

PCH Development Strategy 2020-25



Updated December 2020

Plymouth
Community Homes



The PCH story

Plymouth Community Homes is a high performing, well respected and trusted organisation providing quality and affordable homes for people in Plymouth.

We have a five year Strategic Business Plan, which sets our direction as an organisation to 2025. It's built around our vision to 'Be a leading, growing, independent housing association providing homes and services people want and can afford.'



This Development Strategy outlines how PCH will provide a range of new sustainable homes over the next five years in and around Plymouth.

What we are working to achieve

As the major housing provider in Plymouth, PCH brings specialist skills and significant resources to help achieve the city's vision to be 'one of Europe's finest, most vibrant waterfront cities'.

Home to over 260,000 (and a further 100,000 in the travel to work area) Plymouth already has the second largest population in the South West (after Bristol) with an ambition to grow to 300,000 by 2026. Central to meeting this ambition is growth in employment and housing.

We know we need to build more homes to meet the growing demand for affordable, decent places to live in Plymouth and the wider area. As homes are sold through the Right To Buy scheme, it's essential that we replace them so we at least keep the same number of social homes available for people. But we want more than that, we want to see if we can increase the number of homes we own and expand to a wider area so more people can benefit from a PCH property.

During the period 2020 to 2025 PCH will deliver over 1200 new homes within Plymouth and the wider travel to work area. This includes Affordable Rent, Shared Ownership and Open Market sale.

These include completing the North Prospect Regeneration Programme; the largest regeneration programme in the South West. PCH also has the financial strength, capacity and flexibility to be able to seize opportunities to considerably increase this delivery.

We are committed to providing the right housing, to the right standards, in the right places and at the right cost. We are equally committed to local procurement, as well as training and employment opportunities for local people.

The development of homes for Open Market sale will generate income that PCH will reinvest into the delivery of affordable housing.

Aims

Offer more homes in new ways and new places.

To do this, there are specific deliverables that the Development Strategy needs to achieve.

They are:

- Deliver over 1000 homes through a mixed tenure development programme by 2025 to support the housing needs of the city
- Actively seek opportunities, including from existing PCH land, to support and grow this ambition.
- Complete North Prospect development programme by 2024
- Continue to build and refurbish homes to increase energy efficiency and reduce fuel poverty for our tenants
- Invest in green technology to be more environmentally sustainable

We agreed a Partnership Deal with Plymouth City Council to deliver 600 homes across the city, 444 will be affordable housing.

How we will achieve our aims

This Strategy is broken down into distinct areas of work that will achieve our aims. They are:

North Prospect Regeneration

The completion of the North Prospect regeneration programme remains a key priority for PCH, as an important transfer promise to the local community and wider stakeholders. It involves the demolition of 796 houses and construction of 1,127 new homes: 650 affordable and 477 open market sale housing. The main aim is the rejuvenation of one of the most deprived areas of Plymouth which suffered from a range of social challenges and poor housing conditions.

The estate consisted of poorly constructed 1920s houses, many with serious structural defects that make demolition and rebuild the most economical and practical option. Whilst the condition of the existing homes was a critical factor in reaching the decision to redevelop, the overriding reason remains the need to achieve a balanced sustainable community – moving away from a predominantly ‘social housing’ estate to a 50/50 mix of private/affordable homes.

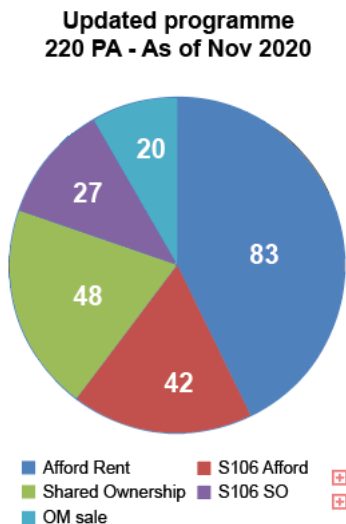
We have successfully relocated 741 households (559 tenants and 182 private owners) during the regeneration.

More than 60 per cent of the relocated households stayed in and around North Prospect with Phase 3, 4 and 5 at over 70%. There has been a big impact noticed to date in relation to crime and a marked improvement in housing conditions. We will carry out a more detailed impact assessment upon completion of the scheme in 2024.

The regeneration consists of 5 phases - phases 1,2 and 3 are complete. Phases 5 and 4 are well underway and due to complete in 2022 and 2024 respectively.

Development of new homes

PCH is developing new homes on a number of sites in Plymouth and within the travel to work area.



The largest tenure expected to be developed is for Affordable Rent, capped at Local Housing Allowance. This five-year programme relies on £23m of subsidy from PCH of which almost £3m will be generated through open market sales.

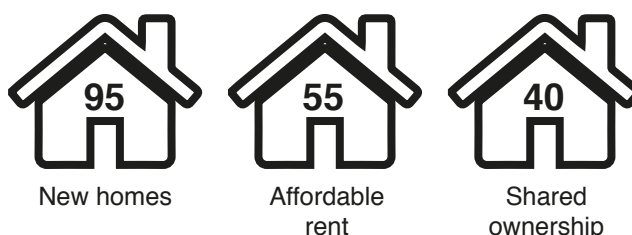
At Porsham Heights on the former Southway campus we built...



At Primrose Park in Whiteleigh we completed the largest Passivhaus development in the South West – this entirely affordable homes scheme includes...



At Brentor View in Southway we built...



We are now building homes as far afield as Bodmin, Okehampton and Newton Abbot based upon a 60-minute travel time from Plymouth.

PCH Ambition - housing products

The quality and type of new housing delivered will express central PCH commitments on ecological sustainability, to local communities, on design quality, as well as affordability. Underpinning these commitments is the fundamental need to deliver the right type of accommodation for the present and future needs. In short, the type of new housing that PCH will deliver.

In terms of the market opportunity best suited to PCH, it is likely to be for first time buyers at the lower-mid range market.

To promote open market sales effectively we will look at appropriate branding that aligns to the overall PCH brand strategy.

Design Quality

PCH will deliver high quality new homes in terms of sustainability, design and specification standards. PCH measures the quality of design through detailed annual resident feedback and uses it to inform changes to the Design and Project Toolkits (the design, contract and specification brief).

In terms of environmental sustainability, PCH has delivered the Passivhaus project at Bodmin Road, Whitleigh, the largest such housing scheme in the South West and at one stage the country. We have commissioned a two year research project to determine the benefits to residents of this type of housing and the practicalities of delivering to this high construction standard.

PCH recognises that it cannot control the design on all types of development, particularly S106 opportunities. These are developments delivered through planning obligations placed upon private developers which usually account for 20 – 30% of the total project. PCH has adopted a clear set of minimum standards for such schemes and already has in place a rigorous gateway approval system which includes colleagues from Asset Management, Maintenance and Housing Management, who scrutinise each new project to ensure they meet the needs of future PCH residents.



Probity and risk control

The way projects and programmes of schemes are procured and delivered has a major impact on the quality of outcome and value for money. PCH has developed a rigorous internal scheme authorisation system with a series of approval gateways at which key development factors such as procurement, design and risk, as well as wider community benefits are considered. Detailed departmental and project risk assessments and Key Performance Indicators are regularly reviewed and reported on directly to Development Committee and Board.

The PCH gateway system needs cross departmental collaboration at the earliest stage of any project and specific consultation and approval through various management levels of the organisation. This engagement seeks to ensure only appropriate schemes are considered and that the design and specification meet current and future resident needs.

Engaging with the local community

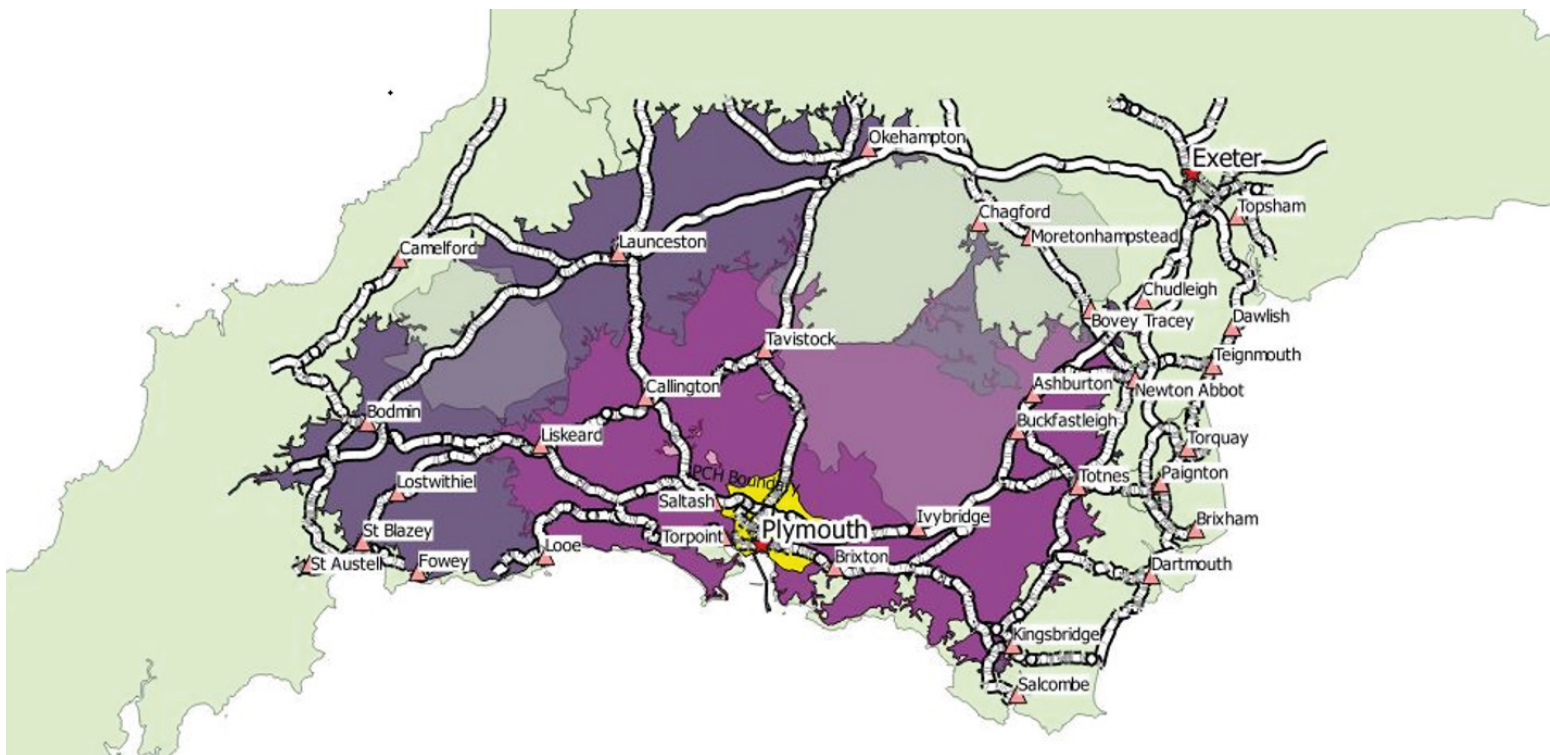
Engagement with PCH residents and local communities is core to the development process within PCH. Before submitting projects for planning approval, PCH invites local residents to consultation events where plans of proposed schemes are available for residents to view and comment on, as well as via the PCH website. Feedback reports from these events are published on the website.



Local training and employment

PCH asks more of its partners and is committed to delivering training placements to local people. These requirements are embedded within the department's key performance indicators which are regularly updated and reported to Board.

PCH Development map



Updated in September 2020 increasing the size of programme and geographic reach.



How we will keep track

To ensure we are focussed in working towards the aims set out in this strategy, we will monitor and measure our progress by:

- Reporting progress against the Development Strategy to the Board annually, with reviews of aims as needed.
- Quarterly reporting to Board as part of the performance monitoring against the Strategic Business Plan.
- Monitoring of the Development Strategy at the Affordable Housing Group with a focus on the current areas of work being carried out.
- Review of resident feedback from completed homes reported annually to Development Committee along with suggested improvements to design specification.
- Annual residents' design conference allowing residents to input into the design of new homes.



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