

Trafford Council

Housing Strategy 2025-2030 Consultation Feedback Report



Introduction

Trafford Council undertook a period of public consultation to obtain views, comments, and feedback from a range of stakeholders, organisations, and residents on the new Trafford Housing Strategy 2025–2030. Formal consultation began on the Draft Trafford Housing Strategy on Monday 2nd September 2024 and ran for a period of six weeks until Monday 14th October 2024.

An online survey was created with questions relating to the Strategy’s proposed priorities and the recommendations required to deliver them. A copy of the survey, Draft Strategy and a Summary Statement were available on the Council’s website. The launch of the consultation was widely publicised via a press release, on the Council’s website, and on the Council’s social media accounts.

In total, 74 survey responses were received with 95% representing the views of residents and 5% representing the views of relevant organisations, such as housing associations and developers. In addition, 3 organisations and 1 individual provided written responses via email rather than completing the online survey.

Trafford’s Draft Housing Strategy 2025–2030

The Trafford Housing Strategy 2025–2030 sets out how the Council and partners will tackle the borough’s housing challenges. The Housing Strategy is a vehicle to make a difference locally and, by participating in the Consultation, residents, partners and stakeholders were given the opportunity to influence the future delivery of housing in the borough.

The Trafford Housing Strategy 2025–2030 vision is:

“Ensuring Trafford residents have access to good quality, appropriate and sustainable housing now and in the future”.

Following a review of policy, strategic context, findings from the Trafford Housing Need & Demand Assessment 2023, initial consultation with residents and stakeholders, and analysis of data, the following strategic priorities were identified:

1. Increase the supply of housing in Trafford and build more affordable homes.
2. Ensure Trafford residents can access suitable housing and sustain their homes.
3. Ensure homes meet current and future needs in Trafford.
4. Create neighbourhoods of choice that address inequalities.

Consultation Feedback

Question 1: Do you agree with the proposed strategic priorities?

62% of respondents agreed with the proposed strategic priorities, while 27% did not agree and 11% were not sure.

Respondents were given the opportunity to provide additional comments alongside their answer. Some respondents noted that the wording of the priorities was unclear and/or too ambiguous; in relation to Priority 1 there was confusion around what 'affordable housing' means, and in relation to Priority 2 and Priority 4 some felt the wording was too vague.

Broadly speaking, the remaining comments could be split into 5 themes, which are detailed below alongside the priority they relate to, and a summary of the comments received.

Theme	Relevant Priority	Summary of Comments
Infrastructure	Priority 1 Priority 4	16 respondents raised concerns around the impact of new residential development on Trafford's infrastructure. Many felt that increasing the supply of housing will put additional pressure on existing infrastructure which is already stretched. Respondents noted there is a lack of GP surgeries, dentists, schools, shops, and bus services, and commented on the high levels of congestion on the borough's roads.
Affordable housing	Priority 1 Priority 2	12 respondents supported the development of more affordable housing in the borough. However, the type of affordable housing was disputed. Some respondents felt the focus should be on affordable rented accommodation, such as social housing, while others felt there was a greater need for affordable ownership options such as Shared Ownership.
Greenbelt land	Priority 1	6 respondents stated that while they agree with increasing the supply of housing, Trafford Council should avoid using Green Belt land to achieve this and should instead develop on Brownfield land.
Condition of homes/ Energy efficiency	Priority 1 Priority 3 Priority 4	4 respondents commented that the repair and maintenance of existing homes should be a priority along with ensuring new developments are built using high-quality materials and energy efficient measures such as solar panels and effective insulation.
Empty homes	Priority 1	4 respondents stressed the need to bring empty properties back into use for residential purposes, including repurposing commercial and historic buildings.

Question 2: Please rank the Strategic Priorities in order of importance to you:

45% of respondents stated that Priority 1 was the most important to them. Respondents felt that more housing was needed in Trafford, and that this increase would drive down market prices. However, it was noted that infrastructure must also be improved in areas of large residential development. Affordability of homes in Trafford was a prominent concern, particularly for younger people who want to buy their first home and for existing residents who feel they are being priced out of the area. In addition, respondents felt strongly that Green Belt land should not be used for new development.

24% of respondents stated that Priority 2 was the most important to them. These respondents felt that before increasing housing supply, Trafford Council should focus on improving the conditions of existing housing in the borough. It was noted that Trafford has a high number of homeowners who are not currently offered any support to maintain their homes to a decent standard. Respondents also noted that existing homes should be retrofitted to make them more energy efficient, and that all new developments should include energy-saving technologies and be built using high-quality materials. Finally, it was raised that all homes in Trafford should be accessible, particularly for those with limited mobility.

14% of respondents stated that Priority 3 was the most important to them. These respondents felt that being able to access affordable and adequately sized housing in Trafford is crucial. It was noted that older people feel they have limited choice on the property types they can access, and that there was a lack of incentive for 'right sizing'. In addition, respondents commented that many properties in Trafford are in poor condition and that homeowners in particular are not offered enough support to properly repair and maintain their homes.

16% of respondents indicated that Priority 4 was the most important to them. Respondents stated that creating high-quality and affordable housing in all areas of the borough would address inequality, while some felt there was a disparity between the North and South of the borough that must be addressed. Many respondents noted that Trafford Council should do more to ensure younger residents can remain in the area to maintain family and community links. Infrastructure was a huge concern for most respondents who noted the borough needs more schools, GPs, local businesses, and reduced road congestion. It is feared that further development without improvements to infrastructure will cause neighbourhoods to become deprived.

The draft priorities were most commonly ranked in the following order of importance:

1. Priority 1 – Increase the supply of housing in Trafford and build more affordable homes.
2. Priority 3 – Ensure homes meet current and future needs in Trafford.
3. Priority 2 – Ensure Trafford residents can access suitable housing and sustain their homes.
4. Priority 4 – Create neighbourhoods of choice that address inequalities.

Trafford Council Response

The Council would like to thank all that participated in the consultation. We are pleased there is support for the proposed strategic priorities and have taken on board all comments and feedback received. The wording of Priority 2 and Priority 4 has been amended to overcome the ambiguity and confusion noted by respondents. The priorities will now read, *“Priority 2: Ensure all residents can obtain and sustain suitable housing in the borough”* and *“Priority 4: Address inequalities by creating neighbourhoods that promote inclusion, health, and wellbeing”*.

Further amendments have been made to the Housing Strategy to provide clarity over what ‘affordable housing’ means; a paragraph has been added under Priority 1 to provide the Government definitions of affordable housing and clarify how this term is used within the context of the Strategy.

We have noted the concerns around infrastructure and agree that sound infrastructure is crucial to allow our communities to thrive. This is why the importance of infrastructure is reference throughout the Housing Strategy and why we included an action under Priority 4 to *“consult with residents and established services in areas of large developments to ensure the impact of the development on local infrastructure is fully considered”*.

The findings from the Housing Need and Demand Assessment 2023 support respondents ask for a diverse mix of tenures. With regards to increasing the supply of affordable housing, the Council is keen to ensure this includes both affordable rented and home ownership options, as well as social housing. Further, supporting residents and local Registered Providers to repair and maintain their homes is a key priority for Trafford. This is captured within Priority 3, which includes a recommendation to *“improve property standards across all tenures”*.

The Council is committed to tackling the climate emergency and recognises the role housing plays in achieving this objective. As such, the Trafford Design Guide stipulates that all planning applications must demonstrate how they have incorporated modern innovations and technology to improve the sustainability of developments. This includes measures to reduce the carbon footprint and energy consumption, and the use of natural resources throughout the construction and lifetime of the development.

The Trafford Empty Homes Strategy underpins the Council’s efforts to reduce the number of empty homes in the borough, bringing them back into use wherever possible. This is also captured within the Housing Strategy under Priority 1, supported by a recommendation to *“reduce the number of empty homes”*.

The Council acknowledges the respondents’ position that development should not occur on Green Belt land. There is a strong focus in the recently adopted Places for Everyone plan to direct new development towards sites within the existing urban area. Such areas are often in sustainable locations, close to facilities, and served by existing infrastructure. There should, therefore, be no need to develop on currently designated Green Belt land to meet housing needs.

Priority 1: Increase the supply of housing in Trafford and build more affordable homes.

Question 4: Do you agree with the proposed recommendations for Priority 1?

45% of respondents agreed with the proposed recommendations, while 35% disagreed and 20% were unsure. Respondents strongly agreed with the recommendation to reduce the number of empty homes in the borough. However, the recommendation around expanding the private rented sector was the most opposed. Respondents raised concerns around the property standards, affordability, and security of tenure in the private sector, and instead suggested the focus should be on increasing the supply of social and affordable homes.

Question 5: Are there any other recommendations we need to consider to meet Priority 1?

60% of respondents felt there are other recommendations we need to consider. These were the most common suggestions:

1. Expedite the planning process to allow developments to come forward at a quicker pace.
2. Ensure stalled development sites are brought back online as quickly as possible.

Trafford Council Response

The Council is pleased that respondents support our ambition to tackle empty homes. However, it is noted that the plan to expand the private rented sector has caused concern.

While the Housing Strategy identifies the Council's aim to increase provision of affordable and social housing, the private rented sector offers an alternative option for those who cannot access home ownership or social housing. Despite this, private rented homes in Trafford make up only 15% of the housing stock. It is with this in mind that Trafford identified a need to expand the sector.

The Council acknowledges the concerns around the condition of properties and security offered within the private rented sector. However, the Housing Strategy has been drafted in the context of the impending Renters Reform Bill which will improve security of tenure, introduce new requirements for property standards, and strengthen local authority's powers to hold private landlords accountable. In addition, the Housing Strategy captures the Council's own intention to improve Trafford's private rented sector.

While the Council accepts that affordability of private rented accommodation in Trafford is a challenge, increasing the availability of private rented homes in the borough may lead to a reduction in private rents as supply catches up with demand.

Trafford Council is grateful to all respondents who suggested additional recommendations. We accept that both suggested recommendations would contribute towards successful delivery of Priority 1 and have therefore amended the Housing Strategy to capture them.

Priority 2: Ensure Trafford residents can access and sustain their homes.

Question 6: Do you agree with the proposed recommendations for Priority 2?

65% of respondents agreed with the proposed recommendations for Priority 2, while 18% disagreed and 17% were unsure. Respondents strongly agreed with the recommendations to support residents to overcome affordability barriers and improve access to social housing. However, respondents noted a lack of recommendations relating to supported housing, particularly for younger people with disabilities or neurodiversity, that strive for independent living. Concern was again raised by respondents around private rented accommodation, namely the security of tenure, rogue landlords, and condition of properties within the private rented sector.

Question 7: Are there any other recommendations we need to consider to meet Priority 2?

18% of respondents felt there are other recommendations we need to consider. These were the most common suggestions:

1. Promote information on housing options more widely to ensure residents are aware of all options, including mutual exchange.
2. Consult with older residents to investigate the mismatch between demand and supply of older peoples' housing.
3. Enhance the offer of assistance for those who are digitally excluded or struggle with technology.

Trafford Council Response

The Council is pleased respondents approve of the ambitions to support residents to overcome affordability barriers and improve access to social housing.

The opinion that the Strategy lacks recommendations relating to supported housing is noted. However, the strategy does refer to supported housing, particularly under Priority 2 and Priority 3, and includes a recommendation to *“address any identified gaps in relation to specialist housing need, including supported accommodation and adapted/adaptable properties”*. In addition, Trafford launched the Supported Housing Strategy in 2023 which provides greater insight into the Council's ambitions for supported housing in the borough.

The Council acknowledges the concerns around the condition of properties and the security of tenure offered within the private rented sector. However, the Housing Strategy captures the Council's intention to improve Trafford's private rented sector. In addition, the impending Renters Reform Bill will introduce measures to improve security of tenure in private rented properties, introduce new requirements for private rented property standards, and strengthen local authority's powers to hold private landlords accountable.

Trafford Council is grateful to all respondents who suggested additional recommendations. To address the first suggestion, an existing recommendation has been amended to incorporate the promotion of information on housing options. The second suggestion has already been addressed under Trafford's Older Peoples' Housing Strategy, and the final suggestion has been captured under the Older Peoples' Housing Strategy and Supported Housing Strategy and will be included in the new Homelessness Strategy.

Priority 3: Ensure homes in Trafford meet current and future need.

Question 8: Do you agree with the proposed recommendations for Priority 3?

65% of respondents agreed with the proposed recommendations for Priority 3, while 23% disagreed and 12% were unsure. Respondents strongly agreed with the recommendations to improve property standards, meet the housing needs of all residents, and ensure housing supply remains appropriate for all residents. However, respondents had mixed views with regards to addressing the climate emergency with some stating this should be a lower priority for the Council while others felt the Housing Strategy did not go far enough in this area. In addition, respondents noted that a clearer understanding of housing need at ward level was needed to allow for targeted action.

Question 9: Are there any other recommendations we need to consider to meet Priority 3?

20% of respondents felt there are other recommendations we need to consider. These were the most common suggestions:

1. Explore options to improve climate resistance to protect residents from natural emergencies such as floods and heatwaves.
2. Encourage retrofit and refurbishment instead of demolition and re-building.
3. Empower private landlords to access energy efficiency schemes to improve their rented properties.

Trafford Council Response

The Council is pleased that respondents support the ambitions to improve property standards, meet the housing need of all residents, and ensure housing supply is, and continues to be, appropriate for all residents.

The conflicting opinions of respondents regarding tackling the climate emergency is noted. However, Trafford Council remains committed to supporting GMCA in its pledge to achieve carbon neutrality by 2038 and will therefore continue to tackle the climate emergency as a priority. The Housing Strategy will be reviewed annually, and additional measures will be considered for tackling the climate emergency wherever possible.

The Council acknowledges the importance of area specific housing need and demand information. This is captured within the Priority 1 action *“develop housing propositions which include details on the range of housing available in each ward and share with developers so any gaps in supply can be addressed”*.

The Council is grateful to all respondents who suggested additional recommendations. We agree that climate resistance is an important consideration and have therefore added this recommendation to the Housing Strategy. The suggestion of requiring developers to consider refurbishment over demolition and rebuilding is already in place in Trafford and captured within the Trafford Design Code. The Renters Reform Bill will require private landlords to ensure their properties are upgraded to EPC standard C. To ensure this occurs, the Housing Strategy includes the action *“ensure prompt action is taken to implement new legislation targeted at improving the private rented sector”*.

Priority 4: Create neighbourhoods of choice that address inequalities.

Question 10: Do you agree with the proposed recommendations for Priority 4?

64% of respondents agreed with the proposed recommendations for Priority 4, while 24% disagreed and 12% were unsure. Respondents strongly agreed with the ambitions to create neighbourhoods that promote community inclusion and to focus regeneration efforts on the most deprived areas of the borough. However, some residents felt that the Council is not doing enough to maintain its green spaces, particularly in the south of the borough. In addition, many respondents were opposed to allowing development to take place on Green Belt land.

Question 11: Are there any other recommendations we need to consider to meet Priority 4?

18% of respondents felt there are other recommendations we need to consider. These were the most common suggestions:

1. Expand infrastructure in all areas to ensure residents have access to medical services and public transport in their localities.
2. Require developers to contribute funding to create/develop green spaces to gain planning permission for large developments.

Trafford Council Response

The Council is pleased that respondents support the ambitions to create neighbourhoods that promote community inclusion and to focus regeneration efforts on the most deprived areas.

Trafford Council agree that maintaining the borough's green spaces is key to allowing our neighbourhoods to flourish. This has been captured within the Housing Strategy under Priority 4, which includes an action to *"ensure council owned green spaces are of good quality, properly maintained, and safe for use"*.

The Council acknowledges the respondents' position that development should not occur on Green Belt land. There is a strong focus in the recently adopted Places for Everyone plan to direct new development towards sites within the existing urban area. Such areas are often in sustainable locations, close to facilities, and served by existing infrastructure. Therefore, there should be no need to build on currently designated Green Belt land to meet housing needs. This position is captured within the Housing Strategy.

The Council is grateful to all respondents who suggested additional recommendations. Steps to address concerns around infrastructure have already been captured within the Housing Strategy under Priority 4 and its associated actions. In addition, Trafford Council already require developers to contribute financially towards green spaces; this is contained within the Trafford Design Code and is facilitated by the Community Levy Infrastructure which requires developers to pay a financial sum which is used to provide essential infrastructure, including green spaces.

Additional Comments

This section captures the additional comments made by respondents to the online survey, along with responses received via email and from comments received on Trafford Council's social media posts. All responses were considered and split into commonly occurring themes, before being summarised into the paragraphs below.

Infrastructure

"The inadequate infrastructure in Trafford is a significant issue; schools and medical facilities are oversubscribed, and the roads are highly congested. Developing new homes in areas without adequate infrastructure will negatively impact the existing resident's quality of life. New housing development should only occur where there is adequate infrastructure to support it. In areas where the infrastructure is lacking, new developments should only go ahead if the developers are also investing in the local infrastructure."

Type of housing

"New homes in Trafford should be accessible, sustainable, and of high-quality. Fewer high-rise flats should be built as this type of accommodation is not suitable for families with children, and only offers the option for leasehold ownership which prevents residents from truly owning their home. The Council must provide details of what type of housing is required in each area of the borough, with a particular focus on the needs of younger people and the older generation."

Social Housing

"There is need for a greater supply of social housing in Trafford, and the Allocations Policy should be reviewed to ensure the available properties go to those most in need. More action should be taken to address those who are under occupying social housing properties, and tenants should be prevented from purchasing social homes. Shared Ownership should be extended across the borough as it offers an affordable option of home ownership."

Affordability

"Trafford Council need to be more explicit in defining what is meant by 'affordable housing'. The affordability challenges in Trafford are ongoing and will require changes at a national level to remedy. Trafford should consider only offering affordable housing options to those who are already resident in the borough and put measures in place to prevent affordable homes being re-sold in the future at inflated prices."

Green spaces

"In delivering more homes, Trafford Council must give due regard to the borough's green space. Development should not be permitted on Green Belt land and flood plains but should instead utilise Brownfield sites. Planning Policy should ensure that developers plant more trees and enhance the green space in the locality. Trafford Council should consult with residents before granting permission to develop on Green Belt land."

Planning process

“To achieve the Council’s strategic objectives, the number of applications granted planning permission needs to be significantly increased. Importantly, there must be a focus on ensuring such planning permissions represent a viable form of development so they can translate to short-term delivery on the ground. The Council should take steps to ensure the new design code does not hinder housing delivery by imposing excessive costs to developers.”

Delivery of the Strategy

“In delivering the Housing Strategy the Council must balance competing objectives, which will prove challenging. Overall, increasing delivery of new homes in the borough is paramount but must be carefully managed alongside protecting the borough’s green spaces. Housing delivery should be carried out in the interest of residents and communities, not solely to benefit developer’s profits. The Housing Strategy must also be reviewed when the National Planning Policy Framework has been reformed.”

Trafford Council Response

The Council would like to thank all residents and organisations that took the time to participate in the consultation. We are thrilled with the level of support for our vision and strategic priorities and note that the overall response was positive.

All responses and feedback have been carefully considered and the following amendments have been made to capture the expressed views:

- Priority 2 and Priority 4 have been reworded to provide clarity and remove ambiguity.
- A paragraph has been added under Priority 1 to provide a definition of ‘affordable housing’ and explain how it is used within the context of the Housing Strategy.
- Under Priority 3, the recommendation *“Develop advice materials specific to marginalised cohorts such as veterans, ex-offenders, and refugees to ensure they are aware of all appropriate housing options”* has been amended to *“Widely promote information on housing options and develop housing advice materials specific to marginalised cohorts such as veterans, ex-offenders, and refugees”*.
- Under Priority 1, the recommendation *“Continue to monitor all affordable developments in Trafford through the Housing Tracker and engage with developers and Registered Providers regarding development activity”* has been amended to *“Continue to monitor all residential developments in Trafford through the Housing Tracker and engage with developers to ensure stalled sites come back online as quickly as possible”*.
- The recommendation *“Explore options to improve climate resistance to protect residents from natural emergencies such as floods and heatwaves”* has been added under Priority 3.
- The recommendation *“Expedite the planning process to allow developments to come forward at a quicker pace”* has been added under Priority 1.

Equality & Diversity Monitoring

Overall, the consultation received responses from a diverse range of residents. The demographic makeup of the residents who responded to the online survey is summarised here:

Age

31% of respondents were aged 55+, 19% were aged 41-50, 12% were aged 51-54, 8% were aged 25-30, 5% were aged 36-40, 4% were aged 31-35, and 1% were aged 19-24. 19% of respondents preferred not to disclose their age.

Annual Household Income

15% of respondents had an annual household income of between £30,001 and £50,000, 14% between £10,001 and £30,000, 11% between £70,001 and £90,000, 11% of over £90,001, 9% between £50,001 and £70,000, and 1% of under £10,000. 39% of respondents preferred not to disclose their annual household income.

Current Housing Situation

66% of respondents were homeowners, 8% were renting from a private landlord, 4% were living with family or friends, 4% were renting from a social landlord, and 1% were living in shared ownership properties. 16% of respondents preferred not to disclose their current housing situation.

Disability

70% of respondents did not identify themselves as having a disability, 14% identified themselves as having a disability, and 16% preferred not to disclose whether they had a disability.

Economic Status

64% of respondents were in employment, 14% were retired, 3% were unable to work due to disability or illness, and 21% preferred not to disclose their economic status.

Ethnicity

73% of respondents identified as White British, 3% identified as Mixed/Multiple Ethnicity, 1% identified as Asian, 1% identified as Black, 1% identified as White Other, and 1% identified as Other Ethnicity. 19% of respondents preferred not to disclose their ethnicity.

Gender

65% of the respondents were female, 19% were male, and 16% preferred not to disclose their gender. 81% of respondents stated their gender is the same as they were assigned at birth and 19% preferred not to disclose this information.

Sexual Orientation

68% of respondents identified as heterosexual, 4% identified as bisexual, and 3% identified as gay. 26% of respondents preferred not to disclose their sexual orientation.