their areas. This reflects increasing recognition that the scale, location and concentration of provision can raise planning issues, particularly where there is rapid growth or clustering within particular neighbourhoods.

### **Blackpool Council**

- 7.59 Blackpool Council has experienced similar growth in children's care homes. The Council has taken the view that changes of use from a dwellinghouse (C3) to a children's home (C2) are generally material due to:
- Changes in the character of the use;
  - Increased day-to-day activity;
  - Operational requirements and physical layout; and
  - Impacts on local services.
- 7.60 As a result, planning permission is typically required, allowing the Council to consider the sustainability and location of proposals.

### **Wyre Council**

- 7.61 Wyre Council's has produced Children's Homes Guidance for Applicants (2023) which outlines information required when submitting planning applications for children's homes.
- 7.62 The guidance states that changes of use from C3 to C2 are generally considered material due to:
- Changes in activity;
  - Operational requirements;
  - Physical alterations to properties;
  - Loss of family dwellings;
  - Impacts on local public services

### **Lancaster City Council**

- 7.63 Lancaster City Council has adopted a similar position, generally treating changes from C3 to C2 as a material change of use where the level of support and supervision required significantly alters the character of the property.

## **Recommendations from the Scrutiny Review**

7.64 The Executive Committee of Fylde Council recommendations as stated in the Review into the use of residential premises as children's care homes (2024) is to:

1. *'Consider the drafting of an advice note to inform and assist applicants, neighbours and other interested parties in the development of, or change of use of an existing building or premises to a children's home, through the seeking of planning permission or lawful development certificate;*
2. *Investigate and consider ways in which Fylde Council can assist and promote the work of Lancashire County Council Children's Services locally in Fylde.'*

## **His Majesty's Government is recommended:**

3. *'To enable the local planning authority to consider and influence the number and location of children's care homes in their area, that His Majesty's Government be requested to amend the Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987 (as amended) to introduce a new use class for small scale children's care homes and;*
4. *Notwithstanding recommendation 3 above, to urgently issue national guidance clarifying when planning permission is required in relation to the establishment of children's homes and the circumstances in which it is likely to be granted or refused;*
5. *To acknowledge the pressure that local public services in Lancashire can face when children are placed some distance from where they would call home and to consider a mechanism as to how such bodies can be recompensed or supported to help cover any additional costs;*
6. *to consider as part of the roll out of Regional Care Cooperatives providing guidance/powers to Ofsted and placing authorities to ensure that regions such as the North-West and Lancashire are not faced with a disproportionate amount of provision in relation to local need.'*

## **Policy Considerations for the Local Plan**

7.65 The evidence demonstrates that, while children's care homes form an important part of the care system, the scale, location and concentration of provision can give rise to planning considerations, particularly where there is a high concentration of homes within certain areas. Evidence also indicates that, despite the overall number of homes within Lancashire and Fylde, there remains a shortage of suitable placements to meet identified needs. This suggests that the key issue is not solely the quantity of provision, but also its type, location, suitability and distribution.

7.66 The emerging Local Plan will therefore seek to ensure that future provision is appropriately located, supports the creation of balanced and sustainable communities, protects residential amenity, and better aligns with identified needs.

## **Location and Character**

7.67 Children's care homes should be located within suitable residential environments where the scale, intensity and nature of the use would be compatible with the character and function of the surrounding area. Proposals should demonstrate that the use would integrate appropriately within the local context and would not adversely affect the character of the street or wider neighbourhood.

7.68 Given the importance of providing stable and supportive living environments for children,

proposals should also be located in accessible and sustainable locations with good access to local services and facilities, including schools, healthcare, recreation areas and public transport.

### **Concentration and Distribution**

- 7.69 Evidence gathered through the Council's review process identified concerns regarding the concentration of children's care homes within certain parts of the borough and the potential cumulative impacts arising from clustering. High concentrations of children's care homes may affect the character and function of residential areas and place additional pressure on local services and infrastructure.
- 7.70 The emerging policy will therefore seek to manage the distribution of children's care homes across the borough and avoid harmful over-concentrations within particular localities. In considering proposals, the number, proximity and distribution of existing homes within the surrounding area will be considered. Particular consideration will be given to whether a proposal would result in a clustering of homes within the same street, nearby adjoining streets, or small settlements with limited services and facilities.

### **Residential Amenity and Community Impact**

- 7.71 Children's care homes should not give rise to unacceptable impacts on residential amenity or the overall balance and function of the community. Consideration will be given to matters including noise, activity levels, comings and goings, outdoor space, and the relationship with neighbouring residential properties.
- 7.72 The emerging policy will seek to ensure that proposals provide a high-quality living environment for children whilst also safeguarding the amenities of neighbouring occupiers and maintaining the character of residential areas.

### **Car Parking and Highway Considerations**

- 7.73 Children's care homes may generate different parking and servicing requirements when compared to a typical dwellinghouse, particularly due to staffing requirements, shift patterns and visits from professional workers and service providers.
- 7.74 Proposals will therefore be expected to demonstrate that adequate parking provision can be accommodated having regard to the operational needs of the home, the level of staffing, the needs of residents, the character of the surrounding area and the availability of on-street parking. Parking arrangements should not result in unacceptable pressure on surrounding streets or give rise to highway safety concerns.
- 7.75 Consideration will also be given to the location of parking and manoeuvring areas in relation to neighbouring residential properties, particularly where vehicle movements at unsociable hours may affect residential amenity.

### **Conclusion**

- 7.76 There is a disproportionate number of looked after children in residence within Fylde, which put pressure on agencies in the borough.
- 7.77 Whilst there are limits to what can be achieved through planning control, where planning permission is required, in the interests of the children it is undesirable for further placements from outside Lancashire to be housed within Fylde.
- 7.78 Where subject to planning control, the Council will grant planning permission for development

or change of use to housing for looked after children only where it is demonstrated that the development will meet unmet needs of children from Lancashire.

- 7.79 To avoid over concentrations of children's care homes, the Council will take into account the local pattern of existing children's care facilities and will not grant planning permission where a local concentration of such homes would result.
- 7.80 The Council will require all proposals for children's care homes to demonstrate that they will not have adverse impacts on the amenity of neighbours and the locality. It will be expected that sites are suitably chosen to avoid such impacts.

## 8 Housing for Adults Requiring Care, Support or Management

- 8.1 Supported housing provides an essential service to diverse groups of individuals with support needs, each with unique challenges. This sector plays a pivotal role in improving their quality of life, building independence, and offering safety and stability in a secure home environment.
- 8.2 This subsection focuses on adults with learning disabilities/autism, adults with mental health needs, and adults with physical disabilities. Housing and accommodation for older people is covered in a separate background paper.
- 8.3 Fylde Council will use this background paper to inform future housing and delivery programmes. The Council's focus is to support adults with care/support needs to live independently in their homes through a range of housing and supported housing options available that enables this to happen.
- 8.4 Alongside the other Council's within Lancashire, aim to develop an *Accommodation with Support Plan*. This will establish requirements and opportunities to develop high quality supported housing and accommodation to align with the needs of adults with health, care and support needs. The *Accommodation with Support Plan* will use evidence from Lancashire Learning and Improvement Network (Housing LIN) which is set out in the Lancashire County Council Evidence base: Estimated need for supported housing and accommodation in Lancashire report which sets out figures and data used in this background paper<sup>43</sup>.

### National Policy

#### Equalities Act 2010

- 8.5 The Equality Act 2010 provides the overarching legislative framework for protecting individuals from discrimination and advancing equality of opportunity<sup>44</sup>. Disability is one of the protected characteristics under the Act and public authorities are required to have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity, and maintain good relations between people with protected characteristics and others.
- 8.6 Within the context of housing and supported accommodation, the Act provides an important framework for ensuring that the needs of disabled people are considered in the planning, design, and delivery of housing and associated services. Section 149(1b) of the Public Sector Equality Duty (2011) requires public authorities to<sup>45</sup>:  
*'advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.'*
- 8.7 This supports consideration of accessibility, inclusive environments, and reducing barriers that may prevent disabled people from accessing appropriate accommodation and support.
- 8.8 For adults with learning disabilities, mental health needs, and physical disabilities, the principles of the Equality Act support the provision of housing and accommodation that promotes independence, choice, and equal access to housing opportunities. Section 149 (3a) of the Act requires public authorities to have due regard to the need to:  
*'remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by persons who share a relevant protected*

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<sup>43</sup> [LCC-Supported-Housing-Needs-Housing-LIN.pdf](#)

<sup>44</sup> Equality Act 2010 [Equality Act 2010: guidance - GOV.UK](#)

<sup>45</sup> Equality Act 2010 Section 149 (2011) <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2010/15/section/149>



*characteristic that are connected to that characteristic.'*

- 8.9 This aligns with wider objectives to enable people to live within their local communities with appropriate care and support and reduce disadvantage arising from inaccessible housing or environments.

### **National Planning Policy Framework**

- 8.10 The NPPF states that planning policies should support the delivery of a wide choice of high quality homes and:

*'That the needs of groups with specific housing requirements are addressed.'* (Section 5 Paragraph 61)<sup>46</sup>

- 8.11 In order to create inclusive and sustainable places. This includes consideration of the housing needs of disabled people and other groups requiring specialist or supported accommodation.

- 8.12 In addition, as demonstrated in Section 2 Paragraph 8b the NPPF supports<sup>47</sup>:

*'Strong, vibrant and healthy communities, by ensuring that a sufficient number and range of homes can be provided to meet the needs of present and future generations.'*

- 8.13 This provides a policy basis for ensuring that new housing development can accommodate people with a range of support requirements, including those requiring supported housing and accommodation.

- 8.14 The NPPF provides a clear national policy basis for considering the housing needs of different groups within the community. It requires local planning authorities to assess and reflect the size, type and tenure of housing needed to meet the needs of a range of groups, including:

*'Those who require affordable housing (including Social Rent); families with children; looked after children ;older people (including those who require retirement housing, housing-with-care and care homes); students; people with disabilities; service families; travellers ; people who rent their homes and people wishing to commission or build their own homes.'* (Section 5 Paragraph 63)

- 8.15 This establishes a clear requirement for authorities to consider the needs of people with disabilities within housing policy and delivery. In doing so, the NPPF provides a national framework that supports the provision of a diverse housing mix, including specialist and supported accommodation, to ensure that housing delivery is responsive to local need.

### **Supported housing: National Statement of Expectations (2020)**

- 8.16 The Supported housing: National Statement of Expectations (2020) sets out national principals for the planning and delivery of support housing<sup>48</sup>. Developed through collaboration across the housing, health, care and supported housing sectors, the document recognises the important role supported housing has in enabling people with a range of support needs to access safe and good quality housing.

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<sup>46</sup> NPPF Section 5 [National Planning Policy Framework - 5. Delivering a sufficient supply of homes - Guidance - GOV.UK](#)

<sup>47</sup> NPPF Section 2 [National Planning Policy Framework - 2. Achieving sustainable development - Guidance - GOV.UK](#)

<sup>48</sup> Supported housing: National Statement of Expectations (2020) [Supported housing: national statement of expectations - GOV.UK](#)

- 8.17 The Statement recognises that supported housing provision should respond to differing needs and local circumstances and that there is no single model of delivery suitable for all groups. Instead, it promotes a flexible and collaborative approach involving local authorities, commissioners, housing providers and health services to ensure supported housing is planned and delivered effectively.
- 8.18 The guidance highlights that supported housing can play an important role in improving outcomes for people with additional needs by supporting independence, improving wellbeing, and enabling people to remain within their communities wherever possible. It also emphasises the importance of understanding local demand, planning for future provision, and delivering accommodation that is safe, good quality, and provides value for money.
- 8.19 This provides an important national policy context for considering the future need for supported housing and accommodation for adults with learning disabilities/autism, adults with mental health needs, and adults with physical disabilities.

### **Collaborative Planning and Delivering Supported Housing**

- 8.20 The Statement highlights the importance of partnerships working in delivering supported housing. The guidance recognises that there is no single model of provision and that supported housing is most effective where local authorities work collaboratively to understand need and coordinate delivery.
- 8.21 The Statement notes that:  
‘In two-tier authorities, upper and lower tier authorities are encouraged to work collaboratively on their strategic planning, as well as with other local partners. Plans will be most effective where they take all client groups into account.’
- 8.22 As Fylde operates within a two tier local government structure alongside LCC, this highlights the importance of collaboration between neighbouring councils and LCC to ensure supported housing provision responds effectively to identified need across different groups.
- 8.23 The Statement also recognises that local authorities may benefit from extending collaborative working across boundaries to manage supply and respond to wider patterns of need.
- 8.24 In addition, the guidance emphasises that supported housing need should be informed by a needs assessment process. This reinforces the importance of using evidence to understand current demand and future accommodation requirements to ensure that the needs of all groups are reflected within future provision.
- 8.25 The Statement further highlights the importance of aligning supported housing need with wider planning policy and housing delivery. This includes identifying how future accommodation needs will be delivered through a range of approaches.

### **Delivering Supported Housing**

- 8.26 The Statement recognises that supported housing accommodates vulnerable members of society and therefore emphasises the importance of ensuring accommodation is safe and appropriate.
- 8.27 The guidance identifies that housing quality can have direct influence on outcomes, including supporting people to live independently, manage health conditions and improve overall wellbeing. It also highlights the wider benefits of high quality provision in supporting more

effective use of public resources and reducing demand on services.

- 8.28 This highlights that future supported housing and accommodation will be informed by evidence of need, delivered through collaborative partnership working, and designed to support adults with learning disabilities/autism, adults with mental health needs, and adults with physical disabilities.

#### **Emerging National Policy (December 2025)**

- 8.29 Proposed changes to national policy, published in December 2025, introduce changes to both plan-making and decision-taking within the planning system<sup>49</sup>. While these changes remain subject to consultation, they provide a clear direction for emerging national policy and are therefore an important consideration in the preparation of the emerging Local Plan.

- 8.30 For instance, the proposed policy objective of *Securing a diverse mix of homes*, aims to strengthen the role of the planning system in meeting the needs of different groups and improving housing choice. The policy states:

*'We want to better support the needs of different groups through the planning system. This includes stronger support for rural social and affordable housing, and setting clearer expectations for accessible housing to meet the needs of older and disabled people. It also means providing more flexibility on the unit mix of housing for market sale, where local requirements have been met for the mix of affordable homes.'*

- 8.31 This policy direction is reflected in HO5: *Meeting the needs of different groups*, which aims to ensure that local plans actively respond to demographic change and accessibility requirements. The proposed changes explain that:

*'These changes also support the provision of specialist forms of accommodation, such as housing for older people, disabled people and students, and set firmer expectations for the mix of tenures on sites over 150 units.'*

- 8.32 A key proposed reform is the requirement for local planning authorities to establish clear targets for accessible and adaptable housing through Building Regulations standards. The consultation proposes:

*'Requiring authorities to set out the proportion of new housing that should be delivered to M4(2) and M4(3) standards of the building regulations, to ensure plans adequately provide for the accessibility needs of an ageing population and the needs of disabled people.'*

- 8.33 The proposed approach would require authorities to align policy requirements with identified need:

*'Authorities will need to set requirements for M4(2) that meet or exceed their locally assessed need for this housing, and ensure that need is met.'*

- 8.34 The draft policy also introduces a proposed national baseline:

*'The government is proposing a national minimum that ensures at least 40% of new housing over the course of the plan period is delivered to M4(2) standards...'*

- 8.35 These proposed changes strengthen the expectation that local plans move beyond overall housing numbers and demonstrate how housing delivery will address accessibility,

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<sup>49</sup> Draft NPPF (December 2025) [National Planning Policy Framework: proposed reforms and other changes to the planning system](#)

demographic change and differing housing needs across communities.

- 8.36 The consultation also proposes revisions to transport and design policy through TR4: *Street Design, Access and Parking*. This policy restructures existing national policy provisions to establish a more integrated approach to transport considerations within scheme design, the policy introduces:

*'New provisions for incorporating facilities that prioritise sustainable transport and adds explicit references to meeting the needs of older people, children, and people with disabilities.'*

- 8.37 This highlights a stronger expectation that developments provide environments which support walking, wheeling, cycling and access to public transport as alternatives to private car use. It also reinforces the principle that transport infrastructure should be designed to accommodate a wider range of users with differing mobility and accessibility requirements.
- 8.38 This reflects an emerging national policy direction that street design should contribute not only to movement efficiency but also to health, accessibility, social inclusion and quality of place. By linking transport provision with the needs of different user groups, the changes strengthen expectations that local plans and development proposals demonstrate how schemes will deliver inclusive and sustainable communities.
- 8.39 These proposals indicate a stronger emphasis on inclusive design, accessibility, and the delivery of housing that responds to the needs of different groups. The draft policy is relevant to the preparation of the Local Plan and supports consideration of policies that promote adaptable, accessible and inclusive communities.

#### **Local Policy**

- 8.40 The Fylde Local Plan to 2032 (incorporating Partial Review) provides the overarching planning framework for housing and development within the borough<sup>50</sup>. A number of policies within the Local Plan provides a supportive framework for the delivery of specialist and adapted accommodation. These policies recognise the importance of meeting the needs of specific groups within the community, promoting inclusive and accessible environments, and supporting wider health and wellbeing objectives.
- 8.41 Strategic Policy H2: Density and Mix of New Residential Development states:
- 'Another aspect of mix is extra care and supported housing for the elderly, people with special needs, offenders, homeless and those avoiding domestic violence.'*
- 8.42 This recognises that housing need within Fylde extends beyond general market and affordable housing and includes the need for specialist and supported forms of accommodation. Although the policy is broad and does not specifically refer to the type of support required, it provides a policy basis for considering supported and adapted accommodation for people requiring additional care and support.
- 8.43 The policy also reflects the importance of providing a diverse housing stock that can respond to differing support requirements and levels of independence. The inclusion of supported housing within the overall housing mix demonstrates an acknowledgement that some residents require accommodation solutions that integrate both housing and care or support provision. This is relevant to adapted accommodation and other forms of specialist housing intended to enable

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<sup>50</sup> Fylde Council Local Plan to 2032 (incorporating Partial Review) [Fylde-Local-Plan-to-2032-incorporating-Partial-Review-adopted.pdf](#)

people to live as independently as possible within the community.

- 8.44 Strategic Policy GD7: *Achieving Good Design in Development* – development will be expected to be of a high standard of design, taking account of the character and appearance of the local area, including:

*‘Making provision for the needs of specific groups in the community such as the elderly and those with disabilities, in line with the Equalities Act.’*

- 8.45 This policy highlights the importance of inclusive and accessible design in new development. It reinforces the requirement for development proposals to consider the needs of disabled people and ensure that environments are accessible, safe, and capable of supporting independent living.

- 8.46 For adults with learning disabilities, mental health needs and physical disabilities, good design can play a significant role in promoting wellbeing, independence, and social inclusion. This may include adaptable access and layouts, wheelchair accessibility, sensory considerations, clear wayfinding, safe communal spaces, and environments that support both privacy and opportunities for social interaction.

- 8.47 The policy also supports the principle that specialist and supported accommodation should not be viewed separately from mainstream development quality standards. Instead, accessibility and inclusivity are expected to form part of the wider approach to sustainable and well-designed communities. This provides an important policy context for the delivery of accommodation that enables people with care and support needs to live as independently as possible within their local communities.

- 8.48 Highway Safety

*‘All development proposals will need to show that appropriate provision is made for public transport services; appropriate measures are provided to facilitate access on cycle or foot; where practicable, ensure existing pedestrian, cycle and equestrian routes are protected and extended; and the needs of specific groups in the community such as the elderly and those with disabilities are fully provided for.’*

- 8.49 This policy recognises the importance of accessibility and connectivity in ensuring that development is inclusive and supports equal access to services and facilities. For adults requiring supported housing and accommodation, access to public transport, safe walking routes, and local services is important in enabling independent living and reducing social isolation.

- 8.50 The policy supports the principle that specialist and supported accommodation should be located in accessible and sustainable locations, with good links to healthcare, employment opportunities, community facilities, and social networks. This is particularly important for residents who may not drive or who rely on public transport, carers, or support services.

- 8.51 The policy also reflects wider health and wellbeing objectives by encouraging environments that are accessible to all users. In practice, this supports the delivery of accommodation that is integrated within communities rather than isolated from local services and infrastructure.

- 8.52 Strategic Policy H4: *Affordable Housing* – Size and Type:

*‘Schemes of sheltered/extra care housing for social rent/affordable rent to the elderly may be provided to meet affordable housing requirements, in conjunction with a Registered Social*

*Landlord. Such schemes should meet the requirements of 100% specialist accommodation for the elderly in policy H2.'*

- 8.53 This policy provides support for specialist housing provision, although the primary emphasis is on accommodation for older people. The policy recognises that specialist forms of housing, including sheltered and extra care accommodation, can contribute towards affordable housing delivery where they meet identified needs.
- 8.54 The policy demonstrates that specialist accommodation requiring integrated care and support provision forms an important part of the housing market. This provides a useful context for considering other forms of specialist accommodation, including supported living and adapted housing for adults requiring additional care and support.
- 8.55 The policy also highlights the role of Registered Social Landlords in delivering specialist accommodation. Similar partnership approaches are likely to be important in meeting the accommodation needs of adults requiring supported housing and accommodation, particularly where schemes require ongoing care, support, or revenue funding arrangements.
- 8.56 Strategic Policy HW1: *Health and Wellbeing*. The Council will integrate public health principles and planning to help reduce health inequalities by:
- 'a) Working with health care commissioners to support healthcare facilities and particularly to improve primary care and mental health care access and facilities;*
- b) Working with the Lancashire Public Health Service and the Health and Wellbeing Board on planning and health issues, to take account of the three goals in the Lancashire Health and Wellbeing Strategy, that the Board will deliver by 2020:*
- 1. Better health – improve healthy life expectancy, and narrow the health gap.*
  - 2. Better care – deliver measurable improvements in people's experience of health and social care services.*
  - 3. Better value – reduce the cost of health and social care.*
- c) Where required by the priorities of Lancashire County Council and health care commissioners, identifying sites for new healthcare facilities, and with providers of other social and community infrastructure to deliver appropriate facilities in accessible locations, to meet local needs, reflecting the spatial distribution of need and the importance of accessibility and public transport provision;*
- d) Seeking land or financial contributions, where appropriate and viable, towards new or enhanced healthcare facilities from developers where new housing results in a shortfall or worsening of provision;'*
- 8.57 This policy demonstrates recognition within the Local Plan that health and wellbeing are important considerations in the planning and delivery of housing and community infrastructure. In particular, the policy highlights the importance of improving access to mental health care facilities and services, recognising that health needs should be considered alongside future development and housing growth.
- 8.58 The policy also supports partnership working between the Council, health care commissioners, the Lancashire Public Health Services, and the Health and Wellbeing Board to ensure that development responds to identified health and social care needs. This collaboration approach

is particularly relevant in planning for adults requiring supported housing and accommodation, where housing provision is often closely linked to care and support as well as wider community services.

- 8.59 The policy is also relevant to adults with learning disabilities and physical disabilities, as these groups may require accommodation that is integrated with health, social care, and community support services. Accessible locations, integrated service delivery, and proximity to healthcare facilities are important considerations in enabling people to live independently, maintain wellbeing, and access appropriate support networks.
- 8.60 In addition, the policy supports the identification and delivery of appropriate social and community infrastructure to meet local needs. This provides a wider strategic basis for planning for specialist and supported accommodation, particularly where accommodation forms part of a broader care and support pathway aimed at promoting independent living, reducing reliance on institutional care, preventing homelessness, and improving health and wellbeing within the community.

## **Local Context**

### **Lancashire County Council Supported Housing Needs**

- 8.61 The Lancashire County Council (LCC) *Evidence Base: Estimated need for supported housing and accommodation in Lancashire* provides an assessment of current and future need for supported housing and accommodation across Lancashire, including Fylde. The report considers the accommodation requirements of adults with learning disabilities/autism, adults with mental health needs, and adults with physical disabilities/long term conditions.
- 8.62 The assessment uses data from LCC adult social care data, population projections, and existing patterns of accommodation and support provision. The report applies assumptions and trend based forecasts to estimate future accommodation need across different groups and types of accommodation. The evidence provides an important local context for understanding future demand for supported housing and accommodation within Fylde and the wider Lancashire area.

### **Adults with Learning Disabilities/Autism**

- 8.63 The baseline population for adults with learning disabilities, including adults with autism who have eligible adult social care needs, is based on the LCC Short and Long Term Support (SALT) adult social care data returns for 2020/21. This identified 3,846 adults aged 18 years and over across Lancashire who were eligible for local authority funded care and support.
- 8.64 The evidence highlights that the use of residential care placements for people with learning disabilities in Lancashire is relatively low compared with the national average. Approximately 4.5% of adults with learning disabilities in Lancashire live in residential care settings, compared to more than 20% nationally. This suggests that Lancashire has historically implemented community based living arrangements and supported housing models that encourage greater independence.
- 8.65 The report estimates a continued shift away from residential care over the next 10 years, with increasing emphasis on supported housing and independent living options. This reflects wider policy direction, which promotes enabling people with learning disabilities to live within standard housing and community settings wherever possible.

- 8.66 In addition, the report identified an estimated decline in the number of adults with learning disabilities/autism living with older family carers over the next 10 years. This reflects an ageing carer population and increasing pressure on existing informal care arrangements. As older carers become less able to continue providing support, additional demand for supported accommodation and housing options is likely to emerge.
- 8.67 There is anticipated to be a trend towards a gradual decline in the population of people with learning disabilities/autistic people living with older family carers over the next 10 years, for example as older carers are no longer in a position to care for and/or accommodate their adult children with learning disabilities/autism.
- 8.68 The evidence therefore indicates a continuing and evolving need for supported housing and accommodation for adults with learning disabilities/autism within Fylde and across Lancashire. This includes accommodation that promotes independence, enables access to community facilities and support networks, and provides flexibility to respond to differing levels of care and support need.
- 8.69 In 2020 it was estimated that there were 292 adults living in Fylde with learning disabilities/autism requiring housing and accommodation support. The evidence shows that the majority of individuals were living in supported housing (63%), making this the most common accommodation type. This was followed by mainstream housing with care/support packages (16%), living with family/informal carers (14%), residential/nursing (4%), and Shared Lives arrangements (3%).
- 8.70 This accommodation profile demonstrates an existing emphasis within Fylde on community based housing models rather than institutional forms of care, with supported housing already playing a significant role in meeting local need.
- 8.71 Looking ahead to 2032/33, the population of adults with learning disabilities and/or autism is estimated to increase to 336. Supported housing is expected to remain the predominant accommodation type, with approximately 67% of the population projected to live in supported housing. Mainstream housing with care/support packages is expected to remain stable at 16%, while the proportion of people living with family/informal carers is expected to reduce to 10%.
- 8.72 The assessment also expected a small increase in the use of Shared Lives arrangements (5%) and a continued reduction in reliance on residential/nursing care (3%), which is the only accommodation type expected to decline over the period.
- 8.73 Overall, the evidence suggests an ongoing shift towards supported and community based living arrangements that promote independence and reduce reliance on residential care settings. This reflects both changing patterns of provision and increasing demand for accommodation options that enable adults with learning disabilities and autism to live independently with appropriate care and support in place.

#### **Adults with Mental Health Needs**

- 8.74 The LCC Supported Housing Needs Assessment identifies the supported housing and accommodation needs of adults with serious mental health needs who are in contact with specialist mental health services. The assessment uses data from LCC alongside secondary evidence sources to estimate current and future accommodation requirements.
- 8.75 Data from the NHS Mental Health Services Data Set (MHSDS) identified approximately 6,800



adults aged 18 to 64 with a mental health related need known to mental health services across Lancashire in 2022<sup>51</sup>. The Lancashire-wide evidence provides the basis for estimating local accommodation requirements within Fylde.

- 8.76 For Fylde, the report estimates that there were approximately 435 adults with mental health needs, with this figure projected to increase to 444 people by 2032/33.
- 8.77 Analysis of accommodation patterns indicates that most people with serious mental health needs currently live within mainstream housing. Across Lancashire, approximately 91% of people known to mental health services live in mainstream housing (renting/owner occupation), with 6% living in supported housing and 3% living in nursing or residential care.
- 8.78 This demonstrates that mainstream housing continues to play a significant role in meeting accommodation needs for adults with mental health needs, with supported housing acting as part of a broader housing pathway rather than the primary accommodation model. It also highlights the importance of ensuring that mainstream housing is accessible, sustainable, and supported through appropriate health and care services where required.
- 8.79 By 2032/33, the proportion of people living in nursing or residential care is expected to reduce to around 1%, with growth in population and reduced reliance on residential care reflected in increased demand for supported housing provision.
- 8.80 Qualitative research undertaken with adults with mental health support needs in Lancashire found that some individuals with more complex needs require specialist supported accommodation options that support recovery and enable progression towards greater independence. The research identified increasing demand for respite and step down accommodation, providing transitional support for people moving towards independent living.
- 8.81 The evidence also suggests that a range of accommodation types will continue to be required, including both shared and self contained housing models. However, there is an increasing preference for self contained accommodation, enabling greater independence, privacy, and control over living arrangements.
- 8.82 Location and quality of accommodation were also identified as important factors. Individuals expressed a preference for housing located within attractive and safe neighbourhoods and highlighted the importance of avoiding concentrations of supported accommodation in a limited number of areas. Access to move-on accommodation was identified as a key issue, with demand for housing options that support longer term independent living.
- 8.83 For Fylde, the assessment estimates that by 2032/33 approximately 93% of adults with mental health needs will continue to live within mainstream housing, 6% within supported housing, and 1% within nursing or residential care. To support this transition, the report identifies a requirement for an estimated 21 net additional supported housing units within Fylde by 2032/33.

#### **Adults with Physical and/or Sensory Disabilities**

- 8.84 The assessment also considers the accommodation requirements of adults with physical disabilities and sensory impairments who may require housing and support to maintain

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<sup>51</sup> NHS Mental Health Services Data Set [Mental Health Services Data Set \(MHSDS\) - NHS England Digital](#)

independence.

- 8.85 Data from LCC identified approximately 1,195 adults with physical disability and/or sensory impairment support needs across Lancashire in 2020/21. The evidence shows that most people currently live within mainstream housing, demonstrating that specialist accommodation is not required in all circumstances and that many people are supported through adaptations and community based support.
- 8.86 Across Lancashire, approximately 78.5% of people with physical and/or sensory disabilities live in mainstream housing, 9% live in supported housing/supported living, 12% live in nursing/residential care, and 0.5% live through shared lives arrangements.
- 8.87 At a more local level, Fylde forms part of the Lancashire North locality alongside Wyre, and Lancaster. Within this area, there were 323 people with physical/sensory disabilities recorded in 2022. Accommodation patterns broadly reflected the Lancashire position, with the majority living within mainstream housing (79%), followed by nursing/residential care (12%) and supported housing (9%), there is currently no existing supply of share lives arrangements.
- 8.88 The assessment estimates that the population of people with physical/sensory disabilities within Lancashire North is expected to increase to approximately 330 people. The projected accommodation profile is estimated that:
- 70% will live within mainstream housing;
  - 24% will live within supported housing;
  - 5% will live within nursing or residential care; and
  - 1% will live within Shared Lives accommodation.
- 8.89 These projections demonstrate an anticipated shift away from residential care and towards greater use of supported housing and community based living arrangements. The increase in supported housing reflects wider policy objectives to promote independence, improve quality of life, and enable people to remain within their local communities for longer.
- 8.90 To support this transition, the assessment identifies a requirement for approximately 50 additional housing and supported living units across the Lancashire North area by 2032/33. This highlights the importance of ensuring an adequate supply of accessible and adaptable accommodation that can respond to changing support needs over time.

#### **Findings from the Supported Housing Needs Assessment**

- 8.91 The LCC Supported Housing Needs Assessment identifies a continued and evolving need for supported housing and accommodation across Lancashire and demonstrates that Fylde will experience similar changes in future housing demand. Although the scale and type of need varies across different groups, the overall findings are consistent in identifying a shift towards housing models that enable people to live within ordinary community settings with appropriate care and support, while reducing reliance on residential and care accommodation.
- 8.92 Across all groups considered within the assessment, the evidence indicates that mainstream housing and supported housing will remain the predominant forms of accommodation. However, there is an expected shift towards accommodation models that provide greater flexibility and allow people to access care and support whilst remaining within their local communities.
- 8.93 For adults with learning disabilities/autism, the projections show continued growth in

supported housing provision alongside reduction in reliance on residential and nursing care and a gradual decline in people living with older family carers. This reflects changing expectations around independence and increasing pressure on informal care arrangements. Supported housing is expected to remain the principal accommodation type within Fylde for this group.

- 8.94 For adults with mental health needs, the assessment highlights that most people are expected to continue living within mainstream housing, supported by appropriate care and support arrangements. However, there is increasing recognition of the need for specialist supported accommodation, including self-contained and step down provision that supports recovery and creates opportunities for progression into longer-term independent living. The identified requirement for additional supported housing units in Fylde indicates that existing provision may need to expand to meet future demand.
- 8.95 For adults with physical and/or sensory disabilities, the evidence suggests continued growth in supported housing and supported living arrangements, alongside reduced reliance on nursing and residential care. Future provision is likely to require housing that is accessible, adaptable, and capable of responding to changing care needs over time.
- 8.96 The assessment demonstrates that future accommodation need in Fylde is unlikely to be met through a single housing model. Instead, a range of housing options will be required, including mainstream housing with support, supported living, Shared Lives arrangements, specialist accommodation, and accessible housing that supports independent living.
- 8.97 The findings also indicate that future provision should not only focus on the quantity of accommodation delivered but also on location, accessibility and quality. Access to services, healthcare, public transport, employment opportunities, and community infrastructure will remain important factors in ensuring that supported housing contributes positively to health, wellbeing, and independence.
- 8.98 Overall, the evidence suggests that Fylde will need to plan for supported housing and accommodation over the long term to respond to demographic change, increasing demand for independence, and the transition away from traditional residential models of care. The projections demonstrate a clear need to ensure that local housing provision within Fylde reflects changing patterns of need and supports people to live independently within their communities.

## **Conclusion**

- 8.99 The evidence identifies an ongoing and increasing need of to ensure that sufficient supported housing and accommodation is planned for within Fylde to respond to patterns of need and support requirements. In response, the Council will aim to ensure that future housing provision reflects the identified accommodation needs of adults with learning disabilities/autism, adults with mental health needs and adults with physical disabilities.
- 8.100 The Council will support a broad range of accommodation that promote independence and provide appropriate levels of care and support. This includes supported housing, supported living arrangements, and mainstream housing supported through adaptable design where appropriate. Future provision should respond to differing levels of need and avoid reliance on a single accommodation approach.
- 8.101 The Council aims to support a continued move towards accommodation that enables people to live independently within their local communities and reduces reliance on residential and

institutional forms of care where appropriate. This reflects both national policy and local evidence indicating increasing demand for supported and community-based forms of accommodation.

- 8.102 The Council aims to ensure that supported housing and accommodation is delivered in accessible and sustainable locations, with good access to healthcare services, public transport, employment opportunities, community infrastructure and support networks. The location and quality of accommodation will be recognised as important factors in supporting wellbeing and long-term housing outcomes.
- 8.103 The Council will continue to work collaboratively with LCC and neighbouring authorities to monitor need, inform future planning, and support delivery of accommodation that responds to identified local demand.
- 8.104 Proposals for the provision of residential units providing supported housing units for adults with support needs commissioned by the responsible authority will be supported in principle where it is shown that it is needed for adults with support needs from Fylde, with support for the application from the Care Commissioners, subject to other policies of the plan.

## 9 Houses of Multiple Occupation (HMOs)

- 9.1 Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs) are residential properties occupied by multiple households who share one or more basic amenities, such as bathrooms, toilets or cooking facilities. HMOs form an important part of the private rented sector and can provide flexible and affordable accommodation for households with limited housing options. As such, HMOs can contribute towards meeting identified housing needs and increasing housing choice within an area.
- 9.2 Within the planning system, HMOs are divided into different categories depending on the number of occupants. The Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) (Amendments) (England) Order 2010 introduced Class C4, which relates to small HMOs and is defined as<sup>52</sup>:
- ‘Use of a dwellinghouse by not more than six residents as a “house in multiple occupation.”’*
- 9.3 Small HMOs (Class C4) are therefore properties occupied by between three and six unrelated individuals who share basic facilities. HMOs occupied by more than six residents fall outside of any defined use class and are classified as sui generis uses. As a result, planning permission is required for changes of use from a dwellinghouse (Class C3) to a large HMO (sui generis).
- 9.4 It is important to distinguish between small and large HMOs because the planning and licensing requirements differ. The planning system is primarily concerned with the use of land the potential impacts of development on neighbouring properties and the wider area, whereas licensing legislation focuses on the safety and management standards of HMO accommodation.
- 9.5 For licensing purposes, the definition of a ‘large HMO’ differs from that used in planning legislation. Under the Housing Act 2004, a large HMO is generally defined as a property occupied by five or more persons forming more than one household. This differs from the planning definition, where HMOs occupied by more than six residents fall within Use Class C4. These differing definition reflect the separate roles of licensing and planning control.

### Licensing

- 9.6 Certain HMOs within Fylde are subject to mandatory licensing under the Housing Act 2004<sup>53</sup>. Since 1<sup>st</sup> October 2018, mandatory licensing has applied to properties occupied by five or more persons forming two or more households. Prior to this, mandatory licensing only applied to HMOs of three or more storeys. The revised regulations extended licensing requirements to include smaller buildings, such as two storey properties, flats and bungalows operating as HMOs with five or more occupants. was limited to HMOs of three or more storeys. The revised regulations extended licensing requirements to include smaller buildings such as two-storey properties, flats and bungalows operating as HMOs with five or more occupants.
- 9.7 In general terms, for licensing purposes:
- Small HMOs accommodating up to four residents do not normally require mandatory licensing; and
  - Large HMOs occupied by five or more persons forming more than one household require mandatory licencing.
- 9.8 The purpose of mandatory licensing is to ensure that larger HMOs are safe, suitably managed and provide acceptable living conditions for occupants. Licensing helps ensure that properties

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<sup>52</sup> [The Town and Country Planning \(Use Classes\) \(Amendment\) \(England\) Order 2010](#)

<sup>53</sup> Housing Act 2004 [Housing Act 2004](#)

meet minimum standards in relation to fire safety, room sizes, sanitation, waste management and the general condition of the accommodation. This is particularly important because HMOs often involve higher occupancy levels and shared living arrangements, which can increase risks if properties are poorly managed.

9.9 When determining whether to grant a licence, the Council must be satisfied that:

- The property is suitable for the proposed number of occupants;
- The licence holder and proposed manager are “fit and proper persons”; and
- Appropriate management arrangements are in place to ensure that the property is maintained to an acceptable standard.

9.10 These requirements are important in ensuring that HMO residents have access to safe and well-managed accommodation, while also helping to minimise adverse impacts on neighbouring properties and the wider community.

### Types of HMOs

9.11 There are different forms of HMO accommodation, including:

- **Section 257 HMOs:** Buildings converted into self-contained flats that do not comply with the relevant Building Regulations standards at the time of conversion, and where less than two-thirds of the flats are owner-occupied.
- **Purpose-built HMOs:** Properties specifically designed and constructed to provide shared accommodation for multiple households.
- **Converted buildings used as HMOs:** Existing residential properties that have been adapted or subdivided to accommodate multiple households sharing facilities.

9.12 Different forms of HMO accommodation can give rise to different management, amenity and environment considerations, and may also be subject to different licensing requirements depending on the number of occupants and the nature of the building. Recognising the different types of HMOs is important as their impacts can vary significantly depending on their design, occupancy levels and location.

### Planning Considerations

9.13 While mandatory licensing regulates property standards and management arrangements, it does not control the spatial distribution of HMOs. Issues relating to the location, concentration and potential impacts of HMOs within residential areas must instead be addressed through the planning system.

9.14 Where HMOs become concentrated within particular neighbourhoods, there can be impacts on local amenity and community balance. Potential issues may include increased pressures on waste storage and collection, parking demand, noise and disturbance and property maintenance.

9.15 It is therefore important that planning policy is in place to ensure that HMO development is appropriately managed and directed to suitable locations. An effective planning approach can help ensure that HMOs continue to contribute towards meeting housing needs, while minimising potential adverse impacts on existing communities and residential amenity.

### Planning Legislative Context

- 9.16 HMOs are defined through the Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987 (as amended). Class C3 (dwellinghouses) comprises use as a single household, while Class C4 relates to small HMOs and is defined as use of a dwellinghouse by between three and six unrelated individuals who share basic amenities.
- 9.17 HMOs occupied by more than six residents fall outside of any defined use class and fall under sui generis. As a result, a material change of use from a dwellinghouse (Class C3) to a large HMO requires planning permission.
- 9.18 The Town and County Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (GPDO), Schedule 2, Part 3, Class L permits changes of use between<sup>54</sup>:
- ‘(a) from a use falling within Class C4 (houses in multiple occupation) of the Schedule to the Use Classes Order, to a use falling within Class C3 (dwellinghouses) of that Schedule;*
- (b) from a use falling within Class C3 (dwellinghouses) of the Schedule to the Use Classes Order, to a use falling within Class C4 (houses in multiple occupation) of that Schedule.’*
- 9.19 This means that a dwellinghouse can normally change to a small HMO, and vice versa, without requiring planning permission, provided that the development meets the conditions set out within the GPDO and permitted development rights have not been withdrawn.
- 9.20 The introduction of permitted development rights for changes between Class C3 and Class C4 was intended to provide flexibility within the housing market and reduce the need for planning applications for smaller-scale changes of use. In practice, this means that local planning authorities may have limited control over the establishment of small HMOs.
- 9.21 However, development is not permitted by Class L if it would result in the use:
- ‘(a) as two or more separate dwellinghouses falling within Class C3 (dwellinghouses) of the Schedule to the Use Classes Order of any building previously used as a single dwellinghouse falling within Class C4 (houses in multiple occupation) of that Schedule; or*
- (b) as two or more separate dwellinghouses falling within Class C4 (houses in multiple occupation) of that Schedule of any building previously used as a single dwellinghouse falling within Class C3 (dwellinghouses) of that Schedule.’*
- 9.22 These exceptions are intended to prevent the uncontrolled subdivision of properties into multiple separate units or HMOs through permitted development rights, where such changes could give rise to more significant impacts on residential amenity, building standards and local infrastructure.

### **National Policy Context**

- 9.23 The NPPF sets out the Government’s overarching planning policies for England and establishes the framework within which local planning authorities are expected to prepare local plans and determine planning applications. Although the NPPF does not contain specific policies relating exclusively to HMOs, it provides the wider national policy context relevant to the provision, management and distribution of HMO accommodation.
- 9.24 National planning policy places significant emphasis on significantly boosting the supply of homes and ensuring that a sufficient range and mix of housing is available to meet the needs of

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<sup>54</sup> General Permitted Development Schedule 2 2015 [The Town and Country Planning \(General Permitted Development\) \(England\) Order 2015](#)

different groups within the community. HMOs can contribute towards this objective by providing flexible and comparatively affordable accommodation within the private rented sector, particularly for groups who may not be able to access owner occupation or self-contained rented accommodation.

9.25 Paragraphs 61 and 63 of the NPPF state that planning policies should<sup>55</sup>:

*‘Meet an area’s identified housing need, including with an appropriate mix of housing types for the local community...within this context of establishing need, the size, type and tenure of housing needed for different groups in the community should be assessed and reflected in planning policies.’*

9.26 These policies highlight the importance of ensuring that local housing provision responds to the differing needs of the population. HMOs can therefore play an important role in broadening housing choice and contributing towards affordability and accessibility within the housing market.

9.27 National policy also promotes the efficient use of land and encourages local planning authorities to make effective use of existing housing stock and previously developed land. In some circumstances, HMOs can support these objectives by increasing the occupancy of existing residential properties and contributing towards higher density forms of accommodation in sustainable locations with access to services, facilities and public transport.

9.28 The NPPF also places strong emphasis on achieving well-designed places and securing a high standard of amenity for existing and future occupants. Section 12 paragraph 135 states that planning decisions should ensure that developments<sup>56</sup>:

*‘Create places that are safe, inclusive and accessible and which promote health and well-being, with a high standard of amenity for existing and future users.’*

9.29 This means that, while national policy supports the provision of a wide choice of homes, including shared accommodation, local planning authorities must also consider the potential impacts that HMOs may have on residential amenity and the character of an area. High concentrations of HMOs can, in some circumstances, give rise to issues such as increased noise and disturbance, pressure on parking, waste management issues and changes to the social composition and character of established residential neighbourhoods.

9.30 Consequently, national planning policy requires local authorities to balance the need for housing choice and affordability with the need to maintain sustainable, healthy and well-functioning communities. This provides the basis for local planning policies that seek to manage the location and concentration of HMOs where there is evidence that excessive concentrations could result in harmful impacts on local amenity or community balance.

### **Local Housing Context**

9.31 Understanding the local housing context is important when considering the role and potential impacts of HMOs within Fylde. Housing market conditions, affordability pressures, demographic change and patterns of tenure can all influence demand for shared accommodation within the private rented sector. HMOs often provide comparatively lower cost and flexible

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<sup>55</sup> NPPF Section 5 [National Planning Policy Framework - 5. Delivering a sufficient supply of homes - Guidance - GOV.UK](#)

<sup>56</sup> NPPF Section 12 [National Planning Policy Framework - 12. Achieving well-designed places - Guidance - GOV.UK](#)



accommodation options for households who may be unable to access owner occupation or self-contained rented housing. As a result, evidence relating to housing need and affordability is relevant in understanding both the demand for HMOs and the role they can play in meeting local housing needs.

9.32 According to the 2021 Census, Fylde had<sup>57</sup>:

- 40,510 total dwellings;

9.33 Tenure breakdown indicates the following housing tenure profile within the borough:

- 43.5% of households are owned outright.
- 28.9% of households are owned with a mortgage, loan, or shared ownership.
- 8.3% of households are socially rented.
- 19.3% of household are privately rented or rent free.

9.34 This indicates that Fylde has a predominantly owner-occupied housing stock, with over 70% of households living in households that are owned outright or owned with a mortgage, loan, or shared ownership. However, the private rented sector also forms a significant component of the local housing market, reflecting wider national trends. Growth in the private rented sector can be associated with changing patterns of affordability, demographic change, greater labour mobility and barriers to accessing home ownership, particularly amongst younger households and lower-income groups.

9.35 The growth of the private rented sector is relevant to HMOs because HMOs form part of this sector and often provide some of the more affordable and flexible forms of rented accommodation available. HMOs can therefore play an important role in meeting housing needs for individuals who may not be able to afford self-contained accommodation within the borough.

9.36 Population and household projections suggest that Fylde is expected to experience continued growth over the next decade. It is estimated that the population of Fylde will increase by approximately 8% over the next 10 years, representing one of the highest projected growth rates within Lancashire<sup>58</sup>.

9.37 This suggests that demand for housing within the borough is likely to increase, placing additional pressure on the local housing market and increasing the need for a diverse range of housing options. In this context, HMOs may contribute towards meeting identified housing need by providing relatively affordable shared accommodation, particularly for households unable to access owner occupation or self-contained private rented accommodation.

9.38 Affordability also plays an important role in shaping housing demand. Data from the Office for National Statistics (2024), measures housing affordability using the house price-to-earnings ratio<sup>59</sup>. In areas where house prices are significantly higher than local earning, access to owner occupation can become increasingly difficult, potentially increasing demand for private rented accommodation and lower-cost housing options.

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<sup>57</sup> Census 2021 [Dwellings data, England and Wales: Census 2021 - Office for National Statistics](#)

<sup>58</sup> Fylde Strategic Assessment Local Profile 2025 [fylde-district-profile-2025.pdf](#)

<sup>59</sup> Office for National Statistics (2024) [House price to residence-based earnings ratio - Office for National Statistics](#)

9.39 The table below shows the ratio of median house price to median gross annual residence-based earnings (2024):

| Area              | House price to earnings ratio (2024) |
|-------------------|--------------------------------------|
| England and Wales | 7.54                                 |
| North West        | 5.84                                 |
| Lancashire        | 5.22                                 |
| <b>Fylde</b>      | <b>6.03</b>                          |

Table 2 - Ratio of median house price to median gross annual residence-based earnings (2024)

9.40 The table shows that in 2024, Fylde had a median house price to earnings ratio of 6.03, compared with 5.84 across the North West and 5.22 across Lancashire. This indicates that housing within Fylde is less affordable than in the surrounding region and county, although affordability pressures remain below the national average.

9.41 The relative affordability pressures within Fylde are important in understanding demand for HMOs. Where households are unable to access owner occupation due to high house prices, deposit requirements or mortgage lending constraints, there may be greater reliance on rented accommodation, including shared housing arrangements. HMOs can provide a lower-cost entry point into the housing market by reducing accommodation costs through shared facilities and lower individual rents.

9.42 Further evidence relating to local housing need is provided through the Fylde Housing Needs Survey (HNS), which assesses the housing requirements of different groups within the borough and identifies the scale and nature of housing affordability pressures<sup>60</sup>.

9.43 The Housing Needs Survey identifies a:

*‘Clear and acute need for rented affordable housing for lower income households rather than affordable home ownership products.’*

9.44 The analysis indicates that many households are unable to access home ownership and instead rely upon rented housing options to meet their needs, particularly lower income households and those unable to secure sufficient savings for a house deposit. This is relevant to HMOs as shared accommodation can provide one of the more affordable forms of housing available within the private rented sector, particularly for single person households and those with limited financial resources.

9.45 This survey also highlights significant affordability constraints within the borough. It estimates that:

*‘Only around 18% of households in need could afford an affordable rent (without claiming benefits or spending more than 30% of their income on housing).’*

9.46 This demonstrates that a substantial proportion of households experience difficulties accessing both market and affordable housing products. In this context, lower-cost shared

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<sup>60</sup> Fylde Council Housing Needs Survey (2022) [Microsoft Word - Fylde\\_Final\\_HNS\\_140922](#)

accommodation such as HMOs may provide an important housing option for households who are unable to afford self-contained accommodation or require more flexible and lower-cost living arrangements.

- 9.47 In addition, the survey identifies a 'rent/buy gap', comprising households who are able to afford private rents but are unable to access ownership, often due to issues such as deposit requirements and existing financial commitments. This group represents a significant proportion of households that housing needs are not met by either owner occupation or traditional affordable housing products.
- 9.48 This is relevant to HMOs because households within the 'rent/buy gap' may rely on the private rented sector for longer periods of time, increasing demand for a range of rented accommodation types, including shared housing. HMOs can therefore contribute towards meeting the needs of households seeking affordable and flexible accommodation whilst unable to transition into owner occupation.
- 9.49 Within this context, the private rented sector plays an important role in meeting housing need by providing accommodation for households unable to access other tenures. This includes a range of housing types and price points, including shared accommodation which may provide comparatively lower housing costs than self contained dwellings.
- 9.50 HMOs therefore form part of the wider housing offer within Fylde and can contribute towards meeting identified needs for lower-cost accommodation within the private rented sector. However, while HMOs can provide important housing opportunities, it is also necessary to ensure that their location, concentration and management are appropriately considered through the planning system to balance housing need with the protection of residential amenity and community character.
- 9.51 The above findings indicate that a mix of housing types and tenures will be required to meet the needs of the borough's growing populations, including accommodation options within the private rented sector. Within this context, HMOs can contribute to the supply of lower-cost shared accommodation within the private rented sector.
- 9.52 Overall, the evidence suggests that a broad mix of housing types and tenures will be required to meet the needs of Fylde's growing population, including accommodation within the private rented sector. Within this context, HMOs can contribute towards housing choice, affordability and flexibility, particularly for households who may otherwise struggle to access suitable accommodation within the borough.

#### **Local Evidence and Monitoring**

- 9.53 Monitoring the number, location and distribution of HMOs is important in understanding the role that shared accommodation currently plays within Fylde's housing market and in identifying whether concentrations of HMOs may be emerging within particular areas. Evidence relating to licensed HMOs can also help inform future planning policy approaches and ensure that any growth in HMO accommodation is appropriately managed.
- 9.54 As of April 2025, there were 24 licensed HMOs recorded within Fylde. This represents a relatively small proportion of the borough's overall housing stock of more than 40,000 dwellings, indicating that HMOs currently form a limited component of the local housing market when compared with other forms of housing.

9.55 The distribution of licensed HMOs across the borough is shown below:

| <b>Settlement</b>   | <b>Number of<br/>Licenced<br/>HMOs</b> |
|---------------------|----------------------------------------|
| Lytham and St Annes | 17                                     |
| Kirkham and Wesham  | 7                                      |
| Freckleton          | 0                                      |
| Warton              | 0                                      |
| Rural areas         | 0                                      |
| <b>Total</b>        | <b>24</b>                              |

9.56 This distribution of licensed HMOs reflects the borough's settlement hierarchy and housing characteristics. The majority of licensed HMOs are located within Lytham and St Annes, with a smaller number located within Kirkham and Wesham. No licensed HMOs are currently recorded within Freckleton, Warton or the rural areas of the borough.

9.57 This pattern is consistent with the location of the borough's largest and most sustainable settlements, where there is a greater concentration of housing stock, employment opportunities, shops, services, education facilities and public transport accessibility. Larger settlements are also more likely to contain housing stock sustainable for conversion to shared accommodation and to experience demand from households seeking flexible or lower cost rented housing.

9.58 The current evidence indicates that HMOs play a small but potentially important role within Fylde's housing market by contributing towards the supply of lower-cost accommodation within the private rented sector.

9.59 Overall, the available evidence suggests that HMOs currently represent a relatively small component of the borough's housing stock and do not appear to be concentrated at a scale likely to give rise to widespread amenity concerns. Compared with some neighbouring Lancashire authorities, Fylde contains relatively few licensed HMOs and does not experience the same scale of concentration of smaller flats, student accommodation or shared housing.

### **Neighbouring Authorities**

9.60 The distribution of HMOs varies across the wider Fylde Coast and Lancashire area. This means that the level of HMO provision, associated pressures and management approaches differ between authorities.

9.61 In Wyre, there are currently 173 HMOs within the borough, of which 71 are licenced and 102 are unlicensed or licence exempt<sup>61</sup>. Wyre Council has recently prepared evidence to support an Article 4 Direction to manage the growth and concentration of HMOs in Fleetwood and Thornton-Cleveleys where high levels of HMOs have been identified.

9.62 In Blackpool, poor-quality flats and HMOs form a significant component of the housing stock.

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<sup>61</sup> Wyre Council Article 4 Direction: Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs) 2026 [article-4-direction-evidence-document](#)

The Blackpool Local Plan Part 1 2012-2027 identifies concerns regarding an unbalanced housing market, characterised by a high proportion of small units and poor-quality accommodation<sup>62</sup>. The Plan highlights that further growth of HMOs could reinforce concentrations of single person households and exacerbate existing housing and regeneration challenges.

- 9.63 In other Lancashire authorities, such as Lancaster City Council and Preston City Council, HMOs are largely associated with student populations. In these areas, HMO policies are primarily designed to manage the concentration of student housing within residential neighbourhoods. This is not the case for Fylde, where there is no comparable large-scale student housing market. As a result, HMOs within Fylde are more likely to serve the general private rented sector, including households seeking lower-cost accommodation.
- 9.64 These differences demonstrate that the scale, role and impacts of HMOs vary significantly between neighbouring authorities. Consequently, local planning authorities must consider their own housing market characteristics, housing supply and local evidence when determining whether additional planning controls or policies relating to HMOs are required.

### **Emerging Policy Direction**

- 9.65 The purpose of the emerging Local Plan is to establish an appropriate planning framework that responds to identified housing needs whilst protecting the character, function and amenity of Fylde's communities. In considering whether specific planning policies relating to HMOs are required, it is important that the approach taken is proportionate, evidence-based and reflective of local circumstances.
- 9.66 National planning policy supports the delivery of a wide choice of homes and requires local authorities to provide an appropriate mix of housing types and tenures to meet the needs of different groups within the community. The evidence presented within this paper demonstrates that HMOs can contribute towards meeting identified housing needs by providing flexible and affordable accommodation within the private rented sector, particularly for lower-income households, single-person households and those unable to access owner occupation.
- 9.67 At present, small HMOs falling within Use Class C4 may be developed without planning permission through permitted development rights. This allows changes of use from a dwellinghouse (Use Class C3) to a small HMO (Use Class C4) without the need for planning permission.
- 9.68 The adopted Fylde Local Plan to 2032 does not contain a specific policy relating to HMOs or any Article 4 Directions restricting changes of use between Class C3 and Class C4. This reflects the fact that HMOs have historically formed only a limited component of the borough's housing stock and have not presented the same scale of issues experienced in other authorities.
- 9.69 However, as HMOs can play a role in meeting housing needs in the borough and poor-quality developments can harm the character and amenity of neighbourhoods the emerging Local Plan will establish a criteria against which proposals for the conversion of buildings into multiple occupancy units will be assessed. In addition to complying with the other policies of the Local Plan, proposals must demonstrate that:

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<sup>62</sup> Blackpool Local Plan Part 1: Core Strategy (2012-2027) 2016 [J118003 \[107575\\_2016\]\)\\_updated 17 Feb 2016\\_High Res](#)

- a) The proposal does not unacceptably harm the living conditions of nearby residents and the character and appearance of the surrounding area;
- b) The proposal would not lead to an unacceptable over-concentrated use of the property and site which will have an adverse effect on amenity;
- c) An adequate amount of garden/ outdoor amenity space is provided to meet the needs of residents;
- d) The site or surrounding area can accommodate the necessary parking and manoeuvring areas in a way which preserves residential amenity and the quality of the street scene; and
- e) Adequate refuse and recycling facilities, including appropriate storage space, is provided.

9.70 These criteria provide a framework for considering the potential impacts associated with HMO development, whilst recognising the role that HMOs can have in meeting housing needs. The policy therefore aims to balance the benefits of providing flexible and affordable accommodation with the need to protect residential amenity, local character and the surrounding environment.





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