

Cumberland Council

Supported Housing Strategy 2026-2031



**Cumberland
Council**

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Foreword

Welcome to Cumberland Council's first Supported Housing Strategy.

Having access to a range of good quality, safe, accessible and affordable housing is fundamental in being able to support people to live fulfilled, healthy and independent lives. Supported accommodation is important in delivering key services for vulnerable people and plays a crucial role in helping those who are vulnerable and disadvantaged because of ill-health, age, disability, or because of circumstances that mean they may not be able to live independently without being supported.

By providing a range of accommodation models that deliver care and support, and support through homelessness services we can ensure that peoples housing needs can be met by appropriate support pathways and preventive support services to allow people to have settled and secure accommodation where they can thrive.

Having a safe and stable home can make a life changing difference for people who need care or support. Supported housing helps people through difficult periods, supports recovery after crisis, and enables people to live independently and with dignity. It also plays an important role in reducing homelessness, easing pressure on health and social care services, and helping people move on safely from hospital or institutional settings.

At the heart of this strategy are the voices and experiences of people who live, or have lived, in supported housing. Their lived experience has helped shape our understanding of what works well, what could be improved, and what really matters in people's day to day lives. We have listened to residents, service users and people with experience of homelessness, mental ill health, disability and other support needs to ensure this strategy reflects real lives.

The strategy has also been developed in partnership with supported housing providers, health services, social care, voluntary and community organisations and other local partners. By working together, we can plan the right types of supported housing in the right places, ensure good standards of quality and support, and create services that help people achieve their own goals.



Cllr Emma Williamson

Deputy Leader

Children's Services, Family Wellbeing and Housing Portfolio Holder



Chris Jones-King

Director Adult Social Care and Housing

Background

The Adult Social Care and Housing vision:
People live fulfilled, healthy, independent lives in the place they call home.

Adult Social Care & Housing services support people to remain safe and independent, living within their communities with a sense of belonging. The right home can improve the lives of peoples and their families. Our places have a strong sense of community that enhances the support we offer. We work with a range of partners, seeking a supportive collaborative approach that is focussed on delivering good outcomes for people.



Adult Social Care and Housing

Our Vision: People live fulfilled, healthy, independent lives in the place they call home.

Excellence in practice.

Valuing our skilled workforce.

Empowered voices, empowered choices.

Right support, right time, right place.

Innovating for our communities.

Health and wellbeing is at the heart of everything we do

Our values



Adult Social Care and Housing is the largest directorate in Cumberland Council, with over **1200 staff**. Our facilities cover from Longtown in the north to Millom in the South.



52,329 residents in Cumberland are disabled under the Equality Act, accounting for 19.4% of the population. This is above the national average of 16.9%.



There are currently **66,473 residents over the age of 65 in Cumberland.** By 2044, this is estimated to increase by 27% to 84,471 residents.



As of 2024/25, it is estimated that **c.750 people aged 18+ years with learning disabilities and/or autistic people living in Cumberland, were eligible for adult social care support from Cumberland Council.**



NHS MHSDS data indicates that the majority of people with mental health needs are living in mainstream housing (82%). There are currently **c.6,560 people with a mental health need in Cumberland** and this is expected to increase by c.20% by 2039 to c.7,865 people.



Cumberland's HIA service issued a total of **1007 Disabled Facility Grants in 2025/2026.**



79.4% of all people aged 65 and over live in owner occupied properties, 14.2% live in social rented accommodation and 6.4% live in private rented.



Over half of the total housing stock in Cumberland was built before 1939



Our Supported Housing Strategy

As the Local Housing Authority, Cumberland Council has a statutory duty to understand and plan for the housing needs of its population. This strategy has been developed following the completion of the following studies and strategies.

- ❑ Cumberland Housing Strategy 2025 to 2039
- ❑ General Needs Housing Study by Arc4 Ltd
- ❑ Stock Condition Study (Private Sector) by Opinion Research Services
- ❑ Supported Housing Needs Study by Housing LIN
- ❑ Homelessness Prevention and Rough Sleeping Review and Strategy by Cumberland Council
- ❑ Temporary Accommodation review by Cumberland Council
- ❑ Market Position Statement for Adult Social Care Services by Cumberland Council 2025 - 2029
- ❑ Cared For, Care Experienced and Separated Young People Sufficiency Strategy 2024 - 2027

The aim of our Supported Housing strategy is to support the delivery of supported accommodation, including supported exempt accommodation in Cumberland, that provides choice, the right mix of accommodation options, tenure, affordability and support, and makes a difference through the offer of independent living.

Our key focus is to help people maintain their independence, whilst working with our partners to ensure that residents are receiving the right support tailored to their needs, and we can help our communities to have homes and services that they require.

The Housing LIN Supported Housing Needs Study provides a 15-year evidence base which sits behind this 5-year Strategy. The Supported Housing Strategy will be reviewed every 5 years.

Our Priorities Shaped by People

The Supported Housing Strategy sets out the council's priorities to meet the housing needs of

- Older People
- People with Learning Disabilities and/ or People with Autism
- People with Mental Health Conditions
- People with Physical Disabilities
- People at risk of or experiencing homelessness
- Care experienced Young People



Whilst the strategy is in relation to the 'cohorts' of people above, it is recognised that people's needs are often complex and that innovative approaches to housing and support that go beyond these 'cohort' definitions will be required and indeed desirable:

- An assumption that mainstream housing suitably designed and/or adapted will be appropriate for many people with care and/or support needs.
- Housing solutions may be multi-functional, e.g. providing a mix of mainstream housing, supported housing and potentially other facilities.
- All housing and supported accommodation for people with care and/or support needs should assist and facilitate inclusion in community life.

Consultation and Engagement

The relevance and success of this strategy has involved a wide range of key stakeholders and people with lived experience across Cumberland Council's local communities. The Council has worked with Social Care Institute for Excellence (SCIE) to support the development of a co-production toolkit that enables the Council to complete comprehensive engagement with those who have lived experience in supported housing.

SCIE's report on the outcomes from the engagement has provided meaningful and comprehensive feedback, which has enabled us to review and re-evaluate the priorities set out in this strategy.

The Council's experience of working with SCIE has fundamentally shifted the way we think about how we should be providing supported housing and services in the future. The development of toolkits has given the Council a framework in which to work so that the voices of those with lived experience are heard.

SCIE TOOLKIT

Toolkit Framework

The SCIE toolkit offers a structured ten-step framework for co-producing housing strategies with diverse communities.

Focus on Preferences and Needs

Step 4 centers on identifying residents' preferences and needs to inform housing and support system strategies.

Expert Guidance and Flexibility

SCIE provides national expertise, guides workshop facilitation, and ensures toolkit adaptability for all cohorts.



Our Overarching Objectives

Enable people with support needs to live as independently as possible in Cumberland

Ensure the impact of the Cumbria Home Improvement Agency reduces hospitalisations, delays care placements and prolongs independence

Ensure an adequate provision of quality accessible, adapted and affordable general needs housing and supported accommodation

Establish closer working relationships with external agencies, organisations, and charitable bodies to ensure appropriate support is available

Ensure housing advice is provided and easily accessible to those with support needs in Cumberland

Explore and review good practice in other Local Authorities in relation to supported accommodation, support services and implement appropriate good practice in Cumberland

Ensure the housing needs of our population are reflected in the Council's Local Plan

Make use of public sector land and property to support delivery of supported accommodation, working with partner organisations when necessary

Ensure there is sufficient access to mainstream general housing, and that move-on accommodation is in place, both with and without support, where required

Ensure there is supported housing with 24/7 support in place to meet the needs of those with more complex support needs, with the aim of reducing the use of institutional care options

Our Overarching Objectives

Ensure effective partnership arrangements prevent barriers to rehousing and create housing stability

Ensure new legislation requirements are embedded across Housing that improve quality standards within the sector

Improve the health and wellbeing of Cumberland residents through delivery of high-quality service and provision of suitable supported housing

Ensure housing provision is equal to the challenges of the population and health inequalities

Implement a joint commissioning approach across Children's services and Adult Social Care and Housing that develops a robust provider market within Cumberland

Embed lived experience, co-production and partnership working to strengthen service design, social value, improvement, and equality, diversity and inclusion

Improve housing quality through responsive repairs, clear landlord communication and safe neighborhoods

Improve access to mainstream housing with support that is safe and close to amenities

Our Future Need up to 2039

Cumberland faces demographic challenges driven by an expanding and ageing population with the older population (65+) expected to grow much faster (increasing by c.32% by 2044 relative to 2021) whereas the working-age population shows a decline (c.3% lower in 2044 relative to 2024).

- ❑ 0-19 Years – fall by 1%
- ❑ 20-39 years- fall by 5.2%
- ❑ 40-54 years- fall by 5.4%
- ❑ 55-64 years- fall by 21.4%
- ❑ 65-74 years- increase by 13.1%
- ❑ 75-84 years – increase by 30.8%
- ❑ 85+ years- increase by 58.4%

Estimates of need for supported, specialist and accessible homes using qualitative evidence from a range of stakeholders has been used to inform this strategy are produced for the next 15 years to 2039.

Estimate of supported housing need to 2039

- ❑ 13,896 accessible homes and 908 wheelchair adapted homes
- ❑ 6,600 units of housing for older people
- ❑ 174 units for people with learning disabilities / autistic people
- ❑ 118 units for people with mental health needs
- ❑ 70 units of accommodation for care experienced young people, and 36 units of general needs move-on
- ❑ 250 units of emergency Temporary Accommodation needed to meet increasing homelessness demands
- ❑ Up to 94 units of specialist supported housing linked to homelessness are required to ensure there are positive pathways and move-on from Temporary Accommodation

What “home” means to older People

During our engagement sessions older people described “home” as closely connected to familiarity, independence and remaining part of their local community. Home was not simply a physical space, but the place where people felt settled, secure and able to manage everyday life on their own terms.

Some older people felt their current homes met their needs but expressed anxiety about how they would manage in the future, particularly in relation to stairs, bathrooms and general mobility.

Participants also spoke about loneliness as a growing concern as they age, with community-based housing and shared spaces seen as important in reducing isolation and supporting wellbeing over time.

These findings underline the need for a Supported Housing Strategy that supports ageing in place, improves access to information and preventative support, and invests in accessible, well designed and aspirational housing options that older people would choose to move into. Together, these approaches are essential to enabling people to age well, safely and with dignity in Cumberland.

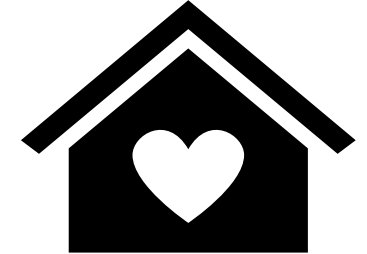
Our Aim is for older people to have access to safe, secure accommodation that promotes independence and dignity. We aim to enhance quality of life through tailored support, social inclusion, and the prevention of unnecessary institutional care

“Living close to good transport links is really important to me when I think about housing options. I don’t drive anymore and with no family living nearby, I need to be somewhere I can easily get a bus to do my shopping, attend appointments and still be able to attend the clubs I attend.”

A OLDER PEOPLE

CURRENT PROVISION

	Retirement / sheltered housing (units)	Extra care housing (units)	Residential Care home (beds)	Nursing Care home (beds)
Total	2,443	412	1,473	583



ESTIMATED NEED FOR EXTRA CARE HOUSING FOR OLDER PEOPLE TO 2044

	Current Provision in 2024	Est. need in 2029	Est. need in 2034	Est. need in 2039	Est. need in 2044
Extra care housing (units)	247	478	708	932	1,135
Market sale	136	263	354	466	568
Shared ownership	12	24	35	47	57
Social/affordable rent	99	191	319	419	511

ESTIMATED NEED FOR RETIREMENT/SHELTERED HOUSING TO 2044

	Current Provision in 2024	Est. need in 2029	Est. need in 2034	Est. need in 2039	Est. need in 2044
Retirement/sheltered housing (units)	408	1,060	1,711	2,343	2,918
Market sale	224	583	855	1,171	1,459
Shared ownership	20	53	86	117	146
Social/affordable rent	163	424	770	1,054	1,313

SHORT TERM PRIORITIES (2026-2028)

- ☐ Agree a strategic plan to increase provision of extra care accommodation aligned to the Council's priorities
- ☐ Work with developers to encourage adoption of inclusive and age friendly designs in new general needs stock, to ensure lifetime flexibility
- ☐ Maximise the impact of the Council's wider preventative offers, including the discretionary grants available under the Homes Adaptation and Assistance Policy including Assisted Technology and grants targeted at reducing hospital admissions
- ☐ Ensure that the cost of social and affordable rented properties meet local affordability levels
- ☐ Maximise the number of M4(2) and M4(3) compliant properties on new developments

MEDIUM TERM PRIORITIES (2028-2031)

- ☐ Support the development of a sustainable market that delivers a mixture of housing and support so that people with high / complex care needs can be accommodated
- ☐ Work with Registered Housing Providers and market housing developers to encourage development of a new generation of contemporary 'retirement housing' that is aspirational and supports people to remain independent
- ☐ Work with the care home sector to encourage and reshape the market towards nursing care provision and provision for people living with dementia, physical frailty and other complex care needs

B PEOPLE WITH LEARNING DISABILITIES AND/OR AUTISTIC PEOPLE

What “home” means to People

Across engagement activities, participants described “home” as more than a physical building. Home was understood as a place of safety, familiarity, relationships and routine.

Home was described as being about relationships, feeling safe and being able to do everyday activities with the right support. Home is not defined primarily by tenure or building type, but by connection, familiarity and the ability to participate safely in daily routines. Practical support is closely tied to emotional security and confidence.

The engagement shows that home is experienced as safety, connection and everyday autonomy, rather than simply accommodation. Independence is expressed through practical daily choices and familiar routines.

Expanding genuine choice will therefore require more than increasing supply. The strategy should strengthen accessible information, support informed decision-making and ensure neighbourhood quality and safety are addressed alongside property design. Personalisation, pets and small elements of control also contribute meaningfully to people’s sense of belonging and stability.

Our Aim is to support people with learning disabilities and/or autistic people to live independently. We aim to provide a range of accommodation to enable person-centred support and community inclusion.

“I want to bake, but need help so I don’t burn myself.”

“I need to live near bus services.”

“I can go out on my own to the shop.”

“I’d like to have a dog.”

B PEOPLE WITH LEARNING DISABILITIES AND/ OR AUSTISTIC PEOPLE

CURRENT PROVISION

Type of accommodation / housing provision	Number of people accommodated	Percentage of people accommodated
For the population of adults with learning disabilities and/or autistic people, the accommodation/ housing provision and types	730	100%
Residential / nursing care	99	13%
Shared lives (adult placement)	7	1%
Supported housing	293	39%
Living with family / friends / informal carers	288	36%
Mainstream housing	82	11%



Estimated need of supported housing and accommodation by 2039 (units)

Shared Lives	Supported Housing	Mainstream Housing with paid support
34	140	73

B SHORT-MEDIUM TERM PRIORITIES 2026-2031/ People with Learning Disabilities and/ or Autistic People

SHORT TERM PRIORITIES (2026-2028)

- ☐ Agree plan to increase Shared Lives placements
- ☐ Increase the supply of supported housing by 45 units in partnership with RHP, private developers and third sector
- ☐ Promote use of choice based lettings
- ☐ Develop a dynamic demand forecasting model that captures the pipeline of young people transitioning from children's to adult services, people living with carers who may require future supported housing
- ☐ Review the appropriateness of current accommodation for either reconfiguration or re-development where required

MEDIUM TERM PRIORITIES (2028-2031)

- ☐ Increase the supply of supported housing by 47 units
- ☐ Plan for return of individuals from out of area placements where needs can be safely met and local provision is appropriate

C PEOPLE WITH MENTAL HEALTH CONDITIONS

What “home” means to People

Across engagement activities, people with mental health needs described “home” as fundamentally about safety, privacy, stability and predictability. Home was closely linked to emotional security and recovery, shaped by past experiences of trauma, exploitation, homelessness or unsafe living environments.

Participants emphasised the importance of feeling safe and protected, having control over their own space, and knowing that support is available when needed.

For many, home was not simply a place to live, but a space where they could feel secure enough to rebuild confidence and manage daily life.

People described current supported accommodation positively because it provided a sense of security and predictability that they had not experienced previously.

Participants also spoke about the importance of having support available when needed, while recognising that access to support could be variable. Some described feeling hesitant to ask for help, particularly where past experiences had created fear that seeking support could lead to hospital admission or loss of their home. This highlights the importance of trusted, trauma informed support relationships alongside housing.

Our strategy will prioritise housing that supports recovery, reduces anxiety about future moves, avoids re-traumatisation, and enables people to live in safe, well connected environments with support that is reliable, trusted and proportionate.

Our Aim is to offer safe and secure accommodation to provide stability and recovery focussed support. We aim to promote independence while helping individuals to build resilience and access health care

“Having my own front door.”

“Having my own kitchen, bedroom and living room is very important. I need my own private space, but I also like knowing people are around”

“Feeling safe is top priority”

“I did not want to ask for help in case they sectioned me. I thought if I said I was struggling I might lose my home and end up back in hospital”

C PEOPLE WITH MENTAL HEALTH CONDITIONS

CURRENT PROVISION

Sub area	No. of supported living units	% of total units
Carlisle	8	42%
West Cumbria	10	53%
Out of County	1	5%
	19	100%



Estimated need of supported housing by 2039 (units)

Carlisle	38
Lakeland Fringe	6
LDNP North Lakes (West)	4
LDNP North Lakes	4
Millom	3
Rural Carlisle	9
Solway Coast to Lakes	12
West Cumbria	42
Units	118

C PEOPLE WITH MENTAL HEALTH CONDITIONS

SHORT TERM PRIORITIES (2026-2028)

- ☐ Increase the supply of move-on accommodation with floating support attached by 35 units
- ☐ Improve access to different tenancy types that can help support tenancy sustainment
- ☐ Work with developers and landlords to implement supported housing solutions for people who have forensic needs
- ☐ Develop a dynamic demand forecasting model that captures the pipeline of young people transitioning from Children's to adult services,
- ☐ Provide stable housing pathways with clear information about what happens next

MEDIUM TERM PRIORITIES (2028-2031)

- ☐ Increase the supply of move-on accommodation with floating support attached by 39 units
 - ☐ Agree plan to increase the supply of step-down accommodation from acute settings
- Commission specialist services at a local level to meet customer needs based on evidence of demand and understanding of the market
- ☐ Ensure the availability of step-up, step-down accommodation
 - ☐ Encourage a mix of 'mainstream' and specialist Registered Providers to increase market capacity
 - ☐ Ensure there is access for older people with mental health conditions to age designated supported accommodation as required, such as retirement / sheltered housing and extra care housing

D PEOPLE WITH PHYSICAL DISABILITIES

What “home” means to People

Across engagement activities, participants described “home” as closely linked to independence, familiarity and the ability to live safely within their community. For many, home was not defined by specialist provision, but by whether a property enabled everyday life without unnecessary restriction.

Participants expressed a strong desire to remain in their own homes or move within their local area, rather than into specialist or institutional settings. Familiarity, social connections and access to trusted services were highly valued, even where current homes were not fully accessible.

Home was described as somewhere people want to live long-term, including as needs change.

Participants valued homes that could be adapted over time, even if adaptations were not immediately required.

Living close to shops, public transport, health services and community amenities was consistently described as essential. Participants spoke about the impact of poor transport links on their ability to attend appointments, maintain routines and stay connected.

For people with physical disabilities, home is experienced as independence, continuity and safety within a familiar community. The ability to remain at home or move locally, adapt properties over time and access everyday amenities is central to wellbeing and quality of life.

Our strategy will prioritise adaptable mainstream housing and inclusive design, with location, access to amenities and community considerations.

Our Aim is to provide accessible and adapted homes that will support independence and safety.

We aim to provide accommodation that will enable community participation and improve quality of life

“Bungalows in cul de sacs feel safe.”

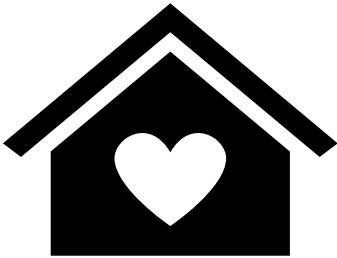
“Homes with access to good bus routes is essential”

“We want peace and quiet”.

D PEOPLE WITH PHYSICAL DISABILITIES

CURRENT POSITION: Estimated number of households with a wheelchair user in Cumberland

Type of wheelchair household	No. of people
Continuous user of a wheelchair	1,145
Indoor only wheelchair user	509
Outdoor only wheelchair user	2,926
Total	4,580



CURRENT POSITION: Number of people requiring physical support in Cumberland receiving local authority funded support in 2023/24

Disability	18-64		65+	
	Number of people	% of Total	Number of people	% of Total
Physical Support: Access & mobility only	94	27%	248	11%
Physical Support: Personal care support	252	73%	2,014	89%
Total	346	100%	2,262	100%

Estimated need for fully wheelchair adapted homes and accessible homes in Cumberland by 2039

Estimated Need by 2029		Estimated need by 2035		Estimated need by 2039	
Accessible	Fully wheelchair adapted	Accessible	Fully wheelchair adapted	Accessible	Fully wheelchair adapted
4,632	303	9,264	605	13,896	908

D PEOPLE WITH PHYSICAL DISABILITIES

SHORT TERM PRIORITIES (2026-2028)

- ☐ Deliver a range of mandatory and discretionary Disabled Facilities Grants (including tech enabled) through Cumberland Home Improvement Agency, that enable independent living and prevent or delay people needing to move to specialist accommodation
- ☐ Work with Registered Providers to ensure best use of existing stock by allocating adapted homes through the Council's housing register and direct matching / nomination rights
- ☐ Increase the supply of accessible and adapted accommodation for use as emergency Temporary Accommodation for those presenting through the homelessness pathway

MEDIUM TERM PRIORITIES (2028-2031)

- ☐ Aim to meet the Centre for Ageing Better design standards in new housing developments to reduce the need for future adaptations such as ramps, grab rails etc.
- ☐ Make available suitably adapted accommodation in extra care housing / supported housing
- ☐ Improve access to larger family homes for households with a person with physical disabilities, and homes that can accommodate a live-in carer
- ☐ With providers increase the supply of new accessible (M4(2) adapted properties by 4,632 units
- ☐ With providers increase the supply of new adapted (M4(3) properties by 303 units
- ☐ Develop supported housing for the small number of working age adults with complex physical and related health / care needs and people who may have an acquired brain injury

E PEOPLE AT RISK OF OR EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS

What “home” means to People

Many people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness have multiple and complex needs, including mental-ill-health, substance misuse, experience of domestic abuse, involvement with the criminal justice system, or the challenges faced by young people leaving home and refugees.

To prevent homelessness from becoming entrenched, it is essential all people have access to the right accommodation, with the right support, at the right time; enabling them to stabilise their lives and move towards safe, settled housing.

People described home as somewhere they can feel safe and physically well, with working essentials and no hazards. The basics of warmth, dryness, security and safe electrics were described as central to being able to cope.

Across our engagement, for people experiencing multiple disadvantage and homelessness, home is experienced first as safety, privacy and stability, rather than choice or aspiration. People’s expectations were often described in very basic terms — warmth, security, affordability and the ability to remain somewhere without fear of being moved on again.

The engagement highlights that housing systems are often experienced as high-pressure and low-choice, with people feeling they must accept whatever is offered even where it feels unsuitable. This undermines confidence and makes it harder to settle and sustain a home over time.

Our strategy will prioritise safe, stable and affordable housing pathways, clear communication and ongoing support beyond move-in, so that people can sustain tenancies and avoid repeated disruption.

Our Aim is to ensure that everyone who is homeless, or at risk of homelessness, can access the right housing and support at the right time, so that homelessness is prevented wherever possible and does not become entrenched

“Safe means no faulty wiring, no mould or damp that could affect me or my baby’s health, and secure doors and windows.”

“A place they won’t be forced to move on from again.”

“I would love to have a house on a new estate and a good community where all the families are nice and there is no trouble. My house would have a garden for my daughter and it should be near a school as I do not drive.”

“A nice flat that I could afford and pay all my bills. I have never lived long term anywhere, so to put down roots would be my ideal.”

E PEOPLE AT RISK OF OR EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS

Temporary Accommodation currently absorbs the majority of homelessness demand, with limited step-down options for households who need more than emergency accommodation but less than institutional care.

This results in:

- Longer stays in TA
- Blocked move-on pathways
- Repeat homelessness cases
- Higher costs and less positive outcomes



Supported housing therefore plays a critical system role, sitting between crisis and independence.

Current Council managed provision: Temporary Accommodation

TA	Total number of units
Allerdale	11
Carlisle	48
Copeland	11
Total	70

Estimated need of Supported Housing & Accommodation

Cohort	Share	Units (2030)
Young People	30%	28
Housing First: complex need and criminal justice	40%	38
Domestic Abuse	12%	11
Families	18%	17
Total	100%	94

E PEOPLE AT RISK OF OR EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS

SHORT TERM PRIORITIES (2026-2028)

- ☐ Implement a blended in-house and commissioned delivery model, ensuring statutory, safeguarding and financial controls alongside market capacity
- ☐ Expand supply of homelessness-related supported housing by 59 units
- ☐ Introduce a single supported housing gateway linked to homelessness and Temporary Accommodation Services and Strategy, with clear eligibility, thresholds and review points
- ☐ Prioritise supported housing for those at highest risk of repeat homelessness and long-stays in emergency Temporary Accommodation
- ☐ Strengthen move-on arrangements into social housing, the private rented sector and other housing options
- ☐ Embed Supported Housing Regulatory Oversight Standards across all in-house and commissioned provision

MEDIUM TERM PRIORITIES (2028-2031)

- ☐ Expand Housing First, complex needs and criminal justice pathways, working with statutory partners
- ☐ Review and rebalance the in-house and commissioned mix to ensure quality, resilience and value for money
- ☐ Demonstrate outcomes and grant compliance through HRSDA reporting, including reduced repeat homelessness and emergency TA use particularly for families with children

F CARE EXPERIENCED YOUNG PEOPLE

What “home” means to People

Across our engagement, young people described home as a place that must first and foremost feel safe, warm and stable, before it can feel like somewhere they belong.

Safety was a dominant theme. Young people spoke about concerns related to neighbourhood safety, anti-social behaviour, and feeling unsafe both inside and outside their homes. Survey responses showed that many were not told about anti-social issues in the area before moving in, and practical features such as outdoor lighting were described as helping people feel safer.

Home was closely linked to physical comfort and the ability to manage everyday living. Young people described difficulties with heating, damp and repairs, as well as uncertainty about basic household tasks.

Many young people spoke about loneliness, particularly when moving from foster care or residential settings into independent or semi-independent accommodation.

Having connections, a sense of community and opportunities for social contact were seen as essential to feeling at home, rather than optional extras. Loneliness was not only described as emotionally difficult, but as a factor that can undermine confidence, tenancy sustainment and successful transitions to independent living when people feel unsupported or isolated.

Our strategy will prioritise supported housing choices that provide young people with safe, good quality housing away from antisocial neighbours and poor living conditions. Ensuring that support is in place for transitional periods to independent living and values consistency, providing empathetic support from staff and social services and information and practical advice to ease the process of becoming an adult.

Our Pledge is to provide safe and stable accommodation to allow every cared for child, care experienced young person and separated child to develop independence and essential life-skills. We aim to allow them to grow, flourish and thrive and reach their full potential.

“In the foyer there is a period of time when the staff leave and security start and that made me feel unsafe, at the weekend there was often no staff”

“Help to understand my thermostat and what the flashing lights mean”

“Having connections and a community is really important and everyone should have this, moving in by yourself is really lonely.”

F CARE EXPERIENCED YOUNG PEOPLE

Current Provision: Supply of supported housing for care experienced young people

Supported accommodation type	Units of supported housing	% of units by location
Whitehaven Foyer*	19	18%
Carlisle Foyer	13	12%
Supported accommodation (Carlisle)	73	70%
Total	105	100%



* 15 units commissioned by Cumberland Council. Whitehaven foyer also accommodates other vulnerable young people, care experienced young people are one of the priority groups

Estimated need for supported and move on housing required for care experienced young people

Supported Housing with 24/7 support for young people with higher/complex support needs	Supported accommodation for semi-independent living
35 units	35 units

In addition, the data suggests there is an identified need for an additional 36 units of general needs housing stock per annum to be used as move-on accommodation for fully independent living.

F CARE EXPERIENCED YOUNG PEOPLE

SHORT TERM PRIORITIES (2026-2028)

- ☐ Ensure there is sufficient safe and suitable emergency accommodation for young people is provided with appropriate accommodation that can meet the needs of care experienced young people who are presenting to the council
- ☐ Develop a dynamic forecasting model that captures the pipeline of cared for / care experienced young people and trends related to young people presenting as homeless who will require future housing and housing with stepped support into independence to inform commissioning rights.
- ☐ Review our offer to strengthen our support to care experienced young people by joining the sufficiency strategy with the cared for, care experienced and separated young people's strategy via the "Right Place to Live" corporate parenting sub-group
- ☐ Work with local landlords and housing providers to develop suitable accommodation, with support, for Cumberlands Unaccompanied and Separated Care experienced young people, in locations where their identity, cultural and social needs can be well supported
- ☐ Develop joint planning systems so that young people move to general needs accommodation when they are ready and able, for example moving from Staying Put to general needs accommodation at a point that suits their needs and, in such situations, can avoid the use of supported accommodation.
- ☐ Develop Staying Put and Home Stays (Supported Lodgings) as a familial type of semi-independent and supported accommodation.
- ☐ Develop outreach support/floating support/ tenancy sustainment support to enable young people to access support that moves across accommodation and tenure type to enable tenancy sustainment
- ☐ Provide accommodation options close to transport links, education facilities and training opportunities which supports young people to sustain, maintain and thrive

F CARE EXPERIENCED YOUNG PEOPLE

MEDIUM TERM PRIORITIES (2028-2031)

- ☐ Develop an additional 70 units of supported accommodation for care experienced young people - key priority areas are Workington and Carlisle
- ☐ Secure an additional 35 units of safe and affordable move-on general needs accommodation places per annum via supported living / training flats
- ☐ Stimulate a stable and innovative market for external providers to partner with Cumberland to deliver local supported living homes and training flats which meet the needs of our care experienced young people and separated young people
- ☐ Ensuring homes are situated in the right areas of Cumberland linking the principles of staying close and meaningful independence preparation and communities support and engagement developing long lasting networks

Action Plan Year 1

Action 1

Establish a new steering group to oversee Supported Housing strategy and action plan

September 2026

Action 2

Review of publicly-owned land and property in Cumberland to identify viable sites for supported housing development

December 2026

Action 3

Use the priorities to set an action plan which details pipeline of schemes for development

March 2027

Action 4

Creation of a supported housing prospectus

May 2027

Action 5

Engagement through workshops and peer-sharing

June 2027

Thank you for reading this document.

If you have any comments or feedback, please contact paul.Latimer@cumberland.gov.uk