Housing Strategy Evidence Base 2026-2036

Bury Metropolitan Borough Council

May 2026

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1. Introduction

1.1 This report has been developed in response to the housing market characteristics and challenges identified in Bury.

1.2 A number of source documents and interviews have been used to set out the challenges, potential ideas, and solutions that the council may choose to incorporate into their housing strategy. These include:

- The National, Regional and local strategic agenda
- The most current evidence base developed through a Housing Needs and Demand Assessment.
- Interviews with officers and members about housing priorities in Bury
- Interviews with external partner organisations

1.3 The report is structured around a number of key findings within the evidence base and uses the data sources within it.

2. National Strategic Agenda

2.1 Housing and planning policy have become a central focus of government agendas due to the persistent housing affordability crisis, exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic, rising construction costs, and ongoing supply shortages.

2.2 The UK's economic climate has created additional hurdles for housing development. Inflation and global supply-chain disruptions have driven up the cost of building materials and labour, slowing the rate of new housing construction as developers face higher costs and lower profit margins. Since 2022, instability in the mortgage market—caused by rising interest rates—has made it harder for first-time buyers to access home ownership. Developers have become increasingly cautious about launching new projects, fearing a slowdown in demand if potential buyers are priced out of the market.

2.3 The pandemic initially prompted a series of short-term housing interventions designed to prevent homelessness and stabilise the market. In the post-pandemic period, however, government attention has shifted to long-term structural reform, aiming to tackle the root causes of the housing crisis, strengthen planning and land assembly, improve building safety, and enhance consumer and tenant protection.

Levelling Up and Regeneration Act 2023 and the National Planning Policy Framework

2.4 The **Levelling Up and Regeneration Act 2023**[1]—a key component of the wider Levelling Up agenda—represents one of the most significant pieces of planning legislation in recent years. Receiving Royal Assent in October 2023, the Act seeks to reduce regional inequalities, drive regeneration, and deliver substantial reforms to the housing and planning systems.

2.5 Key provisions of the Act include:

- Reform of the planning system to streamline development processes, encourage up-to-date Local Plans, and promote the creation of "beautiful and sustainable" places.
- Simplified procedures for local authorities to use compulsory purchase orders (CPOs) to acquire land for development, enabling easier reclamation of underused or derelict land for housing.
- Measures to support high-street regeneration, including converting vacant retail and commercial spaces into housing—particularly in town and city centres—to boost housing supply and revitalise local economies.
- Requirements for local authorities to update and adopt Local Plans, with a stronger emphasis on community involvement and consistency with national growth and sustainability priorities.

[1] Levelling-up and Regeneration Act 2023

2.6 In December 2022, the government launched a consultation on a revised **National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)**[2] as part of its Levelling Up reforms. A new, revised version was published in December 2024, following the change of government and re published in February 2025. Under the new administration, significant emphasis has been placed on increasing housing supply, particularly affordable housing, while promoting developments that align with environmental and design standards. Labour's revisions have also reintroduced housing delivery accountability measures—most notably the Housing Delivery Test—and strengthened requirements for maintaining a five-year housing land supply to ensure Local Plans remain current and effective.

2.7 The introduction of "grey belt" land, which allows for appropriate development on areas that make only a limited contribution to Green Belt purposes, reflects Labour's effort to balance housing growth with environmental protection. The scrapping of the previously proposed Infrastructure Levy, widely criticised for complexity and uncertainty, signals a shift back to using Section 106 agreements as the primary mechanism for securing affordable housing contributions.

Planning and Infrastructure Act 2025

2.8 Passed in March 2025, the **Planning and Infrastructure Act 2025**[3] introduces major reforms intended to accelerate decision-making, reduce bureaucracy, and unlock sites for housing growth. Key measures include:

- Halving the time required for major housing schemes to obtain planning approval (reducing average determination periods from four years to under two).
- Shifting greater decision-making powers from local councillors to professional planning officers, to reduce political delays and increase consistency.
- Reforming compulsory purchase rules to allow land assembly at lower cost and with clearer compensation arrangements, helping to bring forward stalled sites.
- Introducing a new "first ready, first connected" approach to grid connections, ensuring that developments which are construction-ready can access energy supplies more quickly.
- Expanding national grid capacity to support housing delivery in areas previously constrained by power-supply limitations.

2.9 The Act underpins the government's target to deliver 1.5 million new homes during the current parliamentary term, with a particular focus on brownfield land and urban regeneration.

Affordable Housing Investment

2.10 On 11 June 2025, the government announced a new £39 billion Affordable Homes Programme, representing a major step-change in national investment to support

[2] National Planning Policy Framework - GOV.UK
[3] Planning and Infrastructure Bill - Parliamentary Bills - UK Parliament

affordable housing delivery in England. The programme is intended to accelerate delivery of new affordable homes across a range of tenures, with a strong emphasis on increasing the supply of homes for social rent and supporting delivery in areas experiencing acute affordability pressures.

2.11 The £39bn programme significantly exceeds previous funding commitments and signals an enhanced role for affordable housing investment in tackling housing need, reducing homelessness pressures, and improving access to secure, genuinely affordable homes. The programme will support delivery through partnerships with registered providers and local authorities, alongside wider interventions to strengthen housing supply and improve affordability outcomes. The funding will run from 2026 to 2036, with homes required to start on site by 31 March 2036 and be completed by 31 March 2039.

2.12 Affordable housing delivery is being supported by substantial new funding commitments and related policy changes aimed to support development. Homes England has recently moved towards a more regional operating model which seeks to ensure solutions are better tailored to reflect local priorities.[4]

2.13 Additional national funding streams and related policy measures include:

The National Housing Bank was officially launched in April 2026 as a subsidiary of Homes England, with an initial allocation of £16 billion of new financial capacity, comprising £10.5 billion of investment capital and £5.5 billion of funding guarantees. The Bank seeks to de-risk private investment in housing to make large developments, stalled sites and social housing more viable to deliver.

- The Government has committed £2.5 billion of low-interest loans for RPs, via the National Housing Bank. These aim to complement other funding sources, increasing RPs' borrowing capacity and improving scheme viability. There has been some suggestion that such loans could be used to support RP acquisition of S106 homes which are not eligible for grant funding.
- A fourth round of the Local Authority Housing Fund will provide £950 million of match-funding to 2029-30 to support local authorities in obtaining better quality TA. This can be achieved through councils acquiring homes on the open market, through direct delivery or partnering with RPs.
- The Council Housebuilding Skills and Capacity Programme launched in July 2025, backed by £12 million of funding. This seeks to support councils to develop in-house capacity to directly deliver more homes, providing tailored advice, training and peer learning, as well as financial assistance.
- RPs and stock-holding councils will benefit from a new ten-year rent settlement, with rents rising by CPI + 1% annually from April 2026, alongside the reintroduction of rent convergence from April 2027.[5] This provides increased

[4] Homes England appoints new executive regional leaders to strengthen collaboration and boost tailored housing and regeneration delivery across the country (December 2025)

[5] Rent convergence will allow social housing providers to move properties toward target rent levels, allowing slightly higher annual increases for under-target rents. This can improve rental income and long-term financial planning.

financial certainty to support investment, business planning and the delivery of new homes.

- Newly built affordable homes will be exempt from the Right to Buy for 35 years alongside a significant reduction in eligible discounts. From 2026–27 councils will also be allowed to combine receipts with other grant funding.
- The government has extended access to preferential borrowing rates via the Public Works Loan Board for council housebuilding until March 2027.
- Councils will be able to own up to 1,000 homes before being required to open a Housing Revenue Account, a significant increase from the previous threshold of 200 homes, removing administrative barriers for councils seeking to directly deliver new homes.

Homelessness

2.14 In December 2025 the UK Government published its first **cross-government National Plan to End Homelessness**,[6] setting out a structural approach to preventing homelessness and reducing rough sleeping, backed by **£3.5 billion of investment**. The strategy introduces measurable targets to halve long-term rough sleeping by the end of the Parliament, end the unlawful use of B&Bs for families outside emergencies, and embed statutory duties on public services to **collaborate on prevention**. It signals a policy shift toward early intervention, improved temporary accommodation quality, and accountability across government departments, and incorporates voices of people with lived experience in its design.

Housing Regulation, Tenants' Rights and Consumer Standards

2.15 The legislative landscape for housing regulation and tenant rights has undergone far-reaching reform.

2.16 The **Social Housing (Regulation) Act 2023**[7] strengthens the powers of the Regulator of Social Housing, enabling it to intervene earlier and more effectively when landlords fail to meet safety or service standards. The Act also enhances tenant empowerment, building on commitments in the **Charter for Social Housing Residents (2020)**[8], which sets seven core standards that social tenants should expect from their landlords.

2.17 The **Leasehold and Freehold Reform Act 2024**[9], which received Royal Assent on 24 May 2024, abolishes escalating ground rents for most new residential leases, enhances transparency around service charges and enfranchisement, and provides greater rights for leaseholders to extend leases or purchase freeholds.

[6] A National Plan to End Homelessness - GOV.UK

[7] Social Housing (Regulation) Act 2023
[8] The charter for social housing residents: social housing white paper - GOV.UK
[9] Leasehold and Freehold Reform Act 2024

2.18 In the private rented sector, the Renters' Rights Act 2025, which received Royal Assent on 27 October 2025, represents the most significant overhaul of private renting in a generation. The core tenancy reforms came into force from 1 May 2026 and include:

- The abolition of Section 21 "no-fault" evictions, giving tenants greater security of tenure.
- The replacement of assured shorthold tenancies and fixed-term contracts with assured periodic tenancies, providing tenants with greater flexibility and security.
- Stronger controls over rent increases, including use of the Section 13 process, two months' notice of proposed increases, and tenants' continued right to challenge excessive increases through the First-tier Tribunal.
- A ban on rental bidding wars, requiring landlords and agents to advertise properties at a clear rent and preventing them from inviting, encouraging or accepting offers above the advertised price.
- New anti-discrimination provisions preventing landlords and letting agents from refusing to let, restricting access to viewings, or otherwise disadvantaging prospective tenants because they have children or receive benefits. These protections also prevent landlords from relying on discriminatory terms in tenancy agreements, superior leases, mortgages or insurance contracts.
- The phased introduction of a national private rented sector database/property portal, requiring landlords to register and provide key information about themselves and their properties, including safety and compliance information.
- The introduction of a mandatory Private Rented Sector Landlord Ombudsman, providing tenants with a route to redress where things go wrong. The Government expects landlord membership of the Ombudsman scheme to be required from 2028, subject to readiness.
- Strengthened local authority enforcement powers, including civil penalties, expanded rent repayment orders and powers to investigate breaches of key housing law requirements. Local authorities will be able to impose financial penalties for breaches of the new rules, including up to £7,000 for breaches of the bidding-war restrictions.

2.19 Together, these reforms are intended to stabilise the private rented sector, improve quality and accountability, and rebalance the relationship between landlords and tenants. By strengthening security of tenure, improving transparency, tackling discriminatory letting practices and increasing penalties for non-compliance, the Act provides a much stronger framework for protecting tenants while setting clearer expectations for landlords and agents.

2.20 An updated, reviewed HHSRS assessment method is anticipated in late 2026

Building Safety, Standards and Environmental Sustainability

2.21 The **Building Safety Act 2022**[10] was introduced following the Grenfell Tower tragedy to reform building safety, particularly for high-rise and higher-risk residential buildings. Its provisions include establishing the Building Safety Regulator, new safety obligations for developers and landlords, legal duties to rectify unsafe cladding and fire risks, and protections for leaseholders against bearing remediation costs.

2.22 The **Future Homes Standard**[11], has recently been published, marking a significant milestone in national housing policy and setting out how new homes in England will be built in the future. The standard is implemented through updates to Building Regulations and establishes a clear direction towards low-carbon, energy-efficient housing.

2.23 The Future Homes Standard introduces a number of major changes to the design and construction of new homes:

- On-site renewable energy generation-New homes will be required to incorporate on-site renewable electricity generation, which in practice is expected to mean the installation of solar photovoltaic (PV) panels on most dwellings.
- Low-carbon heating systems-The standard requires the use of low-carbon heating technologies, such as heat pumps or heat networks. As a result, traditional gas boilers will no longer be compliant for new homes.
- Improved energy efficiency and carbon reduction-Homes built to the standard are expected to achieve around a 75% reduction in carbon emissions compared to previous standards, with the aim of being “zero-carbon ready” and not requiring retrofit as the electricity grid decarbonises.

2.24 The standard will come into force from March 2027, with transitional arrangements allowing some developments already in the pipeline to continue under existing regulations until around 2028

2.25 The Environment Act 2021 continues to shape the planning framework by embedding the principle of biodiversity net gain—requiring developers to ensure that new schemes leave the natural environment in a measurably better state than before—and by tightening environmental standards in construction and waste management. The government has also proposed exemptions for smaller sites from biodiversity net gain requirements, with the intention of reducing regulatory burdens and supporting delivery on small-scale developments.

Supported Housing and Care Provision

2.26 The Supported Housing (Regulatory Oversight) Act 2023, which came into force on 29 August 2023, was introduced in response to concerns regarding poor-quality

[10] Building Safety Act 2022

[11] The Future Homes and Buildings Standards: Building Circular 01/2026 - GOV.UK

exempt accommodation and inconsistent regulatory oversight. The Act establishes a strengthened regulatory framework for supported housing providers, including minimum standards for accommodation quality and the delivery of care and support. The Government is currently consulting on the detailed implementation arrangements, with phased rollout anticipated during 2025–2026.

2.27 In this context, there is a clear need for local authorities to develop a robust evidence base to inform future provision. This includes undertaking a Specialist Housing Needs and Demand Assessment to understand the scale, nature and location of need across different client groups, alongside the preparation of a Supported Housing Strategy to guide commissioning, investment and partnership working. Together, these will help ensure local supported housing provision is compliant with the new regulatory framework, delivers good-quality outcomes for residents, and addresses identified gaps in supply.

2.28 Additionally, the **Domestic Abuse Act 2021**[12] places new statutory duties on local authorities to provide safe, supported accommodation for victims and survivors of domestic abuse and their families, ensuring access to secure housing and appropriate support services.

Awaab's Law and Health-Based Housing Standards

2.29 In February 2025, the government confirmed timelines for implementing **Awaab's Law**[13], named in memory of Awaab Ishak. From 27 October 2025, social landlords are legally required to investigate and remedy damp and mould that present a significant risk to health within fixed timeframes, and to address all emergency repairs within 24 hours.

2.30 In 2026, the requirements will expand to a wider range of hazards, expected to include excess cold, excess heat, structural safety, fire, electrical hazards, and hygiene risks.

2.31 By 2027, Awaab's Law is expected to be extended across social housing to cover all remaining significant hazards under the Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS), with the exception of overcrowding. This will place stronger legal duties on social landlords to investigate and address serious hazards within prescribed timescales, representing a major step forward in housing standards and landlord accountability. Similar protections are expected to be extended to the private rented sector following further consultation on the implementation of the Renters' Rights Act. In addition, the reformed Decent Homes Standard will be extended to the private rented sector from 2035, further strengthening the regulatory framework for improving housing conditions across rented homes.

[12] Domestic Abuse Act 2021

[13] Millions of tenants safe from black mould through Awaab's Law - GOV.UK

3. Regional Strategic Agenda

3.1 The overarching strategic framework for Greater Manchester is set out in the Greater Manchester Strategy 2025–2035[14], which functions as the Combined Authority's equivalent to a corporate plan. This strategy establishes a long-term, place-based vision for the city region and provides the foundation for all thematic strategies and delivery plans.

3.2 The strategy sets out a vision of "a thriving city region where everyone can live a good life" and emphasises that economic and social progress must go hand in hand. It positions Greater Manchester as a whole-system partnership, bringing together public, private, voluntary and community sectors to deliver shared outcomes.

3.3 At its core, the strategy is structured around two interdependent priorities:

- Growing the economy (Growth Plan)
- Ensuring people can live well (People Plan)

3.4 This establishes a clear policy direction in which economic growth, public service reform and inequality reduction are integrated rather than treated separately.

Delivery and Implementation Framework

3.5 To operationalise the strategy, GMCA has developed a Greater Manchester Strategy Delivery Plan[15], which translates long-term ambitions into specific actions, milestones and measurable outcomes.

3.6 The Delivery Plan is designed as a live document, updated quarterly and supported by an annual performance report. It sets out delivery across a series of workstreams and defines long-term "end states" alongside shorter-term actions.

3.7 From the Greater Manchester Strategy Delivery Plan Overview you provided, the delivery model is structured around seven core workstreams. These are clearly set out (and consistently referenced across GMCA strategy materials) as:

3.8 The 7 GMCA Delivery Plan workstreams

- Healthy homes for all
- Safe and strong communities
- A transport system for a global city region
- A clear line of sight to high-quality jobs
- Everyday support in every neighbourhood
- A great place to do business
- Digitally connected places and people

[14] Greater Manchester Strategy - Greater Manchester Combined Authority

[15] 5A GMS Delivery Plan Summary Updated for CA 17.11.25.pdf

3.9 The delivery plan says that by 2027 Greater Manchester aims to be building more social housing than it is losing through Right to Buy, and by 2030 it aims to approve 75,000 new homes across the ten local authority areas. That means the current policy direction is not simply "more homes"; it is about social rented supply, affordability, healthier homes, delivery through the planning system, and aligning housing to wider growth and public service outcomes.

Places for Everyone

3.10 The key statutory planning document supporting housing delivery is Places for Everyone (PfE)[16], which provides the spatial framework for growth across Greater Manchester.

3.11 This plan forms part of the statutory development plan for nine Greater Manchester authorities and sets out how the city region will grow to 2039, including:

- The scale and distribution of new housing and employment land
- Site allocations and infrastructure requirements
- Environmental protections and Green Belt changes

3.12 PfE is critical in translating GMCA's strategic ambitions into land use and development decisions, making it the key bridge between high-level strategy and local plan delivery.

Social and Affordable Homes Programme

3.13 A key current priority is the Social and Affordable Homes Programme[17], which reflects a stronger emphasis on social rent and affordability within GMCA's housing agenda.

3.14 This programme focuses on accelerating the delivery of social and affordable homes across Greater Manchester, with a clear prioritisation of social rent as a core tenure. It forms a central component of GMCA's approach to addressing housing need and is aligned with the wider Greater Manchester Strategy commitment to significantly increase the availability of genuinely affordable homes.

3.15 The programme signals a shift in policy direction towards a more interventionist approach, with greater emphasis placed on influencing tenure mix, improving affordability outcomes and ensuring that new housing supply better meets the needs of lower-income households, rather than focusing solely on overall housing numbers.

[16] Places For Everyone - Greater Manchester Combined Authority

[17] https://www.greatermanchester-ca.gov.uk/what-we-do/planning-and-housing/housing/social-and-affordable-homes-programme

Housing First Greater Manchester

3.16 A newer and important part of the agenda is Housing First Greater Manchester[18] represents a key element of the Combined Authority's approach to housing and public service reform, positioning housing as the foundation for improving wider social and economic outcomes.

3.17 The programme is based on the principle that secure, permanent housing is essential to achieving good health, education and employment outcomes. GMCA frames this as part of a broader effort to "fix the foundations of life", recognising that without a stable home, wider ambitions for individuals and communities cannot be realised.

3.18 At a strategic level, Housing First is not just a homelessness intervention but a whole-system reform approach. It seeks to redesign services so that housing, health, care and support systems operate in a more integrated way, focusing on prevention and long-term stability rather than crisis response. This includes providing permanent accommodation alongside wraparound support for people with complex needs, enabling them to sustain tenancies and improve life outcomes.

3.19 A central ambition of the programme is to deliver a "healthy home for all by 2038", ensuring that all residents have access to housing that is safe, secure, affordable and sustainable. This ambition aligns Housing First with wider GMCA priorities, including net zero, health improvement and reducing inequalities.

3.20 The establishment of a dedicated Housing First Unit further reinforces this direction of travel. The Unit is intended to drive a more coordinated and interventionist approach to housing policy, including increasing housing supply (particularly affordable and specialist provision), improving housing standards, and strengthening links between housing and public services such as health, employment and skills.

[18] Housing First Greater Manchester - Greater Manchester Combined Authority

4. Bury Local Strategic Agenda

Corporate Plan Let's Do it[19], Team Bury and The Neighbourhood Model

4.1 The Bury 2030 "Let's Do It!" Strategy is a long-term vision for transforming the borough over the next decade through stronger communities, better public services and more inclusive economic growth. At its heart is a simple ambition: for Bury to stand out as a place achieving faster economic growth than the national average while also having lower-than-average deprivation. The strategy is rooted in conversations with residents, businesses, community organisations and public service leaders, and it presents itself not just as a service improvement plan but as a new model of community power, where relationships come first and everyone has a role to play.

4.2 The strategy confirms Bury's challenges in 2020, including worsening relative deprivation, health inequalities, lower employment rates, uneven educational progress and the severe social and economic impacts of Covid-19. At the same time, it recognises the borough's strengths, such as resilient communities, effective partnership working, integrated health and care services, and a strong cultural identity. In response, the strategy combines immediate recovery priorities with longer-term reform, aiming to address poverty, health impacts, inequality, climate change and barriers to opportunity while building on the spirit of collaboration seen during the pandemic.

4.3 A key feature of the strategy is its four guiding principles: local neighbourhoods, an enterprising spirit, delivering together, and a strengths-based approach. These principles shape a wide-ranging programme of action across regeneration, housing, skills, health, inclusion, transport, digital connectivity and the environment. The strategy emphasises neighbourhood-based working, integrated public service teams, support for volunteering and community leadership, and closer links between residents and decision-making. It also sets out ambitions for town centre regeneration, affordable and low-carbon housing, carbon neutrality, improved educational attainment, stronger local businesses, and better access to employment and skills.

4.4 Overall, the strategy is both a vision and a practical framework for change, with rolling delivery plans and clear measures of progress. Its success will be judged by improvements in quality of life, early years development, educational attainment, adult skills, inclusive growth, carbon reduction and digital connectivity, with the broader aim of making Bury one of the fastest-improving post-industrial northern localities in reducing deprivation. In essence, the document describes how Bury intends to become a fairer, healthier, greener and more connected borough by 2030 through collective effort, shared responsibility and a strong focus on people and place.

[19] Let's Do It! strategy - Bury Council

4.5 Central to delivery is a strong emphasis on place-based working and neighbourhood-level change. The strategy proposes integrated, multi-disciplinary teams operating within local areas to bring together health, housing, education, policing and community services, alongside voluntary and community organisations. This model is intended to shift the focus towards prevention, early intervention and personalised support, helping residents to live independently and well. Alongside this, there is a clear commitment to empowering communities through volunteering, community hubs, co-design of services and stronger local leadership, ensuring that residents have a genuine voice in shaping decisions and outcomes.

4.6 The strategy also places significant weight on inclusive economic growth and long-term sustainability. It aims to strengthen the local economy by supporting business growth, improving skills and education pathways, and connecting residents to quality employment opportunities, while ensuring that the benefits of growth are shared more evenly. At the same time, it sets out ambitions to address the climate emergency through carbon reduction, greener infrastructure and sustainable housing. Taken together, these priorities reflect a holistic approach to regeneration—one that links economic success with social inclusion, environmental responsibility and improved wellbeing for all residents.

4.7 This approach reflects a broader shift in how public services are delivered in Bury. The neighbourhood model is explicitly intended to drive inclusive growth and reduce deprivation, aligning economic, social and service delivery priorities at a local level. It also embeds a strengths-based approach, focusing on the assets within communities and enabling more targeted and efficient use of collective resources. Importantly, it enables a locally responsive approach, recognising that different parts of the borough face different challenges and require tailored interventions. Housing, health, care, employment and community services are therefore brought together at neighbourhood level to deliver coordinated support, particularly for vulnerable residents or those at risk of crisis.

Corporate Plan

4.8 The Bury Corporate Plan (2025/26) is structured around three core priorities, supported by a fourth set of enabling actions. These priorities reflect the council's contribution to delivering the wider Let's Do It Bury vision and focus on both immediate service delivery and longer-term system change.

4.9 The first priority is Sustainable Inclusive Growth. This focuses on strengthening Bury's economy while ensuring that the benefits of growth are shared across communities. It includes delivering major regeneration schemes, progressing town centre masterplans, and improving infrastructure such as transport and digital connectivity. A key element is linking economic growth with housing delivery—particularly ensuring the provision of high-quality and affordable homes in the right locations to support access to jobs. The priority also includes developing the Local Plan, advancing strategic housing sites, and supporting skills and employment through initiatives like the All Age Work and Skills Strategy.

4.10 The second priority is Improving Children's Lives, which centres on ensuring that children and young people are safe, supported and able to achieve positive

outcomes. This includes improving children's social care services, embedding family safeguarding approaches, and strengthening early help and prevention. It also covers improvements in education, including SEND (Special Educational Needs and Disabilities) provision, school place planning and inclusion. The priority reflects a strong focus on partnership working across education, health and care to ensure children receive the right support at the right time and to improve long-term life chances.

4.11 The third priority is Tackling Inequalities, which addresses disparities in health, income, opportunity and community outcomes across the borough. This includes work on poverty reduction, community safety, health inequalities and access to services. Key strands include developing a prevention framework, implementing the Live Well approach, and strengthening neighbourhood working to better target support to those most at risk. The priority also incorporates housing-related challenges such as homelessness pressures, access to affordable homes and the role of housing in supporting wellbeing and independence.

4.12 Supporting these three priorities is a set of Enabling Actions, which ensure the council is able to deliver effectively. These focus on financial sustainability, workforce capacity, organisational improvement and transformation. This includes delivering the Medium-Term Financial Strategy, improving commissioning and procurement, developing a commercial strategy, and progressing digital and organisational transformation programmes. It also includes strengthening governance, performance management and the effective use of assets to support service delivery.

4.13 Additional strategy documents for Bury have been drawn upon throughout this report to support and evidence specific thematic sections.

5. Delivering New Homes

Achievements

Delivering more homes to meet a growing population.

Allocated strategic housing sites to accommodate around 6,440 new homes, 25% of which are to be affordable housing.

Adopted new Places for Everyone planning policy requirements which will see new homes built to net zero carbon standards.

Circa £9.6 m external capital and revenue funding secured between 2022 – 2025 to remediate/de-risk sites to get them 'development ready'.

Active delivery of a pipeline of 1,616 new homes on former Council owned brownfield sites by 2030/31 comprising 1,040 market homes and 576 affordable homes (including c 180 social rented homes).

Increasing affordable housing across the borough.

1,339 new homes completed 2020-2025 of which 384 are affordable.

£770,000 affordable housing S106 commuted sums for affordable housing were received from 2021-2026 as a result of planning policies. Commuted sums have supported the delivery of new affordable homes at the former Radcliffe Times Building and bringing empty properties back into use as affordable housing.

Achievement

Bury's Development Control service plays a central role in shaping the borough's growth, ensuring that development is carefully managed in line with statutory planning requirements while supporting wider economic, social and environmental objectives. The service is responsible for determining around 1,300 planning applications each year, covering a wide spectrum of development including housing, employment, town centres, recreation and community infrastructure. Alongside this core function, the team also protects and enhances Conservation Areas, manages works to protected trees, and undertakes planning enforcement to address breaches of planning control, ensuring the integrity of the planning system.

Operating as a quasi-judicial authority, the service provides impartial, professional advice to applicants while balancing the views of residents, stakeholders and statutory consultees. This neutral position allows the team to assess proposals against local and national planning policy, often requiring amendments to schemes to secure better design, improved sustainability and stronger outcomes for communities. Planning permission represents a key point of public scrutiny in the development process, and the team's experience enables it to navigate complex and often competing interests to achieve high-quality, policy-compliant development.

The service is closely aligned with strategic planning frameworks, including the Bury Local Plan and the Greater Manchester "Places for Everyone" plan. Through these, it helps ensure that housing delivery meets identified needs in terms of scale, location, design and mix, including the application of affordable housing policies and the delivery of adaptable homes for changing accessibility requirements. It also supports the integration of green infrastructure, sustainable layouts and connectivity, while applying policies across a wide range of areas such as health, education, conservation, countryside protection and recreation. Sustainability is embedded as a core principle in assessing new development.

Following the adoption of Places for Everyone, the Council has progressed masterplanning for a number of major allocated sites. These strategic locations are expected to deliver significant levels of housing alongside employment opportunities, education provision, infrastructure and open space. The Development Control service has been instrumental in translating these allocations into deliverable schemes, with several sites now progressing through the planning application stage. This demonstrates the service's role not only in regulation but also in enabling long-term place-making and growth.

Performance has been a key strength, with Bury consistently recognised at a national level for the effectiveness of its planning function. The service achieves very high levels of decision-making within statutory timeframes, with 99.8% of applications determined on time in 2024/25. Appeal levels remain relatively low given the volume and complexity of applications handled, and only a small proportion of decisions are overturned. Enforcement activity is also actively managed, with notices served where necessary to address non-compliance. These outcomes reflect a well-resourced, experienced team that delivers both efficiency and quality, maintaining confidence among applicants, residents and central government alike.

Housing Requirement

5.1 Bury's housing requirement is established through Places for Everyone, which sets an average requirement of 452 homes per year, through a stepped approach with the annual requirement increasing from 246 per year from 2022-2025, to 452 from 2025-2030 and 520 from 2030-2039. For the Local Plan period 2022-2043, this equates to a total requirement of 9,486 homes. Although the national standard method for calculating local housing need was updated in December 2024, transitional arrangements apply, meaning the new figure (currently 999 homes per year as of March 2026) is not applicable to Bury's Local Plan examination.

5.2 The new Local Housing Need (LHN) calculated using the standard method will need to be addressed through a future Spatial Development Strategy (SDS) for Greater Manchester. The SDS will be a high-level spatial plan and will set housing targets for each of the ten Greater Manchester local authorities using the collective LHN for the ten districts as a starting point. On adoption, the SDS will replace the current Places for Everyone housing targets, and is likely to result in a substantial increase in Bury's

target. The SDS will provide a framework for future local plans and planning decisions, which will have to be in conformity with it.

Past Housing Delivery

5.3 Between 2015/16 and 2024/25, only 2,909 net new dwellings were completed, compared with a cumulative target of 5,002 homes, resulting in an overall shortfall of around 2,093 dwellings. Past under delivery is reflected in the PfE housing requirement, therefore there is no requirement to specifically address under-delivery prior to the PfE plan period separately. Over the most recent five-year period, average delivery was around 268 homes per year, significantly below the long-term average requirement now set through Places for Everyone, but meeting the stepped requirement in PfE to deliver 246 homes per year from 2022-2025.

Land Availability

5.4 Bury's Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment is an assessment of potential sites for residential development and is used to assess the housing land supply. It includes sites that have an extant planning permission, sites allocated through the joint Places for Everyone Plan and sites that have potential to obtain planning permission in the future. This shows that there are a number of sites within the Borough with the potential to deliver a significant amount of housing. The Council's Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA)[20] has identified sufficient housing land supply to deliver 10,249 homes from 2024-2042. However, not all of these sites will contribute to housing delivery in the short term, as many sites will take longer than five years to come forward and be fully developed.

5.5 Bury Council's Five-Year Housing Land Supply Statement (2025)[21] identifies an anticipated supply of around 2,231 dwellings expected to be delivered within the five-year period from sites under construction, with planning permission, or forming part of strategic allocations where delivery is evidenced. When compared with the five-year housing requirement (including the required 20 per cent buffer), the identified supply equates to approximately 4.3 years of supply, indicating that the borough is currently below a full five-year housing land supply.

Emerging Local Plan[22]

5.6 Bury Council currently uses an Adopted Unitary Development Plan (UDP)[23] as the statutory land-use policy document for the borough. The UDP sets out the development strategy and policies for managing future land use, including housing land provision, housing quality, residential amenity and the distribution of residential development across the borough. Although many detailed policies in the UDP remain

[20] https://www.bury.gov.uk/planning-building-control/planning-projects/housing-development-opportunities

[21] Bury Five Year Supply of Deliverable Housing Land, April 2017

[22] draft-local-plan-v7-cabinet.pdf (this is the Reg 18 plan with the Reg 19 currently awaiting cabinet approval)

[23] Bury Five Year Supply of Deliverable Housing Land, April 2025

in force as saved policies, they are progressively being supplemented or superseded by newer policy documents through joint and sub-regional planning processes. The UDP includes a specific chapter on housing that historically guided decisions on housing land supply, housing types and locations, and balancing market and affordable housing needs. It emphasises the importance of allocating sufficient land for housing, focusing residential development within the urban area and improving housing conditions and residential environments.

5.7 The Council is in the process of replacing the UDP with a new Bury Local Plan, which will provide a locally specific set of planning policies covering the period to around 2042/2043 and will sit alongside PfE, the Greater Manchester Joint Minerals Plan and the Joint Waste Plan as part of the borough's development plan.

5.8 The emerging Bury Local Plan is progressing toward Regulation 19 publication, with Cabinet approval expected in June 2026 and consultation anticipated in July 2026. Importantly:

- The Local Plan does not set a new housing target;
- the PfE target (an average of 452 dwellings per annum) continues to apply

5.9 Instead, the Plan provides the borough-level policy framework that will shape how allocated and windfall sites are delivered.

Key Housing Policies in the Emerging Local Plan

5.10 The emerging Local Plan[24] includes a comprehensive suite of housing policies (LP-H1 to LP-H11), covering land supply, windfalls, housing mix, affordable housing, specialist provision and specific forms of development (e.g. HMOs, conversions).

5.11 The most significant policies in delivery terms are LP-H4 (Affordable Housing) and LP-H5 (Housing for Older People and People with Disabilities).

Policy LP-H4: Affordable Housing Provision

a) Minimum Requirements

5.12 Policy LP-H4 sets differentiated affordable housing requirements:

- 10% on sites of 10–24 units
- 15% on sites of 25+ units in Town Centres
- 25% on sites of 25+ units
- 50% on sites of 10+ dwellings in the Green Belt
- 20% for Build to Rent schemes

5.13 The tenure split is:

- 60% social or affordable rented

[24] The Reg 19 Local Plan is subject to cabinet approval

- 40% affordable home ownership

5.14 There is explicit support for the delivery of social rented homes, with a requirement for schemes to demonstrate that all opportunities to deliver social rent have been explored. Exemptions apply to 100% affordable housing schemes, Build to Rent and specialist accommodation

b) Type, Size and Mix

5.15 The policy states that the affordable housing mix (including dwelling type and size) should:

- Reflect site-specific conditions, viability and evidence of need;
- Generally mirror the mix of market housing on site (e.g. 10% or 25% of each type/size)

5.16 This approach promotes "tenure blind" and proportionate delivery across dwelling types.

c) On-Site vs Off-Site Provision

5.17 Affordable housing is to be provided on-site, unless exceptional circumstances justify otherwise. Where off-site provision is accepted, contributions must:

- Deliver the equivalent number of units,
- Preferably as units built off-site or land for provision,
- Financial contributions (commuted sums) only as a last resort

d) Design and Integration

5.18 Affordable homes must:

- Be fully integrated and dispersed across the site (unless specific circumstances apply),
- Be indistinguishable from market housing,
- Be built to the same specification

5.19 This reinforces mixed and inclusive communities.

Policy LP-H5: Housing for Older People and People with Disabilities

5.20 Policy LP-H5 establishes clear accessibility standards:

- All dwellings to be built to M4(2) accessible and adaptable standard (aligned with PfE policy JP-H3)
- On sites of 50+ dwellings, 4% of homes to meet M4(3) wheelchair user standard, unless impracticable or unviable

5.21 This is consistent with evidence in the Housing Needs and Demand Assessment, which identifies:

- An annual affordable housing shortfall of 1,017 homes,
- A need for significant additional older persons' accommodation (including C3, Extra Care and C2 provision),
- A recommendation that 4% of new dwellings be wheelchair accessible

5.22 There is also identified need for leasehold sheltered, enhanced sheltered and Extra Care housing for sale

Strategic Allocations in the Places for Everyone (PfE) Plan

5.23 Bury's housing growth will be strongly supported by the Places for Everyone (PfE) Joint Development Plan. The PfE plan identifies a series of large strategic allocations within Bury, supported by Development Frameworks for which consultation has recently been completed.

Elton Reservoir (JPA7)

5.24 Elton Reservoir is the largest residential allocation in the borough and a key strategic site within the Places for Everyone (PfE) Joint Plan. The site has capacity to deliver approximately 3,500 new homes, including around 25% affordable housing (equating to approximately 875 homes). The affordable housing provision is expected to comprise a mix of 60% affordable or social rent and 40% affordable home ownership, alongside provision for specialist and older persons' accommodation to support a balanced and inclusive community.

5.25 The scale and comprehensive nature of the Elton Reservoir allocation means it will play a critical role in meeting Bury's long-term housing needs and significantly boosting affordable housing supply. Beyond housing delivery, the scheme will create a new sustainable community supported by a wide range of infrastructure and services, including a new primary school, local centres with retail, health and community facilities, and a new Metrolink stop and public transport hub. The development will also deliver strategic transport improvements, including a new link road and active travel network, as well as extensive green and blue infrastructure such as public open space, parks and ecological enhancements.

5.26 The Elton Reservoir Development Framework establishes the overarching vision, masterplanning principles and phasing strategy for the site, ensuring that housing delivery is aligned with the timely provision of infrastructure. Consultation on the draft Development Framework took place in February / March 2026, with adoption targeted for summer 2026, after which planning applications can come forward. Delivery is expected to be phased over the medium to long term, with development brought forward incrementally alongside the provision of key infrastructure, reflecting the scale and complexity of the site.

5.27 Once adopted as a Supplementary Planning Document, the framework will provide a clear basis to guide future planning applications and support the coordinated delivery of this major growth location. This aligns with wider PfE policies relating to

housing mix, design quality and sustainable development, ensuring the site delivers a high-quality, well-connected and resilient new community.

Walshaw (JPA9)

5.28 Walshaw is allocated for approximately 1,250 homes, including 25% affordable housing (around 300 homes), with an expected tenure split of 60% affordable or social rent and 40% affordable home ownership. The scheme will also include provision for specialist and older persons' accommodation, supporting a balanced and inclusive community.

5.29 The draft Walshaw Development Framework (WDF) establishes a comprehensive masterplan for the site, setting out the vision, design principles and infrastructure requirements needed to deliver a sustainable new neighbourhood. In addition to housing, the development will provide a new two-form entry primary school, local community and retail facilities, a new through road, active travel networks, and extensive green infrastructure including open space, sports provision and ecological enhancements. This ensures that housing delivery is supported by appropriate social, transport and environmental infrastructure.

5.30 An outline application has been submitted on part of the site (up to 275 homes), indicating early delivery activity within this strategic allocation. The project is currently progressing through the planning and framework stage, with the draft WDF published for public consultation in February / March 2026 and adoption targeted for summer 2026.

5.31 Following adoption of the WDF, development is expected to come forward on a phased basis, with early phases likely to follow soon after planning approvals are secured. Given the scale of the allocation and its infrastructure requirements, delivery will take place over the medium to long term, with housing brought forward incrementally alongside the provision of supporting infrastructure.

5.32 Overall, Walshaw represents a key component of Bury's housing growth strategy under PfE, delivering a significant number of new homes alongside the infrastructure needed to create a cohesive, sustainable community integrated with surrounding neighbourhoods.

Simister / Bowlee (JPA1.2)

5.33 The Simister / Bowlee allocation spans Bury and Rochdale and will deliver approximately 1,550 homes, including around 1,350 in Bury and 200 in Rochdale, with 25% affordable housing in Bury (approximately 335 homes). The development will also include provision for specialist and older persons' accommodation, supporting a balanced and inclusive community.

5.34 The draft Simister Bowlee Development Framework (SBDF) establishes a comprehensive masterplan for the site, setting out the vision, design principles and infrastructure requirements needed to deliver a sustainable new neighbourhood. In addition to housing, the scheme will provide a new two-form entry primary school, local community and retail facilities, green infrastructure including open space and

sports provision, and a network of active travel routes. Strategic infrastructure will also include a new spine road, off-site highway improvements and sustainable drainage systems, ensuring the development is supported by appropriate transport and environmental infrastructure.

5.35 The allocation plays a key role in supporting the wider Atom Valley Mayoral Development Zone and complements the adjacent Northern Gateway employment site, helping to align housing growth with major economic investment and job creation. The SBDF will, once adopted as a Supplementary Planning Document, provide a clear framework to guide future planning applications and ensure a coordinated approach to phasing, infrastructure delivery and place-making across the site.

5.36 As a cross-boundary allocation, Simister / Bowlee is critical to meeting sub-regional housing needs under PfE, while also delivering wider economic, social and environmental benefits. It represents a key opportunity to create a well-connected, sustainable community, integrated with employment growth and supported by high-quality infrastructure and services.

5.37 The Simister / Bowlee allocation is expected to be delivered as a long-term, phased development, with delivery linked closely to the provision of enabling infrastructure and the adoption of the Simister Bowlee Development Framework (SBDF). The current focus is on establishing the planning and delivery framework, with the draft SBDF published for public consultation in February / March 2026 and formal adoption targeted for summer 2026.

5.38 Following adoption, the site will move into the planning application and early delivery phase, with development expected to come forward in stages over a number of years. The SBDF makes clear that delivery will be infrastructure-led, meaning that housing development will be phased alongside the provision of key infrastructure such as the spine road, school, utilities and transport improvements.

5.39 Other PfE Allocations: In addition to the Elton, Walshaw and Simister / Bowlee allocations, Places for Everyone also includes allocation JPA1.1 Heywood / Pilsworth This is a cross-boundary allocation which is predominantly for employment development, however it includes provision for around 200 homes within Bury at Castle Road, of which 25% (50 homes) will be required to be delivered as affordable housing in accordance with Bury's local planning policy requirements. PfE also includes allocation JPA8: Seedfield for around 140 homes, including 25% affordable housing. Part of this allocation is currently under construction by Hive Homes to deliver 81 homes.

Future requirements for market housing

New homes delivered in Bury

At Green Street in Radcliffe town centre, a major redevelopment of the former Radcliffe Baths site is underway. The scheme will deliver 132 one- and two-bedroom apartments, including 97 affordable homes across a mix of tenures. In

addition, 13,000 sq ft of commercial space will be provided, with Watson Homes relocating its headquarters to the site. The council disposed of the site in 2023, with construction commencing shortly after. The first 97 apartments were handed over to residents in March 2026, with full completion expected in summer 2026.

At York Street in Radcliffe, the Irwell View scheme has delivered 211 high-quality homes on a former brownfield site. Developed by Kellen Homes as a build-to-rent scheme and managed by Simple Life Homes, the project was supported by £1.95 million from the Brownfield Housing Fund. Construction began in 2023, with full completion achieved in winter 2026.

Scholars Park in Radcliffe, located on School Street on the former Riverside School site, is delivering 90 sustainable family homes, including 22 affordable units. Developed by Hive Homes, the scheme has benefited from £800,000 of Brownfield Housing Fund support to enable site remediation. Construction began in 2023, with completion expected in 2027. The development will also contribute over £250,000 towards local amenity improvements through Section 106 funding.

Similarly, at Roedeer Gardens in the Seedfield area of Bury, 81 family homes are being delivered on the site of the former Seedfield centre. The scheme, also brought forward with Hive Homes, includes 25% affordable housing across a range of tenures. Supported by a £1 million Brownfield Housing Fund grant, construction commenced in 2024 and is expected to complete in autumn 2026. The development will also deliver improvements to local sports facilities through Section 106 contributions.

5.40 Bury is expected to continue experiencing population and household growth, with the number of households rising by around 10% between 2022 and 2043 and particularly strong growth among older age groups (65+, and especially 75+). At the same time, there remains sustained demand from families and working-age households, reflected in strong market signals such as rising house prices, high aspirations for home ownership, and a continued preference for houses with gardens and parking. Most households planning to move want to remain owner-occupiers and aspire to larger homes than they currently occupy, indicating ongoing demand for mainstream market housing rather than a shift away from it.

5.41 The future market housing mix should be dominated houses, particularly to meet the needs of families, growing households and established owner-occupiers seeking more space. Around two-thirds of market delivery is expected to be houses, with a strong emphasis on 3-bedroom homes, around 25–30% of market supply, alongside a continued requirement for 4+ bedroom homes, around 20–25%, to meet demand from larger families, and those seeking additional space. However, the market offer should not be narrowly interpreted as family housing alone. There is also a clear role for smaller homes, including 1–2 bedroom houses and level-access homes (which can include flats and appropriately designed houses where all facilities are on the ground floor).

5.42 Market apartments have a positive role to play as part of this mix, particularly in accessible, well-connected locations such as town centres, district centres and

transport corridors, where they can support higher-density development, make efficient use of land, contribute to regeneration and provide attractive level-access options close to services, public transport and amenities. Spatially, family housing is particularly important in areas such as North Bury and Whitefield, where prices are higher and demand for detached and larger semi-detached homes is strongest. Overall, the evidence points to a future market housing offer that is house-led and family-focused, but also diverse enough to support town-centre density, ageing households and a broader range of market needs. Apartments should therefore be seen as a complementary part of both the market and affordable housing offer where appropriate, rather than being treated solely as affordable housing provision while larger family housing is delivered only for market sale.

Future requirements for affordable housing

New Affordable Housing delivered

At Wheatfields, Whitefield, Onward Homes has delivered a high-quality development of 30 affordable homes, reflecting Bury's focus on brownfield regeneration and partnership delivery. The scheme provides a mix of houses, apartments and bungalows, including homes designed for people with mobility needs and older residents, helping to create an age-friendly and inclusive community. All homes are affordable, comprising a mix of affordable rent and shared ownership, with rents capped to ensure long-term affordability. The council retains 100% nomination rights in perpetuity, ensuring the homes continue to meet local housing need. Supported through Homes England grant funding, the development was completed at the end of 2024 and is now fully occupied, forming a mixed-income, sustainable neighbourhood.

The 'Willows', Bury, a £3.3m supported housing scheme delivering 13 self-contained apartments for adults with physical, sensory and learning disabilities, developed by Irwell Valley Homes in partnership with Bury Council and Persona Care and Support. The scheme provides 24-hour support, enabling residents to live independently in a purpose-built environment tailored to their needs. It has been supported by Homes England and GMCA funding and responds to a recognised shortage of supported housing locally, helping to reduce pressure on health and care services.

Looking ahead, a number of schemes are also in development. These include The Elms, which will deliver 16 social rent apartments for residents aged 55+, and Spurr House and Pyramid Park, which will provide a further 55 affordable homes. Fletcher Fold (former Millwood School site) will deliver 39 social rent homes for older people and the William Kemp Heaton site in Bury will deliver 43 social rent homes including 18 self-contained apartments for residents with additional need and accessible bungalows specifically tailored for those with mobility challenges. The council retain nomination rights in perpetuity, ensuring the homes continue to meet local need. In addition, the East Lancashire Paper Mill site (Radcliffe) will

deliver a major mixed-tenure scheme of around 400 homes, including 100 affordable units, forming a key part of the borough's longer-term housing pipeline.

5.43 The Housing Needs and Demand Assessment shows that Bury has a substantial existing affordable housing stock, but that this is insufficient relative to need. Across the borough there are around 13,300 affordable homes in total, comprising approximately 7,716 local authority dwellings, 5,275 homes owned by Registered Providers, and around 370 affordable homes delivered through Section 106 agreements (mainly discounted market housing). Most affordable homes are smaller properties, with around 80% having one or two bedrooms, and a significant proportion occupied by low-income and economically inactive households. Despite this scale of provision, turnover is limited and the stock is unable to meet current or future demand.

5.44 The Housing Needs and Demand Assessment identifies a substantial net annual affordable housing shortfall of around 1,017 homes, driven by both newly arising need and the limited capacity of existing stock. Crucially, the assessment demonstrates that meeting overall housing delivery targets alone would be insufficient to address this gap, as affordable housing need significantly outstrips current delivery levels. The scale of under-supply reflects historically modest affordable housing delivery relative to need, reinforcing the conclusion that addressing the shortfall requires more than increasing total housing output. Instead, it will depend on consistently maximising affordable housing provision within market-led development, alongside effective use of funding, robust planning policy and strong partnership working. Without sustained intervention, the evidence indicates that Bury faces an ongoing risk of under-delivery and a growing mismatch between housing need and supply.

5.45 As of December 2025 there were 2,126 households on the housing register, with long average wait times (e.g., around 478 days for one-bedroom and 840 days for four-bedroom homes), underscoring the limited turnover relative to need. The Allocations policy[25] further confirms that demand significantly exceeds supply. The policy is explicit that social housing is a scarce resource and that demand "continues to outstrip the number of properties available. This confirms:

- Persistent pressure on the Housing Register
- Long waiting times for many applicants
- The need for the housing strategy to address supply, alternatives to social rent, and prevention, not just allocation mechanics

5.46 The Housing Needs and Demand Assessment therefore emphasises the importance of maximising affordable housing contributions on all suitable sites, prioritising social rented housing within the recommended 30% social rent, 30% affordable rent and 40% affordable home ownership tenure split. Overall, the evidence shows that while

[25] bury-allocations-policy-2025.pdf

Bury has a sizeable affordable housing sector, it is not large enough nor sufficiently responsive to meet current and future housing need.

5.47 Only social rent is affordable to lower-quartile income households, while affordable rent and low-cost home ownership products are only accessible to a narrower group with higher incomes. This means that the existing affordable housing stock, although significant in absolute terms, is structurally misaligned with income levels and household needs, particularly for families, older people and households with disabilities.

Self-Build and Custom Housebuilding

5.48 The Housing Needs and Demand Assessment identifies self-build and custom housebuilding as a small but distinct element of housing demand in Bury. National evidence suggests interest from around 5–10% of households, although far fewer progress to delivery due to constraints around land availability, finance and planning. Bury's Self and Custom Build Register had 206 entries as of October 2024, with demand mainly for detached three- and four-bedroom homes, including plots within larger developments. While previous demand has been met through permissions, continued provision of serviced plots will be needed, supported through small sites, subdivision of larger allocations and opportunities within wider developments.

5.49 Those interested in self-build are typically working-age households, often existing or aspiring owner occupiers seeking greater control over design, space and energy efficiency. While self-build can diversify housing supply and support design innovation, it is likely to remain a niche component of the housing market rather than a significant contributor to overall housing or affordable housing delivery.

Models of delivery currently used in Bury

5.50 The council is open to models that work in Bury and may adopt a competitive dialogue approach, inviting the market to propose delivery models, financing structures and tenure mixes.

5.51 Bury Council currently has a limited role in direct delivery, with most housing development undertaken through partners such as Registered Providers and private developers.

5.52 The council has considered taking a direct delivery role, acting as developer. However, delivery is currently constrained by limited in-house expertise and capacity to manage construction risk. While this model offers greater control over design, quality and tenure outcomes, it is more complex and resource intensive. As such, it is likely to represent a longer-term opportunity for Bury, with potential to expand as internal capacity and resources are strengthened.

5.53 Delivery of affordable housing is primarily through the Registered Provider (RP) Partnership Framework, a central mechanism for delivering new affordable housing across the borough. This framework brings together the Council and a selected group of housing associations in a formal strategic partnership to accelerate the delivery of high-quality homes, including general needs, specialist and supported

accommodation. The partnership is particularly focused on maximising the use of council-owned land to deliver new homes that meet identified local needs and priorities.

5.54 The RP partnership plays a critical role in enabling the Council to shape the type, tenure and location of new development, ensuring that delivery aligns with wider strategic objectives, including increasing affordable housing supply, supporting independence, and reducing inequalities. Through this model, the Council works collaboratively with providers and developers to bring forward schemes that respond to demographic pressures, including an ageing population and the need for more specialist and supported housing.

5.55 This approach reflects a broader commitment to partnership-led delivery and integrated commissioning, linking housing provision with health, care and wider public service outcomes. For example, the RP framework underpins the delivery of key priorities such as extra care housing, with the Council working alongside provider partners to plan and deliver new schemes that enable residents to live independently for longer and reduce reliance on residential care.

5.56 Looking ahead, the Council will continue to strengthen its RP partnership model by fostering long-term relationships with providers, encouraging innovation in housing delivery, and ensuring that development opportunities are aligned with local need. This includes supporting a diverse provider base, improving joint working across sectors, and maintaining a clear focus on delivering the right homes, in the right places, to support sustainable and inclusive communities.

5.57 Affordable housing delivery is generally via:

RP-Led Delivery via Land Disposals

5.58 Under this model, the Council disposes of surplus land to Registered Providers (RPs), who take on full responsibility for development and delivery. In return, the Council typically secures 100% nomination rights on first lets and 50% nomination rights on subsequent lets in perpetuity, but does not retain any ongoing financial return beyond the initial land receipt. This model has been used to develop specialist housing schemes. Overall, this model is characterised by low risk, minimal resource requirement and relatively quick delivery. Bury has utilised this model to secure specialist housing schemes with significant success.

RP Land-Led Delivery Model

5.59 Under this model, a Registered Provider (RP) identifies and acquires land directly, leading the development process rather than the Council. The RP takes responsibility for securing planning permission, procuring contractors and delivering the scheme, often retaining full ownership and management of the completed homes. This approach gives the RP greater control over design, tenure mix and delivery timescales, allowing schemes to be closely aligned with local housing need and organisational priorities.

Mixed-Tenure Cross-Subsidy Models-S106

5.60 These schemes combine market housing (sale or rent) with affordable provision, using the surplus generated from market units to subsidise affordable homes. This is a common approach across local authority delivery, particularly where grant funding is limited and viability is challenging. It is typically embedded within partnership or developer-led models and improves overall scheme viability.

Build-to-Rent (BTR) / Private Rented Sector Investment

5.61 Build-to-Rent models involve institutional investors delivering and retaining homes for long-term rental income. In the Bury context, these schemes typically require scale (around 100–150 units) and may still require subsidy. There is currently limited appetite from institutional investors for high-density, apartment-led schemes locally with stronger interest in low- to mid-density, housing-led formats and mixed-tenure approaches. Overall, this is a long-term investment model but is highly sensitive to viability and market conditions. “

5.62 The Council has explored the potential role of BtR in Bury Town Centre through a programme of soft market testing with investors, funders and developers. This confirmed qualified market interest, but highlighted a number of important constraints. In particular, the market favours multi-site or portfolio approaches rather than standalone schemes, allowing sufficient scale, cross-subsidy and operational efficiencies to support viability. There is a clear preference for low-rise, lower-amenity and “affordable-by-design” BtR products, often combined with other tenures, rather than high-specification apartment schemes.

5.63 Feedback also indicated that Bury’s current income profile limits the level of rent that can be achieved, meaning that BtR schemes may face viability challenges without subsidy, cross-subsidy from open market housing, or delivery alongside other tenures. However, these could be more attractive to the market if delivered as part of a wider, phased programme. Smaller standalone schemes were generally viewed as unattractive for BtR in isolation, and such smaller isolated sites are more attractive to Registered Providers in terms of delivery and management perspective.

5.64 In practice, no single delivery model is applied universally. Instead, the Council adopts a flexible, site-by-site approach, guided by town centre masterplan and in line with planning policy, selecting the most appropriate model based on viability, site characteristics, social value priorities and specific housing needs. The findings from soft market testing reinforce the need for this flexibility, with BtR likely to play a role within the town centre as part of a broader mixed-tenure, phased programme and delivery strategy, rather than as a dominant or standalone model.

Accelerating Housing Delivery in Bury

5.65 The Draft Bury Local Plan[26] confirms that sufficient housing land has been identified to meet the housing requirement over the plan period from 2022-2043. 47% of the

[26] The Reg 19 Local Plan is subject to cabinet approval

identified housing land supply is on sites allocated through the Places for Everyone plan, 19% on sites with planning permission and 19% is on other sites within town centres. The remainder of the supply is through other sites outside town centres, a small sites windfall allowance and through units completed in the first three years of the plan period. The key challenge in delivering new homes is therefore not land supply, but ensuring the identified supply translates into housing completions. Much of the Borough's supply is concentrated within a small number of large strategic sites (via Places for Everyone), which are complex and require masterplanning and significant infrastructure investment.

5.66 Bury has an established track record of supporting housing delivery through a proactive, partnership-led approach. This has enabled progress in a challenging market context and provides a strong foundation to accelerate delivery over the lifetime of this strategy. The priority now is not to change direction, but to scale up and strengthen this approach—ensuring that delivery keeps pace with need, particularly for social and affordable housing.

5.67 To achieve this, the Council will take a more focused and interventionist role, targeting its resources, assets and partnerships to maximise supply and unlock delivery across the borough.

Targeting Sites and Scaling Delivery

5.68 The Council will prioritise delivery across:

- Brownfield sites with a dedicated delivery programme in Bury Town Centre
- Strategic allocations within Places for Everyone
- Estate regeneration and infill opportunities within existing housing areas

5.69 A clear and coordinated delivery programme will be developed across these sites, supported by site-specific feasibility work and a stronger pipeline approach. This will enable the Council to better plan, prioritise and accelerate delivery across multiple locations.

Estate Renewal and Increasing Supply

5.70 A key opportunity is the more proactive use of existing housing assets to increase supply and improve quality. The Council will establish an Estate Renewal Task Force to lead a new workstream focused on:

- Estate regeneration, redevelopment and remodelling
- Infill development and use of underutilised land (e.g. garage sites)
- Increasing the number of homes within existing neighbourhoods

5.71 This will be supported by a long-term development approach, including the potential appointment of a strategic delivery partner to work across a pipeline of sites. This programme-led model will enable the Council to scale up delivery, access expertise and funding, and bring forward mixed-tenure schemes that support both regeneration and new supply.

Strengthening Partnerships and Delivery Models

5.72 Increasing supply will require a broader and more diverse range of partners, while building on the Council's existing Registered Provider Framework, established in 2022 to accelerate affordable housing delivery. The Council will:

- Work with Registered Providers, housing associations, developers, investors and SME builders
- Build on the existing Registered Provider Framework to support and accelerate affordable housing delivery
- Attract new partners to unlock more complex or marginal sites
- Use its land and pipeline to shape delivery outcomes and secure affordable housing

5.73 A flexible approach will be taken to delivery, testing and applying a range of models depending on site characteristics and viability, including:

- RP-led delivery and land-led models
- Joint ventures and regeneration partnerships
- Build-to-Rent and institutional investment
- Long-term development partnerships across multiple sites
- Deferred land payment and land value participation approaches
- Leasing and income strip models where appropriate

5.74 This approach will allow the Council to respond to market conditions, de-risk delivery and maximise output across different types of sites. By building on the existing Registered Provider Framework while also attracting a wider range of partners, the Council will be better placed to accelerate affordable housing delivery and unlock more complex sites.

Maximising Funding and Investment

5.75 Unlocking delivery will require the effective use of funding and investment. The Council will maximise opportunities through:

- The Social and Affordable Homes Programme and Homes England partnership
- Local Authority Housing Fund to support temporary and permanent accommodation
- Retained Right to Buy receipts and S106 commuted sums
- GMCA funding, including the Good Growth Fund
- Additional capacity through programmes such as CHoSS

5.76 Funding will be used strategically to address viability gaps, particularly on brownfield and regeneration sites, and to leverage private sector investment.

Strengthening the Council's Enabling Role

5.77 The Council will continue to act as a proactive enabler of housing delivery, using its planning, regeneration and land powers to:

- Bring sites forward and reduce delivery risk
- Coordinate infrastructure and development planning
- Support land assembly and unblock stalled sites
- Set clear expectations on tenure, quality and outcomes
- Access Good Growth and Homes England revenue and capital funding to unlock and delivery sites in council ownership. Sponsor external RP and Developer led bids on private land

5.78 This includes taking a more active leadership role in improving planning processes and working with partners to streamline delivery, reduce delays and provide greater certainty to the market.

Improving Delivery Capacity and Procurement

5.79 To support delivery at scale, the Council will strengthen its internal capacity and explore more efficient delivery mechanisms. This includes:

- Securing additional skills and capacity to support programme delivery
- Exploring the use of third-party development managers to oversee multiple schemes simultaneously.
- Improving procurement approaches to accelerate delivery across sites
- Continue to lobby for and position Bury's projects for funding at a GM and HE level, gaining a reputation as a delivery focussed authority.

Case Study: Buy Back and Property Acquisition Programme – Bury Council

Context
Bury Council has experienced a long-term reduction in social housing supply, driven largely by Right to Buy sales, which resulted in the loss of 249 council homes between 2018/19 and 2022/23. At the same time, demand for affordable housing and homelessness pressures have increased, highlighting the need for new ways to expand the council's housing stock.

Intervention
In July 2024, Bury Council's Cabinet approved the Buy Back & Acquisitions Policy and Procedures 2024–2028. The policy establishes a formal framework for the council to purchase homes from the private market and convert them into social or affordable housing.

The programme enables the council to acquire:

- Former Right to Buy properties

- Long-term empty homes
- Existing privately owned housing
- New-build homes on private developments

Properties acquired are added to the council's housing stock and let at social or affordable rents (up to 80% of market rent) to households on the housing waiting list.

Funding and Governance
Acquisitions may be funded through a combination of:

- Right to Buy capital receipts
- Housing Revenue Account (HRA) borrowing
- Section 106 commuted sums
- Government grants or other funding sources

To streamline delivery:

- Property purchases up to £250,000 can be approved by senior officers.
- Acquisitions above £250,000 require Cabinet approval.

Strategic Impact
The policy enables the council to increase the supply of affordable housing more quickly than relying solely on new development. It also supports efforts to:

- Reduce homelessness and housing need
- Bring empty homes back into use
- Expand the council's housing portfolio and rental income
- Take a more proactive approach to management local affordable housing supply

6. Economic Growth and Town Centre Regeneration

6.1 Town centres play a pivotal role in shaping the economic future of the borough. As traditional retail patterns continue to shift, there is a clear need to reposition town centres as vibrant, mixed-use destinations that combine residential, commercial, leisure and community functions. Regeneration provides the opportunity to breathe new life into these areas—transforming underused or vacant spaces into places where people want to live, work and spend time.

6.2 Introducing new homes into town centres increases footfall, supports local businesses and helps to sustain a diverse and resilient local economy. At the same time, a stronger commercial and employment offer attracts investment, creates jobs and enhances the overall appeal of the borough. This integration of residential and commercial uses is fundamental to creating active, safe and thriving places throughout the day and evening.

6.3 By prioritising town centre regeneration, the Council can unlock the full potential of its urban centres, make more efficient use of land and infrastructure while supporting wider economic growth. A renewed focus on town centre living and activity will not only revitalise these areas but also contribute to long-term prosperity, stronger communities and a more sustainable pattern of development.

Bury Economic strategy 2024-2034[27]

6.4 The Bury Economic Strategy sets out a long-term vision for 2024–2034 to support a fairer, greener, competitive and resilient local economy that delivers successful places, people and businesses across the borough. It is framed as a key enabler of the wider Let's Do It! vision for tackling inequality and securing growth. Within this context, housing is recognised as part of the fabric of sustainable, prosperous places that attract residents, workers and investment.

6.5 A major focus of the strategy is on place — creating inclusive and prosperous environments where people choose to live, work and invest. Quality of life and the borough's appeal are explicitly referenced as part of the place ambition, with the strategy highlighting the value of improving town centres and built environments to support community wealth and economic vitality. This includes promoting vibrant mixed-use areas with residential elements that complement commercial and cultural activity.

6.6 The strategy also incorporates housing within the economic opportunities for the borough, identifying the need to increase the supply of new and affordable housing as a contribution to economic growth, town centre regeneration and attracting and retaining talent. Enhancing quality of life through good housing options is tied to strengthening the borough's offer as a place to live and work and enabling sustainable economic participation.

[27] Bury Economic Strategy - Bury Council

6.7 There is an emphasis on integrated delivery across economic development, infrastructure, planning and housing policy. Housing is positioned alongside other strategic levers — such as planning policy, town centre regeneration, and transport infrastructure — that collectively shape how growth is realised in place. This reflects an understanding that sufficient, good-quality housing underpins the borough's ability to grow its economy and support residents across different stages of life.

6.8 The strategy's evidence base also recognises demographic and lifestyle drivers, noting the importance of housing choices and quality in enabling Bury to attract and retain a diverse workforce and support sustained population growth. While housing is not a standalone theme, it appears as an integral element of creating successful places and supporting wider economic aims.

6.9 Bury Council is investing in a coordinated programme of town centre regeneration and place-based planning across the borough, responding to changing retail patterns and the need to strengthen the long-term vitality of its towns. The plans reviewed in this section demonstrate a shared ambition to reposition town centres as mixed-use places, with improved public realm, stronger community infrastructure and better connectivity.

6.10 Across these strategies, housing is consistently identified as a key driver of regeneration. New homes are expected to increase town centre vitality, support services and local businesses, and help address affordability pressures, while also creating more inclusive communities with a wider mix of housing types and tenures. The summaries below therefore focus on the housing implications of each plan, including delivery scale where stated, the types of homes proposed, and the priority issues for implementation.

Bury Town Centre Masterplan[28]

Bury town centre has retained its Purple Flag accreditation for over ten years, recognising its commitment to providing a safe, welcoming and vibrant evening and night-time experience for residents and visitors. The Purple Flag Scheme—similar to the Blue Flag for beaches—is a national accreditation that aims to raise standards and broaden the appeal of town and city centres from 5pm into the late evening, while maintaining high levels of safety and wellbeing.

Bury was the first town in Greater Manchester to achieve Purple Flag status in 2015, reflecting its strong blend of entertainment, dining and cultural attractions, alongside a clear commitment to creating a safe and welcoming visitor experience. The town has successfully retained the award each year since.

Continued investment will further enhance the town centre offer, including the new Casewell's venue at Bury Market and the planned redevelopment of the Mill Gate Shopping Centre. These sit alongside established attractions such as the East Lancashire Railway and Bury Art Museum. A growing events programme—including the annual Bury Food and Drink Festival, Comic Con, and the Shaun the

[28] Bury Town Centre Masterplan - Bury Council

Sheep Trail in 2026—continues to drive footfall and strengthen Bury's position as a vibrant destination.

6.11 The Bury Town Centre Masterplan sets out a long-term framework to 2040 to reposition the centre as a more diverse, mixed-use destination, with housing playing a central role in supporting activity, vibrancy and long-term sustainability. It promotes a shift away from a traditional retail-led model towards a broader mix of uses, including residential development, alongside improved connectivity, public realm and cultural and leisure provision. The Masterplan identifies the town centre as a key location for housing growth, with a significant proportion of the borough's overall housing need expected to be delivered in this area. It supports a mix of housing types and tenures, including higher-density apartment-led development, affordable housing and specialist provision, with the aim of attracting a wider range of households and supporting a more active, mixed community.

6.12 Since its adoption in 2022, the Masterplan has moved into an active delivery phase, with a number of major regeneration projects now underway. The £33m Bury Market regeneration scheme, including the new Flexi Hall, commenced on site in early 2025 and is expected to complete in 2026, representing the first phase of delivery. Alongside this, enabling works including demolition, site preparation and public realm improvements have been undertaken, helping to create the conditions for future development. The Masterplan is also supported by a wider pipeline of regeneration projects, including the transformation of the Mill Gate area and improvements to the transport interchange, which are expected to unlock further mixed-use and residential development over time. While significant housing delivery has yet to come forward at scale, these early interventions are laying the groundwork for future residential growth.

Bury Town Centre Regeneration Programme Phase 1 Masterplan

6.13 Building on the 2022 Town Centre Masterplan and subsequent work on Mill Gate, the Interchange, Pyramid Park, SOMA/Humphrey House and NORA, the updated Phase 1 programme marks a shift from a high-level framework towards a coordinated, delivery-focused regeneration programme. The focus is now on sequencing, decision-making, infrastructure planning and alignment with funding opportunities, ensuring that individual sites are treated as part of a single integrated programme rather than standalone projects.

6.14 To support this, the Council is commissioning a focused Phase 1 Masterplan. This will bring together existing masterplans, site studies and technical work into one coherent spatial and infrastructure framework. It will not replace the existing town centre vision, but will provide the next level of detail needed to support coordinated delivery, programme sequencing, funding decisions and future planning guidance. The masterplan will focus on how the key Phase 1 sites connect, what infrastructure is required, and how public realm, movement, active travel, utilities and enabling works need to be planned across the programme.

6.15 The next three to five years, from 2026 to 2029, are structured around a phased, decision-led approach, with 2026 identified as a critical mobilisation and pre-

development year. During this period, the priority will be to establish a robust evidence base, secure key decisions, particularly around residential development, and align schemes with Greater Manchester Combined Authority funding gateways. Early decisions on the role, scale and viability of housing are on the critical path to delivery, with the residential component of the Interchange identified as a key catalyst for the wider programme. A programme-wide residential strategy will therefore be developed to provide clarity on housing typologies, tenure mix and delivery models across sites.

6.16 Within this framework, the Interchange is identified as the primary catalyst site. A residential component is proposed, currently under review at around 50 to 100 homes, with key decisions required on scale, tenure and delivery. Market testing suggests that the site presents viability challenges in isolation, particularly for Build to Rent, but has stronger potential for affordable or mixed-tenure housing if delivered as part of a wider coordinated programme.

6.17 Mill Gate represents the largest and most complex opportunity within the town centre, with potential to deliver around 800 to 1,000 homes alongside commercial and town centre uses. Progressed through a joint venture with Bruntwood, it is expected to play a central role in residential-led regeneration and long-term town centre vitality, although governance, phasing and delivery arrangements will need to be clarified to unlock its full potential.

6.18 Pyramid Park is a council-owned brownfield site at the southern gateway to the town centre, adjacent to the Interchange and college, with potential to deliver around 150 homes. The site has secured funding for remediation and infrastructure, with enabling works approved in 2024 and completion anticipated in 2027/28. Across Pyramid Park and the former Q-Park sites, the wider opportunity could deliver more than 300 homes, alongside improved public realm, step-free connectivity, active travel links and access to green space.

6.19 SOMA/Humphrey House is a longer-term opportunity, with capacity for around 150 homes depending on density and design. The site has recently been masterplanned and is expected to come forward in phases, reflecting the need to manage parking provision for the surrounding retail core. NORA, adjacent to The Rock, represents a further longer-term opportunity, with potential for more than 400 homes alongside mixed-use development and public realm improvements. Surrounding areas such as Redvales also offer longer-term regeneration potential, particularly given proximity to the town centre and improved flood resilience following the Radcliffe and Redvales Flood Risk Management Scheme.

6.20 A key purpose of the Phase 1 Masterplan will be to ensure these sites contribute to a coherent set of high-quality, connected residential neighbourhoods. It will provide practical place-based guidance for individual sites, including expectations around density, public realm, green infrastructure, play and amenity space, active travel, climate resilience, and the character and identity of new development. This will help ensure that, although sites may be brought forward by different design and delivery teams, they contribute to a consistent and high-quality town centre environment.

6.21 Taken together, these sites form a coordinated development pipeline, with the Interchange acting as the early catalyst, Mill Gate as the principal long-term

regeneration engine, and Pyramid Park, SOMA/Humphrey House and NORA contributing to delivery over time. Their interdependencies reinforce the need for a programme-led approach to sequencing, funding and delivery, ensuring that housing growth, infrastructure investment, connectivity, active travel and public realm improvements are planned and delivered in an integrated way.

The proposed Housing offer

6.22 Alongside the spatial and delivery framework, a clear housing offer is emerging for Bury town centre, informed by market analysis, housing need and engagement with delivery partners. The overall approach is to deliver a balanced, mixed-tenure residential offer, with a strong emphasis on the private rented sector, alongside affordable and ownership products. Evidence indicates that Build to Rent (BtR) will form an important component of the town centre housing offer, reflecting strong and growing demand within Bury's private rented sector. However, the approach is not reliant on a single delivery model. Instead, a flexible, site-by-site approach is adopted, with delivery models tailored to reflect viability, site characteristics, social value priorities and local housing needs. Soft market testing has reinforced the importance of this flexibility, with BtR expected to play a role as part of a broader mixed-tenure strategy rather than as a dominant or standalone model.

6.23 This approach is supported by a diverse typology of housing, with a focus on higher-density, apartment-led development in core locations, complemented by townhouses and specialist accommodation where appropriate. Provision for older people, including extra care and supported housing, as well as housing for specific groups such as key workers and care leavers, is embedded within the overall strategy. This reflects both identified local needs and the role of the town centre as an accessible, service-rich environment.

6.24 Overall, this tenure and typology mix is expected to support a more demographically diverse and economically active town centre population. It is likely to appeal particularly to young professionals and working-age households, single people and couples, key workers and middle-income households, as well as older people seeking to downsize into accessible, well-located accommodation. Smaller numbers of families are also expected to be accommodated in locations where lower-density housing is appropriate. In doing so, the town centre will become a more balanced and sustainable residential location, increasing footfall and activity throughout the day and evening, supporting local businesses and services, and reinforcing the transition towards a vibrant, mixed-use centre. As families are attracted to live in Bury Town Centre, consideration is being given to family friendly spaces, play equipment as well as the wider culture offer.

Millgate Regeneration Framework[29]

6.25 The Mill Gate Regeneration Framework sets out a long-term plan to transform the shopping centre and surrounding area into a mixed-use town centre neighbourhood,

[29] Mill Gate regeneration framework - Bury Council

forming a key part of the wider Bury Town Centre Masterplan. It focuses on repurposing the existing retail-led environment into a more permeable and diverse place, introducing new homes alongside leisure, workspace and public realm improvements to support activity beyond traditional shopping hours and drive increased town centre vitality.

6.26 Since 2022, the council has taken a proactive role in enabling delivery, acquiring the Mill Gate estate in partnership with Bruntwood to secure control of around 15 acres of the town centre core and bring forward a coordinated regeneration programme. This intervention has been critical in moving beyond a purely policy-led approach, allowing the council to directly influence phasing, land assembly and delivery, and to position Mill Gate as a central component of the borough's wider regeneration strategy.

6.27 Progress has since moved from early consultation and framework development into an agreed regeneration strategy. Public engagement took place during 2023, culminating in the approval of the final Regeneration Framework in 2024. This establishes a clear vision for a new mixed-use urban quarter incorporating housing, workspace, leisure uses and enhanced public realm. The framework provides a robust spatial and design structure for the area and is expected to guide phased redevelopment, with individual planning applications coming forward over time in line with market conditions and delivery priorities.

6.28 From a housing perspective, the framework represents one of the most significant opportunities in the borough, with proposals indicating capacity for around 800 homes as part of the wider redevelopment. This scale of delivery has the potential to make a substantial contribution to town centre living, supporting increased footfall, local services and the diversification of the town centre economy. Housing is expected to be delivered as part of a mixed-tenure offer, contributing to a balanced and inclusive community.

6.29 However, delivery remains at an early stage, with no major residential phases yet underway. The project is therefore transitioning from strategic planning into a long-term delivery programme, with development expected to come forward incrementally over a number of phases. Progress will be influenced by viability, funding availability and market appetite, as well as the need to coordinate redevelopment with the continued operation of the existing shopping centre.

Prestwich Village Regeneration[30]

6.30 The Your Prestwich proposals set out a major regeneration of the Longfield Centre site, intended to create a revitalised village centre with a new community hub (including a library and flexible community space), a new village square for events and markets, and new retail/leisure uses. A key enabling element is a new multi-storey "travel hub" (parking) located away from the core of the centre, aiming to

[30] Home - Your Prestwich

reduce congestion and create a more walkable, people-focused environment. The scheme is planned to come forward in phases, with the town centre and community facilities delivered first and housing following in later phases.

6.31 From a housing perspective, the plans indicate delivery of 210 new homes the latest masterplan updates proposing to increase this to 248 homes, framed explicitly as "homes for all" with a mix of sizes and tenures, including affordable housing and homes suited to different life stages (such as first-time buyers, families and downsizers). The housing element is therefore positioned not just as additional supply, but as a tool to support wider town centre renewal—bringing more residents into the centre to support local businesses and activity throughout the day and evening, while also helping address affordability pressures.

6.32 For housing priorities, the key requirements will be: ensuring the affordable housing offer is meaningful (both in volume and type), securing a genuinely balanced mix (including accessible/age-friendly options), and making sure delivery is not pushed too far back behind the enabling infrastructure. There is also an opportunity to align the housing component with wider priorities around sustainable design and low running costs, and to ensure the scheme strengthens inclusion—so regeneration does not unintentionally displace lower-income households or reduce access to the village centre.

6.33 Since the initial "Your Prestwich" proposals were developed, Bury Council has moved the scheme into the delivery phase, with the regeneration being implemented through a joint venture between Bury Council and Muse Places Ltd (Prestwich Regeneration LLP). The partnership was established to bring forward the comprehensive redevelopment of the Longfield Centre site and surrounding area.

6.34 The project has progressed to the first delivery phase, centred on the construction of the Prestwich Travel Hub, a multi-storey car park located off Fairfax Road. Cabinet approved up to £14 million of capital funding for this phase in 2024, alongside the legal and procurement arrangements needed to appoint developers and contractors.

6.35 Construction of the Travel Hub is now underway. The facility will provide around 300 parking spaces with EV charging and cycle storage, and is designed to replace parking currently located within the Longfield Centre site. This is intended to free up central areas of the village for redevelopment and create a more pedestrian-friendly environment. Completion of the Travel Hub is expected around 2026.

6.36 The Council is also progressing procurement for an external operator to manage the Travel Hub once complete, as operating large multi-storey parking facilities is not currently a core function of the Council.

6.37 Once the Travel Hub is completed, the scheme will move on to the redevelopment of the Longfield Centre and wider village core. This phase is expected to include:

- a new community hub (including a library, adult learning and community services)
- new retail and leisure space
- a market hall and improved public realm

- enhanced pedestrian connections and green spaces

6.38 These elements are expected to begin once replacement parking is operational and demolition of the existing centre can take place.

Ramsbottom Town Centre Plan[31]

6.39 The Ramsbottom Town Centre Plan (2022) provides a long-term framework to support the town's continued success as a high-quality residential and visitor destination. It focuses on enhancing public realm, improving movement and connectivity, and addressing issues such as congestion and parking, rather than driving large-scale housing growth. Housing plays a more indirect role, with improvements to the town centre intended to support Ramsbottom's attractiveness as a place to live, particularly for residents and hybrid workers.

6.40 Since adoption, activity has focused on early-stage project development and enabling work. The Plan has been established as a material planning consideration to guide future investment and development, with individual proposals requiring further design, feasibility and funding before implementation.

6.41 Progress to date includes feasibility work on a proposed enterprise centre at Market Chambers and Civic Hall, supported by external funding, alongside the development of proposals for public space improvements and pedestrianisation within the town centre. In parallel, transport and connectivity schemes are being taken forward through the Streets for All programme, aimed at improving walking, cycling and the overall quality of the town centre environment.

6.42 Overall, delivery in Ramsbottom remains at an early stage, with activity focused on developing projects, securing funding and improving the public realm. Unlike Radcliffe, there is limited evidence of significant housing delivery directly linked to the plan to date, with the emphasis instead on strengthening the town centre as a place to live, which may support incremental residential development over time.

Whitefield Town centre Plan[32]

6.43 The Whitefield Town Centre Plan provides a 10-year framework to guide regeneration, setting out a vision to create a more vibrant, liveable and people-focused town centre. It responds to structural changes in the high street and aims to reposition Whitefield through improvements to public realm, connectivity and the overall mix of uses, supported by a stronger role for the local community in shaping delivery.

6.44 The Plan identifies a series of priority sites and interventions, including opportunities for redevelopment around the former town hall, library and Uplands area, alongside smaller infill opportunities such as garage sites. Housing forms part of this approach,

[31] Ramsbottom Town Centre Plan - Bury Council

[32] Whitefield Town Centre Plan - Bury Council

particularly through higher-density development on previously developed land and smaller-scale schemes that improve place quality.

6.45 Progress to date has primarily focused on early-stage delivery and enabling activity. The Plan was adopted in 2025 following extensive consultation, and initial projects are now being taken forward, including public realm improvements and enhancement works at locations such as Victoria Park and key junctions along Bury New Road, supported by external funding. These early interventions are intended to improve the environment, strengthen the town centre offer and build momentum for longer-term redevelopment opportunities.

Radcliffe Regeneration[33]

6.46 The Radcliffe Strategic Regeneration Framework (SRF) provides a long-term plan to reposition Radcliffe, with a strong focus on revitalising the town centre and using housing as a key driver of change. It identifies new homes as central to regeneration, both to meet local need and to support a more active and sustainable town centre, particularly by attracting younger households and increasing footfall.

6.47 Since the SRF was published, regeneration has moved into delivery, with a number of major projects underway. The £40m Radcliffe Hub is now under construction and will act as a central anchor for the town centre, alongside wider investment in education, public services and the local environment. These interventions are intended to create the conditions for private investment and new housing development to follow.

6.48 Housing delivery is now progressing across a range of sites. There are multiple schemes either under construction, about to start or in planning, demonstrating a shift from strategy to implementation. Key sites include the former East Lancs Paper Mill (around 400 homes), School Street (around 90 family homes, including affordable housing) and Green Street (over 100 apartments, largely affordable), alongside a wider pipeline of brownfield sites across the town.

6.49 The East Lancashire Paper Mill site in Radcliffe represents the largest brownfield housing opportunity in the borough, with plans for around 400 homes, including 100 affordable units. The site was acquired by Homes England in 2024, which is working in partnership with Morris Homes to deliver the scheme. Planning approval was secured in 2025, with remediation works starting in autumn 2025 and the first homes expected from late 2026. The overall development is anticipated to complete by 2034.

Redcliffe

6.50 Radcliffe has been a major focus for housing-led regeneration within the borough. These schemes form a central component of the Radcliffe Strategic Regeneration Framework (SRF) and reflect the Council's 'brownfield first' approach—prioritising

[33] Radcliffe regeneration - Bury Council

the redevelopment of long-term vacant and underused sites to support housing delivery, town centre renewal and wider economic growth.

6.51 Collectively, these developments are transforming previously derelict or underutilised land, reducing ongoing maintenance liabilities for the Council while generating new council tax revenues, supporting local services and increasing residential catchment to sustain the town centre.

Overview of Key Schemes

6.52 Housing delivery in Radcliffe has largely been driven through four principal sites:

Green Street (132 homes)

This town centre gateway site, formerly the location of Radcliffe Baths (demolished in 2016), is being redeveloped to deliver 132 apartments alongside 13,000 sq ft of commercial space. The scheme provides a mix of tenures including social rent, rent to buy and private rent, with a significant proportion of homes supporting those on the Bury Housing Register.

6.53 The development plays an important placemaking role within the SRF, combining residential and commercial uses to increase footfall and economic activity. Notably, the scheme will also accommodate the relocation of Watson Homes' headquarters into Radcliffe, bringing approximately 40 jobs into the town centre and reinforcing investor confidence.

School Street (Scholar's Park) (c.90 homes)

Delivered on the former Riverside School site, this scheme provides approximately 90 family homes, including a mix of 3- and 4-bedroom properties for open market sale and affordable provision. The redevelopment of this long-standing brownfield site has been supported through brownfield funding to address viability challenges and enable delivery.

6.54 The scheme aligns with regeneration objectives by introducing high-quality family housing, helping to attract and retain households in Radcliffe and increasing demand for local services and amenities.

6.55 East Lancashire Paper Mill (ELPM) (c.400 homes)

The ELPM site represents the largest and most strategically significant housing opportunity in Radcliffe. This long-derelict 21-hectare site is being brought forward through a partnership approach between the Council and Homes England, with capacity for around 400 homes, including affordable housing, alongside new open space and replacement sports facilities.

6.56 The site has been subject to extensive de-risking and masterplanning work over several years to enable comprehensive redevelopment. A reserved matters application was approved in 2025, with construction expected to commence from 2026/27.

6.57 An initial phase of development has already been delivered on the 'Island Site', providing 27 affordable homes, demonstrating early progress in unlocking this complex site.

York Street (Irwell View) (211 homes)

This scheme delivers 211 build-to-rent family homes on a previously disused brownfield site. The development provides a mix of 2, 3 and 4-bedroom houses and has been supported through significant Brownfield Housing Fund investment.

6.58 The build-to-rent model diversifies the local housing offer, meeting demand from households seeking flexibility while contributing to the overall scale of delivery in Radcliffe.

Northern Gateway Heywood / Pilsworth (JPA1.1)

6.59 The Northern Gateway Development Framework sets out a long-term vision for a strategically significant, employment-led development within Greater Manchester's Atom Valley growth area. At its core, the framework is about delivering transformational economic growth—positioning the site as a major hub for advanced manufacturing, logistics and innovation, with the potential to attract national and international investment. This economic focus is fundamental to the scheme, with the delivery of substantial employment floorspace and the creation of high-quality jobs forming the primary driver of development. Housing, while important, plays a complementary role within this wider growth agenda.

6.60 The development is planned as a primarily employment-led scheme delivered over approximately 20 years, combining employment uses with new homes, supporting infrastructure and community facilities. Around 1,200 homes are proposed across the site (comprising of around 1,000 new homes in Rochdale at South Heywood and around 200 new homes in Bury off Castle Road). This reflects a clear intention to create sustainable communities where people can live close to employment opportunities, supported by local services, schools and local centres.

6.61 A defining feature of the framework is its emphasis on infrastructure-led development. The scale of growth proposed requires significant investment in transport, utilities and social infrastructure, with a strong focus on ensuring that delivery is coordinated and phased appropriately. The site benefits from a highly accessible location at the intersection of the M60, M62 and M66 motorways, and proposals include new and improved junctions, enhanced public transport provision and a comprehensive network for walking and cycling. This approach reflects a wider ambition to prioritise sustainable movement and improve connectivity between new development, surrounding communities and key employment areas.

6.62 The framework also places considerable weight on the creation of vibrant mixed-use centres that act as focal points for both workers and residents. These hubs are intended to accommodate a range of uses—including retail, leisure, community services and transport interchanges—providing essential amenities and reinforcing a sense of place. They are designed to support the day-to-day needs of the population while also contributing to the attractiveness and competitiveness of the site as a business location.

6.63 Environmental sustainability and landscape integration are central to the development approach. The framework adopts a landscape-led strategy that seeks to retain and enhance existing natural features, including woodlands, hedgerows and

watercourses, and to embed these within a connected network of green and blue infrastructure. This supports biodiversity, mitigates environmental impacts and contributes to the overall quality of the development. In addition, there is a strong emphasis on sustainable design and construction, with expectations around energy efficiency, water management and climate resilience.

Overall, the Northern Gateway Development Framework represents a large-scale, strategic intervention aimed at reshaping the economic geography of the area. It is not simply an employment development, but an important strategic opportunity to deliver unprecedented investment, jobs, homes and community benefits. It will enable the delivery of a large, nationally significant employment opportunity to attract high quality businesses and investment on the M62 corridor coupled with a significant number of new homes and supporting services and facilities.

7. Bringing Long Term Empty Homes Back Into Use

Bringing Empty Homes Back into Use

- Contributed to the delivery of Bury's Empty Property Strategy, addressing long-term vacant homes through engagement, enforcement and acquisition where necessary.
- Supported re-use of empty dwellings to increase supply, reduce neighbourhood blight and mitigate homelessness pressures.

7.1 Vacancy levels across Bury are relatively modest but still represent a notable component of the housing stock. The borough has around 85,000 dwellings, of which approximately 2,558 are vacant, equating to a vacancy rate of 3.0%, slightly above the national average of 2.8%. Of these 1,600 are long term privately owned empty properties (empty for 6 months or more)

7.2 Bury's *Empty Property Strategy*[34] frames the continued rise in long-term empty homes as part of the borough's broader housing challenge, including shortages of affordable housing and growing numbers of families in temporary accommodation. Empty properties are described as a wasted housing resource that deteriorates more quickly than occupied homes, blights neighbourhoods, can contribute to crime and anti-social behaviour, and negatively impacts local property markets and community wellbeing.

7.3 The strategy identifies that the majority of long-term empty homes in the borough are privately owned, and that many remain vacant due to issues such as sale or letting difficulties, probate delays, financial constraints for owners, or land-banking. It emphasises that, although bringing empty properties back into use will not solve overall housing shortages, it plays a role in increasing available housing and relieving pressure on affordable housing supply.

7.4 Strategic priorities are set out under three main headings:

- Preventing homes from becoming long-term empty, including recording, monitoring and early engagement with owners, use of incentives and council tax premiums, and tailored action plans.
- Reducing the number of long-term empty properties, including risk assessment, prioritisation of properties vacant more than two years, targeted action to make best use of existing stock, and improvements to low-carbon standards.
- Minimising negative community impacts by prioritising enforcement where appropriate, improving neighbourhood amenity and visual appearance, tackling anti-social behaviour, and reclaiming costs associated with direct works or legal action where possible.

[34] Empty property strategy - Bury Council

7.5 The strategy highlights the housing benefits of bringing empty properties back into use, such as increasing the supply of available homes (including for those homeless or threatened with homelessness), contributing to a healthier private rented sector, supporting neighbourhood pride and economic vitality, and improving safety and environmental quality. It also notes the use of council tax premiums and other financial mechanisms to discourage prolonged vacancy and encourage reoccupation.

7.6 The Strategy will be refreshed shortly with similar objectives.

7.7 At an operational level, the service is largely reactive, with activity primarily driven by complaints about nuisance properties. This reflects current resource constraints, which limit the ability to proactively identify and target empty homes across the borough. Addressing this will be important, and plans to increase capacity provide an opportunity to adopt a more proactive and targeted approach over time.

7.8 The single biggest barrier is probate, which is significantly constraining progress. Where a property owner has died, homes can remain empty for long periods while legal ownership is resolved. During this time, enforcement options are extremely limited—particularly if the property is not causing a nuisance.

7.9 Despite these challenges, there are some positive developments and tools in place. The council has secured around £414,000 of GMCA funding, which will fund two additional officers and resources to bring empty homes back into use, with a target of delivering 16 homes in the next year.

7.10 The council is also using a mix of delivery and enforcement mechanisms, including loans, lease-and-repair schemes, community protection warnings (CPWs), community protection notices (CPNs), and enforced sales where debt exists. CPWs act as an initial warning to address issues, with CPNs used where problems persist and are having a detrimental impact on the local area.

7.11 The council has also been successful in utilising £1.6m of Section 106 funding to purchase and refurbish long-term empty homes for temporary accommodation and general housing. This demonstrates that empty homes are already being used as a practical source of additional affordable housing supply, not just a policy issue.

Bury Lease and Repair Scheme

7.12 Bury Council operates a Lease and Repair Scheme as part of its approach to bringing empty homes back into use and increasing the supply of good-quality housing. The scheme works by partnering with private landlords who have properties that are vacant or in need of improvement. In return for leasing their property to the Council for a fixed period, landlords benefit from a guaranteed rental income and support to bring the property up to a lettable standard.

7.13 Under the scheme, the Council leases properties for a period typically ranging from three to seven years, although to date agreements have generally been for up to five years. During the lease period, the Council takes on responsibility for managing the property and allocating it to households in housing need, helping to reduce local housing pressures while making use of otherwise underutilised homes.

7.14 A key feature of the scheme is the potential to support necessary repairs or improvements to bring empty properties back into use. While the Council is still developing its approach to providing loans for this purpose—including determining appropriate funding levels—this element is intended to remove financial barriers for landlords and accelerate the reoccupation of long-term empty homes.

7.15 The scheme was introduced in 2023, with the first property becoming operational in December 2024. Current delivery includes a small but growing portfolio, with four properties secured to date—comprising two HMOs and two family homes—and a further eight properties in the pipeline. As the scheme develops, it is expected to play an increasingly important role in tackling empty homes and expanding the range of housing options available in Bury. The Council is currently developing a loan offer for owners of empty properties to support bringing them back into use.

Case Study 1: Radcliffe

The property had remained vacant following probate after the owner passed away. As an ex-council home located within an area of existing managed stock, it was considered a strong strategic acquisition. Prolonged vacancy created risks of deterioration and anti-social behaviour. The Council acquired the property using Section 106 (S106) commuted sums and undertook a full refurbishment to bring it up to lettable standard in line with existing council housing stock.

- Cost (S106 funded):
- Purchase: £90,000
- Refurbishment: £30,661.38
- Fees (valuation, legal, negotiation): £3,305.00
- Total: £123,966.38

(Note: Homes England grant funding of £45,000 was sought but not secured.)

Outcome

Property brought back into active use as temporary accommodation

Now housing a family awaiting allocation on the housing register

Reduced risk of vandalism, squatting, and neighbourhood decline

Asset now aligned with wider council stock standards

Case Study 2: Greenmount / Ramsbottom

Status prior to intervention: Empty for over 6 months; hoarded and in poor internal condition The property became vacant following the death of the owners and had deteriorated significantly due to hoarding. Its layout and location made it suitable for older or disabled residents—an identified area of high demand.

Acquired and refurbished using S106 funding to deliver an adapted, accessible home within an established council-owned area.

- Cost (S106 funded):
- Purchase: £55,000
- Refurbishment: £48,575.24
- Fees (incl. stamp duty): £2,310.00
- Total: £105,885.24

(Homes England grant funding was explored but unavailable.)

Outcome

Returned to use as housing for a vulnerable household

Contributes to specialist housing supply (accessible homes)

Prevents ongoing deterioration and anti-social behaviour

Supports demand pressures for adapted accommodation

8. Council Housing

8.1 Bury Council is now directly responsible for managing its housing stock following the return of services from Six Town Housing, its former Arm's Length Management Organisation (ALMO), in 2024. This transition marked a significant shift, bringing housing management back in-house and giving the Council full control over landlord services, performance and strategic direction.

8.2 The move in-house provides a stronger platform to align housing services with wider corporate priorities, neighbourhood working and prevention, as well as improving accountability and oversight. It also creates an opportunity to reset services and ensure they are more responsive to the needs and experiences of tenants.

8.3 The Council owns around 7,700 social rented homes across the borough. The stock is predominantly made up of smaller properties, with relatively limited supply of larger family homes. At the same time, demand for council housing remains high, with over 2,000 households on the Housing Register and particular pressure on family-sized accommodation.

8.4 Since bringing services back in-house, the Council has focused on understanding its current position and identifying where improvements are needed. This has included external challenge through a Management of Change inspection, alongside listening carefully to tenant feedback and complaints. Together, this has provided a clear evidence base to shape service improvement.

8.5 This work has highlighted a number of priority areas where the Council will strengthen its approach, including improving service quality and responsiveness, strengthening governance and oversight, enhancing communication with tenants, and increasing opportunities for residents to influence decisions.

8.6 Overall, the transition back in-house represents an important opportunity to strengthen the Council's role as landlord—focusing on delivering better services, rebuilding trust with tenants, and ensuring that housing plays a central role in supporting thriving neighbourhoods.

Housing Revenue Account (HRA) and Financial Sustainability

8.7 Bury Council has recently refreshed its 30-year Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Business Plan as part of the 2026/27 budget-setting process. The HRA is a ring-fenced account that funds the management, maintenance and improvement of the Council's housing stock, primarily through rental income. It provides the long-term financial framework to ensure council housing remains safe, well-managed and sustainable under the self-financing system.

8.8 The updated Business Plan sets out a clear picture of the financial pressures facing the housing service. Rising costs, increasing regulatory requirements, and the scale of investment needed to maintain and improve existing homes are placing significant and growing strain on resources. The Council must balance the need to keep homes affordable for tenants with the requirement to invest in safety, quality, compliance and decarbonisation.

8.9 The plan highlights a number of long-term risks, including increasing borrowing requirements to fund capital investment, rising costs associated with building safety and damp and mould remediation, and wider economic pressures such as inflation, interest rates and construction costs. Without intervention, these pressures could impact the long-term financial sustainability of the HRA, with projections indicating rising debt levels and potential cash flow challenges over the life of the plan.

8.10 In response, the Council is taking a proactive and pragmatic approach. The focus is not on reducing ambition, but on strengthening financial resilience and ensuring that resources are used as effectively as possible to protect homes, support tenants, and sustain investment over the long term.

8.11 This means a renewed focus on efficiency, value for money, and strengthening the evidence base that underpins investment decisions. Currently, the Council lacks a fully coordinated property data platform to support strategic investment planning and net zero ambitions. A stock condition survey has been underway since 2022 and the council has stock data on 88% of its stock. This will increase to 100% and will have a 20% rolling programme each year to ensure this information remains current.

8.12 Alongside this, key priorities include:

- Improving income collection from rents and service charges to strengthen financial stability
- Driving service efficiency and ensuring resources are targeted where they have the greatest impact
- Strengthening procurement and contract management to secure better value
- Using asset management data more effectively to prioritise investment and avoid unnecessary costs
- Refocusing the capital programme to align investment with priorities and long-term viability
- Assessing the long-term sustainability of housing assets to inform future investment decisions

Maximising Rental Income to Invest in Homes and Services

8.13 Bury Council recognises that strong and consistent rent collection is fundamental to sustaining high-quality homes and services for current and future tenants. The income collected through rent is reinvested directly into maintaining, improving and managing council homes, ensuring they remain safe, well-managed and fit for the future.

8.14 The Council recognises that where rent is not paid consistently, this limits the resources available to invest in homes and services, and is therefore committed to a more proactive and consistent approach to collection.

8.15 At the heart of this approach is a clear and shared understanding that paying rent contributes to the quality and sustainability of homes and neighbourhoods, both now and for future generations. Strengthening this approach will support a more

sustainable housing service where everyone benefits from well-maintained homes and effective services.

8.16 At the same time, Bury will continue to provide support to tenants who may be struggling to pay. This includes early engagement, access to advice and financial support, and a focus on helping tenants sustain their tenancies.

8.17 This balanced approach will:

- Ensure rental income is maximised to reinvest in homes and services
- Support long-term investment in safe, high-quality housing
- Provide early help to prevent arrears from escalating
- Promote fairness and consistency in how rent is managed
- Support tenants to successfully sustain their tenancies

8.18 Through this, Bury will strengthen its ability to invest in homes, support residents, and provide a sustainable housing service that benefits current and future communities. (Plan to be shared in April)

Asset Management Strategy

8.19 The Council's housing stock must provide safe, affordable and quality homes for current and future generations, supported by sustained and well-managed investment to ensure properties remain compliant, well-maintained and fit for purpose over the long term. Strategic asset management provides the framework to manage this investment effectively, ensuring resources are used efficiently and deliver long-term value.

8.20 A clear and up-to-date understanding of stock condition sits at the heart of this approach. Robust and reliable data provides the evidence base to identify priorities, manage risk and plan interventions, enabling a coordinated and sustainable long-term investment programme. This reflects best practice, where a detailed understanding of assets underpins effective decision-making and investment planning.

8.21 This evidence-led and coordinated approach forms the basis of a comprehensive Asset Management Strategy, setting out the long-term vision, priorities and investment requirements for the housing stock. Such a strategy provides a clear framework for how assets will be maintained, improved and, where necessary, reconfigured to ensure their ongoing viability and performance.

8.22 Investment is therefore planned and managed in a strategic, proactive and coordinated way. This includes a stronger focus on preventative maintenance, ensuring works are prioritised effectively, delivered efficiently and aligned to long-term asset performance and value for money. Through this approach, the Council can protect the value of its housing stock, maintain high standards of safety and quality, and secure better outcomes for residents over the long term.

8.23 Through the development of this strategy, Bury will:

- Strengthen its evidence base on stock condition and investment requirements

- Clearly identify and prioritise current and future investment needs
- Plan and programme investment in a sustainable and strategic way
- Target resources effectively to maximise impact and value

8.24 This approach will ensure that investment is aligned with priorities, supports the long-term sustainability of the housing stock, and delivers high-quality homes for residents through a more proactive, data-driven asset management model.

Using Evidence to Drive Investment and Improve Homes

8.25 Strengthening the use of data and intelligence is fundamental to improving the effectiveness, efficiency and long-term sustainability of Bury Council's housing service. High-quality, accessible data enables the Council to better understand its housing stock, the condition of homes, and the needs of the people who live in them—providing a robust foundation for informed, transparent and defensible decision making.

8.26 Historically, the Council has not had a fully comprehensive or integrated data environment to support strategic planning and investment decisions. This has limited its ability to accurately assess stock condition, forecast future investment needs, and target resources where they will have the greatest impact. As a result, there is a risk of reactive decision making, inefficiencies in investment, and unforeseen pressures within the capital programme.

8.27 This challenge is particularly important in the context of significant and growing investment pressures. The Council has committed approximately £60 million over the next three years to meet the Decent Homes Standard, alongside a further £17 million for sustainability improvements. However, this level of investment does not fully reflect the scale of longer-term pressures, including potential changes to the Decent Homes Standard and the substantial costs associated with improving energy efficiency. Nationally, achieving EPC C across all social housing by 2030 represents a major challenge, requiring extensive retrofit and sustained funding. On current trajectories, this target is unlikely to be achieved across the Council's stock without further investment and a step change in delivery.

8.28 In response, the Council is taking steps to strengthen its evidence base and move towards a more intelligence-led approach. The stock condition survey currently underway will provide a critical baseline, offering a more complete and consistent understanding of the condition, performance and future requirements of the housing stock. Alongside this, there is a growing recognition of the need to better integrate data on homes with intelligence about tenants, including demographics, vulnerabilities and support needs. Bringing these together will support a more holistic, person-centred approach to housing management and investment.

8.29 A key enabler of this transformation is the ongoing upgrade to QL, the Council's housing management system. QL is a core platform used to manage housing services, including rents, repairs, assets and compliance. Once embedded, the upgraded system will support improved reporting on Decent Homes compliance and energy performance, and enable stronger links between compliance activity, repairs

and maintenance, and capital investment programmes. This should reduce unexpected works and improve the accuracy and reliability of long-term investment planning.

8.30 Improved data and intelligence will directly inform how the Council plans and invests in its housing stock. This includes taking a more strategic approach to independent living and extra care housing, ensuring that investment and service provision are aligned with resident needs. Data will support a clearer understanding of how existing schemes are performing, whether they remain fit for purpose, and how they should be positioned in the future.

8.31 This will enable more effective matching of homes to residents, with stronger alignment between building design, levels of support and the needs of occupants. In some cases, this may require refocusing schemes—for example, from extra care to independent living, or from sheltered housing to supported accommodation—to better reflect demand and promote independence.

8.32 Data will also support more targeted responses to specific stock issues. For example, at Eaton Hill Flats, where there are known quality concerns, improved intelligence will help identify the most appropriate solutions to improve quality and living conditions, ensuring homes are safe and fit for purpose.

8.33 Overall, strengthening the use of data will enable Bury Council to:

- Make informed decisions about where and how to invest
- Ensure housing schemes are being used in the most appropriate way
- Respond effectively to quality issues in specific buildings
- Develop clear, targeted plans for the future of its housing stock

A Social Housing Delivery Strategy

8.34 Bury Council is developing a Social Housing Delivery Strategy to support a more ambitious and coordinated approach to increasing the supply, quality and long-term sustainability of social housing across the borough. This will sit alongside the Council's wider long-term plan to regenerate priority sites and make better use of land and assets where the Council owns stock, controls underused land, or is well placed to masterplan and assemble opportunities for delivery.

8.35 Estate performance varies significantly across the borough. While some neighbourhoods are sustainable and require limited intervention, others experience a combination of social, physical, environmental and asset-related challenges that affect long-term viability and residents' quality of life. Improved stock condition data, neighbourhood intelligence and asset performance information will be used to support clear decisions about the future of homes and estates, including where investment, improvement, repurposing or regeneration is the most appropriate response.

8.36 The Social Housing Delivery Strategy will provide a framework for identifying where the Council can do more to deliver new and better homes. This will include opportunities to make more effective use of existing land and buildings, particularly

where sites are underused, inefficient, or capable of supporting additional housing. The approach will include:

- Repurposing underused or inefficient sites
- Infill development within existing estates
- Demolition and redevelopment where homes no longer have a sustainable long-term future
- Reconfiguration of existing buildings to better meet current and future housing need
- Masterplanning larger or more complex sites to create coordinated regeneration and delivery opportunities
- Using Council-owned land and assets to increase the supply of social and affordable housing

8.37 Where existing homes no longer meet residents' needs or are not sustainable in their current form, estate regeneration will be considered as a key solution. This will focus on replacing poor-quality or unsuitable homes with new, high-quality housing that is better designed, more energy efficient and aligned with modern standards. Regeneration will also provide opportunities to improve estate layout, public realm, environmental quality and community safety, while increasing the overall number of homes where this is viable and appropriate.

8.38 The Council will explore a range of delivery routes to bring forward these opportunities, including direct delivery, Registered Provider-led schemes, mixed-tenure regeneration, joint ventures and partnerships with private sector developers. A key principle will be the use of cross-subsidy, where appropriate, to improve site viability, reduce reliance on the Housing Revenue Account, and support the creation of mixed-tenure communities with a broader range of housing types. The Council will also consider establishing a long-term delivery partnership, procured through an appropriate formal framework, to provide additional capacity, expertise and continuity alongside existing partners.

8.39 Over the lifetime of the strategy, the Council will work towards having a clear plan for all of its housing stock and associated land assets. This will ensure that each estate, site or group of homes has a defined future direction, whether that is continued investment, targeted improvement, repurposing, infill development or wider regeneration. The Social Housing Delivery Strategy will therefore provide the mechanism for aligning asset decisions, housing need, regeneration priorities and delivery capacity, helping the Council to grow its social housing stock while improving outcomes for existing and future residents.

Partnership Working and Maximising the Value of Council Homes

8.40 Bury Council will take a joined-up, partnership-led approach to ensure its housing stock delivers the greatest possible benefit for residents and the wider system. By working closely across council services and with key partners, the Council will

maximise the role of housing in improving outcomes while making more efficient use of resources.

8.41 A key priority is strengthening alignment between housing, adult social care and wider "Team Bury" services. By coordinating support and housing provision more effectively, the Council can reduce demand on more costly interventions, particularly specialist housing and temporary accommodation. For example, enabling households to move into suitable council homes more quickly can reduce reliance on temporary accommodation, delivering both financial savings and more stable, secure housing outcomes.

8.42 The Council will also ensure that tenants are better connected to the Live Well offer in Bury, enabling them to access timely and coordinated support that helps them remain independent, sustain their tenancies, and improve their overall wellbeing. This will support residents to manage their health, finances and day-to-day needs more effectively, reduce social isolation, and build stronger connections within their communities.

8.43 By strengthening this link, tenants will be better equipped to maintain stable tenancies, avoid crisis situations, and live well in their homes for longer. This approach will lead to improved quality of life for residents, while also reducing demand on higher-cost services by intervening earlier and more effectively.

Safety and compliance

8.44 Bury's Housing Repairs & Maintenance Service is currently undergoing a significant period of review, stabilisation, and transformation following several years of organisational change and inconsistent delivery. Since 2023, the service has experienced sustained disruption, including reliance on interim leadership, which has contributed to variable performance, fragmented processes, and delays in addressing long-standing issues.

8.45 The recent appointment of a permanent Head of Repairs & Maintenance marks a key turning point, providing stronger leadership and a clear direction for improvement. A comprehensive, service-wide review is now underway, covering responsive repairs, voids, compliance-related works, and out-of-hours services. The overarching aim is to establish a modern, efficient, and tenant-focused repairs service that meets strengthened regulatory expectations, including Awaab's Law, the Housing Ombudsman's Complaint Handling Code, and the Regulator of Social Housing's consumer standards.

8.46 Key challenges identified through the review include:

- Inconsistent performance and oversight: Weak and variable performance management, with limited ability to monitor productivity or identify risks.
- Poor data quality: Inaccurate or inconsistent repair data, affecting job prioritisation, reporting, and decision-making.
- High levels of repeat repairs: Variability in diagnostics and job scoping leading to avoidable follow-on visits and reduced first-time fix rates.

- Inefficient scheduling and resource use: Misalignment between job requirements, operative skills, and geographic routing.
- Customer experience issues: Complaints relating to missed appointments, repeat visits, and poor communication.
- Voids and compliance pressures: Inconsistent void standards and the need for stronger assurance on compliance-related repairs, particularly damp and mould in line with Awaab's Law.
- Supply chain and materials issues: Problems with van stock and materials availability, contributing to delays and inefficiencies.

8.47 A structured improvement and transformation programme is in progress to address these issues. This includes:

- Developing a consistent operating model to standardise processes, expectations, and accountability across the service
- Delivering a data cleansing programme to establish reliable performance and compliance baselines
- Introducing improved diagnostics and scheduling systems to reduce repeat visits and increase efficiency
- Strengthening workforce supervision and productivity management
- Improving customer communication and satisfaction monitoring
- Standardising voids processes and compliance pathways
- Reviewing supply chain and materials management to improve availability and reduce delays

8.48 The focus over 2025–26 is on stabilising core operations and delivering a phased transformation programme that will improve performance, ensure regulatory compliance, and deliver better outcomes for tenants.

8.49 Significant progress has been made in strengthening compliance and repairs services, including improvements in processes, performance monitoring and the management of historic repair backlogs. Data quality is being enhanced to provide greater visibility and support more effective decision-making, while expanded direct labour is helping to reduce reliance on subcontractors, improve responsiveness and deliver better value.

8.50 Damp and mould remains a core operational focus, with strengthened processes in place and further work underway to ensure a robust and effective response in line with evolving requirements, including Awaab's Law.

8.51 While progress has been made, the Council recognises that there is more to do, particularly in addressing outstanding areas such as electrical safety and fire risk assessments. These will continue to be prioritised to ensure full compliance and assurance across all homes.

Strengthening Tenant Voice and Influence

8.52 Bury Council has developed a wide range of opportunities for tenants to share their views and get involved in housing services. This provides a strong foundation for engagement across the borough. The Council's priority now is to build on this and ensure that tenant involvement goes beyond participation, to delivering meaningful influence over decisions, services and outcomes.

8.53 The focus will be on strengthening how tenant feedback directly shapes services. While surveys, forums, home visits and community activities provide valuable insight, the Council will ensure there are clear mechanisms in place to demonstrate how tenant views lead to change, improvement and accountability.

8.54 This means moving from engagement to influence—ensuring tenants have a stronger, more visible role in shaping housing services, policies and priorities. The Tenant Voice Forum, resident groups and targeted engagement with specific communities will continue to play an important role, but with a renewed emphasis on impact and outcomes.

8.55 The Council will prioritise investment in developing and strengthening these mechanisms, including:

- Creating clearer routes for tenant feedback to inform decision-making
- Demonstrating how tenant input leads to tangible service improvements
- Strengthening scrutiny and challenge from tenants
- Ensuring a diverse range of voices are heard, including underrepresented groups
- Embedding tenant voice within governance and performance monitoring

8.56 Alongside this, communication channels and opportunities to get involved will continue to be accessible and flexible, ensuring all tenants can participate in ways that suit them.

8.57 Through this approach, Bury will ensure that tenants are not only heard, but have a genuine and lasting influence on the services they receive and the communities they live in.

Older People's Housing and Ageing Well at Home

8.58 Bury's population is ageing, and this trend is particularly evident within the social housing sector. Over the lifetime of this strategy, the number and proportion of older residents will continue to grow, with people aged 65+ projected to increase significantly.

8.59 Evidence shows that households living in affordable housing are more likely to experience vulnerability, including lower incomes, higher levels of economic inactivity, and long-term illness or disability. Around a quarter of household reference persons in affordable housing are permanently sick or disabled, and a further proportion are retired, highlighting the complex support needs within this group.

8.60 At the same time, the current model of provision is increasingly under pressure. While there remains a role for specialist housing, including Extra Care and supported accommodation, the evidence points to a need to shift the balance of provision. There is both a growing demand for older persons' accommodation and a clear need to enable more people to remain living independently in their own homes for longer.

8.61 The strategic response is to rebalance the system towards prevention, independence, and choice. Over the lifetime of this strategy, the council will:

- Develop a clear and consistent "ageing well at home" offer, setting out the support, services, and housing interventions available to help people live independently for longer
- Strengthen early planning for later life, supporting residents to make informed decisions about their housing options before crisis points are reached
- Improve access to in-home support, including adaptations, assistive technology, and coordinated services that respond to changing health and mobility needs
- Reduce reliance on specialist accommodation where appropriate, ensuring it is targeted at those with the highest needs while expanding alternatives that enable independence
- Promote a wider range of housing options, including accessible, adaptable, and right-sized homes that support ageing in place

8.62 This approach reflects a shift from a system primarily focused on specialist provision to one that prioritises independence, prevention, and wellbeing, ensuring that older residents across Bury can live well, safely, and with dignity in their own homes.

The Long-Term Role of Social Housing in Bury

8.63 Bury Council recognises that the role of social housing is evolving. Demand is increasing, households are presenting with more complex and often more chaotic circumstances, and there is a growing need for housing that not only provides a home but also supports stability, wellbeing and independence.

8.64 In this context, social housing will play an increasingly important role as a foundation for strong, safe and resilient communities. The Council will take a long-term, strategic approach to ensure that its housing stock is used to deliver the greatest possible impact for residents and the borough as a whole, including making best use of its existing assets.

8.65 This means carefully considering what these changes in demand and need mean in practice, and reflecting this in how social housing is allocated and used. The focus will be on ensuring that homes are allocated in a way that not only responds to immediate need, but also supports longer-term outcomes for residents and communities, including promoting opportunities for right-sizing where tenants wish to move.

8.66 Supporting tenants to right-size can deliver positive outcomes for both households and the wider housing system. For residents, moving to more suitable accommodation can improve affordability, reduce the burden of maintaining larger

homes, and provide properties better suited to their current needs. At the same time, this helps to free up larger family homes, enabling better use of limited housing supply and meeting pressing demand from households in need of larger accommodation.

8.67 Over time, this approach will:

- Better align housing with the level and complexity of need
- Support households to sustain their tenancies and achieve stability
- Maximise the positive impact of limited housing supply and existing assets
- Promote and support right-sizing where appropriate
- Contribute to the development of balanced, safe and high-quality communities

8.68 The Council will place greater emphasis on ensuring that allocation decisions are informed by a clear understanding of need, support requirements and potential outcomes, alongside closer alignment with wider council services.

8.69 Recognising that this is a long-term shift, Bury will work progressively to embed this approach, developing its thinking and practice over time. Through this, social housing will play a central role not just in meeting need, but in shaping stronger communities, making best use of housing assets, and improving outcomes for residents across the borough.

Case Study

Bury Council currently operates a Tenant Incentive Scheme (TIS) to encourage existing council tenants to downsize or move to more suitable accommodation. The scheme is voluntary and aims to make better use of the borough's housing stock, particularly by freeing up larger family homes and adapted properties in high demand.

Under the scheme, tenants who move are eligible for financial and practical support, including:

- A basic payment of £1,000
- £500 towards removal costs
- An additional £500 for each bedroom given up when downsizing

For example, a tenant moving from a four-bedroom property to a two-bedroom home would receive £2,500 in total.

The scheme was introduced in 2023 with funding from the Housing Revenue Account and has since been extended, reflecting its role in addressing under-occupation and improving the efficiency of the council's housing stock.

9. Homelessness and Rough Sleeping

Achievements

Providing a broader range of housing options and improving access to suitable homes.

- Over 5 year homelessness and housing options has delivered a total of 145 supported accommodation units and secured 41 long term accommodation units, with an additional provision for Afghan families and increasing access into the private rented sector for long term accommodation.

Working towards eliminating rough sleeping by 2025.

Supported Accommodation

- Commissioning of a bed every night provision (ABEN) - 34 units for rough sleepers, those at risk and NRPF.
- Commissioning of Community Accommodation Service 3 (CAS3) for prison leavers, preventing rough sleeping - 14 units
- Commissioning of Huntley House - 19 x self contained units for rough sleepers and stat homelessness with support and Silver Street 6 x family units for homeless families
- Partnering with Support/Registered providers to mobilise supported accommodation 60 x single units.
- Internal lease and repairs partner with an RP for 2x HMO's - female supported 6 units and Mixed supported 6x units

Long Term accommodation

- Commissioning of 10 1x bedroom properties Rough sleeper accommodation Programme (RSAP), properties for long term move on whilst retaining place on the housing register
- Acquisition of 6 x1 bedroom properties for rough sleepers (30 years nominations RSAP) for long term move on whilst retaining place on the housing register,
- Deliver of the GM RSAP programme 5x 1 Bedroom properties for for long term move on whilst retaining place on the housing register,
- Commissioning of of 20 family properties for long term move on (100% nomination rights for 5 years) under the homeless accommodation leasing programme (HALP)
- Deliver the accommodation for ex offenders (AFEO) securing long term move on for 20 prison leavers

- Commissioning of the Afghanistan relocation accommodation programme (ARAP) for 10 Afghan families fleeing Afghanistan when troops withdrew.
- Increasing access into the private rented sector, securing long term move on accommodation for singles and families.

Leading on GM housing first Bury Locality for entrenched rough sleepers,

Homelessness Review

9.1 The Council has recently completed a comprehensive homelessness review. This review provides a detailed evidence base on homelessness demand, service pressures and delivery challenges. Next steps include a MoSCoW prioritisation analysis of the review's recommendations, which will inform a detailed action plan. The timetable is:

- September – finalisation of review and action plan
- October onwards – implementation phase

9.2 The review of Bury Council's Homelessness Strategy 2022–2025 assesses delivery against the borough's ambition to prevent homelessness wherever possible, reduce rough sleeping, and ensure that homelessness is rare, brief and non-recurrent, while preparing the ground for a new strategy from 2026 onwards.

9.3 The strategy is underpinned by a borough-wide, partnership-led approach, developed through extensive engagement with statutory and voluntary partners, people with lived experience, and local communities. It reflects the shift seen nationally and regionally towards earlier intervention, person-centred services, and whole-system working, rather than crisis-led responses.

9.4 At its core, the strategy adopts a prevent-first model, recognising that rising demand, cost-of-living pressures, instability in the private rented sector, and asylum system pressures mean that homelessness cannot be addressed by housing services alone.

Key pressures and evidence base

9.5 The review highlights a sharp rise in homelessness pressures since 2022, driven by:

- Cost-of-living increases and in-work poverty
- Rising private rents and loss of PRS tenancies
- Increased use of temporary accommodation, including bed and breakfast
- Growth in rough sleeping, particularly among single adults aged 30–45
- Additional pressures from asylum system decisions and Notices to Quit

9.6 Despite some reduction in statutory homelessness acceptances, overall demand for advice and support continues to rise, with many people disengaging before prevention activity can succeed. The transition from prevention to relief has

increased, showing how difficult it is to intervene early enough under current pressures.

9.7 Homelessness is identified as a Central Driver of Allocation Pressure in the Allocations policy. Homeless households feature heavily across:

- Band 1 (urgent need)
- Band 2 and 3 (non-priority or insecure cases)
- Direct lets and temporary accommodation routes

Strategic framework and priorities

9.8 Delivery of the strategy has been structured around seven interconnected priorities:

1. **Prevention** – stopping homelessness before it occurs, both through statutory duties and non-statutory early intervention.
2. **Person** – identifying individual needs and providing tailored, person-centred pathways, particularly for people with complex needs.
3. **Property** – ensuring access to suitable, affordable permanent and temporary accommodation, including expanding supply and improving move-on.
4. **Place** – integrating homelessness services into neighbourhoods and community hubs, rather than relying solely on town-centre provision.
5. **Purpose** – supporting people to rebuild stability, skills and independence through co-production and meaningful engagement.
6. **Promote** – improving awareness and understanding of homelessness services across communities and partner agencies.
7. **Partnership** – delivering homelessness services collaboratively through the Bury Homeless Partnership and the borough's "Let's Do It" principles.

9.9 The maturity assessment shows strong progress overall, with Partnership, Property and Prevention particularly well developed, while Promotion, Place and Person-centred practice are identified as areas requiring further strengthening

Temporary accommodation and rough sleeping

9.10 A major theme of the review is the unsustainable growth in temporary accommodation, particularly for families. Without changes to prevention and move-on, projections show the council would need significantly more temporary units over the next three years.

9.11 Rough sleeping has also increased markedly, with:

- A growing cohort of people new to the streets
- A smaller but highly complex group experiencing repeat or long-term rough sleeping

- Evidence that emergency accommodation (e.g. ABEN) is effective but insufficient on its own without stronger move-on and resettlement support

9.12 Bury Council is implementing a structured programme to reduce its reliance on costly and unsuitable forms of temporary accommodation, particularly bed and breakfast (B&B) and pay nightly provision, while responding to sustained increases in homelessness demand. Since April 2021, the service has experienced significant pressure, with around 350 monthly contacts and approximately 70 households per month accepted as threatened with or experiencing homelessness between September 2025 and January 2026. This has driven increased use of temporary accommodation, including B&B placements, which peaked at 67 households in October 2024 (22 single people and 45 families). Temporary accommodation expenditure reached £1.5m in 2024/25 and is forecast to rise to £2.5m by March 2026, underlining the need for a more sustainable approach.

9.13 In response, the Council is shifting towards a model that replaces high-cost, short-term provision with more stable, self-contained accommodation, while maintaining a clear cap on overall supply. For family households, the service is targeting the replacement of 59 pay nightly units with alternative temporary accommodation over a three-year period. Although approximately 80 family units are expected to be mobilised, the number in use will be capped at 59 to avoid oversupply and to ensure continued focus on prevention rather than system expansion. This approach will also support the phased reduction of B&B use, with 25 families still in B&B as of March 2026, and an ambition to eliminate family B&B placements entirely by 2029. For single households, a similar approach will be taken, with the service aiming to replace 29 B&B placements with suitable self-contained or supported accommodation options.

9.14 The delivery programme will be achieved through a combination of funding streams and partnerships. This includes Local Authority Housing Fund (LAHF) investment to deliver 11 family temporary accommodation units (6 units in Tranche 3 and 5 units in Tranche 4), a GMCA-funded lease and repair programme expected to bring 16 empty homes into use annually, and partnership schemes such as 10 units with Irwell Valley Housing and 13 units at the Old School House. In addition, further provision will be delivered through Silver Street and Huntley House schemes, including 8 additional family units and 10 single units, alongside 6 supported units for single people. Overall, this will result in the mobilisation of 59 family units and at least 6 new single units over the three-year period.

9.15 This shift in provision is expected to generate significant cost savings by reducing reliance on nightly paid accommodation. Estimated reductions in temporary accommodation expenditure are projected at approximately £0.653m in 2026/27, rising to £0.973m in 2027/28 and £1m in 2028/29. These savings are based on replacing average nightly costs of around £60 for families and £55 for single B&B placements, with assumed 40% housing benefit recovery and a 3% annual inflation increase.

9.16 The approach has already delivered improvements, particularly in reducing B&B use for families. The number of families in B&B fell from 42 in January 2025 (23 exceeding the six-week limit) to 9 in January 2026 (4 exceeding six weeks), reflecting

the impact of increased use of self-contained "pay nightly" units, which now total 59. However, pressures remain, particularly for single households, where B&B use increased from 8 individuals in January 2025 to 19 in January 2026. Furthermore, demand continues to outstrip move-on rates, with an average of 15 families and 10 single people entering temporary accommodation each month, compared to 12 families and 8 singles moving on.

9.17 To address this, the Council's approach is underpinned by a stronger emphasis on prevention and improving move-on from temporary accommodation. The cap on provision is intended to avoid a cycle of continually increasing supply in response to demand, which could mask underlying pressures and reduce system-wide accountability. However, the Council recognises ongoing risks. If demand continues to rise or prevention and move-on outcomes do not improve, additional pressure will be placed on the system. Modelling suggests that even small increases in demand could require an additional 50 family units and 38 single units per year. Conversely, modest improvements in prevention and move-on—such as preventing two additional households per month and increasing move-on by one household per month—could reduce the need for temporary accommodation by 22 family units and 36 single units annually.

9.18 There is evidence of recent reductions in B&B usage, reflecting progress in managing demand and improving provision.

Case Study: Using Right to Buy Receipts to Acquire Homes for Homeless Households – Bury Council

Context

Bury Council has experienced a significant rise in households living in temporary accommodation, particularly expensive bed and breakfast and hotel placements. This increase has been driven by limited housing supply, inward migration, and rising private sector rents. The council identified an urgent need to expand the supply of affordable homes to meet its statutory homelessness duties and reduce reliance on temporary accommodation.

Approach

The council approved a programme to acquire additional housing using retained Right to Buy (RTB) receipts generated between April 2022 and March 2024. Up to £3.019 million of RTB receipts will be used to purchase properties within the borough.

The programme prioritises:

- New-build homes on private developments, particularly three-bedroom properties suitable for families.
- Pre-owned homes where suitable new-build opportunities are not available within the required timescales.

These acquisitions will provide permanent accommodation for households in priority need and must be completed before March 2026, when RTB receipts must be spent to avoid financial penalties.

Outcomes and Benefits

The initiative is expected to:

- Increase the council's housing stock.
- Provide secure, long-term housing for homeless households.
- Reduce reliance on costly temporary accommodation such as hotels and B&Bs.
- Generate rental income and council tax revenue.
- Improve the council's ability to meet its statutory homelessness duties.

Lived experience and co-production

9.19 People with lived experience consistently describe homelessness as emotionally and physically exhausting, with particular concerns about:

- Quality and suitability of temporary accommodation
- Lengthy waits for settled housing
- Digital exclusion and complex systems
- Inconsistent follow-through on identified support needs

9.20 Top priorities identified through co-production include:

- More recovery and supported housing
- Fairer access to housing
- Better use of empty buildings
- Greater respect, dignity and involvement in decision-making

9.21 This reinforces the strategy's emphasis on trauma-informed, inclusive, person-centred services.

Key strategic priorities going forward

9.22 The Housing Strategy should structure its homelessness response around four core pillars:

1. Strengthening prevention
    - Expanding early intervention and housing advice

- Reducing inflows into homelessness

2. Increasing access to housing
    - Improving access across tenures, including the PRS
    - Strengthening housing options and allocations pathways
3. Providing safe and suitable accommodation
    - Ensuring sufficient temporary accommodation (TA) supply
    - Supporting move-on into settled housing
    - Improving the quality and appropriateness of provision
4. Reducing rough sleeping and improving support
    - Providing targeted, multi-agency support for those with complex needs
    - Improving engagement with services and long-term outcomes

9.23 These pillars will form the basis of the homelessness section of the Housing Strategy, supported by case studies to demonstrate impact and service effectiveness.

Alignment with national homelessness policy

9.24 The review of Bury Council's Homelessness Strategy 2022–2025 demonstrates strong alignment with the Government's new and emerging National Homelessness Strategy by reflecting a shared shift away from short-term, crisis-driven responses toward a prevention-led, whole-system approach.

9.25 The strategy places early intervention at its core, recognising that homelessness is driven by wider structural factors such as poverty, housing affordability, health inequalities, domestic abuse and transitions from institutions, and therefore requires coordinated action across housing, health, social care, education, justice and the voluntary sector. It mirrors national priorities by focusing on reducing reliance on temporary accommodation, particularly bed and breakfast use, improving outcomes for children and families, and ensuring that homelessness is rare, brief and non-recurrent through stronger move-on and tenancy sustainment pathways. The strategy's emphasis on Housing First principles, trauma-informed and person-centred support, and integrated responses for people with complex needs reflects the Government's direction of travel toward housing-led solutions with wraparound support.

9.26 In addition, the strong use of lived experience and co-production aligns with national expectations around dignity, inclusion and service design, while the focus on data quality, partnership governance and system integration positions the borough to respond effectively to future national funding reforms and policy change. Taken together, the review shows that Bury's approach is not only consistent with the Government's new homelessness strategy, but actively anticipates and operationalises its core ambitions at a local level.

9.27 Overall, the review positions Bury well to respond to the next generation of national homelessness policy, moving beyond crisis management toward a whole-system, prevention-led model grounded in partnership, lived experience and place-based working.

Private rented sector (PRS) and housing options

9.28 The role of the private rented sector was discussed as a key component of the homelessness response, particularly in discharging homelessness duties and supporting move-on. Key considerations include:

- The extent to which the Council discharges duty into the PRS
- The balance between leasing schemes and direct landlord engagement
- Opportunities to strengthen relationships with landlords and improve access to PRS accommodation

Case Study

Bury Council delivered a scheme to provide temporary supported accommodation for people experiencing homelessness at Huntley House and 18–22 Silver Street. The properties were refurbished by the owner and leased to a Registered Provider of Social Housing, with the Council securing exclusive nomination rights to place households it had a statutory duty to house.

The scheme created 27 units of supported accommodation (19 units at Huntley House and 8 self-contained flats at Silver Street) for people who required temporary housing and support to help them develop the skills needed to move into permanent independent housing. The Council also commissioned a specialist provider to deliver support services for residents, helping them manage tenancies and address wider support needs.

This initiative helped reduce the Council's reliance on hotel and bed-and-breakfast accommodation, which had been costly and unsuitable for supporting people with complex needs. The supported accommodation offered more appropriate housing and provided a structured pathway towards long-term housing stability.

The project also generated significant cost savings, with the supported accommodation model estimated to save the Council approximately £2 million over five years compared with continued use of hotel accommodation. Funding was supported through existing government grants and housing funding streams.

10. Valuing an Ageing Population

10.1 The Housing Needs and Demand Assessment confirms that population ageing is accelerating in Bury, with the number of residents aged 65 and over projected to increase from around 36,000 in 2022 to almost 44,000 by 2043, and particularly rapid growth in the 75–84 and 85+ age groups. This shift is important because it is strongly associated with rising support needs, even where people remain in mainstream housing. Most older households are long-term owner occupiers, often living in larger homes, and many wish to remain where they are rather than move. The evidence therefore points to a growing cohort of older residents ageing in place, with increasing reliance on adaptations, informal care and support services to remain independent.

10.2 The household survey data shows that support and adaptation needs increase sharply with age. Among households where the Household Reference Person is aged 65 and over, a significant proportion report needing home adaptations, particularly level-access showers, improved bathroom facilities, handrails and changes to entrances. The Housing Needs and Demand Assessment also identifies a growing requirement for space within the home to accommodate carers or equipment, reflecting increased frailty and long-term conditions at older ages. These needs are present across all tenures but are especially relevant for owner occupiers, who are more likely to remain in homes that were not designed with ageing in mind.

10.3 In terms of help and support in the home, the Housing Needs and Demand Assessment shows that older households are more likely to require assistance with daily living, including help with household tasks, personal care, and managing their home safely. The proportion of households reporting the need for some form of assistance rises steadily with age, particularly beyond age 75. While dissatisfaction with housing condition is generally lower among older people than younger renters, the evidence highlights that functional suitability matters more than condition alone. The report therefore emphasises that meeting the needs of an ageing population will increasingly depend on preventative support measures, such as timely adaptations, energy efficiency improvements and access to home-based support services, enabling older people to remain independent and reducing future pressure on health and social care systems.

10.4 The Housing Needs and Demand Assessment shows that most older people in Bury strongly prefer to remain living in their current home as they age, rather than moving into specialist accommodation. Evidence from the household survey on future housing choices indicates that the dominant aspiration among older households is to stay put, provided their home remains suitable, safe and affordable to run. Only a minority express a preference for moving into sheltered housing, Extra Care or residential care, and these options are typically considered only where health or mobility issues make remaining at home impractical. This confirms that ageing in place is the prevailing preference rather than the exception.

10.5 Where older households do consider moving, the evidence suggests this is usually about downsizing or improving suitability, not changing tenure or moving into institutional settings. Interest is strongest in smaller, more manageable homes,

particularly level-access properties or bungalows, often within the same neighbourhood. However, the Housing Needs and Demand Assessment highlights that a lack of suitable alternatives locally acts as a significant barrier to moving, reinforcing why many older people remain in family housing even when it no longer fully meets their needs. Affordability, availability and emotional attachment to home and community all shape these decisions.

	65-74 (%)	75-84 (%)	85+ (%)	All 65+ (%)
Continue to live in current home with support when needed	67.2%	82.4%	87.5%	75.4%
Buying a dwelling on the open market	19.6%	8.3%	0.0%	12.9%
Rent a dwelling from a private landlord	2.4%	2.5%	0.0%	2.1%
Rent from housing association	12.8%	12.7%	2.9%	11.5%
Rent from the council	15.2%	15.6%	2.9%	13.7%
Part rent / buy	3.6%	1.9%	4.1%	3.0%
Sheltered accommodation - To rent	21.9%	27.4%	16.0%	23.1%
Sheltered accommodation - To buy	15.7%	16.0%	10.6%	15.2%
Sheltered accommodation - Part rent / buy	3.2%	14.6%	11.6%	8.5%
Extra Care housing - To rent	14.1%	18.1%	14.7%	15.7%
Extra Care housing - To buy	10.8%	8.3%	9.4%	9.7%
Extra Care housing - Part rent / buy	4.6%	2.3%	0.0%	3.2%
Supported housing for people with learning disabilities and autism	0.8%	0.0%	0.0%	0.4%
Supported housing for mental health needs	3.0%	6.1%	12.6%	5.4%
Residential care home	1.6%	5.4%	9.8%	4.1%
Co-housing	13.2%	15.0%	7.4%	13.1%
Go to live with children or other relatives/friends	5.3%	4.0%	5.7%	4.9%
Other	2.6%	2.4%	0.0%	2.2%
Base (total households responding)	4,057	2,963	1,074	8,094

Source: Re-weighted (2021 Census) Household Survey

10.6 Crucially, the housing choices evidence reinforces that supporting older people in their existing homes is central to meeting future need. Because most older households want to remain where they are, demand will increasingly focus on adaptations, home improvements and in-home support, rather than large-scale moves into specialist housing. The Housing Needs and Demand Assessment therefore positions specialist housing as an important option for some, but makes clear that the primary housing response to an ageing population must be making mainstream housing work better for older people, through accessible design, timely adaptations, and coordinated housing, health and care support.

10.7 Older People Are a Distinct and Growing Priority Group in Bury's allocations policy.[35] The policy explicitly references:

- Retirement living
- Extra care housing
- Ground-floor and bungalow provision
- Direct lets for older applicants aged 55+

10.8 This demonstrates:

- Recognition that general needs housing does not meet all older people's needs
- The strategic importance of specialist older people's housing within the overall system
- Alignment with wider ageing-well and extra care strategies

10.9 There are clear signals about the importance of downsizing in the allocations policy. The policy actively promotes downsizing where households:

- Under-occupy family homes
- Occupy adapted properties they no longer need
- Are affected by welfare reform

10.10 The Council encourages, but does not force, downsizing and allows flexibility in size to make moves viable. For a housing strategy, this highlights:

- Structural under-occupation within the stock
- The importance of attractive, suitable smaller homes
- The role of downsizing in improving system efficiency

[35] bury-allocations-policy-2025.pdf

10.11 Where and how people live in later life depends on their individual needs, aspirations, taste, and financial circumstances, much the same as any other age group. Our evidence tells us that the majority of people will want to live in their current home for as long as possible, but others will want to or will need to move. There will be people who live independently all of their lives, whilst some will need accommodation with access to specialist care and support. Choice of options is important.

10.12 Regardless of whether people rent or own their home, homes need to be accessible, adaptable, and technology enabled. They need to be safe and warm and in established and vibrant neighbourhoods, recognising the importance of attachment to place and social connections. Getting this right has a remarkable impact on people's health and wellbeing. It improves general health outcomes and enables people to maintain independence; it is the platform on which people can live well and create positive futures. Good quality housing can prevent physical frailty, support positive mental health, and reduce hospital admissions; it can delay or avoid unwanted moves to residential care or more specialist housing, all of which also create enormous social and public savings benefits.

Accessible and adaptable homes

10.13 The adopted Places for Everyone Joint Development Plan requires all new homes to meet accessible and adaptable standards (M4(2)), ensuring they can be modified as people age or their needs change. The emerging Bury Local Plan[36] requires 4% of homes on larger sites to meet wheelchair-user standards (M4(3)).

10.14 Together, these requirements embed the principles of "lifetime homes" into new housing delivery, even though the term itself is not explicitly used.

10.15 The Plan places a clear emphasis on enabling people to live independently for as long as possible. It seeks to:

- maximise independence; and
- allow people to retain control over their housing and care.

10.16 This is supported through both adaptations to existing homes and the provision of specialist housing, including sheltered and extra care accommodation.

10.17 The Plan also highlights the importance of location, requiring homes for older people to:

- be integrated within communities; and
- have good access to services, facilities and public transport.

10.18 This reflects a "lifetime neighbourhoods" approach, supporting ageing in place beyond the home itself.

[36] The Reg 19 Local Plan is subject to cabinet approval

Thinking earlier about homes in later life

10.19 People may be influenced to think earlier about their home in later life through a tailored website and marketing campaign. It may offer specific 'handholding' and financial support to move or adapt current homes. It should be promoted widely and enable housing provider networks, health and social care networks, and the local authority to coordinate the current support available. It may be developed at a county level. The authority may consider working with people in later life to scope out what a practical offer may look like and consider the current barriers. The types of support people may need could include:

- A checklist of what to look for in a new home or how to assess a current home for a positive later life.
- Information on alternative housing options and designs that are not currently widely available (in order to influence demand and housing provision).
- Video footage/case studies from people who have moved or stayed, and what drove their decision-making and the benefits they have found to help people make better informed decisions.
- Financial support available to make home improvements.
- Advice on how to create a healthy home through increased energy efficiency, reducing energy costs, increasing household income, and improving health and wellbeing.
- A directory of specialist retirement homes linking to www.carehome.org for example.

Harnessing Technology to Support Independent Living

10.20 Many older people are unaware of the range of technology available to help them live safely, independently, and comfortably at home. This "unknown unknown" presents a significant missed opportunity to improve wellbeing, delay the need for more intensive support, and reduce pressure on housing and care services.

10.21 While there is a growing market of assistive and smart home technologies—from fall detectors and telecare systems to voice-activated controls and health monitoring devices—uptake remains limited. This is often due to a lack of awareness, confidence, and opportunity to try products before committing to them.

10.22 One potential solution is the development of a 'demonstration' or 'showcase' flat, where residents can see, experience, and test a range of technologies in a real-life setting. This would:

- Build awareness of what is available
- Increase confidence in using technology
- Enable informed choices before purchase
- Reduce the risk of inappropriate or unused purchases

10.23 The Council could play an enabling role by:

- Curating and showcasing trusted products
- Providing advice and guidance (potentially through housing, adult social care, or partner organisations)
- Facilitating ordering through a simple, supported process
- Residents would fund the technology themselves, but with the benefit of trusted information, hands-on experience, and streamlined access.

10.24 While the primary focus is on older people, this approach has wider applicability. People of all ages with support needs—including those with disabilities or long-term health conditions—could benefit from greater awareness and access to assistive technology.

Adaptations database

10.25 Significant investment has been made in adapting homes across Bury to meet the needs of residents with mobility or health requirements. However, when tenants move, these adaptations are often underused or removed—resulting in unnecessary cost and missed opportunities to meet existing need.

10.26 There is currently no consistent, borough-wide approach to tracking and reusing adapted properties across Registered Providers (RPs). This can lead to:

- Adaptations being removed or lost
- Delays in matching suitable homes to those in need
- Additional costs for re-installing similar adaptations elsewhere

10.27 A more coordinated approach is needed to maximise the value of existing adaptations.

10.28 The Council could take a leadership role in establishing a shared adaptations database across all RPs in Bury, creating a clearer picture of where adapted homes are and what features they include. This would enable:

- Better matching of households to suitable properties
- Retention and reuse of existing adaptations
- Reduced need for costly new adaptations
- Faster allocations for residents with specific needs

10.29 Key features of this approach could include:

- A live register of adapted properties and their specifications
- Clear nomination and allocation processes prioritising those who need adaptations
- Partnership working across the Council and RPs to maintain and update records

Ageing in the Private Rented Sector

10.30 The private rented sector (PRS) now houses a growing proportion of Bury's residents, and this trend is set to continue. As a result, increasing numbers of people will grow older in privately rented homes—often without the security, adaptations, or support typically associated with social housing or specialist provision.

10.31 This presents a significant emerging challenge. Many PRS properties are not designed for ageing, and tenants may face barriers to making adaptations, limited security of tenure, and less access to coordinated support services. Without intervention, this could lead to poorer health outcomes, increased housing instability, and greater pressure on public services over time.

10.32 The Council and its partners have an opportunity to better understand, anticipate, and respond to the needs of an ageing PRS population—ensuring that residents can remain safe, secure, and well in their homes as they age.

Bonds to move

10.33 In the same way as owner occupiers or social tenants are enabled (social tenants through the downsizing scheme and owners through their equity) to access more suitable housing, households living in the PRS may be unable to do this. The cost of moving, properties potentially having a higher rent, and finding a more suitable property may all act as barriers.

10.34 The council could consider a range of options that include identifying property through accredited landlords that would suit older people given its location, size, landlords approval for adaptations etc. and help to match older people living in unsuitable property to move. If financial support is required, this could be provided potentially through pooled funding from Adult Social Care.

Advice to landlords

Improving awareness and advice for landlords

10.35 Landlords should be better informed about the challenges older people face when living in unsuitable housing, and the role they can play in supporting tenants to remain safely in their homes. This could be achieved through targeted training and engagement, including:

- Information on the needs of older tenants and the risks associated with unsuitable housing
- Guidance on available financial support, such as Disabled Facilities Grants (DFGs)
- Clear advice on how landlords can support or facilitate adaptations
- To encourage take-up, the Council could offer reassurance to landlords by committing to:
- Support in identifying future tenants who require existing adaptations, or

- Assistance to remove adaptations and reinstate properties where appropriate

Building landlord capability to support ageing well

10.36 There is an opportunity to strengthen landlords' ability to support tenants as they age in place. This includes:

- Training on safeguarding responsibilities
- Awareness of dementia and how to create more supportive, dementia-friendly environments
- Guidance on supporting tenants with mental health needs and how to respond appropriately
- Information on how to signpost tenants to relevant services and support

Improving access to support and services

10.37 Landlords can play a key role in connecting tenants to help, but often lack clear routes to do so. The Council could:

- Develop a directory of support services for landlords to share with tenants
- Provide a named referral point to simplify access to advice and support
- Offer guidance on accessing affordable warmth funding and energy efficiency measures, helping to improve property conditions and reduce fuel poverty

Maximising the use of adaptations in the PRS

Encouraging greater use of adaptations will be critical to supporting older tenants to remain in their homes. Alongside promoting DFG uptake, the Council could:

- Work with landlords to reduce barriers to installing adaptations
- Explore partnerships with health services (e.g. step-up/step-down care models) to better match adapted properties with tenants who need them

Enabling Access to Extra Care Housing and Supporting Moves

10.38 Feedback from stakeholders indicates that there is a cohort of households who own their homes but cannot afford to move into more appropriate accommodation, such as extra care housing. While these households may have significant equity tied up in their existing properties, they often lack the liquidity or financial products that would allow them to convert this equity into suitable housing options.

10.39 One potential route is shared ownership or equity-based models within extra care schemes. Under such arrangements, households could sell their existing home and use the equity to purchase a share of an extra care property, with a housing provider retaining the remaining share. The resident would then pay rent on the proportion of the property that they do not own. This approach is already used in other housing products, including Older Persons Shared Ownership (OPSO) and Home Ownership for People with Long-term Disabilities (HOLD), which enable individuals to purchase a share of a home while paying rent on the remainder.

10.40 In principle, this type of arrangement can help bridge the affordability gap for owner-occupiers who are asset-rich but income-constrained. Where a resident purchases a share of a property and pays rent on the remaining share, they may still be eligible for assistance with housing costs depending on their circumstances. In shared ownership schemes:

10.41 Housing Benefit or the housing element of Universal Credit can help cover the rent and eligible service charges on the portion of the property not owned, provided the claimant meets the usual means-tested eligibility criteria.

10.42 Mortgage costs are not covered directly, although some claimants may qualify for Support for Mortgage Interest (SMI), which is provided as a loan.

10.43 Importantly, the fact that a household has previously used equity from the sale of their home to purchase a share of the property does not automatically prevent them from claiming help with the rental element. However, eligibility would depend on their remaining savings and income at the time of the claim, as means-tested benefits assess available capital. While shared ownership can provide a pathway into extra care accommodation, there are several practical barriers:

- Some shared ownership schemes require purchasers to sell their existing property first and demonstrate that they cannot afford to buy outright.
- Applicants must pass affordability assessments, ensuring that rent, mortgage and service charges remain sustainable relative to income.
- Access to mortgages can be difficult for older people or those on low incomes.

11. Health and Housing

Improving housing quality and creating healthy homes and places.

- £1.6m commuted sums for recreation received (2021-2025) to support the delivery of improvements to recreation provision, local nature reserves and open space within the Borough to meet the needs arising from new residential development.

Health, Wellbeing and Inequalities Reduction

- Addressed housing hazards known to contribute to poor health outcomes (e.g. damp, cold, falls risks), supporting national health improvement and inequalities strategies.
- Used housing enforcement and adaptations as preventative tools, reducing pressure on acute health and social care services.

Emergency and Humanitarian Response Capacity

- Played a direct role in the Homes for Ukraine response, facilitating and carrying out property inspections of private rented accommodation to ensure homes offered to Ukrainian households were safe, compliant and suitable for occupation at pace.

Bury JSNA[37]

11.1 Bury's Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) provides the core evidence base on the health, wellbeing and social care needs of the borough's population. It is used by the Council, NHS and partners to identify current and future needs, inequalities and priorities, and to inform strategic planning and commissioning decisions across services.

11.2 The JSNA recognises housing as a key determinant of health and wellbeing, with strong links between housing quality, affordability, accessibility and wider health outcomes.

11.3 In particular, the JSNA highlights:

- The impact of poor or unsuitable housing on physical and mental health
- The growing needs associated with an ageing population, including demand for accessible and supportive housing

[37] Joint Strategic Needs Assessment - Bury Council

- The relationship between long-term health conditions, disability and housing suitability
- The role of housing in supporting independence, prevention and reduced demand on health and care services
- Persistent health inequalities, which often align with areas of deprivation and poorer housing conditions

11.4 The JSNA supports:

- The need for a range of housing options to meet different needs across the life course
- Increased provision of accessible, adaptable and specialist housing, including for older people and people with disabilities
- The importance of stable, affordable housing in supporting wellbeing and preventing crisis
- Integration between housing, health and adult social care planning, particularly around prevention and early intervention.

Wider Determinants of Population Health

11.5 Bury Council's approach to improving health and wellbeing is set out through its "Let's Do It!" strategy, which focuses on community power, prevention and partnership working. The strategy recognises that outcomes are influenced by a wide range of social, economic and environmental factors, including housing, employment, education and social connections, rather than healthcare alone.

11.6 The Council works with partners through the Health and Wellbeing Board, which provides strategic oversight of health inequalities and sets priorities for improving population health. This includes a focus on reducing gaps in outcomes between different communities.

11.7 Bury has adopted a neighbourhood model to organise services at a local level. Under this model, services are aligned to defined neighbourhoods and delivered through multidisciplinary teams. These teams bring together organisations including health services, adult social care, housing and the voluntary, community and faith sector. The purpose of the model is to support better coordination between services, improve information sharing and enable support to be delivered closer to where people live.

11.8 Live Well in Bury is a place-based approach to prevention and wellbeing developed through the *Let's Do It!* strategy and delivered via the neighbourhood model. It is not a single service, but a way of organising support so that residents can access early help to stay healthy, independent and connected within their communities. Delivered through neighbourhood teams, community organisations and local venues such as hubs and libraries, it brings together a range of support including health improvement, housing and financial advice, employment support and social activities. The approach focuses on intervening earlier, improving access to support closer to home and addressing wider determinants of health such as social isolation,

poverty and poor housing, with activity informed by local data and neighbourhood-level intelligence.

11.9 A range of programmes and services contribute to addressing wider determinants of health. These include support related to financial hardship, employment and skills, public health improvement (such as smoking cessation and vaccination) and access to advice and support services. The Council also uses data, including the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) and neighbourhood-level information, to understand local needs and inform how services are targeted.

Place and Community

11.10 Bury's approach places strong emphasis on place-based working and partnership delivery, described through the concept of "Team Bury". This involves the Council, NHS organisations, voluntary sector partners, the private sector and others working together across organisational boundaries.

11.11 The neighbourhood model supports this approach by enabling services to be planned and delivered at a local level, with partners working together within neighbourhoods. There is also an emphasis on engaging residents and working with community organisations in the design and delivery of services, particularly in areas experiencing higher levels of deprivation.

Neighbourhood Planning and Delivery

11.12 Neighbourhood Plans are used to support delivery at a local level. These plans are aligned with Primary Care Networks and wider neighbourhood partnerships and are informed by local data and intelligence.

11.13 They are used to identify local priorities, including support for people with long-term health conditions and those at risk of poorer outcomes. Plans involve a range of partners, including health services, social care, housing and voluntary sector organisations, and are intended to support coordinated action within neighbourhoods.

11.14 Delivery is supported through the use of neighbourhood hubs and community assets, such as community centres and libraries, which provide accessible locations for services and support. These hubs enable residents to access multiple services in one place and support earlier engagement with support services.

Integrated Support for Vulnerable Residents

11.15 Bury is part of the Changing Futures programme, a Greater Manchester initiative that supports people experiencing multiple disadvantage, including homelessness, mental ill health and substance misuse. The programme focuses on improving coordination between services and delivering more person-centred support.

11.16 In practice, this involves services working together across housing, health, social care and the voluntary sector to support individuals with complex needs. The aim is to reduce fragmentation between services and improve outcomes for people who may otherwise experience repeated contact with crisis services.

Supporting Health and Employment through WorkWell

The housing strategy doesn't sit in isolation, in Bury we have linked our work with improving the job and career prospects of local people by ensuring that they are aware of the funded skills and employment support that are available to them to build economic resilience for individuals, families and communities.

Over the past 5 years we have ensured that links are made with:

- Upskilling
- Digital Inclusion
- Employability skills
- Careers guidance
- Financial Literacy

11.17 Bury will continue to deliver the WorkWell programme as part of its wider approach to addressing the links between health, employment and housing stability. Funded through national government (DWP and DHSC) until March 2026, WorkWell provides targeted, early intervention support to residents at risk of leaving work due to health conditions, or those recently unemployed for health-related reasons. The programme forms part of the Greater Manchester WorkWell Partnership Vanguard, which focuses on providing low-intensity, holistic support to overcome health-related barriers to employment and improve long-term outcomes.

11.18 Through personalised, one-to-one support delivered via Bury Works and partner organisations, the programme:

- Helps residents remain in or return to employment
- Improves mental and physical wellbeing
- Addresses wider barriers including skills, confidence and access to services

11.19 The local delivery model is based on a single access point (SAP), providing a joined-up gateway into employment, health and skills support. This enables effective triage, ensuring residents receive the most appropriate intervention while connecting them to wider local services and support networks. Delivery is led by Bury Council in partnership with the Growth Company and the Live Well team, reflecting a collaborative, place-based approach.

11.20 Early delivery indicates that engagement is growing, although performance is currently below target, with 46 residents supported into Return to Work or Thrive in Work plans against a higher delivery profile. However, this is consistent with wider Greater Manchester performance, and momentum is increasing as referral pathways and awareness improve.

11.21 By supporting residents to sustain or re-enter employment, WorkWell will contribute to preventing homelessness, reducing financial hardship and improving long-term health outcomes. It also plays a preventative role in reducing demand on housing,

health and social care services, aligning with the council's wider ambition to intervene earlier and address the root causes of inequality.

Designing healthy, connected communities

11.22 The emerging Local Plan[38] places a strong emphasis on creating healthy, inclusive and well-connected communities. This extends beyond housing numbers and tenure to the infrastructure, services and environments that support wellbeing.

11.23 At a strategic level, the Plan seeks to ensure that residents have access to high-quality housing, community facilities, open space and services. These are recognised as essential to improving health outcomes and reducing inequalities. New development is expected to support these objectives and be accompanied by appropriate infrastructure to meet additional demand.

11.24 Policies within the Local Plan promote development that contributes to healthier communities. In particular, they seek to ensure that major schemes deliver wider social value, including supporting social inclusion, reducing inequalities and improving mental and physical health. This reinforces the expectation that new housing development should contribute to community wellbeing as well as physical delivery.

11.25 The Plan also emphasises the need to address pressures on local infrastructure arising from growth. Development is expected to contribute towards the provision of health, education and community facilities where additional demand is generated, typically secured through planning obligations. This approach helps ensure that new and existing communities are supported by the services needed to function effectively.

11.26 The Local Plan recognises the important role of the built and natural environment in supporting health and wellbeing. Policies seek to protect, enhance and expand green and blue infrastructure, reflecting the contribution of open space and recreation to physical activity, social interaction and overall wellbeing.

11.27 New housing development is expected to contribute to the provision or improvement of open space, sport and recreation facilities, particularly where schemes generate additional demand. The Plan also promotes the integration of green infrastructure with walking, wheeling and cycling networks to support active travel and healthier lifestyles.

11.28 The Housing Strategy will build on this policy framework by promoting high-quality design that supports health and wellbeing. This includes:

- Designing homes and neighbourhoods that help reduce social isolation, including for older people
- Creating safe and accessible environments that encourage physical activity and active travel

[38] The Reg 19 Local Plan is subject to cabinet approval

- Embedding health and wellbeing considerations within planning and decision-making

11.29 This approach reflects the Local Plan's wider ambition to create well-designed places that are safe, inclusive and support sustainable, healthy lifestyles, in line with national planning policy objectives for healthy and vibrant communities.

12. Living Independently

Achievements

Places for Everyone Joint Development Plan adopted, setting up-to-date housing targets for the Borough and ensuring all new homes will meet Nationally Described Space Standards and be built to the 'accessible and adaptable' standard in Part M4(2) of the Building Regulations.

The 'Willows', Bury

A £3.3m supported housing scheme delivering 13 self-contained apartments for adults with physical, sensory and learning disabilities, developed by Irwell Valley Homes in partnership with Bury Council and Persona Care and Support. The scheme provides 24-hour support, enabling residents to live independently in a purpose-built environment tailored to their needs. It has been supported by Homes England and GMCA funding and responds to a recognised shortage of supported housing locally, helping to reduce pressure on health and care services.

William Kemp Heaton, Bury

A larger-scale supported housing development being delivered with Great Places Housing Group, providing a mix of general needs homes and specialist accommodation. The inclusion of self-contained supported apartments with 24/7 care reflects a growing shift towards integrated housing and support models, enabling people with complex needs to live more independently while remaining within the community. The scheme demonstrates the role of housing associations in delivering specialist provision at scale in partnership with the Council.

Fletcher Fold, Bury

An independent living scheme for older people being delivered with Bolton at Home, providing 39 apartments designed to support older residents to live independently for longer. Schemes of this type typically include accessible design, communal facilities and support services, helping to reduce social isolation and demand for residential care. The development reflects the increasing focus on age-friendly housing provision within the borough.

The Elms, Whitefield

A council-led scheme proposing 16 units of independent living accommodation for older people. As a direct delivery project, this represents a more interventionist approach, allowing the Council to retain full control over design, tenure and allocation. Located within an established residential area of Whitefield, the scheme also demonstrates how smaller-scale, locally embedded developments can contribute to meeting specialist housing needs alongside larger partnership-led projects.

Supporting Vulnerable Residents Through Adaptations and Prevention

- Delivered and expanded Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG) activity, enabling disabled and older residents to live independently and safely in their own homes.
- Successfully absorbed responsibility for minor adaptations, clearing historic backlogs and modernising delivery models in line with national DFG delivery guidance.
- Strengthened procurement and contractor capacity to improve resilience, reduce delays and support timely discharges from hospital

12.1 The Housing for People with Additional Needs Market Position Statement[39] outlines the borough's strategic agenda to ensure that adults with a wide range of additional needs — including older people, people with long-term health conditions, learning disabilities, autism and mental health needs — can access high-quality, safe, affordable and adaptable housing that supports independence and wellbeing.

12.2 The statement situates housing as a core determinant of health and care outcomes, noting that the right home can help delay or reduce the need for formal social care, prevent hospital admissions, support recovery and enable participation in community life. It draws on local evidence and the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment, highlighting that Bury's ageing population, health inequalities, and the prevalence of long-term conditions mean there is sustained demand for a range of specialist and mainstream housing options. The document also uses projections to estimate future housing need: for example, the net need to 2035 includes circa 880 retirement housing units, 330 extra care units, and additional residential and nursing care spaces for older people; for adults with a mental health support need it estimates a need for around 370 homes/supported units by 2030, and for adults with learning disability or autism a need for circa 105 units by 2030, with a portion already delivered by 2025.

12.3 To meet these needs, the market must deliver a diverse, flexible and person-centred housing offer that enables independent living and community inclusion. Providers are encouraged to work collaboratively with the council, registered housing partners, service users and carers to co-design housing solutions that are locally based, energy-efficient, accessible and affordable. The statement emphasises expanding housing choices beyond traditional sheltered or residential settings, including mainstream and supported housing that allows people to live in the community of their choosing, close to support networks and transport. It also highlights the role of enterprise and innovation in creating creative solutions, stimulating inclusive local economic growth, and preventing people being forced to move out of borough due to lack of suitable accommodation. Strengths-based approaches recognising individuals' capabilities and the importance of community connection are core

[39] housing-for-people-with-additional-needs-mps-25-27.pdf

principles, and there is a clear commissioning intention to increase options that support wellbeing, reduce social isolation, and empower carers.

Older people

12.4 The older people's market is a central part of adult social care spend in Bury, with significant council expenditure on care-at-home, residential and nursing placements for people aged 65+. Demand for complex support — especially nursing and dementia care — is rising even as capacity in those areas becomes constrained. Providers are being encouraged to innovate and support more personalised, neighbourhood-aligned care, while the council plans a new, retendered care-at-home framework to simplify access and improve equity of provision.[40]

12.5 The Older People, Ageing Well & Dementia Market Position Statement[41] sets out the demographic and care needs driving demand for services in Bury. The borough's population is ageing there were approximately 36,400 people aged 65 and over in 2023, with projections showing this rising to around 43,900 by 2040. Within this group, the numbers of people living alone, living with limiting long-term illness, and those at risk of falls are all increasing, and dementia prevalence is higher than the England average. These trends mean more older adults will need support to maintain independence and wellbeing, as well as formal care and specialist support as needs escalate. The statement highlights inequalities in health and social outcomes, links between social determinants and wellbeing, and a growing cohort of unpaid carers, reinforcing the need for preventative and community-based approaches alongside formal care services.

12.6 To meet these needs, the market must evolve in several key ways. Demand for care at home, complex nursing, and dementia support is growing faster than for standard residential care, while capacity in specialist nursing and dementia placements is at risk of being exhausted within the next couple of years unless new provision is developed. Bury currently funds significant care packages — for example, approximately £25m on 1,719 care packages for people over 65 in 2023/24, with 66 % of spend on residential and nursing care — yet service gaps remain, particularly for complex needs and community-based alternatives. The council's commissioning intentions include retendering the Care at Home framework to support independence at home, expanding extra care housing, and increasing community options to reduce reliance on traditional residential beds. Providers are encouraged to innovate, offer more complex care options locally, and support workforce sustainability through training, technology and strength-based practice.

12.7 The Housing Needs and Demand Assessment identifies a substantial and growing need for specialist housing for older people, driven by rapid population ageing and increasing levels of frailty at older ages. Between 2022 and 2043, the number of residents aged 65 and over is projected to increase by around 8,000, with

[40] bury-adult-social-care-provider-market.pdf

[41] older-people-and-ageing-well-mps-25-27.pdf

particularly strong growth in the 75–84 and 85+ age groups. These age groups are most likely to experience mobility limitations, long-term health conditions and care needs, which cannot always be met within standard housing. The assessment concludes that without a significant expansion of specialist provision, more older households will remain in unsuitable homes, increasing pressure on health and social care services.

12.8 Based on demographic modelling and analysis of current provision, the Housing Needs and Demand Assessment estimates a requirement for 4,458 additional units of specialist older persons' accommodation between 2022 and 2043. This comprises around 3,420 age-appropriate C3 dwellings (such as sheltered and retirement housing), 868 Extra Care units, and 170 residential care bedspaces. This equates to an average need for over 210 specialist units per year, with the largest requirement relating to housing that enables independent living with access to care and support when needed. The evidence shows that while Bury has some existing provision, it is insufficient in scale and not well aligned to future demographic demand.

12.9 The Housing Needs and Demand Assessment also highlights gaps in the type and tenure of specialist housing available, rather than just overall numbers. In particular, there is a shortfall in leasehold sheltered, enhanced sheltered and Extra Care housing for sale, limiting options for older owner occupiers who wish to downsize while remaining independent. The report notes that Bury has a relatively good supply of dementia-friendly provision, but that future demand will increasingly be for flexible, care-ready housing that supports ageing in place and prevents crisis moves into residential care.

Extra Care

12.10 The key strategic priority identified by officers is to deliver additional extra care housing for older people, to support independence and facilitate step-down from (or avoidance of) residential care where appropriate. Bury Council currently lists two extra care schemes: Red Bank (Radcliffe) and Falcon & Griffin (Bury). Red Bank comprises 40 apartments and was developed in partnership by Six Town Housing and Bury Council. Falcon & Griffin provides 24-hour care and support and has been rated "Good" by the CQC (published October 2025).

12.11 Bury's Extra Care Housing Strategy (2026–2036)[42] sets out a clear ambition to expand and strengthen extra care housing as a core component of housing and care provision for older people. The strategy aims to support residents to live independently for longer, with access to care and support as needs change, reducing reliance on residential care and hospital admissions.

12.12 5 additional schemes will be developed over the lifetime of the Strategy.

12.13 Extra care housing is positioned as a preventative housing model, enabling choice, control and wellbeing while supporting the sustainability of adult social care services. The strategy seeks to:

[42] 6. Extra Care Housing Strategy Cabinet Paper Draft 03.11.2025.pdf

- Increase the supply of high-quality extra care housing across the borough
- Enable older people to plan positively for later life
- Support independence, health and wellbeing within local communities
- Contribute to the Council's prevention agenda by delaying or avoiding residential care
- Align housing delivery with health, care and place-based planning

12.14 The strategy establishes ten commissioning priorities, with a focus on:

- Engaging older people and communities to shape extra care provision
- Embedding age-friendly and dementia-inclusive design
- Improving quality, consistency and oversight of existing schemes
- Strengthening partnerships between housing providers and care providers
- Improving allocations, waiting lists and pathways, including supporting downsizing
- Raising awareness of extra care housing to support earlier decision-making
- Supporting delivery of up to five new extra care housing schemes by 2035, including in Prestwich, Whitefield, Tottington and Ramsbottom
- Using cost–benefit analysis to inform future investment and design
- Developing local extra care housing standards, including digital connectivity and assistive technology
- Aligning extra care delivery with the review and regeneration of sheltered housing stock
- The Pyramid Park re-development has been codesigned with ASC to ensure specialist accommodation was included in the masterplanning and Disposal Brief requiring the incoming developer to include Extra Care provision as part of their proposal.

Learning difficulties, mental health and autism

12.15 Bury Council's Adult Social Care Housing for those with Additional Needs Strategy (2021–2025) identified substantial demand among people with long-term conditions, including learning disabilities, autism and mental health needs. Around 0.5% of the population has a learning disability, over 17% experience mental health illness, and demand is projected to increase significantly, particularly among older age groups. Importantly, the evidence shows a clear mismatch between need and current provision, with a heavy reliance on shared supported living models that do not reflect people's preferences or aspirations for independence. There is a strong shift towards an "own front door" model, providing self-contained homes with flexible, tailored support

Learning difficulties

12.16 The Learning Disability & Autism Market Position Statement[43] sets out the scale of need and the demographic pressures in Bury. In 2025, there are an estimated 3,552 adults with a learning disability in the borough, of whom 738 have moderate or severe needs likely to require social care support, and this population is expected to increase by approximately 4.8 % over the next decade. There are also an estimated 2,130 neurodiverse adults, with prevalence increasing slightly over time, and a significant overlap with learning disability services. The document highlights growing demand for services — for example, demand for learning disability residential and supported living services has risen by 23 % over the last five years — and recognises that people with learning disabilities and neurodiverse people experience poorer health, social and economic outcomes than the wider population. It also emphasises inequalities in access and outcomes for diverse communities, and the need to understand and meet that demand through improved local data and co-production with people and carers.

12.17 The evidence base identifies a significant and growing population of people with learning disabilities in Bury, with particular growth among older age groups. In 2022, there were an estimated 3,528 people with a learning disability, of whom 731 had a moderate or severe learning disability. This figure is projected to rise to 776 people with moderate or severe learning disabilities by 2043, representing a 6.1% increase over the period. While growth among working-age adults (18–64) is relatively modest, the number of older people (65+) with moderate or severe learning disabilities is expected to increase by around 17–18%, reflecting wider ageing trends within the LD population

12.18 The evidence highlights a particular pressure point around ageing and transitions to independence. In 2022, an estimated 228 adults aged 18–64 with a learning disability were living with a parent, rising to around 240 by 2043. This indicates a growing cohort of people who may require alternative housing and support as family carers age or are no longer able to provide care, reinforcing the need for planned, supported housing pathways rather than reactive provision

12.19 The evidence base also shows that complex needs within the learning disability population are increasing in absolute terms, even if growth rates are relatively modest. In 2022, there were around 51 adults aged 18–64 with a learning disability and challenging behaviour, rising to 53 by 2043, alongside 72 adults with Down's syndrome, increasing to 75 over the same period. These groups are more likely to require tailored housing, higher levels of support, and stable long-term accommodation, often outside the mainstream housing market

12.20 To respond to this need, the market must evolve substantially. The council's strategic intentions prioritise strengthening supported living and "own front door" accommodation, with plans to re-tender supported living contracts and create more locally based homes, reducing reliance on out-of-borough placements. Residential care is to be used only where supported living is not appropriate, and the council has

[43] learning-disability-and-autism-mps-25-27.pdf

one of the highest percentages of supported living sites rated Good or Outstanding in Greater Manchester, reflecting quality expectations for providers. There are recognised gaps in the market for step-up/step-down and crisis response services, and a need for services capable of supporting people with complex needs and those transitioning into adulthood. Providers are expected to adopt strengths-based practice, enable independence and community participation, support employment and skills development, and ensure local accessibility, transport-linked provision and person-centred care planning. Workforce challenges are also acknowledged, with emphasis on collaborative training, recruitment and retention support, and ongoing co-production with users and carers to shape services that improve choice, control and outcomes.

Mental health supported housing

12.21 The Bury Mental Health Market Position Statement[44] describes a broad and growing need for mental health support across the borough, reflecting both national and local trends. Around one in four adults experience a diagnosable mental health problem each year, and common conditions such as anxiety and depression continue to rise, with Bury residents reporting higher anxiety scores than the England average and rising GP-recorded depression prevalence. The document also highlights inequalities in mental health outcomes linked to deprivation and demographic factors, and notes increased demand following the COVID-19 pandemic. Children and young people in Bury are similarly affected, with national data indicating that around one in five 8–16-year-olds have a probable mental disorder, mirrored locally in higher referrals to specialist services. Suicide rates in the borough are slightly above the national average, and strong links are made between mental health and wider determinants such as poverty, education, and social support. The mental health needs described extend across the life course and include both common (e.g., anxiety, depression) and more complex conditions that can affect long-term wellbeing and independence.

12.22 The Housing Needs and Demand Assessment identifies mental ill health as a significant and growing factor shaping housing need in Bury, drawing on prevalence data and household survey evidence. Based on national prevalence rates applied locally, the assessment estimates that around 16–18% of adults experience a common mental health condition (such as anxiety or depression) at any one time, with a smaller but important group experiencing severe and enduring mental illness, estimated at around 1–2% of the adult population. Applied to Bury, this equates to many thousands of residents with mental health needs, a proportion of whom require housing-related support to live independently and safely.

12.23 The Housing Needs and Demand Assessment shows that most people with mental health conditions live in mainstream housing, rather than specialist accommodation, and that housing problems can both contribute to and exacerbate mental ill health. Household survey evidence indicates that people with a mental health condition are more likely to live in rented accommodation, particularly in the private rented

[44] mental-health-mps.pdf

sector, and are more likely to experience housing instability, affordability pressures and dissatisfaction with housing condition. The report highlights links between poor-quality housing, insecurity of tenure and worsening mental health, reinforcing the importance of stable, affordable and well-managed homes as a preventative intervention.

12.24 In terms of support needs, the Housing Needs and Demand Assessment finds that people with mental health conditions are more likely to require low-to-moderate housing-related support, rather than intensive care, including help with managing a tenancy, budgeting, maintaining the home and accessing services. While only a minority require specialist supported housing, unmet need can result in crisis presentations, homelessness or inappropriate placements. The assessment therefore emphasises that meeting mental health–related housing need is less about the volume of specialist accommodation and more about ensuring a sufficient supply of affordable, accessible homes with flexible, person-centred support, integrated with health and social care services. Overall, the Housing Needs and Demand Assessment positions housing as a critical component of mental health prevention and recovery, with early intervention offering the greatest long-term benefit.

12.25 To meet this need, the market must continue to evolve toward integrated, accessible and preventative services designed in partnership with communities, providers and people with lived experience. The statement emphasises collaboration across health, social care, voluntary and community sectors to deliver the Thriving in Bury vision, which promotes choice, early intervention, tailored support and recovery-oriented care. It identifies opportunities to expand community-based support, crisis management, risk planning, blended digital and face-to-face interventions, and targeted services for at-risk groups. Providers are encouraged to align with strategic priorities such as prevention, neighbourhood-based integrated teams, and transformation to improve quality and sustainability of services. The overall commissioning direction requires creativity, partnership working and responsiveness to projected increases in demand, with an emphasis on supporting people to live well and independently in the community rather than relying on crisis or institutional responses.

Autism-specific housing

12.26 The Housing Needs and Demand Assessment reports that in 2022, around 1,462 people of all ages in Bury were estimated to have an autistic spectrum disorder, increasing to 1,570 by 2043 (a 7.4% rise). Growth is again strongest among older age groups, with the number of autistic people aged 65+ expected to increase by nearly 18%, which has implications for accessible housing, support services and age-appropriate provision for people who may previously have lived independently or with family support.

12.27 The Bury Adult Care Autism Strategy 2024-2027[45] makes clear that autism is a significant and everyday issue in Bury, not a marginal or specialist concern. Around 1

[45] Scoping-Autism-strategy-24-27-v3-July-24.pptx

in 100 people in Bury are autistic, and when families and carers are included, autism affects the daily lives of approximately 10,920 residents. This scale means autism cuts across housing, health, employment, education and community life, and should be treated as a core population need rather than a niche service issue

12.28 The evidence highlights severe inequalities in life outcomes for autistic people. Fewer than 20% of autistic people experience "good" life outcomes, defined as a combination of independent living, friendships and employment. Around 22% of autistic people are unemployed, despite many having strengths and skills that could be valuable to employers. These figures point to systemic barriers rather than individual capability, reinforcing the need for coordinated support that goes beyond health and care services alone

12.29 The strategy also identifies serious risks to health, wellbeing and housing stability. Autistic adults are nine times more likely to die by suicide than the general population and are three times more likely to experience homelessness. These statistics underline the consequences of unmet need, social isolation and poorly designed systems, and demonstrate why autism must be considered explicitly in prevention, housing and homelessness strategies, not solely within adult social care

12.30 Need is further compounded by co-occurring conditions. The strategy highlights that around 4 in 10 autistic people also have a learning disability, and around 7 in 10 have a mental health condition such as anxiety, depression, ADHD or OCD. This reinforces the importance of flexible, person-centred housing and support models, as many autistic people will not fit neatly into single service categories and may struggle to access support where systems are fragmented

12.31 Finally, the document acknowledges data gaps and under-recording. Autism is less likely to be diagnosed where co-occurring conditions are present, and local data sources are known to be incomplete or outdated. This means that recorded demand almost certainly understates actual need, and planning based only on current service numbers risks under-provision.

12.32 Officers described increasing demand from cohorts with multiple and complex needs (including offending histories, aggression and substance use), many of whom cannot live safely in shared environments. While there is existing supported accommodation supply (circa 60 units), the current offer is not consistently matched to need, with much of the support focused on life skills and tenancy sustainment rather than the higher-intensity support/care required. A priority gap is therefore smaller-scale provision: single-gender micro-schemes (2–3 units in a block) that reduce shared-space pressures and enable more tailored support. The same model was also identified as particularly appropriate for people with autism and sensory needs who cannot tolerate noise and busy communal environments, where distressed behaviour can otherwise lead to tenancy breakdown and provider reluctance.

Supported accommodation – learning disabilities and mental health

12.33 Feedback from officers confirms significant recent investment in new supported accommodation for people with learning disabilities and/or mental health needs. Provision includes schemes referenced locally as The Rock, Liberty House and Scott

and Rob's Place. These schemes are managed/commissioned via Persona and, as a result, officers do not currently view learning disability/mental health supported accommodation as an area requiring additional commissioning. Liberty House in Radcliffe is described as a step-down supported living service for adults (18+) with mental health needs and/or learning difficulties, delivered with Bury's Community Mental Health Team, with six self-contained apartments. In Bury town centre, 137 The Rock (Saxon House) provides move-on supported living accommodation delivered with Northern Healthcare in collaboration with Bury Council, reported publicly as 13 self-contained apartments.

Physical disabilities

12.34 The Physical Disabilities Market Position Statement[46] describes the current and projected needs of adults with physical impairments in Bury, highlighting that this group encompasses a wide range of conditions including sensory impairments, mobility limitations, acquired brain injury, neurological conditions and long-term physical health issues. The document notes that the number of adults with a limiting long-term illness or disability is significantly higher than the national average, and many people live alone or with complex co-morbidities, increasing demand for tailored support. While exact projected numbers are not always quantified in the summary document, the narrative makes clear that demand for supported living, care at home, adaptations and enablement services is rising, particularly as people seek to remain independent in their own homes for longer. People with physical disabilities also face challenges related to transport, housing accessibility and access to community activities, pointing to the interconnected nature of support needs across health, social care and community infrastructure.

12.35 To meet these needs, the market needs to shift toward more flexible, local and person-centred services that support independence, dignity and quality of life. This includes expanding home-based support and rapid response services, enhancing access to equipment and adaptations, and increasing the availability of specialist supported living options for people whose physical needs cannot be met through standard care at home alone. Providers are encouraged to work collaboratively with health, housing and transport partners to address barriers that extend beyond traditional care provision. The statement also emphasises the importance of prevention and early intervention, including reablement and enablement services that can reduce the need for ongoing high-level care, and the need for a sustainable workforce skilled in physical disability support. These developments aim to ensure that people with physical disabilities can live as independently as possible in the community, with support proportional to their individual needs.

12.36 The Housing Needs and Demand Assessment identifies a growing population with mobility and accessibility requirements, driven primarily by demographic change. The population aged 65 and over is projected to increase from 35,965 in 2022 to

[46] physical-disabilities-mps-25-27.pdf

43,970 by 2043, with the sharpest growth in the 75–84 and 85+ age groups, which are most strongly associated with mobility limitations and the need for adapted homes

12.37 The household survey evidence shows that a substantial proportion of households already require adaptations. Across all tenures, households report needs for level access, internal adaptations, space for carers and other accessibility features, with requirements rising sharply with age. These needs are not confined to specialist housing but apply to general needs dwellings, supporting the case for accessible and adaptable homes as a baseline standard rather than an exception

12.38 The evidence base translates this evidence into a clear policy recommendation on accessible housing standards. Based on assessed additional needs and long-term demographic trends, it concludes that all new dwellings should be built to the M4(2) accessible and adaptable standard, in line with Places for Everyone Policy JP-H3. This reflects the scale of need across the population and the importance of ensuring homes can be adapted over time to support independent living and reduce future demand for costly retrofitting or residential care

12.39 In addition, the evidence base identifies a specific and ongoing requirement for wheelchair-user housing. It recommends that 4% of all new dwellings (around 18 homes per year) should be built to the M4(3) wheelchair-accessible standard. This figure is derived from assumptions about wheelchair use, household formation and future demographic change, and is intended to meet identified need across both general and specialist housing provision

12.40 The report also makes clear that M4(3) need overlaps with other priority groups, particularly older people and those with disabilities, meaning that wheelchair-accessible homes can simultaneously contribute to meeting multiple strands of housing need. For example, an affordable, level-access wheelchair home may address disability-related need, older persons' housing requirements and affordable housing need at the same time

Adapted homes

12.41 There is strong evidence of need for accessible and adapted Homes in the allocations policy.[47] The policy sets out detailed medical categories (wheelchair accessible, accessible, low-level mobility) and prioritises:

- Matching households to existing adapted stock
- Releasing adapted homes when no longer required
- Referring mental health cases to a multi-disciplinary panel
- This indicates:
- Ongoing and future demand for accessible, adaptable and specialist housing
- Pressure on a limited adapted stock

[47] bury-allocations-policy-2025.pdf

- A clear link between housing need and health and care systems

12.42 From the Bury Private Sector Housing Renewal Assistance Policy, the council offers several forms of financial support for disabled adaptations and accessible housing, with the following key funding levels:

12.43 **Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG)**
The main grant used to fund major adaptations that enable disabled residents to live independently at home. This can cover works such as stairlifts, level-access showers, ramps, widened doorways and accessible kitchens. The mandatory DFG limit is £30,000 per property.

12.44 **Discretionary Disabled Facilities Grant (Top-Up)**
Where essential adaptations exceed the £30,000 mandatory DFG limit, the council may provide a discretionary top-up grant to allow the works to proceed.

12.45 **Disabled Adaptation Grant (DAG)**
Used mainly for smaller adaptation works, typically where the cost is below the DFG threshold.

- Minimum grant: £1,000
- Maximum grant: £5,000

12.46 **Minor Adaptations**
Lower-cost adaptations, generally under £1,000, can be funded through a simplified process to enable quicker delivery of essential works.

12.47 **Major Adaptation Loan (MAL)**
A loan facility that may be offered where the cost of works exceeds the £30,000 DFG limit, allowing larger or more complex adaptations to proceed where grant funding alone is insufficient.

12.48 **Relocation Assistance**
Where adapting a property is not practical or cost-effective, financial support may be offered to help a household move to more suitable accommodation.

- Up to £1,000 for tenants
- Up to £2,500 for owner-occupiers

12.49 Overall, the policy provides a range of grants, discretionary funding and loans to support both major and minor adaptations, enabling disabled residents to remain living independently and safely in their homes where possible.

12.50 The council has recently worked with Foundations on a review of the adaptations service. The Foundations Review has recognised good work already underway across the service, while also identifying themes where further improvement could be made. The findings are currently being considered and will be used to inform a proportionate improvement plan as part of our ongoing commitment to strengthening delivery and outcomes.

12.51 The Home Improvement Team delivered significant improvements in adaptations and prevention services, supporting residents to live safely and independently in their homes:

- Managed increased demand for Disabled Facilities Grants annually utilising Nationally allocated DFG funding over £7m over the five years including
- Successfully absorbed responsibility for minor adaptations, inheriting and fully clearing a five year backlog of 647 cases through comprehensive triage and use of a Dynamic Purchasing System.
- Expanded contractor capacity to reduce delays and improve service resilience and consistency.
- Introduced strengthened end to end procedures and a new customer satisfaction survey, with feedback highlighting life changing outcomes, improved independence and high levels of confidence in staff professionalism.

12.52 Collectively, this work has delivered safer, healthier homes, raised standards in the private rented sector, supported vulnerable households, reduced health inequalities and contributed directly to wider regeneration, homelessness prevention and community wellbeing objectives.

Digital Inclusion

12.53 Bury's approach to specialist independent living recognises that many residents who need supported or specialist housing – including older people, disabled residents and other vulnerable groups – can face barriers in accessing services and advice, particularly where digital exclusion is an issue. The Council's commitment to digital inclusion is therefore an important enabler of independent living, helping residents to access information, manage tenancies, engage with support, and use health and care services in ways that reduce isolation and prevent avoidable crises. By strengthening digital access, skills and support alongside housing provision, Bury can better ensure specialist independent living is genuinely accessible and effective for those who need it most.

Allocations

12.54 Officers reported positive examples of pre-allocation of social housing to better match properties to individual needs, alongside continued use of the private rented sector to secure accommodation where appropriate. In addition, while technology capability exists within the sector, officers felt more could be done to embed assistive technology into schemes, improve awareness of available options and ensure provision is designed with strong digital capacity—an area also emphasised within the extra care strategy.

12.55 There is a gap in provision for people who require a staging post between discharge from institutions and long-term housing, including rapid-access short-term accommodation and a middle tier between general needs and supported living.

13. Homes for Children in Care and Care Leavers

13.1 Bury Council's approach to children in care and care leavers is set out through its Homes for Children in Care Strategy (2025–2026)[48], which responds to increasing demand and system pressures. At a strategic level, the Council is seeking to ensure that children in care can access suitable, stable homes locally, and that care leavers are supported into adulthood with secure accommodation and increasing independence. This aligns with wider statutory expectations, including duties to support young people transitioning to independence and prevent social and economic exclusion.

13.2 A key priority is "support into adulthood", which focuses on ensuring that care leavers have stable and appropriate accommodation, effective pathway plans, and the skills needed to live independently. To support this, Bury has strengthened its policy framework through the introduction of a Joint Housing Protocol (2024), which covers the care leaver journey from age 16 onwards, alongside priority access to housing for care leavers aged 18–25 and stronger coordination between housing, children's and adult services.

Rising Demand and Changing Needs

13.3 The strategy is driven by significant and growing pressures within the care system. There has been a steady increase in the number of children in care, alongside a rise in the complexity of need. At the same time, there is a shortage of foster carers, particularly for older young people and those with more complex needs, which has contributed to a shift towards residential placements, often provided by the private sector.

13.4 There are also particular challenges in securing suitable placements for specific groups, including young people with learning disabilities or mental health needs, unaccompanied asylum-seeking children, and children from Black and minority ethnic backgrounds. These issues reflect wider regional and national trends, where local authorities are increasingly reliant on private residential provision due to insufficient local capacity. At a Greater Manchester level, this reliance is significant, with a large number of children placed in private residential homes.

13.5 Placement location is also an issue. While most children are placed locally or within the wider region, a proportion are placed further away from Bury. This can disrupt education, relationships and support networks, and can negatively affect stability and long-term outcomes.

13.6 Officer feedback confirmed there is an emerging cohort of young people with complex neurodiversity and behavioural needs moving from children's services into adult services that current provision cannot reliably accommodation

[48] Microsoft Word - CORPORATE PARENTING STRATEGY FORMATTED

The Current Offer

13.7 Bury has developed a clear and structured accommodation pathway for care leavers, supported by both policy and practice. This includes a range of options designed to meet different needs and stages of independence. Young people may remain with foster carers through Staying Put arrangements up to age 21, move into supported lodgings which provide a family-based environment with increasing independence, or return to live with family or friends where appropriate. For those progressing into higher education, university accommodation is also supported.

13.8 Alongside these options, there is a broader pathway that includes supported accommodation for 16–17-year-olds, supported housing for care leavers aged 18 and over, and access to independent tenancies. This pathway is underpinned by enabling policies that ensure automatic qualification for housing, reduce barriers associated with homelessness decisions, and promote coordinated working across services.

13.9 Taken together, this establishes a defined and managed pathway from care to independence, rather than relying on a single housing solution.

Strengthening Local Provision: Shift Towards Direct Delivery

13.10 A central theme of Bury's strategy is reducing reliance on the private sector and increasing locally controlled provision. This includes a focus on expanding fostering capacity through the recruitment and retention of carers, improved support and training, and the development of specialist fostering options.

13.11 Alongside this, the Council is planning to reintroduce its own in-house residential provision through the acquisition and conversion of up to two children's homes. These will provide small-scale, home-like environments within the borough and allow the Council greater control over quality, placement decisions and costs.

New Supported Accommodation: Targeted Transitional Provision

13.12 In addition to children's provision, Bury is developing new supported accommodation to strengthen pathways into independence and prevent homelessness. This includes 40 units of self-contained accommodation for young people aged 18–25, designed as short-term, transitional housing with access to communal facilities and support. There are also plans for 20 units of accommodation for young families aged 16–25, providing a safe and stable environment for young parents, and 9 units of Ofsted-registered accommodation for 16–17-year-olds delivered through shared housing.

13.13 This provision is specifically designed to meet support needs rather than function as general needs housing. It is intended as a transitional step within a wider pathway, with a strong focus on developing independence and ensuring clear move-on arrangements into settled accommodation.

Key Gaps and System Challenges

13.14 Despite this structured approach, several challenges remain. Transition points, particularly at age 18, are a key pressure, with suitable accommodation not always

available at the point young people leave care. This can result in the use of emergency or general homeless accommodation, which is often inappropriate.

13.15 There are also gaps in early tenancy support. Young people moving into independent housing do not always receive intensive "day-one" support, increasing the risk of tenancy breakdown. At the same time, there is a growing cohort of care leavers with more complex needs who require higher levels of support, including those with learning disabilities, mental health needs and asylum-related support requirements. Stakeholder feedback suggests that around half of cases awaiting allocation involve young people with learning disabilities, indicating a need for more structured and longer-term provision.

13.16 Pathway planning is another area for improvement, with a need for earlier and more coordinated engagement through Preparing for Adulthood and stronger multi-agency alignment.

13.17 Officer feedback confirmed:

- The potential to explore more flexible housing options such as a shared lives approach whilst young people are awaiting move on accommodation. This could complement the current staying approaches.
- Some care leavers require hands-on support with everyday living skills, such as shopping, managing money, and understanding bills. Written information alone is often insufficient. There may be potential to explore a community-based volunteer support model, focused on building practical life skills. This could involve recruiting and training volunteers to provide informal, light-touch support, including supporting budgeting and food shopping, explaining household bills and costs and building confidence in managing a home. Volunteers would be appropriately trained, DBS-checked, and supported, and matched with young people for a defined period. This model could be delivered in partnership with the voluntary and community sector, strengthening local networks while complementing formal services.
- Care leavers are often provided with large volumes of information at once, which can be overwhelming. There is a need to provide clear, practical, and accessible guidance that can be accessed when needed. Key information should focus on: managing a tenancy, rent, and bills, understanding responsibilities, responding to emergencies, accessing key contacts and local support. There could be the potential to explore the development of an interactive app, offering bite-sized, easy-to-understand guidance, location-based local services and contacts, one-click access to support in emergencies, regular updates from the local authority and partners, optional reminders for rent, bills, and appointments. For example, a simple decision tree could guide users: "I can't pay my rent" → "Have you missed a payment?" → "Yes" → "Contact your housing officer" + "Check local support" + "Set a reminder"

A brighter future for our care leavers'

Bury Council has developed a coordinated, cross-service approach to ensure that care leavers are able to access suitable housing and transition successfully into independent living. This work responds to both statutory duties and locally identified challenges, particularly delays in securing appropriate accommodation for young people leaving care.

The approach was strengthened following an Ofsted inspection in 2021, which highlighted that some care leavers were experiencing delays in accessing stable housing, leading in some cases to temporary or less suitable accommodation. In response, the Council introduced a more structured and proactive system to identify, secure and allocate housing for care leavers at an earlier stage.

Central to this approach is a joint working model between Children's Services, Housing Services and the Housing Growth and Development Team. A formal protocol underpins this collaboration, ensuring that services work together to identify housing needs, plan ahead and coordinate provision. This includes sharing information on demand, aligning with registered providers and embedding care leavers within the Council's wider housing development programme.

A key feature of the model is early planning with housing needs identified well before a young person turns 18 through their Pathway Plan. This enables a smoother transition and reduces the risk of homelessness at the point of leaving care. The Council has also embedded strong prioritisation within its allocations system. Care leavers are given priority access to housing, including Band 1 status in cases of urgent need, and are exempt from certain disqualification criteria that might otherwise restrict access to the housing register.

In addition to prioritisation, the Council has introduced more flexible allocation mechanisms. This includes the use of direct lets for care leavers, particularly where there are safeguarding concerns or complex needs, allowing housing to be secured quickly without reliance on standard bidding processes. Offers can also be accompanied by tailored support packages to help sustain tenancies and promote long-term stability.

The approach is closely linked to Bury's wider housing delivery programme. Through its affordable housing development pipeline, the Council is delivering over 400 new homes, with approximately 10% of new units on relevant schemes earmarked for care leavers. To date, around 50 new-build properties have been identified for this purpose, providing modern, good-quality accommodation specifically for young people transitioning out of care.

Overall, the case study demonstrates a shift towards a planned, partnership-led and housing-integrated model, where care leavers are actively prioritised within mainstream housing delivery. By combining early planning, strong joint working and dedicated housing supply, Bury Council aims to reduce homelessness, improve housing outcomes and support care leavers to establish stable and independent lives.

This work was recognised by the LGA as best practice, recognising Care leavers being prioritised on Bury's council waiting list to be amongst the first to benefit from new housing coming forward in the borough. [Bury Council: Care Leavers Ready to Transition to Independent Living | Local Government Association]

14. Survivors of Domestic Abuse

Survivors of domestic Abuse

14.1 The Bury Locality Domestic Abuse Safe Accommodation Strategy 2025–2028[49] identifies a need for a sufficient and sustainable supply of safe accommodation that reflects the different levels of risk, complexity and length of stay required by victims of domestic abuse and their children. This includes the need for refuge accommodation for those at immediate high risk, alongside a greater supply of self-contained and dispersed safe accommodation for victims who do not require communal refuge settings but still need security and support. The strategy also identifies a need for more second-stage and move-on accommodation to prevent blockages in refuges and temporary placements.

14.2 The strategy states that Bury needs accommodation that is accessible and inclusive, including provision suitable for victims with disabilities, those with complex needs, larger families, and victims from protected or marginalised groups. It highlights the need for accommodation that allows victims to remain within the borough where safe to do so, to maintain access to schools, employment, health services and support networks, reducing disruption and repeat trauma.

14.3 In terms of who should provide this, the strategy makes clear that delivery is a shared responsibility, led by the Council but reliant on commissioned specialist providers and partners. Bury Council is responsible for strategic oversight, commissioning and funding, including using the Domestic Abuse Act grant to commission safe accommodation and support services. Specialist domestic abuse providers are expected to deliver refuge and supported accommodation, provide housing-related support, and work directly with victims and families.

14.4 Registered Providers, housing providers and landlords are identified as key partners in providing self-contained and longer-term housing options, including move-on accommodation. The strategy also identifies a role for housing services and homelessness teams in prioritising access to settled housing, managing pathways, and ensuring housing allocations and lettings policies support survivors effectively.

14.5 Finally, the strategy states that multi-agency partners — including health, police, children's services and voluntary organisations — are required to support delivery by contributing to risk assessment, referral pathways, safety planning and wrap-around support. Governance and coordination are led through the Bury Domestic Abuse Partnership Board, which oversees delivery, performance and ongoing assessment of need.

[49] bury-locality-domestic-abuse-safe-accommodation-strategy-2025-2028.pdf

Domestic Abuse: Strategic Direction and Housing Implications

14.6 Discussions with Bury Council's Strategic Partnerships team highlighted that domestic abuse (DA) remains a key priority within the borough, with a clear shift in strategic direction towards prevention, early intervention, and improved system-wide responses. This reflects both national policy changes and local learning, including insights from domestic abuse-related deaths, which are informing a more proactive and coordinated approach.

14.7 A significant area of focus is the changing profile and complexity of need. Domestic abuse is increasingly understood beyond traditional intimate partner violence, with growing recognition of abuse affecting older people and within wider family contexts. In addition, many cases involve co-occurring needs, particularly mental health issues and substance misuse, which place additional pressure on existing housing and support systems. There is currently a recognised gap in specialist provision for individuals with these more complex needs.

14.8 The safe accommodation model is evolving, with a deliberate move away from reliance on refuge-based provision towards a more dispersed and flexible accommodation approach. This is intended to improve move-on options, reduce bottlenecks in the system, and better reflect the varied needs of victims. However, this transition also highlights gaps in the current system, particularly around coordination and consistency of provision.

14.9 At present, there is no unified sanctuary scheme in place across the borough. While some target-hardening measures are used on an ad hoc basis, there is an opportunity to develop a more structured approach to supporting victims to remain safely in their own homes where appropriate. This aligns with broader strategic ambitions to reduce disruption for victims and minimise the need for emergency accommodation.

14.10 The private rented sector and housing providers are seen as critical partners in responding to domestic abuse. There is increasing emphasis on strengthening relationships with landlords and registered providers to support victims into safe, stable housing. However, current arrangements are described as fragmented and inconsistent, indicating a need for more formalised and coordinated partnership working.

14.11 A key development in this space is the Greater Manchester occupational orders initiative, which aims to enable more victims to remain safely in their homes by removing perpetrators where appropriate. This represents a shift in approach, with housing systems playing a more active role in supporting legal remedies that prioritise victim stability. However, there are practical challenges, including the legal complexity of obtaining orders and the need to build practitioner confidence in using them effectively.

15. Supporting Priority Groups

Families with children

15.1 The Housing Needs and Demand Assessment confirms that families with children remain a major component of housing demand in Bury, accounting for around 27% of all households (including couples with children and lone parent families). The 2021 Census data used in the assessment indicates that around 21,600 households are couples with children, with a further 9,600 lone parent households, making families with children a substantial and ongoing driver of housing need. Family households are spread across all neighbourhoods but are more concentrated in areas with lower housing costs, reflecting affordability constraints rather than preference. As population growth continues, particularly among younger age groups and working-age adults, demand for family housing is expected to remain strong.

15.2 The Housing Needs and Demand Assessment highlights significant affordability and tenure pressures for families, particularly those on lower and middle incomes. Families are disproportionately represented in the private rented sector and affordable housing, with over 50% of lone parent families renting, either socially or privately. The Housing Needs and Demand Assessment also shows that overcrowding affects around 3.8% of all households, but rates are notably higher among families with children, especially those renting. Over 30% of overcrowded households live in the private rented sector, and a further 30% in social rented housing, indicating that lack of access to suitably sized, affordable family homes is a persistent issue.

15.3 In the emerging local plan[50], families with children are recognised as a key group within the housing system whose needs must be explicitly planned for and reflected in housing delivery. Bury's approach is to embed the needs of families within a broader strategy to deliver a balanced and diverse housing supply, creating inclusive neighbourhoods that support residents at all life stages.

15.4 Central to this is the provision of a range of family-sized homes, particularly 2-, 3- and 4-bedroom properties, across a mix of tenures. This reflects the need to address issues such as overcrowding and affordability, ensuring that families can access homes that are suitable, stable and capable of supporting long-term living. The Local Plan places strong emphasis on delivering housing that is not only sufficient in quantity but appropriate in quality, design and adaptability to meet changing household needs over time.

15.5 Bury also recognises that housing for families cannot be considered in isolation. The Local Plan therefore aligns housing growth with the provision of supporting infrastructure, particularly education, health services and community facilities. This includes coordinating new development with school place provision to ensure that family housing growth is supported by adequate capacity at the right time.

[50] The Reg 19 Local Plan is subject to cabinet approval

15.6 In spatial terms, the strategy prioritises sustainable, well-connected locations, where families have good access to schools, services, open space and employment opportunities. This reflects a wider ambition to create neighbourhoods that support healthy, active lifestyles and reduce reliance on car travel.

15.7 Alongside physical provision, Bury's wider strategic approach emphasises the importance of integrated, place-based support for families, including early help services and community-based provision. This reinforces the role of housing as part of a wider system that supports children's wellbeing, educational outcomes and long-term life chances.

Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople

15.8 The Housing Needs and Demand Assessment identifies Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople as a small but distinct group with specific accommodation needs, which are addressed separately from general housing need in line with national policy. Based on council data and wider evidence, the assessment confirms that the number of households is relatively small, but that their accommodation needs are highly specific and cannot be met through the conventional housing market alone. The Housing Needs and Demand Assessment includes a detailed profile of known households and sites across the borough, recognising that even small changes in household numbers can have a significant impact on accommodation demand.

15.9 The evidence shows that Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showperson households are unevenly distributed across Bury, with known households concentrated in a limited number of locations. The tables in the Housing Needs and Demand Assessment indicate that the total number of identified Gypsy and Traveller households is low (in the tens rather than hundreds), with an even smaller number of Travelling Showperson households. Most existing provision is through authorised pitches and yards, and the assessment does not identify widespread unauthorised encampments as a dominant issue at the time of the study. However, the Housing Needs and Demand Assessment notes that household formation over time, including younger people forming new households, will create ongoing need for additional pitches or plots, even if headline numbers appear modest. The latest evidence of need for Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople (set out in the Greater Manchester Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessments of 2024 and the Bury Housing Need Assessment 2025) suggests a need for five additional pitches for gypsies and travellers and three plots for travelling show people.

15.10 The emerging Local Plan[51] recognises the need to plan positively for the accommodation requirements of Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople, ensuring fair and equal access to suitable sites while balancing the interests of the settled community.

15.11 The Council will:

[51] The Reg 19 Local Plan is subject to cabinet approval

- Seek to meet evidenced need for pitches and plots over the plan period.
- Support site provision in appropriate locations, with a preference for previously developed (brownfield) land where feasible.
- Ensure that provision contributes to sustainable, socially integrated communities, with access to services, education, and employment opportunities.
- Promote positive relationships between travelling and settled communities, supporting peaceful co-existence.

15.12 Proposals for Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople sites will be favourably considered where they:

- Provide a safe, healthy and acceptable living environment for occupiers.
- Are located in sustainable locations with access to schools, healthcare, shops and public transport.
- Avoid areas at risk of flooding or with environmental constraints unless these can be effectively mitigated.
- Include adequate space for residential and operational needs, including vehicles and equipment.
- Are supported by appropriate infrastructure, including water, drainage and waste facilities.
- Do not have an unacceptable impact on neighbouring uses or local amenity.
- Are well integrated into the surrounding area through appropriate design and landscaping.
- have safe and suitable vehicular and pedestrian access to the highway network

Service Leavers

15.13 The Housing Needs and Demand Assessment identifies veterans and service leavers as a relatively small but important group with distinct housing risks. While robust local data on scale is limited, national and Census evidence suggests that veterans typically account for around 3–5% of the adult population, with only a small proportion experiencing acute housing need at any one time. In Bury, there is no identified requirement for a distinct, standalone housing provision for veterans. Instead, their needs are understood to overlap with wider groups, including people with mental health conditions, physical disabilities, or those transitioning to independent living.

15.14 Housing challenges are most likely to arise at the point of transition from military to civilian life. Key risks include difficulties accessing settled accommodation, limited local connection due to service mobility, affordability pressures, and support needs associated with physical injury or mental health conditions such as PTSD. Where issues do occur, they are more commonly associated with housing instability, use of the private rented sector, or short-term accommodation, rather than a need for specialist long-term housing provision.

15.15 The emerging Local Plan recognises the Council's responsibilities under the Armed Forces Covenant and the associated statutory duty to have due regard to the needs of the Armed Forces community when exercising housing functions. This includes allocations, homelessness prevention, and tenancy strategies. The Council is committed to ensuring that serving personnel, veterans, and their families are not disadvantaged in accessing housing and, where appropriate, receive additional support.

15.16 In line with national policy and best practice, the Council will ensure that its housing policies:

- Promote fair access to housing, recognising the impact of service life on mobility and housing stability;
- Provide exemptions from local connection requirements, ensuring that service personnel and veterans are not disadvantaged by frequent relocation;
- Offer priority to those in housing need, including additional preference for injured, ill, or bereaved service members; and
- Support service families, including spouses and partners transitioning from Ministry of Defence accommodation, particularly in cases of bereavement or relationship breakdown.

15.17 The Council will work in partnership with housing providers, support agencies, and Armed Forces organisations to:

- Support service leavers and their families in transitioning successfully to civilian life;
- Prevent homelessness among veterans and service households;
- Respond effectively to specific needs, including mental health, disability, and adaptation requirements; and
- Strengthen the local evidence base to improve understanding of the scale and nature of housing need within the Armed Forces community.

15.18 This approach reflects the principles of the Armed Forces Covenant, which establishes a moral obligation to ensure that those who serve or have served, and their families, are treated fairly and face no disadvantage in accessing public services. In some circumstances, particularly for those who are injured or bereaved, additional support is appropriate.

15.19 Bury Council is committed to upholding these principles across key themes including housing, health and wellbeing, employment, and community integration. Through partnership working, leadership, and continuous improvement of services, the Council will ensure that the needs of the Armed Forces community are recognised, understood, and effectively met.

16. The Private Rented Sector

Raising Standards in the Private Rented Sector (PRS)

- Maintained a robust regulatory and enforcement function to address hazards, poor property conditions and landlord non-compliance, supporting national objectives under the Housing Act 2004 to reduce risks to health and safety.
- Implemented and refreshed local HMO standards and amenity guidance, bringing expectations in line with the Mandatory HMO Licensing regime and national minimum standards.
- Used a graduated enforcement approach, including civil penalties where appropriate, consistent with Government guidance on effective PRS enforcement.

Targeted Enforcement and Intelligence-Led Activity

- Processed significant volumes of housing complaints and service requests, ensuring responsive intervention where residents were exposed to unsafe or unhealthy housing.
- Focused enforcement activity on higher-risk properties, including HMOs and long-term problematic landlords, reflecting best-practice risk-based regulation promoted nationally.
- Applied civil penalties and formal notices proportionately, reinforcing deterrence and compliance while avoiding unnecessary criminalisation.

Over the last five years, Bury's Public Protection Service has delivered a strong, nationally-aligned private sector housing and PRS enforcement function, improving housing standards, protecting vulnerable residents, supporting health outcomes and responding effectively to emerging challenges, including humanitarian and legislative change.

Over the past 5 years, the service:

- Processed 2,848 housing-related service requests, responding to complaints, hazards and poor conditions in the private rented sector.
- Managed HMO licence applications (in 2025/26 there were 32 new and 18 renewals), alongside the review and update of HMO standards and amenity guidance, strengthening local expectations on safety and space standards.
- Took formal enforcement action where required, including issuing improvement notices, prohibition notices and utilised new enforcement tools issuing civil penalties to landlords for breaches of HMO management regulations, demonstrating a clear commitment to compliance and deterrence.

- Continued proactive work to address long-term empty properties, supporting acquisition and reuse to bring homes back into occupation and improve neighbourhood conditions.
- Led and coordinated partnership activity in preparation for the Renters' Rights Act, including establishing and chairing a regular multi-service working group, attending sector-led training and maximising use of available funding.
- Worked jointly with Housing Services to support workforce development through the training of apprentice enforcement officers, including recent recruitment of two new apprentices, improving service resilience and succession planning.
- In response to the war in Ukraine, the Public Protection Service worked at pace to inspect and approve private rented accommodation offered to Ukrainian refugees, ensuring homes were safe, compliant and suitable for immediate occupation.

16.1 The Housing Needs and Demand Assessment shows that the Private Rented Sector has grown significantly and now plays a critical role in Bury's housing system. In 2021, 17.8% of households rented privately, more than double the proportion in 2001, reflecting reduced access to owner occupation and constrained social housing supply. Census data shows the size of Burys PRS has grown significantly. The data from 2021 shows the number of households living in the PRS was 14,367 compared to 10,774 in 2011, while the social sector has stayed relatively the same level.

16.2 The PRS accommodates a wide range of households, including singles, families with children and some older households, and is increasingly a tenure of necessity rather than choice. Nearly two thirds of private renters have lived in their home for less than three years, indicating high churn and limited security, while incomes are generally low, with around 60% of private renting households earning below £26,000 per year, making them particularly sensitive to rent increases.

16.3 Affordability pressures in the PRS are acute. In 2024, lower quartile rents averaged £823 per month and median rents £949, increases of over 80–90% since 2010, outpacing income growth. As a result, entry-level private rents typically require household incomes of around £39,500 per year, well above the lower-quartile household income for Bury. Local Housing Allowance rates fall substantially below market rents for most property sizes, creating a widening affordability gap for benefit-dependent households and increasing the risk of homelessness and housing instability. Only social rent is consistently affordable to lower-income households, reinforcing the PRS's role as a pressured and often insecure tenure for those unable to access alternatives.

16.4 The Housing Needs and Demand Assessment concludes that the council has an important enabling and regulatory role in shaping the future PRS. It highlights quality concerns, with 18.1% of private renters dissatisfied with the condition of their home, significantly higher than owner occupiers, and a higher prevalence of older and non-

decent stock. The report supports a more proactive approach to improving standards, stabilising rents and encouraging longer tenancies, including through Build to Rent and affordable private rent models, which could deliver professionally managed homes at discounted rents. Overall, the Housing Needs and Demand Assessment positions the PRS as essential to meeting housing need in Bury, but one that requires stronger policy intervention to improve affordability, quality and security for residents.

Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs)[52]

16.5 HMOs play a role in meeting housing need, particularly for households with limited options. As of March 2026, we have 159 licensed HMOs (this is always increasing), accommodating around over 800 households, with concentrations around Bury town centre. Concentrations of HMOs are actually seen along Walmersley Rd area and Knowsley street; others are located along central main roads across the borough.

16.6 Bury Council has introduced a range of planning and regulatory measures to strengthen control over the private rented sector, particularly in relation to Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs).

16.7 Firstly, the Council is progressing a borough-wide Article 4 Direction, which would remove permitted development rights that currently allow the conversion of family homes (Use Class C3) into small HMOs (Use Class C4) without planning permission. Once in place, all such conversions will require a planning application where they constitute a material change of use (although this cannot be applied retrospectively to HMOs that exist prior to the Article 4 Direction). The Article 4 Direction will enable the Council to better manage the location, concentration and quality of HMOs across the borough.

16.8 Alongside this, the Council has prepared an updated Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) for HMOs, which will provide detailed guidance for assessing planning applications. Once adopted, this SPD will apply to all HMO proposals and will support decision-making on issues such as amenity, standards and impacts on neighbourhood character.

Private Rented Sector Enforcement and Housing Standards in Bury

16.9 The Council has an established Private Sector Housing Enforcement Policy, which sets out how it uses its statutory powers to regulate housing conditions, tackle poor management and ensure that homes are safe and habitable. The focus of the PRS enforcement team is on targeted enforcement, landlord engagement, and collaboration with regional initiatives across Greater Manchester.

[52] Mandatory Houses in Multiple Occupation licensing guide - Bury Council

Preparing for the Renters' Rights Act

16.10 The Private rented Sector Enforcement Team is working in partnership across the borough in preparation for the introduction of the Renters' Rights Act, which is expected to significantly strengthen protections for tenants and increase the regulatory responsibilities of local authorities. The new legislation is expected to:

- Provide stronger protection from eviction for tenants
- Introduce additional responsibilities for councils in enforcing housing standards
- Improve transparency around property conditions and landlord compliance

16.11 The legislation will support the introduction of a PRS Database which will allow improved compliance. The database will be enforced by the council and there will be penalties for landlords who fail to comply. This will enable councils to better identify properties that fail to meet minimum standards and work with landlords to bring them up to the required level. The Government has proposed that privately rented homes meet higher energy efficiency standards in the coming years, with many landlords expected to reach EPC band C by 2030.

16.12 For Bury, this will provide greater clarity on which properties require improvement and enable the Council to engage more effectively with landlords to ensure compliance. Not just EPC related however, and failing landlords will receive civil penalties for non-compliance

16.13 In anticipation of the Renters' Rights Act and the increased demand it is expected to generate, the Council is taking proactive steps to strengthen its enforcement capacity. Recognising that the new initial duties are primarily tenancy-related and that no existing team is currently resourced to take on this function, the Council will utilise new burdens funding to establish a dedicated Environmental Health Officer role. This post, when appointed, will be jointly positioned across Public Protection and Housing services, will support both the Private Rented Sector Enforcement Team and Housing Options service. The role will focus on investigating complaints, undertaking property inspections, and enforcing housing standards, as well as addressing emerging tenancy-related enforcement responsibilities under the new legislation. This approach will ensure the Council is better prepared to respond effectively to the expanded regulatory framework and protect tenants in the private rented sector.

Increasing Resources

16.14 Bury is also participating in the Greater Manchester Environmental Housing Standards Officer scheme which aims to address the shortage of qualified enforcement officers across the region. Through this programme, housing enforcement apprentices are being trained and deployed within local authority housing standards teams. The apprentices undertake formal qualifications while working alongside experienced officers to inspect properties, assess hazards and take enforcement action against landlords where necessary.

16.15 This initiative forms part of a wider regional programme funded by the Greater Manchester Combined Authority (GMCA) to strengthen local authority capacity to

tackle poor housing conditions and support tenants. Across the city region, additional enforcement officers are being recruited and trained to improve oversight of the private rented sector. For smaller authorities such as Bury, participation in this programme provides an important opportunity to build skills and enforcement capacity despite limited local resources.

Participation in the Greater Manchester Property Check Initiative

16.16 Bury places strong emphasis on collaboration with other Greater Manchester authorities. This includes participation in regional networks and joint initiatives designed to:

- Share enforcement knowledge and skills
- Coordinate responses to poor housing conditions
- Develop consistent standards across the city region
- Support the implementation of new legislation

16.17 These collaborative arrangements allow smaller teams to access wider expertise and resources while ensuring that enforcement approaches remain consistent across Greater Manchester.

16.18 Bury Council is engaged with the Greater Manchester Property Check initiative, a city-region programme designed to improve standards in the private rented sector.

16.19 The scheme is intended to function as a type of “property MOT” for rented homes, allowing tenants to request checks where they are concerned about the condition of their accommodation. Local authority teams can then investigate the property and take enforcement action where standards are not met. The initiative is supported by a multi-agency approach involving local authorities and other public services, and is intended to identify homes that fall below the Decent Homes Standard or pose risks to residents.

16.20 The Property Check system sits alongside other regional initiatives aimed at improving rental standards, including the forthcoming Greater Manchester Good Landlord Charter, which aims to encourage landlords to adopt higher standards of management and property quality. However, the future role and operation of Property Check will need to be considered alongside the resources required to operate, promote and enforce the scheme, as well as the forthcoming national Private Rented Sector Database introduced through the Renters’ Rights Act 2025. The national database will require private landlords to register themselves and their properties and is expected to involve a fee, meaning local authorities will need to consider how local and regional schemes align with the new national framework and avoid unnecessary duplication for landlords, tenants and enforcement teams.

Potential ideas

16.21 Selective licensing could offer a number of potential benefits for Bury by strengthening the council’s ability to regulate and improve standards within the private rented sector. Under a selective licensing scheme, private landlords in

designated areas are required to obtain a licence from the local authority, demonstrating that properties are properly managed and meet required housing standards. This can help address issues such as poor property conditions, ineffective management, anti-social behaviour and tenant exploitation. Importantly, licence fees generate a dedicated funding stream that can be reinvested into enforcement, inspections and landlord engagement activity, providing the council with additional resources to proactively improve housing quality and management practices in the sector.

17. Climate Change and Energy Efficiency

Accelerating the transition to low-carbon homes.

Total between 2021 – 2026 (exc. energy schemes) : 2,438 properties - works completed (communal areas, internal works, roofing, windows/ doors and environmental works) excludes disabled adaptions work / energy

The Home Improvement Team has worked in partnership with GMCA to promote the Greater Manchester Retrofit Portal, an online platform providing residents with impartial advice on home energy efficiency improvements, available support, and access to accredited installers. This has ensured 302 energy efficiency retrofit installs via ECO4 / LA Flex attracting £1,678,709 investment into the Borough. This has resulted in average annual energy bill savings of £595.67 and saved 942.50 tonnes of CO_2 per year.

17.1 Energy efficiency is a central part of Greater Manchester's housing and net zero agenda, with a strong focus on improving the performance of existing homes. This is driven by the city region's target to become carbon neutral by 2038, recognising that housing—particularly heating—is a major source of emissions.

17.2 The main delivery programme is retrofitGM, which aims to upgrade around 880,000 homes across Greater Manchester by 2038. The ambition is to scale up to around 60,000 home retrofits per year by 2030, improving insulation, installing low-carbon heating (such as heat pumps), and introducing renewable technologies. The programme also aims to reduce fuel bills, tackle fuel poverty and create green jobs.

17.3 The Action Plan sets out how this will be delivered at scale, targeting improved energy efficiency standards (such as EPC C), increasing investment, and building the skills capacity needed to support a large retrofit market. It emphasises that retrofit is both an environmental and social priority, helping to reduce emissions while improving health and affordability.

17.4 GMCA has also established a Net Zero Housing Retrofit Framework to support delivery, enabling partners to procure retrofit works at scale and accelerate investment.

Bury's approach

17.5 Bury Council declared a climate emergency in 2019 and committed to becoming a carbon-neutral borough by 2038. The Climate Action Strategy (2021) set out the Council's initial response to this commitment, establishing the overall vision, identifying key sources of emissions, and outlining priority areas for action across energy, buildings, transport and the natural environment. Housing and buildings were identified as a central challenge in the 2021 strategy. Domestic energy use accounts for a significant proportion of local emissions, with around 34% of Bury's total emissions coming from households. However, only around 10% of homes are directly owned or managed by the Council, meaning that the majority of decarbonisation activity must take place in the private sector.

17.6 The 2021 strategy set out a long-term ambition for all buildings in the borough to be carbon neutral by 2038. Achieving this would require:

- Major improvements to building energy efficiency, particularly insulation and retrofit.
- Large-scale installation of low-carbon heating systems, such as air-source and ground-source heat pumps.
- Greater deployment of renewable energy generation, including solar photovoltaic panels.
- Higher energy standards for new housing development, including the use of recognised low-energy building standards.

17.7 The updated Climate Action Plan 2026 retains the same broad priority themes but places greater emphasis on practical delivery and targeted action. The plan focuses on a smaller number of priority actions designed to make the most effective use of limited resources while continuing to move the borough towards its 2038 carbon-neutral target.

17.8 Within the housing and buildings agenda, the refreshed plan places stronger emphasis on:

- Accelerating retrofit of existing homes, particularly through insulation improvements and low-carbon heating systems.
- Securing external funding, such as government decarbonisation programmes, to support improvements to social housing.
- Improving data and evidence, including updating stock condition and EPC information to better understand retrofit requirements.
- Increasing renewable energy generation, including solar installations on council assets and regeneration projects.
- Supporting decarbonisation of the private housing sector, including raising awareness and encouraging landlords and homeowners to retrofit their homes.

17.9 The refreshed plan also recognises the scale of the challenge across the borough. It identifies that 64% of homes in Bury currently have an EPC rating below C, and that tens of thousands of properties will require retrofit measures to improve their energy performance.

17.10 The emerging Local Plan as well as the Places for Everyone Joint Plan include measures that will support ambitions for Greater Manchester to be carbon neutral by 2038 and for all new development to be zero net carbon in operation by 2028. The Places for Everyone Joint Plan includes policies designed to contribute towards Greater Manchester's commitments to become carbon neutral by 2038. These include measures to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and to promote decentralised energy infrastructure. Climate change is a cross-cutting theme within the Local Plan, with the majority of chapters contributing to climate change mitigation and adaptation. The emerging Local Plan seeks to supplement climate change-related policies in Places for Everyone with a range of policies, including those associated

with flood risk and water management, green infrastructure, design, air quality and transport infrastructure whilst seeking to promote development in sustainable locations that encourage active travel and the use of public transport.

Bury Town Centres

17.11 Bury Council has undertaken a feasibility study to explore the potential for a district heat network in Bury Town Centre and has secured Government funding to progress the project to the detailed design stage. Heat networks distribute low-carbon heat from a central energy source to multiple buildings through a network of insulated pipes, reducing the need for individual boilers and enabling more efficient and scalable decarbonisation of buildings. The feasibility work identified Bury Town Centre as a suitable location for such a network, supported by the concentration of existing public sector buildings and significant planned development within the town centre masterplan area.

17.12 Looking ahead, Bury Town Centre has been identified as a potential Heat Network Zone, which is expected to become a formal planning and energy policy tool under the Energy Act. If confirmed, new developments within the zone—particularly new residential schemes—would normally be expected to connect to the heat network unless an alternative low-carbon heating solution can be demonstrated to be more cost-effective. Establishing a heat network would therefore support the decarbonisation of both existing buildings and new housing development, helping to reduce emissions and support the borough's wider ambition to become carbon neutral by 2038.

Low-Carbon Retrofit and Net Zero Approach in Bury Council Housing

17.13 Bury Council is implementing a programme of housing retrofit and decarbonisation to improve the energy efficiency of its housing stock and support the borough's wider ambition to become carbon neutral by 2038. The Council is seeking to maximise opportunities through national funding programmes such as Warm Homes/Social Housing Fund while aligning investment with its wider Climate Action Plan.

17.14 Rather than focusing solely on improving Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) ratings, the Council is adopting a whole-house approach to retrofit, integrating fabric improvements, renewable energy generation and improved indoor environmental quality. This approach aims not only to reduce carbon emissions but also to improve the comfort, health and affordability of homes for tenants.

Fabric-First Retrofit Approach

17.15 A key principle of the Council's retrofit programme is a fabric-first approach. This prioritises improvements to the physical structure of the building before introducing low-carbon heating technologies. Typical fabric improvements include:

- External or cavity wall insulation
- Loft insulation

- High-performance windows and doors
- Draught-proofing and airtightness improvements

17.16 Improving the thermal performance of the building envelope helps homes retain heat more effectively, reducing energy demand and ensuring that future technologies such as heat pumps operate efficiently. Fabric improvements also improve thermal comfort for residents, reduce energy bills and minimise the risk of cold spots and condensation.

17.17 Bury Council has already begun applying this approach through retrofit programmes across its housing stock. Through previous waves of the Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund, improvements including insulation upgrades and solar PV installations have been delivered to a number of council homes. These works are designed to improve energy performance and prepare homes for the future installation of low-carbon heating systems, including heat pumps.

Ventilation and Healthy Homes

17.18 A key challenge in retrofit programmes is ensuring that homes remain well-ventilated once insulation and airtightness improvements are introduced. Without appropriate ventilation, homes can experience condensation, damp and mould.

17.19 To address this, Bury Council is incorporating ventilation improvements alongside fabric upgrades. Measures may include:

- Improved extract ventilation in kitchens and bathrooms
- Passive or mechanical ventilation systems
- Measures to improve indoor air quality

17.20 Ensuring adequate ventilation helps residents use their homes safely and comfortably while reducing the risk of condensation and mould. This approach supports the wider focus on healthy homes, particularly in light of strengthened regulatory expectations relating to damp and mould in social housing.

Renewable Energy and a Whole Net Zero Approach

17.21 Alongside fabric improvements, the Council is installing solar photovoltaic (PV) panels where appropriate. Solar PV systems generate renewable electricity from sunlight, helping to reduce carbon emissions and potentially lowering household energy costs.

17.22 Solar PV is being integrated alongside insulation improvements as part of a broader whole-house decarbonisation approach, rather than focusing solely on EPC improvements. Combining energy efficiency measures with renewable energy generation helps reduce energy demand and supports the transition to low-carbon homes.

Case Study: Stanley Close Retrofit Project

17.23 Energy improvement works have been undertaken at Stanley Close, involving a number of council-owned homes. The scheme forms part of the Council's wider housing decarbonisation programme and demonstrates how retrofit measures are being delivered at neighbourhood level.

17.24 The works include thermal improvements delivered through the Council's capital programme using specialist contractors procured through the Procure Plus framework. The scheme contributes to wider objectives to improve the energy performance of council housing while reducing carbon emissions and improving thermal comfort for residents.

Linking Retrofit to the Capital Works Programme

17.25 Bury Council is integrating retrofit measures with its planned capital investment and repairs programme, adopting a whole-house and whole-lifecycle approach to housing improvements.

17.26 Where major works are planned—such as replacing roofs, windows or heating systems—the Council considers opportunities to deliver complementary retrofit improvements at the same time.

17.27 This approach helps to:

- Reduce the need for multiple visits to properties
- Minimise disruption for tenants
- Improve cost efficiency by coordinating works
- Ensure improvements are delivered in the correct sequence

17.28 By aligning retrofit activity with planned maintenance and capital investment programmes, the Council can deliver improvements more efficiently while improving the long-term performance of its housing stock.

Addressing Damp, Mould and Fuel Poverty

17.29 The retrofit programme also contributes to wider housing objectives, including addressing damp and mould and reducing fuel poverty. Improving insulation and ventilation helps stabilise internal temperatures and reduce condensation risk, addressing some of the underlying causes of damp and mould.

17.30 This work is increasingly important in the context of strengthened regulatory expectations relating to damp and mould, including the introduction of Awaab's Law, which places additional responsibilities on social landlords to respond quickly to hazards affecting tenant health.

17.31 Improving the energy efficiency of homes also helps reduce household energy consumption, supporting efforts to tackle fuel poverty by lowering heating costs for residents.

Retrofit Assessments, Data and PAS 2035

17.32 As part of its stock condition survey programme, Bury Council is undertaking retrofit assessments across its housing stock in accordance with the PAS 2035 retrofit standard.

17.33 PAS 2035 is the UK framework for delivering domestic retrofit. It requires a structured, whole-house approach that includes:

- Comprehensive assessment of the property
- Identification of appropriate retrofit measures
- Coordinated design and sequencing of works
- Quality assurance during installation and monitoring

17.34 The purpose of the standard is to ensure retrofit measures are delivered safely and effectively while avoiding unintended consequences such as damp, overheating or structural issues.

17.35 Through the stock condition survey and retrofit assessments, the Council is improving its understanding of the condition and energy performance of its housing stock. However, at present the Council does not have a dedicated energy data platform, which limits its ability to systematically plan and manage energy performance improvements across the stock. The proposed integration of Sava Intelligent Energy with QL would represent an important step forward, enabling the automated identification of EPC improvement measures and supporting a more strategic, data-led approach to decarbonisation and retrofit planning.

17.36 This enhanced data capability will strengthen the Council's ability to prioritise investment, develop long-term retrofit programmes and respond more effectively to funding opportunities.

17.37 By undertaking retrofit assessments and preparing detailed investment plans, Bury Council is developing a pipeline of retrofit-ready projects that can respond quickly to future funding opportunities, including further waves of national decarbonisation funding and regional programmes delivered through the Greater Manchester Combined Authority (GMCA).

Warm Homes Local Grant

17.38 Bury Council is participating in the Warm Homes Local Grant programme, delivered through the Greater Manchester Combined Authority (GMCA) to improve the energy efficiency of homes occupied by low-income households. Across Greater Manchester, the programme will invest £30m between 2025 and 2028, supporting retrofit improvements to around 1,700 homes. Funding of up to £30,000 per property is available to install energy efficiency and low-carbon heating measures such as insulation, solar PV and heat pumps.

17.39 Bury is adopting an area-based delivery approach to maximise take-up and neighbourhood impact. The first phase focuses on approximately 143 terraced homes around Spring Street and Shepherd Street in Bury, where a high proportion of

properties have lower energy performance ratings. The council will undertake local engagement with residents, followed by property assessments and installation of retrofit measures delivered through the GMCA Net Zero Housing Retrofit Framework.

17.40 The programme will help reduce fuel poverty, improve the quality and energy performance of older housing stock, lower household energy costs and contribute to Greater Manchester's net zero ambitions.

18. Strategic Priorities for Bury Housing Strategy

18.1 This report has brought together a comprehensive evidence base to understand the housing challenges and opportunities facing Bury. It has drawn on national and regional policy, local strategic priorities, stakeholder insight and the Housing Needs and Demand Assessment to build a clear picture of current and future demand. Across this evidence, a consistent narrative emerges: Bury is a borough with strong foundations and clear ambitions, but one that faces growing and increasingly complex housing pressures.

18.2 These pressures are multifaceted. The borough continues to experience a significant shortfall in housing delivery—particularly in affordable and social rented homes—alongside rising homelessness demand and increasing reliance on temporary accommodation. At the same time, there is a need to improve the quality and energy efficiency of existing homes, respond to the impacts of climate change, and ensure that housing supports better health and wellbeing outcomes. Demographic change, particularly an ageing population, adds further complexity, requiring a shift towards more accessible homes, preventative support and enabling people to live independently for longer.

18.3 However, the evidence also highlights real strengths and opportunities. Bury has a strong track record of partnership working, a clear regeneration pipeline, and a proactive approach to enabling delivery. The alignment between housing, economic growth, neighbourhood working and public service reform provides a solid platform to take a more ambitious and coordinated approach. The challenge—and opportunity—is to build on this foundation, scaling up delivery while ensuring that housing plays a central role in reducing inequalities, supporting communities and improving life outcomes.

18.4 Taken together, this evidence points to the need for a clear, long-term strategic response—one that not only addresses immediate pressures, but also sets a direction for how housing will support Bury's wider ambitions for inclusive growth, health and wellbeing, and stronger communities.

18.5 Based on this, a proposed vision and set of strategic objectives have been developed to provide a clear framework for the Housing Strategy and to guide future priorities and investment.

18.6 The proposed vision is:

"Working together to ensure everyone in Bury has access to a safe, affordable home that reduces inequalities, supports health and wellbeing, and creates strong, thriving communities."

18.7 To support this, the following strategic objectives are proposed:

1. **Deliver more homes to meet Bury's needs** – increasing the supply of high-quality homes across all tenures, with a strong focus on social and affordable housing.
2. **Improve the quality, efficiency and use of existing homes** – ensuring homes are safe, well-maintained and energy efficient, while making best use of existing stock.

3. **Enable people to access and sustain homes that meet their needs** – supporting residents to find and keep homes that promote wellbeing, stability and choice.
4. **Prevent homelessness and provide stable housing pathways** – focusing on early intervention, strong partnerships and access to settled accommodation.
5. **Be an excellent landlord and strategic housing leader** – delivering high-quality council housing while using the Council's leadership role to drive wider system change.

18.8 Together, these proposed objectives provide a clear and coherent framework for translating the evidence in this report into action, supporting the development of a Housing Strategy that responds to local challenges while delivering positive outcomes for residents and communities across Bury.