

# Fleckney

Housing Needs Assessment (HNA)

June 2024

## Quality information

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## Table of Contents

|   |    |
|---|----|
| 1. Executive Summary.....                               | 6  |
| 2. Context.....   | 13 |
| Local context.....                                      | 13 |
| The NA boundary and key statistics.....                 | 13 |
| The housing market area context.....                    | 15 |
| Planning policy context.....                            | 15 |
| Quantity of housing to provide.....                     | 16 |
| 3. Objectives and approach.....                         | 18 |
| Objectives.....   | 18 |
| Affordability and Affordable Housing.....               | 18 |
| Type and Size.....                                      | 18 |
| Specialist Housing for Older People.....                | 19 |
| Approach.....   | 19 |
| 4. Affordability and Affordable Housing.....            | 21 |
| Introduction.....                                       | 21 |
| Definitions.....  | 21 |
| Current tenure profile.....                             | 22 |
| Affordability.....                                      | 23 |
| House prices.....                                       | 23 |
| Income.....   | 24 |
| Affordability Thresholds.....                           | 25 |
| Estimates of the need for Affordable Housing.....       | 30 |
| Evidence in the HENA.....                               | 30 |
| Affordable Housing policies in Neighbourhood Plans..... | 30 |
| Application of Local Plan policies.....                 | 30 |
| Affordable Housing at Neighbourhood level.....          | 31 |
| Conclusions- Tenure and Affordability.....              | 32 |
| 5. Type and Size.....                                   | 36 |
| Introduction.....                                       | 36 |
| Definitions.....  | 36 |
| The current housing mix.....                            | 37 |
| Dwelling type.....                                      | 37 |
| Dwelling size.....                                      | 38 |
| Population characteristics.....                         | 39 |
| Age.....  | 39 |
| Household composition and occupancy.....                | 40 |
| Future population and size needs.....                   | 43 |
| Age.....  | 43 |
| Tenure.....   | 45 |
| Type.....   | 46 |
| Conclusions- Type and Size.....                         | 47 |
| 6. Specialist housing for older people.....             | 49 |
| Introduction.....                                       | 49 |
| Definitions.....  | 50 |
| Specialist housing for older people.....                | 50 |

|  |    |
|--|----|
| Demographic characteristics .....                              | 51 |
| Future needs for specialist accommodation and adaptations..... | 52 |
| Further considerations.....                                    | 53 |
| Care homes.....  | 54 |
| The Role of Mainstream Housing .....                           | 55 |
| Conclusions- Specialist Housing for Older People .....         | 56 |
| 7. Next Steps .....  | 58 |
| Recommendations for next steps .....                           | 58 |
| Appendix A : Assessment geography .....                        | 59 |
| Appendix B : Local Plan context.....                           | 61 |
| Policies in the adopted local plan .....                       | 61 |
| Appendix C : Affordability calculations.....                   | 63 |
| Market housing.....  | 63 |
| i) Market sales .....  | 63 |
| i) Private Rented Sector (PRS).....                            | 64 |
| Affordable Housing.....  | 65 |
| i) Social rent.....  | 65 |
| i) Affordable rent.....  | 65 |
| i) Affordable home ownership.....                              | 66 |
| Appendix D : Affordable Housing need and policy.....           | 70 |
| Affordable housing policy .....                                | 70 |
| Appendix E : Specialist housing for older people .....         | 73 |
| Background data tables.....                                    | 73 |
| HLIN calculations .....  | 74 |
| Appendix F : Housing Needs Assessment Glossary .....           | 75 |

**List of acronyms used in the text:**

|       |   |
|-------|---|
| DLUHC | Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (formerly MHCLG)   |
| FWP   | Fleckney Neighbourhood Plan Review Working Party  |
| HDC   | Harborough District Council   |
| HMA   | Housing Market Area   |
| HNA   | Housing Needs Assessment  |
| HRF   | Housing Requirement Figure (the total number of homes the NA is expected to plan for, usually supplied by LPAs) |
| HLIN  | Housing Learning and Improvement Network  |
| HRP   | Household Reference Person  |
| LA    | Local Authority   |
| LHN   | Local Housing Need  |
| LHNA  | Local Housing Needs Assessment  |
| LPA   | Local Planning Authority  |
| LSOA  | Lower Layer Super Output Area   |
| MSOA  | Middle Layer Super Output Area  |
| NA    | Neighbourhood (Plan) Area   |
| NP    | Neighbourhood Plan  |
| NPPF  | National Planning Policy Framework  |
| OA    | Output Area   |
| ONS   | Office for National Statistics  |
| PPG   | Planning Practice Guidance  |
| PRS   | Private Rented Sector   |
| RQ    | Research Question   |
| SHMA  | Strategic Housing Market Assessment   |
| VOA   | Valuation Office Agency   |

# 1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 Fleckney is a Neighbourhood Area (NA) located in the district of Harborough in Leicestershire. The NA boundary covers the areas administered by Fleckney Parish Council.
- 1.2 It should be noted that it is not possible to exactly recreate the NA boundary using Census Output Areas (OAs) in either 2011 or 2021, as discussed in Appendix A. It is likely due to the Fleckney parish boundary being amended in October 2021, with the Parish Council then requesting an amendment to the NA in November 2022. This was approved in December 2022.
- 1.3 This means that the Census data throughout the report relates to a slightly different area than the NA (see Figure A-1). Census data in the tables throughout the report is therefore represented as percentages rather than raw figures in the majority of instances. The data is still considered robust, with the overall characteristics of the NA still reflected when using this proxy data.
- 1.4 It is important to note that parish level Census data is available for limited datasets in the 2021 Census and aligns with the exact geography of the NA. It is not possible to use this data throughout the report as not all of the required datasets are available, the data is not comparable to 2011, and the available datasets are not all given to a suitable level of detail. A mix of geographies cannot be used throughout the report. However, headline data for the population and number of households is possible. 2021 Census data for the exact NA shows a population of 5,033, with 2,104 households.
- 1.5 The 2021 Census recorded 4,926 individuals in the Fleckney study area, indicating an increase of 32 people (+0.7%) since the 2011 Census. This is approximately 107 fewer individuals than the exact NA, indicating that the study area used is generally representative of the NA population, households, and dwelling stock.
- 1.6 Throughout the report, when discussing Census data, Neighbourhood Area (NA) refers to the proxy area shown in Figure A-1 as this data is being used to represent the NA.
- 1.7 There has been significant development in Fleckney in recent years, some of which has taken place outside of the study area used for Census data in this report. Harborough District Council has provided data showing that 348 new homes were built between 2011/12 and 2022/23. The proportion of affordable dwellings is not fully known, as this information was only recorded for 141 completions. Of these 141 completions, 108 were open market dwellings and 33 were affordable units, suggesting 23.4% of dwellings were delivered as affordable housing.
- 1.8 Data provided by Harborough District Council shows that as of March 2023, outstanding commitments (dwellings on sites with planning permission) total 325 homes. Some of these commitments are residual supply on large sites (totalling 307 dwellings across 3 sites). The remaining 18 dwellings are on minor sites (11 sites). It is likely that some of these have now been built out due to the date of the data.

- 1.9 This Executive Summary details the conclusions of each chapter of this Housing Needs Assessment (HNA), addressing each of the themes agreed with the Working Party at the outset of the research.
- 1.10 Data from the 2021 Census is continuing to be released. At present, the available data covers population, households, tenure, and dwelling stock characteristics. Some data from the Census 2021 at the localised level is not yet available, as well as some data comparing numerous variables. As such this HNA will draw on the latest available data from the 2021 Census where possible and will also continue to use other data sets, including 2011 Census, Valuation Office Agency data, and ONS projections where necessary to build up evidence at the neighbourhood level.

## **Tenure and Affordability**

### **Current tenure profile**

- 1.11 It can be seen that 81.0% of properties in the NA are owned, compared to 75.8% in Harborough and 61.3% in England. As a result, a smaller proportion rent socially and privately in the NA compared to the district and national averages. Whilst the percentage of people owning their home through shared ownership in the NA is similar to the national average, it is half that of the district average.
- 1.12 Between 2011 and 2021, a large increase can be seen in the percentage of those privately renting (45.0%) and socially renting (17.1%). There has been a small increase in the amount of people owning their home (2.3%), whilst there has been a 5.3% decrease in the amount of people owning their home through shared ownership. The large increase in rent tenures could indicate tightening affordability in the NA or reflect the tenure offering associated with recent developments.

### **Affordability**

- 1.13 The median, which is the middle number when you sort the data from smallest to largest has grown overall between 2014 and 2023, despite fluctuations in 2016, 2018 and 2021, with an overall growth of 44.0%, from £176,000 to £253,500. The lower quartile is the middle figure of the lowest 50% of prices and a good representation of entry-level housing. Whilst the house prices for the lower quartile are lower overall, they have increased steadily between 20014 and 2022, before decreasing in 2023. There has been an overall increase of 37.1%, increasing from £142,250 to £195,000.
- 1.14 It appears that local households on average incomes are unable to access even entry-level homes unless they have the advantage of a very large deposit. Market housing, even with the benefit of a higher than average income, is likely to remain out of reach to most. The median house price would require an annual income 37% higher than the current average.
- 1.15 Private renting is generally only affordable to average earners. Households made up of one lower quartile earners cannot afford the given rental thresholds, but households made up of two lower quartile earners can. Affordability is 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.

- 1.16 This report has estimated the income required to afford First Homes and tested the implications of 30%, 40% and 50% discount levels. First Homes with 30% discounts are affordable to households on average incomes and households with two lower quartile earners.
- 1.17 Shared ownership appears to be more affordable than First Homes but is broadly accessible to the same groups. Government has recently announced that the minimum equity share for shared ownership will fall to 10% of the property value.<sup>1</sup> If this is delivered in the NA, it will make shared ownership easier to access for more people.
- 1.18 If Rent to Buy is offered at a discount to *entry level* rents, this would expand this route to home ownership, including to double lower quartile earners. It would also provide a route to ownership for households with little or no deposit.
- 1.19 Affordable rent and socially rented housing is affordable to average income households and lower quartile earners within the NA. Those with the lowest incomes are likely to be by Housing Benefit to access housing and will rely on Social/Affordable Rented housing to secure affordable accommodation.

### **The need for Affordable Housing**

- 1.20 The HENA identifies the need for 321 additional affordable rented homes and 177 affordable home ownership dwellings each year in Harborough as a whole.
- 1.21 When the HENA figures are pro-rated to the study area based on its fair share of the population (5.05% of the district's population (Census 2021)), this equates to 25.1 homes per annum or 426.7 homes over the Neighbourhood Plan period (2024-2041). This equates to 8.9 affordable ownership and 16.2 affordable rent properties per annum or 151.3 affordable ownership and 285.4 affordable rent over the plan period.
- 1.22 It should be noted that this pro-rating is based on 2021 Census population figures, which do not account for the large volume of development in Fleckney over the last couple of years. In addition, there are 325 commitments in Fleckney as of March 2023. If these dwellings have been and will be built out in line with policy requirements for Affordable Housing then a substantial proportion of the need identified could be met. There may however still be some residual Affordable Housing needs.

### **Affordable Housing policy**

- 1.23 HDC's adopted policy on this subject (Policy H2) requires 40% of all new housing to be affordable on sites larger than 10 dwellings. HDC's completion data does not show what

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<sup>1</sup> The previous minimum equity share was 25%. This change took effect from 28 June 2021 and transitional arrangements are in place for planning policy documents that are prepared during the implementation timeframe. Changes are also introduced to make the process of staircasing to full ownership more gradual with lower minimum increments of 1%. The ministerial statement confirming and detailing the changes is available here: <https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-statements/detail/2021-05-24/hws48>.

percentage of completions in the NA over the past decade were made up of affordable housing.

1.24 Table 1-1 summarises Fleckney's position with regards to the expected delivery of Affordable Housing, and how this might ideally be apportioned among sub-categories of tenure to meet local needs over the Plan period. This exercise simply applies the housing requirement figure for the area to the Local Plan policy expectation, and shows the quantities of affordable housing for rent and sale that would be delivered if the tenure mix proposed in this HNA were to be rigidly enforced. In this sense it is hypothetical, and the outcomes in practice may differ, either as a result of measures taken in the neighbourhood plan (e.g. if the group plans for more housing (and therefore more affordable housing) than the local plan, or if the group decides to influence the tenure mix in other ways), or as a result of site-specific constraints.

**Table 1-1: Estimated delivery of Affordable Housing in Fleckney**

|   | <b>Step in Estimation</b>                                   | <b>Expected delivery</b> |
|---|---|--------------------------|
| A | Residual housing requirement figure                         | 180                      |
| B | Affordable housing quota (%) in LPA's Local Plan            | 40%                      |
| C | Potential total Affordable Housing in NA (A x B)            | 72                       |
| D | Rented % (e.g. social/ affordable rented)                   | 75%                      |
| E | Rented number (C x D)                                       | 54                       |
| F | Affordable home ownership % (e.g. First Homes, Rent to Buy) | 25%                      |
| G | Affordable home ownership number (C x F)                    | 18                       |

*Source: AECOM estimate based on LPA's affordable housing policies, AECOM's indicative tenure mix*

1.25 This expected level of delivery does not meet the quantity of demand identified in estimates of the need for affordable housing through using the HENA. The recommendation is therefore that the policy requirement be met wherever possible, and for further avenues for delivering greater quantities of Affordable Housing (such as exception sites) to be explored.

1.26 However, as noted previously, there are 325 commitments in Fleckney as of March 2023. If these dwellings are built out following the tenure split above, then a substantial proportion of the additional need will be met, but not all of it.

1.27 Affordable housing is typically provided and made financially viable by its inclusion as a proportion of larger market developments, as guided by Local Plan policy. However, if the community wishes to boost the supply of affordable housing, there are other, more proactive routes available for its provision. For example, using neighbourhood

development orders, identifying exception sites or developing community land trusts are all ways of boosting the supply of affordable housing.

## Type and Size

### The current housing mix

- 1.28 A large proportion of dwellings in the NA are detached properties (50.7%). This is followed by semi-detached properties which account for a smaller share of 32.1%. Terraced houses and flats make up an even smaller proportion of dwellings in the NA, accounting for 12.4% and 4.8% respectively. This broad profile remains unchanged since 2011, though the proportion of detached. Semi-detached and flats have increased slightly – effectively embedding existing imbalances in the dwellings stock, which may be contributing to affordability issues. 2023 VOA data shows that 11.5% of properties in the NA are bungalows, compared to 12.2% across Harborough and 9.2% nationally.
- 1.29 The majority of dwellings in the NA have 3 bedrooms, accounting for 40.8% of properties in the NA. This is followed by 4+ bedrooms and 2-bedroom properties. Accounting for 28.9% and 24.9% respectively. 1-bedroom properties account for a smaller proportion of dwellings in the NA, 5.4%. Whilst the overall pattern remains similar between 2011 and 2021, table 5-3 shows that there have been completions in all size categories.

### Population characteristics

- 1.30 The total proportion of one person households in the NA is similar to Harborough but lower than the national average. Within this category, the proportion of one person households aged 66 and over is higher in the NA compared to the district and national averages and as a result the proportion of ‘other’ one person households is lower.
- 1.31 Fleckney has a similar proportion of one family only households to Harborough but a higher proportion than the national average. Within this category, there is a larger proportion of one family only households all aged 66 and over compared to the district and national average. There is a similar proportion of one family households with no children compared to the district average but higher than the national average whilst there is a slightly higher proportion of dependent children compared to both the district and national average.
- 1.32 The non-dependent children grew by 24.1% between 2011 and 2021 in the NA –slightly lower than the district average 27.6% but significantly higher than the national average of 3.5%.
- 1.33 In the study area, 80.3% of dwellings are under-occupied by at least one bedroom, whilst 45.5% of dwellings are under-occupied by two bedrooms. Whilst under-occupancy is high across all household types, is particularly high in families aged 65+ and families under 65 with no children, at 97.5% and 97.3% respectively. This may suggest that the larger housing isn't being occupied by households with the most family members, but by the people with the most wealth or by older people who have not chosen or able to move to smaller properties. There is some over-occupancy in the NA, with 3.3% of families

under 66 with adult children and 3.0% of families under 66 with dependent children living in potentially overcrowded conditions.

### **Future population and size needs**

- 1.34 Population growth can be expected to be driven by the oldest households, with a 104.0% increase expected in the 65 and over age group. This increase is significantly higher than the next largest increase of 23.0% for the 55 to 64 age group. The table shows that the 25 to 34 and 24 and under age groups are expected to increase by 22.0% and 15.0% respectively, whilst the 35 to 54 age group is expected to increase the least of all age groups, at 10.0%.
- 1.35 AECOM's modelling of future population growth, occupancy patterns and existing stock mix suggest a range of different dwelling sizes are required. Some emphasis may be given to larger properties because of their more limited numbers in the stock at present.
- 1.36 However, it is important to remember that other factors should be considered in determining the dwelling mix that is desirable in the NA 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.

## **Specialist Housing for Older People**

- 1.37 There is a total of 44 units of specialist accommodation in the NA at present, 29 of which are available for social rent for those in financial need, with the remainder being offered for leasehold market purchase.
- 1.38 In 2021, 9.0% of the population in the NA is aged 75+ compared to 10.3% in Harborough. By the end of the plan period, this is expected to increase to 13.7% of the Na population and 15.7% of the population in Harborough.
- 1.39 The potential need for specialist housing with some form of additional care for older people 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. This can be sense-checked using a toolkit based on national research and assumptions.
- 1.40 These two methods of estimating the future need in Fleckney produce a range of 84 to 106 specialist accommodation units that might be required during the Plan period. These estimates are based on the projected growth of the older population, thereby assuming that today's older households are already well accommodated. If this is found not to be the case, it would justify aspiring to exceed the range identified here.
- 1.41 The majority of specialist housing needed in the NA would be market housing (91) whilst a much smaller proportion of affordable units would be required (15). This is driven by the low share of 55-75 year olds currently renting (and therefore less likely to rely on subsidised specialist housing). The split between housing with care (49) and housing with adaptations, sheltered or retirement living (57) are more balanced.

- 1.42 As noted above, the main unmet need in the NA is for market sheltered housing. This could be satisfied by making sure all new housing is accessible and adaptable for people with lower support needs. Local Plan policy H5 Housing density, mix and standards provides explicit encouragement for development to accommodate specific groups such as older people, and currently requires 4% of dwellings on sites of 100 units or more to meet the accessible and adaptable standards set out in Building Regulations, Part M4(2) Category 2. However, we believe this to be an error as this expectation is very low for M4(2) standards. Instead, we believe this to be an expectation that 4% of new homes will be built to Category M4(3) standards. As a result, the Working Group should discuss this with the LPA. A policy specific to the NA could increase this requirement in order to meet the need for market sheltered housing, though this would require discussion with HDC. The Working Party may also be able to encourage the adaptation of existing properties through grant schemes and other means (though it is acknowledged that Neighbourhood Plans may have limited influence over changes to the existing stock).
- 1.43 It is considered that the study area's position in the settlement hierarchy makes it a relatively less suitable location for specialist accommodation on the basis of the accessibility criteria and the considerations of cost-effectiveness above. As such, noting that there is no specific requirement or obligation to provide the specialist accommodation need arising from the study area entirely within the Neighbourhood Area boundaries, it is recommended it could be provided in a 'hub and spoke' model. In the case of the study area, suburban Leicester or Market Harborough are considered to have potential to accommodate the specialist housing need arising from the Neighbourhood Area (i.e. to be the hub in the hub-and-spoke model).

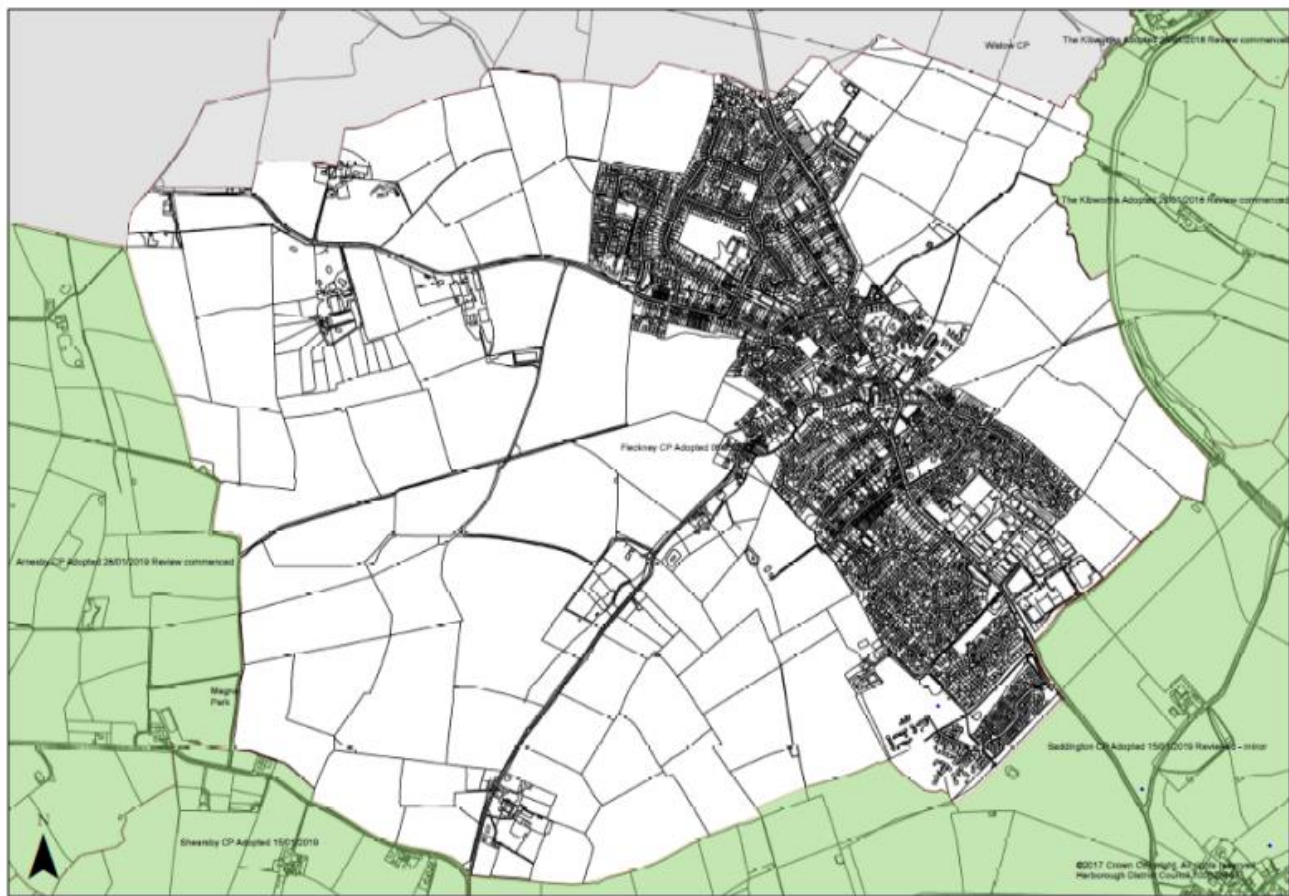
## 2. Context

### Local context

- 2.1 Fleckney is a Neighbourhood Area (NA) located in the district of Harborough in Leicestershire. The NA boundary is the same as the Parish boundary and was designated in December 2022, replacing the March 2016 designation.
- 2.2 The Neighbourhood Plan is envisaged to start in 2024 and extend to 2041, therefore covering a period of 17 years. The evidence supplied in this report will look forward to the Plan end date of 2041, but where possible will also provide annualised figures which can be extrapolated to a different term if the Plan period changes.
- 2.3 The Neighbourhood Area is primarily rural in nature, with residential areas stretching in a ribbon from the north to south boundary of the NA and to the east of the NA. The study area is connected to Leicester and Market Harborough via the A6 to the east. The closest train stations are Market Harborough, (approximately 11km southeast) and South Wigston (approximately 8km northwest).
- 2.4 The South Leicestershire Medical Group Medical Centre and the Fleckney Dental Clinic is located within the NA. There is a Post Office and Co-Op food shop within the NA. Fleckney C E Primary School is located within the NA whilst the closest public secondary school, Kibworth Mead Academy is located outside of the NA, in Kibworth Beaucamp.

### The NA boundary and key statistics

- 2.5 For Census purposes, the NA is made up, like the rest of England, of statistical units called Output Areas (OAs). A breakdown of the OAs relevant to Fleckney is provided in Appendix A. A map of the Plan area appears below in Figure 2-1.

**Figure 2-1: Map of the Fleckney Neighbourhood Area**

Source: *Harborough District Council*

- 2.6 As noted in the Executive Summary, it is not possible to exactly recreate the NA boundary using Census Output Areas (OAs) in either 2011 or 2021, as discussed in Appendix A. This means that the Census data throughout the report relates to a slightly different area than the NA (see Figure A-1). Census data in the tables throughout the report is therefore represented as percentages rather than raw figures in the majority of instances. The data is still considered robust and a sufficient representation of the overall characteristics of the NA.
- 2.7 Throughout the report, when discussing Census data, Neighbourhood Area refers to the proxy area shown in Figure A-1 as this data is being used to represent the NA.
- 2.8 It is important to note that parish level Census data is available for limited datasets in the 2021 Census and aligns with the exact geography of the NA. It is not possible to use this data throughout the report as not all of the required datasets are available, the data is not comparable to 2011, and the available datasets are not all given to a suitable level of detail. A mix of geographies cannot be used throughout the report. However, headline data for the population and number of households is possible. 2021 Census data for the exact NA shows a population of 5,033, with 2,104 households.
- 2.9 At the time of the 2011 Census the study area was home to 4,894 residents, formed into 1,948 households and occupying 1,982 dwellings. The 2021 Census indicates

population growth of around 32 individuals in the study area (+0.7%) since 2011, recording a total of 4,926 residents and 2,065 households. 107 fewer individuals were identified in the 2021 Census study area data for Fleckney than the parish profile data. The study area data is considered to be generally representative of the NA population, households, and dwelling stock.

- 2.10 There has been substantial development in the study area in recent years. Harborough District Council provided completions data showing that 348 dwellings were built between 2011/12 and 2022/23. The increase in dwellings is far greater than the increase in households between the 2011 and 2021 Census (+117 households based on study area and +156 households based on parish profiles data). This could be due to development taking place post-Census in 2021/22 or 2022/23, or earlier in 2021 meaning that the completed dwellings were not yet occupied. It also highlights that the difference in geography between the exact NA and the study area is likely to have minimal impact on the characteristics identified in the report.

## The housing market area context

- 2.11 Whilst this HNA focuses on the Fleckney NA it is important to keep in mind that neighbourhoods are not self-contained housing market areas. Housing market areas are usually wider than local authority areas and often stretch across a number of districts or boroughs. This is because housing market areas are inherently linked to the labour market, employment patterns and travel to work areas.
- 2.12 In the case of Fleckney, the NA sits within a housing market area which covers Leicester and Leicestershire.<sup>[1]</sup> This means that when households who live in these authorities move home, the vast majority move within this geography.
- 2.13 At the neighbourhood scale it is not possible to be definitive about housing need and demand because neighbourhoods, including Fleckney, are closely linked to other areas. In the case of Fleckney, changes in need or demand in settlements nearby is likely to impact on the neighbourhood.
- 2.14 In summary, Fleckney functions within a wider strategic area. As well as fostering good working relationships with the local planning authority (Harborough District Council), it is therefore useful to think about the role of the neighbourhood within the wider area. This HNA can provide evidence to understand this role and the specific features of the neighbourhood within this wider context. Neighbourhood Plans can have a significant impact in shaping their neighbourhoods, enhancing the positive role the neighbourhood plays within the wider housing market, or developing policies to change entrenched patterns and improve housing outcomes in the neighbourhood and wider area.

## Planning policy context

- 2.9 Neighbourhood Plans are required to be in general conformity with adopted strategic

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<sup>[1]</sup> Leicester & Leicestershire Housing & Economic Needs Assessment

local policies.<sup>2</sup> In the case of Harborough District Council, the relevant adopted Local Plan consists of the Harborough Local Plan 2011 – 2031, which was adopted on Tuesday 30<sup>th</sup> April 2019. The Local Plan replaces the Council's Core Strategy 2006 – 2028 and Saved Policies from the previous 2001 Local Plan. The Local Plan sets out the vision, objectives, spatial strategy and planning policies for the entire District area, which includes Fleckney.

- 2.10 In July 2021, the Council's Cabinet took the decision to begin the preparation of a new Local Plan. The revised Local Development Scheme was approved on 4<sup>th</sup> July 2022, replacing the September 2021 version. The new Local Plan was expected to go out to consultation in September/October 2023 and again in December 2024/January 2025, before being submitted for examination in June 2025 and adopted in April 2026. However, a slight delay was announced to the September/October 2023 consultation, with the Issues and Options Consultation instead taking place between 16<sup>th</sup> January and 27<sup>th</sup> February 2024. This new Local Plan is not likely to impact the neighbourhood plan review.
- 2.11 A detailed breakdown of the Local Plan policies relevant to housing need is provided in Appendix B. Here, it is worth summarising the most important points of the adopted Local Plan:
- Local Plan Policy H1 identifies an overall housing target of 3,975 homes for the district during the plan period to 2031;
  - In Policy SS1 Fleckney is designated as a rural centre, which will have a lesser focus for development than the main towns and approximately 307 dwellings is earmarked for all rural centres.
  - Policy H2 states that 40% of all new dwellings are expected to be delivered as Affordable Housing on sites larger than 10 homes. The suggested tenure mix within Affordable Housing is 75% affordable rent to 25% affordable home ownership;
  - Policy H5 sets out an expectation that 4% of new homes will be built to Category M4(2) accessibility standards. However, we believe this to be an error as this expectation is very low for M4(2) standards. Instead, we believe this to be an expectation that 4% of new homes will be built to Category M4(3) standards. As a result, the Working Group should discuss this with the LPA.

## Quantity of housing to provide

- 2.12 The NPPF 2023 (paragraphs 67 and 68) requires LPAs to provide neighbourhood groups upon request with a definitive or an indicative number of houses to plan for over the Neighbourhood Plan period.
- 2.13 Harborough District Council has fulfilled that requirement by providing Fleckney with an indicative figure of 180-500 dwellings to be accommodated within the NA by the end of the Plan period. This figure is outlined in the Local Plan. The Local Plan has a number

<sup>2</sup> A description of the Basic Conditions of Neighbourhood Planning is available at <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/neighbourhood-planning--#basic-conditions-for-neighbourhood-plan-to-referendum>

of options for the distribution of growth that specify the implications for villages including Fleckney. Some of them are for no growth, and others imply 180 to over 500 new homes in the NA. The figure of 180 will be used for calculations in this report, given the large amount of development which has already taken place within the NA.

## 3. Objectives and approach

### Objectives

3.1 This HNA is structured according to a number of themes or topics that were agreed at the outset of the research with the Fleckney Neighbourhood Plan Review Working Party. These themes are broadly aligned with the kinds of housing policy areas available to neighbourhood plans, and each will form a distinct chapter of this report. The sub-sections below give a brief overview of the objectives of each chapter.

### Affordability and Affordable Housing

3.2 Neighbourhood plans may include policies that influence the scale of Affordable Housing provision and the mix of different tenures and products provided through new housing development.

3.3 This chapter has three aims, each given its own sub-section:

- To establish the existing **tenure** of homes within the NA at present (owner occupied, private rented, social/affordable rented, shared ownership);
- To examine the **affordability** of different tenures by considering house prices, rents, local incomes and earnings; and
- To estimate the scale of **need** for Affordable Housing, including the need for those who cannot afford to rent and those who cannot afford to buy.

3.4 The evidence gathered here can be used to justify planning policies in the Neighbourhood Plan, but it is likely that other supporting evidence may be needed, for example on viability. Local Plans typically include policies on Affordable Housing and whilst the Neighbourhood Plan must be in general conformity with these strategic policies, there is scope for Neighbourhood Plan policies to adopt some local variety where this is supported by the evidence.

### Type and Size

3.5 It is common for neighbourhood plans to include policies that influence what form new housing should take in terms of type and size. This requires evidence of what local people need.

3.6 The focus of this chapter is to identify relevant trends and potential gaps in the market that can be used to justify planning policies. It has three aims, each given its own sub-section:

- To establish what **mix** of housing exists in the NA at present;
- To describe relevant characteristics of the local **population**; and
- To look to the **future**, considering how the population is likely to evolve and what mix of homes would be most appropriate to build.

3.7 In addition to the direction of travel revealed by statistics, a variety of reasons sit behind people’s housing choices that are less easy to predict, including wealth, accessibility requirements and personal preference. The conclusions and recommendations given here are sufficient for justifying planning policies but are not definitive. It is also appropriate to take into account other factors and evidence if desired.

## Specialist Housing for Older People

3.8 It may be appropriate for neighbourhood plans in areas with aging populations to include policies relating to specialist housing for older persons.

3.9 This chapter supplements the demographic evidence relating to Type and Size, including the potential demand for downsizing, to consider the quantity and characteristics of need for housing for older people with some form of additional care. Its approach is as follows:

- To review the **current provision** of specialist housing in the NA;
- To estimate the **potential demand** for this form of accommodation with reference to the projected growth in the older population and current rates of mobility limitation; and
- To discuss the potential for meeting this need through adaptations to the mainstream stock and other **additional considerations**.

3.10 This element of the HNA recognises that the majority of older people will live in the mainstream housing stock and that there is no single way to meet their needs. It may also be inappropriate to focus excessively on the needs of one group or to promote a specialist scheme in a location that lacks adequate services. These issues will be drawn out.

## Approach

3.11 This HNA assesses a range of evidence to ensure its findings are robust for the purposes of developing policy at the neighbourhood plan level. This includes data from the 2021 and 2011 Censuses and a range of other data sources, including:

- 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 [Home.co.uk](https://www.home.co.uk);
- Local Authority housing waiting list data; and
- Leicester & Leicestershire Housing & Economic Needs Assessment

3.12 Data from the 2021 Census continues to be released. At present, the available data covers population, households, tenure, and dwelling stock characteristics. Some data at the localised level, including parishes, will not be available until later in 2024, as well as data comparing numerous variables. As such, neighbourhood level HNAs will draw on

the latest available data from the 2021 Census where possible and will also continue to use other data sets, including 2011 Census, Valuation Office Agency data, and ONS parish projections to build up evidence at the neighbourhood level.

## 4. Affordability and Affordable Housing

### Introduction

- 4.1 Neighbourhood plans may include policies that influence the scale of Affordable Housing provision and the mix of different tenures and products provided through new housing development.
- 4.2 This chapter has three aims, each given its own sub-section:
- To establish the existing **tenure** of homes within the NA at present (owner occupied, private rented, social/affordable rented, shared ownership);
  - To examine the **affordability** of different tenures by considering house prices, rents, local incomes and earnings; and
  - To estimate the scale of **need** for Affordable Housing, including the need for those who cannot afford to rent and those who cannot afford to buy.
- 4.3 The evidence gathered here can be used to justify planning policies in the Neighbourhood Plan, but it is likely that other supporting evidence may be needed, for example on viability. Local Plans typically include policies on Affordable Housing and whilst the Neighbourhood Plan must conform with these policies, there is scope for Neighbourhood Plan policies to adopt some local variety where this is supported by the evidence.

### Definitions

- 4.4 This section uses a range of technical terms which are useful to define at the outset:
- **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).
  - **Affordability** refers to the relationship between the cost of housing to buy or rent and the incomes and earnings of households.
  - The definition of **Affordable Housing** is set out in the NPPF 2023 (Annex 2) as 'Housing for sale or rent, for those whose needs are not met by the market...' We refer to Affordable Housing, with capital letters, to denote the specific tenures that are classified as affordable in the current NPPF (Annex 2). A relatively less expensive home for market sale may be affordable but it is not a form of Affordable Housing.
  - A range of affordable home ownership opportunities are included in the Government's definition of Affordable Housing, to meet the needs of those aspiring

to own a home. As part of this, the Government has introduced a new product called First Homes, although this is not yet reflected in Annex 2 of the NPPF.<sup>3</sup>

- **First Homes** is a new product and expected to be an important part of the strategy for improving access to home ownership. Its key features are explained in greater detail in Appendix C.

## Current tenure profile

- 4.5 The current tenure profile is a key feature of the Neighbourhood 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 buy and whether they need subsidy to access housing.
- 4.6 Table 4-1 presents data on tenure in Fleckney compared with Harborough and England from the 2021 Census. It can be seen that 81.0% of households in the NA own their homes, compared to 75.8% in Harborough and 61.3% in England. As a result, a smaller proportion rent socially and privately in the NA compared to the District and national averages. Whilst the percentage of households owning their home through shared ownership in the NA is similar to the national average, it is half that of the district average.
- 4.7 2021 Census data shows that there are 245 private rented properties in the NA. However, data shows that there are currently only 6 properties available to rent (March 2024). This indicates that the majority of properties in the NA are already let, meaning that there may be more people who would like to rent in the NA but are unable to due to lack of availability.
- 4.8 Completions data has been provided by HDC. It is not known what proportion of the 348 completions are affordable as this data has not been collected for all sites. However, of the 141 completions where this data was collected, 33 of them were delivered as affordable units. This could mean that the percentage of shared ownership and socially rented properties could be slightly higher than in is shown in the table below due to delivery of some properties after the Census 2021.

**Table 4-1: Tenure (households) in Fleckney and comparator geographies, 2021**

| Tenure           | Fleckney | Harborough | England |
|------------------|----------|------------|---------|
| Owned            | 81.0%    | 75.8%      | 61.3%   |
| Shared ownership | 0.9%     | 2.0%       | 1.0%    |
| Social rented    | 6.3%     | 8.7%       | 17.1%   |
| Private rented   | 11.9%    | 13.5%      | 20.6%   |

Sources: Census 2021, AECOM Calculations

- 4.9 It is also worth comparing how the tenure mix has changed in the last ten years, using the 2011 Census (see Table 4-2). A large increase can be seen in the percentage of those privately renting (45.0%) and socially renting (17.1%). There has been a small

<sup>3</sup> 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>.

increase in the amount of households owning their home (2.3%), whilst there has been a 5.3% decrease in the number of households owning their home through shared ownership. The large increase in rented tenures is likely to reflect worsening affordability in the NA to some extent, but is also likely to have been influenced by the tenure offering associated with recent developments.

4.10 Again, completions since 2021 are likely to increase the change in the number of shared ownership and socially rented properties in the NA, shown below.

**Table 4-2: Tenure change (households) in Fleckney, 2011-2021**

| Tenure           | 2011  | 2021  | % change |
|------------------|-------|-------|----------|
| Owned            | 1,635 | 1,672 | +2.3%    |
| Shared ownership | 19    | 18    | -5.3%    |
| Social rented    | 111   | 130   | +17.1%   |
| Private rented   | 169   | 245   | +45.0%   |

Sources: Census 2021 and 2011, AECOM Calculations

## Affordability

### House prices

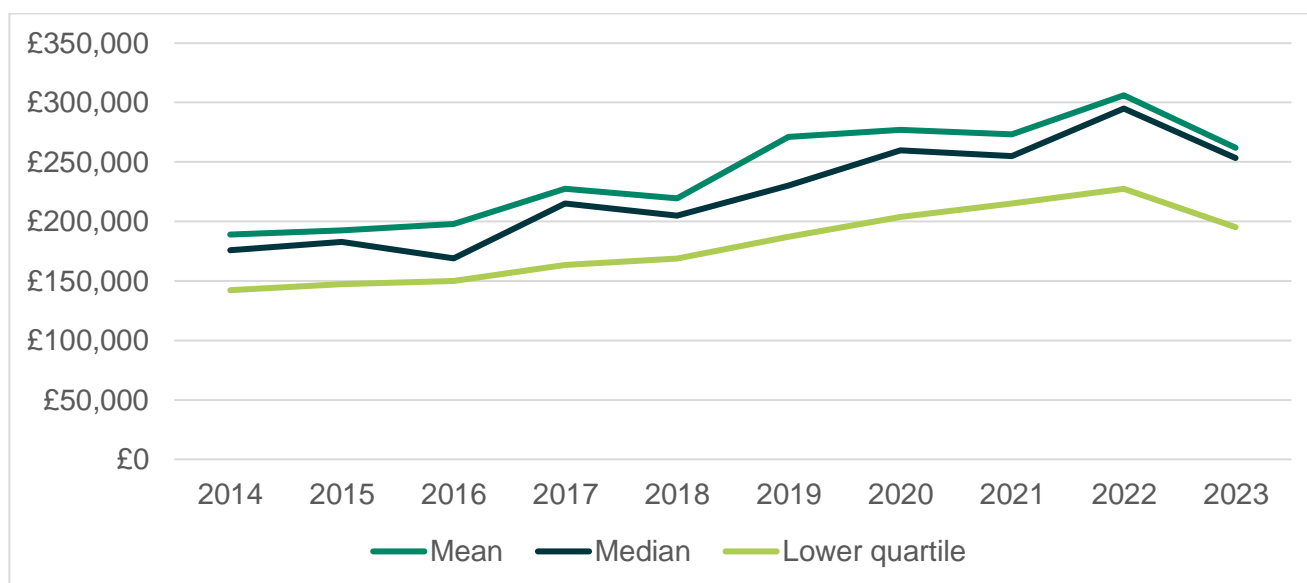
4.11 House prices provide an indication of the level of demand for homes within an area. The relationship between house prices and incomes determines whether housing is affordable to local households and, to a large extent, what tenure, type and size of home they occupy. Changes in affordability over time can indicate pressures in the housing market. As such, it is useful for the evidence base for plans to examine trends in prices and consider what this reveals about the local housing market.

4.12 Figure 4-1 looks at the average and lower quartile house prices in Fleckney based on sales price data published by the Land Registry.

4.13 The median, which is the middle number when you sort the data from smallest to largest has grown overall between 2014 and 2023, despite fluctuations in 2016, 2018 and 2021, with an overall growth of 44.0%, from £176,000 to £253,500. The mean broadly follows the same trend as the median, with an overall growth of 38.5%, increasing from £189,037 to £261,800.

4.14 The lower quartile is the middle figure of the lowest 50% of prices and a good representation of entry-level housing. Whilst the house prices for the lower quartile are lower overall, they have increased steadily between 2014 and 2022, before decreasing in 2023. There has been an overall increase of 37.1%, increasing from £142,250 to £195,000 over the decade however.

4.15 House prices in the LA are higher than in the NA. The mean house price in the LA is 57.3% higher than the NA, whilst the median is 24.3% higher and the lower quartile price is 23.1% higher.

**Figure 4-1: House prices by quartile in Fleckney, 2014-2023**

Source: Land Registry PPD

4.16 Table 4-3 breaks down house prices by type, presenting the median within each type. It shows that between 2014 and 2023, semi-detached properties have seen the largest increase in median house prices within the NA (71.5% over 10 years), followed by flats (58.7% over 10 years). Terraced properties and detached properties have increased by 50.3% and 50.1% respectively between 2014 and 2023. These figures give an overall median house price growth of 44.0% for the NA between 2014 and 2023.

**Table 4-3: Median house prices by type in Fleckney, 2014-2023**

| Type             | 2014  | 2015  | 2016  | 2017  | 2018  | 2019  | 2020  | 2021  | 2022  | 2023  | Growth |
|------------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|--------|
| Detached         | £206k | £201k | £225k | £267k | £260k | £287k | £317k | £320k | £339k | £310k | 50.1%  |
| Semi-detached    | £156k | £165k | £160k | £195k | £183k | £200k | £229k | £237k | £261k | £268k | 71.5%  |
| Terraced         | £124k | £130k | £142k | £145k | £167k | £158k | £188k | £202k | £184k | £188k | 50.3%  |
| Flats            | £78k  | £106k | £95k  | £102k | £150k | £125k | £101k | £130k | £136k | £123k | 58.7%  |
| <b>All Types</b> | £176k | £183k | £169k | £215k | £205k | £230k | £260k | £255k | £295k | £254k | 44.0%  |

Source: Land Registry PPD

## Income

4.17 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 the NA.

4.18 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 locally was £47,700 in 2020 (the most recent year for this dataset). Discussion about the area to which this data applies is provided in Appendix A.

4.19 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. Harborough's gross individual lower quartile annual earnings were £20,494 in 2023. To estimate the income of households with two lower quartile earners, this figure is doubled to £40,988.

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

## **Affordability Thresholds**

4.21 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.

4.22 AECOM has determined thresholds for the income required in Fleckney 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 Appendix C.

4.23 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. These are standard assumptions across housing needs assessments at neighbourhood and local authority scale although different approaches are sometimes taken and a case can be made for alternatives. This is discussed in more detail at the start of Appendix C.

4.24 Table 4-4 summarises the estimated cost of each tenure, the annual income required to support these costs within the NA, and whether local incomes are sufficient. The income required column assumes the household already has access to a deposit (which we have assumed to be 10% of the value to be purchased) but does not reflect the possibility that households may already hold equity from an existing property. Although these factors may be crucial to whether housing will be affordable, they are highly dependent on individual circumstances that cannot be anticipated here.

**Table 4-4: Affordability thresholds in Fleckney (income required, £)**

| Tenure   | Mortgage value (90% of price) | Annual rent | Income required | Affordable on average incomes?<br>£47,700 | Affordable on LQ earnings (single earner)?<br>£20,494 | Affordable on LQ earnings (2 earners)?<br>£40,988 |
|--|-------------------------------|-------------|-----------------|---|---|---|
| <b>Market Housing</b>                          |                               |             |                 |   |   |   |
| Median House Price                             | £228,150                      | -           | £65,186         | No  | No  | No  |
| Estimated NA New Build Entry-Level House Price | £203,773                      |             | £58,221         | No  | No  | No  |
| LQ/Entry-level House Price                     | £175,500                      | -           | £50,143         | No  | No  | No  |
| LA New Build Median House Price                | £329,171                      | -           | £94,049         | No  | No  | No  |
| Average Market Rent                            | -                             | £12,156     | £40,520         | Yes                                       | No  | Yes   |
| Entry-level Market Rent                        | -                             | £11,028     | £36,760         | Yes                                       | No  | Yes   |
| <b>Affordable Home Ownership</b>               |                               |             |                 |   |   |   |
| First Homes (-30%)                             | £142,641                      | -           | £40,755         | Yes                                       | No  | Yes   |
| First Homes (-40%)                             | £122,264                      | -           | £34,932         | Yes                                       | No  | Yes   |
| First Homes (-50%)                             | £101,886                      | -           | £29,110         | Yes                                       | No  | Yes   |
| Shared Ownership (50%)                         | £101,886                      | £2,830      | £38,544         | Yes                                       | No  | Yes   |
| Shared Ownership (25%)                         | £50,943                       | £4,245      | £28,706         | Yes                                       | No  | Yes   |
| Shared Ownership (10%)                         | £20,377                       | £5,094      | £22,803         | Yes                                       | No  | Yes   |
| <b>Affordable Rented Housing</b>               |                               |             |                 |   |   |   |
| Affordable Rent                                | -                             | £5,678      | £18,907         | Yes                                       | Yes   | Yes   |
| Social Rent                                    | -                             | £4,770      | £15,886         | Yes                                       | Yes   | Yes   |

Source: AECOM Calculations

4.25 Before considering each tenure category in turn, it is important to stress that these affordability thresholds have been calculated to give an 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. The income figures also disguise a large degree of variation. 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 housing for purchase and rent

4.26 Thinking about housing for purchase on the open market, it appears that local households on average incomes are unable to access even entry-level homes unless they have the advantage of a very large deposit. Market housing, even with the benefit of a higher than average income, is likely to remain out of reach to most. The median house price would require an annual income 37% higher than the current average.

4.27 Private renting is generally only affordable to average earners. Households made up of one lower quartile earners cannot afford the given rental thresholds, but households made up of two lower quartile earners can. Affordability is 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.

### **Affordable home ownership**

- 4.28 There is a group of households in Fleckney who may be able to afford to rent privately but cannot afford home ownership. They are typically earning between around £36,760 per year (at which point entry-level rents become affordable) and £50,143 (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.
- 4.29 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.
- 4.30 This report has estimated the income required to afford First Homes and tested the implications of 30%, 40% and 50% discount levels. First Homes with 30% discounts are affordable to households on average incomes and households with two lower quartile earners. Higher discounts would make these homes more affordable but would not extend affordability to households with a single lower quartile earner and may also impact on viability of development. 30% discounts are likely to be appropriate in this NA.
- 4.31 It is important to note that this evidence based on affordability does not provide a complete picture: evidence about the financial viability of development is also relevant. The question is whether demanding higher discount levels on First Homes will create a financial burden on developers that leads them to argue either that the discount level is not feasible or that the total amount of Affordable Housing may need to be decreased. This could effectively sacrifice the provision of affordable rented housing to provide a more attractive First Homes product. The issue of development viability is a specialist matter involving analysis of land values and build costs that is outside the scope of this assessment. If the Working Party intend to set a higher First Homes discount level than that set at district level, further discussions with the LPA are advised.
- 4.32 Shared ownership appears to be more affordable than First Homes but is broadly accessible to the same groups. Government has recently announced that the minimum equity share for shared ownership will fall to 10% of the property value.<sup>4</sup> If this is delivered in the NA, it will make shared ownership easier to access for more people. However, while the income threshold for a 10% equity shared ownership home is lower, this product may not necessarily be more attractive than the alternatives (such as shared ownership at higher equity shares and First Homes) for those who can afford them.

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<sup>4</sup> The previous minimum equity share was 25%. This change took effect from 28 June 2021 and transitional arrangements are in place for planning policy documents that are prepared during the implementation timeframe. Changes are also introduced to make the process of staircasing to full ownership more gradual with lower minimum increments of 1%. The ministerial statement confirming and detailing the changes is available here: <https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-statements/detail/2021-05-24/hws48>.

4.33 Rent to Buy provides households with the option to rent at a discount whilst saving for a deposit to buy their property within a set period (usually within 7 years). The income required to access Rent to Buy is assumed to be the same as that required to afford market rents. However, affordability to local households would depend on how rents are set. If Rent to Buy is offered at a discount to *entry level* rents, this would expand this route to home ownership, including to double lower quartile earners. However, discounts on *average* rents would make Rent to Buy affordability, in terms of the household income required, comparable to First Homes and Shared Ownership. However, for some households, the availability of a deposit rather than income level per se is the key barrier to accessing home ownership. Rent to Buy may therefore offer a useful product to meet the needs of some households.

4.34 These three affordable home ownership products need to be considered in relation to what they offer occupants in the long term beyond simply being affordable to access or not:

- First Homes allow for a greater ownership stake in the property, enabling occupiers to benefit from price appreciation over time. Monthly outgoings are also limited to mortgage costs alone, which tend to be cheaper than renting.
- Shared ownership at high equity shares performs a similar function to First Homes, but there are additional costs associated with the rented portion.
- Shared ownership at low equity shares can usually be accessed by lower earning households (than First Homes) and requires a smaller deposit. However, this is a potentially less attractive route to eventual ownership because monthly outgoings remain high. The occupant has to pay a significant monthly rent as well as service charges and other costs, so it can be harder for them to save funds to buy out a greater share in the property over time.
- Rent to Buy requires no deposit, thereby benefitting those with sufficient incomes but low savings. It is more attractive than renting but results in a much slower accumulation of the funds that can provide an eventual route to ownership than the other tenures discussed above.

### **Affordable rented housing**

4.35 Affordable rents set out in the table above are substantially below market rents. Whilst affordable rents can be set at up to 80% of market rents, in many locations Registered Providers (housing associations) set them to ensure that they are affordable to those claiming housing benefit, i.e. at or below Local Housing Allowance levels. This means that they are in practice below 80% of market levels. This appears to be the case in Fleckney.

4.36 Affordable rent and socially rented housing appears affordable to all households (average income households, lower quartile and two lower quartile earners) within the NA on the basis of their incomes. Households with the lowest incomes or earnings (below lower quartile levels) are likely to be supported by housing benefit to access rented housing.

- 4.37 The evidence in this chapter suggests that the affordable rented sector performs a vital function in Fleckney as the only option for a large segment of those in the greatest need. The Working Party have outlined a desire for more affordable rented housing within the NA, as this appears to be affordable for all as well as eliminating the need for a deposit when purchasing (which the Working Party feel is a large barrier in the NA for home ownership).
- 4.38 Social rents are cheaper and would therefore leave households on lower earnings better off and better able to afford their other living costs, such as food and fuel etc. Where households are supported by housing benefit the difference in the cost of affordable and social rents may be irrelevant as the level of housing benefit flexes according to the rent. This means that households supported by housing benefit may be no better off in social rented accommodation because they receive a lower rate of housing benefit to cover their rent.

## **Estimates of the need for Affordable Housing**

4.39 This section seeks to quantify the long-term potential need for Affordable Housing, which should be considered separately for affordable rented housing and affordable routes to ownership. The appropriate approach is taken based on the evidence available at Local Authority and NA scale.

### **Evidence in the HENA**

4.40 A HENA was undertaken for Leicester and Leicestershire in 2022. This study estimates the need for affordable housing in the district based on analysis of the Council's housing waiting list and other data sets in line with Planning Practice Guidance at the time.

4.41 The HENA identifies the need for 321 additional affordable rented homes and 177 affordable home ownership dwellings each year in Harborough as a whole.

4.42 When the HENA figures are pro-rated to the study area based on its fair share of the population (5.05% of the district's population (Census 2021)), this equates to 25.1 homes per annum or 426.7 homes over the Neighbourhood Plan period (2024-2041). This equates to 8.9 affordable ownership and 16.2 affordable rent properties per annum or 151.3 affordable ownership and 285.4 affordable rent over the plan period.

4.43 However, pro-rating district level estimates of affordable housing need to rural areas presents problems in practice. The Local Authority level figures are likely to represent higher needs in urban areas where there is a large social housing stock and larger numbers of households living in private rented homes on housing benefit. Both of these factors tend to generate higher needs. By contrast, in rural parishes like Fleckney the more limited supply of social housing means there is more limited need generated from households already living in the sector. Similarly, households who may need social housing often move away to areas where their needs are more likely to be met (either because there is social housing available or more private rented housing). This means it is difficult to identify precisely the need for social/affordable rented housing within Fleckney. In practice, figures represent wider needs within the district as well as locally generated needs.

## **Affordable Housing policies in Neighbourhood Plans**

4.44 This section outlines a common Neighbourhood Plan policy level around the tenure mix of affordable housing, provides a recommendation and summarises relevant considerations.

### **Application of Local Plan policies**

4.45 HDC's adopted policy on this subject (Policy H2) requires 40% of all new housing to be affordable on sites larger than 10 dwellings. HDC's completion data does

not show what percentage of completions in the NA over the past decade were made up of affordable housing.

- 4.46 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 the NA, and every effort should be made to maximise delivery where viable. Changing or influencing the overall proportion of housing that must be affordable is uncommon in Neighbourhood Plans and would demand a high standard of evidence to depart from the Local Plan. If this is of interest, it should first be discussed with the LPA to ensure their support and to determine what additional evidence (e.g. about development viability) would be needed.
- 4.47 How the Affordable Housing that comes forward through mainstream development sites is broken down into specific tenures – such as the balance between rented tenures and routes to home ownership – is specified as 75% affordable/social rent and 25% affordable ownership in the Local Plan Policy H2.

## **Affordable Housing at Neighbourhood level**

- 4.48 The HNA can provide more localised evidence and this may be used to support Neighbourhood Plan policies. This section suggests an Affordable Housing tenure mix that might be suitable for Fleckney on the basis of identified housing need and a range of other considerations detailed in Appendix D.
- 4.49 This indicative mix is chiefly a response to the expectation that the delivery of Affordable Housing will be lower than the needs identified here. The Local Plan guideline mix of 75% rented to 25% ownership appears to offer a suitable benchmark, which also complies with the various minimum requirements mandated nationally, such as government policy which requires 25% of affordable homes to be First Homes. Local and national policy prioritising First Homes and the need to safeguard more acutely needed rented options should be prioritised. However, for diversity and to offer an option with a lower deposit, we suggest that 10% should be allocated to Rent to Buy. This 10% could be allocated to Shared Ownership depending on the Working Group's desires. This split also promotes the Working Party's desire for more affordable rented properties in the NA, as they feel the largest barrier for home ownership is the deposit, therefore providing an affordability advantage over home ownership. It should be noted that this indicative mix is a slightly different tenure split to that outlined in the Local Plan. Therefore, it is recommended that the Working Group discuss this with the LPA before developing this policy.
- 4.50 Where the Working Party wish to develop policy that deviates from that outlined in the Local Plan – either by differing from the headline split between renting and ownership or by specifying a greater level of detail around sub-tenures, it is important that they liaise with HDC to determine what additional evidence (notably about development viability) may be needed, and to ensure that departures from the local policy context have their support.

**Table 4-5: Indicative tenure split (Affordable Housing)**

| <b>Tenure</b>                                | <b>Indicative mix</b>             | <b>Considerations and uncertainties</b>  |
|--|-----------------------------------|--|
| <b>Routes to home ownership, of which</b>    | <b>35%</b>                        |  |
| First Homes                                  | 25%                               | Product untested so uncertainties around viability, developer, lenders and buyer appetite etc.   |
| Shared ownership                             | 10%                               | Recently confirmed changes to the model to allow purchases of 10% share - impact on viability unknown.<br>RPs business plans currently reliant on shared ownership model. Impact of displacement by First Homes unknown. |
| Rent to Buy                                  | 0%                                | Emerging product with popularity and effectiveness as yet unknown.<br>Impact of displacement by First Homes unknown.   |
| <b>Affordable Housing for rent, of which</b> | <b>65%</b>                        |  |
| Social rent                                  | To be set by Registered Providers | Uncertain how much funding available to support this tenure in local area.<br>Uncertain whether RPs willing to own/manage stock in this area.  |
| Affordable rent                              | To be set by Registered Providers | Uncertain whether RPs willing to own/manage stock in this area.  |

Source: AECOM calculations

## Conclusions- Tenure and Affordability

### Current tenure profile

4.51 It can be seen that 81.0% of properties in the NA are owned, compared to 75.8% in Harborough and 61.3% in England. As a result, a smaller proportion rent socially and privately in the NA compared to the District and national averages. Whilst the percentage of people owning their home through shared ownership in the NA is similar to the national average, it is half that of the district average.

4.52 Between 2011 and 2021, a large increase can be seen in the percentage of those privately renting (45.0%) and socially renting (17.1%). There has been a small increase in the amount of people owning their home (2.3%), whilst there has been a 5.3% decrease in the amount of people owning their home through shared ownership. The large increase in rent tenures could indicate tightening affordability in the NA or reflect the tenure offering associated with recent developments.

## Affordability

- 4.53 The median, which is the middle number when you sort the data from smallest to largest has grown overall between 2014 and 2023, despite fluctuations in 2016, 2018 and 2021, with an overall growth of 44.0%, from £176,000 to £253,500. The lower quartile is the middle figure of the lowest 50% of prices and a good representation of entry-level housing. Whilst the house prices for the lower quartile are lower overall, they have increased steadily between 20014 and 2022, before decreasing in 2023. There has been an overall increase of 37.1%, increasing from £142,250 to £195,000.
- 4.54 It appears that local households on average incomes are unable to access even entry-level homes unless they have the advantage of a very large deposit. Market housing, even with the benefit of a higher than average income, is likely to remain out of reach to most. The median house price would require an annual income 37% higher than the current average.
- 4.55 Private renting is generally only affordable to average earners. Households made up of one lower quartile earners cannot afford the given rental thresholds, but households made up of two lower quartile earners can. Affordability is 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.
- 4.56 This report has estimated the income required to afford First Homes and tested the implications of 30%, 40% and 50% discount levels. First Homes with 30% discounts are affordable to households on average incomes and households with two lower quartile earners.
- 4.57 Shared ownership appears to be more affordable than First Homes but is broadly accessible to the same groups. Government has recently announced that the minimum equity share for shared ownership will fall to 10% of the property value.<sup>5</sup> If this is delivered in the NA, it will make shared ownership easier to access for more people.
- 4.58 If Rent to Buy is offered at a discount to *entry level* rents, this would expand this route to home ownership, including to double lower quartile earners. It would also provide a route to ownership for households with little or no deposit.
- 4.59 Affordable rent and socially rented housing is affordable to average income households and lower quartile earners within the NA. Those with the lowest incomes are likely to be by Housing Benefit to access housing and will rely on Social/Affordable Rented housing to secure affordable accommodation.

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<sup>5</sup> The previous minimum equity share was 25%. This change took effect from 28 June 2021 and transitional arrangements are in place for planning policy documents that are prepared during the implementation timeframe. Changes are also introduced to make the process of staircasing to full ownership more gradual with lower minimum increments of 1%. The ministerial statement confirming and detailing the changes is available here: <https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-statements/detail/2021-05-24/hlws48>.

## **The need for Affordable Housing**

4.60 The HENA identifies the need for 321 additional affordable rented homes and 177 affordable home ownership dwellings each year in Harborough as a whole.

4.61 When the HENA figures are pro-rated to the study area based on its fair share of the population (5.05% of the district's population (Census 2021)), this equates to 25.1 homes per annum or 426.7 homes over the Neighbourhood Plan period (2024-2041). This equates to 8.9 affordable ownership and 16.2 affordable rent properties per annum or 151.3 affordable ownership and 285.4 affordable rent over the plan period.

### **Affordable Housing policy**

4.62 HDC's adopted policy on this subject (Policy H2) requires 40% of all new housing to be affordable on sites larger than 10 dwellings. HDC's completion data does not show what percentage of completions in the NA over the past decade were made up of affordable housing.

4.63 Table 4-6 summarises Fleckney's position with regards to the expected delivery of Affordable Housing, and how this might ideally be apportioned among sub-categories of tenure to meet local needs over the Plan period. This exercise simply applies the housing requirement figure for the area to the Local Plan policy expectation, and shows the quantities of affordable housing for rent and sale that would be delivered if the tenure mix proposed in this HNA were to be rigidly enforced. In this sense it is hypothetical, and the outcomes in practice may differ, either as a result of measures taken in the neighbourhood plan (e.g. if the group plans for more housing (and therefore more affordable housing) than the local plan, or if the group decides to influence the tenure mix in other ways), or as a result of site-specific constraints.

**Table 4-6: Estimated delivery of Affordable Housing in Fleckney**

|   | <b>Step in Estimation</b>                                   | <b>Expected delivery</b> |
|---|---|--------------------------|
| A | Residual housing requirement figure                         | 180                      |
| B | Affordable housing quota (%) in LPA's Local Plan            | 40%                      |
| C | Potential total Affordable Housing in NA (A x B)            | 72                       |
| D | Rented % (e.g. social/ affordable rented)                   | 75%                      |
| E | Rented number (C x D)                                       | 54                       |
| F | Affordable home ownership % (e.g. First Homes, Rent to Buy) | 25%                      |
| G | Affordable home ownership number (C x F)                    | 18                       |

Source: AECOM estimate based on LPA's affordable housing policies, AECOM's indicative tenure mix

- 4.64 This expected level of delivery does not meet the quantity of demand identified in estimates of the need for affordable housing through using the HENA. The recommendation is therefore that the policy requirement be met wherever possible, and for further avenues for delivering greater quantities of Affordable Housing (such as exception sites) to be explored.
- 4.65 However, as noted previously, there are 325 commitments in Fleckney as of March 2023. If these dwellings are built out following the tenure split above, then a substantial proportion of the additional need will be met, but not all of it.
- 4.66 Affordable housing is typically provided and made financially viable by its inclusion as a proportion of larger market developments, as guided by Local Plan policy. However, if the community wishes to boost the supply of affordable housing, there are other, more proactive routes available for its provision. For example, using neighbourhood development orders, identifying exception sites or developing community land trusts are all ways of boosting the supply of affordable housing.

## 5. Type and Size

### Introduction

- 5.1 It is common for neighbourhood plans to include policies that influence what form new housing should take in terms of type and size. This requires evidence of what local people need.
- 5.2 This can be done using statistics to identify relevant trends and potential gaps in the market. That is the focus of this chapter of the HNA. The evidence gathered here can be used to justify planning policies either on its own or in combination with survey results expressing the specific wants and concerns of local residents. It will also build up a picture of the population and existing range of homes that may provide useful context for the neighbourhood plan.
- 5.3 This chapter has three aims, each given its own sub-section:
- To establish what **mix** of housing exists in the NA at present;
  - To describe characteristics of the local **population** that are relevant to housing need; and
  - To look to the **future**, considering how the population is likely to evolve and what mix of homes would be most appropriate to build.
- 5.4 It is important to keep in mind that housing need is not an exact science. To get from a set of facts about the population to an ideal mix of homes requires making assumptions. For example, there are clear patterns about what size of home families tend to live in at different stages of life. However, a variety of other reasons sit behind people's housing choices that are less easy to predict, including wealth, accessibility requirements and personal preference. Some trends can also change rapidly over time, such as the increasing preference for home working.
- 5.5 The conclusions and recommendations given here are therefore not definitive. Rather, they are what the statistics suggest future needs will look like based on current trends. This is sufficient for justifying planning policies, but it is also appropriate to take into account other factors and evidence if desired.

### Definitions

- **Dwelling type**: whether a home is detached, semi-detached, terraced, a flat, bungalow or other type. Which a household chooses to occupy tends to be more about wealth and preference than a specific need.
- **Dwelling size**: how many rooms or bedrooms a home contains. While this could also mean floor area or number of storeys, the number of bedrooms is most reliably recorded in housing statistics. Bedroom numbers are also closely linked to family size and life stage.

- **Household:** a unit of people who live together, commonly a family, couple or single person. Not all dwellings contain a household, including properties that are vacant and second homes, so the number of dwellings and the number of households in an area is usually different.
- **Household composition:** the specific combination of adults and children who form a household. The Census offers a number of categories, for example distinguishing between families with children who are dependent or non-dependent (i.e. adults). 'Other' households in the Census include house-sharers, groups of students, and multi-family households.
- **Household life stage:** the age of the lead member of a household – usually the oldest adult, or what used to be called the 'head of household'. Life stage is correlated with dwelling size as well as wealth.
- **Housing mix:** the range of home sizes and types in an area.
- **Over- and under-occupancy:** the degree to which the size and composition of a household lines up with the number of bedrooms in their home. If there are more bedrooms than the household would be expected to need, the home is considered under-occupied, and vice versa.

## The current housing mix

5.6 This section establishes the current housing mix of Fleckney, highlighting recent changes to it and comparing the mix to wider averages.

### Dwelling type

5.7 Table 5-1 below shows a large proportion of dwellings in the NA are detached properties (50.7%). This is followed by semi-detached properties which account for a smaller share of 32.1%. Terraced houses and flats make up an even smaller proportion of dwellings in the NA, accounting for 12.4% and 4.8% respectively. This broad profile remains unchanged since 2011, though the proportion of detached, semi-detached and flats have increased slightly – effectively embedding existing imbalances in the dwellings stock, which may be contributing to affordability issues.

5.8 Whilst Census data does not capture bungalows as a separate category, VOA data does. VOA data shows that 11.5% of properties in the NA are bungalows, slightly lower than the proportion of 12.2% seen in Harborough, but higher than the national average of 9.2%. The Working Party have stated that there is a lack of bungalows in the NA despite the growing older population and increasing interest in these types of homes from this group.

5.9 Completions data has been provided by HDC which shows that 348 completions took place between 2011/12 and 2022/23. Unfortunately, the type and size of all of these completions has not been recorded. However, of the 141 completions where this information is available, 72 were detached houses, 56 were semi-detached houses, 6 were apartments, 5 were bungalows and 2 were terraced houses. This could increase the percentage of detached and semi-detached

properties seen in 2021 (Table 5-1), potentially widening the gap between the amount of larger properties and smaller properties in the NA. However, completions data provided by HDC does not show when these completions took place, therefore the 2021 data below is considered the most reliable dataset.

**Table 5-1: Accommodation type, Fleckney, 2011-2021**

| Type          | 2011  | 2021  |
|---------------|-------|-------|
| Detached      | 49.9% | 50.7% |
| Semi-detached | 31.6% | 32.1% |
| Terrace       | 13.9% | 12.4% |
| Flat          | 4.4%  | 4.8%  |

Source: ONS 2021 and 2011, VOA 2021, AECOM Calculations

5.10 Table 5-2 compares the NA mix to wider benchmarks. It shows that the proportion of detached dwellings in the NA (50.7%) is similar but slightly higher than the proportion of 48.8% across Harborough and significantly higher than the national average of 22.9%. The proportion of semi-detached dwellings in the NA (32.1%) is similar but higher than the district proportion of 29.2% and national proportion of 31.5%. The proportion of terraced houses and flats is smaller in the NA compared to the district and national averages.

5.11 Again, completions since 2021 are likely to have increased the percentage of detached and semi-detached properties in the NA, widening the gap between the NA and the district and national averages.

**Table 5-2: Accommodation type, various geographies, 2021**

| Type          | Fleckney | Harborough | England |
|---------------|----------|------------|---------|
| Detached      | 50.7%    | 48.8%      | 22.9%   |
| Semi-detached | 32.1%    | 29.2%      | 31.5%   |
| Terrace       | 12.4%    | 14.4%      | 23.0%   |
| Flat          | 4.8%     | 7.0%       | 22.2%   |

Source: Census 2021, AECOM Calculations

## Dwelling size

5.12 Table 5-3 below presents the current housing mix in terms of the size of dwellings households occupy. It shows that the majority of households in the NA have 3 bedrooms, accounting for 40.8% of properties in the NA. This is followed by 4+ bedrooms and 2-bedroom properties. Accounting for 28.9% and 24.9% respectively. 1-bedroom properties account for a smaller proportion in the NA, 5.4%. Whilst the overall pattern remains similar between 2011 and 2021, Table 5-3 shows that there have been completions in all size categories. This data is based on households rather than dwellings and so will not pick up the size of dwellings that were unoccupied at the time of the Census. Whilst this is not usually a significant issue, in this case, because of the substantial number of completions in recent years, it is possible that more dwellings than usual were unoccupied whilst awaiting buyers or renters.

5.13 Unfortunately, whilst completions data has been provided by HDC, it is not known what size the 348 completions were.

**Table 5-3: Dwelling size (bedrooms), Fleckney, 2011-2021**

| Number of bedrooms | 2011  | 2021  |
|--------------------|-------|-------|
| 1                  | 5.0%  | 5.4%  |
| 2                  | 26.1% | 24.9% |
| 3                  | 42.9% | 40.8% |
| 4+                 | 26.0% | 28.9% |

Source: ONS 2021 and 2011, AECOM Calculations

5.14 Again, it is useful to look at the percentage breakdown of dwelling sizes in comparison with the wider district and country. Table 5-4 shows that the NA has a larger proportion of 4+ bedroom properties compared to England, but a smaller proportion compared to Harborough. The NA has a slightly larger proportion of 3 bedroom properties compared to England, and a larger proportion compared to Harborough. There is a larger proportion of 2-bedroom properties in the NA compared to the district, but lower than the national average. The proportion of 1-bedroom properties in the NA is smaller than both the district and national averages.

**Table 5-4: Dwelling size (bedrooms), various geographies, 2021**

| Number of bedrooms | Fleckney | Harborough | England |
|--------------------|----------|------------|---------|
| 1                  | 5.4%     | 5.7%       | 11.6%   |
| 2                  | 24.9%    | 21.6%      | 27.3%   |
| 3                  | 40.8%    | 35.9%      | 40.0%   |
| 4+                 | 28.9%    | 36.8%      | 21.1%   |

Source: Census 2021, AECOM Calculations

## Population characteristics

5.15 This section examines key characteristics of the local population that have a bearing on what housing might be needed in future years. Where available, recent data is used. However, for some information it is necessary to fall back on the 2011 Census.

### Age

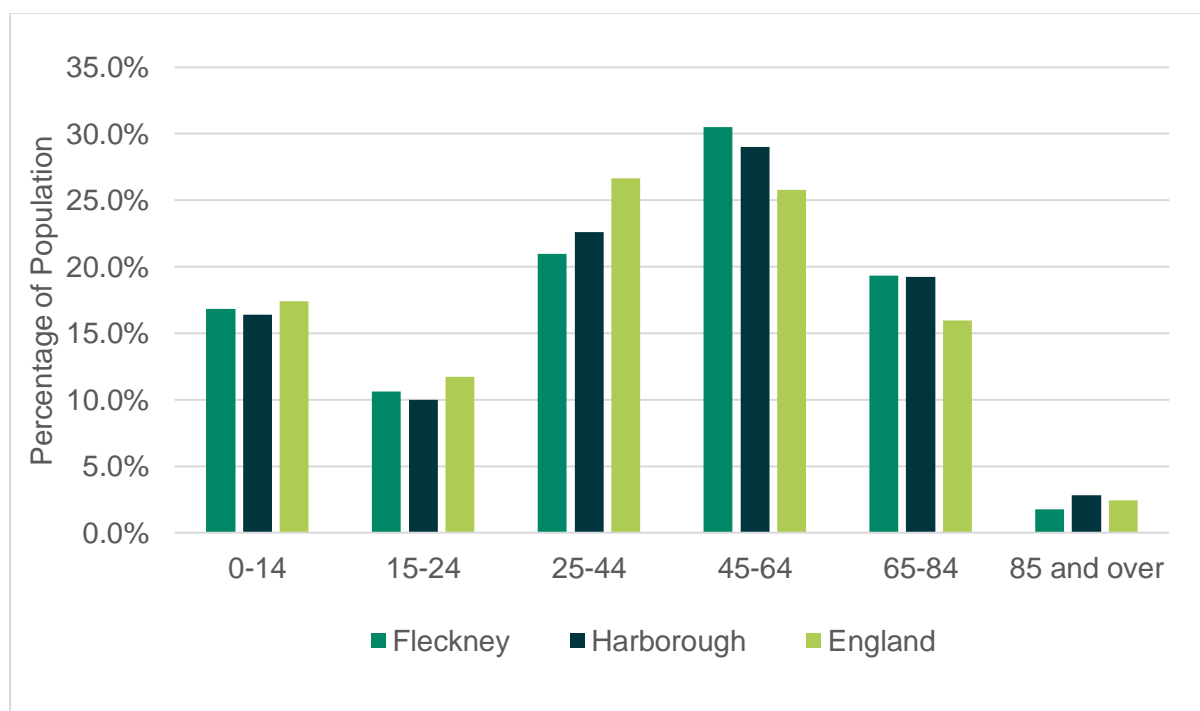
5.16 Table 5-5 shows the most recent age structure of the NA population, alongside 2011 Census figures. It shows that similarly in 2011 and 2021, the largest age group in the NA is the 45-64 age group, followed by the 25-44 age group. Notably, between 2011 and 2021, there has been a 19.7% decrease in the number of people aged 0-14 and a 17.2% decrease in the number of people aged 25-44. There has been a 62.6% increase in the number of people aged 65-84 and a 32.3% increase in the number of people aged 85 and over in the NA. These changes show that the NA has a clearly ageing population.

**Table 5-5: Age structure of Fleckney, 2011 and 2021**

| Age group   | 2011  | 2021  | Change |
|-------------|-------|-------|--------|
| 0-14        | 21.1% | 16.8% | -19.7% |
| 15-24       | 9.9%  | 10.6% | +8.1%  |
| 25-44       | 25.5% | 21.0% | -17.2% |
| 45-64       | 30.2% | 30.5% | +1.6%  |
| 65-84       | 12.0% | 19.3% | +62.6% |
| 85 and over | 1.3%  | 1.7%  | +32.3% |

Source: ONS 2011, ONS 2021, AECOM Calculations

5.17 For context, it is useful to look at the NA population structure alongside that of the district and country. Figure 5-1 (using 2021 Census data) shows that Fleckney has a smaller proportion of residents aged 25-44 and 85 and over compared to both Harborough and England. The NA has a small proportion of residents aged 0-14 and 15-24 compared to England, but slightly larger than Harborough. Fleckney has a larger proportion of residents aged 45-64 and 65-84 compared to both Harborough and England. The NA has an older bias to its population and this is common to other rural centres and parishes in England.

**Figure 5-1: Age structure in Fleckney, 2021**

Source: ONS 2021, AECOM Calculations

## Household composition and occupancy

5.18 Household composition (the combination and relationships of adults and children in a dwelling) is an important factor in the kinds of housing needed over the Neighbourhood Plan period. Table 5-6 shows that the total proportion of one person households in the NA is similar to Harborough but lower than the national average. Within this category, the proportion of one person households aged 66 and over is higher in the NA compared to the district and national averages and

as a result the proportion of ‘other’ one person households is lower. Fleckney has a similar proportion of one family only households to Harborough but a higher proportion than the national average. Within this category, there is a larger proportion of one family only households all aged 66 and over compared to the district and national average. There is a similar proportion of one family households with no children compared to the district average but higher than the national average whilst there is a slightly higher proportion of dependent children compared to both the district and national average.

5.19 Note that ‘non-dependent children’ refers 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. It is interesting to observe that this category grew by 24.1% between 2011 and 2021 in the NA –slightly lower than the district average 27.6% but significantly higher than the national average of 3.5%.

**Table 5-6: Household composition, Fleckney and comparator geographies, 2021**

| Household composition        |  | Fleckney     | Harborough   | England      |
|------------------------------|--|--------------|--------------|--------------|
| <b>One person household</b>  | <b>Total</b>                             | <b>26.2%</b> | <b>26.0%</b> | <b>30.1%</b> |
|                              | Aged 66 and over                         | 14.4%        | 13.2%        | 12.8%        |
|                              | Other                                    | 11.9%        | 12.8%        | 17.3%        |
| <b>One family only</b>       | <b>Total</b>                             | <b>70.4%</b> | <b>69.6%</b> | <b>63.1%</b> |
|                              | All aged 66 and over                     | 14.4%        | 12.8%        | 9.2%         |
|                              | With no children                         | 19.3%        | 19.6%        | 16.8%        |
|                              | With dependent children                  | 27.4%        | 26.7%        | 25.8%        |
|                              | With non-dependent children <sup>6</sup> | 12.0%        | 10.2%        | 10.5%        |
| <b>Other household types</b> | <b>Total</b>                             | <b>3.4%</b>  | <b>4.4%</b>  | <b>6.9%</b>  |

Source: ONS 2021, AECOM Calculations

5.20 The tendency of households to over- or under-occupy their homes is another relevant consideration to the future size needs of the NA. 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.

5.21 Table 5-7 shows that in the study area, 80.3% of dwellings are under-occupied by at least one bedroom, whilst 45.5% of dwellings are under-occupied by two

<sup>6</sup> Refers to households containing children who are older than 18 e.g students or young working people living at home.

bedrooms. Whilst under-occupancy is high across all household types, it is particularly high in families aged 65+ and families under 65 with no children, at 97.5% and 97.3% respectively. This may suggest that the larger housing isn't being occupied by households with the most family members, but by the people with the most wealth or by older people who have not chosen or able to move to smaller properties. There is some over-occupancy in the NA, with 3.3% of families under 66 with adult children and 3.0% of families under 66 with dependent children living in potentially overcrowded conditions.

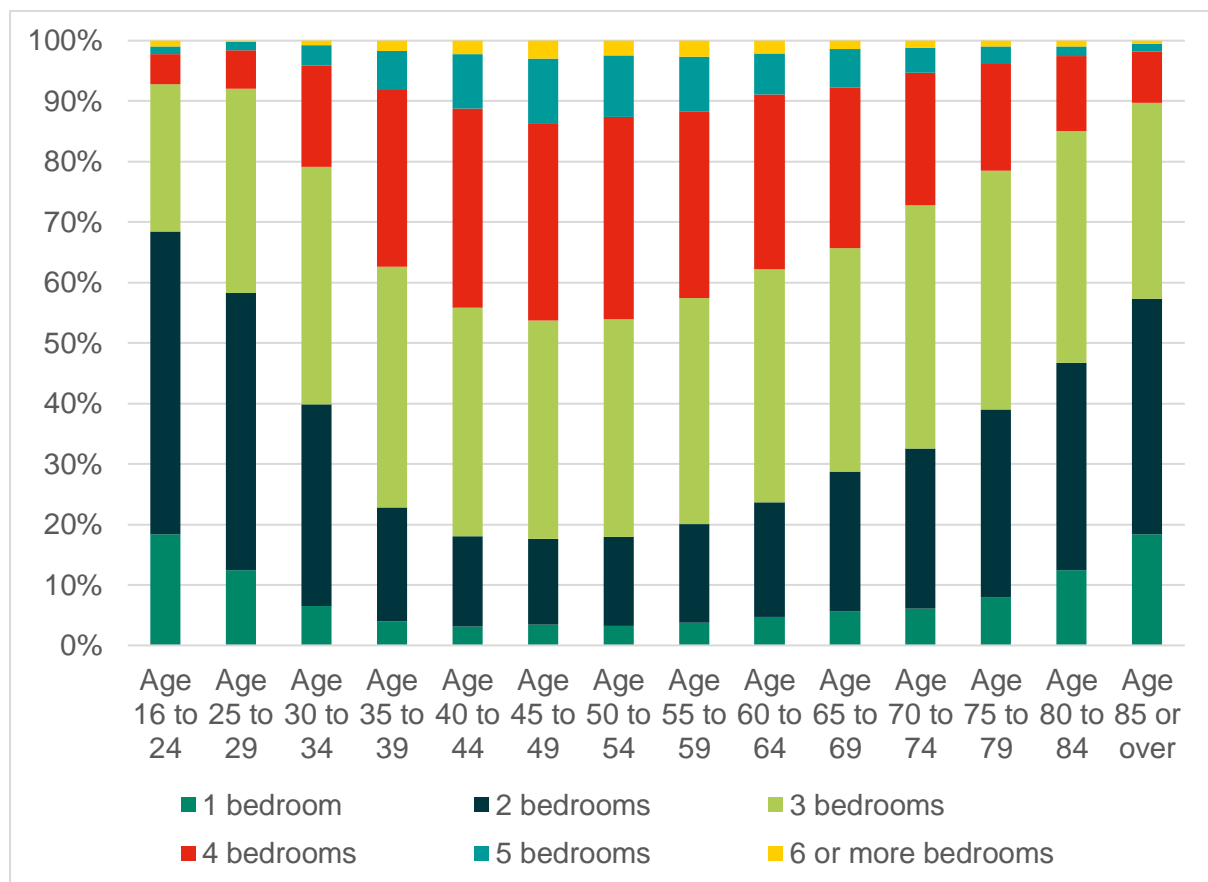
**Table 5-7: Occupancy rating by age in Fleckney, 2021**

| Household type                       | +2 rating | +1 rating | 0 rating | -1 rating |
|--------------------------------------|-----------|-----------|----------|-----------|
| Family 66+                           | 72.1%     | 25.4%     | 2.5%     | 0.0%      |
| Single person 66+                    | 40.9%     | 43.6%     | 15.4%    | 0.0%      |
| Family under 66 - no children        | 73.1%     | 24.2%     | 2.7%     | 0.0%      |
| Family under 66 - dependent children | 28.9%     | 39.2%     | 28.9%    | 3.0%      |
| Family under 66 - adult children     | 32.0%     | 37.3%     | 27.5%    | 3.3%      |
| Single person under 66               | 41.9%     | 38.6%     | 19.5%    | 0.0%      |
| All households                       | 45.5%     | 34.8%     | 18.0%    | 1.6%      |

Source: ONS 2021, AECOM Calculations

5.22 As noted in the introduction to this chapter, the life stage of households is strongly correlated with the size of home they tend to occupy. Figure 5-2 sets out this relationship for Harborough in 2011 (because this data is not available at smaller scales). The graph shows how the youngest households tend to 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 in Harborough, 2011**



Source: ONS 2011, AECOM Calculations

## Future population and size needs

5.23 This section projects the future age profile of the population in Fleckney at the end of the Neighbourhood Plan period and then estimates the mix of dwelling sizes they may need.

### Age

5.24 The result of applying Local Authority level household projections to the age profile of Fleckney households in 2011 is shown in Table 5-8. This makes clear that population growth can be expected to be driven by the oldest households, with a 104.0% increase expected in the 65 and over age group. This increase is significantly higher than the next largest increase of 23.0% for the 55 to 64 age group. The table shows that the 25 to 34 and 24 and under age groups are expected to increase by 22.0% and 15.0% respectively, whilst the 35 to 54 age group is expected to increase the least of all age groups, at 10.0%. Therefore, the study area can be said to have a clearly ageing population and an associated need for smaller dwellings for both the ageing population to downsize and for young starter families.

**Table 5-8: Projected age of households, Fleckney, 2011 - 2041**

| Year               | 24 and under | 25 to 34 | 35 to 54 | 55 to 64 | 65 and over |
|--------------------|--------------|----------|----------|----------|-------------|
| 2011               | 24           | 169      | 929      | 390      | 436         |
| 2041               | 28           | 206      | 1,018    | 481      | 889         |
| % change 2011-2041 | +15%         | +22%     | +10%     | +23%     | +104%       |

Source: AECOM Calculations

5.25 The demographic change discussed above can be translated into an ideal mix of dwelling sizes. This is achieved through a model that maps the dwelling size preferences by life stage shown earlier (in Figure 5-2) onto the projected age profile for the NA in Table 5-8 immediately above. The resulting 'ideal' future mix of dwelling sizes can then be compared to the current stock of housing to identify how future development might best fill the gaps.

5.26 This approach has limitations, in that it embeds existing size preferences and does not anticipate changes in what people want from their homes. As such, it is appropriate for the results 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 appropriate for the purpose of drafting neighbourhood plan policies.

5.27 The result of this exercise is presented in Table 5-9. It suggests that in order to reach the suggested housing mix by the end of the plan period all sizes of properties are required. However, due to the large proportion of 3 bedrooms homes in the existing stock, the modelling exercise results in projected need for a relatively substantial proportion of larger dwellings to provide the larger family homes that the demographic and occupancy modelling predicts are required.

**Table 5-9: Suggested dwelling size mix to 2041, Fleckney**

| Number of bedrooms | Current mix (2011) | Suggested mix (2041) | Balance of new housing to reach suggested mix |
|--------------------|--------------------|----------------------|---|
| 1                  | 5.0%               | 6.1%                 | 9.5%  |
| 2                  | 26.1%              | 22.8%                | 13.2%   |
| 3                  | 42.9%              | 37.4%                | 21.5%   |
| 4                  | 22.7%              | 25.4%                | 33.0%   |
| 5+                 | 3.3%               | 8.3%                 | 22.8%   |

Source: AECOM Calculations

5.28 The following points sense-check the results of the model against other evidence and suggest ways to interpret them when thinking about policy options.

- The Leicester and Leicestershire HENA outlines a suggested size mix of 5% 1-bedroom, 35% 2-bedroom, 40% 3-bedroom, 20% 4-bedroom dwellings in Harborough for market housing. The suggested mix in the HENA for affordable

renting lessens the amount of 4 and 3-bedroom properties and increases the amount of 1 and 2-bedroom dwellings, whilst the mix for affordable ownership lessens the amount of lessens the amount of 4-bedroom properties and increased the amount of 1, 2 and 3-bedroom properties.

- The findings of the HENA may justify rebalancing the HNA recommendation if this is in line with the objectives of the community, for example seeking fewer 1 bedroom and more 2-bedroom homes. One potential approach would be to combine the size categories and allow for greater flexibility between them, for example by requiring 40% of new homes to have 1-2 bedrooms rather than specifying percentages for each.
- The preceding chapter found that affordability is a challenge in the NA. 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.
- To best meet the needs of the growing cohort of older households expected to be present by the end of the Plan period, it should also 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 are built in future to attract both newly forming households on lower budgets and older households with equity from their existing larger homes. While the number of bedrooms required may be similar, other preferences and levels of purchasing power could be very different. Facilitating downsizing among older households may also release those larger homes for use by families who need more bedrooms if they existing stock of larger homes is sufficiently affordable.

## Tenure

5.29 The recommendation discussed immediately above applies to all housing in the NA over the Plan period. This is considered proportionate for devising policy at neighbourhood scale. However, in practice different size mixes may be appropriate for market housing and Affordable Housing. While this distinction may not be appropriate to make in Neighbourhood Plan policy, since Local Authorities tend to define the precise mix of Affordable Housing required on applicable sites, it is worth thinking through the factors at play.

5.30 Generally speaking, the size mix needed within affordable tenures, particularly affordable and social rent, is smaller than the size mix of market housing. This is because there tend to be higher proportions of single people and couples in need of affordable rented housing, and they are likely to be eligible only for 1 or 2 bedroom properties. In contrast, people buying their own homes tend to want more space than they technically 'need', such as spare rooms for guests, home working or other uses. This fact is established in the data on under-occupancy presented earlier in this chapter.

5.31 There are three key sources of information for thinking through the size needs of different categories. These are:

- The suggested mix in the HENA for affordable renting reduces the number of 4 and 3-bedroom properties and increases the number of 1 and 2-bedroom dwellings, whilst the mix for affordable ownership reduces the number of 4-bedroom properties and increases the number of 1, 2 and 3-bedroom properties.
- The waiting list for affordable rented housing, kept by the Local Authority. This provides a more current snapshot of the size needs of applicant households. As this changes over time, individual planning applications can be decided in ways that meet evolving needs. Waiting list data has not been provided by HDC. In AECOM's experience this often highlights acute demand for some larger affordable homes. Whilst fewer households are eligible for larger social/affordable rented homes, these properties become available for let less frequently and so households can wait very long periods of time (often in unsuitable housing) to be housed.

5.32 To summarise, the overall size mix recommendation presented above applies generally to new housing in the NA. Within this mix, Affordable Housing might require a greater weighting towards smaller sizes while market homes focus on mid-sized homes and some larger options. It is not necessary (and is potentially not appropriate) for Neighbourhood Plans to be prescriptive about the size mix within different tenures, but a range of data sources exist that indicate a direction of travel, which Local Planning Authorities will draw upon when determining applications, and which it is possible for the neighbourhood planners to monitor.

## Type

5.33 Planning policy also tends to be less prescriptive about the mix of dwelling types that are needed than the mix of home sizes. This is because the choice to occupy a terraced rather than a detached home, for example, is primarily a matter of wealth, personal preference, and the amount of outdoor space or other features sought than 'need' in the strict sense. This stands in contrast to the matter of dwelling size, where it can be more clearly established that a household with a certain number of members, closely correlated with age, requires a particular number of bedrooms.

5.34 The key distinctions when it comes to dwelling type are between flats and houses and, to a lesser extent, bungalows, each of which tend to appeal to occupants with different life circumstances. However, it remains difficult to generalise about this, particularly when drawing on demographic evidence.

5.35 The benefits of delivering a certain blend of dwelling types are more closely related to affordability, which is clearly established as an issue in Fleckney, and which favours more dense options (e.g. terraces and flats). This imperative to improve affordability is often in conflict with matters of character, which in rural areas tend to favour lower density options that blend in with the existing built environment. This is particularly relevant in the case of flats, a large block of

which may not be a welcome proposition in the NA. That said, it is possible to deliver flats in the form of low-rise maisonettes that resemble terraces from street level, which can counter this issue.

- 5.36 In summary, there is a balance to be struck between, on the one hand, improving affordability and choice in the market by encouraging flats and terraces, and, on the other hand, preserving the distinctive character and other features that residents like about the NA today. How far the Neighbourhood Plan should guide on this issue, and in what direction, is a policy decision for the Working Party and community to consider.

## Conclusions- Type and Size

### The current housing mix

- 5.37 A large proportion of dwellings in the NA are detached properties (50.7%). This is followed by semi-detached properties which account for a smaller share of 32.1%. Terraced houses and flats make up an even smaller proportion of dwellings in the NA, accounting for 12.4% and 4.8% respectively. This broad profile remains unchanged since 2011, though the proportion of detached. Semi-detached and flats have increased slightly – effectively embedding existing imbalances in the dwellings stock, which may be contributing to affordability issues.

- 5.38 The majority of dwellings in the NA have 3 bedrooms, accounting for 40.8% of properties in the NA. This is followed by 4+ bedrooms and 2-bedroom properties. Accounting for 28.9% and 24.9% respectively. 1-bedroom properties account for a smaller proportion of dwellings in the NA, 5.4%. Whilst the overall pattern remains similar between 2011 and 2021, table 5-3 shows that there have been completions in all size categories.

### Population characteristics

- 5.39 The total proportion of one person households in the NA is similar to Harborough but lower than the national average. Within this category, the proportion of one person households aged 66 and over is higher in the NA compared to the district and national averages and as a result the proportion of 'other' one person households is lower.
- 5.40 Fleckney has a similar proportion of one family only households to Harborough but a higher proportion than the national average. Within this category, there is a larger proportion of one family only households all aged 66 and over compared to the district and national average. There is a similar proportion of one family households with no children compared to the district average but higher than the national average whilst there is a slightly higher proportion of dependent children compared to both the district and national average.
- 5.41 The non-dependent children grew by 24.1% between 2011 and 2021 in the NA – slightly lower than the district average 27.6% but significantly higher than the national average of 3.5%.

5.42 In the study area, 80.3% of dwellings are under-occupied by at least one bedroom, whilst 45.5% of dwellings are under-occupied by two bedrooms. Whilst under-occupancy is high across all household types, it is particularly high in families aged 65+ and families under 65 with no children, at 97.5% and 97.3% respectively. This may suggest that the larger housing isn't being occupied by households with the most family members, but by the people with the most wealth or by older people who have not chosen or are unable to move to smaller properties. There is some over-occupancy in the NA, with 3.3% of families under 66 with adult children and 3.0% of families under 66 with dependent children living in potentially overcrowded conditions.

### **Future population and size needs**

5.43 Population growth can be expected to be driven by the oldest households, with a 104.0% increase expected in the 65 and over age group. This increase is significantly higher than the next largest increase of 23.0% for the 55 to 64 age group. The table shows that the 25 to 34 and 24 and under age groups are expected to increase by 22.0% and 15.0% respectively, whilst the 35 to 54 age group is expected to increase the least of all age groups, at 10.0%.

5.44 AECOM's modelling of future population growth, occupancy patterns and existing stock mix suggest a range of different dwelling sizes are required. Some emphasis may be given to larger properties because of their more limited numbers in the stock at present.

5.45 However, it is important to remember that other factors should be considered in determining the dwelling mix that is desirable in the NA 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.

## 6. Specialist housing for older people

### Introduction

6.1 It is relatively common for neighbourhood plans in areas with aging populations to include policies relating to specialist housing for older people. This chapter considers in detail the specialist housing needs of older people in Fleckney. It focuses on specialist forms of provision but recognises that the majority of older people will live in the mainstream housing stock. The approach is as follows:

- To review the **current provision** of specialist housing in the NA;
- To estimate the **potential demand** for this form of accommodation with reference to the projected growth in the older population and current rates of mobility limitation; and
- To discuss the potential for meeting this need through adaptations to the mainstream stock and other **additional considerations**.

6.2 Because of the wide variation in the level of support needed, as well as the financial capabilities of those affected, the estimates of need presented here should be viewed with caution – as an idea of the broad scale of potential need rather than an obligatory target that must be met.

6.3 It is important to note that the need for housing for particular groups of people may well exceed, or be proportionally high in relation to, the total housing need or requirement. This is because the needs of particular groups will often be calculated having consideration to the whole population of an area as opposed to the projected new households which form the baseline for estimating housing need overall.<sup>7</sup>

6.4 This study covers the need for housing, i.e. buildings that the planning system classifies as Use Class C3 (private dwellings).<sup>8</sup> Residences that fall into Use Class C2 (institutions including prisons, boarding schools and some care homes for older people) are largely beyond the scope of this research. However, it is possible to estimate the likely need for residential and nursing care over the Neighbourhood Plan period.

6.5 The distinction between care homes for older people that fall into use class C2 and those where accommodation is counted as C3 is blurred. As such, the findings of this chapter may justify the provision of extra-care C3 housing and/or C2 care home units, but it is not possible to state definitively how much of each would be required. C3 specialist accommodation is typically self-contained with its own front door, made available on an individual basis with support provided in

<sup>7</sup> See Paragraph: 017 Reference ID: 2a-017-20190220, at <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/housing-and-economic-development-needs-assessments>)

<sup>8</sup> For a full description of Planning Use Classes, please refer to [https://www.planningportal.co.uk/info/200130/common\\_projects/9/change\\_of\\_use](https://www.planningportal.co.uk/info/200130/common_projects/9/change_of_use)

the home or not at all if the resident does not require it, and offered for sale or rent on the open market.

## Definitions

- **Older people:** people over retirement age, ranging from the active newly retired to the very frail elderly. Their housing needs tend to encompass accessible and adaptable general needs housing as well as the full spectrum of retirement and specialised housing offering additional care.
- **Specialist housing for older people:** a wide range of housing types specifically aimed at older people, which may often be restricted to those in certain older age groups. This could include residential institutions, 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.
- **Sheltered Housing<sup>9</sup>:** self-contained flats or bungalows where all the residents are older people. Schemes on the whole provide independent, self-contained homes, either to rent or buy. Properties in most schemes have features like raised electric sockets, lowered worktops, walk-in showers, and so on, as well as being linked to an emergency alarm service. Some will be designed to accommodate wheelchair users. Managed schemes will also usually have some shared or communal facilities such as a lounge for residents to meet, a laundry, guest flats and gardens.
- **Extra Care Housing:** housing which usually consists of purpose-built or adapted flats or bungalows with a medium to high level of care available if required. Residents are able to live independently with 24-hour access to support services and staff, and meals are often also available. 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.
- **Category M4(2):** accessible and adaptable dwellings.
- **Category M4(3):** wheelchair user dwellings.

## Specialist housing for older people

6.6 There is a total of 44 units of specialist accommodation in the NA at present, 29 of which are available for social rent, with the remainder being offered for leasehold market purchase. Details are provided in Appendix E.

6.7 The 2021 Census indicates that at this time there were 441 individuals aged 75 or over in Fleckney. This suggests that current provision is in the region of 99.8 units per 1,000 of the 75+ population (a common measure of specialist housing supply). It is relevant to note that the national average for England is 136 units

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<sup>9</sup> See <http://www.housingcare.org/jargon-sheltered-housing.aspx>

per 1,000 of the 75+ population<sup>10</sup>, so provision in the NA is lower than the national average.

## Demographic characteristics

- 6.8 The starting point for estimating the need for specialist housing for older people is to project how the overall number of older people in Fleckney is likely to change in future. This is calculated by extrapolating population projections from the ONS Sub-National Population Projections for Harborough. The results are set out in Table 6-1. It shows that in 2021, 9.0% of the population in the NA is aged 75+ compared to 10.3% in Harborough. By the end of the plan period, this is expected to increase to 13.7% of the Na population and 15.7% of the population in Harborough.
- 6.9 A key assumption for the estimate given at the end of this section is that the older people living in the NA currently are already suitably accommodated, either because they occupy the existing stock of specialist accommodation, have made appropriate adaptations to their own homes or do not require support or adaptations. This is unlikely to be completely true, but it is not possible to determine how many such individuals are inadequately housed without evidence from a household survey (which itself may not give a complete picture). As such, the growth in the older population rather than the total at the end of the Plan period is the key output of this calculation.

**Table 6-1: Modelled projection of older population in Flackney by end of Plan period**

| Age group | 2021     |            | 2041     |            |
|-----------|----------|------------|----------|------------|
|           | Fleckney | Harborough | Fleckney | Harborough |
| All ages  | 4,926    | 97,626     | 5,669    | 112,359    |
| 75+       | 441      | 10,069     | 774      | 17,670     |
| %         | 9.0%     | 10.3%      | 13.7%    | 15.7%      |

Source: ONS SNPP 2020, AECOM Calculations

- 6.10 The next step is to consider the need for different tenures of dwelling for older people. It is assumed that those currently occupying their own home will wish to do so for as long as practicably possible in future, even where downsizing or moving into specialist accommodation. Equally, those who currently rent, either in the private or social sectors, are projected to need affordable rented specialist accommodation.
- 6.11 The 2011 55-75 age bracket is considered the best proxy for the group likely to fall into need for specialist accommodation during the Plan period to 2041. The top row in Table 6-2 outlines the tenure mix among households aged 55-75 at Local Authority level, which indicates that the majority of people (91.5%) aged 55-75 in the District own their property, of which 64.9% own it outright and 26.6% own their own property through a mortgage of shared ownership. 8.5% of those

<sup>10</sup> Table 22, 'More Choice Greater Voice' (2008), published by Housing LIN for CLG (now DLUHC) and the Care Services Improvement Partnership

in this age group rent their property, of which 7.5% is social rent and 0.9% is private rent. 0.1% live rent free.

6.12 The expected growth in the 75+ population in the NA is 333 additional individuals by the end of the plan period. This can be converted into 238 households based on the average number of people per household aged 75+ at Local Authority scale. Multiplying this figure by the percentages of 55-75 year olds occupying each tenure gives a breakdown of which tenures Fleckney households are likely to need in 2041 and is shown in the bottom row of Table 6-2.

**Table 6-2: Tenure of households aged 55-75 in Harborough (2011) and projected aged 75+ in Fleckney (2041)**

|                                   | All owned    | Owned outright | Owned (mortgage) or Shared Ownership | All Rented  | Social rented | Private rented | Living rent free |
|-----------------------------------|--------------|----------------|--------------------------------------|-------------|---------------|----------------|------------------|
| <b>Harborough (2011 mix)</b>      | <b>91.5%</b> | 64.9%          | 26.6%                                | <b>8.5%</b> | 7.5%          | 0.9%           | 0.1%             |
| <b>Fleckney (2041 projection)</b> | <b>218</b>   | 154            | 63                                   | <b>20</b>   | 18            | 2              | 0                |

Source: Census 2011

6.13 It is also important to consider rates of disability by tenure. 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 E-2 in Appendix E presents this data for Fleckney from the 2011 Census.

## **Future needs for specialist accommodation and adaptations**

6.14 Based on the evidence outlined above, the number of households falling into potential need for specialist accommodation over the Plan period is calculated to be 106.

6.15 AECOM's modelling, summarised in Table 6-3, is based on the assumption that those whose day-to-day activities are limited a lot may need housing with care (e.g. extra care housing, with significant on-site services, including potentially medical services), while those with their day to day activities limited only a little may simply need adaptations to their existing homes, or alternatively sheltered or retirement living that can provide some degree of oversight or additional services. However, it is important to note that, even those people who have high support or care needs can often be supported to live in their own homes. This is often reflected in policy of local authorities, with explicit aim to reduce the need to commission increasing numbers of care home beds.

6.16 Table 6-3 shows that the majority of specialist housing needed in the NA would be market housing (91) whilst a much smaller proportion of affordable units would be required (15). This is driven by the low share of 55-75 year olds currently renting (and therefore less likely to rely on subsidised specialist housing). The split between housing with care (49) and housing with adaptations, sheltered or retirement living (57) are more balanced.

**Table 6-3: AECOM estimate of specialist housing for older people need in Fleckney by the end of the Plan period**

| Type   | Affordable | Market    | Total      |
|--|------------|-----------|------------|
| Housing with care                            | 8          | 41        | 49         |
| Adaptations, sheltered, or retirement living | 7          | 50        | 57         |
| <b>Total</b>                                 | <b>15</b>  | <b>91</b> | <b>106</b> |

Source: Census 2011, AECOM Calculations

6.17 It is worth comparing these findings with the recommendations of the Housing Learning and Improvement Network (HLIN), one of the simplest and widely used models estimating for the housing needs of older people. Table E-3 in Appendix E reproduces the key assumptions of HLIN's Strategic Housing for Older People (SHOP) toolkit. Applying those assumptions to the growth in the older population of Fleckney results in a total of 84 specialist dwellings that might be required to the end of the Plan period. This is set out in Table 6-4.

**Table 6-4: HLIN estimate of specialist housing for older people need in Fleckney by the end of the Plan period**

| Type   | Affordable | Market    | Total     |
|--|------------|-----------|-----------|
| Housing with care                            | 10         | 14        | 24        |
| Adaptations, sheltered, or retirement living | 20         | 40        | 60        |
| <b>Total</b>                                 | <b>30</b>  | <b>54</b> | <b>84</b> |

Source: Housing LIN, AECOM calculations

## Further considerations

6.18 The above estimates suggest that potential need for specialist accommodation could be in the range of 84-106 units over the Neighbourhood Plan period. However, it may not be possible or appropriate to deliver this scale of new accommodation. It is proportionally high in relation to the overall housing need of 180 in the NA, and therefore should not necessarily be prioritised to the exclusion of other groups, such as those in need of Affordable Housing.

6.19 In addition, specialist housing for older people should only be provided in sustainable, accessible locations that offer services and facilities, public transport options, and the necessary workforce of carers and others.

- 6.20 Alongside the need for specialist housing to be provided in accessible locations, another important requirement is for cost effectiveness and economies of scale. This can be achieved by serving the specialist older persons housing needs arising from a number of different locations and/or Neighbourhood Areas from a single, centralised point (i.e. what is sometimes referred to as a ‘hub-and-spoke’ model).
- 6.21 It is considered that Fleckney’s position in the settlement hierarchy makes it a relatively less suitable location for specialist accommodation on the basis of the accessibility criteria and the considerations of cost-effectiveness above. As such, noting that there is no specific requirement or obligation to provide the specialist accommodation need arising from Fleckney entirely within the Neighbourhood Area boundaries, it is recommended it could be provided in a ‘hub and spoke’ model. In the case of Fleckney, Leicester and Market Harborough are considered to have potential to accommodate the specialist housing need arising from the Neighbourhood Area (i.e. to be the hub in the hub-and-spoke model).
- 6.22 It is also important to emphasise that the potential need for specialist housing for older people overlaps with the need for care home bedspaces and the need for adaptations to mainstream housing. These topics are considered in the sections below.

## Care homes

- 6.23 Residential and nursing care homes are not defined as housing because they do not provide self-contained accommodation where an older person can live independently. Care home accommodation is defined as institutional accommodation rather than housing.
- 6.24 However, residents of care homes may be similar in terms of their care and support needs as those living in specialist housing, or even mainstream housing with appropriate care and support delivered in their homes. There may be some scope for older people who would otherwise have been accommodated in care homes to meet their needs within specialist or mainstream housing if sufficient appropriate accommodation can be provided. Nevertheless, there is likely to be continued need for care home accommodation to meet more acute and severe needs, and to offer choice to some older people and their families about how they are cared for and supported.
- 6.25 Given the overlap between people who might enter care home accommodation and those who might take up specialist housing or care and support in their own home if available, estimates of the future need for care home accommodation, as with estimates of the need for specialist housing above, are uncertain and depend on both local and national policies, delivery, and the appetite of private developers.
- 6.26 AECOM has estimated the likely need for care home accommodation over the plan period, based on the HLIN SHOP toolkit prevalence rates for residential and nursing care homes for older people (aged 75+). This estimate applied the

prevalence rates in the 'More Choice, Greater Voice' 2008 report which informed the development of the HLIN toolkit. This report suggested that 65 residential care beds per 1,000 people aged 75+ was an appropriate rate. For nursing care beds this is an extra 45 care beds per 1,000 people aged 75+. Based on these rates, applied to the growth in the older population for consistency with the calculations above, it is estimated that in 2041 there would be a need for 22 residential care beds and 15 nursing care beds in the NA.

6.27 It is important to note that as these estimates relate to care homes (or the population in institutions) rather than independent housing, these figures are in addition to the overall need for housing in the NA. However, as discussed in this section, some of the need for care home beds might be met by independent housing accommodation and vice versa.

## The Role of Mainstream Housing

6.28 The majority of older people live in mainstream housing and will continue to do so all of their lives. Based on the estimated number of older people and the tally of the existing stock in Appendix E, around 89.0% of the Fleckney population aged 75 and over is likely to live in the mainstream housing stock<sup>11</sup>.

6.29 It is not possible to be precise about how well older people are accommodated within mainstream housing, in terms of whether their accommodation is suitable to their needs and whether adequate care or support is provided within the home when they need.

6.30 However, given that there is unlikely to be a large volume of additional specialist supply during the Plan period, another key avenue to addressing those with relevant needs is to discuss the standards of accessibility and adaptability in new development to be met in the Local Plan with Harborough District Council

6.31 It is relatively common for Local Plans to require that all or a majority of new housing meets Category M4(2) standards in response to the demographic shifts being observed nationwide. Government is considering mandating M4(2) on newly erected dwellings<sup>12</sup>, although changes to Building Regulations have not yet been made.

6.32 The current adopted Local Plan policy H5 provides explicit encouragement for development to accommodate specific groups such as older people. Policy H5 states that housing developments of 100 dwellings or more should meet the accessible and adaptable standards set out in Building Regulations, Part M4(2) Category 2, in 4% of dwellings proposed. However, we believe this to be an error as this expectation is very low for M4(2) standards. Instead, we believe this to be an expectation that 4% of new homes will be built to Category M4(3) standards. As a result, the Working Group should discuss this with the LPA. The evidence gathered here may justify the Neighbourhood Plan Working Party approaching

<sup>11</sup> 441 over 75s in 2021, of which 49 are accommodated in specialist housing, leaving 392 people living in mainstream housing. This is approximate since some people in specialist housing and care homes will be under the age of 75.

<sup>12</sup> See [Raising accessibility standards for new homes: summary of consultation responses and government response - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/raising-accessibility-standards-for-new-homes)

the LPA to discuss setting more ambitious requirements on accessibility and adaptability at district level. It is unclear whether Neighbourhood Plans can set their own requirements for the application of the national standards of adaptability and accessibility for new housing and so discussions with the LPA are advised if this is a key priority.

6.33 The proportion of new housing that might accommodate those using wheelchairs is harder to define at small scales. Typically, at Local Authority scale, this might be set with reference to the proportion of Affordable Housing applicants in the Local Authority area falling into this category or to wider data from surveys and other sources where available.

6.34 Table 6-5 sets out the proportion of wheelchair users in England as a whole, either using a wheelchair all of the time (0.6% of the population) or part of the time (3% of the population). As a crude estimate, these percentages are applied to the expected level of housing delivery for Fleckney to suggest the number that might be encouraged to be wheelchair friendly or adaptable. This would imply a potential need for 2-6 wheelchair accessible dwellings over the Plan period. It is worth noting that these national figures are for all age categories, not just older persons, although it is likely that a significant proportion of households using a wheelchair will be older persons.

**Table 6-5: Wheelchair use Nationally Applied to Fleckney**

|  | Percentage in England | % applied to NA housing requirement figure (180 to end of plan period) |
|--|-----------------------|--|
| Households using wheelchair all the time               | 0.6%                  | 1.08   |
| Households using wheelchair either indoors or outdoors | 3.0%                  | 5.4  |

Source: Survey of English Housing 2018/19

## Conclusions- Specialist Housing for Older People

6.35 There is a total of 44 units of specialist accommodation in the NA at present, 29 of which are available for social rent for those in financial need, with the remainder being offered for leasehold market purchase.

6.36 In 2021, 9.0% of the population in the NA is aged 75+ compared to 10.3% in Harborough. By the end of the plan period, this is expected to increase to 13.7% of the Na population and 15.7% of the population in Harborough.

6.37 The potential need for specialist housing with some form of additional care for older people 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. This can be sense-checked using a toolkit based on national research and assumptions.

- 6.38 These two methods of estimating the future need in Fleckney produce a range of 84 to 106 specialist accommodation units that might be required during the Plan period. These estimates are based on the projected growth of the older population, thereby assuming that today's older households are already well accommodated. If this is found not to be the case, it would justify aspiring to exceed the range identified here.
- 6.39 The majority of specialist housing needed in the NA would be market housing (91) whilst a much smaller proportion of affordable units would be required (15). This is driven by the low share of 55-75 year olds currently renting (and therefore less likely to rely on subsidised specialist housing). The split between housing with care (49) and housing with adaptations, sheltered or retirement living (57) are more balanced.
- 6.40 As noted above, the main unmet need in the NA is for market sheltered housing. This could be satisfied by making sure all new housing is accessible and adaptable for people with lower support needs. Local Plan policy H5 Housing density, mix and standards provides explicit encouragement for development to accommodate specific groups such as older people, and currently requires 4% of dwellings on sites of 100 units or more to meet the accessible and adaptable standards set out in Building Regulations, Part M4(2) Category 2. However, we believe this to be an error as this expectation is very low for M4(2) standards. Instead, we believe this to be an expectation that 4% of new homes will be built to Category M4(3) standards. As a result, the Working Group should discuss this with the LPA. A policy specific to the NA could increase this requirement in order to meet the need for market sheltered housing, though this would require discussion with HDC. The Working Party may also be able to encourage the adaptation of existing properties through grant schemes and other means (though it is acknowledged that Neighbourhood Plans may have limited influence over changes to the existing stock).
- 6.41 It is considered that the study area's position in the settlement hierarchy makes it a relatively less suitable location for specialist accommodation on the basis of the accessibility criteria and the considerations of cost-effectiveness above. As such, noting that there is no specific requirement or obligation to provide the specialist accommodation need arising from the study area entirely within the Neighbourhood Area boundaries, it is recommended it could be provided in a 'hub and spoke' model. In the case of the study area, suburban Leicester or Market Harborough are considered to have potential to accommodate the specialist housing need arising from the Neighbourhood Area (i.e. to be the hub in the hub-and-spoke model).

## 7. Next Steps

### Recommendations for next steps

- 7.1 This Neighbourhood Plan housing needs assessment aims to provide Working Party with evidence on a range of housing trends and issues from a range of relevant sources. We recommend that the neighbourhood planners should, as a next step, discuss the contents and conclusions with Harborough District Council 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 Harborough District Council;
  - 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 Harborough District Council.
- 7.2 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.
- 7.3 Bearing this in mind, it is recommended that the Working Party should monitor carefully strategies and documents with an impact on housing policy produced by the Government, Harborough District Council or any other relevant party and review the Neighbourhood Plan accordingly to ensure that general conformity is maintained.
- 7.4 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 : Assessment geography

- A.1 For Census purposes, the whole of England is divided into statistical units of similar population size called Output Areas (OAs) and their larger equivalents. OAs are the smallest units. They make up Lower Layer Super Output Areas (LSOAs), which in turn make up Middle Layer Super Output Areas (MSOAs).
- A.2 As noted in the main report, it is not possible to exactly recreate the NA (see Figure 2-1) in the 2011 or 2021 Censuses. Figure A-1 shows the closest geography it is possible to create using Census LSOAs. Although the 2021 Census parish profile for Fleckney aligns exactly with the geography of the NA, there is very limited data available at this geography so it cannot be used throughout the report (headline figures for population and households are in Chapter 1 and 2).
- A.3 The NA equates most closely to the following combination of LSOAs, which will be used for Census data throughout the report:
- E01025778;
  - E01025779; and
  - E01025780.

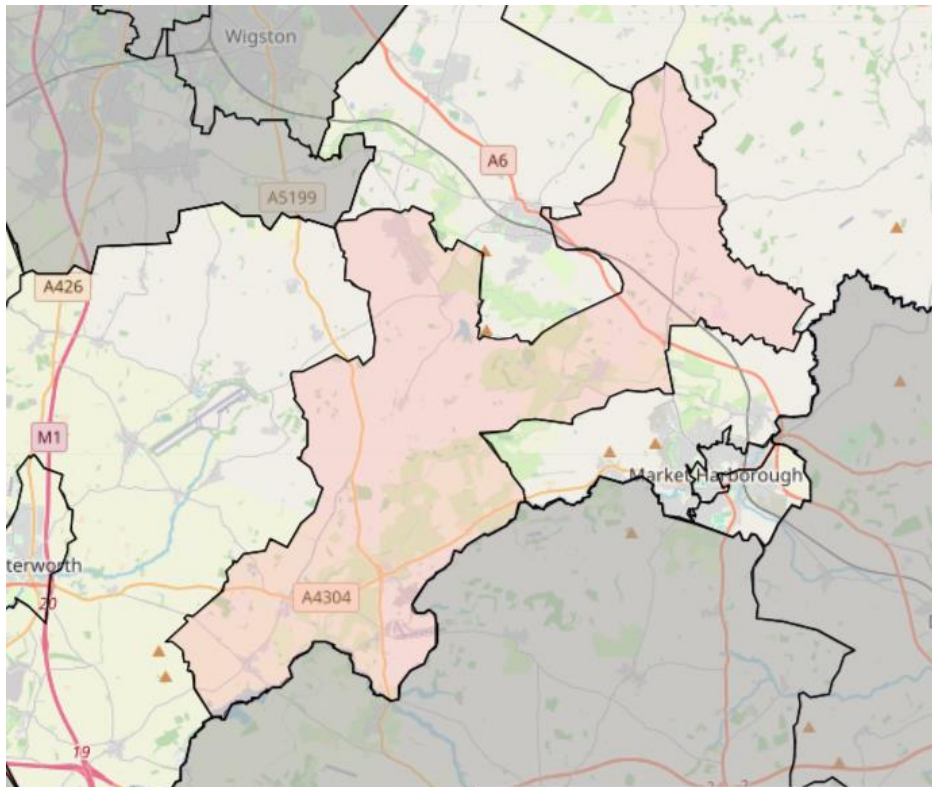
**Figure A-1: Proxy area for Census data**



Source: NOMIS

- A.4 As noted in the analysis of affordability in the main body of the report, household income data for small areas is only provided down to the scale of MSOAs. The relevant MSOA, in which the NA is located and which will need to serve as a proxy for it, is:
- E02005371

**Figure A-2: MSOA for income data**



Source: NOMIS

# Appendix B : Local Plan context

## Policies in the adopted local plan

B.1 Table B-1 below summarises adopted Local Plan policies that are relevant to housing need and delivery in Fleckney.

**Table B-1: Summary of relevant adopted policies in the Harborough District Council adopted Local Plan**

| Policy                         | Provisions   |
|--------------------------------|--|
| SS1<br>Spatial Strategy        | <p>The spatial strategy for Harborough District to 2031 is to manage planned growth to direct development to appropriate locations, in accordance with the following settlement hierarchy:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Rural Centres: Bilesdon, Fleckney, Great glen, <b>Houghton on the Hill</b>, Husbands Bosworth, the Kibworths, Illesthorpe.</li> </ul> <p>Enable housing and commercial development during the period 2011-2031, including:</p> <p>About 307 dwellings on non-allocated sites or sites to be allocated in neighbourhood plans for rural Centres and Selected Rural Villages.</p>  |
| H1<br>Provision of new housing | <p>In addition to the delivery of existing commitments and completions and the allowance for windfalls, land for a minimum of 3,975 new homes will be provided during the plan period to 2031.</p>   |
| H2<br>Affordable housing       | <p>40% affordable housing will be required on housing sites of more than 10 dwellings or with a combined gross floorspace of more than 1,000 square metres. The tenure split for the affordable housing should be 75% affordable or socially rented and 25% low-cost home ownership products, or a variation of this mix which is shown to be justified by reference to the latest assessment of affordable housing need.</p> <p>When developments of 10 dwellings or less are proposed within 5 years of each other on sites which have a spatial relationship, or on adjacent sites under the same ownership, affordable housing will be required where there is a cumulative total of more than 10 dwellings or a combined gross floorspace of more than 1,000 square metres.</p> |
| H3<br>Rural exception sites    | <p>Development proposals for affordable housing on small sites in rural areas that would not normally be permitted for housing, will be approved as rural exception sites where the development would meet evidenced affordable housing need, the housing remains affordable in perpetuity, the site is proportionate in scale to and in safe and reasonable walking distance of a rural</p>   |

| Policy                                       | Provisions  |
|--|---|
|  | <p>settlement and the development respects the character, form and appearance of the immediate vicinity and surrounding area. Small numbers of market homes may be permitted on rural exception sites where they are essential to enable the delivery of affordable units, meet an identified and proven element of local need, such as starter homes or units to enable downsizing, and constitute no more than 20% of the number of dwellings proposed, the exact percentage being determined by the viability of each scheme.</p>  |
| <p>H4 Specialist housing</p>                 | <p>The provision of well-designed specialist forms of accommodation in appropriate locations will be supported, taking into account housing needs.</p>  |
| <p>H5 Housing density, mix and standards</p> | <p>New housing development will be permitted where it makes efficient use of land and whilst respecting the character of the surrounding area, maximises the density on sites from where a full range of services and facilities is accessible by walking, cycling and public transport, and is designed to meet higher water efficiency standards of 100 litres per person per day. Major housing development should provide a mix of house types that is informed by up to date evidence of housing need. Housing developments of 100 dwellings or more should meet the accessible and adaptable standards set out in Building Regulations, Part M4(2) Category 2, in 4% of dwellings proposed. Proposals for self-build and custom build housing will be supported in any location suitable for housing, including allocated sites, committed sites, windfall sites and sites which are in accordance with Policy GD2: Settlement Development.</p> |

*Source: Harborough District Council Local Plan 2011 - 2031*

## Appendix C : Affordability calculations

- C.1 This section outlines how the affordability thresholds discussed in the Affordability and Affordable Housing have been calculated.

### Market housing

- C.2 Market housing is not subsidised and tends to be primarily accessible to people on higher incomes.

#### i) Market sales

- C.3 The starting point for calculating the affordability of a dwelling for sale from the perspective of a specific household is the loan to income ratio which most mortgage companies are prepared to agree. This ratio is conservatively estimated to be 3.5. In practice this can be highly variable. Multipliers up to 4.5 or even above 5 times income increasingly available, although the actual average in practice tends to be lower, particularly where applicants are dual earning. The Financial Conduct Authority uses 3.5 or more as its standard assumption for single applicants and 2.75 or more for dual applicants.
- C.4 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 Fleckney, 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.
- C.5 The calculation for the purchase threshold for market housing is as follows:
- Value of a median NA house price (2023) = £253,500;
  - Purchase deposit at 10% of value = £25,350;
  - Value of dwelling for mortgage purposes = £228,150;
  - Divided by loan to income ratio of 3.5 = purchase threshold of £65,186.
- C.6 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 2023 was £195,000, and the purchase threshold is therefore £50,143.
- C.7 It is also 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. Land Registry records 7 sales of new build properties in the NA in

2022. There were too few recent sales in the NA specifically to determine an accurate average for the cost of new build housing in Fleckney. It is, however, important to understand the likely cost of new housing because new housing is where the Neighbourhood Plan has most influence, and is the appropriate benchmark for understanding the costs of affordable home ownership tenures (considered below).

- C.8 Therefore an estimate has been calculated by determining the uplift between all house prices in 2023 across Harborough and new build house prices in 2023 in the same area. This percentage uplift (or 'new build premium') is then applied to the 2023 lower quartile house price in the NA to give an estimated NA new build entry-level house price of £226,414 and purchase threshold of £58,221.
- C.9 In order to provide a comparison with the wider local authority area, it is helpful to also look at the cost of new build housing across Harborough in 2023. The median cost of new build dwellings in Harborough was £365,746, with a purchase threshold of £94,049.

## **i) Private Rented Sector (PRS)**

- C.10 It is assumed here that rented housing is affordable if the annual rent does not exceed 30% of the household's gross annual income. The percentage of income to be spent on rent before the property is considered affordable varies considerably for individuals, and it is increasingly common for households to dedicate a larger proportion of their earnings to rent. When considering affordability it is considered good practice to be conservative, and the 30% benchmark is used as ONS's current standard assumption.
- C.11 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.
- C.12 The property website Home.co.uk shows rental values for property in the Neighbourhood Area.
- C.13 According to home.co.uk, there were 6 properties for rent at the time of search in March 2024, with an average monthly rent of £1,013. There were 4 two-bed properties listed, with an average price of £919 per calendar month.
- C.14 The calculation for the private rent income threshold for entry-level (2 bedroom) dwellings is as follows:
- Annual rent = £919 x 12 = £11,028;

- Multiplied by 3.33 (so that no more than 30% of income is spent on rent) = income threshold of £36,760.

C.15 The calculation is repeated for the overall average to give an income threshold of £40,520.

## Affordable Housing

C.16 There are a range of tenures that constitute the definition of Affordable Housing within the NPPF 2023: social rent and affordable rent, discounted market sales housing, and other affordable routes to home ownership. The new First Homes was introduced in 2021 but is not yet included in the NPPF. Each of the affordable housing tenures are considered below.

### i) Social rent

C.17 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.

C.18 To determine social rent levels, data and statistical return from Homes England is used. This data is only available at Local Authority scale so must act as a proxy for Fleckney. This data provides information about rents and the size and type of stock owned and managed by private registered providers and is presented for Harborough in Table C-1.

C.19 To determine the income needed, it is assumed that no more than 30% of income should be spent on rent. This is an assumption only for what might generally 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 C-1: Social rent levels (£)**

| Size                         | 1 bed          | 2 beds         | 3 beds         | 4 beds         | All            |
|------------------------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|
| Average social rent per week | £81.29         | £92.61         | £97.08         | £109.39        | £91.74         |
| Annual average               | <b>£4,227</b>  | <b>£4,816</b>  | <b>£5,048</b>  | <b>£5,688</b>  | <b>£4,770</b>  |
| Income needed                | <b>£14,076</b> | <b>£16,036</b> | <b>£16,810</b> | <b>£18,942</b> | <b>£15,886</b> |

Source: Homes England, AECOM Calculations

### i) Affordable rent

C.20 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).

- C.21 Even a 20% 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 46.7% of market levels rather than 80%.
- C.22 Data on the most realistic local affordable rent costs is obtained from the same source as social rent levels for Harborough. Again it is assumed that no more than 30% of income should be spent on rent, and the overall average is taken forward.
- C.23 Comparing this result with the average 2 bedroom annual private rent above indicates that affordable rents in the NA are actually closer to 50% of market rates than the maximum of 80%, a feature that is necessary to make them achievable to those in need.

**Table C-2: Affordable rent levels (£)**

| Size                             | 1 bed          | 2 beds         | 3 beds         | 4 beds         | All            |
|----------------------------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|
| Average affordable rent per week | £91.40         | £109.34        | £121.75        | £158.91        | £109.19        |
| Annual average                   | <b>£4,753</b>  | <b>£5,686</b>  | <b>£6,331</b>  | <b>£8,263</b>  | <b>£5,678</b>  |
| Income needed                    | <b>£15,827</b> | <b>£18,933</b> | <b>£21,082</b> | <b>£27,517</b> | <b>£18,907</b> |

Source: Homes England, AECOM Calculations

## i) Affordable home ownership

- C.24 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.
- C.25 In paragraph 66 of the NPPF 2023, the Government introduces a recommendation that “where major development involving the provision of housing is proposed, planning policies and decisions should expect at least 10% of the total number of homes to be available for affordable home ownership.” There are exemptions to this requirement, including where:
- The provision would exceed the level of affordable housing required in an area;
  - The provision would significantly prejudice the ability to meet the identified affordable housing needs of specific groups;
  - A proposed development provides solely Build to Rent homes;
  - A proposed development provides specialist accommodation for a group of people with specific needs (such as purpose built accommodation for students or the elderly);

- The development is proposed to be developed by people who wish to build or commission their own homes; or
- The proposed development is exclusively for affordable housing, a community-led development exception site, or a rural exception site.

### **First Homes**

C.26 Because First Homes are a new tenure product, it is worth explaining some of their key features:

- 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 prioritisation 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.

C.27 The starting point for considering whether First Homes are affordable is the estimated cost of new build entry-level housing in the NA noted above of £226,414.

C.28 For the minimum discount of 30% the purchase threshold can be calculated as follows:

- Value of a new home = £226,414;
- Discounted by 30% = £158,490;

- Purchase deposit at 10% of value = £15,849;
- Value of dwelling for mortgage purposes = £142,641;
- Divided by loan to income ratio of 3.5 = purchase threshold of £40,755.

C.29 The income thresholds analysis in the Affordability and Affordable Housing chapter also compares local incomes with the costs of a 40% and 50% discounted First Home. This would require an income threshold of £34,932 and £29,110 respectively.

C.30 All of the income thresholds calculated here for First Homes are below the cap of £80,000 above which households are not eligible.

C.31 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 £1,750 per sq. m<sup>13</sup>) would be around £122,500. This cost excludes any land value or developer profit. This would appear to be an issue in Fleckney as the 50% discounted value is £113,207.

C.32 Table C-3 shows the discount required for First Homes to be affordable to the three income groups. The cost of a typical First Home is calculated using an estimate for new build entry-level housing in the NA. However, it is worth thinking about First Homes in relation to the cost of new build prices in the wider area, as well as median and entry-level existing prices locally to get a more complete picture. The discount levels required for these alternative benchmarks are given below.

**Table C-3: Discount on sale price required for households to afford First Homes**

| House price benchmark                          | Mean household income | Single LQ earner | Dual LQ earning household |
|--|-----------------------|------------------|---------------------------|
| NA median house price                          | 27%                   | 69%              | 37%                       |
| NA estimated new build entry-level house price | 18%                   | 65%              | 30%                       |
| NA entry-level house price                     | 5%                    | 59%              | 18%                       |
| LA median new build house price                | 49%                   | 78%              | 56%                       |

Source: Land Registry PPD; ONS MSOA total household income

### Shared ownership

C.33 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 rent payable on the share retained by the provider. Both of these are variable. The share

<sup>13</sup> It is estimated that in 2022, build costs for a house are between £1,750 and £3,000 per square metre - <https://urbanistarchitecture.co.uk/cost-to-build-a-house-uk/>

owned by the occupant can be increased over time through a process known as 'staircasing'.

- C.34 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.
- C.35 To determine the affordability of shared ownership, calculations are again based on the estimated costs of new build housing as discussed above. 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).
- C.36 The affordability threshold for a 25% equity share is calculated as follows:
- A 25% equity share of £226,414 is £56,604;
  - A 10% deposit of £5,660 is deducted, leaving a mortgage value of £50,943;
  - This is divided by the loan to value ratio of 3.5 to give a purchase threshold of £14,555;
  - Rent is charged on the remaining 75% shared ownership equity, i.e. the unsold value of £169,811;
  - The estimated annual rent at 2.5% of the unsold value is £4,245;
  - This requires an income of £14,151 (annual rent multiplied by 3.33 so that no more than 30% of income is spent on rent).
  - The total income required is £28,706 (£14,555 plus £14,151).
- C.37 The same calculation is repeated for equity shares of 10% and 50% producing affordability thresholds of £22,803 and £38,544 respectively.
- C.38 All of these income thresholds are below the £80,000 cap for eligible households.

### **Rent to Buy**

- C.39 Rent to Buy is a relatively new and less common tenure, which through subsidy allows the occupant to save a portion of their rent, which is intended to be used 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 savings with a portion of the rent.

# Appendix D : Affordable Housing need and policy

## Affordable housing policy

D.1 The following table reviews the relevant factors in developing a policy on the Affordable Housing tenure mix, which inform the recommendation given in the main body of the report.

**Table D-1: Wider considerations in developing Affordable Housing mix policy**

| Consideration   | Local Evidence  |
|---|---|
| <p><b>A. Evidence of need for Affordable Housing:</b></p> <p>The need for affordable rent and affordable home ownership is 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 not be able to afford the deposit to transition to ownership.</p> | <p>This HNA suggests that the NA requires around 17 units of affordable rented housing and 9 units of affordable home ownership homes per annum over the Plan period. Both forms of Affordable Housing appear to be valuable in meeting the needs of people on various incomes.</p> <p>The relationship between these figures suggests that affordable rented housing should be prioritized over affordable home ownership.</p> |
| <p><b>B. Can Affordable Housing needs be met in full?</b></p> <p>How far the more urgently needed affordable rented housing should be prioritised in the tenure mix depends on the quantity of overall housing delivery expected.</p>   | <p>If the Local Plan target of 40% were achieved on every site, assuming the delivery of the NA's housing target for 180 homes overall, up to 72 affordable homes might be expected in the NA over Plan period.</p> <p>This level of potential affordable housing delivery would not be sufficient to meet all of the need identified. Therefore, the more urgent and acute need for rented housing should be prioritized.</p>  |
| <p><b>C. Government policy (eg NPPF) requirements:</b></p> <p>Current NPPF policy requires 10% of all homes to be delivered for affordable home ownership. There can be exceptions to this</p>  | <p>For 10% of all housing to be affordable ownership in Fleckney, where 40% of all housing should be affordable, 25% of Affordable Housing should be for affordable ownership. This complies with the guideline tenure split sought in the Local Plan.</p>  |

|   |   |
|---|---|
| requirement if it would prevent the delivery of other forms of Affordable Housing.  |   |
| <b>D. Local Plan policy:</b>  | The adopted Local Plan seeks a tenure split of 75% affordable rent and 25% affordable home ownership.   |
| <p><b>E. First Homes policy:</b></p> <p>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.</p> <p>After the 25% First Homes requirement has been met, the remaining 75% of Affordable Housing units should as a first priority protect the provision for social rent set out in the Local Plan. The remaining units should then be allocated to other tenure products in the relative proportions set out in the Local Plan.</p> <p>AECOM is aware that some Local Planning Authorities are considering ‘top slicing’ their affordable housing quota to provide 25% First Homes and then allocating the remaining proportion according to their existing policy tenure split. Some LPAs are considering this approach because of the existing business models of registered providers which have relied on shared ownership to cross subsidise affordable rented housing and uncertainty over whether First Homes could replace this model.</p> | 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. This will not impact the 75% affordable rent and 35% affordable home ownership tenure split set out in the Local Plan policy. However, this will displace other products such as Shared Ownership and Rent to Buy. |
| <b>F. Viability:</b>  | 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.  |
| <p><b>G. Funding:</b></p> <p>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.</p>                   | The Working Party may wish to keep this in mind so that it can take up any opportunities to secure funding if they become available.   |
| <p><b>H. Existing tenure mix in Fleckney:</b></p> <p>The current stock of homes in an area, in terms of balance between ownership, rented and affordable provision may be a consideration in the mix of tenures provided on new development sites.</p> | Evidence suggests there is limited Affordable Housing (either to rent or for sale) within the NA at present. The existing tenure mix is 81.0% ownership, 0.9% shared ownership, 6.3% social rent and 11.9% private rent.   |
| <p><b>I. Views of registered providers:</b></p>  | 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 NA. The funding arrangements available to housing associations will determine rent levels.   |
| <p><b>J. Wider policy objectives:</b></p>  | The Working Party may wish to take account of broader policy objectives for Fleckney and/or the wider district. These could include, but are not restricted to, policies to attract younger households, families or working age people to the NA. These wider considerations may influence the mix of Affordable Housing provided. |

# Appendix E : Specialist housing for older people

## Background data tables

Table E-1: Existing specialist housing supply, Fleckney

|   | Name              | Description           | Dwellings | Tenure      | Type  |
|---|-------------------|-----------------------|-----------|-------------|-------|
| 1 | Brookside Gardens | Retirement Housing    | 29        | Social Rent | Flats |
| 2 | Byron Close       | Age Exclusive Housing | 15        | Leasehold   | Flats |

Source: <http://www.housingcare.org>

Table E-2: Tenure and mobility limitations of those aged 65+ in Fleckney, 2011 (65+ is the closest proxy for 75+ in this data)

| Tenure                               | Day-to-day activities limited a lot |       | Day-to-day activities limited a little |       | Day-to-day activities not limited |       |
|--------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|-------|--|-------|-----------------------------------|-------|
|                                      |                                     |       |  |       |                                   |       |
| <b>All categories</b>                | 140                                 | 21.5% | 157                                    | 24.1% | 354                               | 54.4% |
| <b>Owned Total</b>                   | 110                                 | 19.0% | 132                                    | 22.8% | 336                               | 58.1% |
| Owned outright                       | 98                                  | 19.0% | 119                                    | 23.1% | 298                               | 57.9% |
| Owned (mortgage) or shared ownership | 12                                  | 19.0% | 13                                     | 20.6% | 38                                | 60.3% |
| <b>Rented Total</b>                  | 30                                  | 41.1% | 25                                     | 34.2% | 18                                | 24.7% |
| Social rented                        | 23                                  | 42.6% | 15                                     | 27.8% | 16                                | 29.6% |
| Private rented or living rent free   | 7                                   | 36.8% | 10                                     | 52.6% | 2                                 | 10.5% |

Source: DC3408EW Health status

## HLIN calculations

**Table E-3: Recommended provision of specialist housing for older people from the HLIN SHOP toolkit**

| FORM OF PROVISION  | ESTIMATE OF DEMAND PER THOUSAND OF THE RELEVANT 75+ POPULATION |
|--|--|
| Conventional sheltered housing to rent   | 60   |
| Leasehold sheltered housing  | 120  |
| Enhanced sheltered housing (divided 50:50 between that for rent and that for sale) <sup>36</sup> | 20   |
| Extra care housing for rent  | 15   |
| Extra care housing for sale  | 30   |
| Housing based provision for dementia   | 6  |

Source: *Housing LIN SHOP Toolkit*

E.1 As Table 6-1 in the main report shows, Fleckney is forecast to see an increase of 333 individuals aged 75+ by the end of the Plan period. According to the HLIN tool, this translates into need as follows:

- Conventional sheltered housing to rent =  $60 \times 0.333 = 20$
- Leasehold sheltered housing =  $120 \times 0.333 = 40$
- Enhanced sheltered housing (divided 50:50 between that for rent and that for sale) =  $20 \times 0.333 = 6.66$
- Extra care housing for rent =  $15 \times 0.333 = 4.99$
- Extra care housing for sale =  $30 \times 0.333 = 9.99$
- Housing based provision for dementia =  $6 \times 0.333 = 2$

# Appendix F : 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 =  $\frac{£200,000}{£25,000} = 8$ , (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 methods<sup>14</sup>.

### **Age-Restricted General Market Housing**

A type of housing which is generally for people aged 55 and over and active older people. 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, over-crowding, concealment or affordability, but who are yet to be offered a home suited to their needs.

### **Bedroom Standard<sup>15</sup>**

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.

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<sup>14</sup> The Tenant Services Authority has issued an explanatory note on these methods at <http://www.communities.gov.uk/documents/planningandbuilding/pdf/1918430.pdf>

<sup>15</sup> See <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/english-housing-survey-2011-to-2012-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 developments (NPPF definition)

A development instigated and taken forward by a not-for-profit organisation set up and run primarily for the purpose of meeting the housing needs of its members and the wider local community, rather than being a primarily commercial enterprise. The organisation is created, managed, and democratically controlled by its members. It may take any one of the various legal forms including a community land trust, housing co-operative, and community benefit society. Membership of the organisation is open to all beneficiaries and prospective beneficiaries of that organisation. The organisation should own, manage, or steward the homes in a manner consistent with its purpose, for example through a mutually supported arrangement with a Registered Provider of Social Housing. The benefits of the development to the specified community should be clearly defined and consideration given to how these benefits can be protected over time, including in the event of the organisation being wound up.

### Community Right to Build Order<sup>16</sup>

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)<sup>17</sup>

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 older 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.

### 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.

<sup>16</sup> See <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/national-planning-policy-framework/annex-2-glossary>

<sup>17</sup> See [http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20160107160832/http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/dcp171776\\_350282.pdf](http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20160107160832/http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/dcp171776_350282.pdf)

## **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**

First Homes is another form of discounted market housing which will provide a discount of at least 30% on the price of new homes, introduced in 2021. 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 years<sup>18</sup>, 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 very frail older people, 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.

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<sup>18</sup> See <https://www.which.co.uk/news/2017/08/how-your-income-affects-your-mortgage-chances/>

## **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**

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% (though this was lowered in 2021 to a minimum of 10%), 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 Housing<sup>19</sup>**

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 and 3 bed roomed. 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

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<sup>19</sup> See <http://www.housingcare.org/jargon-sheltered-housing.aspx>

'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 Older People**

Specialist housing for Older People, sometimes known as specialist accommodation for older people, 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.<sup>20</sup>

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<sup>20</sup> See <http://www.communities.gov.uk/documents/planningandbuilding/doc/1980960.doc#Housing>

