

Health and Housing Needs Assessment FAQs

What is a Health Needs Assessment?

Health needs assessment is a systematic approach to understanding the needs of a population. The health needs assessment can be used as part of the commissioning process so that the most effective support for those in the greatest need can be planned and delivered. It aims to be a holistic assessment considering social, economic, cultural and behavioural factors that influence health.

What is the purpose of the Housing and Health Needs Assessment (H&HNA)?

The Housing and Health Needs Assessment (H&HNA) examines the link between housing conditions and health outcomes in Suffolk. It highlights the challenges faced in the county due to factors such as housing supply, affordability, energy efficiency, and homelessness, and provides a series of recommendations to addressing these issues.

Who was involved in the steering group and drafting of the H&HNA?

The H&HNA was drafted by a steering group consisting of representatives from various organisations, including district and borough colleagues, representation from other directorates such as Growth, Highways and Infrastructure, Children and Young People, and Adult and Community Services.

What does the H&HNA focus on?

The H&HNA focuses on the relationship between housing conditions and health outcomes, rather than the location or construction of new housing developments. It emphasises how factors such as energy inefficiency, damp, overcrowding, and affordability issues in existing homes can negatively impact the health and wellbeing of residents.

What queries have been answered during the production of the H&HNA?

The H&HNA working group have reviewed previous drafts of the needs assessment. Feedback was wide-ranging, particularly focusing on the nuances of the recommendations, retrofitting costs, housing projections figures and the content reported in district and borough plans, particularly house building targets.

Which projections have been used as part of the H&HNA?

The H&HNA utilizes various projections, including household projections from the Office for National Statistics (ONS) and housing supply recommendations from the Housing for Older People Supply Recommendations (HOPSR) tool.

Which housing policies and plans are included?

The H&HNA considers and aligns with relevant housing policies and plans at the national and local level, such as the Decent Homes Standard, the Energy Company Obligation (ECO), and local authority housing strategies. Where local policies are referred to, hyperlinks are provided to policies where figures have been taken at the time of writing.

Where is the H&HNA data taken from?

The H&HNA draws data from a variety of sources, including the 2021 Census, the English Housing Survey, the Suffolk Local Energy Asset Representation (LEAR), and local authority records on housing conditions, homelessness, and housing registers.

How will the recommendations be implemented?

The recommendations provided are intentionally broad to allow flexibility for different approaches across Suffolk. It is expected that the Suffolk housing board will utilise these recommendations to help guide and prioritise targeted work and interventions related to improving housing and health.

What are the limitations of the data/assessment?

Some of the data is derived from national surveys, with estimates applied to Suffolk, so actual local figures may vary. There are also data gaps, such as a lack of recent comprehensive data on damp and mould specifically for Suffolk homes. The assessment relies on the best available evidence at the time of writing.

How can residents get involved or access support?

The assessment provides sources of information and guidance for residents on maintaining their homes, applying for grants/subsidies if eligible, getting advice on landlord responsibilities, and home adaptations to improve accessibility and safety.

I still have a question?

Please contact us: Knowledgeandintelligence@suffolk.gov.uk