

Housing for investment, people and place



Housing Strategy

2018 - 2023



This strategy aligns the Councils Housing ambitions with our economic growth and social inclusion priorities; ensuring that Copelands Housing offer delivers an outstanding quality of life and economic prosperity in a world class environment for all our residents.

Our rich Industrial heritage of shipbuilding and mining gave way to the exciting science of a new age of the nuclear industry which has permanently placed Copeland not only on the UK but also onto the world stage.

Building on our history as innovators we are ready for new challenges particularly as the production of nuclear power has given way to nuclear de-commissioning and the requirement for a brand new set of highly technical skills and a workforce to meet that demand.

Tourism is being exploited to drive visitors to Copeland so that they can enjoy the many and varied attractions we can offer from coastal walking to rock climbing, from a Castle to a Beacon Museum, from a Laal Ratty to a walk in a park, actually a walk in a National Park!

The need for suitable and varied Housing is clearly uppermost.

Access to a good home is vitally important to all our lives, throughout our lives - from the moment we start and as we develop, through ongoing health and well-being, economic prosperity, security and crucially, to finding a place to call home.

This strategy encompasses a broad range of ambitions and meets the different aspirations and requirements of all our residents so that they can live an exceptional quality of life whilst they build a career, set up a home, raise a family, and eventually retire in Copeland.

Delivering our strategy requires help and support from our wide-range of partners across all sectors. This is reflected in the approach we have taken shaping the vision and the delivery plan that sits under this strategy and drives the three priorities of

- Housing for investment
- Housing for people
- Housing for place

This housing strategy sets out the vision and plans for the future of housing in Copeland over the coming years – now is the time for Copeland to achieve its full potential.

I commend our Housing Strategy to you and hope that you share our vision and join us on our journey.

investment / people / place

Mike Starkie, Mayor of Copeland





Copeland Borough Council Housing Strategy

Contents

Copeland's Strategy	6
Our Location	7
Copeland Facts	8
Driving Change through the Housing Sector	9
2017/18 Achievements	11
Operating Environment	
National Context	12
Local Strategic Context	14
Delivering in Partnership	18
Delivering Outcomes	
Theme One: Housing for Investment	20
Theme Two: Housing for People	22
Theme Three: Housing for Place	24
Monitoring and Review	26



Copeland's Strategy

Copeland's Housing Strategy sets out the Council's ambitions for housing across the borough over the next five years. The strategy recognises that the housing sector plays a key role in driving forward the Council's ambitions to attract investment and achieve economic growth and is well positioned to support the Council in responding to the changing needs of the population in providing a balanced housing market and creating sustainable communities.

In producing this strategy partners from across all sectors have played a role in helping to identify the key themes and priorities, and in partnership, we will continue to work with our communities to help achieve the ambitions set out in this strategy.

The strategy underpins the Council's Corporate Strategy by supporting the ambitions:

- Town centre regeneration
- Employment, skills and social wellbeing
- Strengthening the way we operate

The strategy sits alongside our vision to be a commercially focussed organisation and forms the fourth of Copeland's four pillar strategies alongside the corporate strategy, growth strategy and local plan. It is informed by, and feeds into, the emerging four towns spatial frameworks, which each set out a future vision for our key service centres of Cleator Moor, Egremont, Millom and the principal town of Whitehaven.

The Council cannot deliver the ambitions in this strategy alone. The Council's role encourages, enables and facilitates partnership working across sectors and is critical to achieving the lasting change that this strategy is driving. We are focussed on outcomes and collaboration.

Social inclusion is at the heart of the strategy and this driver underpins each of the identified themes as well as the pillar strategies. Here we establish an ambition to ensure everyone benefits from investment in Copeland and that those in most need are supported before they reach a critical position or when they are at crisis point.

The Copeland Housing Strategy vision:

Together we will sustain and grow our local economy and housing market by delivering the right mix of homes in the right places to address the changing needs of Copeland's population, businesses and services. We will build truly sustainable communities and places where everyone can benefit, contribute and live a better life in Copeland.

Our vision aims to achieve:

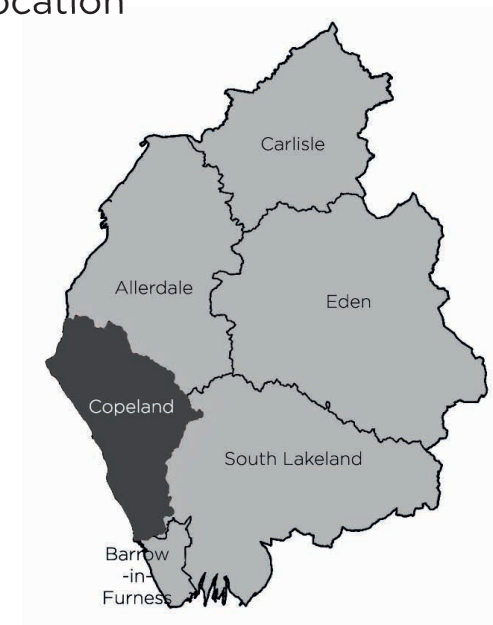
- A sustainable economy
- Sustainable homes
- Sustainable communities
- Quality of life for all

The vision is supported by three themes:

- 1) Housing for investment
- 2) Housing for people
- 3) Housing for place

Our current position, our future aspirations and the action we will take to make a difference are set out under each theme. The strategy is supported by a detailed delivery plan, which will be refreshed annually throughout the life of the document.

Our location



Copeland Borough Council is one of six district and borough Councils within Cumbria, which is the third largest County in England yet one of the most sparsely populated. Located on the western fringe of the Lake District, with 90 km of coastline, the Borough is sandwiched between the lakes and fells, looking out over the Irish Sea to Scotland and The Isle of Man. It is predominantly rural, with 70% of the district falling within the Lake District National Park and is home to England's highest mountain, Scafell Pike and deepest lake, Wastwater. The nuclear economy brings 2 billion per year to the national economy. In 2018 Copeland was named the second happiest place to live in Britain in an Office for National Statistics Well-Being Survey.

Copeland has a population of around 68,700 people, and four main towns - Cleator Moor, Egremont, Millom and Whitehaven which, with a population approaching 24,000, is the principal town. 39.5% of our residents live in urban areas with 60.5% living in rural areas. The Borough has been identified as one of the Top 10 most affordable places to live in the UK and has an average salary of over £45,000 for people working in the Borough; this is the third highest average weekly income nationally.

However, there are pockets of deprivation - within Copeland there are three areas which rank within the 10% most deprived in England in relation to income deprivation. The proportion of people claiming out of work benefits is higher than the national average (9.6% compared to 8.4%) and our unemployment and youth unemployment rates are higher than the national average. Through collaborative work across the public, private and voluntary sectors there is a strong history of community engagement and successful social inclusion projects. We use this engagement to address the disparity between the higher earners and those living with less or facing poverty within the Borough.

Recent years have brought an increase in growth and sustained interest from developers and commercial investors to build and do business in Copeland.



*all statistics relate to 2017 unless stated otherwise

Driving change through the housing sector

Copeland Corporate Strategy 2016-2020 mission statement:

"To make Copeland a better place to live, work and visit"

At the heart of the Corporate Strategy's mission statement is the ambition to drive increased and innovative housing supply and to create thriving socially and economically sustainable communities. The Council recognises that good quality housing of the right mix in the right place, which supports access to work, healthy lives and educational attainment, will help deliver our long-term ambitions. Given the right type, mix and location, housing can be a springboard to change for individuals, families and communities.

Copeland's economy is on the cusp of transformational change, building on international recognition as the Centre for Nuclear Excellence attracting world-class expertise, with ambitions to be at forefront of investment linked to the emerging national and regional Industrial Strategy and Nuclear Sector Deal. Recent research has established that 55% of Copeland's workforce is employed by Sellafield Ltd, compared to 4.4% of the neighbouring borough. There is a need to provide attractive, modern and suitable housing to attract and retain this skilled workforce.

Copeland has already been identified as one of the most affordable places to live in the UK. The area offers a unique coastal location and is a gateway to the Lake District National Park, with recently designated World Heritage Site status. By harnessing these opportunities and creating an attractive housing offer, this strategy identifies actions to help retain younger residents, generate investment into the improvement of existing stock and attract economically active people with specialist skills to live in the borough.

In the context of inclusive economic growth, we will be supporting the development of aspirational high-quality homes whilst driving up the standards of existing housing stock to sustain existing communities, attract and retain the skilled workforce we need and to encourage young families to stay in our area. Alongside this, we will be looking to offer a balanced market, working with our developers to ensure all needs are met and identify creative ways to ensure growth benefits existing communities.

The Council will ensure that investment from local growth benefits all residents and that an uncompromised level of service and housing support is offered to all people and places in the borough. It will ensure that, through our Social Inclusion Policy and Social Investment Plan, nobody is left behind. The strategy recognises housing as a key economic driver, contributing to the improvement of the Copeland community's economic well-being, health and future opportunities. Through this, town centre properties and existing estates can be regenerated to provide good quality homes. Through inward investment in local infrastructure and the public realm, health, education and leisure services can be strengthened for future generations, enabling the borough to deliver an improved quality of life and well-being for all residents. This strategy will enable all residents to thrive and meet their full potential, to contribute to and benefit from a successful economy and to enjoy suitable desirable housing, wherever they choose to live.



36 unfit
private sector
rented properties
brought up to
standard



£193k
secured for
community
led housing
with
£120k
in grants
issued so far

Local Protocol
launched to
help prevent
homelessness
for young people



£303k+ allocated
to 109 businesses
to improve their premises

98% of planning applications approved
100% of major applications determined within government targets
98% of minor and other applications approved within government targets



350
families
prevented
or relieved
from
homelessness



1,200
new houses
in the pipeline.
Active developers
showing strong
sales figures

Tackling
child
poverty
through partnerships

Donated
£30,000
to support
Millom
floods in
September
2017

One of the
highest
rated
authorities
for planning
approvals in
2017-18

▲▲▲
£88k
secured
for two year
domestic
abuse
project

Awarded
£90,000
in grants
through
Copeland
Community
Fund

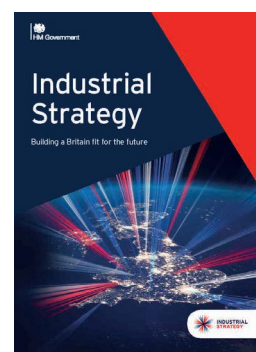
£1.3
million
invested in
Whitehaven's
historic
market
place
through the
Townscape
Heritage
Initiative



Operating environment

The Copeland Housing Strategy does not stand alone. It operates alongside national and local strategies which demonstrate cross-cutting priorities to achieve truly resilient and sustainable communities. Understanding the national and local context of housing and the housing support that is required is fundamental in helping mobilise partnership working.

National context



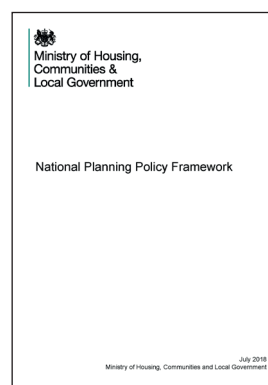
Industrial Strategy: Building a Britain for the Future

Key principles

- Focus on using new technologies to drive Britain forward
- Policy areas of ideas, people, infrastructure, business, environment and places
- National Productivity Investment Fund (NPIF) £31bn to support investment
- Resulting sector deals including nuclear sector deal and construction sector deal

Copeland perspective

- Improvements to digital and transport infrastructure make the borough more attractive as a place to live and work
- Investment in new housing design improves our housing offer and helps meet the long terms needs of our ageing population



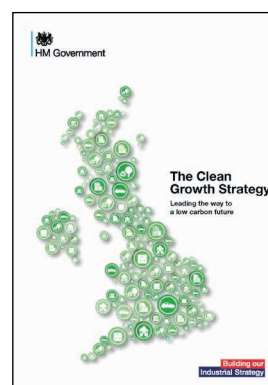
National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2018

Key principles

- Emphasis on sustainable development and housing delivery
- Applies three overarching economic, social and environmental objectives in the drive to achieve sustainable development
- Reforms the planning system alongside Government White Paper 'Fixing the broken housing market'
- Building the right homes in the right places
- Decisions must be made in accordance with the Development Plan
- Redefinition of Affordable Housing
- Recognition of Self Build as a means of providing low cost housing
- Expectation of 10% affordable housing on major developments

Copeland perspective

- NPPF components underpin the corporate strategy, housing strategy, growth strategy and local plan – Copeland's four pillar strategies
- Opportunity to respond to local demand in a new way and work with developers to boost development
- Opportunity to deliver well designed housing in the right locations
- Development, construction and project management skills are well represented in the borough to deliver varied housing



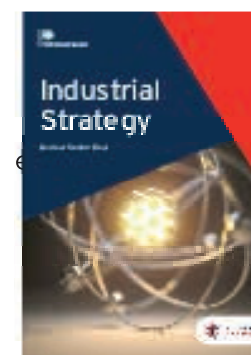
Clean Growth Strategy

Key principles

- Balancing green growth with affordable energy supply
- Investment in upgrading homes and improving energy performance standards
- Use of local plans to drive emission reductions through policy management

Copeland perspective

- Ageing stock energy performance and fuel poverty issues can be addressed alongside economic growth through the nuclear sector
- Local authorities play a key role in driving improvements



Industrial Strategy: Nuclear Sector Deal

Key principles

Commits to:

- Securing the UK's diverse energy mix and driving down the costs of nuclear meaning cheaper bills for energy customers
- Kick-starting a new advanced manufacturing programme including research and development investment to develop world-leading nuclear technologies, such as advanced modular reactors
- Increasing gender diversity in the civil nuclear sector by 2030

Copeland perspective

- Copeland is the UK Centre of Nuclear Excellence and hosts a wide range of nuclear sector sites facilities including:
 - Sellafield site and its national decommission and radioactive waste management programmes
 - The National Nuclear Laboratory
 - The Manchester University Dalton Institute
 - The nation's low level nuclear active waste facility and a significant supply chain presence

Potential Investment through the Moorside project means Copeland is well placed to reap the benefits of the Nuclear Sector Deal, including through housing.



A New Deal for Social Housing

Key principles

Commits to:

- Seeks to rebalance the relationship between residents and landlords
- A further 2 billion by 2020 for more affordable and social housing
- Establishes five principles:
 1. A safe and decent home which is fundamental to a sense of security and our ability to get on in life
 2. Improving and speeding up how complaints are resolved
 3. Empowering residents and ensuring their voices are heard so that landlords are held to account
 4. Tackling stigma and celebrating thriving communities, challenging the stereotypes that exist about residents and their communities
 5. Building the social homes that we need and ensuring that those homes can act as a springboard to home ownership

Copeland perspective

- Opportunity to maximise the already positive relationship with registered providers to:
 - Deliver new homes
 - Remodel existing estates
 - Ensure social housing tenants in Copeland get the best service from their landlord, benefiting from this renewed focus on the tenant's voice and on quality of provision and service.



Local Strategic Context

Copeland's four pillar strategies to drive and guide growth for Copeland include:

- Copeland Corporate Plan
- Copeland Growth Strategy
- Copeland Local Plan
- Copeland Housing Strategy



The documents are delivered collaboratively to ensure a consistent and joined up approach to achieving the key priorities for Copeland, with the golden thread of social inclusion cross cutting through each.

The Copeland Growth Strategy 2016-2020 adopts a clear message that Copeland is open for business to support Copeland in becoming a sustainable home to a healthy and diverse economy by 2025.

The Growth Strategy seeks to develop the places of Copeland by building new homes to suit all needs, revitalising its town centres and, as two thirds of Copeland lies within the Lake District National Park, to celebrate the recent world heritage site designation by building upon the Lake District National Park tourism offer.

'By 2025 Copeland will be a sustainable home to a healthy and diverse economy, to support its growing population. It will be a dynamic and innovative hub for growth, internationally recognised as the Centre of Nuclear Excellence (CoNE) and a key driver in the Northern Powerhouse. The area's population will be well-educated and offer a balance of professional skills to deliver the opportunities evolving on its doorstep. Copeland's network of thriving communities will reflect the rich cultural heritage and unique natural environment that reinforce its draw as the ultimate destination to come and invest, do business, relax and call home.'

Copeland Growth Strategy vision



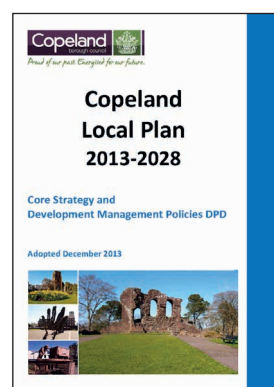
The Growth Strategy presents eleven priority areas for Copeland which demonstrate the opportunities faced by the Borough across various areas for investment, as shown. The larger circles represent those themes directly related to Copeland's place making agenda which will be driven through the implementation of the Housing Strategy along with Copeland's Spatial Frameworks.





Local Strategic Context

The Copeland Growth Strategy is informed by the Copeland Local Plan which sets out the strategic vision and framework for the future development of the area. The elements of the local plan that strongly support opportunities in relation to housing in Copeland are quality of life, the economy, community facilities and infrastructure.



The local plan also provides a framework for safeguarding the environment, adapting to climate change and securing good design in accordance with National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

Housing is one of the key strategic spatial issues for Copeland in terms of the borough's industrial past and the legacy of a high proportion of terraced housing, an identified shortage of executive-type housing and the unbalanced quality of housing stock to suit all needs of the community.

The plan supports the delivery of the Copeland Housing Strategy through its strategic and technical policy framework, as well as being a major delivery vehicle for other local strategies including the Copeland Growth Strategy and the Local Enterprise Partnership's Cumbria Industrial Strategy.



Building on the Copeland Growth Strategy, guided by the Copeland Local Plan and in response to investment in the borough, Copeland has developed spatial frameworks for each of the key service centres - Cleator Moor, Egremont, Millom and Whitehaven, our principal town. Along with the housing and growth strategies the spatial frameworks promote the influential role of quality places which, managed effectively and with the right partnership approach, will secure sustainable and inclusive communities.

The frameworks will draw out four key areas of the 11 priorities of the Copeland Growth Strategy including 1) environment and sustainability 2) vibrant towns and communities 3) connectivity 4) quality of life, in which to deliver Copeland's place making agenda. The Copeland Local Plan will enable and help guide this sustainable development through its remit as a material planning consideration in the determination of planning applications.



A key partner in driving positive change within Copeland is the Cumbria Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) which provides a strategic lead on activities that contribute to Cumbria's economic growth. The LEP's overall vision for Cumbria is to have one of the fastest growing economies in the UK and to unleash Cumbria's economic potential.

The LEP has begun work on a local industrial strategy which will supersede its Cumbria Strategic Economic Plan 2014-2024. The strategy will identify the county's priorities through to 2030 and, along with the suite of documents outlined in this housing strategy, will be a driver for investment from Government and the private sector. The Cumbria Industrial Strategy will adopt a partnership approach to identifying priorities based on the five foundations of productivity outlined within the Government's Industrial Strategy:

- Innovative ideas
- Major infrastructure upgrades
- Places for more prosperous communities
- People and jobs
- Business environment

The Local Industrial Strategy aims to address how Cumbria can deliver against these five foundations of productivity and through the four grand challenges set out in the Government's industrial strategy. Along with the Copeland Growth Strategy and Copeland Local Plan, the housing strategy will act as a local delivery mechanism to support the Cumbria Industrial Strategy, the principles of the NPPF and the ambitions of the Government's industrial strategy.

There is a clear recognition within this strategy that the local economy and many of Copeland's residents are reliant on Sellafield.



A report by Oxford Economics (in July 2017) - The Economic Impact of Sellafield states that over 11,000 people are directly employed by Sellafield Ltd and 90.3 per cent of those are based in Copeland. In addition, the Sellafield supply chain sees thousands of long term temporary workers and contractors coming to the borough, all of whom have a significant impact on the local economy and housing market. The average salary for workers is over £43,000 - many of those higher earners do not currently live in Copeland but may choose to if the housing offer was more diverse. The average salary for those that do live and work in Copeland is closer to £25,000. Sellafield Ltd is planning to transform over the next five years which may result in a reduction of over 3000 job roles.

Over reliance on the nuclear sector is a long-standing issue and what happens to the existing and future workforce through the decommissioning programme will have a direct and substantial impact on our communities and individuals. Copeland Borough Council and Sellafield Ltd have a long standing, strong, collaborative relationship and are working together currently to develop and deliver the Sellafield Ltd Social Impact Strategy. This plan will help diversify the economy, develop alternative skill in the existing and future workforce and reduce overall reliance on Sellafield.



The Cumbria District Authorities, including the Lake District National Park authority, have developed a joint Cumbria Housing Statement. This vision is:

"Working together to drive housing and economic growth, regenerate poor housing and help people to live independently."

A target is set for 33,020 new homes countywide, including 8,800 new affordable homes (with a range of rent and sale options), by 2030. There is a commitment within the statement to regenerate struggling areas to help drive economic growth. This complements the Copeland Housing Strategy's ambition of balancing the housing market.

This ambition supports the aim of the Cumbria Housing Statement:

"Regenerating our poorest housing and town centres, improve the quality of housing and increase choice and demand in these areas. We want to bring empty homes back into beneficial use and improve the energy efficiency of homes."

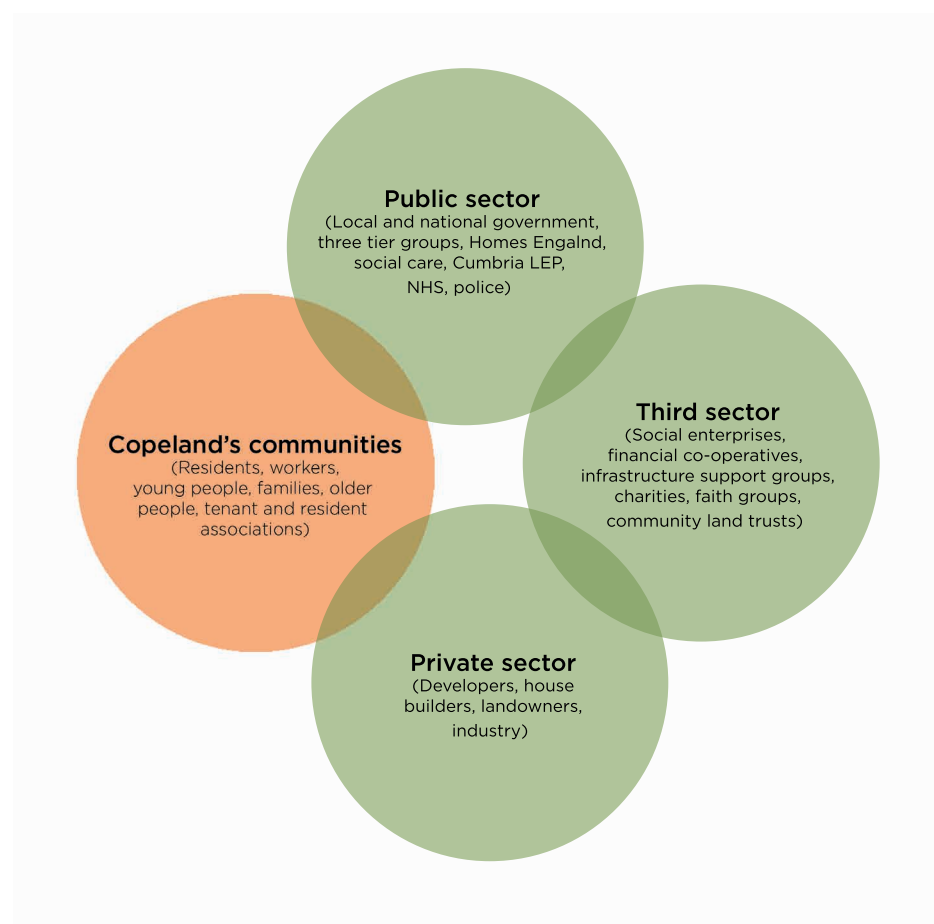
Copeland's Housing Strategy identifies with the issues set out in the national and local strategic context. It emphasises a cohesive approach to ensuring that housing not only maximises investment opportunities for the borough but positively impacts upon our people and our places to encourage inclusive, sustainable communities and above all, ensure that the borough offers good quality homes of the right type and mix, in the right places for all residents of all ages and economic situations.



Delivering in Partnership

Copeland is a dynamic, collaborative and modern council, proud of its history of strong and effective partnership working. The Council's role in delivery alongside partners is wide ranging providing strategic leadership where required to instigate action and also to encourage, enable and facilitate integrated partnership working across sectors. We invite conversations with anyone who would like to work with us to support the delivery of this strategy. We are committed to being open and accessible to partners and do all we can to free up barriers to delivery.

The diverse housing sector, with its range of partners and capability, is a key asset through which we will drive delivery of this strategy. Joint working and collaboration with and between our partners will cut across all three themes of investment, place and people. Partners' unique skills, specialisms and networks, in collaboration with the Council's strategic leadership, will enable us to deliver real change and a lasting legacy for our communities and residents.



We will be instrumental in developing close strategic inter relationships between partners from across the sectors to establish, monitor and deliver a shared plan for investment, people and place in Copeland. Partners will be involved in evaluating achievements against the plan.



Through a partnership approach, our widened areas of influence include:

- ▲ Improving health outcomes
- ▲ Tackling child poverty
- ▲ Driving up quality of housing in the private sector
- ▲ Improving infrastructure
- ▲ Addressing the blight of empty homes on neighbourhoods
- ▲ Regeneration and reconfiguration of our social housing mix
- ▲ Town centre regeneration
- ▲ Skills and learning for the future workforce
- ▲ Promoting financial inclusion and mitigating the impact of welfare reform
- ▲ Encouraging community cohesion and contribution



Delivering Outcomes

Theme One: Housing for Investment

This theme aims to support the growing economy and maximise the housing renewal and development opportunities for Copeland within the emerging Industrial Strategy, the newly refreshed National Planning Policy Framework and the Governments white paper - Fixing the Broken Housing Market.

This focus will help us actively generate opportunities to bring investment and growth to the borough and deliver quality housing for all ages and incomes in line with the priorities of the local plan and spatial frameworks, strengthening and investing in our existing stock as well as through new development.

Through a mix of tenure types, building design and locations, housing will help attract and retain new and existing residents, ensuring people's changing aspirations for how they live their lives and life-long needs are met.

The focus for growth will meet a wide spectrum of needs including those of single people, young families, older people, key workers and long term temporary workers. The improved mix of housing models and new innovative build type, through manufacturing, construction and energy efficient solutions, will help the borough adapt to changing aspirations and needs across all demographic, particularly those of the growing senior population.

Current Position

A range of professional, skilled jobs resulting in a high demand for a variety of housing types across the borough and greater investment opportunities to meet that demand within the borough. Opportunities to meet existing demand from young families and higher earning skilled workers and increase choice in the market.

Seeing intensified interest from builders wanting to develop in the borough. Growing demand for flexible living designs such as 'custom built' development and interest in self-build opportunities to match the diverse and flexible ways that people now want to use their homes. An emerging new Copeland Local Plan which provides confidence in land availability and suitability for investors to deliver sustainable developments and a range of products.

A proposed new development, backed by Homes England, of 370 homes planned for the Harras Moor area of Whitehaven demonstrating public sector joint enterprise.

Limited affordable housing choice for local people in some rural areas and a rise in second home ownership, which presents the risk of some communities becoming disconnected from vital service provision such as schools and public transport.

An unbalanced mix of property type within our existing social housing stock with an oversupply of three bed houses and an undersupply of accessible homes and smaller units as a direct impact of welfare reform.

Poor digital and infrastructure connectivity in some areas which impacts upon access to employment, education, health and other services.

Changing aspirations for how people want to live their lives and what their homes look like. The desire for self-build and self-sustainability, green growth, energy efficient eco-living and village living models is growing. There is a long tradition of self-build because of the design and construction skills in parts of the local population along with disposable capital and personal aspiration. Accommodation requirements of a potential temporary workforce of thousands coming into the borough to support the potential Moorside new nuclear power station project and impacting upon the future economic growth of the borough. The Sellafield Ltd transformation drives both.

Delivery Priorities

1. To understand and respond to the barriers of housing investment in Copeland.

- Work proactively with landowners, developers and accredited landlords to drive a balanced housing market
- Ensure availability of land for development is of different scales and in a variety of locations across the borough
- Support innovative construction types and development models such as modular build, customer build, eco living and co-sharing models
- Maintain positive relationships and work proactively with neighbouring planning authorities
- Through the development of the public realm provide incentive and opportunity for large and small investors and developers to renew existing property and develop new homes
- Seek opportunities to secure funding for infrastructure projects.

2. To grow the supply of housing to suit the needs of professionals and entrepreneurs seeking to remain in or move into the area.

- Be a leading force for the provision of NHS key worker accommodation, linked to an improved Copeland infrastructure including education, leisure and health facilities
- Use opportunities from Northern Powerhouse investment funds such as Moorside to strengthen our communities and housing offer
- Attract economically active professionals to live in the borough through increasing the supply of high quality homes in desirable environments
- Develop and nurture opportunities for alternative living models that meet the changing aspirations of how people want to live by increasing eco-living opportunities and improving digital connectivity. This will underpin the Cumbria Industrial Strategy by encouraging green growth and improving digital connectivity to allow people to work from home
- Promote and encourage self-build, custom build and flexibility around internal design, recognising the wealth of constructions skills in the borough.

3. To ensure sufficient affordable and social housing supply, whilst improving place and public realm

- Seek to deliver affordable homes on new developments in line with local demand and the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) requirements
- Work with developers to support development of place through developer contributions where they apply and through voluntary agreements and offers
- Support community led housing initiatives in rural areas maximising the impact for the borough of current government policy and funding streams
- Work together with our registered provider partners to reconfigure social housing stock and redesign some of our existing estates and spaces to improve the mix and meet changing needs within our population
- Address the housing needs of our ageing population by encouraging lifetime standards in new developments so people can stay in their homes.



Delivering Outcomes

Theme Two: Housing for People

This theme will help create desirable places to live: homes where every resident, whatever age and income level, can live a healthy, happy life. House build design and housing support services will adapt to changing life long needs and ensure provision for our growing senior population is expanded and options are varied. The action plan sitting beneath this strategy will both complement and seek to maximise the opportunities emerging from the Sellafield Ltd Social Impact Strategy and Local Industrial Strategy to help diversify the economy and local skills set.

In Copeland the overall average income (outside of the Sellafield environment) is low and some residents experience extreme hardship. The Copeland Housing Partnership will work together to support people who are struggling both before they reach a critical point and when they are in crisis. Copeland Borough Council will apply its social investment priorities to:

- Offer coordinated support to individuals and communities to reduce the impact of welfare reform and tackle abuse and exploitation
- Ensure local access to and support with benefits and advice to make housing more affordable and help alleviate causes of poverty
- Ensure that those at risk of homelessness are reached and supported
- Ensure people have the support they need to reach their full potential by getting their basic housing needs met
- Ensure that changing housing needs for all income levels are met through all stages of life
- Enable people to stay in their own communities and still have their needs met.

Current Position

Friendly close-knit communities with a strong and celebrated West Cumbrian identity.

A strong and active third sector network with a track-record of successful partnership working achieving lasting results.

55 per cent of Sellafield Ltd workers are living in the borough but some higher earners are living elsewhere. A lack of modern construction to meet people's aspirations.

Strong, successful approach to homeless prevention but a lack of provision for hard to engage adults with challenging behaviours and high levels of support needs.

A borough with affordable housing to buy but with an ageing stock in need of repair.

Ageing senior population, many with increasing health needs, living in housing that may not meet their future needs and without easy access to the support they need to maintain health and independence.

High levels of child poverty and poor health indicators such as obesity amongst children.

Reliance on high cost lending and evidence of loan shark activity in some wards, which impacts on the ability to pay for housing and meet basic needs.

Rapidly increasing local demand for disabled adaptations which outstrips the financial resources made available by Government

A high proportion of residents who are not digitally confident or do not have internet access at home and who require assistance to access welfare benefits and support.

10% of households living in fuel poverty due to poorly insulated and heated homes in an ageing housing stock.

High incidents of domestic abuse across demographic and a lack of women specific services in the borough.

Delivery Priorities

1. Instigate and support third sector partnerships to address unmet need, expand service provision and help mitigate the impact of austerity.

- Facilitate a project with the Police and Crime Commissioner and third sector partners to establish a business case for a women's centre in the borough
- Drive the provision of an outreach service across the borough to tackle debt, high cost lending and help mitigate the impact of Universal Credit in the south of the borough
- Continue to develop and fund a partnership approach to preventing and relieving homelessness through the Council's prevention fund
- Address the housing needs of the youth and care leavers of the borough via a youth protocol

2. Work with developers, statutory bodies and third sector partners to increase the supply of specialist housing with support for groups with a specific and unmet need

- Work with the NHS and specialist providers to deliver an integrated care solution for people leaving hospital care, particularly for older people
- Work with Cumbria County Council to deliver an extra core strategy which will seek to increase provision in the borough, with a focus on dementia care models
- Encourage co-living and village living models whereby communities can live together in a cohesive and co-operative community, built on eco living principles.
- Ensure new housing development meets lifetime standards so people are able to remain in their homes as they age
- Secure funding to extend the domestic abuse project for a further two years and work with the police to secure an additional two 'safe houses' with bespoke security measures.
- Bring existing empty housing stock back into use.

3. Shape and influence policy to improve the health and wellbeing of all residents in the Borough ensuring nobody is left behind.

- Work alongside registered providers to embed the principles of the housing green paper, A New Deal for Social Housing - to rebalance the relationship between landlords and social housing tenants to ensure the tenant's voice is heard and that customer service including process for tackling dissatisfaction is accessible and robust at a local level
- Maintaining and prioritising a collaborative strong relationship with Sellafield Ltd to deliver the Sellafield Ltd Social Investment Strategy
- Refresh the Council's Social Inclusion Policy, strengthen delivery resources and introduce the Social Inclusion Impact Assessment to ensure it is embedded in all future strategy and policy work
- Develop with youth services at county level a county wide protocol for young persons and care leavers facing homelessness and continue the Council's commitment to support care leavers to build a sustainable independent future
- In partnership with other district authorities influence Supporting People Policy at county level to commission services for disengaged homeless people who have high risk behaviour and cannot be accommodated in existing supported provision
- Lead on strengthening the operation and governance of county wide Choice Based Lettings system to ensure we meet our statutory housing duty for social housing provision with the district.



Delivering Outcomes

Theme Three: Housing for Place

This theme helps us achieve our ambition to maintain Copeland as one of the best places to live in the UK, with vibrant sustainable and green communities and enhanced public realm with thriving town centres. The heritage and unique character and architecture of the borough will be preserved whilst improving digital and transport connectivity ensuring places are fit for future generations.

We will support investment in new developments as outlined in theme one. Alongside this and of equal importance we will be looking to offer a balanced market within our existing town centres and villages. We will do this by working with investors, landlord and partners from across the sectors to ensure growth benefits existing places and properties, enhances our existing communities.

This strategy will drive up the quality of existing properties and neighbourhoods. It will shape places and improve areas within our larger villages, key service centres and principal town as well as recognising the vital role that larger villages play in supporting smaller settlements. We will ensure that all areas of the borough are attractive places to live and are safe, clean and inclusive.

Current Position

Copeland is positioned on the West Coast, amongst mountains and lakes, with a stunning coastline and unique towns each with distinctive characteristics and heritage.

Second home ownership is high in some parts of the borough as second homes in Copeland provide accommodation for long term contract workers connected to the nuclear sector, as well as the traditional holiday home market.

Second home ownership has a mixed impact depending on the area. In some areas it can create a market for properties that might otherwise attract little interest yet in other areas it can affect the local economy if the homes are only inhabited for a part of the week, resulting in less local spend and a negative effect upon the local economy's 'multiplier effect'.

There are over 1000 empty residential properties at any one time in the borough. These are a mix of properties, some are in the process of sale or rental but there are around 600 long term empty homes. Homes become empty due to a range of factors including inheritance, low resale value, and properties bought as investment opportunities that have not come to fruition.

Town centre residential properties are at an increasing risk of becoming empty over a longer term due to younger residents aspiring to move to new developments and the quality of some older stock meaning significant investment would be needed to bring them up to decent standards.

Private sector housing in Copeland is representative of building type from most eras but predominantly of post Second World War construction. 7,906 dwellings (28.5%) were constructed pre-1945. Within this group, 6,814 dwellings (24.6%) were constructed pre-1919. The oldest housing profiles are associated with the Millom area (68.7% pre-1945 construction).

Registered providers are currently rejuvenating existing estates and undertaking place shaping projects around those estates in Cleator Moor and Millom to improve the type and mix of homes and introduce green spaces and attractive outdoor environments.

The highest private rental areas of occupation outside the Lake District National Park are Millom and Egremont. Standards within these older properties in some parts of these towns are low and can have a negative impact on the appearance of place

The Council is investing in a significant public realm improvement projects in its four key towns due to commence in 2019.

Delivery Priorities

1. To bring empty residential and commercial properties in our town centres back into use.
 - Identify and secure inward investment, Government grants and contributions to provide capital funding to address empty homes
 - Refresh and deliver the Empty Homes Policy 2016-2018 and set a new two-year action plan (2019-2021) to target future work to strategically align with the four town spatial frameworks and levels of housing needed
 - Maximise New Homes Bonus income and council tax collection through growth in housing supply and bringing empty homes back into use to continue resourcing an empty homes officer role
2. To make our key service centres, rural village and surrounding residential areas vibrant, safe and sustainable places that are appealing to visitors and the residential market.
 - Continue the momentum generated by the Pride of Place campaign to drive up standards in the town centres and bring empty units back into use
 - Work with registered providers to shape and deliver large scale regeneration projects for some of the social housing estates in our key service centres
 - Shape the interventions relating to housing emerging from the spatial frameworks
 - Use visible multi-agency partnership working, co-ordinated by the Copeland Community Safety Hub, to tackle incidents of antisocial behaviour
 - Encourage cohesion and pride of place within communities and target the small number of problem areas with direct enabling activity, to improve the appeal to the market
3. To drive up standards within the private sector and social housing rental markets.
 - All licensable Houses of Multiple Occupations (HMOs) are identified, visited and licenced
 - Rejuvenate the Private Landlords Forum and obtain resources to deliver a discretionary accredited landlord scheme in key locations
 - Use new housing standards enforcement powers to tackle unfit properties and direct resources to strengthen enforcement action
 - Work with the opportunities provided by Government policy to address long standing issues in the borough regarding some pockets of poor quality housing which will lead to improvements in residents' lived experience and impact directly on issues such as child poverty.

Monitoring and Review

This strategy sets out the ambitions that the Council and its partners will achieve within the housing sector over the next five years.

The strategy reflects the current strategic context and the priority areas as identified by the Council and its partners. Our actions and response is evolving all the time and as new initiatives and ideas emerge they will be reflected in the action plan, which will be reviewed on an annual basis. The action plan will be SMART (specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and time bound) and be delivered in conjunction with our partners.

The action plan, to carry this strategy forward operationally to deliver its priorities, will be owned by the Copeland Housing Partnership, a forum which brings together key stakeholders, developers and providers across all sectors. Progress against the plan will be reported to Council through the Quarterly Housing Portfolio Holders Report. The Council's Overview and Scrutiny Committee, a formal member led group feeding into Council, will oversee and scrutinise the action plan and its delivery.

Useful documents:

www.copeland.gov.uk

Copeland Corporate Strategy 2016-2020

Copeland Growth Strategy 2016-2020

Strategic Housing Market Assessment

Private Sector Stock Condition Survey 2017

www.cumbria.gov.uk

Cumbria Strategic Economic Plan 2014-2024

www.gov.uk

National Planning Policy Framework 2018

Industrial Strategy: Building a Britain for the Future New Deal for Social Housing 2018

Nuclear Sector Deal

New Deal for Social Housing



Strategic Housing,
Copeland Borough Council,
Market Hall,
Whitehaven,
Cumbria
CA28 7JG

01946 598300
info@copeland.gov.uk
www.copeland.gov.uk