

Policy BSC4: Housing Mix

B.120 The Local Plan aims not only to increase supply of housing but to encourage a mix that can help improve the functioning of the housing market system, make it more fluid, and enable households to more easily find and move to housing which they can afford and which better suits their circumstances.



B.121 There is need to provide a mix of housing in Cherwell that reflects the needs of an ageing population, a growth in smaller households and which meets the requirements for family housing. The mix of housing needs to enable movement through the market from one house type to another as the needs of households change. This movement frees up housing which might otherwise be unavailable.

B.122 The Oxfordshire Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA 2014) provides conclusions on a strategic mix of housing for Oxfordshire over the next 20 years. The SHMA analyses the types and sizes of accommodation occupied by different ages of residents, projected changes in the population and estimates of future need and demand for different sizes of homes. The SHMA's conclusions are shown below:

SHMA Table 67: Conclusions regarding Mix of Homes, HMA Level

	1-bed	2-bed	3-bed	4-bed
Market	5%	25%	45%	25%
Affordable	25-30%	30-35%	30-35%	5-10%
All Dwellings	15%	30%	40%	15%

B.123 The SHMA does advise, however, that at an individual local authority level, there is a greater need for 3-bed properties in Cherwell and that the overall mix identified is focused more towards smaller properties than the existing mix of homes in Oxfordshire.

B.124 The SHMA also advises that in applying policies for housing mix to individual development sites, regard should be had to "...the nature of the development site and character of the area, and to the up-to-date evidence of need as well as the existing mix and turnover of properties at the local level" (paragraph 7.40).

B.125 The need for housing for those with care needs is also significant. 'Extra care' housing in particular will be important in meeting the housing needs of an older population across all tenures. Extra care housing comprises self-contained accommodation for older and disabled people which enables independent living by providing a range of support facilities on the premises and 24-hour care services. It can help people live longer in their own homes either securely alone or with partners or friends. It meets a need between traditional sheltered housing and residential care and can be purpose-built or adapted accommodation. People have their own front doors but also have the opportunity to benefit from communal facilities. Extra care can also contribute in achieving more social cohesion by providing an opportunity for community living and a better mix of housing within residential areas.

B.126 The NPPF recognises that a key driver of change in the housing market over the next 20 years will be the growth in the population of elderly people. Evidence produced for the Council's former Housing Strategy for Older People (2010-2015) identified a requirement for an additional 788 units from 2010 to 2026 to meet extra care and 'enhanced sheltered' needs. Extra care remains an important housing option in the District Housing Strategy 2012-2017. The SHMA also highlights that an ageing population and higher levels of disability and health problems amongst older people will mean an increasing demand for specialist housing.

B.127 An assessment of the development viability of extra care housing (2011) concluded that the inclusion of extra care housing within mixed tenure schemes will not significantly impact on the viability and deliverability of housing. Consultation with providers suggests that schemes will need to comprise at least 45 dwellings to make the provision of support and care facilities operationally viable.

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New residential development will be expected to provide a mix of homes to meet current and expected future requirements in the interests of meeting housing need and creating socially mixed and inclusive communities.

The mix of housing will be negotiated having regard to the Council's most up-to-date evidence on housing need and available evidence from developers on local market conditions.

Housing sites of at least 400 dwellings will be expected to provide a minimum of 45 self-contained extra care dwellings as part of the overall mix. Should it be agreed with the Council that extra care housing would not be desirable in a particular location, an equivalent amount of alternative specialist housing (use class C3) for older people will be required.

Elsewhere, opportunities for the provision of extra care, specialist housing for older and/or disabled people and those with mental health needs and other supported housing for those with specific living needs will be encouraged in suitable locations close to services and facilities. All

proposals will be expected to provide affordable housing in accordance with Policy BSC 3: Affordable Housing.