

# **HOUSING STRATEGY FOR PENDLE**

**2018 - 2023**

# Introduction

This is Pendle Council's Housing Strategy for 2018 - 2023. It will support the delivery of some of the key priorities in Pendle's Strategic Plan and be complementary to other strategies such as our Jobs & Growth Strategy.

Its purpose is to show what we, the Council, will do about the strategic housing priorities for Pendle. It lists the key actions we'll be undertaking, with partners, in order to deliver this strategy.

## Our Vision and Objectives

We believe that the vision and objectives identified in our 2014 Housing Strategy Refresh are still appropriate and should be carried forward into this Strategy

### Vision

*To have a balanced housing market that supports economic growth and social well-being in Pendle. To maximise the potential of our housing markets by diversifying and improving the housing offer, ensuring it is attractive and affordable and meets the needs and aspirations of our communities.*

**Objective 1:** To ensure a sufficient quantity, quality, and appropriate type of housing supply, to meet the aspirations and social needs of Pendle

**Objective 2:** To develop sustainable neighbourhoods that can retain and attract successful households

**Objective 3:** To meet the housing and support needs of residents and vulnerable people

## National Context

The Government launched its **Housing White Paper - Fixing Our Broken Housing Market** in February 2017. The proposals in this White Paper set out how the Government intends to boost housing supply and, over the long term, create a more efficient housing market whose outcomes more closely match the needs and aspirations of all households and which supports wider economic prosperity. Four steps have been highlighted to address the housing shortage identified which include: Planning for the right homes in the right places, Building homes faster, Diversifying the market and Helping people now.

To deliver the priorities of the White Paper the Government announced a **housing programme** with a further £15.3bn of new investment and support. This consists of:

- Confirmation of an extra £2bn investment in affordable housing, including for social rented homes
- £1.1bn for a new Land Assembly Fund
- An extra £2.7bn for the Housing Infrastructure Fund
- A further £630m for infrastructure and remediation on small sites
- A further £1.5bn for the Home Building Fund targeted at SMEs
- The creation of £8bn worth of new guarantees to support a range of housebuilding
- Up to £1bn more HRA headroom for councils in high demand areas.

The majority of the Government's housing programme will be delivered through **Homes England** (formerly Homes & Communities Agency). It was announced in the 2017 Autumn Budget that Homes England will bring together "money, expertise, and planning and compulsory purchase powers" and have "a clear remit to facilitate delivery of sufficient new homes" and improve affordability.

In October 2017, the Government released a **Policy Statement and Consultation on funding for supported housing**. A three-pronged approach to funding supported housing in England has been developed, to be introduced from 2020 :-

1. A 'Sheltered Rent' – for those in sheltered and extra care housing
2. Local Grant Fund – for short-term and transitional supported housing (*inc housing for homeless people with support needs, people fleeing domestic abuse, people receiving support for drug and alcohol misuse, offenders and young people at risk*).
3. Welfare System– for long-term supported housing (*inc supported housing for those with learning disabilities, mental ill health and physical disabilities, as well as highly specialised supported housing*).

In November 2017 the Government launched their White Paper **Industrial Strategy: Building a Britain fit for the future**. The Strategy identifies four Grand Challenges which need to be tackled to put the UK at the forefront of the industries of the future, one of which is *Ageing Society*. It is anticipated that ageing populations will create new demands for technologies, products and services, including new housing models.

The government published the revised **National Planning Policy Framework** (NPPF) in July 2018. The emphasis of the document continues to be on increasing the delivery of new homes. The most significant implications for housing in the borough are:

- A new standardised methodology, to be introduced in November 2018, will assess local housing need. This standard approach will provide an overall housing need figure for the borough, but will not break it down into housing types, or identify the amount of affordable housing required.

- For major developments at least 10% of the homes should be available for affordable home ownership, unless this would exceed the level of affordable housing required in the area, which is set out in Local Plan Policy LIV4.
- The revised NPPF has widened the definition of affordable housing, specifically by including starter homes and discounted market sales housing within the definition. On-site affordable housing is expected, unless robustly justified.
- At least 10% of the borough's housing requirement should now be on 'small and medium sized sites' (up to one hectare) identified through the Local Plan and Brownfield Register.
- The revised NPPF fully recognises the Custom Build sector, in addition to Self-Build. The statutory obligation to maintain a register of those seeking to acquire serviced plots and to deliver enough suitable development permissions to meet identified demand, as set out in the Right to Build legislation, is highlighted.
- A new Housing Delivery Test will measure the local authority's performance in delivering new homes from November 2018. The test will reveal a figure, expressed as a percentage of the total net homes delivered against the total number of homes required over the previous three years. If the result shows that less than 95% of the annual housing requirement has been delivered an action plan must be prepared to assess the causes of under delivery. If the figure falls below 85%, the Council must include a 20% buffer in its supply of specific deliverable sites in order to achieve the required five years supply.
- Good design is considered instrumental in delivering new homes. The Council is specifically required to make sure that the quality of approved developments does not materially diminish "between permission and completion, as a result of changes being made to the permitted schemes".
- Viability assessment is to be focussed on the plan making stage, using average costs and values to make assumptions on policy impact. The contributions expected from development must not undermine the deliverability of the Local Plan, the level and types of affordable housing; or other infrastructure requirements (education, health, transport, flood/water management, green and digital infrastructure). It is for the applicant to justify the need for viability review at the application stage. Where a new viability assessment is submitted the weight to be given to this assessment is a matter for the Council to decide.

## Regional Context

There is no up to date regional housing strategy. The Pennine Lancashire Housing Strategy 2009-29 was produced at a time when the Housing Market Renewal (HMR) programme was being delivered and there was considerably more funding available to local authorities to

support house building, improvements to existing stock and neighbourhood management. There are a number of other regional plans and programmes that are relevant to housing.

The **Lancashire Enterprise Partnership (LEP) Strategic Economic Plan (2014)** sets out the LEPs growth ambitions for the next 10 years. Whilst it is predominantly an economic strategy it recognises the importance of quality housing in supporting economic growth. It highlights that the opportunity exists in East Lancashire to provide a quality of housing capable of supporting those high value jobs currently present in the local economy, as well as those which will be created in coming years. Key housing sites which are highlighted for development in Pendle include Trough Laithe, Barrowford and Knotts Lane, Colne.

The **Pennine Lancashire Accountable Health and Care Partnership** has been developing its plans for change. As a result, a **draft Pennine Plan** has been developed which outlines a number of proposals designed to improve the health and wellbeing of people who live and work in the area. The plan recognises the importance of housing in preventing ill health and seeks to reduce health risks that are associated with living in a damp, cold or unsafe home by working with those at greatest risk of poor housing and those in the greatest need.

Housing-related support services for vulnerable people are delivered through the **Lancashire Prevention & Early Help Fund (P&EHF) (formerly Supporting People Partnership)**. It is anticipated that following the conclusion of the supported housing consultation exercise in relation to short-term supported housing, a model, similar to how the Lancashire Supporting People Programme was delivered will be developed to help plan and oversee distribution of the grant monies received.

## Local Context

This latest Strategy has been developed to deliver the housing elements of the **Pendle Council Strategic Plan 2018 – 2020**. A strong economy is one of the four Strategic Objectives and delivery will be through the **Pendle Jobs and Growth Strategy 2013-23**. It is recognised that to increase the attractiveness of Pendle as a location for business there is a need to continue to work towards a balanced housing stock and improve the image of Pendle so it is recognised as a place of choice for people to live and work. A key outcome is for a more diverse mix of high quality and sustainable housing that meets the needs of a growing population. The Housing Strategy is complementary to the Jobs and Growth Strategy.

The Housing Strategy was last refreshed in 2014 and its objectives remain relevant to this new Strategy. The 2014 Refresh identified a number of actions, most of which were taken forward. The key action that has not been delivered is the development of an Extra Care Facility and there is still a need and an aspiration to develop such a facility.

**Pendle's Local Plan** sets out policies for the development and protection of land in the borough up to 2030. Pendle Local Plan Part 1: Core Strategy was adopted in 2015. Pendle Local Plan Part 2: Site Allocations & Development Policies (due for adoption in 2019) will identify sites for development and allocate them for different uses.

A number of studies have been prepared to provide specific evidence for the housing policies in the Pendle Local Plan. The **Burnley & Pendle Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA)** has been used to establish the housing requirement for the Pendle borough. The policy requires the provision of 298 dwellings per annum over the lifetime of the plan up to 2030 (5,662 dwellings in total). A total of 168 dwellings (net) were completed during the period 2016-17. There has been a slight increase in the number of completions since the previous year and the trend shows that completions are continuing to increase year on year. This indicates that some confidence is returning to the Pendle housing market. However, the completion rate is still considerably lower than the annual requirement.

There are 40% of households requiring affordable housing. The provision of such high levels of affordable housing is unrealistic given the current market conditions. Targets have been set which vary from 0% in the M65 Corridor to 20% in Rural Pendle

The attractiveness of our towns is key to attracting and retaining residents in Pendle and different approaches are being adopted in different towns. For example, the **10 Year Vision for Brierfield and Reedley – 2016-26** recognises the opportunity that the multi-million pound transformation of Brierfield Mill (the Northlight project) with a mix of uses including residential, can bring to the town. Further, a Colne Business Improvement District (BID) has been approved following a ballot and has now commenced.

The last **stock condition survey** was carried out in 2009 and highlighted considerable issues. This included 36.3% of the housing stock classed as 'sub-decent' and 22.1% having at least one Category 1 hazards as defined by the Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS). The prevalent Category 1 hazard is excess cold and this is due to their stone built construction, which due to the nature of their irregular cavities, means they cannot be adequately cavity wall insulated. Unfortunately the Housing Market Renewal Program ended shortly after the survey was completed and thus funding to address this issue has been extremely limited.

We are also tackling problems in our **existing housing stock** in a number of ways. We have a dedicated Empty Homes Officer who is delivering our **Empty Homes Strategy**. Targeted action by the Council over the last five years has helped to reduce the number of long-term empty properties from over 2,000 to 1,100. The long-term vacancy rate now stands at 2.3% and is below the average for England of 2.54 although there are signs that it may be starting to rise again, so we need to keep this under review.

Pendle provide **Disabled Facilities Grants** to adapt properties and allow people to remain in their own homes where possible. We also improve home **energy efficiency** to tackle fuel poverty, reduce CO<sub>2</sub> emissions and remove factors such as cold, damp and condensation which have a detrimental effect on health.

We deal with complaints in relation to poor quality **private rented** property through enforcement work and also ensure that the increasing numbers of **Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs)** are licensed where required.

Every local authority must produce a homelessness strategy and Council have adopted the **Pendle Homelessness Strategy 2017 - 2022**. This Strategy takes into account the requirements of the *Homelessness Reduction Act 2017* but as the act only comes into force in April 2018 the implications of the Act are yet to be felt. In addition the full roll out of Universal Credit towards the end of 2018 could impact on homelessness.

The **Pendle Domestic Abuse Action Plan 2016 – 19** provides a framework that enables partners to work effectively together to ensure that those affected by domestic violence and abuse are supported and protected, and that perpetrators are held to account. **Pendle Womens' Refuge** supports victims of domestic abuse.

## Funding / Delivery Challenges

Despite the availability of significant amounts of government funding available through **Homes England** to increase housebuilding this funding has been targeted increasingly towards areas of 'high demand'. It remains a challenge to secure external funding to bring forward our more marginal sites.

There has been some success by Registered Providers in securing funding from the **Affordable Homes Programmes**. Over the last three years 152 homes have been delivered for affordable rent or shared ownership housing, 103 of these have been new build properties and 49 refurbished properties. No affordable housing has been delivered under **s106 agreements** due to lack of viability so it makes it essential to continue to work with Registered Providers to enable developments where Homes England funding has been secured

The number of new housing being developed by **private developers** is increasing but not in proportion with the increasing number of planning permissions that have been granted. We need to continue to work with landowners and developers to identify and tackle the barriers they are experiencing.

The Council have brought forward a number of their own sites for housing development to help us meet our housing targets, many of which have been developed through our Joint Venture **PEARL2**. The new Joint Venture which is being established between Pendle Council, Barnfield and Together Housing, called **PEARL Together**, will help us to deliver further open market and affordable housing, both on Pendle owned sites and private sites.

We are also trying to support smaller developers through the proposed **Developer Register**, through which we will market our smaller sites.

The Council was selected as one of 11 'vanguard' authorities in England to trial the **Right to Build**, to support the self/custom build sector.

The Council set up its self/custom build register in December 2014 and has brought forward a site in its ownership that can accommodate up to 5 self/custom build homes. The plots were marketed to people on the register in 2017 and offers have been accepted on all of them. It is hoped work will start on site in 2018.

Our increasingly **ageing society** means that we need to look at opportunities for new housing models such as **Extra Care**. Due to the lack of suitable property there will be a need to continue to adapt and improve our existing housing stock, both for older people but also for younger people with disabilities and other vulnerable people.

In 2017/18 we had a budget of £835k from the Better Care Fund for **Disabled Facilities Grants** but this is insufficient to meet demand. For **energy efficiency** we had a budget in 2017/18 of £50k provided by Lancashire County Council but no funding has currently been identified for 2018/19. We need to identify opportunities to increase funding for both Disabled Facilities Grants and energy efficiency measures. We also wish to secure funding to improve stock condition of property across the borough and will where possible, lobby Government for funding to be made available to address this issue.

It is anticipated that future funding for short-term **supported housing** will be allocated to Upper Tier authorities. As such, the Council expect to work in partnership with LCC and the eleven lower tier authorities of Lancashire to successfully manage the funding, which will include ensuring that the support needs of residents and vulnerable people within Pendle are met.

To ensure the long term sustainability of our **Women's Refuge** we are looking at options for its future management.

## Key Actions

This Strategy brings together all the current strategies that Pendle Council are working to and is intended to provide increased focus on realising the vision and strategic objectives set for 2018 – 2023.

The delivery plan below sets out the key actions for the Council to deliver with its partners. Detailed actions to deliver these priorities will be incorporated into relevant Service Plans. Cumulatively these actions will work towards delivering the overall objectives.



## Housing Strategy 2018 - 2023: Key Actions

**STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 1:** To ensure a sufficient quantity, quality, and appropriate type of housing supply, to meet the economic growth aspirations and social needs of Pendle.

### Key Actions

- a) **Maximise the use of Housing Zone Status and other Homes England programmes** - to bid for funding to bring forward marginal housing sites
- b) **Encourage greater implementation of extant planning permissions** - by undertaking pro-active follow up work with landowners and developers to identify barriers.
- c) **Increase development opportunities** - by bringing Council sites forward for development with a flexible approach towards capital receipts to encourage greater developer interest
- d) **Encourage greater use of brownfield sites** – through the use of the Brownfield Sites Fund
- e) **Support additional housing delivery** – through the establishment of a new Joint Venture between Pendle Council, Barnfield and Together Housing to deliver 500 houses over 5 years.
- f) **Encourage additional affordable housing development** – by proactively working with Registered Providers seeking to develop in Pendle
- g) **Help developers to access finance** – by supporting developers in applications made to Homes England Homebuilding Fund and other funding opportunities which may become available.
- h) **Increase ability of small developers to access suitable sites** – by establishing a Developer Register to market small Council owned sites.

**STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 2:** To develop sustainable neighbourhoods that can retain and attract successful households, reducing the disparities between neighbourhoods and providing linkages to economic growth and employment opportunities;

### Key Actions

- a) **Tackle empty homes in the borough, in particular long-term empties** – through the delivery of the Empty Homes Strategy
- b) **Support Community Led Housing** – by working with the Bradley Community Land Trust to bring forward development
- c) **Encourage sustainable neighbourhoods** – by working with other Service Areas to tackle anti-social behaviour and problem sites and buildings
- d) **Improve the private rented sector** – through enforcement of housing conditions, licensing of HMOs and where possible, lobby Government for funding to address this issue
- e) **Support Self/Custom Builders** – through keeping an up to date register and identifying suitable plots

**STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 3:** To meet the housing, health and support needs of residents and vulnerable people; promoting better services, with greater choice and accessibility that are fully integrated into local communities.

**Key Actions**

- a) ***Reduce homelessness in Pendle*** – by realising the aims of the 2017 - 2022 Pendle Homelessness Strategy and delivering the Homelessness Trailblazer Programme
- b) ***Ensure support needs of residents and vulnerable people are met*** – through the LCC Prevention & Early Help Fund and funding for Supported Housing
- c) ***Ensure successful resettlement of Syrian refugees*** – by delivering the Syrian Resettlement Program effectively in Pendle.
- d) ***Enable people to remain in their own homes*** - by delivering housing adaptations through DFGs and links with the CCG to support hospital discharge
- e) ***Improve the energy efficiency in existing housing stock*** – by identifying funding sources
- f) ***Support the delivery of an Extra Care facility*** – by working with partners to progress a viable scheme
- g) ***Ensure the sustainability of the Women's Refuge*** – by looking at alternative options for future management