

# Providing affordable housing in Portsmouth

A summary of affordable housing policies for developers

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## Introduction:

This brief document is an introduction to the requirements for the delivery of affordable housing in Portsmouth. The Portsmouth Plan, the city's core strategy, was agreed by the council in January 2012 and includes many of the affordable housing requirements.

The requirements are however, derived from several sources of which the principle ones are listed below with links to relevant websites:

## PORTSMOUTH CITY COUNCIL:

- [Design guide for wheelchair accessible housing](#)
- [The Portsmouth Plan, 2012 Core Strategy](#)
- [CIL Guide for development in Portsmouth 2012](#)

## PUSH - Partnership for Urban South Hampshire:

- [Housing Market Assessments](#)

## Homes England (former HCA):

- [Homes England Strategic Plan 2018 - 2023](#)
- [Design and Sustainability](#)

## Central Government:

- [National Planning Policy Framework - July 2018](#)

## Definitions explained:

Affordable Housing is defined at length in at length in Annex B of the government's National Planning Policy Framework. Affordable Housing includes Social Rented, Affordable Rented and Intermediate housing (Low Cost Home Ownership) provided to specified eligible households whose needs are not met by the market. Provision must be made for the homes to be affordable at the time of development and in the future.

**Social Rented Housing** - homes which are owned and managed by the Councils and Registered Providers (Housing Associations) at nationally set target rents which are substantially lower than market levels.

**Affordable Rented Housing** - rented housing let by Registered Providers of Social Housing to households who are eligible for social rented housing. Affordable rent is not subject to the national rent regime but is subject to other rent controls that require a rent of no more than 80% (including service charge) of the local market rent.

**Intermediate housing** - housing at prices and rents above those of social rents but less than market rent levels (see affordable rent definition). Properties may be for rent or Low Cost Home Ownership which include Shared Ownership or shared equity loans.

## Portsmouth's Priorities:

The following paragraphs highlight the main policy objectives for increasing the supply of affordable housing in Portsmouth. Prospective developers are strongly urged to meet with council staff at the earliest opportunity to discuss how their scheme's proposals may contribute towards these priorities.

## Planning Policies:

### Housing numbers:

The Portsmouth Plan sets a target of at least 740 new homes in the city each year until 2034. A proportion of these will need to be affordable and many of these homes will be delivered via the council's planning policies.

### Site Thresholds and targets:

For sites with a capacity of 10 or more dwellings there is an expectation that between 20% and 30% of the new dwellings will be affordable. The amount required is on a sliding scale where site capacities are between 11 and 15 dwellings - see table at the rear of this document. For larger site capacity of 15 or more a minimum of 30% affordable housing will be required.

### Planning Agreements:

These agreements are made under Section 106 of the Town & Country Planning Act and continue to describe and confirm the method and process for providing affordable housing. Currently the agreements are negotiated between the parties' legal representatives.

- **Portsmouth's Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)** - Came into effect on 1<sup>st</sup> April 2012. Affordable housing will not be liable to pay the levy, but you must formally apply for Social Housing Relief. CIL is a charge made by the council to help fund infrastructure in the city. Payment becomes due on the commencement of the development and will be liable on most schemes. The rate set for housing development in Portsmouth is £105/m<sup>2</sup>. For further information please see: [CIL Community Infrastructure Development](#)

## Provision options:

There are three ways of providing affordable housing on private (market) schemes and these are:

- **On-site provision** - affordable housing, when part of a market development, must be provided on-site to help create socially balanced communities. This will be the preferred option on most development schemes.
- **Off-site provision** - In exceptional circumstances provision will be sought on an alternative site. This will be agreed only rarely where it is not practical or viable to provide on-site affordable housing. The council will need to approve the proposed alternative location which must be within the city boundaries and a new build development.
- **Financial contribution** - A financial contribution towards securing new affordable housing elsewhere in the city will be considered when on-site provision has proven to be not practical. The contribution will be calculated on the size of the units that would have been provided on site or the minimum 'Nationally Described Space Standards' (whichever is the greater) and based on £1000/m<sup>2</sup>.

(E.G. - A pro-rata provision of two units of affordable housing is required on a development - 1x 1bed flat @ 41sqm and 1x 2bed flat @ 72sqm. The financial calculation would be as follows: £1,000 x 50sqm (the minimum specified size for a single story 1bed unit) = £50,000 and £1,000 x 72sqm = £72,000. Total contribution will be £122,000).

## Tenure and Dwelling mix:

### Tenure mix:

New affordable housing developments should aim to deliver schemes with a 70% Social/Affordable Rent and 30% Low Cost Home Ownership. *Any variation to these percentages must be discussed and agreed with the council. In accordance with Planning policy there must be a mix of affordable tenure on site unless the affordable provision is below 7 units.*

### Dwelling type mix:

A range of dwellings are required but the most urgent need is larger family accommodation for social rent and affordable rent.

Research for PUSH (see PUSH web link under 'Introduction' on opposite page) identifies this need in terms of the number of bedrooms new housing should have, regardless of tenure. The proportions are:

1 bedroom 25% - 2 bedrooms 30% -  
3 bedrooms 33% and 4 bedrooms 12%

Exact proportions will vary from site to site but the aim will always be to increase the amount of dwellings with 3 bedrooms or more.

Policy PSC19 of the Portsmouth Plan seeks 40% of all dwellings in a development to be family size of 3 bedrooms or more.

## Design and other issues:

Design quality is critical to creating attractive urban environments where people want to live. For these reasons design principles and standards are pertinent and some are highlighted below:

**Homes England** - publish design guides including Design and Quality Standards, which provide guidance on a range of requirements (see web link under Introduction on opposite page)

**Environmental sustainability** - is a key aspect. See the PCC planning service guide for the [Sustainable Design and Construction Policy - PCS15](#)

**Disability Standards** - Portsmouth need affordable housing that is accessible to people with disabilities: [The 'Design Guide for Wheelchair Accessible Housing'](#), published by the council, illustrates the requirements for wheelchair accessible housing.

**Dwelling and Space Standards** - The council has adopted the '*Nationally Described Space Standards*' that is shown in a table at the rear of this document and is which is reflected in the Portsmouth Plan

**Affordable Housing** - should be integrated with, rather than separated from, the private housing sector. This should be as seamless as possible ideally to the extent that different tenures appear indistinguishable.

## Making it happen:

To discuss Affordable Housing Policies and development opportunities contact the council's housing Enabling team:  
Kevin Beagley - tel. 023 9283 4154  
Bruce Lomax - tel. 023 9283 4524

E-mail: [housingstrategy@portsmouthcc.gov.uk](mailto:housingstrategy@portsmouthcc.gov.uk)

To discuss Planning Policies and their influence on development proposals for specific sites, contact the council's planning development control team:

Planning Development Manager - tel. 023 9268 8415.  
Alan Banting, Development Management Team Leader - tel. 023 9283 4324

Or view the council web site [The Local Plan](#)



**Table - Minimum Gross Internal Floor Areas and Storage (in M<sup>2</sup>)**

General Needs Housing					
Number of Bedrooms (b)	Number of Persons/bed spaces	Single Storey Dwelling	Two Storey Dwelling	Three Storey Dwelling	Built in Storage m <sup>2</sup>
		M <sup>2</sup>	M <sup>2</sup>	M <sup>2</sup>	
1b	1 person	39	-	-	1.0
	2 person	50	58	-	1.5
2b	3 person	61	70	-	2.0
	4 person	70	79	-	
3b	5 person	86	93	99	2.5
	6 person	95	102	108	
4b	6 person	99	106	112	3.0
	7 person	108	115	121	
	8 person	117	124	130	
5b	6 person	103	110	116	3.5
	7 person	112	119	125	
	8 person	121	128	134	
6b	7 person	116	123	129	4.0
	8 person	125	132	138	
6b	9 person	136	141	147	4.5
Special Needs - Wheelchair Disabled Units (M <sup>2</sup> )					
Number of Bedrooms (b)	Number of Persons/bed spaces	Single Storey Dwelling	For two and three storey dwelling see below.		Built in Storage
		M <sup>2</sup>			
1b	2 person	62			2.0
2b	3 person	74			2.5
	4 person	80	See below		
3b	5 person	94	See below		3.5
	6 person	102	See below		
<b>2 Storey Wheelchair user dwelling</b>	<b>Wheelchair properties of 2storey and above: Design and size must be discussed and agreed with the councils Housing Enabling team and Occupational Therapists.</b>				

Net increase in Dwellings	On-site provision of affordable housing	No of affordable dwellings required on site	Off-site provision of affordable housing	No of affordable housing dwellings off-site
10	20%	2	25%	3
12 - 14	25%	3	33%	5
15+	30%	5+	43%	7+