

Wetheringsett cum Brockford Housing Needs Assessment (HNA)

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Quality information

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List of acronyms used in the text:

HNA	Housing Needs Assessment
HRP	Household Reference Person (head of household)
LPA	Local Planning Authority
MHCLG	Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government (formerly DCLG)
MSDC	Mid Suffolk District Council
NA	Neighbourhood (Plan) Area
NP	Neighbourhood Plan
NPPF	National Planning Policy Framework
OA	Output Area (Census)
ONS	Office for National Statistics
PPG	Planning Practice Guidance
RQ	Research Question
SHMA	Strategic Housing Market Assessment
VOA	Valuation Office Agency

1. Executive Summary

1.1 Population and housing statistics

1. The Office for National Statistics (ONS) mid-2019 population estimate for Wetheringsett cum Brockford parish is 714 people, indicating population growth of around 45 individuals since the 2011 Census. This aligns with the fact that 20 homes have been built since the 2011 Census (bringing the total to 300).

1.2 Conclusions- Tenure and Affordability

Affordability issues

2. Wetheringsett cum Brockford's current tenure mix reveals a notable undersupply of Affordable Housing. The NA had, at the time of the 2011 Census, just under two thirds of Mid Suffolk's proportion of social renting and shared ownership, and less than half the England average. No new units of affordable rented housing have been added to the 2011 total of 19 over the last ten years, and it is possible that some have been lost to the Right to Buy scheme. Across Mid Suffolk 196 social or affordable rented homes have been bought out through the Right to Buy scheme since 2011 according to MHCLG live tables, equating to 4.3% of the stock existing at the time of the Census.
3. Home values in Wetheringsett cum Brockford have increased significantly over the last nine years, with the result that the average home now costs more than double the average price in 2012 and the funds needed to access home ownership even at the lower end of the market are increasing far faster than wages (which rose by 19% in Mid Suffolk over the same period as lower quartile house prices rose by 56%, according to ONS estimates of gross weekly earnings). Property in Wetheringsett cum Brockford is around 40-60% more expensive than the wider district.
4. However, these conclusions are based on a fairly small sample size of transactions, so the particular properties that happen to be sold in a given year can skew the average, and an increase in prices from one year to the next does not necessarily mean that all homes in the NA have appreciated by that amount. Despite this volatility, the overall trend presents an immense challenge for those with lower incomes wishing to buy locally.
5. The last time Land Registry recorded the sale of a newly built property in Wetheringsett cum Brockford was in 2014, meaning that there is no robust or recent sample for data on new build prices in the NA. The costs of new housing have had to be estimated here, and it is likely that newly built properties command a premium of around 15-30% over existing homes. This presents a further challenge to households relying on new development to enable them to live locally, whether in open market housing or through affordable routes to ownership like shared ownership and First Homes, which will be priced with reference to their open market value.

Tenure options

6. AECOM has estimated the annual income required to afford various tenures of housing in the NA – each of which is explained in detail in Appendix A. These thresholds are compared to local incomes to determine which options are the most appropriate for local people going forward. The average household income in Wetheringsett cum Brockford is £48,100, and the lower quartile income (per person) for Mid Suffolk was £15,148 in 2019.
7. It was found that a household would need an income comfortably above the average (or a very large deposit) to qualify for a mortgage even for an entry-level home in the area. Home ownership through the mainstream market is not an option for the majority of local people. The median house price would require an annual income more than twice the current average.
8. Private renting is broadly affordable to average earners and households with two lower earners, although it should be emphasised that the average costs given here are based on listings across a wider area because of the lack of homes to rent in Wetheringsett cum Brockford – which is itself an indicator of limited choice and a lack of more affordable, transitional options like renting. The lack of private renting in the parish is not apparent in Census data (which shows that 14% of homes were rented in 2011 compared with 11% across Mid Suffolk), but comes through in the total absence of rental listings available at the time of writing. This may indicate either that private renting has decreased since that time or that local renters remain in their homes for long periods and there is less turnover in the market providing options for new households. It is also possible that this is the result of an anomaly. Unfortunately, historic rental listings data for the parish is not available.
9. Affordability would be improved if households are able or willing to dedicate a larger proportion of their incomes to rental costs, although this has repercussions for other quality of life aspects and cannot be assumed to suit all

individuals' circumstances. While this avenue may enable households with two lower earners, those with just one lower earner cannot have very limited options. A single lower quartile earner would need to dedicate nearly 60% of their gross earnings to rent to afford an entry-level rental. Single-person households must therefore either apply for affordable rented housing or remain in the private rented sector while relying on housing benefit or other support.

10. There is a relatively large group of households in Wetheringsett cum Brockford who may be able to afford to rent privately but cannot afford home ownership. They are typically earning between around £30,000 per year (at which point entry-level rents become affordable) and £75,000 (at which point entry-level market sale homes become affordable). This 'can rent, can't buy' cohort may benefit from the range of affordable home ownership products such as First Homes and shared ownership.
11. All of these products would be valuable to different segments of the local population, with shared ownership at a lower than 25% equity share potentially allowing lower earning households to get a foot on the housing ladder, while rent to buy offers poorer long-term prospects but is helpful to those with little or no savings for a deposit, and First Homes at a 50% discount provides the best long-term support to those with slightly higher incomes.
12. Neighbourhood plan qualifying bodies will have discretion to increase the discount on the new First Homes product from 30% to 40% or 50% where there is evidence to suggest this is appropriate. This HNA finds that the highest possible discount level of 50% is necessary and justified in Wetheringsett cum Brockford.
13. Affordable rented housing appears comfortably affordable to households with two lower earners (average earning households are unlikely to be eligible). However, households with a single lower earner are unable to afford any of the tenures considered including smaller socially rented units. Many such individuals will, if unable to secure a social rented dwelling or additional subsidy, need to live in a room in a shared house using housing benefit.
14. The evidence in this chapter suggests that the small affordable rented sector performs a vital function in Wetheringsett cum Brockford as the only option for a large segment of those in the greatest need. Being cheaper for the occupant, social rent performs this function best.

Quantity of Affordable Housing needed

15. The Ipswich and Waveney Housing Market Areas SHMA Part 2 Partial Update 2019 finds that 1,298 social or affordable rented homes will be needed in 2018-36 across Mid Suffolk, and that there is potential demand for a further 1,391 affordable home ownership units. On the basis that the share of this need attributable to the NA is in proportion to its share of the district population (0.69%), this suggests that Wetheringsett cum Brockford will need 15 affordable homes, 7 of which should be for affordable rent and 8 of which should be for affordable home ownership.
16. While this evidence is a helpful indication of what can be understood as Wetheringsett cum Brockford's share of the district's overall needs, and of the rough scale of demand that might be expected, pro-rating district-level needs for rural areas presents problems in practice. These results should be a consideration when thinking about policy options in the Neighbourhood Plan, but can also be supplemented with calculations that use inputs that relate specifically to the NA.
17. This report estimates Wetheringsett cum Brockford's Affordable Housing needs through two calculations that use up-to-date and locally-specific data as far as possible. The first estimates the need for affordable rented housing and the second considers the potential demand for affordable (i.e. subsidised) home ownership.
18. The result of the first calculation is an equilibrium, with an extremely low anticipated shortfall of affordable rented housing, but also very little room for error if circumstances change in future.
19. MSDC has confirmed that there are currently 5 households with a local connection to Wetheringsett cum Brockford on the housing register. However, if only a small proportion of the existing units of social rented housing come vacant each year this is expected to be able to satisfy newly arising need and lessen the backlog over time.
20. That said, because of the small margin of error in this estimate, the mismatch between needs and supply (in terms of property size and other factors) and the need to address the current backlog as soon as possible, it is recommended that Wetheringsett cum Brockford seeks to deliver some affordable rented housing, particularly early in the Plan period. If this results in oversupply in future years, the vacancies created when existing occupants leave their properties may need to satisfy new need from elsewhere in the district.
21. Turning to Affordable Housing providing a route to home ownership, it is estimated that around 2.2 households per year may be interested in such products (equating to a total of 32 over the Plan period).
22. It is important to keep in mind that the households identified in this estimate are, by and large, adequately housed already. They do not lack their own housing but would prefer to buy rather than rent. They have been included in the

national planning definition of those in need of Affordable Housing, but their needs are less acute than those on the waiting list for affordable rented housing.

23. It may not be achievable or even desirable to deliver this volume of affordable home ownership properties in the coming years as even greater numbers of market homes would be required to cross-subsidise delivery, many of the interested households might not be able to afford the necessary deposit, and there remains a significant number of affordable rented homes required for those with more urgent needs. However, this figure remains a useful indicator of the potential scale of demand and of the affordability challenge in Wetheringsett cum Brockford.

Policy considerations

24. Mid Suffolk's adopted policy in relation to Affordable Housing (H4) aims for up to 35% of all new housing (on sites above 5 homes) to be affordable. The emerging JLP (Policy SP02) raises the threshold to sites with more than 10 dwellings, and suggests that higher percentage requirements may be permitted.
25. The overall proportion of housing that must be affordable is not an area of policy that a Neighbourhood Plan can usually influence, but it is worth emphasizing that the HNA finds there to be robust evidence of need for Affordable Housing in Wetheringsett cum Brockford, and every effort should be made to maximise delivery where viable.
26. The fact that Affordable Housing made up 0% of the new housing in Wetheringsett cum Brockford completed over the last decade is not surprising given all of the schemes were below the relevant thresholds. Given the size of the parish, and the fact that the threshold will rise to 10 homes in future, it is realistic to expect that most future development will also fall below the threshold and will not be expected to contribute Affordable Housing.
27. On the balance of factors listed in section 4.4.3 of this report, AECOM recommends that roughly 40% of Affordable Housing should take the form of rented tenures such as social and affordable rent (preferably the former), with the remaining 60% as affordable routes to home ownership, fulfilling the requirements of the new First Homes product and allowing for some shared ownership or other tenures to widen choice.
28. Although this study estimates that potential demand for affordable ownership is significantly higher than the need for affordable rent, these figures are not directly equivalent and the expected quantity of delivery overall is likely to be extremely limited. As such, affordable rented housing should retain its importance in the tenure mix. However, the needs identified here, in the context of expected housing deliver in future, suggest that there is an opportunity to boost the supply of affordable ownership if this accords with the community's wider priorities.

1.3 Conclusions- Type and Size

29. This study provides an indication of the likely need for different types and sizes of homes based on demographic change. It is important to remember that other factors should be considered in determining the dwelling mix that is desirable in the parish or on any particular site. These include the specific characteristics of the nearby stock of housing (such as its condition and design), the role of the NA or site within the wider housing market area (linked to any Local Authority strategies or plans) and site-specific factors which may justify a particular dwelling mix.

The existing housing stock

30. Wetheringsett cum Brockford has a housing mix that is skewed toward typically less dense and larger homes – i.e. a far higher proportion of detached homes than the district and country and fewer other types. This is not unusual for a rural village. That less than 5% of homes in Wetheringsett cum Brockford fall into the categories of terraced houses and flats might be expected to limit the options for local people on lower incomes, whether they are able to buy or rent. The dominance of detached housing persists in new construction since the Census.
31. Around 15% of homes in Wetheringsett cum Brockford are bungalows, which is a lower proportion than for Mid Suffolk overall. Although it is not necessarily a given that bungalows are be completely accessible (e.g. for an occupant using a wheelchair), and ground floor maisonettes can be equally suitable for people with mobility limitations, the relative lack of bungalows may be an additional factor, beyond the limited size options, obstructing downsizing in Wetheringsett cum Brockford.
32. As of 2021, the size mix of housing locally is dominated by larger homes, with 40% of homes having 4 or more bedrooms, compared with just 28% across Mid Suffolk and 19% across England. Correspondingly, Wetheringsett cum Brockford has a notable lack of 1 bedroom housing. Recent development has not meaningfully widened housing choice in Wetheringsett cum Brockford, though it also has not made the oversupply of large homes much worse.

Demographics

33. The age structure of the population is a key indicator of the future need for housing. Wetheringsett cum Brockford had a generally older population profile than Mid Suffolk and England in 2011. The older age brackets have also grown the fastest between the 2011 Census and the latest ONS estimates for 2019. Currently around 60% of the population are aged over 45 and 24% are aged over 65.
34. Applying ONS household projections for Mid Suffolk to the Wetheringsett cum Brockford population suggests that by 2040 the 65 and over cohort could nearly double from 2011 levels to become by far the dominant group at 42% of the projected total, while the youngest age groups remain stable rather than growing. It is clear that ageing will be a major driver of housing need in Wetheringsett cum Brockford going forward, whether older households intend to occupy the same dwellings they currently live in, or perhaps move within the community to a home better suited to the size of their household or their evolving needs.
35. Wetheringsett cum Brockford has a high rate of under-occupancy, with 78% of people living in a home with at least one bedroom more than they would be expected to need (at the time of the last Census). The percentage of people living in homes with fewer bedrooms than they might be expected to need is small at 4%, although this does indicate that a number of people may have been (or still be) living in inadequate housing conditions.
36. The previous chapter established the high property values in the area, so it would appear that the largest homes are not necessarily occupied by those with the largest families but by those with the financial capacity to do so, irrespective of their household size. Indeed, over-occupancy is strongly correlated with age, with those aged 50 and over the most likely to have more than two additional bedrooms.

The future dwelling mix

37. The results of a modelling exercise, which looks at the sizes of dwelling occupied by households at different life stages and projects the growth and decline of those household age groups over the Plan period, suggests that should be focused on medium and smaller homes.
38. 3 bedroom properties, while already the most common, will continue to be needed as generally the most popular, suitable to many groups, and existing at lower proportions in the parish than across the district and country. The other clear direction is to boost the supply of smaller homes from the current low base, while avoiding too many additional large homes because there are already more than the population is expected to need
39. A further injection of small and mid-sized homes would both improve Wetheringsett cum Brockford's offering for younger households who have few options for their next step on the property ladder and enable older households currently under-occupying larger homes to downsize and in so doing potentially create churn in the market (although it is acknowledged that many of the larger historic properties may be too expensive to be taken up by young local families).
40. The preceding chapter found that affordability is a serious and worsening challenge in Wetheringsett cum Brockford. While the provision of Affordable Housing (subsidised tenure products) is one way to combat this, another is to ensure that homes come forward which are of an appropriate size, type and density for local residents' budgets. Continuing to provide smaller homes with fewer bedrooms would help to address this situation.
41. However, it is never advisable to entirely restrict the supply of specific size categories as is suggested here for homes with 4 or more bedrooms. Further considerations that would justify incorporating flexibility into this relatively imbalanced recommended mix are summarised below.

Further considerations

42. To best meet the needs of the large cohort of older households expected to be present by 2037, it should be considered whether the existing options are well tailored to older people's requirements in terms of space, flexibility, quality, location and accessibility. Variety should be sought within the mid-sized homes that come forward in future to attract both newly forming households on lower budgets and older households with substantial equity from their existing larger homes, whose needs are far from identical. Facilitating downsizing among older households may release those larger homes for use by families who need more bedrooms.
43. That said, it may not be realistic to expect growing families to be able to afford the larger detached homes that are currently under-occupied in the parish. Reducing the issue of dwelling size to a number of bedrooms is potentially unhelpful in this case. There may be a valid justification to continue supplying larger homes despite their abundance because a different kind of larger home is needed to accommodate growing families with less buying power. This is

too speculative to quantify in a percentage size mix, but is among the good reasons not to inhibit any size of dwelling entirely (despite the results of the HNA model).

44. More generally, it would be unwise for any new housing that does come forward to be delivered in an unbalanced way. Those wishing to move within or relocate to the area will have a range of circumstances and preferences, and they should be offered a range of choices. As such, it is recommended that priority is given to smaller homes but that this is done to a degree that aligns with the wider objectives of the community and does not limit choice or threaten viability. The evidence in this section represents a starting point for further thought and consultation.

1.4 Conclusions- Accessible Housing for Older and Disabled People

45. ONS 2019 population estimates suggest that there are currently around 60 individuals aged 75 or over in Wetheringsett cum Brockford. This is projected to grow to 91 by 2037 (an increase of 31 older people).
46. The potential need for housing with enhanced accessibility features and the potential to be further adapted in future can be estimated by bringing together data on population projections, rates of disability, and what tenure of housing the current 55-75 cohort occupy in the NA.
47. This method of estimating the future need in Wetheringsett cum Brockford produces a range of 5 to 15 accessible housing units that might be required to accommodate older people with moderate mobility challenges during the Plan period. Providing this estimate as a range reflects uncertainty about the extent to which existing older households live in suitable homes: the lower end is a minimum for how many new older households are likely to need such homes, and the higher end assumes that existing households are likely to be in need as well. Note that 'new households' does not necessarily mean households arriving elsewhere – it refers predominantly to existing residents who will enter the 75+ age bracket in the coming years.
48. This estimate does not include people in younger age brackets with similar needs, nor older people requiring more extensive support (such as the help of a carer). It would be wise to maximise the provision of this type of housing as a way of future proofing the parish for further ageing, and to help accommodate other people who could potentially benefit but were not incorporated into the estimate.
49. Around one tenth of the households identified here are expected to require their accessible or adaptable homes to be offered as social or affordable rented tenures, with the majority likely being able to afford to buy their next home on the open market, assuming that it is of a value equivalent to or lower than the home they currently occupy. That said, it is generally desirable to achieve the same rate of Affordable Housing whether the homes in question are accessible or not, and to provide equal access to accessible housing irrespective of a household's financial situation. This point is simply to emphasise that all housing (both market and affordable) would benefit from increased accessibility standards.
50. While the adopted Local Plan is largely silent on this issue, the emerging JLP Policy LP06 states that 50% of dwellings on sites of ten or more units should meet the requirements for accessible and adaptable dwellings under part M4(2) of Building Regulations.
51. The evidence gathered here would certainly appear to justify meeting or exceeding this target in the Neighbourhood Plan. 50% is a relatively robust requirement, however there are ways in which it could be strengthened in response to the clear need in Wetheringsett cum Brockford. One would be to make the requirement apply to sites delivering fewer than 10 dwellings, which would help to ensure provision even if most schemes in future are on small infill sites within the parish. Another would be to increase the target up to 75% or higher because the overall delivery of housing in the NA is likely to be insufficient to meet the need identified here at a lower target (though this question cannot be firmly answered at this stage because the parish is not in receipt of a formal target from MSDC).
52. Finally there is the question of homes that meet an even higher standard of accessibility, namely Category M4(3) Building Regulations meeting the requirements of wheelchair users. There is no robust data on the number of wheelchair users at parish level, and this assessment has focused on the group of people whose day-to-day activities are limited 'a little'. This is because it is hard to separate out within the people whose activities are limited 'a lot', those who use a wheelchair and those who require a carer for medical or other reasons.
53. That said, MSDC have confirmed that there is a household on the waiting list for Affordable Housing (representing 20% of those on the list, though this is a very small sample) who requires an adapted level-access dwelling. This demonstrates some need for homes with the highest standards of accessibility.

54. If the stock of housing in the parish is poorly equipped for wheelchair users and/or there are more residents who currently need such housing (which is likely given the age and difficulty in adapting many existing homes), there may well be justification for an additional target for the number of new homes that should be M4(3) compliant. This is usually much lower than targets set for M4(2) standards – typically around 3-10%.
55. Without a firmer understanding of the quantity of development expected in Wetheringsett cum Brockford during the Plan period overall, it is difficult to specify what targets would be appropriate. But it is clear that there is an ageing population and that a notable proportion of such people would need or benefit from highly accessible, so this should be secured in the NA to the greatest extent possible through planning policy with the support of MSDC.

1.5 Custom and self-build housing

56. This part of the summary does not correspond to a standalone chapter in the report. It is included to provide the limited available evidence about the demand for custom and self-build housing in the parish.
57. Custom and self-build housing can provide a cost-effective route to home ownership, a high degree of specialisation to meet individual needs, and add valuable architectural interest to residential areas. However, it tends most often to be provided in the form of serviced plots on large-scale development sites that may not be likely to come forward in the parish.
58. That said, plots can also be offered by developers on their own or in conjunction with a housing association partner; a group of custom and self-builders can come together to secure economies of scale and reduce building costs; and landowners sometimes service and sell plots themselves. Self-build projects on infill sites within the parish may be the most realistic route in Wetheringsett cum Brockford, although the upcoming sites may be encouraged to supply a small number of plots to meet clear demand.
59. Demand for custom and self-build housing is generally captured on the local planning authority's Self Build Register. It is generally referred to as demand rather than need because it is not known how many people expressing interest on the register need a custom home because their needs (e.g. for specific features) are not being met by the market, and how many simply wish to be part of the process or influence aspects of aesthetic design.
60. Babergh and Mid Suffolk operate a joint Self Build Register, which had approximately 390 applicants as of the end of June 2021. The detail provided by each applicant varies considerably, and it is not known how many currently live in the parish. Most have stated that they wish to build 'in any location', and it should be noted that many applicants apply to the registers of multiple local authorities.
61. Filtering out the applicants who specifically identify a location other than Wetheringsett cum Brockford, reduces the figure to 130. Of these, 5 applicants specifically mention the area as their preferred location. Again it is not clear whether they already live in the parish, and it is therefore not possible to say what proportion of the local population want to self-build in the parish. However, 5 applicants is a reasonably large figure for a small parish, and it is common for Self-Build Registers to under-represent demand. As such, there appears to be clear demand for self-build plots in the parish.
62. To bring forward plots either on mainstream sites with planning permission or through a bottom-up community process, it would be helpful to confirm the scale of seriousness of demand through a household survey and explore interest among local landowners. At the least, this limited evidence from the register would justify encouragement for custom and self-build provision in the Neighbourhood Plan.

2. Context

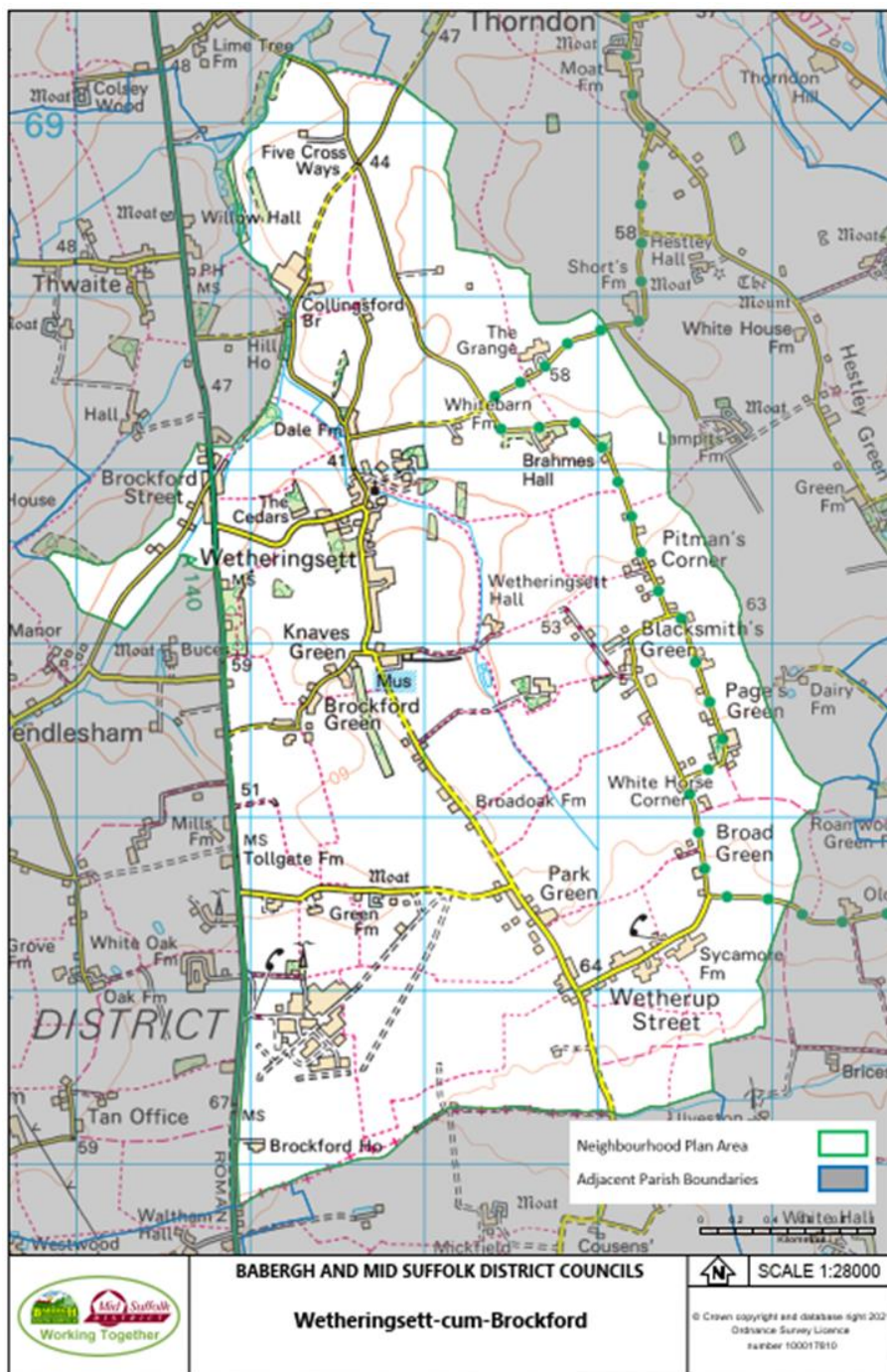
2.1 Local context

63. Wetheringsett cum Brockford is a Neighbourhood Plan Area (NA) located in the District of Mid Suffolk.
64. The NA boundary aligns with that of the civil parish of Wetheringsett cum Brockford. It was formally designated as an NA by Mid Suffolk District Council (MSDC) in January 2021.
65. The parish is centred on the village of Wetheringsett, but also includes a number of small hamlets across a relatively wide rural area. Wetheringsett cum Brockford is located around 8 miles north-east of Stowmarket and 15 miles north of Ipswich. The A140 (Norwich Road) runs north to south along the western edge of the parish, connecting it to Ipswich and Norwich.
66. Wetheringsett village offers a limited range of amenities that include a church and primary school, which is anticipated to grow due to the establishment of a companion nursery, as well as the Mid-Suffolk Light Railway Museum. There are 55 listed buildings across the parish.
67. The proposed Neighbourhood Plan period extends to 2037 in line with the end-date of the emerging Joint Local Plan (JLP) for Babergh and Mid Suffolk districts. For the purpose of this assessment the Plan is assumed to begin in 2022, therefore comprising a planning period of 15 years. The evidence supplied in this report will look forward to the Plan end date of 2037, but where possible will also provide annualised figures which can be extrapolated to a different term if the Plan period changes. The start date need not remain fixed or be specified at all, and is only used for the purpose of certain calculations.

The NA boundary

68. A map of the designated NA appears below in Figure 2-1.
69. Data for Wetheringsett cum Brockford parish was captured in the 2011 Census. Up-to-date population estimates can also be obtained for parishes, and a current snapshot of housing in the parish can be obtained by adding together 2011 Census numbers and completions data from MSDC. However, for other datasets including the 2001 Census, the parish needs to be recreated using statistical units called Output Areas (OAs).
70. The NA/parish is formed of two OAs having the following code numbers: 42UEHR0008 and 42UEHR0009. Data for this combined area allows trends from the 2001 Census to be observed.
71. However, other datasets with relevance for demographic and housing need issues do not drill down to the smallest scale of OAs, being instead limited to their higher order equivalents. Where a slightly larger proxy area has to be used for particular datasets in this report, this is noted in the commentary.
72. Where house prices from Land Registry are cited, these figures refer to all transactions having a postcode within the parish boundary.

Figure 2-1: Map of the Wetheringsett cum Brockford designated Neighbourhood Area



Source: Mid Suffolk Council

Headline population and housing statistics

- 73. The statistics show that at the time of the 2011 Census Wetheringsett cum Brockford parish had a total of 669 residents, formed into 263 households, and 280 dwellings (17 of which were therefore vacant at that time or used as second homes).
- 74. Data provided by MSDC indicates that since 2011 there have been 20 new dwellings built in the NA. The total quantity of dwellings in the NA as of July 2021 is therefore estimated to be 300.
- 75. The Office for National Statistics (ONS) produces mid-year population estimates for parishes and wards throughout the country. The mid-2019 population estimate for Wetheringsett cum Brockford is 714 – indicating population growth of around 45 individuals since 2011.

76. The average number of individuals per household in the parish in 2011 was 2.54, on which basis it can be estimated that the 20 new dwellings might accommodate 51 people. This estimate is extremely close to the growth of 45 people provided by ONS, appearing to validate that figure (which it should be emphasized is based on projections and assumptions rather than an actual survey). A fully accurate total will soon become available with the publication of 2021 Census statistics.
77. Data sources for the population and the existing housing stock that are more recent than the 2011 Census will be used wherever possible in this report. However, Census datasets providing, for example, the breakdown of households (as opposed to individuals) by age and the tenure of dwellings, cannot be accurately be brought up to date in this way. Such patterns are instead generally assumed to persist to the present day.

2.2 Planning policy context

78. Neighbourhood Plans are required to be in general conformity with adopted strategic local policies.¹ Those having relevance to housing are reviewed here, along with any policies that are likely to be adopted in the near future.
79. Mid Suffolk's adopted Local Plan is relatively old: the original version, some of which remains in force in the form of saved policies, dates from 1998. However, the 1998 Local Plan has mostly been superseded by policies from the Core Strategy (September 2008), and its Focussed Review (December 2012).
80. The adopted development plan documents are now being replaced entirely by a new Joint Local Plan (JLP) for Babergh and Mid Suffolk districts looking ahead to the period to 2037. The JLP is at a very advanced stage, being formally submitted for examination in March 2021. The first stage of the examination is scheduled for September 2021, having been rescheduled from June, with the second stage following closely thereafter.
81. Given its status, the emerging JLP will be accorded weight when planning applications are determined. However, until it is formally adopted the policies from the Core Strategy and original Local Plan remain important.
82. That said, the Core Strategy and adopted Local Plan date from before the adoption of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), the key national planning policy document first adopted in 2012 and revised in 2019. This means that for planning purposes, the older documents are considered 'out of date', and in cases where those policies conflict with the NPPF, it is the NPPF that takes priority and that the Neighbourhood Plan should align with. The policies relevant to housing need reviewed here are considered not to be in conflict with the NPPF.
83. The Basic Conditions require neighbourhood plan policies to be in general conformity with the strategic policies in the adopted local plan rather than emerging policy. However, it is clearly sensible in this case, given the forthcoming replacement of adopted policies and their relative age, for the Neighbourhood Plan to seek to be in conformity with both adopted and emerging policy (where adopted policy does not conflict with the NPPF). Needing to be in conformity with both is not normally problematic.
84. Below the key policies relating to housing from the emerging and adopted policy documents are reviewed.

Table 2-1: Summary of relevant adopted policies²

Policy	Source	Provisions
H4: Affordable Housing	Local Plan 1998 (saved policy)	A proportion of Affordable Housing (up to 35%, based on negotiation) in new housing developments of 5 dwellings or more in the part of the District including Wetheringsett cum Brockford.
H5: Rural Exception Sites	Local Plan 1998 (saved policy)	Affordable housing permitted on rural exception sites where there is evidence of need.

¹ Available at <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/neighbourhood-planning--2#basic-conditions-for-neighbourhood-plan-to-referendum>

² Available at <https://www.midsuffolk.gov.uk/planning/planning-policy/adopted-documents/mid-suffolk-district-council/>

Policy	Source	Provisions
CS1: Settlement Hierarchy	Core Strategy 2008	<p>Defines Wetheringsett as one of twenty-six 'Secondary Villages' in the settlement hierarchy. Secondary Villages are described as unsuitable for growth but capable of taking appropriate residential infill and development for local needs only (which may be identified through surveys and Neighbourhood Plans).</p> <p>Settlements not listed in the hierarchy, such as Brockford, are designated as countryside villages where development is restricted to particular types of development to support the rural economy and meet affordable housing needs (detailed further in Policy CS2: Development in the Countryside and Countryside Villages).</p>
FC2: Provision and Distribution of Housing	Core Strategy Focussed Review 2012	<p>Replacing Policy CS8 from the Core Strategy 2008, this policy makes provision for 2,625 new homes across the district from 2012 to 2027 through greenfield site allocations. A further 1,220 homes are estimated to be delivered on previously developed land.</p> <p>These figures are distributed among key settlements and categories in the settlement hierarchy in the Core Strategy 2008. Secondary Villages are not required to contribute any housing to the targets.</p>

Table 2-2: Summary of relevant emerging policies³

Policy	Provisions
SP01: Housing Need	<p>10,165 net additional dwellings are planned within Mid Suffolk from 2018-2037.</p> <p>The mix of housing types and sizes should reflect the needs established in the most relevant district needs assessment or surveys.</p>
SP02: Affordable Housing	<p>A contribution of 35% Affordable Housing is required on sites of ten or more dwellings (or more than 0.5ha. Higher amounts will also be permitted subject to relevant local and neighbourhood policies. The mix of affordable tenures will have regard to relevant district needs assessment and viability.</p> <p>The supporting text points to the overall profile of need by tenure in Mid Suffolk: 12.5% of housing as affordable rent, 10% as affordable home ownership (5.8% of which shared ownership and 4.2% starter homes).</p>
SP03: Settlement Hierarchy	<p>Wetheringsett cum Brockford is divided into three separate settlement areas. The Church area is defined as a Mid Suffolk Hinterland Village, while the Brockford Street and Wetherup Street & Park Green areas are defined as Mid Suffolk Hamlet Villages.</p>
SP04: Housing Spatial Distribution	<p>Of the 12,616 new homes planned in Mid Suffolk over the Plan period, 1,267 (or 10%) are expected to be delivered in Hinterland Villages (of which 517 have outstanding permission already and a further 750 should be sought), and 404 (or 3%) are expected to be delivered in Hamlets (of which 200 have permission and 204 should be sought in future). All figures are minimums.</p> <p>Designated housing requirements are provided for neighbourhood plan areas. However, Wetheringsett cum Brockford is not listed because the submission Plan was published before the neighbourhood plan area was designated.</p>
LP06: Mix and Type of Composition	<p>In addition to the 35% of homes that should be affordable in accordance with Policy SP02, 50% of dwellings on sites of ten or more units should meet the requirements for accessible and adaptable dwellings under Part M4(2) of Building Regulations.</p>
LP11: Self-Build and Custom-Build	<p>The Councils are broadly supportive of planning proposals that provide serviced dwelling plots for custom and self-build. The supporting text notes that there were 164 people on the self-build register as of April 2018 (for Mid Suffolk and Babergh together).</p>

³ Available at <https://www.midsuffolk.gov.uk/planning/planning-policy/adopted-documents/mid-suffolk-district-council/>

2.2.1 Quantity of housing to provide

85. The NPPF 2019 (paragraphs 65 and 66) requires Local Authorities to provide neighbourhood groups upon request with a definitive or an indicative number of houses to plan for over the Neighbourhood Plan period.
86. Mid Suffolk has not yet fulfilled this requirement by providing Wetheringsett cum Brockford with definitive housing target, because the NA was not designated at the time that figures for other areas were determined in the current draft of the emerging JLP. However, MSDC is assumed to be able to provide a figure if requested in future and, as such, the question of how many dwellings to plan for overall is not within the scope of this report.

3. Approach

3.1 Research Questions

87. The following research questions were formulated at the outset of the research through discussion with the Wetheringsett cum Brockford Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group. They serve to direct the research and provide the structure for the HNA.

3.1.1 Tenure and Affordability

88. The Steering Group would like to understand the needs of the community for housing of varying tenures, as well as the relative affordability of those tenures that should be provided to meet local need now and into the future.
89. This evidence will allow Wetheringsett cum Brockford to establish the right conditions for new development to come forward that is affordable, both in the broader sense of market housing attainable for first-time buyers, and as Affordable Housing for those who may be currently priced out of the market.
90. The Steering Group is interested in exploring the need for Affordable Housing for sale (also known as affordable home ownership) and are therefore eligible for support under the Affordable Housing for sale element of the Neighbourhood Planning Technical Support programme. Analysis and commentary on this issue is provided under the remit of this research question.

RQ 1: What quantity and tenures of Affordable Housing should be planned for over the Neighbourhood Plan period?

3.1.2 Type and Size

91. The aim of this research question is to provide the Steering Group with evidence on the types and sizes of new housing needed by the local community. This will help to shape future development so that it better reflects what residents need, as there is a perception that recent development has focused on executive housing that may not be affordable or appropriately configured to the needs of local residents.
92. While this study is not able to advise on space standards or home configurations, it may reveal imbalances between the available stock and demographic trends.
93. Note, however, that the evidence gathered here takes the current population as its starting point and projects forward trends that exist today. It therefore risks embedding features of the housing stock and occupation patterns that the community may actually wish to change. In that sense, the findings in this report might be viewed as the baseline scenario on top of which the community's objectives and primary evidence should be layered to create a more complete picture and vision for the future.

RQ 2: What type (terrace, semi, bungalows, flats and detached) and size (number of bedrooms) of housing is appropriate for the Plan area over the Neighbourhood Plan period?

3.1.3 Accessible Housing for Older and Disabled People

94. This section supplements the demographic evidence relating to Type and Size, including the potential demand for downsizing, to consider the justification for high standards of accessibility and adaptability in new housing to better accommodate people and others with mobility or support needs.

RQ3: What justification can be made for higher standards for accessible and adaptable housing for older people and those with support needs over the Neighbourhood Plan period?

3.1.4 Custom and self-build

95. The limited evidence on this topic is summarised and discussed in a small additional section in the Executive Summary.

3.2 Relevant Data

96. This HNA assesses a range of evidence to ensure its findings are robust for the purposes of developing policy at the Neighbourhood Plan level and is locally specific. This includes data from the 2011 Census and a range of other data sources, including:

- Other Office of National Statistics (ONS) datasets providing more up-to-date demographic information;
- ONS population and household projections for future years;
- Valuation Office Agency (VOA) data on the current stock of housing;
- Land Registry data on prices paid for housing within the local market;
- Rental prices from Rightmove.co.uk;
- Local Authority housing waiting list data; and
- The Ipswich and Waveney Housing Market Areas Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) 2017 and the Part 2 Partial Update 2019.

4. RQ 1: Tenure, Affordability and the Need for Affordable Housing

RQ 1: What quantity and tenures of Affordable Housing should be planned for over the Neighbourhood Plan period?

4.1 Introduction

97. This section approaches the question of affordability from two perspectives. First, it examines what tenure options are currently available in the parish and which of them might be most appropriate going forward, based on the relationship between how much they cost and local incomes. Second, it estimates the quantity of Affordable Housing that might be required during the Neighbourhood Plan period. The scale of need for these homes can justify planning policies to guide new development.
98. Tenure refers to the way a household occupies their home. Broadly speaking, there are two categories of tenure: market housing (such as homes available to purchase outright or rent from a private landlord) and Affordable Housing (including subsidised products like social rent and shared ownership). We refer to Affordable Housing, with capital letters, to denote the specific tenures that are classified as affordable in the current NPPF. A relatively less expensive home for market sale may be affordable but it is not a form of Affordable Housing.
99. The definition of Affordable Housing set out in the 2019 NPPF makes clear the Government's commitment to home ownership by broadening the definition to include a range of low-cost housing opportunities for those aspiring to own a home. As part of this effort, the Government has recently introduced a new product called First Homes.⁴
100. Because the First Homes product is new and expected to be an important part of the strategy for improving access to home ownership, it is worth summarising its key features and implications:
- First Homes should be available to buy with a minimum discount of 30% below their full market value (i.e. the value of an equivalent new home);
 - The discount level can be set higher than 30% – at 40% or 50% – where this can be suitably evidenced. The setting and justifying of discount levels can happen at neighbourhood as well as local authority scale;
 - After the discount is applied the initial sale price must not exceed £250,000 (or £420,000 in Greater London), and lower caps can be set locally.
 - Purchasers must be first-time buyers with an income less than £80,000 (or £90,000 in Greater London), and First Homes can be prioritised for local people and/or key workers;
 - They will be subject to legal restrictions ensuring the discount is retained for future occupants, and renting out or sub-letting will not normally be permitted;
 - In addition to setting the discount level, local authorities and neighbourhood planning groups can apply additional criteria, such as a lower income cap, local connection test or prioritization for key workers through adopted plans, emerging policy or Supplementary Planning Documents.
 - 25% of all homes delivered through section 106 developer contributions on sites enabled through the planning process should be sold as First Homes. In simpler terms, 25% of all subsidised Affordable Housing on mainstream housing developments should be First Homes. This is likely to mean that First Homes will take the place of shared ownership housing in many circumstances, and in some cases may also displace social or affordable rented homes.

4.2 Current tenure profile

101. The current tenure profile is a key feature of the Neighbourhood Plan Area (NA). Patterns of home ownership, private renting and affordable/social renting reflect demographic characteristics including age (with older households more likely to own their own homes), and patterns of income and wealth which influence whether households can afford to rent or

⁴ The shape that the new First Homes product will take is set out in a Ministerial Statement issued in May 2021, available here: <https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-statements/detail/2021-05-24/hlws48>. The relevant update to PPG is available here: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/first-homes#contents>. Note that First Homes formally came into effect from 28 June 2021, and Local and Neighbourhood Plans that reached an advanced stage of development by that date may not need to reflect these changes. However, it is advisable for all plans in process to reflect the direction of policy changes where possible.

buy and whether they need subsidy to access housing.

102. Table 4-1 below presents data on tenure in Wetheringsett cum Brockford compared with Mid Suffolk and England from the 2011 Census, which is the most recent available source of this information. The parish has a similar rate of home ownership to Mid Suffolk, which is significantly above that of the country as a whole. Private renting is much more common than social renting in the NA, which is a departure from both wider areas where they are equally common.
103. There were 19 units of social rented housing and 1 unit of shared ownership in 2011. Social rent is the tenure that accommodates people with the most acute needs for housing, so the particularly low proportion of 7% represents a potentially significant challenge for those on the lowest incomes or with other support needs locally. As well as this notable lack of social rented accommodation compared with wider geographies, there may well be an opportunity to provide affordable routes to ownership.
104. MSDC data on the homes built since 2011 suggest that all 20 were for open market sale or rent. In other words, no new Affordable Housing has been built in the parish in the last decade. This means that the combined total of homes in affordable tenures has declined from 7.6% to 7.1%.
105. This can only be an estimate because it is not recorded how many of the 19 social housing units existing in 2011 have since been bought out by their occupants through the Right to Buy scheme (effectively transferring those homes from social rented to ownership tenures), nor whether the shared ownership home has been acquired in full. However, it is likely that this has occurred to some degree and the stock of Affordable Housing is lower still.
106. It is not possible to update the other tenure categories because records are not kept of privately owned homes transferring from owner occupation to private rent and vice versa. The 2021 Census will provide the most robust and up-to-date picture of this when the results are released in the coming months.

Table 4-1: Tenure (households), Wetheringsett cum Brockford, 2011

Tenure	Wetheringsett cum Brockford	Mid Suffolk	England
Owned; total	74.9%	75.1%	63.3%
Shared ownership	0.4%	0.9%	0.8%
Social rented; total	7.2%	11.3%	17.7%
Private rented; total	14.4%	11.2%	16.8%

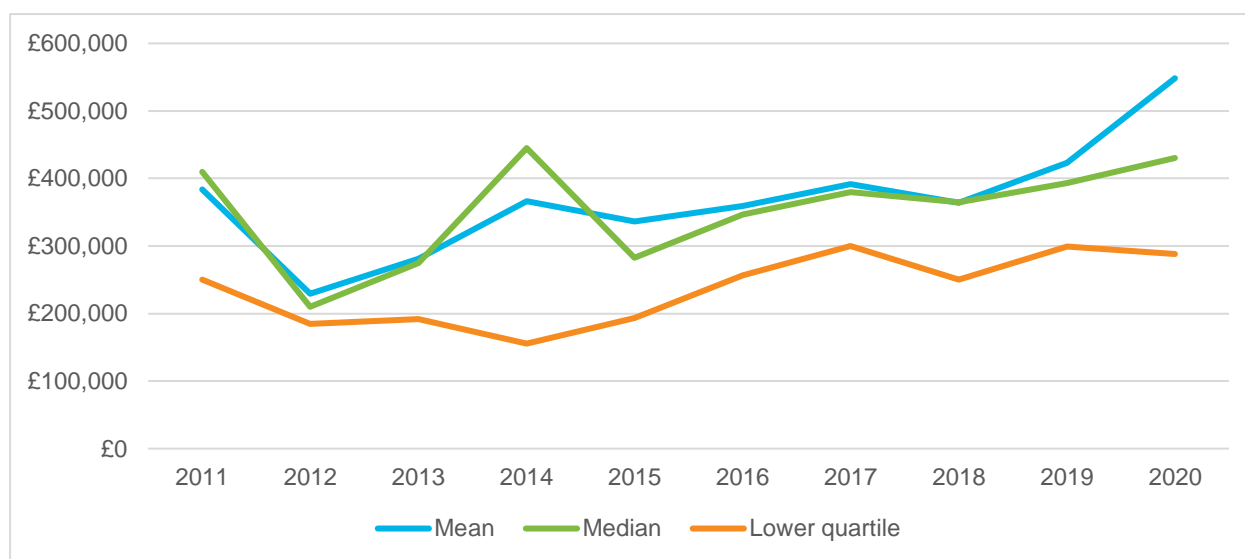
Sources: Census 2011, AECOM Calculations

4.3 Affordability

4.3.1 House prices

107. Figure 4-1 below presents selected measures of house prices in Wetheringsett cum Brockford over the last ten years. It shows a general upward trajectory that is marked by a high degree of year-on-year volatility.
108. This is due to the extremely small sample size of transactions in each year – for example, there were only 4 transactions recorded in 2019. So what particular properties happen to be sold in a given year has a big effect on the average, and an increase in prices from one year to the next does not necessarily mean that all homes in the NA have appreciated by that amount – rather it is caused by a combination of market growth and an element of randomness.
109. Nevertheless, the overall trajectory of the market is clear. At £430,000 and £288,000, the median and lower quartile average prices in 2020 are 5% and 15% above their 2011 benchmarks respectively. However, there were only 5 transactions in 2011 and the average for that year is particularly high. Compared with a base date of 2012, when there were 15 transactions recorded, the median and lower quartile average are 105% and 56% higher.
110. While the precise level of additional funds needed to afford homes in Wetheringsett cum Brockford today compared with the past is difficult to pinpoint because of the small sample, the overall trend presents an immense challenge for those with lower incomes wishing to buy locally.
111. It is worth noting also that the 2020 median and lower quartile prices for Mid Suffolk as a whole are £270,000 and £210,000 respectively, indicating that property in Wetheringsett cum Brockford is around 40-60% more expensive than the wider district.

Figure 4-1: House prices by quartile in Wetheringsett cum Brockford, 2011-2020



Source: Land Registry Price Paid Data (PPD)

- 112. It also is important to think about the pricing of newly built housing, since this is what the Neighbourhood Plan may be able to exert some control over. The last time Land Registry recorded the sale of a newly built property in Wetheringsett cum Brockford was in 2014, meaning that there is no robust or recent sample for data on new build prices in the NA.
- 113. There were, however, 174 sales of newly built homes across Mid Suffolk in 2020. The mean price was £300,000, ranging from £177,000 for an average flat to £358,000 for an average detached house. These figures give a reasonable indication of how much newly built housing might cost in Mid Suffolk in future.
- 114. However, given that house prices in the NA are 40-60% more expensive than across Mid Suffolk, it is likely that Wetheringsett cum Brockford is considered a particularly desirable place to live with higher than average land values for the district. As such, it is likely that any new build housing that is delivered here in future will be priced higher than the district averages cited above. Estimated prices, which are calculated and explained in Appendix A, are £330,000 for a new terrace and £569,000 for a new detached home.
- 115. This suggests that newly built properties command a premium of around 15-30% over existing homes. This presents a further challenge to households relying on new development to enable them to live locally, whether in open market housing or through affordable routes to ownership like shared ownership and First Homes, which will be priced with reference to their open market value.
- 116. While the well-located historic properties in Wetheringsett cum Brockford are likely to hold the highest values, newly built housing is generally more expensive than an equivalent existing home.
- 117. Table 4-2 below breaks down house prices in Wetheringsett cum Brockford by type. The data is again weakened by the small sample size, with a number of gaps. Yet it does reveals a clear distinction between detached housing and the other types, with the former often commanding a price more than double that of the latter.
- 118. Note that Land Registry only records the type of dwelling sold and not its size (in terms of the number of bedrooms, rooms or any other metric).

Table 4-2: House prices by type, Wetheringsett cum Brockford, 2011-2020

Type	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Detached	£425,000	£252,188	£300,714	£496,000	£417,617	£399,833	£471,083	£462,000	£477,333	£430,750
Semi-detached	£220,000	£178,750		£145,000	£201,333		£350,000	£196,875	£260,000	£335,000
Terraced		£350,000	£145,000	£153,000		£258,500	£154,000			
Flats										
All Types	£384,000	£229,333	£281,250	£366,375	£336,511	£359,625	£391,231	£364,115	£423,000	£548,357

Source: Land Registry PPD

4.3.2 Incomes

119. Household incomes determine the ability of households to exercise choice in the housing market, and consequently the level of need for affordable housing products. Two sources of data are used to examine household incomes in Wetheringsett cum Brockford:

- The first source is ONS's estimates of incomes in small areas. This is locally specific but limited to the overall average income (i.e. it does not provide the average income of lower earners). The average total household income before housing costs locally was £48,100 in 2019 (the latest year for which data is available). This relates to a wider area around the parish, a map of which is provided in Appendix A. This total (gross) income figure is typically used by mortgage lenders to assess a household's ability to afford to borrow.⁵
- The second source is ONS's annual estimates of UK employee earnings. This provides lower quartile average earnings (i.e. the income of the lowest 25% of earners). However, it is only available at the Local Authority level. It also relates to individual earnings. While this is an accurate representation of household incomes where there is only one earner, it does not represent household income where there are two or more people earning. Mid Suffolk's gross lower quartile annual earnings were £15,148 in 2019. To estimate the income of households with two lower quartile earners, this figure is doubled to £30,296.

120. It is immediately clear from this data that there is a large gap between the spending power of average earning households and those earning the lowest 25% of incomes, particularly where the household in question has one earner only.

4.3.3 Affordability Thresholds

121. To gain a clearer understanding of local affordability, it is useful to understand what levels of income are required to afford different tenures. This is done using 'affordability thresholds': the estimated amount of annual income required to cover the cost of rent or a mortgage given local housing prices.

122. AECOM has determined thresholds for the income required in Wetheringsett cum Brockford to buy a home in the open market (average and entry-level prices), and the income required to afford private rent and the range of Affordable Housing tenures as set out in the NPPF. These calculations are detailed and discussed in more detail in the Appendix.

123. The key assumptions made in assessing the affordability of different tenures are explained alongside the calculations, but it is worth noting here that we have assumed that the maximum percentage of household income that should be spent on rent is 30% and that mortgage financing will be offered at a maximum of 3.5 times household income.

124. Where First Homes and shared ownership costs have been estimated, these are based on the estimated cost of a new build terrace of £330,000 (as discussed above and calculated in Appendix A).

125. Table 4-3 overleaf summarises the estimated cost of each tenure, the annual income required to support these costs within Wetheringsett cum Brockford, and whether local incomes are sufficient. The income required column does not reflect the cost of a deposit (which we have assumed to be 10% of the value to be purchased) or the possibility that

⁵ Total annual household income is the sum of the gross income of every member of the household plus any income from benefits such as Working Families Tax Credit.

households may already hold equity from an existing property. Although both factors may be crucial to whether housing will be affordable, they are highly dependent on individual circumstances that cannot be anticipated here.

126. The same information is presented as a graph in Figure 4-2 on a subsequent page.

Table 4-3: Affordability thresholds, Wetheringsett cum Brockford

Tenure	Mortgage Value (90% of price)	Rent	Income required	Affordable on average incomes? £48,100	Affordable on LQ earnings (single earner)? £15,148	Affordable on LQ earnings (2 earners)? £30,296
Market home ownership						
New build detached home (estimated)	£512,100		£146,314	No	No	No
New build terraced home (estimated)	£297,000		£84,857	No	No	No
Existing median home	£387,000	-	£110,571	No	No	No
Existing entry-level home	£259,425	-	£74,121	No	No	No
Private renting / rent to buy						
Average market rent	-	£9,540	£31,800	Yes	No	Marginal
Entry-level market rent	-	£8,820	£29,400	Yes	No	Yes
Affordable home ownership						
First Homes – 30% discount	£231,000	-	£59,400	No	No	No
First Homes – 40% discount	£198,000	-	£50,914	No	No	No
First Homes – 50% discount	£165,000	-	£42,429	Yes	No	No
Shared ownership – 50% equity	£148,500	£4,125	£56,179	No	No	No
Shared ownership – 25% equity	£74,250	£6,188	£41,839	Yes	No	No
Shared ownership – 10% equity	£29,700	£7,425	£33,236	Yes	No	No
Affordable rented housing						
Affordable rent (overall average)	-	£5,643	£22,572	Yes	No	Yes
Social rent (overall average)	-	£4,979	£19,916	Yes	No	Yes

Source: AECOM Calculations

127. Before considering each tenure category in turn, it is important to stress that these affordability thresholds have been calculated to give a sufficiently robust indication of the costs of various tenures to inform Neighbourhood Plan policy choices. These figures rely on existing data and assumptions, and it is not possible to estimate every possible permutation. For simplicity the analysis below speaks in terms of tenure products being 'affordable' or 'not affordable' for different groups, but individual circumstances and the location, condition and other factors of specific properties in each category have a large impact. These conclusions should therefore be interpreted flexibly.

Market home ownership

128. Thinking about housing for purchase on the open market, it appears that local households on average incomes are unable to access even entry-large homes unless they have the advantage of a very large deposit. Even a household with an above average income cannot afford an entry-level home. Market housing, even with the benefit of a higher income or savings, is likely to remain out of reach to most. The median house price would require an annual income more than twice the current average.

Private renting

129. Private renting is broadly affordable to average earners and households with two lower earners, although it should be emphasised that the average costs given here are based on listings across a wider area because of the lack of homes to rent in Wetheringsett cum Brockford – which is itself an indicator of limited choice and a lack of more affordable, transitional options like renting.

130. Affordability would be improved if households are able or willing to dedicate a larger proportion of their incomes to rental costs, although this has repercussions for other quality of life aspects and cannot be assumed to suit all

individuals’ circumstances. Households made up of two lower quartile earners may, for example, be able to access an average rented dwelling (as opposed to entry-level) by spending a slightly higher proportion of their income on rent.

131. While this avenue may enable households with two lower earners, those with just one lower earner cannot have very limited options. A single lower quartile earner would need to dedicate nearly 60% of their gross earnings to rent in order to afford an entry-level property. Single-person households must therefore either apply for affordable rented housing or remain in the private rented sector while relying on housing benefit or other support.

Affordable home ownership

132. There is a relatively large group of households in Wetheringsett cum Brockford who may be able to afford to rent privately but cannot afford home ownership. They are typically earning between around £30,000 per year (at which point entry-level rents become affordable) and £75,000 (at which point entry-level market sale homes become affordable). This ‘can rent, can’t buy’ cohort may benefit from the range of affordable home ownership products such as First Homes and shared ownership.

133. First Homes are to be offered at a discount of at least 30% on equivalent market prices (i.e. new build, entry-level properties). Local authorities and neighbourhood plan qualifying bodies will have discretion to increase the discount on First Homes to 40% or 50% where there is evidence to suggest this is appropriate.

134. This report has estimated the income required to afford First Homes, and tested the implications of 30%, 40% and 50% discount levels. Only the 50% discount level would bring First Homes prices within reach of average earning households, who are likely at the upper end of the range of groups for whom such subsidised ownership products are intended. For this reason this HNA recommends that the maximum 50% discount level for First Homes should be sought in Wetheringsett cum Brockford. While 43% is actually likely to be sufficient, 40% would not be enough and the discount level is rounded to the nearest 10%. Furthermore, increasing the discount to 50% would enable a slightly larger group of people earning slightly below the average to access this product.

135. Table 4-4 below shows the discount required for First Homes to be affordable to the three income groups, based on a few alternative ways of benchmarking what they might cost in practice (i.e. in the unlikely event that it is possible to bring forward a new First Home at a price equivalent to an existing entry-level home, this would require a lower discount).

Table 4-4: Discount on sale price required for households to afford First Homes

Tenure / product	Mean Income	LQ Income x1	LQ Income x2
Median existing NA house price	56%	86%	73%
Estimated NA new build terraced house price	43%	82%	64%
Entry-level existing NA house price	35%	80%	59%

Source: Land Registry PPD; ONS MSOA total household income

136. Shared ownership at a 25% equity share or lower appears to be slightly more affordable than First Homes at a 50% discount in Wetheringsett cum Brockford. Lower equity shares widen access to more potential occupants and slightly lower earners, particularly with the now lower 10% minimum equity share option.

137. However, it is worth emphasising that the transition from 10% to 100% ownership would be long, and during this period the rent on the 90% unsold value would not be subsidised. This product may have a lower threshold for access, but the longer-term prospects of building an equity share are poorer and the ongoing monthly costs will be higher.

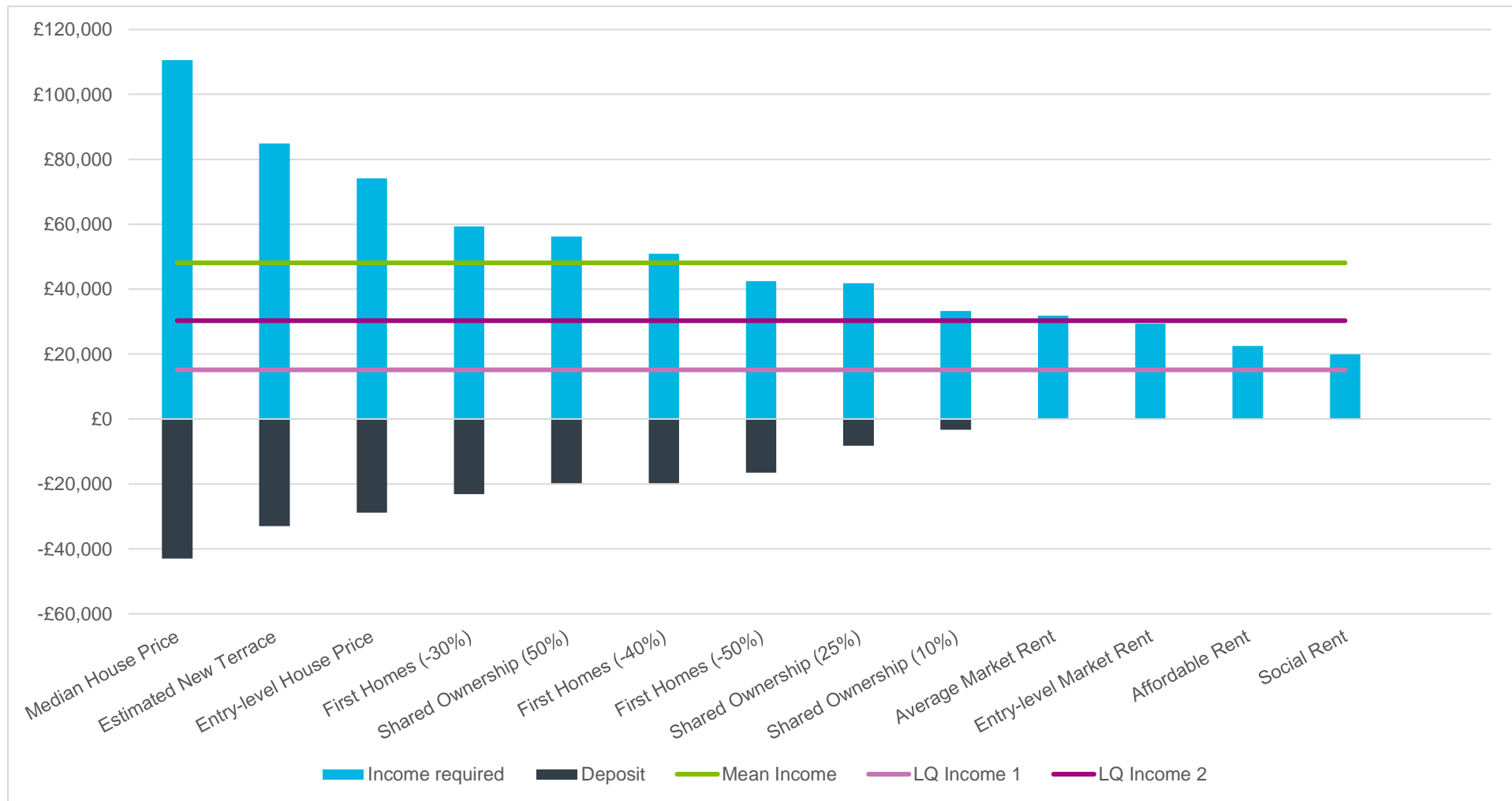
138. The income required to access rent to buy is assumed to be the same as that required to afford market rents – the difference being that a portion of the rent is effectively saved for a deposit rather than paid to a landlord. It therefore appears to be slightly more affordable than First Homes and shared ownership, though there are again other disadvantages when compared to the other options.

139. These three products need to be considered in relation to what they offer occupants in the long term beyond simply appearing affordable or not. Each potentially provides value to different segments of the local population, with shared ownership at a lower than 25% equity share potentially allowing lower earning households to get a foot on the housing ladder, while rent to buy offers poorer long-term prospects but is helpful to those with little or no savings for a deposit, and First Homes at a 50% discount provides the best long-term support to those with slightly higher incomes.

Affordable rented housing

140. Affordable rented housing appears comfortably affordable to households with two lower earners (average earning households are unlikely to be eligible). However, households with a single lower earner are unable to afford any of the tenures considered including smaller socially rented units. Many such individuals will, if unable to secure a social rented dwelling or additional subsidy, need to live in a room in a shared house using housing benefit.
141. The evidence in this chapter suggests that the affordable rented sector performs a vital function in Wetheringsett cum Brockford as the only option for a large segment of those in the greatest need. Being cheaper for the occupant, social rent performs this function best.

Figure 4-2: Affordability thresholds, Wetheringsett cum Brockford, income required (additional cost of deposit in black)



Source: AECOM Calculations

4.4 Affordable housing- quantity needed

142. One way to understand the need for affordable housing in Wetheringsett cum Brockford is to refer to the relevant Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA). The Ipswich and Waveney Housing Market Areas SHMA Part 2 Partial Update 2019 provides total estimates for the need for Affordable Housing for each district.
143. It finds that 1,298 social or affordable rented homes will be needed in 2018-36 across Mid Suffolk, and that there is potential demand for a further 1,391 affordable home ownership units (composed of 960 shared ownership and 431 discounted market homes). On the basis that the share of this need attributable to the NA is in proportion to its share of the district population (0.69%), this suggests that Wetheringsett cum Brockford will need less than half a unit of each type of Affordable Housing in each of the coming years. Over the assumed 15 years of the Neighbourhood Plan period, this equates to the need for 15 affordable homes, 7 of which should be for affordable rent and 8 of which should be for affordable home ownership.
144. While this evidence is a helpful indication of what can be understood as Wetheringsett cum Brockford's share of the district's overall needs, and of the rough scale of demand that might be expected, pro-rating district-level needs for rural areas presents problems in practice. It effectively smooths out differences across a wide area and is less specific to the local situation. These results should be a consideration when thinking about policy options in the Neighbourhood Plan, but can also be supplemented with calculations that use inputs that relate specifically to the NA, which are detailed below. The first estimates the need for affordable rented housing and the second considers the potential demand for affordable home ownership tenures.

4.4.1 Affordable rented housing

145. The starting point for assessing the need for affordable rented housing is the number of Wetheringsett cum Brockford households currently applying for Affordable Housing on the Mid Suffolk housing register. MSDC has confirmed that as of July 2021 there are currently 5 applicant households claiming a local connection to Wetheringsett cum Brockford on the housing register (claiming because local connections are not verified until properties come available). It is not known how many of these, or if any other households, currently reside in the parish. This current snapshot appears to be representative of other years: a previous snapshot in 2016 found 8 applicants with a local connection (of whom 5 had that connection confirmed).
146. It is worth pointing out that there are currently 586 households on the waiting lists across the district. 5 is 0.85% of this total, which is not substantially different from the 0.69% of the population used in the pro-rating exercise above.
147. The number of bedrooms needed is varied, with 2 households needing 1 bedroom, 2 needing 3 bedrooms, and 1 needing 4 bedrooms. 2 of the households are aged over 55 and 1 requires a level-access property adapted to their mobility needs.
148. Table 4-5 below estimates the need for Affordable Housing for rent in Wetheringsett cum Brockford per year of the Plan period. It should be noted that the accuracy of the findings generated by the model is only as strong as the evidence available. However, given the test of proportionality for evidence supporting neighbourhood plans, the calculations set out below are considered a reasonable basis for understanding and planning for neighbourhood-level affordable housing need.
149. The result of this calculation is effectively an equilibrium, with an extremely low anticipated shortfall of affordable rented housing, but also very little room for error if circumstances change in future.
150. This lack of long-term need, which the model estimates at less than 1 unit for the whole of the Plan period, is initially surprising given that there is currently a backlog of 5 households who clearly are in need. However, what the model is suggesting is that turnover in the existing stock, when existing homes come vacant as their current occupants move to a new location, pass away or cease to be eligible, should be sufficient to meet newly arising needs as well as the current backlog, which is effectively spread out over the 15-year period to produce an annualized figure.
151. The result of the model is effectively that no additional affordable rented housing will be needed. However, the qualitative evidence provides a clear, if modest, justification to increase the stock where possible:
- First, there are demonstrably households currently in need in Wetheringsett cum Brockford, and to 'spread them out' over the Plan period suggests that some of them can be accommodated in ten years' time once a sufficient surplus has been built up through new supply and turnover of the existing stock. While possible,

this is not favourable to the individuals involved. In practice, it would be better to frontload any future affordable rented provision to meet those needs as soon as possible, leaving newly arising need beyond that in the future to be met by turnover in the existing stock.

- Second, the model result makes no allowance for a sudden uptick in need, for example if there is a downturn in the economy, so it is helpful to have some additional buffer. It also assumes that the number of socially rented dwellings in 2011 remains the same, which may not be the case. If some homes are now in owner occupation, the ability of turnover in the existing stock to satisfy newly arising needs will be lower.
- Third, Wetheringsett cum Brockford is part of a wider market area and may be expected to meet some of Mid Suffolk's needs, which have been identified in the SHMA and are corroborated by the figure of 586 households currently waiting to be housed. Alone, this is not necessarily a reason to supply affordable rented housing in the NA – particularly given its position in the settlement hierarchy. However, if there were ever to be a surplus of affordable rented housing in the NA this could help to satisfy those wider needs.
- Finally, it is worth emphasizing that one unit of Affordable Housing does not necessarily service one household worth of need, since the unit might have 2 bedrooms while the applicant household might require 4 bedrooms, it may be located in an inappropriate location, or be otherwise unsuitable.

152. As such, it is recommended that Wetheringsett cum Brockford seeks to deliver some affordable rented housing if possible, particularly early in the Plan period, with the understanding that if this results in oversupply in future years, the vacancies created when existing occupants leave their properties may need to satisfy new need from elsewhere in the district.

Table 4-5: Estimate of need for Affordable Housing for rent in Wetheringsett cum Brockford

Stage and Step in Calculation	Total	Description
STAGE 1: CURRENT NEED		
1.1 Current households in need	5.0	Latest housing register data from MSDC, representing those claiming a local connection.
1.2 Per annum	0.3	Step 1.1 divided by the plan period to produce an annualised figure.
STAGE 2: NEWLY ARISING NEED		
2.1 New household formation	38.8	MHCLG 2018-based household projections for the LA between start and end of plan period. % increase applied to NA.
2.2 Proportion of new households unable to rent in the market	10.6%	(Steps 1.1 + 2.2.1 + 2.2.2) divided by number of households in the NA.
2.2.1 Current number of social renters in parish	19.0	2011 Census social rented occupancy Note that it is not known whether any of these homes are no longer available in this tenure.
2.2.2 Number of private renters on housing benefits	7.8	Housing benefit caseload May 2018. Pro rata for NA.
2.3 New households unable to rent	4.1	Step 2.1 x Step 2.2.
2.4 Per annum	0.3	Step 2.3 divided by plan period.
STAGE 3: TURNOVER OF AFFORDABLE HOUSING		
3.1 Assumed proportion of the existing stock re-let each year	3.0%	
3.1 Supply of social/affordable re-lets (including transfers)	3	Step 3.1 x Step 2.2.1
NET SHORTFALL (OR SURPLUS) OF RENTED UNITS PER ANNUM		
Overall shortfall per annum	0.04	Step 1.2 + Step 2.4 - Step 3.2
Overall shortfall over the Plan period	0.6	Result multiplied by years in the Plan period

Source: AECOM model, using Census 2011, English Housing Survey 2018, MHCLG 2018 based household projections and net additions to affordable housing stock. 2018 is the latest reliable data for some datasets so is used throughout for consistency. Figures may not sum due to rounding.

4.4.2 Affordable home ownership

153. Turning now to Affordable Housing providing a route to home ownership, Table 4-6 below estimates the potential demand in Wetheringsett cum Brockford. This model aims to estimate the number of households might wish to own their own home but cannot afford to – the ‘can rent, can’t buy’ group described in the previous section. The model is consistent with methods used at Local Authority scale in taking as its starting point households currently living in or expected to enter the private rented sector who are not on housing benefit.
154. There may be other barriers to these households accessing home ownership on the open market, including being unable to save for a deposit, or being unable to afford a home of the right type/size or in the right location. The model also discounts 25% of households potentially in need, assuming a proportion will be renting out of choice. This is a relatively arbitrary assumption but no robust indicator exists for this area or a wider scale.
155. The result of the calculation is 2.2 households per annum who may be interested in affordable home ownership (or 32 for the entirety of the Plan period). For comparison, this is slightly lower than the current number of households in the private rented sector in the Na in 2011.
156. As mentioned for the estimate above, this assumes a rate of turnover in the existing stock will satisfy some need, though this is negligible because of the lack of shared ownership in Wetheringsett cum Brockford currently. The potential current and future demand is fairly large and barely mitigated at all by turnover, meaning that the final result is likely to exceed the overall need for housing generally.
157. It may not be achievable or even desirable to deliver this volume of affordable home ownership properties in the coming years as even greater numbers of market homes would be required to cross-subsidise delivery, many of the interested households might not be able to afford the necessary deposit, and there is a competing imperative to deliver affordable rented homes required for those with more urgent needs. However, this figure remains a useful indicator of the potential scale of demand and of the affordability challenge in Wetheringsett cum Brockford.
158. It is also important to keep in mind that the households identified in this estimate are, by and large, adequately housed in the private rented sector, Affordable Housing, or living in other circumstances. They do not necessarily lack their own housing but would prefer to buy rather than rent. They have been included in the national planning definition of those in need of Affordable Housing, but their needs are less acute than those on the waiting list for affordable rented housing.

Table 4-6: Estimate of the potential demand for affordable housing for sale in Wetheringsett cum Brockford

Stage and Step in Calculation	Total	Description
STAGE 1: CURRENT NEED		
1.1 Current number of renters in parish	46.3	Census 2011 number of renters x national % increase to 2018.
1.2 Percentage renters on housing benefit in LA	16.9%	% of renters in 2018 on housing benefit.
1.3 Number of renters on housing benefits in parish	7.8	Step 1.1 x Step 1.2.
1.4 Current need (households)	28.9	Current renters minus those on housing benefit and minus 25% assumed to rent by choice.
1.5 Per annum	1.9	Step 1.4 divided by plan period.
STAGE 2: NEWLY ARISING NEED		
2.1 New household formation	38.8	LA household projections for plan period (2018 based) pro rated to NA.
2.2 % of households unable to buy but able to rent	10.1%	(Step 1.4 + Step 3.1) divided by number of households in NA.
2.3 Total newly arising need	3.9	Step 2.1 x Step 2.2.
2.4 Total newly arising need per annum	0.3	Step 2.3 divided by plan period.
STAGE 3: SUPPLY OF AFFORDABLE HOUSING		
3.1 Supply of affordable housing	1.3	Number of shared ownership homes in parish (Census 2011 + LA new build increase to 2018/19 pro rated to NA).
3.2 Supply - intermediate resales	0.1	Step 3.1 x 5% (assumed rate of re-sale).
NET SHORTFALL (OR SURPLUS) PER ANNUM		
Overall shortfall (or surplus) per annum	2.2	(Step 1.5 + Step 2.4) - Step 3.2.
Overall shortfall over the Plan period	31.8	Result multiplied by years in the Plan period

Source: AECOM model, using Census 2011, English Housing Survey 2018, MHCLG 2018 based household projections and net additions to affordable housing stock. 2018 is the latest reliable data for some datasets so is used throughout for consistency. Figures may not sum due to rounding.

159. It should be noted that there is no policy or legal obligation on the part either of the Local Authority or Neighbourhood Plan to meet affordable housing needs in full, though there are tools available to the Steering Group that can help ensure that it is met to a greater extent if resources permit (e.g. the ability to allocate sites for Affordable Housing).
160. It is also important to remember that even after the Wetheringsett cum Brockford, or indeed any other, Neighbourhood Plan is adopted, the assessment of need for Affordable Housing, the allocation of affordable rented housing to those in need, and the management of the housing waiting list all remain the responsibility of the Local Authority rather than the Steering Group.

4.5 Affordable Housing policy guidance

161. Mid Suffolk's adopted policy on this subject (H4) aims for up to 35% of all new housing (on sites above 5 homes) to be affordable. The emerging JLP (Policy SP02) raises the threshold to sites with more than 10 dwellings, and suggests that higher percentage requirements may be permitted.
162. The fact that Affordable Housing made up 0% of the new housing in Wetheringsett cum Brockford completed over the last decade is not surprising given all of the schemes were below the relevant thresholds. Given the size of the parish, and the fact that the threshold will rise to 10 homes in future, it is realistic to expect that most future development will also fall below the threshold and will not be expected to contribute Affordable Housing.
163. The Affordable Housing that does come forward through any future mainstream development sites may take a variety of forms. How it should be broken down into specific tenures is suggested in emerging policy SP02. This policy states that the need is for 12.5% of all housing to be for affordable rent and for 10% to be for affordable sale. However, the total of 22.5% is below the overall target for the proportion of housing that should be affordable, so it is not clear exactly how the homes on a given scheme should be split between affordable renting and affordable ownership.
164. The HNA can supply more localized evidence to follow a different mix or add nuance about the specific products within each category. This section summarises the factors that might be taken into account before proposing a suggested Affordable Housing tenure mix that might be suitable for Wetheringsett cum Brockford specifically.
165. The following evidence and considerations may be used as a starting point in the development of policy concerning the Affordable Housing mix:
- A. **Evidence of need for Affordable Housing:** This study estimates that Wetheringsett cum Brockford requires limited quantities of affordable rented housing in the long term but could benefit from a near-term injection of supply, supplemented by around 32 units of affordable home ownership over the Plan period. Both forms of Affordable Housing appear to be valuable in meeting the needs of people on various incomes.

The relationship between these figures suggests that most Affordable Housing should offer a route to ownership. However, as noted above, these figures are not directly equivalent: the former expresses the identified need of a group with acute needs and no alternative options; the latter expresses potential demand from a group who are generally adequately housed in rented accommodation and may also not be able to afford the deposit to transition to ownership.
 - B. **Can Affordable Housing needs be met in full?** How far more urgently needed affordable rented housing should be represented in the tenure mix depends on the quantity of overall housing delivery expected. This is currently unknown, however given the lack of allocations in the emerging JLP and the low levels of delivery in recent years, it is unlikely that much if any Affordable Housing is likely to be delivered in the NA in the coming years.

In this context of very limited supply, there is a valid impetus to prioritise affordable rented housing for those with the most urgent needs.
 - C. **Local Plan policy:** As noted above, the adopted and emerging Local Plans do not provide firm guidelines for how Affordable Housing should be distributed among the various possible sub-tenures.

- D. **Government policy (NPPF) requirements:** current NPPF policy requires 10% of all homes to be delivered for affordable home ownership. This requirement is also enshrined in the emerging JLP and corroborated by the need figure provided by the SHMA.
- E. **First Homes policy:** the Government recently concluded a consultation on the introduction of First Homes (to provide at least 30% discount on new build home prices). The proposals have now been enacted through a ministerial statement. A minimum of 25% of all Affordable Housing secured through developer contributions are now required to be First Homes.
- This new minimum requirement may have the effect of displacing other products in any established tenure mix, and will reduce the amount of social or affordable rent if this was proposed to be more than 75% of Affordable Housing. That is not the case in Mid Suffolk, where explicit requirements are not given.
- F. **Viability:** HNAs cannot take into consideration the factors which affect viability in the neighbourhood area or at the site-specific level. Viability issues are recognised in the Local Plan and it is acknowledged that this may affect the provision of affordable housing, the mix of tenures provided and the discounts that can be sought on First Homes properties.
- G. **Funding:** the availability of funding to support the delivery of different forms of Affordable Housing may also influence what it is appropriate to provide at a particular point in time or on any one site. The Steering Group may wish to keep this in mind so that it can take up any opportunities to secure funding if they become available.
- H. **Existing tenure mix in Wetheringsett cum Brockford:** Wetheringsett cum Brockford has a proportion of social renting far below district and national rates, indicating an undersupply of this tenure that it may be beneficial to counteract. However, it is also true that the NA rate of shared ownership is below the norm in other areas, and presents another opportunity to diversify the tenure mix overall. These two pieces of evidence strongly justify the provision of Affordable Housing, no-matter what specific form it takes: both social rent and shared ownership have room to grow, with the former being particularly important.
- I. **Views of registered providers:** it is not within the scope of this HNA to investigate whether it would be viable for housing associations (registered providers) to deliver and manage affordable rented homes in the parish. The funding arrangements available to housing associations will determine rent levels.
- J. **Wider policy objectives:** the Steering Group may wish to take account of broader policy objectives for Wetheringsett cum Brockford and/or wider Mid Suffolk. These could include, but are not restricted to, policies to create lifetime communities by enabling younger households to grow into larger comes and for older households to downsize if they wish. These wider considerations may influence the mix of Affordable Housing provided.

166. There is no precise science for determining what the most suitable tenure mix for Wetheringsett cum Brockford might look like, and this is particularly challenging when the overall supply of housing in future years is unknown. However, it is assumed in this case that the potential for affordable delivery is very limited.
167. While delivering some affordable rented housing should be a priority – to help meet the backlog, address Wetheringsett cum Brockford’s lack of affordable rented tenures compared with other areas, protect the interests of those on the lowest incomes, and future proof the housing stock in case circumstances change – there is also an opportunity here to widen access to home ownership through more subsidised tenure options like First Homes.
168. In this context, it seems reasonable to allow flexibility in the precise products that come forward, and to seek a relatively even balance between renting and ownership. The SHMA found that 12.5% of the need is for affordable rent and 10% is for affordable sale. This equates to a ratio of 56/44 within Affordable Housing, and might be taken as a good benchmark for the NA as well. For simplicity, this might be rounded to 60/40.
169. This would provide a comfortable buffer for meeting the needs of those in the most financial difficulty while also making more of the apparent opportunity to serve those wishing to own.
170. The breakdown within the category of affordable home ownership is proposed to meet the national First Homes requirement as a priority (especially since this tenure, if secured at a 50% discount, is also the most beneficial in the long-term). The remainder is then apportioned to shared ownership at a slightly higher proportion than rent to buy because it is better-established and equally affordable to some lower earners. However, the reality is that there are unlikely to be any sites in the NA offering so many affordable homes that they can be distributed to this level of

granularity. Rather, these figures should be interpreted as a recommendation about which products are generally more suitable. If 1 affordable ownership dwelling is available, it should probably be a First Home. If 2, probably 1 First Home and 1 shared ownership, and so forth.

171. This mix should be viewed as a starting point, based primarily on secondary evidence and AECOM's professional judgement, which should be reconsidered in light of considerations F to J above, and in particular the views and objectives of the community.
172. Where the Steering Group wish to develop policy that goes beyond that outlined in the Local Plan – as is suggested here – it is important that they liaise with MSDC to gather more detailed income and viability information, and to ensure that departures from the local policy context have their support.
173. Another option when developing Neighbourhood Plan policies on tenure splits is to add caveats to the policy in question, to the effect that the precise mix of affordable housing will be considered on the basis of site-by-site circumstances in addition to this evidence.

Table 4-7: Indicative Affordable Housing tenure mix for Wetheringsett cum Brockford

Tenure	Indicative mix	Considerations and uncertainties
Routes to home ownership, of which	40%	
First Homes	25%	Product untested so uncertainties around viability, developer, lenders and buyer appetite etc.
Shared ownership	10%	Proposed changes to the model to allow purchases of 10% share ⁶ - impact on viability unknown Registered Providers' business plans currently reliant on shared ownership model. Impact of displacement by First Homes unknown.
Rent to buy	5%	Emerging product with popularity and effectiveness as yet unproven. Impact of displacement by First Homes unknown.
Affordable Housing for rent, of which	60%	
Social rent	To be set by MSDC and Registered Providers.	
Affordable rent	To be set by MSDC and Registered Providers.	

Source: AECOM calculations

4.6 Conclusions- Tenure and Affordability

Affordability issues

174. Wetheringsett cum Brockford's current tenure mix reveals a notable undersupply of Affordable Housing. The NA had, at the time of the 2011 Census, just under two thirds of Mid Suffolk's proportion of social renting and shared ownership, and less than half the England average. No new units of affordable rented housing have been added to the 2011 total of 19 over the last ten years, and it is possible that some have been lost to the Right to Buy scheme. Across Mid Suffolk 196 social or affordable rented homes have been bought out through the Right to Buy scheme since 2011 according to MHCLG live tables, equating to 4.3% of the stock existing at the time of the Census.
175. Home values in Wetheringsett cum Brockford have increased significantly over the last nine years, with the result that the average home now costs more than double the average price in 2012 and the funds needed to access home ownership even at the lower end of the market are increasing far faster than wages (which rose by 19% in Mid Suffolk

⁶ <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/jenrick-unveils-huge-12-billion-boost-for-affordable-homes>

over the same period as lower quartile house prices rose by 56%, according to ONS estimates of gross weekly earnings). Property in Wetheringsett cum Brockford is around 40-60% more expensive than the wider district.

176. However, these conclusions are based on a fairly small sample size of transactions, so the particular properties that happen to be sold in a given year can skew the average, and an increase in prices from one year to the next does not necessarily mean that all homes in the NA have appreciated by that amount. Despite this volatility, the overall trend presents an immense challenge for those with lower incomes wishing to buy locally.
177. The last time Land Registry recorded the sale of a newly built property in Wetheringsett cum Brockford was in 2014, meaning that there is no robust or recent sample for data on new build prices in the NA. The costs of new housing have had to be estimated here, and it is likely that newly built properties command a premium of around 15-30% over existing homes. This presents a further challenge to households relying on new development to enable them to live locally, whether in open market housing or through affordable routes to ownership like shared ownership and First Homes, which will be priced with reference to their open market value.

Tenure options

178. AECOM has estimated the annual income required to afford various tenures of housing in the NA – each of which is explained in detail in Appendix A. These thresholds are compared to local incomes to determine which options are the most appropriate for local people going forward. The average household income in Wetheringsett cum Brockford is £48,100, and the lower quartile income (per person) for Mid Suffolk was £15,148 in 2019.
179. It was found that a household would need an income comfortably above the average (or a very large deposit) to qualify for a mortgage even for an entry-level home in the area. Home ownership through the mainstream market is not an option for the majority of local people. The median house price would require an annual income more than twice the current average.
180. Private renting is broadly affordable to average earners and households with two lower earners, although it should be emphasised that the average costs given here are based on listings across a wider area because of the lack of homes to rent in Wetheringsett cum Brockford – which is itself an indicator of limited choice and a lack of more affordable, transitional options like renting. The lack of private renting in the parish is not apparent in Census data (which shows that 14% of homes were rented in 2011 compared with 11% across Mid Suffolk), but comes through in the total absence of rental listings available at the time of writing. This may indicate either that private renting has decreased since that time or that local renters remain in their homes for long periods and there is less turnover in the market providing options for new households. It is also possible that this is the result of an anomaly. Unfortunately, historic rental listings data for the parish is not available.
181. Affordability would be improved if households are able or willing to dedicate a larger proportion of their incomes to rental costs, although this has repercussions for other quality of life aspects and cannot be assumed to suit all individuals' circumstances. While this avenue may enable households with two lower earners, those with just one lower earner cannot have very limited options. A single lower quartile earner would need to dedicate nearly 60% of their gross earnings to rent to afford an entry-level rental. Single-person households must therefore either apply for affordable rented housing or remain in the private rented sector while relying on housing benefit or other support.
182. There is a relatively large group of households in Wetheringsett cum Brockford who may be able to afford to rent privately but cannot afford home ownership. They are typically earning between around £30,000 per year (at which point entry-level rents become affordable) and £75,000 (at which point entry-level market sale homes become affordable). This 'can rent, can't buy' cohort may benefit from the range of affordable home ownership products such as First Homes and shared ownership.
183. All of these products would be valuable to different segments of the local population, with shared ownership at a lower than 25% equity share potentially allowing lower earning households to get a foot on the housing ladder, while rent to buy offers poorer long-term prospects but is helpful to those with little or no savings for a deposit, and First Homes at a 50% discount provides the best long-term support to those with slightly higher incomes.
184. Neighbourhood plan qualifying bodies will have discretion to increase the discount on the new First Homes product from 30% to 40% or 50% where there is evidence to suggest this is appropriate. This HNA finds that the highest possible discount level of 50% is necessary and justified in Wetheringsett cum Brockford.
185. Affordable rented housing appears comfortably affordable to households with two lower earners (average earning households are unlikely to be eligible). However, households with a single lower earner are unable to afford any of the

tenures considered including smaller socially rented units. Many such individuals will, if unable to secure a social rented dwelling or additional subsidy, need to live in a room in a shared house using housing benefit.

186. The evidence in this chapter suggests that the small affordable rented sector performs a vital function in Wetheringsett cum Brockford as the only option for a large segment of those in the greatest need. Being cheaper for the occupant, social rent performs this function best.

Quantity of Affordable Housing needed

187. The Ipswich and Waveney Housing Market Areas SHMA Part 2 Partial Update 2019 finds that 1,298 social or affordable rented homes will be needed in 2018-36 across Mid Suffolk, and that there is potential demand for a further 1,391 affordable home ownership units. On the basis that the share of this need attributable to the NA is in proportion to its share of the district population (0.69%), this suggests that Wetheringsett cum Brockford will need 15 affordable homes, 7 of which should be for affordable rent and 8 of which should be for affordable home ownership.
188. While this evidence is a helpful indication of what can be understood as Wetheringsett cum Brockford's share of the district's overall needs, and of the rough scale of demand that might be expected, pro-rating district-level needs for rural areas presents problems in practice. These results should be a consideration when thinking about policy options in the Neighbourhood Plan, but can also be supplemented with calculations that use inputs that relate specifically to the NA.
189. This report estimates Wetheringsett cum Brockford's Affordable Housing needs through two calculations that use up-to-date and locally-specific data as far as possible. The first estimates the need for affordable rented housing and the second considers the potential demand for affordable (i.e. subsidised) home ownership.
190. The result of the first calculation is an equilibrium, with an extremely low anticipated shortfall of affordable rented housing, but also very little room for error if circumstances change in future.
191. MSDC has confirmed that there are currently 5 households with a local connection to Wetheringsett cum Brockford on the housing register. However, if only a small proportion of the existing units of social rented housing come vacant each year this is expected to be able to satisfy newly arising need and lessen the backlog over time.
192. That said, because of the small margin of error in this estimate, the mismatch between needs and supply (in terms of property size and other factors) and the need to address the current backlog as soon as possible, it is recommended that Wetheringsett cum Brockford seeks to deliver some affordable rented housing, particularly early in the Plan period. If this results in oversupply in future years, the vacancies created when existing occupants leave their properties may need to satisfy new need from elsewhere in the district.
193. Turning to Affordable Housing providing a route to home ownership, it is estimated that around 2.2 households per year may be interested in such products (equating to a total of 32 over the Plan period).
194. It is important to keep in mind that the households identified in this estimate are, by and large, adequately housed already. They do not lack their own housing but would prefer to buy rather than rent. They have been included in the national planning definition of those in need of Affordable Housing, but their needs are less acute than those on the waiting list for affordable rented housing.
195. It may not be achievable or even desirable to deliver this volume of affordable home ownership properties in the coming years as even greater numbers of market homes would be required to cross-subsidise delivery, many of the interested households might not be able to afford the necessary deposit, and there remains a significant number of affordable rented homes required for those with more urgent needs. However, this figure remains a useful indicator of the potential scale of demand and of the affordability challenge in Wetheringsett cum Brockford.

Policy considerations

196. Mid Suffolk's adopted policy in relation to Affordable Housing (H4) aims for up to 35% of all new housing (on sites above 5 homes) to be affordable. The emerging JLP (Policy SP02) raises the threshold to sites with more than 10 dwellings, and suggests that higher percentage requirements may be permitted.
197. The overall proportion of housing that must be affordable is not an area of policy that a Neighbourhood Plan can usually influence, but it is worth emphasizing that the HNA finds there to be robust evidence of need for Affordable Housing in Wetheringsett cum Brockford, and every effort should be made to maximise delivery where viable.
198. The fact that Affordable Housing made up 0% of the new housing in Wetheringsett cum Brockford completed over the last decade is not surprising given all of the schemes were below the relevant thresholds. Given the size of the parish,

and the fact that the threshold will rise to 10 homes in future, it is realistic to expect that most future development will also fall below the threshold and will not be expected to contribute Affordable Housing.

199. On the balance of factors listed in section 4.4.3 of this report, AECOM recommends that roughly 40% of Affordable Housing should take the form of rented tenures such as social and affordable rent (preferably the former), with the remaining 60% as affordable routes to home ownership, fulfilling the requirements of the new First Homes product and allowing for some shared ownership or other tenures to widen choice.
200. Although this study estimates that potential demand for affordable ownership is significantly higher than the need for affordable rent, these figures are not directly equivalent and the expected quantity of delivery overall is likely to be extremely limited. As such, affordable rented housing should retain its importance in the tenure mix. However, the needs identified here, in the context of expected housing delivery in future, suggest that there is an opportunity to boost the supply of affordable ownership if this accords with the community's wider priorities.

5. RQ 2: Type and Size

RQ 2: What type (terrace, semi, bungalows, flats and detached) and size (number of bedrooms) of housing is appropriate for the Plan area over the Neighbourhood Plan period?

5.1 Introduction

201. The evidence in this chapter is intended to give a snapshot of the existing dwelling stock in Wetheringsett cum Brockford in terms of type and size, as well as some of the population characteristics that tend to influence housing needs. From this, it is possible to develop an understanding of what sort of housing would be appropriate in Wetheringsett cum Brockford going forward.
202. It is worth emphasising that this evidence assumes that existing demographic and occupation patterns will persist into the future. It can therefore be thought of as the baseline or default scenario, into which the community may wish to intervene – for example to attract a different or more balanced demographic. The recommendations in this chapter, particularly the final suggested size mix, are a starting point that may be adjusted in light of other community objectives and primary evidence.

5.2 Existing types and sizes

5.2.1 Background and definitions

203. Before beginning to explore issues of dwelling type and size, it is important to note that the demand for housing by size and type tends to be determined primarily by wealth – with those having more buying power choosing to occupy larger homes, and often preferring detached properties to denser types, such as flats.
204. This study is concerned primarily with need rather than demand. Need for homes of different sizes is chiefly determined by the number of people occupying the home. In the strict sense, there is no ‘need’ for dwellings of any particular type, other than the specific needs of those with certain disabilities for level access properties, for example.
205. The best proxy for the number of people in a household is age or ‘life stage’, with younger and then older households tending to have one or two people, and those in between these poles more likely to have larger families including children. Life stage is therefore a main indicator considered here for the size of housing needed. But it is worth pointing out that wealth is also correlated with age, so it is not possible to attain a pure view of what is needed from the secondary data alone.
206. It is also useful to clarify the terminology around dwellings and households. Dwellings are counted in the Census by combining address information with Census returns on whether people’s accommodation is self-contained. As such, all dwellings are classified as either shared or unshared dwellings. Households are groups of people who live together as a coherent unit (such as a family), and a dwelling is shared where there is more than one household occupying it (e.g. two families or a group of individual students). Hence, there is usually a different number of households and dwellings in any given area. The number of dwellings can also exceed that of households in areas with large numbers of holiday or second homes.
207. As noted in the Context section of this report, there is no perfect data source for the current mix of dwellings in Wetheringsett cum Brockford. Generally in this case, adding together Census figures and completions data for the intervening period is the most accurate option.
208. Where the details of a few of the homes built since 2011 is not recorded, these will be retained in the total number of homes discussed but excluded from tallies and percentages around dwelling type and size. For example, of the 20 new homes built since 2011, five have no details recorded at all and a further six are categorised in ways that do not align with the census (e.g. as a ‘bungalow’ or ‘barn conversion’). Therefore only the nine new homes with clear type categorization are tallied and added to the Census to get a picture of the current mix.

5.2.2 Dwelling type

209. The data in Table 5-1 below show that Wetheringsett cum Brockford has a mix of dwelling types that is strongly skewed toward detached housing, which is typically less dense and larger than other types. Almost two-thirds of all homes in the parish are detached, compared with just 22% across England as a whole. As a result, the share of housing falling

into other categories is far below wider district and national averages. In particular there are very few terraced homes and only two flats. This is not unusual for a rural village and to diversify the stock towards flats and terraces may not be appropriate in this location.

210. However, terraces and flats (or maisonettes separating houses into smaller units, which tend to be more in keeping with the character of villages) are generally the most affordable home types. That less than 5% of homes in Wetheringsett cum Brockford fall into these categories may well have the effect of limiting the options for local people on lower incomes, whether they are able to buy or rent.
211. The Tenure and Affordability chapter identified that the main distinction in the local housing market is between detached and semi-detached homes. The latter are meaningfully more affordable than detached homes, and do provide options for those with less buying power. However, terraces and smaller homes would improve affordability further. Only around a third of homes in Wetheringsett cum Brockford are not detached, so this remains a hurdle for younger people and potentially also for downsizing older households.
212. It is worth noting that of the 9 recent completions for which the type category is fully known, 7 were detached and 2 were semi-detached. This is broadly in-line with the existing proportions of those types. Recent development can therefore generally be said to have exaggerated existing imbalances rather than improved variety and affordability. (Again this critique is solely from the perspective of housing need rather than character and design, which may well have favoured detached housing).
213. Another point worth mentioning with regard to dwelling types is the provision of bungalows. This is only expressed in Valuation Office Agency (VOA) data that applies to a wider area than the NA (about double the size), so the raw numbers are not accurate, but give a reasonable indication of the proportion of homes that are bungalows locally. 14.5% of homes are bungalows in and around Wetheringsett cum Brockford parish, compared with 19.2% for Mid Suffolk.
214. Although it is not necessarily a given that bungalows are be completely accessible (e.g. for an occupant using a wheelchair), and ground floor maisonettes can be equally suitable for people with mobility limitations, Wetheringsett cum Brockford's slightly lower proportion of Bungalows, in the context of its ageing population (see subsequent sections) may justify further construction of bungalows to accommodate older and disabled households. Only one new home is classified as a bungalow in the recent completions data.

Table 5-1: Accommodation type, Wetheringsett cum Brockford and wider geographies, 2021

Dwelling type	Wetheringsett cum Brockford		Mid Suffolk	England
Detached house	63.0%	(182)	47.5%	22.4%
Semi-detached house	28.7%	(83)	32.6%	31.2%
Terraced house	4.5%	(13)	13.7%	24.5%
Flat	0.6%	(2)	5.5%	21.2%
Total		(280)		

Source: Census 2011, MSDC completions data 2011-2021, AECOM Calculations

5.2.3 Dwelling size

215. Table 5-2 below sets out current the mix of housing by number of bedrooms in Wetheringsett cum Brockford. This has again been determined by taking the size mix at the time of the 2011 Census and adding to it the size mix of the 12 new properties built since then for which size data is available (out of a total of 20).
216. It is important to note that the starting total from the 2011 Census for dwelling sizes is slightly lower than that recorded for dwelling types. This is because type is recorded for all dwellings whether occupied or not, while number of bedrooms is a question answered for occupied dwellings only, meaning that vacant / second homes are not captured for this dataset.
217. The size mix in Wetheringsett cum Brockford aligns with the dominance of detached housing noted above in that larger homes are strongly represented. 40% of homes have 4 or more bedrooms, compared with just 28% across Mid Suffolk and 19% across England (figures for the wider areas are from the 2011 Census). There is a relative lack of 1 bedroom homes, with Wetheringsett cum Brockford having only 9 such properties. Despite the abundance of larger homes and

lack of smaller ones, the proportion of homes with 3 bedrooms in Wetheringsett cum Brockford mix is consistent with the picture across the district and country.

218. Recent construction has only slightly increased the average dwelling size in Wetheringsett cum Brockford, with 3 bedroom dwellings continuing to dominate, and slightly more larger than smaller homes built. Combining completions data with Census data does not illuminate whether any of the homes existing in 2011 now have a different number of bedrooms, due to extension, subdivision or some other reason. It is unfortunately not possible to tabulate this without a thorough investigation of planning permissions that is beyond the scope of this report, but it is a strong possibility that the size mix is in fact slightly different – and more likely that homes have been extended than subdivided or reduced in size.
219. Thinking purely in the broad terms of how many bedrooms a property has (which does not necessarily correlate to affordability or suitability to different household groups), recent development has not provided meaningful diversification to housing choice in Wetheringsett cum Brockford, though it also has not made the oversupply of large homes much worse.
220. However, the overall mix remains dominated by larger homes that tend to be more expensive.

Table 5-2: Dwelling size (bedrooms), Wetheringsett cum Brockford, 2011 and 2021

Number of bedrooms	2011 (Census)		Completions 2011-2021 (MSDC)		2021 total (Census + completions)		Mid Suffolk % (Census)
1	9	3.4%		0.0%	9	3.3%	6.0%
2	45	17.1%	2	16.6%	47	17.1%	25.0%
3	103	39.2%	7	53.3%	110	40.0%	40.4%
4	75	28.5%	3	25.0%	78	28.4%	21.2%
5+	31	11.8%		0.0%	31	11.3%	7.2%
Total	263		12		275		

Source: ONS 2011, MSDC completions data 2011-2021, AECOM Calculations

5.3 Age and household composition

221. Having established the current stock profile of Wetheringsett cum Brockford and identified recent changes to it, the evidence gathered below examines the composition and age structure of households living in the parish. Many of these indicators have a bearing on what housing might be needed in future years.

5.3.1 Age structure

222. Table 6-3 below shows the most recent estimated age structure of the Wetheringsett cum Brockford population, alongside 2011 Census figures. The population profile in percentage terms has experienced some important changes over the last eight years, with the three youngest age cohorts either contracting or stagnating while the three oldest expand significantly. Those aged over 45 represented 42% of the population in 2019, and represent 60% today, and the largest increase in any age group was the 42 additional people falling into the 65-84 age band. This signals a clear ageing trend in Wetheringsett cum Brockford, and it is likely that this will be a major driver of housing need in the parish going forward.
223. ONS advises exercising caution with population estimates by single year of age (from which this 2019 data has been derived), as patterns of variance and bias make it relatively less accurate compared to Census data. It is also worth noting that only the age structure of the population (individuals) can be brought up to date in this way. The life stage of households, which forms the basis of the subsequent analysis of future dwelling size needs, is not estimated each year. The 2011 Census therefore remains the most accurate basis to use in those areas.

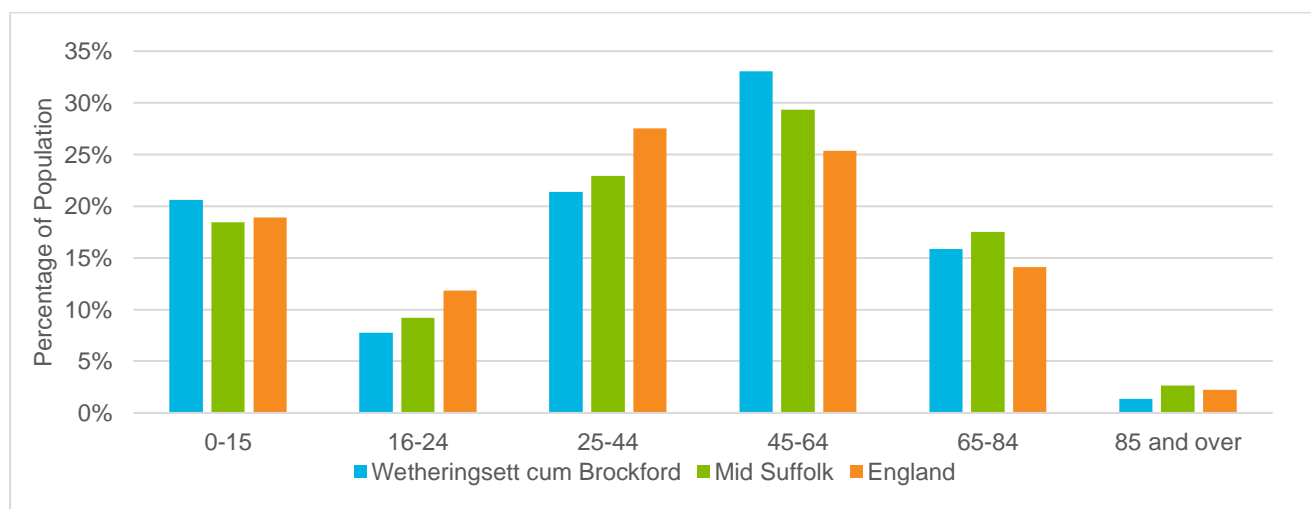
Table 5-3: Age structure of Wetheringsett cum Brockford population, 2011 and 2019

Age group	2011 (Census)		2019 (ONS, estimated)	
0-15	138	19%	120	16.8%
16-24	52	12%	54	7.6%
25-44	143	28%	114	16.0%
45-64	221	25%	253	35.4%
65-84	106	14%	148	20.7%
85 and over	9	2%	25	3.5%
Total	669		714	

Source: ONS 2011, ONS mid-2019 population estimates, AECOM Calculations

224. For context, it is useful to look at the parish population structure alongside that of the district and country. Figure 5-1 below (using 2011 Census data) shows that the NA population was generally older than the Mid Suffolk average, with a smaller share of the population in the 16-24 and 25-44 age groups and a much larger share in the 45-64 age group. This particularly large 65-84 cohort in 2011 is a driver of the estimated increase in the older age groups in 2019 observed above, though it had not yet translated into a large population aged over 65 in 2011.

Figure 5-1: Age structure in Wetheringsett cum Brockford and wider geographies, 2011



Source: ONS 2011, AECOM Calculations

5.3.2 Household composition

225. Household composition (i.e. the combination and relationships of adults and children in a dwelling) is another important factor in the size (and to an extent, the type) of housing needed over the Neighbourhood Plan period.

226. Table 5-4 below shows that in 2011 Wetheringsett cum Brockford had a similar proportion of one person households as the district average. Unlike Mid Suffolk and England. Of the parish’s family households, the vast majority are younger than 65 and slightly more of them have dependent children than no children.

227. Note that non-dependent children refer to households in which adult children are living at home, or which students still call their primary residence despite living for most of the year near to university. A marked increase in this category can be taken to indicate the relative unaffordability of entry-level homes, where young people are financially unable to move out and form their own households. However, Wetheringsett cum Brockford has seen a slight decline in this group between 2001 and 2011 (noting this data is now quite old), and has a current proportion lower than the district average.

228. The number of 'other' household types, on the other hand, has expanded from 4 to 15 in the same period. This category includes students and houses in multiple accommodation (where multiple individuals or families share the same house). It is unclear exactly why this might be in Wetheringsett cum Brockford.

Table 5-4: Household composition, various geographies, 2011

Household composition		Wetheringsett cum Brockford	Mid Suffolk	England
One person household	Total	26.2%	25.4%	30.2%
	Aged 65 and over	12.2%	12.9%	12.4%
	Other	14.1%	12.4%	17.9%
One family only	Total	68.1%	70.6%	61.8%
	All aged 65 and over	9.5%	11.6%	8.1%
	With no children	24.7%	23.3%	17.6%
	With dependent children	25.1%	26.6%	26.5%
	All children Non-Dependent	8.7%	9.1%	9.6%
Other household types	Total	5.7%	4.1%	8.0%

Source: ONS 2011, AECOM Calculations

5.3.3 Occupancy ratings

229. The tendency of households to over- or under-occupy their homes is another relevant consideration to the future size needs of Wetheringsett cum Brockford. A person is considered to under-occupy their home when there are more bedrooms in their home than a family of their size and composition would normally be expected to need. This is expressed as an occupancy rating of +1 or +2, indicating that there is one surplus bedroom or at least two surplus bedrooms (respectively). Over-occupancy works in the same way, with a rating of -1 indicating at least one bedroom too few.

230. Census data on occupancy rating is only provided down to ward level, which in this case is larger than the NA (representing a population of 2,530 rather than 669).

231. Across Wetheringsett ward, a combined 78% of people lived in a home with at least one extra bedroom in 2011, with 47% living in a home with two or more extra bedrooms. The percentage of people living in homes with fewer bedrooms than they might be expected to need is low at 4%, although this does indicate that around 27 people may have been (or still be) living in inadequate housing conditions if patterns for the ward hold for the parish.

232. The previous chapter established the high property values in the area, so it would appear that the largest homes are not necessarily occupied by those with the largest families but by those with the financial capacity to do so, irrespective of their household size.

233. It is useful to cross-reference this data by age bracket, presented in Table 6-5 below. Extreme under-occupancy (+2 rating) is strongly correlated with age, with those aged 50 or over much more likely to under-occupy their homes. At the same time, 9% of children live in over-occupied homes – the highest of any group.

Table 5-5: Occupancy rating by age in Wetheringsett ward, 2011

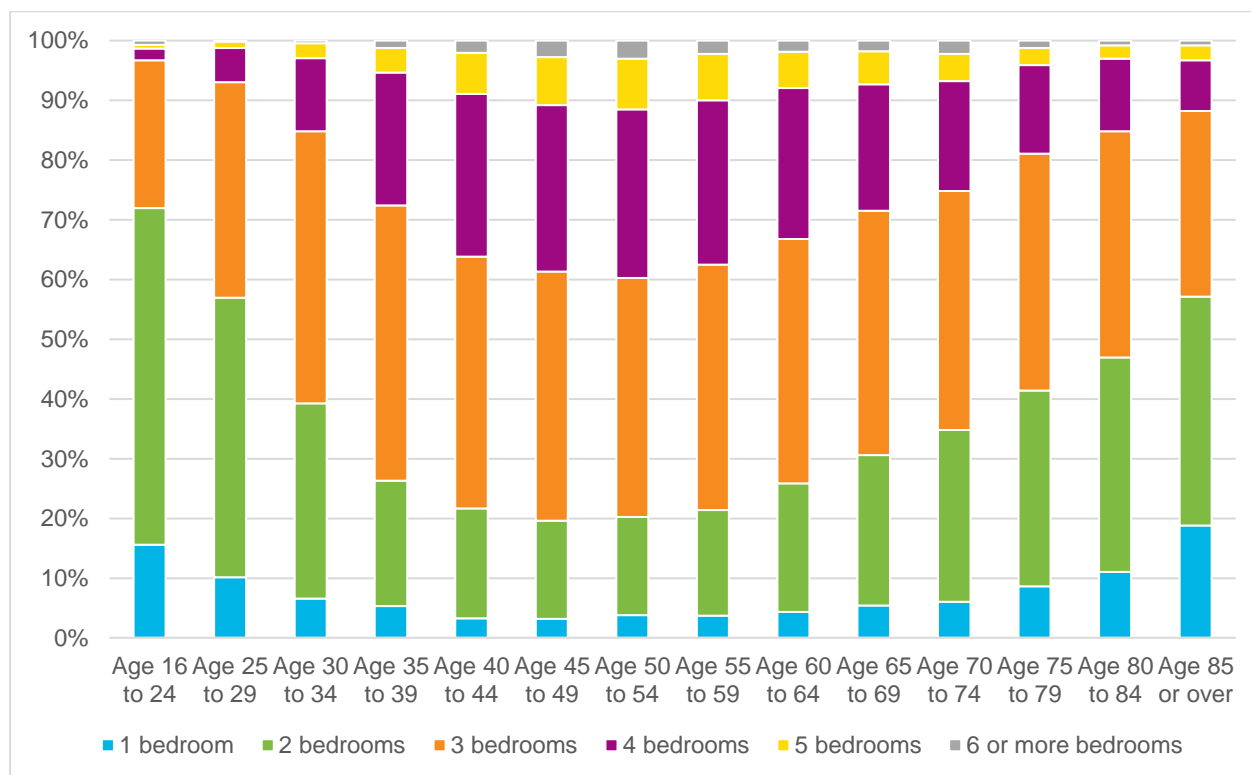
Age group	+2 rating	+1 rating	0 rating	-1 rating
0-15	28.6%	32.4%	30.4%	8.6%
16-49	37.1%	35.9%	21.5%	5.5%
50-64	67.0%	21.8%	10.0%	1.1%
65 and over	62.9%	27.2%	9.6%	0.2%
All ages	47.4%	30.2%	18.3%	4.1%

Source: ONS 2011, ONS mid-2019 population estimates, AECOM Calculations

5.4 Suggested future dwelling size mix

234. As noted above, there is a strong link between the life stage of a household and the size of dwelling that household can be expected to need. The final part of this chapter presents the results of a model that aims to estimate the dwelling size needs of the parish at the end of the Neighbourhood Plan period. The steps involved in this model are not presented in full, but can be summarised – along with the underpinning assumptions and some limitations – as follows:
- The starting point is the age distribution of Wetheringsett cum Brockford households in 2011.
 - The life stage of a household is determined by the age of the household reference person (HRP), a more modern term for the head of household.
 - As noted above, household life stages are not estimated annually, so the older Census data must be used.
 - This life stage data is then projected forward to the end of the Plan period by applying the growth rates for each household age group as suggested by the latest household projections. This allows for an estimate of how the parish population might evolve in future.
 - ONS household projections are produced every two years but are only available at Local Authority level. The growth rates are therefore applied to the 2011 starting household age profile of Wetheringsett cum Brockford.
 - Next, we turn to a Census dataset that shows the occupation patterns or preferences of each household life stage (e.g. what proportion of households aged under 24 tend to live in 1 bedroom homes as opposed to 2, 3 or 4 bedroom homes). This data is mapped to the distribution of the projected parish population for each life stage and each dwelling size category to form a picture of what mix of homes might be appropriate in future.
 - This occupation data is again only available at Local Authority scale, so it does risk embedding any unusual characteristics present in the area.
 - The model also assumes that today's occupation patterns persist into the future, which is not a given, particularly with the change in preferences for home working space and other features arising from the Covid-19 pandemic. However, there is no better indication of what those patterns might look like. It is considered more appropriate to adjust the end mix that results from this model to reflect such trends than to build further assumptions into the model.
 - Finally, this 'ideal' future mix of dwelling sizes can be compared to the current stock of housing in the NA (derived from the 2011 Census plus recent completions for which bedroom information was known). From this we can identify how future development might best fill the gaps.
235. It is important to keep in mind that housing need is not an exact science and this exercise provides an estimate based on demographic trends and occupancy patterns alone. It does not take into account income and wealth, other than in an indirect way through the tendency of households to occupy more or less space than they 'need'. It also does not anticipate changes in how people may wish to occupy their homes in response to social and technological change.
236. The approach therefore embeds existing patterns of occupancy which may or may not be desirable. As such, it is appropriate for the result of this model to be taken as a baseline scenario – what would occur if current trends persisted. It may well be the intention of the community to intervene to produce a different outcome more in line with their interpretation of emerging trends and their place- and community-shaping objectives. Layering these factors on top of the indicative picture provided by this model is considered entirely appropriate for the purpose of drafting neighbourhood plan policy.
237. Before presenting the results of this exercise, it may be interesting to review two of the inputs described above.
238. The first, given as Figure 5-2 below, sets out the relationship between household life stage and dwelling size for Mid Suffolk in 2011. This shows how the youngest households occupy the smallest dwellings, before rapidly taking up larger homes as their families expand, and then more gradually downsizing to smaller homes again as they age.

Figure 5-2: Age of household reference person by dwelling size, Mid Suffolk, 2011



Source: ONS 2011, AECOM Calculations

239. The second dataset of note is the result of applying Local Authority level household projections to the age profile of Wetheringsett cum Brockford households in 2011. Table 5-6 below makes clear that population growth can be expected to be driven by the oldest households, with the 65 and over category nearly doubling from 2011 levels to become by far the dominant group at 42% of the projected total, while the youngest age groups remain stable rather than growing.

Table 5-6: Projected distribution of household life stages, Wetheringsett cum Brockford, 2011-2037

Year	Age of HRP 24 and under	Age of HRP 25 to 34	Age of HRP 35 to 54	Age of HRP 55 to 64	Age of HRP 65 and over
2011	2	14	100	70	77
2037	2	15	99	78	139
% change 2011-2037	-8%	9%	-1%	11%	80%

Source: AECOM Calculations

240. The final result of this exercise is presented in Table 5-7 below. The model suggests that new development should be focused on medium and smaller homes.

241. 3 bedroom properties, while already the most common, will continue to be needed as generally the most popular, suitable to many groups, and existing at lower proportions in the parish than across the district and country. The other clear direction is to boost the supply of smaller homes from the current low base, while avoiding too many additional large homes because there are already more than the population is expected to need.

Table 5-7: Suggested dwelling size mix to 2037

Number of bedrooms	Current (2021) distribution	Target (2037) distribution	Balance of new housing required to reach target mix
1	3.3%	6.3%	16.7%
2	17.1%	25.0%	50.2%
3	40.0%	40.3%	33.2%
4	28.4%	21.2%	0.0%
5+	11.3%	7.2%	0.0%

Source: Census 2011, AECOM Calculations

242. A further injection of small and mid-sized homes would both improve Wetheringsett cum Brockford's offering for younger households who have few options for their next step on the property ladder and enable older households currently under-occupying larger homes to downsize and in so doing potentially create churn in the market (although it is acknowledged that many of the larger historic properties may be too expensive to be taken up by younger local families).
243. However, it is never advisable to entirely restrict the supply of specific size categories as is suggested here for homes with 4 or more bedrooms. The result of this model is a relatively blunt measure of what could be beneficial given population change and existing imbalances in housing options. It is a starting point for thinking about how best to address the more nuanced needs of the future population.
244. For example, there may well be a need for more affordable larger homes than those that exist currently to accommodate growing families with less buying power. Furthermore, the young starter families and downsizing older households mentioned above may both need 'mid-sized' homes, but are likely to have extremely different requirements and degrees of purchasing power. There is limited scope for Neighbourhood Planning policy to influence the more detailed characteristics of new housing, but additional guidance and prioritisation could be informed by primary research.
245. Further considerations that would justify departing from this relatively imbalanced recommended mix are summarised in the conclusion below.

5.5 Conclusions- Type and Size

246. This study provides an indication of the likely need for different types and sizes of homes based on demographic change. It is important to remember that other factors should be considered in determining the dwelling mix that is desirable in the parish or on any particular site. These include the specific characteristics of the nearby stock of housing (such as its condition and design), the role of the NA or site within the wider housing market area (linked to any Local Authority strategies or plans) and site-specific factors which may justify a particular dwelling mix.

The existing housing stock

247. Wetheringsett cum Brockford has a housing mix that is skewed toward typically less dense and larger homes – i.e. a far higher proportion of detached homes than the district and country and fewer other types. This is not unusual for a rural village. That less than 5% of homes in Wetheringsett cum Brockford fall into the categories of terraced houses and flats might be expected to limit the options for local people on lower incomes, whether they are able to buy or rent. The dominance of detached housing persists in new construction since the Census.
248. Around 15% of homes in Wetheringsett cum Brockford are bungalows, which is a lower proportion than for Mid Suffolk overall. Although it is not necessarily a given that bungalows are be completely accessible (e.g. for an occupant using a wheelchair), and ground floor maisonettes can be equally suitable for people with mobility limitations, the relative lack of bungalows may be an additional factor, beyond the limited size options, obstructing downsizing in Wetheringsett cum Brockford.
249. As of 2021, the size mix of housing locally is dominated by larger homes, with 40% of homes having 4 or more bedrooms, compared with just 28% across Mid Suffolk and 19% across England. Correspondingly, Wetheringsett cum Brockford has a notable lack of 1 bedroom housing. Recent development has not meaningfully widened housing choice in Wetheringsett cum Brockford, though it also has not made the oversupply of large homes much worse.

Demographics

250. The age structure of the population is a key indicator of the future need for housing. Wetheringsett cum Brockford had a generally older population profile than Mid Suffolk and England in 2011. The older age brackets have also grown the fastest between the 2011 Census and the latest ONS estimates for 2019. Currently around 60% of the population are aged over 45 and 24% are aged over 65.
251. Applying ONS household projections for Mid Suffolk to the Wetheringsett cum Brockford population suggests that by 2040 the 65 and over cohort could nearly double from 2011 levels to become by far the dominant group at 42% of the projected total, while the youngest age groups remain stable rather than growing. It is clear that ageing will be a major driver of housing need in Wetheringsett cum Brockford going forward, whether older households intend to occupy the same dwellings they currently live in, or perhaps move within the community to a home better suited to the size of their household or their evolving needs.
252. Wetheringsett cum Brockford has a high rate of under-occupancy, with 78% of people living in a home with at least one bedroom more than they would be expected to need (at the time of the last Census). The percentage of people living in homes with fewer bedrooms than they might be expected to need is small at 4%, although this does indicate that a number of people may have been (or still be) living in inadequate housing conditions.
253. The previous chapter established the high property values in the area, so it would appear that the largest homes are not necessarily occupied by those with the largest families but by those with the financial capacity to do so, irrespective of their household size. Indeed, over-occupancy is strongly correlated with age, with those aged 50 and over the most likely to have more than two additional bedrooms.

The future dwelling mix

254. The results of a modelling exercise, which looks at the sizes of dwelling occupied by households at different life stages and projects the growth and decline of those household age groups over the Plan period, suggests that should be focused on medium and smaller homes.
255. 3 bedroom properties, while already the most common, will continue to be needed as generally the most popular, suitable to many groups, and existing at lower proportions in the parish than across the district and country. The other clear direction is to boost the supply of smaller homes from the current low base, while avoiding too many additional large homes because there are already more than the population is expected to need
256. A further injection of small and mid-sized homes would both improve Wetheringsett cum Brockford's offering for younger households who have few options for their next step on the property ladder and enable older households currently under-occupying larger homes to downsize and in so doing potentially create churn in the market (although it is acknowledged that many of the larger historic properties may be too expensive to be taken up by young local families).
257. The preceding chapter found that affordability is a serious and worsening challenge in Wetheringsett cum Brockford. While the provision of Affordable Housing (subsidised tenure products) is one way to combat this, another is to ensure that homes come forward which are of an appropriate size, type and density for local residents' budgets. Continuing to provide smaller homes with fewer bedrooms would help to address this situation.
258. However, it is never advisable to entirely restrict the supply of specific size categories as is suggested here for homes with 4 or more bedrooms. Further considerations that would justify incorporating flexibility into this relatively imbalanced recommended mix are summarised below.

Further considerations

259. To best meet the needs of the large cohort of older households expected to be present by 2037, it should be considered whether the existing options are well tailored to older people's requirements in terms of space, flexibility, quality, location and accessibility. Variety should be sought within the mid-sized homes that come forward in future to attract both newly forming households on lower budgets and older households with substantial equity from their existing larger homes, whose needs are far from identical. Facilitating downsizing among older households may release those larger homes for use by families who need more bedrooms.
260. That said, it may not be realistic to expect growing families to be able to afford the larger detached homes that are currently under-occupied in the parish. Reducing the issue of dwelling size to a number of bedrooms is potentially unhelpful in this case. There may be a valid justification to continue supplying larger homes despite their abundance because a different kind of larger home is needed to accommodate growing families with less buying power. This is

too speculative to quantify in a percentage size mix, but is among the good reasons not to inhibit any size of dwelling entirely (despite the results of the HNA model).

261. More generally, it would be unwise for any new housing that does come forward to be delivered in an unbalanced way. Those wishing to move within or relocate to the area will have a range of circumstances and preferences, and they should be offered a range of choices. As such, it is recommended that priority is given to smaller homes but that this is done to a degree that aligns with the wider objectives of the community and does not limit choice or threaten viability. The evidence in this section represents a starting point for further thought and consultation.

6. RQ 3: Accessible Housing for Older and Disabled People

RQ 3: What justification can be made for higher standards for accessible and adaptable housing for older people and those with support needs over the Neighbourhood Plan period?

6.1 Introduction

262. This short section considers the specialist housing needs of older and disabled people in Wetheringsett cum Brockford.
263. People experience ageing differently. Much depends on their health, lifestyle and relationship with work. Some people live healthy and active lives into advanced old age while others may need support and care much earlier in their lives. Some will be interested in moving to a suitable home closer to services while for others ageing independently in place will be key to their wellbeing.
264. The potential scale of the need for more appropriate housing among older people (75+) is assessed below by considering demographic projections and rates of mobility limitation among this age group. The result is not necessarily a target for how many suitable new homes should be built, but an indication of the potential demand that could be satisfied by enforcing high standards of accessibility and adaptability in all new housing in the parish.
265. It is important to remember that accessible and adaptable or adapted housing will not serve all households in this demographic, some of whom would be better accommodated in specialist housing with some level of on-site care or even a care home. Given Wetheringsett cum Brockford's rural character and relative lack of services, such housing provision within the NA is unlikely to be suitable, with affected households likely better served by accommodation in larger settlements nearby. The need for this kind of additional care housing is not under consideration here.

6.2 Approach

266. The first step is to project how the overall number of older people in Wetheringsett cum Brockford is likely to change in future, by extrapolating 2019 population statistics estimates for 2019 using ONS Sub-National Population Projections for Mid Suffolk in 2037. The results are set out in Table 6-1 below. It appears that the 75+ population in the parish will increase from 8% of the total currently to 15% in 2037 as the population of older individuals increases by 31 to 91 people. Note that there were 51 people in this age bracket at the time of the 2011 Census, meaning that it has expanded by 18% in the eight years since.

Table 6-1: Modelled projection of elderly population in Wetheringsett cum Brockford by end of Plan period

	2019	2037	Rate of growth 2021-2037 (Mid Suffolk)
All ages	714	771	8%
75+	60	91	52%
% aged 75+	8.4%	15.3%	

Source: ONS 2019 mid-year population estimates, ONS population projections 2018-based, AECOM Calculations

267. A key assumption for the next stage of the calculation is that the 60 older people living in the NA in 2019 are suitably accommodated at present, either because they already occupy a home appropriate to their needs or do not need to move to a more accessible dwelling. This is unlikely to be the case as the population ages in the coming years, but it is not possible to determine how many existing residents have mobility or support issues without primary survey data. Instead it is considered appropriate to focus on the growth in this demographic and to see the result of the calculation as the lower end of a range.
268. The people whose needs are the focus of the subsequent analysis are therefore the additional 31 individuals expected to join the 75+ age group between 2019 and 2037. This figure should also be converted into households with reference to the average number of people per household with a life stage of 75+ in Mid Suffolk in 2011 (the smallest and most recent dataset to capture households). In 2011 there were 8,834 individuals aged 75+ and 6,309 households headed by a person in that age group. The average household size is therefore 1.39, and the projected growth of 31 people in Wetheringsett cum Brockford can be estimated to be formed into around 22 households.

269. The next step, shown in Table 6-2, is to multiply this figure by the percentages of 55-75 year olds occupying each tenure in the parish in 2011 (the latest year for which this data is available). This is helpful because it gives an indication of how many of the additional older households might be able to continue owning their own home and how many might need Affordable Housing. It is assumed that those in the 55-75 age group in 2011 will be the majority of those entering the 75+ group during the Plan period, and that they will be able to continue occupying the housing tenure they did at that time.
270. The results suggest that the vast majority of older households who might benefit from accessible or adaptable housing will be able to afford to purchase their new home on the open market using the equity they own in their existing home. Those who cannot will likely need affordable rented housing – around 10% of the total.

Table 6-2: Projected tenure of households aged 75+ in Wetheringsett cum Brockford by the end of the Plan period

Tenure	All owned	Owned outright	Owned with a mortgage	All rented	Social rented	Private rented	Living rent free
Percentage of 55-75 year olds occupying each tenure	89.4%	65.5%	23.9%	10.6%	9.7%	0.8%	0.1%
Number of households in 2037 likely to occupy each tenure	20	14	5	2	2	0	0

Source: Census 2011, ONS SNPP 2013, AECOM Calculations

271. Next, rates of disability by tenure are considered. The tendency for people in rented housing to have higher disability levels is well established. It arises partly because people with more limiting disabilities tend to have lower incomes. It also reflects the fact that as people develop support and care needs they may find that the only suitable and affordable option to them is available in the social rented sector. Table 6-3 below presents this data for Wetheringsett cum Brockford from the 2011 Census. Note that the closest proxy for the 75+ age group in the Census is the 65+ age group.

Table 6-3: Tenure and mobility limitations of those aged 65+ in Wetheringsett cum Brockford, 2011

Tenure	All categories: Long-term health problem or disability	Day-to-day activities limited a lot	Day-to-day activities limited a little	Day-to-day activities not limited
All categories: Tenure	115	26	22.6%	25
Owned or shared ownership: Total	90	17	18.9%	21
Owned: Owned outright	83	15	18.1%	20
Owned: Owned with a mortgage or loan or shared ownership	7	2	28.6%	1
Rented or living rent free: Total	25	9	36.0%	4
Rented: Social rented	9	2	22.2%	2
Rented: Private rented or living rent free	16	7	43.8%	2

Source: Census 2011

272. It is now possible to multiply the projected number of 75+ households occupying each tenure by the rates of mobility limitation for that tenure to arrive at the final tenure-led estimate for those having need of accessible or adaptable

housing. People experiencing no mobility limitation are unlikely to need specially designed housing; those whose activities are limited a little are likely to benefit the most (and are the key group considered here); while those with severe limitations on their mobility are more likely to be better served by extra-care specialist accommodation.

273. The result of the calculation $((2 \times 16\%) = (20 \times 23\%))$ is 5 additional older households who are likely to require accessible or adaptable housing between today and 2037. This estimate should function as the minimum end of a range which could in practice be far higher if some of the 43 or so older households living in the NA at present do not feel their homes to be suitably accessible, or if other members of the population (in lower age brackets) could also benefit from more accessible homes.
274. The same calculation as that set out above has also been applied to the full starting figure of 91 older people (as opposed to the growth figure of 31) to provide a sense of the higher end of the range – were most older people with mobility limitations resident in the parish today to require a more accessible home. The result of this calculation was 15 accessible or adaptable homes.

6.3 Conclusions- Accessible Housing for Older and Disabled People

275. ONS 2019 population estimates suggest that there are currently around 60 individuals aged 75 or over in Wetheringsett cum Brockford. This is projected to grow to 91 by 2037 (an increase of 31 older people).
276. The potential need for housing with enhanced accessibility features and the potential to be further adapted in future can be estimated by bringing together data on population projections, rates of disability, and what tenure of housing the current 55-75 cohort occupy in the NA.
277. This method of estimating the future need in Wetheringsett cum Brockford produces a range of 5 to 15 accessible housing units that might be required to accommodate older people with moderate mobility challenges during the Plan period. Providing this estimate as a range reflects uncertainty about the extent to which existing older households live in suitable homes: the lower end is a minimum for how many new older households are likely to need such homes, and the higher end assumes that existing households are likely to be in need as well. Note that 'new households' does not necessarily mean households arriving elsewhere – it refers predominantly to existing residents who will enter the 75+ age bracket in the coming years.
278. This estimate does not include people in younger age brackets with similar needs, nor older people requiring more extensive support (such as the help of a carer). It would be wise to maximise the provision of this type of housing as a way of future proofing the parish for further ageing, and to help accommodate other people who could potentially benefit but were not incorporated into the estimate.
279. Around one tenth of the households identified here are expected to require their accessible or adaptable homes to be offered as social or affordable rented tenures, with the majority likely being able to afford to buy their next home on the open market, assuming that it is of a value equivalent to or lower than the home they currently occupy. That said, it is generally desirable to achieve the same rate of Affordable Housing whether the homes in question are accessible or not, and to provide equal access to accessible housing irrespective of a household's financial situation. This point is simply to emphasise that all housing (both market and affordable) would benefit from increased accessibility standards.
280. While the adopted Local Plan is largely silent on this issue, the emerging JLP Policy LP06 states that 50% of dwellings on sites of ten or more units should meet the requirements for accessible and adaptable dwellings under part M4(2) of Building Regulations.
281. The evidence gathered here would certainly appear to justify meeting or exceeding this target in the Neighbourhood Plan. 50% is a relatively robust requirement, however there are ways in which it could be strengthened in response to the clear need in Wetheringsett cum Brockford. One would be to make the requirement apply to sites delivering fewer than 10 dwellings, which would help to ensure provision even if most schemes in future are on small infill sites within the parish. Another would be to increase the target up to 75% or higher because the overall delivery of housing in the NA is likely to be insufficient to meet the need identified here at a lower target (though this question cannot be firmly answered at this stage because the parish is not in receipt of a formal target from MSDC).
282. Finally there is the question of homes that meet an even higher standard of accessibility, namely Category M4(3) Building Regulations meeting the requirements of wheelchair users. There is no robust data on the number of wheelchair users at parish level, and this assessment has focused on the group of people whose day-to-day activities

are limited 'a little'. This is because it is hard to separate out within the people whose activities are limited 'a lot', those who use a wheelchair and those who require a carer for medical or other reasons.

283. That said, MSDC have confirmed that there is a household on the waiting list for Affordable Housing (representing 20% of those on the list, though this is a very small sample) who requires an adapted level-access dwelling. This demonstrates some need for homes with the highest standards of accessibility.
284. If the stock of housing in the parish is poorly equipped for wheelchair users and/or there are more residents who currently need such housing (which is likely given the age and difficulty in adapting many existing homes), there may well be justification for an additional target for the number of new homes that should be M4(3) compliant. This is usually much lower than targets set for M4(2) standards – typically around 3-10%.
285. Without a firmer understanding of the quantity of development expected in Wetheringsett cum Brockford during the Plan period overall, it is difficult to specify what targets would be appropriate. But it is clear that there is an ageing population and that a notable proportion of such people would need or benefit from highly accessible, so this should be secured in the NA to the greatest extent possible through planning policy with the support of MSDC.

7. Conclusions

7.1 Overview

286. Table 7-1 below sets out in full the conclusions and recommendations of this Neighbourhood Plan housing needs assessment, based on the evidence reviewed and analysed.

Table 7-1: Summary of study findings with a potential impact on Neighbourhood Plan housing policies

Issue	Summary of evidence and data assessed	Conclusions and recommendations
<p>Tenure and affordability</p>	<p>Wetheringsett cum Brockford's current tenure mix reveals a notable undersupply of Affordable Housing. No new units of affordable rented housing have been added to the 2011 total of 19 over the last ten years, and it is likely that some have been lost to the Right to Buy scheme.</p> <p>Home values in Wetheringsett cum Brockford have increased significantly over the last ten years, with the result that the average home now costs more than double the average price in 2012. Property in Wetheringsett cum Brockford is around 40-60% more expensive than the wider district.</p> <p>These conclusions are based on a fairly small sample size of transactions. Despite this volatility, the overall trend presents an immense challenge for those with lower incomes wishing to buy. A new-build premium of 15-30% presents a further challenge to households relying on new development to live locally.</p> <p>The average household income in Wetheringsett cum Brockford is £48,100, and the lower quartile income (per person) for Mid Suffolk was £15,148 in 2019.</p> <p>The Ipswich and Waveney Housing Market Areas SHMA Part 2 Partial Update 2019 finds that 1,298 social or affordable rented homes will be needed in 2018-36 across Mid Suffolk, and that there is potential demand for a further 1,391 affordable home ownership units. On the basis that the share of this need attributable to the NA is in proportion to its share of the district population (0.69%), this suggests that Wetheringsett cum Brockford will need 15 affordable homes, 7 of which should be for affordable rent and 8 of which should be for affordable home ownership. These results can also be supplemented with calculations that use inputs that relate specifically to the NA.</p> <p>MSDC has confirmed that there are currently 5 households with a local connection to Wetheringsett cum Brockford on the housing register.</p>	<p>It was found that a household would need an income comfortably above the average (or a very large deposit) to qualify for a mortgage even for an entry-level home in the area. Private renting is broadly affordable to average earners and households with two lower earners, although this relates to listings across a wider area because of the lack of homes to rent in Wetheringsett cum Brockford – which is itself an indicator of the limited options.</p> <p>There is a relatively large group of households in Wetheringsett cum Brockford who may be able to afford to rent privately but cannot afford home ownership. This 'can rent, can't buy' cohort may benefit from the range of affordable home ownership products such as First Homes and shared ownership, which offer value to different segments of the population.</p> <p>Neighbourhood plans have discretion to set the discount level on the new First Homes product. This HNA finds that the highest possible discount level of 50% is necessary and justified in Wetheringsett cum Brockford.</p> <p>The small affordable rented sector performs a vital function in the parish as the only option for a large segment of those in the greatest need.</p> <p>The HNA finds an extremely low anticipated shortfall of affordable rented housing, but also very little room for error if circumstances change in future. It is recommended that Wetheringsett cum Brockford seeks to deliver some affordable rented housing, particularly early in the Plan period.</p> <p>Turning to Affordable Housing providing a route to home ownership, it is estimated that around 2.2 households per year may be interested in such products (equating to a total of 32 over the Plan period).</p> <p>It may not be achievable or even desirable to deliver this volume of affordable home ownership properties in the coming years but it remains a useful indicator of the potential scale of demand and of the affordability challenge.</p> <p>On the balance of factors listed in section 4.4.3 of this report, AECOM recommends that roughly 40% of Affordable Housing should take the form of rented tenures such as social and affordable rent (preferably the former), with the remaining 60% as affordable routes to home ownership, fulfilling the requirements of the new First Homes product and allowing for some shared ownership or other tenures to widen choice.</p>

Issue	Summary of evidence and data assessed	Conclusions and recommendations
<p>Type and size</p>	<p>Wetheringsett cum Brockford has a housing mix that is skewed toward typically less dense and larger homes. That less than 5% of homes in the parish fall into the categories of terraced houses and flats might be expected to limit the options for local people on lower incomes, whether they are able to buy or rent. The dominance of detached housing persists in new construction since the Census. Around 15% of homes in the parish are bungalows, which is a lower proportion than for Mid Suffolk overall.</p> <p>As of 2021, the size mix of housing locally is dominated by larger homes, with 40% of homes having 4 or more bedrooms, compared with just 28% across Mid Suffolk and 19% across England. Correspondingly, Wetheringsett cum Brockford has a notable lack of 1 bedroom housing.</p> <p>The parish had a generally older population profile than Mid Suffolk and England in 2011. The older age brackets have also grown the fastest between the 2011 Census and the latest ONS estimates for 2019. Currently around 60% of the population are aged over 45 and 24% are aged over 65.</p> <p>Applying ONS household projections for Mid Suffolk to the Wetheringsett cum Brockford population suggests that by 2040 the 65 and over cohort could nearly double from 2011 levels to become by far the dominant group at 42% of the projected total, while the youngest age groups remain stable rather than growing. It is clear that ageing will be a major driver of housing need in Wetheringsett cum Brockford going forward.</p> <p>Wetheringsett cum Brockford has a high rate of under-occupancy, with 78% of people living in a home with at least one bedroom more than they would be expected to need (at the time of the last Census).</p>	<p>The results of a modelling exercise, which looks at the sizes of dwelling occupied by households at different life stages and projects the growth and decline of those household age groups over the Plan period, suggests that should be focused on medium and smaller homes.</p> <p>3 bedroom properties, while already the most common, will continue to be needed as generally the most popular, suitable to many groups, and existing at lower proportions in the parish than across the district and country. The other clear direction is to boost the supply of smaller homes from the current low base, while avoiding too many additional large homes because there are already more than the population is expected to need</p> <p>A further injection of small and mid-sized homes would both improve Wetheringsett cum Brockford's offering for younger households who have few options for their next step on the property ladder and enable older households currently under-occupying larger homes to downsize and in so doing potentially create churn in the market (although it is acknowledged that many of the larger historic properties may be too expensive to be taken up by young local families).</p> <p>Ensuring that homes come forward which are of an appropriate size, type and density for local residents' budgets should help to resolve the clear affordability issues currently present.</p> <p>However, it is never advisable to entirely restrict the supply of specific size categories as is suggested here for homes with 4 or more bedrooms. This recommendation should be applied with a degree of flexibility.</p>

Issue	Summary of evidence and data assessed	Conclusions and recommendations
<p>Accessibility</p>	<p>ONS 2019 population estimates suggest that there are currently around 60 individuals aged 75 or over in Wetheringsett cum Brockford. This is projected to grow to 91 by 2037 (an increase of 31 older people). While the adopted Local Plan is largely silent on this issue, the emerging JLP Policy LP06 states that 50% of dwellings on sites of ten or more units should meet the requirements for accessible and adaptable dwellings under part M4(2) of Building Regulations.</p>	<p>The potential need for housing with enhanced accessibility features and the potential to be further adapted in future can be estimated by bringing together data on population projections, rates of disability, and what tenure of housing the current 55-75 cohort occupy in the NA.</p> <p>This method of estimating the future need in Wetheringsett cum Brockford produces a range of 5 to 15 accessible housing units that might be required to accommodate older people with moderate mobility challenges during the Plan period.</p> <p>This estimate does not include people in younger age brackets with similar needs, nor older people requiring more extensive support (such as the help of a carer). It would be wise to maximise the provision of this type of housing as a way of future proofing the parish for further ageing, and to help accommodate other people who could potentially benefit but were not incorporated into the estimate.</p> <p>Around one tenth of the households identified here are expected to require their accessible or adaptable homes to be offered as social or affordable rented tenures, with the majority likely being able to afford to buy their next home on the open market. That said, it is generally desirable to achieve the same rate of Affordable Housing whether the homes in question are accessible or not.</p> <p>The evidence gathered here would certainly appear to justify meeting or exceeding the Local Plan target in the Neighbourhood Plan. One way would be to make it apply to sites delivering fewer than 10 dwellings, which would help to ensure provision even if most schemes in future are on small infill sites within the parish. Another would be to increase the target up to 75% or higher because the overall delivery of housing in the NA is likely to be insufficient to meet the need identified here at a lower target.</p> <p>There is also demonstrable need for homes with the highest standards of accessibility. There may well be justification for an additional target for the number of new homes that should be M4(3) compliant.</p>

Issue	Summary of evidence and data assessed	Conclusions and recommendations
<p>Custom and self-build</p>	<p>Custom and self-build housing tends most often to be provided in the form of serviced plots on large-scale development sites that may not be likely to come forward in the parish.</p> <p>That said, plots can also be offered by developers on their own or in conjunction with a housing association partner; a group of custom and self-builders can come together to secure economies of scale and reduce building costs; and landowners sometimes service and sell plots themselves. Self-build projects on infill sites within the parish may be the most realistic route in Wetheringsett cum Brockford, although the upcoming sites may be encouraged to supply a small number of plots to meet clear demand.</p> <p>Demand for custom and self-build housing is generally captured on the local planning authority's Self Build Register. It is generally referred to as demand rather than need because it is not known how many people expressing interest on the register need a custom home because their needs (e.g. for specific features) are not being met by the market, and how many simply wish to be part of the process or influence aspects of aesthetic design.</p>	<p>Babergh and Mid Suffolk operate a joint Self Build Register, which had approximately 390 applicants as of the end of June 2021. The detail provided by each applicant varies considerably, and it is not known how many currently live in the parish. Most have stated that they wish to build 'in any location', and it should be noted that many applicants apply to the registers of multiple local authorities.</p> <p>Filtering out the applicants who specifically identify a location other than Wetheringsett cum Brockford, reduces the figure to 130. Of these, 5 applicants specifically mention the area as their preferred location. Again it is not clear whether they already live in the parish, and it is therefore not possible to say what proportion of the local population want to self-build in the parish. However, 5 applicants is a reasonably large figure for a small parish, and it is common for Self-Build Registers to under-represent demand. As such, there appears to be clear demand for self-build plots in the parish.</p> <p>To bring forward plots either on mainstream sites with planning permission or through a bottom-up community process, it would be helpful to confirm the scale of seriousness of demand through a household survey and explore interest among local landowners. At the least, this limited evidence from the register would justify encouragement for custom and self-build provision in the Neighbourhood Plan.</p>

7.2 Recommendations for next steps

287. This Neighbourhood Plan housing needs assessment aims to provide Wetheringsett cum Brockford with evidence on a range of housing trends and issues from a range of relevant sources. We recommend that the Neighbourhood Plan Group should, as a next step, discuss the contents and conclusions with MSDC with a view to agreeing and formulating draft housing policies, bearing the following in mind:
- All Neighbourhood Planning Basic Conditions, but in particular Condition E, which is the need for the Neighbourhood Plan to be in general conformity with the strategic policies of the adopted development plan;
 - The views of MSDC;
 - The views of local residents;
 - The views of other relevant local stakeholders, including housing developers and estate agents; and
 - The numerous supply-side considerations, including local environmental constraints, the location and characteristics of suitable land, and any capacity work carried out by MSDC.
288. This assessment has been provided in good faith by AECOM consultants on the basis of housing data, national guidance and other relevant and available information current at the time of writing.
289. Bearing this in mind, it is recommended that the Steering Group should monitor carefully strategies and documents with an impact on housing policy produced by the Government, MSDC or any other relevant party and review the Neighbourhood Plan accordingly to ensure that general conformity is maintained.
290. At the same time, monitoring on-going demographic or other trends over the Neighbourhood Plan period will help ensure the continued relevance and credibility of its policies.

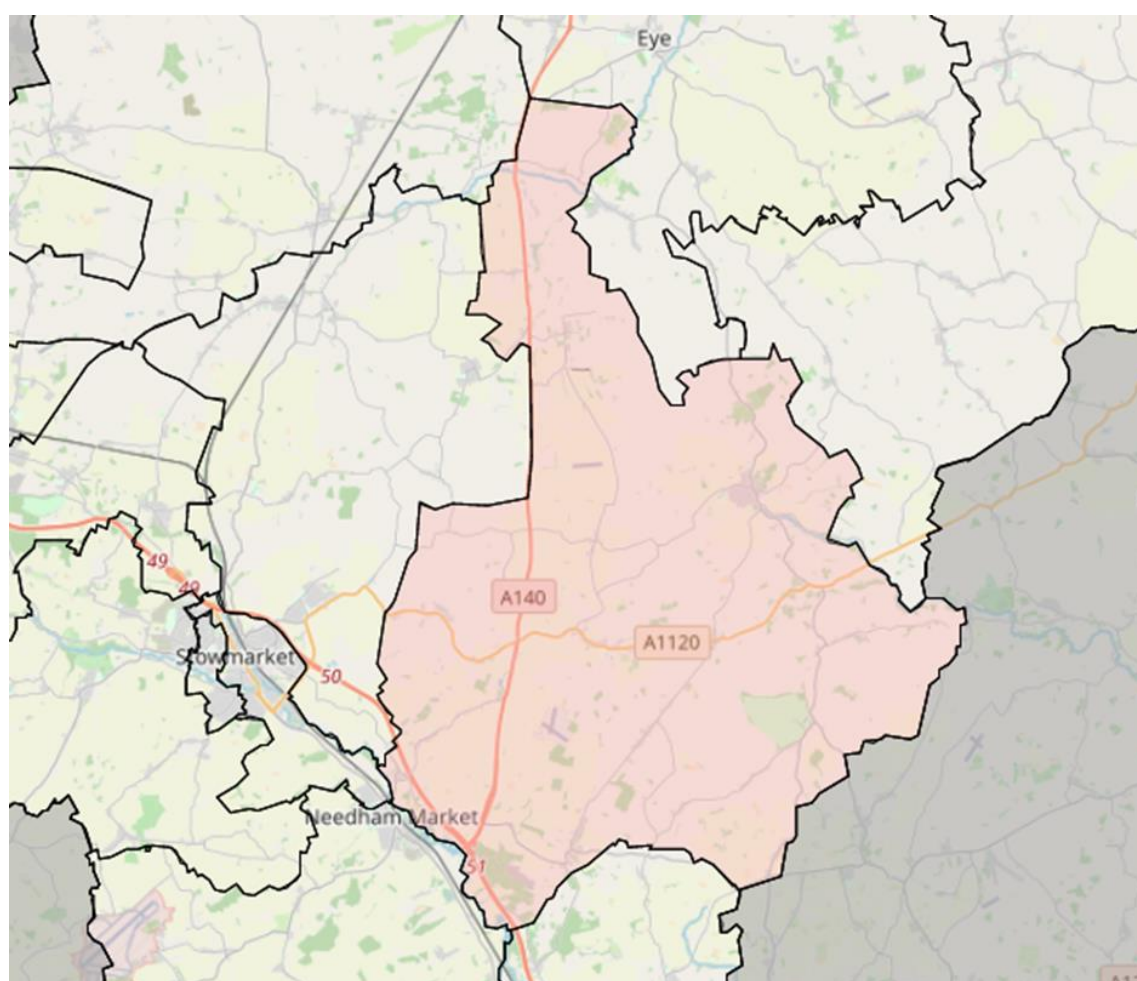
Appendix A : Calculation of affordability thresholds

A.1 Assessment geography

291. As noted in the Tenure and Affordability chapter above, affordability thresholds can only be calculated on the basis of data on incomes across the Neighbourhood Plan area. Such data is available at Medium Super Output Area (MSOA) level but not at the level of neighbourhood plan areas.

292. As such, when calculating affordability thresholds, an MSOA needs to be selected that is a best-fit proxy for the Neighbourhood Plan area. In the case of Wetheringsett cum Brockford, it is considered that MSOA Mid Suffolk 007 (E02006267) is the closest realistic proxy for the NA area boundary, and as such, this is the assessment geography that has been selected. A map of Mid Suffolk 007 appears below in Figure A-1. The area is clearly much wider than the parish, which tends to be the case in less populated rural areas. However, it is the MSOA that includes Wetheringsett cum Brockford and therefore the best source for data on incomes in the NA.

Figure A-1: MSOA Mid Suffolk 007 used as a best-fit geographical proxy for the Neighbourhood Plan area



Source: ONS

A.2 Market housing

293. Market housing is not subsidised, and tends to be primarily accessible to people on higher incomes.

294. To determine affordability in market housing, this assessment considers two primary indicators: income thresholds, which denote the maximum share of a family's income that should be spent on accommodation costs, and purchase thresholds, which denote the standard household income required to access mortgage products.

i) Market sales

295. The starting point for calculating the affordability of a dwelling for sale (i.e. the purchase threshold) is the loan to income ratio which most mortgage companies are prepared to agree. This ratio is conservatively estimated to be 3.5.
296. To produce a more accurate assessment of affordability, the savings required for a deposit should be taken into account in addition to the costs of servicing a mortgage. However, unlike for incomes, data is not available for the savings available to households in Wetheringsett cum Brockford, and the precise deposit a mortgage provider will require of any buyer will be determined by their individual circumstances and the state of the mortgage market. An assumption is therefore made that a 10% purchase deposit is required and is available to the prospective buyer. In reality it is possible that the cost of the deposit is a greater barrier to home ownership than the mortgage costs.
297. The calculation for the purchase threshold for market housing is as follows:
- Value of median NA house price (2020) = £430,000;
 - Purchase deposit at 10% of value = £43,000;
 - Value of dwelling for mortgage purposes = £387,000;
 - Divided by loan to income ratio of 3.5 = purchase threshold of £110,571.
298. The purchase threshold for an entry-level dwelling is a better representation of affordability to those with lower incomes or savings, such as first-time buyers. To determine this threshold, the same calculation is repeated but with reference to the lower quartile rather than the median house price. The lower quartile average in 2020 was £288,250, and the purchase threshold is therefore £74,121.
299. It is worth pointing out how few properties change hands in the NA in a given year. Only 7 transactions took place in 2020 and only 4 took place in 2019. There were, however, 13 transactions in 2018. Despite the small sample size, which has the potential to distort these calculations, the averages cited above appear to be reasonably accurate: there is indeed a sub-section of the market with semi-detached houses and cottages that can be purchased for around £250,000 (or even below £200,000) while the rest of the market (primarily detached homes) commands much higher values.
300. Finally, it is worth assessing the purchase threshold for new build homes, since this most closely represents the cost of the new housing that will come forward in future. The last time Land Registry recorded the sale of a newly built property in Wetheringsett cum Brockford was in 2014, meaning that there is no robust or recent sample for data on new build prices in the NA.
301. There were, however, 174 sales of newly built homes across Mid Suffolk in 2020. The mean price was £300,000, ranging from £177,000 for an average flat to £358,000 for an average detached house. These figures give a reasonable indication of how much newly built housing might cost in the NA in future.
302. However, given that the median price for all housing in the NA in 2020 (at £430,000) was 59% more expensive than the equivalent figure for Mid Suffolk (at £270,000) and the lower quartile was 37% higher, it is likely that Wetheringsett cum Brockford is considered a particularly desirable place to live with higher than average land values for the district. As such, it is likely that any new build housing that is delivered here in future will be priced higher than the district averages cited above.
303. It is not unrealistic to expect that a newly built terrace will cost around 37% more in Wetheringsett cum Brockford than across Mid Suffolk – therefore around £330,000 (which is the Mid Suffolk average of £241,000 uplifted by 37%), and that a newly built detached home might cost £569,000 (the Mid Suffolk average of £358,000 uplifted by 59%).
304. These two benchmarks for newly built housing produce the following purchase thresholds, using the same approach as set out above:
- Detached new build: £146,314; and
 - Terraced new build: £98,486.

ii) Private rent

305. Income thresholds are used to calculate the affordability of rented housing tenures. It is assumed here that rented housing is affordable if the annual rent does not exceed 30% of the household's gross annual income.

306. This is an important assumption because it is possible that a household will be able to afford tenures that are deemed not affordable in this report if they are willing or able to dedicate a higher proportion of their income to housing costs. It is becoming increasingly necessary for households to do so. However, for the purpose of planning it is considered more appropriate to use this conservative lower benchmark for affordability on the understanding that additional households may be willing or able to access housing this way than to use a higher benchmark which assumes that all households can afford to do so when their individual circumstances may well prevent it.
307. The property website Rightmove gathers rental listing data for Wetheringsett cum Brockford. However, there were no properties listed for rent in the NA at the time of search in July 2021. A wider radius of 5 miles from Wetheringsett cum Brockford village was therefore used, which stretches to Eye and parts of Stowmarket). This produced a sample of 16 rental listings, primarily in surrounding and broadly comparable villages, although it should be noted that these locations may not be perfectly comparable particularly because they contain a number of terraced maisonettes which are less common in the NA.
308. Of the 16 rental listings observed (including those with lets agreed), 10 of these were for 2 bedroom properties and 6 were for other sizes (predominantly smaller rather than larger).
309. The calculation for the private rent income threshold for 2 bedroom dwellings, which is used to represent an entry-level property, is as follows:
- Annual rent = £735 x 12 = £8,820;
 - Multiplied by 3.33 (so that no more than 30% of income is spent on rent) = income threshold of £29,400.
310. The income threshold for the overall average monthly rent of £795 is £31,800.

A.3 Affordable Housing

311. There are a range of tenures that constitute the definition of Affordable Housing within the 2019 NPPF: social rent and affordable rent, discounted market sales housing, and other affordable routes to home ownership. More recently, a new product called First Homes has been introduced to replace Starter Homes. Each of the affordable housing tenures are considered below.

i) Social rent

312. Rents in socially rented properties reflect a formula based on property values and average earnings in each area, resulting in substantial discounts to market rents. As such, this tenure is suitable for the needs of those on the lowest incomes and is subject to strict eligibility criteria.
313. To determine social rent levels, a statistical data return from Homes England is used. This data is only available at the Local Authority level, so Mid Suffolk must act as a proxy for Wetheringsett cum Brockford. This data provides information about rents and the size and type of stock owned and managed by private registered providers and is presented for Mid Suffolk in the table below.
314. To determine the income needed, it is again assumed that no more than 30% of household income should be spent on rent. This is an assumption only for what might generally might make housing affordable or unaffordable – it is unrelated to the eligibility criteria of Affordable Housing policy at Local Authority level. The overall average across all property sizes is taken forward as the income threshold for social rent.

Table A-1: Social rent levels, Mid Suffolk, 2019

Size	1 bed	2 beds	3 beds	4 beds	All
Average social rent per week	£79.52	£93.20	£104.96	£116.34	£95.75
Annual average	£4,135	£4,846	£5,458	£6,050	£4,979
Income needed	£16,540	£19,386	£21,832	£24,199	£19,916

Source: Homes England, AECOM Calculations

ii) Affordable rent

315. Affordable rent is controlled at no more than 80% of the local market rent. However, registered providers who own and manage affordable rented housing may also apply a cap to the rent to ensure that it is affordable to those on housing benefit (where under Universal Credit the total received in all benefits to working age households is £20,000).
316. Even an 80% discount on the market rent may not be sufficient to ensure that households can afford this tenure, particularly when they are dependent on benefits. Registered Providers in some areas have applied caps to larger properties where the higher rents would make them unaffordable to families under Universal Credit. This may mean that the rents are actually 50-60% of market levels rather than 80%.
317. Data on the most realistic local affordable rent costs is obtained from the same source as social rent levels for Mid Suffolk (above). Again it is assumed that no more than 30% of income should be spent on rent, and the overall average is taken forward.
318. Comparing this result with the average 2 bedroom annual private rent above indicates that affordable rents in Wetheringsett cum Brockford are actually closer to 64% of market rates than the maximum of 80%, a feature that is necessary to make them achievable to those in need.

Table A-2: Affordable rent levels, Mid Suffolk, 2019

Size	1 bed	2 beds	3 beds	4 beds	All
Average affordable rent per week	£93.36	£108.55	£124.80	£140.97	£108.52
Annual average	£4,855	£5,645	£6,490	£7,330	£5,643
Income needed	£19,419	£22,578	£25,958	£29,322	£22,572

Source: Homes England, AECOM Calculations

iii) Affordable home ownership

319. Affordable home ownership tenures include products for sale and rent provided at a cost above social rent, but below market levels. The three most widely available are discounted market housing (a subset of which is the new First Homes product), shared ownership, and rent to buy. These are considered in turn below.
320. In paragraph 65 of the NPPF 2021, the Government introduces a recommendation that “where major housing development is proposed, planning policies and decisions should expect at least 10% of the homes to be available for affordable home ownership.” The recently issued Ministerial Statement and updates to PPG state that 25% of all Affordable Housing should be First Homes – the Government’s new flagship discounted market sale product. When the NPPF is next updated, it is expected that the 10% affordable home ownership requirement referenced above may be replaced by the First Homes requirement.

First Homes

321. Whether to treat discounted market housing as affordable or not depends on whether discounting the asking price of new build homes of a size and type suitable to first time buyers would bring them within reach of people currently unable to buy market housing.
322. The starting point for these calculations is therefore the estimated cost of an entry-level new build home in Wetheringsett cum Brockford of £383,000 noted above. For the minimum discount of 30% the purchase threshold can be calculated as follows:
- Assumed value of an entry-level new property = £383,000;
 - Discounted by 30% = £268,100;
 - Purchase deposit at 10% of value = £26,810;
 - Value of dwelling for mortgage purposes = £241,290;
 - Divided by loan to income ratio of 3.5 = purchase threshold of £68,940.

323. The income thresholds analysis in the Tenure and Affordability chapter also compares local incomes with the costs of a 40% and 50% discounted First Home. This would require an income threshold of £59,091 and £49,243 respectively.
324. It should be noted that the 30% discount level would not bring the discounted price below the ceiling of £250,000, so slightly smaller or lower value homes would need to be built for First Homes at this discount to comply with the requirements. Alternatively, as recommended in the main body of this report, a higher discount level should be required. Even with the greatest discount, a £19,150 deposit would be required and may represent a significant barrier for many households.
325. All of the income thresholds calculated here for First Homes are below the cap of £80,000 above which households are not eligible.
326. Note that discounted market sale homes may be unviable to develop if the discounted price is close to (or below) build costs. Build costs vary across the country but as an illustration, the build cost for a 2 bedroom home (assuming 70 sq m and a build cost of £1,500 per sq m) would be around £105,000. This cost excludes any land value or developer profit. This would not appear to be an issue in Wetheringsett cum Brockford.

Shared ownership

327. Shared ownership involves the purchaser buying an initial share in a property, typically of between 25% and 75% (but now set at a minimum of 10%), and paying rent on the share retained by the provider. Shared ownership is flexible in two respects, in the share which can be purchased and in the rental payable on the share retained by the provider. Both of these are variable. The share owned by the occupant can be increased over time through a process known as 'staircasing'.
328. In exceptional circumstances (for example, as a result of financial difficulties, and where the alternative is repossession), and at the discretion of the provider, shared owners may staircase down, thereby reducing the share they own. Shared equity is available to first-time buyers, people who have owned a home previously and council and housing association tenants with a good credit rating whose annual household income does not exceed £80,000.
329. To determine the affordability of shared ownership, calculations are again based on the estimated cost of a newly built entry-level home. The deposit available to the prospective purchaser is assumed to be 10% of the value of the dwelling, and the standard loan to income ratio of 3.5 is used to calculate the income required to obtain a mortgage. The rental component is estimated at 2.5% of the value of the remaining (unsold) portion of the price. The income required to cover the rental component of the dwelling is based on the assumption that a household spends no more than 30% of the income on rent (as for the income threshold for the private rental sector).
330. The affordability threshold for smaller flats at a 25% equity share is calculated as follows:
- A 25% equity share of £383,000 is £95,750;
 - A 10% deposit of £9,575 is deducted, leaving a mortgage value of £86,175;
 - This is divided by the loan to value ratio of 3.5 to give a purchase threshold of £24,621;
 - Rent is charged on the remaining 75% shared ownership equity, i.e. the unsold value of £287,250;
 - The estimated annual rent at 2.5% of the unsold value is £7,181;
 - This requires an income of £23,938 (annual rent multiplied by 3.33 so that no more than 30% of income is spent on rent).
 - The total income required is £48,559 (£24,621 plus £23,938).
331. The same calculation is repeated for equity shares of 10% and 50%, producing affordability thresholds of £38,574 and £65,201 respectively. At £81,843, the income threshold for a 75% share exceeds £80,000 and would therefore not be possible since any households who could afford it would be ineligible.

Rent to buy

332. Rent to buy is a relatively new and less common tenure, which through subsidy allows the occupant to save a portion of their rent to build up a deposit to eventually purchase the home. It is therefore estimated to cost the same as private rents – the difference being that the occupant builds up equity in the property with a portion of the rent, but this portion is still a monthly outgoing for the occupant.

Appendix B : Housing Needs Assessment Glossary

Adoption

This refers to the final confirmation of a local plan by a local planning authority.

Affordability

The terms 'affordability' and 'affordable housing' have different meanings. 'Affordability' is a measure of whether housing may be afforded by certain groups of households. 'Affordable housing' refers to particular products outside the main housing market.

Affordability Ratio

Assessing affordability involves comparing housing costs against the ability to pay. The ratio between lower quartile house prices and the lower quartile income or earnings can be used to assess the relative affordability of housing. The Ministry for Housing, Community and Local Governments publishes quarterly the ratio of lower quartile house price to lower quartile earnings by local authority (LQAR) as well as median house price to median earnings by local authority (MAR) e.g. income = £25,000, house price = £200,000. House price: income ratio = £200,000/£25,000 = 8, (the house price is 8 times income).

Affordable Housing (NPPF Definition)

Housing for sale or rent, for those whose needs are not met by the market (including housing that provides a subsidised route to home ownership and/or is for essential local workers); and which complies with one or more of the following definitions:

a) Affordable housing for rent: meets all of the following conditions: (a) the rent is set in accordance with the Government's rent policy for Social Rent or Affordable Rent, or is at least 20% below local market rents (including service charges where applicable); (b) the landlord is a registered provider, except where it is included as part of a Build to Rent scheme (in which case the landlord need not be a registered provider); and (c) it includes provisions to remain at an affordable price for future eligible households, or for the subsidy to be recycled for alternative affordable housing provision. For Build to Rent schemes affordable housing for rent is expected to be the normal form of affordable housing provision (and, in this context, is known as Affordable Private Rent).

b) Discounted market sales housing: is that sold at a discount of at least 20% below local market value. Eligibility is determined with regard to local incomes and local house prices. Provisions should be in place to ensure housing remains at a discount for future eligible households.

c) Other affordable routes to home ownership: is housing provided for sale that provides a route to ownership for those who could not achieve home ownership through the market. It includes shared ownership, relevant equity loans, other low-cost homes for sale (at a price equivalent to at least 20% below local market value) and rent to buy (which includes a period of intermediate rent). Where public grant funding is provided, there should be provisions for the homes to remain at an affordable price for future eligible households, or for any receipts to be recycled for alternative affordable housing provision, or refunded to Government or the relevant authority specified in the funding agreement.

Affordable rented housing

Rented housing let by registered providers of social housing to households who are eligible for social rented housing. Affordable Rent is not subject to the national rent regime but is subject to other rent controls that require a rent of no more than 80% of the local market rent (including service charges, where applicable). The national rent regime is the regime under which the social rents of tenants of social housing are set, with particular reference to the Guide to Social Rent Reforms (March 2001) and the Rent Influencing Regime Guidance (October 2001). Local market rents are calculated using the Royal Institution for Chartered Surveyors (RICS) approved valuation methods⁷.

Age-Restricted General Market Housing

⁷ The Tenant Services Authority has issued an explanatory note on these methods at <http://www.communities.gov.uk/documents/planningandbuilding/pdf/1918430.pdf>

A type of housing which is generally for people aged 55 and over and the active elderly. It may include some shared amenities such as communal gardens but does not include support or care services.

Annual Monitoring Report

A report submitted to the Government by local planning authorities assessing progress with and the effectiveness of a Local Development Framework.

Basic Conditions

The Basic Conditions are the legal tests that are considered at the examination stage of neighbourhood development plans. They need to be met before a plan can progress to referendum.

Backlog need

The backlog need constitutes those households who are eligible for Affordable Housing, on account of homelessness, overcrowding, concealment or affordability, but who are yet to be offered a home suited to their needs.

Bedroom Standard⁸

The bedroom standard is a measure of occupancy (whether a property is overcrowded or under-occupied, based on the number of bedrooms in a property and the type of household in residence). The Census overcrowding data is based on occupancy rating (overcrowding by number of rooms not including bathrooms and hallways). This tends to produce higher levels of overcrowding/ under occupation. A detailed definition of the standard is given in the Glossary of the EHS Household Report.

Co-living

Co-living denotes people who do not have family ties sharing either a self-contained dwelling (i.e., a 'house share') or new development akin to student housing in which people have a bedroom and bathroom to themselves, but share living and kitchen space with others. In co-living schemes each individual represents a separate 'household'.

Community Led Housing/Community Land Trusts

Housing development, provision and management that is led by the community is very often driven by a need to secure affordable housing for local people in the belief that housing that comes through the planning system may be neither the right tenure or price-point to be attractive or affordable to local people. The principle forms of community-led models include cooperatives, co-housing communities, self-help housing, community self-build housing, collective custom-build housing, and community land trusts. By bringing forward development which is owned by the community, the community is able to set rents and/or mortgage payments at a rate that it feels is appropriate. The Government has a range of support programmes for people interested in bringing forward community led housing.

Community Right to Build Order⁹

A community right to build order is a special kind of neighbourhood development order, granting planning permission for small community development schemes, such as housing or new community facilities. Local community organisations that meet certain requirements or parish/town councils are able to prepare community right to build orders.

Concealed Families (Census definition)¹⁰

The 2011 Census defined a concealed family as one with young adults living with a partner and/or child/children in the same household as their parents, older couples living with an adult child and their family or unrelated families sharing a household. A single person cannot be a concealed family; therefore one elderly parent living with their adult child and family or an adult child returning to the parental home is not a concealed family; the latter are reported in an ONS analysis on increasing numbers of young adults living with parents.

⁸ See <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/english-housing-survey-2011-to-2012-household-report>

⁹ See <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/national-planning-policy-framework/annex-2-glossary>

¹⁰ See http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20160107160832/http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/dcp171776_350282.pdf

Equity Loans/Shared Equity

An equity loan which acts as a second charge on a property. For example, a household buys a £200,000 property with a 10% equity loan (£20,000). They pay a small amount for the loan and when the property is sold e.g. for £250,000 the lender receives 10% of the sale cost (£25,000). Some equity loans were available for the purchase of existing stock. The current scheme is to assist people to buy new build.

Extra Care Housing or Housing-With-Care

Housing which usually consists of purpose-built or adapted flats or bungalows with a medium to high level of care available if required, through an onsite care agency registered through the Care Quality Commission (CQC). Residents are able to live independently with 24 hour access to support services and staff, and meals are also available. There are often extensive communal areas, such as space to socialise or a wellbeing centre. In some cases, these developments are included in retirement communities or villages - the intention is for residents to benefit from varying levels of care as time progresses.

Fair Share

'Fair share' is an approach to determining housing need within a given geographical area based on a proportional split according to the size of the area, the number of homes in it, or its population.

First Homes

The Government has recently confirmed the introduction of First Homes as a new form of discounted market housing which will provide a discount of at least 30% on the price of new homes. These homes are available to first time buyers as a priority but other households will be eligible depending on agreed criteria. New developments will be required to provide 25% of Affordable Housing as First Homes. A more detailed explanation of First Homes and its implications is provided in the main body of the HNA.

Habitable Rooms

The number of habitable rooms in a home is the total number of rooms, excluding bathrooms, toilets and halls.

Household Reference Person (HRP)

The concept of a Household Reference Person (HRP) was introduced in the 2001 Census (in common with other government surveys in 2001/2) to replace the traditional concept of the head of the household. HRPs provide an individual person within a household to act as a reference point for producing further derived statistics and for characterising a whole household according to characteristics of the chosen reference person.

Housing Market Area

A housing market area is a geographical area defined by household demand and preferences for all types of housing, reflecting the key functional linkages between places where people live and work. It might be the case that housing market areas overlap.

The extent of the housing market areas identified will vary, and many will in practice cut across various local planning authority administrative boundaries. Local planning authorities should work with all the other constituent authorities under the duty to cooperate.

Housing Needs

There is no official definition of housing need in either the National Planning Policy Framework or the National Planning Practice Guidance. Clearly, individuals have their own housing needs. The process of understanding housing needs at a population scale is undertaken via the preparation of a Strategic Housing Market Assessment (see below).

Housing Needs Assessment

A Housing Needs Assessment (HNA) is an assessment of housing needs at the Neighbourhood Area level.

Housing Products

Housing products simply refers to different types of housing as they are produced by developers of various kinds (including councils and housing associations). Housing products usually refers to specific tenures and types of new build housing.

Housing Size (Census Definition)

Housing size can be referred to either in terms of the number of bedrooms in a home (a bedroom is defined as any room that was intended to be used as a bedroom when the property was built, any rooms permanently converted for use as bedrooms); or in terms of the number of rooms, excluding bathrooms, toilets halls or landings, or rooms that can only be used for storage. All other rooms, for example, kitchens, living rooms, bedrooms, utility rooms, studies and conservatories are counted. If two rooms have been converted into one they are counted as one room. Rooms shared between more than one household, for example a shared kitchen, are not counted.

Housing Type (Census Definition)

This refers to the type of accommodation used or available for use by an individual household (i.e. detached, semi-detached, terraced including end of terraced, and flats). Flats are broken down into those in a purpose-built block of flats, in parts of a converted or shared house, or in a commercial building.

Housing Tenure (Census Definition)

Tenure provides information about whether a household rents or owns the accommodation that it occupies and, if rented, combines this with information about the type of landlord who owns or manages the accommodation.

Income Threshold

Income thresholds are derived as a result of the annualisation of the monthly rental cost and then asserting this cost should not exceed 35% of annual household income.

Intercensal Period

This means the period between the last two Censuses, i.e. between years 2001 and 2011.

Intermediate Housing

Intermediate housing is homes for sale and rent provided at a cost above social rent, but below market levels subject to the criteria in the Affordable Housing definition above. These can include shared equity (shared ownership and equity loans), other low-cost homes for sale and intermediate rent, but not affordable rented housing. Homes that do not meet the above definition of affordable housing, such as 'low-cost market' housing, may not be considered as affordable housing for planning purposes.

Life Stage modelling

Life Stage modelling is forecasting need for dwellings of different sizes by the end of the Plan period on the basis of changes in the distribution of household types and key age brackets (life stages) within the NA. Given the shared behavioural patterns associated with these metrics, they provide a helpful way of understanding and predicting future community need. This data is not available at neighbourhood level so LPA level data is employed on the basis of the NA falling within its defined Housing Market Area.

Life-time Homes

Dwellings constructed to make them more flexible, convenient adaptable and accessible than most 'normal' houses, usually according to the Lifetime Homes Standard, 16 design criteria that can be applied to new homes at minimal cost: <http://www.lifetimehomes.org.uk/>.

Life-time Neighbourhoods

Lifetime neighbourhoods extend the principles of Lifetime Homes into the wider neighbourhood to ensure the public realm is designed in such a way to be as inclusive as possible and designed to address the needs of older people, for example providing more greenery and more walkable, better connected places.

Local Development Order

An Order made by a local planning authority (under the Town and Country Planning Act 1990) that grants planning permission for a specific development proposal or classes of development.

Local Enterprise Partnership

A body, designated by the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, established for the purpose of creating or improving the conditions for economic growth in an area.

Local housing need (NPPF definition)

The number of homes identified as being needed through the application of the standard method set out in national planning guidance (or, in the context of preparing strategic policies only, this may be calculated using a justified alternative approach as provided for in paragraph 60 of this Framework).

Local Planning Authority

The public authority whose duty it is to carry out specific planning functions for a particular area. All references to local planning authority apply to the District Council, London Borough Council, County Council, Broads Authority, National Park Authority or the Greater London Authority, to the extent appropriate to their responsibilities.

Local Plan

This is the plan for the future development of the local area, drawn up by the local planning authority in consultation with the community. In law this is described as the development plan documents adopted under the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004. Current core strategies or other planning policies form part of the Local Plan and are known as 'Development Plan Documents' (DPDs).

Lower Quartile

The bottom 25% value, i.e. of all the properties sold, 25% were cheaper than this value and 75% were more expensive. The lower quartile price is used as an entry level price and is the recommended level used to evaluate affordability; for example for first time buyers.

Lower Quartile Affordability Ratio

The Lower Quartile Affordability Ratio reflects the relationship between Lower Quartile Household Incomes and Lower Quartile House Prices, and is a key indicator of affordability of market housing for people on relatively low incomes.

Market Housing

Market housing is housing which is built by developers (which may be private companies or housing associations, or Private Registered Providers), for the purposes of sale (or rent) on the open market.

Mean (Average)

The mean or the average is, mathematically, the sum of all values divided by the total number of values. This is the more commonly used "average" measure as it includes all values, unlike the median.

Median

The middle value, i.e. of all the properties sold, half were cheaper and half were more expensive. This is sometimes used instead of the mean average as it is not subject to skew by very large or very small statistical outliers.

Median Affordability Ratio

The Lower Quartile Affordability Ratio reflects the relationship between Median Household Incomes and Median House Prices, and is a key indicator of affordability of market housing for people on middle-range incomes.

Mortgage Ratio

The mortgage ratio is the ratio of mortgage value to income which is typically deemed acceptable by banks. Approximately 75% of all mortgage lending ratios fell below 4 in recent years¹¹, i.e. the total value of the mortgage was less than 4 times the annual income of the person who was granted the mortgage.

Neighbourhood Development Order (NDO)

An NDO will grant planning permission for a particular type of development in a particular area. This could be either a particular development, or a particular class of development (for example retail or housing). A number of types of development will be excluded from NDOs, however. These are minerals and waste development, types of development that, regardless of scale, always need Environmental Impact Assessment, and Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects.

Neighbourhood plan

A plan prepared by a Parish or Town Council or Neighbourhood Forum for a particular neighbourhood area (made under the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004).

Older People

People over retirement age, including the active, newly-retired through to the very frail elderly, whose housing needs can encompass accessible, adaptable general needs housing for those looking to downsize from family housing and the full range of retirement and specialised housing for those with support or care needs.

Output Area/Lower Super Output Area/Middle Super Output Area

An output area is the lowest level of geography for publishing statistics, and is the core geography from which statistics for other geographies are built. Output areas were created for England and Wales from the 2001 Census data, by grouping a number of households and populations together so that each output area's population is roughly the same. 175,434 output areas were created from the 2001 Census data, each containing a minimum of 100 persons with an average of 300 persons. Lower Super Output Areas consist of higher geographies of between 1,000-1,500 persons (made up of a number of individual Output Areas) and Middle Super Output Areas are higher than this, containing between 5,000 and 7,200 people, and made up of individual Lower Layer Super Output Areas. Some statistics are only available down to Middle Layer Super Output Area level, meaning that they are not available for individual Output Areas or parishes.

Overcrowding

There is no single agreed definition of overcrowding, however, utilising the Government's bedroom standard, overcrowding is deemed to be in households where there is more than one person in the household per room (excluding kitchens, bathrooms, halls and storage areas). As such, a home with one bedroom and one living room and one kitchen would be deemed overcrowded if three adults were living there.

Planning Condition

A condition imposed on a grant of planning permission (in accordance with the Town and Country Planning Act 1990) or a condition included in a Local Development Order or Neighbourhood Development Order.

Planning Obligation

A legally enforceable obligation entered into under section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 to mitigate the impacts of a development proposal.

Purchase Threshold

¹¹ See <https://www.which.co.uk/news/2017/08/how-your-income-affects-your-mortgage-chances/>

Purchase thresholds are calculated by netting 10% off the entry house price to reflect purchase deposit. The resulting cost is divided by 4 to reflect the standard household income requirement to access mortgage products.

Proportionate and Robust Evidence

Proportionate and robust evidence is evidence which is deemed appropriate in scale, scope and depth for the purposes of neighbourhood planning, sufficient so as to meet the Basic Conditions, as well as robust enough to withstand legal challenge. It is referred to a number of times in the PPG and its definition and interpretation relies on the judgement of professionals such as Neighbourhood Plan Examiners.

Private Rented

The Census tenure private rented includes a range of different living situations in practice, such as private rented/ other including households living "rent free". Around 20% of the private rented sector are in this category, which will have included some benefit claimants whose housing benefit at the time was paid directly to their landlord. This could mean people whose rent is paid by their employer, including some people in the armed forces. Some housing association tenants may also have been counted as living in the private rented sector because of confusion about what a housing association is.

Retirement Living or Sheltered Housing

Housing for older people which usually consists of purpose-built flats or bungalows with limited communal facilities such as a lounge, laundry room and guest room. It does not generally provide care services, but provides some support to enable residents to live independently. This can include 24 hour on-site assistance (alarm) and a warden or house manager.

Residential Care Homes and Nursing Homes

Housing for older people comprising of individual rooms within a residential building and provide a high level of care meeting all activities of daily living. They do not usually include support services for independent living. This type of housing can also include dementia care homes.

Rightsizing

Households who wish to move into a property that is a more appropriate size for their needs can be said to be rightsizing. This is often used to refer to older households who may be living in large family homes but whose children have left, and who intend to rightsize to a smaller dwelling. The popularity of this trend is debatable as ties to existing communities and the home itself may outweigh issues of space. Other factors, including wealth, health, status and family circumstance also need to be taken into consideration, and it should not be assumed that all older households in large dwellings wish to rightsize.

Rural Exception Sites

Small sites used for affordable housing in perpetuity where sites would not normally be used for housing. Rural exception sites seek to address the needs of the local community by accommodating households who are either current residents or have an existing family or employment connection. Small numbers of market homes may be allowed at the local authority's discretion, for example where essential to enable the delivery of affordable dwellings without grant funding.

Shared Ownership

Housing where a purchaser part buys and part rents from a housing association or local authority. Typical purchase share is between 25% and 75%, and buyers are encouraged to buy the largest share they can afford. Generally applies to new build properties, but re-sales occasionally become available. There may be an opportunity to rent at intermediate rent level before purchasing a share in order to save/increase the deposit level

Sheltered Housing¹²

Sheltered housing (also known as retirement housing) means having your own flat or bungalow in a block, or on a small estate, where all the other residents are older people (usually over 55). With a few exceptions, all developments (or 'schemes') provide independent, self-contained homes with their own front doors. There are many different types of scheme, both to rent and to buy. They usually contain between 15 and 40 properties, and range in size from studio flats (or 'bedsits') through to 2

¹² See <http://www.housingcare.org/jargon-sheltered-housing.aspx>

and 3 bedrooled. Properties in most schemes are designed to make life a little easier for older people - with features like raised electric sockets, lowered worktops, walk-in showers, and so on. Some will usually be designed to accommodate wheelchair users. And they are usually linked to an emergency alarm service (sometimes called 'community alarm service') to call help if needed. Many schemes also have their own 'manager' or 'warden', either living on-site or nearby, whose job is to manage the scheme and help arrange any services residents need. Managed schemes will also usually have some shared or communal facilities such as a lounge for residents to meet, a laundry, a guest flat and a garden.

Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment

A Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) is a document prepared by one or more local planning authorities to establish realistic assumptions about the availability, suitability and the likely economic viability of land to meet the identified need for housing over the Plan period. SHLAAs are sometimes also called LAAs (Land Availability Assessments) or HELAAs (Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessments) so as to integrate the need to balance assessed housing and economic needs as described below.

Strategic Housing Market Assessment (NPPF Definition)

A Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) is a document prepared by one or more local planning authorities to assess their housing needs under the 2012 version of the NPPF, usually across administrative boundaries to encompass the whole housing market area. The NPPF makes clear that SHMAs should identify the scale and mix of housing and the range of tenures the local population is likely to need over the Plan period. Sometimes SHMAs are combined with Economic Development Needs Assessments to create documents known as HEDNAs (Housing and Economic Development Needs Assessments).

Specialist Housing for the Elderly

Specialist housing for the elderly, sometimes known as specialist accommodation for the elderly, encompasses a wide range of housing types specifically aimed at older people, which may often be restricted to those in certain older age groups (usually 55+ or 65+). This could include residential institutions, sometimes known as care homes, sheltered housing, extra care housing, retirement housing and a range of other potential types of housing which has been designed and built to serve the needs of older people, including often providing care or other additional services. This housing can be provided in a range of tenures (often on a rented or leasehold basis).

Social Rented Housing

Social rented housing is owned by local authorities and private registered providers (as defined in Section 80 of the Housing and Regeneration Act 2008.). Guideline target rents for this tenure are determined through the national rent regime. It may also be owned by other persons and provided under equivalent rental arrangements to the above, as agreed with the local authority or with Homes England.¹³

¹³ See <http://www.communities.gov.uk/documents/planningandbuilding/doc/1980960.doc#Housing>

