Kent Housing Group
The Voice of Housing in Kent

Asks of Government

This briefing note sets out the support Kent and Medway require from Government to deliver on the ambitions set out in **Better Homes: Growth, Wellbeing and Choice** the **Kent and Medway Housing Strategy 2025–2030**:

https://www.kenthousinggroup.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2025/06/Kent-and-Medway-Housing-Strategy-2025-web.pdf

Our **"asks of Government"**, finalised in May of this year, are built on a robust evidence base developed in partnership with Aecom and reflect the shared priorities of our housing, planning, health and infrastructure partners across Kent and Medway:

https://www.kenthousinggroup.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2025/03/Kent-Medway-Housing-Strategy-Evidence-Refresh-Final-Report-12032025-1.pdf

Context

Kent and Medway face a 'housing permacrisis':

- Housing delivery has fallen short by 24% of local plan trajectories
- Social and affordable homes delivering only 1/3rd of locally identified housing need
- As of June 2025 – 3,339 of our children were in Temporary Accommodation

The challenges we face together:

1. Undersupply of delivery of new affordable and market homes

2. Continuing rise in house prices and rents outstripping growth in wages

3. Decreasing affordability and choice for residents of Kent and Medway to either buy or rent their home

4. The continued role in the housing system of homes that are in poor housing condition and are energy inefficient

5. The negative impact of living in poor housing circumstances on people's health and wellbeing.

Theory of Change

Our strategy, **Better Homes: Growth, Wellbeing and Choice,** supports a simple but compelling theory of change, that the delivery of new homes, with infrastructure alongside, will improve housing outcomes in Kent and Medway.

We are united in our commitment to accelerate housing delivery, improve affordability and ensure housing promotes health, resilience and economic opportunity.

Affordability continues to worsen and housing quality, particularly in the private rented sector, undermines health and wellbeing. We support the Government's ambition to build 1.5 million new homes, but without the tools and investment to unlock delivery in areas like ours, this shared objective is at risk.

The theory is:

- Provide more affordable housing, with supporting infrastructure
- Increase the supply of market and affordable homes that are in good condition
- Provide improved safety and security to residents
- Have a positive impact on people's health and wellbeing

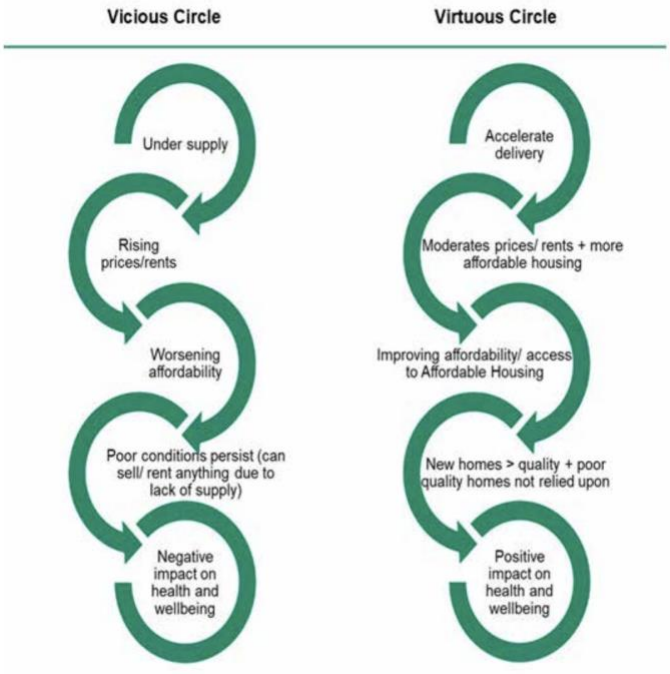

Figure 1 – Theory of change in the Kent and Medway housing system

Source: AECOM

Our Asks of Government

We ask for support across five strategic themes. These asks (some of which have already been positively responded to in Spending Review 2025) are fully aligned with national objectives on growth, regeneration, safety and energy efficiency:

1. **Accelerating Delivery**
   - Increase resources for the planning system to enable good plan-led growth.
   - Work with Kent Housing Group, Homes England and local authorities to remove nutrient neutrality barriers.
   - Permit time-limited use of AHP grant on S106 sites to respond to market failure.
   - Support a new HRA settlement and Homes England partnership to expand council-led delivery.
   - Prioritise regeneration within the AHP to support coastal and urban areas.
   - Support MMC pipelines and manufacturing capacity in Kent and Medway.
   - Fund MMC training hubs in further education colleges.

2. **Infrastructure First**
   - Support creation of a Kent and Medway Mayoral Strategic Authority.
   - Establish an Infrastructure First Growth Deal for the region.
   - Provide funding certainty for GPs, schools and hospitals in growth areas.

3. **Affordability and Choice**
   - Develop a new first-time buyer incentive package including key workers.
   - Include dedicated funding for shared ownership in future AHPs.
   - Update Local Housing Allowance rates annually and link them to local rents.
   - Expand the AHP with long-term, inflation-linked funding prioritising social rent.
   - Scale up Rural Exception Sites and support Rural Housing Enablers.

4. **Safe and Efficient Homes**
   - Apply the Decent Homes Standard to the private rented sector.
   - Provide long-term funding to eliminate damp and mould.
   - Simplify retrofit funding to help landlords meet EPC C and install renewables.
   - Invest in fire safety for social housing.

5. **Health and Wellbeing**
   - Join up national health, care and housing strategies with grant funding for supported housing.
   - Reform Permitted Development Rights to stop poor quality conversions.
   - Amend data protection rules to enable proactive interventions.
   - Fund rural Housing First delivery in partnership with DEFRA.

Why It Matters

Better Homes: Growth, Wellbeing and Choice is our fourth county-wide housing strategy.

Developed in partnership with local authorities, housing associations, developers and health partners, it sets out a clear plan and a series of realistic, deliverable asks of Government to help us play our full part in national delivery.

With the right support, Kent and Medway can be a national exemplar for delivering affordable, safe and sustainable homes at pace and scale. Without it, the market will continue to fail those most in need and public trust in the planning and housing system will decline further.

We energetically ask MHCLG to consider these asks as part of your work to develop a national housing strategy and work with KHG, Homes England, Thames Estuary Growth Board and local partners to bring these asks forward so we can jointly bring to fruition our shared ambition for accelerating the delivery of good plan led growth.

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*(**Kent Housing Group** – KHG is Kent-wide housing forum which serves to represent the collective voice of housing across Kent and Medway. Representation is from all Local Authorities, Medway Unitary Authority, Kent County Council, active Housing Associations and engages with colleagues from across the wider housing, planning, development and health systems.)*

https://www.kenthousinggroup.org.uk/