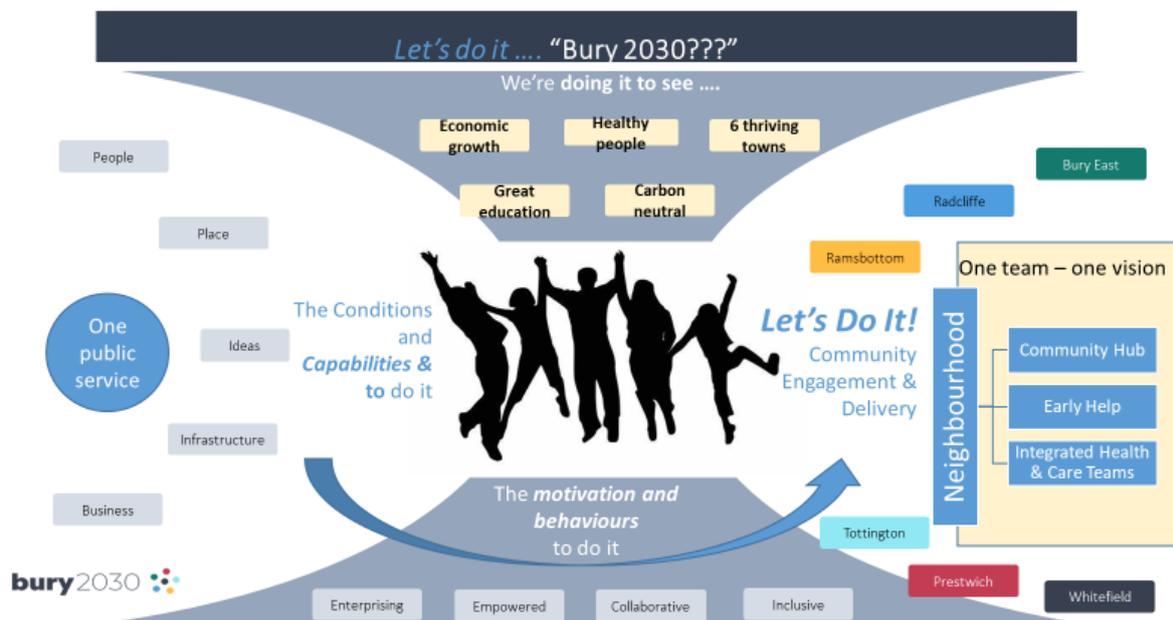


Section 1: Housing for Bury 2030: Let's do it!

The Council, partners and residents are working together to develop a 10-year vision and strategy for Bury. Through a true collaborative transformation process, the emerging *Bury 2030 Vision; Let's do it!* is bringing together and integrating our public services with new neighbourhood-based hubs and team working. Our public and VCS services, businesses and local partners are starting to coalesce energetically around a common vision and set of objectives that will continue to guide reform and service transformation across Bury. The *Bury 2030 Vision: Let's do it!* will be launched at our Bury Best culture festival in the winter of 2020.

This housing strategy and action plan sets out how we intend to work and what we intend to do to create the right conditions so that Bury's housing – across all tenures – supports our emerging Bury 2030 Vision.



1.1 Housing for *Bury 2030 Let's do it!* and our Industrial Strategy

Housing, in its widest sense, affects many parts of our lives. The COVID-19 lockdown period brought home to us all just how important it is to have a healthy, suitable and secure home.

It has made us more conscious of our local neighbourhoods and of the spaces between our homes, places where we can meet and enjoy each other's company. There is a new impetus on helping people of all ages to live well within our communities; neighbours stepped up to offer support to people who were shielding; homeless people were given ensuite hotel accommodation with on-site support; as the appetite for residential care decreased rapidly the realisation that we must create the conditions for older people to live well within their communities for as long as possible as grown. And we are now acutely aware of the huge role housing construction could play in shoring up a positive future for our local and national economy, not least as we gear up to address the climate change challenge.

Here's how housing will support the five themes of our industrial strategy.

1.1.1 Healthy People

People are healthy when we are living well in our home and neighbourhood. The ability to secure a warm, safe home that is the right size and that meets our particular needs at each stage of life in a neighbourhood we feel we 'fit' and with the support we need to live independently, is core to our happiness. It is the basis for good mental and physical health and a springboard to a good life at any age.

There is currently an imbalance between the housing available in Bury and what people need and aspire to, so not everyone is able to find a home that is affordable for them and that meets their needs. This is also limiting Bury's potential as a place of choice for people considering moving to the area. This strategy aims to plot a course towards filling that gap both through more proactive engagement with developers and through building new homes directly to enable more of the right sort of homes to be built.

It also sets out the steps we'll take towards more healthy housing, communities and places and to take the pressure off our health systems including through our One Commissioning Organisation and by proactively addressing people's housing problems through our neighbourhood-based teams and homeless programmes.

1.1.2 Thriving Green Places

Thriving green places are alive, calming and distinctive. People love to live and work in them and visit them because they offer safe, pleasant and interesting spaces and reasons to interact with others – through digital means as well as face-to-face. They offer the potential for money to be spent and earned through the sale of attractive goods and experiences as well as free, inexpensive and pleasant community spaces to just 'be'. They provide safe ways to cycle and walk through green spaces; air quality is high. Homes are powered by renewable energy sources and are well insulated.

Town centre regeneration is taking place all six town centres: Bury, Prestwich, Radcliffe, Ramsbottom, Tottington and Whitefield. By aligning new housing development, improvements to existing homes, consideration of people's local workspace requirements and need for parks, trees and green spaces with these broader plans to enhance the already

strong identities of each of our towns, we aim to create urban villages where people can live, work, relax and have fun.

1.1.3 Co-designed Ideas

Bury needs more affordable housing. However, people want more than ‘affordable housing’; they want a home to enjoy that meets their needs and aspirations in a place they like at a price that enables them to enjoy their lives.

We want to hear more from our residents at different stages of their lives about what makes a ‘good home’ and a ‘good neighbourhood’ and to provide ways for them to influence what happens in their neighbourhood including through our approach to planning and delivery on the ground. We want to influence more diverse and imaginative types of housing to support people to live good lives – whether they are live-work schemes, dementia-friendly homes, self-build or other types of housing – in line with their aspirations and affordability levels. We are open to new ideas and we want to both inspire others and be inspired by seeing how other places are innovating, for example, in financing new homes, low carbon technology, modern methods of construction.

1.1.4 Future-proofed Infrastructure

We see our housing – of all types – as part of the infrastructure of the borough, alongside our transport, roads and digital communications. The housing that is already there, and that will be built over the period to 2030, will outlive most of us so we have a duty to look after it for future generations.

We want to drive up the number and quality of homes in the borough and to make sure that new homes are right for the location, offering people choice and helping our towns and neighbourhoods to thrive. We will seek to influence the type, quality, density, energy efficiency and carbon emissions of new homes that are built. We will also drive up standards in private rented housing and empty homes that we bring back into use. We will enable people at all stages of life to access a home that suits them and their families at a price they can afford – giving special attention to meeting the aspirations of our older people and our younger households who might otherwise move away. Our long-term aim is for all the borough’s homes to become net carbon neutral, starting with new homes.

1.1.5 Inclusive Business Growth

Bury has ambitions to move beyond its post-industrial phase to forge a new economic future characterised by inclusive growth and respected and engaged communities.

Housing can help to boost Bury’s local economy in several ways. Increasing the supply of homes that are both affordable and attractive for young professionals starting out help to retain more of our young people and attract others to live in Bury to power our local economy. A better range of housing options for households across the life-course and quality places will help to attract people who can fill skills gaps to live and spend their money in Bury and will encourage new businesses to locate themselves in the borough.

Supporting development partners and procuring from building companies who offer local apprentice, training and employment opportunities will help to increase the number of construction jobs available to Bury residents. Through new self-build and renovation options, our younger residents will have opportunities to build their construction skills-set. Supporting local businesses to rise to the challenge of climate change, we can help to upskill a workforce for component manufacture and housing retrofit; and the more people save on fuel bills, the more they have to spend in the local economy.

1.2 Housing that enhances our towns

All six of our town centres are different. Residents are actively engaged in creating their town's future, based on its strong identity, ambition and the contribution it aspires to make to people's lives and prosperity of the north west. Each town is on a different trajectory and the process and timescales for developing the town centres will vary considerably.

Housing presents an opportunity to breathe new life into our town centres and help to achieve each of our town centre ambitions. The changes in our retail habits that have been accelerated by the COVID-19 pandemic will force a repurposing of many of our town centres. Changing the use of some retail sites to create an aspirational housing offer that includes affordable homes with good access to leisure facilities, parks, culture, art and a wide range of community facilities, could be one route to realising our ambition for '15-minute neighbourhoods'.

Building new homes as part of a regeneration plan, such as through a Bury Town Centre Masterplan, could enhance the town centre as a place to live, shop and work. A holistic plan for the place and properly supported delivery would help to raise developer confidence and attract investment. Apartment-style accommodation close to tram stops and other transport hubs can be popular with younger commuters. Offering some Build to Rent apartments could be a way of providing a blend of rent levels.

Other places, such as Radcliffe, could be enhanced through a broader mix of good quality housing designs that appeal both to young families and elderly people alongside good quality workspaces. The Radcliffe Strategic Regeneration Framework sets out some detailed proposals around key housing sites and their importance in meeting the housing needs of local residents as well as delivering increased footfall to aid town centre vitality. The former East Lancashire Paper Mill, for example, has the potential to deliver 400 homes with a range of house types, sizes and tenures.

In Ramsbottom and Tottington, some sites may be suitable for additional 2-bed bungalows or flats that could be attractive to older people looking to downsize. While in Prestwich, the desire for larger homes to buy in areas with significant Jewish populations could be enabled in partnership with a trusted housing association while also accommodating some higher density apartment-style homes alongside products suitable for young people.

Whitefield may have potential for a village hub around an extra care scheme and this could inspire similar intergenerational 'village hubs' through remodelled sheltered schemes.

In every place there is scope to remodel the public spaces between the homes to provide more congenial spaces for people to meet and enjoy together.

1.3 Working with residents to shape housing in each township

Much of this strategy applies equally across the whole borough. However, it will be possible to vary how we apply some elements in different locations depending on the emerging vision for each town.

We will hold a series of conversations with residents through our Towns Initiative, our new community hubs and other forums to shape our approach to housing for each township. We will explore existing homes, new homes and how housing can support successful neighbourhoods and will allow for local variations in timescale in how some elements of this housing strategy are implemented. The vehicle for holding these conversations will vary – in some towns it may take place as part of a masterplanning process or as part of the development of the strategic regeneration framework. In other places, a standalone housing blueprint might provide a useful mechanism for discussion and negotiation. There will be an expectation that each township will support borough-wide ambitions, such as for all homes to be low carbon by 2038, and that they will contribute to meeting the overall housing needs of the borough. A central decision-making committee will ensure that each township does its part to deliver the vision of the whole of Bury within Greater Manchester.

The current profile of homes, including both rent levels and purchase prices, vary significantly between the six townships. It makes sense to build homes that will help to 'balance up' the range of homes available across the borough at the same time building to achieve the vision for each town. Our Housing Needs Assessment 2020 provides information on the nature and affordability of existing housing in each township as well as the aspirations and expectations of residents living there. We will draw on the information provided within the Housing Needs Assessment to develop individual 'housing propositions' that will inform our discussions and help us to determine what sort of new homes we want built in each town (see Section 2.3.1 for more information). They will be informed by the Greater Manchester Spatial Framework and local planning documents and will also inform the development of future planning documents. We will also draw on the range of ideas presented within this strategy to ensure our action on existing homes supports the broader vision for each town.

Developing our township coproduction mechanisms will enable us to get ahead of the Planning White Paper that is expected to establish a new system of 'zonal planning' in which resident engagement is weighted towards the plan development stage. We will seek resources from Homes England, MHCLG, BEIS and other sources to support and deliver our arrangements for township housing planning.

Outcomes sought from this housing strategy

- More homes in the borough
- Increased affordable housing supply – through new build, leasing and acquisition
- A more dynamic housing market – a broader range of housing tenures and more tailored support for people to access a suitable home they want in any tenure
- Good quality, healthy homes and places
- Support that enables people to live well in the community
- Intelligent, evidence-driven, targeted investment to improve health through housing
- Towards a township housing strategy shaped to support the future of each town centre and neighbourhoods
- To eliminate rough sleeping by 2025 – through an evidenced approach to preventing homelessness, increasing supply of affordable new homes, supporting accessibility and ‘enabling support’ towards independence
- Rapid movement towards low carbon housing