

## Appendix 3: Local and National Context

This document details key legislation as well as the local and national context that guides our work and has shaped the Housing Strategy 2025 – 2030.

# Contents

Section	Subject	Page
1.	Legislation	2
2.	The national context	4
3.	The local context	5



## 1. Legislation

This section provides an overview of the UK legislation that regulates the social and private rented sector, housebuilding, homelessness, and other housing-related matters.

**1.1 The Housing Act 1996** sets out housing provision for the social rented sector, houses in multiple occupation, landlord and tenant matters, housing benefit, the allocation of housing by Local Authorities, and homelessness.

**1.2 The Housing Act 2004** brought many changes including introducing the Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS) to assess health and safety within homes, mandatory licensing for houses of multiple occupation and the tenancy deposit protection scheme. The use of Empty Dwelling Management Orders (EDMO's) was also introduced as an additional enforcement tool to bring empty homes back into use.

**1.3 The Localism Act 2011** introduced changes to how local government services are delivered including introducing flexible social housing tenancies of 5 years or more, the ability to offer private rented accommodation to end homelessness duties, more powers for Local Authorities to determine eligibility for social housing in their areas and greater powers to generate income.

**1.4 The Housing Act 1996 & the Homelessness Act 2002** Part 7 of the Housing Act 1996 is the primary legislation regarding preventing homelessness and assisting households who are homeless or threatened with homelessness. The Homelessness Act 2002 and the Homeless (Priority need for accommodation) (England) order 2002 was introduced to ensure a more strategic approach and to extend the priority need categories to include more vulnerable groups.

**1.5 The Homelessness Reduction Act 2017** placed additional duties on Local Authorities to intervene earlier to prevent homelessness and extended the requirement to aid those without a "priority need". It extended the prevention duty to begin 56 days prior to the threat of homelessness and introduced an additional 56-day relief duty when a household becomes homeless. **The Homelessness Code of Guidance** sets out how Local Authorities should operate their homelessness functions in line with the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017.

**1.6 The Social Housing (Regulation) Act 2023** increases regulation within the sector, and introduced new rules for protecting tenants from serious hazards in their homes following the fire at Grenfell Tower in 2017 and the death of Awaab Ishak in 2020.

**1.7 The Supported Housing (Regulatory Oversight) Act 2023** is concerned with the regulation and oversight of supported exempt accommodation and enforcement powers in relation to this.

**1.8 The Renters Rights Bill** aims to change and improve the experience of private renting by giving renters more security and stability. It will deliver several measures including abolishing Section 21 evictions, introducing a new Private Landlord Ombudsman, strengthening Local Authority enforcement, and applying the Decent Homes Standard and Awaab's Law to the sector.

**1.9 The [Homes \(Fitness for Human Habitation\) Act 2018](#)** amends the Landlord and Tenant Act to require all landlords to ensure their properties are fit for human habitation and strengthens tenants' rights.

**1.10 The [Housing & Planning Act 2016](#)** sets out provisions for housing, estate agents, rent charges, planning and compulsory purchase.

**1.11 The [Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004](#)** introduces a statutory system for regional planning and local planning reforms to the development, control, compulsory purchase and compensation systems.

**1.12 The [Planning and Energy Act 2008](#)** enables Local Authorities to set requirements for energy use and efficiency within their local plans.

**1.13 The [Self-Build and Custom Housebuilding Act 2015 \(as amended by the \[Housing and Planning Act 2016\]\(#\)\)](#)** requires Local Authorities to meet the demand for self-build and custom build plots in their area.

**1.14 The [Building Safety Act 2022](#)** came into force following the Grenfell Tower tragedy to give residents and homeowners more rights and protections. It assigns clear responsibilities in relation to fire safety, established a building safety regulator to ensure compliance, improves building safety in relation to cladding, and extends protections to some leaseholders from the costs of cladding removal.

**1.15 The [Regulatory Reform \(Fire Safety\) order 2005](#)** provides a framework for regulating fire safety in non-domestic premises placing the responsibility for risk assessing and managing the risk of fire on individuals within organisations.

**1.16 The [Welfare Reform Act 2012](#)** introduced Universal Credit to replace existing means tested benefits and tax credits. This was in addition to other significant changes in the benefits system such as the introduction of Personal Independence Payments (PIP) and restrictions on Housing Benefits entitlement for social housing tenants through the social sector size criteria and the benefit cap.

**1.17 The [Care Act 2014](#)** sets out how adult social care should be delivered by Local Authorities (Suffolk County Council) to ensure residents receive the support they need to minimise the impact of their care needs or prevent deterioration.

**1.18 The [Equality Act 2010](#)** legally protects people from discrimination because of nine protected characteristics (age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation).

**1.19 The [Children Act 1989](#)** ensures that every child is kept safe and protected from harm and the welfare and developmental needs of every child are met.



## 2. The national context

This section provides an overview of the national policies, schemes and pressures that have an impact on housing and homelessness in Ipswich.

**2.1 The [Rough Sleeping Strategy \(2018\)](#)** set out a plan and commitment to end rough sleeping by 2027, by supporting those rough sleeping to move off the street and into a home. Local Authorities were provided with funding to develop Rough Sleeping Initiatives to achieve this.

**2.2 [Ending Rough Sleeping for Good \(2022\)](#)** built upon its previous Rough Sleeping Strategy (2018) by introducing centres around prevention, intervention, recovery, and a joined-up approach. It provided a definition for the goal to end rough sleeping as “preventing it wherever possible, and where it cannot be prevented, making it rare, brief and non-recurring”. The refreshed strategy was accompanied by further government funding.

**2.3 [Decent Homes](#)** provides the definition of a decent home and guidance on how the decent homes standard should be implemented.

**2.4 The [National Planning Policy Framework \(NPPF 2023\)](#)** sets out the government's planning policies and provides a framework for Local Authorities to make plans to provide sufficient sustainable housing and developments.

**2.5 [National Planning Practice Guidance](#)** sets out the planning policies for England and how they are to be applied.

**2.6 The [Article 4 Direction](#)** requires landlords to seek planning permission before converting a property into a small house of multiple occupation (HMO).

**2.7 The [Net Zero Strategy \(2021\)](#) and [Powering up Britain: Net Zero Growth Plan \(2023\)](#)** describes the government's plans to reach net zero by 2050.

**2.8 The [Private Rented Property Minimum Standard](#)** defines a minimum level of energy efficiency for privately rented properties meaning landlords must ensure that their properties have an Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) of at least an E in line with the Energy Efficiency (Private Rented Property) (England and Wales) Regulations 2015.

**2.9 [Economic pressures](#)** have been having a significant effect on UK residents since the end of 2021 due to a fall in disposable income caused by higher inflation and low wage growth. This negatively affects the ability of households to pay for goods, services, and essential bills such as food, heating, and housing costs. This has been further impacted by the war in Ukraine and the increased cost of energy.

**2.10 [Pressures on public services](#)** including Local Authorities, mental health services, and social care, are experiencing the effects of national challenges such as reduced budgets and increased demand in relation to the provision of good quality services.

**2.11 [National housing shortages](#)** are a result of current housing supply in England falling short of what is deemed necessary to ensure all residents are living in suitable, safe, and secure housing. To address this issue, all Local Authorities in England will be given updated mandatory housing targets to meet the national ambition of 1.5 million additional homes. This will have an impact on the Council's services and new housing provision across the borough.

### 3. The local context.

This section provides an overview of the local policies, schemes and pressures that have an impact on housing and homelessness within Ipswich.

**3.1 The [Ipswich Borough Council Corporate Strategy](#)** is the corporate plan adopted in 2023 "Proud of Ipswich: Championing our community and revitalising our town", which centres around five priorities:

1. A thriving town centre.
2. Meeting the housing needs of our community.
3. A carbon neutral council.
4. Promoting community wellbeing and fairness in Ipswich.
5. A financially sustainable council providing good quality services.

**3.2 The [Maintenance and Contracts Service](#)** manages and maintains the Council's housing stock to ensure the homes the Council provides are safe, well maintained, of good quality, and meet the needs of current and future residents.

**3.3 The [Ipswich Borough Council Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy](#)** sets out our plan to tackle homelessness and rough sleeping in Ipswich.

**3.4 The [Ipswich Local Plan](#)** determines how development will be planned over time within Ipswich.

**3.5 The [Ipswich Borough Council Affordable Housing Position Statement](#)** describes the specific needs for affordable housing in Ipswich.

**3.6 The [Ipswich Borough Council Tenant Engagement Strategy](#)** sets out how we aim to work with our tenants to meet their needs and optimise satisfaction with the service we provide to our tenants.

**3.7 The [Ipswich Borough Council Empty Homes Policy](#)** outlines the Council's approach to reducing empty homes in Ipswich.

**3.8 The [Ipswich Borough Council Digital Strategy](#)** sets out how we will further the use of digital services and take opportunities to transform our service delivery to meet the needs of our community.

**3.9 The [Gateway to Homechoice Allocations Policy](#)** sets out how social housing is allocated across the Gateway area.

**3.10 The [Ipswich Borough Council Older Persons Housing Review](#)** commenced in 2018 to review the service we provide to our older residents including sheltered housing and other services we provide. The findings have been used to develop a new strategic approach to meeting the housing needs of older persons that reflects modern lifestyles.

**3.11 The [Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment \(SHLAA\)](#)** underpins the Ipswich Local Plan 2018 – 2036 by identifying sites which may be suitable, available, and achievable for housing development within the Ipswich strategic planning area (Ipswich Borough, Babergh and Mid Suffolk and East Suffolk councils) to meet housing needs within the Ipswich housing market area.



**3.12 The Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) 2017** estimates local need and demand for all types of housing within the housing market area (Ipswich, Mid Suffolk, Babergh and East Suffolk).

**3.13 The Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople Accommodation Assessment 2017** assesses the need for sites within Ipswich, Babergh, Mid Suffolk and East Suffolk Local Authority areas.

**3.14 The Ipswich Custom and Self-build Monitoring Report** provides headline data on demand for self-build and custom housebuilding revealed by the register.

**3.15 Suffolk County Council Accommodation Strategy** details accommodation provision for adults whom Suffolk County Council have a statutory duty to accommodate.

**3.16 Suffolk Housing Board** comprises Local Authorities within Suffolk working together towards the shared vision that “all residents in Suffolk lead independent, healthier lives through the supply of affordable, quality homes which provide choice within sustainable communities”.

**3.17 The Suffolk Health and Housing Needs Assessment** provides an analysis of the effect of housing on the health of Suffolk residents and makes recommendations to guide future work across Suffolk. It recommends that Suffolk Housing Board lead the development of a “Housing Health Audit” to address housing health hazards, with a focus on private rented accommodation where housing conditions tend to be worse, and to strengthen links between health, public health, communities and the Suffolk Office of Data and Analytics (SODA).

**3.18 CORE20Plus5** is a national NHS England and NHS Improvement approach to support the reduction of health inequalities at both national and system level between 2021-2024.

**3.19 The Joint Local Health and Wellbeing Strategy** sets strategic priorities for partners working together as part of the Health and Wellbeing Board to improve health and wellbeing outcomes and reduce health inequalities through local initiatives and activities.

**3.20 Tackling Poverty in Suffolk 2022** details how Suffolk County Council and its partners support people to move out of poverty.

