



# Adult Social Care Accommodation Strategy 2025-2035

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# Foreword

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We are pleased to introduce Suffolk County Council's Adult Social Care Accommodation Strategy 2025–2035, a strategy that reflects our shared ambition for every adult in Suffolk to live well, independently, and with dignity.

A safe, suitable, and supportive home is central to a good life. It shapes how connected people feel to their communities, how confidently they can manage their daily lives, and how effectively we can support them as their needs change over time. This strategy sets out how we will ensure every person in Suffolk has access to accommodation that enables choice, independence, and high-quality care.

In developing this strategy, we have listened carefully to people with lived experience, their families, carers, and our partners across health, housing, and the voluntary sector. Their voices have been essential in shaping what good looks like, support that flexes with need, clear pathways through housing and care, and homes that help people stay independent for as long as possible.

Suffolk faces a growing and ageing population, increasing complexity of need, and a housing landscape that varies greatly across our county. These challenges require us to think differently and work together in new, more integrated ways. This strategy sets a clear direction of travel: strengthening partnerships with housing providers, influencing the development of accessible, high-quality homes, and ensuring that support services are designed around what matters most to people.

It also outlines how we will shift towards more preventative, enabling models of support—embracing technology, building stronger community connections, expanding Extra Care Housing, and redesigning supported housing for younger adults and those with disabilities. We want people to have real choice about where they live and how they are supported, now and into the future.

We are committed to working collaboratively with our partners, health colleagues, care providers, and communities to deliver the ambitions set out here. Together, we will build a more sustainable, responsive accommodation offer for Suffolk—one that supports independence, promotes wellbeing, and ensures value for money for our residents.

Thank you to everyone who contributed to the development of this strategy. Your insight and commitment are helping us create a future where every adult has the right home, in the right place, with the right support.



**Cllr Beccy Hopfensperger**  
Cabinet Member for Adult Care



**Gareth Everton**  
Executive Director of Adult Social Care

# Purpose

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Adult Social Care (ASC) recognises the importance of housing and how having the right home can help to promote choices in how and where people's care needs are met.

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*In getting the right care, at the right time and in the right place, people can live well and independently.*

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The purpose of this strategy is to support the Council and its partners to build on good practice and develop new ways of providing care and support. It will inform decisions relating to housing and accommodation-based care that meet people's care needs providing a choice of disability and age inclusive offers.



# Context

What we know...

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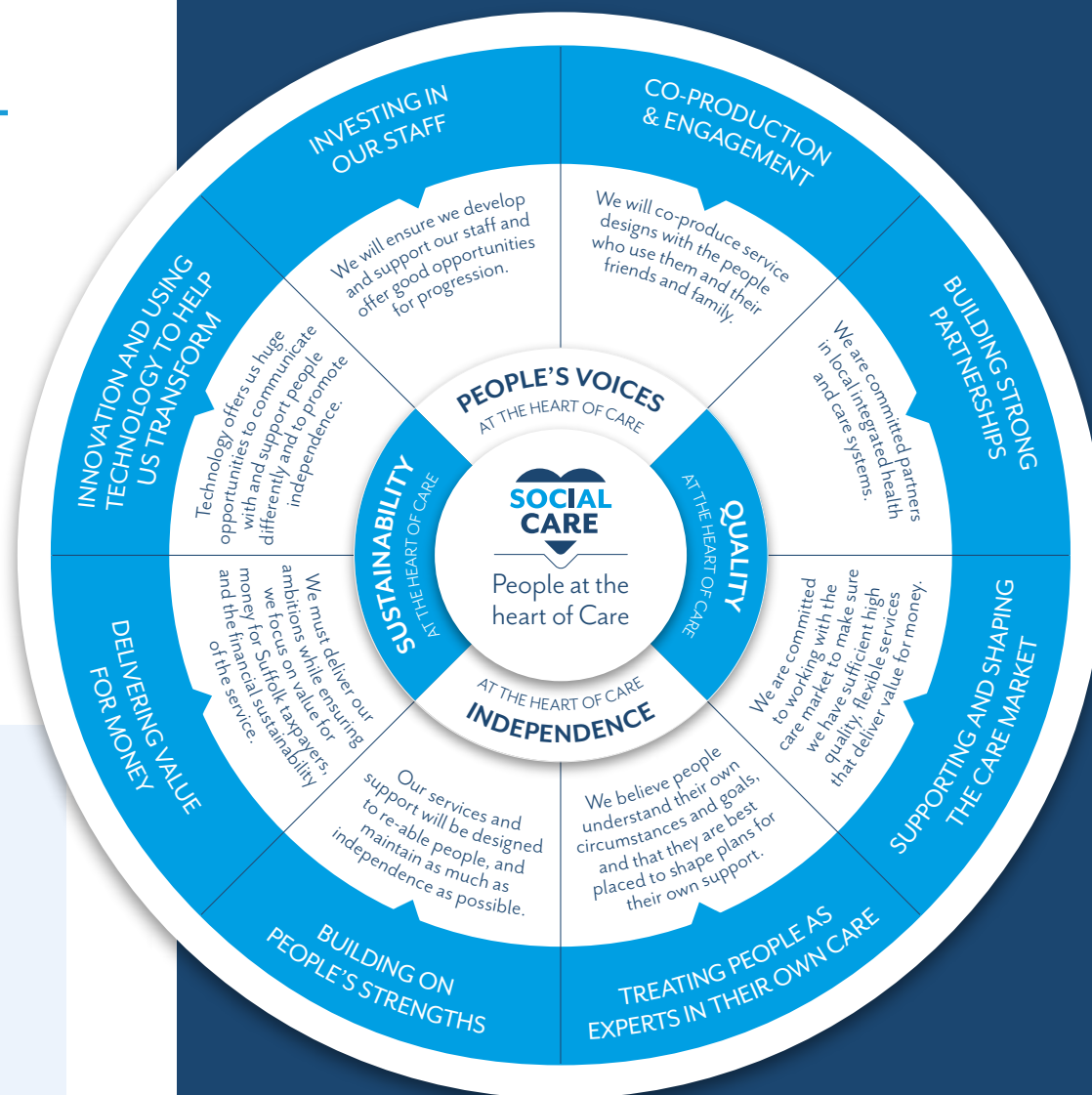
# The Strategic Ambition for Adult Social Care

Our **People at the Heart of Care** approach believes that adults should be at the centre of decision-making about their own care and support.

The **Care Market Strategy** explains the services we have available, sets out our priorities, and outlines how we want to work with existing and new care providers to develop our offer in Suffolk.

This **Accommodation Strategy** supports the delivery of both strategies by:

- Promoting a choice of **quality** care and support options to meet people's needs
- Championing Homes that enable **independence**
- Listening to **people's voices** to build on strengths and 'what good looks like'
- Supporting a **sustainable** care market that meets local needs and providing value for money

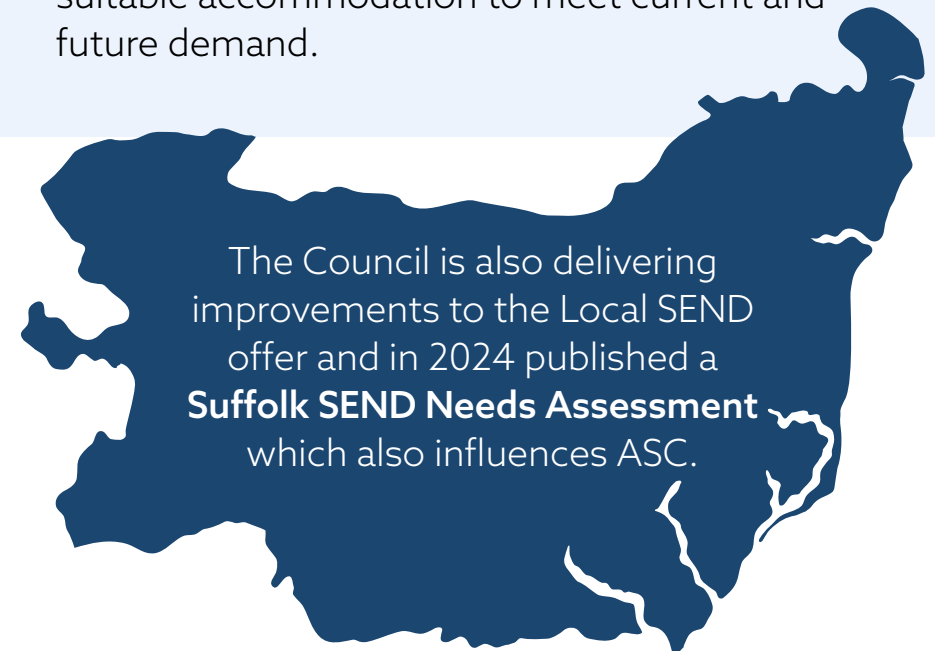


# Strategic Links

Across ASC's published strategies, accommodation is consistently identified as a key enabler of effective care and support. This is reflected in the following strategies:

- **Suffolk All Age Autism Strategy (2024)** identifies a shortage of specialist accommodation, highlighting a gap in provision that impacts people's ability to live independently and access appropriate support.
- **Suffolk Joint Learning Disability Strategy (2021)** emphasises housing as a priority, with people telling us that "housing should be a major activity" and that "housing is still a big issue," underlining the ongoing need for suitable and accessible options.
- **Suffolk All Age Carers Strategy (2022)** highlights the importance of housing and accommodation options awareness in enabling carers to sustain their caring role.

- **Suffolk Dementia Strategy (2024-2029)** sets out the need for a range of accommodation and care options to enable people to live well as their needs change, including home care, extra care housing, and residential care homes.
- **The Adult Social Care CQC Assessment (2023)** rated Suffolk Adult Social Care as 'Good'. The assessment recognised, however, that further work is required to develop a sufficient range of suitable accommodation to meet current and future demand.



# Changes around Social Care and Housing

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Suffolk is a non-metropolitan two-tier authority with ASC and housing delivered by different authorities. Work between the various local authorities is co-ordinated through the **Suffolk Housing Board**. It covers issues such as homelessness and housing pathways.

Suffolk has been fast tracked for Devolution and Local Government Re-organisation and is part of the government's **English Devolution White Paper**, that seeks to streamline council structures so it's easier for residents to understand and save taxpayers money.

If approved, it will create unitary authority(s) to enable a more co-ordinated approach between social care and housing that can support greater innovation and prevention.

It would also create a combined County Authority for Norfolk and Suffolk with an elected mayor. The aim would be to provide authorities with greater control over how funding is spent to meet local needs including around housing and regeneration.



# Housing and Care

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## The home is a central part of people's lives

A suitable home enables people to build and sustain their independence, remain connected to their community, and achieve their ambitions. It plays a vital role in preventing ill-health, reducing the level of care and support people require, and delaying or avoiding the need for residential care.

For most people, care and support needs are met within mainstream housing and wherever possible, we aim to support people to remain in these homes and live independently. This may include property adaptations, visiting or domiciliary support, and the use of assistive technology.

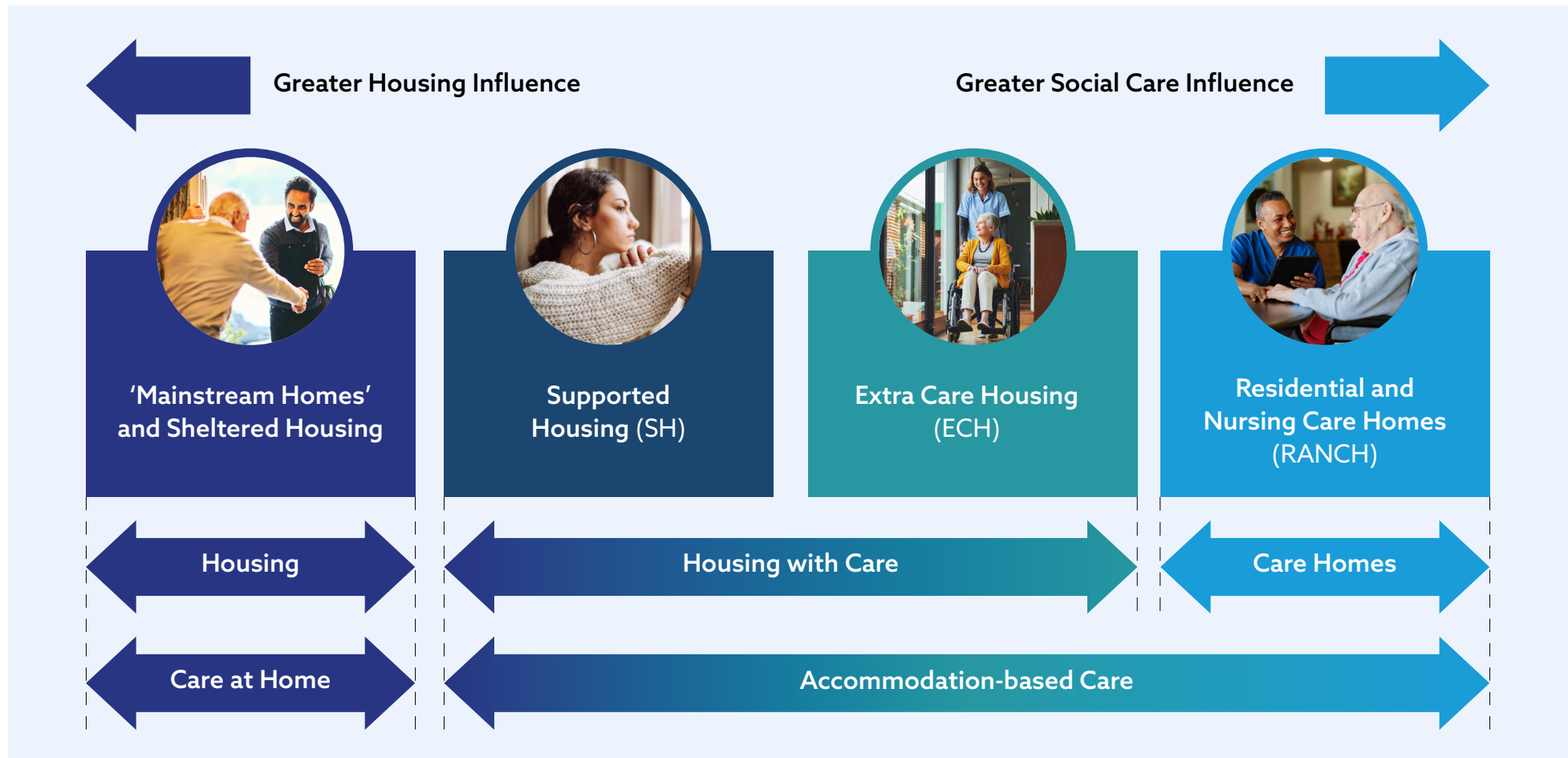
As people's needs change, particularly for older adults who require a more accessible living environment, some may choose to move to specialist later-life housing, such as sheltered housing or retirement living.

We want to support clear and flexible pathways through housing and care that enables progression to more suitable accommodation where needed. Helping people access to the right level of care and support at the right time and in the right place.



# Types of Housing and Care

As people's needs change, their care and support should change and this can include accessing different types of accommodation. ASC has statutory responsibilities under the Care Act (2014) to ensure people can access the care and support they need across all types of accommodation.



# Housing and Care Key Facts

## Mainstream Housing

Housing and Care are separate (including sheltered accommodation)

- 58% of people supported by ASC receive home care
- 10% more people are being supported in 'mainstream homes' with home care rather than residential care in the last 5 years
- ASC spend £99.7m annually on homecare



## Supported Housing (SH)

Accommodation is directly linked to support that is either on-site or visiting

- Suffolk has 260 SH schemes
- 18% of people supported by ASC in housing with care live in SH
- Most people are 18-64 years old
- ASC spend £70m annually on SH



## Extra Care Housing (ECH)

Accommodation is linked to on-site support and has an age limit

- Suffolk has 24 ECH schemes
- 10% of people supported by ASC in housing with care live in ECH
- ASC spend £15m annually on ECH



## Residential and Nursing Care Homes (RANCH)

Regulated CQC accommodation and support







- Suffolk has 183 Care Homes with 70% having a good or outstanding CQC rating
- 72% of people supported by ASC in housing with care live in Care homes
- Approximately 200 beds are suitable for people with higher needs
- ASC spend £118m annually on Care Homes



# Key Social Care Challenges

Social care and housing face significant challenges in meeting current and future accommodation and support needs, particularly in the context of ongoing financial and budgetary pressures.

The Council has published a Care Market Strategy and a Market Position Statement (MPS). Together, alongside the Accommodation Strategy these documents provide a framework for understanding market capacity and sufficiency. The MPS will be updated annually to support a dynamic response to emerging risks, and opportunities in the Care Market.

<p><b>Suffolks population is ageing</b></p> <p>The number of people aged 65+ is increasing creating further demand for social care and support</p> 	<p><b>Geographically and Financially diverse Landscape</b></p> <p>Suffolk has a mixture of rural and urban areas where people have range of affluence and levels of deprivation</p> 	<p><b>Increasing Complexity</b></p> <p>The care workforce and support offers in Suffolk must grow and develop to meet future needs, particularly increasing complexity for younger and older age adults</p> 
<p><b>Property Suitability</b></p> <p>A large proportion of older housing is not suitable or accessible</p> 	<p><b>Pathways through Housing and Support</b></p> <p>Processes can be complex and difficult to navigate as well as prioritisation for housing varying across Suffolk leading to a differential offer (a postcode lottery)</p> 	<p><b>Availability of Housing</b></p> <p>There is not enough housing, particularly in more urban areas that is affordable or accessible for people with disabilities to live independently and be connected to communities</p> 

# Changing Demand Challenges

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The factors influencing the need for accommodation-based care are multiple:

- Suffolk's **population is aging** and by 2043 **1 in 3 people will be aged 65+** and 1 in 5 aged 75+. In addition, older people are moving to Suffolk, particularly in the rural and coastal areas.
- More people are choosing and being **supported to stay at home** rather than move into accommodation-based support. In the last five years 10% more people are receiving home care rather than residential care.
- When people move into residential care their needs are often more complex and there is a lack of provision for people with **higher and more complex needs** including dementia. This is a growing demand.
- Suffolk has a high reliance on residential care and fewer alternative **options for later life** such as Extra Care Housing (ECH), and most of these are smaller schemes reducing opportunities for economies of scale.
- There is a lack of **inclusive opportunities** to support a wider range of needs in later life. Particularly people with learning disabilities, autism and mental health support needs to provide greater choice of options that can meet their changing needs with age.
- Increasing demand in children and young people with **Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND)** rising from 12.4% in 2015 to 18.1% in 2024 including those with complex needs requiring Education, Health, and Care (EHC) plans, which increased from 2.5% to 4.6%.

# Suffolk Landscape Challenges

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The factors influencing where accommodation-based care is located are multiple:

- **Workforce challenges** and inconsistency of demand impact investment in more rural locations making it more difficult to develop sustainable services with sufficient staffing.
- **Ipswich has a competitive care market** with an available workforce which plays a significant role in providing accommodation-based support to the whole County. There is a lack of affordable opportunities in other parts of the county which draws demand into this area.
- Most Supported Housing for people with learning disabilities and/or autism is shared longer term support but there is a lack of **affordable self-contained housing with care to promote greater independence** and the lack of move on further hinders people developing independence and increasing costs to ASC.
- There are service gaps in areas such as **Waveney and the North-West of the County** for nursing care and supported housing.
- Older housing stock often does not support **accessibility standards** and **best practice design** to promote an enabling environment for people's independence. The District & Boroughs have adopted different approaches across Suffolk to the percentage of accessible and adaptable housing built in communities making it an inconsistent offer.

# Our Learning

What have people told us...

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# People with care and support needs

We have held engagement sessions with people with lived experience and their families

## They told us:

- the importance of **choice** for support providers
- the importance of **choice** for accommodation providers
- the need to have **flexible** support that can respond to their needs.
- that Housing and ASC need to work together and focus on what is important to the person and achieving their **goals**.

We looked at different types of accommodation and support and people told us that no matter where they lived the **same things were important** and co-produced '**what good looks like**' across all types of accommodation and support.



# Co-produced 'What good looks like'

These statements were co-produced with people who have lived experience and their families through two facilitated sessions in partnership with Suffolk User Forum and My Home Focus Group. Also available in an **easy read version**



"My home is accessible for me or I can make changes to help me live independently"



"I am listened too and can make changes in my home"



"Housing and Social Care are working together"



"I live in quality accommodation"



"I am supported to understand my options around accommodation and support"



"My support is flexible changing with my needs"



"I have the equipment to help me live independently"



"I am supported to be as independent as possible and work towards my goals"



"I am part of my community as I choose"

# Co-produced

## 'What good looks like' cont...



"If I have a tenancy this is accessible, and I have good support from my landlord"



"I know how and where to find information and support"



"I have outdoor space that I can enjoy"



"I can choose to live with my pet"



"My Home is affordable for me and costs are transparent"



"My accommodation is separate from my support (not including care homes)"



"I have access to digital technology to help me be independent"



"My home, support and community build on my strengths"



"I am supported to stay connected to family and friends"

# System Partners

To shape the strategy, we have listened to system partners.

**Housing** colleagues in the District and Borough Councils told us they would like to develop **closer working**.

They want **closer relationships with housing providers** particularly registered social landlords to deliver affordable housing with care.



**Health** colleagues in the Integrated Care Boards (ICBs) told us there needs to be more **specialist accommodation** to help people with higher support needs to live in the community.

This would help timely **discharge from hospital**.



**Providers** of Housing and Care told us that they wanted clearer **information and data** around What Suffolk Needs to provide confidence and support investment/development of services.



**Children and Young persons (CYP)** social care colleagues told us there are gaps within services for young adults **transitioning from CYP to ASC**. They would like to **work closer** with ASC to develop more services.



# Community Learning

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Listening to communities is a key part of 'what good looks like' to make informed and considerate commissioning decisions around housing with support for people to be part of their community.

An Independent enquiry in 2021 identified better ways of working with local communities when arranging housing-based care highlighting the importance of balancing the needs of the community and the needs of the person. Suffolk has worked to embed the recommendations from this report.



The Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC) and Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) launched the Older People's Housing Taskforce report that highlighted the importance of communities and that we need to go further than housing alone.

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*'Beyond the front door - the built environment, local infrastructure, communities and mutual support - enables people to live independently and well, whatever housing they choose to live in'*

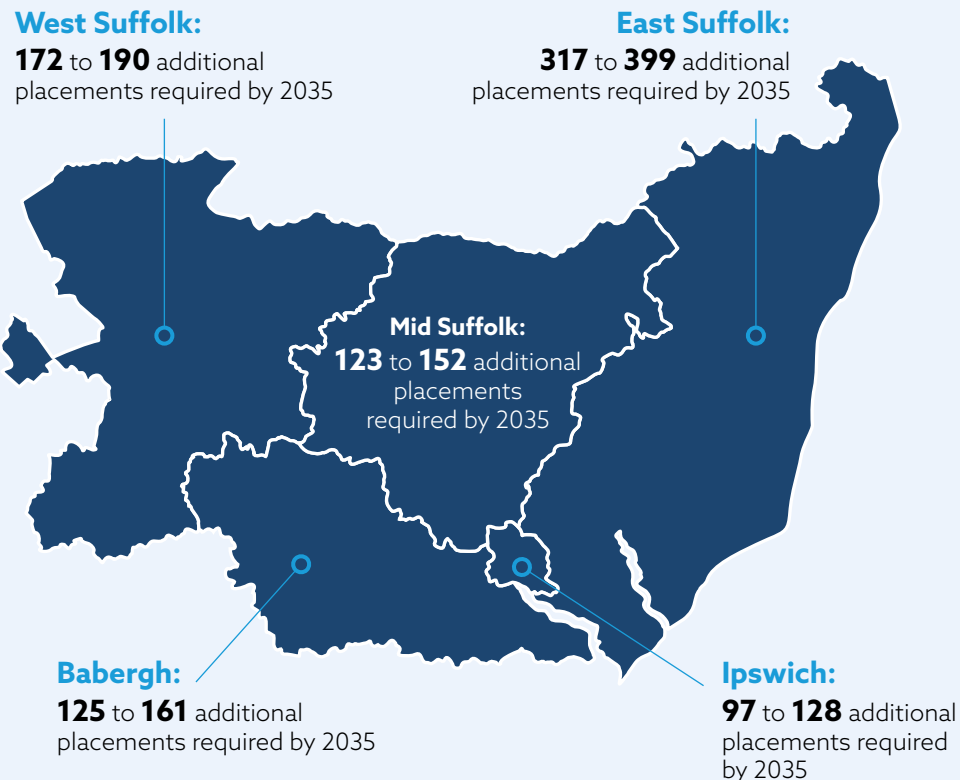
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As part of this providers of both Housing and Support should **build and maintain relationships with communities** to enable care and support to be sustainable for people to **live well in their communities**.

# Overview of Population Projections

People aged 65 years + are predicted to grow by **25.56%** whilst people aged between 18-64 years are predicted to increase by **3.71%** by 2035. This will increase demand for services for older people and change the services we need.

Using national population data alongside how people are using accommodation-based support in Suffolk we have estimated the number of placements that will be needed by 2035. There are factors that can influence and change these projections. Find out more about our methodology, a further breakdown of the data and some of the factors that may influence demand.



Projections show Suffolk could need between **835** and **1030** additional accommodation-based support placements by 2035



Projections include between **637** and **780** ASC funded accommodation-based placements by 2035



From 2025 to 2035 this is a projected increase of between **17.03% - 20.99%**

# Need and Demand Projections

Most of the increased demand is to support older adults which currently are mainly being met in residential or nursing care. Therefore, future projections show a high demand for support needs within later life as well as having existing service gaps around meeting higher support needs including with dementia.

Projected additional (net) accommodation-based support required by 2035 by primary support need		
	Adult Social Care	All including self-funders
Physical and Sensory Support Needs	292-346	385-455
Dementia Support Needs	234-325	310-431
Learning Disability and Autism Support Needs	40-41	50-52
Mental Health Support Needs	25-25	32-32
Other Support Reason	45-45	59-59
<b>Total*</b>	<b>636-781</b>	<b>835-1030</b>

\*Total shows slight difference to the summation of the categories due to number rounding of each service areas outputs.

Projected additional (net) accommodation-based support required by 2034 by type of accommodation-based support		
	Adult Social Care	All including self-funders
Residential	424-531	560-703
Nursing	117-143	154-190
Extra Care	66-78	86-101
Supported Living	28-29	35-36
<b>Total*</b>	<b>637-780</b>	<b>835-1030</b>

\*Total shows slight difference to the summation of the categories due to number rounding of each service areas outputs.

This data does not include changes in market demand or our place based and need insight learning around re-developing our Supported Housing and Extra Care Housing offers including services to support young people.

# Summary Strategy Learning

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Both care and housing markets in Suffolk have strengths and challenges, closer working between Housing and Social Care is needed to support systems to respond to these challenges.

## Co-production

Co-production  
- Learning from people's lived experience, communities and professionals including 'what good looks like'

## Strength Based Communities

Meeting local needs, using local insights and knowledge, meaningful links to areas with facilities/ services.  
Opportunities and pathways for progression and being able to respond to changing needs

## Service Gaps and Future Demand

A need for a diverse range of accommodation-based support that can respond to increasing demand and complexity of needs. A particular focus on Extra Care Housing and wider offers that can respond to higher support needs such as Dementia and emerging demand such as increasing SEND needs

## Enabling Environments

The importance of good quality, affordable and accessible housing with innovative technology solutions to prevent, reduce, delay care needs that enable the delivery of support when this is needed

## Partnership

Jointly working to address challenges, developing relationships and making the best use of resources to support the right accommodation offers that deliver value for money and are sustainable including the workforce to meet Suffolk's needs

# Providers of housing and care

**Suffolk does not currently experience widespread unmet demand** across adult social care. Market development opportunities are focused on enhancing the quality, capability, and resilience of existing provision.

Over time, population change is expected to drive growth in demand in **specific market areas**, shaped by an increased focus on reablement and prevention as well as people’s choice to stay at home.

We expect these areas of focus to be around responding too:

## Reprovisioning

Some of the existing stock of properties used to deliver care will need to be replaced due to dilapidation, accessibility issues, shifting demand, and energy costs. New properties will need to support a reduced climate impact and energy costs and enable digital care opportunities.

## Young Adults

The number of young people with special education needs or complex behaviours is increasing. Offers and pathways ready to support younger adults achieve and maintain their independence will need to grow and develop.

## Mainstream Homes

It’s likely that the trend will continue that more older people will stay at home for longer and the home care market, and related markets like virtual/care and digital care, will grow. Accessible housing options, including extra care and new housing, for people in later life will need to grow.

## Higher Needs

It’s expected that the market will grow for more intensive provision care home provision designed for specific health needs, such as bariatric care and dementia, as well as end-of-life support, specifically within nursing homes, will grow.

There is **no one single factor** determining how successful new developments will be at meeting aligned social care and housing needs.

Providers need to consider a **variety of local geographic, social, demographic, affordability, capability, environmental and accessibility factors** in determining the potential success of a development.

# Ambitions

What we want to achieve...

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# Our ambitions to support people to live independently

We want people to receive support that is proportionate to their needs, with access to housing that helps to prevent, reduce, or delay the need for ongoing social care. **We will do this by:**

## Supporting young people

Supporting young people with SEND needs or disabilities to plan for their first adult move

## Using digital technology

Using Cassius to enable people to live without unnecessary intrusion

## Recognising accommodation need

Ensuring accommodation needs are identified and met appropriately

## Arranging outcomes-focused support

Organising accommodation that enables people to maximise independence

## Providing the right support in the right place

Aligning accommodation and care and support models

## Helping people to stay at home

Using adaptations, equipment and housing options that can enable independence

## Connectivity

Supporting people to feel safe and connected in their own home

## Choice of accommodation

Making sure people are informed about their accommodation options

## Supporting continuity of care

Using accommodation options that support respite and hospital discharge

## Responding to higher support needs

Developing the providers that can affordably meet increasing complexity

# Strategic Priorities

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To deliver on this ambition, and in response to changes in the population and patterns of demand, the Council will need to directly influence through **how it commissions support** and **shapes the care market** in Suffolk:

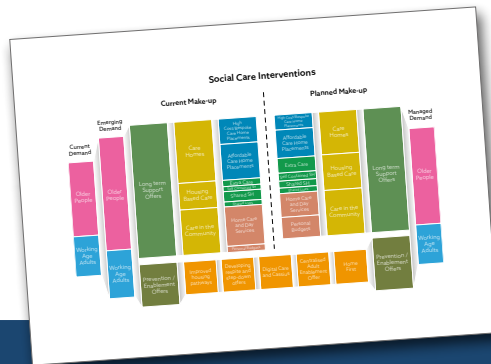
- Increased take-up of digital care offers as well as more diverse options for people to use their personal budget (instead of Council organised care) to help people remain at home
- Increased availability and take-up of Extra Care, Shared Lives, and respite placements
- A higher proportion of affordable Care Home placements meeting social care needs
- Decreased voids within Supported Housing services

Adult Social Care also intends to **work with system partners to influence:**

- Planners to ensure most new houses as accessible (M4(2) minimum) and all Local Plans to include specific provision in housing developments for physical and non-physical disabilities
- ASC will monitor and respond to all accommodation-based care planning applications
- An increase in the number of working age adults with, or who have had, care and support needs accessing general needs housing (social or private)
- The average EPC rating for SCC placements into accommodation-based support will improve

# Approach to influencing social care and housing needs

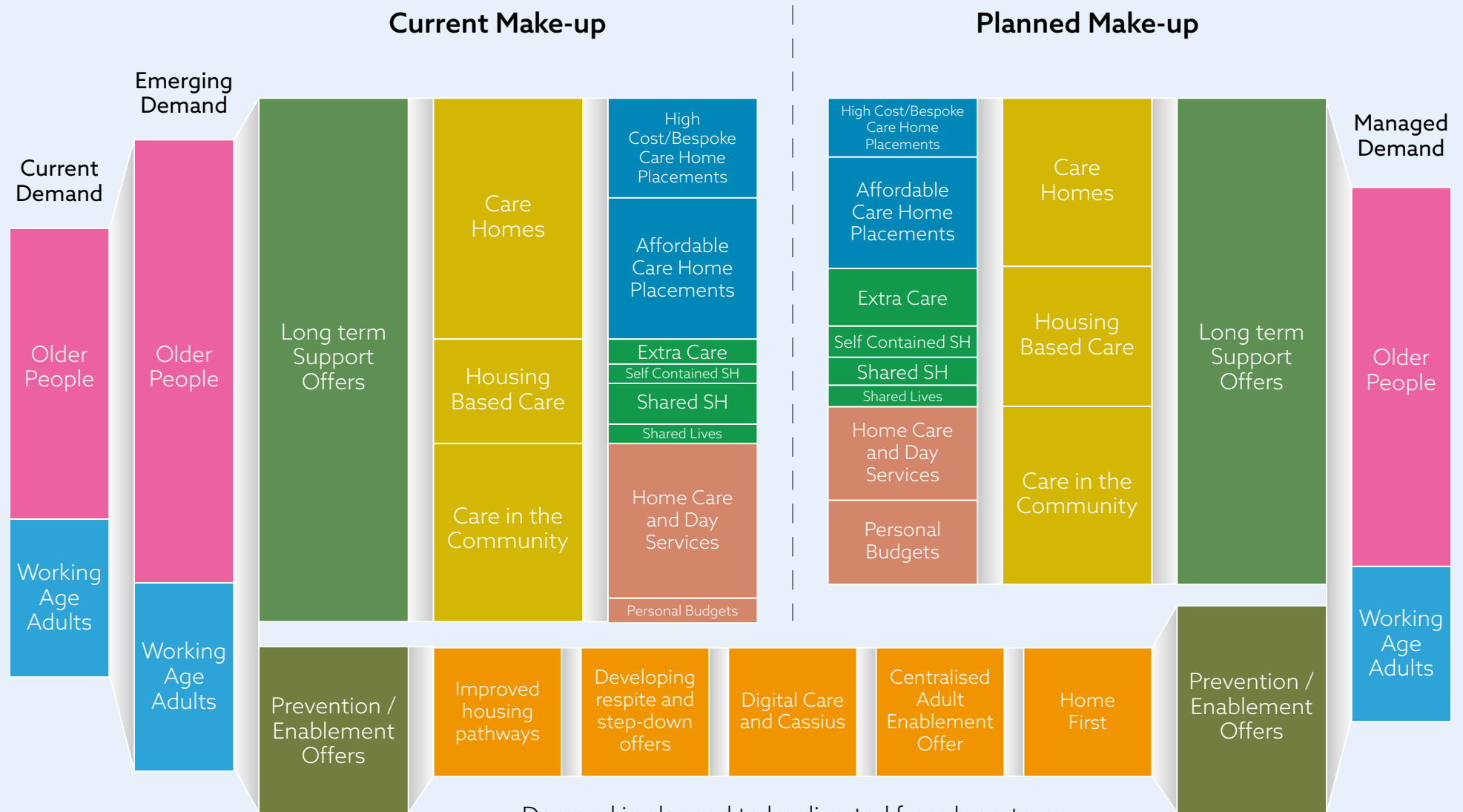
Using the People at the Heart of Care model Adult Social Care will be repositioning offers across the care market so that services are proportionate to, and preventative of, accommodation and care needs by default. This will enable better outcomes for people, including greater independence, and lower costs for providers and those paying for care.



This diagram on the following page sets out the expectations of that transition. Scale is illustrative and not directly proportionate to spend or use.



# Social Care Interventions



Demand is planned to be diverted from long-term support with these opportunities

# How this influences commissioning ambitions

To be successful, support offers in Suffolk will need to be **inclusive, respond to local needs, and manage costs effectively.**

Here is what those ambitions mean for different parts of the care market in Suffolk:

## Support in the Community

We'll continue to enable people to access care and support in their own home by default. This will mean:

- Continuing to reduce barriers and improving pathways for people with disabilities to access housing and living independently
- Exploring digital care and physical adaptations to homes
- Commissioning high quality responsive home care and community support offers where needed that are highly personalised and outcome focused

## Supported Housing

We're undertaking a comprehensive redesign of our Supported Housing offer. That will focus on the following areas:

- Moving to commissioning for outcomes and improved influence on costs
- Strengthening our enablement and reablement pathways
- Supporting implementation of the Regulatory Oversight Act to ensure value for money and the quality of accommodation offers
- Redeveloping existing services where they don't respond to needs or demand

## Extra Care

We're intending to explore opportunities to develop our extra care services including both existing services and new proposals. We're intending to help more people access Extra Care by:

- Broadening the capabilities and eligibility of services
- Improving access, awareness, and local partnerships
- Developing respite and reablement offers
- Testing value for money for direct care costs models and wellbeing charges

## Care Homes

We'll be working to close gaps in the market linked to affordability and eligibility for services. Specifically, we will focus on:

- Embedding our Choice of Accommodation policy
- Targeted commissioning to close geographic, affordability, and capability gaps by developing new, or redeveloping existing, schemes
- Working with existing providers to develop skills and competencies that respond to more intensive support needs

# How we will achieve this

Actively engaging with partners across sectors and people with lived experience:



**Making the best use of available resources:** Public assets, emerging digital technologies, funding and investment opportunities, and a strength-based community approach.

**Innovative Ways of Working and Design:** Accommodation that enables the prevention and support of care needs with pathways through housing and care to promote independence and respond to changing needs.

# How will development proposals be tested?

The Council will be testing the following factors when reviewing new care developments for the purposes of providing feedback to planning authorities and regulators.

These factors will also be considered when making commissioning decisions.

<p><b>Quality Accommodation</b></p> 	<p><b>Accessible and Inclusive Design</b></p> 	<p><b>Considers Place and Community</b></p> 
<p><b>Affordable Costs</b></p> 	<p><b>Support Models Aligned with People at the Heart of Care</b></p> 	<p><b>Supports Choice of Provider</b></p> 

# To find out more

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## Additional Information

For further information around the Strategy, we will be publishing a Supplementary Information pack on our website alongside the main Accommodation Strategy and Care Market Strategy on our website.

## Contact

You can find out more information about our model of working, contract management and latest messages to the care market through our Providers Contracts Toolkit.

**WANT  
TO WORK  
WITH US?**

If you are interested in working with us, please contact our **Care Market Hub** who will connect you with the appropriate commissioning



[ascaremarkethub@suffolk.gov.uk](mailto:ascaremarkethub@suffolk.gov.uk)



**Thank you  
for reading**