

Technical Appendix 10: Children's Homes



Hertfordshire

1.0 Background

- 1.1 Under the [Children Act 1989](#), the county council has a statutory duty to take steps that ensure, so far as reasonably practicable, that children (aged 18 and under) in their care are provided with suitable accommodation within the authority's area, unless this as a compelling reason that requires otherwise.
- 1.2 When a child enters the care system, the local authority acts as a corporate parent. This means that the county council, along with its elected members, employees and partner agencies, are responsible for providing the best possible care, protection and support for these children, nurturing them to be the best version of themselves, like any good parent would.
- 1.3 Often this requires the placement of children at children's homes. Children's homes should not look or feel like institutional settings, they should be single dwellings that resemble family homes. These homes should offer a safe and loving environment, improving the experiences and outcomes for young people in care. This approach should apply to both short-stay and longer-term accommodations, providing a positive environment until children can safely return to their families.
- 1.4 More information about Children's Social Care in Hertfordshire can be found on our website at <https://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/services/childrens-social-care>

2.0 Assessing need and calculating contributions

- 2.1 The need for additional infrastructure such as children's homes may be generated (at least in part) by more housing development and consequently, appropriate mitigation of those increasing pressures may be sought by the county council.
- 2.2 The county council is looking to create a strategic approach to the delivery of new children's homes. LPA partners, providers and developers will play a key role in shaping the outcomes. While the county council is not currently seeking S106 financial obligations at this stage, it will through the local plan process look to secure the provision of children's homes to meet future need.

3.0 Delivery of Children's Homes

- 3.1 Where able to demonstrate a need for the provision of additional children's homes, the county council will look to secure such provision in Local Plan policy as explained in the county council's Local and Strategic Plans Engagement Document.
- 3.2 There are numerous ways in which a children's home can subsequently be delivered and ultimately secured via a S106 agreement once a planning application is submitted.
- 3.3 Homes could be built by the developer of a wider residential-led development site, with C2 permission granted to the specific home in question.

The design and location of this house should be approved by the county council during the planning application stage to ensure it is appropriate for its intended use. The house could then be transferred to a provider, including the county council, and added to its portfolio of operational houses in which to place children.

- 3.4 Alternatively, land for a children's home could be transferred by the developer to a provider, including the county council, with outline permission for a C2 home secured, after which the provider would need to secure detailed planning permission and build the children's home. The county council should approve the location and size of the land during the planning application stage to ensure it will enable a children's home to be built that is appropriate for its intended use.
- 3.5 In both instances, the county council's [Service-Provision and Place-Making Guide](#) contains information to help guide the design process. Triggers for the transfer of land and/or completion of the children's home would also need to be agreed with the county council during the planning application stage.