



Appendix 1



Tewkesbury
Borough Council

Tewkesbury Borough Housing and Homelessness Strategy

2022-26



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Councillor Gill Blackwell,
Lead Member for Housing



“Tewkesbury
Borough, a place
where a **good
quality of life** is
open to all”

Foreword

Housing and Communities is one of the key priorities of our Council Plan. The Housing and Homelessness Strategy provides more detail on how we will address this priority. It not only sets out our ambitions for new homes, but also describes how we will seek to improve housing conditions and standards across all tenures. It emphasises the importance and value we place on partnership working.

The vision for the strategy very much reflects that, although high quality housing that people can afford is fundamental to the wellbeing of our residents, we believe that the communities in which the homes are situated are also extremely important. We seek to support our local communities, whether they are new or existing, to thrive and to enable them to be as resilient and diverse as possible. This commitment is illustrated through the objectives and actions in this Strategy.

We have identified three key themes for the Strategy: increasing housing supply, regenerating and making best use of existing stock and meeting the needs of homeless households and those with specific housing needs.

As part of developing the Strategy we have reflected on a wide evidence base which has helped us to understand both housing needs and the changes in our population, thus enabling us to plan effectively for the future.

In drawing up the strategy we have consulted as widely as possible, including an open public consultation. Our intention is that the strategy should be a live document which reflects our shared priorities over the next four years and beyond.

Thanks must go to our partners, who provide housing and related support services, our stakeholders, parish councils and the public as well as our staff and councillors for their responses. Their ideas have played an important part in formulating this Strategy. We cannot deliver the priorities and actions alone and therefore the continued collaboration and support of our partners to deliver the vision and desired outcomes from the Strategy is essential. We look forward to working to make this possible.





Introduction

Housing is about more than having a roof over your head: the quality of homes and the communities in which people live are widely accepted as being extremely important to their health and wellbeing.

The external environment has undergone considerable changes since the last housing strategy was developed in 2017. There are now many new Government policies and priorities relating to housing and planning which the Strategy needs to consider. The COVID-19 pandemic has also underlined the importance of good quality housing and the positive impact this has on people's lives.

A key priority is addressing the challenges of climate change and this is a cross cutting theme that runs throughout the Strategy. The objectives and actions within the Strategy aim to enable and support policies that improve energy efficiency and reduce the reliance on fossil fuels for both new and existing homes.

Preventing and resolving homelessness and the threat of homelessness continues to be a priority. Although the most obvious form of homelessness, those sleeping rough on the streets, is not common in Tewkesbury, the wider problems experienced by those who need to leave their homes due to abuse or violence, live in unsafe or insecure accommodation or whose home is not suitable to meet their specific housing needs are key issues for this strategy to address.

This Housing and Homelessness Strategy sets out the strategic housing priorities for Tewkesbury Borough and outlines a range of actions to support residents to access good quality housing, while preventing homelessness and rough sleeping.



The strategy has been developed in partnership with many of the main organisations involved in housing locally and reflects the councils commitment to:

- Put the needs of our customers at the heart of what we do and listen to what they say, whilst treating people fairly and without bias.
- Work positively with others - recognising we cannot achieve our objectives by working alone.

The strategy covers both the private and affordable housing sectors:

- It specifically focuses on homelessness and measures to prevent homelessness;
- It encompasses housing in its broadest sense, including the needs of those with specific housing needs;
- It reflects the ambitions of the Tewkesbury Borough Council Local Plan and the Joint Core Strategy; and
- It recognises the joint housing initiatives with Gloucestershire County Council and the other district councils within Gloucestershire.

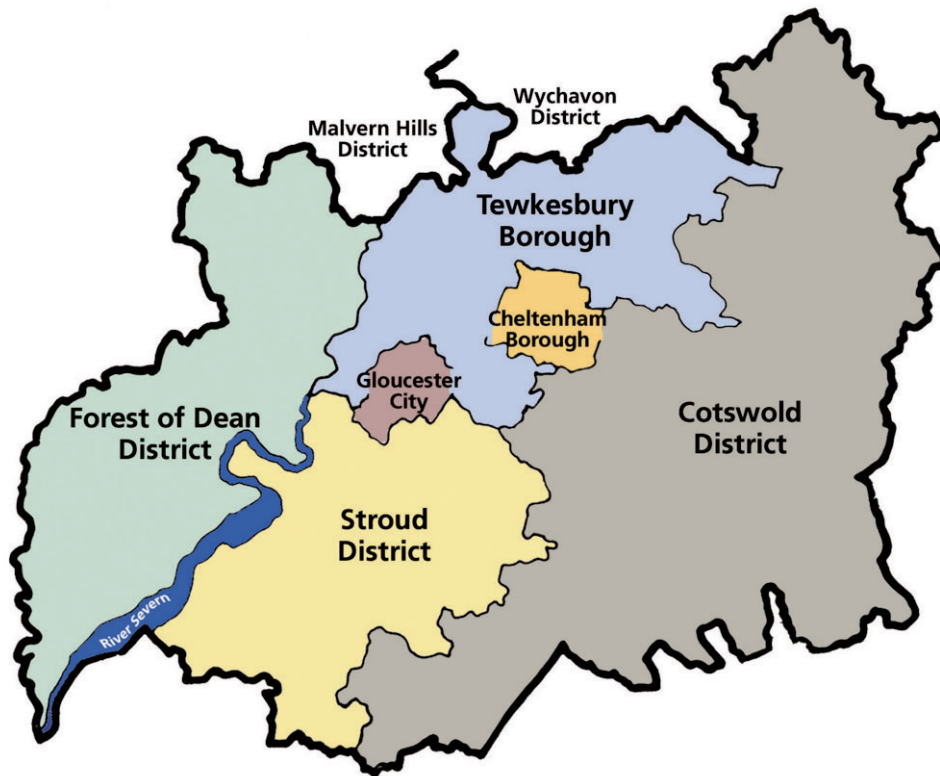
It is intended that the strategy will be sufficiently flexible to accommodate and respond to changes in the external environment during its lifetime.

The actions in the strategy are high level actions. Detailed action plans will be developed in collaboration with our partners to support and deliver the strategic objectives.

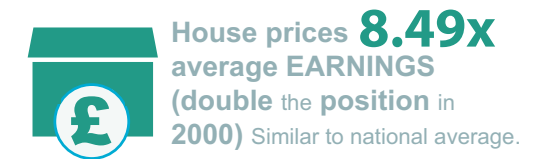
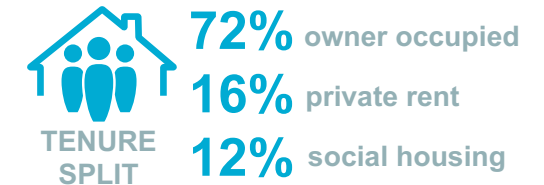
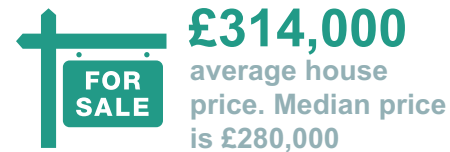
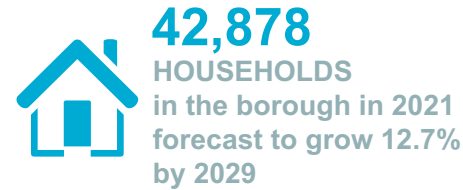
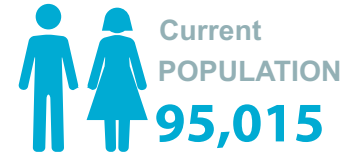
We recognise that during the four year life span of this Strategy we will need to prioritise certain objectives and actions. This document will provide a basis for the direction of travel and will guide us in our current and future activities.

About Tewkesbury Borough

Tewkesbury Borough is one of six districts in the county of Gloucestershire, it covers an area of 160 square miles. The borough has a mainly rural character, with the population predominantly living in rural settlements and large market towns.



Tewkesbury Borough and adjacent districts



More about housing in Tewkesbury Borough



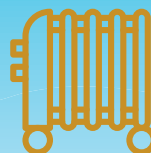
3700 HOUSEHOLDS where long-term illness or **DISABILITY** affects housing need in 2021. Increasing to **6900** by 2041



22% of CHILDREN live in households with an **INCOME less than 60%** of the median national average



11,700 NEW HOMES required in the period 2021 to 2041



9% of households are considered to be in **FUEL POVERTY**



24.9% of households are **OLDER PERSON ONLY** this is one of the highest in the county. Compared to **21.3% nationally**



6900 new **AFFORDABLE HOMES** required 2021-2041



£172 average **RENT** per week for a **TWO bedroom** private sector property



1 rough **SLEEPER** identified through a rough sleeping snapshot exercise Autumn 2021



14% **INCREASE** in private rent (2015/16-2018/19)



510 **EMPTY HOMES** (October 2021)



MAIN HOMELESSNESS reason 2020/21 **FAMILY** no longer willing or able to accommodate



“We recognise how important it is for residents to **feel part of their communities**”

A vision for housing in Tewkesbury Borough

Our borough was recognised as the fastest growing district outside of London (ONS 2019) and without doubt, our ambition for growth is unprecedented for a borough of our size. We are committed to punching above our weight and creating a ‘sustainable place’ to meet the needs of our growing population.

To enable our residents to thrive we not only need to ensure that homes in Tewkesbury Borough are of the best quality possible, but that the communities in which they are located are resilient, inclusive and sustainable. We recognise how important it is for residents to feel part of their communities.

The vision for our new Strategy is:

“Meeting the **housing needs** of our **communities; supporting them** to be resilient and **to thrive** sustainably, **now and into the future.**”



Key themes

The following key themes for the Strategy have been shaped through consultation with our partners and stakeholders:

- **Increasing the supply of new homes – with particular focus on increasing the number of affordable homes.**
- **Regenerating and making best use of existing stock.**
- **Meeting the needs of homeless households and others with specific housing and support needs.**



What have we achieved so far?



1205 Affordable homes delivered (from 2015/16 to 2019/20) of these 660 were for rent.



Maintained low numbers of rough sleepers recording between 0-2 at official counts for last five years.



Supported the development of neighbourhood plans eight currently active.



26 rural housing needs surveys undertaken since 2015.



Caring for communities and people contract in place – supporting 400 people each year.



Prevented 206 households becoming homeless in 2020/21.

What are the challenges?

- Mitigating the impacts of climate change such as flooding and overheating.
- Achieving high environmental and quality standards in both new and existing homes;
- Tackling affordability – the gap between incomes and housing costs is increasing, making it more difficult for people to afford to live in their local communities;
- Ensuring new homes and communities are sustainable in terms of transport, local facilities and employment;
- Meeting affordable housing need in rural areas;
- Addressing the number of empty homes;
- Tackling major regeneration opportunities in Tewkesbury;
- Converting heritage and redundant buildings into residential use;
- Tackling disrepair and poor standards of accommodation in the private sector;
- Preventing homelessness and resolving the support needs of those unable to sustain a tenancy;
- Enabling the development of additional housing with support for older people, people with learning disabilities and those with mental health needs identified in the Gloucestershire Housing with Care Strategy, 2020;
- Ensuring sufficient, suitable emergency and move on accommodation is available for survivors of domestic abuse;
- Meeting the housing needs of young people, especially care leavers and those from rural areas;
- Understanding and responding to the needs of the gypsy, roma and traveller community;
- Ensuring new homes are accessible and adaptable to meet the needs of residents;
- Ensuring supported housing is fit for purpose.



“Prioritise reducing fuel poverty through good design...”

Increasing the supply of new homes, including affordable homes

Our objectives

1. Ensure adequate land is allocated through planning policy to meet housing need
2. Support the development of high quality and sustainable homes
3. Seek to reduce the impact of new homes on the environment whilst increasing their resilience to climate change
4. Support rural communities to grow organically
5. Promote and support the development of new garden communities
6. Maximise the supply of appropriate affordable housing
7. Support the development of resilient and vibrant communities:

Actions

Objective 1 - Ensure adequate land is allocated through planning policy to meet housing need.

- Adopt the Tewkesbury Borough Local Plan and put in place relevant policies to support housing delivery;
- Support the review of the Joint Core Strategy and the delivery of its objectives;
- Maintain the five year land supply to manage growth effectively;
- Continue to work with Gloucester City Council and Cheltenham Borough Council to bring forward strategic development sites;
- Utilise land in Tewkesbury Borough Council’s ownership to support the delivery of affordable housing and encourage other public bodies to do likewise.

Objective 2 - Support the development of high quality and sustainable homes

- Maximise and explore the use of additional public sector funding streams to support the development of new homes.
- Adopt the National Described Space Standards for new homes;
- Ensure that a proportion of new homes are built to meet the needs of residents who require accessible or adaptable accommodation;
- Work with partners to increase and scale up the use of modern methods of construction;
- Prioritise reducing fuel poverty through good design and encouraging a “fabric first” approach;



Objective 3 - Seek to reduce the impact of new homes on the environment whilst increasing their resilience to climate change

- Support Registered Providers and other developers in accessing funding opportunities to enable carbon reduction measures to be installed when homes are built, thus reducing the need for future retro-fitting;
- Collaborate with Gloucester City Council and Cheltenham Borough Council to develop a strategic policy, as part of the Joint Core Strategy review, to address carbon reduction and climate change impacts for strategic development sites;
- Provide consistent guidance for all developers on expectations in relation to carbon reduction policies for new homes.
- Explore opportunities to support developers and Registered Providers to upskill local people in creating energy efficient homes, including the installation and use of green technology.



Objective 4 - Support rural communities to grow organically

- Support the development of new homes in rural areas, through appropriate planning policy, to assist with economic viability and sustainability of those communities;
- Support and enable the development of Neighbourhood Plans;
- Carry out Housing Needs Surveys in rural areas to identify what additional housing is needed;
- Work proactively and in partnership with parish councils to find ways to meet local housing need;
- Encourage partners to engage local people in rural communities, particularly those in housing need in developing community-led housing solutions.



Objective 5 - Promote and support the development of new garden communities

- Enable land release through the development of key infrastructure e.g. roads and services;
- Develop policy through the Joint Core Strategy Review that supports the development of the Garden Town;
- Progress plans for developing Phase 1 of the Garden Town (around 850 homes).

Objective 6 - Maximise the supply of appropriate affordable housing giving priority to social rented homes

- Work with partners to establish opportunities through new developments to provide larger family homes;
- Continue to build strong and effective partnership with Registered Provider partners;
- Support Registered Providers to access public funding, to increase the percentage of affordable homes within new developments.
- Prioritise the delivery of social rented properties to reflect the local evidence of housing need.

Objective 7 - Support the development of resilient and vibrant communities

- Promote and support the design of high quality, mixed tenure neighbourhoods with appropriate services;
- Place community development, wellbeing and sustainability at the heart of new developments;
- Put policies in place to ensure that the right infrastructure (transport, services, community space etc.) is developed at the right time within new communities;
- Work with private developers and Registered Providers to ensure that new homes and communities are managed effectively.
- Support a diverse range of different forms of housing for example self build and co housing schemes.



Regenerating and making best use of existing housing

Our objectives

1. Make better use of under-utilised land and existing homes
2. Improve conditions and standards in existing housing
3. Respond to climate change and fuel poverty
4. Support housing-led regeneration

Actions

Objective 1 - Make better use of under-utilised land and existing homes

- Develop a complementary strategy to reduce the number of empty homes, making use of the legal powers available;
- Work with partners to establish arrangements for management of empty homes that are brought into use through management orders;
- Establish and promote policies to support social housing tenants to downsize, releasing family sized homes;
- Explore opportunities to work with partners to bring under-utilised buildings into use as housing, such as high street shops, redundant offices and industrial units;
- Review the options for dealing with social rented homes that are unpopular and difficult to let.

Objective 2 - Improve conditions and standards in existing housing

- Analyse the findings of the Gloucestershire County Stock Condition Survey and put in place an action plan to address the findings for Tewkesbury Borough;
- Improve communication and raise resident awareness in the private sector about how to access financial help and obtain advice to make improvements to their properties;
- Work with Registered Providers and other partners to collect data and identify properties that would benefit from energy efficiencies and other improvement measures;
- Establish a local private landlord forum to share good practice;
- Adopt a flexible and proactive approach to the use of Better Care Fund resources to improve accessibility of communal spaces and community buildings as well as individual homes;
- Develop plans to ensure accessible homes are available to people who need them;
- Effectively target Disabled Facilities Grants to ensure they benefit those who need them.



“Identify properties
most at risk from
climate change
impacts...”

Objective 3 - Respond to climate change and fuel poverty

- Work jointly with Registered Providers and other partners to support carbon reduction demonstration projects and procure funding to assist with carbon reduction measures;
- Promote opportunities and provide advice to residents to enable them to improve environmental standards in their homes to assist in meeting national energy efficiency standards.
- Support partners to target advice at households most at risk of fuel poverty;
- Identify properties most at risk from climate change impacts, including flooding, and work with owners/landlords to implement mitigation measures.

Objective 4 - Support housing-led regeneration

- Support the housing-led regeneration of allocated brownfield sites in Tewkesbury town centre;
- Continue the Heritage Action Zone work, unlocking upper floors for residential use;
- Work with Registered Providers and other landowners to establish opportunities for land assembly, enabling more effective regeneration of existing homes and estates;
- Support opportunities to make use of redundant land for temporary and social housing, promoting the use of modular construction methods.
- Make available funds from commuted sums received from developers to maximise affordable housing provision in regeneration schemes.





“Engage key partners in exploring new ways of helping rough sleepers”

Meeting the housing needs of homeless households and others with specific housing needs

Our objectives

1. Seek to prevent homelessness occurring and when it does arise, ensure an appropriate response is in place.
2. Address the need for specialist, supported accommodation for older people, people with learning disabilities and those with mental health needs.
3. Ensure the right accommodation and support is available for survivors of domestic abuse.
4. Identify and respond to the housing needs of young people, particularly care leavers and those from rural areas.
5. Ensure the accommodation needs of the Gypsy, Roma and Traveller community are understood and resolved.
6. Improve and increase our understanding of customer experience.

Actions

Objective 1 – Seek to prevent homelessness occurring and when it does arise, ensure an appropriate response is in place

- Work together to develop a proactive, multi-agency approach to ensuring homeless households are referred for appropriate support;
- Continue to provide support for people to sustain their tenancies, including money advice;
- Engage key partners in exploring new ways of helping rough sleepers and other individuals with complex and multiple needs;
- Promote the Homeseeker Plus service and provide support for people to use it;
- Develop new temporary accommodation solutions to meet local needs in a dispersed way across Tewkesbury, including piloting a ‘Temporary to Permanent’ model utilising a small number of social rented units and making greater use of private lettings.

Objective 2 – Address the need for specialist, supported accommodation for older people, people with learning disabilities and those with mental health needs

- Conclude the plans for the development of extra care housing at Perrybrook, Brockworth;
- Review the need for, location and design of additional extra care housing and other specialist, supported accommodation outlined in the Gloucestershire Housing with Care Strategy, 2020, through engagement with potential occupiers;
- Review the appropriateness of existing supported accommodation and take action to improve standards or reconsider its future use.



Objective 3 – Ensure the right accommodation and support is available for survivors of domestic abuse

- Raise awareness of domestic abuse, and the services available, amongst staff in all relevant agencies to ensure an appropriate response at the first opportunity;
- Identify suitable, dispersed units of accommodation to meet the emergency refuge and move-on needs of survivors of domestic abuse.
- Support the aims and objectives of the Gloucestershire Domestic Abuse Strategy (2021 – 2024) to achieve a whole housing approach.



Objective 4 – Identify and respond to the housing needs of vulnerable young people, particularly care leavers and those from rural areas

- Fully implement the countywide Care Leavers Covenant locally, including developing a local 'offer' to redress the disadvantage that care leavers may have experienced through childhood;
- Ensure services work effectively together with care leavers and other vulnerable young people to prevent future homelessness;
- Ensure the future needs of children and young people are considered in rural housing needs assessments.



Objective 5 – Ensure the accommodation needs of the Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople are understood and resolved

- Conclude the Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople Accommodation Needs Assessment; and

- Engage with the local communities to understand their requirements and to develop a plan for resolving needs.

Objective 6 – Improve and increase our understanding of customer experience

- Engage with people with 'lived experience' of homelessness and other disadvantage in developing plans for the delivery of housing services;
- Ensure that services, including Homeseeker Plus and community-based support services are well promoted and accessible to those who need them.



Glossary

Affordable housing	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) - National Planning Policy Guidance 2021, Annex 2 contains a full definition. National Planning Policy Framework (publishing.service.gov.uk)
Care Leavers Covenant	This is an agreement between the Tewkesbury BC and the 5 other district authorities in Gloucestershire, along with Gloucestershire County Council to provide an enhanced package of support to care leavers in the area.
Disabled Facilities Grant	The statutory Disabled Facilities Grant regime provides the framework that enables the council to administer grants for aids and adaptations to help residents remain independent in their own home for longer
Extra care housing	The term 'extra care' housing is used to describe developments that comprise self-contained homes with design features and support services available to enable self-care and independent living.
Fabric first approach	A 'fabric first' approach to building design involves maximising the performance of the components and materials that make up the building fabric itself, before considering the use of mechanical or electrical systems. This can improve energy efficiency and have a positive impact on reducing carbon emissions.
Heritage Action Zone	The High Streets Heritage Action Zones scheme, backed by government funding, aims to help with the recovery of local high streets from regenerating historic buildings to helping to engage local communities through art and cultural projects. Tewkesbury High Street Heritage Action Zone – Tewkesbury Borough Council
Homeseecker Plus	Homeseecker Plus is a choice based lettings (CBL) scheme run by the seven local authorities in partnership with the majority of Social Housing Landlords operating within Gloucestershire and West Oxfordshire. The online application scheme manages the allocation of rented affordable housing in the partnership area. Homeseecker Plus private lettings scheme – Tewkesbury Borough Council
Gloucestershire Housing with Care Strategy	This strategy sets out the key priorities for housing with care in Gloucestershire for all adults with a care need that would be best met through housing with flexible onsite care. housing-with-care-report_17feb_21.pdf (gloucestershire.gov.uk)
Garden Communities	Tewkesbury Garden Town - Is based upon a potential development of 10,195 homes and approximately 100 hectares of employment land, the programme was awarded Garden Town status. This development opportunity will be supported by infrastructure including roads, schools and green space to meet the community needs. More information can be found here: Tewkesbury Garden Town

Glossary

West Cheltenham Cyber Central garden community

Cheltenham and Tewkesbury councils are working together to drive a world-class development at West Cheltenham known as “Cyber Central garden community”. The vision is to create a vibrant pioneering community integrating hi-tech business, residential and leisure uses. It will require the highest standards of environmental sustainability integrating exemplar homes as part of a thriving campus and garden community.

Gloucestershire Housing Condition Survey

A survey of a proportion of all housing in the county to identify the condition and any hazards, including excess cold and risk of falls, carried out on a regular basis and used to identify where the council and it's partners need to focus interventions.

Joint Core Strategy

The Joint Core Strategy (JCS) is a partnership between Gloucester City Council, Cheltenham Borough Council and Tewkesbury Borough Council, which sets out a strategic planning framework for the three areas. The JCS was adopted by all three councils in December 2017 and is now undergoing a review. More information can be found here: [Joint Core Strategy](#)

Modern Methods of Construction

‘Modern Methods of Construction’ (MMC) is a wide term, embracing a range of offsite manufacturing and onsite techniques that provide alternatives to traditional house building.

National Described Space Standards

This is a government standard that sets out requirements for the internal floor area of new dwellings at a defined level of occupancy as well as floor areas and dimensions for key parts of the home, notably bedrooms, storage and floor to ceiling height. More information can be found here: [Technical housing standards – nationally described space standard - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

Older person’s household

A household where all members are over 65

Registered Provider

The term registered provider is defined in the Housing and Regeneration Act 2008 as a provider of social housing.

Social housing

Social housing is housing that is more affordable than homes generally available in the open market. It can be rented from a registered provider or councils (where the council still owns council housing) at reduced rents or purchased on a part rent, part buy basis known as “shared ownership”. It exists to help people who can’t afford to rent or buy a home on the open market.

Tewkesbury Borough Local Plan

The plan that sets out detailed policies and specific proposals for the development and use of land in Tewkesbury Borough. It guides most planning decisions. More about Tewkesbury Borough planning policies can be found here: [Planning policy – Tewkesbury Borough Council](#)

Data Sources

Affordable housing supply	Gloucestershire Local Housing Needs Assessment 2020 Local Housing Needs Assessment
Empty homes	Tewkesbury Borough Council
Ethnicity	Office for National Statistics census 2011
Homelessness data	TBC homelessness records
House price data	Office for National Statistics
Household projections	Gloucestershire Local Housing Needs Assessment 2020
Households where a limiting long-term illness or disability affects housing need.	Gloucestershire Local Housing Needs Assessment 2020
Local child poverty rates, After Housing Costs	The DWP/HMRC data provide the number and percentage of children aged 0-15 years who are living in households with below 60% median income before housing costs. Child-Poverty-AHC-estimates-2015-2020_final.xlsx (live.com)
New supply	Gloucestershire Local Housing Needs Assessment 2020
Number of households in fuel poverty	Sub-regional fuel poverty in England, 2021 (2019 data) (publishing.service.gov.uk)
Population forecast	Office for National Statistics Subnational population projections for England: 2018
Private sector rents	Gloucestershire Local Housing Needs Assessment 2020
Tenure split	Office for National Statistics - Subnational estimates of dwellings by tenure, England



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